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3 June 2000
Sports-related Tourism and the Product Repositioning of Traditional Mass Tourism Destinations: An Empirical Study of Greece

by

Ourania P. Vrondou BSc., MSc.

A Doctoral Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of

Doctor of Philosophy of Loughborough University

(1998)

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Abstract

The thesis investigates the role that sports-related tourism may play in the rejuvenation and reinvestment process for mature mass tourism destinations, specifically, it synthesises a range of material and case studies from, and seeks to contribute to tourism policy development for, various contexts in Greece.

Following a review of published material inter alia on the product life cycle applied to tourism destinations, on the debates surrounding the need for new rejuvenating products to be sustainable forms of development, on the development of special interest forms of tourism, and particularly on the rise of active or sports tourism, the work considers methodologically how best to investigate the role that sport tourism is playing, or may play, in assisting to rejuvenate and differentiate mass tourism destinations and assist mass tourism-oriented economies.

Seeking a comprehensive insight into the development of new forms of tourism across Greece and the potential for further sports-oriented tourism development, this research included case studies of both traditional regions of tourism concentration (e.g. Crete), and more isolated and, as yet, under-developed tourism areas (e.g. Thrace), thus contributing to further understanding the potential of sports tourism in different contexts. Empirical work in these case study locations was preceded by an in-depth review of public sector policy relating to tourism and, where relevant, to environmental and developmental policy. This included a carefully structured series of in-depth qualitative interviews with both central state policy makers (from senior decision makers, such as the Minister for Tourism, to policy implementers) and regional or local officials, who are both receivers and increasingly designers of policy. The study also benefited from access to a range of both published and unpublished material through the Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO).

A shift in policy direction towards product differentiation, harnessing sports-related tourism, was identified. New policy announcements are beginning to support the increased development of sport tourism forms, through favourable legislation and subsidies to private investors. Sports tourism increasingly recognised as having a profile capable of differentiating the tourism offer by exploiting hidden potential, whilst also helping to bring about a more sustainable development philosophy, despite some industry skepticism.
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Introduction

Tourism has grown considerably in overall volume in the past few decades and despite the large economic benefits, the negative cultural and environmental effects of mass tourism have given rise to intense debate and to increasing interest in alternative and sustainable forms of tourism. The initial research recognises the apparent decline in the demand growth for traditional mass tourism oriented destinations and the potential economic consequences for national and regional economies which are heavily reliant on such products.

The research reviews the implications for tourism of the rise of sustainability consciousness, charts the influence of this change on developing forms of tourism, and looks particularly at the extent to which the growth in interest in active tourism and sport-oriented holidays can be harnessed within the regeneration of the Greek tourism product. This would appear to hold relevance for the sustainability of mass tourism destinations more generally.

Butler's (1980) model of the tourism product life cycle is adopted for its capacity to demonstrate the evolutionary process of Greek tourism from its introductory stage to its saturation, and to focus on the 'intervention moment', where policy actions or non-actions appear critical to the future potential of the Greek tourism product and the tourism economy.

The identification of this intervention moment is here linked with the concept of sustainability, based on the notion that well planned 'supply-oriented' development, with careful regulation of procedures, can ensure long term benefits, while they may avoid the catastrophic effects experienced elsewhere. This continuous process of sustainable regulation is a complex function which pre-supposes an effective interaction between different governmental, developmental, and environmental bodies, at central and local levels. The extent to which the organisational and functional diversity of such bodies seems likely to affect the process of implementing promising product rejuvenation and sometimes development policies, is explored. This also has to be seen
within the context of significant, but changing, centre-local relations in Greece, which affect all types of economic and development policy.

The study also utilises Dietvorst's (1992) transformation model, based on the notion that actors, in this case 'producers', determine the transformation of physical and socio-economic resources crucial for tourism development. The analysis attempts an understanding of the transformation process through an examination of the governmental interventions that appear to signal an era of product differentiation, re-imaging and image building, and also of the private sector response to government policy for tourism, and their sometimes different views and inputs. The input of the different 'producer' groups at all levels of central and local government, and the private sector, towards changing and rejuvenating the Greek tourism product is the main focus of the present study.

The realisation that a policy change is necessary towards the development of 'quality' tourism was evident in policy announcements, unpublished governmental documents and interviews with public sector representatives from all levels (see below). Evident also was a clear identification of those negative impacts of mass tourism that had led to the state intervention at various levels of public policy. The need for product differentiation is also heavily emphasised in Greek tourism literature and the work of commercial analysts. There is a 'common consciousness' identifiable which suggests that a transformation process is commencing for Greek tourism. This research, however, has revealed some considerable discrepancies between the views of both public and private sector bodies responsible, as to how, to what extent, and through what vehicles, these changes can best be implemented.

In terms of empirical work, comprehensive insight into the potential for sport-related tourism development to assist in regenerating a stagnating tourism product, is achieved through the examination of three different tourism and broader policy environments: i.e. the central government tourism department and associated policy environment, representing the state or 'central' viewpoint; and two quite different, but representative regions, the traditional tourism destination of Crete, and the isolated and so far under-developed peripheral region of Thrace. These case studies, apart from being used to provide an in-depth insight into the arena for tourism policy and product change in
Greece, can assist in enabling generalisations to be made regarding the potential for sports-oriented special interest tourism to similar settings. The three case studies developed in this context included within each an investigation of commercial as well as public sector organisations. The primary research included using detailed formal semi-structured interviews at all levels of both central and local government. Detailed interviews were conducted with a range of key tourism providers and representatives of tourism-relevant government departments in Greece. In particular, the Ministry of Tourism, as the organisation responsible for the planning, development and promotion of tourism in Greece, was investigated through informed source interviews with representatives at all key levels, including the Minister of Tourism and the Directors of a number of the Departments relevant to tourism policy. In addition, in the regional case studies of Crete and Thrace, the regional and local agents responsible for tourism development and other relevant fields, such as economic development and environmental practice, were also interviewed. In addition, the dynamics and viewpoints of the tourism industry, as represented by significant agents of the private sector, are analysed within the context of the production process, particularly for the development and operation of sport-oriented products.

As well as looking specifically at tourism policy change, the study also examined the shift of policies towards more sustainable practices. The study thus employed certain developmental ‘denominators’ which are used to indicate the appropriateness of policy action towards the satisfaction of sustainable developmental goals. Regional differentiation, equity, local involvement, environmental considerations and developmental flexibility, are all utilised within an analysis of the qualitative data collected in the three different policy environments.

Chapter 1 reviews the phenomenon of special interest tourism within the context of tourism product development, and its potential (in a number of forms) to assist destinations to move away from stagnating mass tourism products, towards a quality-oriented (i.e. higher spending) market and long lasting product performance. Based on Butler’s (1980) model of the tourist area life cycle, this Chapter demonstrates the evolutionary pattern of mass tourism development from introduction to saturation, before it reaches either a rejuvenation or decline phase. This theoretical process is related to the Greek tourism developmental profile and more recent statistics. Adoption
of Dietvorst's (1992) transformation model ameliorates the weakness of the life cycle model to illustrate the dynamics and causal relationships between 'producers' of transforming products and resources. The growth of special interest tourism within this era of change is reviewed, and an increasing tourism trend towards more active forms of tourism is identified. The focus here is particularly on sports-related tourism. The Chapter attempts an explanation of the definition, nature and different forms of sport tourism, in order to clarify the concept and broaden understanding that, in terms of providing product differentiating and rejuvenating facilities, sports tourism offers much to destinations such as Greece, which are currently heavily reliant on an undifferentiated sun-sea product.

The dimension of a lasting tourism product performance and therefore benefits (particularly economic) is examined in relation to the concept of sustainable development, that is increasingly influencing economic and political thinking, and in this case particularly, the notion of sustainable tourism development. Chapter 2 highlights the importance of environmental and community considerations within tourism development, despite the questions that the concept of sustainable tourism has raised and the definitional inconsistency that is evident in some parts of the literature. The Chapter offers a broad interpretation of sustainability applied to tourism, through an examination of community participation approaches, environmental economics perspectives, EU directions and regional development theories, that together demonstrate the complexities of developing or repositioning a tourism product within this context. Chapter 2 concludes with the notion of a comprehensive and holistic planning approach that matches Butler's and Dietvorst's approaches of a 'time-limit' course for tourism development, and focuses on the importance of the 'intervention moment'.

Chapter 3 applies the model of the tourism are life cycle specifically to the traditional mass tourism destination of Greece, which is now experiencing the stagnation stage, and has recognised the timing for the 'intervention moment' before the effects of 'decline' are more evident and become irreversible. The evolution, nature and problematic features of the Greek tourism product are examined within the context of the life cycle stages, and the present crucial period for the tourism development in Greece is recognised. The review of tourism characteristics in Greece supports the notion of
immediate action that would regenerate product features and improve its long term performance, without further environmental decline to an already saturated tourism environment or endangering other areas worthy of protection.

Chapter 4 reviews the theoretical considerations which emerged in the design of the research approach and ultimately resulted in the use of both an interpretative and critical perspective in the analysis of new product development and differentiation for Greek tourism. Examining three different tourism environments (the administrative and tourism centre of Athens, the traditional mass tourism destination of Crete, and the under-developed region of Thrace) the study aims to offer a more comprehensive understanding of the potential for sport tourism development and the re-imaging of a Greek product, that does not have to be constrained to offering sun-sea products exclusively. Semi-structured in-depth interviews with key officials, within a carefully designed framework, offered valuable insight into developmental procedures and organisational cultures which, along with a similar sampling of key private sector actors, provided a viable representation of the tourism policy community in Greece.

Access to, and analysis of, unpublished as well as published documents, through the cooperation of the Tourism Ministry and GNTO, provided valuable information on internal discussions and the policy direction towards product differentiation and rejuvenation. The shift towards ‘quality tourism’ represents a clear focus of the new tourism development, and this is supported by new policy announcements, many of which explicitly focus on special interest, and in particular sport-oriented, tourism forms. These are presented as feasible and effective developmental vehicles. Largely on the basis of the primary documentary analysis as a first level of analysis, Chapter 5 reviews the shift of governmental as well as private sector thinking towards the promotion and use of special interest tourism, especially active forms and sports tourism developments, to satisfy product regeneration purposes. Evident is a recognition of the needs for tourism quality enhancement (attracting higher spending tourists) and product differentiation (additional ‘value-added’ facilities and programmes and some new autonomous sports-oriented tourism facilities) to help identify the Greek product as more than just another sun-sea destination. These types of initiative are shown to be seen as key for the regeneration of the Greek tourism product. As a particular interest of the study, we are highlighting the significance of sport-oriented tourism forms within
this process of product repositioning and rejuvenation, and believe that this can be significant also to other stagnating destinations in a variety of settings.

Chapter 6 represents the first of the three results chapters and this chapter reviews the results of the qualitative analysis largely focused on the policy action, opinions and approaches of central government agents (as well as representatives of the higher level, centrally located, private sector hierarchy in tourism, invariably high office holders of representative industry bodies). Use is again also made of data derived from unpublished official government documents, to which access was negotiated. The main goal of this Chapter is to identify the views of policy makers, and the processes, that will influence the regeneration of a saturated product environment. Two particular strands of enquiry included; the extent of the inclusion of sustainability considerations within this process, and examination of the evaluation given to sport tourism as primary element in the product regeneration and differentiation process. The analysis included attention to: structural policy characteristics; centre-local relations and decentralisation considerations; other legislative activities related to the policy shift in tourism towards quality (not quantity) tourism; the parameters being proposed for product differentiation and the extent of ‘fit’ for sports tourism products; and the extent to which sustainability considerations are included.

Data from the first of the two contrasting case study regions is analysed in Chapter 7, and both regions may be seen to contrast with, or provide the implementation background for, the central policy reviewed above. Crete is chosen as it represents the prime example from Greece of mass tourism concentration, economic benefit, and environmental dis-benefit. It is here that any decline in interest in the sun-sea product will be felt, and here that central and local policy makers have to assess and implement tourism product rejuvenation and image change strategies.

Local policy makers and administrative agents of the tourism region of Crete provided an in-depth insight into the policy and implementation system, and the issues of restructuring in the context of product repositioning, associated development, and sustainability considerations. Implementation of central government guidelines, the politics of centre-local relations, and local idiosyncrasies, can be seen to be crucial developmental parameters which, along with private sector reluctance to some proposed
new developments, highlight a complex environment for policy practice and common agreement on developmental goals.

In contrast to the saturated and, in places, over-developed environment of Crete, the region of Thrace (Chapter 8) is presented as a region of almost limitless potential, but currently ‘lagging behind’ economically and developmentally, and deficient in developmental structures and infrastructure to facilitate the rapid or easy introduction of new tourism products. Here, it is not the local product in need of redevelopment and rejuvenation, but rather this is an example area of where the sensitive and sustainable development of tourism facilities and infrastructure can help Greece offer a wider range of products, towards the differentiation process, and this area can be repositioned or positioned as one accessible to and welcoming tourism, and can benefit socially and economically, ameliorating some of the classic symptoms of under-development. The area’s natural features offer significant potential for limited forms of activity tourism and other special interest forms.

This chapter aims to offer an understanding of the positioning and potential benefits of sport tourism to an underdeveloped region, and its capacity to establish a regional tourism product that would assist in building a differentiated image, and a repositioning of this area as a viable destination. This new tourism development is examined particularly in the context of European interventions and Greek government initiatives to support private investment and to support underdeveloped regions. Also of particular significance, here is a prime example of the classic debate between economic development and social need on the one hand, and environmental protection on the other. The sustainability considerations within the proposed tourism future for the area are explored. Lastly, the area provides an opportunity to monitor the private sector response to European and Greek government incentives to develop and operate in areas with theoretical potential, but little tangible in terms of infrastructure, developed facilities, or a proven market. The response here may be indicative of the likely results for other attempts to more equitably spread the benefits of tourism and other development, and provide different tourism products in new areas.

Concluding this study, Chapter 9 aims to relate the conclusions regarding the constraints and potential of special interest tourism provision, particularly sports or active tourism,
as a regenerative vehicle, back to the destination life cycle and transformation models, as well as to review the extent to which current attempts to rejuvenate, differentiate and re-image tourism products in Greece are recognising and implementing sustainable development practice. The roles and attitudes of different key actors are explored, and an assessment of the potential for sports-oriented tourism development is made. This is found to be different, not only in different physical and developmental environments, but also according to the attitudes of the local public and private sectors, and their responses to centrally designated policy changes. Future research considerations are identified in areas of sports tourism demand, sport tourist profiling, and sport participation during holidays, which indicate the significant further research requirements of sports tourism, in its increasing role within contemporary tourism development.
Chapter 1

New Forms of Tourism:
Their Role in Tourism Development

Introduction

Tourism has been a significantly increasing leisure form during the last two decades. Statements like 'the biggest industry by the year 2000' have been commonplace, forecasting not only economic results but a range of social and cultural benefits at both a local and global level. Tourism offers significant economic benefits to communities for whom, in some cases, it may increasingly be a chief source of income. However, there is now much evidence to suggest that when planned exclusively for short term economic purposes, this has often resulted in negative effects for the natural and cultural environment of the destination (see inter alia Murphy, 1985; Butler, 1980; Inskeep, 1991).

This chapter, reviews the broadly defined phenomenon of 'special interest tourism', and identifies the weakness of much existing work in failing to offer explicit guidelines and definitions that allow effective categorisations and comparative approaches. The practical difficulties for tourism research which are born of such definitional problems, obstruct generalisations and the testing of theory. This becomes more difficult when concepts such as the 'greening' of tourism and the increasing importance of 'active tourism' offer potential new tourism forms that are presented as alternatives (or additions) to traditional tourism models. This chapter also overviews the philosophical differences between sociological and psychological research which has attempted to analyse the changing motives for travel, but although informing later analysis, this is not central to the present work.
1.1 Perspectives on Tourism Perception and Behaviour

"Making theoretical sense of 'fun, pleasure and entertainment' has proved a difficult task for social scientists" (Urry, 1990). While the synthesis of the technical terminology satisfies statistical needs that communicate ideas, plans and policies between nations and governing bodies, the rudimentary definitions that exist create a series of conceptual problems. Simplistic descriptions are abundant such as: "a journey in which one returns to the starting point" (Webster’s dictionary), or "a movement away from the normal place of residence" (Holloway, 1992), to that of the Tourism Society (1981) where tourism "may be defined in terms of particular activities selected by choice and undertaken outside the home environment. Tourism may or may not involve overnight stays away from home".

The main problem for such definitions is the articulation of a specific set of possible motives or purposes that would give tourism a narrower perspective, and some explicit guidelines that would contribute to an objective formula for identifying exactly what defines tourism and the tourist. Conceptually more detailed definitions have included varied sets of motives, used to categorise visitors into more specific 'labelled' groups, according to the similarity of their primary motive and end behaviour. Sociology and psychology have been employed to analyse the relationship between initial motive and destination or form of travelling. Pearce (1993), for example, describes the task of studying tourist motivation as providing "some form of integration and synthesis amongst tourist motives such that the patterns of behaviour and experience can be understood in a cumulative rather than a piecemeal fashion". The same work emphasises the importance of psychological factors and processes to the understanding of terms such as "attitudes, behaviours, intentions, values, preferences, beliefs, needs and goals" in tourism. Based on seven 'key specifications', Pearce formulated a theoretical approach to tourist motivation that stands between the Psychocentric - Allocentric model of Plog (1987) and the Intrinsic Motivation/Optimal Arousal perspective of Iso - Ahola (1980), and is self-characterised as "having more strengths" than the other two. The seven specifications include: the role of tourist motivation analysis, the ownership of tourist motivation explanations, ease of communication, the
measurement issue, multi-motive versus single trait approaches, a dynamic approach, and intrinsic - extrinsic motivation.

Plog (1987) on the other hand, after investigating the characteristics of flyers and non-flyers, developed two broad profiles:

- psychocentric: “self-inhibited, nervous, non-adventurous” people;
- allocentric: “variety seeking, adventurous, confident” people.

Transferring this model to the tourism decision process, he observed a behaviour pattern, where Psychocentric types prefer familiar destinations and atmospheres through package holidays for example. Allocentric types prefer less developed tourist areas and distant cultures. Although Plog shows the population distribution of these ‘Psychographic’ types to be normal, Pearce argues that such single-trait approaches give “no continuing evidence that the distribution of the trait is normal”.

Iso - Ahola (1980), in his model of Intrinsic Motivation, explores motives through a framework of ‘the need for optimal arousal’ that includes different levels of causality, social and situational influences. This approach has been criticised for its weakness of measuring and specifying optimal arousal, while excluding extrinsic motivation. This ‘travel career’ model, described as explicitly multi-motive, considering “societal changes with relevant content at each travel level”, suggests a pattern of motivation described in five levels (biological needs, safety - arousal, personal relationships, self - esteem and development, and fulfilment). Pearce (1993) also argues for the existence of a ‘career’ in tourist behaviour, with changing levels and types of motivation.

Sociological approaches offering explanations for the behaviour and form of travelling, have also changed over time, from emphasis on the ‘individual traveller’ to the ‘mass society tourist’ (Urry, 1990), and often back to the ‘individual traveller’ of the 1990’s. Urry, offers a review of relevant literature which is explicitly anti-traditional, referring to examples like Boorstin’s (1964) analysis of the ‘pseudo - event’ where, “isolated from the host environment and the local people, the mass tourist travels in guided groups and finds pleasure in inauthentic contrived attractions, gullibly enjoying the ‘pseudo - events’ and disregarding the ‘real’ world outside”. McCannell (1973), in his approach to ‘staged authenticity’, argues that Boorstin’s ‘pseudo - event’ is not the
product of an 'individualistic search for the inauthentic', but is instead a result of the 'constructed attractions' that the tourism industry invests in as profitable opportunities.

As a leading analyst, Cohen (1972) has employed two main tourist typologies to analyse the dimensions that influence tourist behaviour. The first, termed 'Interactional', emphasises the relationship between the tourist and his/her destination, while the 'Cognitive - Normative' stresses the motives behind travel. Cohen's category of 'existential, experimental, experiential', for example, describes the visitor who embarks on a journey for 'spiritual sustenance', seeking to discover alternative lifestyles, guided by 'escapism' motives, away from the artificially created environment of organised mass tourism.

As with other sub-sections of this review, all those viewpoints and forms of analysis are ultimately relevant background to consideration of appropriate forms of tourism for development and/or rejuvenation purposes for ailing tourist destinations or for developing regions with tourism potential.

1.2 Perspectives on Tourism as a Commodity

Also increasingly significant to destinations which often developed with a naive acceptance of the benefits and an unquestioning belief that these, and the tourism influx, would continue indefinitely and unaided, is a realisation that destinations are, in reality, products with a life cycle and marketing needs/potential, like other products.

Although marketing professionals would strongly support the importance of tourism through a product development perspective, the subject disconcertingly receives much less attention from public policy planners and policy makers. Debates in the literature can however be found on whether or not tourism is an industry, producing a tourism product. Tucker and Sundbergs's (1988) belief that tourism is not an 'industry' in the conventional sense, "as there is no single production process, no homogeneous product and no locationally confined market" represents a source of strong debate with supporters of the tourism product notion and is at odds with their definitions. Despite the linkage in the literature between product development and marketing, there is an
evident contrast between authors, some of whom suggest that linking product development with marketing is more an "academic hope than business reality" (Smith, 1994).

Kotler's (1984) definition of a product is a representative example of the marketing scholar's conceptualisation of the product as "anything that can be offered to a market for attention, acquisition, use or consumption that might satisfy a want or need" including physical objects, services, persons, places, organisation and ideas. Middleton (1989) conceptualises the tourism product as a group of activities, services and benefits that constitute the whole of the tourism experience. According to his 'components model', there are five ingredients within the concept of the 'tourism product': destination attractions, destinations facilities, accessibility, images and price. According to Middleton (ibid.) there are two levels in the analysis and use of tourism as a product: 'specific level' where a specific product is offered by a single business; and the 'total level' which is the holistic tourism experience by the tourist from the start of the travel to the end of it. This exactly is the level which encompasses the components of Middleton's model.

Jefferson and Lickorish (1988) produced a similar definition for this "satisfying activity at the desired destination". They saw the 'tourism product' as a "collection of physical and service features together with symbolic associations which are expected to fulfil the wants and needs of the buyer". Lewis and Chambers (1989) argued that tourism products are composed of 'goods, environment and services' and identified three different levels within this: the 'formal product', which the customer believes he is buying; the 'core product', or the product actually bought; and the 'augmented product', which is any other value-added feature provided by the supplier. This is adapted from Levitt's (1981) typology of 'core product', 'tangible product' and the 'augmented product' in the general context of product marketing, and is also followed by authors such as Middleton (1989) in consideration of tourism product marketing more specifically.

Based on the available conceptualisations of the tourism product, Smith (1994) proposed a model which moves beyond simplistic descriptions by suggesting a product
concept that consists of not only the elements, but most importantly the process, by which these elements are assembled. According to Smith, the success of a product, in meeting the needs of its buyers, is determined by how well each element is designed and integrated with the others. The result is termed ‘synergistic interaction’ amongst all the components. Elements described by the model include: the ‘physical plant’ (site, or natural resource), ‘service’ (tasks required to meet the needs of tourists), ‘hospitality’ (expression of welcome by locals), ‘freedom of choice’ (the necessity to offer options to maximise satisfaction), and ‘involvement’ (consumer participation in the delivery of services). The process begins with primary inputs of resources and raw materials accepting additional processing, refined through managerial expertise, to finally generating the final output of “intangible but highly valued experiences” (Smith, 1994).

In a sense, typologies such as those proposed by Smith (1994), Cohen (1988), Pearce (1978) and others over this time span, reveal that there is no such thing as ubiquitously identifiable tourist, tourist experience or product, but rather numerous varieties of tourists, experiences and product types. Product creation and consumption belongs to an era of cultural commodification where touristic consumption is 'sign-driven' and media-driven, and subject to the dictates of commodity exchange and consumption patterns (Watson and Kopachevsky, 1994). These authors perceive tourism as an extension of the commodification of modern social life, according to which, “objects and activities come to be evaluated primarily in terms of their ‘exchange value’ in the context of trade, in addition to any ‘use-value’ that such commodities might have”. The same authors perceive leisure as regulated by the main dynamics of capitalist ideological productions or, more controversially, “part of the culture industry’s technique of mass deception, social acquiescence, and passive conformity”. Tourism production as goods production can be interpreted as leading to a mass, standardised and homogenised tourism experience. In 1984, Cohen noted that modern mass tourists were often denied access to underdeveloped regions of the host country where authenticity could be found, and instead were presented with ‘false backs’. Mass tourism activities are formed by the prepackaging of easily accessible activities, seeking profitable consumption through the standardisation of production, activities and launching.
Many Marxist approaches to tourism consumption represent tourists as people who are consuming 'alienated leisure' (McCannell, 1973) and, having no control over the context in which their leisure time is socially structured, the extent to which such tourists are exercising genuine personal autonomy and freedom from outside control, has been seriously questioned by the scholars of anti-capitalist ideology (see e.g. Watson and Kopachevsky, 1994). The structural determinants of tourism activity are seen as influential to mass tourists who do not exercise a great level of freedom and personal choice. The same forms of analysis see the commodification process of images contributing to the alienation of leisure and tourism experiences. The 'standardisation for profit maximisation' era of the mass tourism industry also failed to produce infinite and on-going consumer satisfaction, despite the affordable commodification of the tourism product.

Irrespective of the political emphasis of the analysis, most commentators agree that the deterioration of host environments, the homogenisation of tourism experiences, and the degradation of services, have increasingly driven tourist preferences towards new types of tourism product offer and experience, increasingly rejecting mass-offer products for new 'quality' products. Simultaneously, public policy planners increasingly employ tourism as a means to finance the protection of critical habitat, restore degraded environments and tackle regional social inequalities. The mainly mass operated tourism industry, which was once confined to a limited range of destinations, is increasingly reformed and often repackaged by public incentives and subsidies towards a broader range of operations and destinations, new markets and thus, new products.

The literature appears enthusiastic regarding the potential of these 'new' products to deliver a number of different tourism characteristics, e.g. broader economic impacts, greener operations, more fulfilling tourism experiences than the almost exclusively passive mass tourism products of the past. However, authors adopting a more critical look into the potential threats of these new tourism forms present rather a different picture. Also focussing on aspects such commodification of nature and/or human-nature interactions, several authors identify that shifting activities to different places with rich environmental resources should be treated with caution, and despite the wider spread of economic benefit, at least theoretically, should be viewed as an opportunity more for the
suppliers to create new products, resulting in further degradation of natural and sometimes human and cultural resources. Despite the more positive attitudes proposed by the ecotourism lobby, that new forms of tourism foster positive human/nature relationships and bring a range of benefits if employed sensitively, critics of ecotourism suggest that exactly this type of relationship has entered a new circle of commodification, tourism product development, and therefore environmental alteration.

1.3 The Tourism Product Life Cycle as an Evolution Paradigm

Life cycle models originated in microeconomics, but have been adopted in a number of disciplines to enhance understanding of long term change. The life cycle model has perhaps been most commonly used in marketing contexts, particularly in analysis of the growth and decline of consumer goods and longer term product-market relationships (Kotler, 1984). It has been extended to the tourism field, most notably by Butler (1980), to conceptualise and explain the process of destination area development and decline, more recently described by Ashworth and Dietvorst (1995) as charting “the historical vicissitudes of tourism places”. This type of applied cyclical model, utilised since Butler by many tourism analysts in different contexts, is based on the notion that tourism as an economic activity combines a set of products which can be treated as any other industrial product. Butler, for example, simply replaced sales volume with visitor numbers to identify/quantify the product’s (or destination’s) ‘evolution’. The implication is that the model can be, and has been used as a strategic planning tool, identifying critical points where intervention or change of policy is appropriate. It is discussed here, alongside the commodification of new tourism resources and development of new products, in light of its later use in empirical work to suggest just this type of policy change.

In addition to Butler’s analysis, the life cycle’s stages have also been described by Nocifora (1994) as “discovery, development, consolidation, decline”. This, he applies more specifically to the countries of the Mediterranean which “allows us to construct a model which effectively describes the dynamics of the market”, and which makes the analysis particularly relevant to the present study. Butler (1980), using the model of traditional tourism industry destinations, presents the life cycle stages as starting from
the 'exploration' stage and small numbers of tourists, proceeding to the 'involvement' stage with local response to demand, reaching the 'development' stage with its characteristics of mass production, construction and consumption by the 'institutionalised' tourist described by Cohen (1984). Butler's next stage, 'consolidation', describes the 'slowdown' in tourist growth, even though numbers continue to increase. The peak of tourism operations is reached at the 'stagnation' stage, but growth by this stage is non-existent. The last stage, 'decline', describes the inability of the destination product to compete effectively in the marketplace, and the significant loss of tourist numbers indicates the demise of that particular tourist destination product, unless (as Nocifora identifies) "the market position of the country is revitalised and its image re-configured".

Butler's (1980) model suggests that unspoilt local environments attract visitors who leave a place unchanged in the initial stages of its 'discovery'. There is, at this time, hardly any policy consideration necessary by the local community, which is often yet to realise the potential for tourism development, or does not have the expertise to exploit this potential. At this stage, the growth is demand-led, with very little local provision
consideration. Local initiatives begin to provide tourism-specific facilities and attract private entrepreneurs, when the visitor demand has significantly increased. The next stage of rapid development shows a dramatic increase of visitor numbers, quickly followed by an increased supply of tourism superstructure to cope with these levels of demand. These dramatically increased numbers of visitors are increasingly using facilities that gradually take resources away from other uses, and impose new pressures upon the natural and socio-cultural environment of the destination.

While most researchers do not contest the concept of a product life cycle, arguments do exist on the detailed evolutionary pattern of the model. The development of the tourism product of a destination is not inevitably going to follow a ‘biological’ pattern of birth, growth, decline and death. Authors such as Tooman (1997), for example, suggest that the tourism product undergoes an evolutionary process of continual change in response to changes in demand and supply, implying that almost any pattern is possible. This view suggests that the value of the model could be diagnostic. In addition, according to the traditional model, ‘decline’ occurs mainly due to internal physical or social factors, which tends to underplay the importance of exogenous factors that influence demand and supply. The emphasis given to internal factors, as directly related to the product’s long-term viability, bears the danger of excluding a variety of other influencing factors on the destination’s popularity.

For some now ailing (or ‘stagnating’) traditional mass tourist areas, ‘alternative tourism’ represents a product that can potentially revitalise (‘rejuvenate’). Nocifora (1994) explains the trend for differentiating destinations, as “the search for new tourist destinations is certainly an indicator, if only in a general way, of a demand which rejects repetition and standardisation, and which places novelty and the quest for new experiences as an indispensable option”.

In an era when tourists have for years now experienced a variety of what Holloway (1992) terms ‘identikit’, undifferentiated destinations, where one crowded Mediterranean beach, surrounded by ribbon tower block or sprawling chalet developments, looks much like any other, irrespective of national location, declining tourist numbers suggest that ‘differentiating’ the product represents a logical product
development strategy. The exact nature of the differentiating mechanism can vary according to local preference, ‘unique’ or high profile features of the area, or some other policy/product drive. Alternative forms of tourism, implying less ‘mass’ appeal, but significant specialist appeal (e.g. cultural, natural, sporting etc. products), are becoming increasingly attractive methods of rejuvenating destination products and altering the curvature of the life cycle graph.

Butler’s (1980) model of a tourist area life cycle describes the development of alternative tourism as part of an ongoing evolutionary process that impacts upon conventional tourism as it presently exists. As described by Butler, the most critical phases of the evolution process are the ‘exploration’ and the ‘development’ stages. According to his concept, an area will initially be explored by some adventurous travellers who communicate their experiences to others willing to try the experience. This process generates alternative destinations to the traditional ones and thus, further development takes place. During the ‘development stage’, the involvement of external agents and operators naturally guides development towards conventional types of
tourism. Intervention in this ‘traditional’ development process takes on great significance at this stage, if the conventional process is to be influenced or altered in order to restrict external investment and control, while still attracting a desirable level of activity.

This type of intervention is increasingly seen as necessary, particularly through public sector actors, if unbridled development is not to spread beyond its existing areas of tourist concentration, to new destinations. More limited forms of development, often implying alternative (to mass) tourism forms, are often seen as the way forward. Often however, powerful local interests prefer tourism developments which promise considerable financial returns in a short-time period, often ignoring the negative impacts that these inevitably bring to the local environment. Classically, in sustainable development parlance, passing the long term costs of the short term economic gains onto ‘future generations’ (Brundtland Report, 1987 in Jackson and Glyptis, 1992). In life cycle terms, the very nature of some alternative tourism forms dictates their short and limited product life because they are directed towards an extremely limited market segment due to their cost, level of difficulty or skill, and physical or intellectual accessibility.

The notion of tourism policy intervention through planning, requires an understanding of the dynamic character of tourism development in order to manage the rate and direction of the development. The life cycle approach, despite its apparent importance in illustrating this dynamic character, lacks the ability to demonstrate the continuing process of transforming tourism components and the producers’ actions that determine this process. Dietvorst’s (1992) transformation model, as shown in the following section, aims to identify the structure of the transformation mechanism as determined by activities and intervention by producers and consumers. For the purposes of this study the model is focused on the nature and actions of producer groups and their influence on tourism resources.
1.4 The Tourism Transformation Model

Along with the increasingly widespread recognition that tourism and recreational activities have become more than marginal additions to local economies, has come the recognition also that these activities can be regarded as consumable products with predetermined life expectancy. The necessity for identifying and harnessing effective economic growth routes dictates policy intervention by national and local authorities. This way also assist in ensuring that neither the product nor the local environment are damaged by over-extensive production growth, mistreating finite resources. However, in many cases these authorities cannot be assumed to have detailed understanding of the nature of recreation and tourism, neither of the dynamics involved in the process of tourism development and evolution.

In order to illustrate the dynamic character of the tourism product development process, Dietvorst (Centre for Recreation and Tourism Studies of the Wageningen Agricultural University, 1992) developed a model which “shows the continuing transformation of the original tourism-recreation resource by activities and interventions by producers and consumers of many types, wittingly or not for a variety of objectives”. This model considers the transformation within tourism and recreation products, and particularly the “changing of the shape, appearance, quality or nature of things”, creating a ‘synthesised’ concept to express the importance, in this case for tourism and recreation, of space and time.

Additions to Dietvorst’s concept of ‘transformation’ reinforce the suggested consequences of social acceleration. Harvey (1989) for example argues that: i) social transformations emphasise the “ephemerality of fashions, products, values and established practices” that make producers respond to market shifts with a more short-term than long-term planning approach; ii) the globalisation of markets has accentuated local sensitivity to spatial and cultural qualities and to the apparent diminishing uniqueness of local environments, and has resulted in the promotion of distinctive images within the global competitive market; and iii) symbolic transformations in which “the image takes precedence over the material product” results not in the alteration of
the genuine resources, but of the image surrounding them and therefore determining their marketability.

Describing or modelling the transformation of original resources, Ashworth and Dietvorst (1995) (illustrated in Figure 1.3) have identified two main types of transformations determined by producers and consumers. According to the authors, in this case resources can be considered as any "element used in the creation of a tourism-recreation product", with special importance given to scarce resources, identified as: physical resources, labour, capital goods, and socio-cultural resources.

![Figure 1.3 The Tourism Transformation Model by Dietvorst (1992)](image)

For the purposes of this study, special attention is given to 'material transformations' caused by producers who "transform the original resource by direct actions or non-intervention" in order to restrict or develop certain activities. This 'production' process involves all of public authorities, consumers, private agents and local communities. The Mediterranean basin is undergoing an evident process of transformation and represents a good example for Dietvorst's model. The treatment of resources becomes a significant production factor as traditional tourism areas invest and compete increasingly, Utilising their unexploited unique characteristics. Socio-economic developments are changing the relationships surrounding the public sector and market forces are producing a new
direction for the product creation process. Highly related to ‘material transformations’ by producers, the ‘symbolic transformation’ is regarded as a decisive factor in “converting resources into products through interpretation”. Mass tourism areas in the Mediterranean, for example, have created concrete perceptions of their tourism environment. Desirable image alteration is subject to producers’ manipulation of the communicated icon, in support of the material transformation. The policy community of producers transforms the physical structure of the area “more or less indirectly through coding...this is the real added value of the tourism-recreation product, i.e. the illusion” (ibid.). It is through the generation of product significance that producers can manipulate the tourism clientele. Particularly, with regard to the concerns of this project, it must be noted that, although different categories of producers have a more direct affect on material and symbolic transformations, certain groups like the suppliers of the product (tour operators, agencies) can play a very influential part in transforming established images towards more unique and therefore alternative area profiles, thus influencing disproportionately the product rejuvenation process.

Dietvorst also identifies a symbolic transformation occurring by consumers, who “transform the physical structure of the area visited by them through their distinctive interpretation of the product offered”. Boorstin’s (1964) ‘pseudo-events’ are consumed by tourists, finding satisfaction in inauthentic experiences. Along with life style changes, effective communicated images influence their choice of visits to certain places rather than others. This decision to buy a certain product in turn results in a contribution to a ‘material transformation’ by consumers of the physical, social and thus economic structures of the area. The presently negative impacts observed in the mass tourism regions of the Mediterranean belong to this direct transformation process of the original tourism-recreation resource. This resource transformation has occurred through both users and providers, sharing the responsibility of altering coastal landscapes, the built environment and local character. The present study, examines the group of providers and their established authority to transform resources and products by direct policy action; in this case to ensure the healthy continuation of a valuable tourism sector (lengthening the positive phases of the product life cycle), but in ways less damaging to the environment and indigenous culture.
The study employs Dietvorst's transformation model, based on the principle of assuming that people, through a variety of symbolic and material interventions, "determine the transformation of the original physical and socio-economic space valuable for tourism and recreation". The model of tourism transformation as illustrated in Figure 1.3 attempts an understanding of the transformation process through the identification of the four types of transformation that "form just the surface reflection of much wider complicated developments in society". The model focuses upon the "spatially visible tracks of the transformation", following a variety of symbolic and material interventions that determine the tourism resource, and therefore the produced offer. Interventions by producers and consumers embrace material practices, as well as image manipulation and interpretation. The continuing transformation of the tourism resource by producers' interventions is the main focus of the present study and especially the dynamics involved in the production process of alternative tourism products.

However, despite its structural logic, the model admittedly neglects the explanatory mechanism of the transformations. The present study aims to offer more insight into the nature of these interventions within a complicated policy making arena, i.e. the transformation or development of tourism policy and planning in Greece. Insight is also given into the shift of policy directions, as well as the debate between the public and the private sector. An attempt to understand the reasoning behind these interventions is made, through an examination of the different views of the social actors and the ways in which they interpolate and influence tourism offers.

In an attempt to produce some explanatory tools, the model is extended by adding the dimensions of relocalization and globalisation. The constitution of meaning forms parts of processes like globalisation, and some tourism transformations are less consciously produced, but occur within a changing global market world. Additionally, the impacts of resource transformation on the local environment and local identity belong to the consciously produced alterations about which an intervention policy can be criticised. Similarly, the globalisation processes where producers have no, or very limited, control on local resource exploitation and use, are initially under the control of non-tourism activities, which result in numerous implications for policy interventions. The main
focus of this analysis therefore becomes the forces that are powering the transformations, concentrating on the main group of producers of the transforming tourism offer. The production of this new tourism offer is inevitably influenced by the existence of a multiplicity of producers, everyone of those preoccupied with the manipulation of certain products for a variety of goals relevant to their agencies, but not necessarily to the local environment - broadly defined. The present study considers the government in Greece as a producer, not in the sense that tourism business are not equally involved in the process, but as the initiator of the direction of change, and as the architect of collective goals in tourism development for the nation.

Recent pressure on local resources from multi-users has resulted in the rise of issues such as flexibility and sustainability regarding Greek tourism. Sustainability represents an important dimension within the explanatory approach of the Dietvorst model, since it plays an increasingly important role in all kinds of systems control and intervention in the public policy structure. The transformation of resources in the tourism product offer and the sustainable future of this offer is a result of deliberate intervention. The lengthening of positive phases of the tourism product life cycle produces a need for continuous economic reforms, through a safely sustained local environmental and structural resources, and this demands public policy intervention. The following Chapter (2) reviews the increasing importance given to sustainable issues within the tourism offer and identifies the relationship between of the product life cycle and the concept of sustainability, which is central to the research.

1.5 The Emergence of 'Alternative' Travelling Modes and Special Interest Tourism Products

The appearance of literature on 'alternative tourism' indicates the beginning of a tourism trend that recognises "new kinds of life-style and a new realisation of the importance of relations between people and nature...Gaining in importance are participation in outdoor activities, awareness of ecological problems, educational advances, aesthetic judgement and improvement of self and society" (WTO, 1993).
Put into either an environmental or market context, alternative tourism stands as an antithetic tourism form, undertaken by the tourist of the 1980's and 1990's, who is described by De Knop (1990) as "more critical, more and better educated, with a great consciousness about health, tourism infrastructure and a want for more active participation", and has as a guiding principle "to put as much distance as possible between themselves and mass tourism" (Krippendorf, 1987). The traveller pursuing alternative tourism forms strongly feels that the ultimate travel experience derives from the search for authenticity, that only unspoiled physical and cultural environments can offer.

Alternative tourism as a growth market has emerged as recognition has increased of the negative impacts that years of largely unfettered tourism development have had, particularly in mass tourism destinations. While numerous texts have focussed on such impacts, environmental issues which comprise one key element are summarised in the EU publication 'Taking Account of Environment in Tourism Development' (CEC, 1993). The document breaks primary environmental issues down into eight categories:

- serious modifications of the coastal ecosystem;
- intensive urbanisation of the area, degradation of the countryside;
- pressure on agricultural land with the aim of rendering it suitable for building;
- sea pollution, abnormal seaweed growth;
- coastal erosion;
- air pollution;
- excessive water consumption;
- pollution of ground water.

Special attention has been given to the pollution of sea water through the peak tourist season, which is causing particular problems for some Mediterranean destinations. Excessive use of water reserves and sea/coast pollution by congested tourist units appear as the two main environmental dangers in Mediterranean areas. In broadscales, the overriding evaluation of the relationship between tourism and environment over the last twenty years is negative, and the same report indicates a significant lack of environmental awareness by the 'suppliers'. The opportunity of easy and quick profit
from which many economies have benefited over recent years now appears less environmentally sensible and increasingly economically costly.

Increasing recognition of the true costs of tourism development, which have yet to be paid in many locations, represents one significant problem for the contemporary tourism industry. Another lies in the fact that for some areas, which are heavily reliant on tourism revenue, the projected continued growth in tourism is now failing to emerge. Whilst the EU countries have been enjoying an increase in revenues from tourism of 110 - 150% over the period of 1985 to 1990, giving Europe a character of ‘centrality’ within the international tourism market, the growth of arrivals per decade in Europe (Table 1.1), follows a clear decreasing course, from 200% of the 1960’s boom to 41% of the 1990’s, while forecasts now estimate a decrease down to 22% by the year 2000 (CEC, 1994).

Table 1.1
International Arrivals in Europe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Arrivals in Millions</th>
<th>Growth per Decade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>50.4</td>
<td>+ 200 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>113.0</td>
<td>+ 124 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>196.0</td>
<td>+ 73 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>276.0</td>
<td>+ 41 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forecast</td>
<td>338.0</td>
<td>+ 22 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commission of the European Communities, 1993.

Additionally, as the examination by Nevin and Wason (1993) indicates, the protagonists of the mass tourism industry in Europe face a decrease in the trade surplus in real terms, along with a negative course for arrivals between 1986 and 1990, even though the numbers are positive. “The 1980’s saw a decline in demand for tourism based on ‘sun, sea, sand and skiing’ and a growth in demand for rural, environmental and cultural tourism. This change in preferences has broadly benefited northern European
destinations offering a rich historical and cultural heritage at the expense of Mediterranean destinations’ (Nevin and Wason, 1993). This type of analysis has raised warnings for tourism economies such as Greece, and again represents a key motive for this study in terms of identifying a need to analyse the process through which alternative tourism forms are being, and can be, developed and implemented effectively.

Adopting a ‘market’ approach, the EU also suggests that the traditional ‘sea, sun and sand’ holiday product of the Mediterranean has reached a mature phase in its ‘product life cycle’, and this life cycle approach, which has also been adopted here, is attractive in terms of analysing both the state of traditional tourism and the development of new products, such as special interest tourism and more specifically for this study, sports tourism.

Krippendorf (1987) and others have argued that fundamental changes are occurring in the tourism market, with the development of new patterns of tourism consumption. “We are observing an extension of the boundaries of activities and social behaviour which can be seen as originating from the practice of tourism” (Nocifora, 1994). Helber (1988) described the increasing trend for ‘experience-oriented holidays’ with an emphasis on ‘action, adventure, fantasy, nostalgia’ etc., and there now appears little doubt that there is a significant rise in interest in ‘active tourism’. De knop (1990) noted that “in the eighties new trends appeared...concepts such as development, activity, social engagement, pleasure, self-culture, companionship and self-enrichment became central in our society ... recreationists want to participate in an active way; they want to observe intensively and enjoy consciously”.

WTO (1985 in Jackson and Glyptis, 1992) has defined ‘special interest tourism’ as “specialised tourism involving group or individual tours by people who wish to develop interest and visit sites and places connected with a specific subject”. A characteristic of special interest tourism that increasingly attracts attention is the ‘activity’ undertaken during the holiday experience. Being a basic element of special interest tourism, ‘activity’ holidays represent a special travel product which has a promising potential for further development, particularly for destinations which have previously relied almost exclusively on the now declining sun, sea, sand product. Increasingly, relevant
literature has started to offer definitions that emphasise the potential of this new trend. "Active holidays could be defined as holidays during which a person engages in a cultural, artisanal or leisure activity or sport with a view to fulfilling himself and developing his personality" (WTO, 1985).

Leisure Consultants (1992), (reviewing statistics about the development of activity holidays in Britain) describe activity holidays as being based largely on three key features: 'involvement in physical or mental activity', as a 'main purpose of the holiday', and which is carried out on an 'organised basis' (although the last point is surely debatable). In a different form of analysis, Dickinson (1992 in Leisure Consultants, 1992) suggests that activity holidays can be sub-divided into two categories: packaged trips or independent travel.

Recognising the difficulty in defining the broad concept of 'activity holidays', Leisure Consultants (op cit) set a framework using two main holiday characteristics: firstly, holidays with/without active pursuits, and secondly, active pursuits as/as not the main purpose of the holiday (see Table 1.2). Table 1.2 illustrates four groups of holidays created by the criteria described, of which only group 4 can be termed as 'activity holidays', since it represents 'holidays with active pursuits', which 'are the main purpose for travelling'.

Despite the fact that we have now recognised active tourism as a growing trend, with a significant role to play, in this case for example, in the rejuvenation of mass tourism resorts, relatively few works explicitly offer statistics for 'active' holiday makers. According to the study by Leisure Consultants (1992) over 12% of holiday trips taken by British residents and 15% of their spending concerns activity holidays. Similar estimates are offered by Wooder (1992), where an estimated 10 - 15% of holidays taken in Britain involve some form of activity, while Stuart (1993) through the Henley Centre for Forecasting, has shown an increase of positive responses from 26% in 1983, to 27% in 1985 and 35% in 1991, to hypothetical questions regarding interest in activity-oriented holidays. Leisure Consultants' (op cit) research identified 1000 organisations offering activity holidays in Britain based on: a. sport participation and b. courses (e.g. art, intellectual, social practical).
Table 1.2
Defining Activity Holidays - The broad framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pursuit done but not main purpose of holiday</th>
<th>Holiday with non-active pursuits</th>
<th>Holidays with active pursuits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group 1 e.g.</td>
<td>Holiday as rest &quot;just getting away&quot;</td>
<td>Group 3 e.g. Playing a game of tennis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pursuits as main purpose of holiday</td>
<td>Group 2 e.g. Beach holiday</td>
<td>Group 4 e.g. Study trip, Golfing holidays, HOLIDAYS = ACTIVITY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>City centre break</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Summarising this field from a broader analysis, Collins and Jackson (1998) conclude "what is clear is that activity holidays have considerable significance. In very broad terms, they appear to account for 10% of holiday tourism in Northern European countries. From best estimates, sports activities appear to generate roughly half of these holidays, with the rest being comprised of social, intellectual and cultural activities".

1.6 Sports Tourism: Delineating the Field

Sport is increasingly being recognised as the single most important type of pursuit undertaken within active holidays. De Knop (1990) suggests that the phenomenon of "sports and active participation during holidays has become very successful, probably as a consequence of increased urbanisation and of changing leisure time pursuits".
Standeven (1992) added a number of factors which have influenced the development of sport-oriented holidays such as: the increase of holiday entitlement and personal disposable income, awareness of the benefits of an active lifestyle, environmental protection, and the high profile of sport promoted through the international media. Collins and Jackson (1998) note that “supporting trends include evidence from many countries of the extension of sports participation and growth in frequency of playing sports (including affluent middle-aged people, more of whom have developed sports interests than their predecessors), the opening of more specialist activity centres, and that the tourism industry is now recognising the potential of this market”. The tourism industry therefore are increasingly recognising the types of active and recreational pursuit that foster sport-oriented/active holidays. Despite this growing phenomenon, at the time of writing, still relatively little literature has examined the growth and development of sports tourism. That which has emerged is reviewed in the following sections, to set the context for the empirical work in this study.

1.6.1 The Sports Tourism Concept

In particular, relatively few theoretical works deal explicitly with the interrelationship between sport and tourism. This is despite the fact that the phenomenon of sporting participation during trips away from home is not new.

Mill (1990), for example, refers to Ancient Greeks who were travelling a) to visit cities, b) to religious festivals and c) to spectate at sporting events. Romans, also visited cities hosting fight-to-the-death gladiator games. More recently, and within a developmental context for modern sports tourism, by the 19th Century the Grand Tour undertaken by north European gentry often included activities like mountaineering and skiing, and in 1896 included for many, a visit to Athens for the celebration of ‘Modern Olympics’ (Standeven, 1992). Occasional literature provides snapshots of sport tourism development. Tomlinson and Walker (1990 in Jackson and Glyptis, 1992) estimate that by the 1930’s more than 10 million people in Britain “combined cycling with their holidays”, while Redmond (1991) identified sport as part of the “recipe for total family fun in British holiday camps” (like Butlin’s, Pontin’s and Warner’s) through to the 1950’s and 1960’s.
However, there is a significant difference between these traditional forms of sport during holidays and modern sports tourism. De Knop (1990) notes that “new is the offer and the practice of new sports during holidays; new is the planning of sport activities in the holiday period; new also is the fact that today people choose a particular holiday resort just because of its specific sport facilities and possibilities”. These elements identify the emergence of sports tourism, as do some of the other indicators and tourism industry responses noted earlier.

While some authors have noted the increasingly obscure separation of administration and responsibility for sport and for tourism in most European countries (see e.g. Glyptis, 1991; Jackson and Glyptis, 1992; Collins and Jackson, 1998), it has also been noted that increasingly several nations are using sport in their tourism promotional process. Glyptis (1991) noted that Portugal practised (what was then) an exceptional policy in investing and promoting sport to attract visitors and building a sporting image for the country, others such as Spain and Ireland have followed suit, and this is now ubiquitous.

Of particular relevance to the present study, some of the limited literature that examines the sports tourism interrelationship offers indicators and possible factors that promise potential for further development, particularly in areas where it has not been developed to date. Factors like the increased sporting activities offered within camping holiday packages, and the increase in ‘club’ holidays (e.g. Club Mediterrane). Redmond (1991) notes that “one of the most obvious and popular manifestations of sport being the focus for holidays is ‘Club Med’, a 40 year old concept which has grown into a US $1.3 billion empire, with 110 villages in 33 countries on five continents”. Even a brief industry review shows other significant developments and packages where sport is central to the tourism product, e.g. the Center Parcs chain across northern Europe, the newer ‘copy cat’ developments such as ‘Oasis’ in the UK. The rejuvenation of the ‘holiday camp’ concept using sports as a central feature e.g. Ranks’ redevelopment of Butlins in the UK, and other examples abound.

But the significance of sports tourism goes beyond initiatives of sports participation programmes. In 1992 the Commission of the European Communities had for the first time included and considered sport-event tourism as a sector which “has a very
important influence on tourism flows". The Commission (1993) put sport tourism in the context of 'suitable products' for 'all season tourism', arguing that holidays with an "activity or sports context are becoming increasingly popular as a mechanism for spreading arrivals into the off-season...and...may help to generate off-season business for summer resorts". As well as assisting in differentiating a mass product, this already examples the type of issues attracting attention for the Greek tourism authorities.

Spectating, as well as participating is clearly part of the sports tourism phenomenon. Hall (1992), for example, defines sport tourism as "travel for non-commercial reasons, to participate or observe sporting activities away from the home range". A number of interested authors working in this field have attempted to categorise the types and range of activity involved. De Knop (1990) typifies this approach, dividing the field into three broad types. Although even within this, other types of categorisation possibilities are clearly evident:

- The 'pure sport holiday': where the sporting activity is the primary aim and content of the holiday, in either organised or free private form;

- The 'sporadic acceptance' of the organised sport provided: where a programme is provided to supplement and make the offer attractive to visitors who would undertake sport either recreationally or at an advanced level;

- 'Private sporting activity': sport has always been a favourite activity during holidays with walking and swimming as the most popular, where people relax through free recreation.

Litras (1991) describes the basis for a theoretical framework of the sports tourism phenomenon, and presents the similarities that support, the sports tourism linkage under a number of categories (Figure 1.4):
This model is interesting and worthy of closer examination of its sub-categories, which assist us in recognising the full scale of the significance of sports-related tourism and its potential:

- ‘Mass Accumulation’ - Both sport and tourism represent two major social phenomena, with massive numbers undertaking these pursuits or working within these sectors. Tourism is considered to be the world’s biggest industry by the year 2000, while sport has proved to influence e.g. people’s lifestyle, behaviour, and cities’ image and economy;

- ‘Fragility’ - Both sport and tourism have a sensitive and fragile character, significantly influenced by social, economic and political trends (like wars, terrorism, environmental degradation, political anarchy) that can limit or terminate their operation;
• 'Subjectivity' - The demand for the pursuit of either sport or tourism is subject to a variety of social factors that influence the personal choice and/or the type of sport tourism undertaking. For example, cultural reasons, socio-economic status, personal tasks and preferences all guide the personal choice which appears as the current 'expressed demand';

• 'Free-time' - The two major leisure forms of sport and tourism have been developed within the free time of the working individual. The increase of free time and expansion of holidays have boosted sport and tourism to high operational levels, reinforcing this link;

• 'Government intervention' - The existence of relevant ministries/authorities suggests the dependency of both issues on public policies that can lead to successful development or detrimental fragmentation;

• 'Multi-complexity' - This characteristic refers to various criteria and categorisations of the people involved which are influential (sex, age, socio-economic groups etc) both as 'suppliers' and 'consumers';

• 'Common infrastructure' - Specific infrastructure is needed and affects the harmonious development and function of both sport and tourism;

• 'Common legislation framework' - Specific legislation deals with the two phenomena that further attest to their autonomy and separation in most instances;

• 'International co-operation' - Both sport and tourism have been used to foster international peace and co-operation in various circumstances across the globe;

• 'Psychological and sociological' content - Where sport and tourism have brought national pride and contributed to the country's image promotion e.g. in performance in, or staging of mega sports events.
Despite its use in terms of raising attention to the significance and interrelationship between sport and tourism, the above categorisation obviously creates generalisations that can be questioned. What limited literature there is examining the links between sport and tourism, in most cases avoids definition or delimitation of the phenomenon. This has so far led to inconsistency amongst analysts as to what exactly constitutes sports tourism, what may be included, what omitted and on what grounds. There have been some attempts to categorise the forms of sports tourism.

Table 1.3

Categories of Tourism Sport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ATTRACTION</th>
<th>RESORTS</th>
<th>CRUISES</th>
<th>TOURS</th>
<th>EVENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sport Museums</td>
<td>Fishing/Hunting</td>
<td>Sports/Celebrity</td>
<td>Golf/Tennis Tours</td>
<td>Regional/International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Halls of Fame</td>
<td>Resorts</td>
<td>Cruises</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport Conferences</td>
<td>Outfitters</td>
<td>Golf Cruises</td>
<td>Sports Study Tours</td>
<td>Sport Events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrations</td>
<td>Ski Resorts</td>
<td>Tennis Cruises</td>
<td>Sports Adventure Tours</td>
<td>Championships/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Bonspiels/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports Ice</td>
<td>Sports Conferences</td>
<td>Snorkel Cruises</td>
<td>Facility/Sites</td>
<td>Meets/Invitational/</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sculptures</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Event Tours</td>
<td>Marathons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theme Parks</td>
<td>Sports Camps</td>
<td>Sport Cruises</td>
<td>Game Safaris</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bung. Jumping</td>
<td>Training Camps</td>
<td>Sports attractions</td>
<td>Sports participation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Visitations</td>
<td>tours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White Water Rafting</td>
<td>Volleyball Camps</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golf courses</td>
<td>Hockey schools</td>
<td>Fishing cruises</td>
<td>Training tours</td>
<td>World Cup</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ski facilities</td>
<td>Basketball schools</td>
<td>Yacht charters</td>
<td>Cycle/walking tours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Regattas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water slides</td>
<td>Soccer schools</td>
<td>Bareboat Chartering</td>
<td>Ski Do Excursions/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Outdoor Expeditions</td>
<td>Sport Festivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wave Tech pools</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stadiums/ Arenas</td>
<td>Card cruises</td>
<td>Adventure Tours</td>
<td>Olympic Games</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The Tourism Sport International Council (1994), for example, having the primary goal “to promote the role of sport in the tourism industry”, refer to sports tourism as “a
philosophical and entrepreneurial revelation of the nineties". TSIC provides a
categorisation of ‘Tourism Sport’ within five major sub-categories: Attractions, Resorts,
Cruises, Tours and Events (Table 1.3). The identified categories provide a wide
spectrum of sports tourism activities which are, however, open to interpretation within
different typologies and sets of definitions that could question the validity of this
categorisation. Despite some of the idiosyncrasies in some of the sub-fields, it is a
useful delineation of the breadth of the field.

1.6.2 Sports Tourism: Active Consumption

The act of consuming sports tourism can clearly be divided most effectively into broad
types: active consumption and passive consumption. Dealing first with the former, we
find rather less written on the activity of sports tourism than about events and passive
consumption. Apart from those assessments of volume of interest overall, previously
reviewed e.g. Leisure Consultants (1992); Collins and Jackson (1998), those writing on
the participation aspect of sports tourism are few.

The sports tourist category of “travel to participate in sport holidays” has been
reviewed by Hall (1992). He describes ‘activity participants’ as those who “pursue
sport as a form of leisure for the development and expression of skills and knowledge,
and for personal enrichment”. A second category he sees as ‘players’ who include
“hobbyists who are competitive” at an amateur level, with the aim “to acquire and
maintain the knowledge and skills enabling the individual to experience uncommon
rewards from the endeavour”. The extreme end of sports holidays, defined as
‘adventure’, includes that special group of people that “deliberately seek risk and
danger in outdoor activities”. Here, Hall has provided a definition of adventure tourism
as: “a broad spectrum of outdoor tourist activities, often commercialised and involving
an interaction with the natural environment away from the participant’s home range and
containing elements of risk; in which the outcome is influenced by the participant,
setting and management of the tourist experience”. While not an all-encompassing
categorisation, this does at least raise attention to some of the sub-categories within
active sports tourism participation.
This type of holiday, as we have seen earlier, is expanding for a number of the reasons reviewed. According to Tallantire (1993), amongst the factors supporting the growth of ‘risky holidays’ in particular is the increasingly advanced technology which provides greater ‘ease’ of approaching untouched and appealing places through sophisticated equipment, clothing, and transportation means. Participants of this group of ‘adventure active sports tourists’ can have an independent or a highly organised form of travel, usually with a high level of interaction with the natural environment.

Before many subsequent categorisations, Jackson and Glyptis (1992) provided a list of suggested developments through which sport could assist in developing tourism. The majority of these developments focus on the participation element, although the last moves into passive consumption. Examples include: the building of new ‘resorts’, specialist activity holiday centres, training activity centres, sport activities added to existing resorts in a bid for competitive advantage, integrated year-round holiday villages, sport tradition as a capital opportunity, the transformation of hotel business through the additional ‘value added’ sports products, the attraction of ‘quality’ markets to destinations through investment on sport and leisure facilities, sport linked to other leisure themes, sports tour opportunities and sports events of various scale and type.

Along the same lines, Redmond (1991) provided some sub-categorisations of ‘holiday experience’ or destination where sports tourism could actively be consumed. These included:

- The ‘resort’ “a vacation centre with facilities for recreation” commonly offering e.g. golf, tennis, swimming, racquetball, squash, jogging trails, water sports opportunities etc.

- ‘Hotels’ increasingly realising the demand for fitness products or holiday programmes, investing in health and fitness equipment and facilities, either to extend the range of products offered within that hotel or more specifically “to be able to stress their quality”.
‘Clubs’ - Redmond separately identified these, which have shifted their programme considerably towards an active holiday experience. Redmond focuses on ‘Club Med’, highlighting the importance of sporting provision within their ‘strap-line’: “Whatever you fancy, we’ve got the sport”.

All these examples provide further evidence that mass tourist interests, whether individual hotel sites, ‘resort clubs’, tourist destinations or national/regional governments reliant on the mass tourist economy can, and in some cases already have, benefited from the development of more significant sports provision and opportunity for active recreation within the a range of holiday products, whether this be to differentiate their previously sun/sea reliant product, maintain visitor growth or absolute numbers or to attract more ‘quality tourists’ capable of higher spending, but demanding excellence in provision and variety in choice.

1.6.3 Travel for Sports Spectating and Events

The second broad type of sports tourism is that of passive consumption, and concerns sports Spectating and events. The latter can clearly be widely ranging in scale and have generated a disproportionately large literature within this overall field, most probably because of the economic significance and appeal, particularly of large events. Definitions concerning the phenomenon of ‘events’ seem to depend on the researcher’s viewpoint and background. Ritchie (in Hall, 1992), being amongst the leading analysts of ‘events’, describes the most significant, or ‘hallmark events’, as: “major one time or recurring events of limited duration, developed primarily to enhance the awareness, appeal and profitability of a tourism destination in the short and/or long term. Such events rely for their success on uniqueness, status or timely significance to create interest and attract attention”.

Tourism attracted by such events has unsurprisingly been termed as ‘event tourism’, which is “concerned with the roles that festivals and special events can play in destination development and the maximisation of an event’s attractiveness to tourists” (Getz, 1991). Although clearly sport represents only one type of major event, with
expos' and arts events also generating great interest and travel, the world's major one-off events and some of its most popular recurring events are sports based.

Whatever the different 'scientific' angles for examining the issue of events, there is an agreement amongst authors indicating the growth in such events and the strong and increasing competition between countries seeking to host 'large scale' events. The majority of the existing literature focuses on the importance of 'mega-events', emphasised by virtue of their 'size in terms of attendance, target market, level of public financial involvement, political effects, extent of television coverage, construction of facilities and impact on the economic and social fabric of the host community' (ibid.).

Rooney (1988), for example, categorised mega-events into three types:

- Events periodically organised at different places over regular and irregular time intervals (e.g. the Olympics);
- Events periodically organised in certain places over regular intervals;
- Events organised periodically in a place at a regular time.

According to Burns and Mules (1986), the primary function of 'hallmark events' is "to provide the host community with an opportunity to secure a position of prominence in the tourism market for a short, well defined period of time", and several authors have charted the progress of 'event cities' from their selection as host, to games stages, to post games destination. What has until recently been evident and still causes much debate is that analysts studying the importance of these high profile events face great difficulty in calculating the benefits derived from their organisation, due not least to uncertainties over the real long term economic effects, the true costs of staging events, and the full scope of financial activity during these events. Like many, Kang and Perdue's (1994) study on the long-term impact of special events, presents a positive relationship, although still relatively few works have monitored or explicitly deal with the long-term results.

More work on the true economic costs and benefits of large scale sports events is now emerging, but even here two observations appear pertinent. Firstly, there has been less work on the non-economic costs and benefits, and secondly, more significant work
specifically relevant to this type of study is necessary into the short and long term tourism potential of events of various scales. Dealing with the first of these points, Hall (1989) for example, has criticised the events literature for neglecting "the philosophical, societal implications...and political nature of the events at both the macro and micro level for individual and institutional actors in the policy-making process". Following the same critical stance against the 'conservative' literature, Roche (1994) emphasises the importance of the presently neglected social part of the "production, and the conditions of the production" surrounding events, and the lack of theoretical work exploring an "explanatory understanding of causation/production". Increasingly however, there is an understanding that there are social, environmental, political etc. costs and benefits of major events.

On the second point, still relatively little work has been undertaken on the ongoing tourism impacts of hosting major events, despite the fact that this has clear significance. Pyo, Cook and Howell (1991) have attempted to analyse the economic activity of the 'Summer Olympic tourist market', and conclude that events like the Olympic games have been proved unable to attract the expected number of tourists. However, in an analysis of the financial risks of trying to balance the costs and benefits of Olympic Games, with such diverse economic outcomes as Montreal and Los Angeles presented, Heinemann (1993) for example, claims that the macro-economic impact of the establishment of the host country as a tourism destination is one of the most attractive arguments for games bids.

Hall (1989) offered a group of factors which seem to support the development of event tourism, explaining why so many public authorities have sought to stage such events. These he categorised into three types:

- The civic pride that local people feel from the cultural promotion of their area and its celebration, which is used to "put themselves on the tourist map through positive imaging", both in the short and long term;
- Creating the appropriate image, the event can attract investment and public subsidies for sports and culture. Associated tourism is treated as a means of economic development;
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- The "changing nature of leisure activity" in western societies has created a 'follow the leader' effect, where communities appreciate the benefits of successful events and try to emulate successful host destinations.

In general, according to Ritchie (in Hall, 1992), research has for the most part been examining mainly the short-term impacts and "until a systematic analysis of the long-run impacts of such events is reported, all investments in hallmark events must be conservatively treated as short-term expenses". The study by Sparrow (1989) is one of the few studies attempting an examination of the long term effects, and suggests scenarios concerning the impacts. Within the long term scenario, "a new plateau for tourism growth" is described as a significant feature, and unsurprisingly the Sydney Olympic Games Review Committee has argued that the Olympic games will leave a 'positive legacy' for the host city through new and upgraded sporting facilities and venues, infrastructure, enhanced international recognition, reputation, increased tourism, investment and marketing opportunities, and increased participation in sport.

There are clearly many caveats to such positive analyses, which is sometimes characterised as 'boosterism'. Sparrow distinguishes two important types of hallmark event that differentiate such events into their social, cultural and political context and which need further investigation:

- 'Indigenous' events are those which the host community bids for and therefore had a discretionary input into;
- 'Adventitious' events are those which "came about or were thrust upon a host community...possibly a limited discretionary input and planning was undertaken on the run".

"Destination communities with little input or control over their own destinies" (Murphy, 1985) are observed when 'adventitious' events are imposed upon them, resulting in a series of negative effects. Indigenous events are produced and offered by local people for mainly the local needs, while adventitious events are organised and provided by external actors for the national or global event market. The level of involvement by local organisers/producers and the host community participation in planning, can influence a series of social and cultural phenomena resulting from special events. Roche (1993) has offered one of the few detailed studies looking at the social
aspects of special events and their implications, describing mega-events as "multi-dimensional and multi-purpose phenomena with diverse impacts".

Again, all such work is worthy of recognition by national, regional and city level governments concerned, whether for city reimagining, economic impetus or tourism development, with assessing the benefits of event-staging and particularly sports event strategies. However, there is more to special events and associated tourism redevelopment and impacts than that which relates to 'mega-events'. Getz (1994), for example, identifies the importance of smaller scale events, where visitors needs for cultural experience can be satisfied. Getz's conceptual model attempts to define a framework for the overall 'special event product', including both major and more minor special events (see Figure 1.5).

Breaking this model down into its key components, 'Events Tourism' is specifically where events are "an integral and major part of tourism development and marketing strategies". According to Getz, both local and mega-events have a local or international significance, when they are utilised in expanding and distributing tourism activity, increasing tourism and creating a positive image.

'Tangible Products' are effectively a 'facade' presented to the public through a 'synergistic' process, where both tangible and intangible products are invented to assist in "creating the event atmosphere".

'Visitors Experiences' are where a series of benefits relating to the event will offer a distinct experience. Those 'benefits' have been sub-categorised into firstly 'Generic Benefits' i.e. those which "distinguish special events from permanent attractions". These include:

- 'Spectacle' through visual displays which enhance the attraction of events;
- 'Belonging/Sharing' of experiences within a 'public celebration', which raises high motivation levels for participation in the organisation of events;
Figure 1.5 Perspectives on festivals and special events (Getz, 1991)

- 'Authenticity' both as a motivator and criterion for an event's evaluation, which raises questions about visitor satisfaction and community integrity, and which indicates a great level of sensitivity on the cultural status of a special event;
• ‘Ritual’ i.e. the ceremonial part of the events which, along with special logos and symbols, become the "heart" of the experience;
• ‘Games’, including participation in fun games, creates the appropriate atmosphere of celebration;

Secondly; ‘targeted benefits’ provide competitive advantages through the satisfaction of specific visitors' needs and expectations.

Getz differentiates a number of different perspectives in the hosting of significant scale events, which are useful to discern for those areas which may consider an events strategy as part of their economic regeneration or tourism development strategy, and which are clearly relevant to sports tourism.

• ‘The Organiser’s perspective’ is represented by the ‘internal management process’ and is influenced, for example, by the volunteers’ inexperience and difficulty of control.

• ‘The organisation and its environment’ Organisers should, for example, carefully consider the possible impacts that the hosting of event can bring, since it uses both a physical and community setting as an essential resource for this special product.

• ‘The Community development perspective’ is particularly relevant for ‘Indigenous events’, which include the local administration of the events, and which are the most likely to achieve the objectives that Getz identifies e.g.:
  - community control of the event;
  - satisfying community needs;
  - fostered leadership and inter organisational networks;
  - considerations of the potential social, cultural, economical and environmental impacts.

Special events can be seen to have become established as a major part of tourism development for some areas. The previous review analysis aimed to offer a wider appreciation of the transformation resulting from the conversion of resources that occur in the changing relationships between leisure components. Considering the importance of the organisations’ energies, the transformation process is examined in its capacity to
direct converting resources into new tourism outcomes. Both sport events and sport tourism products have been examined as outcomes of transforming processes that can be a key part of tourism developments. The section leads to the consideration of a whole range of possible parameters which define the process outcome, focussing on the ‘producers’ who tend to determine the nature and potential of a new sport tourism product. To the extent that community development is a major part of the transformation process, the new product is capable of achieving a wide range of possible benefits.

Getz and Ritchie (1984 in Hall, 1989) provide a useful summary of a significant number of the ‘possible’ (both positive and negative) impacts deriving from the hosting of events, categorising them into six major areas (Table 1.4). Again these are essential considerations for destinations of whatever scale in assessing potential sports tourism event strategies.

The proposed positive impact of the strengthening of regional values and traditions, doesn’t seem to enjoy significant support within the overall literature, which often defines the social impacts of tourism in terms of “the manner in which tourism and travel effect changes in collective and individual value systems, behaviour patterns, community structures, lifestyle and the quality of life” (Hall, 1991).

When the decision of “whether to host an event or not, is taken outside of the public arena and behind the closed doors of a private office or city hall” (Hall, 1991) it can generate negative effects, such as changes in community structure through e.g. the relocation of native people, and commercialisation of the values and tradition of events, which become “the epitome of manufacturers imagery which serves to confuse the public as to what is real and what is not”.

However, a fair evaluation of the possible impacts should include the positive effects of the social interaction observed in host communities, such as a development of administration skills, the ‘togetherness’ of sporting individuals and groups working towards a common goal, an increase of minor and major sport and other associated activities, and the involvement of ‘non-regular’ participants in sport.
Table 1.4
Analysis of the possible impacts of Hallmark Events on host communities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Increased expenditures; Creation of employment; Increase in labour supply; Increase in standard of living.</td>
<td>Price increases during event; Real estate speculation; Failure to attract tourists; Better alternative investments - Inadequate capital; Inadequate estimation of costs of event.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism/Commercial</td>
<td>Increased awareness of the region as a travel / tourism destination; Increased knowledge concerning the potential for investment and commercial activity in the region - Creation of new accommodation and tourist attractions; Increase in accessibility.</td>
<td>Acquisition of a poor reputation as a result of inadequate facilities, improper practices or inflated prices; Negative reactions from existing enterprises due to the possibility of new competition for local manpower and government assistance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical/Environmental</td>
<td>Construction of new facilities; Improvement of local infrastructure; Preservation of heritage.</td>
<td>Environmental damage; Changes in natural processes; Architectural pollution; Destruction of heritage; Overcrowding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social/Environmental</td>
<td>Increase in permanent level of local interest and participation in types of activities associated with event; Strengthening of regional values and traditions.</td>
<td>Commercialisation of activities which may be of a personal or private nature; Modification of nature of event or activity to accommodate tourism; Potential increase in crime; Changes in community structure; Social dislocation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td>Increase local pride and community spirit; Increased awareness of non-local perceptions.</td>
<td>Tendency toward defensive attitudes concerning host regions; Cultural shock; High possibility of misunderstanding leading to varying degrees of host/visitor hostility.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Political/Administrative</td>
<td>Enhanced international recognition of region and values; Development of skills among planners.</td>
<td>Economic exploitation of local population to satisfy ambitions of political elite; Distortion of true nature of event to reflect values of political system of the day; Failure to cope; Inability to achieve aims; Increase in administrative costs; Use of event to legitimate unpopular decisions; Legitimisation of ideology and sociocultural reality.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chapter 1

New Forms of Tourism: Their Role in Tourism Development

The psychological impacts, as categorised by Ritchie (1984), are also defined by Burns and Mules (1986) as the ‘psychic income’ which local people enjoy from “the general excitement created by the event, good self-opinions, the opportunity to have guests, home hosting, and the pleasure of experiencing the event”. Ritchie and Lyons (1990 in Getz, 1991), investigating the impacts of the 1988 Calgary Olympic Games, found that of the possible benefits for locals in terms of perceived benefits ‘the recognition for Calgary’ was an effect stated by 50% of those interviewed.

There is clearly then much to consider for destinations evaluating the role that events and, in this context, particularly sports events might play within their rejuvenation or product development, or marketing strategies. This was always considered to have relevance to Greece and now has even more so with the award of the 2004 Olympic Games. As Getz (1991) notes; “events have the potential to foster tourism, conservation, heritage, leisure, community development and ... can be catalysts for economic, and infrastructure development, and they can support urban renewal efforts”. Others have identified different host benefits, such as the ‘psychic income’ to be generated from hosting events. However, overall, the literature seems unable to prove a more positive than negative effect from large scale events. It particularly criticises ‘adventitious’ events and underlines the importance of community involvement in the planning and implementation of events, suggesting that if effectively implemented “events tourism with its emphasis on communities, provides a ready-made basis for the development of a sustainable approach towards tourism” (Hall, 1992). Despite the growth of work in this area in recent years, there is a need for more substantive research examining the potential of this type of sports tourism to maximise the identified positive benefits and for its adoption within long-term cultural and economic regeneration planning.

Conclusions

Whilst ‘sports tourism’ has not, until very recently, attracted significant attention within the tourism literature, there have now been some attempts to identify and elaborate on the links between these two elements of the leisure sphere, and to highlight the potential
benefits of their combination into an inter-linked, deliberately exploited, sub-form of tourism. Active tourism is recognised as growing, and sport has been identified as the most significant pursuit undertaken within active holidays. Events, and particularly sports events, have attracted a more significant literature which has generally adopted an economic approach, and although methods of economic evaluation are still being honed, possibly the greatest scope lies in the need for more accurate monitoring to assess the true costs and benefits of events. In both active tourism and events-based tourism there is much potential for comparative research which can help in generating definitions, explanations and policies for sports tourism development.

Alternative and active tourism forms, either as the result of an increased environmental or health-centred awareness within the tourism market, or generated as a product utilised to regenerate a declining sector or destination, is steadily creating its own profile, exponents, providers and analysts. However, despite the potential that sports tourism clearly offers to mass tourism destinations such as Greece, warning bells are already being sounded. Krippendorf (1987) is one of the most respected observers of the field and notes that "alternative tourists unwillingly become the vanguard of mass tourism from which they want to escape. Unwittingly they set new market mechanisms going, although many of them, especially the young, are professed opponents of consumer ideology. But they, themselves have become a market!".

While this has more conspicuously been applied to the dangers of so-called 'nature tourism' or 'eco-tourism', which can itself be a major source of deterioration in natural environments (see e.g. Long, 1993), and arguably more so than traditional mass tourism, which at least is concentrated within already degraded areas, there are clear dangers emanating from the development of active tourism packages and events which use the natural environments an input product. The relevance of this can later be seen clearly in the case study of the underdeveloped region of Thrace.

Earlier sections of this review chapter considered the ageing profile of many mass tourism destinations within the product or destination life cycle, and we can place the Greek tourism product within this category. Conventional wisdom thus tells us that product development and differentiation must take place and the identified growth area
of active, especially sports tourism (a sub-set of the growing special interest tourism phenomenon) appears to provide a significant opportunity. The middle section of the review has highlighted that resource transformation has already taken place through tourism by both users and providers, altering the original product, and that this process will clearly continue, both materially and symbolically (altering the 'physical' and the 'image'). The present study seeks to identify, analyse, report and perhaps influence the dynamics of the transformation process involved in rejuvenating the Greek tourism economy, or parts of it, with the development or exploitation of the possibilities offered by sports tourism as a differentiating, revitalising and product development vehicle. What is also identified is that this process must now take place within a context of sustainable development ethics and practice, and that this adds additional considerations to the process.

More is increasingly recognised in terms of making development of all types 'sustainable' and, not least in tourism, this has attracted significant attention because of the sheer volumes of people involved, the fragile nature of some of the destinations coveted and their almost inevitable exploitation in the coming years. However, the tourism industry has a long way to go in terms of convincing many analysts and, increasingly, impact assessors of its sustainable development credentials, and this issue will have significant importance in expanding the forms and geographical spread of tourism in mass tourism destinations seeking product development and destination life-cycle rejuvenation.

The following section aims to link the development of new tourism forms, such as sports tourism, with the increasingly influential paradigm of sustainable development. Reviewing the notion of sustainability and overtly linking this to the analysis of sports tourism policy and tourism-oriented structural developments in Greece, are designed to set the broader environmental and social context for the subsequently reported empirical research within the present study.
"All other lands were surpassed by ours in goodness of soil, so that it was actually able at that period to support a large host which was exempt from the labours of husbandry ... And, just as happens in small islands, what now remains compared with what then existed is like the skeleton of a sick man, all the fat and soft earth having wasted away, and only the bare framework of the land being left ... But at that epoch the country was unimpaired, and ... such then, was the natural condition of the rest of the country, and it was ornamented as you would expect from genuine husbandmen who made husbandry their sole task, and possessed of most excellent land and a great abundance of water, and also, above the land, a climate of most happily tempered seasons’’ (Plato, 5th Century BC as translated by Bury, 1929).

Plato vividly described environmental problems and unsustainable practices in ancient Greece that led to the decline and eventual collapse of the country, showing that the concept of sustainability is of diachronic value. Literature has accepted the term of sustainability as a single concept, suggesting an endless long-life of beneficial development. Modern social science interpretation, however, has created a variety of different explanatory perspectives and often contradictions.

2.1 Sustainability: Definition and Ambiguity

The ‘sustainability’ problem originates from the difficulty of managing economic activity, without the collapse of the environment which supports it. A belief that economic activity is itself an unsustainable function generates debates and controversy over the realism of sustainability. Counter to this, there is also a conviction that addressing human problems such as inequality and poverty requires ‘‘levels of economic activity to be increased worldwide’’ (Common, 1995). In these terms, sustainability becomes interpreted as a balancing of economic activity and natural environment. The state of the natural environment affects economic development and vise versa.
A third component in this relationship is that of humans, whose actions or non actions are also influential, as both actors and the acted on. The question of sustainability arises when the environment's capacity to support future developments at the level and form required by people is questionable. In some cases, the negative impacts of economic development are now so evident that policies are required to encourage or even demand sustainable practice. However, the designation of sustainable practices is highly problematic and sustainability is an extremely complex and contestable concept.

The increased environmental awareness of the 1980s is reflected in the use of terms having 'sustainability' as one of their main components. But it was in 1972 that Danella and Dennis Meadows shook the political and public arenas with their book 'Limits to Growth'. This "posed a real threat to conventional economic wisdom" (Barton and Bruder, 1995). It emphasised that resources are finite and demonstrated that the prevailing pattern of growth in population and resource usage could not be sustained, leading to a global environmental crisis early next century. The message was clear; there were environmental limits to growth and if not addressed with sustainable practices, global economic collapse was inevitable. It emphasised the need for a radical reorientation of political priorities and the adoption of sustainable practices that "could move the world economic system into a configuration that would be sustainable far into the future" (Meadows et Meadows, 1972). However, despite the increasing evidence given about the reality of acid rain, ozone-thinning and global warming, soil erosion, land degradation and water quality deterioration, which are alarmingly evident in many countries, the 'Limits to Growth' model has generated controversy, as well as considerable debate.

Economists predictably confronted the proposition that economic growth could not continue indefinitely with the argument that the economic system would allow progressive adaptation to scarcity, when higher prices would force greater efficiency, substitution and an intensified search for "raw materials" (Barton and Bruder, 1995). Although some authors argue that this has been proved to be the case, others have identified that key resources have finite limits. The notion that the capacity of the environment to absorb our wastes and respond to a growing population was already being exceeded, was emphasised in 'Limits to Growth' within 26 principles, proposing that "development and environmental concern should go together, and less developed countries should be given every assistance and incentive to promote rational environmental management" (Common, 1995).
The 'Limits to Growth' document led to the publication of the World Conservation Strategy by the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN, 1980), which is widely regarded as introducing the concept of 'sustainable development'. However, it was not until 1987 that the concept gained prominence and was highlighted within the publication of the Brundtland Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987), set up by the United Nations General Assembly in 1983. The report, deriving its common title from the name of the Chairman of the Commission, Gro Harlem Brundtland, a former Minister for the Environment and Prime Minister of Norway, is properly entitled 'Our Common Future'. The Brundtland Report identifies that “sustainable development seeks to meet the needs and aspirations of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” and has been characterised by subsequent analysts as a “brilliant political document”, and widely praised and positively responded to by many governmental and non-governmental organisations. Some of its contents and aspirations are now included within many political agendas around the world. However, beside the simplicity of the definition, much controversy is concealed, because although identifying the malaise, the document fails to clearly identify the parameters for a sustainable development future.

Hunter and Green (1995) in their analysis on the World Commission report argue that it regards the major objective of development as the satisfaction of human needs and aspirations, and where basic needs are not met, sustainable development requires economic growth. “Growth must be revived in developing countries because that is where the links between economic growth, the alleviation of poverty, and environmental conditions operate most directly. Yet developing countries are part of an interdependent world economy; their prospects also depend on the levels and patterns of growth in industrialised nations” (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987). It remains unclear if development implies economic growth where basic needs are already met, as in developed countries. Sustainable development, it seems, does not preclude the continued pursuit of economic growth in these places. This, for some analysts, is a more realistic developmental path, while for others this in itself is a contentious issue surrounding the concept of ‘sustainable development’. However, in these terms, environmental concern that rejects the abandonment of economic growth has gained the support of politicians, and increasingly sustainable development has been treated as a political goal.

A second important element within the concept of sustainable development is that of ‘limitation’. According to ‘Our Common Future’ there are different limits to the use of
energy, materials, water and land which should not preclude growth dealing with poverty and inequality. This growth would, however, be differentiated from that of the past by following ‘sustainable practices’ and would limit the development to within environmental carrying capacities. The use of ‘renewable’ resources (animal and plant species) for food, clothing, medicines etc., ensures that future generations would benefit equally, provided the rate of use does not exceed the limits of natural regeneration and growth. With great emphasis placed increasingly on economy of use, re-use and recycling, non-renewable resources should not be exhausted before “acceptable substitutes or alternatives” are available. This substitution possibility differentiates the above argument from that of ‘Limits to Growth’ (1972), which held the view that “the potential for reducing the demands on environmental functions by such substitutions is quite limited” (Common, 1995). Additionally, the earlier work suggests that economic expansion should soon come to an end, because of environmental limits, while poverty and inequality should be dealt with within a non-growth world economy.

Thus, views about the existence, nature and magnitude of limits differ considerably. Attempts to set limits according to changes in “biospheric functioning from the current or prior state”, or changes in the environment exceeding the rate at which humans can adapt, do not define the limits precisely enough. Uncertainty is compounded by problems of estimating future impacts. “It is much easier to estimate short-run costs and damages, than costs and damage occurring well off in the future” (Field, 1994). Many authors suggest that we might be able to identify a limit on damage strictly on physical grounds, but Field (ibid.) suggests that for most environmental resources, a physical limit is not definable, especially when all estimations and decisions must incorporate human judgements. To some extent, “trade-offs automatically become relevant”.

Despite the arguments of critics and sceptics, and those writing relatively early on the topic, that sustainable development is a “fuzzy concept that it may prove to be of little practical use in tackling the environmental issues that are emerging” (Murphy, 1993), sustainability as presented in ‘Our Common Future’, and since recognised and embraced in many places at government level, in fact builds on important principles of conservation and stewardship and offers a more proactive stance that incorporates continued economic growth in a more ecological and equitable manner. It has incorporated what some would see as necessary realism, that economic growth can be achieved with the adaptation of less polluting technologies, improving the potential trade-offs between marketed output and environmental quality. Even in developing countries, growth demands more resources to improving environmental quality. The need for sustainable practices, whether they are through innovative technology,
managerial efficiency or changes towards the realisation of more proactive behaviour, have become manifest and appreciated by the global community, and are increasingly influencing political and social actions.

Recognising the difficulty of formulating an acceptable definition for sustainable development, Van den Bergh and Van der Straaten (1994) usefully presented different approaches from the existing literature. They identify two types of definition, firstly based on indications such as income, production and welfare, which move along 'non-declining paths' over time. A contradictory approach to the above is based on 'capital theory' regarding "the value of a stock as the value of the goods and services it generates in the future" and the maintenance of this stock. It could be added that the environment is a composition of many stocks of capital. Theories regarding 'renewable' or 'non-renewable' stocks, regenerative capacities and substitution strategies have been suggested as most appropriate to minimise the harmful effects of economic activity on the environment.

Based on the first approach of 'non-declining' paths, Van den Bergh and Van der Straaten (ibid.) distinguish two versions of sustainable development. 'Strong' sustainability is achieved when "whatever indicator is used, whether it is based on quantity and/or quality, it must be non-decreasing over time". Other interpretations of strong sustainability based on substitution and complementarity of economic and natural stocks of capital, require that both principles are non-decreasing, "in the sense of some relevant indicator". 'Weak' sustainability suggests that the sum of the set of indicators or other measures should not decrease over time, promoting the idea of compensation in which technological solutions can compensate a loss in natural capital by "a man-made or a combination of man-made and semi-natural capital".

It remains difficult to estimate the critical point where the boundaries of sustainable development have been exceeded, particularly based on the existing definitions that are viewed more as theoretical approaches to development. However, the Van der Bergh and Van der Straaten work is useful in suggesting that sustainable action should be undertaken when signs of unsustainability appear in forms of: a) unstable trends in social and economic functions like income, welfare and production; b) variable or negative patterns in natural resources stocks; c) unstable trends in populations, industrial and agricultural pressure on land; and d) significant increases in pollution stocks. Sustainability, undoubtedly has a crucial part to play in the current and future interlinkage between economy and the environment not least in the aspects of development that are the focus of the present study, i.e. that of tourism. The subsequent
sections identify some of the considerations that have been necessary context for this study and also are relevant to the development future of the Greek tourism product and regional development more broadly.

2.1.1 Ecological Approaches to Sustainability

Ecological sustainability has received different interpretations of the environmental function and the action of human behaviour. Analysts following an ecological approach to sustainability invariably start with the "properties of the system of which humans are a part" (Common, 1995). Without ignoring human interests, they identify them "with the continuing existence of a functioning biospheric system, rather than defining them as consumption". However, this view is not shared by some authors, who identify environmental sustainability as concerning "human ways of life and the ability of the environment to sustain those ways of life" (Ekins, 1994). Thus, in summary, sustainability is often defined as the maintenance of environmental functions to provide this sustenance. Certain basic ‘biophysical’ criteria set the conditions for human existence and ways of life, however the levels at which they should be sustained are still debatable, and this has become central to many sustainability debates.

Following this rationale, environmental functions have been defined by De Groot (1992) as "the capacity of natural processes and components to provide goods and services that satisfy human needs". De Groot summarises the environmental functions within four main areas: regulation, carrier, production and information. Pearce (1989), Turner (1990 in Ekins, 1992) and Ekins (1992) all offer a different categorisation of these functions, which include some of De Groot’s groups: Provision of resources for human activity, absorption of waste from human activity, and provision of environmental services independently of, or interdependently with, human activity. The increased population, its needs and activities, puts these functions in competition, and the environment under an increasing threat. Such approaches emphasise the role of sustainability as sustaining human ways of life by sustaining the environmental stock and by directing policy choices accordingly.

This view however is not shared by some ecologists who position human interests more within an uninterrupted biological system than a consumption function. Holling (1986), for example, presents the difference between the ecological approach, paying more attention to the "properties and behaviour patterns of ecological systems" and the economic approach. The analysis employs the concept of ‘stability’ to describe the "propensity of some populations in an ecosystem for return to an equilibrium level.
following a disturbance”. ‘Resilience’, e.g. to disturbance, is a common property of an ecosystem and this perspective suggests that the whole system continues to function in the same way infinitely, prior to and after the disturbance. This ecological approach to sustainability suggests that a system is sustainable, if it is resilient.

However, what remains unclear for pragmatists is whether there are indicators of resilience that could dictate, prior to a ‘disturbance’, if the system would prove to be resilient. Large-scale human disturbance often makes ecosystems vulnerable, despite their evolutionary ability to adapt to disturbance. “Reductions in current biodiversity reduce evolutionary potential and therefore the potential for keeping functioning ecosystems in-being as environmental change takes place” (Common, 1995). Consequently, ecologists see these considerations as a crucial reason for regarding the conservation of biodiversity as an important goal.

Some view environmental sustainability as an ethical issue. Exploiting present finite resources, for example diminishes the environmental options of future generations to use the same natural stock. Ekins (1992) terms this a ‘self-interest’ concern. Environmental degradation comes from what may be seen as unethical and immoral behaviour, threatening costs and disruption to ways of life in the future, “that are or may be greater than those incurred by moving voluntarily towards sustainability now”. The environmental movement has led many people to focus on such questions of environmental ethics, “exploring the moral dimensions of human impacts on the natural environment” (Field, 1994). Ekins (1992) suggests that the current strengthening of public anxiety about the environment, is a manifestation of the “self-interested concern about unsustainability obviously becoming stronger as the time-scale within which the costs and disruption will be experienced is perceived to shorten”.

The view that environmental sustainability is an ‘ethical imperative’ has not yet become a dominant feature of public policy in most places, and it is regarded rather as ‘desirable’ to present and future development. Environmental sustainability evidently cannot yet be attained by simple rules and measures, and seems to contrast with the precise and unambiguous definitions of economic sustainability, with which many governments and powerful businesses feel more comfortable. There is greater apparent precision and quantification in the economic approach to sustainability, but is this illusory?
2.1.2 Economic Approaches to Sustainability

Classical economics assumes that “growth is good and more is better” (Szakal in Van Lier et al, 1994). The growth requirement of the economy has meant a potential increase of both the raw materials input from the environment and the output of waste into the environment. A system built on ‘individualised ownership’ of the means of production, with minimal state restrictions on property rights, gives rise to ‘external cost’ and market failure. Marxist economics has argued that the socialist economy is a reproductive economic system, and accuses capitalism of the destruction of the environment through unsustainable industrial development. However, analysts now heavily criticise socialist countries for the “extensive destruction of natural resources”, despite the increased state intervention to protect the environment. Both economic approaches present similarities in terms of their growth definition, relying on “large scale factory-style energy and capital intensive specialised production units” (ibid.). In addition they have both been heavily criticised for unsustainable rates of absorption of non-renewable resources with irreversible results.

Evolving from classical into neoclassical economics, some authors claim that the role of the natural environment in relation to economic activity almost entirely disappeared from the agenda for economic inquiry. Economics focused on the substitution possibilities of resources, and this ‘central issue’ is encapsulated, for example, in Hartwick’s sustainability model of ‘cake-eating’ (1989 in Common 1995). Supposing and implying that the natural resources available represent a finite stock of a non-renewable resource, that recycling is impossible, and that humans directly live off these resources, this imposes the problem of having to divide up the cake between a large number of ‘would-be’ cake eaters. Questions emerge, such as: “what is the largest constant rate of per capita consumption that can be maintained indefinitely? ; and what is the maximum sustainable rate of consumption?” In a cake-eating world, sustainability appears impossible because there is no positive use rate for a finite non-renewable resource stock to be maintained indefinitely.

The answer to the problem of the possibility of a constant level of consumption that can be maintained indefinitely, turns upon what is assumed about the substitution possibilities between the resource and capital in production. The Hartwick model specifies how much output can be consumed each time and how much must be saved and added to the capital stock. The amount to be saved is the amount by which the use of the resource contributed to production over and above the costs of extracting the resource, (or what is known as ‘rent’). Given that resources are exploited efficiently and that the
substitution possibilities are there, then the rents arising will give constant consumption indefinitely.

Despite its considerable appeal, Hartwick’s (1989) model fails to consider that the required substitution possibilities may not exist, since we know little about these possibilities. Economics therefore depends on technological progress to invent new substitution possibilities. Yet resources for specific production needs cannot be substituted, and even if it is assumed that substitution possibilities are favourable, the rule works only for a constant population. With a growing population, the feasibility of constant per capita consumption requires additional considerations about the exploitation of natural resources.

Economists, however, generally consider infinite time ‘horizons’, “avoiding the problem of deciding what time horizon should otherwise be” (Common, 1995). In that sense, the neoclassical approach advises us that “to optimise the use of the natural resources available, is senseless so long as we cannot quite accurately assess the amount of natural resources we have” (Bramwell et al, 1996). Exceeding the thresholds, results in irreversible effects on the natural environment, producing a negative form of externalities. Externalities occur when “the activities of a firm or individual give rise to unintended effects on other firms or individuals and these effects do not figure in the costs and benefits associated with the activity of the firm or individual responsible for it” (Common, 1995). An example of an externality is the release of wastes by a firm, giving rise to atmospheric pollution. The release involves no costs to the firm, since it cannot be charged for the use of the atmosphere that nobody owns. Pigou (1920 in Bramwell et al, 1996) defined external diseconomies as the production of a negative by-product by one or more economic agents, unwanted and unasked for. The natural resources are exploited by production and consumption means with costs usually underestimated. This market function fails to produce desirable outcomes or ‘allocatively efficient outcomes’. According to Pigou’s formula of internalisation, the state corrects this market failure by imposing tax on the production of negative externalities and by supporting, through subsidies, the production of external economies.

The Pigovian approach, however, faces considerable difficulty in estimating in monetary terms the ‘benefits of avoided environmental damage’ (Bramwell et al, 1996). Economists have suggested evaluation techniques to estimate these benefits when, for example, they test the benefits against the costs of avoiding environmental damage. Estimates can be made easily when the costs of decreasing the pollution levels equals the purification costs. However, it remains difficult to estimate benefits which cannot be
expressed in market prices, as in the case of public goods. Public goods are ‘non-rival’ and ‘non-excludable’ in use, and individuals cannot be excluded from the enjoyment of the services provided. Of significance to tourism, the services provided by natural environment resources have the characteristics of public goods.

In neither case is one individual’s enjoyment of these services rival to other individual’s enjoyment of the same resources. Many of these services or benefits cannot be expressed in market prices, since for example, ecosystems and atmosphere have no markets. Other evaluation methods have been used to estimate the benefits of an avoided environmental damage. However, these too remain problematic since they only “indicate individual preferences for a sound environment” (Bramwell et al, 1996). Individual preferences though cannot objectively measure the value of derived benefits that pollute the environment during their production and consumption, as against an unspoiled natural environment. Additionally, estimates fail to be accurate, since the preferences of future generations for natural resources are not known. The over-exploitation of natural stocks reduce them irreversibly, therefore reducing the utility levels of the future generations and the possibility of repeated use.

Many economists disagree with the arguments raised about the availability of natural resources facing scarcity through the continuous growth process. Studying the relevant data, some economists suggest that there is evidence that increasing demand and needs “have stimulated substitutions and technical change, rather than increased scarcity” (Common, 1995). However, there are certain products and industries that are heavily based on unspoilt natural resources (tourism being a prime example), whose substitution would invariably mean the end of desirable participation levels in the initial form of activity.

Even a brief review suggests that many questions remain, and that analysis, whether by ecological or economic approaches to sustainability, poses as many questions as it answers. This supports the Bramwell et al (1996) claim that sustainability is itself a ‘contestable concept’ and that we are charged in reality with satisfying ourselves that we have studied the several approaches and their implications sufficiently to identify problems and ameliorate them, rather than to suggest that we have found the answers.

2.1.3 Perspectives of Ecology-Economy Relationships

With this ‘contestability’ in mind, it is interesting to note the different perspectives expressed in examinations of the interactions within production, environment and
society. These different approaches may be related and help the interpretation of the nature and practice of sustainable forms of tourism. Bramwell et al (1996), examining the distinctions between ‘green philosophies’, identify some fundamental themes to “any interpretation of the implications of sustainable thinking for tourism policies and management”.

Naess (1989), for example, refers to ‘deep’ and ‘shallow’ ecology, Dobson (1990) distinguishes between ‘ecologism’ and ‘environmentalism’, while O’Riordan (1981) refers to the distinction between ‘ecocentrism’ and ‘technocentrism’. A similar categorisation to O’Riordan’s (1989) is offered by Graedel and Allenby (1995) based on the different relationships between the human population and the state of technology. Ecocentrism, according to O’Riordan (1981) rejects market-based social relations leading to a materialist society with a highly developed ‘self-interest’. This category of environmentalism includes the division between ‘deep’ and ‘self-reliance soft’ ecology, while Graedel and Allenby (1995) add the extreme forms of ecology, those of ‘radical’ ecology and the ‘continuation of status quo’.

‘Radical’ ecology represents a programme of low technology, rejecting the use of modern agriculture, electronics and medicine, or other benefits of technology. These are exactly the methods through which some of the earlier described analyses aim to substitute or save resources. Despite its great sensitivity to environmental and social problems like natural deterioration, famine and disease, this approach seems to fail to offer a programme that would realistically support the current and future world population. Technology would suddenly be removed, resulting in a “swift and chaotic collapse of the human population” (Graedel and Allenby, 1995). This extreme approach of minimal use of technological methods raises a considerable number of moral and ethical implications over the threat of a population reduction.

Following the continuum, O’Riordan’s ‘self-reliance soft technologists’ reject technology because of its ‘anti-democratic character’. This group undertaking a community approach, emphasise the importance of local involvement in decision making, which is undermined by high technology, requiring that ‘elitist’ technical expertise is imposed over the community. Modern technology reinforces the concept of ‘self-interest’ and materialistic values, offering benefits enjoyed away from the local community.

‘Deep’ ecologists view technology with suspicion because of its detrimental effects on environmental resources. Technology, according to the ‘deep’ ecologists is something to
be controlled, not exploited. They doubt technology's role in the evolution of a sustainable world, and suggest that a return to low-technology options could result in a reduction in the Earth's carrying capacity, which might however be managed well enough to produce a 'gradual and controlled transition' (Graedel and Allenby, 1995). Priority, however, is given to 'bio-rights' and the right of species and landscapes to be left unspoiled (O'Riordan in Bramwell et al. 1996). Natural stock has an intrinsic value, whether or not it is related to human production and benefits. In this principle of deep ecology, technology is viewed as part of the problem, it is unsustainable, rather than an important ingredient of the solution.

In contrast, the following analyses recognise that environmental considerations and constraints must be "internalised into human cultures and economic activity at all levels" (Graedel and Allenby, 1995). Both Graedel and Allenby's (1995) 'industrial ecology' and O'Riordan's 'technocentrism' recognise the need for continued technological evolution and its role as a critical component of the transition to a sustainable world. 'Industrial ecology' emphasises the role of technology to maintain current population levels, including the development of efficient products, processes and services, improving energy efficiency and providing advanced information management. This new innovative technology however cannot be treated naively. Desirable carrying capacities and sustainable systems cannot be achieved without socio-economic dislocations and disturbance of natural assets. Keeping a realistic stance, they suggest that "progress from the present point in human history must occur within the degrees of freedom that actually exist, not those that wishful thinking would create" (Graedel and Allenby, 1995). The 'technocentrism' approach to sustainability, puts great emphasis on the 'instrumental value' of resources to society, and argues that economic growth can be viewed as our ability to reduce the adverse impacts of economic activities. This ability can be enhanced by the use of new technologies, planning and management systems, offering people the choice to behave more sustainably. Ecocentrics would simply reject the above arguments as 'non-green', since technological innovation is itself an unsustainable function that cannot avoid negative ecological impacts.

The 'technocentric' approach, in addressing the problems of reduced natural resources with technological innovation, is further divided into two sub-categories, those of 'environmental managers' and 'cornucopians' (see Bramwell et al, 1996). Environmental managers place great emphasis on 'control' of the effects deriving from resource exploitation that continuous economic development demands. This control system includes means such as taxation, protection of environmental standards and compensation through by environmental pollution payments. Key tools for the
environmental managers are emerging techniques such as ‘environmental impact assessment’ and the ‘project appraisal’. These methods evaluate and audit the impacts of development on the physical, cultural, economic and social environment. However, there are arguments that question the ability of these assessment techniques “to capture the cumulative impact of individual projects”, being restricted to physical and economic appraisals and excluding social, cultural and other effects (Bramwell et al 1996). Despite these arguments, environmental appraisals have become an important guide to natural resources auditing, and are used to identify the carrying capacities of places and levels of activity undertaken. The use of these control mechanisms increasingly helps to limit the dangers of environmental degradation, by setting the standards of behaviour and taxing for additional environmental protection measures. Despite the difficulty of estimating the exact limitations of such activities, environmental auditing and appraisal can be an important monitoring tool, evaluating the impacts and advising on appropriate control systems.

The cornucopian approach on the other hand, faces the difficulty of setting the limits to resource exploitation by using technical ingenuity. Scientists and technocrats are considered appropriate and capable of finding solutions and suggesting strategies, with technological expertise being highly valued. Their role is based on their expertise in allocating resources and developing policies or other alternative strategies. This technocrat-led approach views with suspicion the involvement of ‘non-experts’ (Bramwell et al, 1996) in project appraisals and, being highly market oriented, ignores key aspects of market failure.

Again, seeing this as a continuum of analysis types, Graedel and Allenby’s (1995) extreme option of ‘continuation of current trends’ is a high-cost choice, largely similar - according to pessimist approaches - to the current uncontrolled level of economic development. The continuation of exploitative growth imposes substantial costs on the environment and on present and future generations. Infinite resource extraction, production and consumption cannot be sustained. Ad hoc adoption of specific measurements and initiatives to individual environmental problems cannot contribute to a sustainable society. Thus, economic, technological and cultural disruption is ultimately inevitable on the current path. Ultimately the outcome of this ‘continuation of status quo’ appears similar to those of the other extreme ‘radical ecology’ routes, whereby rejecting the use of available techniques, controls and technology, results in disruption and reduced population. These are catastrophic results which suggest that sustainable development is not only a logical, but a necessary pathway.
These options have been identified as the possible outcomes of an ecology-economy interaction. The distinctions between ecocentric and technocentric approaches to this interaction results in different implications and effects on policy development and management, which have to be considered, and ought to be understood within developmental politics. As will later be shown, there is however little evidence of this. The difficulty of interpreting the concept of sustainability and the mapping of a sustainable path, has so far led to the development of a number of alternative perspectives, as highlighted. We may consider that deep ecology and other ‘extremes’ are unrealistic options. Graedel and Allenby (1995) argue that within the biological context, all systems evolve in response to external changes in the environment. Their ability to evolve is critical to continued survival of the system itself. Society, however, may face changes that will interrupt or terminate evolution, if they exceed the environment’s capacity. The question then is whether this society will choose to work in a rational, realistic, and proactive manner regarding sustainable development.

The real world of modern developmental policy and politics is arguably still yet a more complicated process, making sustainability a difficult concept. With particular reference to the ultimate implementability of the concepts reviewed in the context of Greek tourism and regional development, the discussion develops around an approach to sustainable management which is considered to have strength in analysing and dealing with the balance of costs, benefits and efficiency in allocating resources, that of ‘environmental economics’.

2.1.4 Operationalising a Sustainable Eco-logic/nomic Proposal

The economic approach to sustainability presents a precise definition, suggesting that there is a high degree of possible substitution between environmental and economic services which allows consumption to remain constant. The ecological approach to sustainability cannot offer such a precise definition because the functioning of the natural environment and its ecosystems are themselves is imprecise. Economists generally focus on human benefits, often neglecting issues related to the functioning and problems of environmental systems. Ecologists tend to focus on environmental functioning, often without being able to relate it to human interests in any explicit way.

The approach arguing that the above different approaches can be synthesised, is basically anthropocentric. Environmental economics, drawing from both sides, focuses on ‘how we can change economic institutions and policies to bring those environmental impacts more into balance with human desires and the needs of the ecosystem itself’ (Field,
1994). It is argued that human interests would be better served by a continuous and undisrupted biosphere. This approach focuses on addressing poverty and inequality, and on policies to address threats to the environment. Environmental economic thinking would be proactive, not reactive. In addition, this approach is flexible, as many aspects of its economic and industrial operations may need to be adapted to new processes, due to new scientific, ecological and technological changes and limitations. In a changing world, societal development cannot afford to be insular. National and cultural boundaries, for example, have to be exceeded when environmental assets are threatened. As Graedel and Allenby (1995) note, sustainable economic growth has to be ‘designed-in’, not ‘added-on’.

This observation recognises that many aspects of development are defined by decisions taken very early in the design process, with a proactive manner, high standards of quality, and considerations of long-run effectiveness. In relation to this work, this is clearly relevant to redesigning tourism products which are clearly unsustainable. Green thinking, in its non-extreme forms, is exploring the opportunity ‘to move from unconstrained use and disposal of materials to approaches that take both products and their impacts into account in the same design and with the same degree of foresight’ (ibid.). This new economic and industrial revolution, whether applied to tourism or more generally, will need the support and vision of many other elements of society and industry to generate new and sustainable levels of well-being, and will not be a rapid or easy route for future economic development.

In a mixed or market-based economy when the market fails to allocate resources efficiently, public intervention is often called to either override the markets directly or to rearrange elements so that they are seen to work more effectively. According to Newlands (in Hardy et al, 1995), neoclassical theory recognises three government economic roles: stabilisation, allocation and distribution. This model, however, fails to recognise the ability of government to ensure economic efficiency through considering economic policy as a public good, specifically government’s legitimate role in the ‘growth function’. The growth function of government can be justified, according to Newlands (1995), as a response to cases of market failure, in order to ‘ensure optimal dynamic efficiency’. This is summarised in three instances: Industrialists avoid risk investment on risk projects and so constrain technological innovation. Secondly, insufficient information on new and potentially profitable markets and products may restrict economic growth. Finally, because of externalities occurring in the market, some business services will not be provided by the private operations, even though they are essential public goods.
Petrella (1996), arguing that sustainable development depends on a 'normal functioning of the politeia', emphasises the increasing role of private interest and market forces in expanding their space and benefit. He offers a summative list of social conditions that favour the 'regression phenomenon' witnessed in society. 'Liberalisation' of the market creates free trade areas and breaks the barriers to trade, having as the ultimate goal a free global integrated market. 'Globalisation' forms 'global players' involved in transnational trade, finance, production etc. This global market generates highly competitive relationships, not only between companies and products but also nations, cities, or resorts. This type of 'competitiveness' generates 'winners' and 'losers' in a merciless war for survival. On this track, the only way to be a 'winner' is to continuously innovate. Arguably, 'non-stop technological innovation' reduces cost, improves quality and increases competitiveness. 'Privatisation' has overtaken any part of the society that can be privatised, even those considered as public goods. In the course of fulfilling this goal, 'deregulation' of the state leaves the market to guide and orientate the development of the economy and society. The role of the state is restricted to that of creating a favourable environment for firms to operate and grow in a competitive global market.

However, a weakness seen particularly within tourism, is that the market invariably focuses on short term positive outcomes, whereas sustainability is a matter for the long term, and this has caused an economic world crisis, initially identified by a relatively few authors and the green movement, but increasingly recognised globally. Arguably, the right political and social framework can exploit the market's ability to effectively design and produce sustainable processes through technological innovation and low cost services, but this, as we have seen, is no simple process, and requires global action, across sectors, across governments and transcending much of traditional thinking on economic operations and environmental thinking. Some authors though, such as Petrella (1996), agree that the way out of the present structural crisis of industrial society lies in a new social contract aimed at "establishing the new principles, rules, institutions and mechanisms to govern the globalisation of the human condition and to ensure the highest degree and quality of political representation".

Old perspectives that the response to market failure implies a role for central government and not for regional or local government, are increasingly being replaced by new arguments that give regions a more autonomous role in economic development within the context of changing capitalist economies and production. Even though many sectors of society use mass production within mass markets, there has been a shift in the balance of production. Mass production methods appear to be in decline in several instances,
while small-scale, flexible methods of production correspondingly become more competitive and effective. Hardy et al (1995) identify a shift from "organised to disorganised capitalism, from mass production to flexible specialisation, or from Fordism to post Fordism".

Focusing these arguments towards regional development, and the role that tourism can play, there is increased innovation and market diversification, not only by firms but also countries, regions or localities. Regions and communities are increasingly in a position to promote local characteristics and opportunities for growth, and the ability of regional development bodies to act as vehicles in the implementation of appropriate economic development has also increased. They can be used to tackle market failure, offering services, capital and education to decentralised areas. However, there are inherent new dangers in this for the environment, unless there is equitable regard by regional bodies for environmental safeguards. Sustainable development demands the integration of environmental and social objectives into the political structure. "If this is true, the existence and safeguarding of strong sub-national regional governments can be interpreted as an institutional provision to secure a share of resources for the national growth objective" (Zimmerman, 1990). Growth has to be considered as an allocation function that works over a long time, "implying present saving for future returns" and has to be detached from a short-term and narrow political structure.

There are clear messages here within some wider perspectives on future economic growth and environmental safeguards for the way that tourism can play a role within regional development. But this has to be harnessed within a political and social order where regional governments adhere to sustainable development practice and where local and global environmental factors, which regional development can influence, have increased importance.

2.2 Promoting Sustainability within the context of Regional and Local Government

Regional science arguments were based on the concepts of free trade and the ideas of comparative advantage and geographic specialisation. Regional growth models as reviewed by Weaver (1982), have been employing arguments concerning specialisation, interregional factor flows and eventual diversification. According to these perspectives, inside a region, there exists a combination of labour power, physical resources and capital. Development is dependent upon a mixture of these factors which produce a certain commodity at a competitive price, to be sold on the national and international market. This commodity may need the support of additional production means that
would be brought in from outside. From a Rostowian (1960) viewpoint, this process leads to 'worlds of sustained economic growth'. Bringing in external capital, or even resources and labour if needed, would create activity that produces exchange value through export. This could then be used to make complementary local investments which build up the base for regional economic development.

The second strand of regional science originates from Marxist economic theory, providing a more generalised analysis of uneven development under 'monopoly capitalism'. Within the framework of multinational corporations, capital is increased by holding monopoly control within globalized markets. Under this model, regional populations gain few rewards from these export sales, increased productivity and finance. There is frequently no local exchange value that would be realised from their activities, but only "accounting entry forwarded to the corporate headquarters, as are all other forms of capital expansion which take place within the corporate structure" (Weaver, 1982).

Even in Western countries, the success of regional policies has been problematic. 'Underdevelopment-dependency' theory has been used to explain regional problems in industrialised countries (Weaver, 1982; Komilis, 1994). Direct investment by multinational corporations gives external decision makers the capability of organising production means and inputs to suit their own specialised purposes, thus controlling the region's potential value and capacity. Local capital is short-circuited, and specialised production for export imposes significant opportunity costs on the regional economy. As a result, peripheral regions are unable to promote local capital and the development of an integrated local economy. Multinational or even national capital puts regions in the cycle of economic specialisation and thus underdevelopment. By producing commodities for external consumption and not 'regionally-oriented' products, little real value can be left locally. Dependent on the exogenous centres of decision making, regions can suffer the policies of 'neocolonists' seeking maximum benefits. As against this, more recently regional actors are showing a growing awareness that increasing dependence and outside control leads to structural erosion and instability.

The role of the state in uneven development has become the focus of debate among regional scientists, raising questions as to the state's activity and the contradictions involved within this. The objectives of governmental power focus on a) the production and reproduction of capital, and b) the reproduction of social formation. The first objective aims at increased production, rapid circulation and further accumulation of capital. Reproduction of social formation, according to Weaver (1982), is the
guaranteeing of continued reproduction of production, assuring the replacement of labour power, and providing for maintenance of the superstructure. In a capitalist society, the survival of the state depends on its promotion of efficient self-expansion capital, requiring it to form alliances with multinational interests against regional entrepreneurs. These political contradictions in uneven development expose regions to crisis and political unrest. Regions are tied into national-regional interrelationships within a political struggle.

Regional social formations take place within the regions themselves, aiming at a self-managed regional economy, “where the reduced sphere of market transactions becomes a predominantly regional affair” (Weaver, 1982). Communities meeting their own needs, set the basis for productive interregional or national alliances, both economic and political.

Development at the regional level requires increasing self-awareness, and the cultural basis for such a reawakening might be Renzhis’s (1980 in Komilis, 1986) ‘principle of critical inheritance’ suggesting an “appreciation and transformation of past accomplishments within the context of contemporary struggle”. It is suggested that media and education can support this transformation, when linked not only with national curricula but also with local networks, in order to produce a new concept of neighbourhood and territory.

Regionalist ideology requires some measure of disengagement from the ties with the national state in the areas of policies, regulations, laws and taxes. However, central government regulations related to transfer payments and other benefits of the welfare state, pose a significant difficulty when regions have become highly dependent on these. A real devolution of power would demand local initiatives supported by changing legal systems, aiming at a measure of regional sovereignty.

Peripheral economies generally display a high level of dependency on the ‘metropolis’. This is supported by outside capital, political control and production regulation. The main channels of this exploitation require market control, capture of wealth, savings transfers, and thus reinforcement of the outside hegemony. In reality, commodities and services will continue to be produced outside the region when they simply cannot be made locally. However, the objectives of regional development suggest a positive alternative structure which cannot be distributed through the ‘metropolis’ or national centres, and which would support the implementation of local capital viability.
Regional tendencies occur as established boundaries and administrative systems are overtaken by pressures, making regional planning and administration an enduring necessity. Wannop (1995) has summarised the main characteristics of the nature of regional planning into eight areas. He sees, regional planning as a "mercurial and frequently ephemeral concept". Some have wished to institutionalise it, while others have failed to appreciate its nature, but successful regional planning has proved to be highly influential. Because regional planning so often re-emerges, it becomes a necessity between levels of government and agencies of administration. The shape and characteristics of the regions fluctuate according to political conditions and external circumstances. Regional issues, mainly being political in nature, have displayed great difficulty in devising the appropriate system, often resulting in instability. Then, regional planning becomes more an instrument of monitoring, interpreting and exchanging information, than resolving strategic policy. The redirection of regional strategies is infrequent and the timing is irregular. Finally, because regional planning looks to long term results and employs a more complex framework of action, it faces a high degree of risk.

The need for regional planning may vary according to the circumstances, but it is necessary in virtually all economic and political conditions; even if many forms of regional governance are imperfect, and so are the regional plans. Most regional plans will be overtaken by events, and especially politics and affairs of governance. However, lack of local participation in political approaches to regional issues often results in ineffective and often detrimental action.

Bennett (1989) identifies four criteria for acceptable participation:
1) **Identity**: maintenance of community interest, character and support of local people;
2) **Legitimacy**: the extent to which administrative decisions are accepted by individuals or groups;
3) **Penetration**: the extent and effectiveness of administrative effects on individuals or groups;
4) **Distribution**: the degree of redistribution from those who have, to those who have not.

Despite the problems of increasing homogenisation through the influences of global economics and interests, regional idiosyncrasies and the need for sensitivity and equity are increasingly recognised. Active regional planning and regional government has been accepted with great enthusiasm, for example, within the European Community. The Commission has a vision of a ‘Europe of the Regions’ with a ‘reasonably homogeneous’
regional structure across Europe (Newlands, 1995). However, the development of semi-autonomous regional or local economies threatens macroeconomic management, while a whole range of macroeconomic functions are being transferred from member states to the EU. It is within this changing and uncertain context that current efforts to establish or develop environmentally (and socially) sustainable economic development are being attempted, and within the empirical work in Greece is evidenced some of the traditional tensions of central/local relations and some new problems resulting from attempts to decentralise some power to the regions, including some responsibilities for tourism development.

2.2.1 Towards Environmental and Social Sustainability: The Context of European Regional Development

EU regional policy was reformed in 1989 in recognition of the fact that there are considerable regional disparities within the European Community. Summary statistics evidence these disparities, for example the ten least developed regions have an average per capita income of less than one third that of the ten most developed regions (Hardy et al, 1995). The EU document ‘Europe 2000+’ (1994) identifies ‘peripherality’ and ‘social and economic exclusion’ as the main disparities, and suggests that greater economic and social cohesion are desirable. The suggested equalisation mechanisms aim at restoring spatial balance in Europe through sustainable development of the regions concerned. The mechanisms include “reducing the isolation of peripheral regions” through increased accessibility, “balancing development of the urban system”, and “preservation of rural areas”, through active spatial planning measures. Seeking a more balanced system, the EU argues that problems depend ‘inter alia’ on geography, demo-graphic trends and the structure of economic activity. “Resources linked to the availability and quality of sparsely populated areas need to be preserved, developed and exploited through the revitalisation of rural towns and areas” (CEC, 1995).

Strategies for overcoming environmental and social problems and achieving a more sustainable development include (a) sustainable spatial planning, applying principles of sustainable design to land use and incorporating environmental and social considerations into planning; (b) supporting the small and medium-sized towns and cities to recover declining economic, technological and social activity and population, towards a more balanced distribution and growth; and (c) efficient management of environmental resources by orienting environmental design towards reducing the use of water, energy and materials, through implementing low-impact technologies and ‘using resources rationally’, increasing the efficiency of energy use, reducing waste and the unnecessary
use of materials. However, there is no single set of actions, which can be applied equally to all European members and regions. Cultural differences, for example, are important determinants of the way people perceive problems, while the administrative basis for implementing policy varies between member states, according to the degree of decentralisation of power and responsibilities.

Strategic planning and intervention are usually expressed in terms of ‘regionalism’ for those engaged in local government. Notwithstanding questions of subsidiarity, the local and regional level of government is thus to become increasingly central to the formulation and implementation of EU regional developmental policy. Newlands (1995) argues that there are several different reasons for increasing the direct involvement of regional authorities. The most common argument is that this will lead to a better understanding of local needs in the formulation and implementation of development plans. In the mid-1990’s the Structural Funds which comprised the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund and the Guidance Section of the Agricultural Fund, targeted specific Community priorities, and were to be based on regional development plans drawn up largely by regional governments, becoming the core to the policy formulation. In order to ‘serve regional development’, the European Commission (1995) based the Structural Funds (which were strengthened by the revised regulations in July 1993) on four principles: Programming, Partnership, Additionality and Subsidiarity, which are important to a knowledge of regional development and the context for sustainable development in Europe. ‘Programming’ results in multi-annual development programmes, the result of a process leading to decisions taken through partnership; ‘Partnership’ implies close co-operation between the Commission and regional and local authorities from the preparation stage to implementation; ‘Additionality’ means that community assistance complements the contributions of the Member State, rather than reducing them.

The principle of ‘Subsidiarity’, however, protected and emphasised by the Treaty of Maastricht, governs the relations between the Commission and the Member States. The European Commission (1995) explains that according to this principle, “a higher authority may not and must not act if an objective can be achieved satisfactorily at a lower level”. It is therefore up to the appropriate authorities at the national level to select the projects to be financed and to supervise their implementation.

The establishment of the ‘Committee of the Regions’ by the Maastricht Treaty reflected the political, as well as the economic, dimension of the Community’s regional measures. This new body is a recognition of the role of local authorities as partners in the Union's
system of governance. The Committee consisted of 189 representatives of the regions and local authorities, as a body with advisory status, and is involved in the formation of EU policy in areas in which local authorities have particular interests, either as the bodies responsible for the ‘implementation’ of policy, or for the ‘enforcement’ of EU legislation, (O’Neill, 1995; Hardy et al, 1995; European Commission, 1995).

However, in terms of the issue of subsidiarity, authors analysing the role of regional authorities raise questions as to who decides what is the lowest practical level of the responsibility for carrying out tasks. For example, regional regimes seeking to secure greater autonomy from their national governments may be tempted to define subsidiarity to suit their own purposes. On the other hand, EU Commissioners may find it convenient to by-pass some national governments and deal directly with the regions. O’Neill (1995) fears that anti-federalists will argue that regions will become the ‘agents’ of Brussels. Newlands (1995) adds that there are still serious obstacles to the building of an institutional framework within regional governments that can be effectively involved in EU regional policy. Not all member states, for example, have regional government structures and therefore there is a lack of ‘formal machinery’ for involving regional authorities in the EU decision-making process.

Despite the disagreements, the vision of a ‘Europe of Regions’ remains attractive, with a distinctive role for regional authorities in the enhancement of economic efficiency and the growth function. In the context of this study, this vision also potentially provides mechanisms for enhanced environmental preservation and long termism within a development context. It provides what Europe 2000+ (1995) calls “viable territory for sustainable development”.

Under Article 2 of the Maastricht Treaty, a major objective of the Union is to achieve “sustained and non-inflationary growth respecting the environment”. The Action Programmes for the environment, adopted in 1992, established a framework for sustainable development, “with explicit recognition of the central role of spatial planning as a means of achieving this” (EU, 1995). Such spatial planning organisation has a priority to safeguard the environment and its biodiversity, fight against pollution and inspire Union programmes and policies through ‘systematic environmental impact studies’. The model of sustainable development suggested in the White Paper implies a territorial organisation based on “prudent management of natural resources to ensure their renewal and availability for future generations and the preservation of the environment” (EU, 1995). This clearly echoes the theoretical substance of sustainable development, including that for tourism, reviewed earlier.
Apart from its obvious inherent importance, a preserved environment also strengthens territorial attractiveness and competitiveness, acting for example as a strong motive for the location of enterprises and people. As stated in the White Paper, ‘Growth, Competitiveness and Employment’, in promoting a policy based on this new model of development: “the current imbalances in environmental terms will increasingly be eliminated, while a new basis is being laid for sustainable activities and an improved quality of life in regional (rural) areas” (EU, 1995). The development of forms of resource management which safeguard resource renewal, require a number of approaches to be pursued, such as combined transport networks, modern technology, and (in rural areas) forms of management which avoid pollution of land, “make use of extensification techniques and involve rational and sustainable exploitation of resources” (EU, 1995).

Again, of specific relevance to this study, tourism represents an activity which underdeveloped regions and regional authorities are well placed to take advantage of, when the reverse is often the case for most other activities. Realising the potential of tourism to support the development of rural areas and isolated regions, the EU includes this activity, within its “new quality regional products” which are at the heart of its model for sustainable regional development and diversification.

2.2.2 The Role of Natural and Cultural Resources: Regional Development through Tourism

Regional development in peripheral regions is often identified with industrialisation. However, at least in the case of some European regions, peripheral areas have achieved high living standards despite their inability to specialise in ‘traditional’ industrial activities. Tourism has often created an accumulation of capital and has thus promoted the development of construction, trade and relevant industrial activities. In this, such regions are clearly benefiting from the existence of natural and cultural resources which have previously been undervalued or underexploited in economic development.

Cappellin (1993) highlights the parameters in an analysis of the relationship between regional development and cultural and natural resources. He identifies that cultural and natural goods have an economic value, “either as a factor of consumption by the population or as a factor indirectly contributing to the increase of the economic production capacity of a region”. Exchanged in the market, these goods follow the traditional microeconomic rules of supply and demand. An increasing income and educational level of individuals, leads to an increasing appreciation of the value of
culture, history and the natural environment, and thus an increase in the demand for 'consumption' of these goods.

However, there are some clear problems and limitations in the process of offering these resources to the market. Examples include those of 'close spatial contiguity' and 'interdependence' among the natural and cultural goods, which determine the preservation of a well-defined environment. Tourism, in particular, which uses the environment as a core resource, experiences closely related positive and negative interdependence effects. The potential degradation of the environment implies the need to control tourism development and to diversify the typology of tourist activities as part of a more 'sustainable process', and this has clearly not occurred in much tourism development and resource exploitation to date. This sustainable form of development, however, requires a much broader perspective, since tourism uses resources with the characteristics of 'public goods', limited private ownership, and which are culturally and morally valuable, besides their economic importance through tourism development.

There are clearly a number of very significant problems in utilising tourism within regional development which have been well established by a number of analysts in this field. Inter alia Cappellin (1993), Hunter (1995), Komilis (1994), Murphy (1993), Silva and Silva (1993) variously identify that cultural and natural resources represent not only goods for the use of outside visitors, but also represent crucial resources for local residents, whose interest must be protected within the process of equitable economic and social development - a process which has not occurred within the development of several tourism destination areas to date. Tourism uses resources that distinguish regional identities and at the same time can insert itself into the regional identity, i.e. places become defined as 'tourist destinations'. Tourism is based on, and profits from natural resources, has 'experiences' as one of its key intangible products, and is an inherently different type of industry than many being utilised within regional development.

A crucial characteristic problem of tourist activities is associated with what is termed 'external orientation'. External orientation describes tourism's nature as a regional product sold on external markets, which is increased by the 'double regional penetration' of external capital and tour operators. Despite the positive effects of economic growth of the region, it is not difficult to find many 'classical' problems of polarised regional development in areas where tourism prevails, such as: high leakage of tourism income and catastrophic environmental and social impacts.
Yet attempts to ameliorate such problems can limit the extent that tourism can be used as a regional development tool. The preservation of some of these natural and cultural resources in some locations deemed to be 'sensitive', can penalise some areas despite their valuable natural and cultural stocks, leading some local interests to crave environmental degradation in the interests of economic development. Greece carries very recent examples of this type of activity. These problematics of development through tourism now receive greater attention than in the early years of tourism exploitation, but require much work and political attention at the regional, national and supra-nation levels.

Recent analysis evidences some of the current debates and questions, and sets the context for research into how new styles of tourism can more sensitively exploit the resources of peripheral regions in an environmentally and socially sustainable manner.

It is sometimes questioned to what degree tourism activity can be included in the adaptation of equitable regional development, but where it continues, new policies are clearly necessary. Silva and Silva (1993) for example suggest “that regionally supported strategies for tourism development will require strong attention to the link between endogenous and exogenous development factors, a central place being reserved for the control mechanisms held by local and regional authorities over tourism planning processes”. Komilis (1994) identifies these ‘endogenous’ and ‘exogenous’ factors as i) the country’s socio-economic development process, territorial structure and regional accessibility, the organisational model of the tourist industry and relevant government policies, and ii) the way the regions are connected with the international travel system and are affected by tour operations.

Hunter (1995) recognises the links which exist between destination areas and the wider environment, and the need for tourism to contribute to regional and national resource conservation measures, in order to “advance intra- and inter-generational equity of access to wealth-generating natural resources”. This type of interpretation of development starts to highlight recognition of the relationships of tourism and regional sustainable development, and that tourism can also be a positive force.

Silva and Silva (1993) have produced a definition to describe the issue of tourism activity carrying in itself a strong environmental and social attachment: “Sustainable (tourism) regional development can be defined as a form of development able to guarantee a high social benefit level along with a way compatible with long term ecological balance and globally sustained development on a supra-regional scale”. This
approach implies the identification of the critical factors in successful regions, where the benefits of tourism can be established without unacceptable levels of negative impacts.

This whole field of enquiry and particularly the potential sustainable regional development effect of tourism and its definition is a complicated process. The issues involved are many, but the literature suggests that a balance is crucial between the social, economic and environmental functions in order to protect developments. The ‘Tourism Canada’ group (1990 in Murphy, 1993), for example, suggests: “management of all resources in such a way that we can fulfil economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems”. Leading authorities suggest that such effective management and planning, which is only achievable through public-private sector partnerships within planning mechanisms, can achieve sustainable development “premised on the notion that the economy and the environment are but two sides of the same coin and thus intimately linked” (Slater, 1992 in Murphy, 1993).

Cronin (1990 in Hunter, 1995) is oriented more towards the responsibilities of the private sector, suggesting that “the industry’s challenge is to develop tourism capacity and the quality of its products without adversely affecting the physical and human environment that sustains and nurtures them”. This definition of, or approach to, sustainable tourism development clearly coincides with the principles of inter-generational equity and constant natural assets. This inter-generational equity issue is also included in Pigram’s (in Komilis, 1994) advocacy of sustainable tourism development, through the values of: ‘existence’ of a resource which is being preserved even if it is not used, ‘option’ of alternative future uses for the area when preserved, and the ‘bequest’ value of a resource, not used to its theoretical maximum capacity, in the interests of future generations.

The parameters involved in the definition of sustainable tourism development within regional contexts can thus been seen to be a multi-dimensional and interdisciplinary field of inquiry. Inter alia Murphy (1993) and Porter (1991) have identified the ‘multi-dimensionality’ character of sustainable tourism development by setting seven dimensions. Examples include that ‘resource management’ is put as the priority for action, in a proactive manner to reduce the erosion of scarce environmental stock. On the other hand the ‘economic features’ of tourism activity have to be appreciated and supported in order to deliver benefits to the community. Crucially, another dimension emphasises the need to fulfil ‘social obligations’ by respecting and preserving heritage and customs in terms of intergenerational equity. ‘Ecological parameters’ must be
addressed in order to sustain natural and human environments, and control the effect of tourism on fragile and valuable areas. The maintenance of ‘biological diversity’ is crucial when seeking to promote the distinctive character of local natural environments. Thus, the need to sustain our basic ‘life support systems’ is obvious. Finally, the ‘aesthetic appeal’ of the environment and heritage, places a crucial emphasis on the promotion of tourism development and the quality of life for the local community.

Within this context of tourism’s multi-dimensionality, drawing together and summarising key contributions to this field of enquiry, and recognising the potential for EU policy, Bramwell et al (1996) review and outline the principles behind the approach of ‘sustainable tourism management’ (the work was undertaken as part of a programme to support the development of sustainable tourism throughout Europe). In this, “natural and human resources should never be allowed to be damaged catastrophically or irreversibly, and more generally should be managed within limits and in ways considered to be sustainable”. An ethical responsibility to protect environmental stock is involved in this approach, that appreciates the importance of “reducing the adverse consequences and maximising the benefits resulting from the complex interactions of the tourism industry” and therefore the need to develop “practical measures to secure more sustained tourism practices”. Planning and management are considered as ‘essential responses’ to the problems of environmental exploitation.

These mechanisms are regarded as realistic and feasible not least because they do not demand dramatic transformations. They appreciate that trade-offs and compromises “may often be necessary due to conflicts of interest between different actors”, and additionally, the practice of these sustainable mechanisms will be influenced by a variety of societal functions that set limits to what can be achieved in the short and medium term. The same study identifies these functions within the operation of the economy, the culture of business environments, and the power of governments. However, the approach suggests that it is an ethical and normative obligation to adopt long-term thinking and proactive planning to offer an equal opportunity for equal resource use by future generations. The preventing of the over-exploitation of resources demands a system that identifies and sets the limitations of every developmental action. The approach advocated by Bramwell et al, is generally not anti-growth, but it emphasises that there are limitations to growth. Despite the difficulty in calculating the exact limits and the future value of developments, it is required that we identify those limits considered to be sustainable and manage growth accordingly.
Apart from environmental considerations, this conception of sustainable tourism management includes various economic, social, cultural, political and managerial considerations as crucial to the process. Tourism functions could have both a positive and negative contribution to the social and cultural structure. Mass homogenic flows, for example, threaten cultural pluralism, but also cultural differentiation is achieved through the tourism experience itself.

The authors clearly identify that "balancing of costs and benefits in policy actions must extend to considering how much different individuals and groups will gain or lose" and conclude that a sustainable approach to tourism development and management must take into consideration the affected parties and especially the local hosting community. As was enshrined in the Agenda 21 vision of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit, sustainable development requires that communities are not excluded from the design and implementation of policies for development in their region.

2.2.3 Sustainable Tourism Development through Community Involvement and Recognition by other Stakeholders

While prioritising environmental conservation and improvement, like Bramwell at al (1996), authors such as Cappellin (1993) and Inskeep (1991) also highlight the significance of social sustainability within sustainable approaches to regional development. Several authors highlight within this the role of community participation in policy making. In general terms, De Kadt (1990) highlights the changing political movements that lead to a "further transformation of the state and the extension of participation through civic organisations". More specifically to tourism, Wilkinson (1989) focuses on "the factors influencing the chances of tourism development, identifying 'alternative' characteristics in micro-states and ending with a clarion call for community participation in the development of local tourism".

According to the principles of subsidiarity, local authorities are the most appropriate bodies for "taking regional-specific initiatives in the management of cultural and natural goods, and can better plan and integrate the various types of intervention" (Cappellin, 1993). This management of cultural and natural resources requires a deep knowledge of the local character and system in every aspect of economic, social and political life, especially when these resources represent the invaluable assets of local identity and culture within a homogenising world. Under this approach, Hall (1994) positions the local community as "the focal point of the tourism-planning exercise, and not the
tourists. The community which is often equated with a region of local government is regarded as the basic planning unit”.

While there is increasingly understanding that, in reality, ‘community’ is an elusive concept and often does not equate to political boundaries (see e.g. Jackson and Morpeth, 1998), the understanding that local stakeholders should have a significant role in contributing to development planning is an important one. Inskeep (1994), for example, highlights the sustainable approach of ‘community-based tourism’, focusing on community involvement in the planning and development process, and “developing the types of tourism which generate benefits to local communities”. He suggests the application of techniques to ensure that most of the benefits of tourism development are allocated to local residents and not to ‘outsiders’. As Litras (1991) identifies, this is a two-way process from which tourism can benefit, as well as residents, since the current trend in tourism planning to incorporate resident input into destination area planning is significant not least “because residents themselves are being seen increasingly as an essential part of an area’s ‘hospitality atmosphere’”.

This community approach positions the resident of destination areas as the nucleus of the tourism product, which faces both positive and negative tourism impacts. In defining a ‘community tourism product’, greater public involvement has been the central issue, highlighting the need to decentralise tourism planning and “to integrate it into overall community objectives”. Barton and Bruder (1995) argue that “a sustainable community must be built on self-awareness and empowerment”. Translating awareness into positive action through community involvement, local authorities can help “achieve change not just for the people but by the people” (ibid.). Long (for WTO 1993), describing the techniques “for socially appropriate tourism development”, includes ‘community participation’ as a crucial step in increasing the sustainability of this form of development. “The on-site community must be involved in the conceptualisation and planning processes of the tourism development” (WTO, 1993).

Much of this reflects Murphy’s (1989) earlier thinking on tourism development, and his perspective has been one of the most significant community-oriented approaches to tourism planning. He advocated the use of an ecological approach to tourism planning, which focuses on the need for local control over the development process, and on the notion that in satisfying local needs it may also be possible to satisfy the needs of the tourist: “Tourism should be seen as a local resource, and its management ... for the common good and future generations should become the goal and criterion by which the industry is judged”.

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Simmons (1994) uses Sewell and Philipps review of 21 selected case studies to highlight three fundamental tensions for the design and implementation of public participation programmes. 'A high degree of citizen involvement’ appears to include two important factors: the number of citizens involved and the degree of individual participation. Secondly, achieving equity in participation is considered crucial, and is defined as the “extent to which all potential opinions are heard”. The central issue here is to ensure an airing of a balance of differing viewpoints between interest groups. Finally, ‘efficiency of participation’ includes the amount of time, personal and other agency resources required to operationalise public participation programmes. The study concludes, emphasising the need for ‘both an informed public and the ability to appraise the utility of their effects in planning’.

The wider literature includes various attempts to formulate community approaches to planning, and these represent valuable contributions to the encouragement of wider participation in tourism planning. According to Hall (1994), community-oriented approaches to tourism development and planning follow a pluralistic approach, assuming that all parties have an equal opportunity to participate in the political process. Under this approach, power is relatively evenly distributed within the community and “will shift according to issues and the range of interests and values involved”. While, again, we know there to be problems with this, Hall (1994) argues that there are a ‘set of rules of the game’ within community-oriented tourism planning, by which certain interests can be excluded from the decision-making process.

Clearly, there have to be other significant stakeholders beyond the local community, even if the latter are embraced. Broadening out the reality of ‘involved’ parties within effective sustainable tourism development planning, Bramwell et al (1996) have categorised the involved parties into a number of categories. These ‘stakeholders’ have to be considered and appreciated when sustainably planning and managing tourism developments. ‘Government intervention’, for example, can be undertaken in a direct regulatory manner, as in the case of the protection of valuable resources, regulation of pollution emissions and energy consumption etc. Often using financial instruments, government organisations affect the management of tourism development projects and the equivalent demand response. The WTO (1993) suggests that governments can be involved as the ‘developing agency’ in the marketing and management of tourism destinations. WTO identifies certain types of government agencies involved in tourism development, starting from international government consortia, to federal or provincial/state organisations, to municipal district, to certain local task forces, and advisory committees.
According to Long (1993), in order to achieve social sustainability within a tourism environment, the government should be proactive including: maintaining as much internal political stability as possible; maintaining and expanding 'healthy' international and interregional relations; establishing regulations to protect valuable cultural and natural resources; establishing appropriate entry and exit requirements for visitors; and establishing tourism policies in accordance with other regulatory agencies operating in the development region.

Governments clearly exercise control in areas like the conditions under which tourists enter the country and often the rate at which their currencies will be exchanged. They can exercise their influence to set the conditions of investment and access, and provide appropriate infrastructure for development. Intervention by the state is essential when helping productive units to maximise their profits. Using direct regulation, they "build appropriate cost and price signals into the framework within which productive units operate by creating incentives and disincentives" (De Kadt, 1990). This capacity of government agencies can help tourism developments by creating the conditions for sustainability, in just the same way as they were responsible for some of the earlier unsustainable tourism developments. When sustainability is high on the agenda of government policy, it can help set restrictions and limits to any violation of the physical or social environment by tourism enterprise behaviour, and therefore draws attention to the importance of responsible and long term planning.

In addition to potentially creating an appropriate 'incentive' structure for sustainable forms of tourism development, governments have an important role to play with the 'outside' agencies. Transnational corporations, if left to operate according to their own agendas, will generate low cost, large scale developments and will usually not be sensitive to ecological or local issues, such as the distribution of benefits (De Kadt, 1990.). Commenting on local environmental auditing, Barton and Bruder (1995) identify an important role of government agencies within this process in at least five areas: 'Principle', i.e. deciding that the exercise is to be undertaken and deciding the general level of resourcing; 'Scope', i.e. agreeing how narrow or broad the course of the planning should be, the time scale and the relationships to other policy processes; 'Publicity', i.e. giving the process a high public profile as key issues are explored, explained, and in encouraging participation; 'Action', i.e. deciding to implement recommendations and allocate funds accordingly; and 'Follow on', i.e. subsequently maintaining support and resources necessary to monitor progress and sustaining ongoing auditing. If the local community and governments and its agencies are significant to sustainable tourism, then so too are 'individual enterprises', which the WTO (1993)
define as including businesses that are "economically involved in the operation of tourism activities", such as: transportation businesses, lodging businesses, restaurants, tourism service shops, recreational activity businesses, tour guides, travel agents and training establishments. No sustainable development approach can be effective unless it involves the businesses that interface with the public in any service sector.

In order to turn what Bramwell et al (1996) term "sustainable thinking into management practice", the WTO (1993) developed a set of principles for the tourism industry and individual enterprises. Examples include:

- Be ethical in the industry's manner of business;
- Pay full value for use of resources;
- Work with businesses that support sustainability of the industry;
- Use indigenous resident labour and materials when possible;
- Operate facilities and activities in a way that is appropriate to the social and physical characteristics of the area.

These principles evidence the breadth of scope involved in attempting to implement tourism sustainably, involving both costs and partnership with other agencies. They also identify however that the industry itself can benefit, which is possibly the valuable factor in ensuring the operationalisation in practice of sustainable thinking. Examples include the potential competitive advantage of a positive environmental approach and green products, and the fact that sustainable environmental and social practices may be compatible with economically competitive and effective corporate strategy.

These tourism industry interests, termed by WTO (1993) as "investors who provide resources for the physical development of tourism" are central to sustainable tourism development. Sustainability in their behaviour assumes ethical decisions in financing tourism development projects, and consideration of the long term integrity of the local community through projects which are economically feasible in the long run, as well as socially and physically appropriate. While these may provide some areas of difficulty in the short term, the benefits that the industry can potentially derive, the increasing recognition of the significance of sustainability in tourism by interventionist or incentivising national or regional authorities, and the continued growth in 'green' consumption, should all combine to see these principles realised.

Green consumption is of course, yet to be fully established in tourism, but increasingly (the theory states) the tourism 'consumer' should engage in activities and services that are socially and physically appropriate to the area, pay full value for use of resources and
respect on-site culture and lifestyle. This sustainable behaviour, according to Bramwell et al (1996), will lead profit-making companies to develop more sustainable tourism products, since there is an expressed demand for them. Such consumer behaviour is to be formed by different ‘driving forces’ within the changing socio-economic context of increased awareness of environmental and cultural issues, through increased levels of information on relevant topics and the availability of new ‘green’ tourism products in the market place. Some ‘developing agencies’ (like outsider co-nationals/foreigners and immigrant co-nationals/foreigners) form ‘lobbying and good practice’ groups (Bramwell et al, 1996) operating at local, national and transnational level, and including industry associations and non-governmental organisations. With the greening of economies and customer behaviour, these groups will increasingly develop codes and practices promoting sustainability within tourism operations. While much of this remains visionary, tourism industry groups are already increasingly producing common or individual voluntary statements and action programmes in the form of ‘sustainable’ standards of operation, economic use of resources and care for the localities.

‘Local groups’, such as associations of tourist enterprises, can also play an important role in initiating environmental positive practices and sustainable actions, drawing attention to cultural and tourism development through sustainable thinking. Involving members of the community in tourism planning, they can secure an equitable distribution of tourism’s benefits within the local economy, and thus we come full circle to concerns of involving local stakeholders.

Long (1990), taking this categorisation further, identifies two affected locality types, and the issues identified serve to further identify some of the components which will be necessary in establishing truly sustainable forms of tourism development. The ‘Tourism site region’ refers to the “immediate region affected by tourism development and involves communities and settlements that border the tourism site, share political boundaries, or exist on transportation routes of the area”. Sustainable practices suggested for such zones include: better communication of problems and difficulties resulting from tourism development to those involved; proactive steps in planning tourism development which is spreading into the area; and when resources are restricted, cooperation with potentially ‘rival’ regional tourism developments. Secondly, Long’s ‘on-site population’ category is described as “a settlement or a community living or engaging in normal activities in the tourism development site”, including: ‘on-site inhabitants’ as members of a community with a tourist attraction within the community boundaries; and recreational users of “the tourism destination area for normal activities such as hunting, fishing, farming, bathing etc”. Sustainability in these zones is
promoted through actions like: communication of needs, problems and desires to outside developers and government agencies; education and professionalism on the local environment; provision of equitable opportunities for participation in the developments by any interested community member; and finally, engagement in activities that "will strengthen its community identity".

Although this is necessarily a summary review, it is evident in considering all of the potential stakeholders and responsible agencies for sustainable tourism development into the future, that the call for greater community involvement has been increasingly dominant in recent approaches to tourism planning. However, despite the efforts of the academic literature to move the concept of community involvement nearer to the centre of the sustainability debate, there are a considerable number of criticisms. Simmons (1994), for example, points to the lack of mechanisms in sponsored tourism planning guidelines to enable public involvement in the developments. In the majority of cases, the destination area community is seen as a resource for tourism and "negative local attitudes as barriers to be overcome". The need to search for and evaluate participation techniques applicable to tourism planning, has produced studies suggesting the use of methods such as surveys, focus groups and other consensus-generating devices, identifying local issues and establishing their significance for local residents. Finding members of the public representative of 'common views' additionally makes this form of tourism planning highly problematic.

The use of the 'community show' staged by a 'friendly community' in order to attract investment and visitors hides the danger of producing another destination stereotype. If this is the case, the expectation that local people should act as hosts will only serve to widen community differences. There is often a lack of local experience in tourism and most of the time the community is "at the mercy of the opinions of those who are presented to them, or who present themselves, as 'experts'" (De Kadt, 1990). This places the 'developers' in an advantageous position in promoting the interests of specific parties. There are also cases where communities do not feel the desire to participate. While Murphy (1985) was confident that this diversity of views within a community represents an opportunity for cooperation, with better communication and can help to address the needs of the various constituencies existing in the community, others have identified the individualism and competitiveness characteristic of modern 'communities', and other similar trends (see inter alia Jackson and Morpeth, 1998). Differences within communities have been observed to widen when "as tourism develops in an area, a previously homogenous community becomes diversified with groups exhibiting different responses to touristic developments" (Dogan in Inskeep,
Insider approaches to community research, in fact identified little role for "the notion of a shared vision for tourism development", which he sees as highly romanticised, given the fundamental inequalities found in western societies (ibid.).

So, while it is clearly desirable to involve residents in planning, not least within tourism development, this is evidently no simple process. One of the main difficulties in implementing a community approach, according to Hall (1994) is the political nature of the planning process in most locations. A community approach to tourism planning implies that there will be community control of the tourism development process, but this level of public involvement in tourism planning has rarely been adopted by central authorities. Community consultation most often represents "a form of tokenism in which decisions or the direction of decisions have already been prescribed by governments". Communities, in reality, rarely have the opportunity to say no. The nearest that individuals often come to exercising a 'say' is in their voting rights at the national or regional level, but here, as Cappellin (1993) identifies, "those individuals interested in specific cultural and environmental issues may be an isolated minority in comparison with other more powerful groups". This in turn, may lead those concerned to attribute a lower priority to interventions in the field of environment and culture, reinforcing the problem of generating community involvement and interest in environmental and developmental issues.

According to Cappellin (1993), certain aspects of the state's operation and public administration have been proved as obstacles to the achievement of more sustainable tourism development policies. De Kadt (1990) also lists a series of government machine inefficiencies, identifying the negative influence of the "sectoral dynamics of government and administration which provide the backdrop to any effort at implementing more sustainable tourism development policies". The complexity of administration and the lack of cooperation between professional groups, tends to be dominant in the implementation of suggested developments, and this is in addition to the identified shortcomings in terms of the possibilities for 'real' community involvement. Socio-cultural factors make this implementation even more difficult, when 'soft states', patron-client networks, clan politics and 'endemic corruption' create a fragmented government machinery. The 'top-down' form of planning which invariably results, contradicts and confounds a community approach to tourism planning. Many of these issues may legitimately be seen as the background context for the development of new tourism proposals within this study, as may be seen from the case studies.
Centralised forms of government in particular cannot overcome these problems and constraints, and under such conditions the relationship between sustainability and tourism development is likely to remain highly problematic. Among organisations with "vested interests in the status quo" (De Kadt, 1990), transnational enterprises are also particularly powerful. High in resources, they are in the position to employ 'high-powered' experts and technology to achieve the most profitable arrangements within the limitations of the legal system. During the late 1960s and 1970s, even though they developed an economically beneficial tourism establishment, especially in Mediterranean areas, they have been heavily criticised for their role in primarily serving the interests of their invariably external corporation centres, at the expense (in terms of, for example paying the full price for use of resources) of local interests.

The 'micro-states' involved in tourism have become part of a global system over which they exercise little control and are often passive spectators of a transforming local environment according to foreign plans. In contrast to talk of community involvement and enhanced local decision making, Wilkinson (1989) heavily criticises the role of external corporations and 'exogenous decision-making', forced upon local communities. "Many decisions governing their lives, even those dealing with local matters, are made elsewhere by other countries, multinational companies, or airlines". Only regions on a regular flight route can be included in the computerised networks of travel agents and tour operators. According to De Kadt (1990), "the momentum of this system is enormous, the interests involved truly global". While there is some evidence emerging of wider community involvement and socially sustainable development practice, this is the exception, particularly in Mediterranean countries. Generally, the political climate globally has moved back towards market forces and private enterprise, while local authorities have become oriented towards the framing of necessary regulations, incentives and taxes to control developments. Sustainable development practice in those terms needs to come to terms with the reality of transnational technological power, perhaps initially through innovative, limited and smaller facilities. As Bramwell et al (1996) suggest, there are now some signs that even global tourism operations are increasingly having to pay attention to sustainability issues, and there may therefore be scope for both public authorities and communities to exercise some influence in future development practice. There is, however, widespread recognition that such 'greening' and sustainability-enhancing initiatives within tourism will be at the expense of increased cost, towards the 'real' value of these products, and in the short term this must be seen as a slowing factor.
Chapter 2
Sustainability and Tourism Growth

2.3 Theoretical Considerations of Peripheral Tourism Development

An interdisciplinary approach to tourism development is based on the notion that tourism is an activity involving a series of interdependent procedures. The functions of production, distribution and consumption share the principles of economic sciences, while the cultural interaction, transnational communication and social implications resulting from tourism development are the subject of sociology, politics, anthropology or psychology. The fact that the tourism function uses the environment as one of its core resources for the creation of basic and supplementary infrastructure, to facilitate consumption, also involves principles from the ecological and environmental sciences.

The positioning of tourism within 'traditional' theories of regional economic development is relatively limited. Tourism as a test for regional regeneration and development has not been comprehensively examined, while in some cases it has raised contradictory views on its effectiveness. Komilis (1992) attempts a comprehensive review of theoretical frameworks relating to tourism, originating in the wider spectrum of the social sciences. Within this, he criticises the inability of economic theories to support the analysis of tourism's peripheral developmental parameters. The 'neo-classical' model, as well as the theory of 'international trade', do not include the necessary intersectoral analytical methods that characterise the complicated production field of tourism. In addition, 'economic base theory' synthesised by an 'external' factor (satisfying external expressed demand for tourism) and a 'non-base' or internal factor (dealing with domestic demand), appears to have a very limited role in the analysis of regional dimensions and multi-sectoral relationships of tourism operations. Conversely, the theory of 'pole development' could provide an analytical framework for tourism development based on e.g.: a) the factors of overall tourism demand; b) the 'regional multiplier' to prove tourism as a leading (production) sector of an area; c) the effect of tourism expansion and involvement in the development and operation of other productive sectors through the identification of backward/forward linkages; and d) a spatial analytical framework.

A further categorisation by Komilis (1992) of the different theoretical approaches to tourism development includes four additional theoretical groups. Firstly, 'location theories' are normative models based on the theory of profit maximisation, cost minimisation and market functions. These theories when applied, have concluded that tourism development is not only a peripheral, but also a 'central' activity, dependent on the tourist customers that the market creates, the funds available and the structure of distribution. Within the above context, two different situations are suggested that affect
the locational establishment of tourism. Firstly, the peripheral structure is formed by a) a network of central places (tourist poles, urban centres etc), b) small natural, ecological or cultural geographical entities, and c) a multi-functional network with distributed establishments, according to the transportation network and the spatial availability of services and infrastructure.

The second category of theoretical approaches to tourism development includes four types of theoretical model. These models describe or forecast the observed or expected phases of establishment under the regional dynamics of the economic activity. The 'polyperipheral' models describe and explain the structure and distribution of the economic activity of the different sectors according to their trans-peripheral differentiation. These sectors are influenced by factors such as: a) the market and the transperipheral demand, b) the level of urbanisation in the region, and c) accessibility.

The models of 'spatial interaction' which have been applied by a number of studies (Noval, 1975; Archer, 1976; Lesceun, 1977 in Komilis, 1992) offer some distinctive conclusions. They explain tourist flows as the sum of different socio-economic factors (per capita income and expenditure, prices etc), accessibility factors (transport and cost of travel), and 'attractiveness' factors (services, infrastructure, promotion). In addition, it is concluded that, within the peripheral structure of the tourism activity in an area, the magnitude of tourism demand can be influenced by the accessibility of the region and "a group of factors that express the level of tourism investment-infrastructure-services which has been formed as the result of certain policies, decisions and the active involvement of the responsible public and private actors" (Komilis, 1992).

The 'structural approach' focuses on macro-analyses of the social phenomena as parts of societal structure and intersectoral relationships. Political and economic structures are considered the basic cause of peripheral inequalities and functional inefficiencies. In tourism, these 'structural approaches' examine the relationships between centre and periphery (foreign market-host destination), and the control of external operations on the destination areas deriving from the technological and economic advantage of the former. Lundgren's study (1975) of the structure and development of international tourism was based on an 'operational' mechanism of tourism flows, in all three spatial levels (international, national, regional), and on the historical evolution of transport systems and technology. Tourism's impact on a region "appears to be dependent on the position it occupies within this framework and on the changes derived by the operational mechanism in the formation of the tourism supply and the relevant productive structure which supports it" (Lundgren, 1975). The ownerships level of services and
infrastructure by foreign operator 'centres' in tourism destinations, dictates an increased dependency and loss of developmental control for the regional tourism environments. In general, the structural 'duality' within the societal classes and the political issues, increases the peripheral inequalities in tourism distribution and affects the overall developmental course.

The last type of theoretical approach to tourism development in Komilis' (1992) categorisation is one of particular significance for the conceptual framework of this study. The 'evolution modes' described by Komilis constitute the origins of the 'life cycle' model of the mass tourism product, focusing on the diachronic-physical evolution of tourist places. Noronha (1979) used three 'developmental phases' to describe the tourism developmental course. Initially, a place is discovered by small groups with various characteristics, harmoniously accommodated within the local community. Secondly, the increase of visitors to the same place creates a spontaneous and uncoordinated small scale developmental response, mainly by local actors, which dictate the adaptation of the 'customers' to the local conditions. Finally, in order to meet international service standards and a rapidly increased demand, development adopts standardisation techniques to increase supply and maximise the benefits. This 'institutionalisation' phase of development is characterised by the intervention and eventual domination by external factors that guide the level and type of tourism. The expressed demand is guided through the distributional channels to areas with concentrated investment, built infrastructure and an established image.

Miossec (1977) presented a similar developmental model for tourism using four phases, differentiated according to 'observed changes' in transportation networks, the links between centre and periphery, in the behaviour of customers and local providers, and finally in the policies of the bodies responsible for tourism development. Gormsen (1981) on the other hand, in his model of the diachronic evolution of tourism development in coastal areas, adopts an approach which reflects at least some of the latterday sustainability propositions, currently under examination within recent tourism development analyses. He describes the different phases of evolution according to quantitative and qualitative differentiation of tourism establishments, the social structure of the tourism population and last, but not least, the level of active participation by the local actors in the developmental procedures.

Tourism analysts have, it seems, long criticised these 'descriptive' or 'ideographic' models as inappropriate for a deep analysis of the changes in the tourism production structure, or the social changes occurring between the phases of development.
Additionally, they question their general applicability (generalizability) and comparability, since they are based on observation of certain areas, and examination of a large number of variables which cannot be controlled and applied to every different case. The tourism impact, for example, varies considerably not only between areas in different phases of development, but also between areas within the same phase. However, there is an increasing interest now being expressed by authors examining the applicability of these models for modern tourism development, in an effort to map developmental paths, understand commonality, and to explain performance differences/fluxuations.

2.3.1 The Evolution Model of the Product Life Cycle and Sustainability as Parallel Developmental Paradigms: Foundations for the Present Study

The ‘life cycle’ management approach towards products and their design process, helps businesses to broaden their perspective and to look more systematically and holistically at products over their entire lifetime and not consider only the product manufacturing processes. Life cycle approaches help companies to consider the entire managerial spectrum, from product design, production and use, to disposal or re-use.

What we have done in this research is firstly to look at the background context and subsequently the reality on the ground for linking the life cycle approach to understanding and managing tourism product evolution, development and decline, with the growing ideas for a sustainable development future, both in terms of wider regional development and specifically for tourism and renewal. At the outset of this work in the early 1990s, the growing interest in sustainable development and the existing knowledge of product life cycles, especially related to tourism, seemed to have much scope for integration and investigation. As the research developed, it was found that Ashworth and Dietvorst (1995) had identified and worked on the same potential. The life cycle model describes product-market relationships through time and thus identifies critical points where intervention or change of policy are appropriate. Ashworth and Dietvorst (1995) argue that similarly the idea of sustainable development is “based upon the existence of the time dimension and a similar idea of a progression that inevitably proceeds but is susceptible to intervention to show or divert slow progress”, despite the fact that the time-scale is far wider, encompassing pasts and futures beyond the life-cycle of a product. In addition, they emphasise that this approach goes “beyond the life cycle measured against the individual place product, but against the economic, social and environmental local system as a whole”.

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In this context, Welford (1996) argues that there is an identifiable shift of industry's action priorities from managerial to ecological. He suggests that the life cycle approach represents an auditing tool of products and processes, rather than management systems, and is highly interrelated with sustainability when "in a far-reaching life cycle assessment absolutely everything connected with a particular product would have to be measured and all measurements and impacts would have to be assessed according to an unlimited horizon". Auditing for sustainability requires firms to examine their overall impact on "the environment, on equity and on futurity".

The industrial literature uses these 'cradle to grave' types of approach as tools toward reducing the environmental effects of business operations, identifying two distinct components (Hass and Groenewegen, 1996). The first involves different types of cooperative efforts among companies related to environmental issues, and the second includes specific managerial instruments (such as life cycle management) and environmental information tools (life cycle analysis), which are required to determine the environmental effects over a product's entire life cycle. Placing the concept of futurity within the overall measurement of performance, the life cycle approach, according to Welford (1996), puts more emphasis on the role of design and re-design. He argues that marketing and environmental strategy can be intertwined when concentrating on the product, rather than the production system, which therefore facilitates direct measurement of environmental impacts. It also requires the active cooperation of suppliers, and "collaboration and co-operation are prerequisites for progress".

As noted previously, the life cycle model originated in microeconomics and was applied in marketing analysis of the growth and decline of consumer goods. It was extended to the tourism field to describe "the historical vicissitudes of tourism places" (Ashworth and Dietvorst, 1995). Most importantly, they suggest that "its utility within the tourism area, apart from describing product-market relationships through time, is to identify critical points where intervention is appropriate" and this is clearly appropriate to the current project's concerns with the rejuvenation of specific tourism economies. The applied model is based on the notion that tourism as an economic activity combines a set of products which can be treated as any other industrial product, and secondly, that tourism can be viewed as "one function of multi-functional places, to be used in some quantity, in some combination, to produce some result in some locality" (ibid.).

Butler (1991), pioneering the application of the life cycle model to the tourism product (see also Section 1.3), added the principle of 'animal populations', a sustainability-
related principle applied to tourism evolution. According to this analogy, tourism and tourist destinations follow the pattern of populations, which in natural settings experience a growth in size, but often of rapid proportions until the population exceeds the capacity of the environment to support it.

With this principle, Butler (1991) interrelates the life cycle of the tourism product with sustainability, as they both follow a time-limit course of development. Ashworth and Dietvorst (1995) linking the product life cycle approach with sustainability, identify within this interrelationship a transition of fundamental importance for the achievement of sustainable development. The transition occurs when growth evolves from being demand-led to become supply-led, "which in turn creates a need and an awareness for intervention, whether from inside or outside the place concerned and whether initiated by public or private agencies". In Figure 2.1, the 'intervention moment' occurs with the boosting of development and the transition from a demand to a supply-oriented process, urgently requiring regulation of procedures, rather than stimulation, in order to ensure sustainability. Short term turnovers are usual and attractive within the tourism industry, however spatial and cultural effects "do not always operate synchronously" with the economic development patterns. Supply-side elements need a longer period to be established and "tend to evolve with a low growth in terms of time-space axes" (ibid.). When established though, due to their ability to obtain profit in the short run, these can have a catastrophic effect.

![Figure 2.1 The 'Intervention Moment' by Ashworth and Dietvorst (1995)](image-url)
To a significant degree, this study is about the practical linkage of these observations about tourism life cycles, with the increasingly evident need that further development or redevelopment must be implemented within the now recognised parameters of sustainable development practice applied to tourism. In reality, the work initially sought to apply the life cycle model to the Greek tourism product and review the complexities of this for destinations in different stages of regional development. The review therefore necessarily covered life cycle approaches and associated economic theory, regional development material and the literature on sustainability applied to tourism. The discovery of existing work relating life cycle models to sustainability cemented the direction of the work. Here we have utilised the life cycle approach, both as a descriptive method for illustrating its applicability to the evolution of Greek tourism, and as a planning tool, to provide insight to guide decision-making concerning new product positioning and market segmentation.

Having reviewed much of the work on sustainability applied to tourism, one of the final stages of the review process was to establish or identify a practical typology of sustainable tourism planning and management, that could be utilised alongside the life cycle observation, to integrate the two criteria for analysing the contemporary Greek tourism industry/product, and taking forward practical recommendations regarding its future direction.

Several experts have formulated typologies, often strongly related to the managerial principles of ecosystems and social local equity for long term sustainable development. Reviewing different typologies of sustainable tourism planning and management, Komilis's (1991) 'instrumental developmental criteria' or 'denominators' were chosen to support the present study and serve as a structural frame for the research. Within the context of tourism's growth and the sustainability of regional development, Komilis (1991) assumes certain common 'denominators' which underlie "the selection of both the market and product-related modes or types of tourism growth, and the goals or policies of a (sustainable) regional development strategy". The following criteria have been used to assess the direction of the Greek tourism sector (both public and private), which relating to our life cycle observations, has identifiably reached a new 'intervention moment' in its 'stagnation stage' of development.

With the identification that the 'stagnation' stage of development has been reached, the present research assesses the appropriately sustainable and innovative new qualities of tourism product development, urgently needed to shift the life cycle curve from stagnation to rejuvenation. The research is timely in that it coincides with first steps
within the Greek tourism sector towards the formulation of strategic choices and relevant instruments in order to regenerate a recognisably saturated industry. New tourism products have been identified within the innovative directions of public policy, and sports tourism especially has been examined as an appropriate and feasible proposal for rejuvenating, differentiating and adding value to the product offer.

The first criterion used to evaluate the selection and promotion of tourist products and ‘sustainability-related’ regional development objectives, according to Komilis (1991), is “interregional differentiation and diversity of regional tourist production”. He refers to the need for a continuous process of enriching and innovating the tourist products, in such a way as to enhance each region’s ‘tourist identity’ and improve competitiveness through a wide range of attractions based on diverse regional/indigenous resources. The present study attempts an evaluation of the applicability of sports tourism within regional tourism production and differentiation, and, with reference to sustainability in its wider definition, a close examination of its compatibility with the local culture and character. It also highlights the differences between differentiated products produced to regenerate a saturated mass tourism environment (Crete) and a region (Thrace) that is ‘lagging behind’ in terms of regional development.

This examination aims to identify the different use of natural and cultural resources in the production of appropriate forms of sports tourism that satisfy local economic and social needs. This ‘continuous process’ of innovation is a complex function which presupposes various interactions between the diverse views (and actions) of different governmental and developmental agencies, and policy makers and operators. The examination of this opinion diversity, and its implications for policy formulation and implementation in Greece, is one of the fundamental aims of the study.

The second of Komilis' (ibid.) criteria refers to aims of “maximising the economic benefits of tourism over an entire region, by providing the best interlinkages of tourism to the other sectors of the regional economy”. In this process, the ability of the involved parties to include adjusted tourism patterns within the region’s production system is examined in relation to other sections of the local economy. The research attempts to identify the resource potential of the local environment, depending on the region's specific geographic and socio-economic characteristics. The development of new and ‘special’ tourism products, and especially sports tourism, is examined in conjunction with other elements of significance, such as land use and resources, coastal and mountain areas, and traditional production techniques. The identification of advantageous factors
that could lead to the formulation of competitive sport tourism products is attempted for the significant tourism bodies of both the public and private sectors.

The third criterion of "equity and local involvement conditions that should prevail when tourism's growth is related to sustainable development" is of great importance to the present context. It directs the examination towards those conditions that exist, or should exist, among the different power groups involved in development, before making choices and designing appropriate policies. Local involvement conditions are examined, as well as the 'Centre's' direction of policy, relating particularly to certain programmes identified. The study examines the different perceptions of local and national actors involved in tourist product ownership and management, and the potential for effective coalitions. Sectoral interlinkages and 'integrated-activity' are investigated, in order to catalyse the sustainable introduction and development of new tourism products. Available opportunities and possibilities for formulating partnerships are investigated throughout the wider policy and managerial structure. It has been crucial to identify significant changes in the power and expansion of local government, and shifts within the governmental arena that would affect the developments and tourism products.

Therefore, the perceptions concerning the direction, appropriateness and feasibility of new tourism product development and its use in socio-economic regeneration are investigated in-depth across the spectrum of local and central government and the other groups involved.

The fourth criterion highlights "environmental considerations taken into account in policy-making and tourist product development". The study includes an insight into the appropriateness and the nature of 'environmental' constraints and limits, as well as "adjustments or trade-offs" (Komilis, 1991) in the various development and policy making processes. The different evaluations of the scale of environmental problems indicate the significance of policy formulation and the type of sustainability adopted, or the priorities attached to social and economic goals. A review of the legislative and policy instruments investigates their effectiveness in achieving sustainable results. Alongside, and emanating from, the interpretations and value judgements given by the policy makers within parts of the empirical work, the study aims to reveal the level of sustainable considerations included in the policy priorities of key actors, and any differences identified with those of private agents, in their perception of tourism development and the environment. Accepting the fact that resource capacities have often been reached and the various tourism impacts are apparent, it is considered important to establish the context of the whole range of economic, socio-cultural and physical
parameters which form the tourist product of a region. These parameters help to map the potential of new differentiated tourism products, assigning a certain level of economic and ecological value to them.

Finally, Komilis's (1991) fifth criterion sums up the sustainable tourism development denominators focusing on the "continuity and adjustability of a region's tourist development within its wider environment". This criterion focuses on the managerial abilities exhibited in the region, such as flexibility and responsiveness in adapting tourism development and products in order to meet, and respond to, the requirements and conditions of a changing international tourism market.

Conclusions

Within the context of a highly competitive tourism environment and changing tastes, the need for effective adjustability and competitiveness dictate the development of substitutes or alternatives within the limits of a sustainable exploitation of resources. The examination includes an evaluation of the strategic planning and management of new tourism products, such as sports tourism, through a critical assessment of the relevant organisational and procedural abilities to realise the goal of tourism product adaptation and rejuvenation.

The appeal and applicability of sustainability clearly necessitate certain choices for the future development (or rejuvenation) of the Greek tourism product in different locations, "while at the same time, developing a region's socio-economic and environmental assets in response to changing demand conditions within a highly competitive environment" (Komilis, 1991). This study, then, seeks to utilise the established parameters of the life cycle driven intervention needs, and those of sustainable regional development, applied particularly to tourism, using empirical investigation among key actors in this process, to establish the processes and problems through which Greece (and different destination types within it) can realistically and sustainably establish new types of tourism product.
Chapter 3

The Development of Tourism in Greece and the Characteristic Features of its Mass Tourism Product

Introduction

This Chapter is designed to provide a detailed overview of the development of Greek tourism and its tourism product, based largely on secondary data analysis, including a review of published and unpublished secondary sources and some recourse to unpublished government department statistics. The Chapter is structured loosely around the key stages of the tourism product life cycle, previously reviewed, and attempts to highlight the different characteristics of the tourism demand profile, and the changing supply and organizational features at each phase of development, within an overall historiographic review. Following the earlier review of the contextual literature informing the study, this Chapter seeks to provide the reader with a necessary understanding to the evolution, nature and problems of Greek tourism development, within the life cycle context adopted by the study, and to bring the reader up to date through that structure to the present 'stagnation/rejuvenation' phase for Greek tourism, that the study focuses on.

3.1 The Introductory Stages of Tourism Development

Xenius Zeus, the father of gods and god of hospitality protected foreigners in ancient Greece, who were treated with Greek warmth and generosity. This hospitality tradition and the historical treasures of Greece attracted a considerable number of high spending and educated visitors even before the Second World War and the era of mass tourism, but it was in the period 1948 to 1952 that direct state intervention in tourism emerged through policies of modernization and restoration of hotels damaged by the War. Although the origins of Greek tourism policy can be traced back to the 1920's (Leontidou, 1991), it was in 1950 with the restoration of the country’s infrastructure and
elected government, that tourism was recognized as an organised and systematically pursued economic activity (Briassoulis, 1993), substantiated by the establishment of the Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO).

The GNTO, the first public organisation for the development and promotion of tourism, was established in 1950 with major responsibilities for supervising, controlling, planning and developing tourism and the appropriate infrastructure, as well as creating the conditions for private tourism investment. The broad aim of the GNTO was to promote tourism development in Greece in order to improve the country's balance of payments, to generate employment and to attract foreign exchange (Briassoulis, 1993). With 37,464 foreign tourists visiting Greece in 1950 (GNTO, 1995), Greece's tourism 'product life cycle' (see section 3.2.1) was at its 'involvement stage'. A number of factors had delayed its further development; particularly, its remoteness from the main tourist generating areas. At that time, with the level of economic development relatively low and the general infrastructure poor, it was more expensive to develop tourism products and infrastructure in Greece than in other more advanced developing holiday destinations (such as Spain, South France, Italy). Tourism development and demand in Europe in the 1960s was not yet significant enough to include Greece amongst the 'top division' of new destinations being exploited by tour operators for their new inclusive packages. In the same period, internal political problems, which had led to the dictatorship of 1967 and the invasion of Cyprus by the Turkish army in 1974, became crucial factors in suppressing international arrivals. However, during the late 1970's and early 1980's tourist flows to Greece increased rapidly, allowing the country to claim a major role in the development of European mass tourism by the end of the 1980's.

The exact extent of this early tourism development in Greece is difficult to track accurately and the industry has been termed 'statistically invisible' (Leontidou, 1991) due to the volume of hidden or undeclared tourist-related activities and nature of some transactions which hamper the accurate documentation of its operation and impact. Cross-checking of official figures and other published material is necessary and, as in this study, reference has to be made to unpublished documentation and policy statements in order to achieve a more effective illustration of tourism development in
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Greece.

Whilst the emergence of the GNTO in 1950 was a positive step in the development of Greek tourism administration, there remained a number of different bodies with tourism responsibilities, resulting in a lack of co-ordination and obscure communication channels. The GNTO initially came under the direct control of the Ministry of National Economy, however the Ministry of Environment contributes to and controls policy regarding spatial and land use issues. In addition, the Ministry of the Interior controls the tourist police (i.e. local police specialising in crime and maintaining order in tourist places during the tourism season) and collects data, while the Ministry of Commerce controls the operation of museums and historical sites (Leontidou, 1991).

However, the establishment of the Ministry of Tourism in 1992 responded to the need for a powerful body to represent and serve a now significant industry. The initial use of tourism as a policy tool for economic development can be identified in legislation offering incentives for tourism developments from the 1950's and 1960's (Legislation Decrees 3213/1953, 3430/55, 4171/61 and 276/69). In the period 1951-64 the largest share of public investment in tourism (55.9%) was directed towards the construction of tourism infrastructure, such as hotel accommodation and management schemes (Komilis, 1986). This direct state intervention also aimed to offer good practice management models for the future, as well as a means of ‘heating up’ the economy (Leontidou, 1991). In addition, this effort attempted to challenge the reluctance of the private sector to invest in tourism, by undertaking the cost of ‘setting up’ or ‘opening up’ various regions to tourist development, which is a strong characteristic of the regional policy of the same period. Thus, the main elements of private sector investments at this time were oriented towards private accommodation construction, even though public investment in commercial facilities covered 100% of the total public funds available for tourism at this time (Konsolas and Zaharatos, 1992).

1966 marked the beginning of a period of change in the relationship between Greek public and private investment in tourism, with the percentage funding invested by the public sector dropping to 27%. In contrast, the investment by the private sector increased significantly. This reduced state investment was also re-allocated
predominately towards the construction of tourism relevant infrastructure, such as roads, beach paths, coastal water and sewage systems. From the zero levels of the previous period, private investment in hotel accommodation rose from 1958 onwards, and continued to grow significantly alongside the public investment contribution.

Komilis (1986) proposes four factors that explain the increased private sector involvement of this period. Firstly, the improvement of ‘special’ tourism infrastructure (marinas, thermo-spas etc.) and increased accessibility in certain tourism areas attracting private interest. Secondly, favourable loan rates for tourism facilities (offered at the level of 11.3% between 1960 and 1966). These rose to 26.7% in the period 1967 to 1973. In addition, the dramatic increase of foreign - mainly European - demand for travel in the Mediterranean produced a new commercial supply of tourism services.

The emergence of the dictatorship in Greece in 1967 resulted in an even greater emphasis on tourist development as a means of boosting the country’s economy. However, even though the level of public investment in tourism infrastructure tripled from the previous period, these funds still did not match the rates of increase of private investment at this time (Komilis, 1986). By 1967 then, the initiative for tourist development had shifted to the private sector. The state, for its part, initiated the establishment of the infrastructure, banking and incentives system, which maintained and boosted the attractiveness of tourist development (Leontidou, 1991).

In addition to internal Greek investment in tourism development, foreign investments, mainly US, West German, Swiss and French capital, poured into hotel accommodation, reaching 66.1% of all investment in tourism in 1968, and 37% of total foreign capital investment in all sectors of the country’s economy (GNTO, 1995). These foreign investments during the dictatorship, targeted mainly in coastal areas, have come to be considered by some authors as the ‘sellout’ of Greek lands to foreigners, fostering the external control of tourism which has become a structural problem with the Greek tourism economy. Komilis (1986) argues strongly that this uneven relationship between private and public investments resulted in the unbalanced distribution of tourist activity, forming extremes of regions with either low quality infrastructure and poor accessibility, or congested and overdeveloped areas. The lack of effective physical or
social planning within tourism development at this time is now seen to be the prodrome of an unsustainable tourism environment facing many areas of Greece today, only a couple of decades later.

3.2 Tourism and Regionalisation Policies

In the last twenty years, tourism operation in Greece has shown a polarisation in terms of geographical distribution and business concentrations. Komilis (1986) presents ‘accessibility’ and ‘concentration of tourist services’ as the main factors of the differentiation of tourist demand between areas, alongside physical attractiveness and employment in tourism. At a state policy level, less developed regions were initially supported by differentiated incentives to boost tourism development through favourable legislation (such as grants and subsidies). Peripheral border regions enjoyed the highest incentive programmes, while the two major centres of Athens and Thessaloniki were usually excluded from any incentives. The rest of the country was divided into two other zones, those near the two centres and the rest of the regions (Chiotis and Coccosis, 1992). Tourism was always used as a means of regional development, through which “general goals for the national economy as well as the particular goals for regions of the country must be fulfilled” (Konsolas and Zaharatos, 1992). The extent of use of tourism for national and regional development is highly evident in the State’s 5 year plans for economic and social development. However, Komilis (1986) argues that tourism’s general structure should be considered in relation to both ‘endogenous’ and ‘exogenous’ factors: a) the socio-economic development process, organisational mode of the tourist industry and regional accessibility; and b) the regions’ connection with international travel systems and tour operators.

Although, the 1948-52 period was characterised by direct state intervention in the construction of tourist infrastructure, it was the next period of the early 1950’s that marked an era of extensive public investment and credit policy (Konsolas and Zaharatos, 1992). At this early stage of tourism development, ‘a centre-periphery’ dichotomous growth pattern was dominant (Komilis, 1986), with a concentration of tourism superstructure in few areas, particularly those of the strong centre (Greater Athens region) and certain peripheral regions (mainly the islands of Rhodes, Kerkyra,
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and Crete). Athens enjoys a large share of the country's tourism assets, enjoying the benefits of an international air-based travel system and major heritage features.

Komilis (ibid) offers a categorisation of the peripheral areas, which in tourism terms, can be recognised to be within the initial growth phases. He distinguishes two types: a) 'small holiday-resort areas', usually small islands highly dependent upon transportation links to the centre; and b) 'independent' regions in terms of linkage with the international air-based travel system (such as Rhodes, Corfu and Crete), with a strong seasonal tourism demand. The initial direct state intervention through the creation of accommodation and management models throughout the country can now be seen as the examples of the use of tourism in regional planning and decentralisation.

Private investment in new accommodation facilities in the regions was activated after 1958 after strong public sector funding towards the creation of 'tourist areas' (areas characterised predominantly by tourism development as the major local production sector). The regional allocation of publicly constructed tourism facilities (as recorded by 1980) was scattered across 37 out of the country's 52 prefectures. However, the distribution of public investment incentives was not equally matched by the increasing private initiatives and involvement of the same decade, which was far more geographically concentrated. The formulation of 'tourism areas' became synonymous with the concentration of tourist activity in three 'independent' tourism centres (Athens, Corfu and Rhodes), controlling the 52%, 12% and 16% of private tourism involvement respectively.

This rapid development increased the regional inequities and functional problems, and subsequently there was a clear need to "harmonise tourism activity with regional development needs" through spatial development criteria and appropriate credit policy. For the first time the term 'touristic zones' was used to describe the need for regional prioritisation and positive discrimination which "should be made in accordance with the aims of regional development of the country" (Developmental Plan, 1968; henceforward DP). A system of zones was developed aiming at controlling the growth and unbalanced distribution of private investment in hotels and tourism facilities. Konsolas and Zaharatos (1991) however, refer to 'social reactions and pressures' that
did not allow the successful implementation of the scheme. These development incentives were put into effect through five development laws (72, 6, 8, 81, 82) dividing the country into 4 or 5 main regions, with investment incentives adjusted according to the level of development. During this period, an even greater concentration in terms of hotel units was evident in both the established tourist centres (Athens, Rhodes, Corfu) and the newly created tourism areas like Crete and Chalkidiki.

The evident lack of balance between private investment in tourist superstructure and public tourist infrastructure produced an environment unable to cope with the rapid increase in tourism consumption (Komilis, 1986; Konsolas and Zaharatos, 1992). The dangers of environmental degradation are initially recognised in the 1968-1972 plan, but became more pressing and evident in the 1973-1977 five year plan, where it was emphasised that “tourism can be used to a major extent for the promotion of the general development policy and the parallel protection of the natural environment and tourist values” (DP, 1973).

However, it was the revised 1976-80 plan that emphasised the problematic features of tourist activity distribution (or rather concentration), and suggested that “tourism planning should be directed towards a more widespread dispersal of tourist nuclei” (DP, 1977). Komilis (1986) refers critically to the uneven public investment distribution and the lack of its use as a spatial regional distribution guide for private investment. In addition, he criticises the lack of macro level planning by the GNTO and its ineffective role in regulating and controlling private investment behaviour, which tends to favour the areas with developed infrastructure, accessibility and facilities, despite the favourable subsidies for investment in other areas.

The same developmental plan emphasised the role of local capital and small scale tourism development as local economic development investments (Leontidou, 1991), while also suggesting the curbing of tourist development in areas already showing signs of saturation. This could only proceed through appropriate implementation of the ‘zoning’ plans in specific areas, the lack of which reinforced the problematic spatial distribution of tourism activity.
The following plan (1981-1985) was constructed on the same principles of regulating spatial planning, and aimed at "the suspension of further tourist development in regions and areas which show marked signs of overcrowding and saturation (including Athens, Rhodes, Chalkidiki)" (DP, 1980). In addition, the policy would be used "to increase the contribution of tourism to a) the economic development of problematic regions, and b) to the more general regional development of the country" (DP, 1980). Konsolas and Zaharatos (op cit) view this plan as the "first plan for the regional development of the country", emphasising the recognition that development would address the easing of development in saturated traditional areas and would support undeveloped regions through the promotion of small scale tourism facility developments. The plan adds that the above goals could be achieved by "increasing auxiliary accommodation in relation to main accommodation and by correctly distributing this accommodation throughout the country" (DP, 1980).

The 1983-87 plan emphasises the important role of local capital and discourages large unit developments and foreign capital inflows by claiming that "in the near future, 56% of investment will be public and 44% private" (Greek Parliament, 1984), and initiating legislation supporting primarily the development of small accommodation units (of less than 80 beds). The policy for this period subdividing the country into three areas was implemented, along with the introduction of regional development grants and regional criteria (LDs, 1116/1981 and 1262/82 in Leontidou, 1991). Additionally, it was considered that there was a need for the gradual decentralisation of the GNTO and the transfer of its central management of 'publicly owned' hotels to local authorities. Leontidou (1991) however, highlights the inefficiency of these laws in actually decreasing tourist congestion, claiming that in reality the authorities continued to support the viability of investment and the encouragement of financing projects in already developed areas.

Other authors, examining the 5 year plans in relation to tourism development disagree on the contribution of tourism within regional development. Leontidou (1991) interprets its role more as a means of restoring/maintaining traditional settlements, rather than as a tool for further regional development and economic growth. Konsolas and Zaharatos (1992) emphasise the goal as the "zoning redistribution of tourist
demand and supply and the corresponding suspension of tourist development in some areas”. However, they all agree that there is increasing concern and need for appropriate regional policy and, more importantly, in relation to this study, for the encouragement of alternative modes of tourism to beach tourism.

The 1988-92 plan encouraged decentralisation through privatisation of the tourist sector, regulation of activities which have a strong impact on the environment, and delimitation of areas of tourist development. In addition, large promotion campaigns aimed at a quality image, targeting high income and high status tourist markets were developed. However, this highlights further fundamental problems with the Greek tourism product, its development, and control over its development. In reality, this promotion was found to influence only 18% of tourists surveyed, while 34% were influenced by the ‘word of mouth’ of relatives and friends. In addition, tour operators influence the choice of 24% of tourists for particular areas, and significantly influence the spatial distribution of tourism demand in Greece (GNTO statistics, 1985).

Tour agents and operators in tourism generating regions play a crucial role in influencing the choice of tourists, operating between the consumer and the product offered by the local market. Thus, they affect the development of tourist facilities that satisfy this expressed demand. Tourist choices are also dependent on price policies, destination image, offered services and tourism trends. Therefore the individual tourism localities are unable to significantly influence international demands, as they are connected with a system serving international oligopolies.

There is a lack of relevant data and detailed research on the level of influence of foreign tourist operators on the local distribution of demand in Greece, with the exception of Komilis’s (1986) analysis of the spatial distribution of demand in Greek resorts as influenced by British tour operators. This study highlighted that the areas promoted by British tour operators accepted proportionally equal numbers of day visitors and more valuable overnight stays, while areas (with often similar/or equally interesting physical and cultural characteristics) not included in their offer, received a far smaller number of valuable foreign tourist visitors. There is a need therefore for further investigation of the impact of foreign tour operator policies and the distribution of their activity, as well
as examination of those factors that contribute to the inclusion of certain areas in the operators’ programmes.

The financial policy expressed through the programmes of the Monetary Commission and operationalised through the funding system did not follow any guidelines of the country’s spatial or regional planning policy. The GNTO proved unable to address funding incentives according to the development policies for peripheral areas, and was therefore restricted to a more technical role. Authors agree that this inconsistency and lack of synthesis of the funding system, regional development policy and public investment in infrastructure, resulted in the uneven distribution of private business within the regional structure.

Thus the distribution of ‘expressed’ demand from foreign visitors and domestic overnight stays in Greece, as a result of one or a combination of increased private tourism initiatives, tour operator preferences, tourist destination preferences and regional development policies, follows an uneven pattern which favours certain regions, leaving others underdeveloped. Komilis (1980) adds ‘accessibility’ and ‘concentration of tourist services’ to those factors, as significant in creating major tourism resort areas receiving large numbers of visitors.

3.3 Regions in Demand

Between 1963 and 1973, which finds Greek tourism entering the ‘growth stage’ of development, exhibiting the initial formation of regional patterns in tourist demand, we find a clear growth in the control exercised by the growth of tour operators/agents, charter flights and package holidays. The same period saw the establishment of the regional distribution of development in Greece, the centres of which have remained unchanged during recent years, despite an annual 16% increase of tourist demand (Leontidou, 1991).

Demand from inbound foreign tourists has been concentrated in the coastal areas, thus initiating environmental and infrastructural degradation as a result of intense concentration. The Greater Athens area, for example, received 67% of the total new
hotel bed places in this period, benefiting primarily from its effective linkage with the international transport system and its attraction-base, including major historic sites. Additionally, three areas (Corfu, North Crete and Rhodes), termed ‘microperipheries’ by Komilis (1986), claimed 40% of the total number of hotel night stays in 1973, with Rhodes claiming 41% of this subtotal. Komilis sees these areas to some extent as ‘independent’ from the ‘central’ (state) procedures, since their mainly seasonal character is affected significantly by foreign operators. Other key tourist areas attain 50% of the hotel night stays of foreign and local tourists, with some of them, because of their location close to high profile archaeological or transit sites, enjoying large tourist flows and, again, high concentration impacts.

The total number of bed spaces within the various types of accommodation in these areas grew by 123% between 1970-1979. Until 1970, the majority of hotels (55%) were of third to fifth class, with first and second class representing only 34%. In the 1980’s the share of lower standard hotels dropped to 49%, reaching 438,355 bed places in 1990, while the first and second class hotels increased their share to 46%, reflecting the need to increase the ‘quality’ and spending power of tourists to Greece.

After the 1970’s important fluctuations in tourist demand for certain areas occur. Athens suffered a significant loss in popularity, declining continuously during the 1980s with 40% of incoming tourists selecting it in 1983, falling to 33% in 1984, 30% in 1985, to just 25% in 1986 (unofficial estimate; Papachristou, 1987 in Leontidou, 1991). Overnight stays in the Greater Athens area declined dramatically by two million between 1981 and 1986 (Leontidou, 1991). Conversely, the areas of Corfu, North Crete and Chalkidiki have enjoyed the increasing preference of the foreign tourists, with Dodecanese gaining nearly 3 million overnight stays between 1981-6 and Crete nearly 2 million.

Thus, while the concentration of tourists remains an important phenomenon in Greece over this period, the number of tourists and key resort areas increases. The 1990’s are characterised by concentration of tourist infrastructure and hotel units in 6 major tourism areas. By 1991, Athens, Crete, Aegean Islands, Chalkidiki, Magnisia and Corfu contained 63% of Greece’s hotel units and 71% of bed places (Kasimati et al,
1995), emphasising the uneven regionalisation of Greek tourism. Such figures show why there are great pressures on some saturated environments, particularly in relation to the relatively small proportion of the total land area that these resorts cover.

Recent GNTO statistics published in 1995 illustrate the continuation of this pattern, with the Aegean Islands holding 23.1% of the total bed space (of which 17.6% is concentrated in Dodecanese). Crete represents 18.4%, Athens 14%, Corfu 6.4%, and Chalkidiki 4.5% of the total bed space, leaving a figure of less than one percent found in the entire remaining mainland of Greece, and the north Aegean islands (GNTO, 1995). Those areas have increasingly developed other auxiliary accommodation facilities (such as camping, rented rooms etc) which in 1983 represented 61% of total beds in Kavala and Thasos for example. However, these locations outside the concentrated resorts are, so far, of minimum importance to mass foreign tourism. They are, however, preferred by Greeks.

Another problem evident within the Greek tourism economy, as briefly noted earlier, is that of undeclared (and therefore untaxed and unregulated) bed spaces. Kasimati et al (1995) estimate that by 1991, 1,000,000 bed places were offered illegally in auxiliary accommodation, a number exceeding the total of legal bed places of 550,000 in hotel units in the same period, and representing the phenomenon of ‘paraxenodohia’ (Leontidou, 1991) i.e. ‘para-hotel’ businesses.

Despite its negative impacts on the tourism economy, knowledge of undeclared rooms has existed since 1972 for all regions. According to various estimates, the ratio of official to unofficial beds lies between 1.3 to 1.1 (Leontidou, 1991). According to Papachristou (1987 in Leontidou, 1991), in addition to the 405,628 beds in hotels and legal rooms, there were at least 450,000 beds in 230,000 undeclared rooms, in the 1980’s in Greece.

3.4 Tourist Profile

The demand for tourism in Greece has always been Eurocentric, with European visitors totaling 51.9% of the total of arrivals in 1961 (reaching 70% in the 1990s). However,
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during the decade 1961-73, Greece was highly dependent on the United States for its inflow of tourists with 82,819 American visitors out of the 399,438 total arriving in 1960. By 1970 the flow from the United States was 13 times higher than in 1952 (Leontidou, 1991), but thereafter dropped from 27% of the total in 1970, to 11% in 1978, down to 7% in 1985, which remained roughly constant throughout the 1990s. The decline of tourist flows from America happened simultaneously with a rapid increase of numbers originating in Europe. Between 1950 and 1990, the level of European visitors has fluctuated between 60% and 90% of total arrivals in Greece. In the early years, Greece received large numbers of Scandinavian visitors and residents of the former Yugoslavia. The latter initially represented the majority of European tourist arrivals; a trend which thereafter changed towards increasing inflows from the UK and Germany.

Tourists currently travelling to Greece come mostly from Western European countries. Their share of 77.5% of foreign tourists to Greece in 1980, had increased to 91.3% by 1992. The 46.3% European tourist flows in 1970, rose steadily to 49.9% in 1980, with a dramatic increase to 67.9% by 1988, reaching 76.5% in 1991 (Leontidou, 1991; ES, 1995). Despite earlier changes in visitor origin, the main tourism markets for Greece have not changed during the 1990s, positioning the UK and Germany as the main generators of tourism to Greece. They enjoy a stable 23% share of total arrivals, while the earlier dominant, high spending US customers have been steadily decreasing, declining to just 2.49% in 1994 (GNTO, 1995).

Even though Asian and African countries have increased their share of the total market of visitors to Greece, they still represent a small proportion of the total tourist arrivals. However, the volume of visits from Japan has shown a rapid increase since 1987, with an average annual growth in arrivals of 47.2% (1980-91). An important characteristic of this tourist market has been the great interest shown in cultural and archaeological features during their travel, preferring historical centres like Athens to the now traditional beach destinations of European mass tourism.

The changing characteristics and consumption patterns of the people visiting Greece has influenced the per capita tourist expenditure through the years. Recent studies (ES,
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1995) show for example that American tourists on average spend twice as much as Europeans. This has negatively affected the quality of services and product offered during the last three decades, with European ‘mass tourists’ looking for ‘value’ holidays, and spending relatively little.

The socio-economic characteristics of the Greek tourism market has not been studied in detail, especially regarding their educational, professional, and economic status. This has to date prevented the accurate profiling of Greek tourism consumers. There has, however, been some attempt to provide a typology of different tourists based upon their ‘revealed’ activities.

The ‘Cultural Heritage’ type of tourist (Wickens, 1994) of the 1960’s has, in the majority, been replaced by the ‘Hedonistic’ consumer of the 1980’s-1990’s, enjoying “a miniature world of hedonism, a world of instant joy, relaxing and letting go, which is governed by the ethic of hedonism, of pleasure and play - in short, a consumption ethic”. Bell’s (1963) study of the evolution of a small traditional village (Pefkohori) into a mass tourism destination shows the impact of tourism on the tourists’ perceptions. A ‘low key’ destination has been transformed through ‘hedonistic behaviour’ (alcoholism, nudism, drugs etc.) and staged authenticity, into a ‘standardised’ destination, characterised by ‘unethical’ mass consumption.

The few studies that have been undertaken (GNTO, 1985) show that the majority of tourists visiting Greece belong to middle class groups, with occupations such as skilled workers (65%), clerical staff or students etc, travelling to Greece with their family on an organised package. 70% of the tourists visiting Greece in 1985 were between 16 and 40 years old. Of the other ‘known’ characteristics, one of the most significant is that per capita expenditure is known to have decreased dramatically through the years, due to the change in tourist profile. This in itself has been one of the most significant features of Greek tourism in recent years, and is one of the driving forces behind studies like this, which attempts to assess the feasibility of implementing more differentiated, ‘quality’ tourism packages and products, as part of the rejuvenation process.

Regarding other tourist profiling studies, Briassoulis (1993) draws attention to a study
by Howarth Consulting (1990), which identifies six main market segments within the visitors. The majority (61.3%) were ‘hotel guests’, with businessmen representing 14%, other vacationists 7%, congress participants 6.8% and 10.2% ‘others’. These figures are largely confirmed by GNTO statistics and the categorisation reveals the dominance of mass organised tourism within the overall visitor patterns.

A 1992 GNTO study of consumer types in Greek hotels shows that this reported pattern is not only repeated, but also shows an increase recently, to 63% of visitors in the ‘tour groups’ category. Other identified categories had decreased by 1-2%. The increase of ‘group tourism’ to Greece further highlights the dependency of the Greek tourism industry on external foreign operators, with all the attendant (and well documented) problems of income leakage and power relations issues that this brings.

3.5 The Greek Tourism Performance and the Hypothetical Evolution of a Tourist Area

3.5.1 The ‘Involvement’ Stage

The Greek tourism product has traditionally been based on the renowned antiquities, climate, physical environment of the coastline, islands and beaches, “qualifications considered in the past to provide ‘self-advertising’ ” (Briassoulis, 1993). The first form of expressed demand for this rich Greek tourism product put Greece in a favourable position in the list of the most touristic European countries in the after-war period. The wealth of ancient and Byzantine monuments constituted the core motive for travel to Greece in the 1960’s, positioning Athens at the centre of travel activity and boosting tourism development to high rates of visitor arrivals and relatively high spending, particularly (as noted) from American visitors.

The high quality of services requested by this type of tourism demand, is reflected in the building of accommodation at this time, the majority of which (93.9%) were hotel units. The capacity of the 106 luxury and first class hotels was 6,101 rooms (or 10,369 bed places) which represented 20% (and 18.5% respectively) of the totals.
Despite the noted relatively large proportion of American visitors in the early developmental years of Greek tourism, the majority of tourists visiting Greece in the 1960s were European (51.0%), of which British and German visitors held the first place, with French and Yugoslavian visitors following. The total arrivals between 1956 and 1970 increased sixfold, with a stable average annual increase of over 15%. The introduced tourism product, with its unique features combining cultural, physical and recreational advantages, proved itself able to attract a considerable number of visitors.

This introductory stage of the new Greek tourism product attracted a tourism market with an increasingly high per capita expenditure rate of 1.77% average annual increase (and an average annual increase income rate of 14% by 1970). Despite the decreased rates experienced during the dictatorship regime in 1967 (proving the fragile nature of tourism demand), overall expenditure rose to a 28.3% average annual increase rate by 1970, forecasting a promising future (see also Figure 3.2).

3.5.2 The ‘Development’ Stage

By this stage, Greece exhibits the characteristics of a well-defined tourist destination, but experiences a number of significant changes between 1970-81 that help to differentiate this period from the previous and following stages. The arrivals in Greece
between the years 1970 and 1971 increased by 73.7%, generating an income increase of 57.6% from the previous year (1970). More importantly, the average per capita expenditure of the same year increased by 18.3% from the previous year, making 1971 'the golden year' of the Greek Tourism (Piou, 1993) and representing the starting point of a highly profitable ‘development’ stage within the Greek tourism product life cycle.

![Figure 3.2 Tourism Income and Per Capita Tourist Expenditure (GNTO, 1996)](image)

This is a period of 'boom' for the Greek tourism product, with arrivals steadily increasing by 15% (average annual rate) during 1970-81 and with receipts growing at an average annual increase rate of 25% (despite the negative effects of the Turkish invasion in Cyprus in 1974 and political problems 1975-76). During the decade 1970-80, Greek tourism enjoyed rapidly growing receipts and an increasing per capita tourist expenditure of 9.5% (average annual increase rate), which reached a peak in 1981. 1981 can be deemed to conclude the ‘development stage’ with tourist arrivals reaching 5,577,109 visitors, generating 1,881 billion US$, and a record average per capita expenditure of 369 US$.

The tourism supply in the form of legal accommodation reached 2,498 hotel units in 1971, representing an increase of 33.4% from the previous period, with increases to all types of accommodation including luxury and first class venues. The total accommodation capacity provided by the tourism industry increased at this stage by
111% or 285,956 bed places, with a dramatic 194% increase of bed places in high class hotels, indicative of the potential of the Greek tourism product. Since 1971, the total of overnight stays follows an equally positive course, showing a dramatic increase rate of 44.5% from the previous decade, reaching 30,623,057 night-stays in 1981.

However, despite the promising increases of newly constructed accommodation units over this period, a great emphasis still lay with relatively low class hotel establishments, and especially with a new form of small scale accommodation termed 'rent rooms'; the establishment of which signaled a continuation, if not a reinforcement of, an over-reliance on relatively low quality, low spending tourism, with consequent impacts on overall tourism product quality and on the environment.

3.5.3 The 'Stagnation' of the Greek Tourist Product

Tourism expenditure follows a diminishing course after 1981, signaling the beginning of a period of 'stagnation' for the Greek tourism industry. Average per capita expenditure actually fell by 17.8% between 1981 and 1982. Despite some optimistic interpretations of the tourism performance between 1981 and 1994, the majority of authors and economists emphasise the significance of this diminishing expenditure. The apparent increasing income is justified by increased arrivals, but not a commensurate increased expenditure. The level of expenditure in this period is lower or equal to that of the 1970's, indicating a 'mass' and therefore low spending tourist profile.

In 1994, 11,230,854 visitors traveled to Greece, - a significant number of arrivals. However, this figure represents a decline of annual average increase to 5.8%, compared with the constant increase of 15% in the previous decade. This is a significant statistic, illustrating that a 'stagnation phase' has been reached. In 1991, the total of overnight stays of 41,467,517 were analogous to those of 1981 (41,032,029), further illustrating the stagnation, despite the fact that the increased arrivals (11,230,854) of the same period might be interpreted as encouraging. The increased arrivals resulted in an excess construction of tourist accommodation that reached 6,991 units, in order to satisfy large numbers concentrated in certain areas, during certain months of the year, representing
the classic over-concentration characteristics of mass tourism.

Indicative of the degradation of the tourism product over this period is the decreased growth in luxury and first class hotel units and bed places over this period. In addition, two other changes took place over this period which signal developmental stagnation. Firstly, the average overnight stays rate and the accommodation occupancy level in hotel units fell; while secondly, the number of illegal accommodation units rose enormously. Estimates of these illegal accommodation forms stand at around 1,000,000 bed places in ‘rent rooms’, representing one of the most problematic issues in Greek tourism development, since this number significantly exceeds the total of bed places within legal hotel units in this period (Kasimati et al, 1995). The degradation of the tourism infrastructure and services reflect the dramatic change of the tourist profile towards visitors with low incomes and spending, and associated cultural behaviour (typical characteristics of mass tourism), that led to the construction of low class accommodation units and a consequent decrease of high class accommodation and per capita spending.

The oversupply of tourist accommodation, responding to the increased arrivals, has not brought an equivalent income growth, since in this period the overall income from tourism receipts shows an average annual growth rate of only 7.3%. This represents a percentage decrease of 70.6% from the previous ‘development’ period (see mean rate, figure 3.3), and generates an average annual per capita expenditure growth rate of less than 1% (0.59%).

The over concentration of tourism activity in a small number of regions and particularly coastal areas inevitably resulted in a degradation of the physical environment, decline in the quality of tourism services and in the quality of life for the local communities. By 1991, 63% of all hotel units and 71% of the total bed spaces were concentrated in six main tourism areas; those of Athens, Crete, the Aegean islands, Chalkidiki, Magnisia and Corfu, - a fact which maximises the negative impacts of ineffective infrastructure, pollution and declining resident-tourist relationships.
Figure 3.3 Rate of tourism income in Greece and its mean between the different stages.

This spatial polarisation of accommodation establishments between areas became one of the main features of the alteration of the initial Greek tourism infrastructure towards a mass tourism product. Greece as a 'wanderlust' destination of the 'after war years' became a typical 'sunlust' area, with two-thirds of the total hotel bed places located on the islands and with 90% of the customers primarily visiting Greece for 'sun and relaxation', according to a GNTO survey (GNTO, 1985).

The 'new' mass tourism product is subject to high seasonality of demand. Accommodation lodgings are withdrawn from the tourism market during the winter season and are utilised to capacity during the summer months. Authors (like Leontidou, 1991) describe this seasonality as "among the most extreme in Europe and increasing with time", reinforced by the effective loss of interest in the 'cultural areas' (Athens, Delphi, Epidavros) and the orientation towards the climate and physical features of the coastal areas and islands. Studies over this recent period show extreme peaks of arrivals and overnight stays during the summer months. Leontidou (1991), examining the fluctuations of demand for travel in Greece at different times in the year for 1981, shows that 61.6% of the arrivals and 66.7% of overnight stays were concentrated between June and September. Ten years later, arrivals follow an even more exaggerated rate of seasonal concentration, with May to September receiving 76% in 1990, 78% in 1991 and 79% in 1992 (GNTO, 1993), or with four out of five tourists visiting Greece...
in the high summer.

Although public incentives were introduced to tackle the seasonal character of tourism in Greece, attempting temporal dissipation through the distribution and expansion of tourism activity at other times of the year, they proved ineffective and unable to ameliorate the seasonality that has become one the most problematic features of the Greek tourism product. The degradation of the environment and the low cost-low quality tourism services offered, are unable to satisfy a tourism market that increasingly recognises the negative elements of saturated tourism areas and is gradually developing a critical and resource-oriented pattern of choice and behaviour. A 1984-85 GNTO survey evaluating the tourism services and infrastructure provided to the tourism market, offers a revealing response to questions on the environment and quality of services. The categories ‘bad’ and ‘average’ to describe the services offered by accommodation units were used by the 57% of the respondents, while 47% of the sample described the hygienic conditions as ‘average’ and 41% chose ‘bad’ or ‘average’ to describe the transportation provision.

The lack of long term planning can in Greece be shown to have led to the characteristic problems of mass tourism destinations. A saturated environment and the low cost of production has created mass tourism consumption with tenuous economic and social benefits. The visits to historical attractions by relatively high spending tourists have been replaced by rapidly increased demand for sandy beaches, sun and sea; “the low cost production of which dictates concentrated tourism services in a small number of areas with high degrees of accessibility (air travel system) and mass organised travel modes” (Komilis, 1986). Evaluating the product features in its ‘stagnation’ phase of the life cycle, it is noticeable that low level of ‘parity’ (Burke and Resnick, 1991) with the past product is lost. The new tourism product has less quality, and attracts lower spending visitors, who cause higher cost impacts. Other developed Mediterranean destinations offer an homogenous basic tourism product and have suffered similar impacts, before tackling the problems. Spain, Italy, Malta and Portugal have always been the main competitors to Greece, offering an equivalent tourism product and services, but they too are experiencing similar negative effects of a rapid and uncontrolled tourism development. In the 1990’s, another danger to these established
tourism-receiving areas lies in destinations established in the late 1970s/early 1980s within the European tourism market, such as Turkey, Tunisia, Morocco and Cyprus, which despite offering a product with very similar characteristics, depend highly on a market dissatisfied with the low quality services of the traditional and much-visited mass tourism destinations. The example of Turkey, establishing a differentiated tourism offer through good quality services, constitutes the major competitive threat to the Greek tourism product.

These are the now classic features of Mediterranean mass tourism. The characteristic loss of the ‘uniqueness’ of Greek tourism of the 1960s has been replaced by a new tourism form whose main features are standardisation and mass consumption of the 4 S's. Although these generated high rates of arrivals and income by 1981, the product has gradually created a saturated tourism environment, reducing quality and expenditure, and is in great need of differentiation in order to survive the challenges of the decades to come.

3.6 Socio-economic Impacts of Tourism in Greece: A Cost and Benefit Analysis

During the after war years, the Greek economy has been characterised by a chronic and steadily growing merchandise trade deficit, and tourism had early been suggested as a partial solution. Between 1981 and 1991 this deficit reached an average of 30%, and 31.4% in 1988, and this represented 40.4% of the total value of exports and 17.7% of imports. In 1990 tourism receipts represented 58% of all export receipts and in the period January - November 1991, 61.2% (Briassoulis, op cit). The importance of tourism receipts for the Greek national economy is more evident when they are examined in relation to the ‘invisible receipts’. GNTO estimates the total 2,586m US$ tourism receipts (through banking transactions) as 25.7% of the invisible receipts for 1990 and 24.8% for 1992. In addition, the inclusion of receipts from credit cards, etc, increase the previous amounts to 48.6% of the invisible receipts for 1990 and 44.7% for 1992.

The net impact of tourism is calculated by subtracting the negative impact (foreign exchange expenditure) from the positive one (total receipts from foreign tourism), a
number that has been proved positive. A number of analysts (see e.g. Leontidou, 1991) have shown that the share of tourist receipts in the country's Gross Domestic Product followed an increasing course from 1.6% in 1960 to 2.4% in 1970, to 4.9% in 1978 reaching 10% in the 1980's (and compared with 8.5% and 8% for Spain and Portugal, respectively, according to EU analyses). The multiplier of the tourism receipts is currently estimated by the GNTO as 1.9, when the general services multiplier is 1.28, the agriculture, fishery and forestry multiplier as 1.6, and transport as 1.8. The share of contribution of tourism into the development of other sections of the economy is estimated by the GNTO to be between 30 and 38%, compared with 16% of the total of services.

Authors also emphasise the importance of tourism as a generator of direct and indirect employment in Greece, although the data available does not accurately reflect the actual number of jobs generated, due to the scale of unreported jobs, because these are sometimes second jobs, and with female labour not always counted as employment. This also not reported. The recording of indirect employment is even more problematic and studies vary considerably. According to KEPE studies (1984 in Briassoulis, 1992) on tourism employment, it is estimated that direct employment in tourism grew considerably after 1966 with 23,500 employed staff, rising to 335,000 in 1988, representing 7.2% of total national employment. Additionally, between 1970 and 1980 direct employment grew dramatically by 265%, with estimates suggesting that the indirect employment increased by 270% over the same period. According to the five year Development Plan 1983-1987, total direct employment in tourism in 1987 was 160,000 employees at the peak season, or 200,000 if indirect employment is added. Since then, Athanasiou (1995) has estimated an annual average growth rate of 4.03% for the period 1971-81, diminishing the following decade (1981-91) to 3.69%.

However, interpretation of the above estimates should be treated with caution. Some authors (like Kasimati et al, 1995) emphasise that the importance has been underestimated, and she claims that the total tourism employment probably exceeds the official estimates by 100%, since the indirect and seasonal employment cannot be accurately traced. What the figures show is that the contribution of tourism to regional development through job generation is undoubtable. Areas suffering from population
decline managed to improve local economic conditions, provide income to people and local businesses, and improve infrastructure and quality of life, through tourism.

However, following the developmental pattern of mass tourism, employment became seasonal and unevenly distributed in space. Tourism-related employment in Athens supported 40.36% of the country’s total tourism employment in 1971, which fell to 28.67% in 1981 and 26.16% in 1991. Conversely, newly developed coastal areas and the islands dramatically increased their share of tourism employment. Crete, for example, occupied 26.08% of the total of tourism employment by 1991, and the Ionian islands from 2.88% in 1971, increased to 8.20% in the 1980’s, reaching 16.73% in 1991. This increased polarisation of employment into certain areas has driven other areas into decline, with a loss of population. Regions like Thrace, Epiros, Thessaly and Northern Aegean, for example, occupy in total trace shares (4.66%) of total tourism and general employment.

Despite the problems and inequalities, it is generally accepted that the importance of tourism to Greek economic development has been crucial. From a regional development perspective, tourism has offered jobs and income to isolated regions and contributed to the reduction of population migration to large urban areas. A large number of islands were inaccessible in the 1950’s with a declining economy and an aging population. Then, with state’s intervention, isolated places received a significant amount of public investment on infrastructure creation and accessibility links with national and international centres. During the period 1950-1960, significant public investment was provided to improve and sometimes create an efficient infrastructure in terms of road, sea and air accessibility, connecting a large number of islands and coastal areas with Athens, Pireaus and the rest of Europe. Kasimati et al (1995) refers to the ‘opening’ of an accessibility line between Greece and Europe when a ferry-boat connection between Italy and the Greek mainland was established. By the 1970s, several islands had already been directly connected with European cities by charter flights and, according to Leontidou’s (1991) study, more than 50% of charter arrivals occurred at island airports such as Rhodes, Kos, Corfu and Helaklion (Crete).

Apart from the significant public support for the creation of appropriate infrastructure,
the public intervention through incentives and subsidies was vital for the establishment of a positive environment for the operation of private enterprise. Subsidies that reached 40-70% of the private investment boosted tourism development, creating local jobs, income and support to related industries. These policy incentives were targeted at peripheral area development which, after the mid 1970s, was focused on “channeling additional income to local population family units and small businesses” (Leontidou, 1991) using small-scale tourism programmes. The economic impact of small-scale tourism was proved to be positive and effective in securing a significant and increasing amount of income for peripheral localities. However, there is a lack of relevant research recording accurately the impact of the above policies on local communities. The exception is a KEPE study (in Kasimati et al, 1995) according to which, by 1980 significant levels of repatriation occurring particularly in the touristically developing areas, with a consumerate improvement of ‘quality of life’ indicators. With native people returning back to their origins and an improving local economy, tourism has been considered by many as a panacea for regional economic recession.

However, these positive economic and social tourism impacts to Greek regions and islands, although they exist, are not without costs, and have more recently been questioned by various interpretations which have highlighted a number of problematic outcomes of the policies implemented. Analysts (KEPE) suggest that a closer examination of the public and private investment distribution shows that the last two decades evidence a significant flow towards the already established tourism regions (Cyclades, Dodecanese, Ionian islands, Crete). This continuation of the uneven spatial distribution of tourism investment has created further saturated environments, offering relatively low quality tourism services. This false decentralisation of tourism activity, is in fact largely spatially polarised, concentrated in a certain number of regions, disrupting certain local production sectors and labour, and congesting the physical and cultural assets which initially formed the basic local tourism product.

Briassoulis (1992) highlights the negative impacts drawn mainly from structural problems of the Greek economy, and especially the significant degree of the ‘underground’ tourist economy, manifested in the considerable number of tourist accommodation units which are not officially declared, and are thus excluded from
taxation and quality control by the GNTO. According to conservative estimates, there were 200,000 undeclared bed-places in 1983, representing an income of 8-10 billion drachmas, reaching 400,000 bed-places and 68 billion DRH by 1990 (Briassoulis, 1992). Even though there is some benefit from this economic impact of the growth of the small-scale tourism establishments in terms of income remaining within the localities, the environmental impacts are highly negative, because of illegal building and unrecorded activities deteriorating the surroundings and threatening the long term viability of the place.

A different evaluation of the costs and benefits of tourism development in Greece presented by the CEPR (Briassoulis, 1992) points to the relatively low significance of the tourist exchange flowing into the country. Domestic production of tourist goods in fact requires imports, which represent 13.5% of actual tourist consumption. Additionally, (according to the same study) due to the high degree of external dependence on foreign tour operators, the actual tourist expenditure which benefits the country is only 40%-50% of the total tourist income, the rest of which leaks back to generating countries through the tour operating companies. In 1984, although tourists were paying an average $625 for the travel product, only $250-300 was actually remaining in the local economy.

Assessing this limited or reduced Greek tourism performance, GNTO refers to the economic conditions of this period that negatively influenced the development, such as the high inflation, the increased public debt and the major cuts in public investments, which produced a low and uncompetitive Greek national economy, and made Greece unattractive to foreign investors, who turned towards other tourism markets. However, the majority of authors analysing the reasons for tourism service degradation agree on the big responsibility for this which has to be taken by the public sector, that proved unable to effectively exploit and control the rapid development of Greek tourism.

Along with the public sector's inefficiency in setting limits and putting in place control mechanisms, it is evident that the structural problems of Greek tourism threaten its future development. The vast majority of tourists use packaged holidays, organised and sold by foreign tour operators. Estimates suggest that tour operators control 56% of
Chapter 3

The Development of Tourism in Greece and the Characteristic Features of its Mass Tourism Product

European tourism. Their ability in controlling the significant foreign demand for tourism in Greece has produced a tourism product form appropriate for mass consumption, with the main characteristics being the low price, the average-low quality services for tourists, with a low spending tourist profile. Their strong competition in flights and packaged holidays have generated demand for cheap accommodation and services. This fact has resulted in a low quality production response in the tourism receiving areas. The external dependency of Greek tourism on European tourism operators, the demand-led provision of low quality tourist establishments and services, low spending tourists and the concentration of tourism activity into certain regions, constitute the major problematic issues of Greek tourism today.

Chiotis and Coccossis (1992) suggest that the structural problems of Greek tourism also include a lack of entrepreneurs and ‘appropriately trained personnel’, which has affected the level and quality of tourism development. Those areas of tourism development rely mainly on small, family-based firms, which generally lack resources, organisational ability to market their special product features, have relatively poor quality services, and lack promotional abilities and channels with foreign tour operators. Their position worsens in areas lacking basic infrastructure facilities, which cannot effectively satisfy tourist needs and nor can they offer quality services. Kasimati et al., (1995) suggest that a crucial problem of the Greek tourism product and its future development is the poor quality image that mass tourism promotes for Greece. This negative reputation puts tourism into the vicious circle of “degrading tourism production - bad image and perception of Greece as a low quality and cheap destination - low quality demand - bad quality accommodation and services”.

The focus of recent demand towards the specific ‘sun-sea-sand’ tourism product generates a problem that both the public and private sector consider as most difficult to tackle: seasonality. Tourism activity, being concentrated within a 3 to 4 month period, exploits resources and infrastructure, leaving facilities and staff under-used for long periods of the year. It is observed that in those regions with a high degree of tourism dependency, the large majority of accommodation establishments and relevant amenities remain unoccupied during long periods, resulting in an under-used and congested built environment, with employees facing a seasonal occupation, and an
insecure future. This seasonal character of employment within mass tourism, works as an anti-incentive for interested parties to follow tourism education and specialised training, which in turn leads to unqualified personnel being employed. In addition, the lack of regulatory public mechanisms to control employment and training, has resulted in low quality services and amenity management (Kasimati et al, 1995).

The use of tourism as an effective tool of regional policy in Greece had enjoyed many supporters and was included in the developmental plans, with the notion that “the dispersal of tourism funds throughout the country and especially in regions which have been deprived of other development funds is important in the process of increasing regional income” (DP, 1972). However, authors evaluating the overall regional policy for tourism in Greece have more recently suggested that the results do not “permit them to conclude that the goals set and the measures taken have been successful” (Konsolas and Zaharatos, 1992). The fact that four traditional tourist areas (Athens, Rhodes, Corfu and Crete) represent a concentration of more than 50% of total tourist capacity, despite the fact that they are placed in the least subsidised zones (D and E), shows that the incentives policy for the regionalisation of tourism have proved unable to attract private investment to regions other than those traditionally established. The lack of appropriate planning and equitable policy resulted in the concentration of hotel units and tourism activity in already established areas, resulting in a series of negative environmental issues that are, or will be, translated into serious economic problems.

Tourism policy relating to the environment in Greece has always been reactive to problems, rather than proactive. The majority of legislative regulations are used to ‘correct’ established negative conditions, rather than setting regulatory standards according to the level and types of tourism development and needs (GNTO, 1994). The main characteristic of environmental legislation regarding tourism in Greece is based on regulation of health standards and control of pollution sources, rather than on levels of carrying capacity and ‘sensitivity’ limits of the host environment (Troumbis, 1994).

It is evident that at the initial life cycle stage of ‘establishment’ (1960’s) of the Greek tourism product, the policy emphasis was given to permits for individual projects and action towards local issues (Troumbis, 1994). Using reactive mechanisms, policy was
driven towards the restoration of establishments and an increase of development under micro-economic perspectives of reducing the production costs and short term investments. In the 1990’s, it is recognised that a more holistic and long term approach to tourism planning and the production function, is necessary, that there is a need for a differentiated tourism product, and a need for operating in a proactive manner that foresees and controls future development, giving great attention to the long run effects of development.

In 1970s, there was an attempt to develop a National Physical Plan in order “to organise spatially the development of tourist activities by designating areas for tourism development”. However, the increasing demand for the Greek tourism product of the same period produced attitudes that favoured short-term management and economic exploitation of resources, rather than a long-term planning perspective. Under strong economic and social pressures, the Plan was never approved or implemented. At this point, instead, certain area-wide controls for tourism development were attempted. In 1984, for example, tourist establishments in rural areas had to meet the standards of the ‘Location Permit’ before ‘Building Permits’ were issued, in order to control potential conflicts of land-use in the area.

In addition, the ‘Law on the Environment’ of 1986 saw the “designation of special areas for protection, conservation, or development of ‘productive activities’” (Chiotis and Coccossis, 1992). Since the 1970s also, the GNTO has designed a special programme in order to prevent the alteration of local physiognomy and architectural styles, as has occurred in the mass tourism centres. The period of rapid tourism development of the 1960s and 1970s, resulted in aesthetic pollution with construction totally incompatible with the local architectural character. The local colour vanished amongst the new large scale establishments, built fast and with consideration only to low cost infrastructure and income benefit. In response, special incentives were provided in order to protect and restore traditional buildings, and grants offered to property owners who wished to refurbish their old houses in the traditional parts of touristic towns, with the conditions that they must use local materials and architectural styles (Briassoulis, 1992). Recently, with recognition of negative environmental effects and increasing competition threatening tourism in Greece, attention has shifted towards
long-term tourism development planning. Suggested initiatives to control tourism activity involve the designation of areas "which can be considered to have exceeded their 'capacity' for tourism and need upgrading" (GNTO, 1994).

Almost 90% of tourism activity and its relevant production sectors are currently found along the coastal areas of the country. Although there is a lack of specific studies measuring the impacts of tourism activity on the environment, tourism analysts agree on the high level of deterioration of the physical environment. Examining the possibility of using 'product policy tools' for tourism facilities during all stages of the product's life cycle, Troumbis (1994) produced a matrix of 'impact evaluation' identifying five 'fields' of environmental importance (ecological surroundings, wildlife, sewage, water and energy) during a three stage cycle (establishment, operation and extension). According to the OECD (see Chiotis et al, 1992) "the relationship between tourism and environmental quality is characterised by dynamic feedback mechanisms". Tourism is attracted and established in areas of high environmental quality and amenity. The development is initially based on the differentiated and quality characteristics of the place, that makes it known and attractive. Decline occurs when the place "sells more than it can produce", the quality falls and the numbers decrease. The alteration of the local environment towards the establishment of an 'urbanised' infrastructure results in a series of problems, mainly due to the lack of necessary and appropriate mechanisms and the consequent inability to meet the needs of a growing visiting population (Theohari, 1994).

Island, and coastal areas affected most by the negative impacts of tourism, appear to face a disturbed eco-balance, with water being seriously affected and threatening not only wildlife, but tourists' and locals' health. Water pollution, occurs when most accommodation units and mainly the illegal uncontrolled small scale establishments discharge their sewage untreated into the sea. In addition, the increased water transportation also affects the quality of coastal water. The serious exploitation of water resources, along with the lack of sufficient supply networks and the local supply systems (designed to serve a much smaller population), create problems like water shortages and poor quality water supplied during the peak season. Sewage production by the large increase in tourist arrivals and associated consumption is one of the most
difficult problems to solve. The "institutional and financial weakness of local authorities to cover the basic needs in terms of infrastructure, and the fragmentation and dispersion of the legal and illegal tourist accommodation, have not allowed the construction of autonomous units for biological cleaning in tourist regions", (Konsolas and Zaharatos, 1992). The risk of groundwater contamination is very high from the large volume of untreated sewage and rubbish, and the limited ability of the subsoil to absorb large quantities in dry areas.

The temporal and locational over-concentration of accommodation amenities and tourist arrivals in small resorts, results in a number of negative impacts, usually met in urban areas. Traffic congestion, air and noise pollution near the entertainment places, even though it is difficult to confirm that these are caused exclusively by tourism, are certainly increased significantly by congested tourism-related activities. With the intense urbanisation of the tourist areas, destruction of rare species habitats occurs, threatening species like the sea turtle and the Mediterranean monk seal, alongside other less high profile environmental damage.

The intense exploitation of the resources that make an area touristically attractive, often leads to the degeneration of other productive sectors of the local economy, and to a high level of dependency on the tourism activity, or what Golfi (1994) terms the 'monoculture' of tourism replacing traditional production activities. In the case of traditional mass tourism centres, social life is often impoverished in the tourist off-season as local people abandon the area to work in Athens or abroad, leaving the community increasingly vulnerable. Hatzidakis (1994) illustrates the fact that despite the positive contribution of tourism to the 'integration' of some peripheral localities into more global societal environments, there is a great danger of the 'assimilation' of foreign characteristics, resulting in a loss of local identity. There is a lack of studies measuring the social and cultural impacts of tourism in Greece, with the exception of Tsartas' (1989) systematic analysis of the negative social impacts of tourism in the islands of Ios and Serifos. These islands constitute a micrography of rapidly developed tourism areas. His list of impacts can be used to illustrate the wider identified effects of tourism on Greek destinations and can be seen to be disconcertingly representative. This study has identified a high level of the 'demonstration effect' (identified elsewhere by mainstream
tourism analysts) among the local population who try to "keep up with the foreign tourists by imitating their life style, dressing and general behaviour. Young people speak a mixture of Greek and English, behave like the tourists and in general adopt behaviour foreign to their culture and lifestyle".

Excessive pressure from tourists from one particular country in one area often results in 'foreign' dominance over the local culture, and the "associated loss of local social life" (Chiotis and Coccossis, 1992). Within a local environment altered by foreign images, in order to help its 'customers' feel comfortable and less insecure, the dynamics involved ultimately work against the interests of tourists and locals, as the former lose the benefits of enriching their experience of another culture, and the latter lose their local identity and both may face the problems of 'social tensions' (ibid.). The creation and promotion of a 'staged authenticity' in tourist places, by the use e.g. of traditional feasts and decorative artifacts, creates cultural stereotypes and transforms historic realities.

Commercialised human relations between locals and tourists, resulting from increased tourist enterprenial activity, "break the ties of solidarity and cooperation among locals, and lose the sense of hospitality for which Greece was renowned" (Tsartas, 1989). The promotion of certain professions and personality types as the 'successful entrepreneur' with an independent, easy and interesting lifestyle results, for many, in the abandonment of other productive occupations, particularly by young people seeking tourism-related lifestyles and professions, and ignoring the dangers of the volatile and fragile tourism industry. The peace and often strong ethics of the locality are disturbed by increased crime rates (thefts, rapes, drugs and prostitutes) and the introduction of behaviour that contradicts traditional morals and negatively affects the local community.

Conclusions

The Chapter aimed to provide a background knowledge of the evolution process for Greek tourism, that has come to determine the nature and profile of the contemporary tourism product. The need to develop and support a fast growing industry led to heavy
state intervention and produced five year plans which aimed to offer ‘good practice’
development models to boost development and exploit the country’s potential as an
important tourism generator. Great emphasis was placed on tourism development as a
means of regenerating the country’s economy, through large scale infrastructural
construction and financial support to new private investment. However, uneven public
investment incentives for increasing private initiative and an increasingly strong and
autonomous private sector, resulted in the unbalanced distribution of tourist activity and
regional inequalities. The formation of tourism areas departed from the initial objective
of more even regional tourism development, and resulted instead in the concentration of
tourism activity in a limited number of tourism centres. State action which aimed to
“harmonise tourism activity” in different regions proved inefficient and unable to
influence established tourism development schemes. Recognition of the increasing
problematic features of tourism activity was evident in a number of policy declarations,
which aimed to regulate and direct private investment through specific measures. However, policy inconsistencies and lack of effective regional distribution policies,
along with increased tour operator control over tourist choice and local tourism, led the
Greek tourism product into its ‘stagnation’ phase, with saturated income growth,
despite continued (if slowing) arrival increases.

Tourism’s economic contribution to the development of Greece is crucial to the national
economy, in offering jobs and income to undeveloped regions and directly improving
the basic infrastructure of the country. However, the last decade particularly has
evidenced the nature of tourism activity, which has offered unevenly distributed jobs
and income, environmental degradation, low quality services and a declining image for
the country. Greece, like a number of Mediterranean destinations is paying now for its
past gluttony for rapid economic benefits. The 1990’s signaled the start of a ‘common
consciousness’ for policy makers, along with some private investors, that product
differentiation through sustainable management practice is now necessary to produce a
new regenerated tourism product with long term performance capacities. Subsequent
chapters aim to highlight some of the emerging information that demonstrates the start
of a new developmental era for the Greek tourism product, that offers hope of shifting it
to, and sustaining it in, the ‘rejuvenation stage’ of its life cycle.
Chapter 4

Methodology

Introduction

The act of perceiving and examining a phenomenon, question or subject has received numerous terms and has been grouped into various research categories. Recognised or 'unconsciously assumed' (Ernest, 1994) research takes place within 'paradigms', defined by Guba and Lincoln (1994) as "a set of basic beliefs that deal with ultimates or first principles", and by Patton (1978) as a general perspective, "a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world". It represents a world view that defines, for its holder, the nature of the world, his individual place in it and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts.

4.1 Research Theory: Paradigm Debate

Authors like Ernest (1994) and Guba and Lincoln (1994) agree about the existence of three explicit components or 'basic beliefs' that define the paradigms. First, ontology examines the 'nature of reality' or the 'status of the social world' (Sparkes, 1992), and how things really work. Second, epistemology deals with the relationship between the 'knower or the would-be knower' and what can be understood as shared human 'knowledge', or individual knowledge through 'learning' (Ernest, 1994). Finally, methodology corresponds to the appropriate methods and techniques that "control possible confounding factors" and validate the generated knowledge (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).

Paradigms as 'human constructions' according to the above principles, often claim to have a "monopoly on the truth" (Ernest, 1994) but they are subject to human error and "produce nothing more than well confirmed theories, relying more on 'persuasiveness' and 'utility' than 'proof' " (Guba and Lincoln, 1994).
Denzin and Lincoln (1994) offer an intraparadigm analysis commencing from the positivist or scientific research paradigm, where knowledge of phenomena may be derived from scientific generalisations, "some of which take the form of cause-effect laws" (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). The true state of affairs as determined by the paradigm's outcome is often doubted and accused of being deterministic and unsustainable (Ernest, 1994). However, the epistemological paradigm argues that when the validity of research is threatened, appropriate strategies should control the influences and ensure that the findings are true, while methodology is concerned with adding questions and hypotheses tested empirically to support this process.

The interpretative (or naturalistic) research paradigm attempts to interpret and understand the subject by using qualitative methods and especially case studies. For some authors (e.g. Guba and Lincoln, 1994), this paradigm is characterised more as constructivism, because research "depends for its form and content on the individual person holding the constructions". Therefore, interpretativist methods are not 'guarantors of truth' as they are in positivism, but highly dependent on the skills and sensitivities of the researcher. "What we are left with in interpretative research is a situation in which multiple interpretations are possible regarding the same group under study, each of which can be coherent in themselves. That is, there can be many truths available" (Sparkes, 1992). Clearly there are problems for the researcher in the choice of a multitude of interpretations of a given event or process.

The critical theoretical research paradigm, alongside interpretative understanding, undertakes and is underpinned by a critical dialectical perspective, with a special interest in social and institutional change, participant engagement and validation. This theory considers the subject group within a wider social context and focuses on "the ways in which the social processes that are evident in the subject group are mediated by structural relations" (Sparkes, 1992). There has been no sufficient proof that certain paradigms offer the 'right' results, and thus could also be "replaced by other paradigms which will not provide a closer approximation to the 'truth' but will simply be more informed and sophisticated than the visions we presently entertain" (ibid.).

Qualitative research has been criticised by paradigm analysts because it is open to
multiple interpretations. For the purposes of this study, therefore, it seems appropriate to avoid categorisation of the research process within one of the above paradigms. This is particularly the case since it tries to capture the individuality of particular circumstances and contexts that the interpretative paradigm describes, while attempting to present a critical insight into the social and institutional reality that tourism operates in, and the factors which would influence the development of new forms of tourism.

4.2 Research and Theoretical Considerations

A number of different theories were reviewed and evaluated in the process of adopting an appropriate theoretical framework for the study. For instance, Jessop’s (1990) theoretical model of ‘strategic relations’ provides a framework for addressing the role of the state in areas of social action, explained by reference to accounts of the specific economic, political and social structures within which state activities take place, and of the struggles and conflicts which occur between individuals and interested groups. The result of the changing status of socio-economic structures is examined within a transnational, as well as national, perspective and policy developments are regarded as the result of political, economic and cultural interactions.

This macro level approach, reviewing the wider social processes, focuses inter alia on the ways in which the power of dominant groups and individuals is articulated and the results this has on policy developments. While useful, this is not the central focus of the present study. Appropriate theory for the study of tourism policy would be that which provides not only a macro level analysis of the wider social and economic structure, but most importantly a micro level examination of the ideologies, values, expectations and evaluations of participating actors. Houlihan (1991) adds the question of ‘meaning’, which attempts to understand how actors “make sense of their world and the consequences that this has for the policy process”. Thus, at a meso level of examination, the present study aims to uncover the characteristics of inter-organisational patterns and issues, and how these are articulated in the formulation of policy objectives.

A second theory evaluated as being appropriate for the purposes of adopting a
theoretical basis within this study, is the concept of 'Policy Community', defined by Richardson and Jordan in 1979 as the "relationship involved in committees, the community of departments and groups...that perhaps better accounts for policy outcomes than do examinations of party stances, of manifestos or of parliamentary influence". The notion of 'Policy Community' as having an explanatory value in exploring the way in which policy is made has been dividing theorists for some time. Policy Community has been used rather liberally to describe all types of group-government relations. Authors like Jordan and Richardson (1982) tend to describe relationships between groups and government agencies, rather than explain how these affect outcomes. There is no real distinction made between the intensity of these relationships, and the community is viewed as being relatively open. Houlihan's (1991) view of a 'Policy Community' is one that "takes the span and intensity of issue interest/control as being defining characteristics". Policy actors with a direct or indirect interest in the policy or implementation field, include those who own, manage or work for organisations in the relevant industry; i.e. governmental organisations, local authorities, private enterprises, pressure groups etc.

Expanding the notion of Policy Community, the 'Policy Network' is used as a means of categorising the relationships that exist between groups and the government. According the work of Smith (1997) on policy networks, because power is the result of dependency, based on an exchange of resources, governments and groups have an incentive to build networks. These formed networks exchange information leading to the recognition that a group has an interest in a certain policy area. Whilst membership of a policy community is limited, in a network it can be extremely large. Unlike the Policy Community, in which actors with "a general concern for policy" are included, the Policy Network includes actors who are involved in developing policy responses to an issue. Similarly, Houlihan (1991) gives an insight into how parties become excluded from specific networks. The creation of a Policy Network to deal with an expressed problem or issue depends on the consensus or strength of mutual interests within the Policy Community. This enormous group of interested parties is put under the wider concept of 'Policy Universe', from which "those actors and potential actors are drawn who share a common identity or interest" (Houlihan, 1991).
The wide conceptualisation of the theory of 'Policy Community' has generated disagreement in terms of definition and appropriate use, particularly regarding certain question areas. Firstly, there is the problem of 'membership', i.e. potential or actual involvement in responding to issues of actors who could be "a relatively small group of participants in the policy process which has emerged to deal with some identifiable class of problems that have or could become the concern of central government" (Friend, 1974). Additionally, the 'centrality of profession' is argued by Houlihan to be one aspect of membership on which there is a high degree of agreement between professionals creating an 'influential lobby' within a policy community.

The second question that arises is one of the 'capacity' of the community to restrict entry to other communities which often conflict. Rhodes, for example (1985), sees that the "community is substantially closed to other communities and invariably to the general public".

The third question concerning the use of 'Policy Community' is the extent of the organisation and its structure. The pattern of resource dependency reflected within the communities, as well as 'implicit authority structures', could affect the extent and nature of integration.

The fourth issue identified in the same argument focuses on the importance of 'shared perceptions' of problems and solutions, attitudes and values, within the policy community. This would include the lack of common technical language or a unified view of the world across different organisations. The sharing of interests, attitudes and objectives shows a cooperative interaction of community institutions. Benson (1979) argues that the nature of this network interaction is based on a deeper social structure and that solutions to problems must follow the "fundamental features of the total social formation". Houlihan identifies the basis of power relations through a 'pragmatic source' such as 'resource dependence', referring to tangible or intangible products or activities "which policy actors require in order to further their interest".

Finally, the question of the 'range of issues' that the community deals with is another problem in refining the concept of Policy Community. The community handles
relevant issues which can either be resolved satisfactorily through its resources, or mistreated because of lack of interest or due to ‘ownership’ conflicts.

The use of a specific theoretical approach within the present research produces the danger of misleading or misinterpreting the research outcomes, since its structure does not necessarily correspond precisely to the models proposed. On the other hand, the conceptual flexibility offered by models like Jessop’s (1990) ‘Strategic Relations’ and ‘Policy Community’ (inter alia Jordan and Richardson, 1982; Houlihan, 1991) enables them to be adjusted or only partially utilised to provide a theoretical basis. In fact, the study does utilise both the macro level of analysis of ‘Strategic Relations’ and the descriptive/explanatory nature of the Policy Community approach. The following section reviews the methods required to satisfy the needs of a policy oriented research outcome.

4.3 Developing Policy Oriented Qualitative Research

Along with the concepts of Policy Community, Policy Networks etc., Houlihan (1991) also refers to the Policy Cycle as being valuable in interpreting the policy process. Hogwood and Gunn’s (1984) explanation of the Policy Cycle is seen as the most comprehensive description of the different stages of the process, some of which will be used for the purposes of this study. Initially, ‘issue research’ or ‘agenda setting’ describe the stages of how specific problems become transformed into potential public issues. An examination of the environment that gives rise to the issue under question justifies the inclusion of this issue within the agenda and the need for policy formulation. The second stage, ‘issue filtration’ is highly relevant to this study, since it involves the decisions regarding the “route that a policy (or a potential policy) will take through the political system and the resources of government that will be invested in its resolution and management” (Hogwood and Gunn, 1984). The ‘issue definition’ stage is where the problem/issue is clarified and redefined as the ownership of one particular community.

One of the key purposes of this research is also reflected in the fourth stage of the policy cycle: ‘forecasting’. The identified actors are asked to anticipate how the issue
will develop and the factors influencing the development, before they set "objectives and priorities" (fifth stage), "analyse the options" (sixth stage), "implement, monitor and control the policy" (seventh stage), "evaluate and review the results" (eighth stage), and "terminate or maintain" (ninth stage) the policy decided. This is clearly relevant to the issues described (Chapter 2) which face those responsible for Greek tourism policy, in terms of evaluating the policy options etc. for rejuvenating the tourism product.

Among a wide variety of research 'purposes' and reflecting Patton's (1990) view of a rational process for this type of study, the present work attempts a 'summative evaluation' of the extent to which it can contribute to decision making regarding a programme or intervention, and it will organise data and findings to inform potential recommendations. Following the same process, the present examination could be interpreted as a policy-related approach, where collected data can contribute to documenting "the existing state of affairs, to assess the feasibility of alternative outcomes, and to design the mechanisms for bringing about change" (Platt, 1972 in Patton, 1990).

The policy-research relationship is broadly the subject under study, with particular reference here to the development of sports tourism policy. The methodology for this type of work has been described in the literature as 'enlightenment', with its main task being to "encourage understanding and conceptualisation of the issue" (Finch, 1986). Rist (1981 in Finch, 1986) argues strongly for the valuable use of qualitative research in this type of 'enlightenment', which "must be based not on prefabricated or furtive encounters with the society, but on a long term and intense familiarity". He argues that qualitative research, with its longitudinal perspective, can reflect both developmental and comparative dimensions of the studied issue. Qualitative research is in the advantageous position of being able to describe the dimensions of the problem, because of the long term 'familiarity' with a specific environment and its actors, and can "pay particular attention to competing definitions of the situation, including the way in which participants themselves define the issue" (ibid.).

Qualitative research has long enjoyed the support of social scientists and its strengths
are used within this study to provide, for example, a study of social processes in their natural contexts; the capacity to provide descriptive detail which makes situations ‘comprehensible’; a capacity to study processes over time, including the policy-making process itself; and a capacity to reflect the subjective reality of people being studied, most importantly those who are the target groups for the policy action (Finch, 1986). Additionally, Shipman (1988) identifies a number of features which further confirm that qualitative research is appropriate for the aims of this study: e.g. its relevance for focusing on the social processes and the meaning given to those by the social actors; a ‘commitment’ to viewing events, action and values from the perspective of the people under study; the non-disturbance of the natural setting by the research process and the researcher; and finally, the capacity of research to be adjusted in order to allow for unexpected issues to turn up.

In the course of this study, the nature and potential of sports tourism development in Greece, and the actors’ perceptions of the factors influencing the development and position of sports tourism in the tourism industry, determined the principal focus of the examination. This ‘policy development’ oriented qualitative research has been chosen as being the most appropriate to investigate these issues, rejecting as it does more detached research methods and instead, getting close to research subjects, rather than keeping them at ‘arm’s length’ (Finch, 1986).

More recently, Miles and Huberman (1994) have supported the advantageous nature of qualitative research, particularly for its capacity to focus on “naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings”, providing ‘local groundedness’, collecting data in close proximity to a specific situation with the emphasis on a specific ‘case’. The richness of qualitative data provides for substantial descriptions of topics, but also allows us to ‘assess causality’ of issues studied over a sustained period. In studying the development of sports-oriented tourism in Greece, qualitative research was considered vital in collecting data on the ‘meaning’ people place on the events, processes and structures, and connecting these meanings to existing tourism policy. The above characteristics could be labeled as ‘interpretative’, since, as Tesch (1990) argues, interpretation is the ‘exegesis’, or the process of ‘meaning-making’, of the nature of the phenomenon.
More specifically within this overall qualitative approach, authors list 'case studies' under the interpretation approach for achieving 'meaning' for their studied subject. However, as Stake (1994) notes, case studies are not "a methodological choice, but a choice of subjects to be studied". Thus, even though the custom of labeling an examination as a case study is well established within the social sciences, this work argues that the results of the present analysis are also generalizable, or at least useful, to other mass tourism destinations in the Mediterranean, which are also stagnating in terms of tourism demand and are consequently interested in the rise of developing forms of tourism. The present examination of sports-oriented tourism shows generalisation (relevance) beyond the focused understanding of a small scale case study. This type of case study is defined by Stake (1994) as 'instrumental', satisfying the aims of this research, since it represents "other cases or because it illustrates a particular trait or problem". Therefore, the case is looked at in depth, its contexts scrutinised and its activities detailed, because this helps us pursue and understand the wider context relating to this subject.

The 'uniqueness of situations' argument, which focuses on the singularity of particular cases, can be challenged on a number of grounds, using traditional broad scale 'objections' and providing specific examples from this work. For example, the 'nature of the case' is often seen to have broader relevance. In this case, the 'nature of the case' is the emergence of new forms of tourism, like sports tourism, and their establishment increasingly within the mass tourism sector. This is a phenomenon common to a large number of Mediterranean destinations, and the research appears to have broader relevance despite the 'uniqueness' of individual destinations. Also suggesting a broader relevance is the 'historical background' of established mass tourism destinations and operations, which often follows common stages of development, such as: exploration, development and stagnation, leading to either decline or a repositioning of the tourism product offered. Thirdly, the 'physical setting' refers to the environment under study, which in this case offers numerous similarities to other mass tourism areas (e.g. Spain, Turkey) in terms of industry characteristics, operational procedures and organisational structure. In the same way, those informants through whom the case is studied belong to relatively common institution types, representing e.g. national tourist authorities dealing with public policy, and tourism operators from the private sector.
4.4 Research Design Process

4.4.1 The Planning Stage

The present study included several different planning stages within the research process and, utilising Morse's (1994) elements of research planning, can be summarised as:

a) Selecting the site; After identifying the topic under examination, it was necessary not only to locate sites of interest, but also to secure access to necessary sources of information. As the purpose of the study is the examination of sports related tourism policy issues, the need to include all levels of policy dictated the need for representation of relevant bodies at both central and local government levels. This included the Greek Ministry of Tourism (GNTO) at central government level and relevant departments of the different structures at the local government level, i.e. the Periphery, Prefecture, and City Councils. With reference to the requirements of the Policy Community approach, the private sector was also included through the official representative associations of tourism enterprises, hotel owners, travel agents and sports tourism operating companies. One of the key issues in the early stages, that secured the feasibility of the research process, was ensuring the cooperation of key informed sources, initially at the central and later at the local government level and with private sector operators. Access to, and review of, published and unpublished official documents at all levels also produced a considerable amount of secondary data which was useful in supporting, with evidence and background material, the knowledge produced through the qualitative interviews. Arrangements (through letters, phone calls and personal visits) took place before the interviews, informing the respondents of the areas of interest through a list of identified topic areas, for their preparation on issue definitions and contexts. This approach, though time consuming is seen to have greatly increased the quality of the subsequent interviews.

b) Selecting the strategy; Seeking the capacity to identify the existing scope and further potential of new tourism forms, like sports tourism, within two different types of environment (i.e. traditional established tourism areas and underdeveloped tourism
regions), the research strategy identified the need for detailed research across two sample areas, Crete for the first case and Thrace for the latter. This would be in addition to research which established the ‘central’ policy making and implementation viewpoint, identified as necessary in what has been a highly centralised state.

As detailed above, qualitative research was considered appropriate for the purpose of this study, depending on gaining a detailed insight into the sports tourism development process by interacting with key actors and potential actors in “their own language and terms - a territory controlled by the investigatees rather than the investigator” (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This again is seen to have contributed to the quality of the responses in many cases. Qualitative methods are traditionally seen as consisting of three types of data collection (see e.g. Patton, 1990): i) in-depth, open-ended interviews, ii) written documents and iii) direct observation. The data from interviews usually provides direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge, and was used in this way in this study.

For the collection of data in this study, open-ended interviews and analysis of written documents (both published and unpublished) were employed, at all levels of the policy hierarchy. Primary semi-structured interviews were used to extract key actors’ perceptions on their decisions (or non decisions) in policy making, the factors that influence government activity or inactivity, problematic or promising issues concerning sports tourism development etc. Secondary data was provided by written documents obtained from government departments referring to legislation, policy announcements and developmental proposals. Much of this material is valuable in terms of never having been published or researched in detail previously.

c) Validating data: Triangulation; Some authors have questioned the extent to which qualitative research gives ‘real’ answers and its ability to offer objective results. Objectivity in this context is comprised of two components: reliability and validity.

Kirk and Miller (1986) describe validity as “the extent to which the research gives the correct answer” and “is the issue of much contention over the organisation and events”. There are three main notions surrounding the validity issue. Sometimes a
measuring tool is so closely linked to the phenomena under study that the validity provided is obvious, and is termed as ‘apparent validity’. ‘Theoretical validity’ is reached when a method is consistent with an adequate theoretical approach. In this respect, from the perspective of either Jessop’s (1990) ‘Strategic Relations’ or Houlihan’s (1991) ‘Policy Community’ approach, the examination of key respondents’ perceptions of influences on developmental strategies (through semi-structured interviews), may be considered both relevant and valid, since the actors’ perceptions and interpretations are pursued or derived from relevant policy processes. Additionally, ‘instrumental validity’ refers to observations matching those generated by an alternative procedure.

Validity in qualitative research, then, is largely to do with description and explanation. Reliability of data, on the other hand, refers to the consistency of a measure or the extent to which a measurement procedure yields the same answer, however and whenever it is carried out. The problem with interview data reliability appears when, due to the nature of the examined organisations, the process of data collecting cannot be repeated. This is most important when dealing with data from developing organisations which, within a changing socio-economic environment, may produce unstable observations through time.

Even though Shipman (1988) argues that reliability in social research can rarely be completely achieved, a careful predesigned instrument, such as structured interviews, can be used to capture respondents’ perceptions and views on the studied subject, thus minimising researcher bias and keeping external factors that would influence the responses under control. In addition, selecting interviewees at all levels of tourism policy or relevant status is a way of securing valid information, free from ‘elite bias’, which according to Huberman and Miles (1994) occurs by “overweighing data from articulate, well informed, usually high-status informants and under representing data from less articulate, lower-status ones”.

A factor that presented some difficulty in achieving reliability in the present study was the nature of the interview questions, which in the main were not focused on a descriptive evaluation of what had already happened, but on an evaluation of what, and
under which conditions, would happen. This situation does not allow the testing that qualitative researchers often use to check reliability in their data, by contrasting different responses against records of fact. In the present research, it was appropriate to look at every item of information, not only by searching for corroboration in other sources, but also by investigating those factors which give rise to disagreement by adding more questions to the prestructured ones. It was found that unreliable data could be identified when the interviewees' explanations were inconsistent over time, or where there was a weight of consistent conflicting evidence. The problem of reliability will be dealt with in more detail in following sections where interview techniques are analysed.

The combination of semi-structured interviews and documentary analysis is used here for reasons of enhancing validity, through the process of 'triangulation', where, according to Kirk and Muller (1986), reliable evaluation is achieved by "comparisons of data elicited by alternative forms". Denzin (1978) identifies four basic types of triangulation. The use of a variety of data sources in a study is termed 'data triangulation', while 'investigator triangulation' describes the involvement of several different researchers or evaluators. 'Theory triangulation' is concerned with the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data. Finally, 'methodological triangulation' uses multiple research methods to study a single problem.

For the purposes of this study, the triangulation of data, as well as of method, was used to enhance the credibility of strategies used and the data produced. With data triangulation, multiple instances from different sources are tested and the information validated. Data on the researched subject of sports tourism has been located within a considerably large number of organisations; academic, political, tourism research centres and youth organisations, suggesting that data triangulation is both possible and necessary.

Next, using 'method triangulation' the interview data was (where possible) cross checked with an in-depth document, report, legislation analysis etc., of secondary information derived from different sources, giving a reliable evaluation of the knowledge or views produced by the interviews. Thus, it should be emphasised that the data collected through documentary analysis plays a complementary role to the body of
knowledge that the interviews produced. The benefit of obtaining unpublished governmental material on policy issues and future developments enhanced the validity of the results produced by the interviews.

4.4.2 Sampling

Unlike quantitative research which seeks statistical significance, this approach to the study of the present and future nature of sports tourism in Greece offers an in-depth qualitative examination of the issues by using specific groups of interviewees. Therefore, the research could not be random, which would produce irrelevant and invalid information, but rather was ‘purposive’ (Kuzel, 1992 in Miles and Huberman, 1994), attempting the highest level of relativity and appropriateness between the sample groups involved.

The need to create a ‘frame’ that would uncover, confirm and qualify the basic process of investigation, necessitated what Kuzel (ibid.) terms ‘stratified purposeful sampling’, which illustrates subgroups and facilitates comparisons of information. However, it has to be noted that sampling decisions were altered during the progress of the fieldwork, or as described by Miles and Huberman (1994), ‘conceptually-driven sequential sampling’ took place. Understanding key relationships in the studied settings revealed many different, but relevant, sources which had to be examined sequentially.

The multi-case sampling within the two regions of Thrace and Crete, as well as at Central Government level, adds confidence to the findings, while strengthening the validity and stability of results. “By looking at a range of similar and contrasting cases, we can understand a single-case finding” (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Consequently, the decisions of case choices were made more on conceptual grounds, but remained representative. The issue of the generalizability of the research findings, either through conceptual power or representativeness, could perhaps be questioned by some, arguing that each case is unique. However, according to Miles and Huberman (ibid.), we can generalise from one case to the next on the basis of a match to the underlying theory or topic, in this case, the position of new tourism forms in stagnated mass tourism environments. Thus, the parameters of the studied issues were examined in a planned
and structured fashion, but occasionally refocusing and redrawing the sampling and the questions put to some respondents.

The process of sampling had to consider some crucial issues before commencing. It was necessary initially to estimate the 'boundaries' determining the extent of this investigation. By estimating the time and means provided for the completion of this thesis, and attempting early contacts at a central government level and at a local level, the feasibility of a series of visits and interviews to central government (Athens) and to both mass tourism (Crete) and underdeveloped areas (Thrace) was assessed. Firstly, the decision to investigate central government departments came as an obvious and rational choice, despite obvious problems of accessibility, due to the status of the interviewees and of information potentially to be gained, and their 'ownership' of policy issues, determining present and future tourism developments. As well as sampling sources at central and local government level (see below), private sector practice, operations and the primary drivers of such activity (often in response to government policy) were investigated. In the sampling framework this sector was represented by its official bodies, which are relevant to both central and local decision making.

At the local level, the geographical and developmental split (i.e. researching in both traditional concentrated tourist zones and developing areas) was seen to enhance the generalizability and coverage of findings. Seeking to sample a typical mass tourism area, Crete was selected because of its international tourism significance. Crete receives 20% of all international tourist arrivals to Greece and, additionally, the features of tourism services in Crete can be characterised as the typical traditional mass tourism product of the Mediterranean, selling the three S's (sea - sun - sand) and constructing the whole tourism and local social environment accordingly. In this study, Crete can be considered to represent the developed tourist areas of the country, representing areas of high tourism volume, and is an example of a locality where the local economy is highly tourism-reliant. However, it also represents a transposed physical environment where mass tourism is offered, where the identified negative features of mass tourism are evident, and where stagnating tourism demand is a significant cause for concern.

On the other hand, Thrace represents a tourism area with much potential which is
underdeveloped, due to a number of political and economic factors, and its peripheral location in a relatively centralised state. A number of regional development issues have already been reviewed. The choice to investigate Thrace was not only based on its presently low tourism inflow and its isolated character, but also because of its rich physical environment which has very similar natural characteristics to developed areas of high tourism volume. Like several other areas in Greece, it has clear potential for development, but as we have identified, tourism planners must be mindful not only of sustainability issues, but of the stagnating demand for the traditional product. At least theoretically, these are areas where developing special interest tourism, and particularly sports-related tourism, should have significant potential.

The examination of both regions, that share common local government structures and physical environments, gives the opportunity of a comparative analysis concerning the present and future position and role of special interest tourism forms, and especially sports tourism, and the degree of their contribution (recognised or yet to be recognised) towards a sustainable development future for these areas.

The ‘purposeful sampling’ was aimed at selecting cases through which the research can collect in-depth and valuable information on crucial issues. The groups interviewed were representative of different levels of the tourism policy structure and relevant institutions. However, there are additional considerations. Johnson (in Patton, 1990) refers to five criteria which could represent and generate the sampling of ‘ideal’ interviewees. The criterion of ‘partiality’, in the sense of political partisanship, was not considered as crucial here, since the partiality of actors was not included in the investigation as a subject under study. The criterion of respondents’ ‘position’ (and consequently their ‘knowledge’, resulting from their role), in relevant organisations was considered as most crucial for the progress of the research respondents, alongside the criterion of their ‘willingness to cooperate’. Their knowledge, derived from their access to information on developments through their position in the organisation, or their familiarity level or experience with the issues studied, along with willingness to cooperate in the study (in some cases influenced by support for the study from the GNTO), were the primary considerations in the selection of individuals to be interviewed within sample organisation. One potential problem of the study was the
respondents' *abilities*, e.g. to communicate, but this was not included within the respondent selection, and is not considered to have been a significant weakness.

It should be noted that due to the nature of organisations targeted, and the status of some interviewees, especially at a central government level, pretesting or pilot interviews across the whole range was infeasible. The very busy schedule of informants in higher positions would not allow the repetition of an interview procedure. The high status and level of demand of some of the interviewees also made this element of the study (while rewarding), a very time consuming process, with many reschedulings. At the local government level, considerations of time, cost and distance made interview pretesting infeasible. In general however, all the main interviews conducted provided very worthwhile data.

The empirical research then, involved interviews with tourism policy actors at all levels in Greece. At the central government level, interviews were conducted at the Ministry of Tourism (GNTO), including heads of the departments responsible for the instigation and development of tourism policy in Greece, directors of policy implementation sections, and project coordinators.

A crucial part of the interview sampling structure was obtaining an interview with the highest positions of the policy hierarchy, in this case the Minister of Tourism. Persistent contacts with his office led to a thirty minute interview with the Minister. These high level ministerial and directorate interviews, are considered to have greatly increased the validity of the data obtained, and to set the study apart from those that rely solely on what are summarised and sometimes inconsistent published documents.

A visual summary of the interview structure at the central government level is provided by Figure 4.1, to which structure has to subsequently be added, the qualitative research within the two different types of region.
Dietvorst’s model, describing the parameter of ‘producers’ as a community of suppliers greatly influencing tourism transformation (see Chapter 2), similar to the notion of Policy Community, suggests the importance of role of private organisations in tourism developments. Thus, the study of the private sectors interests and views on sports
tourism development was also considered crucial to the research and complementary to the work on the public sector.

Along with obtained interviews at a central government level, central representative bodies of tourism businesses were included within the work investigating the wider community of 'suppliers'. At the national level, the private sector was represented by the largest industry bodies based in Athens (see summary in Figure 4.2).

![Tourism Private Sector](image)

| Hellenic Association of Tourism Enterprises | Hellenic Association of Hotel Owners | Hellenic Association of Travel Businesses |

Figure 4.2 Private Sector Representative Bodies at the National Level

Interviews were obtained with the Presidents of the Hellenic Association of Tourism Enterprises, Hellenic Association of Hotel Owners and the Hellenic Association of Travel Businesses. As with the ministerial and government directorate interviews, these proved a very time consuming process. Comparable information was also collected within local association departments of the tourism industry in both of the case study areas, complementing but also cross examining, the level of similarity (or diversity) between national and local sector views and ideas.

All relevant levels or 'grades' of local government were represented within both case studies of Crete and Thrace. This was simplified because they share a common governmental structure. Starting at the 'widest' local government level, in terms of spatial responsibility, within the Periphery Authorities (Periphery of East Crete, Periphery of West Crete, and Periphery of East Macedonia and Thrace), the heads of the Departments of Social and Economic Development, responsible for tourism planning, were interviewed in both Peripheries of Crete. In the case of Thrace, the General Secretary of the Periphery was interviewed. At the more local Prefectural level, the Directors of the newly established Tourism Committees (see Chapter 6) and other relevant departments were interviewed in both Crete and Thrace regions.
In the Thracian Prefecture of Rodopi, an interview was achieved with the Prefect himself, providing an additional significant perspective. The lack of relevant departments at the city level for the collection of information provided for only one interview at this level, with the Mayor of Agios Nikolaos (Lasithi, Crete). The last level of this hierarchy is represented by the President of the Community of Archanes (Heraklion, Crete) as the most local level in the hierarchy.

The private sector at the local level was represented by the Presidents of Hotel Owners of every Prefecture in Crete, and board members of the Association in Thrace (see figures 4.3 and 4.4). Travel Agents were represented by a board member in the case of Thrace, but in Crete the president was not available for the research, despite numerous attempts.

4.4.3. Research Tools - Interviews

The explanatory nature of the research parameters and the dynamics of the tourism context in Greece meant that significant initial pre-instrumentation (with highly structured closed, as opposed to open-ended, interviews) was inappropriate. This fact, at the same time, potentially threatens the internal validity and generalisability of data. On the other hand, the use of a ‘multi-case’ type of examination in this study required cross-case comparisons for the standardisation of instruments, “so that findings can be laid side-by-side in the course of analysis” (Huberman and Miles, 1994), and thus the validity can be increased. Here also, the focus is narrower and the instrumentation is more closely linked to the variables of interest. In the process of method design, the need for comparability between the two cases of Crete and Thrace was appreciated from the outset, and the representativeness of the destinations studied and the possible generalisability of results, suggested a semi-structured research tool to meet those needs. This semi-structured, open-ended interviewing method can be conceived to represent a free-standing, single case study approach to the researched topic, which, as noted, has been supported by documentary analysis and cross-case comparisons through standardisation of some of the research questions. The generalisability has therefore been maximised.
### Prefectures of Crete

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<tr>
<th>PUBLIC ADMINISTR</th>
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<tr>
<td>District:</td>
<td>West Crete: Director for EU Progr. Implementation</td>
<td>(no organised department)</td>
<td>East Crete: Director for EU Progr. Implement. on Culture and Tourism</td>
<td>(Administrative centre)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prefecture:</td>
<td>Head of Tourism Policy</td>
<td>(no organised department)</td>
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<td>Head of Tourism Policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>G.N.T.O.:</td>
<td>Head of Policy Implementation</td>
<td>(no organised department)</td>
<td>Director of G.N.T.O. Crete Head of Research and Spec. Inter. Tour.</td>
<td>(no organised department)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipality:</td>
<td>(no organised department)</td>
<td>Director of Tourism policy</td>
<td>Director of Culture and Sport Tourism Initiatives</td>
<td>Mayor of Ag. Nikolaos</td>
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<td>Local Authority:</td>
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<td>President of Aharnes</td>
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**a) Public Sector**

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<tr>
<th>Association of Hotel Owners:</th>
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<tr>
<td>President of A.H.O. and Rent Rooms</td>
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| Association of Tourism Enterprises: | | | President of Tourism Enterprises for Crete |
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<tr>
<th>Association of Travel Agencies:</th>
<th>Member of Sport Tourism Business Group</th>
<th>Board Member of A.T.A.</th>
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**b) Private Sector**

Figure 4.3 Regional and Local Structure and Interviews obtained in the Region of Crete.
(DISTRICT) PERIPHERY OF EAST MACEDONIA AND THRACE
REGION OF THRACE

PREFECTURES OF:

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<tr>
<td>District:</td>
<td>(Administrative centre)</td>
<td>East Macedonia and Thrace: General Secretary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Prefecture:</td>
<td>Head of Culture Policy</td>
<td>Nomarch of Rodopi Head of Tourism Policy</td>
<td>Head of Tourism policy</td>
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<tr>
<td>G.N.T.O.:</td>
<td>(no organised departments)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Municipality:</td>
<td>Head of Culture Policy</td>
<td>Head of Culture Policy</td>
<td>Culture Policy Coordinator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Local Authority:</td>
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<td>President of Dioni</td>
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a) Public Sector

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Association of Hotel Owners:</th>
<th>Board Member of the A.H.O. of Thrace</th>
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<th>Association of Tourism Enterprises:</th>
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<tr>
<th>Association of Travel Agencies and Tour Operators</th>
<th>Board Member of the Association of Travel Agencies and Tour Operators</th>
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<tr>
<td>Board Member of the A.H.O. of Thrace</td>
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b) Private Tourism Sector

Figure 4.4 Regional and Local Structure and Interviews obtained in the Region of Thrace
Throughout the research process, contacts with the respondents were pre-arranged, in most cases with personal visits, telephone calls or letters, notifying them about the nature and purpose of the study. At the central government level, the interviewees initially questioned, offered valuable help by suggesting and helping to arrange visits or meetings with several departments, and by recommending relevant departments of the local government appropriate to the research. The initial contacts supported the agenda of the research and often provided letters of introduction to other potential contributors. Most were interested and concerned with the issues involved. Full interviews were then arranged at mutually convenient times.

The use of tape recording was considered essential to the accurate collection of data, both in terms of information storage and as a way of recording emphasis or relegation of specific issues. Additionally, it provided the benefit of concentration being kept on the course of the interview, rather than having the distraction of needing to keep accurate and detailed notes. This greatly assisted the direction of the semi-structured approach. No one objected to the use of tape recording, indeed, some respondents thought of it as adding clarity in interpreting their often wide-ranging responses.

Interviewees were informed about the 'scientific' nature of the questions, allaying fears of any political or journalistic interest, and it was emphasised that the data collected would be used for exclusively academic purposes. The respondents were also informed of the cross-checking of information to achieve an optimal level of data objectivity.

In order to maximise the validity, credibility of information and optimal flow of the interviews, a certain procedure was followed. Firstly, introducing the researcher, background and role in the present study. Secondly, outlining the problem, its nature and the reasons creating the need for further investigation.

One of the difficulties identified in the early stages of interviewing, was the 'definition' confusion that exists at present between terms given to describe different types of tourism forms or situations (see also Chapter 1 and 5). It was therefore necessary to initially define 'sports tourism' accurately for interviewees, which was otherwise often seen as being synonymous only with sports event tourism. Due to the explanatory
nature of the research, questions were worded in a simple and comprehensible manner to assure understanding and to maximise output, whilst minimising potential embarrassment derived from ignorance, confusion or hostility to certain described circumstances. When such situations arose, the questions were reformulated to obtain the required information. With some respondents in high positions, the subject introductions and number of questions had to be restricted slightly (see Appendix I). However, in all cases a satisfactory level of information was generated.

4.5 Analysis of Data

Within the present study the use of separate cases for achieving greater understanding was considered crucial, especially in terms of collecting, organising and analysing data, hence the over-lying structure of the work at the central level and in the two different types of regions. "The purpose is to gather comprehensive, systematic and in-depth information about each case of interest" (Patton, 1990), and this is reflected in the analysis of the material generated.

The management and analysis of qualitative data is considered highly problematic due to the large volume of unorganised information generated through 'natural conversations' with people interviewed. Patton (1990) argues that "there is no right way to go about organising analysing and interpreting qualitative data...and...there is not a precise point at which data collection ends and analysis begins". In this study too, the first thematic groups appeared as potential categories for analysis during the data collection phase, assisting the development of the study and suggesting some sequencing of analysis.

The present study's fieldwork framework (see summary figures 4.1 to 4.4) resulted in a large amount of data from the semi-structured interviews conducted in Greece, which followed a largely structured and organised path, but was sometimes organic in the positions and number of interviews in each area. Particularly since the core sample was structured and largely comprises a number of detailed interviews with key, and sometimes high ranking office holders, all interviews were transcribed in detail, providing much of the raw data for the study.
Invariably, associated ‘part-interviews’ or clarification calls were also made with subordinates or support staff, which were recorded in less detail and were treated alongside the supporting documentary evidence analysis. Several readings of the unprocessed data were necessary before identifying data categories and coding. Patton (1990) describes this categorisation as similar to the construction of an “index for a book or labels for a file system”. Detailed examination of the interviews ultimately led to the development of a systematic classification scheme made up of a set of thematic categories, according to the studied areas, within which there were additional sub-sections. Information that fed these categories came from a coding process for every response or point made in the interviews. A classification code, describing the content of the answer, was developed for all the main themes, and thus a highly structured approach was taken to the qualitative analysis.

4.5.1 Factoring

Attempting an objective categorisation and interpretation of findings, a more statistical strategy of ‘factoring’ was employed at this point, more specifically ‘qualitative research factor analysis’. This represents a large number of variables in terms of a smaller number of unobserved variables which may have some commonality overlapping with each other. These variables are termed ‘factors’ and the process that generates them ‘factoring’. The value of factor analysis, according to Rummel (1970), is dependent on the meaningfulness of the variability in the data. As data deriving from qualitative research presents a large variation in terms of issues involved, then more than one factor can be derived from the data. This data variation implies the notion of patterned relationships.

The coded answers are listed and scanned to identify those factors that produce thematic commonalities. This first factoring strategy of deriving common characteristic themes is followed up by a second factoring process. At this point, a factor evaluation occurs, ensuring that key factors “contribute to our understanding of the case and its underlying dynamics” (Huberman and Miles, 1994). The factors that appear helpful in explaining the research questions have the form of a short terminology that not only reduces the large data set, but also describes the identified dynamics of the investigation.
'Simplifying the complexity of reality into some manageable classification scheme is the first step of analysis' (Patton, 1990). The construction of this general mapping of the total data extracted by the interviews provided what Huberman and Miles (1994) term as an 'explanatory effects matrix', and constitutes the first step towards answering subject questions. This matrix "clarifies a domain in conceptual terms and is a useful first-cut exploration, beginning to trace back and forward the emerging threads of causality" (ibid.). This system enhances our temporal understanding of any causal mechanisms involved and helps to discover any links between roles, institutions and ideologies. These are examined individually as they appear positioned within certain categories.

Patton's (1990) 'inductive analysis' searches for patterns, themes and categories, and variations of data deriving from different sources in every setting, and forms data categories developed and articulated by the interviewees. Huberman and Miles (1994) present this type of examination as a 'case dynamics matrix', defined as a system that "displays a set of forces for change and traces the consequential processes and outcomes". The matrix can have the form of a table, presenting the 'dynamic' issues involved positioned in the rows of this table, and the relevant responses in the columns. Adopting this approach, an inductive analytical review was thus employed, aiming to find 'themes' that cut across respondents. This is defined as 'pattern clarification' and was developed initially through the elucidation of key phrases or terms used regularly to evaluate certain issues and the variations or similarities that occurred. These are characterised by Patton (1990) as 'indigenous concepts'.

Factor analysis has been criticised as being arbitrary in that different investigators potentially give different interpretations to the same data. However, for a relatively complex and unorganised data set, 'qualitative research factor analysis' is useful in exploring the interrelations of the phenomena. Studies suggest that the approach can reduce complex linkages and can uncover unsuspected relationships, and the application of factor analysis can satisfy a number of research aims. Interdependencies between variables were explored, the mass of data was reduced to identified categories, and the factors were employed to uncover causal relationships and therefore suggest meaning.
4.5.2 Variable Analysis

For the purposes of this study, a ‘variable’ oriented strategy was employed, in the first instance because in a variable-oriented analysis, “the predictor variables are intercorrelated and the key dependent variable (in this case the development of sports tourism in Greece) is regressed on the others” (Huberman and Miles, 1994). This type of analysis is helpful in finding probabilistic relationships amongst the variables in a population. Its reduced size decreases the difficulty found in ‘causal complexities’ and increases manageability of the data. This size also allows benefits from the application of a case-oriented analysis as well, where a closer look into the particular cases can tease out “configurations within each case and subjects them to comparative analysis” (ibid.). These combined examinations, or what Fisher and Wertz (1975 in Miles and Huberman, 1994) call ‘interactive synthesis’, provide a wider analytical insight. In this study, a cross-case analysis between the variables and the actors involved, ultimately used ‘displays’ to map a full data set and provide a holistic picture of all obtained information. Miles and Huberman (1994) call this display, a ‘partially ordered metamatrix’, which “brings the basic information from several cases into one big chart”. Then, according to the purpose and interest of the study, different analytical approaches and reconfigured matrices can be effected. This approach was adopted and proved particularly useful in finally ordering the manipulated data for clarity of analysis.

Conclusions

Miles and Huberman’s (1994) ‘tactics of generating meaning’ could be borrowed to sum up the analytical process adopted in this study, starting by ‘noting patterns and themes’ from an organised display of the total data obtained, both within each of the three case types and horizontally through identified variables. This analysis revealed variable similarities and differences across cases and individuals. As Miles and Huberman (ibid.) note, it becomes important to be able to i) see added evidence of the same pattern, and ii) remain open to discomforting evidence when it appears. When enough evidence supports the plausibility of issues, then the process of ‘clustering of variables’ follows in thematic groups, according to similarity of responses or even
contrasting arguments. Then, the ‘partitioning of variables’ aids the examination of identified crucial variables, that can now be differentiated and divided into sub-variables in relation to their level of importance, emphasis or sequence of reference given by the respondents. This strategy helps to avoid unmanageable magnitudes of theme categories, which could exclude crucial information, and secondly, contributes to the construction of variables derived straight from the process of extracting information. This serves the need for finding “coherent, integrated descriptions and explanations” (ibid.).

The route within the analysis towards creating valid conclusions develops through a logical chain of evidence towards the identification of justified relationships between identified variables. Verifying the results at every possible stage helps to build valid outcomes. This evidence gradually builds up through the analysis process, towards an identification of the main factors and their interrelationships, facilitating their testing against other sets of data obtained, through different research methods and sources of information. Secondly, it proceeds by ordering the information and refining it into an ‘explanatory plan’, which can be tested against other cases and instances.

This process adopted here produced a mass of raw data from the main and supporting interviews, and corroborating data analysis. However, the structured approaches adopted (described above) provided an effective way of managing this data and enabled significant results to be generated, and conclusions to be drawn.
Chapter 5

Special Interest Tourism: Its Potential for the Regeneration of the Greek Tourism Product

Introduction

This Chapter reviews the increasing evidence from within Greece that the need for tourism policy change and product rejuvenation have been recognised, and that some significant changes in emphasis, particularly towards a recognition of the potential environmental impacts of tourism, are under-way. The section uses some published material, but in the main has been developed by reference to much of the recent unpublished documentation internal to the GNTO and market analysis by Greek companies and authorities. This sets the immediate context material for the more detailed empirical work on the extent that these developmental policies are being realised and with what means and tensions.

5.1 The Development of the Greek Tourism Product

The benefits of the phenomenon of tourism in Greece had been identified in the early post war years, as it had in most of the Mediterranean countries. The potential for further development was realised early and the 'opening' of the Greek tourism product to the international tourism market heralded a successful future.

This development had its foundations in the 1950s, when tourism was accorded a high environmental and cultural profile, and was treated in the context of 'image building' through 'quality' tourism. In this initial phase of its development, tourism was less important to the national economy than today, and it generally took the form of 'selective' tourism, having the character of hospitality rather than commercial transactions. Even "the price of the services was a matter of interhuman relationship" (Kolios, 1994). Tsekouras et al (1991) add that this initial form of selective tourism "was aiming at a balanced geographical distribution of tourism activity", and this reflects some of the regional development emphases that have already been reviewed.
5.2 Politics and the Greek Mass Tourism Model

Even though the Greek literature acknowledges the contribution of tourism to Greek national income and employment, it remains very critical of tourism policy, where “the development was based on the uncontrolled exploitation of essential resources” (Tsekouras, 1991). In 1961 the Greek National Tourism Organisation (GNTO), now within the Ministry of Tourism, being the responsible body for tourism policy, for the first time produced official statistics for Greek tourism. They showed that the generated income was 62.5m US$ for that year. However, analysing the causes of environmental degradation, Litras (1988) noted that “the lack of long term planning and the philosophy of the ‘easy profit’ created an anarchic tourism development which ignored preservation of resources and environmental catastrophe”.

Greece’s period of dictatorship, starting in 1967, boosted tourism development to high levels, using loans and financial support to the tourism industry. 1971, the golden year of Greek tourism, brought an income of 300m US$, giving a 57.7% increase on the previous year, while arrivals had more than quadrupled, reaching 2,257,994 (GNTO, 1994), (see also Chapter 3). However, once again, the lack of long term planning ignored the environmental, social and economic costs of that policy. Litras (1988) criticises the governments which succeeded the dictators, in that state and private initiatives at this time “didn’t realise the temporality of the 1971-80 boom and remained complacent”. Aggelopoulos (General Secretary of the GNTO in 1993) also notes that “the inexistence of tourism policy, along with the dependence of supply on demand, gradually brought a decline in the cultural content of Greek tourism”. Greece invested in, and was promoted through, the traditional ‘sun, sea and sand’ image.

The consequences of this unplanned ‘policy’ brought about market instability and some decreases in the numbers for the Greek tourism product by the early of 1980’s. The socialist government of PASOK (Hellenic Socialist Party) has since been severely criticised for its negative position against tourism, especially towards private initiative, which had been highly influential in initial Greek tourism development. Under the PASOK regime, Greek tourism policy was affected by managerial instability and lack of direction. Between 1982-85 for example, five different General Secretaries were positioned in the GNTO. The realisation of the need for effective intervention and redirection of Greek tourism came after a series of negative effects, which have been relatively well analysed in the literature of the second half of the 1980’s and early 1990’s.
5.3 A Problematic Continuity

Although the Greek national economy has undoubtedly benefited from the development of tourism, this has clearly not been without its problems and costs. Internal political and personal differences, the rapid and uncontrolled mass tourism development, along with the dramatic increase of inflation, lack of essential investment in infrastructure and cuts in subsidies, have generated a series of problems and inefficiencies within the Greek tourism product. The Greek literature (e.g. Litras, 1991; Tsartas, 1991; Tsekouras et al., 1991;) views the country’s main tourism-related problems as:

- the seasonality of demand;
- the concentration of tourism activity in certain areas, resulting in:
  - tourism depending on international trends;
  - urbanisation of the countryside building on rural land;
  - degradation of natural resources, pollution, environmental damage;
  - overcrowded infrastructure;
- the inability to compete in the international market effectively when the dramatic increase of illegal and low quality accommodation units, results in “poor quality services bringing an image of a cheap holiday destination” (Pilarinos, 1992).

In the early period of development between 1971 and 1981, ‘bed-spaces’ in tourist accommodation increased by 111%, while the bed-spaces in accommodation units of ‘first’ (A’) class increased by 194%. These figures emphasise that the early development was based on the attraction of ‘quality’ tourism, i.e. visitors of high income and social levels. However, this trait of development did not continue into the decade 1981-1991, where two major changes took place: “the average overnight stay length and the level of accommodation occupancy in accommodation units fell, while the illegal accommodation units rose enormously” (Piou, 1993). In 1981, the number of tourists arriving in Greece was 5,577,109, bringing an average expenditure per capita of a record 369 US$. However, by 1991, this figure had fallen to 319 US$, even when the arrivals for that year reached 8,271,258. Greek tourism managed to increase its arrivals volume, but this did not bring a commensurate increase in revenue. Meanwhile, the tourism workforce in Greece had to offer services to an additional 2,550,000 tourists (Rafail, 1989).

The ‘over supply’ of tourist accommodation units, which forced them to cut costs in order to be competitive and subsequently offer poor quality services, has since been exploited by the large European tour operators who now control much of the Greek
tourism product. These international operators now benefit by offering cheap packages to the ‘consumers’ of mass tourism (Tseliga, 1989), whilst the Greek economy benefits less well than if ‘quality tourism’ had been effectively developed.

5.4 From ‘Quantity’ to ‘Quality’ Tourism

The 1980’s closed with the realisation that a policy towards ‘quality tourism’ was needed. This required the attraction of higher spending visitors from higher socio-economic groups, within a “differentiating consumer model of tourism” (Rafail, 1989).

GNTO General Secretaries of different governments agree and emphasise the importance of a “multi-faceted tourism development with the direct priorities: the need for a constructive absorption of the ‘human’ factor, the natural environment and the preservation and promotion of our national heritage” (Pilarinos, 1992).

Policy statements of the GNTO use, and place a great emphasis on, the term ‘selective tourism’, defined as “the movement of people enjoying independent and individually adjusted holiday programmes, based on information and personal choice motives for discrete isolation from mass groups and the choice of special interests or adventure” (Doxiadis in Kolios, 1994).

In 1993, the GNTO identified a number of explicit goals, which can be conceived as representing the beginning of a ‘new’ tourism policy. These included:

• creation of a new, multi-dimensional and rich tourism product;
• positive improvement of service quality;
• lasting tourism development and environmental protection;
• complete peripheral planning, supporting business initiatives;
• modernising the present infrastructure;
• promotion of new destinations;
• spatial distribution of tourism;
• promotion of alternative tourism through the creation of special infrastructure;
• education and specialisation of the tourism workforce.

In summary, the key objectives of these were:

• the revival of ‘quality tourism’;
• maximisation of income in foreign currency;
• an increase in the average level of expenditure per capita;
• an increase in the level of tourism at off-peak periods;
• full and positive exploitation of the potential of Greece as a valuable, natural and cultural destination, adjustable to the demands of the present day, (GNTO unpublished internal document, 1993).

This quest for 'quality tourism' has been supported by private sector interests in Greece. A survey by the 'Kapa Research' (1993, in Piou, 1993) into Greek tourism and its development, showed that 64% of Greek tourism operators believe that 'quality tourism' is the only way out of the economic and cultural miasma of the last decade. The private sector are, though, very critical of the role of the GNTO, which they feel should be promoting Greek tourism and improving its infrastructure, in such a way as to be appropriate to 'quality tourism'.

Analysis of the policy statements of the General Secretaries of the GNTO during the period between 1989 - 1994, despite emanating from different political parties, present similar views on the implementation of the new policy approach, highlighting for example:
• protection of the physical and cultural environment;
• common financial and organisational co-operation between the authorities of both public and private sectors;
• control and limitation of tourism development in over-developed and overcrowded areas;
• controlled development in areas of special environmental value;
• development in areas with presently low levels of tourism, but high future tourism potential (e.g. north Greece, Macedonia, Thrace);
• completion of general and essential infrastructure, (airport, ports, motor-ways, communications), along with a sustainable improvement of services that respect the physical and cultural environment;
• creation/completion of special tourism infrastructure (marinas, conference centres, golf courses, ski-resorts, spas etc.);
• educating and increasing the awareness of tourism professionals about the new trends that influence the tourism process;
• preservation of national heritage and cultural values.

Observation analysis and the review work of inter alia Rafail (1989) and Pilarinos (1992) identify the following manifestations of these policies being implemented:
• subsidies for high quality forms of accommodation;
• building initiatives based on environmental, architectural and demographic studies;
• supplementary and special establishments (such as sports facilities, conference centres and golf courses);
• the construction of new ports/marinas;
• the preservation of traditional houses/villages;
• the construction of spas and geo-thermal sources;
• the preservation of archaeological treasures;
• the control and elimination of illegal accommodation units;
• the promotion of Athens as a new cultural destination (as opposed to its current perception as a transit area);
• the organisation of art and other cultural events in Greece and abroad;
• the establishment of legislation that supports private initiatives for 'special interest tourism' (e.g. sea tourism, spas, conferences, winter, cultural, agro and sports tourism).

The need for product differentiation is now heavily emphasised in contemporary Greek tourism literature, identifying the need for ‘a common consciousness’ that emphasises the new quality goals and considers, with great attention, the question of which kind of new ‘quality’ product can be offered to the international tourism market in order to achieve the maximum economic and social benefits (Aggelopoulos, 1993). This common consciousness includes an awareness of the importance of physical, cultural and environmental protection, on which the tourism products are ultimately based and are dependent.

5.5 A ‘Green’ Future?

Writing as General Secretary of the GNTO, Pilarinos (1992) has advocated environmental protection as a top priority and drawn attention to GNTO co-operation with the national public bodies of: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Land Use and Environment, and the Merchant Navy, in an effort to regulate the increased tourism flows which have put an extra burden on the ecosystems of the area. In its publication ‘Tourism Towards 2000’ (1993), the GNTO introduces the government’s plan for a quality differentiation for the Greek tourism product, where both physical and cultural environments play an essential role.

According to this document, these aims are to be achieved through:
1. Implementation of a programme for the conservation of traditional areas/villages and urban neo-classic buildings. This targets;
   • conservation of cultural and architectural heritage;
   • construction of special tourism infrastructure for special tourist interests;
   • limitation and minimisation of environmental pollutants;
   • creation of jobs and economic development in underdeveloped areas;
   • co-operation between central and local authorities.

2. Promotion of public awareness about the sensitivity of the environment. This aims, for example, to;
   • provide information about the protection of species in danger (e.g. turtles, bears);
   • advise about the importance of clean beaches, coastline and seas.

3. Promotion of a sustainable way of living. Including;
   • economising on essential resources such as energy, water, paper;
   • recycling of certain materials;
   • alternative ways of resource use.

4. Support for environmental studies for ecological development in agreed areas (such as Crete), including;
   • restoration of the sea and coast, control of pollution in areas of high effluent concentration and environmental protection;
   • protection of the water life, sea ecosystems etc.

The rise of environmental awareness related to tourism can now be identified within Greece, for example, through educational activities and international information exchanges. Of significance, the Greek island of Santorini hosted a meeting of the EU Ministers of Tourism (13-15th of May 1994), concerning “the dynamic role of tourism within the economic and social activities in the EU countries”, and also concerning “the pressure that uncontrolled development puts on the environment” (Falirea, 1994).

The meeting included the following topics:
   • uncontrolled visitor flows and the inevitable burden on infrastructure, services and natural resources;
   • the auditing of the water, energy, natural resources and eco-systems;
   • support for the smaller islands and adjusted special policies;
   • transport;
• the implementation of European legislation for the environment;
• the promotion of special environmental management for overcrowded areas.

A set of programmes were identified and will be implemented, including:
• to undertake studies to examine ‘Tourism and the Environment’;
• organise seminars for information exchange about tourism legislation and its effect on the environment;
• readjustment of the term ‘capacity’ for significant destination areas;
• support for the underdeveloped but potential tourism areas;
• the promotion of voluntary participation (of some supportive private sector organisations) in environmental audits and attempts to increase the levels of public-private co-operation in tourism-related environmental concerns;
• support for the sustainable policies which suggest economy of resources (e.g. energy);
• effective management of financial resources.

During the same year, a relatively large number of conferences, meetings and symposia, in the field of ‘Tourism and the Environment’ which took place, appear to highlight the importance now being accorded tourism-related environmental concern. These embody the dynamic character of the tourism-environment interrelationship and the ‘green’ future it promises. Examples include:
• 9th-10th May: Athens; Bird Life International Conference; ‘European Coastal Management’.
• 18th May: Athens; GNTO and Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature: ‘Blue Flags’

Thus, in theory at least, greater emphasis is now being placed on maximising the value of tourism, whilst minimising the costs, particularly to the environment.
5.6 Sustainability from Theory to Practice

Despite the potential that ‘regulation’ can provide in promoting sustainable tourism policy and practice, the promising level of private sector co-operation and involvement is clearly crucial. This represents another aspect where the GNTO is attempting to influence the future development of tourism in Greece. For example, in April 1994, the GNTO, the Ministry of Land Use and Environment and invited influential private sector representatives from transnational tour operators, hotel chains etc., met to examine the relationship between tourism and the environment. All parties were in agreement that, in the long term, tourism is viable only through a sustainable strategy of the type outlined above.

Examples of sustainable management practice in tourism are now becoming increasingly evident. The GRECOTEL hotel chain, located primarily in Crete/Greece, operates over 10,000 bed-spaces and was recently awarded the Association of German Tour Operators ‘International Award for the Environment’. Of significance here is the fact that this award was made for the first time to a private tourism operator and not to an environmental organisation. Operating a green philosophy, GRECOTEL became one of the first companies to identify and implement a comprehensive set of sustainable policies. These included:

- to economise through the practice of re-use, reduction and recycling where possible;
- economy in water use;
- economy of energy consumption;
- a green consumption policy, including: the purchasing of goods like bottled water and wine, soap etc. under strict hygienic, economic and recyclable conditions.

While various authors on sustainable practice have noted the potential competitive advantage that ‘green policies’ can provide for the private sector (see inter alia Hawken, 1993; Bramwell et al., 1996) the GRECOTEL Chief Executive, Daskalandonaki notes that “the protection and control of the physical and cultural environment is not a promotional technique, but a surviving practice”, and that “the diagnosis and eco-audit of the environment, adopted by the EU, aims at the practice of the mechanism of auto-control of the tourism enterprise. The environment is the most important source for tourism” (ibid.).

Other Greek examples of the implementation of sustainable management practice influencing the type of future tourism product can be identified. For example, the
number of coastal resorts awarded the ‘Blue Flag’ has increased to 287, which makes Greece the third highest in Europe. The number of candidate beaches and coasts has also risen in recent years. This is indicative that policy makers have started to recognise the importance of the environment to tourism. ‘‘The programme doesn’t aim to promote a particular destination or place, but encourages a common effort to protect the beaches and to preserve a satisfactory hygienic and environmental level for present and future users’’ (The Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature, 1992 - Greek Coordinator for the Blue Flag campaign).

5.7 Legislation and the Environment

Apart from voluntary efforts towards environmental conservation in tourism, explicit legislation is necessary to regulate private tourism operation, set the standards and penalise illegal actions that threaten environmental resources.

In Greece, the state identifies the duty of the citizen to protect and care for the environment (Article 2 of LD 1650/1986). This covers a broad area of concerns: ‘‘the summation of the physical and human factors and variables which interrelate and affect the ecological balance, the quality of life, the health of the citizens, its heritage and the aesthetic values’’ (Dimakis, 1994).

Additionally, the ‘water environment’ (including the sea area, rivers and the water ecosystems) is particularly highlighted as ‘at risk’ and in need of legislative protection. Specific legislation has been established (793/1977) ‘‘for the protection of the water/sea environment and for the prevention of sea pollution from all types of waste’’. Legislation Degree 793/1977 is practised at all Hellenic ports, coasts, beaches, open sea and applies also to enterprises like hotels and other industry, forbidding the despoiling of coasts and waterways by any kind of waste. Penalties of 2,000,000 DRH (£4,700) and 10,000,000 DRH (£25,000) can be imposed on transgressors (Dimakis, 1994).

At the transnational level, the European Commission is also interested and becoming involved in the application of sustainable practice relating to tourism. DG XXIII of the European Commission announced, at the GNTO organised ‘Eurotourism: Research and Potential’ conference (Halkidiki, 15th - 16th May 1994), its intention to publish green guidelines for the tourism industry.
The second part of this 'Eurotourism' conference 'Culture and Countryside' was held in Athens (27-28 May, 1994). Here, the Greek Minister of Tourism identified special interest tourism as a significant and influential trend that affects the tourism process; "differentiating the European tourism product, aiming at the maintenance of Europe as the most favourable international tourism destination, the development and establishment of new-alternative tourism forms is of great importance" (Livanos, 1994). Thus, alternative forms of tourism are already being considered at both the national and supra-national level, as part of a sustainable management policy to maintain tourism as a positive force and maintain Europe's threatened market share of world tourism.

By the end of 1994, the Greek Ministry of Land Use and Environment, and the GNTO (Ministry of Tourism) had met to create a working group whose main role was to formulate the "direction of environmental and land planning policy" in Greece. This would be implemented through:

1. Legislation Decrees (such as 2160/93); "to practice an effective policy for the protection of the environment...and for control of the environmental effects of the tourism operation (penalties for improper sewage disposal, noise pollution etc.)".

2. Investment being guided by the "enhancement of the tourism offer and the protection of the environment". For example, a new decree (2234/94) supports initiatives for:
   - modernisation of hotel units;
   - creation of new developed destinations;
   - investment in 'supplementary and special establishments' additional to existing units (e.g. sports facilities, golf courses, conference centres etc.), to improve the offered product.

3. Investment in 'special' tourism infrastructure (for the development of alternative tourism and attraction of the special tourism market). A large amount of public expenditure goes already exclusively on the development of 'special interest tourism' forms, such as:
   - sea tourism (sailing, yachting, jet-ski);
   - ecological, mountain tourism;
   - 'urban recreation';
   - cultural, social, religious tourism;
   - spas, health tourism.

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These types of initiative represent evidence that the need for 'product rejuvenation' has been recognised, and these will be further supported and developed in attempts to boost Greece's potential to attract an increased share of the growing 'alternative tourist market', and to complement its traditional mass tourist product. In the sections that follow, a number of alternative tourism product types and their current status in Greece are reviewed.

5.8 Special Interest Tourism in Greece

5.8.1 Greek Special Interest Tourism in Context

The development of special interest tourism has been conceptualised in the literature by a variety of analysts as having three main benefits in enhancing the existing tourism product offer:

- **Time/temporal distribution:** "Lengthening of the tourism period to up to 12 months of operation and tackling the seasonality of demand" (Aggelopoulos, 1993). This author also strongly asserts that "without the development of special interest tourism it will be impossible for tourism enterprises to survive";

- **Geographical distribution:** The decentralisation of tourism activity and investment in the peripheral areas (Pagonis and Pilarinos, 1992);

- **Product differentiation and "improving the quality of tourism services"** (Pilarinos, 1992): thus enhancing the long term competitiveness of the Greek tourism product in the face of stabilising growth in traditional mass tourism, beach-oriented holidays.

Less often identified is the importance of the 'sustainable' character which the new forms of tourism ought to have in order to prevent the negative effects that increased tourism flows invariably bring. However, Pagonis (1992) does note that "we offer to the visitor holidays where apart from fun, he/she will have the chance of a positive contact with nature and a closer and essential meeting with people, their customs, traditions and habits, while contributing to the preservation of our natural and cultural heritage". Whether this is feasible in reality remains open to question.
Both the theoretical literature and the policy statements reviewed, concur that statements regarding “the toppling of the mass tourism product and its holistic substitution by the new tourism forms” (Tsekouras, 1991) are extreme and overstated, when “the basic motive for every tourist -at least for the summer period- will always be the sun and sea” (Piou, 1993).

However, it is equally the case that traditional mass tourism destinations need to look to maintain interest in sun/beach oriented tourism, and must recognise the declining quality that some destinations now represent. “The maintenance of the mass tourism model with a significant ‘whitewash’, is a policy that was practised unsuccessfully and needs to be addressed” (Tsekouras, 1991). The few tourism analysts who have reviewed this position have already noted the role that some alternative forms of tourism can have in ‘supplementing’, rather than replacing, the traditional tourism product. The mixture of mass tourism with new alternative forms “has the potential for a normal adaptation into Greek reality” (Tsekouras, 1991).

Special interest tourism is therefore increasingly being positioned as having a supplementary role which supports the differentiation of the tourism offer, and “in combination with the classic holiday package, creates an important ‘plus’ which would positively influence both the tourist choice, expenditure and level of satisfaction” (Piou, 1994).

What are these new tourism forms, and what do they offer the Greek tourism product? There have so far been very few complete studies about alternative tourism in Greece. A significant exception is the study by the Hellenic Bank of Industrial Development (Tsekouras, 1991). This offers an examination of the ‘degradation’ of the mass tourism model, the subsequent effects and the appearance of new tourism forms.

Tsartas (1991) has also worked on this field and identifies some of the definitional problems involved, noting that “the effort of a holistic analysis comes up against the weaknesses in practising a complete and reliable typology”. However, he does attempt to categorise and define a number of key terms implicit in this form of analysis. This attempt to categorise and define the terms led to the following groups:

‘New’ forms of tourism, he suggests, “include those tourism forms that were developed after or parallel to mass, organised tourism and in relation to it”. Often, the new forms ended up operating in an organised and mass form, differentiating themselves from the
mass tourism model, only in the specialised product which was the main motive for some holidays.

'Alternative' tourism forms "include those, whose basic characteristic is their antithesis to the classic mass tourism product, having as their basis the need for environmental protection, preservation of the national heritage and natural life". One of the main features of this category is the implied 'active' participation of the holiday makers within these alternative activities.

'Special' tourism form: are defined as those which "satisfy the diverse demand for special interest holidays" which have always been offered during the tourism process and are being developed and differentiated, now having an autonomous position to other present tourism types.

Tsartas (1991) notes, however, that this strict categorisation of forms is often difficult to follow in practice and that many new product-offers fall between two or combine the three groups. Sea-sport tourism, for example, initially positioned within the 'special' forms, could be described as an important part of the traditional organised tourism offer.

A different approach to special interest tourism categorisation is offered in the study by the 'Centre of Planning and Economic Research' (KEPE), where Komilis (1986) has examined the problematic situation of Greek tourism and the development of new alternative tourism forms in Greece. In that study, tourism categories are differentiated according to: goals and motives for participation; types of participation and the time/place of the activity. A number of tourism categories are identified in each case:

1. Goals and motives of people participating in tourism activities:
   - 'recreational'
   - 'educational - cultural'
   - 'health - treatment - thermo - spas'

2. 'Participation' (organised forms, participation patterns, socio-economic status of participants):
   - 'mass tourism'; defined as the category of tourism whose main characteristic is the grouping of participation into certain periods of intense tourism activity. Additionally, the characteristic of mass organisation, transportation and accommodation characterises to the traditional mass tourism form. Komilis adds some characteristic factors that comprise mass operation e.g.
cost of travel (distance between the country and destination area);
- level of prices and offered services;
- 'sun, sea and sand' product, succeeding the ones of culture, history, archaeology.

- 'independent tourism'; defined as the tourism category where independent, personal arrangement, transportation and touring are the main characteristics.
- 'social welfare tourism'; defined as the tourism form offered by the state to lower socio-economic groups in order to achieve a social benefit.

3. 'Time - Place' of tourism activity:
- 'winter' tourism (e.g. ski resorts)
- 'mountain' tourism (non-ski)
- 'agro' tourism
- 'sea' tourism.

5.8.2 Necessary Preconditions for Alternative Tourism Development

While some work has been undertaken and clearly (as with the above studies) there are already some guidelines for policy makers to promote a 'greener' direction for an alternative tourism future, the theory has so far been practised relatively sporadically. In an attempt to identify the preconditions for, and promote the establishment of, the new tourism forms, further investigation of the potential for alternative tourism in Greece is clearly necessary.

Although with specific emphasis on the internal policy process in Greece, this is one of the goals of the present study, Komilis (1986) has also suggested that at least some investigation is needed in the form of European 'market research', to indicate the size and nature of the specific interested markets, and in order to be able to understand the motives of people participating. These, however, lie outside the scope of the present study.

With more specific relevance to this study, Tsekouras (1991) identifies some of the preconditions for the establishment of special interest tourism in Greece including:

- A legislation plan; this could cover and implement special interest tourism development, and could be based on studies of international experience and awareness of private sector and local development authorities.
- A national and peripheral programme; where 'the existence of this programme means the integration of the goals (for special interest tourism) into the wider
national and peripheral tourism policy". Such a programme could include, for example:

- education and promotion of information about the advantages of investment in special tourism, to private enterprises;
- categorisation of the characteristics of every region and the provision of a special programme based on these characteristics;
- emphasis on the local idiosyncrasies and characteristics of under-developed places, where many special tourism forms could operate positively for tourism attraction;

• **Education and specialisation;** the demand for special knowledge on international tourism trends is both obvious and necessary, and the position of specialised staff in key jobs is important;

• **Cost of infrastructure;** this essential precondition demands an economic analysis for the construction of ‘special establishments’ on which special interest tourism could be developed.

The same study, exploring the potentially “viable symbiosis of mass tourism with new alternative tourism forms”, suggests that “there should be a complementary relationship between the existing mass tourism model and special interest tourism”, and adds that “the combination of two, three or more special forms could result in a network of special interest programmes”, that would give the visitor a variety of choices within the same trip and reduce the cost of administration, promotion and management.

5.8.3 The Evolution of Special Interest Tourism in Greece

The rise of Greek tourism initially supported ‘special tourism’ forms, when the state invested in special infrastructure for cultural tourism. In addition, the 1950’s and 1960’s benefited the development of ‘therapeutic’ and ‘mountain’ tourism, while during early 1970’s there was significant investment in marinas to attract ‘sea tourism’. After the mid 1970’s, the subsidies for the construction of special interest infrastructure reduced, with the exception of those for ski tourism in newly constructed ski resorts. The late 1970’s brought with it an increase in environmental issues which, along with cultural values, prompted attention to other future tourism alternatives (Kalokardou, 1991).
Policy statements during the 1980's promised the implementation of programmes concerning 'sea tourism' (yachting, sailing), ski tourism and 'thermo' tourism. However, since 1990, sea tourism has clearly been the top priority for public sector development, with the construction of marinas, while private initiatives have focused on 'conference' and 'health' tourism. Even though such special interest tourism forms are now evident within tourism development in Greece, "this special development has been characterised by fragmentation and lack of constructive planning" (Kalokardou, 1991). In addition, "the uncoordinated action plans, the lack of consistency in the government's policies and mainly the lack of administration at all levels" (Tsartas, 1991) have handicapped the development and offer of special products. Lack of special infrastructure (Piou, 1993), the postponement of production, anachronistic legislation and bureaucracy, have all obstructed the essential introduction and promising potential of this element of Greece's future tourism product.

5.8.4 Sub-types of Special Interest Tourism - The Greek Context

A number of researchers working in the tourism field have categorised tourism into generic types and some have established typologies of 'special interest tourism'. The following sub-section represents an attempt to synthesise some of these approaches and identify some key categories of special interest (non mass tourism) that can later be utilised in the present study of new approaches towards the further development or rejuvenation of the Greek tourism product.

a) Sea tourism
Kalokardou (1991) defines this type of tourism as "every (specialist) tourism activity which is related to the sea, coast and beach,...including sea touring, cruising, wind surfing, yachting, sailing...". Greece has 16,000 km of coast, 4,000 islands and 130,000 sq km of sea and a centuries old nautical tradition. "Without doubt it enjoys competitive advantages for the further development of sea tourism" (Kalokardou, 1991). 5% of the sea tourism market in the Mediterranean and 7.7% (44,509m/DRM) of the whole tourism income of Greece for 1989, was estimated to have been derived from sea tourism activities in Greek waters, while one third of the world's cruise ships are under Greek ownership (Falirea, 1994).

Underdeveloped infrastructure (such as marinas), poor quality services, lack of appropriate planning, while operating in a highly competitive market, and realisation of the huge potential for further development, have prompted the responsible public
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authorities (GNTO, Ministry of Navy, Ministry of National Economy) to emphasise sea tourism as a top priority for product differentiation and the quality upgrading of Greek tourism in the coming years (Falirea, 1994). Relevant policy initiatives already proposed in this area include:

- the establishment of a national policy for the development of sea tourism, designed particularly to encourage private investment;
- legislation and tax relief for tourism enterprises in order to motivate private initiatives and investment;
- modernisation of existing infrastructure (ports and marinas) and improvement of services;
- construction of new marinas;
- environmental security and protection through strict legislative practice;
- support to the Hellenic ship building industry;
- subsidies for purchases of new craft;
- recruitment of specialised staff and emphasis placed on tourism education;
- promotion of Greek sea tourism through GNTO offices abroad;
- fostering co-operation between the public and private sectors for the establishment and implementation of a special sea tourism programme.

b) Cultural tourism

A definition of cultural tourism given at the ‘Eurotourism - Culture and Countryside conference (May 1994, Athens) by Hatzidakis of the GNTO, is “the form of touring whose main motive is the experience of different societies and their culture through a direct contact with them, within their idiosyncratic physical environment”. The early Greek tourism offer was almost exclusively based on the fascination of archaeological sites and history, and soon became synonymous with cultural tourism. The year of ‘Protection of European Architectural Heritage’ (1975) emphasised the importance of cultural preservation, and brought a set of policies for the ‘preservation of traditional areas’, which then constituted a special tourism product.

During this period (mid 1970’s), 120 old buildings were restored by the GNTO, while 175 buildings had been redecorated by private organisations who were subsidised by the state. However, the 1960 to 1975 tourism boom saw what has been termed ‘peripheral imbalance’ and ‘aesthetic violation’ caused by the development of uncontrolled mass tourism. Thus, these efforts of the GNTO to promote the cultural ‘ingredient’ of Greek tourism (through international exhibitions, conferences and
special publications for example), became lost during a period which lacked long term planning and represented a vague programme full of managerial inconsistencies, characterised by a lack of co-operation between different decision centres, and programmes such as Ministry of Land Use and Environment, Ministry of Culture, EU plans, GNTO Mediterranean Programmes and other government policy statements.

c) Business tourism (including conference and incentive travel)

World-wide business tourism has become recognised as a key tourism market sector, characterised as much by its value as its volume. Horwath Consulting estimate that conference tourism generates 6.8% of tourists staying in Greek hotels. Based on research by the Hellenic Federation of Hotel Owners, Athens appears as the fifth most favourable European capital for conferences for the lucrative American market. 81.5% (134) of Greek conference centres are concentrated in the hotels of Athens, Thessaloniki, Crete and Rhodes.

Published and commercial analysis of Greek business tourism, while emphasising the importance of conference tourism in income generation, criticises the political ignorance, lack of strategic marketing and initiatives for private investment in this key sector of Greek tourism. GNTO research has indicated that a ‘conference tourist’ spends 1.5 times more money than the independent tourist, and 2 to 3 times more than the ‘mass tourist’ during a stay in the country.

d) Agro (agricultural) - Rural tourism

Two main forms of agro-tourism have been identified by Pagonis (1992). Firstly, the accommodation of visitors at farms where guests participate in daily farm life; and secondly, the construction of village/rural accommodation and the offer of hospitality to visitors. The significance of this special tourism form to the overall Greek tourism product is represented by:

- the development of agro tourism taking place in non-urban areas. Thus spreading economic benefits;
- the centre of the whole activity is the family and the local industry;
- the interrelationship between the offer and the local production function.

Tsekouras (1991) analyses positively the potential of this tourism sub-type for further development since “it is a ‘green’ product with an existing market... while ...legislation and subsidies by the EU support the new form”.

The GNTO special brochure for rural tourism defines rural or agro-tourism as tourism “concerning all those who wish to spend their holiday in a Greek country home, in an
atmosphere of hospitality and care based upon simple and straightforward relations between people...it seeks a harmonious and balanced link between Greek tourist supply and everchanging tourist demand”. While this may represent a rather idealistic marketing image of this tourism form, others have found it an attractive prospect. “It is the alternative aspect to mass tourism, is a philosophy and way of living which suggests that the small village with its warmth and local hospitality are the protagonists of a mild tourism activity which respects the physical, architectural and cultural surroundings” (Papakonstandinidis, 1994).

In reality, some of the management inconsistencies of the Greek tourism product are highlighted by this sub-sector of the special interest tourism market. The planning and implementation of the programme to promote agro or rural tourism lies between a number of different bodies including the Ministry of Agriculture, GNTO, Unions, General Secretariat for (sex) Equality, etc.

e) Health - spa - thermo - therapeutic tourism
Each of the above refer to a special category of tourism which has as a common goal the promotion of health through different services. They include:

• curative programmes;
• preventative programmes;
• health, fitness and leisure.

Greece operates thermo tourism programmes in a number of places including Edipsos, Killini, Loutraki, Kamena Vourla, Lesbos. However, this element of the overall tourism product is still considered to be weak. “The state policy announcements and the motives for modernisation of these facilities have not been able to attract sufficient numbers...even though the potential and the benefits to be derived are extremely valuable” (Gazelidis, 1994).

Such categorisations of special interest tourism reviewed above (a-e) are both useful in terms of delineating the field of ‘alternative’ tourism types (although this is clearly not exhaustive) and in illustrating the extent to which these have been attempted, or have potential for further development in Greece. This may be particularly relevant within tourism development policies that seek to move the country away from a reliance exclusively on mass tourism products, or at least to broaden the image to encompass some of Greece’s much wider potential. Both appear significant for policies to differentiate the tourism product, raise the ‘quality’ of the tourism attracted, and reduce reliance on a product offer exhibiting clear signs of demand stagnation.
5.9 Sports Tourism in Greece

Sports tourism in ancient Greece was an important tool for the promotion of a powerful image for towns hosting the events. "Sports tourism was related with religious feeling and the greatness of sport and peace" (Tsalouhidis, 1987). It was not unknown for adversary authorities to announce cease-fires in order to host Games in peaceful conditions, which could safely attract visitors from distant areas.

Olympia, the mother town of the Olympic Games (776 BC), held the brightest and oldest sporting and cultural event, attracting around 40,000 visitors to the stadium of Ieri Alti, with specially constructed infrastructure and management (such as supervision by rabdoforoi-mastigoforoi: the 'tourist police'). A number of other sporting events all around the Hellenic area (Pithia, Nemea, Esthmia) were organised to build the image of towns hosting the events and to promote the fame of the town outside its local borders. Much of this rings true to the literature on today's motives for hosting 'hallmark' events.

For the purposes of this review, focusing on the Greek literature and in an effort to offer a detailed overview of all types of active tourism in Greece, the term 'sports tourism' is taken to include any travelling whose primary purpose is dedicated to sport (active or Spectating) and the activities undertaken during such trips. Krandonellis (1991) gives an accepted definition as "the form of tourism whose main purpose is to spectate or participate professionally or at an amateur level in sporting activities".

Despite its impressive history, it is perhaps necessary to emphasise that modern sports tourism in Greece is presently at its embryonic stage of development. There are, for example, different bodies operating for the two composite parts of sports tourism (the General Secretariat for Sport (G.S.S.) and the Ministry of Tourism. As is common elsewhere (Jackson and Glyptis, 1992; Collins and Jackson, 1998; Weed and Bull, 1996), there is a characteristic lack of co-operation between the two in the drawing up of an appropriate joint programme and a lack of dedicated sports tourism policy.

An examination of the limited information which exists concerning this special tourism form immediately identifies two terms for the phenomenon and definitional confusion. It is interesting to observe within the theoretical work and policy statements deriving from the different bodies in Greece, that their interest in the phenomenon of the sport - tourism interrelationship, seeks to emphasise the priority and importance of the
elements they individually promote. For example, sport bodies use the term 'sports tourism', highlighting the sport and physical exercise elements within any tourism activity. Conversely, the tourism sector use the term 'tourism sport' to emphasise the importance and operation of tourism over and above the inclusion of sports activities within holidays.

Although the Greek literature on this subject is limited in extent, it identifies three main categories:

- **Sporting events;** Where organised groups of fans travel to support their team, or independent travel by people who want to spectate at mega- or even local, sporting events;
- **Training schemes;** Where professional or amateur players have the chance to train through a pre-seasonal programme in special sporting facilities, operating in milder climates like Greece;
- **Sport holiday programmes;** Where visitors have the opportunity to enjoy their favourite sport or a fitness programme through organised schemes and facilities whilst away from their home area.

### 5.10 Sports Tourism - The Contemporary Greek Context

The value of sport tourism must be seen in the context of the time and spatial distribution of tourism activity in the Hellenic area. "The creation of 'demand' at the off-peak months of the tourism period" (KEPE), and the "attraction of visitors of high socio-economic status" (Pilarinos, 1992), are the two main arguments put forward for attracting sports tourism in the limited Greek literature. Following a European tourism market research study referring to 'sports tourism', the GNTO (1992) argues that "investment in sport establishments increases the level of customer satisfaction, improves the 'prestige' and competitive image of hotels, which subsequently enjoy increased revenues and a quality custom". The same research criticises the inferior condition of the present sporting facilities in most Greek hotel units, but emphasises the great potential that Greece has to attract sport tourists through strategic marketing, special infrastructure and effective promotion.

Other apparent benefits of sports tourism are recognised. It is encouraging that sports tourism has been given an environmental tone, as "sports tourism represents activities which suggest a direct contact with nature, and can promote Greece as an environmentally sensitive destination" (GNTO, 1992). Some of the Greek literature places sports tourism within the 'ecotourism' category, indicating the direct relationship
that sport is often seen to have with nature. While this is clearly not always the case, it is a recurring theme within much of the Greek material and policy thinking in sports tourism.

This is especially emphasised in the study of Tsekouras et al (1991), where 'ecotourism' includes a large variety of physical activities, from walking and trekking to more adventurous activities such as scuba-diving and canoe-kayak. According to Tsekouras, this form of touring also has the advantage of redistributing "the flow of investment from big centres to small communities, helping to reduce the abandonment of 'problematic' areas by their inhabitants, by creating the appropriate economic pre-conditions".

Research suggests that sports tourism in Greece has taken a number of significant steps forward in development terms, with the pre-conditions necessary for its development, supporting legislation and appropriate providers all now emerging:

a) Preconditions
The survey undertaken by the HBID (Tsekouras et al, 1991) for a significant number of foreign and national ecotourism agencies, suggests that the profile of the 'customer' of the Greek tourism product is changing, because increasing numbers of travellers "prefer the big towns less than the more unexplored places gifted with an extraordinary physical environment".

Most analysts of this field argue that the current lack of special infrastructure prevents sports tourism development, despite the existence of a unique physical environment in which it could easily be established. However, Litras (1991) suggests that this process is already emerging, identifying the increased trend for the 'sport' ingredient in holidays, and offering a long list of private companies that offer sport equipment for hotel units, that "indicates the increased entrepreneurial interest".

Tsartas (1991) strongly believes that the most crucial factor that constrains this development is the lack of managerial skills such as 'administration, training, promotion'. The same author criticises the GNTO and other Ministries for insufficient information and activity in this area, offering examples where, due to more effective promotion, tourism activities such as mountaineering, walking, trekking, in certain places of North and West Greece enjoyed more night stays in the late 1980s.
b) Regulation and Legislation

In addition to emerging provision and marketing, the establishment of relevant legislation and effective regulation by the public sector are crucial preconditions of comprehensive development and new tourism products. This would include the designation of appropriate areas for investment, offers of support (through subsidies and tax allowances), and schemes for the protection of the environment, which would prevent an anarchic private development and set the basis for economic and social benefits, thereby avoiding the mistakes of the past.

There are already several examples of public sector activity that support sports tourism initiatives in Greece. For example, through article 37 of Legislation Decree 75/1975, the General Secretariat for Sport has the increased responsibility of establishing training/coaching ‘Institutes’ which would satisfy the needs for training and supervision in the tourism industry. Secondly, Legislation Decrees 144/1976 and 48/1984, allowed the opening up of private schools offering coaching and teaching courses, especially designed to create qualified sport personnel for hotel units.

The Coast Guard within the Ministry of Merchant Navy, in serving the needs of the increasing and significant level of sporting activity in the sea during the tourism season, provider definitions, regulations and restrictions for a variety of water sports activities through the Legislation Decree 3131 1/06/94.

Finally, through the (25%) tax relief for newly constructed sporting facilities and other subsidies (Legislation Decree 1892/1990), the state motivates private enterprises to invest in the modernisation of existing, and construction of new, facilities (such as golf courses), which support the tourism industry in improving the tourism product offer, and indicating the important role ‘sport’ is increasingly being given in generating tourism and improving its ‘quality’.

c) Providers

The materialisation of sports tourism programmes (like golfing holidays) through public mechanisms, take time and are sensitive to the political inconsistencies that succeeding governments bring. However, it is possible to find examples where public local authorities, realising and appreciating the economic potential of this active tourism trend, have introduced sporting activities and schemes throughout the tourism season. The island of Kos has adopted the sporting activity of cycling/mountain biking, that
arguably responds sustainably to the environment and manages to "combine the classic 'sun and sea' holidays with sports". Crete, by organising sea sporting events (such as the Minos Sailing Cup), manages to attract sports men/women all through the year.

European policies have also indicated interest in the development of sports tourism. For example, the 'Informal Meeting of EU Ministers of Tourism' in Athens (15 of April 1994), noted that "sports tourism has become an interestingly important sector and trend at both European and International level" (G.S.S., 1994). Additionally, the European Treasury of Peripheral Development, responsible for programmes such as 'LIFE', 'LEADER' and 'ARTUR', have put great emphasis on sport tourism, with special interest tourism viewed as a potential contributor to peripheral regions. Despite the fact that the above policy statements are highly indicative of the new trend, they operate at an infant stage and are dependent on further political implementation at the national level.

Despite these public sector initiatives, ultimately it is the private sector that invariably takes the initiative of establishing and investing in sport for tourism purposes, either as specific and core products, or as a supplementary service that improves the existing product offer. There are already promising signs that this is also taking place, as Litras (1991) has identified. There remains, however, a lack of information and relevant literature on the extent of sports tourism activity, which in the interests of providing adequate information to maximise the effectiveness and sustainability of the 'new tourism', warrants further investigation of the extent, type and potential of this form of tourism operating in Greece, and this constitutes a key motive for the present study.

5.11 Sporting Events

While the more general literature in this field has similarly been reviewed earlier (Chapter 1), the Greek literature referring to sporting events as tourism generators is at present limited. There have, however, been internal reports which originate from both sport and tourism public organisations in Greece, which have examined the benefits deriving from events, and which in some cases pre-date the significant effort to attract the Olympic Games to Greece.

Papathanasiou (1993), for example, supported the promising potential for the successful presentation of big events which can act as tourism magnets, both in the short and long
term, and which he suggests, have the capacity to become 'the' promotional tool of Greece.

Plastiras et al (1992) argue that sport events are a special form that could "operate 'traditionally' within the mass tourism model, but also be used to attract 'selective' tourism". Organised within the mass tourism industry, sport events can successfully enjoy both the efficiency of an established tourism environment and the attraction of a 'quality' market.

The main organisers of every sporting event in Greece are the Federations of the respective sports, in collaboration with the General Secretariat for Sport. However, it is a characteristic that the co-operation between the different bodies of tourism and sport to date has been limited, which subsequently restricts product development, promotional efforts and the end result.

Ignoring the obvious potential of 'mega' multi-sport events, work on specific sports with an ability to attract tourism has long been recognised by some researchers and sports enthusiasts, who also positively advocate the staging of such events. For example, amongst the sea sports, sailing has been suggested by Katsaras and Botos (1991) as a sport that can attract a large number of visitors, for whom sport is a primary purpose, particularly through participation in sailing competitions. This type of special product "brings large revenue levels and a high image promotion for Greece, through media exposure to every competing country" and obviously offers potential for development from the traditional mass tourism product, with positive economic results.

Another related form of sea sport tourism that enjoys significant attention is that of 'wind surfing', which promises "a sporting image for Greece, through low cost organised events" (GNTO). The same studies emphasise the importance of a complete promotional plan, for the organised development of this activity. This would include:

- detailed tourist guides and other information on the existing areas providing sea sports facilities;
- promotion through the media of local and international competitions;
- development of appropriate policy regulation under the aegis of GNTO.

'Motor sport', generating significant publicity through events such as the international 'Rally Acropolis', along with the appropriate natural infrastructure, have helped Greece to be recognised as a favourable destination for certain car racing types. This type of
sporting activity has been accused of representing anti-environmental behaviour and has driven ecological organisations to suggest the abandonment of the sport. However, sport enthusiasts believe that controlled on an appropriate basis, and organised according to environmental practices, this activity can avoid the negative effects and realise positive ones, such as:

- economic benefit to local communities included on the race course;
- cultural interaction with communities that are difficult to access under normal circumstances;
- specially constructed infrastructure that would benefit the locality all year through.

In terms of motor sport, there are several examples world-wide of these types of effect. However, all of these reviewed sports tourism activities suggest that with careful redefinition of the term ‘capacity’ in environmentally sensitive areas, and strict monitoring of the potentially negative effects, ‘sustainable’ sports tourism flows can be generated and can help build a sporting tradition in some unexploited and remote areas, further contributing to the overall potential of sports tourism in Greece. Experience from elsewhere also suggests that there are other particular types that can supplement those that have already been reviewed for their potential for Greece.

Consideration of the impacts and potential of the imminent staging of the Olympic mega-event lie outside the scope of this study and will clearly require further research. However, this at least requires recognition and evidences further the potential of sport to contribute to tourism development and the determination of the Greek authorities to use it to differentiate the country from a reputation based exclusively on sun, beach mass tourism. The present study, however, focuses on the development of more continuous, smaller scale contributions of sport to the tourism product and particularly on active rather than passive forms of sports tourism.

5.12 Sport and Activity Holidays

Exampling directly this focus on active sports tourism, the following section reviews a number of sports tourism types which are already showing evidence of significant potential in Greece towards the identified objectives of tourism policy. The section also, however, identifies some problem issues and constraints that are more fully evidenced in the subsequent case studies.
5.12.1 Sea Sports

Sea sports tourism has attracted the majority of attention in this context and, as noted, has been treated as a priority form of special tourism in Greek development planning. This sports tourism type has been seen as particularly relevant to the Greek context with its “unique nautical and sea resources, anthropological environment (structure and form of localities), physical surroundings and lifestyle” (Komilis, 1986).

‘Yachting’ has been treated tautologically with sea tourism by the State, which considers this type of tourism as the most appropriate both in attracting ‘quality tourism’ and increasing volume. The total revenue from this type of activity rose from 2,7bn DRM in 1978, to 4,8bn DRM in 1989, and up to 11b DRM in the 1990s, with a high average expenditure per capita. 80% of ‘professional tourist craft’ are ‘bare boats’ (not staff equipped) and “are crewed by European sailors mainly, who seek more the physical activity than the luxury” (Kalokardou, 1991). Some of the existing literature comments positively on the potential of yachting for tourism development, in that it would boost both the economy and image of Greece.

‘Sailing’ has been described as “the new product of the decade” and is enjoying dramatic growth. It is “offered as a complete tourism product, through the organisation of international competitions or equally importantly through the hiring of sailing boats” (Katsaras and Botos, 1991). There are around 2,500 boats under the private management of either sailing companies or hotel enterprises that include sailing within offered packages, mainly under the ‘activity holidays’ title. A number of authors highlight the high economic benefits already derived from such sailing operations, but prioritise its further development in order to benefit the image of Greece as a sporting destination.

‘Wind surfing’ has been described as the most popular ‘holiday activity’, with “relatively low cost and special skill levels which offers a deep knowledge of nature” (GNTO, 1992). The relatively low cost of facilities, equipment and administration has promoted its popularity and wind surfing is now included in a large number of activity holiday packages and sea sport tourism programmes.

‘Scuba diving’ in Greece exists and operates, but is completely regulated by special legislation “concerning archaeological matters” (Legislation Decree 5351/32), that restricts diving to only five coastal areas (covering less than 4% of Greece). The strict
regulation has been prompted by the outside exploitation of Greek archaeological treasures, but the legislation could now be viewed as anachronistic, incomplete and inequitable.

Authors in this field, criticise the bureaucratic public authority administration of ‘diving centres’ which are also discriminated against through being excluded from tax relief policies, where instead they should be encouraged as a further lucrative form of sports tourism. Diving organisations offer statistics that assess the European diving market as representing 550,000 people, and the American market as to 150,000, with an average 15 day expenditure per capita of 1,500 US$. This does not include special additional expenditure (diving equipment, air etc.) of 500 US$. With the current discrimination against, and lack of incentives/investment for, diving programmes in Greece, the result has been a lack of organised diving centres, inefficiency and an inability to satisfy expressed demand that is increasingly attracted to competitive countries (like Turkey).

Although a number of new diving centres have opened, experts in this field have suggested a number of programmes that would help the development:

- re-consideration of the Legislation Decree 5351/32 that limits diving activity;
- GNTO involvement in financial, organisational and promotional efforts for diving;
- the launching of special tourist packages for diving holidays;
- the creation of diving centres in underdeveloped and less crowded areas;
- co-operation of the different government departments in Greece for the promotion of, and detailed information about, this special product to the interested market.

Regarding sea sports generally, Komilis (1986) identifies a number of guidelines and necessary pre-conditions for the further development of sea tourism activities in Greece, suggesting:

- construction of marina facilities for leisure boats and studies on alternative and complementary uses of marinas (such as high quality yachting services and sailing/water sport centres) with the co-operation of local sports clubs;
- improvement and enhancement of water sports club facilities and construction of special sports training centres;
- maintenance and repair units serving the needs of sea sport activities;
- education, research and training through seminars for technical and managerial staff, establishment of water sport institutes in co-operation with GSS;
- a network of sea sport-oriented administration and management:
  - peripheral government, private, public co-operation;
- legislation for ship regulation, safety rules and environmental restrictions;
- international exhibitions to provide a promotional network;
- cultural events based around the maritime tradition of Greece.

5.12.2 Sport in Hotel units

The growing demand for fitness all year through, has seen the increased inclusion of sport into holiday programmes, in the form of both organised and/or independent exercise. While hard statistics do not exist, surrogates can be found. The number of companies offering sports equipment to hotels has increased (Litras, 1991), so has hotel business interest in investing in sport facilities and programmes.

The GNTO has also produced both regional and local statistics on sporting facilities in hotels, but limited the investigation to four main sports (mini golf, swimming, sea sports and tennis). Analysis of these figures would offer very interesting results, since the areas with established mass tourism industries (e.g., Crete, Dodekanese, Athens and Peloponese) include almost every facility in every category. Yet, the investment in sport facilities by hotels could be more widely indicative of the role that sport has started to play in the broader tourism offer, and there is an enormous need for updated and additional research on the levels of investment on sporting activities by the tourism sector in Greece. The statistics suggest that Crete is the most active area in terms of this type of facility, particularly in its larger hotels, which suggests that this form is already being adopted in the differentiation of mass tourism products by private sector operators.

On a related note, the term 'Tourist Animation' noted in some Greek texts has been defined as 'Tourist Recreation-Entertainment', and is seen by some as an integral element of the tourism package. Litras (1988) demonstrates the importance of 'Animation' to the tourism offer and how this can influence tourism demand in the future. Within general animation programmes, sport is one of the most essential elements and is offered under specific programming and supervision. The majority of hotel units offering animation within their package are of the 'club' type (such as Club Mediterrane, Kappa Club, Robinson Club etc.). Litras (1991) refers to organised educational schemes, offering special degrees in animation, such as the Institut du Tourisme et des Loisirs in France and 'Touranim' in Greece. These appear to indicate the need for qualified staff for the sector of active tourism, and the rise of the sport tourism profession.
Within the new policy framework of differentiating the tourism product offer and promoting to a quality market, golf (as another key hotel-oriented sport) has a very important role to play. Since the 1960’s, the GNTO realising that the establishment of golf courses would attract a high income tourist class, has identified nine potential new courses in different areas of Greece, of which only one has so far been constructed and is operating, in Rhodes. Legislation providing significant subsidies and additional incentives, for tourism-oriented golf development has attracted the private sector’s interest, which already owns the few golf courses existing at the present. However, the high construction costs, along with inappropriate climatic conditions and therefore operational problems, make the development of golf programmes difficult at present, even though there is “an expressed interest from local authorities for investing in this significant sporting activity” (Krandonellis, 1991).

5.12.3 Winter Tourism and Mountain-Adventure Tourism

Special attention has been given to skiing, where the few ski resorts satisfy the internal market and have the potential for expansion. The major advantage of winter resort tourism in Greece is the variety of different sports that can be accommodated in a climate with large temperature variations. For example, “the visitor can ski at Mt. Parnassos and sail in the sea of Itea” (Tsekouras, 1991). The climatological conditions of Greece also provide opportunities for operating outside the traditional period, and if the increase of 3.7% in overnight stays between the winters of 1992 and 1993 continues, there is evidence that this is a promising tourism form.

For Greece, mountains have only recently become the source of, and basis for, another group of activities that could represent a core product of a new alternative and highly sustainable tourism offer. Tsekouras (1991) describes two main types of customer:
- People of the 30-40 age group, with high income levels, travelling in organised groups, seeking the milder sporting forms of mountain walking, trekking and rambling.
- People of younger age groups, travelling independently, or in organised groups, seeking activities with a high difficulty level and an adventure character.

The latter category particularly has attracted significant attention, raising questions as to whether it is a passing fashionable trend. “Is it fashion? Is it a need for contact with nature? Is it a new invention of the saturated tourist industry? Is it a demonstration of affluence through high cost travel?” (Falirea 1993). Whatever the motive, this type of tourist represents potential demand for another form of sports tourism for Greece. This
demand is already being satisfied by 10 tour agencies in Greece, that increasingly offer different packages ranging from mildly adventurous to high risk sport (Deriziotis, 1994).

Notwithstanding earlier reviewed analysis that sees any tourism development of 'natural' areas as inherently unsustainable, two main factors indicate the relatively sustainable nature of these types of active holidays. Firstly, the initial development of active holidays was a product of non-profit oriented, or eco bodies. It was often undertaken by nature enthusiasts who focus heavily on nature preservation and environmental awareness. It has therefore, at least initially, been based on more sustainable practice than many tourism developments. Secondly, the majority of Greek authors referring to Greek holidays within the context of 'ecotourism', identify the motives and behaviour of participants as having a close contact with nature, a deep knowledge of the eco-systems and, most importantly, the belief that only an unspoiled environment creates the ultimate intrinsic satisfaction. Here then, we have another pre-condition of ongoing sustainable tourism, i.e. that the clientele are also informed about, and oriented towards maintenance of the environment - and this again contrasts with the uniformed and environment - degrading nature of mass tourism products. While there are clearly, differing views on the 'sustainable credentials' of developing 'environmentally aware' tourism, it does have very significant potential for establishing more significant tourism-oriented economic activity within relatively undeveloped internal regions of Greece.

Conclusions

The potential of sports tourism to be developed as a sustainable of special interest tourism has been investigated, and appears to be supported by a number of important factors:

- increasing recognition of the negative impacts of mass tourism forms and the slowing of growth in mass tourism;
- an increased awareness for environmental and global issues;
- growth of healthier lifestyles and fitness levels, resulting in visitors with high levels of exercising demands;
- an increased demand for better service standards;
- a growth in part-time employment and holidays;
- a growing desire for escapism;
- a desire for self-actualisation through contact with the natural environment.
All these factors describe a great diversity in lifestyles, which have important implications for the traditional tourism market, such as:

- increasing differentiation of demand;
- decreasing passive tourism forms;
- the emergence of new specialised markets and segments.

Greece as a traditional Mediterranean destination, enjoying both the positive and negative effects of a well-established mass tourism industry, is in the process of redirecting its policy towards the attraction of what is termed 'quality tourism', through a multi-dimensional product offer. This would also appear timely, by considering the stagnating level of growth in mass tourism, rising awareness of the health risks of traditional beach tourism, and growth in interest in active tourism, which are increasingly recognised characteristics of tourism worldwide, but with particular significance to Mediterranean Europe.

Special interest tourism forms have been recognised as one potential direction for this new tourism policy aimed at rejuvenating and more effectively differentiating its product. Much existing analysis suggests that this new 'product', as complementary to existing mass tourism products, can be both competitive and sustainable. However, the real potential for special interest tourism and especially sports tourism to be comprehensively developed in Greece has not been investigated with substantive research. There is a great potential for future research into the development, profile and evaluation of sports tourism in Greece, its potential contribution to the country's economic and social regeneration, and continued position as a highly popular tourist destination with a variety of tourist product offers, for an increasingly sophisticated and differentiated market.

One of the most significant determinants now, of whether this potential can be realised, is that of the extent that public sector drivers of this tourism policy have recognised and can implement appropriate programmes and supporting legislation, incentives etc.; and also the extent to which the industry is amenable and foresightful enough to acknowledge the benefits of such policy and product shifts; or whether the short term profitability of the existing mass tourism products, will cloud their identification and realisation of the changing needs of both the European tourism market and the host country's physical and social environment.
Chapter 6

Tourism Product Repositioning through Sports Tourism Development: Central Government Involvement and the Private Sector Response

Introduction

The aim of the following three chapters is to present the key findings of the research undertaken in Greece, mainly derived from the formal interviews with significant actors in the Greek tourism industry and administration. The main areas addressed are: a) an evaluation of the potential for Greece to sustain its tourism profile through the development of a 'sports tourism product'; b) the direction of tourism policy towards active tourism developments in the 1990’s and into the next millennium; c) the position and the response of key actors and agencies to the changing tourism environment and the emerging proposals for sports tourism development; d) the developmental path suggested by key actors of the private sector and the level of adjustability of the industry to changing trends; and e) the barriers identified in the process of repositioning Greek tourism to include and highlight sports tourism product development.

The main objective of Chapter 6 is to proceed with the analysis and presentation of research findings at the central government level, both from secondary sources such as unpublished official government documents and policy declarations, and from interviews with policy makers, including the Minister for Tourism, and appointed bureaucrats in the GNTO.

While both of these data sources types provide new and valuable material evidencing the significance and role that sports tourism can play in tourist destinations like Greece, it is perhaps the interview process that is the key primary data produced within this study. The goals of the interviews conducted with central government sources, focusing on tourism policy formulation were:

- to identify the views of policy makers on the need for product differentiation, the role of sport within this process and their evaluation of the potential for sports tourism development to play a role in this process in Greece (in many ways, this represents a pivotal question for the study);
• to investigate the ways in which the direction of tourism policy has been affected by the concept of sustainability and the perceived ability of sports tourism to contribute towards sustainable tourism development;
• to identify the establishment and practice of economic, political and developmental vehicles that support and serve sports tourism development;
• to evaluate the proposed sports tourism forms and their applicability within the context of product differentiation and sustainable development;
• to identify the Central Government’s view of the changes to, and nature of, decentralisation of resources and authoritative power in Greece, and the ways this would affect the level of sustainability of new tourism product developments such as sports tourism.

In addition, this presentation of the findings includes a parallel analysis of the position, views and responses of private sector actors to these ‘central’ government actions. High level representatives of different groups from within the tourism industry have been identified as best representing ‘the industry’ response to some of these proposed developments, and other central actions which affect the tourism industry.

6.1 Public Sector Tourism Policy and Structural Characteristics

The main characteristic of public administration in Greece is the high level of centralised decision-making concentrated in Athens and the lack of any alternative power source capable of challenging central government. This ‘over-concentration’ of administrative power in the centre makes Greece ‘the most centralised state’ within the European Community (Papageorgiou et al, 1993). In the 1980’s, following Greece’s accession to the EU, a large amount of responsibilities were transferred to the lower tier prefectures. However, these attempts cannot be interpreted as effective decentralisation of the political decision-making power, but rather as “administrative functions in the interests of bureaucratic rationalisation” (ibid.).

Consequently, the administration within the tourism sector follows the same structure. The sum of decision-making power is concentrated in the centre, along with all the financial and administrative responsibilities. Until March 1989, the wide range of administrative and policy-making power for the ‘development and promotion of Greek tourism’ belonged to the ‘Greek National Tourism Organisation’ (GNTO). Established in 1951 as an independent public body, the GNTO was brought under the Ministry of National Economy by the socialist government in 1984. The legislation decree (LD) published in the ‘Government Newspaper’ (1984, issue 76, part one) announced the
establishment of the Ministry of Tourism responsible for the supervision and support of the GNTO. The main goals of the GNTO are later identified as "the planning, development and promotion of tourism in Greece through the positive exploitation of all potential capacities of the country" (LD 2160/93). Responsibilities include:

- the designation and proposal to the government of tourism policy;
- the implementation of agreed tourism policy by the government and the co-ordination of the actions of responsible authorities for the achievement of common tourism goals;
- the research, study, provision and supervision of tourism infrastructure;
- the planning and implementation of country's tourism promotion campaigns abroad and the support of a 'healthy' tourism consciousness;
- the construction, supervision and control of tourism facilities and activities of any kind;
- support for and co-operation with public services, organisations and relevant local authorities whose activities contribute to the promotion of the GNTO goals.

The GNTO thus participates in the operationalisation of programmes for tourism development in Greece, supervises tourism facilities and offered services and, most importantly, proposes to other public bodies, policies and incentives for the achievement of agreed tourism development goals (Rafail, 1989). In addition, the GNTO supports both private enterprises and local government bodies in improving their regional and local tourism products. The wide range of responsibilities undertaken by the GNTO have created numerous conflicts between various private and public organisations, leading to calls for decentralisation and the distribution of authority to the periphery.

The GNTO therefore has a wide range of responsibilities, reflected in its departmental structure, including the fields of research, statistics, legislative matters, investments, local government, implementation and land use, environmental protection, technical support, advertising, education, cultural events and casinos. For the purpose of this study, it was considered appropriate to analyse the views of all those departments relevant to the formulation and implementation of developmental policies and thus, selectively excluding those parts with irrelevant responsibilities, often of a more technical nature. This selection was achieved by a thorough analysis and evaluation of every department's responsibilities as established and expressed in the Presidential Legislative Decree 884/76 (GN A325, issue 1, part 1) for the "structural agreement of the services and personnel of the GNTO". It is characteristic of the centrality of the administrative power of the GNTO that all the policy-related departments belong to the
‘central service’ and not to the ‘peripheral (or regional) services’ within the hierarchical basic structure of ‘central’, ‘peripheral’ and ‘foreign’ services.

The legislation decree comprehensively describes the activities of each department and its sections, putting great emphasis on the developmental responsibilities of the ‘central service’. The majority of the interviews were conducted with the ‘General Department of Tourism Development’ which includes the departments (A) of ‘Research and Development’, and (B) of ‘Programme Implementation and Land Use’. The department (A) of ‘Research and Policy includes the Section (A1) of ‘Research and Studies’, having as its major responsibilities: the collection and scientific processing of data on tourism matters; research and study of GNTO efficiency, quality and competitiveness of its tourism services and policy development, by internal analysts and private sector evaluators; the policy oriented research, towards the identification of new tourism potential according to changing national and international trends; and the mapping of short-term action plans.

The Section (A2) of ‘Policy and Programming’ supervises the implementation and effectiveness of agreed policies and their improvement according to the demands of the international market and, most importantly, designates the necessary incentives for the attraction, direction and distribution of invested capital.

The Section (A4) of ‘Investments and Golf’ is responsible for the collection and analysis of information on tourism investments in terms of incentives, legislation, tax, precondition issues, as well as investment policy, developmental programmes, statistical and operational evaluations, aimed at efficiently communicating information to investors in tourism from both public and private sectors. Also, responsibilities reside with this section for the creation of data banks that foster co-operative relationships between private and public sectors; proposals for the formulation of beneficial and appropriate tourism investment policy; and the creation of preconditions, financial terms and legislation for the implementation of developmental and other tourism investment programmes.

The Section (A5) for the ‘Support of Local Government and Decentralisation’ is of great importance to the implementation of sustainable tourism policy, and has been influential in local empowerment and alteration to political principles during the 1990’s. It receives special attention in the following sections. This revised Section supports the cooperation of local government authorities on local tourism matters with central, regional and local public and private organisations, and proposes action plans for the support of
local involvement in tourism development, and the decentralisation of resources and responsibilities.

The Department (B) of 'Programme Implementation and Land Use' includes the Section (B4) of 'Tourism Values and Environment' which deals with the protection and supervision of tourism's physical, cultural and environmental resources, and 'ethics', fostering co-operation with other relevant authorities. Secondly, it proposes necessary 'action plans' for the protection and promotion of the above values within tourism development.

The recently established Department of 'Sea Tourism' concentrates on a range of activities and responsibilities related to the needs and demands of a significant part of the Greek tourism industry dealing with yachting, sailing and cruising. Finally, the Department (K) of 'Accommodation Facilities and Supervision' provides the supervision and evaluation of tourism facilities' effectiveness, satisfactory operation and associated legal affairs. At the higher positions of this administrative structure stands the Minister of Tourism and the General Secretary, who provide the final approval for suggested policies, while co-ordinating the internal and external responsibilities of the organisation, within its social and political environment.

6.2 Special Interest Tourism within the Process of Differentiating the Tourism Offer

The process of changing from the existing ubiquitous, degrading and increasingly non-competitive Greek tourism product, led to the formulation of new policy, which adopts a wider perspective than one based purely on the price differentiation. The 1980's closed with the realisation that a policy towards the generation of 'quality tourism' was needed. This required the attraction of higher spending visitors from higher socio-economic groups, within a "differentiated consumer model of tourism" (Rafail, 1989).

GNTO General Secretaries of different governments have agreed, and emphasise, the importance of a "multi-faceted tourism development with direct priorities: the need for a constructive absorption of the 'human' factor, of the natural environment and the preservation and promotion of our national heritage" (Pilarinos, 1992). Policy statements and internal documents of the GNTO use, and place a great emphasis on, the term 'selective tourism', defined as "the movement of people enjoying independent and individually adjusted holiday programmes, based on information and personal choice"
motives for discrete isolation from mass groups and the choice of special interests or adventure” (Doxiadis in Kolios, 1994).

Again, review of internal GNTO policy statements identifies a number of crucial activities that the central public sector view as necessary in moving this process forward:

- the creation/completion of special tourism infrastructure;
- the establishment of legislation that supports private initiatives for special interest tourism developments;
- the education of specialised professionals and the creation of favourable conditions for private investment.

This shift of policy direction was evident in the statements of interviewees at all levels of the administrative structure, especially underlining the need for the “independence of the Greek tourism product from reliance on the current product of mass tourism and the highlighting of cultural and environmental qualities of the country, through certain special tourism forms” (Dept. of Decentralisation). In addition, the “continuous differentiation of the tourism product is of vital importance, in which special interest tourism forms have a crucial role to play. Different tourism forms exploit potentialities that not only regenerate the whole tourism picture, but also develop new destinations that consequently promote local characteristics and result in a distributed regional development” (Dept. of Accommodation).

In 1995, the Minister of Tourism when asked about the competitiveness of the Greek tourism product and the potential of new tourism forms, highlighted the ability of the latter “to create a highly competitive product which when based on certain local physical, cultural or structural characteristics can produce those advantages that could attract different segments of the tourism market and therefore earn the optimal amount of the tourism market pie” (personal interview). The General Department of Tourism Development, reinforcing the above argument, that presents special interest tourism as applicable to the general policy goals, added that: “Besides the contribution of these forms to economic development - through the exploitation of different market segments - they prevent an overbuild and therefore an unsustainable environment, since they are based on an integrated, equitable and environment-friendly model of development that derives from the realisation of the short term viability of the traditional and large scale tourism developments”.

At a policy level, GNTO has suggested special interest tourism forms as a feasible and sustainable proposal for the process of differentiating the present tourism product offer.
However this has not been without strong criticisms when it has reached an implementation stage. Bureaucrats of the Departments of Investment and Programme Implementation described GNTO's development actions as "disorganised and uncoordinated", while the limited legislative tools available for implementing such proposals are fragmented by highly bureaucratic procedures.

Despite the evident internal, as well as external problems in this process, the realisation of a need for policy intervention in order to regenerate a saturated tourism product has led to the production of a ‘Tourism Policy’ (GNTO Unpublished Document, 1994), created to face the three main problematic characteristics of the 1990’s Greek tourism product. First, the high seasonality of tourism has led to an intensive exploitation of local resources. Secondly, the uneven geographical distribution of tourism activities has created a ‘monocultured’ local production system in places, an inequitable distribution of wealth, and over-exploitation of natural stock. Finally, and most significantly, the low competitiveness of Greek tourism derived from a product based almost exclusively on price differentiation and a low quality image, has created a number of significant, identified problems. Aiming at the product’s independence and move away from this mono-development of mass tourism, the lengthening of the tourism season, and the protection of the physical and cultural environment, the government has explicitly set the direction of public policy towards the “upgrading of tourism quality and the differentiation of the tourism product”. This differentiation process is defined as “the launching of a tourism product characterised by its variety of new tourism forms which would increase its competitiveness, long term viability and futurity” (GNTO, unpublished document, 1994).

Since then, this shift of policy direction towards ‘new tourism forms’ has been underpinned by legislation that promotes and supports investment through legislation decrees and incentives. Amongst this evidence of a shift in policy direction are: a) incentives for the modernisation of hotel units for the improvement of the tourism offer; b) creation of ‘Areas of Integrated Tourism Development’ (A.I.T.D. or POTA); c) support for tourism activity that rejuvenates traditional establishments; and d) support for and direction of investment towards the creation of ‘special’ tourism infrastructure. All these policy vehicles support the establishment of new tourism forms, including sports tourism forms which are the focus here, and these strongly characterise the new policy direction.
6.3 Development Parameters of Sports Tourism in Greece

6.3.1 Setting the Context for Differentiating the Product Offer through Special Tourism Forms

From an initial analysis of both public documents and formal interviews, it appears that the monolithic tourism product in Greece based on the sun and sand ingredients, faces an inevitable shift of direction in order to maintain a viable position within the Mediterranean tourism market. At a central government level, the role of sports tourism is seen in the context of "quality improvement of the offered services, aiming at the attraction of visitors of high socio-economic status" (Pilarinos, 1992). Based on a European tourism market research study which included sports tourism, GNTO (1992) argued that "investment in sport establishments increases the level of customer satisfaction, improves the 'prestige' and competitive image of hotels, which subsequently enjoy increased revenues and a quality custom".

This 'Quality' direction for Greek Tourism as highlighted so far in this analysis is the result of two processes. With respect to the sale of the traditional product, this has been reliant on a undifferentiated, pseudo-cultural and low cost offer. This offer produced a cheap holiday destination image, attracting certain market segments and offering limited benefits. Secondly, the view that sport and recreational tourism developments are a beneficial, if not necessary, part of the quality improvements, has been a common element in the statements of the interviewees. "This effort of promoting recreational forms of tourism aims to free the Greek tourism product from the dominance of mass tourism established in the last decades. The 'active' tourism forms have the capability of exploiting the cultural and physical potential of the country, that would effectively differentiate the offer" (Dept. of Research and Policy). In this context, common to most of the interviewees at central policy level, there was a belief that sports tourism forms have a crucial role to play within the process of building a multi-dimensional tourism product with increased distinctiveness.

For some sections of the policy making structure, the development of these recreational (or 'active') tourism products alongside other 'value added' elements, has been perceived as the logical response to an increasingly quality-oriented consumer, who chooses quality products and services. The generally improved lifestyles and consequently fitness levels and sports participation are reflected in holiday choice and behaviour, suggesting the need to adjust recreational tourism services to the developing needs. This view however, was not the line taken by the majority of the policy makers.
interviewed, who appear more strongly in favour of supply, rather than demand-based policies. It became clear from the interviews at the policy sections of the GNTO that there is a lack of explicit information on tourism demand for sports tourism products and little market knowledge of the sport tourist profile. This lack of knowledge about emerging tourism trends becomes significant in the inclusion of certain forms of supply within the whole ‘development’ and legislative framework, resulting in a series of negative bureaucratic measures and definitional confusion. Consequently, although some development of ‘active’ tourism provision has been advocated, the selection of sport tourism forms ignores demand indicators, and is based more on supply principles (e.g. attempted quality differentiation) than on changing leisure and tourism trends, which is clearly hazardous.

All interviewees at the policy level accepted that there is a shift in policy direction towards product differentiation. The value of sport tourism was also acknowledged by the majority of the interviewees in the context of changing the seasonal and spatial distribution of tourism activity in the Hellenic area. In addition, the majority of policy makers emphasised the contribution of sports tourism in the building of an attractive image and therefore in increasing of the product’s competitiveness. The higher levels of policy making (Dept. of Research and Policy; Minister of Tourism) argued positively that sports tourism would beneficially contribute to product regeneration through a higher quality profile for Greek tourism.

However, there was not a clear expression of any prioritisation of sports tourism developments within the process of differentiating the tourism offer; and in addition, it was noted that some contradictory arguments were expressed by lower sections of the policy hierarchy, arguing that “an image building, differentiation policy for Greek tourism should initially be based on infrastructural and general policy improvements of existing managerial and legislative systems, before investing in new developments with high risk levels” (Dept. of Programme Implementation and Land Use). The majority of interviewees serving in the implementation levels of tourism policy shared the view that public policy should put greater emphasis on altering those procedures that contribute to the degradation of the tourism offer, before introducing ‘radical’ new forms of tourism development. “There is not such a thing as ‘sustainable-responsible tourism’ when developing and operating within an unsustainable tourism structure” (ibid.). Simultaneously, other contradictory arguments suggest that new tourism forms and especially ‘energetic’ - recreational tourism have those qualities, such as easy market adaptation and new products, that could ‘mix’ with the traditional sun/sea package to provide realistic product innovation. This view was supported by members of the Dept.
of Research and Policy, identifying a crucial role for sport within the quality improvement process and general modernisation of the tourism superstructure, such as the modernisation of hotel units and the attraction of specific market segments having sport as their prime motive for travel.

These contradictory, but also in some ways complementary, viewpoints expressed above, reflect the plethora of interpretations and managerial contradictions concerning how sports tourism development may be beneficial; as summarised in the statement of the policy co-ordinator (Dept. of Research and Policy): “We are facing the opportunity of exploiting the potentialities of recreational tourism forms for a sustainable and beneficial development, but also the danger of hidden externalities when considering the importance of readjusting implementation mechanisms in order to reach a new sustainable outcome”.

Thus, the research revealed greatly diverse views between the interviewees at this central policy level on the basis and nature of potential sports tourism development. Three different views are clearly evident, yet prior to the research there was an assumption that all held consistent views as to where and how this potential development to the tourism product would fit. The different viewpoints identified include: a) sports tourism as an autonomous product type in terms of resources and managerial authority; b) sports tourism as an alternative to the mass tourism development in terms of scale, impact and benefits, and c) sports tourism as a supplementary, ‘value-added’ service to the operation and upgrading of the traditional tourism industry.

All of this evidences some internal confusion regarding the nature and role of sports tourism. It appears debatable, taking into account the contradictory views of policy makers, whether sports tourism is to be seen as an autonomous, or a more supplementary, tourism form within the new developmental framework of public policy at central government level. Arguments concerning the strategic implementation of sports tourism, represent some areas of difference between the higher levels of policy making and those of policy implementation. The Minister’s statement strongly emphasises what he sees as a high degree of autonomy for sports tourism, in representing specific market segments, and therefore successfully meeting the policy objectives of quality differentiation. The Research and Policy Department also argued in favour of the independence of sports tourism from the traditional mass tourism product model, identifying crucial qualities in terms of operating in space and seasons different to the mass tourism patterns.
These significant identified qualities suggest an alternative role for sports tourism to that of an adjunct to the established tourism model, as viewed by certain sections of the GNTO. On the one hand, the already differentiated Dept. of Sea Tourism views sports tourism as: "an autonomous special tourism form operationalised by specific financial and implementing resources, and tools that differentiate it from the general tourism planning system. It is therefore addressed toward certain tourism groups that seek quality and variety" (Dept. of Sea Tourism). On the other hand, the Department of Research and Policy interpreted this autonomous character of sports tourism more as an effective way of redistributing existing tourism activity rather than producing new market segments. This latter objective seems to depart from the initial meaning of 'product innovation' as expressed by higher policy making sections.

Certain policy sections used the term 'alternative' tourism form to describe sports tourism, suggesting that this product would not be addressed to mass tourism consumption and production. They supported the use of the term by referring to a framework of specific economic resources and administrative tools necessary to support the development of sports tourism in Greece. However, considering other policy development directions, there is little mention of alternative mechanisms in terms of controlled development, environmental protection and sustainable product features. Therefore, it is evident that there is not a clear conceptualisation of the distinction between autonomy of tourism forms and alternative development.

These views are also quite different from those of other identified actors in the policy hierarchy within the GNTO. The term 'supplementary' was commonly used to describe the role that the new sports tourism product might take, merely reinforcing or aiding the existing mass tourism product. Most interviewees in policy implementation posts emphasised the difficulty of establishing a new image for a traditional industry. "The replacement of a well-established traditional image with a new 'active' picture of the tourism product is utopic. Greece was always promoting those features that would appeal to the wide market. Sun, sea and sand is the product, and this is what we offer best...Summer holidays will always be connected with beach relaxation, clean waters and burning sun" (Dept. of Research and Policy). This interviewed section of the GNTO also appeared in favour of maintaining the central government status quo in terms of the traditional exercise of policy making. Preference in maintaining the central attitudes and mode of actions was a common element in the statements of this group, despite their efforts to appear familiar and favourable to more alternative and radical procedures.
Therefore, a more ‘supplementary’ role for sports tourism (merely added to existing mass tourism products and resorts) was generally suggested by the individuals at the policy implementation level. “Sports tourism realistically can operate supplementary to the mass tourism model. By inserting sports tourism forms, the offer is improved through a more quality image and services, and thus becomes more competitive. It is difficult to forecast an autonomous sports tourism development sufficient to reorganise the whole tourism product. There is a role for sport in product improvement in satisfying the changing needs and tastes of the tourists. Sports tourism, however, will remain a complementary service to the overall tourism operation” (Dept. of Hospitality). The term ‘supplementary’ here defines the contribution of sports tourism as improving an insufficient existing tourism operation. But sports tourism can also clearly operate at a different level, through the attraction of specific consumer segments, or supplementing tourism volume by off-peak season operation or spreading activity beyond concentrated mass tourism zones.

The General Director of Research and Policy for the GNTO in some ways clearing the ground and in other ways reinforcing the confusing interpretations given to the new policy direction, steers a middle course. He suggests that “it is time for the public hand to effectively intervene towards the designation of new forms of development. Sports tourism is one of those tourism forms that could positively contribute to a sustainable and beneficial future. I would avoid the categorisation of new tourism products and I would suggest that sport tourism is the ‘midway’. It has the capability of behaving sustainably and bringing positive results within the traditional tourism structure”.

Despite the sometimes contradictory arguments expressed above, the policy shift in tourism that followed the realisation of the dangers of uncontrolled development, is evident and is reflected in the strong arguments on the applicability of new tourism forms, like sports tourism, to satisfy the goals of the necessary product repositioning. New policy declarations suggest that sports will be included in the rejuvenation of the tourism offer, but whether the industry is showing a sufficient level of adjustability to a changing tourism environment remains open to question. Is it sufficient to add ‘value associated’ sports products to existing mass tourism product offers, or are more significant attempts to change the product more radically, using sport and other special interest tourism forms, what Greece really needs to rejuvenate its tourism product.

This research shows that the tourism industry in Greece, through its representatives, remains sceptical of the potential development of new tourism forms and their ability to secure satisfactory returns. However, the change of policy in the 1990’s towards a
quality and rejuvenated product is welcomed, even by the most-traditional parts of the sector. “We need every new ingredient that can contribute to the improvement of the services. Quality is the key word to survival and success. Our mainly European customer is becoming more demanding for upgraded services and he/she can afford it. Sport is part of his/her every day life and must be offered during holidays as well. Sport now constitutes an increasing part of the offer and every time it has been included it has provided beneficial results” (President of Tourism Enterprises). Sport positioned in the context of ‘services improvement’, attracts positive comments by all interviewed representatives of the industry. Sport facilities development in hotels, for example, are considered an effective method of increasing competitiveness and image building.

However, common to most of the private sector interviewees was the belief that sports tourism constitutes a special interest tourism form and, as such, “would always be addressed and attract special groups with a specific expressed demand” (President of Travel Businesses). These beliefs produced comments suggesting that “these tourism products have limited potential for further development because we operate within a mass tourism business and the quest for numbers is vital” (ibid.). Clearly here, while there is a recognition of the benefit of sports products in tourism settings, there is less clarity on the role that special interest tourism can play in developing the product from a quantity to a quality orientation.

In contrast to the supply-oriented philosophy of the public sector (providing facilities to reflect the policy direction sought), the private sector’s actors evaluate the potential of sports tourism forms according to demand levels. Demand drives new private sector developments and the industry would always respond to expressed preference for new products. Demand is here characterised by increased numbers seeking specific tourism services. However, the private sector, would characterise demand as significant, only when it reaches mass numbers that promise profitable outcomes. Big numbers, according to the respondents “can satisfy investments with low cost, therefore a product with a special interest consumer group has to be significant enough to fill tourism superstructure to its capacity” (President of Hotel Owners). For the private sector in Greece at present, sports tourism is largely viewed as a ‘supplementary’ tourism form, to be added to the existing heavily mass oriented tourism industry. Beyond this they see only that marketing efforts surrounding sports products could be addressed at attracting special sports-oriented groups to tackle seasonal operational inactivity.

The contradictory arguments both from private and public sectors, as expressed above, indicate that Greek tourism, while at the threshold of a new developmental era, has yet to
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embrace the potential changes fully. Undoubtedly, sport has a major role to play in rejuvenating a saturated industry, yet there remain different development scenarios for how, and the extent to which, this can come about in the immediate future. The following sections offer an analysis of the parameters for potential development for sports-oriented special interest tourism, as suggested by the actors of the tourism community who influence development. Sport as a special tourism form, or a recreational activity added to existing products, is examined through a sustainable development perspective. Initially the legislative context supporting the development of sports tourism initiatives is reviewed.

6.3.2 Legislative and Developmental Vehicles Supporting a Sport-oriented Tourism Product

The driving force in tourism development is typically either an investor or the public sector, both evaluating promising indicators of success, for their sometimes different goals. In Greece, development incentives have been provided by Government in order to attract inward investment, and to channel it towards preferred schemes and locations. In 1990’s the shift of tourism policy towards quality differentiation and product improvement has been underpinned by legislative and investment guidelines in order to promote the new tourism developments. The new tourism policy direction and its regional development dimension (recognising differing needs of developed and lagging tourism regions) were reflected in the policy action announced in Athens in August 1994, proposing four incentives through the ‘new developmental legislation 2234/94’ (and the funding support of the 2nd Community Support Framework). The new incentives covered:

a) Firstly, ‘integrated investments for the modernisation of large hotel units’, aiming at the quality upgrading of the tourism infrastructure and the reshaping of the tourism product. This incentive is mainly directed at areas with heavy concentrations of tourism establishments urgently needing image improvement in order to maintain their custom. The level of public subsidies for the modernisation of hotel establishments reaches 25% of the investment in Athens and touristically developed areas, and 30-32% in less touristically developed regions (some Aegean islands and Thrace). This positive discrimination of funding aims to support under-developed areas to improve their tourism product offer, and therefore increase their share of the total tourism market for Greece.
Within hotels and in the context of quality differentiation, sport has been recognised by both public and private sector actors. It has been identified as one of the most effective ways to achieve perceived modernisation and facilities upgrading. "Sport facilities within hotel units have dramatically increased its (sports) importance in attracting the level and type of custom we aim at. In terms of expressed demand, there are significant changes in sport participation patterns and increased health consciousness. It has potential waiting to be endlessly exploited" (Dept. of Accommodation etc.). However, these initiatives are largely within very specific forms of recreational development, invariably relating to the range of fitness and health activities. There is also a rapidly increasing entrepreneurial activity in providing sports equipment and consultancy. While this may appear relatively restricted, hotel business are investing in sport facilities and programmes. Most of this type of investment, however, identifies with the 'supplementary' view of sports tourism development, adding mainly to existing facilities, in existing areas of concentration.

b) Secondly, this legislation refers to "investment in new hotel establishments within the main tourism zones", aiming at the controlled and quality expansion of tourism in heavily developed areas. It is emphasised that the objective behind this policy is not to create new mass tourism destinations, but to improve inadequate tourism facilities and to generate a nucleus of special interest tourism developments. Developed tourism areas attract investment due largely to the established and secure tourism activity that existing infrastructure and concentrated industry offer. In an effort to control new tourism developments within established and concentrated tourism environments, the public policy promises financial support to investments that follow a new controlled and specially designed development, based on a 'special interest tourism' offer. The view that a new 'multi-activity tourism offer' would start from within already established tourism zones, and therefore these should be supported within, rather than excluded from state support, was a common element in the statements of the interviewees at central government level.

Sports tourism has attracted positive attention in this context for its 'adjustability' and suitability within these already concentrated environments. The vast majority of traditional tourism activity in Greece occurs in coastal areas, and therefore, sea and water sport activities can be developed within feasible, financially viable, and easily promoted plans, in a relatively short time scale. It is important to note that this easy adaptation has also been described as 'sustainable', since generally only 'soft' sport forms can be operated. Sea sports such as windsurfing, sailing, scuba-diving, and mountain biking
have all attracted positive comments on their contribution to altering the image of low quality and congested areas, offering new multi-sports activity.

c) Third, the new policy announcement introduced an incentive that attracted significant private sector attention by suggesting a new model of tourism development. The creation of ‘Areas of Integrated Tourism Development’ (AITD) are advocated for use in establishing a sustainable tourism environment for the Greek tourism industry in the long term. Directed at both traditional tourism regions and underdeveloped areas, the AITDs could “supplement the offer of developed destinations with facilities of best quality and special infrastructural features”; but also in areas of ‘lagging’ tourism development, the suggested model aims to limit the growth pattern of mass-scale tourism through “integrated, operational and enterprenial activities”. Apart from broadscale public subsidies to new developments, the key element in this instrument is that the Ministry of Tourism, along with the Ministry of National Economy, has designated legislation which directs public subsidies more heavily to the new ‘Areas of Integrated Tourism Development’. Offering tax relief and heavy subsidies on invested capital for new developments, represents an example of heavy public intervention not seen since the first years of tourism development in Greece. The level of subsidy etc. can be varied according to the region, thus directing development to desired areas.

This new model of tourism development is more sophisticated than earlier ‘special growth area’ models, in that it introduces an integrated approach to tourism planning, paying special attention to the level and type of the proposed development, the applicability of the facilities, the long term viability of the offer, and most importantly, the compatibility of the overall establishment with the indigenous social and physical environment, as well as the location of the development. Developments based on this model enjoy subsidies of 15-50% on the capital invested, according to their location and type of proposed development. The fact that major state support is especially directed to programmes of a special interest tourism nature, comes as a consequence of the shift in tourism policy towards promoting a quality differentiated product. Here, we have clear evidence that the objectives of the policy making ‘centre’ have departed from the earlier elementary meaning of ‘tourism development’, that satisfied only short term returns during the last three decades in Greece. In this also, is evidenced a better planned tourism development environment, including effective partnerships between related authorities (Ministries of National Economy, Environment and Land use, Agriculture, and Tourism) to set the guidelines for sustained and more sustainable development, with longer term economic returns for the region, through the development of a more multifaceted tourism product.
d) The fourth incentive type within the same Legislation Decree is of particular significance to the support and promotion of sports tourism activities. Aiming at satisfying the main objective of ‘product differentiation’, the decree 2234/94 (like that of LD 1892/90) supports ‘investments in special tourism infrastructure’. Covering both mass tourism areas and isolated regions, the new policy action is addressed at establishments seeking to invest in special interest tourism facilities, redirecting their product offer towards different tourist markets and targeting a more recreational, and therefore arguably more ‘quality’ tourism customer group. It is important to note, that within the same paragraph in this decree, the form of sports tourism is explicitly referred to as one of the applicable and feasible new types of development that could benefit from the regulation.

Through this legislation, the construction of special interest tourism infrastructure and establishments is supported by public subsidies of 25% of the investment in Athens, 35% in other touristically developed areas, and 40% - 42% in the isolated areas such as Thrace. This incentive represents a key development vehicle for three main sports tourism forms, that benefit from an institutional regulation classifying them within the category of ‘special tourism forms’. Marinas, golf courses and ski-centres are thus in the particularly favourable position of receiving subsidies reaching 42% of the capital invested in certain regions. This public support for new investments was considered crucial to the construction of a new competitive tourism product by the GNTO policy makers. However, some GNTO officials from the higher levels of tourism policy development, strongly emphasised that the state’s intervention should be directed at provision of effective basic tourism infrastructure, rather than funding new private sector establishments and programmes. The lower level policy making tiers however, accepted the responsibility of the public hand to finance and support investors in new developments, arguing that “the sense of security and environmental change provided by public sector action constitutes the most crucial motive for increased entreprenial activity” (Department of Research and Policy).

These contradictory messages, alongside those earlier identified, regarding the state’s role in public subsidies of private investments, have to some extent been overcome, or overwhelmed, by the positive response of the industry. The entreprenial interest for the new developmental legislation was evident from the 152 hotel units which applied for subsidies to their investment in relevant facilities during 1995; a trend which was also continued during 1996. One of the seven criteria/preconditions that investments had to include in order to receive full financial support was “the improvement, extension and
supplement of tourism establishments with recreational and sporting activities" (GNTO, 1995).

Thus, it appears evident that in both the development of ‘special tourism forms’, such as marinas, golf courses and ski-centres, and in more supplementary additions to existing facilities, and both in terms of rejuvenating existing areas of tourism concentration and in areas of regional development, sport and recreational activities are being used in the redirection of the tourism product. What we also identify is that these new development initiatives also face the challenge of altering a number of procedures of the traditional tourism administration culture, within a changing tourism market context.

The European Union, following the same basic objectives for the regeneration of tourism, but in the Mediterranean more broadly, supports the new direction of quality improvement of the Greek tourism product, seeking to “increase international competitiveness in the sector” (CEC CSF, 1994-1999). EU action for tourism directs the Greek tourism policy towards product quality and infrastructural improvements, emphasising the need “to take better account of the needs of the tourism industry at the appropriate levels to improve its operation and performance and the quality of its services” (EU, 1995). Modernisation of enterprises, leading to a competitive, wide-ranging and high quality tourism product, is an activity highly supported by the EU. Differentiating the tourism offer, according to the European policy guidelines, is based on an emphasis placed on raising standards, rather than increasing capacity. This policy direction which also highlights equitable and sustainable development for both traditional and lagging regions, suggests the creation of a small number of new and high quality tourist zones, including the integrated packaging of services and infrastructure (like marinas, golf courses, conference centres etc.). Financial actions in support of the diversification of the tourism product offer, are directed particularly towards new special interest tourism forms, such as ecological, cultural and sports (particularly mountain) tourism. Even though, these interventions focus mainly on developing the cultural ingredients within the tourism offers, other active tourism forms contribute to the achievement of the main objective of stimulating economic activity in ‘lagging’ regions. A wider range of sports tourism forms could be included and qualify within the suggested ‘special interest tourism forms’ and the intervention plans for improved quality. The EU contribution for tourism development in Greece as included in Objective 1 (Structural Development and Adjustment of Regions whose Development is Lagging Behind) is 692.6 million ECU per year and is contained in the national tourism operational programme.
This developmental action plan, attracted a total of 43 investment proposals and increased interest from the private sector for quality upgrading of tourism services. 21 proposed investments referred to the modernisation of tourism enterprises, 18 suggested the restoration and preservation of cultural heritage, while 6 proposals suggested the creation of special tourism facilities. In total, the sum of investments reached 24,016,141,000 DRM subsidised with 6,668,147,700 DRM (with the private contribution being 17,347,992,300 DRM). Sports tourism forms that benefited from this developmental programme were: a) two golf courses (Glifada and Elounda) subsidised with 134,725,000 DRM and a private contribution of 318,775,000 and, b) a marina (Lavrio, Attiki) constituting the largest special interest tourism investment of 2,940,000,000 DRM and receiving the subsidy of 1,029,000,000 DRM.

Clearly, the EU action guidelines are influencing the public sector tourism policy as described and announced in the reviewed GNTO documents and policy plans. Product differentiation, quality improvements and modernisation of tourism enterprises are common key policy directions expressed in both EU and GNTO documents. With the private sector offered large subsidy levels for such developments, rapid tourism growth seems likely. In practice however, there is also evident investor hesitation in the face of what appears to be a significant reorganisation of the tourism environment, both internally to Greece and in the wider market environment, and although sports tourism development is occurring, there remains some investment reticence.

6.3.3 Public Sector Developmental Initiatives and the Private Sector Response to Potential Sport Tourism Development

Despite the arguments of government that tourism is essentially a private sector activity, all interviewees at policy making levels recognised the importance of the role that the state can play in future developments. The new developmental legislation received considerable support in terms of its generation of favourable conditions for investment and development, but also some criticism of its effectiveness for guiding and controlling a well distributed, and therefore an economically and socially sustainable development of tourism.

Statements such as: "any new individual project is more likely to succeed if the infrastructure is adequate" (Dept. of Research and Policy), suggest strong support for public sector involvement in the new developments. These new incentives, aiming at the regeneration of the Greek tourism offer through the establishment of different sport and recreational tourism forms, operate more as a general policy proposal towards improving
the wider tourism infrastructure, than as an image-specific alteration procedure. Sport tourism development, when perceived as a high cost new tourism form, can be successfully established only within an efficient general tourism infrastructure; an evaluation which prioritises the need to improve basic travel services, rather than investing in new tourism programmes. Strong criticisms were directed at the new developmental policy from some policy makers, for the inability of the legislation to attract private interest. It was criticised by some as having an individualistic, narrow and confusing character, failing to provide definitional explanations of tourism terms, leading to the exclusion of certain sport tourism forms. The lack of an integrated development plan is evident in the comments of some participants, who fear that sport tourism development, if not specified more clearly, will fall into an undifferentiated structure like that of mass tourism, repeating the mistakes of the past.

However, there is support for the process. When positioning a potential sport tourism development within a sustainability context, the majority of interviewed policy makers argued that the positive discrimination of subsidies towards isolated areas, provides the basis for a more equitable distribution of private capital within tourism, leading to a promising regional economic and social regeneration. There were, however, criticisms expressed within the section responsible for investments, when they heavily criticised the amount of subsidies and the overall financial framework proposed. Some felt that subsidising a new high cost sport tourism project by 30% would not be proved sufficient enough to secure new private capital investment. Enormous costs of construction, cannot be covered by the provided amounts, but most importantly, a successful operation cannot be secured within an ineffective infrastructure and services. There is, at least, some agreement on the importance of effective infrastructure (from airports and roads, to hotel facilities and public services) preceding the development of a new tourism offer and new development.

However, despite the fact that special infrastructure is needed in order to facilitate new sports tourism forms within the traditional areas, common to most of the interviewees from both the public and private sector was a belief that the existing tourism industry and tourism environment, that has managed successfully to serve demand for the last decades, is very well organised. Efficient agencies, operational systems and a well trained personnel were suggested as strengths of the industry, that if reorganised, could effectively provide an innovative and viable continuation for the Greek tourism product. It is debatable however, taking into account the views of traditional sections of the private tourism sector, that tends to preserve the status quo no matter what, whether
tourism operations are, in reality, sufficiently flexible and capable of adjusting to new development, especially when this necessitates sustainable tourism operations.

Sustainable tourism development suggests more equitable economic development through, for example, more widely distributed activities and more interlinkage between various production sectors. It became clear from the interviews with the private sector that they believe that the State initiatives do not necessarily provide those favourable conditions, promoting a more sustainable mode of operations, either in terms of effectively differentiating the offer or distributing business to new destinations. At present, public policy has a poor image with the private sector in terms of effectiveness and provision, and criticisms from the business sector also particularly refer to its inability to undertake effective action to initiate regenerative programmes. "There are no favourable banking and financial schemes to boost new developments such as sports tourism, which demand costly infrastructure. Private businesses alone are unable, in terms of size and capacity, to invest in adventure capital. New developments do not bring positive returns in the short-term and, being realistic, I would admit that private enterprise expects fast economic returns from the invested capital" (President of H.A. of Travel Enterprises). "The public hand is responsible for most of the basic and necessary measures to start up tourism activities. Random and sporadic subsidies will not result in the wanted outcome. Even heavy subsidies are not proven to be effective when the remaining private invested capital needed for the construction of courts, marinas, activity centres or golf is colossal" (President of Tourism Enterprises).

The view that major support for tourism is a public responsibility was a common element in the statements of the commercial actors. The arguments concerning the state's role, and intervention type and level in tourism policy, constitute an important point of difference between the private sector and the higher levels of public tourism policy in Greece. However, the view that the state should be the major actor in promoting effective measures and heavily financing private investments in tourism was not wholly shared by the Department of Research and Policy. They strongly argued that "we (GNTO) should remind them (private businesses) that we operate according to the laws of the free market, and therefore along with a realisation of the power of the private initiative, there remains little doubt that the scale of public support needed in any new development is very limited" (Department of Research and Policy).

By contrast, statements coming particularly from less traditional sections of the tourism industry, show that they see the state's role more as a provider and controller of the general infrastructure, than a financially responsible agent. Positioning new special
tourism forms, such as sports tourism, in a quality improvement perspective, these elements of the industry suggest the need for a quality infrastructure and superstructure, as the most crucial factors in influencing a quality new product. Demanding the prioritisation of that type of infrastructure support for new special tourism forms, representatives of tourism businesses suggest that heavy policy intervention of that sort, for the creation of facilities such as marinas, countryside roads and access to new areas, would offer a wider range of entrepreneurial opportunities for local businesses, that would attract more significant private investment.

Despite the above diverse arguments of the commercial actors on the level and type of State involvement desirable to foster sports tourism development, a common element to all the interviewees, and seen as a crucial factor that will be highly influential in the launching and developing of sports tourism in Greece, is the effective promotion of a new tourism image. So far the biggest criticism from the private sector evident from interviews, was that new policy advocating the use of sport tourism forms for the regeneration of Greek tourism and the more effective distribution of tourism activity, fails to consider the importance of the effective promotion of the new image. The support for special interest tourism establishments described above does not, as yet, include a commensurate promotional image building strategy, that has been proved crucial to the attraction of investment and tourist custom.

Within the to private sector views on changing the Greek tourism product, there was no disagreement that this was desirable (only a small minority felt this), but there was a fervent view that such tourism product development needed the establishment and promotion of a new image, which remains a public sector concern. Since it has already been established that private interests only react to demand, the promotion of new images and products will be crucial in gaining their support. In the Greek commercial tourism sector, profile takes on special significance. Although being asked to invest heavily in the new products, commercial operators feel they have no control over how, and whether, the new products will be promoted. Despite fears that such an expensive promotional effort needed to communicate a new sporting image, could pass almost unnoticed in the wider global market, it was commonly suggested that potential sport tourism development within the Greek product needs the establishment of a strong image. The current lack of an appropriate sport-oriented profile for the tourism facilities and services was suggested as the most crucial factor influencing the level of interest in investing in these developments. The established mass tourism image has provided years of considerable economic returns and has been inevitably linked with those characteristics that initially promoted the Greek product. Equally, some areas are suffering the negative impacts of being associated with a poor quality and degrading
offer. There is common appreciation that tourism product development is necessary, but some elements of commercial interest are withholding support until they see evidence that a new image will be created and promoted, generating the interest from tour operators and tourists, that they desire before committing further investment.

The private sector is perhaps understandably, more concerned with its own short-term benefit than about the overall tourism sustainability of Greece. The potential to invest in a new high quality, but also costly, sport tourism product offer seems limited when the private sector see risk in the fear that their activity and investment might be undermined by the government, either in terms of insufficient financial incentives or, more significantly, lack of a promotional strategy.

On the one hand there is pessimism that although the product needs enhancing, it will be difficult to shake the well-established image of being purely a sun/sea destination. "The nature of long-term major developments is relatively irreversible when a certain image is developed over a period of time for a destination" (President of Tourism Enterprises). However, there is also some optimism for the future of special tourism categories, including sports tourism. While the lack of promotional/communication intention remains problematic, some private sector interests are clearly positive about the new legislation supporting the promotion of a number of sport tourism forms, that indicates the willingness of the state to support a new destination vision.

Virtually, all interviewees agreed that something needed to happen to change the existing product image. "A new destination vision is a dynamic and evolving process in which strategies are formulated by learning over a period of time and not at a fixed point of time" (President of Travel Businesses). New State programmes receive positive acclaim from commercial interests in terms of initiating a strategy of promoting new product features to regenerate a saturated offer. Negative criticisms however, were expressed regarding on the lack of effectively mapping an explicit new vision which is "absolutely critical for a tourism destination as it will set in motion the development of facilities, programmes and establishments defining the nature and profile of that destination for years to come" (President of Hotel Owners).

More concerted integrated strategic planning is clearly needed, including financial incentives, development legislation and marketing, in order to change, or at least, modify the product image. However, special attention should also be given to sustainability considerations, in terms of the ability of the new proposed tourism products to behave flexibly and be adjusted to future trend changes, in order to reproduce beneficial results.
in the future. The special interest tourism forms suggested by the GNTO are identified to be the most common products recently found in competitive markets. They are not however, the results of detailed market analysis, with detailed indications of demand, changing trends and level of adjustability to future market changes. It became clear from the interviews with public policy makers that measuring indications of expressed demand for potential products was not included amongst their responsibilities, despite the fact that they've often received numerous enquiries about demand for special tourism products. "Undoubtedly, there is a considerable number of indications of foreign demand for products, other than the traditional, by individual travellers or agencies that increasingly include these forms in their offer" (Dept. of Implementation). Despite general agreement on the existence of demand for new tourism products, it remains debatable (taking into account the lack of a relevant section or strategy for analysing demand) whether the proposed products, supported in the recent developmental legislation, have the appropriate market adaptation and flexibility characteristics. The lack of detailed research causes concern for the future sustainability of even a changed tourism product.

However, further optimism for the development of significant sports tourism elements to supplement the tourism product are generated when, within the policy making structure, three new sections have recently achieved a relative state autonomy in administrating specific sport tourism forms. The development of the Department of 'Sea Tourism' and the sections of 'Golf' and 'E4-European Walking Paths', seem to evidence that the objectives set by GNTO are pursuing the objective of tourism regeneration through the development of special tourism forms, including sports tourism, as part of attempts to restructure the tourism product, to be less reliant exclusively on sun-sea tourism.

While it may not have been researched in detail, the evident expressed demand is one of the most crucial factors leading to new development by the commercial actors. They are recognising the changing trends in tourist behaviour, and this, as much as anything, will help create new tourism products. Sections of the tourism industry such as the Hotel Associations now hold a very optimistic view of the potential of an increasingly sport-oriented product, reflected in the increased entrepreneurial interest in investing in sport facilities and services, increasingly required by tourists during their vacations. "Tourist demand for specific services is the prime driving force to the change or readjustment of the offer. ... The tourist is in the powerful position to alter products and programmes" (President of Tourism Enterprises).
Despite the fact that the public sector view the undertaking of designing and marketing of sports-oriented products as lying to a great extent with the private sector, this is still received with great scepticism by commercial operators. They see this as wholly a public sector function. However, there is little disagreement about the potential of the product, if effectively marketed. There are now significant elements of the Greek commercial tourism sector admitting that there is a considerable number of examples that when sports ingredients are added to the traditional package, they were significantly successful and well received by the customers.

However, this begins to identify another problem facing the Greek tourism industry in its attempts to diversify, but also spread the benefits of the tourism industry. Commercial operators agree that there is evident benefit for enterprises in differentiating the product offer through sports tourism. Tourism demand expressed in mass numbers for sport-oriented packages would re-orient investment and services, particularly where these assist in generating full hotel capacity. However, this route and this justification for embracing sport products, seems likely only to reinforce the large concentration of tourism superstructure and tourist activity in certain coastal areas, which have created an unsustainable environment. On this model, sports facilities can help to economic survival of Greek destinations, but this does little for the growing environmental problems. Even the economic sustainability is threatened by the continuation of tourism reliance on foreign tour agencies, increasingly involved in sports-oriented tourism sub-sector.

However, at present there seems few answers to this conundrum, as the private sector has clear preferences for operations in existing mass tourism destinations, even if the product is rejuvenated by special interest elements. The spreading of tourism benefit, it seems, will have to remain the domain largely of the public sector. The preference of the private sector towards traditional mass tourism areas is clear from the statements of the representatives speaking for the majority of tourism enterprises in Greece.

The role and influence of foreign tour operators is particularly evident. "The European entrepreneur would never risk an adventure project in new destination areas, unknown to the wider market and unable to secure big numbers" (President of Tourism Enterprises). The influence and behaviour of key tour operators is, it seems, totally incompatible with the desire of distributing tourism activity more widely, within the state's sustainable future, and for state's desire to reduce its reliance on mass travel operations. The policies of European operators determine the direction of investment to already established areas and the level of quality of the offer produced and consumed. The low
prices of the agents in a highly competitive market sabotage the necessity of improving the general quality of the product and the establishment of a sustainable tourism environment. The majority of the representatives of the tourism industry appeared sceptical, and sometimes negative, towards the ability of the Greek industry to influence its own tourism generating market, and therefore the capacity of the special interest tourism forms, including sport, to radically change the mass nature, nor the geography, of the Greek tourism product offer. Product enhancement in existing settings appears to be the commercial sector’s vision for sport’s contribution to tourism regeneration in Greece. The exception is those few operators who have accepted government incentives to operate or extend operations in under-developed regions.

6.4 The Institutional Framework towards Decentralization and Partners within a Centralised Public Machine

The local state has always been a neglected aspect of tourism policy in Greece in the last two decades of tourism development. The role of local government in tourism policies has not received the attention it merits, contributing to an environment designed and controlled by external centres, interested in short-term profitability, often through unsustainable operations. The wide range of responsibilities of the GNTO have often acted as a barrier to the creation of communication channels between different public and private bodies that would sustain more effective decentralization and distribution of authoritative skills to the periphery. However, it appears that within the institutional arrangements of 1982, the creation of local Prefecture Councils (LD 1235/1982), despite their limited powers, constituted an important step forward in the decentralization process. They offer some hope of supporting economic development through tourism to less developed, as well as developed regions.

This rather slow process became evident to some extent within tourism policy, when in 1994 the GNTO announced the legislative establishment of the new “Prefectural Committees of Tourism Promotion” (described in the new legislation 2160). “The main goal of the new Legislation Decree 2160/93 is the marketing of tourism services, products and events that promote the total tourism offer of every Prefecture through co-ordinated procedures and under a common realisation of the pragmatic needs of the area, and thus avoiding the cutting up of financial support into fragmentary initiatives” (GNTO, 1994). The range of decentralised responsibilities includes: the mapping of integrated programmes for local development, their supervision and assessment of GNTO and local authority operations. The special characteristics of the new legislation appears compatible with the sustainability approach increasingly being employed in
policy making, by suggesting that community involvement is imperative within the planning and development process. Representatives of all involved parts from both public and private sectors, including Associations of Hotel Owners, Tourism Enterprises, Local Authorities, City Councils and local GNTO departments, are actively included in the Prefectural Committee of Tourism Promotion for every Prefecture, working together towards a developmental plan that promotes local characteristics potentially attractive to the tourist market. The establishment of Prefecture Committees constitutes an important step towards a sustainable tourism future in terms of facilitating the expression of the needs and capacities of localities, which is often missing from other public sector attempts to foster community involvement and the community element in the vision of sustainable development.

However, a high level of dependency on the state still remains, particularly when the financial framework for the realisation of proposed programmes is considered. Tourism programmes, for example, are financed by the GNTO up to a 50% maximum of the total estimated amount needed; while the local community would have to secure the remaining amount. This financial dependency dictates the level and type of development, since the central policy makers examine the proposals, assesses the applicability and effectiveness of the programmes, and approve (or otherwise) the level of subsidies. Announced preconditions that have to be met by the interested communities involve: a) the submission of an integrated marketing plan promoting the features of a holistic local product, possible market segments and identified markets; b) the demonstration of financial capability of the involved parties for the successful implementation of the programme; c) description and justification of local needs for product rejuvenation or introduction, contributing to wider geographical socio-economic development; and finally, d) the appropriate and effective use of promotional techniques to satisfy the goals of marketing the new local offer.

This crucial step towards more community-based tourism development suggests a "different perception of the role for tourism at a local level, a new view of the role of local tourism authorities, and a new stance by the private tourism businesses" (GNTO, 1995). With this new decentralization, the centre aims to distribute the responsibilities and the cost of new development amongst all involved actors, through this participative scheme, promoting a new role for local authorities in initiating programmes, while supporting private investment in special interest tourism infrastructure (particularly marinas, golf and ski centres). By distributing a wide range of policy responsibilities, the GNTO limits its participation to the designation of a legislative framework, supporting private initiatives, and promoting tourism developments. Nevertheless, such
policy announcements tend to become a slow and problematic process when operating within a highly centralised state. Having limited powers, the Prefecture Councils have only recently begun to have an impact on Greece’s traditional political structures, contributing to raising awareness of the need for further decentralization.

Decentralization has predominantly been a left/centre demand, but even the right-wing has based itself on a neoliberal programme of “rolling back the frontiers of the state”. With PASOK occupying the state machine, the GNTO heavily supports decentralization, particularly in the form of the newly established Prefectural Committees of Tourism Promotion. It became clear from the interviews that the new community-based administration enjoys significant support and is considered the “most crucial step towards a more sustainable tourism operation” (Department of Research and Policy). The new local structure is viewed as one of the most effective tools in tackling the problematic features of the Greek tourism product, and in achieving successful results in the newly decided differentiation process.

A primary contribution of the scheme has been the promotion of local characteristics in forming new ‘quality’ and varied products, and more effectively channelling these to the wider market. It was previously impossible to attract any State financial support for such activities, since the attention was almost exclusively given to destinations with heavy investment concentrations. The admitted inability of the State to finance and undertake promotional campaigns for all tourism destinations contributed to the uneven distribution of tourism activity, leaving some areas totally undeveloped. This appears now to have changed. “Providing an equitable opportunity and support to regions to exhibit their local characteristics and form a unique offer, constitutes a crucial step in increasing the competitiveness of the Greek tourism product as a whole” (Department of Implementation). “The most important feature of the new Committee is its structural ability to pass previous policy tasks to the local affected parts and to bring a previously irreconciled community to the same table” (Section of Decentralization).

Common to all interviewees at central government level was the belief that this new institution is not threatened by changes to the political scene. The view that new decentralised powers, passed down to the regional administrative authorities, would be accepted, even by traditional right political structures, was a common element in the statements of the GNTO bureaucrats.

Previous studies (Papageorgiou et al, 1993) have shown that at a prefectural level, there is a cross-party consensus around the need for decentralization, regardless of national
party preferences. It became evident from the interviews at this level of policy making, that Greece’s EU membership is regarded as the driving force behind the decentralization of powers to local administrative units, following the new Municipal Code. Placed within the same institutional context, the Tourism Committees do not appear politically sensitive, since they are supported by European administrative principles and not exclusively on national political preferences. “New tourism developments, following a new sustainable mode of administration, require effective local partnerships, embracing the public and private sectors to achieve greater coherence and accessibility at local level” (Department of Research and Policy). It is clearly understood that EU programmes and access to EU funds frequently require the promotion of inter-regional co-operation. The absence of responsible tourism committees for local communities and, most importantly, the absence of a regional tier of government have (until now) made this process difficult. “The undoubtedly important financial support by the EU towards numerous projects requires integrated development strategies at the regional level in order to be successfully obtained. EU funds require the co-ordinated work of various development agencies throughout each region” (Section of Investments). This institutional change, placing an increased level of autonomy with local committees of tourism partners, implicitly suggests a positive correlation between ‘regionalism’ and economic development.

This institutional widening of responsibilities has led to a much greater awareness of the regional dimension in the activities of local authorities, particularly in the form of tourism committees in every region. However, there is an institutional paradox within the establishment of the new tourism committees, when there exists a high degree of centralization within more general local administration. For example, having to report to, and financially depend on, Peripheral administrators and state governors, will inevitably create problems of accountability and inconsistency.

The necessity for, and the creation of, partnerships within this process has been welcomed by the private sector, emphasising the value of these “partnerships involving Local Authorities, Chambers of Commerce, business and enterprises, in serving to develop a common set of objectives and draw-in key business and civic leaders” (President of Travel Businesses). It has to be noted however, that scepticism has been expressed by conservative parts of the industry concerning the ability of this institution to facilitate a significant integration of the various development agencies. Consequently, fears have been expressed of a possible failure to develop a regional perspective, due to the orientation of efforts towards localist and individualistic programmes, serving the interests of certain industrial groups.
Although this new institutional reform coincides with the need to put into practice those sustainability denominators that suggest an increased level of community participation, representation and democratisation of policy making, there remains a significant level of centralized power and associated bureaucracy in Greece (in this case relating to tourism), which may continue to be a prime factor in preventing effective programmes from being designed and implemented. Interviews showed significant criticism from central government bureaucrats of the system’s remaining inability to process new directions of development. With this, the potential for new tourism products to be created and launched seems tenuous. Interviewees serving within policy making and implementing sections, emphasised the lack of administrative efficiency in auditing and reviewing tourism trends, and exploiting emerging opportunities. Areas of potential identified by some GNTO sections are not effectively communicated to implementing departments, not least since the demonstrating proof of tangible and justified results for suggested projects is a long and complicated bureaucratic process. Proposals for new development programmes sometimes never reach the policy making level, since “it is very difficult to persuade the higher policy levels about the necessity of the project..... and ... if the ‘Heads’ of policy making are not persuaded, the opportunity will never be exploited” (Dept. of Implementation).

This paradox relationship between the different planning levels seems at present to determine the future of many tourism developments. The process whereby responsible teams “measure the temperature of the changing tourism market and trends” is jeopardised by a system incapable of providing the mechanisms to promote promising proposals. “Irrespective of the magnitude of the need for policy redirection, e.g. through the designation of new products, the traditional centre prevents immediate policy mapping of new projects, being highly preoccupied in preserving the status quo for the mode of actions” (Dept. of Implementation). Lack of information and creativity to take the opportunities forward, represent obstacles to proposals materialising, and therefore also represent significant managerial gaps. Interviewees from the implementation sections provided examples of suggested projects that had needed ten years to materialise and had therefore lost valuable opportunities. “The virtual absence of information on opportunities, as well as poor communication channels, from research teams to the higher levels of decision making, prejudices the application of developmental plans” (Dept. of Research and Policy).

Responsibility for the unsuccessful implementation of many plans lies, to a large extent with the inability of the government to coordinate and balance the various roles within
the tourism development process. "The fragmentation of organisation over the majority of departments is an obstacle to the construction of an overall development plan. The larger the number of different sections involved, the greater the risk that no consensus can be obtained and that views between planners and decision-makers will differ from one another" (Dept. of Research and Policy). This high level of generated departmentalism has led to a duplication or wastage of resources in the involved government bodies and the private sector, and invariably generates a problem of "relating units or decisions so that they fit in with one another, and not at cross-process" (Dept. of Accommodation). Thus, there is a lack of administrative co-ordination, despite the apparent agreements on aims, objectives and policy direction between the different hierarchy levels.

We have found sports tourism development to be currently entangled in this developmental and bureaucratic web. Sports tourism forms have apparent value in redirecting and rejuvenating tourism developments, and have been the focus of explicit legislative support for new developments. Yet the problem is readily identifiable: "the objectives of re-creating a new multi-recreational tourism form have been enthusiastically accepted by all sections of public tourism policy-making; however, those mechanisms that would coordinate all these different sections are undecided or there are inconsistencies in implementation" (Dept. of Implementation). Interviewees referred to certain sport tourism forms like golf, mountaineering and scuba-diving, that have all at various times entered a vicious circle whereby a proposal has been created, passed down to the responsible committee of design and planning, co-ordinating the different sections involved, and produced the legislative, pre-conditional and implementing parameters that would generate a feasible development programme. However, the realisation of the suggested programme depends on the decision makers of higher governmental levels, who being distant from this lower level of product planning, are an obstacle to successful, co-ordinated implementation of the tourism development process.

A paradox lies in the fact that while there is policy co-ordination in terms of absolute agreement over the basic objectives of the policy direction, there is a great lack of administrative co-ordination to provide the mechanism for balancing the various departmental roles within the tourism development process. The "Project Committees" of proposed developments were strongly criticised by both ends of the hierarchical administration for their structural instability and poor effectiveness. "The creation and dismissal of planning committees is a common feature of the lack of united consensus concerning tourism policies" (Dept. of Research and Policy). Decision makers
sarcastically suggest that “a development is incomplete unless allocated to a responsible committee” (Dept. of Investments). In contrast, members of these committees criticise the inability of decision-makers to dismiss their political status and allegiance, and effectively promote beneficial developments.

Turbulent political conditions over the past decade contributed to this organisational instability at all levels of administration, inevitably affecting the promotion of new policies. Inter-party conflicts and cabinet reshuffles led to an erratic leadership and inconsistent decision-making. With Ministers and General Secretaries succeeding each other in a frenzied fashion, any new programmes paused at the planning level awaiting re-examination by the newly appointed bureaucrats. With instability of leadership, lack of coordinated responsibilities, and ever-changing roles within departments, the gap between formulation, product planning and implementation often became unbridgeable.

However, despite the different governments and ministry schemes, and the bureaucratic hold-ups of development, there appears some hope of progress, since it was strongly emphasised by all interviewees that “the need for policy direction towards more sustainable products and policies goes beyond political stances” (Dept. of Research and Policy). Electoral and inter-governmental programmes have both started to use sustainability as a driving force for their future developments. All political sides have promoted a greener philosophy for tourism development in Greece, through certain proposals that have been accepted even by opposite sides succeeding each other. The acceptance of this ‘undoubted necessity’ “to maintain and supplement any form of action that promotes sustainable tourism activity” (Minister of Tourism) was evident in the statements of the interviewees at all policy levels, and also within GNTO documents. There was, however, a group of interviewees across departments arguing that e.g. “despite the tension of different political parties to appear to be positioning sustainable principles in tourism developments beyond political differences, there are some considerable differences in putting value to implementation strategies and allocation of resources accordingly” (Sections of Accommodation and Investments).

Co-ordination is a political activity in itself, which tends to become problematic especially where there are a large number of agencies involved in the planning or the decision-making process. This appears to have significantly affected the progress of sports tourism developments. “There is no other form of tourism development that is linked to so many diverse and different types of agencies and organisations as in sport tourism” (Dept. of Research and Policy). The importance of co-ordination is apparent when sport bodies, federations, sport facilities management and sport tourism agents are
needed to advise the decision-making process. There are clearly problems within sport that are having an effect, as well as within the bureaucratic process. Interviewees noted problems experienced with the wide range of sports organisations. For example, "sport bodies often show a non-co-operative behaviour in the designing of sport-oriented tourism forms, claiming expertise and demanding exclusivity in planning" (Dept. of Implementation), thus causing confrontation and delay. Directors of the General Secretariate for Sport (GSS) and GNTO, failing to balance their roles and create a synergetic team, have caused enormous delays in the mapping of pre-conditions for recreational tourism forms, that would form the basis of the legislative framework for new developments. However, it has to be noted that all interviewees at the policy making level admitted that this situation of 'role conflict' with sports organisations could also be productive in the sense of assisting in formulating new ideas or strategies for developing different sport-related tourism activities. The involvement of these two highly bureaucratic organisations (GSS and GNTO) in the design of sport tourism activities, has become highly problematic when co-ordination occurs in a very loose fashion, failing to establish formal communication and co-operation channels. Co-ordinated tourism policies become even more problematic when environmental agencies put the parameter of sustainable natural resources into the equation for the formulation of strategies.

The lack of communication and co-ordinated actions between public and private organisations and within public sector bodies, has therefore often failed to generate a consensus in advising the policy making process, and therefore makes sustainable thinking and planning particularly difficult. The public administration criticises the private sector for individualistic behaviour, which supports only their own short term interests and refuses to adopt a wider perspective to tourism development in Greece. All interviewees serving in central policy levels implied that there is a conflict between the public and private interests, regarding concerns particularly over social and environmental issues. Long-term sustainability concerns tended to be ignored by the commercial actors, endorsing "narrow self-interest at the expense of public interest" (Section of Decentralisation). However, despite this commonly held view, it was also suggested that the urgent need for policy redirection of the last decade has produced a substantial number of partnerships between policy makers and private businesses, which has often resulted in efforts to "restore cultural, environmental and social factors in the process of tourism development and not just in an occasional or individual fashion" (Dept. of Research and Policy).
Nevertheless, there appear no significant examples of successful joint projects to support such statements, and it became evident from the interviewees that the State's role is restricted to that of regulator and stimulator of tourism activity, through legislative and financial support, rather than that of entrepreneur. On the other hand, policy decisions do reflect a desire to meet the interests of the extended forms of government to all levels, i.e. national, regional and local, rather than the sectionally defined interests of the tourism industry. However, the State faces the danger of failing to play the role of protector by failing to balance the different involved interests, including those of the tourism industry and other commercial actors. Despite the government's orientation towards socialistic principles, the claim that this is a "market-driven environment and that private actors should follow the rules of the free market" (Minister of Tourism), was a common belief amongst the majority of the interviewees serving at the higher levels of tourism policy making. By contrast, lower sections of policy making strongly emphasised the urgent need for "private and public partnerships to exhaust all feasible options towards a beneficial future tourism continuation" (Dept. of Implementation). "It is time to realise that sustainable development cannot ignore segments of this society's structure, no matter how insignificant. The creation of trans-organisational bodies is needed in order to offer a democratic representation of all interests and sides involved" (Section of Decentralisation). The suggestion seems to be that the creation of independent bodies constituted from representatives of both private and public bodies is an issue often appearing in the policy portfolio, but failing to be implemented because conflicts seem to overcome agreements between the two sides.

Thus, there appears some common ground, but also a significant level of mistrust, between public and private sector in this and other development fields. While there has been (as noted) criticism by the public sector of commercial self-interest and lack of willingness to consider long term and social issues highlighted within sustainable development practice, there has also been strong criticism from the private sector towards the public administration, for its poor effectiveness and failure to take the industry's needs into consideration. All representatives of tourism industry strongly emphasised the unwillingness to include the business 'say' within the development process and the distant position it (the public sector) has adopted. The representatives agree firstly on the lack of interest shown by central policy makers in attempting a consensus between both sides, and secondly, on the inability of the structure to adopt an overall democratic and effective mode of action.

Nevertheless, it is not only the public administration structure that is accused of being ineffective. It was evident from the statements of the business representatives that the
industry itself is also facing a structural crisis. The tourism industry in Greece shows that its own fragmented nature represents a large obstacle to the opening of co-operative paths with the government. This fragmented structure makes it very difficult to form a strong and effective lobby that would directly influence the government to formulate policies in support the industry’s further development. ‘We are not in a position to form a lobby and promote our demands, since we lack co-operative relationships within the tourism industry. Individual interests and avid competition have prevented the creation of a productive and synergetic climate between the different entrepreneurs’ (President of Tourism Enterprises).

However, there is an equally strong emphasis on the importance of breaking individual barriers between the different Enterprenial Associations, and to form partnerships that would increase the level of power and representativeness, in the policy making process. The formation of S.E.T.E. (Association of Tourism Enterprises) by a variety of business groups, constitutes a significant first step in creating partnerships within the private sector, underlining the recognised significance of changing trends within the industry and the need for an agreed redirection of tourism developments.

6.5 Social Actors on the Enhancement of Environmental Resources Determining the Potential of Sustainable Sport Tourism Development

As previously noted, tourism policy as announced in 1994 signals a new direction for tourism in Greece, and can be seen as following the recognition of changing trends and, most importantly, of the irreversible impacts of uncontrolled development. Environmental protection can now be seen to be one of the priorities of the new policy, recognising that ‘a sustainable tourism future equals a sustainably managed natural stock’ (Minister of Tourism). The new policy announcement emphasises the importance of interministrial partnership, particularly between the Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of the Environment, and the common recognition of mutual responsibilities concerning spatial planning and nature protection. Both the enhancement and protection of environmental resources are now explicit tourism policy goals, ‘which are obviously interrelated and mutually influence beneficial tourism development towards a sustained performance’ (Section of Tourism Values and Environment). This team, created by representatives of both Ministries, represents a partnership of co-operating administrative and scientific bodies, aimed at the effective ‘formation of the direction of spatial and environmental policy which supports sustainable tourism operations’ (GNTO, 1994). This intervention policy is underpinned with a legislative framework covering all tourism activities, setting basic preconditions
that “prevent or minimise environmental deterioration” (ibid.) and overseeing the business behaviour of by the private sector. The areas of intervention cover the areas of: a) illegal exceeding of set environmental standards (e.g. for air and water pollution, aesthetic and architectural alteration); b) technical description of suggested measures of prevention and regulation of environmental impacts by tourism activities; and c) description of alternative restoration measures for deteriorated environments and repair of altered natural stock.

However, despite this list of ‘green’ mechanisms, environmental standards to be met by any new tourism establishments are restricted to individual technical preconditions for each proposal. There is a failure to adopt a wider planning perspective, or creation of ‘standards’ for developments. However, long catalogues of preconditions regulating the establishment of new hotel units and supplementary facilities are demonstrating the government’s sensitivity to minimising natural degradation. ‘Special’ tourism facilities also have to follow a strict regulation of spatial, technical and operational preconditions before their approval. However, experts, accuse the government of failing to apply these regulatory mechanisms within a holistic tourism planning framework, and therefore contributing to the continuation of a congested and degraded tourism environment. Despite the announcements for stricter control of pollution sources, and of spatial over-concentrations, and the suggestion for stricter environmental preconditions, none of the new tourism establishments are included within development limits determined by models of carrying capacity (or limits of acceptance).

Lack of knowledge on mechanisms for limiting tourism, and on environmental sensitivity levels, characterises public planning, which threatens the sustainable establishment of new tourism forms. Local environmental measures do not secure a wider spatial balance for sustainable development, when sensitivity levels differ between different places and capacity levels are unknown. It also became evident from the statements of the interviewees that strong criticism and frustration exists within the administrative structure over the inefficiencies of the policy making to secure sufficient sustainability standards. Despite this, the consideration given to the development of ‘green’ operations within the tourism industry by the public policy actors undoubtedly highlights the recognised importance of “preserving an unalterable environment for infinite use” (Department of Research and Policy). Policy makers have become increasingly aware of the importance of following green standards in order to save an industry which is under heavy criticism for altering the natural and social environment of localities. Indications of changing tourist trends towards greener commercial behaviour
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and product demand are influencing this policy action, which may in turn hasten the changes.

Examination of the legislation and policy documents, supplemented by interview statements, suggest some further problems exist for Greece, because it is also evident that there was not a clear conceptualisation of a distinction between the preconditions regulating traditional establishments, and those guiding new desired special tourism infrastructure facilities (like marinas and golf courses). Undifferentiated legislation and lack of alternative measures seem to depart from the policy goals, stated elsewhere, for altering the product ingredients and structure of the tourism product. "With legislative measurements being homogeneous for both the stereotypical tourism structures and the new active forms of tourism, as promoted by the GNTO, there are no indications of foreseeing the development of alternative tourism forms" (Section of Implementation). "The present planning and regulatory mechanisms do not demonstrate clearly the attention of public policy to creating those conditions that would assist 'green products' when operating within an overall unsustainable environment" (Section of Accommodation). Criticisms concentrate on the inability of the policy structure to differentiate a new role for recreational tourism forms (which may arguably be more sustainable) in the process of rejuvenating the declining mass tourism product. "It still remains ambiguous if the new suggested sports-related tourism products are 'mild' and friendly to the environment, either in terms of operation, facilities, or profile of the consumer attracted" (Section of Investment). This type of debate seems likely to beset the process of developing alternative tourism products and of spreading economic development beyond the areas of existing concentration.

The view that the nature of the new environmental policy intervention is corrective, rather than preventive, of harmful impacts was a strong element expressed in the statements of the Policy Implementation Section. This sector of the public administration emphasised the lack of environmental policy adaptation to the needs and directions of the new policy to promote recreational tourism products. "The fact that special recreational forms are included in the wider tourism legislative framework becomes a failure to differentiate new tourism products from traditional modes of development" (Section of Accommodation).

However, there is another angle of criticism to be applied to this policy. Not only is it undifferentiated, applying the same measures to new types of development designed to enhance the tourism product, as for old style 'typical' developments within concentrated tourism zones, but also in another paradox of Greek Tourism policy, the development
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Incentives designed to enhance growth in less developed (and thereby more sensitive) regions, are circumventing the ‘green’ legislation, in that new developments that appear suitable for mass tourism zones are almost automatically seen as also appropriate in development areas, when this is clearly not always the case. These types of observation on the present environmental legislation were expressed by the Section of Investment, strongly arguing that “the presently inconsistent legislative plan, is either ignoring environmental parameters of vital importance, or is using environmental standards as a pretext for the satisfaction of economic and other social pressures” (Section of Investment). The development incentives offered by the government (e.g. for the construction of marinas) are directed at areas of under-developed tourism activity, and therefore areas of valuable natural assets, “without however, pre-setting quality standards and quantitative goals and limitations... This unsystematic approach to environmental and spatial planning prevents a sustainable practice of tourism in Greece” (Section of Investment). “Sustainable planning suggests a carefully examined environmental legislation, paying special attention to limits of development in a wider perspective. When this new system of holistic environmental consideration is decided and practised, it is then appropriate to start sustainable tourism forms” (Section of Accommodation).

The practice of consistent sustainable policies in Greece becomes increasingly problematic within a highly centralized administrative system, lacking the knowledge and experience of regional differences and limitations. As we have seen, tourism policies are decided centrally and uniformly for peripheral areas, often failing to communicate local needs effectively within the policy making process. “It is undoubted that the authority of the local government is limited and it’s contribution to policy making restricted to a more advisory role” (Section of Decentralization). However, there is some hope that this process will improve in the future, and we have already seen evidence that there is increasing weight being given to decentralisation and the more socially sustainable involvement of local interests within policy making. The importance of effectively decentralising powers to local administration has been increasingly recognised within the context of overall re-enforcement of local power and representation in policy and planning. For example, regarding the principles of environmental legislation on ‘nature conservation’ (LD 1650/1986), on the ‘environmental study of every suggested new development’ (Common Ministry Decision 69269/1990) and ‘decentralization’ (Government Newspaper, 31 August 1995), the Government has decided to “convey the responsibility of approval of environmental standards for the construction, establishment and operation of tourism units, and further developments to the Secretaries of the Peripheries”.

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Such new legislation evidences the government's objectives for strengthening sustainable practices through the democratisation of procedures to all levels of the administrative hierarchy. This legislative empowerment of local authority assumes an increased level of inter and trans-organisational co-operation, in order to generate can census regarding the real needs of, and to exploit the known potential of, many localities. ‘‘Local authorities as the main body representing the local people are the capable detectors of opportunities, as well as threats, within proposed developments to the natural and human surroundings. Local authority becomes the thermometer for measuring changes in the ‘health’ of local environments and therefore contributing to the minimisation of negative impacts to the community’’ (Section of Decentralization).

Interestingly, the exclusion of special tourism infrastructure and facilities from this decentralised authority, which was earlier criticised as leading to inappropriate developments in under-developed regions, is here justified on the grounds that such developments need to be controlled by central authority, to ‘ensure’ appropriate levels of development. The legislation material claims the importance of ‘‘planning centrally and according to national or international perspectives of sustainability for developments accommodated in areas of special ecological value and sensitivity’’ (Government Newspaper, 1995). Aiming to set national preconditions for the new recreational tourism developments, the public policy implies and claims expertise within their establishment. Scientific expertise on environmental and spatial planning are considered of vital importance to a sustainable operation of the new tourism products, which appears to justify central and national consideration and intervention. This central policy action could be translated as an effort by the public administration to offer a homogeneous and differentiated procedure for guiding new developments.

Herein again lies a paradox. While the government faces demands from most societal parts for decentralization and thus deregulation, the government has simultaneously been called for increased regulation and control of tourism development. The most manifest source of these demands for regulation of the tourism industry activities has been from environmentalists. Environmental lobbyists, particularly when concerning environmentally sensitive areas, often seek the extension of government regulation to ensure that tourism remains under public control. There is thus a regulatory conflict between two sets of interests concerning the nature and extent of the controls.

The Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature (HSPN), established in 1951, has had great influence on public policy concerning the promotion of environmental
programmes, the legislative underpinning of protection schemes for sensitive areas, and the co-ordination of European and international agreed environmental action. Working closely with the ‘Water Department’ of the Ministry the Environment, HSPN is the operator of the ‘Blue Flag’ campaign in Greece. The ‘Blue Flags of Europe’ campaign aims to raise the environmental consciousness of local authorities in coastal areas to contribute to the sustainable use of water resources and coastal landscapes by tourism. The European ‘Blue Flag’ is awarded annually to beaches or marinas that have fulfilled set requirements of water quality, environmental education and information, beach/marina area management and safety. The programme sets strict standards of environmental protection and excludes a variety of recreational activities, such as motor sports, riding and other unauthorised sports, that would pose a threat to the environment, both natural and human. The Society’s European and international recognition led to the formation of a partnership between HSPN, the Ministry of the Environment, the Foundation of Environmental Education in Europe, and local and regional governments, with the support of the EU, under the philosophy that “a sustainable tourism development requires increased efforts particularly at a local level, from the authorities, the tourism services and the tourists themselves. Increasingly, a healthy environment features alongside services and recreational facilities as the main attraction” (EU, 1995).

The interviewed representative of the Society referred to the success of the ‘Blue Flag’ programme, and regarding sports tourism, characterised the programme as “important for the development of sports tourism in its most likely establishment place, that of the coastal area, since the water and coast offer an irreplaceable recreational source” (Society for the Protection of Nature). The programme represents an exceptional form of planning, where often, alteration of regulatory systems precedes further tourism developments, optimistically indicating a sustainable planning structure for water sport tourism activities. The programme has enjoyed a strong public sector support by both Ministries and European Departments, and with increasing numbers of candidates and flags awarded to Greek beaches and marinas. This, in turn, promotes the importance of environmental conservation within a significant and growing area of tourism and recreational activity.

The introduction of the ‘Blue Flag’ programme has, however, been received with scepticism by many of the private sector tourism actors. For them, environmentalist approaches to tourism planning do not have realistic or operational value, when their long term goals and benefits, along with high establishment costs, contradict the industry’s ‘need’ for high and short-term profitable returns on investment. Persuading the industry of the importance of setting strict environmental standards, in order to avoid
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Tourism Product Repositioning through Sports Tourism Development: Central Government...

... future irreversible effects, and encouraging the commercial sector to follow and meet these standards has become a very difficult and time-consuming procedure for environmental-oriented groups and the public sector. "The industry's perception of environmental projects as utopian and extreme ecological suggestions was the biggest hurdle to be overcome" (HSPN). Some progress has been made however, and the opening of communication channels, along with the provision of information and qualitative support, has contributed to a less uncompromising private sector response. Thus, the interest of private businesses located mainly in coastal areas, owning parts of beaches or marinas, has increased dramatically since 1992, with the number of candidates and successful entries for 'Blue Flag' awards increasing by 33% between 1991 and 1992.

The type and intensity of environmental impacts in Greece directly reflect the classic model of developing tourism activity. With 90% of total tourism development and the largest part of other productive and settlement activities concentrated into coastal areas of Greece, the burden on environmental resources threatens capacity levels. The 'Blue Flag' programme was often perceived by the commercial sector as a tourism activity evaluation tool, which contradicts the environmentalists' position on these measures as having a more intrinsic than financial value. Traditionally, the industry has sought to optimise the use of natural resources, but has failed to consider a negative future for exploited resources. The industry is also now facing a market increasingly sensitive to nature protection and wanting to actively experience an unchanged natural and human environment.

In contrast to environmentalist calls for greater control on tourism operations placed with government, the tourism industry is seeking greater self-regulation and placing the emphasis for controls on itself. Tourism is an industry predominantly driven by a highly profit-oriented private sector, and we are increasingly witnessing a situation where interest and consideration placed lately on environmental conservation is related not with nature protection per se, but the effective integration of economic processes into the wider environment. It became clear from the statements of representatives of the tourism industry in Greece, that sport-oriented tourism activities demanding clean water, quality marinas, well preserved golf courses, trekking paths crossing an authentic and unchanged landscape, mountain-bike routes offering alternative views of scenery etc., are the driving forces for environmental-oriented tourism practice, rather than government announcements on the importance of a healthy environment. The representatives of the industry appeared highly environmentally aware, while simultaneously failing to show equal interest in meeting the increased costs resulting...
from expensive environment-oriented practices. For commercial operators, mass tourism facilities satisfying tourist demand for sport and recreation in existing areas of concentration, appear more favourable than alternative and therefore more expensive activities. In many cases, the industry distances its operation from the necessity of assuming a fall in short-term returns on either sustainable practices or costly investments on sports facilities. However, some industry voices did note that the qualitatively proven potential of some sport-oriented products would evitably prove to be an important factor directing developments.

Again, reflecting earlier views, the most important factor identifying a change in tourism operations towards greener procedures and alternative recreational products, according to the majority of commercial interviewees, was the increasing expressed demand for active or green/natural tourism forms. "There are significant indications of demand for sports tourism activities both within the hotel units and increasingly in the wider area of the resort. Adventure sports are chosen by a clientele with strong naturalistic behaviour and consciousness" (President of Tourism Enterprises). This view was also shared by central government policy sections, who emphasised the ecological qualities of many sports tourism forms. Sport tourists were described by many influential public sector actors as having a high environmental consciousness and positioning nature as a core ingredient of this travel activity, often using sport to access alternative tourism experiences. Examples of sports activities were offered as a proof of this environmentally friendly nature of sports tourism, including golf developments, described as "the most environmental establishments within a congested tourism superstructure and an oasis for travellers escaping crowds and standardised mass tourism activities" (Section of Implementation). According to policy making departments, sport tourism appears as an educator for travellers to Greece, introducing them to discovery of areas distant from the stereotypical 'sun, sea, sand' destination, through activities that encompass physical effort, offering discovery of an unchanged and rich environment, that other 'mass' tourists don't access. In addition, the potential role of sports tourism within the sustainable tourism development of isolated regions was highly valued. Recognising the planning inefficiencies of the past, it was suggested that "the sustainable features of sports tourism are highly applicable to the development of a new alternative tourism strategy in areas needing protection, but simultaneously capable of accommodating green development" (Department of Decentralization).

This 'alternative strategy' clearly needs to differentiated in terms of numbers accommodated, the type of facility, and the level of alteration imposed on the natural environment. What is suitable in or near some already developed areas of tourist
concentration, is clearly not appropriate for some under-developed or otherwise sensitive landscapes. But public policy thinking generally appears positive to the contribution of sports activities in the planning of a new regenerated Greek tourism product, increasingly highlighting improved environmental practices. However, it should be noted that these ‘green credentials’ remain unsubstantiated with quantitative measures and explicit goals, threatening the level of practised sustainability, despite the government support. The statements of government sector interviewees show a great lack of knowledge of environmental sensitivity levels, the exact nature and pitfalls of some sports development types, and an inability to produce explicit planning standards that might assist in quantitatively identifying and controlling ‘sustainable development’. Such observations tend to undermine the otherwise apparent success of sports tourism initiatives being highlighted as a relatively environmentally friendly tool, with significant potential for regional development in Greece.

However, there are still ongoing developments, and hope that planning and implementation practice will become more sensitive to the real needs of sustainable development planning, including for tourism. Such optimism derives not least from the recent efforts to increase knowledge and expertise by the establishment of partnerships between a wide variety of different interest groups, including central policy making sections, tourism product businesses, travel agents, foreign tourism operators and even academic, scientific and environmentalist experts. Foreign demand indicators, central policy announcements, local and national businesses analyses and scientific findings, all seem to support Niki’s (1994) suggestion that “the most important parameter of future lasting tourism development, is that of environmental sustainability”. The viewpoint of high public office is also interesting: “Tourism represents an exceptional example of the fundamental relationship between economic and social development, and environmental conservation, along with the numerous advantages deriving from this interrelationship” (Minister of Tourism).

6.6 Challenges and Potential of Proposed Sports Tourism Forms within the Product Regeneration Process - The Case of Sea Tourism

The economic and social activity within the Hellenic area has always been closely interrelated with the sea and coast. So called ‘Sea Tourism’ (sailing, yachting, windsurfing etc. - see also Chapter 5) has long been one of the most prestigious and profitable ingredients of the Greek tourism product, but has recently been highlighted as a particularly advantageous form of tourism with a number of characteristics well-suited to assisting in the tourism product regeneration and quality enhancement processes.
With annual receipts reaching one billion dollars from sea tourism activities, this travel mode has attracted the interest of both policy makers and the commercial sector, both recognising its potential to provide a competitive and quality tourism product.

Various broader definitions given to describe this tourism form such as "every tourism activity related with the sea and coast" or "the use of the sea and the wider water systems for recreational activities" (GNTO, 1993) do not provide a sufficiently explicit insight into its sport tourism significance. In order to define it more 'tightly' for research purposes, the categorisation by Komilis (1986) is used to more appropriately categorise sea sport tourism activities. Sea sport tourism then refers to activities such as 'cruise sailing and yacht-racing' and 'small boat-related activity' for coastal recreation (boating, dinghies, canoeing, windsurfing). This definition excludes motor boats and speed craft, although there are arguments for their inclusion in some circumstances. 'Bare boats' represent the largest demand of this type in Greece, with visitors seeking a tourism form with a demanding physical activity and flexible travel mode. However, GNTO policies do not differentiate between different sea tourism types, which generates a number of sustainability considerations for the successful practice of some new developmental plans.

Sea tourism, for example, constitutes a priority constituent of many policy plans for the creation of special tourism infrastructure towards the process of product differentiation. The largest amount of public investment has been directed towards the establishment of sea tourism infrastructure, including the creation of a marinas network and the improvement of ports and anchorages. Public policy makers strongly emphasise the potential qualities of sea tourism and the characteristics which make it an ideal type to satisfy the goals of quality differentiation of tourism services, including: high spending clientele, an enhanced image for the whole tourism profile within the international market, and sustainable credentials. The present ownership of marinas belongs to a combination of the GNTO, the Harbour Fund, local authorities and commercial interests.

Recognising the inability of public services to successfully exploit the capacities of sea tourism and generate the necessary infrastructure, GNTO has suggested allocating the management of marinas to the private sector. This is in addition to the recognition of the need for the creation of special interest tourism infrastructure as a significant requirement for the further development of this area, which resulted in the announcement of policy plans for further new marinas within the five-year plan for 1995-1999.
The whole network of basic and supplementary facilities will be provided by public investment even though the management will be ceded to private entrepreneurs. The estimated private contribution to a total cost of 46,333,000 ECU is 13,000,000 ECU, which is described as a "highly favourable programme for private investors seeking to participate in a promising tourism product alteration" (Minister of Tourism). However, despite the great degree of privatisation evident in the new policy plans, the GNTO characteristically defending its centralized role, underlines its status as the central coordinator for marinas, both public and private, at the national and regional levels.

In this context, the new developmental regulations strongly emphasise the described differentiated implementation procedures and the strict application of sustainability principles. The document puts great emphasis on the direction of sea tourism development towards "less developed regions", within the wider context of equitable peripheral tourism development. The first public marinas allocated by the GNTO characterised the highly centralized nature of tourism policy, by being located along the Athenian coast, Thessaloniki and the most cosmopolitan and developed island of Corfu during the 1970's. The new marinas now under construction or recently completed reflect support for the new policy direction for wider distribution of tourism activity to the periphery, with eleven new constructions located in less developed tourism regions and islands. Offering access to isolated regions and diverting the tourism activity towards less promoted areas, marinas are considered as "doors to places of outstanding beauty waiting to be explored" (Department of Research and Policy). The proposed network, as presented by the GNTO, covers the development of special tourism infrastructure in peripheral areas lacking tourism facilities, despite their position, often neighbouring traditional tourism centres. With the inclusion of isolated places, such as Thrace and South Crete included in such plans, the GNTO appears to be driving new development towards alternative tourist centres and travel routes. However, in practice, there are a wide range of problems which will slow the moves to spread such development, and may ultimately defeat the process in the short term.

Unpublished maps obtained from the GNTO describing the suggested marinas for investment and development suggest different proposals for sea tourism development, particularly concerning private sector investment interests. The marinas suggested for development are virtually all concentrated within traditional tourism zones, avoiding the risk of investing in under-developed regions and therefore widening the gap between published public policy and private sector objectives. In addition, it became evident from information collected from the GNTO Sea Tourism Department that a significant part of the public sector development plan is also directed towards already established...
tourism resorts, inevitably affecting the generation of a more balanced and equitable regional tourism growth. The distribution of sailing sanctuaries illustrates this disadvantaged position for the peripheries, with the East Macedonian, Thracian and Central Greece coastline, and the islands of Northern Aegean, benefiting from only 9.5% of the total number of boat sanctuaries (ten out of one hundred and five). The lack of sailing centres, alongside the problems of technical support for such developments, reduce access for travellers to Northern areas and emphasise the unbalanced distribution of infrastructure and facilities between different areas.

The planning consensus described in the new policy announcements as “encompassing the private say along with demand indications within the national planning system on marina construction” (GNTO, 1993) does not appear as feasible in the view of the commercial enterprises. The Association of Yachting Owners reflects the views and interests of the private enterprises in investing only in well-established tourism resorts, emphasising the lack of technical support facilities in the peripheral regions, that prevent the extension of yachting activity much beyond the traditional network. Deciding where new development should or should not be located, or the extent of areas to be protected from development, has implications for a large number of groups, including: land owners, occupiers, residents, businesses and users of an area, as well as the local public bodies.

As a highly political activity, the planning for differentiated tourism development is an activity which involves many conflicting interests, with a complex range of development issues, in this case including land and water use/ownership. These issues it seems, are so far too complex to be overcome, even by the apparent new desire to change the nature of tourism development within some sections of the government sector.

As well as not overcoming the concentrated, centralised nature of development, nor the power of existing commercial interests, the present policy plan also fails to demonstrate a significant level of local government participation, restricting the responsibilities and influence of the centre and private sector entrepreneurs. Additionally, marinas not included in the national marinas network would be examined on an almost ad-hoc basis by a range of parties. Review of each planning application in isolation could result in an irrational and unsustainable pattern of development. The inclusion of a perplexing range of different groups in the development process, suggests that coordinated and sustainable tourism development of this type will be difficult.
Currently, ownership patterns on the coast are complex with different systems involved for the three elements of the ‘coastal zone’: the land; the ‘inter-tidal’ area; and the water. Marinas containing all three elements face the myriad of public and private sector responsibilities and ownerships, concerning (for example) coastal defence, water quality, wildlife conservation, public access, marine minerals, fish stocks and archaeological protection. “Each activity has its own legislative and organisational framework, making the task of undertaking any development in the coastal and island zone complex” (Department of Sea Tourism). Ministries of Tourism, Defence, and Culture, the Harbour Office, Archaeological Trust, Society for the Protection of the Nature, local councils and Harbour Police are all involved, with as yet no integrated assessment of requirements, or integrated approach to the development and management of the coast, especially for recreational use. This picture illustrates some of the problems of developing outside existing areas of tourism concentration, where often these problems have already been overcome.

But while at least some extension to provision in peripheral areas seems likely, the quality of leisure experience in sea sport tourism and its sustainability are potentially at risk from this multi-functional and non-integrated nature of the agencies responsible for its provision. Additionally, the extent to which opportunities can be provided are constrained by the mandates of a number of agencies concerned. For example, “conflict of capacities between different sports federations, tourism agencies and policing authorities is a common characteristic of marina and sea tourism development. It is also a characteristic of a fragmented and obstructed public planning system, influencing a potentially competitive product” (Department of Sea Tourism). Regarding the sport administration, “the nature of their structure is to provide is competitive sea sports which might be part of the overall product, but it results in collision of different hierarchical and political interests” (Department of Sea Tourism). The public sector interviewees from this section imply significant problems in the development of further facilities and programmes, because of this inter-organisational conflict and inefficiency, organisational instability and leadership changes, caused by political or inter-sector changes. All of these make the desirable developments problematic, irrespective of their inclusion in wider government planning.

The new Department of Sea Tourism signals a new integrated approach to sea tourism development, managing some convergence of the regulatory mechanisms of the different responsible bodies, through a nine-member ‘Committee of Surveillance’, as the body for resolving matters of “spatial planning, land use, construction regulation, and project supervision” (Government Newspaper, 1993). This responsible Committee again
reflects the complex nature of marina leisure development, with its inclusion of the General Secretary of the University of National Economy, representatives of the Ministries of National Defence, Finance, Culture, Commercial Navy, Environment Land Use and Public works, the GNTO and the General Secretary of the Ministry of National Economy. The establishment of this Committee and its representation does demonstrate an institutional change towards the democratisation of planning procedures and party involvement. However, there is a significant lack of any local authority involvement in the developmental planning, and the policy and legislation is mainly addressed at regulation of private entrepreneurs. The situation is further confused because coastal and marina development matters are frequently covered by non-statutory mechanisms, when local authorities extend their role beyond the control of recreation development to its provision and management.

The recent initiatives and the drive for sustainable and long term planning are now tending to drive such non-statutory planning into being complementary and consistent with the wider development planning. But the legislation is still failing to fully consider local development plans, and is therefore ignoring the knowledge of local actors which is relevant to different types of marina and coastal sporting activity development. More significantly perhaps, as noted elsewhere, it also fails to gain local views on the areas to be protected from development. Lack of information on local environment qualities and weaknesses, inevitably acts as a constraint to the designation of policy plans which are compatible with local needs and resources.

Widespread involvement of different organisations, and their different strategies and priorities, generates significant tension regarding these types of development. Of all these potential organisational conflicts that occur over coastal recreation, those regarding nature conservation are the most vital in the formulation of realistic sustainable development planning. Statements from the interviewees of the Department of Sea Tourism again demonstrate an increased sensitivity of public policy towards nature protection, which was reflected in the policy announcement supporting the construction of new marinas. However, the legislation underpinning these potential developments, despite exhaustively setting the pre-conditions and restrictions on the marinas under construction, fails to fully embody the announced shift of policy towards greener tourism practices.

Thus, even in this example or case (Sea Tourism) of a potential sports-related special interest tourism development with apparently significant potential to meet the planning goals for quality and differentiation, and to do so sustainably because of the relatively
green nature that such developments have been described as characterising, the required spatial and environmental plans appear unable to effectively adopt a long-term impact perspective. At present environmental assessment is restricted to present conditions, and not future development or conservation considerations.

Acting more as a facilitator, serving commercial interests, than as a protector of the environment within potential marina development, public policy proves sustainability to be a difficult and often compromised reality. The only real exception, to what seems to be a continuation of the fragmented tourism planning policy framework, is the European ‘Blue Flags’ programme, already highlighted, affecting beach and marina developments in EU countries. The European Blue Flag marina criteria aim at a “good integration with the natural and built environment”, constantly assessing the impact of mooring pleasure craft in the local water systems. HSPN’s project co-ordinator described the private businesses as “initially sceptical and suspicious towards this ‘external’ control over resources, despite its beneficial character”. Fear of partialism and non-statutory tools of the European centre, created a ‘diffident’ business community. With the scheme operated by a largely environmentalist agency, the commercial sector perceived the Blue Flag scheme as another ecological, and therefore ineffective and over-restrictive, mechanism.

However, the success of the programme Europe-wide, along with the increase of local authorities' participation in the programme (which is significant for Greece), lifted the irresolution of the commercial tourism enterprises and worked as an educator of the importance of a protected marine environment as the fundamental source of sustainable coastal recreation. ‘Blue Flags’ are now considered a competitive and quality feature of the coastal, beach and marina recreational infrastructure, now representing a sought-after designation, and receiving a dramatic increase of applicants every year.

Effective environmental management requires a deep realisation of environmental issues by tourism industry groups, and their embracing of the ‘Blue Flag’ mechanism for competitive ends, does not always suggest a complete recognition of the need to sustain the natural qualities of the environment for the long term benefit of the industry, as well as for other intrinsic environmental or social goals. There is a reticence towards introducing statutory environmental management techniques among tourism’s commercial interests for a series of reasons. Firstly, they see no direct economic advantage. This was a common element within the statements of private business representatives. Secondly, in all the tourism industry interviews, there was the notion that their operations are not causing environmental damage.
Defending the nature of its operation, the private sector argues that "by nature, sea tourism is capable of accommodating limited numbers of visitors and hopefully the responsible, environmentally sensitive and quality segment of the travel market" (President of Tourism Enterprises). Finally, and most importantly, an environmental approach is difficult to put into practice, since most coastal recreation currently operates in an environmental management policy vacuum, where few legislative guidelines exist. Private tourism businesses have been accused of placing insufficient weight on the intrinsic value of the natural environment, derived from economic theory based on the view that resources have value in use or in scarcity.

However, the commercial sector does understand the commercial element of the argument, that environmental protection especially of coastal areas is largely interrelated with successful tourism operations. This was a common element in the statements of the private sector interviewees. There is an obvious rationale that a cleaner environment should enhance recreational boating activities and the desire of people for coastal sports participation - even if this is not at the heart of an appropriate environmental programme to protect the coastal ecosystem.

Despite the favourable statutory conditions offered by the GNTO for the development of Sea Tourism activity, such as the leasing of public marinas to the private enterprises, and subsidies of 25% in Athens and Thessaloniki, and 35% in the remaining regions, the private sector identifies structural and managerial weaknesses in the proposals, which affect their commercial advantage. The great lack of basic and supplementary marina infrastructure, constitute the main points of agreement between representatives of travel businesses. Increasing competitiveness of a sea sport tourism product suggests a network of complementary facilities and services, and not the fragmented construction of marinas in an uncoordinated effort. Lack of supply, access, repair and technical services, reduce the boating experience and promote a bad image of infrastructural and service effectiveness. In addition, the private sector identify a lack of training schools, specialised/qualified personnel, and supporting legislation, all of which fail to promote the growth of sea tourism activities, suggesting an amateuristic level of provision. Strong criticisms are addressed at government regarding "the inability of the public hand to generate competitive mechanisms for a product disadvantaged in comparison to neighbouring countries (Turkey), who foster this type of development by a variety of tax relief and subsidy allowances" (President of Travel Businesses).
Sea tourism and especially boating-related tourism activities are suggested as the most appropriate tool for developing a high quality tourism product in Greece. Policy guidelines promise high environmental, aesthetic and social protection measures to make new developments 'sustainable'. Sea tourism legislation, however, is restricted to technical and infrastructural standards, ignoring social aspects resulting from this specialised form of development. Undoubtedly, Article 30 of the main sea tourism legislation (2160/1993) provides favourable developmental conditions for tourism enterprises, contributing to a quality product differentiation. The legislation identifies the construction and management of new marinas by hotel owners (units of more than 200 rooms) located in coastal areas, becoming a highly competitive feature of Greek tourism, and therefore increasing the ability to differentiate their clientele towards higher profile, higher spending, quality market segments. The response by private enterprises was generally positive and the programme has an evident potential for further growth. However, the commercial observations about supporting infrastructure, training and integrated planning of such development, must be noted. These vehicles also at present seem likely to be more attractive and operational within or near existing areas of tourism concentration, and there is, as yet, little commercial support for the extension of these operations into new and untried areas.

There are also other externalities relating to sustainability principles which public sector policy makers should consider, concerning the protection of the local character in terms of aesthetics and social ethics. Marinas mooring expensive boats and a clientele with an obviously wealthy profile, may well satisfy needs for economic benefit, but would misfit within small island traditional fishing communities, with a lower than average personal income and a distinct local character. These are the classic problems concerning the social sustainability of tourism developments. The introduction of this high class recreational form would introduce a different set of life style features that, on the basis of research elsewhere, would inevitably have 'demonstration effects' on the local community, particularly in terms of differentiated working and leisure visions for local youth, seeking an idealised life style distant to their traditional principles.

Another consideration also seems to lie in the path of spreading such developments, which has not been overcome even by the integrated committee developing such proposals. The archaeological authorities are still attempting to restrict the implementation of sea tourism projects, suggesting that tourism forms such as diving and fishing are exploited by illegal activities like the antiquities trade to international markets. The authorities characterise foreign visitors as the "thieves of the Greek history and archaeological treasures". This scepticism towards social and cultural
sustainability issues, prevailing from the exercise of sea tourism activities should be recognised, but is not reflected in any of the reviewed developmental plans, probably because the former remain under the remit of local communities and authorities that only specific legislation can effectively include. Again, these reflect some of the wider sustainability issues, beyond the purely environmental, that have yet to be embraced within the development of Greek tourism.

Conclusions

Chapter 6 has presented key findings of the research from central government sources, mainly derived from interviewees serving at the policy level of the GNTO, who are increasingly being allocated enhanced policy making authority. The research included a representation of all levels of the policy and implementation hierarchy, where there was a common agreement on the importance of product alteration towards a ‘multi-faceted’ tourism development, based on numerous sustainability and differentiation arguments. These are evident in both the interviews and in unpublished policy documents. The Minister of Tourism represented this expressed ‘common consciousness’ by explicitly supporting the promotion of a series of legislative tools that reinforce sport-oriented and other alternative tourism developments. In this context, common to most interviewees at central policy level there was agreement that sport tourism can play a crucial role in the product differentiation process. This quest for ‘product differentiation’ through quality tourism has been supported also by the private sector in tourism, as evidenced through the official interviews with its centrally-based representative bodies.

However, there are clearly a number of considerable problem areas, and it was evident that interviewees from different backgrounds appeared sceptical of the effective practice of the otherwise promising policy shift for the Greek tourism product. Firstly, fears were expressed on the supply-based nature of the new policy, which undermines demand aspects and therefore endangers the flexibility of new developments. Secondly, it was evident that there is a lack of agreement over the conceptualisation of sports tourism, either as an autonomous, alternative or supplementary tourism form within the new developmental framework, which inevitably leads to problematic implementation of the policy. Again, higher policy levels support the alternative nature of sports tourism and its ability to differentiate a stagnated mass tourism product, while implementation actors suggest a more ‘supplementary’ role for sports tourism. Similarly, they argue that the need for infrastructural and system improvements and alterations must precede new product developments.
Public and private thinking agree on the State’s role as the driving force in tourism development, which is heavily reflected in the design and announcement of policy guidelines, and explicit legislative developmental schemes in order to support a sustainable and controlled new product differentiation process. Despite the wide private sector appreciation of the importance of product differentiation in order to tackle the recent stagnation of growth, tourism enterprises appeared critical of the ability of the proposed new developments to attract new private initiatives and investment, when operating within the present ineffective infrastructure, and with poor communication of any new image. Keeping a more demand, rather than supply, orientation, the private sector doubt the ability of the new products to sustain activity levels and secure present business levels, under the present promotional arrangements. As such, investment levels are likely to be low at present and will depend on public sector leadership. However, senior private sector sources highlighted the power of an effectively communicated product image, that could raise demand in those products that would cause significant business activity, contributing therefore to a differentiated tourism product. Overall therefore, commercial operators were positive, given some public sector changes and significant support.

Readjusted decentralisation mechanisms support the sustainable nature of the new developments, with administrative and policy responsibilities allocated increasingly to the Periphery, which was enthusiastically received by local actors. However, a paradox lies in the fact that financial and bureaucratic control remains largely allocated to the Centre, which therefore endangers the feasibility of projects. However, the new partnerships between public and private actors, as promoted in the legislation, are widely appreciated those the involved as contributing to sustainable product creation. In addition, environmental considerations, as emphasised in all new policy declarations, were considered crucial within the process of new tourism development. There were, however, criticisms of some new measures, which are not sufficiently differentiated from traditional concentrated mass tourism types. On the other hand, despite private businesses increased environmental awareness, the private sector generally failed to demonstrate a similar appreciation of the need to cover increased costs resulting from environmental-oriented practices.

Finally, Chapter 6 presents the developmental parameters of ‘Sea Tourism’, as the sport tourism form that features as increasingly appropriate to the goals of the new product differentiation process. Favourable financial incentives, a high quality product profile, and a great nautical tradition, suggest a strong developmental potential for this and other sport tourism types in Greece. However, infrastructural and organisational
inefficiencies create scepticism amongst the private businesses regarding the product establishment and viability. The lack of inclusion of all relevant parties to the designation of the new policy, immediately creates a problematic product alteration process.

Chapters 7 and 8, which follow, present local viewpoints on the policy shift at all levels of the policy developmental community, evidencing the extent to which Central viewpoints are acceptable and feasible, and highlighting the differences between two very different developmental and organisational arenas. The examination of the potential for sport tourism development in Greece continues in these chapters with an analysis of the different characteristics, local administration structures, community agencies, and issues identified within the different developmental settings of a traditional area of existing tourist concentration, and a so far under-developed region.

The Regions of Crete and Thrace have very different levels of tourism operation, but face the same challenge of repositioning their regional tourism product. The following review looks at how these different areas are seeking to utilise the special interest tourism forms, proposed by central government policy making. The results of this analysis aims to identify and clearly illustrate the regional differences and the different types of potential developmental roles for sport tourism within these different local environments. In a wider sense these represent and synthesise the range of problems and potential confronting Greece in the rejuvenation of its tourism products, in the face of changing market trends and declining growth in interest for its traditional, over-concentrated, tourism product offer.
Chapter 7

Sustainable Sport Tourism Development in the Region of Crete

Introduction

Covering an area of 8.336 km$^2$ (or 6.3% of Greek national territory), Crete is the largest island in the Hellenic space, constituting the administrative centre of the Periphery of Crete and subdivided into the planning regions of East and West Crete. The population of 537,000 or 5.2% of the total population (Census, of 1991) is distributed between four Prefectures, having a level of demographic growth amongst the highest in Greece (CEC, 1991 and Athanasiou/KEPE, 1995).

The dualism of the Greek economy in the 1970s, with the large urban centres shadowing the distant regions, was supplemented by the migration of people from the periphery to the centre. However, a shift in public policy following this decade has resulted in the dramatic improvement of the quality of life to the previously isolated regions, in terms of private consumption, social services and economic structure, and this movement has now slowed. Public, as well as private investment, (stimulated by the significant incentives' policy), has made the periphery increasingly attractive. The EU intervention through funding has become an additional decisive factor. Despite scepticism expressed about the elimination of the economic dualism in terms of production, it is now widely accepted that regional localities have enjoyed a dramatic improvement of both quality of life and production development. Coastal and island areas, such as Crete, have shown a rapid economic development and consequently an improvement of social well-being. Local entrepreneurial initiatives have extensively exploited the developmental possibilities and potential, particularly existing in the sectors of tourism and agriculture.

7.1 Principle Characteristics of the Region of Crete

Crete belongs to a category of peripheries that have shown a distinct developmental dynamism, an improving economic structure, and have become an example of integrated economic development for the whole of Greece during the last decades. The main characteristics of this successful developmental course have been low levels of unemployment, increased per capita income, and an expanding production sector.
However, due to the nature of this production, the continuation of this dynamic environment has become a challenge to local developers and businesses. Compared with the corresponding average for the EU, per capita gross regional product is approximately 48% (percentage share of the total of country’s GNP), having one of the fastest rates of annual average increase of 3.03% between 1981-1991 (Athanasiou/KEPE, 1995). In addition, per capita income in Crete grew from 84% of the national average in 1981, to 96% in 1989. In 1991, Crete had an unemployment rate of 4% of the total workforce, against 7.7% for the country as a whole and 8.5% for the EU.

According to economic definitions, ‘sectorial specialisation’ refers to the percentage share by a production sector of the total regional employment, when this exceeds the country’s average. In these terms, KEPE has produced a picture of this regional sectorial specialisation for the region of Crete, which is highly illustrative of the process of change underway. Until 1981, half of the working population were employed in the first production sector, emphasising the importance of agriculture in the region of Crete, while the tertiary sector presented a small but dynamic growth area, principally due to tourism. A decade later, half of the working population was employed in the tertiary sector, demonstrating a dramatic movement of employees from agriculture to the tourism sector and a crucial significant reconstruction of the whole production system. By 1991, Crete had the lowest rates of regional unemployment within the country’s working population and a sectorial specialisation that favoured the tertiary sector, producing an average annual increase of 5.29% in its working population. However, the decrease by 3.87% of employees within the agriculture sector, signals the start of an unbalanced production system that presents crucial seasonal and largely unsustainable production dependency, due to the nature of the tourism product.

The rate of change of the levels of productivity in Crete was amongst the highest recorded between 1981-1991, which obviously has been interpreted as a positive economic factor of the region. But as has been identified elsewhere in a number of studies, it should be noted that the phenomenon of unbalanced productivity levels between sectors bears the danger of problematic sectorial structures. Along with employment shifts, the share of the primary and secondary sectors to Crete’s total regional product continues to decline from 26.96% to 22.46% and 21.30% to 18.05% during the same period. Despite climatic conditions that encourage the practice and further development of traditional and new agriculture practices, and other relevant branches of the processing of agricultural products, the share of these production sectors has fallen below the national mean. Thus, the existing good prospects for further
agricultural development seem to be undermined by the accelerating tourism growth, which has been largely responsible for these sectorial changes.

The increasing share of the total regional product by the tertiary sector remains high, occupying almost 60% in 1991 (from 51.79% in 1981). Employees belonging to this sector have the highest per capita income in this region, while GNTO (1995) figures suggest that the total regional income from tourism for 1994 reached 1.5 billion US$. The economic importance of the tourism sector in Crete is demonstrated, for example, by the income generated only from visits to the museums and archaeological sites (Knossos, Festos, Yortina, Ag. Trias, Tilissos and Heraklion) that was estimated at 4 million US$ for the same year. With its priceless archaeological treasures, unique environmental, climatical and anthropogenic characteristics, Crete has attracted mass numbers of tourists during the last three decades and positioned the island as one of the most important Mediterranean destinations.

Crete has become the most important destination within the Hellenic space, with a tourism performance significantly more successful than any other national resort or region. Having the largest share of foreign visitors amongst people visiting the region of any destination (85%) and the smallest share of domestic tourism (15.02%), Crete has attracted an increasing number of visitors that reached 2.4 million by 1994 (GNTO Regional Office of East Crete). The increased arrivals occurred through an increase of charter flights used as the main transportation means, dramatically increasing the inflow of visitors to Crete through the two main airports. Showing increased levels of about 16% between consequent years, arrivals in Crete constitute 20% of the total entry of foreign tourists into Greece, while more than 25% of chartered aircraft destined for Greece landed at Heraklion (GNTO, 1995).

The establishment of hotels in Crete have also shown a dramatic increase during the last two decades, and have steadily represented around 14% of Greece's total hotel establishments in the 1990's. It is characteristic however, that Crete hosts 24% of all 'lux' and 21% of 'first class' hotel units in Greece, demonstrating the potential of the island to adapt to a 'quality profile' and support the tourism product regeneration process. However, the parallel construction of illegal accommodation units, following the dramatic tourism growth in the region, has contributed to the recent degradation of the local product, continuing to be largely uncontrolled and unrecorded by public bodies.
In addition, along with hosting 20% of all accommodation bed places in Greece, Crete receives 21% of overnight stays in Greece, which are largely prebooked through the mass foreign tour operating system, that is presently controlling volume and price levels of the local tourism product, and which planners consider to be responsible for a number of local economic problems. Analysis of the figures describing tourism performance in Crete shows a great advantage in terms of hotel capacity utilisation, reaching 76% in 1994 (with the national average being 66%). However, this is heavily concentrated within certain times of the year. The vast majority of arrivals, and therefore overnight stays, follow the classic time pattern of mass tourism activity in Greece, which is the period between April and September, leaving the tourism superstructure largely underused for the rest of the year.

Unpublished policy documents from the Regional GNTO Office of Crete, obtained during the course of the research, suggests that 58% of tourism exchange in the whole of Greece derives from the region of Crete, demonstrating the crucial economic role of tourism both locally and nationally. It becomes evident from the documents that this importance is appreciated by the regional and local authorities, showing an increased awareness of the need for a continuous upgrading of the local product. This recognition has led to the production of policy action (analysed in the following section) with explicit developmental goals. Through the development of new tourism forms, including sports tourism, and strict quality standards, regional policy making aims to achieve a series of desired tourism performance levels. The contribution of tourism in Crete to the Gross Peripheral Product of 30% is targeted to reach 40% as a result of new policy action for tourism upgrading.

The new proposals take on greater significance and interest because the regional authorities aim to achieve this increase through the implementation of sustainable mechanisms. Tourism development in Crete, in that sense, is planned to be characterised by upgrading of quality services, rather than expanded infrastructure. This type of tourism growth may be suggesting increased visitor numbers (from 5,607,632 overnight stays to 6 million), but it emphasises the importance of spreading temporal peaks and avoiding the peak season of July and August, shifting activities towards initially the months of June and September, with the scope of distributing it further to the Spring and Autumn months. These proposals, apart from increasing hotel capacity utilisation (occupancy) to 83% (from present 76.6%), are expected to generate an additional 12 billion DRM, 240 new job positions in tourism, and an employment increase of 5% for the region (from 46% to 51%). New recreational forms of tourism are proposed to
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contribute to the new policy direction, including 250 km of cultural walking tours and construction of ten new mountain trekking paths, as suggested by European guidelines (E4). Sport and recreational tourism is being proposed as one of the focus points within the suggested policy, aiming to regenerate performance and promote a lasting tourism growth, less dependent on a sun, sea product offer, for which demand is stagnating.

7.2 Sport in the Restructuring of Tourism Policy: Public Sector Role and Perspectives

As identified, tourism in Crete has increasingly become a vital factor of the local social and economic functioning. The dramatic increase of foreign demand caused the movement of the labour force from traditional production sectors (like agriculture) to the tourism sector, which produced 1.5 billion US$ for the local economy and occupied directly or indirectly almost 40% of the total working population in Crete. However, the over-concentration of tourism activity especially in the Northern coast areas, illegal construction of accommodation units, and the lack of effective public policy and control, are some the reasons that have contributed to the creation a congested and unsustainable tourism product.

Because of the negative economic, social and physical effects generated by an uncontrolled tourism operation, local society has now reached the threshold of an era of either effective intervention policy, or development saturation and economic decay. In 1995, a year showing obvious initial signs of decline, the Periphery of Crete, as one of the most important links between the central and local government in Greece, presented the ‘Outline of Peripheral Tourism Policy’ for Crete, as a determined and collective effort to regenerate local tourism business through an ‘integrated’ policy proposal. The direction of the announced policy is based on sustainability principles, supporting long-term integrated national and local planning, tourism activity balanced with other production sectors, a strict environmental policy, and the demonstration of democratic decision-making and planning, including all involved social and administrative groups.

The development of special and ‘mild’ tourism forms figures as the most interesting and effective tool for ‘enriching the tourism offer’ and as one of the most emphasised parts of the policy goals. The new tourism forms are designed to satisfy sustainability requirements “in order to minimise negative effects and maximise social, environmental and economic local benefits” (Regional Programme for Crete, 1994-1999). In Axis 3 and 4 of the proposed policy document concerning ‘Measurements and Action’, sport
tourism is explicitly proposed as the 'mild' tourism form that would "extend the tourism period and distribute tourism activity off-season" (ibid.). Axis 5 referring to 'Tourism Infrastructure and Integrated Intervention Plan' positions the construction sports tourism superstructure as the top priority of tourism policy. The plans included the construction of yachting marinas, golf courses, and the mapping of the 'European Path E4', aimed to facilitate a network of sea, nature and mountain tourism activities, differentiating destinations from the traditional profile.

The five year plan 1994-1999 on 'Special Integrated Tourism and Culture Development' sets explicit goals for the establishment of new mild tourism forms in order to extend the tourism season and improve the offered services. The planned mechanisms include a variety of sports tourism forms, providing alternative activities for both traditional and less developed resorts. Through the construction of a network of marinas and anchorages, sea tourism features as the most appropriate and potentially competitive sport tourism form that "introduces travellers to unexplored Crete and gives an alternative insight into the local features" (Periphery of East Crete). In addition, the promotion of international sports events is proposed as an effective tool within the total process of differentiating the local mass tourism image and the attraction of a quality clientele. The European Paths E4 are extended into the Cretian mountains, initiating a series of sporting activities that will contribute to the improvement of local infrastructure and offer access to less touristically developed areas. Thus, central to the characteristics of the Periphery's development policy is the use of recreational tourism activities to promote the local culture through the ability of these tourism forms to promote access to alternative routes and localities, with distinct cultural and morphological characteristics.

Being the appointed authority by the central government, the Periphery has directed their public policy action for regenerating the local tourism product offer towards the development of new tourism forms. It was repeatedly emphasised in interviews that the new suggested development objectives, encompasses the acceptance of national as well as local government, and therefore promises a high degree of social sustainability. The documents and the representatives of the periphery underline the importance of co-ordinating the programme with the national policy goals. These coincide in the sense of promoting special tourism forms as a tool of rejuvenating the tourism product offer. The Socialist Government of PASOK, putting great emphasis on promoting a gradually decentralised state, has allocated increased power to peripheral government and local authorities. The statements of the periphery representatives underline their close cooperation with the Ministry of Tourism in agreeing a common tourism policy direction.
and a wider inclusion of involved partners. Including all responsible and appropriate groups (GNTO, Prefectures, sports federations and local authorities), sports tourism development has become a part of a democratic policy making scheme, aiming at the well-being and benefit of all affected partners and users. The policy document constitutes a relatively radical proposal for sustainable sports tourism development in Crete and the potential realisation of a new image and growth direction, gradually fostering the independence of the local product from exclusively mass tourism operation, with its inherent weaknesses. The parameter most commonly identified in the interviews as decisive within the process of sport tourism development in these areas, is the need to create a better balance for the local economy and workforce, between traditional as well as tourism and tourism-related employment. The development of tourism interest in elements beyond sun/sea products is viewed as one of the most productive means of fostering a return to a better-balanced production system, whilst also reaping the economic rewards that tourism brings.

However, interviewees serving in GNTO posts in West Crete (Hania) were critical towards the centralised tourism policy which “fails to pass information to regional government and most importantly to educate local government of the potential and pitfalls of new types of development” (GNTO, Hania). GNTO (West and East Crete) emphasises the importance of the role of lower levels of government in the successful establishment of sports tourism development. Local actors, especially in areas facing potential tourism growth, often lack information on new tourism trends, differentiation of demand patterns and tourism development limitations. The gap in relations and particularly communication between central and local government, as identified by GNTO interviewees, to some extent contradict the periphery’s claims of ‘holistic acceptance’ and jeopardises the sustainable practice of sports tourism development. However, there is clear progress in sustainable development contexts. Interviewees representing local communities referred to people’s realisation of the importance of having control over developments and the need for increased local power in policy making. “Within this highly Atheno-centralised state, the community faces a great level of difficulty in accessing developmental programmes and breaking bureaucratic mechanisms in order to facilitate the state’s opportunities” (Aharnes, Local Community). It is only when local actors are informed about the types of tourism development most likely to bring maximum benefits into the community that social sustainability can be achieved.
The statements of the interviewees from the local communities explicitly demonstrate the exclusion of local 'say' in the policy making at present, which remains highly centralised despite the new decentralising legislation. It is implied that the role of the communities is restricted to that of the 'receiver', rather than 'initiator', of developments, therefore increasing the difficulty of local acceptance and support for suggested programmes. Local communities referred to the example of the European Path E3, where signs put up by planners to mark the walking paths were removed and destroyed by villagers fearing 'dangerous foreign operations'. Planning authorities failed not only to educate locals on the benefits of this low-impact development, but also to inform them at all about the implementation of the programme. It is characteristic that interviewees serving in Periphery and GNTO posts agreed with the representatives of the local communities on the highly centralised nature of tourism policy, and the cultural and communications distance between central policy making and local 'say'.

The GNTO of East Crete highlighted the important role of prefectural and local government in influencing the direction and level of development. However, the lack of knowledge on new tourism forms, along with the belief that "the community is unable to offer any input into the regional policy making" obscures the positive contribution which the local authority can make. Despite the criticisms addressed towards the distant position of central government from the local needs for sustainable development, the majority of local public actors interviewed agreed upon the importance of the central policy for tourism product differentiation and sustainable development as an underpinning strategy. These basic elements seemed more significant than 'political' principles about the lack of power at the local level. "The sum of external factors such as European Union policy direction towards sustainable practices, environmental protection and social equity, along with tourists' changing demand for recreational tourism products and active holidays, and well preserved and constructed surroundings, has been proved more influential for future tourism growth than political interests over regions or their authorities" (GNTO of West Crete).

The human factor and local interest have also been suggested as crucial in differentiating tourism direction and exploiting the potential advantages of recreational tourism forms. Local development using recreational activities within tourism products will be differentiated according to the "abilities of local administrative and expert groups in discovering and highlighting local characteristics, and suggesting a specific type of tourism growth. No-one knows the advantages of the area better than local groups and
no one knows how to build on these advantages better than local bureaucrats” (Aharnes, Community President).

Paradoxically, as we have seen elsewhere, particularly over environmental protection, while local authorities demand an increase of active community participation in policy making, there is a simultaneous demand for a strong central government intervention in mapping a common policy and effectively supporting regional developments. The present government policy was characterised as inconsistent towards the promised development of recreational tourism forms, and weak support for them as “non analogous to the urgent need for product differentiation” (Periphery of East Crete). This view was also shared by the representative of the GNTO in Crete, arguing that the presently homogeneous central public policy for tourism development “does not adequately support those initiatives that would require new developments towards recreational tourism forms, largely due to the lack of an integrated, differentiated and special planning framework” (GNTO, East Crete).

The arguments concerning the state’s role and intervention in tourism, constitute the main points of agreement between the different levels of local government in Crete. A common element in the statements of the local authorities was the view that major state support for sport tourism development comes as a consequence of both the national and local realisation of the potential qualities of this tourism form. The view that a significant network of sport tourism activities requires a different tourism policy framework of investments in special sport tourism infrastructure, and an equally differentiated promotional campaign, was shared by the majority of interviewees. “The process of securing independence from mass tourism is a complex issue. The public hand has to set the basis for this differentiation process through the whole restructuring of the financial, managerial and promotional system. We have to accept responsibility for initiating developments through favourable financial and promotional mechanisms” (GNTO, West Crete). Programmes initiated by local government are unlikely to succeed if the centre does not provide a viable financial scheme. This high degree of economic dependency on central decision-making weakens the power of local government in policy making, and therefore potential developments are often left to decisions made by foreign or other outside investment sources, which are not always compatible with local interests.

However, the establishment of the ‘Prefecture Committees of Tourism Promotion’ (PCTPs), (see Chapter 6) refutes views of weak local and regional contribution to
regional tourism development and highlights the ability of local programmes to gain central government support. The centre offers subsidies of 50% of the total investment cost of proposed developments by Prefectural authorities, while the remaining share has to be covered by a partnership of local authorities and private tourism bodies. The importance of the new role for the Prefectural Committees in promoting local programmes was underlined by the Director of the PCTP in Heraklion. "The public sector financial support is a decisive influence on the successful completion of local plans. The strengthening of prefectural government is, or should be, in position to maximise the opportunities for proposals and attract public investments". However, there remain those in influential positions who still see the localities as weak in terms of their ability to influence development decisions in the regions. "Central financial dependency is associated with control over developments and therefore shifts the approval of programmes from the local community to the distant Athenian centre" (Prefecture of Hania). The contradictory arguments as expressed above, reflect the wide range of local politics, government and tourism development perceptions produced following the new policy shift towards the increased active participation of Prefectural authorities, and clearly this process is yet to be fully established, fully tested and fully appreciated. Local actors welcome their increased involvement through the Committees, but openly admit to their lack of tourism knowledge and policy formulation skills that will inevitably weaken or delay effective policy making, at least in the short term.

But as we have seen elsewhere, there are irrefutable gains from local involvement. Local actors emphasise their deep knowledge of local idiosyncrasies, geographical characteristics and group interrelationships, that could be positively exploited in the development of new tourism products and patterns. With only two of the four Prefectural Committees yet established (at the time of writing), the power of the new institutional change has not to date been fully used to effectively influence potential developments. Exceptionally, the Prefecture of Heraklion has already initiated an exhaustive census of the total geo-morphological characteristics of the area, that would constitute the basis of sport tourism forms, enabling the wider distribution of tourism activity both at the coast and to inland areas. The new committee has also achieved a partnership with sport bodies, communities, environmental agencies and private tourism associations, suggesting that collective mechanisms of participation for involved parties, along with expert advice, is feasible, and may be influential in the development of broader tourism products, including those of sports tourism.
Within this positive development picture, the European funding appears one of the most influential intervention vehicles for potential sports tourism development. The ‘Community Support Framework’ aiming at a “geographically balanced and seasonally distributed tourism activity” (EU, 1994) is described by the Periphery representatives as “the most crucial directive and economic catalyst of future tourism growth in Crete”. The promotion and support for new tourism forms are considered as one of the main goals towards “expanding the tourism season and activity, and quality improvement of services offered”. Sports tourism is proposed as an appropriate development in achieving these goals, generally through large scale infrastructural investment. The construction of marinas for the completion of the programme of ‘Sailing and Coastal Recreation’ and financial support for international sports events are the main directions of EU funding in Crete. Within the five year plan of 1994 - 1999, this funding framework offers subsidies reaching 75% of the total cost of investment on special tourism infrastructure, while the remaining 25% is to be covered by public funding.

This decisive funding participation of the EU constitutes a challenge for the policy community of the region when their collective relationships and partnerships will have to shape the development and successfully exploit the given opportunities. The funding support can be obtained by the local community only by meeting the criteria set by the EU, and this requires programmes to be compatible with the National Policy and the Community Action Plan for Tourism Development. The criteria for selection and funding of proposed programmes are based firstly on their ‘developmental expediency’, suggesting sustainable spatial, functional and long term planning in order to achieve holistic social acceptance. Secondly, a satisfactory level of ‘techno-economic expediency’ (feasibility) is required, through an exhaustive infrastructural and operational pre-plan, demonstrating the long-lasting character of the development. Periphery representatives emphasise the importance of amending the previous fragmentation in local group actions, and the creation instead of an “exhaustive representation scheme” of affected community and industrial groups, in order to map a “compatible and feasible programme, able to attract EU support” (Periphery of West Crete). From this evidence, it does appear that EU programmes are capable of generating viable local action and inter-group co-operation within potential new developments.

The GNTO however, highlights the different characteristics of the policy community that will almost certainly obscure agreement over direction. Coastal communities, heavily affected by tourism growth, hold quite different views on future development
than isolated localities of inland areas, who often appear cautious of the potential imbalance of costs and benefits that tourism brings. "The success of new developments is heavily based on the level of social acceptance, especially in areas lacking information, experience and broad-mindness towards tourism expansion and development" (Prefecture of Heraklion). The experience of mass tourism impact on local culture and ethics negatively influences people of undeveloped areas towards the development of any kind of tourism establishment. The need for the construction of special tourism infrastructure was a common element of agreement between planners examining the parameters of a successful development. However, this infrastructure would inescapably offer access to undeveloped localities with strong ethics and a strong feeling of xenophobia towards increased visitor numbers and 'observing foreigners'.

By contrast, regional planners suggest that inland areas are becoming the most appropriate areas for the establishment of promising 'soft sport tourism' forms. Mountain activities, including the walking paths (e.g. E4), trekking, orienteering and a wide variety of adventure sports, can only be accommodated away from mass tourism establishments "in order to preserve its character of remoteness" (GNTO of Heraklion). Regional sports bodies along with local planners appear optimistic about the sustainable development of sport tourism due to its 'quality' characteristics. However, many soft sport tourism forms (as mentioned above) require access to previously inaccessible environments. There is significant support for sports necessitating "a strong will to push yourself to the limits within an environment that is not (pushed to the limits)" (President of Long Distance Running Club of Crete). GNTO identifies two crucial factors in achieving a harmonious introduction of sport tourism activities into relatively undeveloped areas. Initially, the role of local authorities as the educator of communities on the potential and characteristics of alternative tourism activity. This need is strongly emphasised. Secondly, the necessity to effectively control development is emphasised, in terms of visiting numbers and the type and scale of superstructure developed.

It became evident from the interviewees that the shift of emphasis for developing tourism activity towards less developed areas, does not imply an undermining of traditional coastal mass tourism operations, but the creation of a network of 'additional' active tourism forms and opportunities, exploiting a variety of the local geographical and social characteristics, and therefore differentiating the present profile of an exclusively sun-sea offer. In addition, the interviewees identified that sport-oriented special interest programmes and opportunities are also strongly interrelated with other differentiating characteristics, e.g. "by offering accessibility to relatively unaltered natural and cultural
environments and therefore promoting an alternative image for Crete” (Prefecture of Hania). There are further interrelationships, since suggested programmes such as ‘cultural paths’ and ‘castle tours’ use demanding physical activity including trekking and cycle tourism instead of mass transportation means, emphasising the shift of travel modes to include more active involvement and individual, rather than mass means, within a relatively unexplored physical and cultural environment.

The present lack of infrastructure for such ‘special tourism’ forms is commonly identified in the statements of local planners. However, sometimes this lack of infrastructure, particularly in the inland areas, is considered as an advantage in establishing soft tourism forms, such as adventure sports, trekking etc., since “the basis of the new sustainable sport-related tourism types is a virgin environment and a minimum intervention to facilitate access” (Periphery of East Crete). Worryingly, scepticism was expressed by Prefectural planners over the ability of public policy to safeguard environmental and cultural resources, because it lacks “an integrated planning framework for undeveloped and therefore resourceful areas” (GNTO) that would preserve local ‘stock’ and idiosyncrasies for their intrinsic value. Fear of expansion of the mass tourism type development from the coastal to the inland areas, and a repetition of the anarchic and often catastrophic development types, was one of the strongest views expressed in the statements of local community representatives. As against this, there was a worrying naivety in the commonly held perception of a highly ‘green’ image for sport tourists, both in traditional tourist zones and remote places. Visitors using active modes to visit areas or undertaking sporting activities are viewed as having strong environmental and cultural consciousness, an ability to appreciate and adjust to local customs, and respect for the host community. It was a common view that such visitors demonstrated a high degree of sensitivity on environmental issues which would result in demand levels for greener products within a carefully preserved environment. This tourism process would, if anything, give impetus to environmental protection.

In Crete, environmental protection and sustainable travel are not issues exclusive to less developed areas. Local authorities in traditional tourist resorts were highly aware of the urgent need for policy intervention towards nature protection and a sustainable tourism environment. New special interest tourism forms, as suggested by Regional Policy, carry the hope of a more sustainable direction for Cretian tourism. The announcement of the creation of a new ‘Tourism and Environment’ body in Crete follows recognition of administrative and managerial inefficiencies, which contributed to the alteration of the natural and tourism environment, through unbridled development. “Fragmentation and individualism are the main features of earlier policy modes, along with an obvious lack
of integrated planning for tourism development. Organisations and enterprises, despite their efforts in undertaking significant research or developmental projects, fail to communicate and apply their results. Developments have often proved "neither applicable or widely beneficial" (Periphery for East Crete). The new body aims at a strict implementation of environmental principles within tourism policy, introduction of pilot studies/projects and the effective co-ordination of actions towards development. Of particular interest here, within the body's objectives, "the development and promotion of alternative forms of tourism" is suggested as the most effective form of action towards achieving sustainability in the long term, preserving both the valuable tourism environment and the even more valuable natural environment.

Within alternative forms of tourism development, sport tourism is considered as one of the most applicable mechanisms for greener tourism growth through a restructured planning scheme. Sport tourism is suggested as having "the capacity to highlight the importance of a well preserved environment, operating as the base for infinite leisure use and recreational activities for today and forever, and to communicate this importance to everyone, from the visitor, to the local resident and to the higher policy making section" (GNTO of East Crete). The European and other funding packages for such developments seem to offer more hope than previously that such developments will be implemented along more sustainable lines. The wider representation of interests and groups in the policy making also suggests that this is better integrated and more environmentally and socially aware than for earlier development. The sport tourism forms such as: sea tourism, golf and trekking are suggested (perhaps over-ambitiously) as having no "environmental impact" since they are based around new strict operational standards and "by nature constitute the 'greenest' part within the overall tourism operation and therefore suggest the less harmful tourist behaviour" (GNTO).

These perceptions of sport tourism by local actors are highly positive, and clearly, from external observation, appear problematic. There is an evident lack of attempts to identify what might be the acceptable operational levels for the new tourist activity that would qualify it as a 'sustainable tourism form'. This would clearly become necessary as a competitive environment for such products emerged. There is also an evident lack of technocratic skills and therefore limited ability to accurately quantify the real local advantages of, and to develop appropriate strategies for, sensitively exploiting the development potential, and most importantly to preserve a sustainable local physical and economic environment, despite the apparent eco-friendly nature of the considered development.
Other problems with this approach to further tourism development and product regeneration come from other sources. Despite the suggestions of shifting new tourism development activity to inland, less developed areas, as a step towards an evenly distributed and therefore sustainable tourism portfolio, there are fears expressed that the new policy represents a limitation of tourism development activity for the coastal zones. This seems to ignore the fact that the existing tourism establishments in concentrated zones represent the interests of an industry urgently needing regenerative action in the face of the predicted and now, to some extent, realised market preference changes. We have already seen that shifting development opportunity to untried regions raises questions of private investment attraction. Taking into account also that the majority of realistic and immediate sport tourism developments imply the establishment of new products, mainly in already developed Cretian resorts (such as marinas on the Northern Coast and golf courses), the sustainable character of these development types becomes more ambiguous, although perhaps more economically viable.

In the short term, it would appear that most sports tourism developments in Crete will emerge in or near areas of existing tourist concentration, and some have questioned therefore whether such new rejuvenating development will be planned any more sustainably than the original developments. Answering to this argument, the local and regional planners suggested the heavy involvement of environmental bodies (such as the Ministry of the Environment), in terms of finance and regulation, along with the strict state supervision of new projects now introduced, which secures the 'green' character of such proposed development. It has to be noted, however, that local planners like central government officials (Chapter 6) were unable to demonstrate a wider planning perspective for the whole region, rather than an ad hoc, development by development approach.

The same observation as previously is relevant here, that sustainable development needs not only environmental and equitability consciousness, but also the knowledge and application of a wider planning perspective. In the face of fears from existing tourist zones that new development potential might elude them, regional planners cautiously suggest that the potential of sport tourism to contribute to the upgrading of the local sun-sea product, depends as much on the industry's "ability to adjust its services and infrastructure to the needs and character of demand growth for active, sport-related tourism growth", as on the overall policy (Periphery of West Crete). However, this does seem likely, given that local public planners assess sport tourism as having the capacity to extend the tourism season (by two months), and therefore to increase hotel occupancy.
(from 76.6% to 83%). Local employment is also assessed to increase through investment in sport facilities (like yachting marinas and 18 hole golf courses) close to quality hotel establishments. The proposed sporting activities (sailing anchorages, triathlon routes, specialised sporting events etc) would appear capable of contributing to both existing areas of tourist concentration and less developed areas. Primarily, all levels of policy maker viewed positively the potential of various types and scale of sports tourism development, to be capable of assisting in changing the image of the Cretian tourism product, from one exclusively dependent on ‘sun-seeking’ motives to travel.

The views of some other local public thinking should also be highlighted. These doubt the capacity of sports tourism to alter the basic characteristics of the present tourism system as implied above. Extension of the tourism season and increased occupancy, does not necessarily imply less pressure on the present tourist sites and the coast, and most importantly does not secure a more equitable economic distribution derived from tourism activities across the rest of the region. However, there is the argument that soft sport tourism forms can generate new tourism activity in the inland areas, benefiting local communities and increasing the overall attractiveness of the Cretian product. Despite the lack of basic and special infrastructure in the inland areas, the wild and valuable natural environment is suitable for ‘soft’ sport tourism forms, creating an additional ‘active’ and unconventional profile for the regions’ tourism. The low cost of facilities may attract sufficient interest to generate some development, and despite the scepticism, there is enough anticipated interest in this for local planners to consider establishing building interventions to limit the scale of developments, and to keep the establishments ‘soft’.

The topography of the region will itself be another factor in limiting the scale of new developments, since the mountainous inland restricts mass transportation means and therefore controls visiting numbers. Small-scale establishments seem likely to be the centres for any new tourism development of this type and should be able to realise the visions for limited and sustainable models of tourism growth. The Periphery emphasised that this mode of development does not demand a mass operated and technically advanced infrastructure, but it beneficially initiates a new limited tourism service sector facilitating the new product, quite often in new locations. According to the Periphery’s public sector view, the level of flexibility and entrepreneurship of the present tourism system and operators, constitutes the most influential parameter in seeing these additional product developments coming to fruition.
Interviewees of the regional government logically suggested that the present mass tourism environment would satisfy the basic needs of tourist accommodation for any additions to the area’s tourism products, therefore preserving satisfactory economic returns, and building a product relationship between existing sun-sea product offers and the ‘Additionality’ that new sports tourism special interest provision can bring. The initial vision then is one where additional multi-activity tourist activities and amenities are developed in close inland areas, in order to maximise local potential and balance activity between areas. It was also suggested that small-scale establishments presently close to, but undermined by, mass tourism operations can become models of ‘special’ tourism development, through product alteration and investment, and can contribute to the generation of new alternative tourism product offers that broaden the existing tourism image.

However, there are some identified problems with special interest tourism developments when these are positioned within a mass-operated tourism environment. “Little optimism can be generated if development is left in the hands of foreign mass tour operators” (GNTO of East Crete). These are considered the responsible agents of existing tourism product’s decline and inequitable distribution. “If allocated to the operations of the foreign tourism centres, sport tourism will be treated as one more industrial product driven by numbers, income curves and profitability criteria”. (Periphery of West Crete). Thus, the interviewees appeared sceptical on the willingness of the existing industry to include sustainability considerations, when they develop and market new sport tourism products, again raising fears of a new round of concentrated, low quality, unsustainable development, oriented to short term profit.

The GNTO emphasised the need for the introduction of sport tourism facility development to be the responsibility of a network of agencies and organisations “specialised in greener tourism products” and “experienced in both the sporting as well as the travelling dimension”. While it would not be effective in every case, environmental organisations have been suggested as capable of development and sustainable thinking, that would set limited sport tourism establishment on an alternative operating track, to be established sustainably. It is suggested that of these agencies can satisfy the introductory stage of many sport tourism products due to the limited and controlled operation demanded. Being introduced as a strictly controlled tourism offer, within a sustainably managed environment, as demand increases as envisaged, these can move to a different mode of operation. But the control and environmental parameters will by then have been set.
Among public sector representatives, there is a common agreement on the need for product diversification and inclusion of environmental and social considerations within the tourism planning. The above arguments were commonly highlighted within public sector interviews, reflecting increased awareness of the need to control development and alter images. The use of mountaineering, trekking, sailing, adventure clubs etc., in the development of the new ‘additional’ offer is considered essential, assuming the need for ‘soft’ developments within product planning. There is a plethora of produced assessments and political intentions evident in this direction, towards tourism diversification. However, there are problems in terms of, for example, the lack of explicit information on local carrying capacities and natural thresholds. Several confusing indicators have been produced, along with suggested limitations unjustified by scientific measurements. These have invariably been produced by external decision makers. Local knowledge of the physical environment and infrastructure is necessary to contribute to the improvement of local and regional management capabilities and to increase the potential and effectiveness of new products. However, the ability of local actors to influence the direction of new developments is restricted by a lack of knowledge of new technologies, and ‘know how’ that would effectively design new developments, even if they are given more ‘say’ in development planning. It was suggested that the development of supporting services and planning ‘know-how’ constitute a crucial parameter in the sustainability of future developments. Central government was criticised for providing insufficient incentive support in these areas.

As well as insufficient data for making ‘informal’ decisions about developments in this area of tourism diversification and product development, for sport tourism special interest development particularly, there also appears to be a lack of necessary knowledge within involved agencies (sport bodies, planners, analysts, and environmental groups), which reduces the prospect of new services being effectively linked with sustainable measures. “There is a well organised human resources sector within the tourism industry, but there is an evident lack of policy making and implementation skills towards new specialised, and most importantly sustainable, development. Sport tourism is a multi-dimensional tourist activity demanding specialised knowledge from its design to the practice, in order to establish a sustainable but the same time competitive product” (Periphery of West Crete). There is a clear need for sporting, cultural, touristic and environmental professional knowledge, which is lacking in many areas where these developments should take place.
The skills for effectively designing and implementing sustainable tourism developments including those related to new forms of tourism “are lacking from public policy making and therefore restrict the creativity to exploit opportunities or foresee the potential” (Aharnes Local Community). Present sport tourism activities operated by hotel establishments and resorts are only partially relevant to proposed types of development and are mainly operated by foreign staff, and therefore contribute to further dependency on foreign centres. “The present conditions of tourism development do not provide or attract relevant sport tourism professions, qualifications or training, due to the scale of demand and overall profile of the local product” (Municipality of Ag. Nikolaos). Public inertia has to date caused the ignoring of potential links of education, training and policy between the University, sport bodies and local government, and currently this weakens the procedures for the creation of relevant planning and implementation skills at all levels of policy and practice. The development of relevant knowledge and services is a crucial factor in the successful establishment of not only sports-oriented tourism development, but the whole process of tourism product diversification away from exclusively sun-sea products. This is not just a local problem, but regional and national authorities also need to develop the intellectual infrastructure that will inform and service the technical/production aspects of the tourism industry and the environmental/social considerations, necessary for future planning and development of a sustainable, diversified tourism product.

On the positive side, public authorities emphasised the existence of a powerful network of sporting clubs able to provide basic development services, and contribute to the mapping of feasible and promising sporting activities, according to the local topography and participant abilities. The effective cooperation of these had already become evident. The GNTO referred to the success of a pilot event encompassing a number of relevant tourism, sport and environmental groups introduced in 1992. The ‘Minoa Kelefthos’ included walking, climbing and competitive running elements within the entire distance of 490km, which became an athletic task and event of international recognition. “The course passes through four prefectures, eighteen country districts, sixty-five small and large villages, crosses four gorges and by-passes five others, it goes up to eight high- plains, passes through four forests with numerous water-springs and climbs up on ten mountain summits with heights ranging from 1231m to 2456m” (GNTO). “The unexpected success of the run and the publicity that it achieved abroad, made the board of administration and its members aware that the essence of the idea and its popularity, is not only athleticism, but also love for nature, humanism, history. It is a complete cultural journey” (GNTO). This example event successfully combined all three
components of a sustainable sport tourism form and feasible, cooperative operation, with responsibilities delegated to an athletic, an environmental and a social committee.

Along with the physical test, the aim of the journey is to "highlight environmental problems, making public opinion and the state, aware and sensitive to problems of this kind ... to motivate local population, to understand the importance of the clean environment and make them sensitive to matters of this kind" (GNTO of East Crete). Through this sporting journey, the Social Committee emphasised its contribution in "creating inter-state relations of cultural, athletic and environmental interest, exchanging experience, knowledge and human relations, all of which are useful and creating a centre of guidance and instruction for groups of people who crave nature, walking, trekking and climbing, as well as for people dealing with ecology, botany, spelaeology etc."

The GNTO have used this ‘event’ as a model of feasible sport tourism development, involving the collective participation of expert groups in environmental, social and sporting areas and drawing attention to the sustainability of the programme, resulting from the collective effort of the different groups. They identify the high degree of sustainability considerations evident in the planning and implementation, which highlights the potential of a carefully organised direction to ‘soft’ forms of tourism in Crete (GNTO, 1995). The programme received both local and international appreciation, but GNTO representatives were sceptical of how much even the successful operation of such types of ‘new’ tourism initiative appeared attractive to the mass oriented industry of Crete, when at present they are satisfied with high visitor numbers and easy access. Only when numbers fall, if no supplementary products are developed, are they likely to fully appreciate such strategic development initiatives.

7.3 Private Sector Perspectives on New Tourism Developments

Representatives of both central and local government underlined the importance of the developmental role of the State and accepted responsibility for generating incentives for the tourism industry to invest in new products. Central policy making sections identify a series of influential factors determining the industry’s willingness to invest in private initiatives. Primary amongst these, the lack of basic infrastructure in less developed areas, the need for special tourism infrastructure in key locations, and the inadequate present infrastructure in traditional tourism areas, complete a picture of a degraded and increasingly incompetent destination. Recognising the fact that the provision of infrastructure is a widely accepted role of public authorities, to facilitate tourist
development and direct it to specific areas, the central government has accepted responsibility for taking all available opportunities to direct EU and public funding towards improving general basic facilities and developing access. This intervention by the State, which for some is a unquestionable role, is extended further when the State subsidises part of the costs of some developments in order to encourage private investment in particular regions.

The initiatives provided by legislation decree 1892/90, and 2234/94 (aimed at the upgrading of tourism superstructure and the creation of special tourism facilities) were welcomed by the private investors in Crete as a step towards the right developmental direction. However, the suggested sport tourism forms, enjoying the incentives of this legislation, belong to a group of proposed investments with significant production costs, which make commercial investors 'indifferent' and rather sceptical. In 1995, in the region of Crete, the only investment enjoying full State support was a golf course (in Elounda, Prefecture of Lasithi), having a total cost of 209,500m DRM of which 73,725m DRM was provided by public subsidy.

The majority of central government bureaucrats consider these incentives as a radical developmental vehicle for investors, in order to stimulate new tourism establishments and for the upgrading of existing resorts. They suggest that the new policy reflects the accepted responsibility of the State to initiate and direct new development in order to regenerate the tourism industry. Central government actors are also self-critical of the inability of the public policy structure to maintain a stable action plan, along such lines, which has always been subject to turbulent political changes in terms of leadership and philosophy. They admit to the previous lack of an integrated policy plan that would effectively foster and direct new developments, and they characterise the former role of government more as a 'protector of the status-quo' than a 'developer of sustainable tourism operations' (Department of Research and Policy).

As well as improvements in government operations that might provide a stable climate for more effective and controlled tourism operations, the liberalisation of the market that has resulted from the governments of the last decade suggests a high degree of deregulation, increased competition, and a full rein for market forces. It is in fact evident from the interviewees of the higher policy making levels that this characteristic is now used to redirect responsibility for initiating new tourism developments largely to the private sector. "We are operating according to the laws of the free market, therefore private investors have to realise that government's role has been restricted to a more regulatory and legislative stance" (Department of Research and Policy). Policy making
sections expressed their strong belief regarding the responsibility of commercial enterprises to exploit market potential, to make changes to differentiate their product offer, and to ensure maximisation of the beneficial externalities of tourism. There is, however, clearly some tension between this view of an independent commercial sector, and one that requires heavy investment incentive stimulation in some cases.

The interviewees of the private tourism businesses in Crete, in line with the key national industry bodies interviewed, representing the interests of significant sections of the industry, wanted an extension to this government view of an increasingly deregulated industry. "Withdrawing strict regulations would enable the industry to operate successfully and to creatively produce new competitive products for the world market" (President of Tourism Enterprises). However, the argument of deregulation and autonomy declined noticeably from the commercial sector in terms of supporting infrastructural provision. Here, by contrast, private businesses appeared in favour of a more centralised approach to the decisions and spending impacting tourism. The provision of basic, as well as 'special', tourism infrastructure (in the case of sports tourism including provision of marinas, golf courses, diving centres, trekking and cycling paths), was not only a task which commercial operators placed firmly with public authorities, but one highlighted as the most influential factor in terms of generating private investment. For the local industry, it appears to be the responsibility of central government to direct vast amounts of public money towards the construction of large scale recreational facilities, within the process of broadening and redirecting the tourism product offer.

Individual business operations, feeling threatened by external competition and foreign dependency, also demand other government intervention in order to protect business interests, employment and returns. There is a wide appreciation by the government for its developmental role, especially as a provider of infrastructure and funding schemes, in order to support private initiatives. The Greek government has recognised the role of tourism in maximising economic gains from resources, reducing foreign debt and encouraging greater private sector participation. Extending this, recognising the unavailability of private venture capital to invest in the creation of large scale sports facilities, the government is now undertaking a more entrepreneurial role by subsidising part of the cost of production of these facilities, in order to encourage private investment. "The establishment and feasibility of new tourism projects like large scale sports tourism initiatives (marinas, golf courses etc.) with gigantic production costs, demand the heavy financial and legislative intervention of central government. The size of the
present tourism enterprises are not in the position to face the cost of construction, especially when public support is lacking” (President of Lasithi).

Demand for intervention is expressed in numerous forms of assistance from government at all levels, particularly to assist in minimising the costs of production for tourism developers. Local government assistance for development is often demanded to encourage private investment in a particular resort or project. For instance, this maybe in the form of easing procedures or the provision of public owned land for the construction of facilities such as golf courses and mountain activities. Local government co-operation is also required in facilitating operational needs, for instance through securing the provision of water supply golf courses, without causing adverse local reaction. This type of local action is now increasingly common. The central government response to private investors’ demands for effective financial incentives has created a subsidising scheme especially fostering ‘special’ tourism investments, the majority of which constitute dedicated sport tourism forms. Since 1994, subsidies reaching 25 to 35% on the total of investment have generated sports-related tourism investment such as the golf course of Elounda. However, other examples of significant facilities stimulated in this way, are difficult to identify.

Despite the fact that the positive discrimination favouring new private investments towards recreational developments was widely appreciated as “evidence of government commitment” to support the differentiation and diversification of the tourism product offer, the private sector argues that government incentives have not been able to stimulate projects. “The scale of development required to facilitate sports tourism forms makes this a highly costly and risky businesses. The incentives provided cannot cover the establishment costs of such an expensive and extremely diverse tourism product” (President of Hotels Association - Lasithi). The government recently measured the reactions that the new incentives had generated and, seeking to accelerate new development, modified the incentives framework by providing a 5% increase in the amount of subsidies available to private investments, mainly in golf courses, marinas etc. Additionally, the increase of the level of subsidies to 50% for the construction of ‘autonomous’ special tourism facilities (i.e. those not part of private hotel units), reflects the Government’s appreciation of the inability of investors to face huge construction costs in this sector.

The local tourism industry, mainly based on small-size businesses, is not in the position to invest alone in such costly sporting facilities, but the cumulative development of
facilities, satisfying visitors and local clientele, can prove beneficial for the operation of both large and small companies. This type of incentivised shared development seemed more feasible for the wider tourism industry and especially for the small size companies. However, it is dependent on government action, not only in terms of development incentives, but also to market the destination accordingly, and to create the demand conditions within which these facilities operate. The proposed incentives, aiming at the modernisation of the tourism superstructure and differentiation of the product, are mainly addressed towards existing establishments and areas of concentration (the majority of which are concentrated on the North coast), while failing to provide a specific developmental framework for the inland areas and the South coast, in order to contribute to a wider distribution of the tourism activity. The pressures exerted by private sector bodies to protect existing businesses and employment in the traditional areas, make the process of public planning for future and diversifying development a difficult task.

The tourist offer, considered as an industrial product, is associated in the statements of the industry’s representatives, with large concentrated sites and units. They suggest that it is in these areas that new tourism developments are more likely to be established and flourish, benefiting from an “already established market and operational routine” (President of H.A. of Rethymnon). Special interest tourism requires a considerable level of new infrastructure, to facilitate a differentiated tourism offer, and the undeveloped areas of the inland and South Crete additionally require large investments in infrastructure in order to operationalise the government’s suggested developments. Private sector entrepreneurs suggest that “infrastructural costs are disproportionately high to subsequent investment in fragmented projects, despite the favourable funding scheme” (President of H.A of Heraklion).

With the present infrastructure unable to serve mass numbers concentrated in large centres, the policy priority has obviously been placed towards the existing tourism environment. Within this existing tourism environment, it is the larger enterprises that appeared as having the greatest possibilities for investing in sports facilities, to distinctively differentiate their product, according to representatives of private bodies. But also small locally owned and managed accommodation units play a significant role in both foreign and domestic tourism markets and represent by far the largest proportion of the accommodation supply. However, government considers small accommodation units as one of the problematic features of the current tourism infrastructure, and doubts their ability to diversify and differentiate the image of tourism in traditional resorts like
the North coast of Crete. This small hotel subsector though are not in the position to benefit from the development incentives due to their business magnitude and spatial restrictions, and thus this has become a self-reinforcing situation causing some dissatisfaction between government and commercial tourism enterprise. The product of local small hotels is often built up, based on a low spending market. This element of the private sector, perhaps understandably, seems very sceptical of the nature of the new policy favouring high revenue earning tourism, attracted by a new quality tourism product, including e.g. golf and sea tourism facilities.

All representatives of the industry however, agreed to the need to improve the quality of the tourist product in order to increase its competitiveness against other traditional destinations, and the industry appeared positive on the ability of this policy intervention to change the product. But, all representatives agree that “this should be well justified from a marketing standpoint” (President of Tourism Enterprises). They emphasise that there is an evident lack of consideration by the public sector of the marketing implications of changes in the product features.

The interpretation of the public policy objectives by the commercial enterprises suggests that their destination and facilities will have to go up-market in order to attract higher spending tourists. The policy implies an upgrading of the marketing mix elements, and a noticeable improvement of the local product, which inevitably results in price rises, differentiated image and promotion-distribution shifts. Despite the well-intentioned and widely supported public plan to upgrade the tourist offer, the representatives of the tourist industry express fears that there may not be sufficient market demand to make this new product mix feasible. “It is presently unknown if there are enough high status market segments for such sport tourism products to replace the present clientele” (President of H.A. of Heraklion). While there is some misunderstanding of the ‘Additionality’ focus, rather than ‘replacement’, excluding any low spending visitors buying package holidays in the region could be ignoring significant market opportunities and denying local businesses the chance to operate viable small companies.

The majority of representatives from the industry, doubted the efficiency of a new policy action to achieve a distinct differentiated tourism product, which is based on a narrower product, in order to appeal to a more targeted market. It became obvious from the interviews that the commercial sector wanted to benefit from a balance between various types of products that would lead to the creation of business opportunities for local companies. The industry is in favour of a diversified product which is capable of
satisfying a wider variety of tourism markets. But, they highlight that low spending market segments still have a place for small, locally-owned hotels and could be still generating profits for the local economy.

The commercial sector appear to be able to see the benefit of targeting both existing and new markets. One group of adventurous business leaders of the industry, positively suggests that the size of the region supports the potential to gradually ‘tailor’ their tourism product to the needs and preferences of a higher spending market segment, seeking special interest tourism including sports-related holiday experiences. These and others see the outstanding physical environment and the distinct cultural character of the Cretian area as valuable tourism generating resources. “Sports tourism activities carefully selected to attract a different tourism market can contribute towards generating a unique new destination image for the region of Crete” (Association of Rent Rooms). These entrepreneurs are in favour of a supply-led tourism structure. “It is the nature of the destination’s tourism product, which determines the type of tourists visiting an area. The consumers who visit Crete are attracted by what is on offer. Investing in sport facilities would create a differentiated product, the nature of which attracts a specific market of ‘active’ holiday makers’. “The improvement of the product consequently brings a price rise which shifts the existing market to an up-graded, higher spending clientele and therefore better economic returns for local businesses” (President of H.A. of Rethymnon). They suggest that the size of the destination, along with the exploitation of all funding and co-operative possibilities, can alter the present tourism offer to a higher quality and distinctive product in a largely undifferentiated marketplace.

It is clear that the above is a somewhat simplistic view and there is greater rationale in those who want to ‘extend’ the market into higher spending groups, whilst maintaining much of its existing client-base, and the majority of the representatives of the local industry want to maintain a less adventurous stance. They suggest that the size of their tourism sector is not sufficient enough to tailor product’s to a new market segment, although they generally understood the potential of market extension by advocating, some new product elements. Having a rather limited tradition of local business partnerships, they adopted a critical approach to product alteration. The existence of sufficient market demand for dedicated sport tourism products in any case seemed highly doubtful, according to private sector interviewees. “It is pointless to propose a marketing strategy which has obviously little relevance to the actual tourism product, which for decades has been sun and sea based” (President of Tourism Enterprises). In reality, a combination of the two approaches seems the most feasible, i.e. maintaining
existing products and markets while demand exists, meanwhile developing new facilities, associated with both existing tourist centres and some new developments, to both rejuvenate the existing product to an increasingly competitive and changing market, and at the same time, through carefully planned developments and targeted marketing, to also ‘extend’ the customer-base to include new special interest and active tourists, who may be higher spending and ‘quality’ in nature.

For the traditional parts of the private sector, the process of rejuvenating a well-established tourism product will be traumatic and seemingly unnecessary. However, the process of image differentiation for the local product is considered one of the most influential factors for a feasible new sport tourism development. The scale and type of facilities have established the nature of this sand-sea-sun local product, which along with pricing, pre-selects the type of visitors. The massive development of the late 1970s on the Northern Coast has produced a significant mass tourism image and, to date, satisfactory levels of income to local businesses. There is a clear perception that the tourism market desires this local product, and will continue to, and that this is a result of decades infrastructural and facilities development ‘sold well’. To change this towards a distinctive and largely different new tourism offer needs of leap of market knowledge that this sector does not currently have, and some of the extent of desired change may be exaggerated. However, the need for some development and re-imaging of the product needs to be communicated to local operators, before the area sees significant decline in demand. “The process of generating a differentiated tourism image and consequently demand for a sports-oriented product is a long and painful procedure for the local businesses ... which seem too weak to communicate the message of a new type of destination” (President of H.A. of Hania). Also needing recognition is that funding, marketing and promotion of a diversified product and distinctive image for the destination, must be the domain the government administration, in order to stimulate demand for the suggested products. It became clear from the interviews that if a distinct new destination identity and image in the market-place for Crete is to be achieved, this can only be with tourism promotion operated by the public sector agencies, and well financed. Businesses located in Crete are dependent on the government for marketing to attract visitors. “Individual and representative bodies of the industry would be unable to undertake a large scale promotional campaign, to capture sufficient returns to justify their own promotional expenditure” (President of Travel Enterprises).

While it may be seen as ‘commercially convenient’, tourism promotion has been left to the government by the private sector, because of the sense of ‘public good’ that it carries, for an economy so dependent on tourism. “Tourism businesses cannot undertake the
promotional campaign needed to promote a new overall image, because it will not receive the sufficient immediate returns to their investment, since too much leakage of the benefits would occur” (President of H.A. of Heraklion). The main argument, however, is that there is a much larger local society sector who will benefit, along with those who operate in tourism directly, if a large scale differentiating promotional campaign is adopted. The ‘public good’ argument seems likely continue to be used by representatives of the industry in Crete to justify continued government responsibility for tourist promotion on broadscale economic and social grounds.

However, this has not prevented the industry being constructively critical of the existing public sector promotion of tourism. It was emphasised that the public sector promotional campaign would fail to establish a distinct image for Crete if, as at present, it attempts to cover the wider Hellenic area and the needs of different nationally important destinations. Criticisms also focussed on the inefficient and inconsistent nature of the present public sector promotion of tourism, which fails to reflect the market analysis and the shift of policy action towards product regeneration through special interest and particularly sport tourism forms. “The core ingredients promoted by the government agencies remain the traditional features of a mass tourism offer and not the components of the new incentive schemes, which raises the question of investment before or after a commensurate marketing and promotional effort” (President of Travel Enterprises).

This question reflects the hesitation of local businesses to invest in a different tourism product, with as yet unproven demand, and no apparent supporting promotional campaign and uncertain viability. “It is pointless to propose a marketing strategy which has little relevance to the actual tourism product proposed for the differentiation of the offer” (President of Lasithi). With a strong belief that the communicated image of the product determines the type of tourists and spending behaviour, the private sector is calling for effective government funding of a new overall differentiating image, and specific local promotional schemes, along with more significant local involvement in the decisions about promoted images.

Positive comments were made about the establishment and important role of the Tourism Committees in attracting central funding for the creation of local promotional plans, and especially their ability to represent the needs of all parts of the industry. However, it became evident from the interviewees that not only is this lack of control over the promotion an issue, but so also is the power of external groups over the nature
and potential of the tourism product. The growing local use of the terms ‘mass tourism’, ‘traditional tourism’ and ‘package holidays’, indicates a growing realisation of the exploitation of local tourism resources by foreign companies and multinational operators, and their control over the type and scale of tourist activity and the product in Crete. The high degree of dependency on tour operators attracting clients who will accept any new tourism products implemented by government, by local planners and businesses, was a common concern amongst the representatives of the commercial sector. The loss of uniqueness for the Cretian tourism product is a concern locally, but has offered tour operators the benefits of dealing with a considerable number of homogenic products. This power was also identified at the initial stages of product marketing. Faced with increasing competition, the operator designs his products to meet the requirements of the customer and to reduce the risk of falling short of the forecasted sales volume. The current question, despite recognition that the market is changing, is whether more differentiated products will suit the very valuable mass operators in the medium term.

As against this, there is a growing agreement that the product and the mode of operation has to change. There is growing recognition that non-local tour operators significantly impact the economic and social life of the local community. There are clear questions now being raised over their sensitivity to their projects’ effects on local economy and ecology. The unsustainable development of the tourism environment, in this case with the large concentrated sites of the Northern Crete coast, now seem to be determining the future and type of product, which many are equally uncomfortable with. The tourism industry cannot avoid admitting to the high level of deterioration that uncontrolled construction has brought, and increasingly the dominant fears are those of business declining due to an unsustainable physical and built environment. There is growing support for new products and a differentiated, diversified offer. It became evident from the interviews that this increased awareness for environmental issues is now also generating calls for stricter environmental standards in planning and operation, and a more complete realisation of the impact of the degraded environment on tourism demand.

The President of H.A. of Rethymnon representing an increasing number of hotel businesses showing increased sensitivity towards environmental practices, describes the need for the ‘greening’ of business, “not as a promotional trick but a survival practice”. Realising the anarchic former mode of development, a number of private businesses are now criticising government administration for failing to take a more proactive stance in
tourism planning and are demanding increased regulation of developmental standards in order to secure sustainable future establishments. Equally, there are concerns that stricter regulations and other public involvement is restricted to the protection of the natural environment and general infrastructure, without becoming intrusive and jeopardising successful private operations.

Two sets of recognition now seem to be converging, i.e. that the former development and current operation modes are unsustainable, and linked to this, that consumer tastes are changing, and so must tourism products. There is growing interest in a diversified tourism product, but equally that this development must be both sustainable and viable. Tourism as a predominantly private sector driven industry is therefore highly profit oriented and has jeopardised environmental qualities in recent years. In Crete, certainly, environmental protection programmes have received lower priority, in the face of a dramatically increasing demand for additional accommodation and tourism services. It was generally admitted by the majority of interviewees that the private sector would always be enthusiastic in “investing in profit-promising centres, rather than cost-related centres” (President of H.A. of Heraklion). Cost-related systems like sewage systems, biological purification plants, electricity saving techniques etc., they are adopted enthusiastically unless there is an opportunity for revenue increase, or are legislatively imposed by the government. Despite the obvious interrelationship between tourism and the environment, the industry in Crete would not appear highly committed to taking voluntary action towards investing in environmental protection measures.

Hereby, lies a problem for moving product development and rejuvenation forward. Not only is there scepticism about demand for new products, concerns about short term profits, and effectiveness in marketing, but new concerns and measures for environmental protection and sustainable development make new developments and programmes appear more complicated and expensive even if they appear supportive of equitably imposed government regulation. A considerable number of interviewees reflected a private sector increasingly aware of the implications that environmental degradation might have on businesses. The realisation is reflected in the statements calling for State intervention to proactively regulate further development. The principal focus of this call appeared to be the compulsory inclusion of advanced methods of environmental protection, such as ‘biological purification systems’. Government was criticised for failing to secure the establishment of these systems before the construction of further accommodation units and large scale sport facilities, and therefore further jeopardising a sustainable local environment. It appeared as a common element that
many businesses (particularly the larger ones), sense an increased tourist demand for a protected environment, which is likely to translate into a rejection of unattractive, unsustainable large scale existing developments and resorts, unless their products are made more attractive through diversification and further development is carefully controlled and environmentally sensitive.

Despite the diverse arguments which have been reviewed on the potential for new diversified tourism products, particularly sports-related, special interest developments which are the main focus here, the weight of opinion appears to be shifting substantially to one which favours investment in new products that will help Crete remain competitive in the tourism market. While there will inevitably be significant debate, the development of sports-oriented facilities to upgrade the product offer, appear more likely to be initiated (in some cases continued) in and around areas of existing tourist concentration. Within a prematurely ageing built environment of the Northern Coast, the design and implementation of new facilities’ improvement is undeniably a survival strategy. Additionally, there were positive comments on the potential of some major autonomous sport tourism forms (either privately or publicly developed), assisting this region develop a “uniqueness of the offered services, distancing their image and pricing from the present category of 'package' destination and therefore securing more beneficial pricing conditions for local businesses” (President of H.A. of Rethymnon).

Conclusions

The commercial arguments will continue to dominate, but within this, is an increased recognition that: the long-profitable mass tourism product is becoming less desirable, that the products and the imagery and promotion has to change, and that this (in the future and now) needs to be undertaken with a far more substantial view to the tourism product co-existing with what is left of a highly desirable environment, with controlled sustainable developments. The exact modus operandi between government and commercial interests is yet to be effectively mapped, but the emerging climate is one of demands for increasingly local control, maintained commercial orientation, overlaid with public sector regulation on development type and scale, sensitively and equitably operated, and underpinned with public sector input and subsidy to incentivise, direct locationally, and promote a rejuvenating tourism product, which will continue to be a dominant economic and social force for this and other similar areas of Greece.
Chapter 8

Establishment of Recreational Tourism within the Underdeveloped Tourism Environment of Thrace

Introduction

In contrast to the highly developed areas of Crete, Thrace has three prefectures belonging to the planning region of East Macedonia and Thrace, and is (according to national and EU figures), one of the poorest areas of the EU. In 1985, per capita GDP (as a ratio to the EU average) was 0.43 for Thrace, which is one of the lowest ranking in the EU regions. Recent EU reports refer to a further reinforcement of this under-development trend. Located outside the country’s most develop S-shaped corridor (running from Thessaloniki to Patras), Thrace suffered a long period of stagnation, before some coastal areas grew in the 1970s and 1980s at rates higher than the national average. This, however, left the largest parts under-developed, creating enormous disparity. Sources such as Athanasiou/KEPE, 1995; Tsoulouvis, 1987; and Tsoulouvis, 1995; agree that the peculiar political and economic power structure was reflected in the weakness of the planning measures and the inefficiency of implementation practices that led to the underdevelopment of the region. "Urban and regional growth and development in Northern Greece, has happened ‘spontaneously’, that is without the implementation of coherent plans, despite the very prolific plan-preparation process and omnipresent, but adhoc, state intervention” (Tsoulouvis, 1995).

8.1 Regional Reforms in Thrace

This level of under-development has led to outmigration and the depopulation of Thrace, with the loss of a large number of productive employees, whilst in comparison Thessaloniki doubled its urban population between 1951-1971. Small urban and countryside areas were decaying, with a dramatic decrease of the working population attracted to centres of ‘opportunity’, mainly in industrial new developments. This significant migration flow did not decrease until the mid 1970s, when some rising employment opportunities in regional centres occurred. However, research suggests that any increased residential development and production was more related to population growth than to the production of capital goods and heavy industry.
The geography of the production system and the concentration of economic activities in Greece have not changed significantly during the last three decades. The old S-shaped corridor from Kavala to Patras, where development took place in the 1950s and 1960s, is still the dominant feature of a country with many inequalities. The formation of this corridor was supported by industrial establishments (electronic, electrical, plastic, paper, construction) resulting in increased levels of urbanisation. However, the value added to manufacturing products is still very low and the technological dependence on developed countries very strong. Analyses (Tsoulouvis, 1995) of the production structure in Northern Greece suggest that the spatial patterns have been under the influence of a concentration process (of chemicals, plastics, machinery and telecommunication equipment), particularly due to the recent industrialisation. Apart from the Thessaloniki area, where a high percentage of plants and employment are concentrated, the rest of Northern Greece (and especially Thrace) has failed to attract invested capital, despite the incentives offered.

The entry of Greece into the EU has created a series of both pessimistic and optimistic evaluations of the implications to the national economy and regional development. Authors agree on the apparent peripherality of Greece to the EU, and especially the Greek Northern regions, which results in a specific economic and production structure. There has so far been a lack of studies on the impact of the EU on areas such as Thrace, and there is no assessment of the level of its peripherality. However, studies on other peripheral EU regions, such as Ireland and Scotland, suggest that negative impacts are more likely to occur in peripheral regions (Walsh, 1990). Ongoing political crisis and threatening war conditions do not create optimism, while the surrounding poor regions of Albania, Bulgaria and the former Yugoslavia form a barrier to the European markets. The co-existence of different ethnic groups in the area has not ceased to be a threat to political and economic stability, while Turkey's competitive stance towards integration into the EU will bring dramatic changes to the role of Northern Greece.

Some authors, however, are optimistic and suggest that this insufficient level of analysis on the impact of the European Unification on the regions of the periphery, often underestimates Northern Greece's significant advantages, being at the crossroads of different continents and cultures, and implying a competitive role in trade, transport and communications. Some optimistic scenarios highlight that Greece will benefit from the new opportunities and support deriving from European bodies, and funds allocated to developmental proposals. In addition, industrial restructuring in Europe will inevitably influence Northern Greece and favour medium-size towns with an increased power role.
at regional level. EU programmes favour the development of small-size towns, promoting new service-sector activities and land development.

The restructuring of the Balkan states and the potential integration of Eastern countries into the EU has led to changing views of the role of peripheral regions and the relationships between neighbouring cities and states. All Northern Greek regions, including Thrace, are now evaluated as having a great potential to flourish and develop, since the new restructured states will need access to the Aegean and Mediterranean, positioning Northern Greece in an advantageous position.

However, the majority of detailed studies and analyses appear less optimistic. Balkan states are presently highly inaccessible to market exchange with Northern Greece, while the region of Thrace is severely deficient of communication and access channels with the rest of the EU. It has been also suggested that since negative developments appear to hit under-developed areas hardest, even pessimistic scenarios may underestimate the negative impacts of European unification on Northern Greece. According to these pessimistic scenarios (see e.g. Tsoulouvis, 1995), it seems that the high level of peripherality of Thrace has already identified the limitations to growth and development.

Studies (Athanasiou/KEPE, 1995) using principal component analysis on Greece’s spatial structure patterns have analysed population change alongside industrial employment change in the 1980s, arguing that this relationship has weakened. Again, the analysis suggests that tourism and residential development are more strongly related to population growth than with production of capital goods and heavy industry. The recent industrialisation that has taken place in Thrace has resulted in a high degree of diversity, but its overall development potential appears significantly lower than its residential and tourism development potential. Despite the fact that tourism became a crucial sector for Greece’s economy during the same period, influencing patterns of growth and becoming the main developmental factor for many islands and regions, the present dominant perception dictates that “the problems of the country have to be solved through an extensive and fast industrialisation process” (Tsoulouvis, 1995).

However, despite incentives provided by the government, very little capital has been invested in Northern Greek peripheral areas and especially Thrace, with some exceptions of local specialisation (such as an expansion of the garment industry in East Macedonia and Thrace). EU reports identify a considerable number of sizeable mineral deposits, geothermal layers and underwater reservoirs of hydrocarbons located in the region which have not been evaluated, and it has to be noted, that the region of Thrace is rich in
natural resources. These, however, remain unexploited due to the high level of remoteness of the area, the lack of accessibility channels to the European markets and the inefficiency of the present infrastructure to promote communication links with international and even national centres.

Efforts here to establish detailed tourism figures for the area illustrate only that there is a significant lack of official statistics reporting on tourism performance in Northern Greece and especially in Thrace. This lack of data and documents to some extent reflects the tourism inactivity in the region, as well as the deficiencies of the planning system to consider other peripheral areas, in addition to those already established for tourism development. There are, for example, significant gaps of information on tourism performance in the region concerning certain years or types of indicator, such as local income produced by tourism or the profile of per capita expenditure of visitors to the area. However, all available information suggests a very small and sporadic level of tourism operation for the three prefecture divisions of Thrace, positioning it as the 'most remote region' for the whole of Greece. Contradictory statistics derived from different sources fail to produce an accurate picture of tourism activity. Some include and others exclude either of domestic or foreign tourism, and there is little data on transportation (flight, road or rail entry). Therefore, it is difficult to accurately assess the level of organised travel that currently selects Thrace for tourism purposes.

The geographical position of Thrace sees it facilitating the transit of a significant number of travellers from Europe to Eastern countries, adding one further difficulty in the process of estimating local tourism activity in the region. KEPE, however, has now produced some 'official' statistics describing tourism activity in all three prefectures of Thrace up to 1990 (commencing in 1975), and discriminating between domestic and foreign tourism. Arrivals of visitors in the area have shown a low but steady increase between 1975 and the early 1990s. But this still positions Thrace as the least visited of the Greek regions, by both domestic and foreign tourists. The most noticeable trend for tourism in Thrace is the increasing numbers of domestic tourists travelling to the region, which is significantly higher than foreign visitors. The total of arrivals is estimated at 148,295 for 1975, rising to 212,595 and reaching 290,035 by 1990. This includes an increasing but insignificant, level of foreign tourism demand for travel in the region.

Detailed analysis of the reported figures shows that since 1975, domestic tourism in the area occupied an average 85.63% (of the total of arrivals) in 1975, 85.35% in 1981 and 87.39% in 1991, suggesting the lowest inflow of foreign tourism of all the regions (14.37% in 1975, 14.67% in 1981, 12.66% in 1990). Along with diminishing foreign
arrivals, hotel overnight stays by foreign travellers also follow a declining course, suggesting a rather pessimistic future for tourism growth in the area. It is characteristic that the Prefecture of Evros has the largest concentration of both foreign arrivals and overnight stays, due to its bordering position with Turkey and, most importantly, the existence of airport links with main national and thus international centres.

Correspondingly, the supply of tourist accommodation in the region of Thrace has not changed dramatically in terms of hotel unit construction or extension of bed capacity. According to GNTO statistics, since the mid 1980s Thrace has hosted the lowest proportion of hotel/accommodation supply in the whole of Greece, which is less than 1% (0.3%). This is compared to Crete (16%), Cyclades (20.3%) and Athens (18%). This share of accommodation facilities shows some alleviation after 1991 in both numbers of hotel units and bed places in the area, but remains very low. Within the area, the Prefecture of Evros hosts the largest share of accommodation units but the remaining prefectures are in an even more disadvantaged position.

It is clearly evident that the Yugoslavic crisis has been a highly influential factor in the travel patterns of Northern Greece during recent years. Travellers from Northern Europe have avoided using road or train transportation means to the Middle East, therefore substantial decreasing arrivals to the area and, secondly, the once loyal and relatively substantially market of Yugoslavian tourists to Northern Greece have dramatically decreased the number of visits to Thrace, having a negative impact on the region’s tourism development.

Accordingly to this level of tourism operation, the employment of local people in the tourism sector remains largely insignificant, comprising less than 2% of total tourism employment in Greece. Any small increases in this over recent years are mainly due to population growth rather than increasing investment. In addition, the lack of accurate statistics on tourism employment, particularly in Thrace (rather than the total of East Macedonia and Thrace) imply an even lower share for this region to total employment. With unemployment levels for Thrace having doubled between 1981-1991 (and an annual increase of 7%), the outlook for attracting increased investments in the area and generally raising the standards of prosperity for the region, appear pessimistic. The only optimism that can be generated comes from the level of unexploited resources in the area, that could provide the preconditions for regional economic regeneration. This fact has attracted planning attention even at the European level. Tourism particularly seems to hold potential, if the area can be securely and sensitively ‘opened-up’.
8.2 European Intervention and the Implications for the Region of Thrace

Regional inequalities and EU policies that seek to counterbalance them, along with the impact of the common market on cities and regions in Greece, has received limited attention. For areas such as Thrace, pessimism is a common characteristic of views which suggest strongly that positive changes usually favour primarily the centres of decision making such as Athens and Thessaloniki. In contrast, the view has been that under-developed areas receive no attention, and therefore face the negative impacts of limited and constrained development. Analysts observe that policy decisions in the EU concerning the use of funds and support have been highly influenced by broad political, rather than strict economic, principles. However, such debates raise more questions than answers, often resulting in shifts in ideological perspectives, used to account for the lack of development in the region.

European policy documents repeatedly emphasise the importance of European regional development plans as ‘major instruments for pursuing a development policy’, which should offer growth prospects for the Greek economy as a whole. The positive implications of such plan implementation include a minimisation of the divergence between areas, and the creation of a basis for real convergence over the long term, and a favourable environment for investment, benefiting both under-performing regions and the total economy. A prime objective is the reduction of the degree of peripherality and of regional disparities in development through the ‘opening-up’ of regions. European intervention thus suggests the ability of the developmental plans to “take advantage of the indigenous potential of the Greek regions” (CSF, 1994-1999).

The community support framework represents an agreement between the Commission and the Greek authorities for the appropriate allocation of Structural Funds for the period 1994-99 (a sum of 13,980 billion ECU). The Commission suggests that the CSF can have a significant impact on the Greek economy, while ultimate growth prospects will be greatly influenced the macroeconomic stability. Although there appears to be little change in the relative weights of industry and services from the first CSF to the second, tourism and culture spending have actually decreased from 5.3 to 4.8%, although this does not reflect less emphasis, but the requirement to concentrate on tourism under the heading of ‘improvement of productive environment’ (total share of the CSF 29%).

Of particular relevance here, amongst the axes reflecting the objectives of the CSF is the one referring to the ‘reduction in regional disparities and opening-up of areas’. This may be decisive for the future growth of regions with a high level of peripherality such as
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Thrace, and may be utilised in the development and appropriate forms of tourism. The CSF through its regional dimension, aims at the development of the regions by “developing their specific characteristics and offsetting their handicaps” 6,000 million ECU are allocated to the achievement of this objective, 75% of which is community aid (Periphery of East Macedonia and Thrace).

Aiming to underpin any such opportunity realisation with the principles of sustainable development, the documents suggest a high degree of local involvement in the efficient monitoring of the implementation of the regional programmes. Despite the fact that it is planned and implemented at central level, both national and local actors support the development of regions such as Thrace. The gradual empowerment of ‘local say’ is based on the administrative reform (LD 2218), suggesting a strengthening of the role of the region and the second level of local government. Apart from strong local involvement in programme implementation, the finalisation of the programmes demands a demonstration of appropriate methods of intervention, programmes corresponding to the characteristics and potential of the region, and consolidating the actions necessary for achieving the pursued objectives. “However, programmes will be planned to meet the joint needs of all regions ... consolidating the local development actions according to the guidelines of the special programme in respect of the local authorities and adapted to the needs of each region” (CSF, 1994-1999).

In this respect, amongst the thematic subprogrammes suggested as having instrumental value in developing disadvantaged regions, “the development of alternative tourism” is explicitly featured as a top priority. Emphasising strict sustainability parameters, the CSFs document highlights that special attention is placed on the high compatibility of the projects with the preset objectives and regulations. Systematic checks are carried out to ensure conformity with the requirements of the programme, seeking to ensure that authorities successfully implement the projects according to sustainability principles.

Despite the fact that is difficult to establish reliable targets in terms of economic and development impact for the CFS to the peripheral regions, both the Greek Government and the Commission have openly expressed their confidence that the CSF will “lay the foundation for the encouragement of convergence through investment and stimulus for private investment in the productive sectors”. Under Objective 1, aiming at the “economic adjustment of regions whose development is lagging behind”, the European Community’s structural funds (the European Regional Development Fund, the European Social Fund, the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund) aim to remedy specific problems at regional level. Thrace clearly features as an eligible region to
practice appropriate measures, and there appears particular potential for this to utilise sensitively applied tourism development within this process.

The European Commission has in fact approved the application of the Periphery of East Macedonia and Thrace for consideration of its inclusion in developmental programmes aiming to satisfy EU axes of development (29th July 1994) such as: a) the development of infrastructure with a view to opening up the region, b) rural development, c) improvement to the quality of life, d) human resource development, and (appropriately) e) development of the tourist industry and protection of the environment. The specific proposals by the Greek authorities for this programme suggested the following decisive intervention measures in order to achieve these objectives for East Macedonia and Thrace (General Secretary of the Periphery):

- Development of transport infrastructure to facilitate access to markets;
- Measures to reduce the region’s isolation by means of locally infrastructure developments with a view to maintaining population levels;
- Optimisation of the region’s geographic position as the gateway to Asia Minor and Eastern Europe;
- Human resource development;
- Environmental protection;
- Local development;
- Economic development by means of promoting the respective strengths of agriculture, energy, local industry, services and tourism.

The programme is being implemented under the CSF programming agreement for Greece (1994-1999), concluded between the EU and the Greek authorities to support the economy of Macedonia and Thrace, whose development is identified to be ‘lagging behind’. Thus there appears to be reasonable potential for tourism development and specifically for ‘alternative’ tourism development in the region. The funding contribution from the community represents 71.74% of total estimated public expenditure, of which 77.5% derives from the European Regional Development Fund (with 5.3% from the European Social Fund and 17.2% from European Agricultural Guidance). The estimated total cost of the programme is 688,964 kECU of which the share from public expenditure is 95.7% (or 659,100 kECU), while the private contribution is only 4.3% (or 29,864 kECU). Under the title of the ‘Peripheral Operational Programme’, the public authorities (Periphery of East Macedonia and Thrace) declared their commitment to focusing efforts on the optimisation of the area, the upgrading of the economic and social structure, and the enhancement of the attractiveness of the region as an area for basing productive activities (such as tourism).
The main EU lines of intervention specifically for the development of the tourist industry coincide with the axes of the developmental policy, as expressed in the operational programme for the periphery of East Macedonia and Thrace and approved in June 1994 (CFS Operational Programme, 1994-1999). For example, the scheduled projects are directed at developing ‘unexploited’ forms of tourism with a view to lengthening the tourist season, which is at the moment essentially concentrated just on the two islands (of Thasos and Samothraki). It is considered as vital to modernise the offered tourism services through the upgrading of the tourism superstructure, the training of specialised staff and the adoption of effective managerial techniques (Nomarch of Xanthi). What demonstrates a characteristic shift of ideologies concerning development however, is the inclusion of tourism along with the programme of environmental protection. This shift of ideologies suggests that measures should be directed towards achieving sustainability of both ecology and economy, within which tourism has a key role to play.

The Periphery, particularly in Thrace, is characterised by a multifaceted resource base in terms of historical, cultural, as well as physical, natural and anthropogenous features. These valuable, unexploited, and therefore unspoilt, resource reserves have the potential to become the focus of new tourism developments, but now appropriately face the challenge of optimising their value in a sustainable manner. This resource value has been appreciated and thus protected by European bodies and agreements, such as the RAMSAR treaty, aiming at the protection and auditing of "ecologically sensitive areas (like water areas or hydrobiotopos, mountain forests, traditional settlements)" (ibid.).

Both the sustainable development track and an appreciation of ‘alternative’ or special interest types of tourism are evident within influential sources who will be responsible for overseeing development in these areas. "The variety of environmental and cultural resources of the Periphery is the most crucial motive in the adoption of interventions aiming at the development of tourism, not being based on the mass tourism model of other areas, but on a radically sustainable prototype" (General Secretary of the Periphery). The operational programme following the development guidelines of the CFS explicitly evidences the shift of public planning efforts towards the "development of alternative tourism forms" (including autonomous sport tourism forms such as orienteering, sea and sail activities, mountaineering, trekking, etc.) (Nomarch of Evros).

The programme focuses on the compatibility and relationship of the development of alternative tourism initiatives with the actions that concern environmental protection and cultural preservation. Indicators produced to monitor the programme’s effectiveness
include both physical indicators (protection of ecologically sensitive areas), and impact indicators (protection of resources during the development of alternative tourism forms). Another important effectiveness indicator set by the programme reviews any increase of employees in the tourism sector. This has already advanced from 13% to 15% of the total working population in the area (which represents a dramatic increase for the area of Thrace).

Most importantly, the programme measures aim at the strengthening of productive investments emerging from the development of quality tourism and also the increased incentives given to some of the local population to avoid migration to other urban centres, and therefore the further decrease of the population of the region. The inclusion of tourism development within the context of action for the protection of the environment has produced an estimated total cost of 143,451 kECU, of which EU contribution reached 75% (or 102,413kECU), leaving the remaining 25% to public funding (between 1994-1999). Specifically, the announced and approved sub-programme of ‘Developmental Action for Tourism’ with an estimated total cost of 40,693 kECU also received EU funding support reaching 75% (or 25,345 kECU) of total public funding, with a 25% State contribution. The programme suggests that the private contribution needed is around 6,900 kECU, implying only a minimum share of responsibility to private bodies for the necessary investment. The document explicitly identifies the beneficial receivers of the ‘developmental actions for tourism’ to be “the businesses that are actively related to the tourism sector in the whole of the Periphery along with its residents” (OP, 1994-1999).

Interviewees of both Periphery and local government level put great emphasis on the compatibility of the proposed programme with European policy, as well as the central government guidelines for tourism development, and therefore claim an increased level of sustainability for the new developments, in comparison with those earlier developments elsewhere. Positioning tourism within a network of subprogrammes aiming at the improvement of living conditions, it suggests that ideologies concerning new tourism developments have shifted priorities from sound economic performance to sustainable practice, as the prime goal of further growth and regional regeneration. The concepts of sustainability are inherent in the philosophy and, to some degree, the practice of local authorities in mapping the proposed development planning for the region.

As noted in more detail in the previous chapter, the previously highly centralised representation of the State within the Periphery’s administration now seems to be
changing to reflect legislatively increased power for ‘local say’ in policy planning. This has been reinforced by the promotion of local participation and transparency in the implementation of European policy action. It has recently been argued that recent institutional reforms forced the State to be confined only to representation on the level of the facilitating developments, as an executive planning and co-ordination service for policy action decided on at central level.

From this role, the General Secretary for the Periphery of East Macedonia and Thrace strongly supports the increased power of local authorities within the policy making structure. The role of the ‘partners’ in the local society, or the ‘‘representatives of the productive classes’’, as they are usually termed by Greek administration, continue to collect power at the level of local decisions. This increased representation of local partners was suggested as the most influential factor ‘‘in the course of establishing a sustainable tourism environment for users and investors in the area’’ (G.S. of the Periphery). ‘‘According to the vision of the Periphery, tourism is closely associated with the establishment of sustainable development parameters for the opening-up of the region and for social regeneration...sustainable practices, through their lasting impact, produce favourable incentives for both investors in the tourism sector and a vast number of complementary services in the region’’ (G.S. of the Periphery). The opening-up of the region, still distant from mass tourism areas, is now considered to be offering a favourable basis for the establishment of new tourism forms and therefore distinguishing the regional profile.

The richness of natural and cultural resources are considered as the core ingredient for the development of alternative tourism in the area. They should be ‘‘established exclusively on their significant estimated contribution to a sustainable regional development and not on fluctuations of mass demand levels’’ (G.S. of Periphery). This is reflective of other statements, where it became obvious from the interviews with the Periphery representatives that developing tourism is not considered as a series of industry ‘venues’, but as a productive contributor to the regenerating regional process more broadly. Tourism in this sense takes the form of a multi-dimensional contributing factor that aims to support more than one regional objective.

Amongst the tourism forms suggested to facilitate these objectives, sport tourism has been seen as highly appropriate. As was discussed in more detail in the last chapter, here too, this is seen as central. It is characteristic that the terminology used in the proposals for alternative tourism forms includes sport tourism alongside other ‘soft’ tourism forms, such as ecological, mountain, wandering and green tourism. This demonstrates again the
evident association of sport tourism activities with sustainable development. They are
categorised according to their accommodating and use of the natural and physical
surroundings, rather than the specific type of activity undertaken. There is an evident
association of sport activities with a greener tourist profile articulated in statements such
as “active tourist behaviour does not only support a large number of complementary
services, but most importantly, results in the discovery of the natural and cultural
characteristics of the area and therefore creating a distinct and well-known picture for the
region abroad” (G.S. of the Periphery). There is a clear association of sustainable
tourism growth (adapting tourism patterns to a new philosophy) with a protection of
natural resources within a limited form of development, that the area obviously needs for
economic and social sustainability.

The transfer of a Department responsible for auditing natural stock and levels of
deterioration from the Ministry of the Environment in Athens to Thrace, is suggested as
strong evidence of increased decentralisation and the special attention the government is
now paying to preserving natural resources, and shifting policy to more sustainable
procedures.

The representatives of central government in Thrace took a rather optimistic stance
towards the achievement of what they identified as the most crucial factor determining
new development in the area. The construction of effective infrastructure (airport
extensions, road and rail links), along with the upgrading of traditional settlements and
the promotion of local natural and cultural resources, are considered as highly
significant. The European Programmes for Regional Development have been approved
and some of the infrastructural projects have already commenced. This, however,
appears a rather simplistic view, that just by providing the infrastructure and access for
development, and that by controlling the latter more carefully, beneficial sustainable
development will necessarily result. Fear is expressed over the ability of local
mechanisms to satisfactorily and sensitively shift ideologies from “satisfying daily
needs with no future prospects” to “long term established and lasting beneficial
results” (G.S. of the Periphery). It was also suggested (Nomarch of Rodopi) that once the
previously isolated and economically disadvantaged population of the region are
awakened and attracted to increased levels of tourism activity, a new form of sectorial
dependency would occur (as they have elsewhere), with dangers of interrupting first and
second levels of production in the region. “Examples of southern regions with rapidly
developed tourism highlight the dependency of local economy on tourism-related
production...however...the recent shift of both the political and local mind towards strict
environmental protection, promises that limitations on growth will be accepted as the most beneficial way of long term development” (G.S. of the Periphery).

However, analysts question the ability of local mechanisms to effectively implement European guidelines and to attract the available funding. With the present infrastructure being inadequate, the funds are most likely to be used to ameliorate basic living problems, than to be allocated towards a long term and uncertain tourism development future. The absence of effective land use planning, consistent with the protection goals for the environment, has already allowed investment to be allocated to activities which damage the natural resources, even in areas under protection.

“'The economic potential for development which the Region possesses today, may destroy what poverty has so far conserved, unless planning is both proper and rapid’” (KEPE, 1995). The new role for local authorities is one of great importance, to this shift of planning ideology. Until recently, the local authorities often found themselves left out of development decisions occurring on their own territory. Decisions rested with the state authority of the government, represented by the Prefect, whose office controlled the development projects.

Despite the more restricted role of the delegates of central government in the region, the Periphery representatives continue to insist on an increase to regional autonomy, suggesting that the goals of local public actors are in any case compatible with new central policy goals. With the institutional framework readjusted recently (as described), local authorities have taken the Prefectural responsibilities into their own hands, claiming for example that the ‘‘foundations have been laid for a tourism policy of truly innovative action for the area” (Nomarch of Rodopi). The establishment of the Tourism Committee (see Chapter 6) promises more rapid action towards promoting the area and establishing an attractive image for the area. Encouragingly, it became evident from the interviewees at this level of local government that all adjustments to public infrastructure and services towards the new tourism policy direction would be directly linked locally with sustainable development principles. ‘‘We have all been observing the results of large scale tourism growth in the Aegean islands and despite its undoubted economic benefits, the present congested and deteriorated local environment, place a serious warning for tourism planning in our area” (Nomarch of Evros). The significant influence of the European Union tourism guidelines was evident in the statements of the Nomarchs; the area aiming to become ‘‘the gate to and from Europe both culturally and economically’” (Nomarch of Rodopi).
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It was openly stated that the types of tourism considered as appropriate to satisfy these goals are ‘soft’ and ‘green’. Clearly the objective of the new Committee focuses on the creation of a distinctive offer with a largely cultural, ethnic and green character. It was suggested that sport and recreation activities bear the ability to exploit these valuable local resources through the close relationship between the activities and the local environment. However, the most debatable point towards the development of sports tourism in the area, and for generating sufficient support to see development implemented, was its inability to satisfy all the goals conceived for it. Certain parts of public thinking proposed large scale investments such as marinas and anchorages in order to establish a quality and upmarket tourism image for the area, implying commensurate economic returns for the region. The majority of public servants however, seemed to be more highly in favour of promoting those recreational tourism forms that do not require large scale built infrastructure and services. Instead, “soft tourism will be promoted paying special attention to small scale intervention and minimum environmental alteration” (Secretary of the Tourism Committee of Rodopi).

This fact restricts the tourism offer to certain special interest tourism forms which are “nature-based but not nature altering” (ibid.). In addition, the present inadequate tourism superstructure is not in the position to accommodate mass tourism numbers in the area and nor is it likely to in the near future. Therefore, restricting the tourism market mainly to independent travellers, but of an active and ‘quality’ nature, makes far more sense for the region. Despite the increasing demand for recreational tourism to the area, particularly from European tourism centres, the local system has, up to now, been unable to co-ordinate the existing inadequate tourism operations into a coherent product. This, however, appears likely to change, although there remain problems.

Despite the welcomed increased level of local government autonomy, the future of new tourism developments remains dependent -according to Prefectural actors- on heavy State intervention, in the form of improvements to existing infrastructure, but also for the creation of an effective tourism superstructure in order to facilitate initial developments. The magnitude of local power to undertake such development still seems insufficient, especially when operating according to sustainable mechanisms, which require a more objective overview and more influence. “The cost of preparing and operating a sustainable economic and tourism development programme through small scale, authentic, architectural and environmentally friendly services, is not in balance with the local resources available” (Nomarch of Evros).
Central government has been praised for the formulation of a new legislative framework supporting new and controlled developments. However, it was commonly expressed by central government sources that unless the region submits to central government provision and inclusion into the P.O.T.A. (see Chapter 6), which provide a holistic planning approach to new developments, the future of tourism in the area remains questionable. By contrast, it was feared by local actors (e.g. Nomarch of Xanthi) that this type of view suggests an attempt to focus problems and their solution (and real power) on central government, jeopardising the empowered role of local and regional authorities. This State interventionism is viewed by many as restricting their revised responsibilities and pre-judging local matters from a central government perspective. Greater concentration of investments, complementing the new developmental growth, would (it is said) jeopardise local control of industrial expansion and of its impact on the environmental stock.

However, it remains a view widely shared and greatly emphasised, that the way towards regional regeneration for this, and some other regions, is through tourism development as the most appropriate production sector. Despite the admitted lack of means and human resources to deal with changing developments, local authorities have demonstrated a great degree of commitment towards sustainable practices within tourism development and an astute realisation of the crucial relationships between nature, sustainable development and long term viability, that were missing in previous development zones. Optimism could, however, be generated by the apparent feasibility of establishing an appropriate and effective infrastructure through European regional funding, channelled to provide the basis of tourism establishment, and also by the already evident market for ‘alternative’ tourism products, to which the area appears suited.

Perhaps the key issues constraining local level development of appropriately scaled sports tourism development are the lack of human resources, the inability of local staff to create innovative offers, and lack of information on foreign and changing leisure trends in order to adequately design for, and respond to, the apparent market. A number of prefectural actors (Numerates of Evros and Xanthi) admitted these problems, that might hold back the undoubted potential of the area for active tourism development.

8.3 Initiating Sport Tourism Enterprises

Analysis of new investments in Northern Greece demonstrate inactivity in terms of investment in the region of Thrace, even after the developmental legislation which
clearly favours investment in the region. Subsidies for new private investment have proved to be largely ineffective for the period between 1989-1993 (Data Bank-ICAP in KEPE, 1995), failing to gain the interest of enterprises to invest in tourism projects in the region. During this period a total of seven new developments were recorded (with a total investment of 345,900,000DRM) in the region, out of the total of 182 in the whole of Northern Greece. The Yugoslavian crisis was suggested as the major factor in diminishing new tourism developments in the area. However, this does not seem to have affected developments in the rest of Northern Greece to the same extent. The above facts suggest a relatively insignificant impact on both local generated income and long term needs in the field of employment, by the incentive programme in this peripheral area.

This identification of weakness of the impact on job creation is reinforced by other analysts examining the impact of the developmental legislation (LD 1262/82) on the creation and categorisation of working positions in every productive sector. The subsidised employment positions created by the legislation constitute a very low percentage of the whole working population, in particular in the region of East Macedonia and Thrace. It became evident from an analysis of the peripheral distribution of the subsidised new employment positions that the majority of tourism-related jobs have been generated in the already developed regions of Crete and South Aegean. For the region of East Macedonia and Thrace employment that has been created, is concentrated in the primary and secondary productive sectors. If this concentration of new jobs reflects the perceived opportunities for tourism investments by the commercial sector, then the potential for new tourism developments in Thrace seems limited. In addition, work by KEPE analysts has examined the level of investment needed for the creation of each new working position between the different productive sectors. The examination shows that the value of the investment needed for the creation of each new job in the sector of tourism is considerably higher (9,631,000DRM) than for each job in the primary sector (8,658,400) and especially the secondary sector (4,825,900DRM). The region of East Macedonia and Thrace seems likely therefore to be attracted to working positions mainly in the secondary sector. While this picture would seem to favour developed areas such as Crete for new tourism investment, it should be noted that these figures for the creation of new jobs might underestimate the cost of preserving existing employment.

It became obvious from the interviews with the representatives of a limited tourism sector in Thrace (e.g. Association of Tour Agents, President of Industrial Enterprises, Association of Hotel Owners), that investments would be more favourably directed
towards already developed parts of neighbouring or southern regions, than the virgin tourism environment of Thrace. This however, contradicts and to some extent leads to a questioning of central public thinking, which aims to diffuse tourism to areas with what are currently relatively low demand levels, and therefore to spread economic development more widely.

In terms of both observational analysis and from information from the interviews, it seems evident that the distance of the region from areas of established private sector centres, proves to be significantly influential to the attraction of commercial investors in tourism. Present local entrepreneurs emphasise the importance of demonstrating opportunities to potential investors that lie in a largely undeveloped region, which focus mainly around rich cultural and natural resources - although it is difficult to show that this is enough. Despite the positive attitudes towards the reinforced power of local government and the establishment of the Tourism Prefecture Committees, local businesses argue that regional and local authorities are presently unable to undertake new tourism development, especially that of a distinct ‘special’ tourism product, such as sports tourism facilities, due to the lack of managerial and marketing skills, as well as the lack of knowledge of changing tourism trends. It is clearly important for the public sector to show evidence of interest and positive investments in tourism, before entrepreneurs emerge to operate in this sector and develop the facility-base further. Representatives of tourism enterprises in Thrace also noted that this inexperience in matters of tourism development refers not only to the local public administration mechanism, but also to local businesses, the scale of which does not allow for sophisticated managerial processes to evolve.

New tourism development will have to be initiated by both the public and private sector. While it is necessary to be able to show public sector interests and involvement, the early involvement of a number of private sector developers is important, and it is suggested that “plans should be realistically based on sound marketing and financial criteria” (President of H.A. of Thrace). While many do have ‘sensitive’ development and sustainable tourism in mind, it was emphasised that the future for developing a viable and competitive tourism product for the region, lies in the mechanism of international tour operators (or large domestic operators) who are increasingly in the position to market local tourism products to the wide tourism market, because they too are now looking for differentiated products. This new type of development for the area is obviously dependent to some extent on the marketing and development efforts of large companies and it may be that it will take time before these are attracted. However, this
approach was presented as the most feasible way of initiating a profitable and beneficial outcome for the area, in the view of local business sources.

However, there is a paradox here, as although spreading economic development is a primary goal, external involvement in local developments (e.g. by tour operators), both contradicts public sector aspirations for community involvement and control/self determination, and also jeopardises sustainability levels for the local environment. At present there are also other primary problems. “Central government initiatives for the area have so far failed to produce investments in the region, while the financial support to the new Tourism Committees is restricted to small scale projects that would have limited or no impact to tourism on demand for the region” (President of the Association of Tour Agents). The lack of tourism infrastructure and superstructure that this policy inefficiency has produced, is suggested as the crucial obstacle to tourism growth in the area, which is unable to sustain or attract a number of visitors larger than the random inflow of independent travellers, nor is it likely to attract the commercial entrepreneurs and tour operators who can generate facilities and visitors for a developing tourism sector for the area.

It is characteristic that the existing private businesses strongly believe that the new tourism developments in the area can be supply-led. Visitors, it is believed, would be attracted according to what is offered by the local planners. Tourism superstructure has to be established before the marketing of the new product, since “tourists are attracted only to and within an organised and upgraded tourism environment... and ...instead of waiting for an increase of demand, planners should invest in establishing a strong and quality product” (President of Industrial Enterprises).

The pre-marketing and establishment of a sound tourism superstructure satisfies the goal of both public and private developers to control the nature of the product and the profile of people visiting the region, and may be feasible (on a limited basis) given local public sector investment and the availability of EU funding. Ecological and economic sustainability concerns rose from the interviewees of the private sector, appearing highly environmentally conscious in seeking the development of ‘green’ tourism operations and a lasting benefit for the area. Aiming to attract different market segments, businesses suggest the development of a new superstructure for a differentiated tourism offer, with a clear new image. Preferences are evident for to what they term a ‘specialised tourism clientele’, not necessarily in terms of economic status, but mainly in ‘green’ profile characteristics and behaviour. What is necessary though is sufficient development, and
subsequently marketing, to interest niche market tour operators in attracting foreign adventurous active tourists to this new destination area.

Local tourism businesses see further potential, particularly as the image of sports tourists is that they have a desire to "discover rather than consume" local environment (President of the Association of Tour Agents). Private developers suggest a group of 'soft' tourism forms should constitute the regional offer, implying a variety of sporting and recreational activities, at least initially on a low key basis, developing as demand follows initial supply.

Conclusions

There was a mutual agreement over developing a distinct product in order to avoid the mainstream demand image of the traditional destinations and therefore to target different new market segments. Sport tourism, seen by both the public and private sector in Greece as synonymous to a 'soft' active tourism form, bears the ability to create a 'quality' product offer for the region and bring in an attractive, if narrow market segment. The 'sustainable' thinking carried by private developers of the area is associated primarily with the need to invest in a tourism structure that can cope positively with changing tourism fashions in the years to come. This is supported by local public sector actors, to the extent that they have considered this in detail.

What is described as the biggest challenge for private investors is the formulation of a distinct tourism offer in order to attract a specific market segment, along with the creation of a high degree of adjustability of the new product to future tourism demand alterations. From evidence here, it is suggested that there must be an element of public sector leadership in these roles. The development of a new tourism offer, differentiated from many other areas of Greece, the minimisation of environment's alteration, and the positive job/income impact for the local community, are the main interlinked features challenging the new and sustainable development for the region of Thrace.

This Chapter has necessarily been briefier than those considering sports tourism development from the viewpoint of the government Centre, and from the perspective of the Crete case study where, as an area of existing tourist concentration, the region has clear potential and no shortage of advocates for further (if sensitive and different) forms of development. An effort has been made here not to repeat some of the considerations of centre-local relations examined in Chapter 6, nor of some of the developmental considerations that are common to both the 'natural' areas of Crete and the less
accessible, almost exclusively ‘natural’, areas of Thrace. There is less material available on Thrace, because there is, as yet, little tourism activity. At present tourists and businesses are both few. However, the area has clear potential for sports tourism development, if planned (at least initially) on a limited basis. But even such limited development (which has clear benefits for environmental sustainability), can have a disproportionately positive impact on such a developmentally ‘lagging’ region. This type of finding is also clearly as relevant, as those for the more developed areas of existing tourism concentration (such as Crete), in terms of the relevance of the overall findings to the wider Mediterranean region.

Alternative forms of tourism development, it seems, can play a role in rejuvenating the overall tourism products of Mediterranean tourism economies. However, the experiences and issues will be different in different physical and developmental settings, and these will require different types of policy response, implementation procedures, and development, in the different types of region. The following Chapter attempts to synthesise the key findings from across the different physical, developmental, social and political environments sampled in Greece, and to summarise the key points emanating from the research, for hopefully wider relevance.
Chapter 9

Conclusions

Introduction

The investigation into the potential for sports tourism development in Greece has highlighted a number of key areas which will be influential in determining the extent, nature and timescale through which sports tourism programmes may be established, within the broader repositioning of the Greek tourism product. These influential areas include: central policy making, European policy guidelines, local reforms and private sector initiatives, all of which are deemed to be factors interacting in a catalytic way for the establishment of this type of development. A further requirement in the current context is that such programmes must be established through a sustainable development perspective.

From the initial stages of the study it was recognised that regarding both the tourism policy system and sustainable tourism development, the perceptions of the key actors within the system influence the extent to which the existing tourism structure is preserved, or is re-oriented to encompass planning and implementation according to sustainable principles.

9.1 The Tourism Product Life Cycle, Sustainable Tourism Development and the Role of Sports Tourism in Greece

The analysis undertaken in the previous chapters is based around the premise that Greece has reached the stagnation stage of the tourism product life cycle and is in the process of determining in what direction policy and development should now move, and the extent to which existing policies and structures should give way to innovative tourism product development strategies. From the viewpoint of a sustainable development approach, this pre-supposes that a balance is achieved between the different interests within the tourism industry (including the public sector) in terms of the extent to which the principles of sustainable development are accepted within the future planning for Greek tourism. This applies not only at a broadscale central policy level, but also to individual operators and local implementation systems.
This study has shown the importance of two main starting points for new tourism development within different regions. Firstly, a focus within the study was the tourism products whose production, development and futurity is dependent on whether changed public policy and new commercial investment come to fruition. Secondly, the idea that sport and recreational facilities and programmes can be considered as one element to be utilised within a multi-functional tourism sector, in order to produce regional development or re-orientation has been implicit in the analysis. These two issues reconcile the ideas of the product life cycle and that of sustainable development, through an examination of the parameters which influence development processes, particularly with regards to the time dimension, encompassing past and future progress. The examination included an evaluation of the economic, social and environmental structures, on the basis that effective policy intervention in these areas will determine the extent to which the new product is successfully established.

Initially the research reviewed both the Butler (1981) model of the tourism product life cycle, and Ashworth and Dietvorst’s (1995) tourism transformation model. Whilst it was not a primary intention of the study to provide an assessment of these, the empirical work has nevertheless afforded a view of their applicability and usefulness as vehicles for ‘objectively’ determining the appropriateness of the nature and timing of new directions for policy and development in Greek tourism.

Butler’s model was adopted to help conceptualise and to more overtly demonstrate the process of development in the Greek tourism sector from its early stages, through some key phases, to its place as one of Europe’s most favoured mass tourism destinations of recent times. Clearly, at a descriptive level, the model is particularly useful to enhance understanding of the different stages that destinations undergo. However, the study sought to go further and to use key performance indicators from secondary statistics on Greek tourism (such as arrivals, per capita expenditure and income from tourism) to more clearly identify for Greek tourism where the theoretical stages emerge, and in some cases, what are the specific catalysts for the change of phase.

This antecedent information helps better understand the processes going on today and the model then ‘predicts’ a number of potential future scenarios for such resort-oriented destinations. In terms of brief assessment, the model has been valuable as an analytical
vehicle and a predictive (in broad terms) tool for indicating potential directions. As an example, the falling rates of income are clearly indicative of a product in decline, requiring policy intervention to produce an upward curve and a rejuvenation stage of the life cycle.

The stages of exploration and development are clearly defined as the most crucial according to the theoretical directions suggested by the model. Butler’s model suggests the ‘development’ stage as the appropriate timing for effective intervention, with growth being directed more towards the involvement of internal agents and therefore increased supply control. In the case of Greece, and more specifically in mass tourism regions like Crete, this suggested policy intervention was not evident until tourism performance reached stagnated levels, which is proving difficult to alter. With greater understanding and use of such models, earlier warnings could have been heeded, and policy for change implemented and accepted on a different basis.

While Butler’s model is useful in retrospectively highlighting the phased evolution and moving forward to the rejuvenation process, or at least its desirability, Ashworth and Dietvorst’s (1995) conceptual linkage of the life cycle with sustainability factors suggests that the prevention of declining life stages through earlier intervention is desirable and feasible. Both models demonstrate that for Greek tourism there has been a lack of ‘intervention mechanisms’ at crucial times, which has resulted in a period where supply factors have been allowed to direct the developmental process for Greek tourism.

Ashworth and Dietvorst’s model confirms that the most effective ‘intervention moment’ for Greek tourism to design and regulate procedures that would ensure sustainable development, alongside beneficial growth, has long passed. The evident shift of this intervention into the present stagnation stage of the product life cycle for Greek tourism suggests strongly the need for the designation of new policy directions and rejuvenating mechanisms, rather than regulation procedures.

Neither model, however, provides a more explanatory contribution, and this element is left open to individual interpretation and supplementary analysis in more detailed
studies such as this. Detailed studies offer greater insight into, for example, the power relationships between key involved actors, aspects such as central-local relationships, and the background to the policy shifts (or at least policy decisions) that are crucial elements within the transformation process.

In this study the Ashworth and Dietvorst model did contribute to the identification of the structural processes and procedures behind the transforming policies. In both developed and under-developed regions, there is a contemporary policy reform underway, which has been analysed for effectiveness and future direction, through detailed attention to the policy community for tourism development in Greece, attention to direct and indirect governmental action, local authorities perceptions and activities, and the views and actions of key private sector interests within the tourism industry.

Applying Ashworth and Dietvorst's (1995) tourism transformation model to the life cycle of the Greek tourism product, it appears that a critical point has been reached whereby a transition has occurred from a demand-led to a supply-led tourism operation. This, more than anything, emphasises the need for intervention, to be initiated by both public and private organisations in order to re-establish a financially healthy tourism economy. The emergence of this supply-led stage dictates the need for a proactive and holistic strategy. Supply-side elements, once established, tend to decisively determine the future of the industry. This transition from demand-led to supply-led development and the recognition of it, plays a crucial role in the process of achieving sustainability for these types of tourism development.

As a consequence, several management systems have been formulated within the process of sustainable tourism planning, despite the plethora of contradictory views surrounding 'sustainability'. Contradictions stemming from different perspectives on sustainable development more broadly defined, demonstrate the difficulty of defining and measuring the variables relevant to a concept of sustainability in tourism. Sport tourism too, is characterised by an excessive number of policy guidelines, planning standards and objectives, from almost every agency claiming policy ownership, having often vague and contradictory developmental intentions and goals.

A significant problem within the study was the variation in the definitions of sports tourism and difficulty with the conceptualisation of new forms of tourism amongst the interviewees and other policy actors encountered. Within the Greek context the term
‘sport tourism’ has commonly to date been used exclusively to describe tourist activity associated with events, rather than including, or being primarily generated by, sporting activity as a key part of holidays and the marketing of them. This has been clearly constraining on the development and marketing of ‘new’, differentiated tourism forms. Both literature and policy documents often categorise sports activities as a ‘special interest tourism form’, implying minority interest and useful, but limited, potential. This is in contrast to the vision identified in some policy circles which views sporting tourism forms (bolstered by some other special tourism forms) as a key element in building a new, and more differentiated, tourism strategy for Greece.

During the present research a whole series of sports tourism possibilities were identified and aggregated into a categorisation, which was used as an explanatory vehicle with interviewees. A key element was to assess views and the potential of ‘sports activity which is the main or a key element within the purpose of travel’.

Within the interview process there was explanatory intervention by the researcher in order to clarify the definitional parameters of sport tourism. The research strategy needed to tackle the different and often uninformed stances of the interviewees at all levels of public and private policy making, by offering a clear definition which would diminish the danger of excluding crucial sport-related tourism forms from the appreciation of subject area.

As well as this definitional confusion, one of the main features of the present policy-making is the lack of a clearly defined ‘policy action’ or route that would support this new, and sometimes advocated, approach to differentiating the developing tourism product. For example, there are several sources advocating the development of activities such as trekking, particularly in contributing to the development of valuable tourism entities in developing regions, or adding new products to existing centres. This, however, remains one of several possibilities considered, but rarely acted upon, within the general policy context. Paradoxically, for some other sports tourism forms, the newly formed Department of Sea Tourism has clearly separated and allocated policy making responsibilities and represents the start of a policy direction towards differentiation.
This situation throws-up both further confusion within the process of policy change, but also explanation of the differential attention paid to different activity forms within the sports tourism concept in Greece. On the one hand there is clearly evident the start of a differentiating policy direction towards ‘active’ tourism, but the conceptual priority here is heavily oriented towards the generation of ‘quality’ (i.e. high spending) tourism, rather than a broader direction towards differentiation through ‘active’ tourism.

It remains characteristic of Greek tourism policy (other areas are identified in the report) that there is differential understanding of the process being undertaken. While some key actors have come to appreciate the desirability of differentiating the overall tourism product, and have identified significant potential, particularly in some areas for active tourism forms, the new differentiation policy (particularly in terms of central policy making) clearly revolves primarily around attracting ‘quality tourism’, rather than integrating that significant concern within that for broadening and modernising the appeal of the product.

‘Quality tourism’, as the new developmental direction for Greek tourism, implying a higher spending and more educated clientele, is now determining those forms of sports activity that are seen to contribute to the differentiation policy, as opposed to factors such as the popularity and potential of a number of activities, or their potential to contribute significantly in certain areas.

Policy documents largely disregard the term and the concept of ‘sports tourism’ as a broad concept, but do refer to certain sport tourism forms. Subsidy plans also largely support only elitist sport tourism forms, such as sea tourism (yachting, sailing etc.) and golf, and these are seen as synonymous with a ‘quality’ tourism product offer. Only in some areas was a wider appreciation of sports tourism evident, and here largely focussed on the potential of the particular accommodating environment (mountain, agro, sea tourism etc.), rather than the full range of activities and tourism potential that could be developed.
There is, then, a definitional dichotomy evident, whereby there is a growing concern to differentiate a tourism product increasingly recognised as problematic. However, the active tourism forms which are increasingly seen as having potential for differentiation have become synonymous, particularly with some central policy makers, with autonomous tourism forms (e.g. sea tourism), focussed almost exclusively on generating ‘quality’ tourism, within the process of differentiating the traditional tourism product offer.

The definitional and policy implementation confusion appears compounded in different areas of implementation. For example, in mass tourism areas, some private sector operators have seen the potential of ‘alternative’ developmental forms, including sports venues to supplement the mass tourism product. Here, there is growing criticism of larger scale sport tourism forms (such as marina developments) as ‘unsustainable’ operations, unless planned and managed appropriately. In some cases, sport tourism forms are being mis-used, or misinterpreted, as inherently green or sustainable tourism forms, when in reality there appears little evidence to support this.

Elsewhere, particularly in developing regions, limited active tourism developments, carefully controlled, can have a significant economic and associated social impact, and appear to be viewed quite differently by policy makers and private investors alike. Trekking and biking facilities attracting visitors to under-developed areas would be good examples.

There is then considerable definitional confusion and differences in policy development and implementation concerning sports or active tourism in Greece at present, which the research has attempted to identify, explain and in some cases ameliorate.

Despite contradictions within the policy direction and organisational capacity of a number of key actors in the system, a number of areas of common ground are revealed between the different groups examined in the study. These invariably result from the identification that the stage of saturation in tourism development has been reached and especially a realisation of the need for implementing an innovative and sustainable policy action to maintain desirable levels of tourism volume and value. The concept of introducing sporting ingredients into an often standard Greek sun, sea, and sand
product, attracted positive reactions from the majority of central and local bodies involved in the tourism process. However, despite the need to reinvest in tourism products, which analysts would see as necessary for a destination to enter a ‘rejuvenation’ stage, evident is a wide diversity of perceptions regarding the identifiable added value of the sport-related tourism products, inconsistency in the willingness to undertake increased costs in order to achieve these ends on a sustainable basis, and differential ability to promote effective intra-agency communication and inter-agency co-operation. These issues can be seen to jeopardise the realisation of such desirable tourism re-investment. In addition, the shift of policy direction, the accumulation of measures, inconsistencies in legislative proposals, and the incomplete decentralisation process, all appear to increase the risk of delaying responses to development opportunities and de-railing the transition to the rejuvenation of the destination through investment in sports-oriented facilities and sports-related tourism.

9.2 Government, Local State and Private Sector Groups in Tourism Policy

Despite the relatively unquestioned role of the government in the administration and operation of the Greek tourism product (primarily due to the economic benefits of tourism and the partial reliance of the Greek economy on this), the direct entrepreneurial role of public tourism bodies is now undergoing revision in the face of the increasing need to reduce foreign debt, regional inequalities and to encourage greater private sector involvement in tourism, which is widely recognised as a primarily commercial activity field.

Primary evidence from this research shows that the state tourism bureaucracy is increasingly being dismantled in order to encourage commercial tourism development, support the improvement of tourism infrastructure and facilities, and in order to produce a more competitive product. To date the government has subsidised, to a significant extent, the substantial cost of the production of sport tourism-related infrastructure (marinas, golf courses and trekking paths etc.), recognising the lack of private venture capital to initiate such developments. Interviews within this study now suggest a new assumption is being made whereby private sector investment is possible, provided that it is supported by government assistance involving particularly the provision of favourable investment conditions. The improvement of general infrastructure in the already established destinations and the provision of basic services to the underdeveloped tourist regions, was regarded by central government as crucial to the development of a rejuvenated tourism product offer.
However, despite increasing private sector demands for a more restricted role for government in Greece, in recent years in a number of key sectors, there has been a paradoxical demand for more public sector involvement at all levels of tourism development, particularly in the area of marketing and promotion, which have been seen to be weak and poorly targeted. The government reaction to the pressuring private tourism bodies, again evidenced in the research, is based on arguments highlighting the changing market conditions towards an increasingly free enterprise economy and a diminishing role for government within business promotion.

In contrast, industry representatives highlight the 'public good' deriving from a thriving developed destination and product offer, in order to justify their demand for heavy government involvement in tourism planning, and particularly promotion. According to key private sector representatives approached within the study, tourism is or should be, a public good shared by many involved parties, benefiting more than one section of the tourist industry and the other related local and national economic sectors. Their thinking is that the tourism industry has to be supported because it produces income both directly and indirectly, but that it is difficult to achieve a sufficient return from individual large scale construction and promotional programmes for expensive specialised sport tourism developments. An overall strategic presence is therefore viewed as necessary to ensure that individual programmes are subsidised, in order to produce a larger, viable 'whole' tourism product. Funding for national and local tourism promotion presently comes from the public purse, rather than from the industry, and clearly it is in the interests of the tourism industry to maintain this situation. This continuing reliance on government funding takes on greater significance when the costs of promoting a new differentiated tourism image are substantial and clearly exceed the availability of private capital in Greece.

In terms of the future realising and operationalising of some of the identified potential for an increasing emphasis on sports tourism, to increase the differentiation and future value of the Greek tourism product, it is evident that as long as central government is self-characterised as the interest promoter and protector of tourism development, the private sector will continue to criticise the public machinery for planning inertia and particularly the operation of 'political' assessments and intentions. The lack of a widely agreed planning framework is seen by the private sector to mitigate against effective new developments. The defence of a variety of interests is seen by commercial operators to occupy much government activity. The relationship between the different private sector tourism operators, sports bodies, environmental agencies and local authorities clearly raises questions about the extent to which policy formulation
processes lead to outcomes which are in the ‘national interest’, rather than a set of largely narrow private or public sector interests.

Despite the defensive stance of central government, which claims that existing mechanisms can support new types of sport tourism development, there remains an apparent absence of an over-arching agency which involves all sports tourism developmental parameters. In addition, there is criticism evident between government departments regarding the exclusion from the policy formulation and planning process of a number of key interest groups. This suggests a narrow and anti-democratic approach to planning in Greece at present. Sports tourism development clearly needs to be encompassed within a broader range of governmental, economic, social and environmental policies. Policy decisions should reflect a will to satisfy all national and local interests, rather than focusing exclusively on the sectionally defined interests of the tourism industry.

Within the process of the research, it was beneficial to identify the extent and nature of what Houlihan (1991) describes as the ‘policy community’ for Greek tourism. Within the study, this policy community was identified at both central and local level, including the influential private sector actors in the process. Within this, there were clearly evidenced some shared perceptions of the problematic nature of Greek tourism, and these are significant to the study overall.

Despite the apparent lack of a common technical language and the evident definitional confusion surrounding some new tourism components, such as special interest tourism as noted above, there was a unified view across most central and regional actors regarding the potential significance of sport tourism as a regenerating force within the tourism development process. This common ground on a new tourism philosophy demonstrates, as much as anything identified, a cooperative intention towards the start of a differentiation strategy for Greek tourism.

As the main initiator of strategic tourism development in Greece, the GNTO has been identified as the decisive actor within the tourism policy community, having responsibilities for policy formulation and implementation. This is reinforced by the highly centralised government machinery, with the production of policy documents exclusively by the GNTO, which dictates the direction for the Greek tourism. An example of this process is the present policy direction towards a more differentiated
tourism product offer, which is being underpinned by associated developmental legislation.

Alongside this highly centralised policy authority, which was clearly identified by the interviewees, the influence of EU policy directions was also clearly evident within both policy documents and interviews, for several aspects of policy. In fact, the emphasis on sustainable developmental principles and differentiated tourism, adopted by central government policy makers demonstrates a strengthening of the EU as an agent within the policy community for tourism in Greece. The developmental criteria and financial support of the EU are decisive within the centralised policy for tourism, which in turn is dominant (although diminishing) as an initiator and promoter of new developments for tourism in Greece.

Within this strongly centralised policy community, there are some changes beginning to emerge, with some sections of the central government tourism policy makers identifiably separating their stance from others in the higher policy making levels, particularly in suggesting the need for fundamental infrastructural and legislative changes before redirecting the tourism product offer towards new products, such as sport tourism. In addition, some policy implementers appear very sceptical regarding the willingness of private sector tourism interests to adopt new differentiated tourism forms, which to them imply raised costs and relatively few substantial benefits in the short term. The latter have far less interest at present in the longer term aspects of the sustainable development elements of current policy thinking. This view separation is now evident between some policy makers and the implementers. The views of the latter come as a result of their role as communicators and implementers of legislative and regulatory tools for the tourism industry in Greece, and therefore their direct involvement in practice. This sub-community expressed what is arguably a more realistic, operationalising stance towards some new developments, than was evident amongst top policy makers, reflecting more substantially the private sector scepticism of some central policy making.

The most characteristic gap within this identified policy community for the Greek tourism environment lies between the central policy-making concerns and the private
tourism sector. Interviewees from several sections of the industry emphasised their perceived exclusion from the policy designation process, and this clearly leads to a commensurate reduction of valuable market information and knowledge of operational difficulties. The largely consistent view that much of the new policy and legislation exhibits an inability to attract private initiatives and support, demonstrated a lack of policy consensus on implementation mechanisms for the differentiation policy, despite the initial support and calls for new policy directions and for product differentiation. Subsidies, despite their favourable terms, have been received with hesitation by the private sector and it has been suggested that these are insufficient to initiate large developmental changes. However, some elements within the tourism industry are clearly fuelling or enlarging this community gap in their suggestion that more significant proportions of the funding of initiatives and infrastructural support is necessary by the State, and this can be construed as either profiteering or only partial support for the concepts being advocated.

In either case, greater involvement of private sector representatives in the policy development process would appear beneficial to the realisation of a number of proposed initiatives. At present the lack of a private tourism sector voice in the policy development process is clearly evident in the statements of the interviewees concerning the creation and communication of the new image that accompanies the tourism differentiation process. The sense that tourism businesses have no control over the designation and promotion of an alternative tourism image has created feelings of exclusion and insecurity in terms of the determination of the viability of their business. Paradoxically, there is support for effective state intervention in other contexts, appreciating the large public legislative mechanisms and infrastructural investments necessary to rejuvenate the product that lies beneath a tourism image which is declining.

Whilst the private sector may have frustrations with their lack of voice in policy making, there is some evidence of change however, with central government policy announcements now presenting a more participatory approach to the new policy direction toward differentiation, implying that responsibility for the complex character of the new style of recreational offer will be more heavily allocated to the relevant governmental and local administrative departments. However, the improvement of
local and regional capabilities in the context of self-administration, faces a further series of strong criticisms from local government due to the continuation of the high level of financial dependency on the ‘distant state’, which results in an incapacity to profit materially from such decentralisation, and difficulty in its execution.

The desire for more local power in mapping appropriate local strategies for tourism development, as well as other concerns, was evident in the interviews with local government representatives, who believe strongly in the importance of their potential in creating and promoting a distinct local tourism product. It is notable that despite the different objectives of the two sample destinations (i.e. product repositioning in Crete, and tourism development in Thrace), sports tourism features as a high priority amongst local planning strategies, as having the ability to promote distinct local physical and cultural characteristics. Local self-administration capable of utilising the knowledge of local advantages and the potential of specific sport tourism products was strongly advocated by both regional and local public actors. Private sector developers, however, preferred adherence to a more centralised approach of decision making and planning, invariably because of the perceived greater potential for public sector investment and industry support that this brought. Paradoxically, a demand for effective State intervention in mapping and operationalising a product differentiation strategy is shared by a large number of local bureaucrats, admitting often to a local inability to implement developments and ultimately to create the distinctive sport-related image desired. The establishment of Prefectural Tourism Promotion Committees is argued by the central government to allow the types of community involvement, transparency and democratic approaches in the context of regional planning and social sustainability, promoted by recent European as well as national policy reforms.

In Greece, EU guidelines for new tourism developments have proved decisive in the new public policy direction, promoting special interest and especially sport and recreation tourism forms, but recognising the need to adhere to ‘sustainable development’ approaches. More importantly, the financial contribution of the available EU funds for the creation and improvement of both general and tourism infrastructure, along with the construction of sports-related superstructure in both established and new destinations, has been a catalytic factor in the potential for sport-tourism developments in Greece. Facilitating access through effective infrastructure (which is what most public and private sector representatives consider to be the main obstacle to development), have seen EU funding schemes becoming the initiating factor in a number of developments, despite local inexperience in designing attractive proposals.
Tourism development in the regions, especially for under-developed areas, is subject to the ability of the political and administrative structure to be readjusted so as to favour regional growth and local prosperity. The sustainability paradigm suggests that the planning for this regional tourism development must take place within the regions themselves, and the will to do this was evident during the research. However, to produce a distinct sport tourism product offer and to enhance external awareness of this, without conflicting with the interests of private sector operators, is a problematic feature of such developments. A very genuine local sports tourism product seems often to be influenced exclusively by external international commercial interests, adopting a control approach to product development and promotion to the market. All interviewed parties seem to agree on the existing disproportionately high level of control exercised by foreign operators over present and future developments, and the negative local impacts of this. The struggle between the desire to minimise outside control and reduce dependency on the one hand, and on the other to maintain the value of existing tourism investment, has increasingly led to the inclusion of recreational ingredients such as sport activities within the tourism offer. A strong desire for the State to utilise regulatory mechanisms was clearly evidenced in the study, particularly with a view to limiting the power of external commercial operations, by both the local public administration and the local industry, with the aim being to produce a strong and inelastic product within an increasingly competitive market.

9.2.1 Developmental Challenges for the Sports Tourism Product in Greece

Greek regions, both those touristically developed and those emerging, are affected by the new policy announcements regarding improvement of their tourism product, focused on producing a 'quality' offer and targeted at higher spending segments of the market. The nature of a destination’s tourism product clearly determines the type of market attracted and, in this sense, the tourism market has always been supply-led. Mapping an explicit tourism policy towards a sport and recreational product, demonstrates the belief that quality (higher spending) clientele would be attracted by what is on offer. Promoting sports activities such as yachting, golf and skiing which are widely associated with high earning and high social status groups, the tourism policy aims to influence the 'quality' of the market, as well as the product. To achieve this objective, the state suggests that changes in the demand can occur through a radical modification of the supply.

By introducing a system of investment initiatives and direct funding, the GNTO is seeking to catalyse the establishment and upgrading of facilities. Improvement of
tourist facility standards through investment in ancillary sport facilities almost automatically results in higher capital spending, resulting in higher pricing and inclining the product towards higher spending markets. It became evident from the research that this supply-led developmental approach favours more the new specialised sports tourism establishments than older existing facilities. Despite the fact that the State recognised that the differentiation process could be influenced to some extent by the improvement of existing tourism superstructure, it became obvious from the interviews that new specialised and often large scale infrastructure (e.g. marinas, golf courses) and associated establishments, are the most crucial element to an alteration of the nature and profile of the Greek tourism product. Public bodies appeared generally positive to the state's intervention in supply mechanisms to change the product markedly.

This view was not, however, shared by the private tourism businesses, who generally favoured a more 'demand'-led approach to development, future growth and differentiation. Invariably, the representatives of the tourism industry emphasised that the decision to upgrade the tourism product, through the addition or upgrading of large scale sport tourism facilities and infrastructure, should be well justified initially from a marketing standpoint i.e. with revealed demand already evident. From the private sector there was less strategic vision regarding improving the long term profitability of the Greek tourism product and greater emphasis on more immediate financial returns. While this is perhaps unsurprising, the lack of response to the State vision, and lack of strategic vision, is disappointing. From the private sector viewpoint, investment and financial incentives will undoubtedly improve the product, increase the price, and alter the image, but to many operators there appears to be insufficient market demand to make the new product marketing feasible.

This view has evidently been reinforced by the inability of public mechanisms to examine and estimate potential demand levels for sport tourism in Greece, alongside the industry's inertia in exploiting the fragmented expressions of demand at present. Interviewees from all sections of the industry repeatedly emphasised that the successful development of sport tourism would have to be based largely on high levels of expressed demand and not sporadic expressions of interest for certain recreational activities. This is clearly ultimately a self-defeating situation and exhibits both lack of vision and lack of strategic direction from the industry. Demand will not increase until facilities evolve, and these will not evolve unless the industry sees demand. Two further weaknesses of the Greek tourism industry are identified here: firstly, a lack of recognition of the potential to exploit changing tourism tastes exhibited in main foreign markets for an improvement in the long term profitability of the sector; and secondly,
an acceptance of dependency and that foreign tour operators largely control the nature and volume of tourism in Greece. It is this apparent lack of vision from the industry that reinforces the limited optimism that the private sector tourism interests largely have in the potential of the sports tourism sector to enhance the Greek tourism product.

The attempts of public administration to change the product’s nature is conceived by the private sector as narrowing the market and ignoring significant short term marketing opportunities. The private sector prefers a diversified and improved product with its ability to satisfy a variety of markets and widen entrepreneurial opportunities. Public sector attempts to catalyse tourism growth through what seems to the industry to be a specific sport tourism infrastructure, in order to differentiate the present stagnating product, has agitated the industry’s sensitivity to proven demand levels and it is this disharmony in the vision of the short term profitability and longer term development potential, which is currently limiting the potential for successful sports tourism product development in Greece.

The way through this problem, appears to be a much-tried method. Offering successful models of development has always been a driving force for business initiatives, leading to beneficial development particularly in tourism. This has a reasonably long history in Greece, with public tourism bodies appreciating the above type of private sector arguments and justifying their decisions by establishing ‘integrated areas of tourism development’, that can demonstrate the importance and benefits of producing new distinctive and competitive products. This public model of experimental development has, however, given rise to an emerging conflict between different sides of public and private thinking, particularly concerning the direction of developments towards existing or under-developed destinations. The sustainable thinking of the public sector to diffuse tourism towards relatively undeveloped areas has been evident in all policy documents and developmental incentives studied. For example, developing Thrace through highly favourable incentives given to private developers and the provision of large scale infrastructure, is part of attempts to create a differentiated image and distinct local products, for Greece as a whole, aimed at attracting new market segments. The recreational ingredients proposed within the new product, promise to attract visitors from different market, such as those of East Europe, Russia and Asia, as well as higher spending segments from traditional markets.

Analysts have repeatedly emphasised that the present undifferentiated tourism promotion and marketing mechanisms for existing mainstream resorts, is unable to reach different markets and special interest segments. The perceived reasons are local
level public sector inertia and local private sector inability to influence external markets. As a result, in order to improve the viability of the tourism product, particularly in terms of developing differentiating sectors such as sports tourism, the restructuring of the whole of public tourism administration and the improvement of actual technologies and marketing skills of the private local businesses are considered vital. If marketing remains exclusively in the hands of foreign tour operators from the mainstream markets of mainly Northern and Western Europe, the Greek tourism product will continue to attract largely homogenous market segments through a largely undifferentiated product offer. These markets are currently seen as declining in size and vitality, and clearly Greece needs to invest in new products.

In terms of regional development this also needs to be spread more equitably throughout the country. Being largely undeveloped, tourism in Thrace currently presents levels of demand growing insufficiently to warrant substantial product expansion and diversification. Initiated by either the public or private sector, the development of sports tourism in the area should involve all interested parties, in order to demonstrate the feasibility and viability of the potential product offer. The public sector’s strategic intentions, if not complemented by sound marketing and financial criteria, jeopardises developments and will lead to an unsustainable local product. Locally, suggestions are directed towards adopting a substantial initial phase which would permit Thrace to enter the market with a composite, well planned, distinct and viable, but relatively low key, special interest tourism product.

However, fears have been expressed by both public and private sectors regarding the level of flexibility and long term viability of such a new product. A narrow form of sport tourism development, requiring costly special infrastructure, does not necessarily imply commensurate returns and a loyal clientele. Having also a low degree of adjustability to future sports tourism trend changes, these high investment ‘quality’ facilities often generate more questions for long term viability than solutions. Instead, the promotion of a series of smaller scale establishments facilitating recreational activities, especially those more closely related to the natural environment, are suggested as the first ingredients for a sustainable and adjustable product, particularly in locations such as Thrace. Examples include: small scale trekking centres built of indigenous materials in the mountains; anchorages (rather than large scale marinas) attracting visiting yachts etc. Again, however, while these are applaudable public sector strategic goals, the private developers appeared sceptical on initiating projects in undeveloped environments.
In Crete, the size and nature of facilities are for the most part more strongly established, and as noted in previous sections, it is the nature of this product which has pre-selected the type of tourist clientele. The diffusion of investment to under-developed areas such as Thrace, as suggested by public sector planners, is not welcomed by interest groups in Crete, concerned particularly for the future of their investments. The policy of diffusing tourism development to other areas through, for example, autonomous sport tourism establishments, instead of concentrating it within present established centres, is being interpreted as merely creating competing destinations within the country and jeopardising a tourism sector which has traditionally thrived. Hotel owners and other relevant associations were amongst those groups that strongly rejected the 'diffusion' policies.

Crete can be viewed as a classic and well established mass tourist destination. Its rich natural and historic associations have produced a successful destination and image, but this is increasingly proving not to be a timeless one; a characteristic now shared by many popular European resorts. The statements of private businesses and local planners’ within this research suggest that public resources would be more appropriately invested in products which have already proven successful, in order to improve their prospects and continue the beneficial operation of tourism employment, and preserving local income in areas of high tourist concentration. However, this is not wholly negative for those with interests in sports tourism development. In their efforts to defend a well established industry sector, local hotel associations agreed that in order to sustain or achieve continued growth of a ‘quality’ product offer, sport tourism facilities undoubtedly have to be expanded and improved within the present tourist infrastructure for Crete. However, here is evidenced a potential conflict within the vision of tourist development in Greece, because in addition to, or perhaps competing with, the funding of tourism in under-developed regions, the sport tourism facilities needed to regenerate the Cretian destination are also capital intensive. The local private sector see the infrastructural costs as needing to be heavily subsidised by the public purse, rather than paid for by new establishments, in order to make these viable. Without such public sector investment in existing resort areas, it is doubtful if such product repositioning will occur, and without it, the overall Greek tourism economy, as well as the local one, will almost certainly suffer in the coming years.

A further problem lies in altering development towards smaller scale but ‘quality’ markets, which contradicts the industry’s tradition for mass numbers and lower spending segments. This is a cultural change for many operators in the Cretian tourism sector, although progress has been made. Limited to mainly coastal tourism, businesses
in Crete are more likely to adopt sport tourism forms associated with water recreation and fitness equipment. Obviously, small scale investment on these facilities has already been a main ingredient of the product regeneration process in recent years. However, this remains a largely complementary service to the whole tourism offer, and while it represents progress, distinctive and autonomous sport tourism developments associated with large scale infrastructure and costly sports facilities, will be needed in the coming years, if resorts like Crete are to maintain their market share of an increasingly globally supplied tourism market. Increasingly, sophisticated clientele will require increasingly significant ancillary facilities to complement even a high standard traditional sun, sea, sand product. This need clearly has to be built into strategic tourism development thinking for established, as well as new, resort areas.

9.2.2 Policy, Enterprise and the Environment

The belief that the Cretan destination is far from fully exploiting its potential for developing sport tourism activities was shared by all sections of the industry there. However, there must be some doubt as to whether this well established destination has capacity for further development. While small scale additions to the existing product can clearly be made, further growth and construction of new sport tourism infrastructure of a large scale is unlikely to improve a local environment which is showing clear signs of deterioration.

The intention to base sports tourism development on a sustainable track and within audited environmental capacities was demonstrated in both policy documents and interviews, at all levels of central and local government. However, despite the evident increasing sensitivity within the inclusion of environmental dimensions within public policy, the lack of explicit environmental standards and holistic planning of this type of new development, produces not only confusing indicators and inconsistent developmental restrictions, but also maintains an undifferentiated environment and therefore an undifferentiated tourism product. This lack of sophisticated environmental management and the apparent inability to effectively co-ordinate the relevant environmental bodies and organisations, restricts such new policy directions to the production of assessments and political intentions only.

Promoting the development of sports tourism forms, such as sea tourism, also maintains the emphasis for tourism activity being in coastal areas, thus jeopardising the objectives of equitable growth distribution and wider regional regeneration. The justification often used in existing planning approaches is that sport tourism is an environmentally friendly
tourism activity per se. However, this fails to demonstrate sound environmental planning and practice, since the limits of sustainable growth in this area are largely unknown. There also seems to be a largely unjustified perception that sports tourist consumers have an environmentally friendly profile, based on the dependence of the sports tourist activity on natural resources and the unconventional (non-mass tourist) character of present independent sport enthusiast travellers.

None of these, however, empirically justify a commensurate ecological character for the proposed sport tourism forms, especially when the scale of needed infrastructure contradicts the sustainability principles of small scale intervention. The decentralisation of environmental governing bodies to the periphery and the inclusion of intra-ministrial sections in the designing of the new offer, are suggested as core parts of the strategy that optimises the benefits, reduces the problems resulting from further development, and therefore ensures that the natural and cultural resources for tourism are not degraded in the process of establishment.

Sustainable development principles suggest that it is pointless to plan for tourism growth without simultaneously taking into account the detailed needs and perceptions of all stakeholders in the area, the ways different affected groups measure environmental deterioration and the value of local environments. Sound environmental planning and management of sports tourism developments requires a proactive approach to spatial sustainability issues. Amongst private enterprise there is, however, a high level of reticence to introducing formal environmental management standards. They are mainly oriented towards very short term and spectacular effects, and businesses clearly do not feel that there is an immediate tangible and direct economic advantage in proposals to restrict certain types of development or promote others. The feeling also that tourism, and especially sport tourism forms, have inherent environmentally friendly operational characteristics, and do not cause the types of ecological damage seen elsewhere, is strongly evidenced in the statements of the industry’s representatives.

The so-called environmental approach to sport tourism planning in Greece faces future difficulties, since most coastal activities currently operate in a policy vacuum in terms of environmental management. Where there are statutory guidelines, these are confusing. Finally, although reconciling environmentally responsible demand-side action with supply-side policies which explicitly acknowledge resource value and constraints, the planning approach urgently needs synergistic solutions. By capitalising on resource-based opportunities to develop partnerships between the various interest
groups, local communities, government and businesses, a sustainable product and destination strategy may emphasise the advantages of attracting green markets to match what is perceived to be the green character of the new sports tourism offer. In turn, the current approach to sustainable planning depends on a detailed understanding of the nature of sports tourism, its real effects on the local environment and its qualities that may contribute to a sustainable tourism product.

9.2.3 The Regeneration of Developed and Lagging Regions: A Role for Sports Tourism

In order to achieve the new public sector objectives of regeneration and sustainable development, sport tourism is expected to play a major role in strengthening traditional regions and enhancing the development potential of less developed areas, particularly in exploiting some of their unspoilt natural features and their cultural capital. Identifying this potential key role for sport tourism within both tourism product repositioning and regional development in Greece, the following section aims to summarise both the promising and obstructing factors to its establishment and practice, as identified from the empirical research.

In so doing, these conclusions from the empirical work are framed within the five indicators (or ‘denominators’) identified in the work of Komilis (1991) which served as a structural frame for the research (Chapter 2). As noted in Chapter 2, Komilis reviewed a number of different typologies of sustainable tourism planning and management, and the criteria he developed have been used to assess the development of the Greek tourism sector and the role that sports-related tourism can play in its sustainable tourism development rejuvenation track.

The following sub-headings, then, relate to Komilis’ structure for evaluating the selection and promotion of sustainable regional development and tourism product development initiatives.

a. Interregional Differentiation and Diversity of Regional Tourist Production

In this first ‘denominator’, Komilis identifies the need for a continuous process of enriching and innovating of tourist products, in such a way as to enhance each region’s ‘tourist identity’ and improve competitiveness through a wide range of attractions,
based on diverse regional resources. Here we can assess the applicability of sports tourism within the regional tourism products, whether in developed or 'lagging' regions.

The principles of regional differentiation are repeatedly emphasised within much of the central government and local policy action for tourism in Greece. These principles also appear to be acknowledged as encompassed within the perceived potential of sports tourism development, according to a majority of interviews from the range national and local policy makers and designers spoken to. Sports-related tourism clearly has significant potential within the wider ‘special interest tourism’, that is commonly held to be the most appropriate vehicle through which to alter or enhance the existing mass tourism operations.

Active tourism provides for a different type of tourist from the beach-oriented mass product, and has greater potential for differentiated product development, and more significant utilisation of local natural and social resources. Regional qualities, as well as regional differences can be drawn out, providing a more quality oriented product than is demanded by mass beach tourism alone.

There is potential for a greater element of regional identity to be included within the more sophisticated sports-tourism packages and this can be promoted as a means of highlighting the cultural and natural assets of Greece, particularly in areas away from traditional tourism centres. Sport-related tourist behaviour based on different natural resources (mountain/sea tourism) clearly has greater potential than mass tourism forms to highlight local environmental diversity and to build upon distinct local tourist products in different regions. Thus, sports tourism was seen by many interviewees as an ideal vehicle through which to sensitively diversify and develop tourist products beyond those of the mass/beach oriented kind. It also has the Komilis-identified virtues of assisting in providing enriching and innovative tourist products, necessary to improve competitiveness and assist the rejuvenation process.

The policy documents covering the tourism product differentiation process, offer a list of sports-related development types which seem to be appropriate to creating a new...
image for a 'tired' product in a saturated market. Directing the emphasis towards quality facilities and infrastructural improvements, the policy guidelines aim to control within acceptable limits, and upgrade, a tourism product in need of regeneration. The possibilities for significant investment in these sport-related tourism forms has been dramatically enhanced by the powerful incentives offered within the new developmental legislation by central government, which can be used to subsidise large parts of costly sports tourism development. Through both European and national initiatives, the existing destinations can profit from regional finance programmes enhancing 'broad' developmental aspects, such as transport links, information networks and general infrastructure.

In contrast, private investors remain characterised by short term views and high profit expectations. They maintain a rather pessimistic stance towards new investment of an adventurous character in new tourism products. The tourism industry itself (including new elements), located mainly in the most traditional destination areas of Greece, expressed fears about the product differentiation process, in terms of altering the image of a well established classic mass tourism offer. The lack of effective promotional planning to back up the legislative and policy framework implemented, is seen as preventing the successful launch and operation of a more distinct tourism product form. This costly promotional effort is unlikely to be covered by private investors, who are clearly sceptical of the market acceptance, the differentiating abilities, and the operation of the proposed sport tourism developments, and their role in the overall tourism product.

b. Komilis' second criterion, which refers to the aim of 'maximising the economic benefits of tourism over an entire region, by providing the best interlinkages of tourism to the other sectors of the regional economy', lies largely outside the remit of this study and was not ultimately included in the questioning of policy designers and operators with reference to sport tourism development.

The third criterion of 'equity and local involvement conditions that should prevail when tourism's growth is related to sustainable development' was considered to be more central to the present context.

c. Equity and local involvement conditions that should prevail when tourism's growth is related to sustainable development
The institutional instruments enacted recently to develop greater levels of self-administration represent promising indicators for the social acceptability of the new sport-related tourism development policy. Involvement of the public sector and all other affected groups will allow communities to have increased involvement in the adopted approach and increase equitability of development. The systematisation of strong internal collaboration between these groups within the decision-making process creates optimism amongst the local community. The establishment of the collective bodies, the Prefecture Tourism Promotion Committees, creates an interface which aims to strengthen relationships between the central Government and the local authorities of the regions. The role of the regions seems to be transforming from policy impact receiver to provider, advisor, regulator and decision-maker. Regions, both touristically developed and presently developing, demonstrate a ‘community’ of relevant bodies and agencies, who are enthusiastically seeking to establish well-balanced sport-related local products, based on the notion of sustainable treatment of present natural and cultural stock. In addition, the establishment of autonomous sports-related policy departments within the Ministry of Tourism is a decisive indicator of the increasing importance placed upon the inclusion of sport tourism within the tourism policy development and implementation process in Greece today.

The transformation to self-administration is being fostered by a framework of European and national initiatives which are supporting decentralisation and regional distinctiveness. The expected increase of the European interest through a wide regional framework of programmes, is promoting inter-regional cooperation in the fields of infrastructure, culture and environment.

However, the analytical process within this study of estimating the realistic potential for a well-planned and integrated sport tourism development within the Greek tourism product, revealed a series of complicating factors which generate some pessimistic scenarios for this type of development. A significant problem evidenced in the research is the focus on development issues from a central government perspective. This appears to be having the outcome of reinforcing or reconstructing ideological and administrative barriers which impede cooperation between the involved parties. Superficial bureaucratic collaboration, as evidenced in the policy formulation process, fails to effectively underpin, and sometimes distracts, the subsequent progress. One of the characteristics of the public policy, as identified in the research, is the emphasis given to procedures and legislation, instead of means of implementation. In addition, the slow development of these procedures, the diversity of agencies involved, and the lack of
communication of sometimes key information, further complicates the implementation of new policy.

The peripheral regional centres which lack the means, dynamism and qualified human resources, are failing to cope with the challenges and changing trends in tourism, and are therefore unable to produce competitive local products. With the evidence to date, local and regional authorities see the emerging decentralisation and participative approaches as, if anything, restricting their former responsibilities, fearing the transformation of the regional administration into merely a bureaucratic extension of the Centre. Sports tourism development is caught-up in this process, and provides a good example. The financial dependency of new local projects to the Centre, as well as the exclusion of regional bodies from the planning of national large scale special tourism infrastructure, is jeopardising the sustainable character of recent policies for regional regeneration through tourism.

d. Environmental considerations taken into account in policy-making and tourist product development

The inclusion of environmental agencies in the mapping of development preconditions signifies an increased recognition of the need for protection of the natural stock of resources for present and future use. The increased environmental consciousness of the public, as well as private sector recognition of the market potential of this, was demonstrated at all stages of the investigation. The relationship between a sustainable tourism industry (and sustainable individual developments) and an unaltered (or at least protected) environment, is increasingly appreciated in public policy documents and statements from the industry. Investing in sports facilities is considered as one of the most environmentally-friendly developmental directions, and a 'green' option within the tourism superstructure. The results of 'sustainable actions' deriving from European and national interrelationships can have a great impact on tourism and particularly tourism in the developing regions, by compelling adherence to new sustainable philosophy, standards and practice.

However, micro-local short term views and private sector interests seemed to put pressure on developmental decisions and to direct growth according to reasons different from environmental ones. Greater concentration of large scale sport tourism facility developments in the regeneration of mass destinations or their introduction into underdeveloped (and therefore under-prepared) regions could jeopardise the sustainability of the natural resources. The evidenced inefficiency of land use planning
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and the reactive (rather than proactive) nature of environmental control, will allow funding and investment to be channelled into activities which endanger the natural environment. Channelling further tourism activity (including new sports tourism developments) towards already established destinations could create major pressure on local environments in the form of additional illegal building and the further fragmentation of land ownership. Directed towards an industry which is strongly short term profit-oriented, environmental policy and the pro-active planning of new products remains a difficult task, but represents a decisive factor towards developing a sustainable tourism product for Greece.

e. Continuity and Adjustability of a Region’s Tourist Development within its wider environment

Komilis’ last criterion focuses on the sustainable tourism management element of tourism development and particularly on the managerial abilities exhibited in the region, such as flexibility and responsiveness in adapting tourism development and products to meet (and respond to) the requirements and conditions of a changing international tourism market.

The potential for sports tourism development provides a useful test-bed for responsiveness in the Greek context. For example, the EU has proved to be a catalytic factor contributing towards the viable development of tourism regions both developed and undeveloped. Guiding principles of sustainable tourism practice have been recognised in both central government policy documents and local tourism strategies in the region of Crete and Thrace. Funding support has proved decisive for the interviewed local private businesses, especially when attempts towards differentiation of the tourism offer have dictated large scale infrastructural interventions. The continuity of the new product offer is supported by the EU’s decisive funding action, that in order to receive funding, new initiatives have to meet criteria of developmental and sustainable feasibility. This has been particularly relevant for new establishments in developed destinations such as Crete.

‘Soft’ sport tourism forms are suggested as having a minimum impact and resulting in no alteration to the physical and social environment and are therefore highly favoured in
the statements of the policy-makers. While this is a fairly utopian view, it does further
highlight why sport tourism developments have attracted positive support. Despite
scepticism regarding the ability of regional actors to determine the level and nature of
these sport tourism forms, there is wide appreciation of the relationship between the
appropriate scale of these new development types and their long term viability.

The central government tends to be highly supportive of large scale recreational
facilities, particularly through favourable funding schemes for costly sport tourism
infrastructure, such as marinas and golf courses, particularly (as here) where they are
identified with quality tourism. While still supportive of sports-oriented tourism
developments, some other sources identify some problems in this process. For
example, in several locations there are a number of concerns regarding the scale and
commensurate impact of some of these proposed developments on local tourism. Also,
despite the commonly agreed policy direction towards quality and product
differentiation, involving inter alia sports-related tourism development, there is less
common ground, particularly between private businesses and local government sources,
on the overall costs of such development and who pays the more substantial amounts
for some necessary elements of these projects, e.g. market analysis, infrastructure costs,
central capital development, broader marketing etc.

What is evident is that in the process of establishing a differentiated tourism product
offer and image for both existing and new tourism destinations, strategic planning is
taking on greater significance. Including sustainable considerations is an example of a
process where the extension of areas for consideration, as well as the transformation of
the present administrative and operational systems to satisfy the needs of a broader
social and environmental spectrum, sits uncomfortably with traditional and well-
ingrained Greek policy systems.

9.3 Principles Underlying a Sustainable Strategy for Sport Tourism

At some stage, a study of this nature needs to move from detailed analysis of the
policies, networks and interrelationships which are promoting (and sometimes
impeding) development, towards advocacy of ways forward which appear feasible; not
least in satisfying the sometimes conflicting, or at least inconsistent, goals of the main
policy actors. The process of increasing the emphasis on high quality sports tourism
within the product repositioning of Greek tourism is an example whereby an increasing emphasis on sustainable development strategies is both desirable, and may serve to offer an acceptable track to sufficient of the involved actors to be capable of fostering the realisation of change, in what is a significant economic and policy arena for Greece.

Sustainable development thinking suggests that new and ongoing policies should always seek to ensure that local residents are the main beneficiaries, and should therefore seek to minimise the levels of external control over local economic structures. The developments related to the agreed objectives of tourism product regeneration are no exception to this, and in fact provide a good case study in the application of sustainability principles to tourism development. The adopted strategy must incorporate and build upon the high quality of the natural environment of the local regions by increasing the weight significance in planning terms of environmental factors within local policies for development. Sport tourism development can exploit a number of competitive advantages within an enhanced Greek tourism product by promoting the regional environmental potential. Tourism development within underdeveloped peripheral regions must in future follow a sustainable track. Establishing a systematic and effective environmental impact assessment audit for each new development would offer a continuous monitoring of the natural stock and prevent over-development. Adopting concerted land use planning is necessary to prevent the negative exploitation of local carrying capacity in some of these 'new' destinations.

There is now much literature (inter alia Inskeep, 1991; Getz, 1994) to show that tourism planning with a greater emphasis on goals identified by local communities, can contribute to the maintenance of desirable local lifestyles, but also sometimes enhance these through greater local economic strength. There will usually be associated negative impacts which should be minimised, but development must ultimately reflect local cultural strengths and heritage, must be developed with local planning inputs, and must not be of an inappropriate scale. Within these broadscale parameters, there is highly fertile ground for local adoption of sport-related development within an Olympic nation. Here better than anywhere, historical sporting tradition could be treated as maintaining cultural identity and fostering further some already high levels of local pride, alongside the realisation of local socio-economic benefits and contribution to the national tourism image.

For the realisation of this process, logical steps are for destinations, on a regional basis, to select the combination of sport tourism forms which are most appropriate in nature and scale to the area. The products and images used in the promotion of local
establishments should, as far as this is possible, be endorsed by residents rather than being seen as intrusions. Retaining respect for local traditions and lifestyle also suggests local involvement in tourism development planning. Broad-based community participation in tourism planning and implementation will need to be legislatively encouraged in order to achieve local input into the designation of distinct products. Closer auditing of impacts for the local environment will also need to be ‘enshrined’ into local government responsibilities if these developments, sometimes outside traditional destination areas, are not to repeat developmental errors of the past. Coordination of public and private efforts to maintain a balanced new product is vital to the viability of new tourism establishments and to equitable regional development.

On the basis of the research into both policy generation and development implementation, it is clear that public-private sector co-operation and co-ordination is an essential ingredient to implementing plans for new types of tourism development successfully. Making local groups aware of the advantages of sport tourism development, demonstrating lasting economic benefits and encouraging them to participate in planning and use of the facilities, constitutes a critical success factor towards viable and sustainable developments.

Despite the significance of the tourism industry to many areas of Greece, it is essential to consider that tourism is not the only existing nor potential source of local employment and income within most regions, including the under-developed ones. A limiting of the dependency of local production on the tourism sector is desirable for the new regional destinations aiming to develop their tourism potential. As such, developmental efforts should focus on designing structures and measures that balance relationships between all local production sectors. Examples can include looking at means for extending traditional industries in areas that should benefit from the increased flow of visitors, and seeking to exploit local production centres within the process of developing new tourism products and facilities, instead of importing external material and human resources. Thus, the new developments may act as a catalyst for wider economic development, reducing the reliance on tourism which has resulted in traditional destination areas, but which does not have to be an inevitable process.

In this, it is necessary to develop and enhance the educational and training infrastructure in order to realise the potential social sustainability of sports or other tourism developments. The professionalisation of the local workforce, in areas appropriate to the new employment opportunities is necessary, in order to support an equitable social regeneration and increase the real local opportunities for employment. Developing and
mobilising the human potential of local environments provides both individuals and organisations with encouragement to assume responsibility in the implementation of new plans and programmes. This type of process is key to the real social sustainability, as well as economic sustainability of this type of regional development and more appropriately satisfies the goals of economic development, than some of the earlier examples of undifferentiated and less planned tourism growth.

Given the significance of tourism to Greece, strategic central government thinking, along with local input, is necessary in order to identify and prioritise those sports facilities, events and programmes, that are appropriate in order to establish a coherent sports tourism element within the Greek tourism product offer, and thus to contribute significantly to both diversifying the traditional Greek product image and differentiating it from destinations relying solely on their sun, sea, sand resources.

The establishment of strong private-public partnerships appears to be the way forward in identifying estimates and possible sources for the levels of funding needed to realise for balanced and beneficial long lasting tourism developments of this type. Feasibility studies need to be undertaken by a coalition of involved parties and would identify the realistic parameters within which such developments represent viable business investments.

In addition, more significant and concerted promotional efforts need to be directed towards providing distinctive new sport tourism images for Greece, both nationally and internationally, reinforcing the diversified product and thus more competitively positioning Greece in the markets it seeks to serve. The formulation of new images, describing Greece as a sport tourism destination, as well as a sunlust and cultural centre, would define the kind of destination that Greece aims to be and the kind of visitors it seeks to attract.

The following table (9.1) summarises a number of the sports tourism and related developmental issues and policy objectives across three key parameters or viewpoints (central policy, business development and sustainable development) in terms of interpreting and influencing the direction in which these policies should be established/developed in Greece. Table 9.2 also summarises those positive indicators, as well as the main obstacles which determine the potential for sport tourism development in Greece as identified in the process of this study.
Table 9.1 Factors directly related to the prospective role of sports tourism in the regeneration of regional tourism potential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy Objectives</th>
<th>Central Policy</th>
<th>Business Development</th>
<th>Sustainable Development</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Sharing responsibilities in product development | • Restricted role within an increasingly free economy  
• Reinforced local administration  
• Incapacity to control external dependency | • Considered as a state responsibility to protect private businesses  
• Local administration concerns limited administrative capabilities  
• Market conditions suggest sports tourism products | • Maximise benefits through partnerships  
• Provide opportunity to balance socio-economic and environmental objectives  
• Promote new axes of product development based on local capacities taking into account national and European constraints |
| Differentiating an established tourism product | • A ‘supply’ approach to ST development  
• Accent to quality products and markets  
• Emphasis on new resorts’ development | • A ‘demand’ approach to ST development  
• Prefer large concentrated sites and units and profit centres  
• Considered a state responsibility to promote investments | • A product ‘futurity’ approach  
• Provide opportunities to balance regional needs and investment protection  
• Balance spatial development patterns |
| Developing quality product characteristics | • Emphasis on quality product with unjustified demand levels  
• Direct sport activities to undeveloped areas with low image  
• Lack of infrastructural capacities to establish distant regions as sport tourism destinations | • Satisfy present demand for mass consumption  
• Focus on eccentric sport tourism forms with small product life cycle  
• Disruption of other traditional production sectors and ethics through elitistic tourism products | • Consider wider market segments to increase product life cycle  
• Include variety of sport tourism forms to achieve a multifaceted image  
• Accent to adjustable products for long term benefits |

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(Table 9.1 continues)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Establish a distinct sport tourism image</th>
<th>Legislation supports a narrow product</th>
<th>Doubt ability of public promotion tools to alter established image</th>
<th>Promote an agreed image through public-private partnerships</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of sport tourism image</td>
<td>Incompatibility of proposed sport tourism with promotional tools</td>
<td>Favour classic image</td>
<td>Increase weight of sporting ingredients through all tourism establishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of sport tourism image</td>
<td>Lack of vision for explicit new image for Greek tourism product</td>
<td>Considered a state responsibility to undertake costs of image alteration</td>
<td>Create gradually a distinct sport tourism image with long term effects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intention of basing sport tourism on protected environmental capabilities</th>
<th>Production of 'reactive' environmental policy and confusing indicators and restrictions</th>
<th>Prefer self-regulation on spatial issues</th>
<th>Link tourism development with environmental protection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of sport tourism image</td>
<td>Failure to educate and inform local traditional communities of new developments</td>
<td>Limit environmental management to short term effects</td>
<td>Promote small scale establishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of sport tourism image</td>
<td></td>
<td>Insufficient weight on environmental value</td>
<td>Attract investments in nature capital enhancement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of sport tourism image</td>
<td></td>
<td>Prefer short term projects in profit areas</td>
<td>Encourage local environmental audit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of sport tourism image</td>
<td></td>
<td>Put pressure on environment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Improvement of tourism's local management capabilities in the context of self-administration | Incapacity to profit from decentralisation | Preferred more centralised approach to decisions | Allow community involvement in decisions |
| Establishment of sport tourism image                                     | Lack of information and creativity to advance local characteristics | Adopt a sectorial base of problems resolution | Include local human resources in planning distinct products |
| Establishment of sport tourism image                                     | Local financial dependency on the centre | Import external expert advise and human resources for local issues | Train staff locally to serve policy audit and implementation |
| Establishment of sport tourism image                                     |                                                                                             | | |
Table 9.2 Positive indicators of success and main obstacles characterising sport tourism developments in Greece

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Developmental Factors</th>
<th>Positive Indicators</th>
<th>Obstacles</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Construction of an effective interface to organise linkages between involved public and private agencies</td>
<td>•Institutional instruments enacted recently in the context of self-administration (Prefectural Tourism Promotion Committees) •Increased national and European initiatives enhancing regions' competitive advantages •Creation of specialised departments for sport tourism forms within policy structure</td>
<td>•Conflicting perceptions of policy ownership •Lack of intra-agency communication and Lack of inter-agency cooperation •Attempt to focus developments on the central government viewpoint</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sport tourism policy implementation</td>
<td>•Increased recognition of the need for product differentiation •Powerful investment incentives and subsidies •Legislative empowerment of incentives •Tradition and experience of nautical and Olympic activities</td>
<td>•Regions lack the means, human resources and budget to initiate developments •Local financial dependency on the centre •Danger of reconstruction of ideological and political barriers •Slowness of procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intention to advance the goals of a sustainable sport tourism development</td>
<td>•Significant shifts of policy towards greener tourism products •European and national guidelines enhance products compelling sustainable attitudes •Decentralised environmental authorities to the regions</td>
<td>•Pressure on established tourism places creates environmental deterioration •New establishments in undeveloped areas complicate the control of environmental changes due to lack of relevant facilities •Inefficiency of spatial planning allows funds to be channelled to activities that exploit natural stock</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
9.4 Overview and Concluding Remarks

The study attempted to investigate tourism production in Greece, and therefore policy, which despite an element of increased democratisation is being interpreted largely as an exercise of developmental power by the central government and a response to it by the private sector and the Peripheral public authorities. Clearly different regions have different potential, and differing physical, financial and experiential infrastructure to respond.

Much recent international and Greek tourism literature enthusiastically supports the importance of tourism as means of economic growth, of protecting local environments, and tackling regional inequalities. The study here has identified the need for the Greek tourism product to move away from exclusive reliance on a sun, sea, sand oriented product offer, showing signs of demand stagnation, and to rejuvenate its product with new offers and images. Public planners suggest that the direction for the regeneration of Greek tourism should be based, at least partially, on the establishment of special interest tourism. Within this, sports tourism has been highlighted as holding significant potential for a number of reasons. This urge to produce therapeutic solutions to the saturated tourism environment of Greece is evident in the Greek literature, which almost uncritically promotes the green characteristics of new recreational products.

However, adopting a critical-interpretative approach to policy, the study revealed that the new tourism proposals may present a further product which relies equally on the exploitation of the local natural and cultural environment. The literature, and to some extent the policy, fails to recognise that a new cycle of commodification of natural stock is commencing, for the presently unaltered environments which could support the shift of activities to less developed areas. There has been no substantiated proof, either through international literature or that from public planners in Greece, that the nature of the new products have the capacity not only to provide a 'ladder' to the 'regeneration stage', but also to be treated as environmentally friendly vehicles capable of protecting valuable natural assets, during sensitive economic exploitation.

On the contrary, despite analysts beliefs (see e.g. Krippendorf, 1987; De knop, 1990) that recreational products are created by the will of people to differentiate their tourism behaviour and distance themselves from mass tourism experiences, the study shows that the representative administrative and policy mechanisms and the tourism industry of a mass Mediterranean tourism destination like Greece, view the potential new development through the eyes and structural vehicles of the present policy and industry.
system, which has always been mass and number-oriented. Despite some evidenced views that some supporters see the benefits of sports tourism products, both to add value to existing products and to offer some additional new opportunities in presently under-developed areas, there is little evidence that traditional views and operating systems are changing significantly. The majority of policy makers and industry see the new developments to differentiate the Greek tourism product, as best taking place in or around areas of existing tourist concentration. Having said this, there is at least policy recognition and some industry acknowledgement, that Greece needs to differentiate its tourism product, needs more quality tourists, and needs to do so using more sustainable means than have previously been adopted. There is, however, no radical proposal for a shift in operating styles or a clear impetus to respond to the needs and opportunities to spread development, and its benefits more widely.

The use of Butler’s model for the tourism product life cycle (1980) conceptualises the process of tourism development, and increasingly highlights that the stage of ‘saturation’ has been reached in many mass tourism destinations, such as some Greek resorts. The increasingly significant attention given to such models by different studies indicates their value as a strategic planning tool, not least in identifying critical points where intervention is appropriate.

Theoretically, the model provides a rather optimistic view of the significance of public policy mechanisms for tourism development, through their intervention to foster regenerative programmes for local products. Appreciating this explanatory perspective of the model, the present study shows Greek tourism to be at the threshold of a new era for its tourism product, and uses the life cycle to demonstrate the transformation to either a regeneration stage or alternatively a decline scenario. However, the value of this research lies in the fact that the analysis goes beyond the apparent assumption of the model that decline occurs mainly due to internal social factors. Thus, the importance of exogenous factors that influence supply and development are analysed through an examination of many influential groups in the development process. The study seeks to contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of sport tourism development in Greece and its potential to contribute to the rejuvenation track.

To assist this process, Dietvorst’s (1992) tourism transformation model is utilised to demonstrate the transformation of the tourism-recreation resource, through activities and interventions by ‘producers’ who, in the case of Greece, are the policy community of central government, regional and local authorities, private tourism sector bodies, and environmental agents. Even the widely recognised structural logic of Dietvorst’s
model, whilst offering a valuable insight into the transformation process, appears to neglect explanatory mechanisms that investigate the role and interests of different tourism groups and ways in which they influence the tourism product offer. The present study thus seeks to fill this information gap, by providing a detailed insight into the forces that are powering transformation and their manipulation of the development of the sport tourism product in Greece.

The life cycle model takes on particular significance when related to the notion of sustainable development, which is increasingly associated with the establishment and development of alternative tourism forms. The work of Ashworth and Dietvorst (1995) provides the linkage of the product life cycle approach with sustainability, by identifying within this interrelationship a transition process whereby tourism growth evolves from being demand-led to an increasingly supply-led profile. This understanding is crucial to the implementation of ‘intervention strategies’. The authors’ projection of sustainability on a time-space axes of balanced developmental processes, represents a regulatory model for developmental procedures which aim to achieve sustainability. In this case, the model is applied to sport tourism development.

However, despite its apparent significance in linking the two paradigms (product life cycle analysis and sustainable development), producing a more holistic approach to the sustainable establishment and development of new tourism products, the model fails to offer explicit parameters (Komilis, 1991 refers to the these as ‘denominators’) that can be used to assess the detailed nature of the relationship. The present study therefore also aims to provide material which may assist in bridging the gap between life cycle and sustainability as mechanisms for analysis and development. The study has produced a thematic identification of the major parameters within the process of sustainable tourism product development (focusing on the promising developmental potential of sports-oriented special interest tourism) and applied this to the case of Greece, both in terms of regional development and regenerating existing destinations.

Having identified the ‘intervention moment’, the Greek public sector tourism actors are now facing the need to shift the life cycle curve from saturation to regeneration with new tourism product proposals. This study has presented an in-depth examination of the establishment of sport tourism in mass tourism destinations. In addition, recognising the existence of under-developed areas within Greece, the study has included an investigation also into these areas which appear to hold potential for the development of ‘soft’ sport tourism forms, and which may result in the type of regional development actively sought by central government.
The areas of Crete, characterised by its mass volume of tourist inflows, and at the other end of the scale Thrace, as the least visited region, present very different tourism environments. The study of these has sought to examine the role that sports tourism can play in satisfying different developmental objectives (either rejuvenation or product establishment). The major contribution of the study lies in not only its identification of those denominators which characterise the potential of sport tourism within the developmental process, but also how these denominators are used to examine the extent to which these types of development can be implemented sustainably in a sample of very different contexts.

Reviewing both the international and Greek literature, public policy documents, World Tourism Organisation and EU guidelines, the study attempts to increase knowledge regarding an assessment of the role of sport tourism products in mass tourism destinations. This is achieved through the in-depth examination of both the central and regional policy communities in Greece (with representation from the involved public and private sector groups) and draws an explanatory picture of the objectives, expectations and developmental realities for the Greek tourism product. The differentiation of the national and regional tourism products is a particular focus of study, which has significance elsewhere in terms of centre-periphery relationships, and differing potential. An in-depth examination of the diversity of perceptions and plans for action within the sample policy communities, aims to offer some understanding of this complex function, applied to a new focus for economic development/rejuvenation.

Secondly, the study offered an insight into the level of environmental considerations within the policy-making system, reviewing environmental legislation and regulation, which are considered crucial to the sustainable character of the new development, and also including an analysis and comparison of national and regional perceptions. The crucial denominators of ‘equality and community participation’ were highlighted as of great importance to the present context. The examination of institutional conditions and reforms altering the relationship between different power groups and the local community, offers an important and enhanced base for an understanding of the developmental reality for sports tourism and other forms of development in Greece. The insight offered by the study into different administrative policy groups at the different national and regional levels, and the nature of their interrelationship, is significant with regard to the effectiveness of attempts to implement developmental policies (e.g. for sport tourism) sustainably.
However, in comparison to the optimism evident in much of the literature on this subject, in Greece the study has shown that public as well as private sector thinking clearly prioritises their own sectoral viewpoints and preconditions within the process of balancing costs and benefits expected from, what appears to them, to be a radical reform, of the Greek tourism system. Barriers identified in this study to this type of tourism reform signal at the broad scale the conceptual distance between international theoretical proposals and local interests, and at the micro-scale reluctance towards alternative tourism repositioning mechanisms. However, despite this apparent reluctance from some quarters, the process towards differentiating the Greek tourism product has commenced, particularly through public tourism bodies and their implementation of incentive policy programmes. The level of industry acceptance and programme operationalisation has also been reviewed here, and suggests that the private sector is more sceptical regarding the economic value and significance of some of the proposed changes. Yet their position appears myopic in view of the changes taking place in the market for mass tourism destinations, and the identified potential for sport tourism forms to contribute to the differentiation and rejuvenation process.

9.5 Future Research Considerations

The present study highlights the limited level of collaboration between the administrative bodies of the two sectors of sport and tourism which results from a conscious preservation of the status quo within their separate spheres of influence. In contrast to Gunn’s (1990) optimism that there appear very few reasons why collaboration between the two sectors should not develop, in Greece as elsewhere (see e.g. Jackson and Glyptis, 1992; Collins and Jackson, 1998) the fields of sport and tourism (manifest by their separate agencies) are consciously following different policy goals. Policies by the public sector that promote ‘quality’ sport tourism products to attract new markets, in Greece are seen to conflict with the objectives and investment priorities of sport organisations, aimed primarily at increasing participation levels of people; the facilities for which are often wholly different. Providing predominately for its valuable foreign clientele, tourism policy clearly often discriminates against local residents’ needs for sport participation and facility use. Converse to the advocated democratic approaches to local involvement, identified in, for example Inskeep’s (1994) work on community participation to tourism planning, and central to the theoretically world wide adoption of Local Agenda 21 mechanisms for community involvement in planning decisions and sustainable development initiatives (UNCED, 1992), national public policies in Greece focus almost exclusively on sporting ingredients for their capacity to regenerate stagnated tourism products, and are, for the most part, centrally
driven, rather than enhancing local sporting opportunities and local involvement in tourism planning. While the two approaches are not mutually exclusive, the existing focus is creating tensions leading to implementation barriers.

Tourism oriented public bodies fail to consider the needs of local residents for sport participation in their concern for new sport oriented infrastructure, since this clearly lies outside their sphere of responsibility, which in Greece is traditionally allocated to sport bodies. Sport tourism forms such as marinas, golf courses etc., are often considered to have characteristics capable of upgrading tourism products in the Mediterranean, but these reflect an elitist approach in public thinking towards including sport into tourism planning, which is clearly likely to meet opposition at the local level. The introduction of sports such as golf and yachting, generally associated with a high social clientele, is clearly valuable to policies for increasing ‘quality tourism’, but contradicts values of democratic participation at local and national level.

The study has necessarily focused on the ‘producers’ perspective, although there is clearly scope for other studies to review ‘consumers’ roles in the development of sport tourism in Greece. This study also reveals the need for additional extended empirical and theoretical studies into a large number of thematic categories regarding the external influences on the development of sport and other tourism forms, namely by those groups presently controlling the level and type of demand for tourism in Greece. Tour operators, agencies and international distribution channels are considered highly influential in the successful launch and promotion of sport tourism, having the power to establish Greece as a sport-oriented destination and therefore to assist the objectives of the public policy.

A need to quantify the volume and type of sports-oriented tourism demand, both expressed presently and expected, is clearly evident in the research where the public policy makers (despite their lack of demand knowledge) design sport tourism products which may in time prove to be inappropriate have therefore with a limited life cycle. Particular attention should be given to the social profiles of sport tourism participants to identify whether sport does offer the ‘added value’ that can attract the appropriate ‘quality’ tourism clientele. Areas of special interest include the tourist and resident use of sports facilities at private sector developments, the level of response of tourists to sport tourism programmes and the relationship between added value and specific types of sports facilities. The identification of a considerable market for sports tourism, in terms of volume and socio-economic profile, would support the successful
establishment of sport tourism in Greece, not least through the satisfaction of public policy goals for tourism regeneration. At present, that data is lacking.

The undoubted benefit resulting from the linkage of sport with tourism needs to be more extensively examined. There is much work required, for example, on the exact nature of economic benefits from hosting sports events, which is now particularly pertinent to Greece, and on which more work is increasingly evident (see e.g. Gratton, 1998; Collins and Jackson, 1998). The present study has focused on the ‘tourism’ component of this relationship, due to the lack of sports policy related to tourism in Greece. Therefore, other major themes for future research include the potential for joint policy action by the tourism bodies (e.g. GNTO) and the Sport Secretariate, at both national and regional levels; joint promotional efforts and guidelines to local public authorities, as well as private investors, on the benefits accruing from the sport tourism interrelationship are also beneficial, as is further private sector oriented research on viability/economic sustainability of some of these developments, once built.

In order to gain acceptance for some projects, it is also necessary to research the potential of tourism to develop or enhance sports participation, not only for the tourist customer, but also for local residents. The balance between tourist and resident use of sports facilities in tourism areas is suggested as one of the most crucial outcomes of this interrelationship, particularly with a view to the social sustainability of such developments. Special consideration should be given to an analysis of the appropriateness and level of accessibility of sports facilities to the local community in the peak and off-peak tourism season. Despite the focus here on tourism-related issues, the contribution of sport tourism to an enhanced sporting lifestyle and participation is also considered to have vital research potential and contribution to the planning of effective sports policy. It also often influences the viability of sport tourism development.

9.6 Epilogue

As stressed during the course of this study, both the Greek tourism administration and tourism industry are now facing the need to achieve greater control over a product that both directly and indirectly affects the social and economic stability of the national and regional economies and local prosperity. While the analysis clearly highlights that those forces determining the nature and scale of developments are beyond local control, this by no means minimises the importance of attempting to design and implement mechanisms that would shape the future in ways that increase the possibility that
desirable, sustainable local outcomes can be realised. This study has attempted to identify those factors that appear to be related to the successful implementation (or obstruction) of the process of defining and determining how traditional and new destinations in Greece should develop their tourism sector through the inclusion, or concerted development of, recreational tourism forms over the next half century. The importance of establishing this and other forms of alternative tourism development within a socially, economically and politically sustainable (as well as environmentally sustainable) framework, is also highlighted.
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Appendix 1

Qualitative data collection: Interviewing strategy

This appendix supplements the methodological review outlined in Chapter 4 and is designed to clarify both the Government departments and other organisations and personnel involved in the sampling process, and the key aspects covered in the interviews. The structure of the sample is discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

The interviewing strategy was designed to reveal the extent to which sports-related tourism was being, or was accepted to have the potential to be, utilised within the product and policy changes currently underway or planned for Greek tourism. The process also provided additional information on a range of sub-issues identified within the research. Using 'purposive sampling' on number of key actors, including central and local government departments, and representatives of substantial private sector interests within tourism were analysed. This strategy was executed within both the central state and local government contexts and, within the latter, separate analysis was undertaken in both a highly developed tourist region (Crete) and a developing region (Thrace), to identify specific differences that these locations, social and developmental contexts may reveal.

Initial work had identified key actors in the policy community for tourism development in Greece within the different regions, and the interviews covered also a range of 'levels' within the system, from the Minister of Tourism, through a number of policy making positions, to policy implementors and industry representatives affected.

Criteria for differential questioning were invariably related to the interviewees' position within the policy development and implementation hierarchy and their associated level of knowledge and experience of developmental issues.
While individual interviews varied considerably, according to hierarchical position, responsibility types, regional location, personal interest etc., a number of thematic categories were used to focus the qualitative data collection. These are conceived to have provided a good basis for the interview process, and to have afforded insight into both core areas of the research and the flexibility to explore broader issues of relevance that emerged.

The basic steps within interviews were consistent across interview types, and these included:

- Introduction of the researcher’s identity, academic background, research interests and interview goals;
- Clarification of definitions regarding special interest tourism and sport tourism according to international literature and EU terms;
- Identification of the available interviewing time of the respondent and prioritisation of questioning areas;
- Division of research areas and use of appropriate questioning according to different policy levels.
Appendix 1

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Representative Bodies

Interviews with GNTO representatives, including Minister of Tourism and numbers of Department of Research and Policy

a. Sport tourism within a tourism product differentiation process

Higher policy levels
- Direction of quality changes within the tourism structure and special interest tourism
- Quality upgrading and new tourism products
- Sport within a mass tourism structure
- Appropriate/effective sport tourism forms within a quality tourism drive
- Identified sport tourism strengths to ensure quality

Implementation levels
- Modernisation of the tourism infrastructure through sport
- Indications of favourable sports through expressed preferences/activity
- Tourism facilities able to accommodate sport and improve quality
- Specification of the operational role for sport tourism within tourism facilities
- The mix of traditional packages with the new product innovation

b. Funding schemes to support new developments
- Prioritising public support for the developments
- Basis for effectiveness of new legislation to boost new developments
- Role of public funding and private sector contribution
- Public investment and small scale superstructure
- Appreciation of private business reaction to public funding
• EU funding for new initiatives

c. Nature of sport tourism development
• Autonomous nature of sport tourism – alternative developments
• Positioning of sport tourism within a mass tourism structure
• Prioritising the role of sport tourism within the differentiation process

d. State appreciation/awareness of private business response
• Level of risk in new investment for private businesses
• Contribution of private business towards new developments
• Effectiveness of new development legislation
• Importance ranking of funding, development and other State support
• Private sector input into promotional and image-making strategies

e. Sustainable indicators within the policy shift
• Practising sustainable guidelines within new development patterns
• Applicability of sport tourism and appropriate preconditions
• Selection of sport tourism forms and sustainable operation

f. Structural reforms in central and local government affecting new tourism developments
• EU policy influence and determination of structural changes
• Local policy reforms and democratisation of policy making to the regions
• Sustainability concerns within policy formulation and implementation

g. Prioritisation of developmental considerations
• Image production and promotion to communicate new tourism products
• Initiating the differentiation process through special tourism superstructure or improving basic infrastructure
• Organisational and marketing structure to implement the developmental shift
Appendix 1

Interviews with representatives of the Department of Sea Tourism and sections responsible for Special Interest Tourism (e.g. European Paths, Golf, etc.)

- Sport tourism forms and their position in the environment
- Sea tourism and quality tourism differentiation
- Soft sport tourism forms or large scale sport tourism infrastructure within quality differentiation
- Preconditions determining quality performance
- Importance of State’s infrastructural role
- Appreciation of private sector involvement in sea tourism products and development
- Relationship between demand and supply decisions regarding sea tourism
- Effectiveness of favourable funding schemes to initiate developments
- Consumer sensitivity on sea preservation and basis for recreational experiences
- Balancing environmental protection and the development process

Private Sector (Central Representative Bodies)

- Private sector and State decision-making for new tourism developments – the relationship
- Existing tourism facilities and public sector initiatives
- Large scale tourism superstructure investment and cost considerations
- A role for sport tourism within tourism superstructure – supplementary to the mass tourism structure
- Cost of sustainable operation and product differentiation

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- Demand for ‘green’ products and sport as a sustainable product
- Realisation of the increase in sustainable thinking and the planning of new tourism products
- Formation of communication channels and private sector relationship with all levels of government
- Present mass tourism profile and the establishment of new image
- Marketing information – expressed demand – indicators of interest
- Cooperation with designated local/central group responsible for tourism image definition.

REGION OF CRETE

a. Sport tourism within a tourism product differentiation process

Public Sector
- Sport as a tool for destination improvement
- Sport tourism within a product upgrading process
- Combination of cultural ingredients to ensure local distinctiveness
- Sport and image alteration

Private Sector
- Sport tourism as a generator of quality tourism
- Use of sport to tackle seasonality
- Sport tourism within an image improvement strategy

b. Funding schemes to support new developments

Public Sector
Appendix 1

- Creation of channels to communicate funds from centre to the periphery
- Local involvement in attracting funding
- Prioritisation of government funding to basic infrastructure or special sport superstructure

Private Sector
- State’s funding role in product differentiation
- Channelling funding towards improving present infrastructure or special facilities
- Level of subsidies needed to support new developments

c. Nature of sport tourism development

Public Sector
- Supplementary role of sport tourism to the mass tourism structure
- Sports facilities complementing mass tourism infrastructure

Private Sector
- Mixture of recreational facilities with traditional offer
- Adaptation of sustainable special interest tourism forms within the mass tourism operation

d. State appreciation towards private business response

Public Sector
- Level of tourism ‘mentality’ alteration
- Public communication of developmental goals

Private Sector
- State’s responsibility to attract private interest/investments
- Balance of long term benefits of sport tourism development with high regeneration process costs
e. Sustainable indicators within the policy shift
   • Public initiatives and Private businesses ‘green’ adaptation

f. Structural reforms in central and local government affecting new tourism developments
   • The importance of institutional change in the empowerment of local policy formulation

REGION OF THRACE

a. Sport tourism within a tourism product differentiation process

Public Sector
   • Sport promoting local characteristics
   • Sport to protect and promote natural environment
   • Sport tourism within sustainable tourism planning
   • Special interest tourism and tourism establishment in the region

Private Sector
   • Recreational activity to form a distinct tourism product

b. Funding schemes to support new developments

Public Sector
   • Legislation favouring local developments
   • Role of central government in development support
   • EU central funding and regional development control

Private Sector
   • Involved risk in investing in undeveloped regions
   • Balance of central funding with private business contribution
c. Nature of sport tourism development

Public Sector
- Autonomous tourism forms and sustainable local adaptation

Private Sector
- Special interest tourism and market conditions

d. State appreciation towards private business response

Public Sector
- Indicators of private business interest towards new developments
- Appreciation of private reaction to new initiatives

Private Sector
- State’s funding and legislative effectiveness

e. Sustainable indicators within the policy shift
- Environmental practices within private business planning

f. Structural reforms in central and local government affecting new tourism developments

Public Sector
- Local government initiatives to ensure democratisation of procedures

Private Sector
- Scale of new development to ensure viability