

## Conservation, Poverty Alleviation and Community Development Through Tourism in Developing Countries

### International Program 1999 to 2002

CRC for Sustainable Tourism's International program (CRCST-INT) aims to support the development of infrastructure and institutional capacity of countries involved in the management of the natural and cultural estate. CRCST-INT has been established to help protected area agencies and the tourism industry in developing countries to build an ecologically and socially sustainable tourism industry. It aims to develop country specific models of sustainable tourism in close cooperation with host nations, which would include the development of research, education and policy frameworks as well as infrastructure for an ecologically and socially sound tourism development. For this purpose it aims to attract suitable investors for models it develops in collaboration with national institutions and Non-Government Organisations (NGO's). CRCST-INT is developing a joint research and education network based on sustainable tourism involving overseas and Australian institutions, NGO's, researchers, managers and students.

With extensive experience in Australia and Asia and a network across Australia's universities and industry, the CRCST-INT is uniquely suited to work in close cooperation with national institutions to pursue its goals. It can do this with an in-depth knowledge of the global tourism industry and a wide experience in all aspects of natural resource management. It works in close cooperation with Australian tertiary institutions and with researchers and institutions from countries in the Asia Pacific region. CRCST-INT seeks to extend its network of programs and

partners in Asia Pacific and to develop long-term relationships and cooperation between the tourism industry, host communities and managers of protected areas.

CRCST-INT plays an increasingly important role in the development of tourism in many Asia Pacific countries through projects in eight Asian countries and in particular Nepal, Bhutan, China and Papua New Guinea. There is great potential for CRCST-INT to develop its capacity as a network to promote the development of a better, more responsible and beneficial tourism industry across the Asia Pacific region that facilitates conservation and community development. This network also offers a potential to work with United Nations, regional organisations (e.g. APEC) and (I)NGO's in the areas of poverty alleviation, conservation, environmental management and community development.

At the forefront of sustainable tourism development is China using tourism as the lead industry to develop its central and western less developed regions that make up almost 3/4 of its land area. It is in this context that the CRCST-INT has established its first permanent presence internationally in Chengdu China, upon invitation from some of its trusted and long-term partners.

### Objectives

To pursue these general aims the CRCST-INT will:

- Carry out and support research programs



*We live in the initial stage of the first global revolution, on a small planet which to destroy we are apparently furiously determined. We are confronted with numerous conflict, are in an ideological and political vacuum and face problems of global dimensions, that the national states with vanishing importance cannot solve by own effort.*

The Global Revolution, Report of the Club of Rome, 1991



within an international network of ethical tourism management and investment for both Australian and developing country students and professionals.

- Develop and promote sustainable tourism models, in collaboration with industry and natural resource management agencies that can provide significant and lasting conservation and community benefits.
- Support Ph.D students at CRCST partner institutions to conduct their research in sustainable tourism related issues.
- Disseminate findings and information about its activities widely through a variety of media.
- Develop human resources for managing social and ecological issues connected with tourism through a diverse education and training program.
- Seek and develop collaborative linkages and partnerships with stakeholders in sustainable tourism in the region.
- Generate funding to support sustainable tourism management and research activities through education tours and consultancies.
- Support a professional culture of collaboration and integration.

### Outcomes and Benefits of CRCST-INT Programs

#### *For conservation*

- Enhance funding for conservation and protected area management.
- Reduce environmental impacts of tourism.
- Develop political and public support for conservation.
- Improve relationships between conservation and the tourism industry.
- Changing a tourism culture.

#### *For the tourism industry*

- Additional opportunities.
- Improved relationships with conservation agencies and NGO's.
- Better quality tourism product.
- Improved policy frameworks for tourism development.
- Improved marketing and impact management.
- Improved social, environmental and economic sustainability.

#### *For developing countries*

- Development of country specific ecotourism models.
- Policy recommendations for sustainable tourism.
- Manuals for best practice management for nature-based tourism.
- Better access to global tourist industry resources.
- Greater capacity of local human resources.
- Development and testing of ecotourism models for funding nature conservation and poverty alleviation.
- Capacity building.

#### *For Australia*

- Opportunities to export services in research, environmental management and education.
- Opportunities to export tourism enterprises and services.
- Greater capacity of Australian human resources in tourism in developing countries.

#### *For Ph.D students*

- Opportunities for Australian students to gain experience in Asian countries.
- Advising international offices at Universities about Ph.D students.
- Support Asian students to gain access at Australian Universities.
- Support Asian students studying in tourism overseas (also non-Australian).



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