



Munich Personal RePEc Archive

Sustainable Tourism: The Environmental Impact of "Undetected" Tourism

Romita, Tullio

University of Calabria

11 February 2006

Online at <https://mpra.ub.uni-muenchen.de/25387/>

MPRA Paper No. 25387, posted 24 Sep 2010 15:00 UTC

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF “UNDETECTED” TOURISM

Tullio Romita
University of Calabria

In the next twenty years tourism will grow strongly and two thousand million tourists will invade present and future tourist destinations. As a consequence, tourism creates unpredictable impacts on the environment. In this context an important role is played by “undetected tourism”. This term is referred to the unorganized tourism, which takes places directly between tourists and local communities, a process still little analysed by official studies and statistics. The undetected tourism in some western areas, e.g. in Southern Italy, is socially and economically more important than the organized one. It generates hidden economical flows. Moreover, this kind of tourism causes serious damages to the environment, with decay in the quality of life. The paper proposes some corrective measures for its promotion in Southern Italy.

Keywords: *sustainable tourism, undetected tourism, environment, carrying capacity*

INTRODUCTION

The 5th Political and Action Program 1993-1997 of the EC, represents the first document issued by an organization of international interest in which there is a direct reference to the need of applying the principles of sustainable development to tourism. Hence it binds the subscribing countries to promote policies and strategies which assure tourism development and the survival of environmental resources (cultural and natural) on which the future of humanity depends (Montanari, 1993).

If this document had the great value to put tourism sustainability matters on an international level, the one issued a year later has gone even further. In 1995, on the occasion of the international conference on tourism held at Lanzarote promoted by World Tourism Organisation (WTO), a new document known as “Sustainable Tourism Chart” was issued. It pointed out the main criteria according to which sustainable tourism could be achieved:

- a. to respect social, cultural, and natural equilibrium of tourist locations;
- b. to plan tourism interventions by enhancing the partaking and acceptance of its positive and negative effects by all the actors who are directly or indirectly involved in it;
- c. to promote the application of those methodologies, technologies and organizational and managerial actions which have the lowest negative impact on the environment;
- d. to define tourist interventions and strategies exploiting scientific sources deriving from the collaboration and cooperation of all qualified tourism and environmental actors.

Tourism is nowadays part of those human activities to keep under control because it is considered “dangerous” for the environment. This claim is due to the pressure exerted by the rapid growth of tourism, over the past 20 years, on the environment, since tourism is currently a social phenomenon which moves thousands of people, driven by different motivations towards new and highly-developed places and territories.

The purpose of applying sustainable development principles to tourism has emphasised three issues. According to the first one, the environmental resource is not an inexhaustible good. The inevitable transformations caused by the exploitation of the resources for tourist aims can lead to the modification of the quality and quantity of the same resources. It is thus clear that tourism development depends on environmental resources availability. However it is also obvious that the same resources will be inevitably worn out, manipulated and transformed without being able to assure their recovery. Therefore tourism industries are the first ones to pay the consequences for the enduring degradation of these environmental resources, up to the decline and impoverishment of local communities’ social and cultural conditions.

The second issue, emphasising the discussion on sustainable tourism, argues that environmental resources are common goods which cannot be freely used. However, nowadays, the approach according to which the reasons that justify the settlement of productive activities are often seen as winning over the ones that do not recommend its realization for the strong degradation on the environment.

The last issue takes into account the reasons underlying the accomplishment of plans which do not respect and protect environmental resources. Indeed, the promise of an economic wealth for those territories, in which an implementation of actions is suggested to develop tourism is considered a very dangerous initiative for the environment. Therefore, it is practically impossible to support attitudes opposing previously

suggested plans, especially in depressed areas, where it is more difficult to achieve common wealth. It is, also, rarely possible to find solutions which can guarantee a balanced impact on the territory and landscape (Romita, 1999).

However, hereafter, we will depict the situation and the methods through which, yet nowadays, circumstances of unsustainable tourism are fulfilled:

- a) local people confronted with tourism plans which have highly negative impacts on the environment, are usually inclined to favour the accomplishment of the plan previously presented, since they feel that rejecting it could mean opposing economic and social development of the community in which they live;
- b) local public administrators, tend to support the realization of a plan, even when its utility and environmental sustainability are uncertain. They do not intend to undertake a position different from the population's will and from the economic forces supporting it.

The so called "ecomostri" ("eco-monsters") are tourist buildings and infrastructures incompatible with the surrounding landscape and above all degenerating it.

In conclusion, focusing on the issue of sustainable development applied to tourism, we have the feeling of finding ourselves in situations which for many aspects are paradoxical. On one hand it seems clearly evident that more elevated is the quality and quantity of environmental resources, higher will be the possibility of success of the tourist sites in which these resources are present. On the other hand we have learnt that the more tourism develops, higher will be the possibility that tourism itself is the cause of permanent damages on the exploited resources, and on itself.

The way towards sustainable tourism seems to be the one able to bring together environmental and man's needs.

PROBLEMS LINKED TO TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY

Why tourism is considered a high-risk economic activity for the environment?

We can say with absolute certainty that this depends on the fact that the negative effects of tourism on nature and culture are evident in several territories. These effects can soon overcome the positive ones (which are still nowadays dominant) if certain factors are not held under control.

First of all, we must consider that if on one hand there are continuous pressures of tourism on the environment, on the other hand we must say that these pressures will increase in the next 20 years if tourism production will not change radically adopting sustainability principles. According to the WTO, the number of tourism travelling around the world could triple in the near future going from 700 million to about 2 billion a year.

It is evident that new markets, such as China or Eastern Europe, will open their doors to tourism. Thus large masses of tourists will encourage economic operators to create new tourist destinations, new accommodation facilities, restaurants, harbours and airports, roads, amusement parks, etc. This, can lead to a wrong environmental management similar to one implemented by traditionally tourist countries. However, it is also evident for the same reasons, that other tourist sites will be abandoned by the great international tourist fluxes if they cannot guarantee a competitive tourist supply towards the emerging countries. In this case, countries which have made their living on tourism for ages, will have to cope with a productive change over their territory. Other sites will have to cope with quantities of tourist masses which are already higher than the carry-capacity of the territory.

If this is the future situation of tourism, other problems will rise and get worse, such as the spatial and temporal concentration of tourist demand, which is the cause of many of the environmental damages. This is primarily due to the impossibility of overcoming two types of constraints on which the majority of tourism experience proposals are planned, that is: the weather and the availability of tourist dwellings and infrastructures. Most of the world tourism flux is, indeed, concentrated in those months of the year in which the weather is warm, emphasising a seaside sort of tourism. In order to satisfy this kind of tourist demand, tour operators plan their catalogues sponsoring world-famous sea resorts as their main tourist supply. It is evident that nowadays policies that able to concentrate tourist fluxes within the carry-capacity of the territory, environment and population are very uncommon. Thus the intensive exploitation of the territory and its resources, and its degradation are very frequent. In this context we should take into consideration the doubts of those who although looking forward to the development of tourism are also concerned with the impoverishment of the environment.

OBSTACLES TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

This paper has so far looked at tourism as a set of activities and relationships which evolve around an industrial modern productive process, governed by two actors: tourists and tourist operators. The former buy tourist products created by the latter exploiting environmental and cultural resources, attractions, structures and infrastructures, of a certain territory. Therefore all the variables of the productive process are known and so can or could be kept under control.

Indeed, if the tourism system functioned as it has been described, it would be relatively easy to point out the factors underlying the unsatisfactory rapport existing between tourism and environment and the balancing actions. However, although in the past years the population has become more sensitive towards environmental problems, the main problem of tourism is to make people accept, share and put into practice these sustainability rules.

The question is more complicated, and many obstacles impede the assertion of tourism sustainability, which to our concern, we have to do with historical and cultural problems which we feel the need to summarize briefly hereafter.

These problems date back to the initial moments of mass-tourism development. In the 60s and 70s, under the growing demand of tourism coming from all social classes, the people who invested in tourism were about to experience a real social and economic growth. In this context, in the majority of western countries, tourism developed according to unwritten rules accepted by society: the first tourist entrepreneurs were seen as pioneers risking at their own expenses in a field which was not yet clear. The excessive construction of tourist buildings and infrastructures, both private and public, were looked at favourably by the community and local administrators, since they were essential to tourism development. In addition mass tourists were treated with great receptiveness and gratitude. The consequences of this situation are:

- a) the inheritance of many buildings occupying any space considered fruitful from a tourist point of view, and which have not taken into account long term negative effects on the environment and landscape. Moreover, it is difficult, nowadays, to think about reconverting these tourist areas in consideration of the environmental needs, especially if think about the economic impact of such an initiative;

- b) the presence of a great fragmentation of the tourist economic and productive structure in many intersection activities, which in the majority of cases, think and act autonomously far from predictable and controllable ways of production. Thus the product is always different even if the actors involved are carrying out the same task;
- c) the existence of a wide, rooted and consistent “off the books” economy, that is a tourist market which has its own “do-it-yourself” strategies and is self-governed according to means and proprieties which vary from place to place and which are only partially assimilable to the official tourism market ones.

In such a situation the possibility to implement solutions which are compatible with ecological issues, “eco-solutions”, is quite complex since on one hand the range of actors to involve is too wide, and on the other one there are too many economic interests to protect.

Another problematic issue could be the fact that tourism is seen by its operators as an economic phenomenon and not a social one. This means that whatever tourist intervention has in mind, it will be accomplished if it is profitable from an entrepreneurial, economic and occupational point of view. Thus environmental issues are set on a second or lower level of interest, such as the attempt to reconcile environmental and human beings interests with the entrepreneurs’ needs. It is evident that if we reverse the approach, the discourse on the protection of the environment would benefit from a higher attention and consideration, since its reinforcement leads naturally to a higher quality of life, and so to a better quality of tourist experience.

Other problems which limit or delay the application of sustainability principles on tourism issues, are to be found in the leading productive and marketing approaches in the tourist market. According to these approaches the territory is seen as the product and the tourists are seen as its consumers. The territory is not considered anymore as the place in which tourists can achieve a life experience through the direct contact and relationship with the environmental, cultural, leisure and natural resources at their disposal.

In other words, in selling a tourist product, we transfer in the “buyer” the perception that the purchased product is the tourist destination and not the elements which constitute the territory. Thus, the criteria used to value a tourist experience will be: 1) the reaching of one’s destination; 2) the comfort and safety; 3) the leisure facilities; 4) the natural and cultural resources offered by the territory. This is why, in the majority of cases, when we describe an experienced tourist stay, the things we remember are

usually the same: the length and means of the trip, the quality and quantity of food (rarely typical of the place), the reception and validity of the accommodating structure; the type and quality of leisure facilities at one's disposal. Only after, but not always, we will consider cultural and natural resources, demonstrating a very often superficial knowledge about them, usually based on a guide's description, or on the information taken up from a brochure. In such a context a tourist will become aware of the environmental problems, protection and preservation issues, and the impact of tourism on the environment only if the bad conditions of these resources disturb his "usage and consumption" of it (for example in the case of a seaside holiday when the sea gets dirty and polluted).

The last type of problem, which this paper focuses on, is the fact that "tourism" has always been considered as the product of official entrepreneurial and commercial circuits, leaving aside the kind of tourism which is self-governed and spontaneous and which has developed thanks to social and economic strategies far from law.

This phenomenon is further developed than what is usually thought, and has occurred in both underdeveloped areas and developed ones, following the path of the official tourism. This kind of self-governed tourism creates new destinations and makes pre-existing ones become more fashionable and tourist. It usually counts more tourists than the official one and is based on a hidden economy founded on the relationship between local people and the "others", and on a wide availability of private dwellings to sleep tourists. However this is also the kind of tourism, which eludes control, cynically and treacherously creating most of the damages on the environment, due to the lack of specific political, economic, and financial programmes.

UNDETECTED TOURISM

This paper will discuss the effects of unofficial tourism on the environment. For this reason we will take Calabria, an Italian southern region with a strong tourist tradition and relevance, as our case study.

Before entering the issue, we would like to discuss some theoretical aspects which could impede the understanding of some points relevant to our case. In particular, it is important to specify that hereafter the expression "unofficial tourism" will be replaced with "undetected tourism", since with this term we intend a different phenomenon from the hidden tourism created by the official tourism, mainly due to the omission and/or non-registration of tourists by an accommodating structure.

Moreover this term refers to a social and economic phenomenon which is neither “invisible” nor “intangible”, that is one can see and touch it, but which is not yet treated as an integral part of the tourist market, since it is not analysed and explored by methodical and official studies and/or statistics (on both a local and national level). For these reasons it is difficult to relate this kind of tourism to the official one.

The “undetected tourism” in Italy dates back the late ‘60s, when tourism became an essential necessity for all social classes. Thus a growing number of individuals started pouring into those tourist places which were able to offer accommodation to the vacationers and which presented strong elements of tourism attraction. Tourists’ needs were not complicated as nowadays, and in many cases a honest and quite hospitality was enough. While in the forthcoming years in some areas of the country a tourist development based on formal economy rules was favoured, in other parts of Italy, especially in the southern regions, “undetected tourism” has continued its escalation becoming the primary form of tourism overcoming the official one.

In Calabria, “undetected tourism” arose to satisfy its own population tourist demand. Thus many houses and apartments were built as “holiday homes” on the most evocative and uncontaminated costal and mountain areas. These dwellings were to be used to practice seasonal, residential and family tourism (that is a stay which could last up to three months at the seaside or on the mountains for the whole family).

After a couple of years and under the pressure of an increasing tourist demand from other regions, the local people started investing their own money on the construction of new “holiday-houses” or on the extension of their homes. This operation presented the double advantage of investing on real property which could also produce extra revenue if turned into receptive dwellings. Thus at the end of the ‘70s the Calabrian territory counted more than ten thousand dwellings which would have been entirely used to give hospitality to tourists coming from all parts of Italy.

Therefore, for more than thirty years, peasants, workers, teachers, etc have taken the role of receptive operators for at least two months a year. It is for this same reason that almost all the 800 km of the Calabrian coast and also the most beautiful mountain areas have undergone a wild construction phenomenon. This situation has been desired and shared by all the actors involved (both public and private) since thought as useful for the development and progress of an area always considered underdeveloped from both an economic and social point of view. Nowadays, in Calabria there are one million dwellings over a population

of about 2 million inhabitants (that is one dwelling for every two inhabitants!) at least 35% of these dwellings are empty (that is one out of three) and about 60% of them are official registered as “holiday houses”.

It is for this reason that “undetected tourism” has taken advantage over official tourism.

THE IMPACT OF “UNDETECTED TOURISM” OVER THE ENVIRONMENT

The Relevance of “Undetected Tourism”

In Calabria “Undetected Tourism” can count on an objectively high availability of beds thanks to the many holiday houses.

According to ISTAT (Italian Central Statistics Institute) the living units for holiday purposes in Calabria are about 200 thousand, while it counts 700 thousand rooms. This data puts Calabria at the 6th position for the availability living units for holiday purposes and at the 2nd place for empty houses among the 20 Italian regions. This means that considering the average value of 1.5 people per room, the total unofficial receptive capacity of Calabria could be around 1.050.000 beds.¹

However, as previously mentioned, willing to determine the environmental impact, we need to comprehend the quantity of the tourist fluxes ascribable to the availability of holiday dwellings present in Calabria. We, thus, need to know the anthropical effects due to “undetected tourism”. This is very difficult to determine since it is a hidden phenomenon, and so it is quite impossible to collect data and statistics useful for this purpose.

In a research published some years ago², some conclusions have been traced on the basis of the outcomes of two surveys aiming at defining the entity of those tourist fluxes generated by “undetected tourism”.

Thanks to a statistical approach, based on daily expenditure recorded during a whole year in 8 neighbouring communes situated on the Tyrrhenian coast of Calabria³, the daily population present in high season has been estimated in minimum 2.7 and maximum 15.3 times superior to the residential population. Even if the outcomes of this research overestimated the population present on the territory, we would find ourselves, however, in front of high figures.

A second study was conducted through a field research on a small mountain community (about 1.500 inhabitants) in the Calabrian hinterland.⁴ The objective of this research was to determine the tourist

flux in the month of August. The calculation was easy and prompt since after counting the empty dwellings and the number of people occupying the houses in different days during the month of August. The research revealed an average daily presence of 1.400 people (in 451 living units for holiday purposes), which multiplied by minimum 20 days of stay lead to the estimation of minimum 28.000 tourist presences in the only month of August.⁵

The Physical Impact

As we have previously affirmed, “undetected tourism” counts 1.050.000 beds. This capacity is widely superior to the entire receptivity of hotels present on the regional territory, which counts 190.000 beds, thus 5 times inferior to the carrying capacity of private dwellings.⁶

However the most extraordinary data from the point of view of the physical impact on the environment, and which should make environmental sustainability promoters ponder on, is that while receptive accommodations have their beds spread over 1.186 structures, the “undetected tourism” has its beds distributed in about 200.000 living units, they still represent a built-up area about 20 times superior to that of the official receptive structures.

What is more important from the point of view of the impact on the environment is the quality of this relationship between tourist structures and environment, which in this case study gives an advantage to the official tourism.⁷

The “undetected tourism” has found a fertile ground in a territory that has registered a tourist demand higher than the real official tourist offer, and which complies the development of invisible economic activities.

“Undetected tourism” has, indeed, gained power through typical strategy of *hidden and informal economy* (i.e. unbalanced, short-term, informal, anomic, illegal mechanisms based on individual relationships and low entrepreneurial value) (Bagnasco, 19994; Roma, 2001; Istat, 2001). In order to be achieved, these mechanisms need the complicity and support of public opinion, of local private and public bodies. They have established themselves throughout the years thanks to widespread economic benefits, which are able to generate this kind of tourism. “Undetected tourism” gives profits not only to people who rent their houses, but also to many other different activities. In such a context, it’s the environment to pay the negative consequences, for at least two reasons. Firstly, in a context driven by a hidden economy, the economic wealth which is produced favors the private organizations, while the

necessary costs to produce such wealth are ascribed to the public actors. For this reason the public sector has to make its choices on which plan to fulfil, and it is obvious that those plans with a minor negative impact on the population, more than on the environment, will be favoured. For example, last summer the high level of pollution of the Calabrian sea caused a sound protest by tourists (both those lodged in private houses and those lodged in hotels) spending their holidays on a wide stretch of coast (over 40 km.) of the Tyrrhenian sea. Many of these tourists changed their plans moving to other tourist places. The judicial inquiry set up has established that many purification plants didn't work regularly, because broken or in order to keep the costs low. They are often underestimated with regard to the population present on the territory during the tourist season.

The second reason which is partially linked to the first, is that "undetected tourism" has caused an unruly cementation, in order to fulfil the need of public and private structures for this kind of tourism. This explains why in each Calabrian common there are structures and infrastructures, such as soccer fields, tennis courts, etc., which do not have an economic or social motivation for their existence, since in the best cases for 10 months each year they are almost never used. According to us, this would act in opposition to the interests of "undetected tourism". In a context in which a hidden tourist economy prevails, it is merely possible to offer tourists common services which are present on the municipal area, such as those planned and accomplished by local public administrations, but which cannot be run for their economic unproductiveness. This reason, together with all the motivations discussed till now, justifies the state of degradation of the majority of public constructions and infrastructures supporting tourism.

The Pressure on the Territory

In addition to what has been stated previously, the pressure on the environment is highly noticeable also because very often the carrying capacity of the tourist location is exceeded.

We have already seen that there is a conspicuous lodgings capacity in Calabria since this region counts about 1.240.000 beds, of which 84% is provided by private dwellings that are undetectable in the official statistics, while the remaining 16% is provided by hotels and other official accommodating structures.

Moreover, during high season the population generated only by the "undetected tourism", without counting the one produced by official

tourism, can be from 3 to 15 times larger than the resident one, which means that it can gather values which are notably superior to the minimum ones which scientific literature considers unacceptable (Chambers, Simmons and Wackernagel, 2002; Beato, 1995).

These negative effects can be observed in Calabria, especially in summer. As evident consequences, many tourists, change their holiday's destinations.

The Landscape Pressure

The "landscape" can be seen as a great living organism, whose biological characters and whose perceivable forms are the result of the dynamic overlapping of natural and cultural components. Its relationships are recovered and balanced in time acquiring a much more autonomous life, so that they are able to support themselves. As natural components and actions we intend all the elements constituting the complex ecosystem based on the laws of nature, which determine the physical form and the equilibrium of the Earth. While for cultural components and actions we intend all those actions caused by man, their historical overlapping and their consequences on the territory (Oneto, 1985).

However great theoretical problems are faced when, in the attempt to create meanings which can express universal semantic sense, we try to define the currently used word "landscape", which gives wide space to interpretation. In fact, from a general point of view, "landscape" is a piece of territory seen from a prospective and descriptive position, and with an emotional connotation to which we can associate an artistic and aesthetic value.

There are not a unique landscape, and within it there are more 'sub-landscapes'. The operation of defining, describing, illustrating and specifying it cannot be univocal, since it varies according to the experiences, knowledge, life, mood and sensibility of each of us. In other words, the idea of landscape which we are able to express each time comes from the image of landscape that we have and to which we refer, that is that landscape which we think and/or wish to exist. Tourism is made of images, that conveying feelings and sensations, stimulating our fantasy and matching themselves with individual aspirations and knowledge, create the idea of landscape that we would like to experience.

Tourists do not always find the landscape they expect. This happens for three reasons:

- 1) Tourists often create their own image of the landscape only on the basis of the well-constructed and inviting settings depicted

on hotel and tourist brochures, or any other promotional means that, attempting to attract the tourist, emphasises the tourist element on which the supply is based, but reducing or leaving out other features;

- 2) tourists who have already been to a place expect the same landscape when they return, but during the years changes can occur and can intensely modify its main characteristics, and degrade its original features;
- 3) when the basic element presents accessible and usable problems.

In these situations, the tourist realizes that the landscape is different from what he has expected and can value to what extent this will compromise his future choices.

“Undetected Tourism” has not preserved the landscape, because it has not respected the local natural and cultural vocation disregarding the basic exploitation rules of the territory for tourist aims.

As observed elsewhere, the view seen from the train or car travelling along the Calabrian coasts is made by constructions everywhere, by walls, barriers and buildings that hidden the natural resources and the “landscape” (Scaglione, 2003).

The seascape has been more afflicted than the mountains, not because it is more expensive to tackle nor because there is a holiday dwelling rate inferior which has slowed down the creation of extra supporting structures and the speculative will. In fact, we can observe the same level of landscape alteration which may be found at the seaside, even in the mostly developed mountain areas of Calabria.

In other words, “undetected tourism” is a phenomenon which has radically transformed the landscape in its basic components.

CONCLUSIONS

This paper has attempted to prove how “undetected tourism” can cause several damages to the environment which can be compared, or are superior to those generated by the “official tourism”.

In our specific case, we have demonstrated the need to take into consideration “undetected tourism”, since it can create many positive and negative effects on the territory and on its environmental resources if it is widespread. “Undetected Tourism” is a complex phenomenon. It is of great relevance for the territory having positive implications for the economic life of its population, but it also generates negative effects on the environment and on tourism itself: it interferes significantly with the

urban development of the territory and in many cases it has overcome what we have called “official tourism”; it represents an economic and social resource for many local communities; it is self-governed and thus difficult to trace back towards the industrial managerial logic; its positive aspects should be enhanced and led towards a better visibility, openness and governability in order to reduce its negative effects.

This contribution also represents an invitation to deal with the question of sustainability in the field of tourism remembering that this hidden type of tourism is spread all over the world and that its negative effects can be controlled only if supported by political and operative choices which can make it come out and so rule it.

A theoretical and methodological approach could be suggested firstly by distinguishing the tourist market into two categories: “self-directed” tourism, which we have named “undetected tourism”, and “other-directed” tourism, which has been referred to as “official tourism”; secondly, providing the “undetected tourism” with judicial, economic, social, and environmental rules necessary for its functioning and for its governability; and at last granting local communities a fundamental role in the management and evaluation of the different types of impacts of the hidden and official tourism on the environment. This means that it is necessary to restore the communities with a role of great responsibility in the proposition and execution of a model of tourist development by integrating official and undetected tourism. In this way there will be a better administration of the territory and its resources.

REFERENCES

- Augè, M. (1999). *Disneyland e Altri non Luoghi*. Torino, Bollati Boringhieri.
- Bagnasco, A. (1999). *Tracce di Comunità*. Bologna, Il Mulino.
- Bartalotta, V. (1997). Il turismo dell'Alto Tirreno Casentino. *Unpublished Thesis in Statistics*. Rende, Italy: University of Calabria.
- Battimani, P. (2001). *Vacanze di Pochi Vacanze di Tutti*. Bologna, Il Mulino.
- Beato, F. (1995). *La Valutazione di Impatto Ambientale*. Milano, Franco Angeli.
- Beato, F., Osti, G. & Pellizzoni, L. (2001). *La Nuova Società Creata dall'Ambiente*. Milano, Franco Angeli.
- Bettini, V. (1995). *L'Impatto Ambientale*. Milano, Cuen.
- Canestrini, D. (2004). *Non Sparate sul Turista*. Torino, Bollati Boringhieri.
- Castoldi, G. (2005). *Turisti*. Milano, Hoepli.
- Chambers, N., Simmons, C. & Wackernagel, M. (2002). *Manuale delle Impronte Ecologiche*. Milano, Edizioni Ambiente.
- De Rita, G. & Bonomi, A. (1998). *Manifesto per lo Sviluppo Locale*. Torino, Bollati Boringhieri.

- Istat (2001), *Rapporto sull'Italia. Edizione 2001*. Bologna, Il Mulino.
- Martinelli, F. (1995). Ruolo del sociologo negli studi di impatto ambientale. In F. Beato (a cura di) *La Valutazione di Impatto Ambientale*, Milano: Franco Angeli.
- Martinengo, M. C. & Savoja, L. (1998). *Sociologia dei Fenomeni Turistici*. Milano, Guerini Studio.
- Montanari, A. (1993). Il turismo nei paesi mediterranei della CEE. Da un rischio accertato per l'ambiente ad una potenziale risorsa. In E. Nocifora (a cura di) *Il Turismo Mediterraneo come Risorsa e come Rischio. Strategie di Comunicazione*, Roma: Edizioni Seam.
- Nocifora, E. (1993). *Il Turismo Mediterraneo come Risorsa e come Rischio. Strategie di Comunicazione*. Roma, Edizioni Seam.
- Oneto, G. (1985). *Valutazione di Impatto Paesaggistico*. Milano, Pirola Editore.
- Pichierri, A. (2002). *La Regolazione dei Sistemi Locali*. Bologna, Il Mulino.
- Pieroni, O. & Romita, T. (2003). *Viaggiare, Conoscere e Rispettare l'Ambiente. Verso il Turismo Sostenibile*. Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino Editore.
- Roma, G. (2001). *L'Economia Sommersa*. Bari, Editori Laterza.
- Romita, T. (1999). *Il Turismo che non Appare*. Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino Editore.
- Savelli, A. (1989). *Sociologia del Turismo*. Milano, Franco Angeli.
- Scaglione, G. P. (2003). *Calabria, Paesaggio, Città*. Soveria Mannelli, Rubbettino Editore.
- Urry, J. (1995). *LoSguardo del Turista*. Roma, SEAM.
- Vitta, M. (2005). *Il Paesaggio*. Torino, Einaudi.

EDNOTES

1. The ISTAT statistics mentioned to in this paper date back to 1991. In 2001, in the last "Population and Inhabitations" census carried out in Italy ISTAT did not detect the data concerning holiday houses which in the meantime has surely increased.
2. This question has been specifically dealt with in a work published in 1999 (Romita, 1999).
3. The analysis was possible thanks to the collaboration of some business consultants, who gave some information on the daily takings made in 1996 by some business activities throughout the year (Bartalotta, 1997).
4. The study has been carried out by a group of researchers coordinated by the author of this paper.
5. Considering the official statistics it is difficult to include this place in a tourist discourse, since it has only one small hotel with a limited number of beds. In the case of "undetected tourism" instead the situation changes and this place will join again the other tourist destinations of Calabria.
6. The data refers to year 2004.
7. We can also affirm that all the information and indicators available suggest that this observation is true in general, and certainly in all those areas of the

world in which the phenomenon presents a wide diffusion and a consequential minor vocation towards the realization of industrial tourist activities.

SUBMITTED: FEBRUARY 2006

1st REVISION SUBMITTED: JULY 2006

2nd REVISION SUBMITTED: JANUARY 2007

ACCEPTED: FEBRUARY 2007

REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY

Tullio Romita (tromita@unicl.it) is a Researcher and Instructor at the University of Calabria, Department of Sociology and Political Science, Ponte Bucci Cubo 0 - (87036), Arcavacata di Rende (CS), Italy.