

Versatility in Hospitality Industry around the Globe A Case Study on Sustainable Tourism of Zambia

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Abstract: *Over the last few decades, development policy has been dominated by mainstream economic theories that focus on economic growth to achieve sustainable development. The pace and scale of tourism growth in the Livingstone area in Zambia have seen over reliance on natural resource utilization by mass tourism developments. Compounded by insufficient planning and limited coordination and collaboration among the institutions involved in the tourism sector, tourism can have a negative impact and can create conflicts. Tourism growth in Livingstone has predominantly focused on the economic incentives in tourism and ignored the social perspective and impact on the local population. In general, the government agency administration structures affect the successful implementation of tourism policy and planning for sustainable tourism development. Given the fact that the limited government support, funds and appropriate knowledge in tourism limit Livingstone to develop as a sustainable “green” destination and remain an enormously difficult task to achieve. Over the last few decades, development policy has been dominated by mainstream economic theories that focus on economic growth to achieve sustainable development. The pace and scale of tourism growth in Livingstone (Mosi-oo-Tunya) area in Zambia have seen over reliance on natural resource utilization by mass tourism developments. Compounded by insufficient planning and limited coordination and collaboration among the institutions involved in the tourism sector, tourism can have a negative impact and can create conflicts. Given the fact that the limited government support, funds and appropriate knowledge in tourism limit Livingstone (Mosi-oo-Tunya) to develop as a sustainable “green” destination and remain an enormously difficult task to achieve.[2]*

Keywords: Zambia

I. INTRODUCTION

In an effort to reduce the negative impacts of conventional tourism, more environmentally and socially conscientious approaches were promoted to tourism. Typically called “ecotourism and sustainable tourism” though other terms such as responsible tourism, nature-based tourism, green tourism, and alternative tourism are also used. Any tourism destination without an adequate plan for development that addresses the economic as well as social and environmental functions of the industry is under prepared for the impacts of visitors, catastrophic events, and enforcing market forces. The displacement of natural wildlife and undesirable influences to once remote cultures. As an alternative to conventional tourism, sustainability and ecotourism has continued to gain momentum over the last two decades. Planning for sustainable tourism development refers to environmental preservation planning and as such includes a variety of inquiry activities and analysis to the decision for determining the direction of the development. Tourism planning is advanced to prevent the intensive utilization of resources in some specific areas without previous care for the preservation of the resources. There has been an increasing need for landscape planners to consider methodological approaches to tourism planning and a number of techniques, principles, and examples that have evolved and been recommended. Nevertheless, the multiplicity and heterogeneity of tourism stakeholders render the process complicated. A key component to the success of sustainable “green” tourism is local control in the planning, development and management of these tourism sites. Arguably, Livingstone has the highest concentration of tourism activities in Zambia[3]

Tourism in Zambia

Zambia's protected area network covers 30% of the country (224,075 km²) for which Zambia Wildlife Authority (ZAWA) is responsible.

The 19 National Parks covering 6587 km² (28%) and 32 Game Management Areas (GMAs) 160,488 km² in extent or 72% of the country's PA network, a huge resource forms wilderness tourism supply side. Many of the tourism activity centers on the 19 National Parks covering 63,587 km² (28%) and 32 Game Management Areas (GMAs) of 160,488 km² in extent, or 72% of the country's protected area (PA) network. Many national parks, landscapes and fauna form the basis for lucrative tourism and hunting industries in Zambia.

According to the tourism activity created 44% of employment was created in the hotel and restaurant industry compared to 7% in the mining industry, 99% in agriculture and 66% in manufacturing. In 2010, the number of arrivals in Zambia was 815,000 and increased to 920,299 in 2011

Zambia's tourism industry established itself in the 1950s, As shown in Table 1 Zambia's tourism indicators in years. There have been some significant changes in strategic and policy levels in Zambia, all of which have the potential to influence the sustainable tourism planning agenda.

However, the extent to which these changes have infiltrated into implementation of local government is an area that requires further investigation and the holistic involvement of communities in effective utilization of their environmental assets and cultural heritage. The basis for this stance stems from the factor that tourism is increasingly Livingstone's major economic activity. According Zambia's stake in the industry has been insignificant, but the past five years or so have witnessed a steady growth in the tourism sector, projected to deliver over 1.4 million tourist arrivals by 2015

Zambia's major tourism supply side clusters have developed in only a few key urban and national park locations, with a strong bias to the Livingstone region that offers nearly 40% of all nature tourism. The effects of uncontrolled tourism development degrade ecosystems. Nowhere in Zambia is this more evident than in Livingstone Victoria Falls (Mosiah-tunya) tourism site. This underscores the need to entrench sustainable tourism planning principles in tourism management plans well before development begins and irreparable damage. [2]

Tourism Policies

Local and regional authorities were asked if they had knowledge of the Zambia Tourism Policy. There is no statutory requirement for a Tourism Policy, the publication of one indicates a strong community interest and local government commitment to tourism, the survey revealed that 26 tourism institutions under at the three levels of planning and implementation level have knowledge of the tourism policies and other strategies. the comparison of the survey groups indicating the different types of organizational levels and knowledge on tourism policy and related strategies developed towards the tourism sector in Zambia.

The survey respondent's percentage outcome based on proximity to the study site revealed a lower understanding of the Tourism Policy. The respondents' percentage figure trends show 33% of CBNRM respondents had knowledge of the policy and the trend rise in the knowledge of Tourism Policy and strategies by a significant rise at the main government ministry of tourism and government department agency ZAWA. This would appear to indicate that the effect of the national tourism strategy is better understood at the core ministry and department and less appreciated or limited knowledge at local community level to develop and adopt strategies. Respondents with no knowledge of the Tourism Policy stated that all tourism matters delegated to the MTAR or ZAWA. Findings suggest that despite major tourism activities taking place in Livingstone and its surrounding areas, the local population have never come across the earmarked Livingstone greater area plan for sustainable development, but could be encouraged if they had one. This could explain the reason for low response from at local community level, and indicates a lack of interest in tourism development issues at this level, where tourism planning and policy issues were delegated to other bodies at ZAWA and MATER. [3]

The Influence of the MTENR/ZAWA Tourism Policy for Zambia (TPZ)

The majority of local tourism authority planning officers at local and government department (MTN/ZAWA) level who had knowledge of the already existing tourism plans and had seen the Livingstone greater area plan, 83% of respondents had indicated how the Tourism Policy for Zambia (TPZ) would inform their own policy development.



Responses from the local tourism authorities thought that there were emerging tourism issues that needed to be included in a future revised policy such as ecotourism certification, “green tourism”, and sustainable tourism practices. Five respondents indicated the need to incorporate elements of the five-year national development plans such as the, where appropriate to reflect particular locality and for easy implementation. While a further three stated that, they would take the plan lacking in the implementation process due to institutional limitation and resources considered.

Two respondents stated that the TPZ was approved in 1997 and published in 1999, does not reflect the current organizational structures and governmental existing plans, while a further three stated that the turnaround strategy plan directly aligns with the national sustainable strategies. Others commented on specific elements of the national plan and appreciated the opportunity to determine the national context and direction of tourism strategy in Livingstone Zambia and the replicability of the pilot plans such as the Livingstone greater area development plan and for a common approach to core issues as set WTO’s universal tourism standards. Overall, though, the ways in which the TPZ has already influenced, or will influence, policy at a local level appear vaguely stated in many cases.[1]

Importance of Tourism in Livingstone

As indicated in “74.9% of foreign tourists, who have had the opportunity to visit Zambia’s popular tourism destinations”, visited Livingstone Mosi-oa-Tunya area. Other popular destinations included South Luangwa National Park (24.3%), Mosi-oa-Tunya National Park (25.4%), Lake Kariba (26.5%) and other National Parks and Game reserves (26.5%). These destinations are Zambia’s most developed and marketed attractions. Respondents were asked to indicate the perceived importance of tourism in the case of Livingstone. Some 50% respondents stated that the importance of tourism had increased, 17% of these states increased significantly. The main reason given for this was the increasing recognition of the realized and potential economic benefits of tourism within the local tourism areas. It appears that many tourism stakeholders have become more aware of the beneficial effects that tourism can bring to a locality through as a source of revenue, business development and employment opportunities. In particular, the awareness of the ability of events to draw visitors to an area appears to have strengthened. Other contributing factors included growth in tourism, improved marketing and strategic vision, development of new products and services, and more central government funding. Only 7% respondents stated that the importance of tourism had decreased, partly due to the limited tourism appeal of one location but in two others a perceived lack of value, for example: Zambia Tourism Board ZTB have been unable to demonstrate, articulate and quantify the value in monetary terms. 26% of the respondents stated that the importance of tourism remained the same. This was explained by several locations where tourism activity remained static or where growth was limited by infrastructure constraints. One issue identified was the absence of effective tourism organizations and regional coordination to take tourism developments forward and to illustrate the benefits of tourism to the local communities, thereby not propelling tourism forward as a beneficial economic activity. Development of new attractions and recognition of substantial increases in visitors were cited as the main reasons for the increase in importance. This appears to indicate that the tourism area has a clear understanding of how tourism can benefit their locality, which may have resulted from the key messages in the national tourism plan and associated reports. However, similar issues with regard to lack of financial support given to tourism or lack of importance placed on tourism activities[. 2]

Future Tourism Development

The range and scope of developments (78.6%) indicate a significant rise in the tourism infrastructure across the country, from airport enhancements to visitor trails. The most developments, which had taken place in three local communities in Livingstone (Mosi-oa-Tunya) area followed by accommodation development (non-hotel) in 30 areas (71.4%) . It has been reported that the total number of tourists to Zambia is expected to reach more than 1.4 million tourists by 2015 and these will require more hotel establishments in the country .

The development of new attractions at all levels suggests vibrancy in tourism development. In terms of the types of new developments, the list of new attractions, facilities and services on offer is considerable and far too extensive to include, but incorporates a large proportion of new trails, tours, guided walks and outdoor adventure activities, with a smaller amount of development to create or upgrade cafes, hotels, museums and retailing. All of which utilize environmental resources and all of which have the potential to create or exacerbate adverse impacts. As such, the role

of the ZAWA in controlling the effects of tourism development is clear in a climate where growth in individual adventure tourism enterprises and outdoor pursuits is occurring. Some 44.2% of respondents considered local communities in the Living- stone area to be under pressure from increased tourism and show the major pressures highlighted by respondents. [3]

Roles and Integrations of Sustainable Strategies

The integration of Sustainable Development (SD) Strategy in Zambia's National Development Plans' legal framework, various legislation in support of SD developed such as, ZEMA act (2011) to address impacts through strategy preparation is encouraging. However, due inability of local community authorities to benefit directly from the limited resources, especially those with a small population base and limited ability to raise revenue through rates, providing infrastructure, promoting tourism growth and managing impacts are a financial burden on tight budgets from central government: this emerges as a clear theme in the survey. New legislation currently under consideration to minimize waste provides a refund to communities, this is one example of where finding ways to compensate local communities and rate- payers for the use of local services is clearly a challenge and for many councils in Zambia and, indeed, worldwide, juggling the economic costs and benefits of tourism and justifying the outcomes to ratepayers remains problematic.[2]

II. SUMMARY

Zambia has a reputation for being friendly and laid back, and its slightly off-the-beaten-track feel means tourism has developed more slowly here. As a safari destination, it's hard to beat, but its conservation record is not as impressive as countries such as Botswana. Its remote southwest corner has become an elephant poaching hotspot, and although it's a relatively expensive destination for travelers, the country remains incredibly poor. Well managed tourism could be one of the key solutions here, helping to both preserve local culture and fund conservation initiatives. Follow our tips below for a happier, more responsible holiday.[1]

III. CONCLUSION

The continuing limited involvement of local communities and regional government authorities in tourism planning and development of sustainable tourism approaches existed, given "the continued conspicuous absence of documented national development planning policy and fragmented legislation framework of sustainability in Zambia's national strategies' ". With the role of tourism in economic development established and recognized in statutory plans, sustainability now underpins sectoral policy framework for tourism in Zambia, and the landmark steps taken to develop and review national aspirations for tourism development will represent a step forward in establishing a clear remit for local governments in planning for tourism. The extent to which this is rhetoric rather than reality is questionable, given the somewhat mixed results in the survey of local government agencies reported in this study. For Zambia, a country emerging from a history of centralized economic planning, this question becomes even more vexed quite clearly, a range of pressures continue to affect local areas and the challenges that face many local communities in trying to manage the effects of tourism on environmental resources are as pressing as ever. A national tourism plan will enable local authorities and councils to evolve futures that befit environmental resource opportunities and constraints, community aspirations and local budgets. While tourism is mainly a private sector industry in Zambia, the public sector adopts a dual role as the gate- keeper of tourism developments through planning control, while promoting economic development opportunities through tourism.

As such, while councils have become the arbiters of sustainable tourism through their role in implementing the Zambia Tourism Policy, the appeal of developing the local economy places them in a dichotomous position. While much of this discussion sounds positive, there is still a major gap between strategy and implementation in the evolution towards Zambia as a sustainable destination. While sustainability is now one of the cornerstones under tourism strategy review, much of this lies at a national strategic level and remains as a philosophical stance. Evidence suggests that problems created by tourism pressures do exist and some of these are difficult to deal with given the poor linkages and synergies within the various tiers of government that undertake planning with limited budgets at local government. Pressure at key tourist hotspots and with certain tourism related activities are recognized and with the continuing growth in tourist



numbers forecasted, the effects of tourism have the potential to change the nature of the tourist experience and the very foundations on which Zambian tourism is built. The existing problems of geographic concentration of tourism activity will only worsen, exacerbating the pressures on local authorities.

As argued by “policy at a national level that assists local areas in dealing with volumes and the distribution of tourists in a more methodical manner”. With reference to by enabling a more proactive public sector approach to tourism planning, steps towards understanding the dynamics of tourism in Zambia made by the Ministry of Tourism Environment Natural Resource under the Zambia Wildlife Authority by establishing a strategic tourism development model. Given that local government agencies are politically weak, of well-recorded and entrenched patterns of corruption and patronage built around land and planning decisions, this call by planners has a greater degree of cogency as observed by argue that, “those destinations, localities and nations that prepare to put into practice good detailed policies and strategic plans will reap the benefits for sustaining their tourism products in the future”, a cornerstone of Zambia’s tourism strategy. Further research and steps would help local Zambian destinations to ensure ZAWA achieves the goals and principles enshrined in the original legislation. Without a more concerted attempt to challenge pro-development policy, Zambia is likely to lose pace in terms of competitive advantage as a clean, green and sustainable tourism destination. [2]

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