The Global Political Economy of the Environment and Tourism

Gabriela Kütting

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Also by Gabriela Kütting

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ENVIRONMENT, SOCIETY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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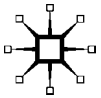

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For my father and my son

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List of Abbreviations

CAMP	Coastal Area Management Programme
DG	Directorate General
EC	European Community
EIA	environmental impact assessment
ERDF	European Regional Development Fund
EU	European Union
FFF	Forum for the Future
FT	*Financial Times*
GDP/GNP	Gross Domestic Product/Gross National Product
GEP	Global Environmental Politics
GG	Global Governance
GPE	Global Political Economy
IR	International Relations
ISA	Internal Security Act
LDCs	Less Developed Countries
LSE	London School of Economics
Medpol	marine pollution assessment and control component of MAP
MFTA	Mediterranean Free Trade Area
MAP	Mediterranean Action Plan
NGO	Non-governmental organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PASOK	Greek Socialist party
TUI	Touristik Union International
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
WWF	World Wildlife Fund
WTO	World Trade Organization

Map courtesy of wordtravels.com

Part I

1
Introduction: The Global Political Economy of Tourism and Local Environment-Society Relations

This book is about power in the global political economy (GPE) and how local and global environment-society relations play out in coastal communities dependent on tourism for economic survival. It brings together several sub-disciplines from global political economy to political ecology, analyzes the consequences of social and economic policies in global institutions and industrialized countries on particular locales outside the center, and makes a case for studying the role of environmental values in global environmental governance. It takes as a starting point an alternative view of the global political economy of the environment, in contrast to the neoliberal institutionalist focus on institutional politics. Rather, it focuses on the underlying structures of the political economy and its social and environmental consequences – in this case, the tourist industry and seaside destinations in marginalized regions of the globalizing economy. These are regions that at first sight seem to have very little connection to the globalizing world, yet the tension between production and consumption, nature-society relations and equity leave their imprint in very particular ways. This book analyzes how these global linkages can have dramatically different results even in supposedly similar situations, thus illustrating the importance of historical and socio-structural factors in analyzing problems but also highlighting how environmental values can actually be more important than environmental law. The conceptual framework is built around three pillars: the historical dimension of environment and society relations, the concept of consumption and the concept of equity in a globalizing world.

There is a wide variety of environment-development challenges that do not neatly fit either the pattern of existing institutions or the tendency of most environment-development scholarship to focus its

analysis on institutional case studies. This happens particularly with regard to global-local linkages; disconnected power relations of distant locales, whose political and economic regimes intermesh mostly in uneven ways, making it impossible to devise institutional frameworks that can address this layer of dislocated power spheres and address the serious side effects of political and economic arrangements.

Environment-society relations refer to the historical dimension of the social relations of economy and the environment, cultural understandings of environment in different communities/societies as well as the lack of effectiveness in global governance (GG). The social and structural origins of environmental degradation in a global political economy in relation to the issues of the case studies are discussed in detail here. Issues of consumption are a dimension without which global-local linkages in tourism cannot be discussed. The analysis and practice of GPE is heavily tilted towards an understanding of the processes of production and here the argument is made that, in order for GPE to be understood holistically and equitably, the institution of consumption needs to be equally studied and understood, whether it is material consumption or the consumption of "environmental goods". Finally, I develop an environmental critique of the global political economy to include issues of equity and social justice. Environmental problems do not exist separately or in isolation from social problems, as is often portrayed in the literature, whether directly or inadvertently. This discussion explores the connection between social and environmental consequences of globalization and addresses the inequitable distribution of power and wealth as a major source of environmental degradation as well as questions of social justice and their compatibility within the neoliberal ideology underlying globalization.

The starting point of my argument is situated in the discipline of International Relations. Both the discourses on global governance and on global environmental politics (GEP) (as well as on global environmental governance) generally fail to take account of the unequal distribution of resources (at least not as a main or guiding principle) and of unequal consumption patterns – nor do they include the notion of "giving up", consuming less or sacrificing something for better governance or for environmental improvement. This normative concern is not within the parameters of the issue area of the mainstream discipline. There are several reasons why this is the case.

First of all, both GEP and GG are primarily concerned with the relations between political actors and the structure within which they operate. They see institutions as the main social force both as causes of

change and as prescriptions for solving problems (Young, 2002: 3). As Haas (2004: 8) puts it: "What is needed is a clearer map of the actual division of labor between governments, NGOs, the private sector, scientific networks and international institutions in the performance of various functions of governance. Also needed is an assessment of …[ ] how well they actually perform these activities". They are not primarily concerned with the improvement of the problem studied except as a political, institutional or a policy issue. Thus, the research focus as well as the normative element of GG and mainstream GEP are fundamentally different from the recent literature on consumption or on political ecology because their research concern is different. A social or emancipatory concern as a subject matter would be fundamentally normative and more of the domain of critical approaches since it pushes the boundaries from a normative, conceptual and methodological perspective.

The connection between critical thought and environment is of course hardly new. Although in GEP, hardly any postmodern or poststructuralist literature is available (the main exception being Simon Dalby), there is a solid core of material that can trace its origins to Marxist thought in some form or manner (Paterson, 2001; Lipschutz, 2003; Saurin, 1994, Merchant, 1992, 1996). In contrast, many environmental theories have a view of the environment as a cornucopia or see technological solutions that will improve environmental degradation (see ecological modernization, or again, institutionalist approaches). Environmental degradation and social injustice or unequal distribution of resources or profligate use of resources are therefore not seen as issues. In fact, warnings of the finite nature of resources and sinks are seen as thoroughly discredited after the Club of Rome and the environmental movement's warnings in the 1970s. Bjørn Lomborg's work (2001) or the world economic forecasts that suggest that there is no resource shortage undermine warnings of consumption and sacrifice is another example of such an approach. It is not within the scope of this book to critique these perspectives except to question the assumption that technology without structural change can solve the environmental crisis and this will be addressed in the following chapters in the appropriate context.

These approaches, discourses and views explain why a focus on environment-society relations, consumption and equity has not made it into mainstream debates so far. However, for those who have been following the debates on consumption that have taken place within the International Studies Association in the past few years, it is obvious that not all is well and that the discipline of global environmental

politics in some ways has reached a chasm if not a crisis. There is a canon that is firmly anchored in the study of global governance issues which is a revised and improved concept of what used to be regime theoretical approaches. Then there is a group of scholars who are moving away from, or were never close to, this kind of approach and their focus is on alternative ways to find environmental improvement at the global level. This kind of work can be structural, actor focused, dealing with the micro level and its relevance to the macro, with connections within the global political economy or normative. However, there is a "disconnect" between these two ways of studying global environmental politics and there does not seem to be a movement to create overlaps or dialog except through the study of global civil society.

There are two reasons for this and they have to do with the focus on mainstream institutions. This focus captures a large but not the whole part of the global political economy and global political ecology. By widening the focus, a dramatically different picture emerges and attention is drawn to different conceptualizations of the problem which are neglected in the institutional view. First of all, there is growing awareness of the issue of consumption as a distribution issue in global environmental politics or global governance among the second group of scholars which is not recognized by the first, the institutionalists. We have seen the addition of social movements and corporations to the role of the state as primary actors in the international system in the past 15 years or so. In fact, this analysis of transnational actors has been incorporated into neoliberal institutionalism and has been one of the areas that has enriched and contributed to the literature on neoliberal institutionalism. In many ways, the role of global civil society has been overemphasized in global processes. There are many successful examples of the workings of global civil society and its reformative or even emancipatory character. However, there are equally many regions in the world where global civil society formation has not been as successful and these cases have been neglected. This book will bring in examples of the Greek islands where the idea of civil society organization is not common. These are cases that are more deserving of attention because they are not necessarily an exception in the world.

Second, there is the understanding that we are not dealing with an ever increasing or at least stable amount of resource and sink capacity on this planet. Some resources are infinite, others are not. Clearly, for a sustainable future, the pressure on resources and sinks needs to ease up. At the same time, resources and access to resources needs to be

divided up differently to provide access to those who have been excluded from the benefits of globalization. Clearly modern technology or ecological modernization can provide us with the tools to achieve this but it does not supply the distribution mechanisms to provide more equal access to resources and sinks. Recent technological developments have shown that the availability of more sustainable technology alone is not enough in achieving more equity and sustainability or eradicating poverty because the cost and access to such technologies makes it unattainable to the majority of people who need it most. Some would go much further, as, for example, David Harvey who argues that the current international or global system can only be described as "accumulation by dispossession" (Harvey, 2003: 137). Thus, the mere existence of solutions to a particular problem does not mean that a problem can indeed be solved.

The notion of unequal distribution and a lack of social justice or structural inequality are of course hardly new. These issues have been raised throughout history, maybe not in the particular environmental context but it is nevertheless a familiar issue. Likewise, environmental decline is a widely studied issue, even in the context of commodification, overaccumulation, overproduction, and so on. Even the notions of unequal wealth and environment have been analyzed together. However, they are hardly ever drawn together in a study of global-local linkages and how differing locales affect each other in the global race. This is what this book aims to achieve.

This book focuses on the subject of coastal environmental problems arising from tourism and the social organization of leisure. Coastal pollution is one of the major threats of the 21st century and the continuous population expansion along coasts is the primary contributory factor in this with an expected 60 per cent of the world population living in coastal zones by 2050. In many regions of the world, tourism, the largest global service sector, is a substantial source of land-based marine pollution while it is also touted as the answer to many developing countries' environmental and economic problems. It is the world's most important export earner (Lanza et al., 2005: 1) and expands much faster than the world economic growth rate. Thus there is an inherent contradiction and problem. Then there are, of course, sociological problems of tourism best described in the often cited term "tourism is the new imperialism" (Crick, 1989; Harrison, 1992; McLaren, 2003). There are concerns that tourism brings much needed foreign exchange and employment but that these are double-edged swords because the employment opportunities are of a low pay and low advancement

variety and the financial gain comes at the great social cost of cultural invasion and environmental degradation.

Research in this field has focused on the impact of multinational corporations and resort-style tourism at the high end or ecotourism or sustainable tourism and their social and environmental impact on particular communities. Generally, the "small is beautiful" model of ecotourism gets much better grades for environmental and social performance; however, it is by necessity a small-scale enterprise and works best in relatively unexplored areas that have some environmental assets to offer. It is also a contested concept among ecotourism writers, many of whom argue that there is no such thing as ecotourism. However, it is uncontested that ecotourism leaves a smaller ecological footprint than resort tourism. The impact of large foreign-owned resorts and their practices of importing everything down to what their clients eat and cordoning off beaches to prevent locals from accessing local land are well-documented and criticized. It is clear that American-style resort tourism offers very little benefit to local communities except maybe in terms of tax revenue for the state in which they are located. However, in many of the world's regions, tourism is firmly anchored in small and medium-sized enterprises and the relationship between such locally-owned tourist facilities and the global political economy is under-researched. For example, in the Mediterranean region, arguably the most important tourist region in the world, tourism is largely in the hands of small and medium-sized enterprises. It is the focus of this book to study the relationship between globalizing forces and locally-based economic tourist bases. Small and medium-sized tourism enterprises offer the opportunity to earn a living from tourism at an economically viable scale for the mass market rather than the niche market, yet it also provides an opportunity for local expansion as small and medium-sized enterprises are usually locally owned and give the local population control over their own destinies and what sort of development model they want to achieve. However, what needs to be evaluated are the conditions under which this can be achieved and how such an economic form of industry development impacts the environment, and if general rules can even be found.

A conceptual discussion of these issues will be complemented and illustrated with three case studies:

The island of Thassos is the northernmost Aegean island, about ten miles off the mainland in the province of Macedonia in Greece, near the city of Kavala. Up to the early-1980s, Thassos was the most forested island in the Mediterranean region and mostly a weekend holiday des-

tination for local mainlanders as well as small groups of individual travelers from Italy, Austria and Germany. There was only one large hotel on the island and many family-owned, very small-scale room rental arrangements as well as a couple of camp sites. In the mid-1980s to early-1990s, Thassos experienced a short tourism boom with organized tourism in the form of package tours from mostly Germany and the UK. Thassos was marketed on the basis of its unspoilt nature and its small-scale tourism, affording the visitor "unspoilt" access to the "real Greece". This also attracted outside investors from other parts of Greece. In the late-1980s, a spate of to-date unexplained forest fires decimated the island's pine forests and had a serious impact on the island's popularity as a tourist destination. This was a turning point in the history of the island. Forest fires in the Mediterranean region are traditionally associated with wild building booms and this was also suspected in Thassos – forest fires would clear the protected land for large-scale hotel resort building. However, this did not happen. Although the forests are irretrievably gone and cannot be replaced to the same extent with reforestation projects due to the sheer age of the trees lost, Thassos has managed to recreate itself as a destination that seems to offer an ideal combination of locally-owned and based development, harmony between development and nature as well as harmony between tourist demands and the preservation of local life. A substantial number of tourists come every summer and a number of package tour arrangements exist. However, all but two of the hotels on the island are owned by local families and are managed by family enterprises, i.e. they have a relatively small number of rooms. Hotels and private housing are all built in villages and there is no unstructured development or building outside the towns and villages, not even on beaches. Thus human habitations are concentrated and there are still vast stretches of coastland that are untouched. This pattern of development guarantees balance between nature and society. Because the balance of numbers between tourists and locals remains at a healthy ratio, harmonious relations exist and most tourists are repeat visitors, a sizeable portion returning summer after summer. Thassos does not bill itself as a sustainable development location, yet Thassos is most fittingly described as the closest thing to an environmentally-friendly holiday destination in the mainstream destination category despite the fact that this environmental asset is not well understood locally.

The island of Zakynthos, or Zante, is the southernmost Ionian island, not far off the Peloponnesian Coast of Greece. It used to be a low-key

tourist destination, like Thassos, but in the past 20 years it has become a top package tour destination and has experienced a veritable building boom with large and uncontained building on all coasts. Zante was/is famous for its sea turtle nesting beaches, the most important of the remaining few in the Mediterranean and of immeasurable importance for the survival of this endangered species. In other parts of the world, such a "resource" would trigger an ecotourism boom and the turtles would become a loved and treasured commodity. In Zante, the exact opposite happened. Although the sea turtle is a protected species and part of the island was declared a marine park, the local population perceives sea turtles as an obstacle to tourism and their ability to earn a living; thus, environmentalists are not popular on the island and sea turtles have been observed being beaten to death. Conservation guidelines are flouted, speed boats tear through marine parks and the law barring nightclubs from opening on protected beaches is defied – the lights and noise of the beat of the music disorients newly hatched turtles and prevents them from reaching the sea as they crawl towards the light instead. In short, the sea turtle has to fight for its existence on the beaches and waters around Zante. Hotels, bars and nightclubs focus their business on the young, solvent clientele from Western Europe which mostly come to Zante to dance and to drink. Package tourism does not offer the best rate of return to hoteliers because they have to offer their rooms to the package tour companies at heavily discounted rates and are bound into a contract for the whole season at this rate – usually a mere fraction of the market rate at high season. The nightclub package tourist is a high spender in terms of booking excursions, consuming food and drink, and buying trinkets. Low-end package tourism also leads to great tensions between tourists and locals as large hordes of drunks will cavort in the streets at night displaying lewd behavior which either enrages locals or makes them focus on the monetary value of tourism only. Furthermore, Zante experiences serious tension between what is perceived to be outside civil society interference. There is a small but influential civil society movement in Greece headquartered in Athens that stands up for compliance with species protection and sees the value of the sea turtle. This is very much at loggerheads with most of the local population and seen as the outside wanting to dictate to the islanders what to do. The city people are perceived not to understand how the turtle is an obstacle to economic viability. Thus the flouting of the conservation rules is seen as a point of pride and the islanders are definitely at odds with the loggerhead turtle. Thus Zante and Thassos,

two very similar islands, offer very different case studies of nature-society relations and of the influence of globalizing forces on a locality. There are some historical differences between the islands that may explain some of the prevailing attitudes.

The third study is about a threat to small and medium-sized tourism on the island of Crete. Crete is a very touristically developed island which draws about 25 per cent of all annual visitors to Greece. Most of this tourism is concentrated on the middle part of the northern coast of the island which is essentially a 50 mile stretch of hotel backing on hotel, many of them large and owned by corporations. Other parts of Crete follow the small and medium-sized enterprise model. The easternmost part of Crete is relatively undeveloped but still dependent on tourism as the main economic activity. There are a few small hotels and self-catering establishments that are mostly frequented by independent travelers. The east of Crete is a very arid region and does not have a lot of vegetation or rainfall. Recently the local monastery has leased land to a British developer who wants to build a 7,000 bed eco-golf resort complex in this area. Locals feel that this does not make ecological sense and will irretrievably alter the social fabric of their community. It will make the small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in the area unviable. In addition, the employment the new proposed development will generate will draw away employees from the existing businesses as well as bring in a whole lot of new, seasonal residents to the area and thus upset the balance in the local communities. Therefore it is not only an ecological threat but also a projected social problem. This is not simply a conflict between outside developer and local community. The developer, Minoan Group, has the support of the Greek Church, which has emerged as an environmental actor in Greece, and it also has the support of a British NGO, Forum for the Future, that has risen to be one of the more visible environmental NGOs in the UK. So this is not a clear-cut divide between developer and environmentalist. In the other two cases, the role of tour operators as powerful interest brokers in island life is a very strong dimension, while in the case of the Sitia region of Crete, power relations are somewhat different but leave locals equally disempowered. There is no comparative method used in analyzing the cases but references are made between cases in order to illustrate particular issues.

This introduction is maybe the best place to outline the importance of package tourism in the culture of European vacationing. The mainstream European model involves what is called package tourism: a family or couple (this market does not cater well for non-traditional

lifestyles) books a holiday including a charter flight, bus transfer, hotel and often half board at a Mediterranean (or other) location. There are special travel agents and special airlines for this market and hotels in the Mediterranean region typically sign contracts with particular providers and they occupy the lion's share of foreign travel arrangements. Some resorts in the Mediterranean are multi-ethnic (with a mixed clientele – meaning, for example, Dutch, German and British) and some are mostly one nationality while the next village over may cater to a different national contingent. So these are all-inclusive packages and, especially on smaller islands such as in Greece, these package tour companies are the main customers of the hotel industry and explain how the model of small and medium-sized hotel enterprises works. The American market, on the other hand, does not have this level of organization and relies much less or rather hardly at all on small and medium-sized hotel enterprises. This market is largely dominated by chain hotels and by the condo market. Of course there is also a substantial difference in that climatically Europeans flock to the Mediterranean for the sun which they rarely find on their own shores or with no guarantees. The United States has plenty of shores that offer guaranteed sunshine and warmth in the summer and thus a large amount of summer beach vacations take place on its own shores, often within driving distance of the tourists' home. Here, the condo or summer house model, rather than a stay in a hotel, is the preferred choice.

This also has to do with the different social model of European states and the United States. Europeans have the concept of a classic summer holiday in which the family traditionally travels together during the summer vacation for 2–3 weeks or even longer depending on the country and the method of accommodation. In France, the traditional summer vacation is the whole month of August. In Germany, the summer holiday used to be three weeks but is now much more likely two weeks. In Britain it has traditionally been two weeks. The Central European states and Russia are also now flocking to the package tour market and filling the gap that was left behind by more and more people in Europe using their increasing disposable income to travel further afield than the traditional Mediterranean destination. But all of these European patterns of holiday-making rely on the longer-term holiday compared to American vacationing style. That is why package tour destinations operate on a weekly flight schedule. Americans have traditionally had much less vacation time and thus tend to make shorter trips, except maybe to their local beaches where summer houses can be rented for the season and are within commuting distance of

home and work. So the European and American way of vacationing may have some similarities but for the mainstream model they are fundamentally different. This of course then impacts on how the foreign tourist destination is influenced by the behavior of the visiting tourist.

The link between this kind of research and global environmental politics as seen from an institutional perspective is tenuous at best except in terms of biodiversity protection and sea turtles. However, it is exactly "on the ground" that we can observe how environmental degradation and the work of international institutions manifest themselves and where the limitations of understanding lie. We understand the impact of the workings of the global political economy as presented in the trade newspapers such as the *Financial Times* or the *Wall Street Journal*; however, financing decisions and financing networks also have far-reaching effects in distant locations, be they intentional or through exclusion. Protecting wildlife through national parks, national conservation legislation or international treaties may have an implementation gap on the ground – due to legal or socio-cultural reasons. Understanding and regulating tourism through international travel conventions is helpful but again becomes meaningless without reference to the specific problems. Thus, pursuing a study of social relations in global-local linkages provides unique insights into where the challenges are for a global environmental politics of the 21st century. International institutions – including treaty-based accords, regulatory regimes, soft-law arrangements, and the programmatic activities of intergovernmental organizations – are undeniably important and the study of actors and institutions are where the heart of political analysis lies. There is, nevertheless, a wide variety of environment-development challenges that do not neatly fit either the pattern of existing institutions or the tendency of most environment-development scholarship to focus its analysis on institutional case studies. This happens particularly with regard to global-local linkages; disconnected power relations of distant locales, whose political and economic regimes intermesh mostly in uneven ways, make it impossible to devise institutional frameworks that can address this layer of dislocated power spheres and address the serious side effects of political and economic arrangements. The equity dimension is the best analytical tool for bringing local-global linkages into the debate. Social and environmental justice and equity are not part of the neoliberal institutional framework that has dominated the study of international institutional development. The neoliberal approach is concerned mainly with the political dynamics of

forming and sustaining institutions and, therefore, tends to disregard cases where institutions have not been formed.

This book is organized in the following way: The next chapter will address the subject of governance in global environmental politics and the difficulty of addressing sectoral problems such as tourism-related problems through an institutional framework. This is a problem that all degradation arising out of local-global linkage issues face. Various governance concepts and layers will be looked at and their role assessed. The following chapter will address and discuss the global political economy and nature-society relations in a general context and then in a tourism-specific context. The general social relations between global-local linkages and the environment in a globalizing economy will be discussed and then complemented by an analysis of the global tourism industry and its environmental impact. Chapter 4 conceptualizes issues of consumption and equity, again both in the global political economy and specifically relating to the subject of tourism and the environment. Tourism may seem a marginal subject but as the biggest service industry in the world and, with the ever expanding incomes of the Western world as well as the declining prices for travel, it is one of the biggest challenges for the environment even if it is not conceptualized as this particular unit of analysis elsewhere, but broken into constituent parts.

The final three chapters, or the second part of this book, will deal with the empirical studies illustrating the conceptual issues. The three case studies are not meant to be comparative but rather should serve as illustrations of the particular problématique discussed here and show that generalized solutions of the "one size fits all" type clearly do not work. The studies will demonstrate that a like-with-like comparison clearly shows that likeness may only be superficial and that quantitative comparative methods miss the overarching importance of understanding the social and historical structures of a particular locale and how it influences outcomes today. It does show that there is no generally applicable way in which local-global linkages play out but demonstrates that a key determining factor in local empowerment is the way outside economic actors such as tour operators or developers engage with the community. Likewise civil society actors are expected to be powerful brokers in the empowerment of local communities but the case studies show that, at least in the case of Greece, it is patron-client relations that are more effective in exercising political influence than the kind of civil society actors that are discussed in the GEP literature. These are interesting new contributions to the study of environmental politics. The book will then conclude with a discussion and

analysis of what the case studies offer to the current state of the academy and what challenges there are for future research. Given that tourism is expected to be a growth sector for many developing countries, there are important lessons here for sustainable and empowered local communities dealing with mainstream tourism. It is also a warning to beware of general policies that do not take account of particular local and historical structures.

2
Environment, Tourism and Levels of Governance

This chapter looks at various institutional levels in order to explore what methods of governance exist to regulate the environmental consequences of tourism and how they connect with other environmental governance layers. This book focuses on global-local linkages and each case highlights different layers of governance and how they do or more likely do not come together to create levels of governance to deal with particular environmental issues. While the nature-society linkages and equity/consumption dimensions are crucial and discussed in later chapters, it is also vital to generate an overview of what governance layers exist or do not exist in bringing together local and global dimensions of tourism and environmental issues. This chapter focuses on formal networks of governance but will also touch upon informal networks and/or the lack of them.

While many global governance institutions certainly have a bearing on the interplay between tourism and the environment, they do not really formally address the issue except by setting normative standards in which players and problems are situated. This applies particularly to economic frameworks. While there are many global environmental governance institutions that do have a bearing on tourism and environment, the connection is usually indirect and implied – and therefore requires conscientious actors implementing the spirit and not just the text of such agreements. As global environmental governance thus finds its way to the local level through government implementation, it will be discussed in such a context in the relevant section below. Two environmental actors particularly relevant for the Mediterranean region, the Mediterranean Action Plan (MAP) and the European Union (EU), will be discussed in detail. This discussion is followed by an

analysis of the Greek government's role in tourism and environment as well as an overview of civil society governance.

Mediterranean Action Plan

The Mediterranean region combines many challenges, both politically and environmentally. Environmental concerns pertaining to the Mediterranean Sea are addressed through the institution of the Mediterranean Action Plan, which is designed for all riparian states and enables Mediterranean states to come together in an environmental forum. However, its effectiveness has been limited in terms of bringing about policy-relevant results. MAP does show several quite novel ways in which cooperative arrangements take place and these are different from the traditional institutional arrangements we find in the Global Environmental Politics literature, mainly because they are normative in quality rather than policy driven – in other words, the main focus of MAP's *raison d'être* is not to set common policy goals but to spread common norms for the region which will then find their way into national legislation.

When MAP was first negotiated in the mid-1970s, its primary motivation was to clean up oil pollution in the Mediterranean Sea. Another motivation for MAP was the lack of knowledge about pollutant pathways and which pollutants were the most pervasive and damaging. Finally, the initial research in MAP suggested that while pollution is a serious issue in the Mediterranean region, most of it is of a nature that does not necessitate joint action as such. One of the primary motivations for establishing MAP was the issue of oil pollution and further facilitating cooperation on how to deal with such pollution. This was followed by concerns about land-based pollution entering the sea and creating a "bath tub effect", or diluting the pollution in this semi-enclosed sea thus affecting all the riparian states. Later research did not confirm this assumption and indicated that most pollution remained fairly local. Although this seemed to indicate that international cooperation was not needed, and urgency in the form of coordinated action was therefore reduced, there was still a transboundary effect and a lack of common knowledge on how to deal with the problems.

The Mediterranean Action Plan is the first and most successful of United Nations Environment Programme's (UNEP) regional seas programs that were devised following a series of conferences and meetings by UN agencies and Mediterranean governments on the state of pollution in the sea and as a reaction to the 1972 Stockholm Conference

on the Human Environment (Raftopoulos, 1993). MAP was created in 1975 at an inter-ministerial conference and its legal framework, which is the Barcelona Convention, was established in 1976 simultaneously with the first two protocols. The Barcelona Convention forms the legal part of MAP and is complemented by a research component (MEDPOL), policy planning programs (Blue Plan and Priority Actions Programme) and financial/institutional arrangements, covered by UNEP.

In particular, the Mediterranean Sea in the 1970s was a region plagued by substantial pollution, yet no body of knowledge existed that could point to the origins and structures of the problem. It was chosen by UNEP as its flagship plan due to the severe state of pollution. MAP is based on a three-pronged approach: to research the origins of pollution, take common action in the form of legal agreements, and try to deal with problems of development and their impact on the environment in the policy planning program. The different levels were clearly intended to interact and feed each other at the Plan's inception. However, in practice this has not happened to the extent envisaged and necessary. Lack of interaction may be related to the compartmentalization of MAP as compared to other agreements but there are many other indicators (e.g. overall lack of enthusiasm *vis-à-vis* concrete action, lack of financial support, and lack of environmental awareness) which make it impossible to determine the significance of this compartmentalized structure of MAP. The various political conflicts in the region and financial disparities as well as a general lack of environmental values were strong contributory factors to MAP's limited form of cooperation.

The institutional arrangement is mainly characterized by two developments: MAP has been extremely successful in building up scientific cooperation and also a scientific body of knowledge about the pollution situation in the Mediterranean Sea, published by UNEP. In addition, MAP has also been very successful in building a socio-economic record of environmental and development trends in the region. But this epistemic cooperation was not complemented by politically significant cooperation for a variety of factors, such as the political atmosphere between member-states, financial considerations and the role of environmental values. By 1995, its 20th anniversary, the Mediterranean Action Plan had achieved quite a difficult task by initiating and keeping up a process for more than 20 years in a region traditionally hostile to cooperation. In the past ten of those 20 years, it had moved away from its legal components, focusing on policy priority plans.

In 1995 the Barcelona Convention was amended to take into account recent global developments and renamed as the Barcelona Convention for the Protection of the Marine Environment and Coastal Zones of the Mediterranean. Most of its protocols were also substantially revised at this stage. The main motivation of the amendments was to express a commitment to the principles of Agenda 21 and other developments arising out of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (the "Rio Summit" of 1992). This was followed in 1996 with the establishment of the Mediterranean Commission on Sustainable Development which was a commitment to develop a regional strategy for sustainable development in the Mediterranean region. This whole process is referred to as MAP II. In effect, it moved the process away from one of legal commitments to one of norm creation. Thus the policy aims of MAP II are even fuzzier and less focused than the first phase. At the same time, the politico-environmental process in the region also became much more multilateral.

This became explicit though other developments outside the environmental field that occurred. The Euro-Mediterranean partnership was established in 1995 as a partnership between the European Union and the Mediterranean states. The aim of this partnership is congruent with general EU aims: economic development, confidence building and political and economic integration to culminate in a Mediterranean Free Trade Area (MFTA). Like the Mediterranean Action Plan, the Euro-Mediterranean partnership is an attempt to foster cooperation in the region through joint programs, building civil society, and funding policy initiatives. While the Euro-Mediterranean partnership covers a multitude of issue areas, it excludes environmental issues – although a significant environmental dimension is provided by the Short and Medium Term Action Programme for the Mediterranean, a consultative network. Given that the EU is the single most important environmental actor in the area, this exclusion is deliberate as this subject area is already covered by MAP. The Euro-Mediterranean partnership (also somewhat confusingly referred to as the Barcelona process) somehow suffers the same fate as MAP as it is an extremely successful enabling arrangement but has not spawned much in the shape of concrete projects involving actors that would not normally cooperate. As Liotta puts it: "While the central concerns of the Barcelona Declaration of 1995 reasonably acknowledge the linkages among cultural, political and economic factors in the Euro-Mediterranean, little multilateral agreement has been reached that will solve the wider negative consequences of collapsing extended security" (2003: 41). In contrast, Hoballah sees

the achievements of the Mediterranean Commission for Sustainable Development as "strengthen(ing) the regional commons and regional consensus for sustainable development in the Mediterranean through promotion of the concept at regional and national levels, the participatory approach, the involvement of civil society and NGOs, through capacity development and its learning process approach" (2006: 167). Thus the impact and role of these initiatives are seen as mainly capacity building rather than presenting specific results.

The post-1995 era in Mediterranean environmental politics has not seen any substantial new proposals, projects or new initiatives but has focused on consolidating the work of the early years, making it compatible with the new sustainable development focused framework. Most progress is achieved at the national rather than the regional level. Massoud et al. (2003) have conducted an excellent study of water use and wastewater management in the Mediterranean Action Plan. In the Mediterranean region, nearly three quarters of all water is used in the agricultural sector. Projections for the future based on agricultural expansion of the region calculate a 32–55 per cent rise in water use for 2010 and 2025 respectively (878). In a region where wastewater treatment is more often than not in its rudimentary stages, the environmental consequences do not project a favorable picture. Water issues are addressed at the national level in the Mediterranean region. However, a major problem facing policy makers and the users of water and/or wastewater is a lack of universal standards on wastewater treatment and methods of application. Thus standard setting at the regional level can play an important role for the national level. In the Mediterranean Action Plan, this was addressed with the Genoa Declaration of 1985, as part of the policy programs, but has not been taken further since. This is another example of the importance of norm creation and capacity building necessary to develop the political will and environmental value base to prepare for joint policies in the future. The European Union and the World Bank were instrumental in funding projects that linked a substantial number of Mediterranean cities to a sewerage system in the 1990s but no efforts have been undertaken for rural areas. Outside of private initiatives and voluntary contributions, MAP does not have the financial scope to introduce such policies. So although the Mediterranean has become a multi-institution environment in the 1990s and early 21st century, this has not altered the predominantly national outlook of policies for the above reasons.

This finding is confirmed by the most visible MAP component in the early 21st century, the CAMPs (coastal area management programmes).

The pressure on coastal areas has continuously escalated in the Mediterranean region, both in the North and the South. Coastal management in the form of special CAMP projects organized through MAP, but also the integrated coastal management initiative by the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, have made the Mediterranean region one of the most advanced in the world regarding coastal management. These projects are carried out at the national, sub-national and local level.

In many ways, MAP II has transformed itself into an enabling agreement that fosters cooperation of a different kind, bringing together environment and economic development as compatible goals. In a region where environmental protection is still viewed with suspicion and as an obstacle to economic development, stressing the congruence between the two is a necessary strategy. However, it then also ties the hands of MAP II as it does not have the resources to invest in large-scale projects stimulating cooperation and sustainable economic development. However, it opens the door for economic cooperation and essentially gives the green light to economic expansion. Admittedly, the Blue Plan remains critical of aspects of trade liberalization (Benoit and Comeau, 2005: 186) but overall it drives the "more sustainability through technology-oriented growth" argument for which the sustainable development discourse has been criticized.

In other words, the cooperation that has taken place under MAP II is not driven by environmental criteria. Although MAP as an institution is firmly committed to environmental improvement, its main mission is not to facilitate cooperation between member-states but to get particular projects off the ground, projects that are mostly within a state rather than cross-boundary. MAP II promotes inter-state cooperation through its commitment to the principles of sustainable development which are interpreted in a liberal/neo-liberal framework in this context. So, by promoting liberal economic development and ecological modernization, environmental improvement will occur and thus no institutional environmental arrangement with set cross-boundary environmental goals is necessary. It is through economic cooperation and technological innovation that environmental improvement will come about. And the Mediterranean region has made great strides in economic cooperation through the Mediterranean Free Trade agreement. Another great partner in trade liberalization has been the European Union which has a special relationship with most Mediterranean Basin states and is one of the most important actors in bringing about economic integration. In addition, it is also one of the strongest environmental actors globally.

One contribution by the EU to the Mediterranean EU member-states has been the harmonization of legislation through the EU legal framework. Spain, France, Italy and Greece have benefited from pollution standards and guidelines as well as the Blue Flag scheme for clean beaches. These standards have been negotiated by all EU member-states and are also applicable to the new members. Often accused of operating at the lowest common denominator, the EU environmental framework is nevertheless one of the strongest environmental codes globally and has without a doubt improved the state of the environment in the Northern rim states. Although the EU entertains cooperative networks with most Mediterranean states, this does not extend to imposing EU environmental standards elsewhere. Therefore, the benefit of the EU legislation is limited to its member-states in environmental terms and more widely in economic terms. Despite this limited geographical reach, the EU can be seen as one of the most active environmental actors in the region. Given that the EU member-states are also the most industrialized states in the Mediterranean Basin and that industrial pollution is a major share of overall pollution, an effective EU environmental policy has a substantial impact on the quality of the Mediterranean Sea. Improvements in the state of the Mediterranean as a result of EU policies cannot be attributed to the success of MAP however – although they happened in the life span of MAP. The EU and MAP II work hand-in-hand in promoting the principles of sustainable development and the EU has a strong commitment to free markets.

So, the last 15 years under the new MAP reflect a political economy framework that firmly remains an enabling agreement rather than an organization that spawns large-scale inter-state cooperation in environmental matters. It has evolved to be part of a much larger structure of institutions and away from being primarily engaged in knowledge production. Thus it can be seen as a part of a much larger blueprint in terms of overall development strategy in the Mediterranean region. This firmly takes environmental cooperation as a single issue into the much wider field of trade liberalization and economic development of which environmental concerns are an integral part rather than a separate issue. From that point of view, it has little to offer for the governance of local-global environmental problems in the tourism sector. It generates research and case studies on coastal area management in the Mediterranean region, and thus provides insights into tourism relations but it does so from a neoliberal perspective which will be critiqued in more detail below in the section on the European Union.

The EU

The European Union is a supranational institution whose areas of competence reach much further than the environmental sphere. Its main aim is to foster cooperation in Europe through closer economic ties and this role, as well as its membership, was gradually expanded to reach the level of integration in existence today. There are many levels to the EU and in its complexity its policies can often end up contradicting each other at the micro level. Environmental influence manifests itself in the EU at multiple levels again. Aside from harmonizing environmental legislation throughout the EU region, the EU has been an important vehicle for the growth of both green civil society in Europe as well as for the growing importance of green parties in the political process (Burchell and Lightfoot, 2001). Even states whose political system does not support the participation in power of smaller parties have sent green party representatives to the European Parliament.

However, the environmental role of the EU is an ambivalent one. While it has helped bring green issues to the top of the agenda, the very underlying rationale of the EU is a major contributor to increasing environmental problems within Europe. Many of the EU member-states are prominent economic actors and thus among the world's largest pollution emitters (Bretherton and Vogler, 2006). The pattern of and commitment to unfettered economic growth and industrial development, which is the primary commitment of the European Union, is also a key factor in the growth of environmental problems in the area. Yet, at the same time, the EU is championed as the most effective environmental institution in the world. However, the EU's environmental commitment has to be seen in its European roots. While the European version of liberal economics and politics has traditionally been compatible with state regulation and thus the EU is able to combine being a strong environmental actor with its liberal values of economic development, this necessarily means that its environmental philosophy is one of economic growth being compatible with sustainability. More recently this has expressed itself through favoring regulatory tools such as carbon trading instead of capping emissions through traditional forms of regulations. The difficulties associated with this view will be discussed further here but suffice to say that this form of environment-society relations subordinates the environment to the economy rather than presuming a good understanding of how humans and environment interact.

The original articles of the Treaty of Rome did not make any reference to the environment and it was not until the Single European Act

in 1986 that the EU officially incorporated environmental concerns into its mission and gave it a legal basis. This role was furthered strengthened in the treaties that followed (Bretherton and Vogler, 2006). Thus the EU is firmly committed to environmental protection through its legal framework and makes sustainable development one of its policy priorities, at least on paper. EU environmental law can therefore be formulated at four levels. *Regulations* are binding in their entirety and directly applicable to member-states while *directives* are binding as to the result to be achieved but give national authorities leeway as to form and methods. *Decisions* are binding upon those to whom they are addressed and *recommendations and opinions* have no binding force. The EU is a participant and signatory to all major multilateral environmental instruments and therefore member-states are firmly bound into the European framework in their international environmental policy process. Through its environmental action programmes, the EU is also committed to the principles of sustainable development. Thus the EU has a very firm commitment to environmental improvement and it has enacted a wealth of environmental principles that are particularly relevant in member-states in which a strong environmental consciousness has not yet evolved. Particular successes are the polluter pays principle, the precautionary principle, environmental impact assessments, and so on. These are formal commitments but the EU has to rely on its member-states for the implementation of its goals and policies.

However, there are also problems in relation to the bureaucratic support for the environment. The role of the Commission's Environment Directorate General (DG) has also created difficulties. Having a separate DG for the environment, while highlighting the profile of environmental issues, tends to single the environment out as a distinctive and separate policy area. However the nature of environmental problems, as particularly obvious in the Crete and Zakynthos case studies, cuts across a broad number of different EU policy sectors; in particular, trade, agriculture, industry, taxation, energy, transport, aid and scientific research. This fact often leads to conflict between the Environment DG and other DGs, illustrating the difficulties faced when attempting intersectoral policy coordination within the EU and also showing a disconnect in environment-society relations when the environment is treated as a separate rather than integrative policy area. For example, trade and environmental priorities can conflict, which often leads to the environment taking second place. As was seen in the section above, the Mediterranean trade policy of the EU and the

Mediterranean Free Trade Agreement take place in the absence of environmental consideration, which are left to MAP and thus subordinated rather than placed on an equal footing. This intersectoral policy coordination problem will be discussed in more detail below.

Another problem for the Environment DG is the fact that it is still largely regarded as a junior player within the EU. While DG Environment has many competences, it has few day-to-day responsibilities for directly applying existing EU environmental policy, as this task usually lies with either national or regional governments. Its small staff, many of whom are on secondment from other EU institutions, private organizations and foundations, as well as a small budget, have served to weaken it. Therefore, DG Environment lacks the power and influence of many of the larger DGs (Burchell and Lightfoot, 2001).

DG Environment and many other environmental agents concede that there are still major problems to be addressed, especially in terms of how policy is made. Despite constant reference within the Treaties and the various Action Programmes, very little has been done to fully integrate the environment into all relevant policy areas. These problems are also exacerbated by a lack of political will on behalf of some of the member-states, which has been reflected in the poor levels of implementation of some EU environmental legislation – again an issue that is woefully apparent in the case studies. This places an important emphasis upon the role of environmental civil society to act as watchdogs on member-states and to ensure their compliance to environmental legislation – a very hard challenge in states like Greece where environmental civil society is not so well developed.

It is also questionable to what extent there is support for enhanced environmental legislation within the EU. Clearly this resistance will be an influential factor in any future attempts to increase the commitment towards a sustainable development agenda. Although DG Environment in particular may have adopted a broader environmental discourse, it is harder to identify the same process across all Commission DGs – clearly there is no cross-fertilization of environmental principles and commitments to the other DG's areas of competence. Economic and industrial policies still take precedence over environmental issues despite the many environmental achievements of the EU.

Another related problem, as in the case of the Mediterranean Action Plan, is a very neoliberal interpretation of the concept of sustainable development. The EU environmental ideology is based on concepts of ecological modernization and on the assumption that unlimited

economic growth is possible with appropriate environmental technology. Ecological modernization theory is based on the assumption that renewal through environmental and ecological technologies with the state taking a strong leadership role can lead to a sustainable way of life just as neoliberal views of sustainable development assume that current economic systems need environmental reform but not systemic reform. With this ideology, there is no inherent incompatibility between the EU's trade and industry policy and its environmental policy, at least on the surface. Even the key environmental achievements of the EU environmental policy, such as the compulsory use of environmental impact assessment or the precautionary principle, are rendered less effective by placing them in such a neoliberal framework – regardless of any implementation issues that exist above and beyond the basic problems (for elaboration of this point see Gould et al., 2008; Paterson, 2001).

But the picture is not as simple as that, as the Blue Plan of the Mediterranean Action Plan argues:

> Without EU support and the environmental directives, just liberalizing trade would have had much higher social and environmental costs than those actually seen, even if some could not have been avoided.
>
> Thanks to the agro-environmental programmes, Greece's joining the EU enabled the use of chemical fertilizers to remain fairly limited. On the other hand, there was a greater polarization of activities around the Athens urban area and increased tourist pressures on the most sensitive coasts. (Benoit and Comeau, 2005: 45)

Clearly, the EU environmental policy commitment channeled economic development in a way that prevented environmental damage that would otherwise have ensued. But regardless of benefits or problems, the tension between the economy and the environment within the EU is very obvious. This is one of the major problems; the other is the tension between various policy areas in the EU that do not complement each other as well as they should. At the forefront is the tension between regional development and environmental policy.

EU and the regions

The EU's member-states and sub-regions have vastly differing standards of living and economic development. On the one hand, there are member-states such as Germany, France and the UK, which are powerful

members of the G8 and with some of the world's most sizeable economies. On the other hand, there are member-states with a relatively low GDP and low rates of development, such as Ireland, Greece and more recent member-states such as Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria. Through its commitment to liberal democracy and liberal/neoliberal economics, the EU sees a substantial part of its *raison d'être* as creating opportunities for economic development and the relevant consumer society in the lesser developed parts of the EU. Thus markets are created for the economically mature member-states while the poorer ones see large investment as a means to let their economies catch up. This transfer of funds is a win-win situation from an economic and trade point of view.

There are two funds for regional development (which incidentally can also go to lesser developed regions of the high GDP countries, such as rural Scotland or parts of East Germany). The two types of funds are structural funds and the cohesion fund. Structural funds are mainly comprised by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) which finances infrastructure, job creation schemes, local development projects and aid for small firms. This is complemented by the European Social Fund for the return of unemployed or socially disadvantaged groups to the workforce. In addition there are special schemes for agriculture and fisheries which will not be touched upon here. The cohesion fund is for the poorest EU member-states to finance major projects in the field of environment and transport (Cini, 2007: 294). Of particular interest in the context of this book is the European Regional Development Fund, which has impacted all case studies in this book through the generous financing of small businesses in tourism and which now focuses on sustainable tourism as a major target for funding. As illustrated by this speech by the then Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry, the emphasis of this initiative is placed on integrated approaches again:

> Last but not least, the Commission will continue to mainstream sustainability and competitiveness in Commission policies.
> Several existing European policies and actions can have a strong influence on tourism and can make an important contribution in tackling the challenges we face. Policies such as environment, transport, employment or research come to my mind (Günter Verheugen, speech 07/700, 2007).

While this verbal commitment to "mainstream" sustainability and to coordinate industry and environmental policies runs like a red thread

through EU literature and policy statements, it is not so readily found in practice. This is illustrated by another example and one that is very prominent in the Crete case study, namely the funding of rather obscure projects for the development of the regions which contradict the spirit of integrated approaches as cited directly above – such as golf. Due to the influential lobby, substantial project funding under ERDF goes to golf course construction. For example, in the ten year period 1989–1999 the Republic of Ireland received more than Euro 20 million in structural funds for the development of golf tourism (www.golfeuropa.co.uk). While the development of golf tourism in Ireland or Scotland may be entirely appropriate, there is a huge question mark over such development in the Mediterranean region. A detailed study by Briassoulis came to the conclusion that while golf-centered development brings some economic benefit to a region, the ecological and social drawbacks outweigh any gains (Briassoulis, 2007). In fact, golf-centered development usually goes hand-in-hand with violations of EU habitats directives or other environmental policies despite efforts to make golfing less resource intensive. Andriotis lists other issue areas where EU policies have had mixed results due to a lack of coordination in the context of Crete:

> Undoubtedly, the availability of EC funding clearly acts as a catalyst for change and contributes to the enhancement of the island's tourist product. Nevertheless, due to the lack of a strategic master plan for the island's tourism development, bad management and inadequate coordination of regional and national programmes with relevant EU ones, many opportunities for tourism projects are missed. Projects accomplished under different EU programmes cover the same areas and sometimes do not reflect the policies of the Union for environmental protection. For instance, a yachting marina was built with the assistance from an Integrated Mediterranean Programme without its impacts on the environment having been adequately analysed. Following erosion of the coastline as a result of this port, it was decided to finance the construction of two breakwaters from the tourism Operational Programmes. As these were then partially destroyed by storms, the repairs were also financed from the tourism Operational Programme (Andriotis, 2001: 308).

EC projects for the development of the island face "implementation deficits" that violate the environment, mainly due to inappropriate planning. Anagnostopoulou et al. (1996) report that, in Crete, EU

funding for the development of underdeveloped and unspoilt bays through the construction of coastal roads impedes the Loggerhead Turtles' route to the beach for breeding. In practice, some projects have no follow-up and community funds are not used optimally. For example, in a survey of 15 treatment plants in Crete, it was found that their operation did not produce satisfactory results and an improvement of the control of the outgoing water was necessary (EC, 1998a). Moreover, there are delays for technical and administrative reasons in carrying out the projects, as well as an increase in total costs. A sewage treatment plant at Rethymno was delayed for 27 months and the cost increased by 257 per cent (EC, 1998a). As a result, the country has received warning letters from the EU and has appeared in the European court (Kousis, 1994).

In part, these problems are clearly situated at the national level and have to do with the interplay between national governments and EU policy implementation. This will be addressed in the next section. However, it is also abundantly clear that while the EU is a global environmental leader, the implementation of the EU's environmental mission is still very improvement worthy, leading to all sorts of governance dilemmas. Weale et al. refer to the process as "multi-level, complex, incomplete and evolving" (2000: 437). One level of decision making cannot be understood without understanding what happens at the other levels and this state of affairs is clearly a permanent fixture and part of the institutional formation.

The national level – Greece

As all three case studies in this book are situated in Greece, the Greek government and state will be discussed here as another layer of environmental governance in the environment-tourism nexus. The above section on MAP and the EU has already hinted strongly that there are implementation deficits at the national level and the relationship between EU environmental policy and Greek implementation is notoriously deficient. Weale et al. find that there is an ambivalent role in Greece in relation to Brussels' role in environmental affairs (2000: 471). On the one hand, Brussels provides welcome funds for ecological modernization and environmental improvement, yet there is some disagreement on the priorities in environmental policy making. The priorities in Brussels are not necessarily the priorities that Greek policy makers choose. This applies particularly to transboundary issues with Greece of course not sharing a boundary with other EU member-states until quite recently with Bulgaria's entry to the EU in 2007.

Greece became an EU (then EC) member in January 1981, having undergone a transformation to liberal democracy after many years under military dictatorship (1967–1974). At that time it was one of the poorest member-states and thus drew substantial support and subsidies. The Greek tourism sector particularly benefited from structural funds which were made widely available with hardly any policy control by the socialist party PASOK in power in the mid-1980s.

One of the main problems of Greek environmental politics is the relationships between the national and regional/local level. Greece is still a highly centralized state, much more so than its southern European EU neighbors. Until quite recently, this was very visible in the low ratio between local and central government expenditure, which is the lowest in the whole of Europe (Close, 1999: 327). Such a relationship is historically grounded in the modern Greece emerging after Ottoman occupation. It was driven by the patronage system creating a party state. Other institutions generally more independent in liberal democracies were also heavily dependent on the state: the church, judiciary, universities, and the media as well as aforementioned local government (Close, 1999: 327). Legg and Roberts (1997) argue that the executive also exerted strong influence, often through the police, on trade unions, the banking system and the business community in general. As a result, there is a lack of professional ethos "in the degree of its submission to party politicians" (Close, 1999: 328). The strong party political nature of the political system made it difficult for civil society to generate broader concepts of collective interest. As a result,

> The weakness of civil society has interacted with the ineffectiveness of government. By weakening the capacity of potential rivals to offer information or criticism, governments have deprived themselves of an essential means of making their own policies more effective, and also of winning the public confidence that they need in order to implement controversial measures (Ibid).

The issues and problems with civil society governance in Greece and its interactions with global civil society will be discussed in the following section. The rather rigid and centralized features of the Greek state and government make its relationship with outside institutions and civil society actors potentially problematic as can be seen in the Greek implementation record of EU legislation and in its relationship, for example, with Council of Europe independent monitors such as on the island of Zakynthos. This adds a rather specific layer of bureaucracy

and problems that are specific to Greece but are also symptomatic for many non-Western states, so there are lessons in the Greek case for local-global relations in places where civil society is also not so well established because of similar problems. There are also lessons from the lack of implementation of environmental (and other) policies arising out of the ratification of international treaties as well as the issue of complexity – one policy on ecotourism, for example, clashes with the implementation of the Habitats directive or the inadequate use of environmental impact assessment.

There are two reasons for this problem, namely the focus on party politics and the general lack of efficiency arising thereof. This is a much criticized problem within Greek society and manifests itself in all layers of political decision making – be it immigration and refugee handling, forest fire prevention, economic policy, church-state relations, and so on. What follows directly from this inefficiency is the inability to coordinate policies. If agencies within the stage cannot handle their responsibilities, then it follows that they will be even less able to handle coordination of their duties with overlapping policy areas. Thus it is not just ineffective government as such but the direct, inescapable but unintended consequences that exacerbate the issue in the first place. These issues are prominent in all three case studies and in more or less all the literature on Greek and/or Greek environmental politics.

Environmental policy in Greece is at the end of a chain of institutions that offer compromised environmental protection. The Mediterranean Action Plan has a primary commitment to sustainable development but focuses on neoliberal economic development as the tool through which to achieve this aim, thus placing economic growth firmly before environmental protection and as a result not committing to specific environmental goals. The EU is firmly committed to environmental protection but, due to the size and sheer number of competencies for the EU, environmental aims often have to take second place to the more primary policy objectives. In addition, again, the EU is firmly committed to economic growth as the vehicle for economic and political as well as environmental well-being in the Union. As a result, the policies that the Greek government has to implement through its membership in the Mediterranean and European governance fora are already woven into a web of complexity where they do not form the primary thread. It is in this context that the Greek government's incapacity to be issue-focused rather than patronage-focused has to be seen. Rather than a primary reason for failure, it is one addition to a long list of problems.

As an additional layer, the Southern European states have not gone through the general greening of its voters and the subsequent mainstreaming of green politics, be it through the rise of green parties or through the adoption of green issues onto the agenda of the main parties. As a result, there has been no public debate on what type of environmentalism would be most appropriate to adopt for the state in its policy making. The EU and the various Mediterranean institutions (for example, MAP, MFTA, and the Barcelona process) have a commitment to ecological modernization/liberal interpretations of sustainable development, respectively, while the Greek state, through its rather old fashioned form, is more state centric and centrist and would not be a natural ally of such an approach given the structures of the economy. However, such a debate has not taken place and is not about to take place either. Therefore a lot of pressure is exerted on the civil society sector to make up for the lack of environmental involvement of the state and international institutions. However, as discussed above, the very nature of the state makes the evolution of an environmental civil society difficult – although it does exist, albeit not on the same scale as in Western European states and some of it drawing on an international base.

Civil society

The role of the state and the role of civil society in Greece are intrinsically connected through the centralized nature of the state discussed above and the directly connected lack of a basis from which civil society can operate successfully (see Kousis, 2007). As Legg and Roberts put it:

> The late and halting industrialization of Greece, the lack of civic traditions and the existence of a culture that emphasized distrust of nonrelatives have reduced the possibility that modern, autonomous associational forms could emerge and have ensured that those organizations that did develop would not likely be controlled or neutralized by the state apparatus (1997: 164).

Likewise, Stefanides argues that the way associational groups developed in Greece perfectly fit in the traditional clientelist environment (2007: 22). Thus the forms of civil society encountered in traditional liberal democracies did not develop in the same way in Greece. This is not to say that civil society does not exist. In the words of Kousis

> The incidence and character of local environmental protest in Greece was influenced by the consolidation of democracy in the

> 1970s, PASOK's dynamic entry into the political arena of the 1970s, the strengthening of leftist and green parties in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as by the alliances of local environmental activists with political parties, especially opposition political parties, organized labour, scientists, and other social actors (2007: 499).

Weale et al. point out that there is now a diverse group of non-governmental environmental actors in Greece which often have a very specific or sectoral focus but that institutional fragmentation inhibits their effectiveness (2000: 259/60). The case studies in this book show three cases with different roles for civil society and largely confirm these views. In the case of the sea turtles on Zakynthos, three different types of civil society emerged: local activism, international civil society involvement, and national associations that used the patron-client model of interaction with the state. In the case of forests and tourism development on Thassos, no civil society engagement emerged. Finally, in the case of the proposed eco-golf resort on Crete, a local movement emerged that made connections with national and international partners. At the same time, an international civil society actor from another country tried to influence the process without interacting with and working against the local movement. Thus there is no pattern between the studies as to the influence of civil society and the role of civil society is very much influenced by the local conditions and the nature of the environmental problem. It also means that civil society is not necessarily a reliable actor in filling in for the duties neglected by the state. In particular, there is a lack of cooperation between state and civil society as found elsewhere, rather it is a case here of civil society working against the state to curb the worst infractions – unless civil society can use the clientelist relationship to advance its cause.

The civil society and social movements literature focuses on cases and situations of positive civil society governance while the problem issues here – patron-client networks, local resistance to global civil society intervention, global civil society pressing an environmentally controversial project against local civil society activism – have not been addressed by the literature. Thus the cases discussed here add an important dimension to the literature by highlighting difficulties in countries that have problems with the development of active civil society networks. It also shows that civil society networks in this part of the world, at least in relation to tourism-related environmental problems which are essentially about complex connections rather than easy-to-regulate issues such as particular emission reductions, is not at

the level of development where many contemporary debates take place. As Timothy Luke argues:

> A key contradiction resting at the core of everyday life is spatial. While one resides in a locality, the conditions of material existence are organized by the market forces in such a way that one simultaneously inhabits many other sites beyond locality in regionality, nationality and globality, which are then mystified further by the system of state sovereignty in the register of territoriality. Too often, environmental struggles, however, are reduced to apparently contradictory opposites, like globality versus locality. With little consideration of what these binaries imply materially, operationally or spatially, environmental struggles often are displaced from all of the sites where they matter into other more occluded registers (2009: 13).

Luke goes on to link his argument to the creation and use of knowledge and the social relations between knowledge brokers. The role of knowledge and its rationalization does not seem to be at the forefront of the political struggles between tourism and the environmental problems discussed in this book. However, the displacement of environmental struggles most certainly is a profoundly important issue.

While this issue is addressed in the literature through debates and discourses on democratizing environmental expertise or through capacity building in civil society (Forsyth, 2009; Fagan, 2009), it seems that these concepts would have two dimensions in the context of the very local-global nature of tourism-related environmental problems. On the one hand, there is a resistance to the consideration of environmental knowledge among many of the actors involved while, on the other, where there is consideration of local environmental knowledge, there are no channels for filtering this knowledge into the policy process due to the centralist nature of the state and policy making. In the case of the sea turtles, the use of clientelist relations by the national NGOs was able to overcome problems at the national level and achieve the quick drafting of legislation. However, it was unable to crack the implementation problems with local government. In the case of the proposed eco-golf resort on Crete, the local environmental movement used the path of a legal challenge and international publicity as its strategy. It helped that many of the problems raised in the legal challenge were also apparent in the current political climate, such as land

deal scandals the church was involved in elsewhere as well as general accusations of cronyism in the government. Kousis (2007) argues that it is time to move away from the preconceived notion that Greece has a weak civil society. By this she does not mean that Greece has now developed strong civil society governance but rather she argues that there are a variety of grassroots movements which operate with different support bases and need to be studied more closely. While the case studies in this book support the diversity of approaches at brokering a more environment-centric policy approach, it is not the focus of this book to study Greek civil society *per se*. However, in the global frame taken in this chapter, it is clear that civil society cannot fill the gap left by the international institutions and Greek government in fulfilling their environmental obligations.

Again, this is not a situation specific to Greece but symptomatic of countries with a strong state. Given that tourism is an economic sector that triggers complex social relations and complex environment-society relations, finding layers of governance through civil society for the protection of the environment is both the most promising but also the most frustrating approach. It is the most promising approach because clearly the issue areas arising out of tourism mean that it is very much necessary to have informal and local environmental networks. However, the conflict between environment and economy makes local actors an uneasy ally – showing that the study of governance networks alone does not tell us so much about what the social dynamics are behind a problem. Most problems are not institutionalized in any way and, rather, the very fact that the problems cannot be captured in an easy institutional framework is exactly at the core of the problem.

Conclusions

This chapter has given an overview of the various governance frameworks that exist for environmental governance in the tourist sector in the Mediterranean EU region with particular emphasis on Greece. It has shown the difficulties of bringing about effective environmental protection through existing legal or policy frameworks.

The foremost problem encountered is not unique to a sectoral case but rather a problem encountered in all environmental policy making, namely the problem of complexity. Environmental policy making is intricately connected to trade, economic, agricultural, fisheries, industry, financial and other policy sectors and usually takes a subordinate

role in the face of economic challenges. This problem exists at the level of policy design and also, of course, policy implementation.

Further, there is an issue of multi-level governance and of having to combine and coordinate policy making at various levels with not all of them on the same page, figuratively speaking. In many cases, the role of civil society fills in where the institutional policy process cannot deliver, but, in the Greek case, the life of civil society is made harder due to the centralized and bureaucratic nature of the state apparatus.

The neoliberal nature of the economic framework in which environmental policy making takes place also limits the effectiveness of environmental decision making. Especially the Mediterranean partnership and the Mediterranean Action Plan with its coastal management programs are very firmly based in a neoliberal world view and, in combination with the challenges of multi-level governance, make implementation of environmental legislation at the local level very difficult. The problems with environmental governance institutions discussed in this chapter combined with the equity, consumption and nature-society relations discussed in the following two chapters illustrate very clearly why studying environmental governance as the main determining factor of environmental politics gives an incomplete picture of global environmental politics. Rather, global-local linkages, environmental values and the power relations between the actors involved provide a stronger understanding of the social forces at work in the creation and rectification of an environmental issue.

3
Environment and Global Political Economy

The environment in global political economy (GPE) has not been incorporated as a mainstream component of GPE analysis despite awareness of its ever increasing importance both in resource economic and also social-cultural terms as well as ecological importance. There are no direct environmental approaches to GPE which incorporate the environment in a systemic framework (apart from ecological world systems theory approaches discussed below in the nature-society relations section), which illustrates a clear gap in the literature and this book is one attempt to fill this vacuum from the perspective of one particular industry. There are many empirical accounts of the impact of certain aspects of GPE on the environment or on certain actors. However, an actor-centric view of GPE and environment neglects the relationship between nature and society in the 21st century and the relationship between ecology and social constructs, such as society and economy. In other words, it studies forms of social organization to address environmental degradation rather than the relationship between nature and society from a structural as well as actor-driven perspective. This book attempts to combine both these aspects. Global Environmental Politics (GEP) has been more successful in incorporating an understanding of the global political economy into its analysis as can be found in the works of Dauvergne and Clapp (2005), Clapp (2001), Paterson (2001 and 2007) and Kütting (2000 and 2004) as well as from a more historical perspective, Chew (2006 and 2008). This book continues in the footsteps of this previously laid groundwork.

Empirical analyses of the environmental impact of GPE range from studies of the institutional frameworks set up to dealing with environmental problems to the analysis of particular problems and their direct origins. An example of the latter kind of study is Peter Dauvergne's

analysis of the environmental consequences of loggers and degradation in the Asia-Pacific (2001) or Matthew Paterson's study of car culture (2007) while examples of the former kind of literature would be analyses of World Bank or World Trade Organization (WTO) policies and how they relate to environmental degradation (Williams, 2001). Most environmental political economy analysis, however, can still be found in the field of regime-type studies of particular institutional frameworks to deal with environmental problems, be they referred to as regimes or as global governance institutions (Young et al., 2008; Haas et al., 1993; Breitmeier et al., 2006).

This chapter will introduce a framework of nature-society relations that will inform the basis of this book and will then be used to analyze a particular economic sector, namely the service industry sector of tourism. I perceive the subject of global-local linkages as a particularly salient aspect of such a GPE framework due to the interwovenness of global social relations. It brings to the study of GEP an understanding of social institutions over time and how they impact environmental degradation rather than taking a temporally neutral approach by studying current institutional networks only. These are generally acknowledged to be components of the sociology of time and of holistic analysis in general but GPE has neatly compartmentalized itself as being purely concerned with the study of connection between intra-human dominated networks such as society, political institutions and economy – from now on all three are being compressed into the "social" in this context. However, another crucial dimension is the equity and power dimension of local-global linkages and how underlying power relations affect the interplay between local and global and inform the choices that can be exercised (or not, as a result) at the local level. Power and equity relations will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter. Here, global-local linkages in the tourism field will be analyzed further. In other words, this chapter will serve as a starting point for a critical analysis of the interplay between environment and society in a globalizing world in a tourism-specific context.

Nature-society relations in a globalizing world

There are many studies on the various actors in environmental politics and some studies on environmental ideologies (Laferrière and Stoett, 1999; Peet and Watts, 1996; Escobar, 1996) as well as studies on the commodification of the environment under modern capitalism (Merchant, 1992; Paterson, 2001 and 2007). However, apart from ecological

world systems theory approaches (such as Chew, 2006 and 2008; Hornborg, 1998 and 2001; Bunker, 1985; Rice, 2007), there has not been any systematic research in International Relations (IR) or any other discipline on the changing relations between society and environment throughout history and the underlying structural forces leading to these changes, which would be vital for an understanding of the relationship between globalization and environmental degradation. Such historical understanding is seen as essential for an understanding of social relations in general, yet in the environment-society field such a basis is sadly lacking. The ecological world systems theorists focus on the unequal exchange or transfer of resources and/or energy and provide detailed analysis of unequal social and ecological relations between core and periphery (as does commodity chains analysis) and examine this part of nature-society relations in great detail.

The global nature of environmental degradation can largely be linked to the rise of the fossil fuel economy and the decreasing distance of time and space in the relations between different parts of the globe (Daly, 1996), although Chew argues that a longer term vision reveals ancient forms of capitalism also led to widespread degradation due to their mode of accumulation. These phenomena are intrinsically linked to the rise of modern capitalism. However, the latter point is part of a longer and larger process that can also be observed in premodernity. This view of environmental political economy is a fundamentally Euro-centric but also technological/economic determinist view of history putting emphasis on global patterns of degradation and Western forms of development. First of all, the notion of the mastering of nature is confined to the industrializing countries and not a global phenomenon. Even today, nature-society relations are far from universal and can take different forms and shapes in different infrastructures even within the same national society. For example, in an advanced industrial society, people have a relationship with their immediate local environment if they live in rural areas or a relationship with the countryside as visited at weekends or during holidays for city dwellers. They also have a relationship with the physical environment as experienced while traveling and they have images of what nature is and what its role should be in modern life. This is their immediately experienced relationship and it differs fundamentally from the environment-society relations of a predominantly agricultural developing country such as, for example, flood-ridden Bangladesh. Therefore it is misleading to speak of "the" environment-society relationship as there are many different such relations in different societies or different segments of

society. Likewise, different nature-society relations are experienced in different aspects of people's lives, be it with the political economy of food or direct living space.

However, not consciously experienced nature-society relations are much more significant in political economic terms. These are experienced through productive and consumptive relations but the ecological or environmental aspects of these are not perceived by the various actors in the international system, or domestic systems, and their side-effects in terms of environmental degradation are de-contextualized through the separation of environmental from other types of policy. What this means is that social behavior and actions have a much larger impact on the environment through the environmental impact of economic activities far removed from the actual consumer and that these practices are vitally important in shaping environment-society relations. Again, a case in point here is food production or the global political economy of oil or shipping. But especially the tourist sector has rich pickings to offer in this area as well as showing that service sectors are just as important in this respect.

The process of globalization is characterized by a globalizing of production processes, a global division of labor and the liberalization of trade and finance (Mittelman, 2000; Paterson, 2001; Cerny et al., 2005) as well as migratory patterns and societal changes as a result. Although these changing structures of economic activity obviously draw after themselves environmental effects, it could be argued that these effects are primarily manifested in increased consumption and increased exploitation of resources and sinks as well as the exploration of previously unused resources and sinks as opposed to a fundamental structural change in the environment-society relations before and during the globalizing economy (as opposed to a previously understood international economy). In other words, it is the extent of economic growth and increasing consumption that is the problem rather than a systemic change in behavior. Thus, there is a change in volume of exploitation but not a qualitative or structural change. Such increased consumption and exploitation is not a new process started under globalization but the continuation of an increasing and expanding international and globalizing economy under modern capitalism as such. So, from this point of view, environment-society relations in the age of globalization are not fundamentally different from previous periods. However, it can be argued that there are important changes in environment-society relations which are not immediately obvious but are still of vital importance and these are to do with a changing power nexus – globalization leading to less local control over the environment.

These changes can primarily be found in the privatizing of nature/environment through the tenets of neoliberal ideology (Peluso and Watts, 2001; Paterson, 2001; Goldman, 2009). Through the globalizing of production and finance, the regulation of environmental degradation at the local or national level becomes more difficult because the agents of pollution are not usually located near the source of pollution, although their economic activities take place there. This interference with local ecology through global linkages has been definitive for many people, especially in peripheral locations. At the same time, environment-society relations in the industrialized, consumer countries are not fundamentally changed whilst the relations between society and environment in developing countries are increasingly shaped by the global or Northern political economy and increasingly less so by local factors (Clapp, 2001). This point applies to both industrializing and primarily agricultural countries (see Mushita and Thompson (2007) for an account of biopiracy in relation to agriculture and the global political economy of seeds). So, in global terms globalization has fundamentally changed environment-society relations although this is not immediately obvious from the vantage point of the Northern citizen. In effect, globalization is described by many as a new ecological imperialism. Again, this is an aspect that is particularly visible in regions dependent on tourism and the particular nature-society relations of such areas.

Globalization is mostly analyzed in spatial terms or from a historical perspective. I will put forward an alternative form of analysis here based on a juxtaposition of social and ecological time. Time is a notoriously difficult concept to define and exists at various levels of differing complexity. Social time is generally regarded as a measurement or as a tool for organization – it is the clock or calendar time our societies are built on. This is fundamentally different from ecological time which is not a social construct but a complicated natural mechanism that has to be conceptualized and harmonized with social time. In social science analysis, social time is the measurement against which environment is studied. So, for example, the aims and targets of institutional arrangements are based on administrative feasibilities and not on ecological necessities (Kütting, 2000). Therefore, since all social "constructs" and all social arrangements are ultimately located in a physical environment, it is necessary to embed social analysis in a wider understanding of ecological time. It would not make sense to have a social timetable of getting a fisheries conservation policy off the ground in five years' time when the ecological situation suggests that by that time fish levels will have sunk to such a low level that regeneration would be impossible.

Both time and the environment are frameworks within which social relations occur: they are part of the social framework but at the same time they are more than that as they encompass social relations. They provide a framework within which society has to operate and the structures within which society is located. They impose certain rules on society such as the natural "laws" but at the same time they are part of a process of social construction. This means they exist independently of society although they are conceived of through a process of social construction. Therefore it is useful to make a distinction between ecological and social rhythms as expressions of time.

Social activity can change environmental rhythms through the interruption or change of ecological cycles. The age of mass production and consumption, and the distanciation of the production process from the resource extraction stage have obscured the link between production, consumption and environmental degradation, thus making it difficult to create a directly observable link between the accumulation of capital and the creation of environmental degradation in particular instances.

This is especially obvious in the social activity of travel. It is a prime example of the privatization and marketization of nature as nature becomes the commodity on the basis of which a destination is sold. Both the demand mechanism as well as the stipulations by tour operators on a particular destination will shape nature-society relations through the development of local infrastructure and the creation of a space that will attract visitors. Here a clash between social and ecological time becomes inevitable. There is immense summer pressure on local ecosystems through temporary overpopulation and excessive energy, water, food, and entertainment demands. This pressure damages the very ecosystem people have come to enjoy. Yet, without tourism there would either need to be other, probably more polluting industries or there would be population exodus as the locality would not be able to sustain its population economically. A more moderate form of tourism with less pressure on the environment and more direct tourism income transfer to the local population could alleviate some of the pressures; however, the global organization of the tourism production process and the nature of tourism consumption make this an unlikely proposition as the next section will explore in detail.

Tourism and nature-society relations

While tourism in itself has existed throughout history, it has only recently become a mass movement so to speak. Pax Americana and the substan-

tial increases in disposable income in Western households since the Second World War as well as the generous vacation arrangements of the Fordist and post-Fordist eras have made it possible for a substantial part of the population to displace itself, traditionally in the summer months when children are off school. Borocz, dated but still appropriate, calls this phenomenon international leisure migration and sees it as "a specific form of travel with international structures and dynamics systematically rooted in and inextricably intertwined with, those of an increasingly internationalized industrial capitalism" (1992: 714). Likewise, the idea of the invigorating and beneficial effects of the seaside have a long history but only in the second half of the 20th century has seaside tourism become such a widely available and popular summer destination. While most seaside vacations in the 1960s and 1970s were undertaken by car, by the 1980s the ever decreasing prices of air travel made island destinations such as those in the Mediterranean or Caribbean not a special treat but a regular event and soon became the equivalent of an entitlement. This created unexpected and welcome opportunities for regions in the Mediterranean and Caribbean sea basins that were mostly undeveloped up to this time. However, in order to make use of such opportunities, capital is needed and, as tourism would only take off once there was an infrastructure and an infrastructure could only be built with capital, tourism in itself could not really provide that capital investment. So investment had to come from the outside, be it in the form of loans or through outside economic interests moving in. However, this being the small and medium-sized business market, many enterprises were built and extended with very little capital. The same applies to the question of social capital. Running a touristic enterprise requires skills that go beyond being able to cook a meal for dozens of people or having a hotel complex that needs to be cleaned. Although this is a question of scale and small and medium-sized enterprises are run differently from large operations. In fact, particularly the Greek islands make it their trademark that in their small hotels, business does not run as smoothly and well organized as it does elsewhere and make this a selling point for an "authentic Greek" experience.

Historically, the 1980s were the point when developments took off in different directions and some islands hit it big in the tourism jackpot while others worked with a much smaller scale model. Especially the islands that were visited regularly even before the tourism boom hit, such as Crete, tended to develop at a large scale. Less well known islands, having not much to show for outside of clear blue or green sea and pretty beaches, and not having antiquities or the like, did not attract large-scale

investment as a general rule but rather tended to follow a smaller model.

Tourism is arguably the world's largest industry. One in nine workers globally are employed in the tourist industry and about 6 per cent of the global Gross National Product (GNP) is generated in this service sector while the overall figure for commercial services is 20 per cent as a comparison (World Tourism Organization). Between 1975 and 2000, tourism expenditure increased by about 4.5 per cent per year and tourism continues to be a growth sector. Therefore pressures on tourist reception communities has grown substantially, particularly in typical holiday destinations such as the Mediterranean, which is the world's leading tourism region (Benoit and Comeau (the Blue Plan), 2005: 341). For example, 10 per cent of the Greek work force is employed in the tourist sector compared to 30 per cent in Malta and 28 per cent in Croatia (Ibid: 341). According to the Blue Plan, the Mediterranean Action Plan's policy planning institution, "Tourism represents on average near 12 per cent of Mediterranean exports of goods and services. Tourism is especially important in the islands where it provides an alternative to the social and economic difficulties inherent to insularity and where it can lead to radical changes. In the Balearics, for example, per capital GDP reached 18,249 euros or 3,000 euros more than the national average whereas the region was among the poorest in Spain before the development of tourism" (341).

The following is an excellent summary of the challenges and therefore I quote at length:

> Tourism has become an essential factor in the development of islands, compensating for a decline in the primary sector. It is nevertheless a risk for islands, their identity as well as their natural and cultural resources.
>
> The summer tourism-related seasonal over population (even in the least visited islands the population regularly doubles in summer) affects all field, social, environmental, cultural and economic: ring-shaped occupation of the territory, oversizing of facilities, degradation and pollution, noise, social tension, a low level of professional training, seasonal saturation of means of transport disturbing the mobility of island dwellers, and risks of land disenfranchisement.
>
> The tensions generated over limited water resources are especially tight. To meet summer demands that continue to increase, there is more and more recourse to importing costly water by boat (in Greece, Italy, and the Balearics) or desalinization. These trends have

> growing impacts on supply costs and the environment and open the way to urban growth, which can make things even worse.
>
> Tourism also generates considerable development of seasonal transport and its side effects. Today islands host 46 of the 112 Mediterranean coastal airports. Without strong regulatory measures the near doubling of tourist flows projected between 2000 and 2025 will concern the islands and further increase the pressures on their territory. The development of new fast maritime means of transport (high speed boats) is especially worrying because of their possible impacts (Ibid: 343).

What this report from the Blue Plan omits is the rising and seasonal demand for energy and food and how they are satisfied. Tourists favoring air conditioning raises the demand for energy exponentially while a quadrupling or more of an island's population means that, although the island may be able to be largely self-sufficient in agricultural products for part of the year, this increase in population will have to be fed with food imports which then have or can have a negative impact on local food production. So, overall tourism has many benefits but also brings many pressures for the host community.

All of these pressures have an environmental as well as a social dimension. While most island communities until quite recently followed a slower and less capital intensive lifestyle due to lack of development, the transition to a part-time highly intensive form of development takes its toll on nature-society relations. On the one hand, tourists come precisely because of a particular form of nature (namely beach and sea with guaranteed sunshine in the summer months) and, on the other, the presence of the tourists is exactly what puts pressure on that particular environment as well as others on the islands. Because the pressures are temporary, many of their effects are not seen as obviously as they would otherwise be.

A substantial literature sees these pressures in terms of carrying capacity (Krippendorf, 1999; McMinn, 1997; Hunter and Green, 1995). This necessitates the identification of specific indicators that can determine when carrying capacity has been reached or surpassed, in other words when there are more tourists than a particular location can sustain. In some cases determining carrying capacity is relatively easy, such as overfishing or air quality standards. When it comes to the social environment or to how many tourists a particular beach can withstand, such indicators are much more difficult to determine and are relative to a large extent, depending on what a community is willing to put up with. In the case of

Zakynthos, for example, the community would be perfectly willing to sustain the loss of the sea turtle nesting sites. However, the larger Greek or world society would not. This also raises questions about whose environment and who should have the power of decision and under what conditions. This problem can also be imposed from the outside onto a community. It is exactly, for example, the preference of foreign tourists for air conditioning that puts pressure on the community to increase its electricity supply and thus its air quality and supply networks. So, with an increasing number of "consumers of nature" there is an increasing number of stakeholders and power brokers, many of which have no investment in and no understanding of local nature-society relations. The environment becomes commodified by both those who have a direct relationship and dependence on it and those who come to consume it.

The commodification of nature is as old as trade or for-profit production in history. It has been argued that societies rise and fall with their understanding of their relationship with their local environment and that overexploitation or excessive commodification has led to the decline of empires. There were cases in the 1970s and early 1980s when something similar happened in the tourist sector. Through excessive pollution, such as untreated sewage release into the sea or excessive building activity on a coast, certain localities lost their customers who found the environment of the destination they traveled to had degraded. These are mistakes that local hoteliers learnt from and as a result environmental standards have been improved somewhat. When the causation is easy and has a direct negative result, fixing an environmental problem becomes a priority and is relatively easy. When the commodification of nature is not so immediately connected nor so easy to detect, this becomes a more difficult problem to resolve. For example, a location may be famous for its particular microclimate which may be connected to its forestry growth. If this growth is removed for building tourist accommodation, the change in microclimate over time is not so easily traced back except by an ecologist. The problem is not only a lack of understanding of these linkages but also a lack of care.

One of the main issues of disturbed nature-society relations in an age termed as that of ecological imperialism is that there is no direct investment by society into its local natural environment because the local society is largely disenfranchised and the power brokers are from outside the community. This means that they have no long-term vested interest in preserving ecological rhythms as they can move on to somewhere else once the profit mechanism in this part of the world has

been exhausted. Paterson (2001), Saurin (1994) and Lipschutz and Conca (1993) have all analyzed this in terms of the power structure of the international system and argued that the very power structures of the system in which environmental problems occur need to be addressed in order to fix these problems. Paterson sees a fourfold interconnection: the state system, capitalism, knowledge and patriarchy (40). Saurin uses the term modernity and the rise of the modern political system as the structural force leading to intended and unintended consequences of the socio-economic system. Lipschutz and Conca see that the expansion of the modern system has not kept up with ecological principles. In earlier works I have referred to the social and structural origins of the contemporary political economy as diametrically opposed to the setting up of institutions that can be environmentally effective (Kütting, 2000). These writings and these authors' publications built on these arguments are very much the only ones in the global environmental politics discourse that address the structural connection between environment and the modern political (social and economic) system.

As the nature-society relations of tourism are very much located in the free market economy and not in an institutionally anchored form of organization, the structural origins of environmental degradation in this field can be found in the organization of the global political economy and only indirectly through the state system as an extension of the contemporary global political economy. However, setting up nature-society relations in a fashion that implies that local influences on the environment are benign and that the "bad" exploitation emanates from the global level is also misleading. A substantial literature on resistance or global civil society seems to suggest that once local empowerment has been achieved there will be fewer environmental problems or no structural degradation because of the direct understanding and self-interest of the local community in sustaining its environment. Evidence suggests that setting up such easy dichotomies is problematic. Especially the case studies presented here show that this is not necessarily the case and sometimes it is the exact opposite.

Nature-society relations are historically specific and cannot be easily categorized. They are often romanticized, for example in a postcolonial context (Adams and Mulligan, 2003). This seems to go back to a desire for a better world that can be found inside us and once we remove the stranglehold of the commodification obsession of modern capitalism, we can instinctively go back to what was before. This can also be found in the literature on indigenous knowledge. However, for every case where indigenous knowledge has led to a positive

development, there are also cases that prove the exact opposite (Kütting and Lipschutz, 2009). So what this teaches us is that there is no clear, linear, easy path that tells us the right answer. Every case has to write its own history and there is no model.

Generally, neoliberalism is blamed for what is called the colonization of nature or eco-imperialism. There are plenty of cases where this terminology is justified. However, in a social environment where the ownership of capital, i.e. the hotels and other amenities in this case, remains firmly in local hands through the prevalence of small and medium-sized enterprises, the model of the outside influencing the tourist location can only be partially valid. Of course, in an age of market consolidation and fewer package tour companies dominating the market, ownership is not the sole criteria of power over one's resources but the relationship between hoteliers and package tour companies becomes crucial. Even so, the example of Thassos shows that such relational power has its limitations too and it seems that package tour companies are mostly interested in securing capacity control rather than shaping the particular infrastructural plans for a tourist destination. The particular power relations of the tourism actors play out differently in different locations and are thus not purely dominated by the global level determining results at the local level and thus over the local environment. The value accorded to environmental factors and to an understanding of nature-society relations is historically and culturally rooted as well as dependent on the position in the global economy. Thus an understanding of the nature-society relations of one location has to be juxtaposed with a study of its global-local linkages and the two brought together for analysis. Thus this chapter will now turn to the subject of global-local linkages.

Global-local linkages

The basic idea behind the concept of global-local linkages is that under globalization social relations are spatially removed, creating global-local linkages through economic and cultural practices (Giddens, 1990; Allen, 2003). At the same time social relations are also temporally removed in two ways: first of all, events can be experienced simultaneously in different places through sophisticated technology and, second, the consequences of an action or policy may not be felt in a different place until some time after the actual events (temporal distanciation). So, time-space distanciation is mostly about global-local linkages. A good example of time-space distanciation is the ozone hole.

The current ozone hole over Latin America, Australia and Antarctica is caused by the production, consumption and resulting release into the atmosphere of ozone depleting substances produced and released over 30 years ago in mostly industrialized countries.

Time-space separation disconnects social activity from its particular social context as can also be seen in the field of food production. This distanciation is manifested in many developing countries by the growing of cash crops for global markets rather than the satisfaction of local dietary needs (and the import of food crops for urban populations). It will become even more manifest when plant life can be patented and indigenous plant genes will be "owned" by commercial enterprises elsewhere in the world (Miller, 2001). In industrialized countries, spatial distance is best expressed by the seasonally unaffected diet of consumers as dictated by supermarket shopping. This distanciation leads to a break away from local cultural activities and habits and a move towards "disembedded" institutions, which can be economic, social or cultural. Redclift sees the main effect of time-space distanciation in the confusion between intention, action and outcome (Redclift, 1996: 147). This means that time-space distanciation leads to difficulties in establishing causal links between actions and their consequences. As Goodman and Redclift argue with respect to the international food system:

> With the simultaneous access to geographically separate production zones, the formation of the world market freed industrial capitals from the seasonality of individual national agricultures, approximating the continuous production process characteristic of industry (1991: 96).

The consequences of this phenomenon are enormous for the understanding of solutions to the problem of environmental degradation. It shows that economic and regulatory structures are "disembedded" and not equipped, thus not able, to adequately address environmental problems – as the analysis of governance structures in Chapter 2 confirms from a different angle as well. It also shows that events or actions in one part of the globe are either the unintended consequences of actions elsewhere or the deliberate but disconnected results of actions elsewhere.

This disenfranchising of local control is supported by the system of global governance and trade that has been institutionalized in support of neoliberal ideology and supports its smooth functioning. There can

be no doubt that the global politico-economic framework legitimized by states and global institutions provides a formidable system for the efficient transfer of resources from the periphery to the core and thus provides a continuation of more violent or more directly exploitative policies of the past. At the same time, despite the increasing environmental rhetoric in the form of the sustainable development discourse, there has been no real attempt to take on board the strained nature of environment-society relations and consequently there has been no real effort to reconcile environmental with social or societal needs. Although there is a sustainable development discourse, an ever increasing number of international environmental agreements and environmental provisions are included in trade agreements, these efforts can at best be seen as efforts to manage environmental problems, and at worst as eyewash supposed to placate those who criticize the hegemonic practices.

The critical globalization literature sees disenfranchisement of the weak and dispossessed as the main weakness of neoliberalism and globalization. This is clearly the case in developing nations such as the farmers in India, the urban poor in Latin America and the majority of the population in Africa that were never empowered in the first place. It also applies to the roles of governments and their participation in designing the global architecture. But what about the states and social groups that are not at the end of the poverty scale yet and are not in the field of influential or decisive players? This would include states such as, for example, Turkey, Morocco, and Costa Rica, as well as social groups in remote regions in Europe such as the islands in Greece or Cyprus or rural Ireland. While these actors have virtually no agenda setting power in a global setting and limited powers at the national levels in the case of regions, they nevertheless seem to retain some self-determination. As discussed in the previous chapter, in the case of the European periphery, the European Union figures prominently both as a neoliberal globalizing institution but also as a guarantor of right and redistribution of income. A share of the EU budget is reserved for promoting "the regions" and a large part of the ethos of the EU is to achieve development in all parts of Europe through free market economics and targeted investment. This strategy has been highly successful – Greece, Portugal and Spain as the longest standing members in this category that entered the EU as much poorer and less-developed states than they are today – thanks to EU policies. Unlike many other multilateral institutions, the EU has a strong social component which it applies to its member-states and which has had a very

positive impact on both economic and environmental developments. The EU is not so generous in extending these privileges to regions outside the EU in quite the same way although there are preferential trade agreements, social policies such as the Euro-Mediterranean partnership, and so on. In terms of global-local linkages, the EU is one of the more decisive outside influences on, for example, the Greek islands at the institutional level. Road-building programs and infrastructural investments, such as airports or entertainment venues, are more often than not funded by the EU. At the same time the EU has performed a standard setting role in the environmental field in all socio-environmental fields, be it sewage treatment requirements, building regulations, environmental impact assessment (EIA), precautionary principle or air quality standards, to name but a few. So, as a globalizing agent, the EU performs a dual role – it is a proponent and spearhead of neoliberalism and free market policies, yet at the same time it is also one of the leading global actors standing up for social and environmental standards. Again, this has a mixed reception in remote regions. One could argue it is particularly helpful for enterprises that have already had a certain sum of capital invested in them and helps them to expand. It is not so useful for those who do not. In addition, there is an implementation gap between what social and environmental standards the European Union sets and what is implemented on site. It is unfortunately all too common that environmental impact assessments are just signed off on with no studies carried out and that building standards are flouted – both by individuals and by corporate entities. It is also not a rare occurrence that seemingly meaningless projects get funding due to the political networks of that region or state. Road-building in Northern Greece would be a case in point.

As to the wider influences of economic and financial globalization, these seem to have a limited impact on small and medium-sized enterprises in the tourist industry within the parameters of this study. They are not the kind of businesses that attract international finance, so their influence would be indirect rather than direct. However, the construction of the proposed Cavo Sidero development would change the funding model in the Greek tourist industry by shifting the focus away from small and medium-sized enterprises (which the government specifically focused on so far) to seek a model based on international finance.

The main "global" influence on these islands is their relationship with tour operators. Only a relatively small amount of tourists arrive on the islands independently while most have booked their holidays through a tour operator in their home country. The European tour operator sector

has consolidated substantially in the past few years with fewer and fewer players and transnational ownership. For example, the German conglomerate KarstadtQuelle now owns the perhaps most historical of all tour operators, Thomas Cook. In terms of occupancy in resorts' hotels, this diversification has had limited effect but it tightens the market and gives less leeway for local negotiations. This reduces the negotiating power of local actors although there are more alternatives these days as new markets open up with the economic success of what used to be Warsaw Pact states. An impressive amount of incoming charter flights at Greek airports are from Poland, the Czech Republic or Russia these days. So the market is in constant flux. This demonstrates how local resorts have to have their fingers on the pulse of the global economy to ensure their continued competitiveness in a world with many, many resorts as well as being flexible in their marketing approaches. Especially the small and medium-sized enterprise market deals with this by putting emphasis on the particular locale rather than following a bland, interchangeable image of the luxury resort.

The tourist industry from a global-local perspective

There is a huge variety of tourism and tourism models which cannot all be covered in this book. Therefore I will focus on marine tourism, i.e. seaside tourism along the lines of the traditional seaside summer holiday and with particular reference to the areas in which the case studies are located. While the rise of the welfare state and its generous vacation allowance gave Northern and Western European tourists the opportunity to spend several weeks at the seaside every summer, this was initially done at locations that were closer to home and could be reached by car. This included destinations such as the Italian Adriatic coast or the coastline of Northern Spain. Other destinations that are a little further away, such as southern Spain, Portugal, Greece, Cyprus, Malta, and now also Northern Africa, came into their prime with the advent of travel by charter plane. This development also gave rise to the tourism conglomerates that offer these packages.

Tourism has been very influential in economic developments along the previously relatively unpopulated coastlines along the Mediterranean coast. According to Selwyn, there are four consequences of these developments:

1. The decline of influence of traditional landowners leading to the rise in influence of development companies, banks and foreign tour operators.

2. The migration of indigenous populations from inland locations to the coast and especially tourist centers.
3. The contestation of space in tourist centers.
4. An uncertain future depending on how the power struggle over tourist space will be decided (2000: 227).

Selwyn calls these developments "the Balearization" of tourism after the Spanish islands that were the first region to experience this phenomenon and in a rather extreme way. The same developments have not taken place in Greece because Greece kept its coastline closed to foreign investors and only opened up to such pressures as late as 2006 (*Financial Times*, 9 November 2006). As the FT put it:

> Previous Greek governments opposed the construction of mega-resorts on the grounds that they would take business away from small, family-owned hotels that formed the backbone of the tourism industry. A scarcity of world-class accommodation complete with golf courses and other sports facilities has slowed the growth of Greek tourism compared with that of Turkey and Egypt.

With the slowing of tourism growth rates in Greece, the move toward resort-style foreign investment properties is seen as the way out of the problem. However, there is immense opposition to this kind of development from local communities, environmental movements and Greek politicians. There is a large body of literature suggesting that big all-inclusive resorts do not benefit host countries in any significant way and indeed the perception by Greek society suggests the same.

This further suggests that Greece does not have the same type of ownership power struggles as Selwyn describes as determining local-global relations in the Mediterranean tourist regions. However, tourist bookings through tour operators are still the main source of income on these islands so the question is whether ownership is the determining mode of power or whether power lies in the relationship between hotel owners and tour operators. Tour operators certainly have the power of price setting and there is not much negotiating room for local hoteliers as they do not have the leverage of an alternative client base. There is the option to rely on domestic and individual tourism in the height of summer during July/August, which is substantially more lucrative than the package tour business, but this implies a much shorter season and is not perceived as a viable strategy on its own by the hoteliers.

Likewise, the migration issue raised by Selwyn applies to Greece as much as elsewhere but is limited in scope as the need for extra labor in

the summer season in a family-run business is just not the same as it would be in a resort-style hotel or in large hotels owned by hoteliers not residing on the island in question. There is less of a tourist-related migration issue on islands that are almost solely populated by small and medium-sized enterprises while islands (such as Crete) that have a substantial number of large hotels do have much higher numbers of migrant laborers working in hotels, restaurants and other tourism enterprises. Bookman (2006) addresses the problems of tourism and migrant labor in detail.

The contestation of space and its outcomes are issues that are relevant to all areas that receive tourism. These contestations are mostly about power in all its senses – the power to shape outcomes, relational power and structural power. In a Foucauldian sense, power is about the pattern of the modifications which the relationships of force imply by the very nature of their process (Cheong and Miller, 2000: 375). This implies a binary structure of the dominated and the dominator in a rigid framework. However, specific and multiple layers of relations of power can manifest themselves quite differently and with different dominators in different settings. For example, in a tourism setting the contestation of space takes place between various groups of locals (not all locals will have the same agenda; for example, traditional fishermen and hoteliers may have quite different interests), tour operators and the tourists as well. Often the assumption is that the tourist, through the choice mechanism, holds the most power by being able to vote with their feet and "consume" their vacation elsewhere if a destination falls from grace. Taste and expectations are not static values and expectations of what a summer holiday should be change over time. Part of this evolution of taste is offset by new generations of holidaymakers from other spatial locations entering the tourist economy which mostly have preconceived notions of what a summer holiday should be based on the Western European model as this was unachievable till now. This applies to the former Warsaw Pact states and makes life easier for resorts as what becomes unfashionable for one group is still very desirable for another and they can be neatly interchanged with a little basic language training.

Tour operators mostly have the power of the pricing mechanism and to push for certain amenities that its clientele expects. This would be, for example, the preparation of a breakfast buffet continental-style or even the preparation of some semblance of a hot breakfast in locations where predominantly British tourists reside. It also includes certain assumptions of taste and custom, such as the establishment of a lawn

in climates where lawns do not grow well in the summer and require high levels of irrigation and fertilizing. These are power relations that affect local customs. I do not see supply and demand issues such as the establishment of cybercafés, foreign newspaper sales or other consumer goods as power issues in the same way – these are market mechanism issues.

Locals are therefore bound into a multi-layer relationship with their touristic clientele and, especially in the Greek setting, a constant subconscious struggle is maintained between preservation of local values and operating according to rational market principles. Greek customs are kept with pride and turned into "the Greek experience". This works while the bone of contention is a minor issue but leads to larger conflict between the various actors when bigger issues are at stake, such as different interpretations of health and safety rules or the like. American-style resort tourism is the answer to these struggles as it gives tourists the chance to avoid all contact with the local population and spend their holiday according to norms that were set by their country of origin. However, this reduces their destination to a venue of exploitative consumption rather than a venue of exchange between different cultures. In other words, it is a form of tourism that does not offer respect for its locale but degrades it to a mere commodity. Such a relationship is much more unlikely through the small and medium-sized business model; however, the navigation of the various social relations of this communication raises a much bigger potential for conflict and misunderstanding. Medium-sized enterprises are also not necessarily owned by locals and can have domestic ownership from the big cities, thus further obscuring and complicating the multi-layer effect of social relations. As the Blue Plan, an environment and development planning report by the Mediterranean Action Plan (the UNEP institutional arrangement dealing with environmental issues in the Mediterranean region), argues:

> (T)he proportion of international tourist spending going into national and local economies remains small. The average cost of stays in the large-scale tourist destinations of these countries, which are in competition with another, is not very high; much of the proceeds go to airlines, tour operators, hotel chains and producers operating outside the countries or destinations visited.
>
> Insufficient control of tourism development generates negative impacts (environmental and socio-cultural) and risks that are considered important by the local people, confirming the ambiguous

> effects of the sector on coastal societies (Benoit and Comeau, 2005: 343).

Economic dependence on tourism is high in coastal societies yet in many locations spending by tourists has declined (Ibid: 343). In fact, some older tourist developments in France and Italy are now standing empty and whole regions are suffering decline as that particular holiday model has outlived itself. These are lessons that are important for the whole Mediterranean region. They also include important environmental lessons.

The excessive population growth as a result of tourism for a relatively short time every year raises waste management and energy issues as well as socio-cultural problems. However, there are also outside threats such as, for example, the danger of an oil spill which would effectively close down a whole season. Ultimately, the recommendation of the Blue Plan is more diversification for areas dependent on tourism (although tourism can have the positive effect of keeping more harmful industries at bay) and to locate more power at the local level. Returning to the triangle of power between tourist, tour operator and local economy, such an endeavor is also problematic because it disregards the choice mechanism and the notion of a fashionable resort. Empowering the local level will not guard against global trends which mass tourists are prone to follow. An answer would be to cater to a niche market, such as ecotourism, but this requires an excellent understanding of social trends in the countries of origin, something that does not exist at the local level of the destination country. Therefore there will always be a social deficit in this relationship. Also, it seems doubtful that painting or cooking or eco-holidays can fill to capacity the hotels of a particular destination and is lucrative enough to provide for alternative target groups. In addition, this would merely mean relying on a different kind of tour operator, the small, specialized business rather than the big company. Yet, the small tour operator would still be reliant on the larger networks for the sourcing of transport, for instance. So, the idea of alternative markets can only provide so much business. These issues are discussed in context-specific detail in the case studies.

Tourist resorts in Italy, Northern Spain or France are better placed because they are not dependent on charter planes to bring tourists in as their destinations can be reached by train or car relatively easily for a large segment of the traditional summer tourist population. With cheap airfares this does not pose a financial advantage but it does change the power relations in terms of reliance in tour operators or it

opens up different markets in terms of bus/coach tourism as a new variable. The Mediterranean island destinations are more limited in their choices and thus have a different relationship with tour operators. They also have the alternative of a local market in terms of the urban populations streaming to the coast and to the islands in the summer to get out of the cities. However, this market has become smaller as the urban Mediterranean citizen now also has the financial means to travel abroad and has at least partially moved away from the traditional model of vacationing near home or on the island/coastline of their ancestors. There have also been incidents of friction between domestic and international tourists as they have different expectations and different lifestyles. This adds another layer to the social relations of tourist resorts.

These complex webs of social relations in tourist resorts indicate that it is difficult to contextualize or conceptualize them as they are all dependent on the particular logistic, infrastructural, historical and social structures of a particular region. The Mediterranean Action Plan suggests that more cooperation between Mediterranean states might help them organize themselves better but this seems an unlikely option precisely because of these differences. Thus an institutionalized form of cooperation to better place local stakeholders in international tourism is an unlikely recipe for success. This then leads back to general questions about how to negotiate power relations in a global governance world.

While large American-style resorts and internationally-owned hotel or even national hotel chains or large national hotels are very connected to international or national power structures through the transnational capitalist class, small and medium-sized hoteliers and other local stakeholders do not have this individual representation and lobbying power. They are also fairly isolated in that they can organize at their local level but it is difficult for them to find allies in other regions or states as they do not have the networking skills and the networks themselves to use the power of the many in that way. Civil society organization mostly takes place in cities in this region or at the very local level without a view to the outside. This also impacts on negotiating skills with international actors such as tourism conglomerates.

Ecotourism, on the other hand, works hand-in-hand with civil society and attracts its clientele through such channels. Ecotourism typically relies on very small enterprises and areas that cannot sustain a large influx of tourists. So the small and medium-sized tourism enterprise falls through the cracks. It is mainstream but not mainstream enough

in order to get ideal representation or to integrate into wider networks. Thus power struggles with other stakeholders take place in a vacuum where the locals do not know what other arrangements or achievements are in place that they could learn from, either in a positive or negative way. In this way, the tour operators and the tourists have a stronger position in terms of relational power as they can make comparisons to other resorts and hold the power to making an island a touristic success story or to drop it from the catalogs. Islands, on the other hand, can also re-invent themselves and have a comeback if that happens.

In terms of environmental protection of a tourist region, stakeholder relations are even more diverse. The natural assumption of a rational mind and of the literature is that local stakeholders will be the ones most interested in preserving the environmental integrity of their spaces as it is their capital and their future livelihood that is connected to it. Tour operators will naturally have the least interest and tourists are interested in spending their vacation in an unpolluted environment but are otherwise assumed to have no stake in an island's environmental protection. However, such assumptions built on rational behavior disregard the importance of acculturation and societal environmental values. In Europe, environmental consciousness is much more developed in the citizens of Germany and Great Britain (as examples of major tourism consumers) than, for example, a Greek islander or a Tunisian coastal resident. The local will have a better understanding of the local ecology but overall the Northerner is trained to be more environmentally aware and to see the connection between behavior and environmental degradation as a result of longer-term public education campaigns. In addition, there are, for example, different concepts of animal rights. Northerners tend to be more critical of behavior toward animals while Southerners tend to have a utility-based relationship with wildlife or livestock. This often leads to friction and blurs the boundaries of the rational assumption that the local stakeholder is most invested in the local environment.

On the other hand, the tourist has little or no understanding of local infrastructure and that his/her demands put an environmental burden on the resort in terms of energy needs or food preferences, for example. However, these are ecological linkages that locals will also not question as a general rule as they see an increased power grid or more choice in the local food supply as something also benefiting the local population. Nobody wants to live in a romanticized village of the past and such increased choices are good socially but not so good for the

environment. Yet, it is an age-old question of whether environmental degradation can be combated with backwardness or forwardness. And in an age where more and more consumers and thus also consumers of tourism ask questions about the ecological impact of what they consume, the tourist him/herself can actually become an advocate for improved nature-society relations at the destination resort. This will put pressure on tour operators and tour operators will put pressure on local hoteliers. Again, this would be a top-down exercise of power but in this context it would be perceived as beneficial and not disempowering. For example, the German tour operator, Touristik Union International (TUI), one of the largest in the market, certifies its larger resorts and flags its 100 most sustainable hotels or club resorts – although it does not list according to which criteria the award was given. They seem to be concentrated among the most luxurious hotels with high energy intensity rather than smaller, local hotels, which makes the scheme questionable in itself. However, what this point demonstrates is that environmental stewardship can come from different directions and that rational choice assumptions about stakeholder values are very misleading. Thus there is potential conflict between environmental considerations and power considerations in general, in other words conflict between social and environmental considerations.

Conclusions

The global political economy of the environmental consequences of tourism shows that both structural and actor-based analysis is necessary for analyzing the complex web of relations that determine the shape of a particular tourist region. The immediate triangle for analysis is the interplay between tourist, tour operator and local but even this relationship is multi-faceted and different actors are more empowered or less empowered at different levels. There is no simple, linear relationship of power or influence in this triangle. Likewise, different types of tour operators and tourists produce different social relations and the historical background of the local experiences is also crucial in shaping these local-global relations. In addition, all actors are embedded in particular social structures of their own, be they global or local. Domestic political and social relations at a seaside resort will produce different relations under different circumstances while the ecological consciousness of the tourist and the home country of the tour operator will also be very influential. The ecological dimension has very much entered the tourism market in the Mediterranean area because of the

sustainable development agendas in the European Union member-states. Thus international institutions such as the European Union play an important role in structuring the social relations of tourism and environment as well, from a variety of perspectives. They introduce liberal principles and market economy but the structural funds program is equally influential as well as the EU's leading role as environmental actor.

The picture in other parts of the world where the EU and EU principles are less influential and where European tourists do not provide the lion's share of the tourist capacity is quite different. Here, environment-society relations play out according to different rules and so do global-local linkages. Thus the influence of the global on the local is both positive and negative, depending on the context. Likewise, the benefit from tourism for the local communities is not always beneficial as the locals are often the stakeholder group that benefits least and "pays" the most in terms of damage. It would provide an interesting analysis to see if the European model can offer incentives for improvements elsewhere or if the particular social structure of the EU institutions is necessary for the kind of relationships that exist in the Mediterranean region. In addition, the Mediterranean example is not necessarily a shining model for the rest of the world as it is far from perfect but it does seem to offer some advantages.

Above everything else, a study of the nature-society relations of tourism show that interests, power and stewardship can change dramatically between actors from one issue to the next. There are no clear cut dimensions along which power and interest can be defined. At the same time, actors can take a positive and a negative approach to certain environmental issues, depending on the sub-issue. Many actors such as the tourists themselves are also distanciated from environmental issues as they do not see the connections between action, behavior and environmental impact. On the other hand, actors such as tour operators do not take a responsible or active role in environmental action as they see their role as removed from that dimension. The following case studies will show that social and historical conditions in different locations will generate different outcomes that make generalizations difficult.

Global institutional policies are notoriously difficult to implement at the local level and the field of tourism is no different. The recommendations of the Blue Plan of the Mediterranean Action Plan have shown that even within the Mediterranean region vastly different conditions exist and that cooperation between the regions is unlikely to lead to improvement. Yet, the precise lack of institutionalization also

means that the privatization of nature as driven by tour operators can continue unhampered.

In this context, this chapter has raised important issues relating to consumptive and equity relations in the context of nature-society and global-local relations that will be addressed in detail in the following chapter. Equity or social justice are usually treated as separate from the environmental field and GPE operates its environmental research largely in the absence of equity considerations but this study will compellingly show that the two are fully intertwined and that environmental research in the absence of social stratification is heavily flawed.

4
Consumption and Equity

In this chapter, I will discuss the dimensions of both consumption and equity in the context of tourism and social and environmental equity. These are the dimensions in global political economy of the environment that are most often neglected by the neoliberal institutionalist literature. Neoliberal institutionalism puts emphasis on political processes and mechanisms based on technical expertise within the parameters of predominant economic values and thus follows the canon of classical economic theory which sees consumption and production as two sides of the same coin. Consumption is the final destination of all that is produced. This means that both production and consumption activities today are more pervasive than at any other time because in the past ten years alone world output grew by 50 per cent and this has obviously led to unprecedented levels of consumption (World Bank, 2008: 193). The academic literature in global political economy has concentrated on analyzing production as the driving vehicle of progress and explanatory variable of social relations, and has seen the activity of consumption as a natural extension of this production structure rather than as a social force or activity in its own right (Boyer and Drache, 1996; Hoogvelt, 1997; Hirst and Thompson, 1996; Dicken, 2007). This means that the study of consumption has been neglected and is one of the least understood of economic activities.

Production and consumption are thus treated as more or less identical phenomena since we consume what we produce and vice-versa. Consumption as a subject matter has traditionally been left to cultural studies and sociology researchers and has not been regarded as a political economy subject although this is beginning to change (Paterson, 2007; Dauvergne, 2008). Consumption is viewed as a natural extension of production and is so closely linked to it that it is considered sufficient

to study production in order to understand larger political economy phenomena, as Perrons argues from this perspective,

> Consumption opportunities are profoundly shaped by material well-being, which in turn remains dependent both on an individual's positioning within the social relations of production, including the gender division of labor, and on their societies' position within the international division of labor (1999: 92).

However, such a perspective reduces consumption to the actual consuming of goods or services and the consumer's place in the division of labor rather than integrating consumption as an integral part of social, political, economic and environmental analysis. Consumption is not only the last stage of the production process but a phenomenon in its own right that influences the production process in more ways than creating demand (Cerny, 2006). It neglects the culture of consumption but also raises normative questions about the nature of the global political economy and the nature of the economic system. It can address many issues such as equity, social justice and general North-South issues which are sidelined in traditional analysis through a lack of conceptual tools adequate for holistic incorporation. It could be argued that the global economic changes that have occurred since the 1970s have coincided with fundamental changes in the consumer ethic in Western industrialized societies, which in turn have led to fundamental changes in the global division of labor. These changes have had negative social consequences as well as further exacerbating environmental degradation and obscuring nature-society relations.

The connection between equity and environmental dimensions of international relations is rarely made as the environment in IR or in global political economy is generally treated from a strictly scientific perspective or as a regulatory matter (see, for example, the regime and governance literature although governance is also concerned with stakeholders which would be an avenue to including equity issues). Thus, the environment is seen as a subject determined by cause-and-effect relationships and their effects on the running of international affairs need to be understood and managed. From this view seeing the environment as subordinate to the international system, it is as good as impossible to perceive of environmental values as such. However, there are many questions relating to the status of the environment and how it relates to social status which are being addressed in other academic disciplines (Schlosberg, 2005; Little, 1999). This

conceptualizing process also needs to be incorporated into IR or global political economy.

There is no need to repeat the theoretical debates on ecocentric versus anthropocentric world views or deep versus shallow ecology in this context. However, some discussion needs to take place first of all on the intrinsic value of environmental resources and sinks but also on the distribution amongst global society of these resources and sinks as well as access to them. There can be no question that well functioning ecosystems are needed for the survival of the human race and that therefore environmental protection in general is not a luxury but a necessity. Deforestation and desertification, for example, have a very real impact on livelihoods and also on global factors such as climate. Atmospheric problems such as global warming, ozone depletion or acid rain are other examples of environmental degradation that play a major role for human survival but also for economic and political functioning. These problems and issues are generally agreed to have a significant social dimension and as such are important policy issues. However, the same cannot be said about, for example, species conservation as in the case of the tiger or the panda bear – or the sea turtle for that matter. These are not generally perceived to be vital issues. Although linkages in ecosystems are not well understood and therefore caution is advisable, it seems that these animals do not fulfill a role without which substantial damage leading to a threat for human survival might ensue. What role, then, should their conservation take? Is this a luxury or do we have a moral obligation to preserve species for future generations, or do we even have an obligation to the species themselves? Should their preservation take precedence over the eradication of hunger, disease or the creation of livelihoods? Should it take precedence over the principle of state sovereignty, i.e. should states be allowed to "interfere" in the internal affairs of another state when it comes to environmental conservation? What about the temporal dimension and inter-generational equity? These are questions that are not the direct focus of global political economy but nevertheless have a vital impact on our understanding of both political economy as well as environmental degradation.

Other questions of environmental equity are about control over and access to environmental resources and a clean living environment as well as distribution of resources. At the national level, research has shown quite clearly that it is especially people at the lower end of social strata and low levels of empowerment who are more exposed to environmental degradation and suffer accordingly from health and deprivation problems. Reasons for this phenomenon are that socially

marginalized people cannot afford to live in areas unaffected by pollution and often have to live near industrial estates with pollution problems (ESRC Global Environmental Change Program Special Briefing No. 7). In addition, they are less able to overcome environmental restraints through the purchase of healthier goods or filtering devices, for example. In many ways, these findings can be extrapolated to the global level. The national or global policy framework is not set up to include marginalized actors as recognized agents and this exclusion is precisely what makes this social group so vulnerable and unrepresented, thus leading to concentrations of degradation (Schlosberg, 2005; Plumwood, 1993; Merchant, 1980).

Another equity issue is the evolution of a global division of labor and the equity dimensions associated with this process. In this global division of labor some regions have clearly been relegated to an agricultural role in the global economy whilst others have the role of cheap labor supplier. Through the intrinsic connections between the various parts of the global economy these roles are not of choice but are dictated by global pressures. This is also where the tourism debate fits in. Like agriculture or cheap labor supplier, it is an economic role that has been dictated by global pressures. Thus environmental access and equity in terms of consumer goods availability, for instance, are preprogrammed with no realistic way out of this equity deficit. Again, this is a structural constraint of the global political economy and one that has existed throughout history in various forms of colonialism. What is different today, however, is that through the privatization of control, the interest in the continued well-being of a particular agricultural area or other economic region is not part of the political set-up any more. Once one region is depleted in environmental or social terms, another region will take its place. Colonial masters were interested in the continued profitability of their land. There is a fundamental difference between the two.

Thus, different levels at which environmental equity is a problem at the international/global level can be discerned. First, there is the agenda-setting power of the various states of the world when it comes to environmental degradation. Second, there is their position in the world economy. Third, there is the issue of purchasing power and consumption. Agenda-setting power is an indirect, structural type of power but equity concerns are by no means limited to structural power. Equity problems can also be found in direct power relations between North and South or between any social groupings. Although coercion by violent means is a relatively rare phenomenon in the international system

given the number of actors in it, the number of violent conflicts with an environmental or resource dimension is rising (Gleditsch, 2001). In addition, there is financial and political coercion, which is a historical phenomenon and has become especially obvious through colonialism and modern forms of colonialism. Although politically most states are independent and sovereign, through their economic position in the global political economy, which is a direct consequence of historical social relations, they are not. Power can also be exercised by the refusal to participate in problem resolution exercises as the withdrawal of the United States from the climate change negotiations during the Bush years demonstrates. Furthermore, the exercise of direct power through global economic institutions determines the way environmental resources and sinks are used.

This point directly relates to the issue of consumption. Environmental degradation is not only a problem related to production but equally, if not more, to consumption. Thus a phrasing of the sustainable development debate or of common but differentiated responsibilities is focused on production but ignores the consumption side. If the consumption side of the global political economy was included in economic analysis of environmental degradation, a different picture of responsibility and duty would arise. The exclusion of the consumption argument thus seems to draw after itself serious equity repercussions which have been neglected in traditional accounts of globalization and environment or even standard development discourse.

Thus it seems that environmental equity is a subject that needs to be more at the forefront of both environmental and global political economy discourses. It is highly relevant to policy discourses as well as issues of environmental ethics as well as social justice. It is also an issue that has been taken up by social movements who pursue the question of global inequality and inequity very seriously, often using vocabulary such as social and environmental justice. I will now explore this point further in relation to the subject of this book, tourism and its relationship with the social and environmental consequences in a local-global setting.

Tourism is often described as the new imperialism precisely because one social group consumes the culture and environment of another social group for entertainment or leisure, thus making local culture a commodity for purchase. The social relations are unequal in that one group is able to afford to travel to far flung places and the other group endeavors to serve them in this adventure by providing all the facilities

but never being able to afford to travel to the home countries of those who they serve. Thus an unequal social relationship exists that determines how social relations are played out. This kind of scenario exists in the luxury resort hotel just as much as in the ecotourist village – as well as in small and medium-sized enterprises to an extent. However, many small hoteliers in the Mediterranean region are indeed able to travel to "Europe" (as it is referred to in Greece despite the fact that Greece is obviously in Europe too) in the winter if they are so inclined, so the equity picture emerging in this model is slightly different. So, again, a triangular relationship emerges between the consuming tourist and the producing local as well as between local and global culture. There may be clashing views on the role and value of nature between the global and local view and the environmental values of various groups are contested.

Tourism and equity

The literature on American resort-style tourism explores the equity dimension in great detail and it is useful to review it here to get an idea of that style to compare it later to other types of tourism (Gössling, 2003a; Harrison, 1992; Richards and Wilson, 2007). Resort tourism in the Caribbean serves as a good example. Tourists generally stay in large resorts that are owned by foreign multinational enterprises and are gated communities. The local population is kept away except as employees at the lower level, such as chamber maids or security guards. Guests are reluctant to leave the resort/compound except in groups because their relationship with the local population is not one of trust and one of wanting to get nearer – the aim of a resort-style holiday is not to bond with locals – it is to experience luxury and leisure in an exotic location where nature and locals are but entertainment. Beaches and land that were previously common property resources of the locals are now closed to them, often with collusion of the national government and often with no legal basis. Local villages become tourist destinations in a limited sense as resorts cater fully to their guests. An excursion to a local village and its souvenir or craft shop will be something special and not part of general movements of visiting tourists. Also, villages and the surrounding environment are not seen as native spaces but as entertainment spaces to be used for waterskiing, jet skiing, jeep rallies, and so on – and naturally these activities take precedence over the attempts of the local population to earn a living as fishermen or in their villages. Local suppliers are rarely asked to supply a resort

hotel, more often than not they are sourced from the home country of the multinational chain owning the hotel. Thus even fruit and vegetables or rice or bread will be flown in rather than a local network of merchants engaged and integrated. Locals are not allowed to use previously open beaches that are now designated for resort use. As a result, it seems difficult to impossible to see how locals and guest/tourists can ever strike up a meaningful or equal relationship. Clearly, the premises of a resort-style holiday are that locals are not an integral part of the equation and are not of particular interest except maybe as props for excursions. This is a kind of vacation that does not engage with locality as something central to the holiday except through the commodification of nature. Likewise, the local population does not benefit from this kind of "development" except in a minimalist, basic way of low-wage labor opportunities. Local merchants are not empowered. The main winners of these arrangements sit abroad and in the government. Such resorts improve trade and economic statistics but they do not improve economic well-being in the country in question. Thus it is very clear that resort-style tourism is not really based on any kind of triangular relationship as discussed in the previous chapter.

Here, the power relations are very clear and linear. Neither locals nor civil society are empowered participants in any process and tour operators play a minimal role in the Caribbean because it is a particularly European model where the tour operator has a lot of power. Resorts are marketed directly rather than through a third party and travel arrangements are made separately from the residential part of the holiday. Harrison (1992) sees two changes in social structure in the host country as a result. First of all, in areas where tourism development has been highly intensive, the lion's share of the market gets taken over by multinational companies and the less profitable share of the market may be left to local entrepreneurs. However, where local entrepreneurs do emerge, they usually have existing links with the wider business community (Harrison, 1992: 23). So intensive tourism resort-style is perceived as inequitable and not profitable by the less connected and capital-owning classes of an "island paradise" as well as by socially aware observers outside. While some trickle down may be observed, this remains a question of absolute versus relative gain where the inequity gap increases rather than decreases.

Second, just like in many other labor-intensive industries, most tourism-related employment is not well paid, especially in the service industries part of tourism. It is argued that the local employees are still paid better than the predominant alternative – agriculture – but neither offers any

opportunity to overcome the problem of absolute versus relative gain in the equity gap. Resort-style tourism offers few employment advances in-resort in a middle-class employment style and the employment opportunities ex-resort are very limited as the sourcing is not done locally. There may be limited opportunities for local crafts and tourist shops as well as boat/jet ski rentals or local excursions but most of these will be covered by the resort too. Thus this is a different model from what we see on the Greek islands. In addition, there is an ethnic dimension. Often, the clientele is white from developed countries (although resorts attract clients from all over the world) while the labor working in the service industries is not, thus evoking colonial servitude and in many ways using the colonial theme as the sales pitch for the holiday. Here, social relations are clearly fundamentally different from what is seen in the Mediterranean. It seems that resorts are first and foremost geared towards the convenience of the hotel owner and of the hotel guests who are not aware of or not interested in having a holiday experience that includes local empowerment and quality interaction with the local populace. It is about place rather than space. It seems that with this model there is no hope for improving equity in tourism and yet it seems to be the predominant vacation model. Now, in the Latin American and Caribbean world this model is counteracted with the model of sustainable or ecotourism as an alternative which I will look at next. This idea of tourism explicitly prides itself on being focused on equity and sustainability, i.e. it is about space rather than place.

The subject of ecotourism or sustainable tourism has been written about widely (Duffy, 2002; McLaren, 2003; France, 1997). While Duffy takes a critical stance, the literature is mostly widely supportive of sustainable tourism as a capacity-building trend in development. It provides a means by which tourist dollars can go right to the source where they are needed most, the local poor or relatively down at heel, it provides structural advancement to local communities through direct control over their future and through direct income as entrepreneurs rather than employees, and by being a low impact activity, its impact on the environment is limited. Meanwhile, it creates a unique connection between local and global by bringing together people from different parts of the globe and the visitors get a unique appreciation of local culture, thus cultures meeting at an equitable level rather than in a subservient environment. Ecotourism could take place as part of a resort-type holiday with an excursion to indigenous community living (Bookman, 2006) or it could be a vacation in itself. It is seen as a form

of "traveling" rather than tourism by those who engage in it because of its image and its engagement with local communities. It could be about creativity and culture (Richards and Wilson, 2007). Very often it is set up to protect a particular local resource such as biodiversity or forests and thus give these potential commodities an environmental but also economic value of itself. Thus ecotourism is about awareness and about tackling the structures of the tourist industry that are perceived as so very harmful in its more predominant forms. As McLaren puts it:

> Conservationists and government planners cite many reasons that ecotravel to protected areas can be advantageous. They believe ecotravel is a subjectively healthier kind of tourism that attracts desirable visitors. Given that ecotravelers are often more tolerant of rustic, basic facilities and infrastructure, tourism inflow can be increased without major expenditures. In some cases ecotourism can support the capital improvements over the long term, starting with just a trickle of undemanding tourists who prefer small-scale accommodations built by local people with native rather than costly and pretentious tourist facilities. Protection of certain natural areas for tourism encourages land use planning. In theory, rural communities will receive the economic benefits of ecotourism. Ideally, ecotourism's profits will help local people; they will in turn participate in integrated, regional planning…The tourism industry regards ecotourism as an exciting product to market; environmental groups tend to see it more as a means of conservation and protection. A number of environmental groups and socially responsible organizations have joined the ecotourism industry, looking for ways to promote and finance conservation efforts, and developed the first models of ecotourism by using tourist fees to support conservation work…Local people opposed many of these conservation projects which created conflicts in the nearby communities. Because of the fragility of the favored areas the increased numbers of tourists soon began to take a toll on the environment. The original designers of ecotourism realized that ecotourists were loving nature to death and disrupting the lives of local people (2003: 93/94).

As McLaren illustrates, the basic idea behind ecotourism may be beneficial but the way it is applied in practice does not always produce the desired results. She partly blames this on the free market principles behind ecotourism that make it impossible to apply certain restrictions.

But fundamentally, this goes back to the triangle of power between the actors in the system and the understanding of nature-society relations. McLaren's work focuses on, but is not exclusively about, the relationship between indigenous communities and national parks. Here, many outside actors have their stakes and decisions will be imposed from outside on how the parks and the tourism should be managed. In addition, there may not be adequate understanding as to how the park will benefit all. Tourists may stay in one village and other villages may lose out and have to sacrifice other economic activities for the national park. In a marine context, coral reefs may be the ecotourist attraction and lead to employment for diver guides and the restaurant and accommodation trade, yet local fishermen will lose out because their trade is curtailed. Then it becomes a question of how many benefit as opposed to how many lose out. In addition, the understanding of the desirability of preserving coral reefs except as a source of income for some remains unclear. So, the desire to use a local environmental "commodity" for tourism is something that is not steered from below but from above. The tension between local communities and conservation efforts and the equity dimensions of this tension will be explored further in the next section.

Thus it seems that ecotourism does not offer the promised equity relations that its proponents argue are its obvious strength. While there is a much more direct relationship between tourist and local, this does not translate into empowerment for the local population or only in rare cases, depending on the project and how the ecotourism program was set up. In any case, the successful programs described in France (1997) are usually on a much smaller scale and often in developed rather than developing countries where control over the program is retained by the locals and where traveling to the destination is much easier than long treks to, for example, the rain forests of Costa Rica. Doing a cookery course in Tuscany, a wine tasting seminar in Burgundy, or living in a monastery anywhere are projects of a different magnitude that engender different social relations than living in a village in nearly anywhere in the developing world to "consume" nature. Thus there is a fundamental equity deficit in most forms of tourism that involves societies of different social standing or so it appears. However, some forms of tourism notionally address this imbalance and thus as a first step raise awareness that this is a problem in the first place. In any case, in order to be truly sustainable, ecotourism necessarily has to take place on a small scale and given the tourist growth rates, it is clearly not a model for the whole tourism sector. But it does

not offer guidelines on how to improve social relations and make them more equitable in other sectors of the tourist industry. This point will now be explored further in the environmental context.

Tourism, equity and environment

As the above section showed, the same dichotomy discussed in the previous chapter arises in the equity context too. It is generally assumed in the romanticized environmental literature that indigenous or local populations know best what is good for the environment and that outside forces stop them from practicing age-old nature-society relations that ensure harmonious conditions for both people and nature. Ample case studies show that this is simply not the case. Thus conflicts arise in several ways. There are situations where outsiders take on the role of guardian for a particular environment and this is in conflict with local interests or practices or ideas about where this particular region should be heading. This could be either good for the environment and bad for people or bad for both. The "needs" of the environment may also be ignored and lead to large-scale degradation or loss of biodiversity. Another option could be that the environment gets "sculpted" to conform to a certain imagery of what that region should be like. An example here is the clearing of mangrove forests to conform to picture perfect views of clear green or blue sea and the establishment of artificial beaches. Again, the various models of tourism and their clientele will have different stories to tell and different priorities.

In this section, I will look at this problem in more detail from an empirical perspective and then contrast it with various forms of environmental or ecological democracy as forms of political organization to achieve more environmental equity. I will do so in a more general context and then explore these points with reference to the case studies of this book in more detail in the case study chapters. Environmental justice through forms of "green democracy" is an attempt to analyze the problem of equity not through the relational lens between the groups of actors but through an ideational lens as a form of institution to ensure more equitable relations as assured through political frameworks. In the consumption section later in this chapter, this same problem will be addressed through a political economy framework and global institutional framework approach as an alternative for addressing the equity deficit.

Various types of tourism have different main actors involved. While the European tourist model gives substantial power to tour operators,

this actor is not very prevalent in other forms of tourism organization and elsewhere in the world with the possible exception of some ecotourist ventures. In the luxury resort model, power is retained with the multinational hotelier and, to some degree, national governments. There are a variety of ecotourism models and while on the surface power seems to be retained at the local level to a substantive degree, this does not play out in this way as there is a whole commodity chain attached to the ecotourist holiday that is not ecotourist in the least – travel arrangements and booking facilities as well as marketing. Thus it is not easy to generalize the tourist industry.

This then leads to the question of how to define equitable social relations in the tourist sector. It seems there is no equity deficit for the tourist or the intermediaries between tourists and locals. Likewise, there does not seem to be an equity deficit for the operators of multinational hotel chains/resorts or large-scale hoteliers that run luxury or high-scale establishments. So, who suffers the equity deficit? First of all, locals in developing countries who are dependent on tourism as a source of employment as well as tourist-dependent migrants to tourist regions are a prime target for suffering unequal social relations due to their lack of structural power and their role as cheap labor. The previous chapters showed that even capital-owning small and medium-sized hotel business owners suffer from inequitable social relations. Then there are locals who are not in the tourist industry and whose livelihoods are undermined by tourism. So the problem here is too much top-down pressure and a lack of local self-determination at first sight. What does this mean for equity and environment relations?

Environmental justice writers such as Bullard (2005) and Timmons Roberts and Parks (2007) argue that true environmental improvement or healthy environment-society relations can only exist in an equitable society. From this it does not necessarily follow that an equitable society is necessarily a sustainable society, so there is no direct connection between equity and environment except that equity is necessary for healthy social relations while sustainability is not or is not perceived to be. This addresses one dichotomy. The other dichotomy is if an outside social force can take on the role of environmental guardian in the absence of any local interest in this matter – would this be equitable or inequitable? In other words, does place have a global or a local environmental ethic and does the principle of self-determination stand above environmental interests? And who decides what constitutes environmental degradation in a particular context?

Such questions have long been the subject of "green" political theory. Joan Martinez-Alier, an ecological economist and not a political theorist, sees the clash between environment and economy as the root cause of ecological conflict, as does my own work. Fundamentally, the incommensurability of values between a social system based on accumulation of wealth and economic efficiency with the aim of unlimited growth is incompatible with a complex ecosystem. He argues that the economic system is organized as if it was not located within these specific ecological constraints (2002). However, this does not help find answers to questions as to what form of political organization is most suitable to combine equity and sustainable environment-society relations except that it would not be based on unlimited growth or take uncritical assumptions of economic growth as its base. Andy Dobson's work is generally seen as the authoritative work on distributional justice and environment and as the most exhaustive treatment of the subject available (Schlosberg, 2005: 107). Dobson (2003) posits that social justice and environmental sustainability may possibly be incompatible and that there are no grounds to assume that social justice is a prerequisite for environmental sustainability. Both social justice and environmental sustainability are contested terms with no determinate meaning – for example, in the liberal view an unequal distribution of social goods and bads is perfectly acceptable as long as such an unequal distribution is fairly arrived at. Thus it presupposes inequality as a starting point. Even with a broadly egalitarian view of justice, it does not follow that environmental sustainability will follow social justice. In a global society where environmental degradation is a fact of life to sustain the economy, some localities necessarily have to carry the can while others can fight to be spared. As long as there is no type of tourism that is sustainable and equitable, some places have to be degraded and thus suffer from a lack of equitable social relations. According to Dobson, for the time being there is no political system (and also no economic system) that can provide the goods, so to speak, without harming people and environment.

The works and debates by the green political theorists such as Eckersley (2004) and Laferrière and Stoett (1999, 2005) focus on the state and environmental or ecocentric or anthropocentric values. Luke (2009) especially critiques Eckersley's approach and argues that its emphasis on accountability and the assumption that this will lead to more ecocentrism is not a tenable link. He argues:

> In an era of neoliberal economy and professional-technical managerialism, one should not assume "the social structures of interna-

> tional anarchy, global capitalism, and the liberal democratic state are necessarily anti-ecological and mutually reinforcing, or that they foreclose the possibility of any progressive transformation of states as governance structures" (Eckersley, 2004: 14). While none of these formations are necessarily anti-ecological, they still are quite often contingently, materially, and operationally anti-ecological with regard to their social production of spatial sites, material settings, and practical structures (Luke, 2009: 27).

Luke does not see greater democratic accountability as the solution to an environmentally harmful political and economic system. Of course it has led to the rise of environmental multilateralism and the codification of international environmental law as well as environmental consciousness in the state and corporate system as well as to the establishment of a strong environmentally focused civil society and its successes, but for him it then does not necessarily follow that this will lead to more environmentally responsible states and state system. He points out that collective choice conundrums will continue to exist and that they will not be qualitatively different, whether they are green or non-green. In his words, "The contradictions of collective will prove even more pernicious as such good will is discovered to be one of the movement's most limited, and perhaps nonrenewable, resources (Ibid: 29)." Green states would still be constrained by the same mechanisms that constrain states in general except that a variety of green visions would now be contested in the political process. The environment would still retain the status of a commodity in a discursive democracy so green, accountable democracy does not touch the root causes of the degrading relationship between environment and society and would not fundamentally alter the existing problems being faced or remove them from the political arena.

So, this leaves a political dilemma where the attainment of social justice is dependent on ideological factors and can be defined in different ways. It is also questionable that the mere existence of social-environmental justice will lead to environmental improvement as it is fundamentally about distributional principles and social justice may only mean that environmental ills are evenly distributed between different social groups rather than ceasing to exist. Social justice or equity in and of itself is independent of environmental improvement, for that an ecological value base within society is needed. However, in a democratic or equitable society, a variety of approaches, values and ideologies will exist and these are contested and this contestation will be played out as a symptom/sign of a deliberative and equitable society.

Thus the social relations based on power and self-interest which form the basis of existing political and economic systems are not bound to cease, rather the opposite. So the bureaucratic vicissitudes that hamper ecological progress as it stands are likely to continue to make life difficult even under an ecologically defined political system.

This, then, leads back to the questions asked at the beginning of this chapter. How can environmental protection be adequately represented in a political system and how can environmental equity for global citizens be achieved at the same time? It seems that the closest answer was Martinez-Alier's who argued that only an economic system that is not based on commodification can give adequate conditions for such a society. However, how is such a system compatible with democratic values and how can it be arrived at democratically? Given that commodification benefits every person, at least in the liberal sense of absolute gains, it seems that a political entity not based on commodification could only be achieved through authoritarian means. Likewise, there is no evidence that an authoritarian green system could provide the right tools for a sustainable nature-society co-existence. Authoritarian political systems in history have not demonstrated a socially and environmentally responsible trend to sustainability. Sustainable living by its very nature cannot be authoritarian but is based on rational understanding of nature-society relations with the assumption that a rational understanding of mutual dependence will lead to sustainable social relations and a sustainable economic method. How can such rational understanding be fused with an economy with a profit motive? Such logic assumes that rationally understanding that there is a problem will automatically lead to a willingness to avoid the problem. However, this mostly works only when a social group is directly affected by the problem and then politically organizes itself. This, furthermore, only works if they can empower themselves. However, in a global economy the main problem is that many local groups are incapable of empowering themselves in the face of global forces. Thus they need allies elsewhere. It seems that the most promising group to become allies is the tourists in this case and not the corporate tourist entities. However, the tourists have a consumption/equity problem and may not be aware of these dilemmas. They may also not be rationally convinced that they have a moral role in this relationship. The relationship between consumption, tourism and the environment as the starting point for an ethics of tourism will be considered next.

Consumption and tourism

The subjects of equity and consumption are closely related in an environmental context. Consumption as a political economy subject and as a global environmental politics subject has received substantial attention in recent years, from a variety of perspectives. First of all, consumption as a political activity has been highlighted, be it shareholder activism, sustainable consumption, the sociology of consumption or the relationship between consumption and production. Then the role of unequal consumption has been raised as an equity issue. Likewise, the ethics of consumption has seen a wealth of writing. While some of these writings are normative, some are empirical and deal with increasing consumer choices and ethical consumerism. The literature can be condensed to two questions: How to consume and how much to consume. The lion's share of the literature is on the former question.

The pathbreaking research on this topic is still Princen et al.'s *Confronting Consumption* (2002) which contains an edited collection of contributions presented at several International Studies Association (ISA) conventions. There is an understanding that we are not dealing with an ever increasing cake or a cake that remains the same size in terms of resource and sink capacity on this planet. Some resources are infinite, others are not. Clearly, for a sustainable future, the pressure on resources and sinks needs to ease up. In other words, the cake to be consumed needs to become smaller while still providing the same nutrition. At the same time, it needs to be divided up differently to provide nutrition where it has fallen short. Clearly modern technology or ecological modernization can provide us with the tools to achieve this but it does not supply the distribution mechanisms to provide more equal access to resources and sinks. Recent technological developments have shown that the availability of more sustainable technology alone is not enough to achieve more equity and sustainability or eradicate poverty because the cost and access to such technologies makes it unattainable to the majority of people who need it most. Some would go much further, as, for example, David Harvey who argues that the current international or global system can only be described as "accumulation by dispossession" (Harvey, 2003: 137). Thus, existence of solutions to a particular problem does not solve a problem. And this is exactly where the notion of sacrifice becomes important as it highlights the chasm between technological capability and political reality.

Whatever our perspective on resources and their distribution is, existing resource consumption can be likened to a "global cake" that is

eaten by the world population. The cliché of the 80 per cent of resources being consumed by 20 per cent of the world's population has to be re-stated – i.e. if the current rate of consumption in the Western world is to be reproduced globally (after all, the promise of liberalism or a neoliberal market economy…!), then five times as many resources or five additional planet Earths are needed. Clearly, these are not available. That brings us back to the two solutions of the technocentric versus the ecocentric view: either technological progress makes the resources stretch for such an expansion (not a likely picture at the moment) or consumption rates have to be adjusted. Or the dream of prosperity for all has to be abandoned and we acknowledge that there is not enough for everybody to go around. These decisions are made by the ones for whom sacrifice would be a moral choice, not by those who sacrifice habitually and due to lack of choice – in other words such choices would be made by the consumers of the 80 per cent of resources, not by the disempowered consumption-challenged majority.

Tom Princen's *The Logic of Sufficiency* (2006) argument for sufficiency as one of the recent path-breaking texts on consumption issues does not suggest a notion of sacrifice or of a radical lifestyle change. Rather, it is based on questioning the logic that efficiency as defined by economies of scale and instant maximized profits without regard for the future is the best organizing principle for economy and society. Princen comes at this from the perspective of an ecocentric resource use specialist and thus neatly slots into (and was indeed one of the founding thinkers of) a growing body of literature that addresses this point from a similar vein but different disciplinary or inter-disciplinary foci. Consumer psychology writers have conducted studies that show that instant gratification and indiscriminate material consumption actually lead to less rather than more happiness. A burgeoning literature on the ethics of consumption has questioned neoliberal lifestyles. Of course there are various civil society movements doing the same. Princen's work contributes to and defines this literature in a new way with the logic of sufficiency. He illustrates with case studies that the concept of sufficiency can indeed by applied to mainstream economic, social, and political scenarios as the citizens of a Toronto island, Maine fishermen and a West coast logging company demonstrate. However, his studies are all of a particularly local nature and deal with the local part of society's interactions. Can sufficiency be applied to the global level?

When it comes to tourism, the consumption problem can be defined as twofold. On the one hand there is unequal consumption of "tourist

venues/nature" as only a relatively small part of the world population can afford to be a tourist or indeed has the social setup to be a tourist. On the other, travel or the consumption of means of transport and leisure activities has a high social and ecological impact in localities removed from home and this local-global linkage or impact is an unequal exchange as tourism may take place everywhere in the world, in developed and less-developed locations, but again a relatively small number of people participate in this unequal exchange. Thus tourist locations are "consumed" extremely unevenly.

Even the concept of sustainable tourism cannot change this fact. Travel and tourism are forms of excessive consumption that hurt the planet. The carbon footprint associated with an intercontinental flight immediately catapults an individual in the top category of "polluter" however sustainable their lifestyle otherwise. So a socially and ecologically conscious tourist can lessen their environmental impact by their choice of holiday and their choice of activity and accommodation while on holiday but this does not change the fundamental underlying principle that the further you displace yourself from your regular residence, the more harmful your travels are. The first logical conclusion of this, therefore, is of course that traveling is bad for the environment. However, this is too simple a picture.

Let us draw an analogy with fruit and vegetables that have recently come under attack in the press. For example, snowpeas (*mangetout*) from Kenya have been maligned in Great Britain and it is recommended that people only buy locally-grown, organic food because of the food's carbon footprint, traveling times, giving more power to local farmers, and so on. However, snowpeas from Kenya, despite their equity conditions also not being ideal, provide an opportunity for Kenyan farmers to be integrated into the world economy and be autonomous economic agents, something they could not be until this market opened. Closing global markets off, however underprivileged farmers in less developed countries (LDCs) are on these markets, would not contribute to global equity and would make a parody out of "think global, act locally". In addition, many ecological footprint studies show that ironically, agricultural produce from developing countries is still more environmentally friendly than more local produce despite its air travel stigma. While it does not make sense to source globally what is available locally (such as apples to the UK from New Zealand), having a market that gives chances of participation in the global economy that are not otherwise available cannot be something that gets sacrificed for well meaning ideas to cut down on carbon emissions. Likewise the

tourism industry: There is no doubt that the tourism industry opens doors for people in developing countries that do bring benefits and that would not be available in the absence of this excessive tourism consumption and inequitable relations. However, there needs to be a discussion on scale and there needs to be more emphasis on equity and sustainability. This means that the individual tourist needs to travel with social and ecological awareness. It does not mean that travels should be a trip to the local lake/beach and everybody camping there and living off berries to put it in jest. Travel to the beach and to far flung beaches at that has its place in society. But a four day trip half way around the world does not make any sense while a bi-annual family holiday for longer periods of time in a location where an open exchange takes place with the local population and local commodities such as local food, for example, does much more. It is also something that can benefit both sides. For children, for example, the experience of playing and communicating with local children is an invaluable memory that teaches more about social relations, tolerance and difference than any textbook, movie or parental discussion does. These are experiences that contribute to equity even though no material exchange has taken place. These points will now be developed further in a more environment-focused context.

Tourism, consumption and environment

Tying the environmental dimension more directly to the tourism and consumption discussion means going back to the subject of global-local linkages. On the one hand, interest for other environments and thus the consumption of far flung places allows their protection in ways that are not otherwise possible, such as the establishment of national parks and wildlife conservation. On the other hand, what the impact of such commodification is in environmental terms warrants further debate.

These points are best explored by looking at some of the recent literature and then to apply it to beach/marine tourism. Uddhammer (2006) has addressed the interplay between development, conservation and tourism in the context of game parks which he argues are rarely popular with the local population yet are one of the most favorite ways to "consume" nature for Western tourists. Uddhammer acknowledges the conflict between local and outside perceptions:

> People in metropolitan areas and in the west may view conservation measures as something very progressive and enlightened. In poor

> rural areas where food and fuel is scarce and traditional ways of life still dominant, there are indications that such ideas have little support (2006: 656).

However, Uddhammer, through his African and Indian case studies, goes on to argue that ecotourism empowers local populations if they are empowered through the national park structures. Post-apartheid South Africa, by giving land back to native tribes and assigning ranger jobs and concessions to locals, was particularly successful in empowerment as well as in making the local population interested in wildlife conservation as an economic strategy. So, attracting foreign tourists and offering commodified nature for consumption is a successful economic strategy. Rosaleen Duffy in *A Trip Too Far* (2002) takes a less benign view of ecotourism. To quote her at length:

> It is critical to place the debate over sustainable development in the South in its political context. It is an example of how interest groups, such as business operators, are able to claim green credentials. Ecotourism, like other forms of business involved in green capitalism, places profit at the forefront of its operations. The establishment of ecotourism ventures is very clearly related to ideas of valuing the environment as an economic resource because it means that conservation has to be financially sustainable. The difficulty with this is that only environments and landscapes that are attractive to ecotourists will be conserved, regardless of their importance to a wider ecosystem. One example of this is that mangroves have tended to be overlooked by ecotourists in favor of coral reefs. Ecotourism, which uses visitor-valuating techniques, means that mangroves are less financially viable than coral reefs because visitors are less likely to want to see them. However, in environmental terms, mangroves are essential for reefs as a nursery for fish and a means of filtering out mud from rivers that would otherwise smother reefs.
>
> Ecotourism like conventional tourism presents developing countries with a series of challenges and it is not the cost-free strategy that its advocates suggest. Rather, it is a highly politicized strategy that does not offer a neutral path to sustainable development for the South. It does not require a radical or fundamental shift but operates within existing social, economic and political structures (2002: 155/156).

In a very clear and concise manner, Duffy brings to the point that ecotourism does not provide the answers to the equity/consumption/

environment problem in tourism. Without even addressing the issue of global-local linkages, she pinpoints the problems with sustainable tourism at the tourist location. In essence, she highlights the same problem identified by McLaren above, namely that any framework that is based on neoliberal or free market principles, such as sustainable development and thus what sustainable tourism clearly is, will suffer from the same structural constraints of the existing economic system.

These constraints are the for-profit motive of the environment, thus the assignation of an economic value rather than an intrinsic value. It also goes back to what was discussed above, namely that only an understanding of nature-society relations clearly leads to a respectful and sustainable relationship with nature rather than an understanding that nature provides a good or adequate livelihood. Ecotourism is based on the romanticized view that a natural paradise still exists in which indigenous societies live in harmony with nature rather than in a disconnected way like industrial society. Clearly, such societies exist but ecotourism is not based on such principles. In addition, tourists partaking in eco-travel clearly also are disconnected at least partially from either the social or the ecological connection that they seek from "visiting" nature. Leaving aside tourists/travelers who spend months traveling around continents on public transport and staying in local hostels, most tourists have a very individualistic attitude to nature and want to experience it – thus putting their own experiences before trying to preserve or conserve the planet. Wanting to see something before it has disappeared irretrievably is a prime motivation. Wanting to experience something unspoilt is another. Not wanting to spend your holidays in a place where nature has already been tamed and groomed to fit certain stereotypes or demands (like in resorts) is another. In addition, staying at home and foregoing these pleasures does not bring any visible protection to the environment except if a substantial number of people did it. So sacrificing one's own pleasures for some ethical notion of protecting the environment does not seem to be an effective strategy. In the equity context it was clear that it was not a helpful strategy either.

What is the answer? To be a tourist is to indulge in overconsumption. To stay at home does not seem to make any difference unless we lived in a society where everybody had a social and ecological awareness, understanding, and consciousness. In addition, tourism may still be the lesser evil for the ecosystems in tourist hotspots compared with other fates or the absence of any economic activity in these regions. This then takes us back to general questions as to how the economy needs to be organized in order to lead to sustainable nature-society

relations and whatever goes on in the tourist sector is just one symptom of this larger structural problem. However, in order to understand the big picture, it is necessary to understand the small picture as it illustrates what is wrong with the big picture.

The first step is awareness as to how a society consumes and what the impacts of this consumption are. In 2009 these debates are increasingly taking place. A larger and larger share of the population is aware of the concepts of a carbon footprint if not yet of the ecological footprint. However, debates are still very much about the level at which this problem needs to be addressed – at the level of production, at the governmental level or through individual consciousness. Hardly a day goes by without an article on green behavior being published in the US press – a phenomenon that seems quaint to the European observer who went through this phase a decade ago or, in the case of the Northwest European, even in the early 1980s. However, in the American press and consciousness the problem is very much framed in terms of sustainable consumption rather than in terms of how much consumption. The structural notion of consumption is not challenged. A hybrid car or biofuels are seen as the answer, and trying to use your car less and walking more or trying to live in a way that you are less dependent on your car is not up for discussion. Energy efficient light bulbs are great but switching appliances off when you do not need them or to unplug them is cumbersome and not up for discussion – heaven forbid have fewer appliances. Likewise with travel. Questioning your impact on your host environment is not something travelers routinely do. They simply demand the same amenities as they are used to at home even if the standard of consumption is lower in their host country – swimming pools are not perceived as necessary when there is a big, clean sea right outside. There is a different temperature "gauge" and air conditioning is a fairly recent addition to most seaside areas. Yet the Westerner demands these luxuries without thinking where the electricity or the water for this comes from and what impact it has on the local infrastructure. After all, their lifestyle is the one that is the standard that the rest of the world aspires to and therefore should be taken for granted for accommodation for Westerners. These are the issues that need to be addressed first and foremost in the tourism and consumption debate. Changing institutions and power structures only go so far, however. What also needs to be achieved is equity in living standards and an acceptance and willingness to learn rather than to assert a perceived natural right to amenities. Thus consumption and the environment is about values just as much as it is about commodification.

Conclusions

Rather than providing answers, the analysis of the relationship between equity, consumption, tourism and the environment has highlighted issues and dilemmas for which there are no clear cut answers or normative prescriptions. The main problems are the following:

No form of tourism seems to provide an answer as to how a more equitable relationship can be achieved although the small and medium-sized enterprise model in the Mediterranean seems to confer the most power to the local base despite the triangular relationship involving "brokers" or tour operators. The three case studies in the following section of the book will explore these relations in more detail.

There is no answer as to how to address equity issues and entitlements to speak on behalf of a local environment. It is often assumed that local stakeholders and local indigenous communities are the primary representatives of the local environment; however, especially in tourism case studies, such a relationship is not confirmed and more often than not it is exactly the local community that is willing to sacrifice the environment for the economic community. This then leaves outside civil society groups to speak up on behalf of the environment which in turn leads to friction. Thus nature-society relations and representations of the issue are far from easy and are contested in a normative as well as very practical way.

Likewise, the consumptive relations of tourism are equally contested. While there is no question that overconsumption through tourism by a small part of wealthy citizens on the planet contributes to the inequitable relations and the commodification of nature as well as massive carbon footprints, the absence of tourism would not improve equity nor would it prevent the commodification of nature. Thus tourism is a linear relationship based on an unequal exchange, yet its absence would not improve the environmental or the equity situation. Yet, at the same time, there are no clear-cut answers as to what type of social relations in tourism would indeed improve this no-win situation. There is no question/doubt that resort-type tourism is clearly not the answer and is the one type of tourism whose abolition would indeed lead to more equity and would benefit the environment. However, the answer is not so easy for small, medium-sized and ecotourism establishments. There is clear economic benefit if not environmental benefit for the local communities, even if the exchange is uneven.

This brings us back to rationality and knowledge about nature-society relations as well as the relationship between economy and environment. Clearly, there are a variety of ideologies and value systems as to how nature-society relations should be and whether economic development should take precedence over environmental protection or even the protection of indigenous lifestyles. Some of these approaches put environment before human development, some put human development before environmental protection. It is not my intention here to enter into a debate of anthropocentric versus ecocentric values but I will make an argument that humans and environment are not separate entities – it is not human versus the environment but rather human/society as part of the environment. As such, certain aspects of environmental change are acceptable even if they alter existing ecosystems. This is a question of degree. The second problem is that of territoriality. Is there a sense of entitlement because one lives in a particular environment or are we all global citizens who are entitled to having a stake in all environments or ecosystems? Clearly the modern nation-state system puts legal boundaries to a global ethic of stake holding. However, the principles and norms of sustainable development, which are espoused by most states and international organizations as well as the increasing transnationalism of global affairs, support a global ethic of citizenship and responsibility. Thus the ideas of global responsibility can be said to be morally accepted even if curtailed by a legal doctrine of state sovereignty. Therefore tourists would have moral rights to be interested in their host environment even if this is not legally enshrined.

Thus the topic of environmental responsibility and who knows best what is best environmentally is a question to which there are no clear-cut answers. It can be broached from a scientific perspective arguing that scientific evidence can indicate what the best course of action is for a particular environment. However, just like medical evidence, these are not absolute universal truths whose laws remain unchallenged. Scientific principles change and change quite radically. Therefore their implementation over the heads of local considerations does have a neocolonial or imperial aspect. On the other hand, indigenous approaches to living with nature have also been eroded and a lot of what gets passed off as indigenous knowledge is anything but this. Thus there is no ideal guardian of the environment and no party can be assumed to hold the answers as to what constitutes the best in terms of nature-society relations. This brings us back to general principles that have rationally been identified as problematic again and again in various contexts, such as the excessive

commodification of nature and the relationship between economy and environment. As long as the environment is subordinated to economic principles, equitable environment-society relations can only ever be a compromise. These issues will now be explored in an empirical context in the case studies.

Part II
Case Studies

5
Zakynthos

This chapter will look at the case of Zakynthos as an example of nature-society relations on an island whose economic base is predominantly composed of small and medium-sized tourist enterprises and where an overt environmental conflict exists. A brief historical overview will be given followed by a discussion of the position of civil society in Greek politics. These are necessary prerequisites for analyzing the environmental conflict between turtle breeding and touristic development on this island. Zakynthos, unlike the case study on Thassos in this book, has strong civil society involvement in its touristic and environmental dealings, and in many ways this seems atypical for Greece which does not have a political culture of civil society activity. This oddity will be discussed as well before analyzing the details of social relations. Zakynthos has a relatively long history of a perceived conflict between the interests of the turtles and the inhabitants of the island, and this conflict is nowhere near to being resolved. This chapter will discuss the role of civil society in the Zakynthos case in detail as it differs from standard civil society accounts and is quite central to this case. This will be followed by a history of turtle and tourism relations on Zakynthos and a more detailed discussion of the two turtle breeding areas – the Vassilikos peninsula and the Laganas/Kalamaki resorts. Furthermore, this chapter will discuss several cases that demonstrate important aspects of the way nature-society relations play out on Zakynthos and include the relationship between tour operators and turtles, a European Court of Justice case regarding Greek violation of EU environmental law, and the development of a marine park. The island is an example of how small and medium-sized enterprises are not an empowered model of doing business and, as such, this disempowerment appears in the way the physical environment is perceived. Many people were interviewed for

this study but are not acknowledged in the text to preserve their anonymity.

Zakynthos is the southernmost of a string of islands in the Ionian Sea, located off the western coast of Greece, of which Corfu is probably the best known. The island enjoys a typical Mediterranean climate but receives more rainfall than mainland Greece and is thus much greener and fertile. Zakynthos is therefore known as "the flower of the Levant". The Ionian Islands have held a strategically important position since Homeric times when they played a vital role in east-west shipping in the Mediterranean. Ulysses' home, for example, was the island of Ithaca (or Lefkas as some other sources surmise), just to the north of Zakynthos. These islands act as an informal demarcation line between the Eastern and Western Mediterranean. Consequently the islands were heavily contested in all phases of ancient, medieval and modern history.

According to Gallant, Mycenian Greeks, Romans, the Byzantine Empire and later Italian city-states, the Genoese and then the Venetians all controlled the Ionian Islands in these powers' heydays. Venetian rule lasted for nearly 400 years, from 1402–1797 (Gallant 2002: 4). This Venetian epoch left its biggest mark on the island and has heavily influenced its culture and self-perception, which makes it different from other parts of Greece that were heavily influenced by the Ottoman Empire (Theodossopoulos, 2003: 18). The Venetians ran an estate system as a result of Venetian imperial policy and Zakynthos specialized in the agrarian production of currant grapes for export to Europe in the form of dried raisins. Thus, "long before other regions of the Balkans, the Ionian islands were incorporated into the burgeoning Eurocentric mercantile world system as a seller of export cash crops and a buyer of basic subsistence commodities" (Gallant, 2002: 5). Economic wealth was concentrated in the hands of the noblemen and did not trickle down to all of society. The Venetians kept a tight reign on how many "aristocrats" were on the island and excluded the growing middle class from economic and political privileges (Theodossopoulos, 2003: 18). The island was composed of the "aristocratic" class, the middle classes and landless tenants (*semproi*) in the employ of their feudal/aristocratic masters.

After nearly a century of French rule as a result of Napoleon's defeat of the Austrian forces in northern Italy in 1797, the British launched a military expedition against the French and Zakynthos was the first island to fall in October 1809 (Gallant, 2002: 6). The Ionian Islands then became a protectorate of the British crown run by a lord high

commissioner. However, the British leadership reinstated the aristocrats and thus did not fundamentally change the power relations from what they were under the Venetians. In unison with the general drive in Europe at the time, there were many uprisings and much underground activity. In 1894, the Danish prince, William of Glücksburg, became the first modern Greek king and Greece's history as a modern nation-state began. It was at this time that the power of the aristocracy was clipped back. With incorporation into the Greek state, the importance of Zakynthos town as a trading center declined and by 1930 it had become a mere provincial town.

The island did not play a major role in the First or Second World War nor has it been anything more than a peripheral island in postwar Greek history. What this tells us, however, is that the island of Zakynthos has been very much connected to the regional (or what was then perceived as the global) political economy throughout the times as an agricultural and strategic maritime venue. This does not make it a central location nor does it elevate it from its largely peripheral status but it does show that it was linked globally even before the rise of tourism. It also shows that the other main economic activity in Zakynthos, agriculture, has a long history and strong roots. In fact, even today many small hoteliers or owners of other small tourist enterprises maintain an agricultural business side-by-side with their tourism source of income (Theodossopoulos, 2000). Furthermore, it shows that it is likely that the inhabitants of Zakynthos form a cohesive ethnic group as agrarian societies of that magnitude do not attract a lot of migration and also do not have large disposable incomes. Therefore it is unlikely that a large merchant class to complement the agrarian society exist(ed) on the island – unlike in other parts of Greece, such as the metropolitan areas of Athens and Thessaloniki or other port cities. Thus the picture that emerges of Zakynthos at the beginning of its tourism career is that of an inward-looking island community that may have been linked to agricultural markets but, due to its modest income base, the island's society had modest consumption rates as well as few opportunities to build an understanding of the global service industry of which it was about to become a part. Tourism thus fundamentally changed social relations which even back in the 1980s were partially still based on the landlord-tenant relationship. But before discussing this era in detail, a brief look at some peculiarities of the Greek political system are in order to explain the social relations between the various groups of actors involved in the environmental and touristic life of Zakynthos.

Greek politics and civil society

Modern Greek politics resumed after the end of the Military Junta in 1974. However, there is continuity between the political culture before the Junta and that which emerged following the Junta. The Greek political system is comprised of a very strong state that leaves less room for other social institutions than in other Western democracies. In fact, Stefanides argues that there is incompatibility between some aspects of the Greek political system and the "contractual idea of citizenship in a liberal democratic polity which reflects the logic of free market relations" (2007: 21). A peculiarity of the Greek political system is that of patron-client relations instead of lobby politics like in other Western democracies. This system dates back historically and was never replaced in the modern democratic form of government. Therefore, the possibility of civil society acting as a strong political block can be problematic as there are no obvious political channels that could be used, apart from the patron-client network. Civil society is often lacking visibility, unlike in many other countries of similar economic standing, and this factor is important in understanding the social relations in the environmental conflict about turtles in Zakynthos. Zakynthos also represents an unusual situation in that there is a strong civil society component to its political situation concerning the turtle conflict but not in the way we traditionally understand civil society in the global governance literature.

Legg and Roberts see the lack of civic traditions and the existence of a culture that is built on familial ties rather than reliance on non-relatives as primary causes of stunted civil society growth (1997: 164). This is closely connected to the cultural notion of Greek self-esteem, *philotimo*. *Philotimo* means that

> The individual is to be respected not because of status, wealth or special merit but simply as a person. The essence of this outlook is to be free and equal to anybody else, to have one's own mind and way of doing things and to subordinate oneself to no one. The essentials of clientelism – the notion of mutual obligation – rest on this notion of equality (Legg and Roberts, 1997: 74).

Thus, when politically motivated landowners and other wealthy persons with political ambitions moved to Athens in the modern Greek state, they were expected to mitigate the effects of government policies on individuals and families in their zone of influence. This

obligation carried much more weight in the shaping of policy than any associational form of lobbying could ever aspire to achieve, with the possible exception of a comparatively weak labor movement (Stefanides, 2007: 22). Thus, in many ways, feudal relations very much determine politics between center and periphery and more so than they do in the core states in the 21st century. This is one aspect of the social relations between Greek environmental civil society organizations and the inhabitants of Zakynthos that needs to be considered.

While the middle class of Zakynthos resided in the island capital and was politically well represented, the rest of society was agrarian as it had been for centuries and still operated on classic landlord-tenant farmer relations. According to Greek law, if someone has worked and lived on a parcel of land for over 20 years, they can claim ownership. In order to prevent this, landlords would force their tenants to move around regularly. However, the less desirable land away from the fertile plains was not claimed historically and some tenant farmers painstakingly cleared the brush to create smallholdings. In addition, in the years after the Second World War, many landlords felt unsafe or uncomfortable in the aftermath of the civil war and actively sold off their land. As a result, from the 1970s onward, most rural inhabitants were also landowners (Theodossopoulos, 2000: 64). This is an important factor when it came to developing land for tourism. It is also worth mentioning that the land that was originally the least valuable – near the sea and thus less fertile – suddenly became the most precious with the arrival of tourism and the desire of Western tourists to be as close to the sea as possible.

There is an innate distrust of the law and politics by the rural population as they feel that the legal system is set out and interpreted in a way that nearly always disadvantages them. Thus rural populations rely heavily on relatives, patrons, and educated local elites to claim their civil rights (Ibid: 69). If they feel that they are not adequately heard, it is not unheard of to resort to illegal measures, as it happened indeed with the tourism/turtle conflict and will be seen below.

This is the backdrop against which the Zakynthian relationship with its sea turtles has to be seen. Tourism is a way for the rural population to substantially elevate their standard of living from their parcels of land that are otherwise not very valuable and a way to move beyond being a purely agricultural society. Having marine protection legislation imposed upon them that severely limits their land use and economic earning potential gives rise to an entrenched conflict between core and periphery. The local population feels (and is) disenfranchised

while civil society actors and international organizations feel disempowered in the face of the blatant disregard for protective measures for the turtles by the Zakynthians. The islanders feel that they have a right to tap their tourism potential and insist on exercising this right regardless of the law while the ecologically-conscious world community watches on in sorrow. From this perspective, it seems that tourists and tour operators take the role of bystander and disengaged actor in this power struggle but a more detailed analysis will paint a different picture. In order to understand these conditions better, the chronology and background of this case need to be outlined.

Turtles and tourism – the history

Tourism has been a growing economic sector in Zakynthos since the late 1970s. This development is fairly concurrent with the discovery of important turtle breeding sites on the southern beaches of the island in Laganas Bay, but of course the two events are not related. There had been awareness of the turtle nesting beaches for about 100 years but it was in the late 1970s that the importance of the Zakynthos breeding sites was documented scientifically. The first phase of tourism started with German backpackers and then a wealthy Zakynthiot built the Louis Zante Hotel on Laganas beach – which is still in existence today. The early 1980s also saw the entry of Greece into the European Community and, with the rise to power of the Socialist party, PASOK, in 1985, Mediterranean structural development funds were made available to more or less any applicant that wanted them. These funds freely gave out money for tourism development across Greece without attaching environmental or social control mechanisms to the grants. This program was used by local landowners and tour operators alike to develop Laganas Bay. Thus "cheap and cheerful" building activities ensued partly funded by British tour operators who saw the recently opened Zakynthos airport as an ideal opportunity to develop Zakynthos for their markets. The first visitors were mostly families, which changed about ten years later to a younger crowd when the infrastructure had deteriorated and "quality tourists" could not be attracted without serious renovation or rebuilding. This legacy of cheap and fast building meant that the Laganas hotel owners are now stuck with the "club 18–30" market, a party crowd that does not much care where they sleep as long as they can party and can afford their hotel rooms. It also means that the roots of the development of Laganas Bay lie in a combination of easy EC cash and the local population and British tour

operators seizing the day in Laganas Bay. So far this story is not any different from what exists on many other islands and places in the Mediterranean and beyond – that is, until "the turtle" is added to the mix.

Although it had been known that turtles come to breed in Laganas Bay for over 100 years, this did not become relevant or was even considered important until sea turtles entered the spotlight as yet another endangered species with the signing of the Bern Convention on the Conservation of Endangered European Wildlife in 1979. From the early to the mid-80s onward, the Greek government and environmental NGOs in Athens worked on establishing a turtle protection policy culminating with the idea and implementation of a marine park. The fact that protective legislation came into place so quickly can once again be found in the patron-client relations of the Greek political system. Two environmental activists, Lily Venizelos and Dimitrios Margaritoulis, had extremely good connections in Greek politics and used these connections to privately lobby for protective legislation. Their influence meant that legislation entered into force at incredible speed.

The Greek government is very committed to the idea of tourist development, yet it has to pursue the combined strategies of furthering tourist-related economic development and bringing environmental legislation in line with EU requirements. Greece became an EU (then Economic Community (EC)) member in 1981 and the EU integrated the environment into its core mission with the Single European Act in 1987, which laid the groundwork for the seminal 1992 Maastricht Treaty that pushed for the harmonization of European law. So the 1980s can be seen as a vital decade for environmental protection both in Europe and Greece. However, it was only with the Maastricht Treaty of 1992 that the environment became a mainstay and particular focus of European legal harmonization. Thus, the Greek government's policy on turtle protection cannot be seen purely in the light of its newly acquired EC membership and attempts to show that they were serious about "being good Europeans". Turtle legislation was enacted before the Maastricht Treaty even if the marine park was established later. In addition, species protection is not the most visible and prominent of EU environmental policies, so this would not have been the obvious starting point for the setting up of a comprehensive, EU-compatible Greek environmental policy. Given the nature of the Greek political system and the traditional lack of civil society involvement in the democratic process, the main force for turtle legislation clearly found its origin in patron-client relations with Lily Venizelos and Dimitrios

Margaritoulis pressing the issue on the back of the Bern Convention. This evaluation is based on the following reasons:

First, environmental protection activity can be traced back to the early 1980s, yet the environmental movement did not organize itself in a meaningful way around the turtle issue until 1983. The government was active before the environmental movement, which once again shows the importance of the intervention of Venizelos and Margaritoulis. The presidential decree for the establishment of a marine park was then signed in 1999. The timelines and documentation of events by the environmental NGOs active on the island suggest that there was at least partial success in their lobbying activity, even though there are massive problems on the implementation side which can be linked to the lack of cooperative fervor by local government. The following relies heavily on Venizelos and Corbett's history of events (2005: 8). By the end of the 1970s, the number of tourist nights in Zakynthos had doubled compared to the beginning of the decade (but still modest numbers) and most tourists were staying in newly built hotels in Laganas Bay in the Laganas resort. Their numbers increased steadily throughout the 1980s and 1990s and today Zakynthos is one of the most popular tourist destinations in the Mediterranean, visited predominantly but not exclusively by British tourists. The turtle conservation movement sprang into action with a slight time delay *vis-à-vis* the touristic take-off – for example, the Sea Turtle Protection Society was not founded until 1983 and it is from this year on that volunteers started to come to the island in the summer to engage in monitoring and tourist education activities. Media attention also meant that more research was carried out and international institutions developed an interest in the biological importance of the Zakynthos nesting sites. The Council of Europe and the Bern Convention both started communicating with the Greek government on the importance of the turtle nests. The Greek government put in place measures to prevent illegal development and to demolish existing illegal building as well as further plans for a marine park. These were transformed into law but met with an implementation gap. There are problems at the local level in the form of several obstructions. First of all, and this will be discussed in more detail below, the turtle nesting beaches can be divided into two areas – the already overdeveloped resorts of Laganas and Kalamaki on the one hand and the villages of Dafni, Gerakas and Sekania on the Vassilikos peninsula on the other. Efforts at turtle protection focus on the Vassilikos peninsula which remains relatively undeveloped with the aim of keeping it that way. Laganas Bay was already a lost cause

although Laganas used to be the most important turtle nesting site in the Mediterranean Sea.

The Vassilikos peninsula inhabitants combine agriculture and tourism as forms of income. Though there is a small degree of tourist development on the peninsula, inhabitants have the most to lose as a result of the introduction of the marine park and are thus the most vocal in their resistance to conversation measures. The Vassilikos peninsula has seen a range of illegal attempts to develop the region including the turtle nesting beaches. According to the zoning of the marine park, such development activities are forbidden. The locals have been very vocal and also violent in defending their rights. Although substantial fines have been imposed, illegal construction has not been removed and the payment of the fines has been commuted at the local level. There are several events that have raised questions concerning the integrity of several public officials, such as when local authorities confiscated beach furniture in illegal zones on nesting beaches with the Mayoral office returning it, obstruction of marine park personnel in fulfilling their duties, and so on. This is a classic example of the patronage system at play and showing that patronage takes precedence over the law.

Then there are financial issues. The marine park expenditure is handled at the national level and dependent on the funds released by the Greek parliament. In the past, this process has been patchy. Especially during the run-up to the Olympic Games, park employees went without pay and other conservation measures, such as regular beach patrols, were left unfunded. The Marine Park became defunct. Greek NGOs made official complaints about Greece to the European Court of Justice and evaluation visits came up with drastically different reports depending on whether the observer teams were Greek or foreign.

Finally, there are problems with potential violence. One local environment movement official's office was firebombed and several public officials also suffered physical violence in their attempts to demolish illegal buildings. As a result, laws and written admonitions are passed but their actual implementation is nearly impossible. On the other hand, local landowners have not been offered compensation for their loss of economic potential as a result of the conservation measures. This fact seems to be at the root of violence and objection to turtle protection. In that light, the island continues to receive media attention as to the progress of turtle protection and the struggle between nature and society continues. While the environmental movement has the media on their side, the inhabitants of the Vassilikos peninsula certainly do not

have much to fear from the local government in their flouting of the law. However, their tourist development is very small scale, harmonious, and sustainable compared with the concrete zone of Laganas.

Another question to be pursued here is why the spotlight is on the Vassilikos peninsula rather than the mega resorts of Laganas and Kalamaki which, after all, are where the other important breeding sites are located and where development is extremely intense. The logical conclusion would be that it has been generally accepted that the struggle there has been lost and that the focus should now be on the beaches that can still be "saved", which happen to be much less developed and are thus easier to guard. However, this raises social equity questions as to why one community can get away with mega development on a protected beach while other inhabitants who pursue a much more low-key form of development are penalized and refused compensation for their loss of land and/or economic income. This is especially poignant when one considers that Laganas used to be the most important turtle breeding site and it is now one of the less important ones.

To sum up this particular aspect of social relations on Zakynthos, international institutions, social movements, and the Greek government pursue a legal framework for turtle conservation while there is reluctance or impotence at the local level to implement these plans and laws. Such reluctance can be found in the particular relationship between land and human in this part of the world and will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

The Vassilikos peninsula, law and nature-society relations

As discussed previously, the historical land ownership pattern of the Vassilikos peninsula is one of landlord-tenant but since the 1980s this relationship has only played a marginal part in the social fabric as former tenants, or *semproi*, were able to acquire land. This throwing off of the shackles of what by any account was a feudal relationship, naturally led to enormous pride in land ownership, even more so when this land became potentially valuable with the onset of tourism and acquired a worth beyond that of agricultural usefulness. The behavior and aggression of the Vassilikiots has to be seen in this light of land ownership as the ultimate achievement.

In the past, land ownership meant the ability to work the land through agriculture or animal husbandry but with the onset of tourism land ownership became equally important; in order to benefit from tourism, land ownership was also necessary. The presidential decrees

protecting the turtle nesting beaches came unexpectedly for the locals. As Theodossopoulos describes:

> The Marine Park in Zakynthos includes parts of the coastal environment and in particular the south coast of the Vassilikos peninsula, the most underdeveloped part of the community. This is where several local families, related by kinship ties, own land that is directly affected by the conservation restrictions. The land to be conserved is relatively inaccessible and unlike other parts of the peninsula, little tourist development has taken place. In addition, the terrain is steep and does not allow for intensive cultivation….small scale tourist enterprises in the form of fish tavernas, umbrella and canoe renting started to establish themselves from the 1980s onwards. The local landowners lack the capital to invest in grand projects but having tasted the profits of tourist-related enterprises, they visualize the future development of their land as being inextricably linked to tourism (2003: 43).

The regulations of the marine park prohibit people from being on the beaches at night (which made it impossible for land owners to set up night time entertainment such as tavernas by the sea/beach) and, after waiting to be compensated for their loss of user rights over their land, the Vassilokiots turned aggressive and insistent on their right to use their legally-owned land as they pleased. This aggression, and in some cases violence, was directed not only at environmentalists trying to "safeguard" the turtles but also at local public officials who somewhat reluctantly tried to enforce the spirit of the law.

In the early 1990s, an environmental organization, World Wildlife Fund (WWF), managed to buy some land of a local landowner at the beach of Sekania to protect this beach. Beaches are public property in Greece and cannot be owned by individuals; however, the land surrounding the beach, and thus access from land, can be secured with ownership. The sale of the land to an environmental organization was met with some disapproval by the local community, although it can be argued that this was a fair exchange that involved fair compensation for the lack of economic viability of the land.

So the social relations of tourist development on the peninsula have to be seen in light of land ownership patterns as well as the lack of compensation resulting from the loss of user rights. However, it has to be said that apart from the turtle nesting issue, tourism on the peninsula is very sustainable in many other ways. Due to the lack of capital of the locals, tourist developments are modest in size and the locals use their

homegrown agricultural produce in the preparation of food. A question that raises itself is why the locals do not try to profit from the "resource" turtle as many other communities all over the world have done with guided walks, for instance. Given the already small-scale nature of their level of development, this would seem an ideal niche and a definite competitive advantage over the larger resorts on the island which attract a different kind of clientele. Even in 2008, tourist websites on Zakynthos still describe access to Dafni, one of the Vassilikos beaches, as "At the sign post on the Vassilikos road drive down a dirt track for 2 km" (http://www.zanteguru.com/beaches/beaches.html) – clearly not billed as a well-frequented beach (although attracting up to 500 a day in summer) and one would assume that those tourists who make their way here would also be amenable to an eco-style holiday with turtle observation. Incidentally, there is one hotel/studio rental in Dafni that makes its selling point the turtles. The hotel website advises that "no visitors (except our guests) are allowed on the beach at night" (http://www.zanteweb.gr/zakynthos.zante/en/andriana-elena), which would be one illegal building owner on the beach as poacher turned gamekeeper. Then of course there is Gerakas, the southernmost turtle beach on the peninsula which attracts a fair number of alternative tourists by offering alternative style holidays (far away from the beach), so there is some development in this direction.

This, then, raises several questions as to why Zakynthos attracts the type of visitor it does, why NGO activity seems to focus on the Vassilikos peninsula, and why civil society actors and locals cannot work toward a pragmatic solution as encouraged by the European Court of Justice.

A somewhat dated Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) document provides a good historical overview of the type of tourist attracted to Zakynthos and the background on tourist funding for the council, tourist infrastructure development, and so on (OECD, 1999a). As to the question why ecotourism on the island has not been developed, the report suggests that relations between "ecologists" (as the locals termed civil society actors) and local landowners/tourist entrepreneurs were so strained that locals did not want to engage in this kind of activity. In addition, the Greek concept of "philotimo" discussed above was also a major obstacle. When the concept of ecotourism became fashionable in Europe and regions started developing the concept, Zakynthos seemed a theoretically ideal destination. However, the locals during this period were predominantly dependent on the British

tour operator market which offered good returns. As Spyropoulou and Dimopoulos argue in the OECD report,

> [T]his effort was not endorsed by most investors on the island, who did not have access to these new markets and were satisfied with the demand and the quality of tourism they already had. Furthermore, the assistance and the guaranteed clientele that these new markets could provide to the small scale hotel owner was limited compared to that of the big tourism industry. Consequently, the local rooms-to-let and hotel owners were collaborating with the big European Tour Operators, who, even though they held a positive view towards conservation, did not require high environmental and infrastructure standards. As a result, most of the areas that were given an advantage for tourism development by the building regulations developed facilities for mass tourism and found quick economic returns, but could not satisfy both types of market at the same time (1999a: 11).

In addition, while the ecotourism issue was under development in Europe, the hoteliers in Zakynthos were getting steadily increasing rates from the tour operators. Once they were a "captive" market, so to speak, prices per bed leveled off and decreased. This is a practice that will be discussed in more detail in the case study on Thassos in which the local hoteliers successfully challenged the tour operators and effectively "won" the power struggle. So the hoteliers in Zakynthos, in their ignorance or their limited knowledge, set themselves up for mass market tourism and its pitfalls.

Other problems that ultimately backfired and impacted both the quality of tourist and type of tourism that the island receives are issues of taxation. According to Spyropoulou and Dimopoulos, only a third of all arrivals on charter flights to Zakynthos in 1994 actually were reported on local tax declarations (OECD, 1999a). The tax law was changed in 1996 to stop this practice but it is obvious that such a massive discrepancy and lack of income available to local authorities meant that huge sums were not available for public services and infrastructure development such as sewerage systems, public roads, waste collection and treatment, and so on. All of these have an impact on environmental quality and ultimately on the type of tourism that the island can attract. This suggests that the reliance on *philotimo* and clientelism may mean short-term gain for local residents but they also lead to some very short-sighted decisions which may not work in the locals' favor in the long run.

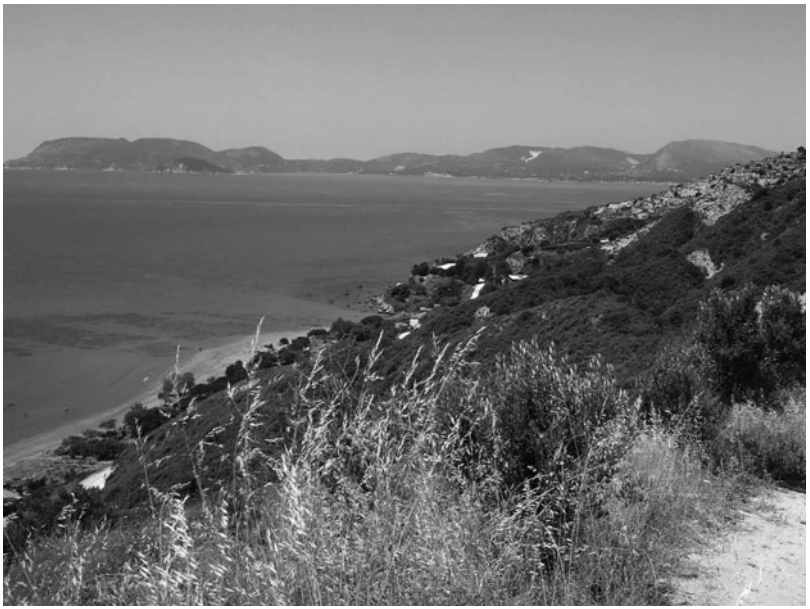
In response to the second question, it seems that the development on the main beaches of Laganas and Kalamaki is already so advanced that the same level of protection that is still possible for the Vassilikos peninsula will not be achieved. However, those two resort beaches account for only about 20 per cent of all turtle nests, so it seems logical to focus on the most promising and important beaches while not sidelining the others. The most important beach is Sekania which was bought by WWF Greece. The sale of the land behind the beach to an environmental organization was heavily contested at the time and the landowners who sold their land rather than continue to defy environmentalists were criticized by the local community. Sekania has thus been spared the conflict between turtles and tourism but suffers from other vagaries of local politics. The local prefecture/government has set up its landfill site by Sekania beach although such developments are also illegal under marine park legislation. The landfill site attracts substantial numbers of seagulls who feast on turtle hatchlings.

Dafni beach is the most contested of all the turtle nesting beaches and will be discussed in detail in the section on the European Court of Justice as it is the main issue of contention in the legal proceedings.

The case history seems to answer why civil society actors and local hoteliers have difficulties working together. There simply is not enough trust. While the turtle population has managed to remain fairly constant thanks to civil society engagement, civil society actors have managed to learn more about locals and their needs but this learning curve has not been much reciprocated by the locals. Here it seems there is a slight incompatibility between smaller-scale tourism and environmental protection. While larger companies and corporations will have to build more rigorously to national standards, smaller developments are not subject to the same constraints. However, as other case histories currently in the news (such as the planned eco-golf resort in Northeastern Crete discussed in the third case study in this book) suggest, even though there may be more laws regulating large resort building, this does not by any stretch of the imagination mean that these regulations will be followed to the letter or even at all.

Laganas, Kalamaki and nature-society relations

As already covered above, Laganas and neighboring Kalamaki are full blown resorts that developed at breakneck speed in the early 1980s and were the original resorts in conflict with the turtles when the Vassilikos peninsula was not yet on the radar screen of environmental supporters.



Dafni beach

In the early 1980s, there were barely three hotels in Laganas and by the early 1990s the village had transformed itself into a resort town attracting close to 400,000 tourists a year, thus making it one of the biggest resorts in the Mediterranean. As discussed above, this rapid transformation came about through capital investment possibilities offered by the European Community and distributed through the PASOK government, of which entrepreneurial locals and British tour operators took advantage. In the very early 1980s, British package tourists came to the island via ferry from the Peleponnese peninsula where a couple of resorts existed. With the close entwinement of package tourism and hotel development in Laganas, the future fate of the sea turtle was sealed. Driving jeeps on the beach, having night clubs by the sea and having sun umbrellas on the beach for sun loungers to rent are compulsory outlets for the clientele. Neighboring Kalamaki is more family centered but has similar problems with restaurants and sun umbrellas if not the night clubs and jeep driving on the beach.

A quiet beach at night and a peaceful atmosphere for turtle egg nests are a precondition for successful breeding. Sea turtles will refuse to lay their eggs if they are stressed or are prevented from doing so by obstacles on the beach. Hatchlings are guided by moonlight when making

their way across the beach to the sea after they hatch. If there are competing sources of light they will get distracted and not travel toward the sea. Likewise, the resulting consequences of the disturbance or compression of turtle nests (by, for example, vehicles driving over them or sun umbrellas being stuck into them) is that there are few or no hatchlings. Only 1 out of 1,000 hatchlings makes it to adulthood, so the odds are already stacked against the turtles without extra interference. So tourist development and turtle interests are on collision course, each needing the beach for their own purpose and unable to share. Employees of the marine park have kiosks on Laganas and Kalamaki beaches, handing out leaflets advising people how to behave on these beaches. However, the guidelines are essentially an invitation to self-policing and not enforced by authority. Thus, although the two resorts see the turtle as a good marketing ploy in terms of souvenirs, the relationship is essentially conflicted as neither tourists nor hoteliers are all that interested in the fate of the turtle. Nature-society relations in Laganas/Kalamaki are about tourism and turtles are tolerated as long as they do not present too much of an obstacle to profiteering. It is package tourism that determines the demand in these resorts and thus the role of tour operators and the social relations between these groups of actors are of paramount importance.

Tour operators and turtles

Foreign tourism in Zakynthos is dominated by package tourists who are brought in on weekly charter flights. In the summer there are also substantial numbers of Greek vacationers who mostly stay in "rooms to let" or studio type establishments. Greek tourists were on the island before the advent of package tourism and continue(d) to come. For the big resorts as well as smaller villages, the reliance on package tourists has become increasingly important. As discussed before, they are a guaranteed market and extra income for the months of May, June, September and October. While some establishments have contracts with tour operators for some of their rooms only, others have exclusive contracts. The main issue for the hotelier is that he/she does not have to deal with individual bookings but rather receives lists from the tour operators and also deal directly with the tour operator in all financial matters. The tour operators also make suggestions in terms of what equipment or amenities the hotel should have to reflect the taste of the clientele. For example, this is how swimming pools have become popular in the region when traditionally the sea was seen as the focal

point of the holiday. Therefore tour operators are more than go-betweens and are important actors in their own right. As discussed above, in the case of Laganas, they even provided the start-up capital for the building of the resort. Tour operators can influence the type of clientele they send to a resort. Laganas attracts a mostly young party crowd and has an image as one of the clubbing hotspots in the Mediterranean.

There is a mixed history of tour operator relations with turtles. In the 1990s, the German tour operator, TUI, was using its pressure by threatening to withdraw from Zakynthos to lobby for more turtle protection. TUI still does not send German tourists to resorts that have turtle nesting beaches and is proud of its social and environmental responsibility. However, TUI now owns a considerable share of the British tour operator business and has not extended its policy to this arm of its business. In general, tour operators argue that species protection is a matter for national and international legislation and is not something that should be laid by their doorstep. Thus, tour operators typically will not boycott a resort or use their influence to improve on an environmental management issue. The same goes for the case of Zakynthos.

However, tour operators have been entrusted with informing their clients of the environmental problems at hand and giving them guidelines on how to behave to comply with the rules of the marine park. This is done in several ways. Very few tour operators mention the breeding turtles in their promotional material on Zakynthos. As it happens, of a cross section of German and British tour operator brochures, only one from each country mentioned the turtles as an environmental issue that required the cooperation of the tourist. Several brochures mentioned their existence in passing without further comment and some brochures did not mention them at all. All tour operators are required to enclose guidelines in their promotional material they pass on to their clients and to give a little pep talk in their welcome talks. A casual check with tourists suggested that this was indeed happening. There was also a debate on whether promotional videos should be shown on charter flights to the island but this does not seem to be the case as the author arrived to the island by such a flight and no such material was shown – and the German airline in question had a monopoly on German flights to Zakynthos. One British NGO, Tourism Concern, has published a cartoon video on "turtle etiquette" which is made available to British tourists. British tourists are also shown a documentary on turtles on their Zakynthos-bound flights. All this presupposes that

the tourists read their promotional material and follow the guidelines – which are self-policing as mentioned above.

The situation suggests that tour operators are happy to act as informants of the situation and to encourage their clients to be considerate of the turtles. At the same time, tour operators do not see their role as proactive and do not see a moral responsibility. They are clearly agents and business partners rather than powerful brokers in the environmental field, or so they see themselves. At the same time, however, they push the image of resorts such as Laganas and are thus very clearly active players in the fate of the region. In addition, through disengagement from the turtle issue, tour operators send a message to hoteliers that turtles are marginal while a prioritizing of turtle issues would send a powerful message to hoteliers that turtles are intrinsically important to economic success and the marine park is an asset rather than a necessary evil. The case of TUI shows that this can be done.

When one looks at both Thassos and Zakynthos, the fact that British tour operators hold a near monopoly on Zakynthos becomes very significant. While this weakens the negotiating positions of local hoteliers, it also means that there is no competition and thus no incentive for stewardship for the area's future attractiveness. Although the diversity of client base on Thassos is not directly related to its relative environmental success, it has empowered the local business community, which in turn has created an atmosphere that attracts return visitors. Zakynthos does not have a high rate of return visitors.

The marine park

The marine park has a long and contested history. When the significance of turtle breeding on Zakynthos was discovered in 1977, the government acted relatively quickly with presidential decrees on marine turtle protection in 1981 and 1983 as well as initiating further research. In the 1980s and early 1990s, the main pressure tool used by lobbyists was the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats of the Council of Europe and the primary aim was a restriction on building developments in Laganas Bay (including all turtle nesting beaches). However, there were substantial numbers of cases of illegal building on public land in the Laganas area as well as attempts to develop the then undeveloped beaches of Sekania, Dafni and Gerakas. In 1988, the government introduced a marine zone limiting the use of speed boats and introducing a speed limit for boats in Laganas Bay.

In the 1990s, the Greek government assured the Bern Convention that it would deal with illegal building and would have such premises demolished. While the owners of the properties were paid compensation, the demolition never followed. It is another example of the lack of implementation by the local police force and local authorities as already evident in the relations between the Vassilikiots and local authority. In 1999, the Constitutional Court of Greece heard a case petitioning for the reduction of environmental protective measures on Zakynthos but the petition was rejected. In the same year the marine park of Zakynthos was finally established by presidential decree.

The marine park is divided into several zones and covers all of Laganas Bay. The park has several employees who are responsible for monitoring the beaches and providing information to coastal visitors. The park's president is in charge of liaising with local, national, and international governance institutions with regard to turtle conservation. In the short history of the park, the office of president has already been tainted with scandal. In 2005, the ministry of the environment, which is in charge of appointing the park president, appointed an individual to replace the incumbent and later had to renege on the appointment as a result of NGO pressure. The ministry replacement was implicated in the illegal ownership of buildings on Dafni beach and thus was a classic conflict of interest situation. This appointment was replaced by the current president, Amalia Karagouni Kyrtsos, who used to be on the biology faculty of Athens University. Her tenure has not been without controversy either, although conflict is over her management style and not her trustworthiness. Some NGOs feel that, although a park management agency has been formed, the president singlehandedly signed a cooperative agreement with Dafni landowners in 2006 asking them to make aesthetic improvements to the illegal buildings on the beach and furthermore allowing nine more buildings to be added to the existing structures. In addition, in 2007 the park president gave permission to build two parking lots behind Dafni beach. By presidential decree, only 100 people are allowed on the beach at any one time so it remains puzzling as to why a high number of parking spaces were needed. Clearly, this is about pacifying the local illegal building owners and to maintain a dialog. However, given the clear legal situation, this seems to be a measure to keep the locals talking with the park authorities and to look reality in the eye. The illegal building structures on Dafni beach are not going to go away and the local authorities are clearly unable or unwilling to implement existing legislation. Thus, the problem is here to stay and needs to be managed

somehow. In 2006, Karagouni even put into place a shuttle service to the beach from the main road to keep vehicles away from the beach but the experiment was discontinued due to its lack of popularity among Greek tourists. The new parking lots are another attempt to make sure that cars do not fully come down to the beach and can be interpreted as a positive protection measure if one accepts that illegal developments on Dafni beach will continue to operate. Although the parking lots are also illegal structures, they do lead to more protection for the turtles from that perspective.

Utilizing this peaceful coexistence strategy, the new park president has worked hard at coming closer to a solution that takes account of the realities of the situation even if she is not pursuing the letter of the law of marine park legislation. These attempts at dialog also raise questions again about the nature of the park and the relations between environmental institutions and environmental protection on the island. The park is in a difficult situation as it is mostly dependent on government funding and this funding is not always forthcoming. For example, before the Athens Olympics, salaries of the marine park employees were not paid for months on end. Funding made available for the park and improvement of beaches for turtles often gets spent on municipal projects, such as sewerage work. Park employees often get assaulted by locals on the Vassilikos peninsula beaches; therefore the park and its employees do not have an easy standing in Zakynthian society and government, and the park does not have the support it needs to operate successfully. On the other hand, it remains to be seen whether the appeasement measures by the park president and her handling of the conflict with the Vassilikos residents by allowing illegal developments are appropriate tools for handling the situation and legitimizing the park in the public eye. Zakynthos does have a corruption problem as it is and adding to this by dabbling in appeasement measures can enhance dialog but can also alienate actors that want to see explicit support for existing protective legislation. The park president also had to face criticism in her handling of the court case in the European Court of Justice.

The European Court of Justice case and hearing

In 1994, the NGO Medasset took the Greek government to the European Court of Justice complaining that the government was in violation of several habitat directives as well as other international environmental law. This action was repeated annually until 1998 when the European

Commission Environment Directorate sent observers to Zakynthos. These observers found that Greece was indeed in violation of European and international law and started infringement procedures, which in effect meant that the Greek government would have to pay a daily fine until the issue was resolved. One of the particularities of European Union law is that the European Union can penalize non-implementation of EU directives by imposing fines until implementation occurs. These are levied in per diem figures.

In 1999, the EU announced its decision to take Greece to court over non-compliance with EU law, a statement that the Greek government countered with the announcement of the establishment of the marine park after the same meeting. In 2002, an EU inspection found progress with species protection in Laganas to be unsatisfactory and a case was lodged with the European Court of Justice. As a result, in 2003 there was an on-the-spot appraisal of the situation by an all-Greek EU observer team who found that substantial progress had in fact been made. However, in the same year a group from the European Parliament also inspected the situation and found that there was serious non-compliance with EU law. Greece then issued a timetable in which it laid out how it would comply with EU conservation law. This situation continued for a while with Greece vowing improvement and the court/commission issuing warnings. In 2006, the situation escalated again when NGOs complained about the new illegal building bout at Dafni beach and the park president's involvement in this. The park president met with EU officials in Brussels and announced that she had averted a court case and fine. NGOs then received a letter from the commission announcing that the case would be closed. At the same time, as mentioned above, the president allowed the building of two parking lots at Dafni beach when access is only allowed to less than 100 people at any time under conservation law. Likewise, no attempts were made at demolishing illegal buildings despite the requirement to do so under European law. Therefore there is frustration among members of the NGO community and the gullibility of the EU is laughed at by locals. There is now reliance on NGO public relations work to continue the monitoring and draw attention to further violations. This is one side of the story.

Another version, as discussed in the previous section, is that the park president wants to keep up the dialog with the Dafni landowners and needs some leverage for this. Karagouni is extremely well connected politically and has achieved results that her predecessor could not achieve due to his lack of support. Karagouni tried to work with the

Dafni landowners but then realized that it would not be a successful strategy – but she did try to set up a working relationship.

The picture that emerges here, in conjunction with the story of the establishment of the marine park, is one of inaptitude and often disregard for the rule of law and environmental institutions. Neither national nor international institutions can enforce conservation law and bring about the demolition of the illegal buildings while the role of the local authorities remains doubtful. It is not quite clear whether it is unwillingness or inability to deal with the illegal landowners that is the problem but it is most likely a combination of the two. The mayor of Zakynthos recently resigned due to a major embezzlement scandal, so altogether this is not simply a marine turtle issue but a more endemic problem with local authorities. In light of this lack of support, the strategy of the marine park president to placate the illegal building owners is an obvious strategy to use carrot and stick tactics as the marine park employees cannot rely on the help of authorities to enforce and implement environmental law. This raises questions of compensation again – that the way forward would be to compensate the illegal land owners for their loss of income and appease them in this way. Most of the land they occupy has already been declared public land as it is, but on the other hand, there has been precedent of people in Laganas receiving compensation and continuing their illegal activity, so a compensation scheme would have to be well managed. And at the moment there is no visible agency that could do so. There is also no public pressure to achieve this. While the turtles are big in the souvenir shops, they are not big in the hearts of the Zakynthians in general. This ties back in with the nature-society relations between islanders and the sea turtles.

Conclusions

The conclusions to be drawn from this study are as follows. This is a case study of very conflicted relations between an endangered species and a local community that is not invested in the future of the sea turtle and its breeding grounds. The reasons for these conflicts can be found in a variety of structures and approaches which form a pattern of quite unique social relations.

First of all, Zakynthos has a long history of feudalism and specific patterns of land ownership. Even today, land with olive groves that gets sold is divided so that the land and the olive groves are paid for separately. The very recent demise of feudal patterns of agriculture has

had a strong impact on local behavior and local social relations with the land. This goes hand-in-hand with the abject poverty found on the island after the 1953 earthquake which followed World War II and the Greek Civil War. Thus, the level of poverty on Zakynthos before the advent of tourism was more pronounced than, for example, on the island of Thassos (all Greek islands suffered from poverty, but relatively speaking, Zakynthos was worse than others). Thus the temptation to cash in may have been higher. This may or may not explain why the inhabitants of Zakynthos are happy to focus on tourism which is one-off tourism – not repeat customers. While on the one hand, the building patterns of cheap and fast construction excludes by definition a high caliber of paying guest, many other destinations attract a large body of loyal returnees. This leads to improved social relations between tourists and locals and ultimately to better nature-society relations because it is usually particular aspects of natural beauty that prompt people to return. Thus, the relationship between locals, tourists, and turtles suffer from the same basic principle, which is a lack of emotional investment. This lack of investment has invariably been referred to as either lack of confidence due to the feudal shackles or plain greed to maximize profits and minimize work input.

An interesting aspect is why the island of Zakynthos remains so disinvested from its own future and disconnected from its own environment when other localities are much more connected to their own space and more interested in their long-term well-being. The long history of feudalism and extreme poverty cannot in themselves provide the answer to this.

The political situation in Greece with the emphasis on patron-client relations rather than a democratic process with strong civil society engagement also played a major role in the particular constellation of the Zakynthos study. Although there is/was a homegrown activist network in Zakynthos, this never had widespread support and ecologists were seen as outsiders and in conflict with society. Thus, no debate and personal involvement at the level of ecological consciousness developed. The turtle issue was conflated with outside interests while the hotel owners/tourism proponents reflected the local interests – or so the situation was interpreted. Therefore environmental protection became an external issue imposed on the community and was rebelled/revolted against. In this context it clearly did not help that Vassilikos landowners were not adequately, or not at all, compensated for their loss of earnings. Again, it was seen as an outside pressure that touristic development was to be prevented. Illegal developers, especially on Dafni

beach, are in a precarious situation. Although they have their businesses and are expanding them illegally, there is no guarantee that their relative protection from the law and implementation of the protective measures will continue indefinitely. Their businesses are not of a nature that they can pass on to their children – unlike those who own legitimate businesses – or those that sold their land to the WWF.

The current marine park president has tried and achieved results even if in a controversial manner. She has not yet been able, and likely has not tried, to use local law enforcement to implement environmental protection law to the letter. Rather, she has relied on dialog to gain the trust of Dafni residents and ensure them that they will continue to have livelihoods. Her connections have served her well but she is now in a quandary as to how to proceed further. There are several possibilities. She could take a harder stance on illegal or pseudo-legal development in general. For example, a lot of land is being converted from forest to agricultural, land which ultimately makes it easy to build there. This is beginning to present a problem, especially in particular protected zones. The marine park could challenge the legality of these land conversions and use this as one way to expand its role. This has not happened yet and most likely will not in the future either. Further, it really is time for a new environmental impact assessment (EIA) to reassess what is going on as the last EIA was over 20 years ago. This would require a vision for the future from which to work and implement ideas. Such a vision would most likely be followed by further controversy and acrimony. Developing such a vision also requires a strong engagement with the problems and a strong commitment to bringing all interests under one hat. Some sources have expressed doubt over whether the office of the marine park president is able to deliver on such a scale.

In this context, the involvement of tour operators also has to be discussed. Despite their public statements on the subject matter that this is not an economic-environmental concern for tour operators (with the exception of TUI), they are nevertheless implicated in their choices of destinations and support for venues, and are indirectly culpable for disrespecting environmental legislation.

What are the lessons from this case study for global-local linkages in seaside tourism and the environment? Although the locals are in many ways victims of global practices, they are in no way helpless victims without choices. There are four global influences – global finance, global business, global civil society and global environmental regulation. The latter two are working toward the protection of sea turtles with only

minimal support or endorsement from local society and thus with limited success. Hence, the Zakynthos case suggests that the romanticized view of intact nature-society relations threatened by global business or global capital is not applicable everywhere. Historically, there was no interest in sea turtles on the island – either in a positive or negative way. Only when the beaches became commercially important did the turtles appear on the radar screen and were immediately perceived as a threat to the new found possibilities for economic development. Although turtle-watching has now become an important touristic activity and thus commercially viable, it still does not follow that turtle protection has now become more important. Nature-society relations are such that turtles are seen as economically viable today but not as a resource to be protected for the future. For ecologically aware locals and visitors as well as for the activists, this is a very demoralizing experience.

The role of global finance and business in this situation has not helped. While neither tour operators nor banks or the EU have directly contravened environmental regulation, the financing of the tourism boom on Zakynthos has most certainly not been done with the backing of an environmental impact assessment. While EIAs were not the order of the day in the early 1980s when the tourism boom started, there certainly was marine environmental legislation in place and development took place largely with disregard to this legislation. This is partly the fault of the financial backers and tour operators but equally to do with the lack of land registries, lack of checks on illegal building activities, and the lack of control and supervision by local and national authorities. While such practices were prevalent in the whole of the Mediterranean region and many an island or coastal region was spoilt by these developments, it had particularly devastating consequences on Zakynthos due to its unique circumstances as one of the last major nesting sites in the Mediterranean. What is important and particularly relevant for the literature on global-local linkages in environmental governance is that this is a case where it is most certainly not exclusively a top-down situation where a disempowered locality is forced into particular styles of development. Choices were certainly made by global business, the tour operators, but the Zakynthiots were very much complicit in these choices and not just because they were new and ignorant in the game. In many ways the script was written in Zakynthos, and not in Brussels or London, and Zakynthos shows disturbed nature-society relations from the start, an inequality deficit but not a disempowered situation and a story of greed.

6
Thassos

Thassos lends itself as a detailed case study because it is an island that suffered an environmental disaster but turned its fortune around and still manages to combine the socio-economic advantages of tourism with relative environmental success. The island of Thassos is an extremely green and forested island whose inhabitants live mostly off tourism but the island does not have an extremely high tourist-to-local ratio. It is an example of an island where nature-society relations are not consciously sustainable but there is a consciousness that tourists come to enjoy the clean and unspoilt environment and that therefore it is an asset worth preserving. Thassos can be seen as a case study that comes as close as possible to marrying mainstream tourism with sustainable tourist practices. As the historical overview below shows, this assumption was not always there.

Thassos is the northernmost Aegean island and is geographically part of the region of Greek Macedonia. It is heavily linked to the Greek port city of Kavala and uses the city's mainland airport as a package tour port of entry. All tourists have to arrive at the island via ferry boat, either from the village of Keramoti near Kavala airport or from the city of Kavala proper. Its close connection with and proximity to the mainland of Northern Greece distinguishes it from other Greek islands which are more dependent on air and shipping links to Athens or neighboring islands with airports suitable for package tour arrivals. Having the airport on the mainland rather than on Thassos itself is a potential drawback although the transfer does not take very long at all. However, it also means that tourists arriving by car or long distance bus can play an important role in the tourism demography as the island's geographical location just off the mainland of Northern Greece makes it attractive for many visitors who prefer to travel to Greece by

car. It is one of very few islands that can offer the romanticism of an island holiday with the practicality of easy reach.

Thassos is an interesting study because after the devastating forest fires the island suffered in the 1980s it was generally assumed that a building boom would follow and lead to large-scale development, doing away with a low level of coastal development. In fact, the island has developed in such a way that there is a healthy balance between development and environment. Although the level of environmental consciousness among the inhabitants is low, and there is no visible environmental movement or civil society organization in general, the excesses found on other islands did not make their way to Thassos. This chapter explores the social relations and nature-society relations of the island to chart the social and structural background of tourism in Thassos.

In order to do so, I will briefly look at the social relations of tourism on Greek islands in general before returning to Thassos and its social and economic history. Thassos is not a traditional tourist destination such as the islands of Crete, Rhodes or Santorini, nor does it have the traditional historical linkages to shipping routes such as the islands Zakynthos or more southern Aegean islands. Its geographical position isolates it in many ways as does its close connection to the Northern Greek cities of Kavala and Thessaloniki instead of Athens – making it the holiday destination of provincial city dwellers rather than the capital. It does have the advantage of having other economic "irons in the fire". Other economic sectors on the island include mining. Ore mining in the past and currently marble quarries are in competition with tourism as the most important economic sector. Thassian marble is very white and very lucrative. As part of Macedonia, Thassos is very much a part of the guest-worker belt that provided labor to Germany during the economic boom of the 1960s when Greek workers migrated there. Most Greek guest workers have returned and have used their earnings for investing in their own businesses in Greece. This is also what has happened with Thassos and is one of the backbones of the financial foundation for tourism investment. It is also where the Thassiotes have learnt about cultural otherness – a concept very useful in the tourist sector. So, while Thassos is a typical Greek island, its inhabitants also draw on quite unique experiences that do not match those on other Greek islands – or Mediterranean islands or resorts in general. Although many Greek islanders have gone to work in the US over the years, they generally do not come back so easily and rather settle permanently in the US. Thus the guest-worker experience in Germany was quite

unique, especially as Germans are a large group of faithful Thassos visitors. The unique situation of the Thassiote resident does not mean that some of the attitudes or approaches found on the island are not the same as in the rest of Greece.

Thassos was a very rich island in antiquity due to its mining and trading, which also made it a valuable part of the Ottoman Empire. Like the rest of northern Greece and Greek Macedonia, it was liberated and became Greek again in 1912. In the early 1920s, it had to usurp a large number of refugees from Asia Minor, as will be discussed below in more detail. Its mines closed in the middle of the last century but in recent years marble quarrying has become substantive – the white Thassian marble being one of the most sought after globally.

Since the forest fires of 1985 and 1989, the western half of the island has been substantially devoid of woodland. The affected areas were reforested but the same quality of forest cannot be achieved within a short span of time. Although the area most affected by the fires is higher up in the mountains, the low lying land near Potos, the most touristic town on the island, was also affected. Today most of the area

Thassos island
Photo by coolimagebank.com

affected by the fires is covered with vegetation and pine saplings. While the green character of the island has been restored, the fires destroyed pine trees that were over 50 years old and like the pine trees around the city of Kavala on the mainland which was also affected by a massive forest fire in 1985 at the same time as the forest fires on Thassos (a fact contributing to the suspicion that this was arson), the older trees created a very favorable micro-climate in the summer that new small trees cannot recreate. As with the more recent devastating forest fires in Chalkidiki in 2006 and the Peleponnese in 2007, which made international news with the near destruction of the ancient site of Olympia, it is possible to replant lost forests but this will take time and the sheer maturity of the trees made their loss irreparable and ecologically disastrous.

Despite this important loss, regeneration has been successful as Spanos et al. observe:

> The wildfires during the last two decades have destroyed more than 80% of the forested area on the island. The worst wildfires occurred in 1985 and 1989. In 1985, the wildfire destroyed more than half (12 400 ha) of all the forests in the southern part of the island and another 5700 ha of *P. brutia* forests in the northwest were destroyed in 1989. Today, only 2024 ha of mature *P. brutia* forests remain. The wildfires destroyed productive forests and contributed to soil erosion from the uplands to lower sites. Most burned sites on Thásos have been restored by post-fire natural regeneration, with a rich vegetation cover and high species abundance. There is considerable natural regeneration in unburned natural stands of *P. brutia* at all sites. At the burned sites, post-fire seedling density of *P. brutia* was higher compared to unburned sites. In these burned sites, the number of seedlings is much higher than at other burned sites in Greece. On the island of Samos the mean density of 6-yr-old *P. brutia* plants after a wildfire in August 1983 was lower, ca. 1900/ ha and the density of 10-yr-old plants was still lower, ca. 1500/ha. This post-fire natural regeneration is sufficient for the reestablishment of the burned sites (Spanos et al., 2001).

Thus the forests of Thassos seem to have recovered in an above average fashion due to successful reforestation measures. In general, despite the loss of mature forest in the highlands of Thassos, it is the coastline that is seen as most vulnerable to environmental degradation in the light of this success. Thassos attracts nowhere near the same number of tourists

as Zakynthos does but most tourists stay in the seaside villages and there are basically no forests left in these lowland areas, only olive groves and bush overgrowth (Gitas and Devereux, 2006). The extraordinarily beautiful beaches of Thassos attract two types of visitors – package tourists as well as individual travelers who drive to Greece. Package tourism travel to Thassos is available from Poland, Germany, Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Hungary and the UK. Individual travelers come from as far as Germany, the Netherlands, and Italy as well as from the former Eastern Bloc and places such as Serbia, Croatia, Hungary, and most recently, in large numbers, from Bulgaria and Romania. In addition, at the weekend and during public holidays there are a substantial number of city dwellers from Kavala and Thessaloniki as well as other northern Greek provincial towns who come to Thassos for recreation – and quite a few of them also spend their summer holidays there. Thus Thassos draws on both local and international visitors. While package tourists come in higher numbers in July and August, they also vacation from May to October. Other visitors mostly come in July and August, so the high season is short and very intense with increased pressure on services and on beaches over those two short months. And this is where the attraction of package tourism lies for Greek island hoteliers who see it as a way to increase their occupancy rates by having tourists in May, June, September and October in rooms that would otherwise be largely empty.

Caravelis and Ivy (2001) have studied the inland mountain community of Sotiras on Thassos and how it has transformed itself from a mining community to a "seasonal visitor destination". In the early part of the 20th century, Thassos had an important mining industry owned by the German company Speidel. By the time of the Second World War, these mining activities had dwindled away and by the late 1950s residents were busy abandoning Thassos' mountain villages, many leaving for jobs either in the cities of Kavala and Thessaloniki or spending time as guest workers in Germany. It is only with the beginning of the tourist boom of the 1970s on the island that Sotiras began to repopulate in the summer, either by former residents converting their old houses into summer residences or by foreigners buying up property, also as summer residences. The summer inhabitants brought new ideas and new principles such as environmental consciousness and it is mostly among these part-time residents that any form of social activism can be found. To be fair, mountain villages are mostly populated by the older generation with younger and middle-aged Thassiotes

firmly anchored in the seaside towns and villages. This raises a number of issues ranging from counting holiday home owners as another category of tourists to the relationship between temporary residents (home owners and "proper" tourists) and the local population. Holiday home owners can be "heritage Thassiotes" whose parents or grandparents hail from Thassos and who have built a holiday home here to remain in touch with their cultural heritage. However, holiday homes are increasingly owned by wealthy Europeans who find it fashionable to have a holiday home in the Mediterranean, both on well-known and developed but also less known islands. A third group of holiday home owners are the loyal returnee tourists who set up second homes. These second home owners typically spend about six weeks a year on the island. They often have certain ideas on what the island should be like and bring ideas of political and social activism to the island that contrast with the Greek political system of clientelism. This inevitably leads to differences and open or hidden resentment between locals and "newcomers". It is particularly second home owners from countries with a high level of civil society engagement that are actively involved in their "local" community if not in Thassos politics in general. A very new phenomenon with the entry of Romania and Bulgaria into the EU is that wealthy citizens from these states swamp the Northern Greek and particularly Thassiot markets for second homes both on the coast but also in mountain villages where the local building style becomes corrupted.

The issue of socio-cultural changes as a result of tourism has been researched with regard to the Greek islands by a variety of writers (Tsartas, 2003; Haralambopoulos and Pizam, 1996). The most important changes have been with regard to the social relations of family. Tsartas sees two fundamental changes, the first being that the typical patriarchal family structure has been challenged and replaced with a more collective form of decision making as younger, more educated family members gain greater say and their expertise is accepted (2003: 116). These younger family members were socialized when tourism gained a foothold as the main island industry and are thus respected as more savvy in interpreting what will be most successful for family businesses. The second change Tsartas sees is that tourism leads to superficial modernization and the introduction of "urban type" social and economic relations. Here, patterns of socializing change to what Tsartas calls "superficial modernization" (2003: 117), which he describes as the social models of the closed agricultural society meeting urban-type consumption patterns with increased social mobility. Women and

young people are the ones who benefit most from tourism development as their structural role within society improves and they become economically empowered.

It is difficult to determine if there is an underlying causal relationship between social change and tourism or if many of these changes are due to general social change and changing social structures. Tsartas argues:

> Researchers in Greece and elsewhere have argued that tourism is not the only cause of change in a region's customs and manners. Other social changes have moved in the same direction such as the spread of mass media, expanding urbanization, better communication and extended use of information technologies. However, in the case of the Greek coastal and especially insular areas where tourism has developed, the historic phase of this development took place before the above mentioned social changes (Tsartas, 2003: 118).

In interviews, the local population in Thassos more or less unanimously declared that they did not feel that tourism presents a negative influence on their children and on family life. In addition, in conversation with local youth I did not gain the impression that they take their cues from what they observe in tourists but rather seem to be influenced by trends that come out of Athens. Some trends are international but some fashion and behavioral trends are very much "hellenized", so therefore such distinctions do become visible. It seems that a distinction has to be made in Tsartas' argument, maybe between islands that saw large scale tourist "invasions" (such as Mykonos, Crete, Corfu, and so on) and islands such as Thassos where there has been a steady but not culturally overwhelming flow of tourism. It also seems that a distinction has to be made between islands that were traditionally outward looking such as Thassos and its mining/guest worker past links and islands that were more "insular" to begin with. On Zakynthos, for example, there are still strong family patterns in villages with most girls married and mothers by the time they are in their late teens. This is not the case on Thassos where marriage and motherhood for women happens on average in their mid-20s.

Haramlambopoulos and Pizam (1996) also take a more beneficial view of the impact of tourism on family structures. They argue that tourism can prevent the necessity of migration as it provides new employment opportunities. They cite various cases where tourism has led to population stability but concede that tourism development can

lead to adverse impacts on traditional work patterns in a particular location (such as loss of agricultural workers). However, they note that on many islands there seems to be a double reliance on both agriculture and tourism as a dual strategy for household income – for example, as observed with the Vassilikos peninsula in Zakynthos. This trend is not so obvious in Thassos. Thassos can also claim a related phenomenon, namely that of guest workers returning for the new employment opportunities on Thassos as a result of tourism development. Tourist enterprises on Thassos as a rule do not engage in agricultural activities. However, agricultural households usually have one member of the household holding down another job as agriculture alone cannot sustain families.

Apostolopoulos and Sonmez distinguish between several categories of tourism in Greece over time:

> Until the early 1970s the predominant model of tourism development centred around a dominant central destination (Greater Athens) and several peripheral regions of two types: (a) small resort islands which were vitally dependent upon Athens for the transportation of their few seasonal visitors as well as for supplies and infrastructural needs and (b) major peripheral destinations which, while they were away from the centre, were linked via an international air-based transport system to facilitate their considerably greater seasonal tourist demand. While the foregoing tourism development model still exists, since the early 1970s tourism development has gradually moved toward the creation of a few autonomous and touristically peripheral regions as well as a continually weaker and declining centre. In the context of these two distinct tourism development models, Greek destinations may be further classified into (a) predominantly urban destinations where accommodations were developed via primarily legal procedures; (b) peripheral destinations where illegality and arbitrariness pertained to tourist establishments; and (c) resort destinations with mainly transnational hotel establishments where predominantly foreign tourists consume the tourist product and international and indigenous labour produce the services (2001a: 77).

While Zakynthos can, up to a point, be categorized as a peripheral destination where illegality and arbitrariness pertained to tourist establishments, the models described above do not fit the island of Thassos. Because of its strong link to the northern Greek mainland rather than

using Athens as a "center" in its world view, Thassos has a more unusual tourism history and arrived late to the package-tourism game. Its reliance on individual tourism and domestic tourism from Thessaloniki and Kavala in the 1970s and 1980s meant that the island's hoteliers had already established a strong base of faithful returnee tourists. The attraction of package tourism is that the season is longer and stretches beyond July and August, starting in May and running until October. Such a longer season obviously increases income potential. It is with the beginning of package tourism that Thassos saw a building boom which coincided with the forest fires. This brought international decision-making processes to the island in two forms. First of all, now package tour operators became influential power brokers. Second, the EU as a regional development institution through the Greek PASOK government had a major hand in the development of Thassos. Through the structural development funds for less-developed regions, Thassiote future hoteliers were also able to tap into the EU's development fund for start-up capital for building their hotels just like their counterparts on Zakynthos did.

There is a wave of tourist activity with changing nationalities being the predominant group visiting the island. The island started off being a favorite for Germans and Austrians then to be followed by the British. With the advent of cheaper long distance travel and the beaches of South Asia and Latin America/the Caribbean thus becoming serious competition for the Mediterranean, other groups have replaced the Germans and British as the most important actors on the tourism scene. It seems that there are cycles of package tourism. Recently, Eastern Europeans such as Russians and Poles have filled the gap left behind by the Germans and British, although of course there are still plenty of British and Germans visiting the island and many of them repeat visitors. Such a change in customer base means that the islanders have to adapt to the changing cultural values and preferences of their customers. It also means that no single ideological approach to the environment by the visiting tourists prevails. German tourists especially, and more recently British tourists, have an increasingly mainstream demand for environmentally sound developments. This is something that the tour operators and the local hotelier base have to respect and work into their development plans. Such sustainable planning demands are less of an issue for the new Eastern European client base. Likewise, the domestic Greek customers will not prioritize sustainable building practices in their choice of holiday destination. Thus "going green" as a sales booster is not a viable concept, or is not perceived to be, by the local hoteliers – unless it is economically viable. However, most

tourists are attracted by the forests on Thassos as well as the good beaches. The pine forests and how they sweep down to the beaches are really the trademark of the island and are what attracts return visitors – that and the "soft" form of development without high rises and large hotel complexes. Before turning to the specific demographics of Thassos and their relevance, the issues pertaining to forests should be discussed in more detail.

Forest issues

In order to understand the significance of the forest fire issue on Thassos, it is necessary to look in detail at the problem of forest fires in Greece in general. Greece is the most affected country in the European Union when it comes to forest fires, not just by number of fires but also by size of burnt areas (Iliadis et al., 2002). In Greece, this is seen not as a primarily ecological problem but an issue of political will and the unfortunate phrasing of forestry law. To quote Iliadis, Papastavrou and Lefakis at length:

> The constitution of 1975 introduced, for the first time, laws that protect forestlands in the country. According to Article 117, paragraph 3 "forestlands (public or private) remain characterized as forestlands after their destruction and it is compulsory for them to be reforested. It is forbidden for those burnt forestlands to be used for any other purposes". On the other hand, Act Number 1734, which was introduced in 26/10/1987, gives authorities the right to rename the burned forests as "pastures" and in this way it indirectly encourages the destruction of the forests. This Act has been called "The Arsonist Law". Other more recent acts also indirectly encourage this practice. In other words, the legal "status" motivates people to burn down the forests. There seems to be two main factors that affect forest fires in Greece. The first is political. Every time national elections are held, the number of forest fires and the total burnt areas, increase significantly. This is due to the fact that individuals, during an election period, promise to legalize all the illegal buildings that have been built inside forest areas, or to change the legal characterization of "forestlands". This is done due to the lack of cadastral survey. There is a special Act 998/79 which defines that every Greek citizen should own at least 4000 square meters of land, in order to build a house near the sea. Many people who do not own exactly 4000 square meters burn down the nearby forests in

> order to change the boundaries of their property. This is possible, since there is no cadastral survey.
>
> There is also the problem of administration within the Forestry Department both at election time and during periods of political unrest. It should be mentioned that all the national elections so far, have been held inside the forest fire seasons, from March to October.
>
> The second important factor is drought. Statistics show that 29% of the forest fires in the country are caused by arson but the real percentage is believed to be as high as 42% since about 50% of the forest fires that are classified as unknown, are probably due to arson.
>
> Greece's neighboring countries do not face such a severe forest fire problem, because they already have a cadastral survey and their forest fires are not caused by arson due to property or land-use problems. Greece is the only European country that does not have a cadastral survey (Iliadis et al., 2002: 327/328).

Thus there is a clear national "loophole" in the legislation that facilitates the use of forest fires for economic gain. Close argues that the Greek government, more than any other in Europe, suffers from "lack of coordination and lack of in-house expertise, combined with reluctance to consult outside experts" (Close, 1999: 327). However, Close continues to point out that the environmental crisis has led to some devolution of power in Greece and hence the emerging involvement of other agencies but that these developments are in their early stages. Thus the excessive problem of forest fires in Greece can be traced back to domestic factors while measures to combat forest fires can be found at the international or European level, where they are limited to forest fire cooperation measures. Thus cooperation is transboundary while legislation and forestry policy is firmly anchored at the national level. Therefore there is a global ecology of causes and effects of forest fires somewhat rooted at the global level (climate change issues) as well as a local ecology and a Mediterranean-wide forest fire task force but the political factors underlying forest fires, which are not often considered, are at the national level. After every particularly devastating forest fire there is increased pressure on the incumbent Greek government to enact legislation curbing illegal building but because of the client-patron system such measures have only ever had very limited success. This then raises the question why, on the island of Thassos, illegal building did not spread substantially after the forest fires.

Discussions with the mayor of Thassos suggest the rule described above of a property having to be 4,000 square meters for it to be built upon is not the whole of the legal situation. Rather, it is necessary for any property outside the development zone (towns and villages) to be by the road and of a minimum size of 4,000 square meters before it can be developed. The emphasis here is on "by the road" and this rule, or rather its implementation, is a good indicator as to why there is hardly any "wild" building. In the past ten years a land register was also established that is currently being expanded across the country and this will help deal with issues in the future. It is hoped that once such a register is in place, land boundaries will be clearly documented and deliberate forest fires will become futile.

It seems that the pressures on burnt forest land on Thassos from developers were kept in check by a variety of factors such as a reluctance by Thassiotes to let in developers from outside the island, a good implementation record for legislation to do with planning and building permissions, and the cautious use of finance by local hoteliers who preferred to build smaller enterprises and not rely too much on outside finance. The legislation also makes it harder to convert forest land into building plots as it needs to fulfill the above mentioned requirements of at least 4,000 square meters in size as well as being located by the road. While elsewhere forest land can be converted to agricultural land and agricultural land can fairly easily be converted to be developed, this little trick does not work, or is not used on Thassos. Thassiotes developed on a smaller scale and mostly within the building plan of the island. But what makes this island choose smaller-scale development over faster, larger development? For this, the historic roots of the population and land ownership patterns need to be considered as these play a vital role in the evolution of modern society on the island.

The Asia Minor refugees and the reorganization of society on Thassos

The Asia Minor refugee crisis had a major impact on the social composition and land tenure of Thassos. Through the resettlement of refugees, the population of Thassos increased by 10 per cent and the political climate also changed. In order to place the refugee crisis in context, its background needs to be discussed briefly here. It was a force that in many ways left its imprint just as much, if not more, than two world wars. It is the story of the displacement of people who were aptly called by Bruce Clark "Twice a stranger" (2006) and had a huge impact

on the Greek psyche as well as demographics. The history of Greece in the early 20th century is one of pushing back the Ottoman Empire. While southern Greece had been liberated decades earlier, northern Greece was still part of the Ottoman Empire in the early 1900s. In 1912, the Greek army managed to regain the Greek province of Macedonia among others – a province that includes the cities of Thessaloniki and Kavala and, by extension, the island of Thassos (which geographically is part of the northern Aegean Isles but, as it is part of Kavala administratively, it is also Macedonian). This pushing back of the Ottoman Empire and beginning Hellenization of the province has been captured extremely well by Mark Mazower in his "Salonica, city of ghosts" (2004), which looks at the city of Thessaloniki. Salonica was a very multicultural city composed of Greeks, Muslim Turks, Bulgars, Slavs and Ladino Jews but, by the end of the First World War, its population had changed dramatically and became almost exclusively Greek. While rural Macedonia in general (and Thassos in particular) was not a multicultural society, the problems of dramatic Hellenization also apply to its history.

Against this backdrop has to be superimposed a view of the Balkans and Asia Minor of a land and society that was not dominated by one ethnic group but rather, like Salonica, of Muslims and Christians living side by side – sometimes peacefully and unlike an ethnically divided society. In 1922, the Greek army was pushed back in Asia Minor and unceremoniously had to flee from the port of Smyrna, today's Izmir. This was the beginning of what, under the Treaty of Lausanne, would become a massive population exchange between Greek and Turkey. Basically, all Turks had to leave Greece while all Greeks had to leave modern Turkey, regardless of how long they had been there and other considerations. This was even more tragic as the concept of ethnicity was largely based on religion – Greek equaled Christian and Muslim equaled Turkish. Many Greeks had converted to Islam under the Ottoman Empire and were "Turkish" only in religion. This was to no avail, they still had to leave and vice versa in Turkey. This was the beginning of the massive population exchange reaching from Crete to Central and Northern Greece, from the Black Sea coast and the Pontus all across Anatolia. These were people who were considered ethnic Greeks or Turks but often did not speak that language or only in rudimentary form. So all these people had to go on the road and/or on the sea and settle in their "new/old homelands". Only the Greek province of Thrace and the Greeks in Constantinople/Istanbul were spared this fate. Not surprisingly, such a massive population exchange brought

enormous pressures on the fledgling states as people had to be housed and livelihoods had to be established. Modern Greece had to cope not only with the influx of 1.2 million refugees but also with the loss of nearly a million Turkish members of its society – the one not neatly replacing the other. Given the agricultural status of both societies, most refugees were smallholder farmers and attempts were made to have incoming Greek refugees take over the farms left behind by the expelled Muslims but this was too simplistic an idea with regard to the challenges. The majority of the refugees first ended up in cities in Macedonia and Attica, in other words in Thessaloniki or Athens. The North Aegean islands ended up with about 50,000 refugees which, given their small populations, was very substantial. Most refugees arrived in either Athens or Thessaloniki where they spent their first weeks mostly homeless and in absolute penury. Although the state and the Red Cross set up networks and institutions to organize the influx of refugees and welcome them, they were too overwhelmed with sheer numbers to cope. It was only gradually that refugees were spread across the country. Refugee communities are even today clearly recognizable by the prefix "Nea" in a town's name – such as for example Nea Smyrni in Athens and innumerable "Neas" in Macedonia (Nea Epivates, Nea Peramos, and so on). As a rule of thumb, Greek names ending in "idis" (for instance, Petridis and Arvanitis) are the names of families originating from the Pontus. These new populations dramatically changed the face of Greece and the population pressures associated with it obviously meant that the social patterns one finds, for example, on Zakynthos are only possible on islands that had not been greatly affected by this huge influx of essentially strangers who needed to be housed and who needed work. As the Greek government already had to face other political problems with the farmers in Thessaly and the Peleponnese and there were pressures on the land, the vast majority of refugees were settled in Macedonia where there was new agricultural land to explore and where the large estates from Muslim landowners could still be expropriated (Kontogiorgi, 2006).

According to the Geneva Protocol governing the population exchange, the Greek government had to provide the refugee commission with 500,000 hectares of land to settle the refugees (Pentzopoulos, 1962: 103). There were three categories of land that were made available: state-owned land, land vacated by the "Turks", and land sequestrated from private owners. While initially the largest share came from vacated properties, the initial 500,000 hectares did not prove sufficient to house all refugees and more land was made available through "the vigorous

expropriation of large private estates" (Ibid: 104). The lack of a cadastral survey bemoaned in the context of forest fires was also an issue in the redistribution of land as the boundaries of rural properties were not well defined and the Commission was active in surveying large areas of rural land and thus establishing a rudimentary form of cadastre (Ibid: 105).

Most of the problems associated with the refugee crisis and land did not apply to Thassos. The population of Thassos had remained nearly exclusively Greek during the Turkish occupation despite the Turkish influence visible in architecture; thus nobody left the island as a result of the population exchange. The Turkish rulers left the island when it became part of the Greek state in 1912, so no population *exchange* took place on the island despite the fact that refugees were settled there. The island's 14,000 inhabitants saw the island grow by 10 per cent with the addition of about 1,400 refugees (Governorship General of Thessaloniki, 1924 in: Kontogiorgi, 2006: 248). There were no large estates to be broken up and redistributed and no land vacated by the "Turks" available to settle the refugees on. This left government-owned land and land reform as the measures by which the refugees could be settled. The Greek land reform of the 1920s meant that the new settlers had to be freeholders, the land belonging to the man who cultivated it (Pentzopoulos, 1962: 153). The Greek government saw this creation of a peasant smallholder class as an important political tool in the prevention of peasant radicalism and also as a way forward to vastly increase agricultural output (which had been in decline since 1912) (Kontogiorgi, 2006: 107). However, there were also problems with existing farmers and disputes over ownership. Refugees often complained that the land they were allocated was encroached on or taken over by Greek farmers once they had tilled it and made it fertile. The refugees were often not socially accepted by the old established population. Although it is not documented, the refugee farmers on Thassos must have faced these problems as well. They were given land that still had to be converted to agricultural use and was not established farmland. Many refugee farmers had to go and take on seasonal work in the city of Kavala on the mainland in order to make ends meet (Kontogiorgi, 2006: 191). It was this segment of the population that joined the communist party and radicalized politics – exactly what Venizelos wanted to prevent with the land reform.

Although the refugees lived in penury and their allocated plots of land could not sustain them, it needs to be noted that all of Macedonia lived in poverty at the time. To all intents and purposes, oral history

accounts suggest that, despite poverty, there was a more equitable distribution of land among the citizens of Thassos than on Zakynthos, which was dominated by a few landlords. This more equitable distribution, whereby most citizens owned modest slices of land, can be traced back to the influx of refugees and the land reform. It becomes significant for political reasons but also has an impact on how the earnings of tourism are more equitably available to the island citizens. Zakynthos was not part of the land reform, which meant that feudal relations were able to continue for considerably longer and the spoils of tourism were not evenly shared. It can also be seen as the root of a whole set of other social phenomena such as the development of a more heterogeneous society that is more obedient in the face of the law (at least in terms of illegal building and getting away with it) because, for society to function, it is necessary that no social group feels disempowered or inadequately represented. While the refugees certainly felt disempowered and not adequately represented in the 1920s and 1930s, the refugee issue was well and truly history by the 1960s. Therefore the earlier end of feudal relations is very important. As people started owning land much earlier on Thassos, and tourism developed a little earlier on Thassos than on Zakynthos, the land ownership and timing become important. Tourism started thriving on Thassos in the late 1960s with the economic miracle. Germans and Austrians drove their cars to Greece and Thassos, being a Northern island with great beaches, became an easy-to-reach favorite destination. Thus the locals on Thassos already had developed some tourism capacity in the late 1970s. Therefore the social fabric on Thassos meant that the development pattern for tourism was one where the local population chose to stay in control of capital themselves rather than rely on outside finance – at least in the early stages. It meant smaller-scale development but also less debt and dependence. This picture changed somewhat in the mid- to late 1980s – incidentally at the same time as the tragic forest fires.

Tourism in the 1980s

The 1980s saw the addition of package tourism to the diversity of visitors to Thassos. Some of the early arrivals were by bus operators from Germany but this market soon dried up with the war in Yugoslavia and the lack of accessibility to that road system. In addition, flying became cheaper and thus the idea of spending nearly six days on a bus to have a summer holiday in Greece or Turkey became increasingly less

attractive. There is a substantive literature on the power of tour operators. Especially in small and medium-sized enterprise markets, hotels are seen to be dependent on tour operators for marketing and for getting their beds filled. Thus undue power is seen to lie with tour operators. For example, Curtin and Busby argue:

> Although all types of inclusive tours represent solutions to a complex set of problems for both clients and destinations by bringing a regular flow of visitors to destinations, they have put destination-based businesses at a bargaining disadvantage because they have obtained the initiative in persuading their clients which destination to visit. The opinion that the bargaining power of developing destinations with unspoilt nature would increase has proved highly optimistic. In the case of many islands, microstates or peripheral economies, primary control of the flow of tourists to the destination lies with companies based in the tourism-generating countries (1999: 138).

Buhalis argues similarly:

> The proliferation of tourism supply in many destinations worldwide, combined with a lower growth of demand, enables both consumers and the travel trade to increase their bargaining power over suppliers. Almost unlimited and undifferentiated supply in numerous destinations around the world essentially increasingly forces the industry to compete on a "cost advantage" basis. The vast majority of suppliers are Small and Medium-sized Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs). Due to the structural and functional weaknesses of most SMTEs, hotels depend almost entirely on tour operators for their communications with consumers and visibility in their major markets. In addition, through vertical integration, tour operators control both transportation companies (charter airlines) and retailers (travel agency chains). Therefore such firms have established their position as channel leaders of the distribution channel. Moreover, exclusivity rights (i.e., the right of tour operators to exclusively represent hotels in their markets), provide tour operators with control over hotels' distribution mix, as they effectively determine which other channel member can feature a particular establishment in their programme. These conflicts are evident not only on the Mediterranean industry but also on several destinations around the world. These conflicts generate an enormous pressure on principals to reduce their prices. They also reduce the economic impacts of tourism at the macro

> level. As a result, a consumption of local resources can be observed in most destinations, while very few initiatives are undertaken to sustain the invaluable environmental and cultural wealth of these regions (2000: 117).

The rise of tourism in Thassos, unlike in Zakynthos, did not start with package tourism but rather the great expansion in the 1980s saw an increasing reliance on tour operators and package tourists. Thassos hoteliers, or would-be hoteliers, also relied on EC structural development funds dispersed very generously and easily by the PASOK (socialist) government when it came to power in 1985. The businesses established were modest in size and family managed with the exception of two hotels on the island. One was in existence long before the 1980s and was built in the 1960s by a rich family from the mainland and the aim was to build in harmony with nature – buildings were one storey only and rooms spread around many small bungalows rather than one big building. The other hotel was built in the 1980s when tourism took off, at the other end of the island, also by a rich family from the mainland. Both these establishments in addition to many small ones relied on package tourists to make their businesses profitable. They could rely on Greeks and independent travelers coming to the island in July and August but for the rest of the year there was no business. This is where the attraction of package tourism was for the local economy.

In the early days, particularly German and British tour operators worked the Thassos market. Many of the problems mentioned above by Buhalis and Curtin and Busby applied to Thassos, especially with the British tour operators. With German tour operators, Thassos was marketed as the unspoilt green forested island and was thus offered by specialized niche market tour operators which were smaller and had a different relationship with their islands. While mainstream tour operators move easily between destinations, niche market operators offer a specialized product and are thus more invested. German tour operators, for example, bring tourists to the island that want to go for hiking holidays, and this is an especially important business as it does not overlap with the summer tourists and fills beds at a time when they are empty. Many of these tourists come year after year and come back independently of the tour operators because of the impressive beauty of the island. They have developed into an important market and, although locals do not quite understand the way these faithful visitors think, they understand that they are important to their economy and that there is a need to follow certain principles in development in

order to keep this faithful base. Even among the large British tour operators, there is a loyal customer base.

In the 1990s and beyond, an increasing share of visitors came from the former Eastern Bloc such as the Czech Republic, Russia and Poland. Most recently tourists arrive from Romania and Bulgaria since these countries joined the European Union. However, there is not much customer loyalty among these groups. There are a relatively small number of people in these countries' populations that can afford international travel at this moment in time and they are eager to explore the world. For them, the proximity of Thassos, which can be reached in a day's driving, is a major attraction. Some of these come by tour operator but many come independently by car. Thus the range of tour operators and ethnic groups sent by tour operators is extremely diverse on Thassos and there is no reliance on one single group or market.

Buhalis' study on tour operators and small and medium-sized hotels in the Mediterranean suggests that smaller and specialized operators are perceived to be better business partners than large tour operators. The more dependent the relationship between tour operator and hotel, the more dissatisfied the hoteliers are. This applies particularly to hotels that relied on tour operators for financing but also those that feel that they are in a market with few alternatives (2000: 121).

This applies particularly to islands that are heavily dependent on one source of tourist origin, such as Zakynthos with its over-reliance on British tourists. Thassos was diversified from the beginning and did not use tour operators for hotel financing. Thus some of the worst power excesses of tour operators bypassed the island.

This is not to say that large tour operators did not have their say on the island. Their issues and problems will be discussed in more detail in the following section. A substantial part of conflict between tour operators and hoteliers is over price. Tour operators, especially large ones, want to maximize their returns and thus try to offer packages with as little overhead as possible, attracting as many "bums on seats" as possible. This is in direct contradiction to the hoteliers who, in turn, want to maximize their returns with a long-term strategy for business survival. Smaller specialized tour operators are not quite as cost driven as they see themselves as offering a specialty product that has a certain quality and thus costs more. Therefore specialized tour operators as a general rule do not have such a conflicted relationship with the hoteliers.

Thassos offers a lot of specialized tourism such as hiking, dancing courses and cookery classes. These are examples of long-term viable

strategies which necessitate cooperation between tour operator and local provider. Likewise, as it is marketed as unspoilt Greece with outstanding natural beauty, it features in the programs of tour operators specialized on Greece who, again, see themselves as offering a quality product that is substantively different from what mainstream tour operators offer. So Thassos is not overly at the whims of tour operators although the island needs the presence of package tourists to survive economically. Most establishments do not contract out to tour operators exclusively but offer a certain percentage of their rooms to them. This way, they attract other business but still have the tour operators to rely on.

Several hoteliers who have worked in Germany as guest workers have a substantial clientele in loyal customers who return every year and who also, through recommendations, send friends and relatives. Although this sounds like "chump change", it is actually a very lucrative market. The charter flights to Kavala airport are only partially used by package tourists and there are many seats, often the majority depending on the season, that are used by independent travelers as well as by Greeks living in Germany who have roots on the mainland. Thus the notion of individualism regarding travels to Thassos is maintained. Since the latest EU enlargement phase, hotel rooms are increasingly occupied by Romanians and Bulgarians as well as Greeks in July and August. Hence, there are many alternatives to the package tour market and all of these are explored and used on Thassos. However, apart from the loyal fan base (who will also stay away if Thassos loses too much of its character), the package tour alternatives are often just as unreliable in the long term. There is no guarantee that Bulgarians, for example, will return next season.

The Eastern Bloc tourists in many ways take the place on Thassos that the club 18-30 British tourists take on Zakynthos. Many hotel rooms that were built quickly in the mid- to late 1980s are now of inferior quality and will not attract well paying customers. Therefore these hoteliers have to settle for "bargain basement" deals, which with package tourism is the young and drinking crowd, while on Thassos it is part of the East European market (but not all East European tourists fall into this category, far from it). However, the difference is that the Zakynthos hoteliers in the big resorts have to rely exclusively on British tour operators for guests while the Thassos hoteliers have a variety of sources they rely on for various market segments.

This shows that the diversity of the Thassos situation – some of it by the nature of location and the natural beauty (in other words the

forests and beaches) and some of it by the design of the tourist base, both of which put the Thassiote hoteliers in a less dependent relationship than the hoteliers on other islands. The main market segment that has to be pandered to is the loyal customer base of returning Thassophiles. But there is another aspect to the relationship between hoteliers and tour operators on Thassos that is quite unique to this island and that is how it dealt with the large British tour operators.

The British tour operators

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the market dominating British tour operators discovered the Thassos market and, as the accommodation is mostly small hotels and family run businesses, it matched the cheap and cheerful image of British package tourism. British tourists were found mainly in the southern part of the island, such as the second largest town on the island, Limenaria, which was firmly in British hands. It proved to be a popular resort island, especially for families and older clients who appreciated the mix of cultures and whose idea of good nightlife was a good restaurant and a good coffee bar rather than non-stop club culture. Therefore the British tour operators tried to expand their base on the island and wanted to net as many hoteliers as possible. The following account is based on interviews and on a detailed account by the lawyer representing the court case named below. The British expansion proved to be successful in the first instance as operators such as Airtours and Thomson offered the hoteliers they approached a very reasonable per room price. Both sides felt happy with the contracts and the following year hoteliers were approached about the possibility of exclusive contracts with a British tour operator. The majority of them accepted as the contractual terms were even improved upon. However, after they had been exclusive for a season, Airtours and other tour operators dramatically changed the terms of the contract and the rate per room became barely above cost price. This is a common strategy of tour operators, creating a dependent relationship and then changing the terms of contract. As hoteliers have no other source of marketing, many feel that they have to make do with this dependent relationship for customers to survive. Not so the hoteliers on Thassos. There was collective agreement that changing such terms of contract was perceived to be akin to fraud and the contracts were rejected. Although exclusive contracts had existed for a year, the Thassos hoteliers felt that they could recover their losses in time and go back to their other client bases. They rejected the dependency of the hotelier-tour operator

relationship. While this does not mean that they do not do business with tour operators – they clearly do – it means that they do not have exclusive contracts where their business relies on one tour operator only.

The Thassos hoteliers have also challenged tour operators on another prevalent problem. Many tour operators settle their accounts at the end of the season, leaving their debts to hoteliers to accumulate while the hotelier has to face the initial layout costs of cleaning crews, food supplies, and so on. There is an inherent danger of not getting paid, especially with smaller tour operators that spring up one season, do not survive that season and are gone by the winter. Here, hoteliers can lose and have lost all their income that they were due from that particular tour operator. The risk can also become an issue with large tour operators. British tour operator Airtours faced a financial crisis in the late 1990s and abandoned the Thassos market leaving all its accounts unpaid. It is very difficult for hoteliers to sue as such cases are dealt with at the international level, the costs of which are often nearly as high as the sums they are owed. As it happened, the lawyer representing Thassos hotel owners was able to make use of a connection in Great Britain and managed to recover most of the money owed at a fraction of the normal cost. Airtours was soon after taken over by another travel company, which happened at a time of consolidation. Needless to say, it ruined an already precarious situation the British tour operators found themselves in.

Thus Thassos has a conflicted relationship with tour operators and the availability to procure other sources of tourism revenue. This situation, in combination with the desire not to rely exclusively or near exclusively on package tourists, means that there is a more equitable relationship between big business operators and local hoteliers than in other places. This can also be seen as a reason why Thassos has not suffered such a destructive building boom.

Conclusions

The island of Thassos is far from being an environmental paradise with an environmentally-conscious local population. It is no green enclave and is not free from the problems touristic development brings to previously untouched and pristine islands. Having said that, the level of development remains low key and firmly in local hands as well as within particular planning zones. Given that other areas in Greece, and in southern Europe in general, fell victim to large-scale illegal building

activities after the devastating forest fires in the late 1980s and early 1990s, Thassos can be seen as a good example for those that want to develop tourism sustainably as it demonstrates how a local population has managed to maintain local control of its destiny.

Normally such resistance to becoming disempowered is associated with the involvement or the power of global, or local, civil society. There are no discernible civil movements in rural Greece in general, and on Thassos in particular, apart from a quite strong labor movement – the Zakynthos turtle-related civil society movement and the Cretan opposition to Cavo Sidero are exceptions in the general social climate. Whatever movements and associations there are on Thassos, they are usually driven by foreign women married to Greeks, but these have not focused on environmental issues. Likewise, whatever happened on Thassos was not related to civil society pressures or resistance politics even though some collective decisions have arisen on some issues.

The ability to keep some power in their own hands while dabbling in organized international tourism lies in the favorable geographic position of Thassos, which means that it can rely on "car" tourists as well as those flying in on charter airplanes. Another reason is that tourists came to Thassos earlier than to some other islands, again, because it could be reached relatively easily by car. Many of those pioneer "car tourists" now come back by plane but their presence during the initial stages of development meant that there was a more diverse group of arrivals on the island. It also meant that the first wave of building happened before the large sums of money thrown at tourism development were available in the mid-1980s. By that time, there were a substantive number of tourists attracted to and returning to the island because of its natural beauty, which had an impact on how future building took place. These are the accidents of timing and geography that have an impact on how development took place on the island but are by no means the only decisive factors.

What are equally decisive factors are patterns of land ownership, zoning and development plans as well as implementation of these plans – generally during phases of development and particularly after the forest fires. The main reason why there is a disproportionate number of forest fires in Greece compared with other Mediterranean states is that there is no detailed land register (although the Greek state is in the process of setting one up, a process that entered the second stage in 2008). This, in addition to a law that requires the ownership of 4 stremmata (4,000 square meters) for land to be built on outside city

limits, the lack of an official land registry gave a large incentive for arson to "correct" land boundaries and thus acquire the right to build on the land in question. In some areas of Greece this led to a massive illegal building boom and the specific circumstances of Thassos meant that the island was spared such massive extension.

Law abidance in Thassos is higher than average and the vast majority of hotel and other tourist developments are within regular development zones (although there is a huge amount of illegal marble quarrying that takes its toll on the environment but this is a problem unrelated to tourism). There are a variety of probable reasons why law abidance is higher than average. First of all, Thassos has different historical patterns of land ownership compared to other islands. Unlike in the Ionian Sea, feudal patterns of land ownership came to an end earlier in Thassos, which was directly related to the decline and ultimate fall of the Ottoman Empire. The huge influx of refugees from Asia Minor and the Greek government's assignment of parcels of land to these refugees meant that the Thassos population saw land reform in the 1920s as well as political diversity and had to come to terms with integrating the newcomers. In practice, this meant that there was a challenge to the ruling class of Thassos and thus more checks and balances in the politics of the island. Greece is one of the most corrupt OECD countries (Kathimerini, 4 July 2006) but corruption is not taken to the lofty heights it reaches in places like, for example, Zakynthos. Zoning plans and building activity within these zones only are vastly adhered to and laws are generally implemented. There is a general consensus among the population that building should be done by locals. These are the factors that "saved" Thassos from indiscriminate development after the forest fires and made it a touristy green island, run and organized by a business ownership society.

So, where is the global link in tourism on Thassos? For Zakynthos, four global linkages could be discerned: global civil society, global environmental regulation, global finance, and global business. For Thassos, only two of these linkages apply, namely global finance and business. To this should be added the decline of an empire. Despite the fact that the two "benign" global influences of civil society and environmental regulation are missing and only the two "malign" influences of business and finance are present, Thassos still manages to be a sustainable island.

The story of global finance is identical on Thassos and Zakynthos but in Thassos the hoteliers took great care to make sure that they stayed in charge of the projects that were financed. They did not cooperate with outside business to build on a larger scale but rather used the

finance available to build hotels that they could be in charge of themselves. Global finance was used in a way that did not disempower local entrepreneurs, as was the relationship with tour operators/global business. There was only a very brief foray into the type of relationship between tour operators and local hoteliers, which was vastly disadvantageous for Thassos hoteliers. While there is no doubt dependence on big business, it is not exclusive dependence, which levels off power relations between the two actors.

Hence power relations on Thassos are substantially more equitable than on Zakynthos and have been so for a much longer time. Nature-society relations are better not because there is a heartfelt nature-society relationship between Thassos' society and the island's environment but because the island's natural beauty is seen as its selling point. Therefore nature is not "consumed" indiscriminately by building everywhere. At the time of my fieldwork, large plots of land (larger than the required 4000 square meters) were being bought up by Romanians and Bulgarians for investment. It remains to be seen if that "no building" consensus outside the development zones remains in force in future.

So, while Thassos draws a much more international and diverse crowd of visitors, it remains a place that is driven first and foremost by local forces. While this does not mean that local empowerment means a more sustainable nature-society relationship (in this case it is more a recognition that it would be self-destructive to build indiscriminately), it certainly leads to more equitable social relations and an equitable model of business development. It is a decisive factor that the influx of refugees from Asia Minor and the consecutive wrapping up of feudal patterns of land ownership led to a more accountable level of local government than would the "old" model of a small elite ruling class on the island. It meant that there was more of an emergent lower-middle class – unlike Zakynthos where feudalism came to an end in the 1970s but local elites managed to hang on to power.

The lessons to be drawn from the Thassos study are that local empowerment is a long-term strategy and cannot just happen with equitable access to capital for development but needs to be rooted on the existing social structure. Local elites need to be more accountable. This is a process that can be steered. The coincidence of being able to draw a diverse body of tourists and attracting a loyal base of returning visitors who generate enough capital to incite the locals to respect the beauty of the island and not develop indiscriminately is something that cannot be influenced from the outside or with a development plan. It is the sheer luck of the draw. However, looking at both Zakynthos and

Thassos, important lessons become obvious for areas that want to develop their tourist base and the example of Thassos shows that relying on small and medium-sized enterprises as the main engine for sustainable tourist development is a good strategy for the relative empowerment of local society. While there is unavoidable disempowerment in the business relations with tour operators, the comparison of Thassos and Zakynthos in this respect shows that dealing with a diverse client base is advantageous. Thassos is not an example of ecotourism but it shows that mainstream tourism and sustainable criteria can be brought together successfully.

7
Cavo Sidero in Crete

The third case study is one where the social and environmental relations of tourism are not mainly determined by tour operator power. The story of the Cavo Sidero planned eco-golf resort is an important case study because it is perceived as trendsetting for the future of Mediterranean tourism. It is a study of complex power relations between an emergent Greek civil society, the Greek government, an "outside" civil society actor as well as an outside developer with the added complication of a controversial Greek actor, the Greek Church. This has been an ongoing fight for over ten years and it can also be described as a conflict between two different environmental ideologies: the idea of ecological modernization where technology can conquer geographical adversity, which is portrayed as sustainable, as opposed to respecting the environmental or geographical limitations of the land and working around it.

The Cavo Sidero peninsula is in the very northeast of Crete in an extremely arid inaccessible part of the island and a Natura 2000 site under European Union rules. There is hardly any rainfall here, a lot of wind and not much infrastructure. The idea is to build a 7,000 bed luxury eco-golf resort community with environmental technology overcoming the natural shortages of water and greenery. This development is to be followed or accompanied by a large-scale general development of the area including a huge upgrade of the small airport located at Sitia, the local town, which currently only runs four flights a week to Athens on a small plane. Roads would need to be upgraded too. At the moment transfer times from the island's capital, Heraklion, are well over three hours on narrow country roads for the last third of the trip. The proposed site is on the land belonging to the Toplou monastery which has leased the land to the developer, Minoan Group, and approves of and has even initiated the development.

So here is an example of strong inside and outside forces contending with local resistance, not just from the environmental movement but the population at large, and a case where there is no conflict between environmental and social needs as they go hand-in-hand. However, there are different interpretations of social need. The planned development will certainly generate employment opportunities – in fact more opportunities than the region can fill with its own population. Thus it is in direct conflict with the existing small and medium-sized tourist businesses from whose base it is going to draw and it would also bring in a large seasonal workforce that has no connection to the area. This is not something that the local population is in favor of and thus this is a rare case in which social and environmental needs converge against an outside idea of what constitutes good, sustainable development. The final go ahead for this project has not been given and after a legal challenge by local civil society, final approval from the Supreme Court is still formally pending and fortunately increasingly unlikely, although most permits and authorizations had originally been granted. At the same time, the developers do not have the funding themselves for the project and have to find investors – which they cannot do until

Cavo Sidero Natura 2000 site

the case appeal has been ruled on by the Greek Supreme Court. So there are still obstacles in the way of the development and the final word has not been spoken. However, it has generated some media interest and is another example of an active Greek civil society. One part of these special circumstances finds its roots in the special history of Crete. This chapter will look at the history of Crete and then at the particulars of the Sitia region before discussing the Cavo Sidero development in detail.

History

Crete, like the whole of the Mediterranean region, has a long and varied history. It is host to some of the earliest archeological remains from the Minoan civilization which can be found on the Knossos site. This site has drawn visitors to Crete for many years before tourism became a mainstream activity, as far back as the late 1800s. Crete was also occupied by the Venetians, as was Zakynthos, and it had a special history under the Ottoman Empire. A series of uprisings against Ottoman rule on the island from 1841 secured the island privileges, such as more power to Christian leaders, and in 1898 the Ottoman Empire lost its grip on Crete and an independent state was pronounced. In 1913, Crete was reunified with Greece. It is also a region that suffered tragically under the 1922 population exchanges with nearly half the population leaving Crete for Turkey and newcomers settling on the island. The current population of Crete is about 630,000 and has increased somewhat with the tourism boom as compared to before the 1960s.

The Northeastern part of Crete is sparsely populated today but in antiquity the city of Itanos on the Cavo Sidero peninsula was a bustling commercial port which suggests that the area used to be much more populated then despite its rough, windswept and arid terrain. The assumption has to be that the peninsula is a rich treasure in unexplored archeological sites apart from the excavated Itanos site.

Cretans are well known for their pride, their tenacity and their eccentricity. Cretan pride and defiance in the face of the law are well documented in the literary world through the writings of novelist Nikos Kazantzakis while a regular reader of the Greek press cannot fail but notice that this fierceness and defiance are still evident today. The island has its own concept of the law and a strong code of honor, especially in the more remote mountainous areas. The Cretan diet is renowned across the world and seen as one of the healthiest diets globally, partly

due to the longevity of the Cretan people. It is very similar to the regular Mediterranean diet but contains even less processed food. However, the Cretan diet these days is mostly extinct and much more processed and fatty foods are consumed. This development is intrinsically related to the increased economic status as a result of income from tourism (Kousis, 2004a, b).

Crete is the largest of the Greek islands and the fifth largest Mediterranean island, its coastline spans 1,040 km with the length from east to west being 250 km, and the interior of the island is covered by a mountain range that reaches peaks of 2,000m. Its climate and fertile agricultural plains make it one of the most favorable and fertile agricultural regions in the Eastern Mediterranean. For example, it is the only place in Greece or indeed in the European Union where bananas are grown. Tourism and agriculture are the main economic pursuits on the island making up the lion's share of Crete's GDP.

About a third of the Cretan population lives in cities, mostly on the northern coast. The main cities are Chania, Heraklion and Rethymnon. It is a well connected island with two main airports and several ports. The airports at Chania and Heraklion are served by flights from all over Europe bringing in package tourists from April to October and a small stream of tourists continues to visit in winter due to the mild Cretan climate.

Crete attracts about 25 per cent of the share of total Greek tourism, which amounts to about 2.5 million tourists a year to the island. Most of them come in on charter flights. The northern coast along the island's highway is the main destination of this tourism boom – more or less the entire zone, from Chania to Aghios Nikolaos with the exception of the city of Heraklion, has been given over to package tourism. It is a very mixed zone ranging from small and medium-sized enterprise-based tourism to large luxury resorts. There are also a large number of illegal (untaxed) rooms-only establishments. Like the other two islands studied in this book, the entry of Greece into the European Community and the amount of funding available shortly after that leading to large-scale development has also had a huge impact on Cretan tourism development. While the island had been visited by tourists as early as 100 years ago by archeological visitors, it became appealing to the broad base of tourism in the 1960s and 1970s with supply and demand escalating in the 1980s. As Andriotis summarizes:

> Tourism development in Greece is promoted through incentives given by various laws which are mainly concerned with the construction of

> hotel establishments and other tourist facilities. The early laws provided mostly market-led incentives, directed at increasing bed spaces and the construction of facilities demanded by the tourist market, without consideration of the needs of the local community and the principles of sustainable development. After 1990, due to problems resulting from oversupply of tourist enterprises in some coastal areas, incentives became more selective, paying attention to environmental resources, attempting to control construction in areas with high concentrations of tourism activity and providing funding for diversified types of investment (e.g. convention centres, golf courses and thalassotherapy centres). According to the Hotel Chamber of Greece (1996), in the period 1982–1995, the Cretan hotel industry attracted 20% of the national investments subsidized through development laws. The level of subsidy reached 14.8 billions GRD (Greek Drachma), 17% of the national total. The capital used was 22% of all investments arising from development laws applied in Greece during this period, and created 23% of national beds (2001: 301).

And Briassoulis writes further:

> By the late 1990s, the number of hotel beds and hotel beds per 1000 inhabitants had almost doubled over 1981. Tourism development intensified in the west with the prefectures of Rethymnon and Chania experiencing the most dramatic increase as hotel beds and hotel beds per 1000 inhabitants grew three-fold. In the prefecture of Irakleion the corresponding magnitudes doubled. Mass tourism still prevailed, although alternative and more diverse types and quality classes of accommodation units were being offered to satisfy shifting tourist preferences toward individual and/or family-based holidays. Greek and foreign entrepreneurs erected luxurious tourist complexes and now control significant proportions of the tourist accommodation and services. The behaviour of local tourism-related capital has become more variegated. In terms of number of firms, family-based businesses dominate but some of them have been transformed into corporate-based businesses that have extended their operations beyond the island. Several others have succumbed to globalization and competition and have transferred their management to foreign multinationals. It is unofficially estimated that foreign tour operators control 70% of the available tourist beds through various arrangements. Unregistered tourist accommodation has increased considerably. Diverse recreation

> facilities, such as golf courses, marinas, ports, water parks and miscellaneous tourist services are now available. The island as a whole is approaching the consolidation stage but individual localities are at different stages of development. The northern axis is in the growth (west) and consolidation (east) stages, with pockets at the stagnation stage in the overdeveloped areas. The northern axis is congested, concentrating four-fifths of total tourist activity and most hotel and transport infrastructure, producing 79% of the island's tourism-related GDP and serving 74% of the population of the region. By contrast, the southern axis is in the involvement and development stages, with the acceleration of tourism development there being facilitated by the construction of new infrastructure. The hinterland remains largely undeveloped touristically (2003: 107/8).

Thus Crete entered the intensive tourism development phase at the same time as Zante and Thassos expanded their bases as well, under the same wave of funding opportunities and with the same mistakes. However, Crete's development goes above and beyond what the other two islands experienced and it is a consolidated tourist destination. The problems relating to the consolidation phase and their relations with tour operators are not part of this study. The northeastern part of Crete that this chapter focuses on is not part of that touristic consolidation and is extremely limited to no package tourism. Its development remains comparable to that of Thassos and Zante outside the main resorts of Laganas and Kalamaki. From that point of view, the situation in northeastern Crete does not compare to the other studies at all. One dominant outside actor is missing. The Sitia region belongs to the same administrative district of Lassithi as Aghios Nikolaos, so statistics can be misleading as Aghios Nikolaos is one of the most consolidated towns on the island. However, the study is still vital to an understanding of small and medium-sized enterprises in an environmentally-threatened area as two outside actors have a very strong influence. Instead of tour operators, there is the British company that bought the development rights. The other actor is the European Union whose policy on subsidizing golf courses in the Mediterranean area has the potential to ruin the area with developments being set up that cannot but fail economically. The northeastern part of Crete is arid and its main claim to fame is the beach at Vai, which draws an enormous amount of day visitors as it is the only beach with native palm trees in Europe. These visitors do not stay the night, however, and get bussed in or find their way with their rental cars. The Sitia region has beautiful

beaches which are superior to those of many of the big resorts in Crete (in fact, some resorts do not even have proper beaches) but the sheer distance from the island's airports as well as the aridity of the land and the strong winds (which on one side of the peninsula also bring in enormous amounts of marine waste from ships) have so far been an obstacle to development. Also, the tip of the Cavo Sidero peninsula does not have decent beaches at all which also suggests that it is not a good setting for such a sizeable development. The Sitia region, like many other relatively undeveloped areas in the Mediterranean, has a loyal following of German returnee visitors, many of whom are devoted surfers, who mostly stay in the town and nearby beach area of Palaikastro, very close to Cavo Sidero, in small, family-owned enterprises. This is the backdrop to the Cavo Sidero planned development.

Cavo Sideo, the history

Cavo Sidero is a 6,000-acre site owned by the Toplou monastery of the Church of Greece. The Toplou monastery is located in near isolation on the peninsula but draws a steady crowd of day visitors wanting to see the monastery and its treasures. The monastery has several goat and sheep herds on the terrain as well as the gardens and olive gardens belonging to the order. The peninsula is rich in biodiversity and archeological remains and the original idea for development comes from the monastery's abbot. The Church of Greece has recently emerged as an advocate of environmental protection but the original deal was made long before that enlightenment. The abbot put forward the land for development in a way that would benefit the local population and lead to the protection of the local environment, which at that time only meant not to repeat the mistakes and excesses found in other parts of the island. So the original lease did not make reference to sustainable development and the language of the discourse has only been used recently, although it is maintained that this was always the spirit. The patriarch of the Orthodox Greek Church has not commented on the Toplou land deal at all.

However, there is another dimension to the role of the Greek Orthodox Church. Currently the church is implicated in several land deals with the Greek government that are to the detriment of the Greek tax payer and church-related land deals have become a political hot potato. In the public sphere, this controversial role of the Church has put the Cavo Sidero deal in a new light. Its details are discussed below but it is highly questionable if the supposed benefit for the local popu-

lation was ever a central motivating criterion. The monastery is impoverished itself.

The Cavo Sidero case is presented, especially in foreign media, as if the motivation of the abbot are "pure", so to speak, and the discrepancy of views on whether this is a viable enterprise might be seen in interpretations of what sustainable development constitutes. The assumption is that modern environmental technology will overcome the natural limitations of the location while the development's opponents argue that this is an unrealistic expectation. As this is not a computer simulation – once the complex is built and if it turns out that environmental technology is not a panacea for all problems, this would enter the books as one of the most monumental planning disasters, basically ruining one of the last areas of wilderness in Europe. Should it be successful, there are still questions marks over equity. Should such an area of (protected) natural beauty be turned over to be a manicured golf course which can basically be built anywhere while the particular beauty and ecosystem of this location cannot be reproduced elsewhere? Local activists are not so charitable about the abbot's motivations and the British developer and feel that the sustainable development discourse is a selling tool and a way to attract EU subsidies rather than a heartfelt commitment by either the abbot or the developers. There are no guarantees or safeguards for sustainability. In fact, the original development was not advertised or reported on under a sustainability banner. This concept was only introduced very recently.

The abbot originally commissioned a British group with developing plans for the site and then leased the land to them for the next 40 years with an option for automatic renewal for another 40 years. The company, then called Loyalward, approached the abbot in 1992 and in 1998 the lease was signed. Loyalward (now Minoan) itself will not provide the capital for building the site nor will it run the proposed hotels. It is an investment venture that makes the plans and then looks for investors as well as tourism companies willing to run and manage the proposed hotels. However, despite the lengthy process, no investors and only one hotel leaseholder have been identified. Part of the problem has to do with the listing of the company, which cannot list itself in the most suitable market until more red tape has been shifted. The Greek government has been slow in granting all the licenses but in 2007 gave the green light for development. Shortly thereafter the Kempinski group announced with Minoan that they are going to run one of the hotels in the zone. This announcement helped Minoan move up to a better trading market. However, trading in the

right market is only one problem for Minoan; the other is to convince investors that this is a viable project that will not get stuck in the red tape of Greek bureaucracy, even the contract with Kempinski is conditional.

Because of the abbot's wish to develop Cavo Sidero, it is assumed that the project has local backing. However, many locals feel that such a big development project would lead to further water shortages in an area that already suffers from water shortages. The closest human settlement of Palaikastro has run out of water before in its recent history and only continues to exist as a human settlement because of the location of another water source. The developers say that they will build a desalination plant and will use drought resistant plants for landscaping and for the golf course. Golf courses in the Mediterranean have a long history of environmental problems and also of economic viability. However, it has to date not been explained how exactly water demand will be met and how these technological advances are going to be made available to the wider community. In addition, desalination plants are highly energy intensive so another question is how this energy demand will be met.

The second problem is that of labor. Proponents of Cavo Sidero argue that it will bring employment to an area that sees a net exodus of the area's young people. However, the proposed 7,000 beds would bring more employment than the local economy could fill. In addition it is arguable whether the employment created is truly "sustainable" employment as a lot of the expected jobs on offer do not require a high level of skills. According to Oliver Rackham, an expert on Cretan ecological history at the University of Cambridge and one of the activists involved in the opposition to the project, the local authority does not back the project and its supposed employment. They do not believe that a golf resort will bring viable, secure long-term employment under conditions of ecological stability. There has also been no discussion as of yet as to what it would mean for the few small and medium-sized tourist enterprises in the region and their ability to attract and retain labor. One local activist put it bluntly: "We have people who work in Elounda 4 months a year and get a room/bed there and their jobs are without insurance, without anything. Why should this development be better and offer better jobs? It's the same and we already have that opportunity" (translation mine).[1] Another issue is that a substantial number

[1]Local activist, personal communication 7 October 2008.

of tourism workers in the Cretan resorts are not actually Greeks but are seasonal workers coming in from Bulgaria and Romania.

There is also controversy over the environmental impact assessment (EIA) that was used to support the site development. Minoan Group and its British support, NGO Forum for the Future, argue that the EIA shows quite clearly that their proposed development would cause minimal environmental harm and would in fact benefit the local community. Rackham and Moody, authors of a book on the ecology of Crete, vehemently dispute the validity of the EIA and argue that it was written in a general and formulaic way and it is not an EIA specific to the site. The Greek Supreme Court appeal on the matter is pending but a preliminary report to the circuit judge highlights that there were procedural problems and that the proposed project is not in harmony with existing environmental and planning law. The abbot strongly disputes this. In a radio interview on 7 October 2008 on local radio, he maintained that Jennifer Moody, a co-activist in setting up the petition and media interest abroad, walked in, took a few pictures in the area and then passed them off as there being archeological findings on the site when basically there is no legitimacy to her claim. This is another matter the Supreme Court will rule on, but the ruling will of course come in the context of land deal scandals involving the Greek Orthodox Church. One Mount Athos monastery caused an extremely timely scandal leading to public outrage in October 2008. The Orthodox Church has been an important player in Greek politics but its actions are increasingly being challenged. In this light, it becomes particularly noteworthy that the patriarch of the Greek Orthodox Church has not made a statement on the Cavo Sidero issue despite his environmental outspokenness.

There are also questions as to whether the strong winds in the area would not be a serious issue for golf players. An ethical question is whether an undeveloped area of unique natural beauty should be used for the building of a (or in fact three) golf course when it has not been chosen because of its suitability for golf but rather for the sheer size of the site. Golf courses in the Mediterranean have a history of being highly energy intensive and find it difficult to compete on quality. Greece admittedly lags behind other Mediterranean countries in developing golf tourism and this project is seen by the Greek government as a way to remedy this situation, but this also raises questions of whether golf tourism is something that Greece needs to compete on. Traditional tourism markets are stagnant and in the recent past golf tourism has boosted the income of other Mediterranean states, but this is also

about being ahead of the curve and not running after it. There is clearly a fashion element to golf tourism as there is to any theme-based tourism and it seems that the fad is at its height right now. The issue of supply and demand also factors in of course with more golf resorts being built everywhere and this thus raises questions on viability from this point of view. The theme of golf resorts has enjoyed so much popularity by southern EU member-states because of the huge subsidies available from the European Union for building golf resorts under the structural funds initiative.

Legal and political issues

These are the practical concerns with the proposed development. Then there are questions over the legal setup of the deal. Phidias Kontemeniotis, an Athenian lawyer who has researched the legal background, states the following:

> The proposed tourist development of the Cavo Sidero peninsula in eastern Crete is a matter of exceptionally (sic) public interest. First, because the scheme is being projected as the largest ever inward tourist investment in Greece and as an intervention which will bring great economic development and social progress to the area. Second, because the principal of this enterprise is a charitable foundation which is supervised by four government ministries and which, by definition, exists and functions for the benefit of society as a whole, with statutory objectives referring to the progress and prosperity of the local residents who, therefore, have a legitimate right at least to know. The writer's decision to undertake this study was prompted by a request from several local-government officials seeking to be informed in depth about the legalities of the matter, given that, for many years, public opinion was only informed through nebulous pronouncements, rumors and commercial advertisements and not by tangible facts. Notably, even the leadership of directly involved local-government bodies was stating until recently that it was not aware of the content of the Contract, even though this had been repeatedly described as a public document, and we eventually obtained it from a press source (Kontemeniotis, 2007: 3).

The main questions concern the motivations of the monastery and the conditions under which they leased the land and what participatory decision-making powers there are for local officials and the local com-

munity. The legal contract underlying the lease of the land to Loyalward/the Minoan Group was made by a charitable foundation under the aegis of the Toplou monastery which owns the site. However, according to Kontemeniotis the transfer of land from the monastery to the foundation is legally void, which undermines the whole basis and legality of the lease Minoan holds. The foundation was set up by presidential decree in 1992 and is supervised by the Ministries of Finance, Culture, Agriculture and Education. Its governing council is composed of the bishop of Sitia, the abbot of the monastery, a priest, a lawyer, a local civil engineer and two pious lay people from within the diocese. A variety of laws and decrees have tried to get around the fact that the transfer of the land to the foundation is not legal but it is not clear if this would uphold if contested. The original plan was to have the land developed in a socially responsible way and the idea of an eco-golf resort and luxury hotels only came much later. The lease as it stands now is valid for 40 years and directly renews itself for a second term, giving Minoan the right to the land and its development for 80 years. The Kontemeniotis briefing has become part of the documentation considered by the Greek Supreme Court in support of its decision.

There is some uncertainty and speculation as to the exact nature of the Minoan Group. It seems to consist of a handful of private persons who have come together for the sole purpose of developing the Cavo Sidero site. They do not have the capital for developing the site nor have they secured investors apart from their preliminary contract with the Kempinski group. This is supposed to happen when the Greek government gives the go-ahead for building on the site. No one at Minoan has experience with similar projects and no one has any expertise in sustainable development in arid landscapes, or any landscape for that matter. They are accountants. However, one of the directors is an architect. The original founders of Loyalward are not part of the project any longer. In 2006 a travel specialist joined the Board of Directors of Minoan who was a senior executive in the British Airtours company when it went bankrupt. This is the same company that was sued by a Thassos hotelier for non-payment of bills. The company's website has copied parts of the Environmental Impact Assessment and makes it available to potential investors. However, it does not give any detailed information. It has only partially been translated and a lot of it is not directly relevant to the site, nor are data interpreted or applied to the development. Although it lists the construction of a desalination plant as a measure for water use, it does not go into any details such as where the energy for it would come from. As for energy efficiency, the

study aims for the Cavo Sidero site of development to use 50 per cent less energy than comparable resorts. This is to be achieved by using more natural light and energy efficient lighting as well as mini-buses instead of individual transport. Again, a study of the energy sector in Sitia was part of the impact assessment but was not used for a discussion on energy by the company's information network. Even if this proposed resort uses only about half the energy comparable resorts use, there is still a big question mark as to how that energy will be generated, how waste will be removed and where to, and how this influ-ences the local community. The company's website provides inconsistent information of the state of the development. Furthermore,

> in November 2006, Mr Giorgos Souflias the Greek Minister of Environment, Planning and Public Works announced his Ministry's approval of the Environmental Impact Study (EIS). On receipt of the formal documentation the development can commence.
>
> It is anticipated that the Licences will be forthcoming as both the local authority and Greek community have expressed their support for the scheme which will create in excess of 2000 direct year-round jobs and give Crete first class leisure and conference facilities. At the same time, marketing off-plan will begin. Based on current projections, building work will start in 2008 (www.minoangroup.com/status.htm accessed 9/26/08).

However, in the business report it states:

> At the beginning of May Minoan was advised that the hearing of the appeal lodged against the Greek Government's approval of its Environmental Impact Assessment ("EIA") in respect of the Project had been postponed. The new date for the hearing before a Plenary Session of the Greek Council of State is 7 November 2008. The postponements of the hearing of the appeal have been disappointing for directors and shareholders alike. However, the directors consider the recent approval of the National Land Plan by the Greek Parliament to be extremely positive both for the Greek national economy and major investment in tourism. The importance of investment in sustainable integrated tourism developments to Greece has been well documented and the National Land Plan seeks to encourage such investment. The Board remains firmly of the opinion that the Project fulfils all the requirements of such developments and looks

> forward to bringing this unique resort to fruition (www.minoan-group.com/downloads accessed 9/26/09).

The website is more of an advertising site rather than a site for detailed information on the investment the company promotes. Thus its material is not well organized or clear. This gives the impression that they are unlikely to pull in major support and are unlikely to pull this project off. Of course such appearances can be deceptive. The Greek government has realized that the current mainstream form of tourism it has supported over the years is not a good strategy to lead the country into the 21st century. Greek visitor numbers are stagnant and the tourism market is becoming more competitive with tourists generally wanting more than the basic "sun, sea, sangria" provisions. Greece has seen its neighbors having success with resort-style, specialized holidays such as golf hotels. Therefore the Greek government is committed to this project as it sees it as a flagship for the 21st century. In fact, Minoan's proposed development is the first project in Greece by foreign investors and the first time the Greek government opened its "doors" to foreign investment in this sector (*Financial Times*, 9 November 2006). Such resort type developments were not approved previously because the Greek government realized that the backbone of its economy is small and medium-sized enterprises and they did not want to take business away from this sector. However, recently it had been felt that such big developments in other parts of the Mediterranean were taking business away from Greece and that large resorts provided an opportunity to rescue the Greek tourism industry. Previous Greek governments were dragging their feet on approving the Cavo Sidero development but the current government took the final step. Its decision has been appealed and the appeal review is outstanding.

It is as a response to this dragging of feet in the face of local resistance that Loyalward gradually redesigned its plans for the development to take account of more sustainable practices, arguing that such developments can command higher prices (*Financial Times*, 9 November 2006). However, at the same time as the project was described as more sustainable, the number of planned golf courses also went up to three from the one originally planned. Presumably this is to attract more subsidies from the European Union. It is in this light that the partnership between the British NGO Forum for the Future (FFF) and Loyalward/Minoan came about. Forum for the Future is an environmental NGO that focuses on working with the business and education sectors in bringing about change by training the decision makers. It has a distinguished list

of trustees, all of whom are household names in green politics in the UK, such as Sara Parkin and Jonathan Porritt. They attract a substantial part of their operating budget from the companies or institutions they work with, so they operate in a zone where they call themselves an NGO but in many ways they perform the services of a consultancy. They were approached by Minoan who wanted Forum for the Future's expertise for the Cavo Sidero project and Minoan is indeed one of the sources from which Forum for the Future derives income. Forum for the Future sees this as an opportunity to work on sustainable tourism. In this case, Forum for the Future's business director defines its role in the process as "helping with frameworking" in the context of the Environmental Impact Study commissioned by Minoan and "scoping out" policies as well as being involved in strategic planning. Forum for the Future is aware that Minoan will attract investors that will actually carry out the building and details of the project but does not see this as a potential problem as those are processes that Forum for the Future does not see its role in. In other words, its role is limited to developing a sustainability vision. They do not see a contradiction between big developments and sustainability as big companies drive the economy and therefore this is where action needs to be focused (interview 22 October 2008). However, it seems doubtful that they really know what they are in for. In their February 2008 press release on the FFF-Minoan partnership, they issued the following background information on Minoan:

> Established in 1991, Minoan Group Plc, formerly Loyalward Group Plc, is a resort management company specialising in the assembly, design and supervision of the construction of high quality resort destinations in the Eastern Mediterranean, which it subsequently manages.
>
> The company's current main focus is on the development of Cavo Sidero. The project draws upon the Company's in-depth knowledge and understanding of the complexities of sustainable development and management within the Greek property market and with the resources, skills and contacts required to succeed in the region (www.fff.org).

While it is true that Minoan/Loyalward is a resort management company, this press briefing gives the impression that Minoan runs other projects besides Cavo Sidero. This is not the case. Its architect member who joined in 2006 may have done so but not Minoan as a company.

Therefore Cavo Sidero is also not its current main focus but its only focus. The company has hardly any knowledge or understanding of "the complexities of sustainable development" apart from its architect. Thus either FFF is whitewashing or they lack the relevant information. In the latter case, this is extremely worrying as to the overall running of the project. As Forum for the Future puts it in its press release:

> The project is the brainchild of the Abbot of Moni Toplou. It aims to provide the necessary resources for the regeneration, protection and enhancement of the local natural and cultural environment through creating a model of sustainable tourism and management and by providing a sound foundation for the local and economic well being of the community. It also seeks to promote the region and make it an international destination for informed environmentally aware visitors, who will be engaged in the life of the region and of its residents.

It is hard to see how the visitors of a luxury golf resort would be engaged with the life of the region and its residents when the residents have no connection to golf at all – or how this target group could be counted as usually environmentally aware. Thus the only way this can be explained as anything but farcical is to go back to the diverging views of sustainability discourse. Such a project can only be supported morally if one sees sustainability mainly as a technical issue of water procurement, waste disposal and local employment. If one incorporates lifestyle issues such as distribution of income and consumption issues, then a different picture emerges, one that cannot under any circumstances see the project as sustainable regardless of desalination plants and sustainable waste disposal. Forum for the Future and the Abbott of Toplou see sustainable tourism as a good way to protect the land from overgrazing and to avoid creeping development with no master plan. However, it is hard to see how 7,000 hotel beds in an area with 2,000 inhabitants can be seen as a small development project that is preferable to locals setting up more small and medium-sized enterprises. This is where the debate stands at the moment. The local population originally stood on the fence or somewhat supported the idea of development but in the last couple of years public opinion shifted substantially in favor of resistance. There is an understanding that there is no common sense to this development and that ideas are half baked. There is also an understanding that they do not want to become a second "Costa Brava", as it is referred to locally, meaning that they do

not want to make the mistakes of Spanish coastal development replicated in an area that has so far gotten away unscathed from mass tourism. Local people generally feel that if this development means more people are going to frequent their businesses then it is good but generally they cannot see the sense of it and would altogether prefer a different kind of development. Locals like the idea of luxury tourism but, if they lived in a world where anything was possible, they would opt for a "tasteful" reconstruction of the old Itanos settlement in the form of luxury villas in hotel form. This model somewhat makes sense as, for example, the Mani peninsula in the Peleponnese has developed such a form of tourism out of ruined watchtowers and it seems to be relatively successful.

To return to the role of Forum for the Future as a consultant to Minoan and as a possible sustainability advocate, there are question marks over appropriateness of the Sitia region for this kind of development. The Forum's business director referred to its publication "Paradise Found" (2008b) as a guide for Forum for the Future's vision for tourism. This report is phrased in extremely vague and mostly technical language. While it argues for biodiversity protection and zero-carbon as well as zero-water impact to be achieved with locally-sourced building materials where possible (nothing wrong here but somewhat unlikely to be achieved in Cavo Sidero), it also puts emphasis on "people, community and finance". Tourist developments are supposed to offer long-term employment opportunities for local society as well as integrate tourists with the local community through a mutual, respectful relationship. Again, seasonal contracts and golf courses in an area where people do not even know exactly how golf is played are unlikely to achieve this sustainability vision. It also seems questionable how sound financial decisions with "solid returns to shareholders" are likely in the case of Cavo Sidero. Clearly the theme of golf resorts has been chosen to attract EU subsidies and funding and not because it is a sound financial decision to invest in golf courses in this area. Golf course development in Southern Europe and especially the Eastern Mediterranean are well documented to be considered unsustainable on several levels (for an overview of the literature see Briassoulis, 2007). Also, the area already has one financial disaster in tourism, namely the Dionysos Village Hotel which is essentially a town house development at the entrance to the Cavo Sidero peninsula and which had a similar finance structure to the one proposed by Minoan. However, here the mother company defaulted and the resort basically collapsed with only some of the town houses being inhabited. Understandably locals are wary of a repeat performance. In addition, golf is a fashion form of

tourism and it is very questionable if an area that seems chronically unsuited to the sport of golf will be a solid long-term investment providing good returns for shareholders. Thus Forum for the Future's endorsement of Cavo Sidero seems naïve and lacking in understanding of local culture and nature. It provides a formulaic structure for Minoan to use for its advertising. While it is obvious that external capital is needed for development in the Sitia region as internal capital is not available, only a project that makes sound business sense apart from being sustainable in an environmental sense can constitute sustainable development. Without the prospect of success, the most futuristic zero-carbon and water-friendly resort is not going to be sustainable.

Likewise, the suggestion of sustainable labor use seems an unlikely idea. Forum for the Future maintains that Minoan is in discussion with local Cretan education facilities to make sure that local labor is found and employed (interview 22 October 2008) but even if Minoan is concerned, as they are not going to employ the labor force and run the establishments, this seems an unlikely success strategy. Employees in the tourism sector – even on Crete where the season is the longest in Greece – are only employed for a certain number of months and do not have comprehensive social insurance. They have to draw benefits for the rest of the year. In the large resorts, the tourism workforce is largely composed of Bulgarians and Romanians as well as Albanians who come down for the season and leave in winter. Cavo Sidero would need to generate year-round employment for university graduates in order to be a viable sustainable employer and the hotel sector in the Mediterranean in general has not been able to provide this kind of quality employment. If Cavo Sidero had an alternative, surely this would have been used to promote its plans instead of hiding behind obscure, generalist sustainability talk. Neither Minoan nor Forum for the Future were able or willing to move away from vague technical jargon to specifics on this matter.

Another political issue is the role of the Greek government. As mentioned above, the Greek government (in the shape of several ministries) is actively involved in the setting up of the Cavo Sidero development as a supervisor of the Foundation leasing the land from the monastery to the Minoan Group. Since it designated this project as the pilot project and presentation object of the 21st century and the savior of Greek tourism, the success and go-ahead of the project has a lot to do with saving face for the government. Although the project has been in existence for over ten years, various governments have dragged their feet in finalizing the building and planning permits. The current New

Democracy government (center right) went ahead but it now suffers from various political issues that have subjected it to criticism. First of all, in the face of a variety of scandals, both leading parties are very unpopular and the symptomatic disillusionment of the public is very vocal and is expressed through a record number of general strikes. In addition, the above mentioned church scandals have done nothing to increase the feeling of competence the population feels its government is lacking. At the end of October the ruling New Democracy party withheld its party from a parliamentary vote to hold a judicial inquiry into the Vatopedi (Mount Athos) church land deals in which the government lost EUR 100 million – out of fear its party would be accused of corruption after the minister of state had already resigned to preempt such charges. In the years before and in the aftermath of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens there have been cash crises and it became obvious that there was monstrous profligacy as well as badly accounted for building activity.

On the environmental side, there is an enormous discrepancy between the environmental rhetoric of the government and its environmental credentials. The Cavo Sidero peninsula is a designated Natura 2000 site – an environmental status awarded by the European Union. Greece has a somewhat shaky record of implementing EU law. Natura 2000 sites have been given specially protected status but it is up to the member-state in which the site is located to implement the Natura 2000 requirements. In the case of Greece, very little has been done (Kathimerini, 6 October 2008). Natura 2000 sites have to be zoned and the relevant government has to determine what human activities are permitted in the zones and which are not. In the absence of such determination, anything goes. Only a very small number of the 371 Natura 2000 areas in Greece have been zoned and Cavo Sidero is not one of them. Environmental academics accuse the Greek government of a lack of will (Kathimerini, 6 October 2008).

So politically the role of the Greek government in the proposed Cavo Sidero development has been controversial and not in harmony with the sustainability criteria that EU policy making requires of its member-states. This poses a challenge for the Greek Supreme Court in its appeal hearing. Politically it may not be opportune to scupper the flagship plans for the government to bring Greek tourism into the 21st century. On the other hand, there have been flagrant abuses of power and extremely liberal or even wrongful interpretations of Greek law that cannot and should not go unchallenged. So the Supreme Court has a political as well as a legal decision to make. On the other hand, a court

ruling may allow the Greek government to revise its policy to move away from supporting small and medium-sized enterprises in tourism. Given the current discontent in the population and the reliance on small and medium-sized enterprises of the Greek economy as well as the current budget crunch due to economic downturns, it might even provide a welcome opportunity to ditch the Cavo Sidero large-scale development policy. In any case, the political record of the Greek government is not spotless on this occasion and, given that the record of Minoan is far from spotless either, this might just add another scandal for the government at a time when it needs it least. On the other hand, having the Cavo Sidero development take place would postpone the public relations and economic/environmental disaster for a few years and would remove the immediate pressure. If one looks at Cavo Sidero in its totality, then surely such fragmented decisions and out-of-context policies and motivations are the main engine pushing this so obviously doomed development.

While the final verdict of the appeal is yet to be announced, a non-binding report by the reporting judge, Christina Christoforidou, was issued in November 2008 and it is rare but not impossible for the appeal judge circuit to reject such reports. The main points of the non-binding report were that the proposed development is in contravention of Greek planning laws that would only permit mild development in this region and a 7,000 bed development in an area with only 2,000 residents cannot be categorized as mild. Further, the report noted that the area in question is a Natura 2000 site and therefore under protection. Thus this report primarily criticizes the government for being in breach of environmental law and the other issues have not been addressed publicly yet. It is significant that the Minoan Group had a different interpretation of the report:

> The view expressed in this report suggested the acceptance of the appeal and the annulment of the environmental terms of the project mainly on the basis that the planning route taken should have been under a special planning approval (POTA), rather than the usual tourism planning regulations under which our application was made. The Company has worked for over eight years with all of the past and present governments, and a large number of the relevant national, regional and local authorities. At no time did any of the parties involved consider POTA to be the correct, let alone obligatory, route to be followed.
>
> At the hearing the legal teams representing the Company, the Foundation, local communities and stakeholders, as well as the legal

> representative of the Greek Government, strongly rebutted the report together with the entirety of the grounds of the appeal including the suggested grounds in the report for annulment relating to the status of the area within the Natura 2000 network and water management. The legal representative of the Government went further by saying that new forms of tourism were necessary for Greece and the Cavo Sidero Project was a prime example (London Stock Exchange Market News, 11 November 2008).

The Minoan Group also stressed the support it had from the local community again, portraying the report as contrary to public opinion. Nevertheless its share value has dropped considerably since the announcement. Meanwhile the Greek and international press have provided extensive coverage of the case and all of it lamenting and highlighting the legal and environmental problems presented. It seems extremely unlikely that the development can go ahead in its present suggested form. However, it also seems likely that the appeal verdict will allow for some form of development. It is impossible to say at this moment in time what this will mean for the existing small and medium-sized tourist enterprises on the peninsula. But it is also clear that a new timeline has been imposed as whatever new development will be approved will also have to go through a planning process from the beginning.

Conclusion

The case study of the Cavo Sidero peninsula is a study of unthinking evaluations. The proponent actors take a short-sighted view of benefits that are taken out of context of larger developments and trends. Aims and aspirations are short sighted and not driven by the common goal that is professed by all, namely the sustainable development of the peninsula. The usual shorthand for such behavior would be greed and profit motive but the issues are more complicated than that. It is a typical case of disconnected nature-society relations even by supposedly sustainable actors. The Greek Orthodox Church in the form of the abbot of the monastery of Toplou wants to develop the land for the sake of economic gain for the monastery and the local population and it is not entirely clear what role a commitment to environmental protection plays. On the one hand, the monastery grows organic produce and offers it for sale, and showcases some commitment to sustainable living, on the other there is no clear environmental statement and the environmental critiques of the development plan have met with disdain. The

public statements of the abbot suggest that there is no systematic and focused environmental plan behind the monastery's aspirations. The same applies to the position of the Greek government. It has not committed to a sustainable project for Cavo Sidero and rather sees this as a project that will modernize Greek tourism and remain competitive within the region – a strategy that it argues it cannot follow with its current and past commitment to small and medium-sized enterprises as the driving force of the tourism sector. For the Greek government this project is no longer about sustainability or strategy but about political face. It has a lot to lose and losing credibility with a denial to develop at the hands of the Supreme Court would be embarrassing. On the other hand so would a failed project – which, however, would not crystallize as having failed till after at least the next election.

A distinction needs to be made between a decision to develop the peninsula in general and to develop it with a so-called sustainable project in particular. The sustainable project arose as a result to the pressures of the environmental lobby as well as against the idea of establishing golf courses. The idea to establish golf courses is merely connected to the fact that it is subsidized by the European Union. Subsequently, as the only motivation is subsidized funding, the various advantages and disadvantages of golf course tourism have not been researched by the actors except through the statistics that show that Turkey and Egypt apparently have better tourism growth rates than Greece as a result of their golf resorts. There is a substantial body of literature that shows quite clearly that golf tourism in the Mediterranean is a flawed strategy both economically and environmentally. However, these points have been ignored in the Cavo Sidero case – by all the proponent actors from the abbot to the Greek government to the developers and their sustainability advisers. It is not surprising that the ecological aspects have been neglected as the interest in a sustainable form of development is a tag-on and not part of the original plans of development but it is surprising that the economic planning aspects have not been better researched.

This point mostly addresses the strategy of the developers, the Minoan Group. Its interest in sustainability is new found but one would assume that the company wants to maximize its profits with a well researched state of the art development strategy. The strategy to build massive concrete silos in the middle of nowhere is neither new nor particularly lucrative. The Greek shipowner, Carras, built the Porto Carras development in northern Greece in the 1970s in the middle of the scarcely developed peninsula Sithonia and it quickly degenerated into a package

tourism destination as it could not attract the kind of clientele that it expected to draw. It is only one example of many. The shareholders of the Minoan Group are novices in the tourism sector and many of their ideas or strategies seem rather quaint. It is exactly their decision to go "sustainable" that finally gave their plans some punch and at least a hypothetical jab at economic success. However, so far it is unclear how these big claims to sustainability can be pulled off without it just being a public relations stunt. Presumably that is why the help of Forum for the Future was enlisted apart from gaining some political credibility through the indirect involvement of some British sustainability "gurus".

Forum for the Future has taken on a role to advise Minoan on their request. Their basic premise is that mainstream tourism needs to become more sustainable and that Cavo Sidero should be a flagship in these plans, a model others will aspire to. As such, they have taken on board Minoan's statements of intent rather uncritically as well as having done limited background research on the exact legal and geographical as well as ecological details of the project. They see their role as mainly advising Minoan on strategy and it is not their place or intention to develop a detailed sustainability plan for the proposed buildings and developments. Thus, in many ways their claim to a sustainable project is misleading and out of context. What this shows the observer is that basically all the actors have a skewed role of what they want the project to achieve and their stake in it. The church's motivations are opaque. The Greek government wants a new, 21st century kind of development but is guided by 20th century notions of what this is. Minoan wants to maximize its profits and uses sustainability as a way to do so but has a flawed idea of what will bring economic success. Forum for the Future is too tied to its role as a consultant and driven by its employers' smokescreen and has too little experience on what sustainable tourism entails as its publications suggest. Therefore its role is too limited to have an impact on the project. These are the problems and issues the activists took up and protested against.

The activists operated in a political vacuum, shaping their role and strategies as they went along. They grew from a handful of concerned locals in Sitia and Palaikastro to a larger group in Crete, Greece and elsewhere. They did not really have a "model" for how to proceed precisely because of the patron-client nature of Greek politics and they were making it up as they went along. The help of some outsiders was invaluable, such as Oliver Rackham and Jennifer Moody, the ecological historians and archeologists who came to the region and got involved in the campaign. Likewise the Athenian lawyer, Kontemeniotis, who

wrote the influential brief, as well as biologists/environmental scientists. Their activism is not different at all from the campaigns we see all over the globe but it is very unique in the Greek context as it became evident in the Zakynthos study, even the one study where Greek civil society played a large role is dominated by patron-client relations. In the beginning the activists operated locally and focused on challenging political decision making. When they became more organized and had more expertise to fall back on, their strategies also became more sophisticated and culminated in their legal challenge of the deal. The tandem strategy of garnering media attention nationally and internationally when court dates approached was aimed to exert moral and political influence in an environment where court rulings inherently have a political element to them. Regardless of outcome, what they have achieved so far is a great success story for an environmental justice movement.

Like the other case studies, this one of Cavo Sidero makes it quite clear that emphasizing environment-society relations, consumption, and equity as the main analytical frameworks for studying an environmental problem is vital. In fact Cavo Sidero is the case where consumption issues are highlighted the most. Tourists come to "consume" a particular locale and part of that consumption is about the unique features (architectural, geographical, infrastructural, environmental) of a particular place. Unfortunately, through consumption they often endanger the very things they set out to consume for future generations and for the local population. In Cavo Sidero it would go beyond that. Existing tourism structures attract tourists that want to "consume" an unspoilt landscape without altering or adulterating it with out-of-place infrastructure. These tourism structures would be threatened by the Cavo Sidero resort and the crowds that would come to Cavo Sidero would not do so primarily because of its untouched nature and particular ecology and environment. They would come because of the particular nature of the resort built there. First of all, this is not what can qualify as ecotourism, which by its very nature is about the ecology of the destination. Thus, what is described as a sustainable tourism venture would only be sustainable in a very technical sense.

Then, this would constitute not only disturbed nature-society relations but a total disregard for nature. It would generate demand for resources that are not available in this particular locale and this demand is not supposed to be curbed (people expected to consume less as they are in an arid environment) but the demand is supposed to be saturated through environmental technologies. This is a technological determinist view that presumes that any obstacle can be overcome but

not one that exudes respect for the particular ecosystem of the peninsula. The same can be said for equity issues. The existing tourist enterprises are family-owned businesses of a small scale and well integrated into the community. Tourists are guests here and do not dominate the landscape. The eco-golf resort would take away decision-making power over the area from the locals. However, it has to be added that the role of the Greek Church and the Greek government in collusion with the church has done nothing to empower the local community. It is obvious that this is a poor community that would benefit from some more development and the creation of local quality jobs. It is also clear that there is an awareness that package tourism, as it exists elsewhere on the island, is not a particularly attractive model for the locals although they would like to see more tourists frequenting their businesses. Tourism is the natural choice for development as the island's two main economic sectors are agriculture and tourism with agricultural returns low for those who do not own substantial plots of fertile land. Likewise, those employed in the tourist sector mostly have to hold down several jobs to make ends meet. Cavo Sidero would not change this regardless of what type of development is chosen in the end.

However, the prospects for job developments outside the tourism field are not promising. Therefore there may be lessons in the Thassos case study for the Sitia region. Crete is well served by many flights and thus it is relatively easy to reach Sitia even if it is out of the way by Cretan standards. There is potential for having specialized package tourism with hiking or Greek cultural themes and a higher rate of return visitors could be attracted. This is hardly going to change the economic prospects of the tourist enterprises in the region but it could make life a little more comfortable. However, in order for this to happen the Greek government would have to respect national and international environmental law and pursue the implementation of the Natura 2000 site provisions. The Sitia region as a result of successes of the local environmental movement has the chance to avoid the pitfalls of large-scale, organized tourism and has strong potential for a more just basis from which to develop the region, the just way also being the more sustainable way. However, in order for this to happen the existing tourism base needs to be strengthened.

8
Conclusion

The conclusions drawn here can be divided between conceptual and applied issues. The applied conclusions of this book are that small and medium-sized enterprises in tourism can indeed provide a more sustainable and equitable form of social relations between tourists and locals if certain conditions are met. The three cases all tell very different stories of equity, environmental protection and empowerment. These differences are due to historical experiences and the different social structures arising as a result but are also somewhat related to geography. In terms of regard for global environmental governance, such as international wildlife protection law or European Union designated protected sites, the research suggests that implementation of such "global" norms depends heavily on the social and environmental values of the local population, thus suggesting that "top-down" approaches can only work if they are meaningful to those they apply to – or are applied to. In other words, the prior existence of environmental values is paramount for the introduction and successful implementation of environmental law and policy. Overall, small and medium-sized tourist enterprise economies can lead to environmentally acceptable forms of tourism under certain conditions.

An analysis of the global political economy of the consequences of tourism requires both a structural and actor-based approach to analyzing the complex and multi-dimensional relations between participants in local tourist economies in order to reveal underlying configurations of power among actors in this setting and their implications for the environment. At the local level, the power relations between tourists, tour operators, and locals demonstrate that these relations are anything but linear and rather create a much more intricate web of relations that are dependent upon the backgrounds, typologies, and experiences of

participating actors. The patterns of social relations from which these actors emerge have a very salient effect on how power is distributed. The domestic and local historical experience will also bear considerable influence. In short, there are multiple ways in which power can be brokered in seaside tourist destinations and the experiences of the actors participating in this configuration inherently shape not only configurations of power but also attitudes towards ecological concerns. Add to this mix the influence of international institutions, such as the European Union, which contribute to the formation of social relations in the areas of tourism and the environment. For example, more attention to the environment has emerged as a result of sustainable development programs in EU member-states and the EU maintains its position as an environmental leader. Economically, the EU has promoted liberal values but also supported the structural funds program, which has provided incentives for tourism development (i.e. eco-golf resort in Crete).

Tour operators have a much stronger influence on the way tourism is organized on the island of Zakynthos where British tour operators have the lion's share of the market than on the island of Thassos where the individual market shares of tour operators are much smaller and tour operators from many different countries work with the hoteliers. While the more diverse nature of tour operators on Thassos does not mean that the economic dependency and price negotiations are any more favorable for Thassiote hoteliers, it does have an impact on the way infrastructural developments are handled. On Zakynthos the way the main resorts were built was very much influenced by tour operators who thought of their and their clients' convenience and not of local needs or nature-society relations. On Thassos, hoteliers were guided very much by their own ideas of what tourism development should look like (of course both localities were guided by funding considerations too but those opportunities were identical in both places) and they already knew that the non-package visitors that came in the 1970s very much appreciated the natural beauty of Thassos and knew that their economic advantage lay in working with these tourist preferences even if they could not follow the rationale behind it themselves. While package tour operators very much ignored the northeast of Crete due to the climatic vagaries and its remoteness, this also meant that they did not push the large hotel model that is prevalent on other coasts of Crete. However, the proposed eco-golf resort is much motivated by EU subsidies for golf tourism developments and it would not be under consideration as a golf resort (but as something else) had it not been for the EU. So, structural funds can have dramatically different results

depending on what actors are involved in designing the use of the funds. Thus, the way funds are used to develop tourism is dependent on how much local actors are involved in the planning, how much experience with tourism they already have and how much they see their local environment as an asset in developing tourism-related livelihoods. Zakynthos did not have any experience with tourism before the structural funds were available and British tour operators tried to capture the island and its beauty/beaches for their market. Thassos did have experience and thus shaped the way tourism was developed more independently (this is not to say that there were master plans or designs but mostly actions of individuals). The Cretan Sitia region obviously does not deal with package tour operators but its resistance movement is using the experience with package tour operators in other parts of the island for arguing against the eco-golf resort and with success.

An examination of the nature-society relations of tourism demonstrates clearly that power, interest, and stewardship are socially and historically rooted among actors in this configuration. Furthermore, these actors can both promote and negate environmental concerns depending on the issue at hand. Actors external to tourism locales (i.e. tourists or tour operators) often do not associate their actions and behaviors with environmental degradation or they negate any responsibility for initiating environmental action, which they view as being outside of their scope of activity. On the other hand, locals themselves are not invested in their environments as they do not see the connection between environmental protection and tourist markets, never mind the connection between healthy environment and healthy people. Writers such as Agyeman et al. (2003) maintain that more equitable social relations between the groups of actors lead to increased sustainability. However, the case studies here only confirm this up to a point. Admittedly, Zakynthos has the least equitable relations and the most environmental problems. Thassos has the best environmental record and the most equitable relations while in northeastern Crete equity relations remain somewhat undefined till the Supreme Court reaches its final verdict. However, the connection between equity and sustainability remains ambiguous and vague. Such an assumption would hold much better if an environmental awareness at the local level was clearly visible and defined. That is not the case for any of the case studies.

The question of nature-society relations is one that is difficult to depict and is challenged both normatively and practically. While local community members are often thought of as the principal spokespeople of the local environment, this is not always the case and especially with

regard to tourism as local constituents are often the first to compromise environmental concerns for economic reasons. Furthermore, contention can often result when civil society groups become involved in defending the environment. Thus, resolving issues of environmental representation and equity is an area that is nothing short of problematic. Differences of opinion emerge that can be divisive and have long-term repercussions.

Another controversial and disputed issue is that of consumptive relations. The problem lies in weighing the clear economic and possible environmental benefits of tourism for local communities with concern for over-consumption by wealthy tourists who can afford to vacation. There is little doubt that tourism (and especially cross-border tourism) exacerbates inequality, adds to the commodification of nature, and leaves larger carbon footprints; however, the question lies in whether or not local communities would benefit from its absence. This question is much more applicable to small, medium-sized, and ecotourism enterprises, as opposed to resort-style tourism as the latter has clear negative implications for inequity and environmental quality.

The case of Zakynthos illustrates the challenges posed by both nature-society relations and consumptive relations. Before it became a popular tourist destination, the level of poverty on the island was much more significant. Over time it developed a tourist economy that is primarily based on "one-off" tourism versus returning clients. The absence of a significant number of returning clients has two important effects: first, it weakens social relations between tourists and locals and, second, it weakens nature-society relations as repeat clients often return to a location for its natural beauty, thus giving the locals a reason to protect and value nature. There is, therefore, a lack of emotional investment in relationships between tourists and locals and those between tourists, locals, and nature (especially the sea turtles in Zakynthos), which has been attributed to both the island's feudal history as well as the desire to maximize profits in the most efficient way possible. But these two factors cannot explain why the island is not concerned with its long-term sustainability, both economically and environmentally, especially when other islands demonstrate the opposite case.

The favorable geographic position of Thassos enabled the island's citizens to retain some power in their own hands while dabbling in organized international tourism. This was possible because the island was able to rely on both tourists arriving by car and by charter plane. The ability to access Thassos by car was one of the reasons that the tourists arrived on the island earlier than on some other islands. Many of those pioneer "car tourists" now come back by plane but the initial stages of

development meant that there was a more diverse group of arrivals on the island. It also meant that the first wave of building happened before the large sums of money thrown at tourism development were available in the mid-1980s. By that time, there were a substantive number of tourists attracted to and returning to the island because of its natural beauty, which had an impact on how future building took place. These are the accidents of timing and geography that have had an impact on how development took place on the island but are by no means the only decisive factors.

Land ownership, zoning regulations, and the design and completion of development plans also influence the process of development in tourist regions, and these factors are evident in Greece. However, the way in which these factors affect development is dependent upon national land ownership and development policies as well as the unique historical experiences of particular locales. In Greece, the absence of a comprehensive land register in addition to a law that stipulates the ownership of a minimum amount of territory before permitting building outside of city limits both contribute to the prevalence of unlawful activity (i.e. arson) to acquire additional land for development. Ultimately, such illicit behavior has resulted in widespread illegal building in some regions of Greece. However, this is not the case in Thassos, and the reason for this is attributed to the island's history of land ownership. Feudal patterns of land ownership that persisted in other areas of Greece did not endure in Thassos due to government-sponsored land reform that took place in the 1920s following the large influx of refugees from Asia Minor. The combination of land redistribution and a more diverse political society resulting from the arrival of the refugees presented a challenge to local elites. This explains one theory as to why there is a higher degree of law abidance by locals and this is reflected in the tourism sector with minimal illicit building outside of regular development zones.

The case of Thassos illustrates that local empowerment is not a rapid process but rather develops over time and is dependent upon a preexisting social structure that allows for equal access to resources (i.e. development funds) and elite accountability and cooperation. A comparison of the cases of Thassos and Zakynthos points to several important considerations for regions looking to expand tourism development. While both Thassos and Zakynthos enjoy the benefits of a diverse client base, Zakynthos's heavy reliance on tour operators has resulted in limited local empowerment. In contrast, the Thassian model of tourism development centered on small and medium-sized enterprises has

resulted in enhancing local empowerment. Furthermore, having a client base of devoted returnees that are invested in their relations with the local community and the environment creates important benefits for local empowerment – a feature characteristic of Thassos but not Zakynthos with its reliance on one-off tourism. While the case of Thassos is not an instance of ecotourism, it does suggest that notions of sustainability can in fact be compatible with mainstream tourism.

The case study of Cavo Sidero echoes the importance of drawing upon the frameworks of nature-society relations, consumption, and equity in analyses of environmental dilemmas, but it especially underscores the significance of consumption. Cavo Sidero faces a common issue of consumption faced by other tourism locales, that being the potential of tourists to alter or jeopardize the very features of a location that they are attracted to through their "consumption" of these features. However, in Cavo Sidero this is furthered by the potential consequences of the proposed eco-golf resort. The current tourism model in the Sitia region aims to attract tourists who wish to "consume" the natural beauty of the region and are not interested in tainting it with unbefitting development; however, the proposed resort would endanger the current state of tourism as the larger scale tourism would attract clientele whose primary motives would not be to enjoy the unique ecology of the locale but rather to enjoy the amenities of the resort. Even though the resort markets itself as being ecologically sustainable, it is hardly an example of what constitutes ecotourism as the concept is not defined by the ecological sustainability of a tourism enterprise but rather by the natural environment.

The proposed eco-golf resort also raises significant questions as to how sustainable the resort would be, taking into consideration the local community and natural environment. Its construction would not only threaten nature-society relations but also the ecology of the region by demanding natural resources from the area that are simply unavailable save through the environmental technological solutions the advocates of the resort seek to employ. This technological determinist approach does not exemplify reverence for the natural environment but rather views any ecological limitations as being surmountable. With regard to other clear concern for the economic consequences of the planned resort on the largely locally-based, family-owned tourist enterprises, the establishment of a large-scale enterprise that caters to the needs of tourists over those of the local community would have substantial ramifications on local, social and political structures, especially with regard to decision making and in light of the absence of local empower-

ment on the part of the Greek church, a key player in this case, and the Greek government. While the further development of tourism is an extremely favorable option for economic development in the region, as agriculture does not often provide the financial benefits that tourism produces, and that the benefits of expanding the tourism sector would clearly benefit locals in terms of employment opportunities, the likelihood that the proposed resort in Cavo Sidero would change these conditions is not high. Furthermore, locals are wary of the package tourism apparent in other parts of the island, thus such an option would stand to be criticized by locals even though they would like to increase in tourist activity.

The limited employment opportunities outside of the tourism sector in Sitia suggest that there are lessons to be learned from the Thassos case. Despite the current predicament, there is strong potential for the development of a more equitable and sustainable model of tourism that is not based on large-scale enterprise. However, in order to accomplish this, the status quo tourism sector must be strengthened and expanded. First, more people need to be attracted to existing establishments and ideally loyal visitors who will return time and again. There are already many who do so precisely because of the lack of package tourism and the unique beauty of the area. There are also loyal followers who use the strong winds for sailing and surfing so there is a market niche in this field already that could be seized and developed. But this client base must be expanded and the relative accessibility of Sitia is an important advantage here. Furthermore, the type of tourism available to vacationers can be enlarged to include specialized tour packages for visitors who are interested in exploring the cultural and ecological features of the region. This cannot happen, however, without the cooperation and participation of the Greek government in enforcing national and international environmental law and implementing the Natura 2000 site conditions.

So, there are connections between empowerment and environmental protection/improvement in the tourist field but, as the above conclusions show, they are very dependent on the historical, social, structural and geographical conditions of a particular location. How do consumption and empowerment connect then? While tourism is one industry that does illustrate a clear causal relationship between consumers and environmental degradation (in this case the impact of a relatively small number of wealthy travelers on environmental quality), abandoning tourism is not a solution to the issue of inequity or the commodification of nature. While tourism does represent a situation of unequal

exchange, its absence does not suggest improved environmental quality or more equitable relations.

In fact, tourism has great potential to influence the nature-society relations at the local level through the increasing ecological awareness of tourists who seek to consume products that have less impact on the environment. As consumers become more conscious of the impact of their behavior and actions on environment quality, they seek new modes of consuming that are more aligned with environmental well-being. While it can be argued that many tourists are ignorant of the ways in which their behavior affects the local environment, and that local citizens are equally unaware of the environmental implications of what they see as enhanced development resulting from increased demand by tourists, it can also be argued that the mindset of consumers in general is changing in favor of more environmentally-friendly options. This can have substantial impact on tourist locales and actually transform tourists into environmental stewards. Such interests can result in pressuring actors within the tourist industry to adopt more ecologically-friendly behaviors. This can be especially powerful at the level of tour operators who can convey the wishes of their customers to local tourist enterprises. While this would constitute a top-down exercise of power, it can be seen as being extremely advantageous in environmental terms and empowering. It also highlights the fact that environmental advocacy can take different forms and emerge in unlikely places. Finally, it points to the unreliable aspects of rational-choice theories as consumers assign less weight to economic rational options that may have heavy implications for their other concerns (i.e. environmental quality).

Another aspect that needs to be considered in more detail is how the nature of the particular environmental problem has an impact on sustainability. Looking at the three case studies, the environmental challenge in each one is quite different. Zante and the sea turtles is a case of wildlife protection and a direct clash between species protection and the right to development. Thus, the environmental problem is an active hindrance to the developments envisaged and hoped for by the locals, and the problem also becomes a distributional one as some locals are more affected by the problem than others, depending on where the land they own is located. Thus this is a very confrontational problem. On Thassos, the problem is much less confrontational. While land ownership and where the land to be developed is located is also an obvious problem, this problem has been framed more in terms of local land ownership versus outsiders coming in and buying up the land. There was collective agreement that nobody wanted large hotels owned by

outsiders – and in addition the profitability of such hotels are questionable given that the summer season on Thassos is shorter than it is in southern Greece. So, the forest fire problem on Thassos is an environmental problem that does not give rise to the same distributional conflicts as it does on Zakynthos. Land ownership is not an issue in the Cavo Sidero case as the land to be developed is owned by one institution, the Greek Orthodox Church. Here, the environmental problem is twofold. First of all, the nature of the proposed development, its ecological unsuitability for the area and its impact on local, protected wildlife. Second, the impact on local tourist enterprises which are small and do not put excessive pressure on the local environment means that other small businesses that do not put excessive pressure on the local environment are threatened, which in turn has an impact on local nature-society relations. This last case is a threatened and not an actual problem but the nature of the problem is more in line with the Thassos case than the Zante case.

Both the Cavo Sidero and Thassos cases are about environmental problems, which could/can be prevented with action (in the Thassos case not meaning the forest fires but the problems that could have resulted thereof) and have different distributional aspects to them than in the Zante case. From the insights gained from the studies it can be argued that distributional aspects are vital in the framing of and solutions to an environmental problem in a tourist economy. Both Cavo Sidero and Thassos have a fairly equitable distribution of power in the local economy and between local businesses. The feudal land ownership patterns and the zoning of the marine park that prohibited the development of certain areas on the island of Zante meant that those whose properties were located in these zones lost out. Those who were located outside the zones or those who developed the two main beaches before the laws came into effect or who collectively flouted them in the early days, made huge profits. Thus distributional aspects clearly have a very negative impact on nature-society relations. So, in these three cases the evidence suggests that equity and sustainability go hand-in-hand although it by no means indicates that an equitable society is a sustainable society. Rather, it suggests that a sustainable society also has to be an equitable society. Another aspect that needs to be looked at in this context is the role of knowledge – not scientific knowledge but whether information about environmental issues has an impact on the tourist economy.

Again, looking at the case studies, knowledge plays or could play a different role in each study. For the island of Zakynthos, because of the

nature of the clientele, most tourists would glean their information about the island from the brochures provided by the tour operators. Only a fraction of these brochures mention the turtles at all and none mention that they are a controversial issue. Therefore most visitors are blissfully unaware of their role in the fate of the turtle. The question is whether their attitude would change if they knew that there was such a conflict between turtle and tourism on the island. This does not seem likely, especially given Duffy's research on ecotourism which showed that many ecotourists "consume" endangered nature as they want to experience it before it is irretrievably lost, fully conscious of the fact that the realization of that wish contributes to the loss (2002). Therefore it is unrealistic to expect "regular" tourists to display a strong and informed environmental consciousness.

On the island of Thassos, tourists were very well informed about the impact of forest fires on the island and this led to a dip in visitor figures. First of all, the forest fires were reported widely in the international media due to their severity, so all Thassophiles knew. As for the package tour clients who most likely were unaware of the forest fires, contracts with badly affected areas were cancelled for a few seasons after the fires – contributing to the dip in the visitor figures. In the Thassos case, the role of knowledge was negligible as there is no direct relationship between deterioration of a problem and tourists knowing about it beforehand. The planned case of Cavo Sidero shows yet another dimension of the issue. It is a potential case of something being advertised as eco-friendly yet being highly controversial environmentally. Here, tourist knowledge would need a highly insightful command of the tourism and sustainability debate and an understanding of the controversial nature of the term "sustainable" in itself. It is obvious that consumers are becoming more environmentally aware but that this environmental awareness basically translates into buying greener and following the other promptings of green marketing. There is no underlying critical, specific knowledge underlying this trend. If Cavo Sidero were built, the Forum for the Future endorsement indirectly giving it the thumbs up by British green icon and FFF founder Jonathan Porritt as well as self-advertising of the project would create the very strong impression that this green technology-focused approach was cutting-edge environmentalism. It would be much more difficult to get the other side of the coin and the knowledge of flouting of Natura 2000 legislation, impact on local ecosystems, and the impact on the small and medium-sized enterprises of the region. Thus Cavo Sidero, if it happens, could be one of these cases presented as state-of-the-art

green tourism and a carefully orchestrated marketing campaign would instill in clients and potential clients the perceived knowledge that their holidays would be anything but environmentally and socially responsible. As the marketing is targeted at consumers who want their holidays to fulfill a certain minimum standard of environmental quality, the outcome would be very ironic. However, it remains to be seen if Cavo Sidero will go ahead as planned or if, as the interim Supreme Court report shows, there will be fundamental changes which might well sound the death knell to the project (but not to some other as yet unspecified development). It is likely that the current financial crisis will also put the brakes on the size of the development if not scupper it altogether should the Supreme Court give its go-ahead after all.

So, the question as to whether potential visitors to an area are well informed about the environmental situation of their destination and how that can influence the way they plan their holidays really depends on the nature of knowledge available and what sort of environmental consciousness the potential visitor has. The more mainstream and "disconnected" the visitor is, the less likely they are to care about the social and environmental specifics of their destination as long as it does not affect their holiday. More environmentally and socially aware visitors will want to have a vacation with a small ecological footprint but it may be difficult for them to have the knowledge at their disposal that will help them make an accurately informed decision. And, to add another dimension, of course even an environmentally difficult destination still gives locals the chance to stay at home and earn a living rather than having to leave and make a living elsewhere. Such an exodus would entail all sorts of other environmental and social issues so the alternative to even environmentally problematic tourism needs to be considered.

Another important lesson to be learnt from the case studies is about the role of civil society. As a general rule, the literature on global social movements or civil society suggests a connection between good nature-society relations and an active environmental civil society. However, social movements and civil society are culturally very specific institutions and they are not necessarily a powerful social force in all the world's regions. Civil society is a more effective and established force in some parts of the world but its role is much more negligible in, for example, Greece. Historically, the patron-client relations of Greek politics did not leave any room for civil society except for labor movements. This makes the two cases where civil society emerged as an important actor so remarkable. It is equally remarkable that the island of Thassos has seen no social movement or civil society action at all

and still managed to have a collective will to protect its shores from outside investment. It suggests that civil society is not a necessary environmental force for the protection of environmental interests if nature-society relations are conscious of environmental limitations.

The Cavo Sidero and Zakynthos environmental movements are quite different in scope. While Cavo Sidero follows a much more general principle of organization that can be seen in many social movements globally, Zakynthos is again much more Greek in its approach. The Cavo Sidero protest movement was about concerned locals coming together and pooling their forces and knowledge in opposing something in their locality that was being introduced without a democratic process and without local consultation. It was about the mobilization of support from both locals and outsiders and about the use of skills to challenge political decisions. This is a classic civil society model. The social movement activity on Zakynthos, however, is more mixed because it was part local and part from the outside. The small number of locals who were ecologically conscious understood the connection between nature and society and the importance of the sea turtle breeding grounds. They had to operate in a clandestine manner on many occasions because of the widespread and often violent opposition by the vast majority of the population. Then there was the outside civil society without whom there would not have been national legislation for the protection of sea turtles. The two well connected Athenian activists and the NGOs they formed were instrumental in bringing about legislative change and also in connecting with international sea turtle protection NGOs which brought a large group of international volunteers to the island working to raise awareness and patrolling the beaches at night. Here, there is a variety of civil society activity in evidence from scientific monitoring and public relations work to political lobbying – but also working against the will of local society. Thus it is an example of a very active social movement but an atypical one because it is an example of outsiders coming in and claiming the turtle as a common property for all of humanity and for the whole planet, against local considerations.

Thus, again, the case studies reveal no clear pattern of the relationship between civil society, tourism and environmental issues. With the exception of Cavo Sidero, where it could be argued that civil society also does not speak for a majority of the locals (who prioritize economic opportunity over environmental issues but if there was a choice would prefer a combination of both), environmental considerations or environmental protection is not linked to an active social movement that fought or fights for environmental quality. On Zakynthos relations between civil

society and the general population have improved somewhat with the environmental movement recognizing the importance of distributional issues and with the locals realizing that the sea turtles provide some advantages, such as increased profits and competitive advantage. However, overall, from a conceptual point of view, the studies suggest that there are no general lessons on civil society in this field. Civil society becomes a strong actor when mobilization is needed against a planned intrusion but this depends on the nature of the threat. Thassos shows that problems can be averted without civil society organization. Again, the nature of the particular problem plays a significant role in political action.

What are the lessons?

So, then, what are the lessons to be learnt from the three studies that were looked at here? As a general rule, small and medium-sized enterprises in Greek island tourism are very much a mainstream rather than ecological form of tourism and in most ways they offer to local society economic opportunities that enable locals to remain on the island rather than having to leave because of a lack of opportunities at home. In the great scheme of tourist offerings, small and medium-sized enterprises empower locals and are far more sustainable than, for example, the high-rise condo coasts seen in places such as Florida or the Caribbean or the large developments on such islands as Corfu or Crete. However, there is a strong issue of capacity control. With capacity control and awareness of local environmental problems and a proactive attitude toward them, the small and medium-sized enterprises in the Mediterranean are more empowered than what is found elsewhere. The main problem there is for local empowerment, which can be traced to the relations with the tour operators who bring in the tourists. The cases here show that a more diverse spread of tour operators from different countries and more business with specialized tour operators is more empowering.

There are lessons in this for regions in other parts of the world that want to enter the tourism market such as, for example, African coastal nations. The lessons are to know the social and cultural/environmental preferences of your target tourist group, to be careful where to raise capital, and not to enter a monopoly market. Neither investors nor tour operators are committed to the environmental health of a destination as it can easily be replaced – this duty lies with the locals and they need to create this stewardship like it was done on Thassos.

These are the applied or policy lessons arising out of the study. But what are the conceptual lessons for global environmental politics as a discipline? In the introduction to this book and throughout the chapters, it was argued that there is a disconnect between what aspects of local-global linkages GEP focuses on as a general rule and what can be perceived on the ground. There is a strong emphasis on power which is a concept avoided and evaded by large parts of the literature (see Kütting and Lipschutz (2009) on this issue). The mainstream literature avoids the complexity of nature-society relations but also of the ethical consequences of equity and consumptive issues by concentrating on institution-building and aspects of political cooperation. These can explain immediate connections between motivation or cause and action but cannot capture the full web of complexities in which a particular environmental problem is located. So, looking at the details of the three cases is as much a critique of more parsimonious methods of inquiry as it is of focusing on institutions as the be all and end all of environmental politics. What this books shows is that there cannot be environmental analysis without adding nature-society relations and the historically specific environmental values and ethics of the main actors.

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