

Paper 4: Draft Tourism Policies for East Timor

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Introduction

These Draft Tourism Policies derive from results of, and papers presented by Ximenes, Carter and Prideaux at, the:

- Strategic Development Planning for East Timor Conference, Melbourne Australia, 5-9 April 1999;
- Reconstructing East Timor Conference, Tibar, East Timor, 30 May-2 June 2000; and
- East Timor Reconstruction Conference: Strategic Planning Conference for Rebuilding East Timor, Brisbane Australia, 20-21 July 2000.

They stem from direction given by the CNRT President and FALINTIL Commander, Xanana Gusmao at the Melbourne conference in 1999:

"A beautiful country like East Timor with its determined and heroic history, must not be promoted through a tourist industry which creates a small modern world of luxury hotels, but rather we should accelerate the creation conditions for ecotourism as a means to promote the unique identity, personality and character of our people, with a dimension of more humane relationships between people.

It is necessary that we are uncompromising in our defence of the environment, with all the consequences this may bring, because we should never lose sight of the small language of the land which is our nation, which has to be preserved as our birthplace and as the green lawn from where the future generations will grow, and as a grave full of flowers for all the generations that have gone before".

Directions from the Melbourne conference 1999

Vision statements

1. **Industry:** A dynamic, diverse, prosperous and mutually supportive tourist industry, based on local community initiatives, responsive to customer needs as well as environment and community sensitivity.
2. **Clients:** A tourist clientele that is appreciative and protective of the cultural tradition and environmental settings within which tourism activity occurs as well as the efforts made by the industry to sustain or enhance the quality of these settings.
3. **Community:** A community that is supportive of the tourism industry and benefits from tourism activity.
4. **Environment:** Conservation, presentation and enhancement of natural and cultural environments through pro-active and sympathetic efforts of the tourist industry and co-operation with other industries and the community.
5. **Government:** Pro-actively supportive of the tourism industry, providing direction and an environment for ecological sustainable development and economic prosperity.

Mission statement

To promote Eco-tourism that actively assists the conservation of the natural environment and its cultural significance through offering services provided by village community-based ventures.

Strategic goals and work plan

Formulate and implement a visitor services plan (VSP)

1. Establish a tourism planning team to develop a VSP.
2. To create the VSP, the planning team will:
 - Assess the existing carrying capacity and quality of accommodation throughout East Timor.
 - Assess the existing capacity of the reliable delivery of adequate food and beverage services for visitors.
 - Assess the existing capacity for the reliable delivery of adequate transport services for visitors.
 - Formulate the best possible estimate of the level of visitor demand at the end of the year two.
 - Plan how to best increase capacity, with priority given to safe, reliable and regular transport service delivery.
3. Target groups for the initial phase of the VSP are workers from government and aid agencies, NGO and church workers, UN and multilateral agencies, as well as private sector and recreational sector visitors.

Promote tourism industry plan and regulations

4. Establish a government department supervising tourism and nature conservation.
5. Establish Timor Tourism Board chaired by government officials with business membership.
6. Develop a comprehensive tourism planning underwritten by the principles of sustainability and protection of East Timor natural and cultural resources.
7. Initiate negotiations and formulate national airline policy.
8. Develop a program of village community tourism education and awareness-raising throughout the country to promote rural community involvement.

Develop eco-tourism resources and infrastructure

- Identify eco-tourism resources and upgrade infrastructure services, such as communications for booking and reservations so that the visitors may be hosted adequately.
- Identify and develop primary services providers for hospitality, travel and tourist attractions for delivery of identified balanced range of complementary eco-tourism products.
- Link all rural services providers to promote and market national diversified tourism product and an image of East Timor internationally
- Register, restore and rehabilitate natural/cultural heritage sites and attractions
- Establish a bio-diversity survey to analyse and recommend conservation priorities for tourism.

Directions from the Tibar conference 2000

Vision statements for the economy

We envisage an independent Timor Lorosae with:

- an economy which serves a free, democratic and prosperous society;
- an open market economy with selective government intervention to ensure equity, transparency and efficiency.

Mission statement on the economy

To transform Timor Lorosae's agrarian economy into a more diversified and developed economy.

Mission statement for the tourism sector of the economy

Develop the tourism industry as one of the major industries in East Timor

Strategies

Promote a tourism industry plan and regulations.
Develop ecotourism resources and infrastructure.
Only support tourism projects that directly benefit the community.

Policies

1. Develop a comprehensive tourism plan with a principle of sustainability and protection of cultural and natural resources. The plan should be based on a detailed inventory of resources, identification of their values and expectations of degradation through tourism use.
2. Prepare and implement programs to facilitate the development of tourism.
3. Build tourism infrastructure to facilitate the development of tourism.
4. Prepare a tourism strategy for the next five years.
5. Undertake a preliminary SWOT analysis of East Timor's tourism potential.
6. Seek membership of the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) and the World Tourism Organisation (WTO).

Directions from the Brisbane conference 2000

Issues

Emphasis on sustainable tourism based on the environment and community action is reaffirmed.

Need to clarify what market is to be targeted when no product exists for either end of the market spectrum.

The need for policy (a strategic plan) was emphasised, including a short-term plan (18mths) to get the groundwork done.

Need for institutions to advocate policies e.g. Dept. of Tourism. In recent past, there has been no indigenous knowledge of tourism: part of role of a new institution.

Need to train people in East Timor to control tourism and prepare the private sector to become partners.

Tourism assets

Apart from its natural, cultural and historic resources, the major tourism assets were identified as being:

1. a new democracy - 'a clean slate'.
2. 'not spoilt' - no hoards of people.
3. the people, because they want involvement in tourism: the culture is right.

Key business issues

1. Identifying a target market.
2. Developing a sustainable market - all year round.
3. Investment policies associated with risk (a 4-year lead-time is needed).
4. Tenure.

It was proposed that joint ventures were desirable with government holding a 51% stake.

Inventory

1. Tourism assets (natural, cultural and historic resources).
2. Training needs assessment.
3. Investor inventory.

Investor needs

1. Clear legal framework.
2. Clear financial framework.
3. Security (a process to build confidence).

Strategy development

Strategy would be to develop a 'Triple bottom line approach' from every investor:

- economic,
 - ecological,
 - community development,
- then see how investors respond to the set bottom line.

Institutional arrangements

Establishment of a Department of Tourism was considered very important, including:

- a marketing board,
- an advisory board,
- clear links between tourism and other departments (health, development etc.).

Prioritised potential actions

1. Develop a sustainable tourism plan to ensure long-term community ownership/awareness, including a market strategy
 - short term (e.g. youth market)
 - med. term (need for more infrastructure)
 - long term (integrate the two)
2. Establish a destination support mission for the development of a rapid tourism development strategy.
3. Establish policies and regulations and an organisational structure.
4. Identify tourism assets, including:
 - identification and protection of heritage (including recent events)
 - community skills analysis
5. Start a demonstration pilot project for ecotourism.
6. Develop a clear image for East Timor (including tourism)
7. Increase community capacity to be involved in tourism:
8. Develop a crisis and communication plan (cross-sectoral -whole of government) and establish a place

for tourism to input to broad government policy for cross-sectoral linkages in infrastructure development.

9. Establish a monitoring and evaluation program (impacts on community).
10. Establish a visitor centre.
11. Promote cultural activities (events and festivals) to build tourism.
12. Undertake market research.
13. Obtain 'Green Globe' accreditation or similar recognition of the sustainability objective.
14. Establishing customer focus in terms of security, health, and well being?
15. Establish a business hotel.
16. Establish an official online website for the Department of Tourism.
17. Prepare a travel guide.

Specific objectives and actions

Issue 1: Inventory

Absence of data of tourism assets (natural, cultural, community capacity) for strategic planning and evaluation.

Sustainability of tourism resources.

Action

Facilitate community based asset inventory.

Develop rapid appraisal mission.

Develop long-term technical inventory.

Who

In-country – build capacity of local community to undertake the inventory.

Establish a tourism task force of specialists and counterparts

Technical specialists with East Timorese counterparts.

Issue 2: Immediate action

The delivery of tangible tourism action

Involvement of community

Getting tourism on development agenda

Action

Implement pilot (community focus) tourism priority at Tutuala, and Atauro.

Who

Partnership between government, local community and investor.

Issue 3: Strategy development

Develop strategies for long-term community ownership/awareness.

Develop a sustainable tourism plan for destination East Timor.

Action

Involve the community from the start.

Have tourism projects work in conjunction with other development programs.

Develop a tourism theme based on local culture and resources.

Integrate the churches (joint ventures)

Instigate a community based self-education program to promote awareness of the value of community resources (long-term plan).

Who?

To be undertaken by East Timor government with the support of an East Timor Tourism Advisory Committee (ETTAC) and local communities.

Issue 4: International support

International expert support for the development of sustainable tourism in East Timor.

Action

Establish ETTAC to advise and assist the East Timor government in policy and strategy and institution and capacity building.

Who?

Potentially PATA and the Co-operative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism (Australia)

Issue 5: Policies and regulation

Establish policies and regulations

Actions

Identify primary areas requiring policy determination.

Put in place necessary head of powers.

Who?

Government and community assisted by consultants - i.e. PATA

Issue 6: Market communication

Re-establish positive communication with key markets and market segments.

Action

Develop a communication strategy.

Who?

Department of Tourism/ whole of government.

Issue 7: Institutional arrangements

Need to set up a tourism leadership, regulation, planning and marketing role in East Timor.

Action

Establish a tourism authority.

Who?

Specialist advisors and local counterpart team including representatives from CNRT.

Issue 8: Queensland action

Establish what Queensland can do

Action

Establish an action committee.

Propose to Qld. State/local government and CNRT a budget of \$1 000 000 to fuel brainpower.

Get CNRT to match \$1 000 000 through UN (World Bank) to fuel their side.

Who

CNRT, Queensland. State and local governments and the UN.

Draft Policy Context

East Timor is currently administered by the United Nations Transitional Administration for East Timor (UNTAET). The role of the United Nations is to facilitate the development of local institutions, leading to elections and independence over a period of several years. Specific timelines are yet to be developed. The current focus of multilateral and bilateral agencies in East Timor is reconstruction. However, national leaders of East Timor have emphasised a need for reconstruction for the future in contrast to restoration. The reconstruction phase will be followed by development projects. There are both opportunities and constraints in regard to the development of sustainable livelihood systems in East Timor.

To some extent, the policies outlined in this document challenge this approach. They propose that action is needed now to set the direction for tourism so that it can develop under the control of East Timorese and not in a reactionary fashion when 'room to maneuver' has been significantly reduced. They also assume that tourism will play a major role in the economic future of East Timor and that early action is necessary to develop community capacity to respond to the opportunities and challenges that tourism brings.

East Timor is currently very poor, predominantly rural, has low numbers of educated people, and is suffering the consequences of many years of environmental neglect and devastation. However, there are also many opportunities. These include natural resources (such as coral beaches, rain forests, off-shore oil and gas), strong local and international commitment, and an absence of existing institutional constraints. Despite the devastation, there are coherent village-level community organisations. Given the re-establishment of nationhood for East Timor, it is critical that activities extend to the various districts of East Timor and include OeCusse-Ambeno and offshore to the island of Atauro. Tourism has the potential to be one such economic activity, but developed in conjunction with broader sustainable livelihood initiatives.

Environmentally Sustainable Tourism

There is considerable scope for environmental tourism linked to high quality beaches, extensive coral fringing reefs, rainforests, and upland communities. In general these can be developed at the local level without major resort style infrastructure. There is a need for facilitation, applied education, and funding of low impact investment. In the absence of a focused program, these opportunities run the risk of being crowded out by large scale and environmentally inappropriate investments.

Catchment and Land Management

There is considerable environmental pressure on land management systems. In the uplands there is a complex situation arising from high rainfall, steep geography, productive soils and high population. The outcome has been deforestation and extremely serious land slippage. The current systems are clearly non-sustainable but it will require detailed analysis and community participation to develop strategies for amelioration and improvement. Close to Dili there are major land use issues associated with deforestation for reconstruction and firewood.

Energy Supply

There is an urgent need to develop and operationalise alternative energy systems to reduce the non-sustainable demand for forest products.

Sustainable Agri-Industry Development

There are already programs being developed and implemented aimed at rehabilitating East Timor agriculture. Some of these projects appear grandiose and environmentally inappropriate, others are based on imported technology. Many of the proposals are ad hoc interventions. There is a need to recognise that subsistence agriculture cannot provide an escape from rural poverty and that East Timor needs a market based agriculture. The challenge is to do this in a way that is environmentally sound, and that also deals sympathetically with the unavoidable need to reduce the proportion of the population that relies directly on agriculture for their livelihoods.

An interdependent community based approach

There is a need for strong interactions between the above components, as well as community infrastructure development, including roads, power and water. Given the existing limited capacity of the East Timorese community to respond to the challenges of development beyond subsistence, each component will need to be developed within an action learning framework, with strong participatory involvement from the outset. Some financial inputs will be non-commercial (such as the education elements). Other components (such as financing of environmental tourism micro businesses) could aim for at least cost recovery.

Thus, underlying all policies is the principle of participatory and community-based activity focusing on sustainable development activities, aimed at facilitating sustainable livelihood systems in East Timor, and undertaken within an action learning framework.

This principle necessarily embraces the concept of partnerships between foreign expertise and resources with that of the East Timorese community and the resources of the nation.

Notes

The extent and source of financial resources needed to implement these policies have not been identified.

The time-frame for these policies is generally within the lifetime of the UNTAET administration.

TOURISM PLANNING

Context

Successful tourism development, in terms of economic, environmental and cultural sustainability criteria, has been shown elsewhere to be directly related to a targeted tourism plan/strategy.

Without a clear plan, tourism development runs the risk of being ad hoc, reactionary and controlled and directed by non-national interests.

Issues

Immediate needs for policy and action.

Short term strategies to direct tourism investment and development.

Integration of tourism issues within broader planning and development strategies.

Aim

To develop an interim tourism action plan and formalise policies to guide tourism development over the next year and subsequent period of UNTAET control.

Policy

To reflect the policy directions identified from previous consideration of tourism issues.

Strategy

Encourage and support the convening of a task force for tourism plan preparation based on international expertise with East Timorese counterparts

Prepare a more detailed policy document.

Prepare a plan to address the immediate needs of tourism, towards a sustainable industry.

Action

Seek funding for the preparation of appropriate planning instruments.

Invite PATA in association with the CRC for Sustainable Tourism and the University of Queensland to undertake a rapid appraisal of the tourism resources of East Timor and prepare a Draft Tourism Plan and Statement of Policy directions.

TOURISM LINKS

Foreign investment considerations

Context

Tourism is an economic activity that has the potential to bring sustainable economic benefits to communities and the State as a whole. Tourism can act as focus for a range of infrastructure development projects that can benefit both the short and long term welfare and economic objectives of communities and the State. Tourism is generally a private sector driven area of economic activity that usually appreciates a clear policy framework but resents excessive government intervention in operational matters. Foreign investment requires clear policies if long-term, non-exploitative investors are to be attracted.

Issues

The absence of investment policies relevant to tourism.

The lack of clarity in tenure issues.

The absence of tourism policies to attract desirable investors.

International perception that long-term investment in East Timor remains a risk.

Aim

To attract foreign investment in tourism beyond the financial resources of East Timorese.

To share the risk of major capital investment in tourism between investors and the East Timorese community as a whole, so that both partners reap the economic benefit of tourism success.

To maintain a social environment free from civil strife.

Policy

Create and maintain an economic and social environment that encourages foreign investment by reputable operators in major tourism infrastructure.

Seek partnerships in investment between the private and public sectors at all levels, but especially for major infrastructure projects.

Maintain a 51% stake in all tourism infrastructure developed with foreign capital.

Strategy

Clarify, formalise and promote a tourism investment policy within a broader investment policy.

Clarify tenure issues in targeted tourism development zones, identified in a tourism plan.

Action

Expedite the formulation of investment policy.

Consult with reputable major tourism infrastructure investors on investment policy matters.

Note: Attracting foreign investment is not solely a matter of fiscal policy. Issues such as health and safety, public utilities and community infrastructure are important but need to be addressed as part of whole of government considerations.

TOURISM LINKS

Rural industries

Context

Meeting the agricultural subsistence needs of the East Timorese community is an accepted priority to avoid the costly alternative of importing the necessities of life.

However, meeting the food requirements of tourists through food imports does not benefit local communities or tourists because of loss of foreign exchange and increased costs to visitors.

Issues

There is limited diversity in food products grown in East Timor, yet overseas tourists seek diversity of food items.

There is potential to diversify and pilot agricultural products in areas where tourism is planned.

Aim

To minimise the importation of food products to service tourist needs and expectations.

To maximise high return, local community cash crops through local sale to tourist operations.

Policy

Where tourism is proposed, rural agriculture development initiatives will proactively consider the opportunity to diversify products to support tourism.

Strategy

Establish a diversity of fruit and vegetable crops in village communities associated with all planned centres of tourism activity.

Action

Commence piloting a diversity of food crops, especially fruit trees, based on accepted agricultural selection approaches.

TOURISM LINKS

General commerce and the retail sector

Context

While tourism is usually identified by its products of resort accommodation and tours, it requires the support of numerous small businesses e.g. restaurants, retail outlets, markets, car and bus services and can equally take the form of low capital cost, village or family owned accommodation. World-wide, tourism is dominated by small business.

Tourism needs a secure and readily available commerce sector for growth.

Issues

Business acumen to efficiently service tourism in East Timor is limited.

Opportunities for small business in tourism related areas is unknown by most of the community.

Tourism will need the development of many business enterprises if it is to be successful.

The area of commerce, especially banking and credit services, needs parallel development with tourism in East Timor.

Aim

To diversify the range of retail services in East Timor, especially those commonly used by tourists.

To establish commerce facilities and services to meet tourist needs.

Policy

Local retail businesses, based on market driven, entrepreneurial investment will be encouraged.

To develop a (tourist) service culture within the community.

Strategy

Educate local entrepreneurs (irrespective of current investment potential) in the retail opportunities associated with tourism.

Provide community training programs in basic accounting and investment principles.

Provide seed funding loans (rather than grants) to local entrepreneurs.

Action

Design and implement a small business awareness program.

CONSERVATION OF TOURISM

ASSETS

Natural assets

Context

East Timor has a variety of natural assets that are attractive to tourists e.g. climate, natural vegetation and associated fauna, mountains and beaches. Despite recent disturbance and a long history of modification for subsistence purposes, many areas retain natural qualities that can form the basis for ecotourism products. Conservation of these assets is essential to the future of tourism in East Timor if it is to be regionally based rather than focused on simply constructed products. A marine and terrestrial protected area system is an attraction to tourists.

Issues

The location, extent and status of the natural resources (relevant to tourism) of East Timor are unclear.

A protected area system symbolises environmentally based tourism.

Expertise to manage natural resources in the context of tourism focused on these assets is poorly developed.

Aim

To inventory the natural resources of East Timor and assess their potential for tourist use.

To determine the management needs to protect these assets.

Policy

To identify the extent and status of all natural communities within East Timor.

To develop a comprehensive conservation strategy for the natural assets of East Timor (including the establishment of protected areas based on the most intact remnants of native vegetation and marine areas).

Strategy

Prepare a rapid appraisal assessment of the natural resources of East Timor based on community knowledge, aerial mapping and specialist input.

Vegetation communities and marine areas with minimal evidence of human disturbance will be conserved within a protected area system (this includes mangrove systems).

Buffer systems to these areas will be established.

Action

Devise and implement a community based program to identify valued natural areas within East Timor.

Prepare a scientific rapid assessment of the natural resources of East Timor to complement the community program.

CONSERVATION OF TOURISM ASSETS

Historical assets

Context

East Timor has a rich pre history resulting from occupation by a succession of ethnic groups. It has also had a long history of Portuguese colonisation, wartime occupation and more recently Indonesian occupation. Physical and documented evidence of this history remains but often in a dilapidated or dispersed state. Oral histories are available if proactively accessed.

The events of the last twenty-five years, and especially 1999, are particularly significant. Locations exist throughout the country that reflect events that contributed to the establishment of East Timor as an independent nation.

The collective of structures and remnants are evidence of East Timor's history and are vital elements of its heritage. Equally, this historical evidence has the potential to be important tourist assets.

Issues

The extent and significance of extant evidence of East Timor's historical past is not documented.

Structures and other evidence of East Timor's independence movement are in danger of being lost because recent events are not perceived as being historical.

Aim

To inventory the physical evidence of East Timor's history.

To identify key sites for heritage protection.

Policy

Sites of historical significance to the East Timorese community and the development of East Timor as an independent nation will be protected as part of the nation's heritage.

Strategy

Develop guidelines for determining significance of structures and sites, based on the history of East Timor.

Prepare a rapid appraisal assessment of the historical resources of East Timor based on community knowledge and specialist input.

Places identified as significant will be placed on a heritage register and their modification or disturbance will not be supported by CNRT.

Action

Prepare a history of East Timor from available sources.

Devise and implement a community based program to identify valued historical places.

Prepare an independent rapid assessment of the historic resources of East Timor to complement the community program.

CONSERVATION OF TOURISM ASSETS

Cultural assets

Context

East Timorese culture stems from occupation of the land by a succession of people of different origins. This has been influenced and modified by a history of colonisation and occupation. However, remnants of the diverse indigenous culture and modified culture remains in the form of architecture, dance, art stories and other cultural expressions. Both the indigenous culture and the evolving culture are part of East Timor's heritage. Both elements have the potential to be tourist attractions.

Issues

Practice of many traditional cultural expressions has lapsed and hence they are in danger of being lost.

Key artisans and 'keepers of traditional knowledge' are no longer living.

Aim

To record East Timor's diversity of indigenous and modified cultural expressions.

To reinvigorate traditional cultural expressions.

Policy

To foster the retention of traditional cultural knowledge and, where appropriate, its expression as part of East Timor's cultural heritage.

Strategy

Identify cultural expressions unique or significant to local communities.

Provide outlets for the manufacture and sale of traditional arts and crafts.

Provide venues for traditional cultural performance.

Action

Prepare a strategy for recording the oral history and traditions of individual communities based on community action.

Identify traditional cultural expressions that have customary or artistic significance.

Prepare an independent rapid assessment of the cultural resources of East Timor to complement the community program.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Central facilities and services

Context

The development of business accommodation is already needed in Dili. It will be a natural consequence that this will be used and expanded for use by tourists. To a lesser extent this will also be required in regional centres such as Baucau.

Issues

Investment capital for such development is limited in East Timor and likely to come from foreign investors.

Aim

To facilitate the early establishment of central facilities without reducing options for future joint venture partnerships.

Policy

Encourage foreign investment in the development of centralised facilities, but based on maintaining East Timorese equity in the development in the form of land contribution.

Strategy

Initially encourage the development of motel style accommodation (needs basis) out of the central business district of Dili, protecting the CBD for future development.

Prepare town-planning schemes.

Resist the alienation of natural landscapes, especially beach areas, until tourism plans are prepared and town planning schemes.

Action

Clarify investment policy.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Regional destination development

Context

Maximum community benefit from tourism will accrue through community based tourism development.

Issues

Overall this product development will fit into an overall strategic plan that nominates a core tourism zone between Dili and Baucau with a periphery in the mountains and coastal areas. The policy on control of these zones requires development.

A related issue is establishment of and access to protected areas (natural, cultural and historic).

Aim

Maximise the economies of scale and minimise the potential for unplanned tourism sprawl.

Policy

Regional tourism development will be based on community owned and operated facilities and services supported by centralised service areas.

Strategy

Use a core tourism region and hinterland approach to provide a focus for tourism development.

Action

Address planning policy and land ownership issues.

Develop tourism planning policy.

Seek a PATA task force to provide an external perspective on East Timor regional destination development potential.

Develop appropriate planning legislation.

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Heritage (history and culture) based tourism

Context

See conservation of tourism assets

Issues

East Timor has a rich history and culture that has been suppressed.

Preserving existing cultural and historical sites is important for national identity and as a tourism resource.

Developing tourism attractions and tours with appropriate interpretation.

Re-establishing lost skills.

Aim

Develop the cultural and historical tourism resources of East Timor.

Develop East Timorese pride in their traditional and historic heritage.

Policy

Develop legislation to protect heritage sites and cultural artefacts.

Strategy

Develop small-scale tourism attractions and entertainment based on heritage and culture (dance, crafts, etc.).

Focus on communities that develop tourism products (e.g. accommodation) and those with unique cultural expression forms.

Preserve and encourage commercialisation of historical and cultural resources.

Action

See Conservation of tourism assets

PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT

Nature and rural based tourism

Context

See conservation of tourism assets.

Issues

The lack of tourism management expertise in rural areas.

Protection of tourism assets.

Lack of regional accommodation and infrastructure.

Lack of transport and related tourism services.

Aim

Develop ecotourism products based on the natural resources of East Timor.

Maximise community involvement in ecotourism activities.

Policy

Establish a system of protected areas based on the natural resources of East Timor to support tourism initiatives.

Base ecotourism products on local community owned (at least 51%) and operated facilities and services.

Strategy

Establish pilot development programs based on existing Portuguese lodges (e.g. at Tutuala)

Action

This is the focus for immediate action. The target market is existing UNTAET personnel who seek to experience East Timor's environments and local culture. The tourism product needs to be developed progressively under an action learning regime.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Accommodation

Context

Little existing skills or accommodation stock exists.

Issues

Need for investment funding.

Identification of appropriate locations.

Training of staff and management.

Development of target markets.

Aim

Ensure the benefits of tourism accrue to local people.

Policy

See tourism links (need for investment policy)

Strategy

Develop local involvement in tourism.

Gradual accommodation development appropriate to target markets

Action

Critical to this area is the identification of people and communities in East Timor who are interested in tourism and their resources. This will be done through canvassing of local communities to determine what tourism product is both available and supported by local people.

As a result, establish a series of small-scale tourism projects across the range of accommodation, attractions, cuisine, entertainment and tours/transport. These will form the basis of further development. Development of existing Portuguese guesthouses could be a Government initiative, taking the locals people along and a useful example of capacity building and training.

INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

Transport

Context

Transport is an integral component of tourism development in East Timor and while its administration may not fall under the control of the Tourism Ministry there needs to be close and ongoing consultation between policy makers in the Departments responsible for tourism and transport.

Issues

The task of transport can be seen as occurring at several levels:

- travel of tourists to and from East Timor,
- travel of tourists whilst in East Timor,
- the freight component of the transport sector,
- construction, maintenance and operation of transport infrastructure such as airports and roads,
- administration of the various transport modes (air, road and sea), and
- enforcement to ensure high standards of safety.

The eventual structure of the tourism transport system will depend on the type of tourism to be developed and the location of tourism zones.

Aim

To develop a tourism transport system that parallels the domestic transport system to provide safe and inexpensive transport to and from East Timor and while in East Timor.

Policy

Airports: Timor can only have one international airport. Facilities for international tourists are required

Airlines: An open skies policy be adopted with allowance for a national operator at some stage in the future.

Road Transport: Licensing of tour operators, taxis, rental cars and buses is required. Local ownership to be encouraged.

Shipping: Licenses will be required for all boat operators carrying passengers.

Strategy

Undertake a needs analysis study of tourism transport needs and issues.

Action

Create an interdepartmental committee with members coming from the Departments of Tourism, Infrastructure and Treasury.

Create a transport subcommittee in the Tourism Department that includes government officers and private sector operators

Develop transport capacity to East Timor by sea and air.

Develop transport to core tourism areas.

Encourage transport to hinterland accommodation and attractions.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Marketing and promotion

Context

The basis for marketing and promotion is to know the potential tourist. There are two groups of potential tourists, UN/Business people, backpackers and adventure tourists.

The UN/Business people are in East Timor already and so provide the first target market. These people need information on day trips, short stay accommodation, local cuisine, entertainment, local events and attractions.

The backpacker market are the next attractive target market. Access points for this market into East Timor are Darwin, Singapore and possibly Bali. Backpacker travel routes are well established and information about East Timor should be made available prior to these access points.

Issues

Collection of information on local events, attractions, accommodation and entertainment.

Communication to target markets.

Capacity building in marketing skills.

Product development and packaging.

Aim

Increase awareness and desirability of target markets in East Timor tourism product.

Policy

Initial target markets will be the UNTAET staff, business travellers and backpackers.

Strategy

Focus on key products and core tourism region (Dili to Baucau) and any specific tourism destinations developed.

Actions

Create a Dili Visitor tourist information centre

Undertake a professional photo-shoot.

Develop a generic East Timor Brochure and Web site.

Conduct a familiarisation/ PR program for agents (at the appropriate time).

Travel agents in gateway cities and along the backpacker routes should be approached to inform them of tourism opportunities in East Timor.

SUPPORT SERVICES

Institutional arrangements

Context

The Department of Tourism will represent an important sector of the economy responsible for substantial employment, a major source of government revenue and generator of export income. Accordingly the Department needs to be adequately resourced to fulfil its tasks as well as coordinate policies with other government departments. Based on these needs, the Department should have a cabinet ranking in the East Timor Government structure.

Issues

Relationship of Department of Tourism with other Departments.

Position in Cabinet

Funding

Identifying desirable form of tourism development in East Timor

Aim

To develop an administrative structure that is cost effective, responsive to the needs of the local community and which responds rapidly to applications for policy guidance and approvals for investment and associated licensing.

Policy

Establish a Department of Tourism with the ability to co-ordinate tourism development in East Timor,

market internationally

co-ordinate training for tourism workers

provide advice on tourism to the remainder of the government

co-ordinate foreign investment

implement tourism development in regions

Strategy

Seek an appropriate budget to commence establishment of the Department

Identify key staff positions

Recruit staff

Develop Departmental priorities on a 1, 2 and 3-year basis

Action

Advertise for key personnel

Develop a departmental budget

Establish priorities

Need for funding of small-scale enterprises through loans.