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Climate Change and Tourism

From policy to practice

Susanne Becken and John E. Hay



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and John E. Hay*



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CLIMATE CHANGE AND TOURISM

The contribution of tourism to climate change, and the likely consequences of climate change for key tourist destinations, has been well reported and discussed. Yet, there is a lack of evidence-based systematic practical advice as to how the tourism industry should respond to the challenge of climate change. Building on a sound conceptual understanding of the links between climate change and tourism, this book shows how the tourism sector might best respond. It not only focuses on the roles of supportive policies and institutions in ensuring a strong 'enabling environment' for practical responses, but also on the practical responses themselves.

This practical approach is presented through a large number of case studies and examples which illustrate how policy and industry initiatives have been implemented in tourism, and if or why they were successful. The majority of examples come from places such as the Caribbean, Spain, the Maldives, Nepal, and the UK, as well as Australia, New Zealand and other parts of the Pacific. The examples are presented within an overall framework that facilitates the translation of adaptation and mitigation policies into practice.

This book offers the tourism industry, students and academics the opportunity to advance from the earlier, more conceptual texts on tourism and climate change by taking a much more practical approach. Its global coverage, through the use of international case studies, fosters a cross-fertilization of ideas and initiatives. This text provides a detailed analysis of best practices in the face of climate change, across countries and geographically diverse tourist destinations and operations.

Susanne Becken is a Professor of Sustainable Tourism at Griffin University, Australia, and an Adjunct Professor at Lincoln University, New Zealand. She is also on the editorial boards of *Annals of Tourism Research*, the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, the *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, and the *Tourism Review*.

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Climate Change and Tourism

From policy to practice

Susanne Becken and John E. Hay

Please contact the Series Editor to discuss new proposals at: rajsharpley@uclan.ac.uk

John E. Hay dedicates this book to his wife, Eleni, who has joined him on a journey few can dream of, let alone experience.

ACRONYMS

AICST	APEC International Centre for Sustainable Tourism
APD	British Air Passenger Departure Duty
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
CAST	Caribbean Alliance for Sustainable Tourism
CERs	Certified Emission Reductions
CFCs	Chlorofluorocarbons
CSR	Corporate social responsibility
ETS	Emissions Trading Scheme
EU	European Union
GHG	Greenhouse gas
IAPAL	International Air Passenger Adaptation Levy
IATA	International Air Transport Association
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organisation
ICLEI	International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
ICZM	Integrated coastal zone management
KSI	Key sustainability indicator
OTA	Oceanic Tailored Arrivals
RES	Renewable energy supply
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNWTO	The United Nations World Tourism Organisation
WMO	World Meteorological Organisation
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

CONTENTS

<i>List of plates, figures and tables</i>	x
<i>List of acronyms</i>	xvi
1 Introduction	1
1.1 <i>Tourism and climate change</i>	1
1.2 <i>Rationale and structure of the book</i>	4
2 Recent Advances in Knowledge and Understanding	8
2.1 <i>Climate change science</i>	8
2.2 <i>The climate change debate</i>	11
2.3 <i>Policy for climate change and tourism</i>	12
2.4 <i>Measuring greenhouse gas emissions by tourism</i>	15
2.5 <i>Supply-side responses to climate change</i>	18
2.6 <i>The environmental behaviour of tourists</i>	20
2.7 <i>Tourist perceptions of climate and weather</i>	23
2.8 <i>Local impacts and destination-level adaptation</i>	25
2.9 <i>Future-oriented analyses</i>	28
2.10 <i>Conclusion</i>	30
3 Adaptation Policy, Planning and Institutions	31
3.1 <i>Introduction</i>	31
3.2 <i>Ensuring a strong enabling environment</i>	33
3.3 <i>Incorporating managing climate risks into national policies and plans</i>	35

3.4	<i>Adaptation policy making and planning at the sub-national and business levels</i>	41
3.5	<i>Adaptation policy making and planning at multi-country and international levels</i>	50
3.6	<i>Conclusion</i>	52
4.	Adaptation Practice	55
4.1	<i>Introduction</i>	55
4.2	<i>Incentive to travel, and appeal of potential destinations</i>	57
4.3	<i>Transport infrastructure and services used by tourists</i>	64
4.4	<i>Managing tourism's resource base</i>	72
4.5	<i>Managing tourist satisfaction, health and safety</i>	83
4.6	<i>Managing the sustainability of facilities, operations and destinations</i>	95
4.7	<i>Conclusion</i>	101
5.	Mitigation Policy	103
5.1	<i>Introduction</i>	103
5.2	<i>Business level mitigation policies</i>	105
5.3	<i>Local mitigation policies</i>	112
5.4	<i>National mitigation policies</i>	116
5.5	<i>Regional level mitigation policy</i>	124
5.6	<i>International mitigation policy for tourism</i>	130
5.7	<i>Conclusion</i>	137
6.	Mitigation Practice	139
6.1	<i>Introduction</i>	139
6.2	<i>Destination appeal</i>	141
6.3	<i>Transportation</i>	149
6.4	<i>Mitigation at facilities and in operations</i>	163
6.5	<i>Tourist behaviour and mitigation</i>	172
6.6	<i>Conclusion</i>	177
7.	Assessing Performance, and Learning	180
7.1	<i>Introduction</i>	180
7.2	<i>Assessing the performance of mitigation policies and plans for the tourism sector</i>	182
7.3	<i>Assessing the performance of adaptation policies and plans for the tourism sector</i>	191
7.4	<i>Maladaptation in the tourism sector</i>	198
7.5	<i>Knowledge sharing and learning</i>	199
7.6	<i>Conclusion</i>	202

8. Integrated Responses to Climate Change	203
8.1 <i>Introduction</i>	203
8.2 <i>Climate change mitigation and adaptation</i>	204
8.3 <i>Sustainable development and climate change response</i>	212
8.4 <i>Disaster risk reduction and adaptation</i>	223
8.5 <i>'Peak oil' and climate change</i>	229
9. Conclusion	235
<i>Notes</i>	240
<i>References</i>	242
<i>Geographical Index</i>	266
<i>General Index</i>	268

PLATES, FIGURES AND TABLES

Plates

3.1	Information for tourists on road conditions after a heavy snowfall event in Wanaka, New Zealand.	35
3.2	Tourist beach-scene in Ocho Rios, Jamaica, on a windy day.	38
3.3	Damage caused to the Barcelo Maya Resort, Quintara Roo, Mexico, as a result of Hurricane Wilma.	39
3.4	Australia's Gold Coast, the recently announced host city for the 2018 Commonwealth Games.	43
3.5	A (former) restaurant destroyed by Category 5 Hurricane Wilma in October 2005, Cozumel, Mexico.	47
3.6	Sagarmatha National Park (Mt Everest) seen from the Tibet side. Increased melting potentially affects climbing and other tourist operations.	52
4.1	Climate change is expected to result in intolerably hot conditions for mid-summer sunbathers, such as these on the coast of Croatia.	60
4.2	Rail line subject to high levels of leaf fall and resulting low adhesion.	68
4.3 and 4.4	Coastal tourism is important to the economy and livelihoods, but also vulnerable to climate change, whether in part of a large country, such as Santa Monica, United States (top) or a small island, such as Aitutaki, Cook Islands (bottom).	74
4.5	Traditional tourist accommodation in Samoa is being threatened by accelerated coastal erosion.	76
4.6	Artificial (i.e. man-made) hotel beach at Coconut Bay, Tobago; the beach is approximately 200 m in length and 60 m in width,	

	and was constructed using limestone sand imported from Guyana. Note also the groyne, constructed in an attempt to slow down the rate of sand loss. The developer of the hotel, John Jefferis, thought of the concept and subsequently designed and constructed the beach.	76
4.7	The Giant Panda in China is a symbol of global nature conservation (e.g. the Worldwide Fund for Nature), and climate change is seen as one factor that puts the species at risk.	77
4.8	Rwenzori Mountains National Park, Uganda. Snow cover on the mountain is already reduced as a result of global warming.	79
4.9	Trail map – the trail network and associated infrastructure are being modified as a result of changes in the climate.	79
4.10	Hotel pool on Denarau Island, Fiji.	86
4.11	Wanaka on a sunny winter day.	88
4.12	A recent trend in the Caribbean is to use white rock when constructing groynes and other forms of coastal protection, in order to improve the aesthetics while also endeavouring to ensure the beach has adequate sand cover.	96
4.13	Russian icebreaker <i>Kapitan Khlebnikov</i> – retrofitted for passengers in Pond Inlet, Nunavut, Canada, in August 2010.	100
5.1	Eurostar in Brussels.	110
5.2	One of about 600 Safa Tempos in Kathmandu.	115
5.3	Passengers at Gatwick Airport, London. It is the UK's second largest airport and the busiest single-runway airport in the world. It serves over 200 destinations for around 33 million passengers a year.	121
5.4	Solar lamp, lighting the garden environments in a hotel in Tobago.	127
5.5	Greenpeace at the 2007 UNFCCC Climate Summit in Bali, Indonesia.	131
6.1	Mountain landscape around Queenstown and Glenorchy, often used in Tourism New Zealand imaging and branding.	142
6.2	Biking in Kangaroo Valley, Australia.	146
6.3	City bikes for tourists in Oslo, Norway.	148
6.4	One of four double-decker coaches which commenced operations in 2007. It meets Euro 3 Emission Standards. The bus is the largest in New Zealand, and is estimated to carry 23,725 passengers per year – the equivalent of removing 47,000 private vehicle journeys from the roads each year.	156
6.5	Cycle tourism on small country roads in South Germany.	158
6.6	Solar panels on an Ecoventura cruise vessel in Ecuador.	160
6.7	Fahrtziel Natur advertisement by the Deutsche Bahn.	162
6.8	Solar hot water on tourist accommodation in Suva, Fiji.	164
6.9	The Hytte in Northumberland, self-catering accommodation (with turf roof).	165

6.10	Whistler Blackcomb gondola.	167
6.11	Carbon offsetting project by Atmosfair: Cow dung is fermented in underground biogas digesters, producing an almost odourless and high-energy content gas.	176
7.1	Promotion of 'low carbon health promotion' accommodation at Bangkok airport.	181
7.2	Overwater bungalows are an important part of the brand of tourism in the Maldives.	196
8.1	Wind turbine installed at the Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort.	206
8.2	Intercontinental Resort and Thalasso Spa in Bora Bora, French Polynesia. The pipeline carrying cold ocean water from 900 m depth runs across the reef flat (foreground) to a building located just above the shoreline. As is evident, the installation has no significant visual impact.	208
8.3	Beach of La Brée-les-Bains, Île d'Oléron, France. Note how the erosion control works limit the useable area of beach.	221
8.4	View from tourist accommodation at Hermanus.	227
8.5	Aviation fuel pump in a regional airport in Germany.	233

Figures

1.1	International tourist arrivals (in millions) (*2010 are preliminary results).	2
1.2	Focus of the book: policy and practice.	4
1.3	Structure of the book: adaptation responses.	6
1.4	Structure of the book: mitigation responses.	6
2.1	Observed changes in components of the global climate system. © American Meteorological Society. Reprinted with permission.	9
2.2	Observed changes in snow cover and glaciation. © American Meteorological Society. Reprinted with permission.	10
2.3	Annual global average temperature anomalies (relative to 1961–1990) from 1850 to 2010 from the Hadley Centre/CRU (HadCRUT3) (black line and grey area, representing mean and 95% uncertainty range), the NOAA National Climatic Data Center (light grey); and the NASA Goddard Institute for Space Studies (dark grey).	11
2.4	Six-step approach to assessing the climate change impacts on tourism and identifying adaptation options.	24
3.1	The adaptation process, highlighting the importance of a strong enabling environment for effective adaptation in the tourism sector.	32
3.2	Structure and content of Saint Lucia's National Climate Change Adaptation Policy and Strategy.	36

3.3	The approach used in the ARICC Project to identify priority adaptation strategies and measures to increase the weather and climate resilience of rail infrastructure and operations.	51
4.1	Forced and planned adaptation – the two categories of actions designed to reduce the consequences of climate change. Also shown for completeness is mitigation, the third response to climate change.	56
4.2	Adaptation initiatives northern European tourists and Mediterranean tourism service providers might take as a result of an increase in the number of unacceptably hot summer days at Mediterranean destinations.	61
4.3	Weather and related phenomena that can be influential for given phases of flight operations.	69
4.4	Causes of weather-related delays at Heathrow Airport, for the period January, 2001 to May, 2006.	70
4.5	A real time FACET graphical display showing convective weather around Chicago O'Hare International Airport on July 23, 2010. FACET integrates weather and air traffic information, allowing operators to reroute flights to maintain safety and minimize delay.	72
4.6	Winter precipitation trends in the Mediterranean region for the period 1902–2010, shown as departures from the long-term average.	73
4.7	Matrix of approaches to responsible marketing of tourism services in the context of climate risks and their management.	84
4.8	Impact of Hurricanes Hugo and Marilyn on room capacity, visitor arrivals and tourist expenditure in the United States Virgin Islands, 1988 to 1997.	90
4.9	Example of tourism advisory related to a hurricane approaching the Florida Keys.	92
4.10	Queensland Tourism Crisis Management Plan.	93
5.1	Risk-based framework for developing GHG mitigation policies.	106
5.2	Accor Hotels Environment Charter.	107
5.3	Six Senses Virtuous Circle.	109
5.4	Corporate Plan 2009–2011 of the Sunshine Coast Council (Australia).	113
5.5	Energy policies of the European Union.	126
5.6	IATA Conceptual Emission Reduction Scenario.	135
5.7	The four pillars to climate change mitigation by IATA.	135
6.1	(a and b) Cycle paths and tourist attractions in Växjö, Sweden.	144
7.1	The role of monitoring and evaluation in the context of mitigation and adaptation, and of mitigation as a source of financial resources to support adaptation.	181
7.2	The carbon intensity of travel options – a webcomic. Reprinted with permission from Ecometrica.	183
7.3	The three scopes of the Greenhouse Gas Protocol in the context of tourism.	184

7.4	Diagram of the supply chains of Emirates Wogan Valley Resort in Australia, showing sources of emissions, and highlighting those units that are included in the GHG inventory.	189
7.5	The two main categories of indicators for monitoring and evaluating adaptation to climate change, with examples based on Snowbowl Ski Resort in Arizona, U.S.	194
7.6	Overview of the activities and intended outcomes and impacts of a regional monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system for disaster risk management (DRM) climate change adaptation Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and Coordination Unit (CU) in the Caribbean tourism sector.	195
7.7	Illustration of the contrast between maladaptation and actions to protect and restore wetlands to facilitate adaptation to climate change.	198
8.1	Synergies and trade-offs arise when tourism responds to climate change in an integrated manner.	204
8.2	Responses to climate change, from climate change-focused (left) to development-focused (right), with illustrative examples for adaptation, mitigation and the two combined.	205
8.3	Diagrammatic representation of the deep ocean water-cooling system at the Intercontinental Resort and Thalasso Spa in Bora Bora, French Polynesia. (Richard Bailey, Pacific Beachcomber SC Company, Tahiti, French Polynesia)	209
8.4	Pacific Resort Rarotonga, Cook Islands.	214
8.5	Excerpt from the Lusaka Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development, Climate Change and Peace.	216
8.6	Media coverage of cyclone Wilma (2005) in the Christchurch <i>Press</i> , New Zealand. The coverage focuses on negative aspects and safety concerns for tourists.	225
8.7	Hierarchical framework for oil price increase impacts on tourism.	231

Tables

1.1	Domestic and international tourist volumes (2005) worldwide for same-day and overnight visitors.	2
1.2	Natural disasters in 2010 compared with the average of 2000–2009: floods, mass movements (wet) and storms.	3
2.1	Climate change impacts, policy gaps and planned policies for tourism.	14
2.2	Contribution of tourism to global greenhouse gas emissions.	15
2.3	Energy consumption for a wide range of transport modes.	17
2.4	Range of adaptation measures appropriate for ski fields.	21
3.1	New Zealand Tourism and Climate Change Plan: priority areas and actions related to strengthening the enabling environment.	34

3.2	Saint Lucia's National Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change by the Tourism Sector.	37
3.3	Examples of adaptation actions of relevance to the tourism sector.	44
3.4	Examples of specific adaptation actions and time frames included in the Kakadu National Park Climate Change Strategy 2010–2015.	46
4.1	Changes in climate and their possible consequences for transportation.	65
4.2	Asset and operational risks to Network Rail due to heat, including exacerbation by climate change.	67
4.3	Adaptation measures being used by tourism operators in Wanaka and Queenstown.	88
4.4	Managing tourist satisfaction, health and safety.	94
5.1	Examples of emission reduction targets relevant to tourism.	104
5.2	Descriptions of selected GHGs abatement policy instruments.	118
5.3	Climate change mitigation policies in Australia.	119
5.4	APD rates of duty from 1 November 2009.	122
5.5	Impacts of the suggested energy policies for Barbados, based on detailed energy audits and analysis.	128
6.1	Examples of mitigation measures for tourism.	140
6.2	Overview of mitigation technologies and practices from the transport sector (non-technological measures such as lifestyle changes are not included).	149
6.3	Aviation's contribution to anthropogenic climate change.	150
6.4	Emission reductions with technologies currently available.	152
6.5	Biofuel flights undertaken by various airlines.	154
6.6	Comparison of offset providers from New York to the Caribbean.	175
7.1	National GHG account for tourism, Australia.	186
7.2	Elements of the energy system that determine energy consumption and GHG emissions in Whistler, Canada.	188
7.3	Proposed climate change related indicators for sustainable tourism destinations in the Caribbean.	195
7.4	Extract from the Results Framework for the Project 'Increasing Climate Change Resilience of Maldives through Adaptation in the Tourism Sector'.	197
8.1	Energy Balance Sheet for Jiminy Peak Mountain Resort, Massachusetts, US.	207
8.2	Summary of strategic directions for the beach destination scheme of the Oléron Island Beach Plan.	219

1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Tourism and climate change

There is increasing awareness of the importance of climate change for tourism, but detailed understanding is still limited, as are practical and effective responses. Tourism is now back on its path of growth, while at the same time the adverse consequences of climate change are accelerating. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) reports that, after a significant drop in international tourism due to the global recession, global arrivals in 2010 exceeded the historic high of 2008. 2010 saw 935 million international tourists worldwide (Figure 1.1). This recovery was much faster than initially expected. The recovery has been led by emerging economies, especially in Asia, with growth rates of 8 per cent relative to 2008, compared with only 5 per cent for advanced economies (e.g. in Europe). Interestingly, tourist expenditure has not recovered at the same level, indicating that those tourists deciding to travel internationally are less willing or able to spend the amounts they did before the global financial crisis. The 2011 events of devastating floods in Australia, the Christchurch (New Zealand) earthquake and the Japanese earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis, as well as increasing fuel prices, are likely to have influenced tourist arrivals and flows for 2011, and beyond.

Global tourism statistics typically focus on international tourism, but Table 1.1 below shows that domestic tourism is the main contributor to the size of the sector, globally. Added together, there were about 9.8 billion tourist arrivals worldwide in 2005 (no later comprehensive assessment is available), of which only 1.75 billion were international in nature. The sheer volume of global tourism indicates its relevance for climate change, in terms of both its contribution to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and its potential vulnerability to adverse weather and climate impacts. As evident in earlier research (e.g. Becken, 2007, 2008a, 2008b; Gössling *et al.*, 2002), the main concern about tourism's GHG emissions relates to transport. When considering