

## INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

**The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted.** Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

# UMI

A Bell & Howell Information Company  
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor MI 48106-1346 USA  
313/761-4700 800/521-0600



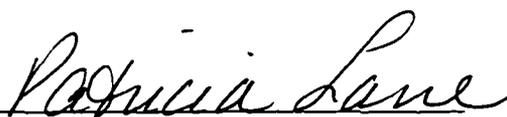
**Developing A Sustainable Tourism  
Approach for Cayo Coco, Cuba**

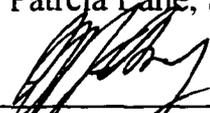
Submitted in Partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in  
International Development Studies

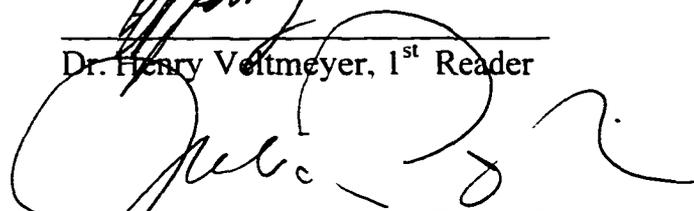
Saint Mary's University, Nova Scotia

Copyright by Carolee Buckler, 1998

January 6, 1998

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Patricia Lane, Supervisor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Henry Veltmeyer, 1<sup>st</sup> Reader

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Julia Sagebien, 2<sup>nd</sup> Reader



**National Library  
of Canada**

**Acquisitions and  
Bibliographic Services**

**395 Wellington Street  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada**

**Bibliothèque nationale  
du Canada**

**Acquisitions et  
services bibliographiques**

**395, rue Wellington  
Ottawa ON K1A 0N4  
Canada**

*Your file Votre référence*

*Our file Notre référence*

**The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.**

**The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's permission.**

**L'auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.**

**L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.**

0-612-33837-1

**Canada**

## **Acknowledgments**

**My time spent in Cuba and the research I conducted has been a life enriching experience and one that I will never forget. There are numerous people that I would like to thank who helped to make this thesis possible, however there is one person in particular who opened my mind, my heart and my life to new possibilities. I would like to dedicate this thesis to my assistant, best friend, partner and now my Husband, Julian del Campo Alanso whose knowledge on the subject, computer wizardry, patience, love and support throughout the entire thesis was insurmountable. I look forward to spending the rest of our lives together.**

**I would like to thank my supervisor, Dr. Patricia Lane who introduced me to Cayo Coco and the Coastal Ecosystem Research Center and who provided me with her guidance and expert knowledge on Cuba. Without her support I would not have been able to conduct my thesis research in Cayo Coco. I would also like to thank my advisors, Dr. Henry Veltmeyer and Dr. Julia Sagebien, for their participation and advice with this thesis.**

**I would like to thank the Canadian International Development Agency and the Canadian Bureau for International Education for funding and supporting this research project. The Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment and the Coastal Ecosystem Research Center (CERC) in Cuba provided me with the technical support and went beyond their role as a host organization to ensure that the work would be accomplished. A great amount of appreciation goes out to the people at the Coastal Ecosystem Research Center whose hospitality and expert advice on the environment made my stay in Cayo Coco an incredible experience. I learned a great deal from the people that work there.**

**Special mention should be given to Liset Arzola de la Rosa, from the Provincial Office of the Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment who provided assistance in developing the questionnaire and who helped to obtain permission. Jennifer Garrey was instrumental in providing her expertise in the statistical analysis of the surveys. Mr. Charles Suddaby from the Economic Planning Group of Canada and Bob Nidderly from The North American Leisure Group provided me with insight into Cuba's Tourism Industry and Elise Hug for helping me to edit my thesis.**

**Finally and most importantly I would like to thank my parents, Judy and Brian, whose love, support and friendly reminders to finish this thesis I could not have done without.**

## **ABSTRACT**

### **Developing A Sustainable Tourism Approach for Cayo Coco, Cuba**

**By Carolee Buckler**

**Date: January, 6, 1998**

Cuba is the largest island country in the Caribbean which is currently increasing its tourism as a key component of its overall development strategy. Cuba is in the process of economic change and for that reason many of the surrounding keys (including Cayo Coco) are being evaluated for recreation and tourism. These types of areas (the keys) are highly fragile and require careful planning. Cayo Coco has all of the infrastructure in place for tourism development and three hotels are already completed. As more and more pristine areas become developed, it is necessary to ensure that it is done sustainably.

The purpose of this study is to investigate whether Cayo Coco, Cuba could develop a market for more nature tourism and less sun, sand and sea tourism. The main objectives of the study are: (1) to gain a historical and present day understanding of tourism planning and the government's strategies for Cuba; (2) to gain an understanding of the strategy and planning for tourism development in Cayo Coco; (3) to develop a basic knowledge of the environment in Cayo Coco in order to identify possible areas of environmental impacts and sensitivity; (4) to conduct a survey of current tourists coming to Cayo Coco in order to obtain an international market perspective on whether it is feasible to develop ecotourism on this island; and (5) to provide a set of recommendations for the Coastal Ecosystem Research Center (CERC) that can be used to reinforce the protection of biodiversity and strengthen current tourism planning, especially in the area of ecotourism.

Field research was carried out for a period of five months in Cayo Coco. While in Cuba, there were three categories of interviews undertaken. They included interviews with 1) scientists and researchers at the (CERC), 2) government planners, agencies and developers, and 3) tourists and personnel in the tourism industry. A survey of 200 tourists was conducted. Secondary data were also collected during the field research period.

Data collected through the surveys and through direct conversations with tourists and personnel working in the tourism industry showed that there is a potential market for ecotourism on the island. Cayo Coco could become a desirable destination for ecotourists. It is necessary, however, for the government to take immediate action to protect remaining areas of Cayo Coco from mass tourism development. Ecotourists, as well as many beach tourists prefer to go to pristine areas that have not been ruined by development. If future development plans continue to include the construction of large beach resorts, the natural beauty of the island will become eroded and Cayo Coco will ultimately become indistinguishable from other traditional tourist spots in the Caribbean. Cuba needs to diversify its tourism product and provide the growing number of tourists who are less hedonistic and more culturally, socially and ecologically aware with the opportunity to explore Cuba's natural surroundings in an environmentally-sensitive manner. It is necessary, however, to conduct a more extensive market analysis in foreign countries to help provide more of an incentive for the government to develop ecotourism.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>I. INTRODUCTION.....</b>	<b>1</b>
I.1 PURPOSE.....	4
I.2 OBJECTIVES.....	4
I.3 ORGANIZATION.....	5
<b>II. DEFINING TOURISM.....</b>	<b>6</b>
II.1 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.....	8
II.2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM.....	10
II.3 ECOTOURISM.....	13
<b>III. HISTORY OF TOURISM IN CUBA.....</b>	<b>18</b>
III.1 REVOLUTIONARY TOURISM.....	21
III.2 TOURISM IN THE SPECIAL PERIOD.....	26
III.3 TOURISM AS A CATALYST FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT.....	27
III.4 TOURIST ARRIVALS.....	30
III.5 CURRENT DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES.....	35
III.6 FOREIGN INVESTMENT IN CUBA'S TOURISM INDUSTRY.....	36
III.7 STRUCTURE OF TOURISM PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT.....	40
III.8 TOURISM EDUCATION.....	43
III.9 CUBA'S TOURISM PRODUCT.....	44
III.10 ECOTOURSIM.....	47
III.11 ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATION.....	52
<b>IV. METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b>V. OVERVIEW OF TOURISM IN CAYO COCO.....</b>	<b>62</b>
V.1 STATUS OF RESOURCES.....	64
V.2 TOURISM DEVELOPMENT.....	66
V.3 TOURISM PLANNING IN CAYO COCO.....	68
V.4 THE COSTS AND BENEFITS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT.....	75
V.4.1 <i>ECONOMIC</i> .....	75
V.4.2 <i>SOCIAL</i> .....	78
V.4.3 <i>ENVIRONMENTAL</i> .....	81
<b>VI. SURVEY ANALYSIS.....</b>	<b>88</b>
VI.1 RESULTS.....	99
VI.2 MAJOR FINDINGS.....	103
VI.3 LIMITATIONS:.....	104

<b>VII. ECOTOURISM IN CAYO COCO .....</b>	<b>104</b>
<b>VII.1 PARKS AND PROTECTED AREAS FOR CAYO COCO .....</b>	<b>114</b>
<b>VII.2 RECOMMENDATIONS .....</b>	<b>119</b>
<b>VII.3 FUTURE DIRECTION AND FRAMEWORK.....</b>	<b>128</b>
<b>VIII. CONCLUSION .....</b>	<b>130</b>
<b>IX APPENDICES.....</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>IX.1 APPENDIX: TABLE OF HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS IN CUBA.....</b>	<b>133</b>
<b>IX.2 APPENDIX: GRAPHS OF CUBA'S GROSS EARNINGS IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY     AND CUBA'S TOURISM ARRIVALS. ....</b>	<b>134</b>
<b>IX.3 APPENDIX: CHART OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF TOURISM IN CAYO COCO.....</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>IX.4 APPENDIX: MAP OF CAUSEWAY AND BEACHES.....</b>	<b>137</b>
<b>IX.5 APPENDIX: TOURIST SURVEY .....</b>	<b>140</b>
<b>IX.7 APPENDIX: PHOTOS OF CAYO COCO. ....</b>	<b>142</b>
<b>X REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>144</b>

## **FIGURES**

Figure 1 Percentage of Tourists from Each Country .....	89
Figure 2 Percentage of Females and Males Surveyed .....	90
Figure 3 Percentage of Age Classes Surveyed. ....	90
Figure 4 Age Distribution by Gender.....	91
Figure 5 Percentage of Occupation Distribution .....	91

## **TABLES**

Table 1 Agenda 21: Travel and Tourism .....	9
Table 2: Tourist Arrivals To Cuba By Major Origin Market, 1989 and 1993-95.....	31
Table 3 Cuba's Tourism Arrivals for 1996.....	32
Table 4 Cuba's Tourism Arrivals for 1997.....	32
Table 5 Key Provisions of Law 33 That Effect Tourism Development.....	54
Table 6 Examples of Economic Reforms in Cuba.....	78
Table 7 Response to Methods to Increase Tourism in Cayo Coco.....	95
Table 8 Protected Area Categories and Management Objectives.....	118

## INRODUCTION

There is growing acceptance, especially following the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio and the adoption of Agenda 21 by the community of nations, that sustainable development has not only economic but also environmental and social dimensions. Since environmental protection is a key requirement for maintaining a sustainable way of life, we must ensure that adequate measures are taken to avoid the depletion and degradation of natural resources. (Mohhan and Jeffery A. McNeely, 1994)

The above quote illustrates the new realization by governments and civil society that development is not just economic growth. Mohan and McNeely refer to the interdependence of the economy, environment and society. They believe that sustainable development is to promote environmentally-sound economic growth and development, and not to promote economic growth or environmental protection in isolation. Hence, sustainable development actively integrates all three dimensions.

Tourism, as a key economic sector, plays an integral role in the debate over economic growth and environmental protection. The tourism industry is one of the world's largest economic sectors. It is worth \$3.1 trillion a year, accounts for over 10 percent of global GDP and employs 112 million people: one in 15 employee's world-wide work in tourism.<sup>1</sup> By sector, it is the largest single provider of jobs in scores of countries. International tourism is expected to increase world-wide as people travel to new locations in search of the perfect vacation. By the year 2000, more than 650 million international tourists are expected to travel the globe.<sup>2</sup> In the past, many viewed only the economic value of tourism and ignored the direct impacts on the socio-cultural and ecological environments. In the 1970s, conservationists took a more critical approach

---

<sup>1</sup> German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation. Biodiversity and Tourism Conflicts on the Worlds Seacoasts and Strategies for Their Solutions. 1997, pg. 3.

towards tourism as a contributor to development. Unfortunately, it took more than a decade of criticism to make people aware of the consequences of tourism. Many theorists believe that there has been an overemphasis on the positive economic benefits of tourism and a lack of attention paid to the negative impacts that tourism has had on the environment and society. This ignorance has caused irreversible damage to the environment as well as to many local communities. The lack of attention paid to the negative impacts that tourism has on the environment and society can be seen throughout the Caribbean and in many countries where tourism has been aggressively promoted.

Cuba is the largest country in the Caribbean. It is currently increasing its tourism sector as an important component of its overall development strategy in order to obtain hard currency. The prioritization of the tourism industry can be explained by the economic crisis that followed the fall of the Soviet Union and the tightening of the economic blockade by the United States against Cuba in the early 1990's. The Cuban government has targeted the tourism industry as a main sector in its economic recovery. In 1994, for the first time since the 1959 Revolution, tourism generated more hard currency earnings for Cuba than the sugar industry. The increase in hard currency, however, has not come without problems. Cuba's decision to promote the tourism industry as a source of hard currency and economic development has brought about environmental threats to particular areas in Cuba such as, pristine coastal areas. These new developments (i.e. hotels, bars, etc) are being constructed in habitats rich in biodiversity and endemic species.

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., pg 3.

Cuba is rapidly developing areas such as the Sabana Camaguey Islands off of Northern Cuba, in order to expand the tourism industry. The approach the government has taken over the past five years indicates a strategy based upon increasing numbers of tourists visiting Cuba each year. The Cuban government views tourism as a key sector to promote development and strives to attract over one million visitors a year with numbers increasing each subsequent year.

The tension between tourism and the environment is becoming a concern for the Cuban government and is the central focus of this thesis. The main concern over the development of tourism in Cuba is that economic growth may be promoted at the cost of environmental degradation on the island. Other countries' experiences over the last decade profusely illustrate a failure to take appropriate measures to sustain the environment. In many countries, over-exploitation for the sake of obtaining earnings from tourism has ruined many natural resources, even those which attract tourists. Cuba is rich in natural resources and biodiversity, and can develop alternative forms of tourism development, which are more sustainable both environmentally and economically.

The Cuban government is presently diversifying its tourism industry by spreading tourism development to different regions in Cuba. The government has identified several important and delicate regions of the island for tourism development. These regions maybe too fragile to develop tourism and the aim of generating national revenue could be at a severe cost to the environment. Several places in Cuba have been targeted for tourism development. For example, apart from the tourist pole (Varadero, Havana), one of the most important is Cayo Coco, a small island located north of the Ciego de Avila province. Plans for tourism development have already begun with the construction of a causeway,

roads, an airport and two hotels. Two additional hotels are under construction and near completion. The island has several different types of ecosystems and extensive nearby areas of mangrove forests. Some of this forest has been damaged by the increase in salinity of the coastal waters which occurred after causeway construction.

### ***1.1 Purpose***

The primary goal of this thesis is to investigate Cayo Coco's tourism development strategy in order to determine whether tourism development on this island is sustainable and to examine whether new forms of tourism development can take place on the island, such as nature tourism, which has less of an overall impact than traditional mass tourism development. In order to fulfill this goal, the area's tourism development plans are critically examined and current tourist market trends are analyzed using a survey of tourists to Cayo Coco. The case study is intended to provide a rationale for the promotion of a more sustainable approach to tourism development.

### ***1.2 Objectives***

The main objective of the thesis is to assist Cuban planners in designing a sustainable tourism model incorporating ecotourism that can be used to address development issues in Cayo Coco and other coastal areas in Cuba.

The specific objectives of the research include the following:

- (1) to gain an understanding of the historical and present day tourism planning and the government's strategies for Cuba

- (2) to gain an understanding of the strategy and planning for tourism development in Cayo Coco
- (3) to develop a basic knowledge of the environment in Cayo Coco in order to identify possible areas of environmental impacts and sensitivity
- (4) to conduct a survey of current tourists coming to Cayo Coco in order to obtain an international market perspective on whether it is feasible to develop ecotourism on this island; and
- (5) to provide a set of recommendations for the Coastal Ecosystem Research Center (CERC) that can be used to reinforce the protection of biodiversity and strengthen current tourism planning, especially in the area of ecotourism.

### ***1.3 Organization***

The thesis is divided into eight sections, the first being this introductory chapter. The following section, Chapter Two, defines the concepts of tourism, ecotourism and sustainable tourism development.

Chapter Three provides an overview of the history of tourism development in Cuba and a general analysis of international tourism in Cuba. In this chapter, pre-Revolutionary tourism in Cuba is examined in order to obtain an historical perspective to tourism development on the island. This chapter ends with a description of Cuba's tourism industry at present and provides a basis for the examination of the sustainability of Cuba's tourism industry.

Chapter Four begins with a presentation of the research methods used in this study. Chapter Five gives an overview of tourism development in Cayo Coco. This

chapter examines past and future tourism development plans for this small island and identifies the economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of developing tourism in this fragile area.

In Chapter Six, results of the tourists' surveys that were administered to assess the potential to develop alternative tourism on the island will be discussed. This chapter investigates the types of tourists coming to Cayo Coco and whether they would be interested in participating in alternative tourism activities.

Chapter Seven examines the potential for the development of alternative tourism activities based on current tourism development plans, interviews, the potential of the landscape, observations and the survey results. This chapter ends with a set of recommendations and guidelines for the implementation and promotion of feasible alternative forms of tourism development as well as the sustainability of tourism on this island.

The final chapter, Chapter Eight, provides a conclusion concerning the future of tourism development on the island, including ecotourism and the challenges facing tourism planners to achieve sustainability in their plans for Cayo Coco.

## **II. DEFINING TOURISM**

The tourism industry is considered to be the driving force behind many countries' economies. The World Tourism Organization forecasts that tourism's contribution to the world economy will have more than doubled by 2005, contributing \$U.S. 7.1 trillion in gross output, employing 305 million people, generating 11.4% of global GDP, \$US 1,613

billion in investment, and US\$1369 billion in tax revenue (www.wttc.org/wttcgate.nsf, 5/2/97).

For the purpose of this research, "tourism" is defined as "the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, those activities undertaken during their stay in those destinations, and the facilities created when catering to their needs."<sup>3</sup> The study of tourism development includes the examination of the behaviour of people who are away from their everyday surroundings; the tourists' experiences in the places and countries of travel; and the reasons behind their tour selection. Tourists may have different reasons for choosing a destination. It could be business, pleasure, or political interest in the country. According to the World Tourism Organization, a tourist is defined "as a temporary visitor staying at least twenty-four hours in any country not of their normal place of residence."<sup>4</sup> Such a definition includes people visiting for leisure purposes as well as business. The motives for becoming a tourist are described by Krippendorf (1989) as the result of the desire to get away from everyday life in developed countries. These motives include the belief that travel brings happiness, allows for easier communication, broadens the mind, fulfils desires for freedom and provides recuperation and regeneration from the stresses of everyday life. Over 70 percent of international tourists are considered holiday tourists. They are divided into traditional tourists-taking sun and beach vacations, doing urban sightseeing, and special interest tourists—those who prefer to take advantage of their vacation by doing something

---

<sup>3</sup> Alister Mathieson and Geoffrey Wall. Tourism, Economic, Physical and Social Impacts. Longmon Group Limited, London, 1982, pg. 1.

<sup>4</sup> David Harrison. Tourism and Less Developed Countries, Halton Press, London , 1992, pg. 10.

different according to their interests. The other 30 percent are made up of business tourists.<sup>5</sup>

For many developing countries, tourism is extremely important. Tourism appeals to developing countries for several reasons. Micheal Peter, cited in *International Tourism*, identifies five potential benefits from tourism: “hard current earnings; dispersion of development to non-industrialized countries; creation of employment positive impact on the general economy through the multiplier effects and social benefits arising from a widening of people’s interest generally in world affairs.” Tourism in developing countries is continually expanding. As tourism continues to grow there are questions raised as to the effects of tourism on the environment.

## **II.1 Sustainable Development**

As a result of the release of the report entitled Our Common Future (the Bruntland Report, 1987) the term sustainable development emerged into mainstream development thinking. The Bruntland Report defined sustainable development as “meeting the needs of today’s generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”<sup>6</sup> The term development has traditionally been defined in terms of economic growth. Sustainable development, however, addresses economic growth and societal well being within the constraints of the earth’s carrying capacity. The Bruntland Report became one of the first international policy initiatives that addressed sustainable development issues.

---

<sup>5</sup> Christ Inman. “Impacts on Developing Countries of Changing Production and Consumption Patterns in Developing Countries: The Case of Ecotourism in Costa Rica.” United Nations Environmental Program, 1997, pg. 6.

This report led to the Earth Summit in June of 1992 where Agenda 21 was adopted. Agenda 21 provided a blue print for securing a more sustainable future. It was the first major consensus on the environment ever negotiated at an international level. This report was agreed upon by both the public and private sector and it paved the way for the debate of the tourism industry within the context of the environment. Below are some principles of sustainable development from Agenda 21 that are relevant to the tourism industry:

**Table 1 Agenda 21: Travel and Tourism**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel and Tourism should assist people in leading healthy and productive lives in harmony with nature</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental protection should constitute an integral part of the tourism development process</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel and Tourism should contribute to the conservation, protection and restoration of the Earth's ecosystem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism development issues should be handled with the participation of concerned citizens, with planning decisions being adopted at the local level</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel and Tourism should be based upon sustainable patterns of production and consumption</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nations shall warn one another of natural disasters that could affect tourists or tourist areas</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nations should cooperate to promote an open economic system, in which international trade in Travel and Tourism services can take place on a sustainable basis</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel and Tourism should use its capacity to create employment for women and indigenous peoples</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel and tourism, peace, development, and environmental protection are interdependent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism development should recognize and support the identity, culture and interests of indigenous people</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protectionism in trade in Travel and Tourism should be halted or revised</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• International laws protecting the environment should be recognized by the Travel and Tourism industry</li> </ul>

Agenda 21 and The Travel and Tourism Industry, WTO, 1995, pg. 34.

<sup>6</sup> WCED, 1987, pg. 43.

Given the importance of tourism to the global economy, many countries are now focussing on its environmental impacts. These impacts can be enormous and can have a severe impact on the tourism industry. The purpose then becomes reconciling the goals of tourism development at the same time protecting the environment. The challenge is to develop a sustainable approach to tourism development.

## ***II.2 Sustainable Tourism***

Sustainable tourism development is also ambiguous and ill-defined. There is no standard definition and there is also a wide margin of interpretation and perspectives. The World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism development as,

tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic need can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems.<sup>7</sup>

Butler defines sustainable development in the context of tourism as:

tourism which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well-being of other activities and processes.<sup>8</sup>

There are yet other interpretations, as Harry Coccossis points out in his book *Sustainable Tourism European Experiences*. He speaks about the sectorial point of view which is in

---

<sup>7</sup> World Trade Organization, Agenda 21 and the Travel and Tourism Industry, 1995, pg.30.

<sup>8</sup> J.G. Nelson and R. Butler. Tourism and Sustainable Development: Monitoring, Planning, Managing. Heritage Resource Center, University of Waterloo, 1992, pg. 1.

line with the economic sustainability of tourism. This emphasises infrastructure development such as upgrading the tourism product, often relying on organizational and technological solutions and innovations. Another interpretation is ecologically-sustainable tourism. Primarily conservationists use this term. Their priority is the protection of natural resources and ecosystems. There are some tourist activities conducted but these are identified as “soft” forms of ecotourism that do not disturb the natural environment. Coccossis defines sustainable tourist development, as the need to ensure the long-term viability of the tourist activity, recognizing the need to protect certain aspects of the environment. This concept recognizes the need for environmental quality and the protection of this quality as an important factor for competitiveness. The last approach that he mentions is based on ecologically-sustainable economic development by which environmental conservation, economic efficiency and social equity are of equal importance and do not precede one another.

In my field research in Cuba, all of Cocosiss’ definitions apply to the tourism development process currently undertaken by Cayo Coco. The Cuban government views tourism primarily as an economic resource and perceives tourism from the sectoral point of view (economic sustainability). They also recognize, however, the need to protect certain aspects of the environment as part of the competitiveness factor, in order to ensure the long-term viability of the tourism industry. The conservationists include those people employed at the Ministry of the Science, Technology and the Environment (CITMA), university departments such as the Department of Geography and some of the local workers who would like to preserve and protect the environment in Cayo Coco. They would like to see protected areas established and perhaps soft forms of ecotourism

developed which would allow them to gain profits, a portion thereof would go back into preserving and protecting the environment. Amid these tensions, the Coastal Ecosystem Research Center is working more towards the last approach which I would consider to be sustainable tourism development; this approach provides equal importance to the economic, social and environmental costs and benefits of tourism. This will be further discussed in Chapter Five on tourism development in Cayo Coco.

Tourism depends upon its natural surroundings for its long-term survival. Tourism has a significant impact on the environment and without appropriate management natural resources can deteriorate. When the environment becomes degraded due to tourism development or other environmental factors, tourists may chose to go elsewhere for their vacation. Maurice Strong, Chairman of the Earth Council states,

“included amongst the earth’s natural resources are all the wonders of nature which attract people from around your country and around the world. They come in all shapes and sizes and can be natural, as in Niagara Falls, Caribbean beaches and the Swiss Alps, or monuments of human activity as in museums, castles and space centers. Any human activity, including travel and tourism, that erodes any of these natural attractions, can lead not only to the economic loss of the activity, but to the social loss of their employment by the peoples of the world (Strong, Dec 2, 1995)”

In order for tourism to be sustainable, countries must start implementing tourism development policies that conserve the environment. There are environmental limits to the development of tourism: "With the growing awareness of conflicts between conservation and development, planners should direct their emphasis from planning the environment for tourism, to defending the environment from tourism impacts."<sup>9</sup> The problem with tourism development plans in the past is that they have not effectively integrated economic, social

---

<sup>9</sup> David Harrison. op.cit., pg. 71.

and ecological considerations. In many developing countries, governments and planners view the tourism industry as an easy and viable means to develop their economies. Their straightforward goal is to use tourism to attract foreign investment, create jobs, and provide foreign exchange.

### ***II.3 Ecotourism***

Ecotourism is considered by many to be the connection between tourism and sustainable development. Its position at the interface of economy and the environment, and its potential for integrating the two sectors makes ecotourism at the center of the sustainable tourism debate. As one person states, "ecotourism is a growing industry and highly desirable as an economic opportunity. It is an economically-beneficial substitute for unsustainable land uses and a source of long-term economic prospects for communities bereft of other sources of income."<sup>10</sup>

Ecotourism provides for the protection of natural areas for future generations while at the same time, providing economic benefits for the present. Many believe that ecotourism incorporates sustainable development, conserves, and enhances natural surroundings while providing economic stability for the locals. Ecotourism provides needed revenue for locals and regional economies. There is an increase in acceptance in the scientific community to allow well-managed numbers of people to enjoy the environment. Ecotourists are inherently interested in the natural environment and often attracted to remote sensitive areas.<sup>11</sup> Although, Ecotourism is more environmentally-friendly and is a potential revenue

---

<sup>10</sup> "Ecotourism in Canada", Canadian Environmental Advisory Committee, March 1992, pg. 22.

<sup>11</sup> Cuba Protecting Biodiversity and Establishing Sustainable Development in the Sabana-Camagüey Ecosystems. UNDP Project Document, July 1993, pg.5.

maker it has not generated the same amount of revenues as mass tourism. The operations are often smaller and it may take longer to generate the same amount of revenues as mass tourism.

Many writers on this topic refer to an array of terms with which ecotourism or tourism has become associated i.e., nature, alternative, green, sustainable, ethical, cultural, soft, environmentally-friendly, etc. There is no universal definition of ecotourism, and the term ecotourism has many different meanings. Ecotourism is not internationally regulated and there have been cases of mismanagement leading to environmental damage as a result.

Hector Ceballos Lascurain was the first to coin the term “ecotourism” in 1983. His definition defines ecotourism as: traveling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present found there) (Ceballos Lascurain, 1991).

Many academics, professionals, and tour operators have since redefined the term ecotourism. The Ecotourism Association of Australia defines ecotourism as ecologically sustainable tourism that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation. (Ecotourism Association of Australia, 1992). According to Elizabeth Boo (1992), ecotourism is nature travel that actually contributes to conservation. The Ecotourism Society defines the term ecotourism as; purposeful travel to nature areas; to understand the cultural and natural history of the environment; taking care not to alter the integrity of the ecosystems; while; producing

economic opportunities that make the conservation of natural resources beneficial to the local people (Ecotourism Society 1991).

In Katrina Bradon's "Ecotourism and Conservation" she describes four types of ecotourists: **hard core**: member of tour groups designed specifically for education and or involvement in environmental projects, such as wildlife monitoring; **dedicated**: travelers to see protected areas and understand local natural and cultural history; **mainstream**: tourists primarily interested in an unusual trip, such as to the Amazon or gorilla viewing in Rwanda.; **casual**: natural and cultural travel as an incidental component of a broader trip.

People are becoming more concerned about the environment. Tourists are looking more towards environmentally sensitive and responsible travel. Some experts feel that there is an apparent convergence between the evolving markets of international tourists and international ecotourists.<sup>12</sup> According to a 1988 survey conducted by the National Tour Association, 93 percent believed that the opportunity to learn while traveling was an important consideration in their travel choice.<sup>13</sup> Environmental awareness by tourists is growing and people are becoming more conscious of this when they travel. Suzane Cook indicates in her study, "Environmental protection has become what politicians call a "consensus issue" to northerners, and they will change their buying or investment decision if they see a negative environmental impact."<sup>14</sup>

Another study conducted by Hana Ayala found that the German and American travel

---

<sup>12</sup> Hana, Alyala. "Resort Ecotourism: A Paradigm for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." Cornell Hotel and Administration Quarterly, 1996, pg. 50.

<sup>13</sup> Hana Alyala. op.cit., pg. 50.

<sup>14</sup> Hana, Alyala. op.cit., pg. 50.

market indicates that environmental considerations are now a significant element of traveler's destination-choosing processes. Moreover, environmental quality is a decisive factor in destination choice for one out every two German tourists.”<sup>15</sup> Ecotourism and nature-based tourism are considered high growth areas. Ecotourists emerged simultaneously with the growth of the environmental protection movement, and the higher educational level of northerners (WTO, 1994).

Ecotourism can be further defined into sub-categories. There are those who enjoy hard core ecotourism and then there are those who enjoy softer forms of ecotourism. Hana Ayala defines hard core ecotourism as an intense or scientific interest in nature and culture; strenuous physical effort (even personal risk); and at least some non-hotel accommodations. A soft version would be a less strenuous, safer, and less intense experience, normally based at a hotel. Many international travelers base themselves at a resort, so resort development should be viewed as an integral part of a heritage destinations product. Ayala believes that a resort may have a greater influence over its guests than a visitor center or other official interpretive sites. “The international resort industry must seize the opportunity to participate in the destinations plans for conservation, and sustainable development plans. In partnership with planning authorities, resort operators can participate in designing the ecotourists' experience and thereby become an integral part of it.”<sup>16</sup>

Ecotourism differs from the traditional mass tourism that has dominated the sector. It is considered to have less of an overall impact on the host community and its

---

<sup>15</sup> Hana, Alyala. op.cit., pg. 50.

<sup>16</sup> Hana, Alyala. op.cit., pg 51

ecosystems. There have been, however, cases where ecotourism is used more as a commercial exploitation. Some of the people involved in the tourism industry use the word ecotourism to attract tourists although the type of tourist activities they offer are not in line with true ecotourism.

A recent study conducted by the Ecotourism Society to gather reliable statistics on ecotourism indicates; that markets of ecotourism demand currently appear to be located in Australia/New Zealand, Europe and U.S/Canada. The rise in ecotourism is a result of several factors: the gradual aging of the tourist population, the maturing of the sun, sand and fun vacation segment, the general public's increasing environmental awareness, and a heightened concern with physical fitness and health demonstrated by consumers in the main tourism-generating markets.<sup>17</sup> Many countries are now taking advantage of the increasing number of ecotourists. Some Caribbean destinations are moving to exploit their ecotourism potential by: (1) modifying the delivery of the traditional resort product so as to reduce the negative environmental and social impacts; (2) diversifying the sun, sand, and sea product through the addition of soft forms of ecotourism opportunities, and (3) developing a hard ecotourism product for nature-specific tourists.<sup>18</sup>

Although nature-oriented tourism or ecotourism helps to bring about environmental improvements in the tourism industry, a country should not rely on this alone to make its tourism industry more sustainable. The tourism planning approach that this thesis will be

---

<sup>17</sup> Hana, Alyala. *op.cit.*, pg. 49.

<sup>18</sup> Katrina Bradon. "Ecotourism Conservation: A Review of Key Issues". *The World Bank*, April, 1996, pg. 4

concerned with is in contrast with the market-led approach to planning (providing whatever facilities and services tourists may demand). The first priority is to preserve the ecological and social integrity of the tourism areas. The key to sustainable tourism is detailed and in-depth planning, with the environmental and social impacts foremost in terms of priorities.

Governments face the daunting task of protecting their environment. The increase in tourist activity world-wide and in particular mass tourism can lead to irrevocable damage if nothing is done to control it, making tourism activity in the future impossible. It thus becomes important for governments to develop a sustainable tourism strategy. The next chapter will examine tourism development in Cuba which has been effective in lessening the environmental, social and even economic impacts while in the process creating new problems.

### **III. HISTORY OF TOURISM IN CUBA**

The development of tourism in Cuba has a lengthy history. Christopher Columbus in October 1492, referring to Cuba, expressed his belief that "this is the most beautiful land human eyes have ever seen."<sup>19</sup> Since Columbus, Cuba has become a destination for many travellers and many other famous visitors to Cuba have commented on the beauty of this archipelago. By 1915, there were seventy-two hotels on the island, and by the 1930s, the average annual income from the tourism sector was approximately \$12 million, representing the country's most important export commodity, after sugar and tobacco.<sup>20</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Eugenio Perez Ferrier. Guide to Cuba, Gianni Constantino, Hall and Co, Italy, 1989, pg.8.

<sup>20</sup> David Harison. op.cit., 1992, pg 123.

Most of the visitors were North Americans: "By 1957 tourism in Cuba involved 272, 000 foreigner visitors, 87 percent of whom were from the U.S.A."<sup>21</sup> At this time, Cuba accounted for over 21% of all tourist arrivals in the Caribbean region (Espino, 1993). Many of these visitors were attracted to Cuba because of its location (only ninety miles from the U.S.).

In pre-Revolutionary Cuba, the tourism industry was largely owned and managed by foreigners, predominately U.S. citizens: "Strong U.S. controlling influences in the tourism industry mirrored Cuba's dependency relationship with that country, while an undercurrent of vice and organized crime reflected the spatial proximity of the two countries and the U.S. perception of Cuba as the nearby underdeveloped subtropical playground where anything goes."<sup>22</sup> Tourism development was in the hands of the wealthy, especially Americans. This resulted in large amounts of currency being taken out of Cuba and diverted back to the U.S. leaving a deficit in Cuba's tourism balance according to International Monetary Fund accounts. According to Hall (1992) the demonstration effect in Cuba led Cubans to seek American lifestyles which caused an increase in importation of American goods and the desire to travel to the States.

Pre-revolutionary Cuba was characterized by gambling and prostitution. During the 1950s, international tourism was exploitative. Catherine Chockrane remarked on this period: "the tourism industry of the day was not only based on the resources of sun, sand and surf, but most defiantly on prostitution and gambling as well. These activities were in

---

<sup>21</sup> Thomas Hinch. "Cuba's Tourism Industry It's Reemergence and Future", Tourism Management, Vol. 11, Sept 1990, pg. 215.

<sup>22</sup> David Hamison. op.cit., pg 82.

fact the mainstays of the tourism industry.”<sup>23</sup> Havana, the capital of Cuba, became one of the world’s largest centres for drug-trafficking, prostitution and vice in general. Signs of social stress began to appear with commercialized vice of various forms, underwritten by organized crime in the United States. For example, gambling proceeds ended up in the hands of American investors who were involved in the Mafia. On visitor to Cuba in 1958 remarked on the period:

I was enchanted by Havana-and appalled by the way that lovely city was debased into a great casino and brothel for American businessmen over for a big weekend from Miami. My fellow countrymen reeled through the streets, picking up fourteen-year old Cuban girls and tossing coins to make them scramble in the gutter. One wondered how any Cuban on the basis of this evidence could regard the United States with anything but hatred. (Hall 1992, pg. 197)

According to Villalba, the organization responsible for promoting tourism in Cuba, “did not guide the tourism industry around the base of natural attractions, historical sites, architecture, folklore, sports, cultural activities or health, rather they demonstrated to visitors the negative sides of a society dominated by corruption and the drive for profits. Drugs gambling and prostitution ended up being the most exploited combination of tourist motivation presented to American clientele.”<sup>24</sup>

Most foreigners were concentrated in Havana and Varadero. Varadero became one of the largest tourist destinations within Cuba. It was known as a playground for the rich and famous. The organisation of tourism in Cuba at that time, concentrated in the more developed areas, reflected the socio-economic and spatial disparities present on the island. The natural resource advantages, in addition to the island's proximity to North America,

---

<sup>23</sup> Catherine Cochrane. Tourism: A Socialist Solution Escape from the Whorehouse,” New Internationalist, Nub 142, 1984, pg. 15.

made Cuba the most important focus for international tourism in the Caribbean until the Cuban Revolution.

The amount of corruption and disparity in Cuba in the 1950s to some extent gave rise to Fidel Castro and the Revolution. The Batista regime was not well liked in 1958 and due to the greed of the government, support was growing for Fidel Castro. Institutions surrounding the Batista government started to crumble and the loss of support from other countries caused Batista and many of his followers to flee the country. Castro became the logical leader to replace Batista, and on January 1, 1959 he overthrew the government and won the support of many followers.

### ***III.1 Revolutionary Tourism***

When the revolutionary government, under the leadership of Fidel Castro came to power in 1959, tourism was considered a symbol of dependency. International tourism was not part of the new government's economic policies. The tourism industry was widely seen as not being beneficial, either socially or economically, so the new government revamped its economic policies. The Promotions Director of Cuba's National Institute of Tourism remarked, "the twelve years prior to the triumph of the revolution, in only three of them was a balance of tourist trade supposedly positive for our country. Most of the proceeds from gambling ended up in the U.S. hands, which controlled the so-called Cuban tourist industry." The new government along with the Cuban population wanted to see drastic

---

<sup>24</sup> Garrido Villalba. Cuba Y EL Turismo. Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales. 1993, pg. 57-58.

changes in the tourism industry, and one of the revolutions' earliest goals was to rid Cuba of the corruption caused by international tourism.

In the immediate years following the Revolution, the Cuban government shifted the policy direction of tourism in order to emphasize "national tourism" rather than international tourism: "The new socialist ideals of the Cuban government provided impetus for the shift towards domestic tourism."<sup>25</sup> The government began the development of national tourism by opening up all hotels and beaches (which were once associated with only rich whites) to all Cubans. The impact of domestic tourism from a social perspective was significant throughout this period. The phase "social tourism" was coined, which in actual fact meant that the government subsidized tourist facilities for Cubans.

In October of 1960, the Cuban government passed a law that gave the Revolutionary Government the authority to establish the "nationalization by means of the unavoidable expropriation and consequential appropriation in favour of the Cuban state all the wealth and enterprises located in national territory that were property of Americans."<sup>26</sup> This resolution led to the nationalization of many foreign hotels such as Habana Libre and Hotel Nacional. As a result, the US broke formal diplomatic relations with Cuba and established the U.S. Blockade in 1961.

In the 1960s, few tourists from Eastern Europe visited Cuba with even fewer from Western or other Latin American countries, apart from those interested in viewing the Cuban Revolution as a social experiment. Many foreigners did not want to return to Cuba after the Revolution because of the Western media's portrayal of Cuba as an unstable and

---

<sup>25</sup> Thomas Hinch. *op.cit.*, pg. 20.

<sup>26</sup> Garrido Villalba. *op.cit.*, pg.125.

decaying country. As noted by Gonzalez, "U.S. imperialism's hysterical campaigns to defame the Revolution and create an impression of political insecurity in Cuba, combined with strict and total blockade imposed by the U.S. government, seriously altered the flow of foreign tourists."<sup>27</sup> Cuba as a tourist destination spot almost disappeared. "It has been estimated that in the early 1960s only 3,000 to 5,000 foreigners a year visited Cuba with most of these invited by the authorities on the basis of friendship and solidarity."<sup>28</sup> As part of the economic sanctions against Cuba, the U.S. government banned all travel by Americans to Cuba. Since American citizens had been the largest section of all foreign tourists in Cuba, the result of the restriction led to the rapid decline of the tourism industry.

The Cuban government turned its focus to domestic tourism in the 1960s because of its new socialist ideals: "Families were encouraged, through collective institutions, to gather knowledge about their motherland and its socialist achievements by taking subsidized holidays organized by their trade union or work place."<sup>29</sup> Many Cubans received a month's holiday in the summer and tourism facilities were constructed to serve increasing domestic tourist needs. It has been estimated that over three million Cubans in 1965 used tourist facilities annually.<sup>30</sup>

Within a few years after 1959, the Cuban government was able to rid the streets of prostitution, gambling, drug trafficking and organized crime. As a result, "thousands of the high class professional call girls of Havana's night life followed their pimps and other

---

<sup>27</sup> Gonzalez, Gary. op.cit., pg. 21.

<sup>28</sup> David Harrison. op.cit., pg. 215.

<sup>29</sup> Thomas Hinch. op.cit., pg. 217.

<sup>30</sup> David Harrison. op.cit., pg., 217.

gangsters of the international vice ring to Miami, San Juan, and New York."<sup>31</sup> The Cuban government closed down many nightclubs and restaurants which were once popular places for foreigners. Tropicana was the only nightclub in Havana that was permitted to stay open. Domestic tourism became so widespread that many buildings were converted into tourist facilities for domestic purposes: "The hotels built for the international tourist trade alone were unable to meet the domestic demand during peak vacation periods, but the government has converted the abandoned villas of wealthy exiles for use by vacationers, and empty schools pressed into service for this purpose."<sup>32</sup> The social gains of the revolution were soon noticeable.

In the 1970s, Cuba returned to the promotion of international tourism, primarily in an attempt to diversify the economy in response to world events (e.g. the oil crisis of 1973). Cuba sought to diversify the economy and reduce its dependence on sugar cane and other natural products. Thomas Hinch has noted that "international tourism was seen as a sure way of obtaining substantial quantities of 'hard currency' which could be used to finance further economic and social development."<sup>33</sup> The re-emphasis on international tourism was strictly to ensure that programs such as free healthcare and education would be kept available to all Cubans and to improve Cuba's reserves of foreign currency. Tourism was considered the fastest way to earn foreign exchange, given Cuba's vast natural resources (sun, beaches, sea, etc.) and its tradition in the tourist industry.

International tourism played an increasingly significant role in Cuba's economy,

---

<sup>31</sup> Margaret Randell. Cuban Women Now. Toronto, The Women's Press, 1974, pg. 237.

<sup>32</sup> Howard Bulstein and Jan Black. Area Handbook on Cuba, Washington, Library of Congress, 1976, pg., 42.

<sup>33</sup> Thomas Hinch. op.cit., pg. 217.

particularly after 1975. The revolutionary government made itself clear that Cuba was open to international tourism once again. The tourist industry helped to provide employment and diversify the economy as planned. Cuba implemented a new marketing scheme to encourage foreigners to travel to Cuba. Canada became a prime market for tourists to Cuba. Package tours were initiated and the number of Canadians travelling to Cuba increased. Close to 50,000 foreigners visited Cuba in 1975, over half of who were Canadian. In 1977, the United States government decided to lift the travel ban to Cuba. Many Cuban exiles and Americans who were curious about Cuba began to travel to see for themselves the results of the Revolution.

The Cuban government re-established tourism but with strict controls in order to ensure it would not become exploitative. The National Institute of Tourism stated, "that it was not interested in reviving mass tourism with its related pre-Revolutionary vices, and some foreign visitors who arrived on prepaid group package tours found they had little freedom of movement or travel."<sup>34</sup> The negative impacts of tourism on the society were taken into consideration. Although Cuba was able to restrict the negative social impacts of tourism, tourists during this time were often disappointed with the restrictions placed on them. Repeat travel to Cuba was minimal.

In the early 1980s, the National Institute of Tourism (INTUR) along with Cubatur increased its promotional efforts and established offices around the world in countries such as Canada, Spain and Germany. INTUR was established in 1976 to promote Cuba as a

---

<sup>34</sup> Howard Blutstein and Jan Knippers Black. *op.cit.*, pg. 423.

tourist destination. Several smaller companies were also introduced during this time to try to promote Cuba as a tourism destination.

### ***III.2 Tourism in the Special Period***

In 1990, Cuba had its worst economic crisis when the former Soviet Union collapsed, forcing the Cuban government to take drastic economic measures to counteract the loss of trade. The collapse of the Soviet Bloc marked the end of Soviet economic support to Cuba. Over a two-year period, trading ties between the two countries declined until eventually the economic relationship between them collapsed. Cuba lost annual subsidies estimated at US \$4-5 billion.<sup>35</sup> Not only did Cuba have to re-examine its economy in the wake of collapsed trading ties with the former Soviet Union and the Eastern socialist countries, but it also had to face a tightening of the economic blockade from the United States which restricted other countries from forming trading ties with Cuba. The Cuban government is calling this time the “Período Especial en Tiempo de Paz” (Special Period in the Time of Peace). The loss of trade resulted in the reduction in oil imports, and available material goods and foods, which in turn resulted in substantial rationing. All state run off-rationed food stores closed down as Cuba instituted rationing for all foods. This austerity program included food rationing, introducing bicycles to replace cars, oxen to replace tractors and many belt tightening measures. It was not until this time, that the real growth of the tourism industry took place. In 1994, Cuba's primary money earner, the sugar crop, amounted to less than 4 million tons-a low level not seen for decades. The islands' factories were producing at only 30 percent capacity, giving rise to shortages in items

---

<sup>35</sup> 1994 Trade and Economic Overview. From The Nova Scotia Economic Renewal Agency, 1994, pg. 5.

ranging from clothes and cosmetics to pots and pans.<sup>36</sup> Initially, Castro's government responded to the economic crisis by introducing reforms that reflected a commitment to a planned economy. The government announced food programs, energy conservation, and a rationing system to counteract the loss of trade with the former Soviet Union. Cuba's imports declined dramatically and production in many industries was reduced or curtailed. In 1992, Cuba was only importing 25% of what it was able to purchase in 1989. As a result, the Cuban government turned towards tourism to bring itself out of the economic crisis.

### ***III.3 Tourism as a Catalyst for Economic Development***

In the past, tourism development in Cuba has been small scale. With the present economic situation, however, the government must diversify the economy. Tourism is now considered to be Cuba's top priority. The government regards tourism as a highly profitable Cuban export item. It provides badly needed hard currency, and acts as a stimulus for employment. As one source states, "international tourism revenues per year are higher than important traditional domestic exports like fisheries, citrus, fruit and tobacco."<sup>37</sup> Tourism makes up approximately 60% - 70% of Cuba's receipts in hard currency.<sup>38</sup> Cuba's tourist arrivals have dramatically increased over the years. A report by the Ministry of Tourism indicates arrivals of international tourists grew from 340,000 in

---

<sup>36</sup> Amparo E. Avella and Allan S. Mills. "Tourism in Cuba in the 1990's back to the future?" Hospitality and Management, January, 1996, pg. 59.

<sup>37</sup> Investing in Cuba Today, pg., 33

<sup>38</sup> Dr. Marion Joop. "Report on Cuba" School of Hospitality and Management at Ryerson. 1995, pg. 2.

1990 to 741,000 in 1995 and the income produced was 1.1 billion.<sup>39</sup> In 1996, Cuba achieved its long time goal of reaching over one million visitors (1,001, 739) (Granma Weekly). This was a 30 % increase over 1995 tourist arrivals. Gross revenue went from 1.1 billion in 1995 to 1.3 billion in 1996 bringing in more hard currency than sugar.<sup>40</sup>

In 1997, 1,170,000 tourists visited Cuba, an increase of 16.5% from 1996. The total tourism gross revenue for 1997 was estimated to be at 1.5 billion U.S. dollars compared with \$1.3 billion U.S. dollars in 1996. The Ministry of Tourism predicted that the country would receive one million 200,000 foreign tourists in 1997 with gross revenue of 1.75 billion U.S. dollars. The Cuban government fell short of their estimate for 1997. This may have been because of the rash of bombings at hotels that took place last year. The Cuban government in 1996 anticipated receiving more than 2 million international tourists by the year 2,000. In January 1998, the government announced a new goal of 10 million tourists by the year 2010. In order to reach this goal expert's estimate that in order to attract 10 million visitors after the year 2,000 the growth rate in 1998 and 1999 must not fall below 23 percent.<sup>41</sup> This estimate assumes that the U.S. blockade is still in place. Without the blockade in place, the number of tourists to Cuba could increase substantially, since Americans provide the largest number of tourists to the Caribbean and Cuba is in close proximity to the United States.

---

<sup>39</sup> Dr. Teresita Borges Hernández and Dr. Norman Medina Pérez. Política Ambiental y Turismo en Cuba, Report at the Cultural Tourism Conference, Havana, Nov 18-24, 1996

<sup>40</sup> Lila Haines. "Reassessing Cuba Emerging Opportunities and Operating Challenges." The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1997, pg 49.

<sup>41</sup> Dalia Acosta. "Development-Cuba: Tourism the Industry of Next Century." World News Inter Press Service (<http://www.oneworld.org/ip2/jan98/cuba.html>)

In economic terms, tourism appears to be working. While tourism has delivered a substantial boost in Cuba's economy, there appear to be economic leakages. Cuba lacks the financial capacity to fund tourism development and must look to foreign investors for assistance. It has done this through joint venture partnerships. The Cuban government has provided substantial benefits to foreign companies in order to attract them to do business in Cuba. The Cuban government has cut taxes and allowed repatriation rights to foreign interests. Since Cuba is a socialist state, it also diminished the degree of control that Cuba has over its tourism industry and it has caused some negative environmental, social and cultural impacts.

Cuba must also import many of its tourism products from abroad. Because of the economic crisis in Cuba, many agricultural products that could be produced in Cuba had to be imported. The hotel manager from the Melia Varadero confirmed that most of the food for the hotel is imported: "butter from France, meat from Canada, and fruit from Mexico. The case of the fish is particularly bizarre. While Cuba is an island, with a fairly well developed fishing industry, 77% of fish consumed at the hotel is imported from Chile. Similarly, Cuba should be able to produce at least two crops a year, but most are imported from Mexico or Chile."<sup>42</sup> Imports increase costs thus cutting into the amount of profits earned. Recent 1996 statistics indicate that Cuba retains 30 cents on every tourist dollar earned. Despite economic leakages, the tourism industry has become a key aspect of Cuba's economic recovery.

---

<sup>42</sup> John Kirk. "Sol's Operational Experience." Cuba Business Journal, Vol 9, No1, Jan/Feb 1995, pg. 2.

### **III.4 Tourist Arrivals**

According to recent statistics, "within the Caribbean, Cuba has significantly outperformed the majority of other destinations in terms of tourism growth. Annual growth over the last seven years has been at 16.9% in Cuba, compared to 6.4% in Jamaica, 4.7% for the Dominican Republic, and 3.4% percent for Puerto Rico. Tourism Arrivals have grown from 309,000 in 1988 to almost 1 million in 1996."<sup>43</sup> Information provided by the Ministry of Tourism indicates the average tourist expenditure per day has increased from \$85.52 U.S. in 1990 to \$170.25 U.S. in 1995.

According to the Ministry of Tourism, visitors from other countries made up the balance to complete the total of just over 1 million arrivals in 1996. This represents a 30 percent increase from the previous year. Tourism statistics are gathered according to the following criteria; "visitors are classified as either tourists (stays at least 24 hours in the country visited) or excursionists (stays less than 24 hours such as sea-cruise travellers). The Cuban government collects two different sets of information on international visitors: (1) number of visitors who arrive through travel agency-compiled by the Cuban tourist corporations and published in the *Anuario Estadístico de Cuba*, and (2) number of foreign visitors arriving at the border - compiled by the Dirección de Inmigración y Extranjería and is published by the WTO in the *Yearbook of Tourism Statistics* and the Banco Nacional de Cuba in its *Informe Económico*."<sup>44</sup> A more modest estimate has been recorded by the World Tourism Organization. According to their statistics, Cuba's tourism arrivals

---

<sup>43</sup> Interview with Charles Suddaby, Economic Planning Group of Canada, Feb. 26, 1997.

<sup>44</sup> Maria Doloras Espino, "Tourism in Cuba: A Development Strategy for the 1990's." *Cuban Studies* Vol 23, 1993 pg.5.

for 1996 were 865,000 a 25 percent increase over 1995. Cuba still had the largest increase of tourist arrivals over all other Caribbean destinations.<sup>45</sup> The discrepancy could be due to the fact that the WTO figures were provisional. Nevertheless, Cuba's tourism arrivals continue to grow. In 1997, Cuba's tourism arrivals amounted to 1,170,000. The most arrivals, in order, were from Italy, Canada, Spain, France, Germany, and Mexico. New markets included Sweden (an increase of 75.4% from 1996), Belgium (an increase of 77% from 1996), United Kingdom (an increase of 77% from 1996), and Brazil (an increase of 56.4% from 1996). Canada has traditionally been the leader in tourism arrivals each year however, in 1997 Italy became the leader. This could be because of aggressive marketing over the last year to promote Cuba as a tourist destination in Europe.

**Table 2: Tourist Arrivals to Cuba By Major Origin Market, 1989 and 1993-95**  
(000 unless otherwise indicated)

Origin Market	1989	1993	1994	1995	% of total 1995
Canada	66.7	114.8	109.7	142.1	19.2
Italy	15.9	49.2	66.4	113.7	15.4
Spain	36.0	54.1	62.2	89.7	12.2
Germany	50.9	63.2	60.6	57.2	7.7
France	10.3	23.4	33.9	34.4	4.7
Argentina	6.1	29.3	36.4	32.5	4.3
Mexico	31.3	56.3	49.1	32.0	4.3
*USA (a)	4.0	14.7	17.9	20.6	2.8

*Source: International Travel Reports No 3 1996 pg. 10.*

\*Primarily Cuban exiles visiting family on the island

<sup>45</sup> Tourism Statistics. Travel and Tourism Intelligence, Travel Industry Monitor, March 1997, pg. 15

**Table 3 Cuba's Tourism Arrivals for 1996**

Italy	185,000	63%
Canada	162,766	10%
Spain	113,000	28%
Germany	75,000	30%
France	61,000	77%
Mexico	36,000	12%
England	28,000	42%
Columbia	24,000	17%

*Source: Cuban Tourist Board, 1996*

**Table 4 Cuba's Tourism Arrivals for 1997**

Italy	200,224
Canada	169,666
Spain	116,597
France	93,980
Germany	86,457
Mexico	52,711
Great Britain	46,211
Argentina	41,514
Columbia	28,745
Switzerland	14,036
Chile	13,604
Portugal	12,993
Brazil	12,420
Holland	11,407
Belgium	10673

Total (1,170,000) % increase from 1996  
- maintain a growth of 17%  
1998 - 1,430,000  
2010 - 10 million

**Source: Cuban Tourist Board, 1998**

Canada not only provides large numbers of tourists to Cuba, but also provides marketing support. There are presently more than ten wholesale Canadian tour operators

providing package holidays to Cuba. Alba Tours currently has the most Canadian arrivals to Cuba. Alba Tours brought over 42,000 Canadian tourists to Cuba in the winter of 1995-1996. In this period, there was an overwhelming increase in tourists' arrivals to Cuba which led to over-booking problems. The Director, Robert Niddery, of the North American Leisure Group (Sunquest and Alba Tours) explained that as a result of the overbooking problems last year and other factors, there has been a dramatic decrease in Canadian tourists to Cuba over the 1996-1997 winter season. The Cuban government also increased their prices by 30 percent which caused many Canadian tourists to book alternative destinations with more competitive prices. Bob Nindery stated, "Cuba's prices were very similar to other sun destinations. Cuba is a great destination but it doesn't have the same standards as other tourist's destinations in the Caribbean."<sup>46</sup> As a result of the over-booking, many Canadians became frustrated because they booked a five star hotel on the beach and ended up in a three star hotel far from the beach. Alba Tours had to cancel 3 flights a week to various destinations in Cuba. There was a large cutback in tour companies packages to Cuba in 1996. In 1997, Alba Tours reserved more rooms to ensure that it would not repeat itself. Mr Nindery stated that the reason many Canadian tourists travel to Cuba each year is good value for your money, beautiful weather, and security of the destination, friendly atmosphere, and the closeness to Canada.<sup>47</sup>

For many, the reason for choosing Cuba as a travel destination is the sun, sand and sea and the budget deals. Business travel, however, is increasing as a result of Cuba's economy opening up to foreign investment. The government has also developed new

---

<sup>46</sup> Interview with Bob Nindery, North American Leisure Group. Feb. 28, 1997.

<sup>47</sup> Interview with Bob Nindery, North American Leisure Group. Feb. 28, 1997.

conference facilities in Havana to encourage business travel. Cruise tourism accounts for a small percentage of tourist arrivals. In 1995, cruise passengers accounted for only 0.5 per cent of visitor arrivals.<sup>48</sup> One of the cruise ships, Melia Don Juan, has been cancelled because it was not selling well. Jennifer Card of Hola Sun, a Canadian tour company, stated “ there really hasn’t been much in the way of cruising in Cuba so it is a whole new market, but it has a lot of potential and we’re hopeful the product will be back next year.”<sup>49</sup> There are no statistics available on the number of ecotourists who arrive each year.

Although tourist arrivals to Cuba are increasing each year, the number of repeat travellers to Cuba still remains low. Few tourists are drawn back to Cuba. A Cuban official, “said that 19 percent of tourists return to Cuba. Rates are twice that for some higher-end Caribbean islands.”<sup>50</sup> Many tourists are still attracted to Cuba because of its low budget all-inclusive deals and therefore, do not develop an allegiance to the country. Repeat business to Cuba remains a problem.

The majority of tourists to Cuba come during the winter months of the Northern Hemisphere, with November through March being the busiest period. The Cuban tourism market is tapping into the Latin American Region as well as Europe, which typically vacation in the summer.<sup>51</sup> This has enabled Cuba to receive strong visitation levels in July

---

<sup>48</sup> Lila Haynes. “Cuba.” International Tourism Reports, Travel and Tourism Intelligence, No.3, 1996, pg. 6.

<sup>49</sup> “Travel File”. Travel Courier. March 13-19, 1997, pg. 4.

<sup>50</sup> “Cuba Trying to Attract Tourists.” Rider Newspaper, Sept 14, 1998, pg. 2.

<sup>51</sup> Charles Suddaby, “Cuba’s Tourism Industry.” Cuba in Transition, Washington, D.C., Volume 7, 1997, pg. 125.

and August however, the low season in Cuba is still a problem. This is the case for many countries in the Caribbean.

### ***III.5 Current Development Priorities***

Development of international tourism has taken place on several fronts. The Cuban government initiated a program during mid 1980's to construct many new hotel rooms as well as upgrade the existing hotel infrastructure. At the end of the 1980's, Cuba had only 5,000 rooms available for international tourism. In 1996, Cuba had approximately 25,000 rooms available for international tourism. (See Appendix IX.I)

In the past, tourism was restricted to Havana and Varadero. Currently, the government is targeting other areas of the island as potential tourist destinations. The government realizes that it needs to diversify the tourism product in order to attract more tourists. The Ministry of Tourism has listed the following areas as priority for tourist development: southern Santiago de Cuba, Trinidad, the Canarreos Archipelago (the Isle of Youth and also the famous Cayo Largo del Sur), northern Holguin, the cays to the north of Villa Clara, Havana, Varadero, Ciego de Avila and Camagüey provinces, with tens of kilometres of virgin beaches.<sup>52</sup> There is a potential capacity of 128,720 rooms in 45 tourist locations. Other regions for tourist development include: North Keys-San Diego, Sagua La Grande, Caibarién, North of Tunas province, Baracoa, South of Granma province, Cienaga de Zapata and Guanahacabibes. There is a potential of 20,468 rooms in 23 locations as well as outside the tourist areas, 3,029 rooms in 17 different places. The Ministry of Tourism has identified more than 85 tourist locations, with a total potential superior to

---

<sup>52</sup> Investing in Cuba Today, pg. 31.

150,000 rooms, some 1,200 resources of different kinds, with tourist attractions such as beaches, lagoons, rivers, caves, fishing, hunting, landscapes, historical sites, submarine landscapes, and archaeological sites.<sup>53</sup> The locations of Cayo Coco and Santa Lucia reflect the emphasis on areas outside of Havana and Varadero and they reinforce the proposed redevelopment of tourist resort properties in Pinar del Rio, Santiago, Cayo Coco and Trinidad. The Ministry of Tourism anticipates 49,556 international hotel rooms by the year 2,000.<sup>54</sup>

The government has expanded Havana's Jose Martí International Airport to accommodate the increasing number of tourists. Cuba invested close to \$62.5 million US to build a 28,000 sq ft terminal. The new terminal allows the airport to handle up to 1, 500 passengers per hour. Varadero's airport has also been recently renovated. Cuba's success in attracting tourists to a large extent hinges on the ability to attract foreign investment to finance hotel construction, to upgrade existing hotels and to diversify Cuba's tourism product.

### ***III.6 Foreign Investment in Cuba's Tourism Industry***

Tourism in Cuba has become the fastest growing industry spurred on by massive future development plans. Foreign investment has come to play a fundamental role in the tourism development strategy in Cuba. Foreign ownership in the tourist industry is a major source of economic leakage. In the typical Caribbean countries, for example, the majority of tour operators are foreign-owned. In Cuba, however a new Foreign Investment Law

---

<sup>53</sup> Dr. Teresita Borges Hernández and Dr. Norman Medina Perez. Política Ambiental y Turismo en Cuba, Report at the Cultural Tourism Conference, Havana, Nov. 18-24, 1996, pg. 5.

<sup>54</sup> ibid., pg 5.

(1984) encourages co-operative development between state and foreign investors. This law was never utilized until Cubanacan was created in 1987, "to seek tourism development with foreign partners willing to provide capital, expertise and experience, computerized technology and management techniques." <sup>55</sup> The Cuban government needs these joint ventures because of the lack of capital to increase their tourist capacity. In order to repair and maintain infrastructure, build new hotels and provide for tourist needs, Cuba requires foreign investment especially if projected growth levels are to be realized.

Cuba has generated a number of joint ventures which have helped to develop a better professional service to the tourist. Cuba has contracted important hotel chains of international prestige to help manage their hotels. Some of the hotel chains include; Delta Hotels (Canadian), Tulip Hotels (Netherlands), Commonwealth Hospitality Inc. (Canadian), Tryp Hotels (Spanish), Super Club (Jamaica) and many more. Cuba has maintained control over the tourism industry even with significantly increased foreign investment.

The new Foreign Investment Law approved in September 1995 opened the entire economy (excluding health, education and defence) to foreign capital. Cuba, however, maintains total property rights over these hotels. "The government believes that, unlike other sectors, tourism does not need foreign investment for re-activation but rather for expansion. Moreover, the government says, investment in Cuban tourism is generally low risk, and Cuba wants to keep the bulk of the profits on the island."<sup>56</sup> The Cuban government is increasingly seeking to develop its tourism industry and is looking towards

---

<sup>55</sup> David Harrison. *op.cit.*, pg. 115

<sup>56</sup> Lila Haynes. *op.cit.*, pg. 6.

joint ventures to provide the necessary capital. Foreign companies invest in Cuba because it possesses beautiful scenery, is clean and stable, and has a low crime rate. They also invest in Cuba because of the tax benefits and a four to five year capital recovery period. In an interview Dr. James Macaulay, the Chairperson of Tourism at Mount Saint Vincent University, stated that "joint venture hotels operate at 45-50 percent net profit which is unheard of for new hotels in other countries."<sup>57</sup> All of these are enticing incentives to foreign companies. Many also see the potential, once the economic blockade is lifted, for the increase in tourism from the U.S. and want to be there before U.S. companies are allowed in. According to Enrique Savignac, Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization, Cuba has much potential for growth:

A huge island with low population density, varied topography, rich history, architecture and culture, pristine beaches, rugged mountains, and deep valleys, fascinating native customs, excellent cuisine and friendly people, Cuba will be the number one destination as soon as all barriers to free travel are eliminated. When U.S. citizens are finally allowed to come to the island, things will really take off.<sup>58</sup>

A Canadian company, Wilton Properties Limited, has signed a joint venture agreement with Gran Antilla S.A. (subsidiary of Gran Caribe) to build 4,200 rooms in Cuba over the next 10 years. This resulted in the establishment of a new company VanCuba Holdings S.A. in Cuba (subsidiary of Wilton Properties). The company will make an initial capital investment of 400 million dollars. This is the first Canadian/Cuban association of this type in the tourism industry. The company will construct golf courses in Varadero, areas to practice tennis and riding, and will enlarge nautical facilities. In an

---

<sup>57</sup> Interview with James Macaulay, Chairperson of Tourism at Mount Saint Vincent University Feb 23, 1996.

<sup>58</sup> "Cuban Tourism Like a diamond." Prisma Cuban Tourism Magazine, No 277, 1996 pg 31.

interview with Mr. Suddaby, whose company was hired by VanCuba holdings to assess the current tourism market in Cuba, he stated that current plans for hotel sites include; Havana, the Isle of Youth, and Jibacoa near Varadero.

Furthermore, Cuba has signed more than 36 hotel administration contracts with 16 international chains. This translates into more than 10,245 rooms, of which 8,738 are already in operation representing 36% percent of the total room capacity.<sup>59</sup> A number of other agreements are linked to financing for the remodelling of old facilities. It is clear that Cuba is taking a risk, in terms of its socialist values, when attracting foreign investment to the island. The Cuban government, however, is placing restrictions to ensure that this does not happen. For example, the government requires companies investing in well-established tourist areas to make a commitment also to invest in other, less developed regions. The government wants to spread tourism around the island to obtain more linkages with the economy and perhaps to dilute the social impacts.<sup>60</sup> Espino recommends that “for tourism to become a vehicle for economic development in 1990s Cuba must reduce imports in all sectors and must establish linkages with other sectors of the economy, especially agriculture, services and retailing. This must happen before tourism can become a generator of income and employment.”<sup>61</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> Dr. Teresita Borges Hernández and Dr. Norman Medina Perez. op.cit., pg. 7.

<sup>60</sup> Lila Haynes. op.cit., pg. 6.

<sup>61</sup> M.D. Espino. “Tourism in Cuba: A Development Strategy for the 1990s.” Cuba at a Cross Roads, Florida, University Press Florida, 1994, pg. 161.

### ***III.7 Structure of Tourism Planning and Development***

In addition to joint ventures helping to fuel the tourism industry, the Cuban government decided to reorganise its institutions and businesses active in the tourism industry. In the past, the tourism industry in Cuba was handled by solely by INTUR (The National Institute of Tourism) a government institution. However, because of the influx of international tourists, the government expanded the number of government institutions that handle the tourism industry. In 1987, the government created the Corporation Cubanacan S.A. to share the responsibilities of the development of Cuban tourism. Cubanacan was one of the first companies allowed to have a great deal of autonomy in making corporate decisions. Cubanacan has three objectives: (1) to find entrepreneurs interested in establishing economic associations in this field, (2) to give its hotels to important chains in management, (3) and to gain experience and improve market possibilities.<sup>62</sup> Cubanacan has successfully attracted several well-established tourism companies to Cuba such as Sol Melia (Spain) and Tryp Hotels (Spain).

Gaviota Corporation was the second corporation established to deal with the growth in the Cuban tourism industry. It was originally established to provide recreational facilities for armed forces personnel and their families, however, by 1991, it was converted into an autonomous corporation with a mandate to provide facilities for international tourists, especially nature-related activities.<sup>63</sup> Gaviota currently operates over 14 hotels with over 1,427 rooms.

In April of 1994, the Cuban government announced a decision to restructure the

---

<sup>62</sup> Investing In Cuba Today, pg. 33

tourism industry. The governments' main objective was to create a Ministry of Tourism to deal with policy issues and to create more autonomous tourism corporations in order to develop a more decentralized decision-making process. The reorganisation of the industry included the appointment of Osmany Cienfuegos as the Minister of Tourism, and the former Ambassador to Argentina, Mr. Brugueras, as his Vice Minister. The new measures that the government introduced in the following months included:

- a) The abolition of the National Institute of Tourism (INTUR) and its replacement by the Ministry of Tourism which has the mandate of designing and implementing overall tourism objectives.
- b) the creation of three independent hotel chains (Gran Caribe, Horizontes and Isla Azul, and a restaurant chain, whose name was is not yet published at the end of 1997). These organizations are to be profit-oriented (a concept never utilized in the operation of state-owned tourist facilities in Cuba) and are to work independently one from the other and not be under operational control from the new Ministry of Tourism.
- c) the new hotel chains have been structured taking into consideration the category of the hotel. Isla Azul: responsible for the operation of hotels for Cuban tourists, some 38 accommodation properties, and 40 restaurants; Horizontes: it is a medium budget hotel chain with 38 properties of three stars or less; Gran Caribe: top level hotel chain for the 4 and 5 star hotels and will only service the international hotel industry.
- d) the present administrative organizations and specific responsibility originally assigned to both Gaviota and Cubanacan Corporations remain unchanged.
- e) the Puertosol chain has been created to manage the marinas and marine sport facilities originally under the jurisdiction of INTUR.<sup>64</sup>

There are also several other companies involved in various aspects of tourism. The major ones being; Cubanacan (a large hotel chain that also operates a number of restaurants, stores, a car rental agency and a taxi company), Havanatur (a tour operator/travel agency),

---

<sup>63</sup> Tourism Sector Profile-Cuba, N.S. Economic Renewal Agency, December 1994, pg. 4.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., pg. 5.

Caracol (operates most of the tourist stores), Transtur (rents cars and buses and has a taxi company), Asistur (special agency set up to deal with medical emergencies, and provide any other assistance to tourists, as necessary), Marlin (operates many of the Cuban marinas and yacht clubs), Cubamar (tour company) and Rumbos (the major excursion company which also operates attractions, restaurants and stores).<sup>65</sup> These reforms allow the companies to operate with a considerable amount of autonomy from the central government.

Recently, the Ministry of Tourism has adopted a plan to provide certificates of category to Cuban hotels. The Ministry of Tourism has acquired the system *International Tourist Quality* (ITQ 2000) for classifying the quality of hotels. The evaluations are carried out twice a year in order to measure the quality and services in hotels.<sup>66</sup> In the past, the hotels were categorised according to Cuba's own star rating system. Many experts agreed that Cuba's rating system is not up to international standards. Several authors have concluded that the quality of tourist services in Cuba is the component of the Cuban tourism product which needs the most substantive improvement in order to be competitive at the international level. In a study conducted by F. Simon to assess Cuban tourism across a range of product components, she gave Cuban hotels (rooms and systems) six out of ten, the lowest score of any destination.<sup>67</sup> The Ministry of Tourism is currently working towards improving the quality of services and products provided by the hotel industry by

---

<sup>65</sup> Dr. Marion Joppe. "Report on Cuba." School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. 1995, pg. 5-6.

<sup>66</sup> Cuban hotels will receive certificates of category. *Destino Cuba*, January-March 1997, pg.17.

<sup>67</sup> Lila Haynes. *op.cit.*, pg.16.

modernizing hotel facilities and other tourist amenities, improving food services, providing professional training for staff and managers and diversifying the tourism product.

### **III.8 Tourism Education**

In 1990, the installation of the National System of Professional Formation for Tourism began and it organized a group of schools directed to the professional development of workers in the tourism sector. In 1996, there are now more than 20 educational centers distributed all over the country which includes a National Animation Center and a Languages Center.<sup>68</sup> The largest tourism training school is in Varadero. The schools have a capacity for 4,700 pupils and from 1990 to 1994 graduated more than 27,000 pupils. These schools offer two-year programs, of which 70% is practical experience, including foreign language training in French, German or English.<sup>69</sup> Language training is considered to be very important in the tourism education system. Student selection for these programs is highly competitive. In 1993, there were 1,400 students across Cuba and ten applicants for every place available. Overseas companies have also been considering graduates from these schools.<sup>70</sup>

Cubanacan operates schools in each of the tourist regions. For example, in Havana, Cubanacan operates a training school at the Hotel Comodoro: "students at the hotel learn and practice hospitality-related skills with course names and descriptions identical to those

---

<sup>68</sup> Tourism in Cuba and its Perspectives for Development, pg 4.

<sup>69</sup> Cuba Business 1994, volume 8, pg. 7.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., pg. 33

in other hospitality schools world-wide.”<sup>71</sup> The School of Hospitality and Tourism Management at the Hotel Sevilla is also considered to be an excellent training school in hospitality management. Many tourism schools in Cuba offer partnerships with other institutions abroad. For example, the Hotel Sevilla has launched a project with the Lausanne Hotel School in Switzerland to upgrade Cuban cuisine to more international standards and train Cuban chefs in these techniques.<sup>72</sup> Because of the increase in the quality of the tourism schools in Cuba, and in foreign companies’ involvement in the tourism sector, there has been a noticeable increase in the quality of service provided to the tourist.

### ***III.9 Cuba's Tourism Product***

According to Simon, “Cuba is still rated for its current appeal as 99% sun and sand: this indicates that the product suffers from a lack of diversification.”<sup>73</sup> Surveys undertaken in Cayo Coco confirm this theory. Almost everyone surveyed indicated that they were there to enjoy the sun, beach, and entertainment. Until recently, Cuba’s tourism product was based almost entirely on the development of mass tourism. Thomas Hinch explained that relying solely on resort tourism does not distinguish Cuba from any other destination in the Caribbean. Simon agrees with Hinch that the predominance of “packaged” tourism does not help to improve Cuba’s one destination image. The majority of tour operators still aggressively promote beach tourism. One Cuban official stated, “We wish to promote

---

<sup>71</sup> Jim Macualay. “Tourism and The Transformation of Cuba.” Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Quarterly, Volume 35, Number 3, June 1994, pg. 19.

<sup>72</sup> Dr. Marion Joppe. op.cit., pg 4.

<sup>73</sup> F.L. Simon. “Tourism development in transition economies: the Case of Cuba.” Columbia Journal of World Business.” Volume 30, 1995, pg. 27.

Cuba as more of a destination for family vacations. Echoing his words, one tour operator in Mexico stressed that the Caribbean Island was more than a paradise of “sun, rum and casual sex.”<sup>74</sup> Cuban tourism officials and international tour operators are beginning to see the potential for Cuba to diversify its market and attract more families, ecotourists, and other tourists interested in viewing what Cuba has to offer.

Although Cuba has been promoted on the basis of its beautiful beaches it offers a variety of other attractions for tourists. The country contains a beautiful natural environment, such as flora and fauna. Cuba has diverse geographical regions, mountains, tropical rain forests and arid flat lanes.<sup>75</sup> The cultural heritage includes folk, art, music, museums, historical sites and much more. In general, tourism destinations rely on a strong base of natural heritage and cultural resources that can be preserved. Cuba offers both natural and cultural heritage to attract visitors, although the beaches are still the stronger attraction. Cuba’s resources include beaches, fishing, scuba diving and snorkelling; other water based activities, ecology and nature experience, and parks and wilderness.

Cuba also offers health tourism packages. Cuba is considered to have the best medical care system in the developing world comparable even to many western countries. Cuba has treatments and cures for many diseases which are unavailable in other countries. It has been estimated that over seven percent of tourists enter Cuba for this reason.<sup>76</sup> Despite the strengthening of the economic blockade which has resulted in the reduction of medical supplies in Cuba, health tourism continues to grow.

---

<sup>74</sup> Interview with Cuban Tourism Official on October 24, 1997.

<sup>75</sup> Charles Suddaby. *op.cit.*, pg. 123.

<sup>76</sup> “Cuba your best choice brochure.” Cuba Tourist Board, 1990, pg. 25.

Recently, Cuba has been able to attract many people interested in viewing Cuba's socialist system. Cubamar, a tourist agency that has devoted itself to ecological and social tourism, states, "many tourists groups are interested in visiting schools, work centers, and farming communities, and in getting to know Cuban society from a different point of view at the same time they enjoy the Island's natural attractions."<sup>77</sup> Most of Cubamar's attention has been directed towards attracting youth tourism. The government is recognizing that there is a market for tourists who are interested in nature and simple accommodations where they can interact with the local residents. There are many new tourism companies that have sprung up in recent years to try to diversify the Cuban market. The diversification is necessary for Cuba to attract the volume of tourists that it hopes to obtain in the near future. Creating and promoting niche markets within the tourism industry will help to set Cuba apart from other destinations in the Caribbean.

In an interview with Charles Suddaby of the Economic Planning Group of Canada. Mr Suddaby pointed out several strengths for tourism development in Cuba. These include,

- strategic location
- by Caribbean standards a large land mass
- a large and diversified inventory of attractions
- city of Havana is a major tourist attraction (UNESCO world heritage site)
- strong tourism support infrastructure
- recently expanded hotels and upgrades
- safe travel environment
- friendly, warm and educated population
- a tourism industry that can be expanded to meet future demands <sup>78</sup>

---

<sup>77</sup> "A firm the doesn't plan for the future will not have a present." Business Tips on Cuba, August 1994, pg.10

<sup>78</sup> Interview with Charles Suddaby, Economic Planning Group of Canada, Feb. 26, 1997.

If marketed and planned well, all these characteristics can help to set Cuba apart from many other tourists' destinations in the Caribbean. The increase in Cuba's tourism industry has worried its Caribbean neighbours: "Cuba offers, and threatens to surpass, everything available in all other regional destinations combined."<sup>79</sup> In the future, ecotourism is considered to be a key component in increasing the tourist market to Cuba.

### **III.10 Ecotourism**

Most Caribbean countries have planned and marketed large resorts and chain affiliated hotels with meeting spaces, casinos, health spas, marinas, golf and tennis facilities. This perspective tends to ignore studies that indicate both market forces and global competition are singling out the availability of ecotourism products as a major determinant of visitor destinations in the future. Ecotourism is considered to be the fastest-growing subsector in the OECD markets and draws one of the most upscale segments, because of its average costs and low guide to guest ratio.<sup>80</sup> "The Caribbean offers tremendous potential of the region's rich natural and cultural resources, including a high level of biological diversity, to offer resort networks a setting that would catalyse visitor's exposure to and enjoyment of the destination's unique attributes, act as stepping stones of ecotourism itineraries, and carry out the most marketable pledge to protect the quality of place experiences that competition cannot match."<sup>81</sup> The only problem is that most

---

<sup>79</sup> Gillian Gunn. "The Social Impact of Rising Foreign Investment", Cuba briefing Paper Series. No. 1, Jan 1993, pg 10.

<sup>80</sup> Francoise L. Simon. "Tourism Development in Transition Economies the Cuba Case." Columbia Journal of World Business, Spring 1995, Volume XXX, N0, 1, pg. 31.

<sup>81</sup> Hana Ayala. "The International Resort Industry, Heritage Conservation and Sustainable Development: Towards an Unprecedented Partnership." INSULA International Journal of Island Affairs. Year 4, No.1 Sept. 1995, pg. 37.

Caribbean countries have lacked the policies and commitment necessary to develop ecotourism. As one Cuban tourism planner states, "tourism is a flimsy market and unless Cuba develops more ecotourism opportunities then Cuba will never fully capitalize from the tourism market."<sup>82</sup>

The Ministry of Tourism recognises the potential in ecotourism as an emerging sector within the tourism industry. Over the past two to three years, Cuba has slowly been developing ecotourism. Cuba has a great wealth of flora and fauna. Cuba's climate and rich natural resources make it the perfect place to visit. The size and geographical diversity of the country provide a strong opportunity for the development of natural ecology parks and wilderness areas. There are over 6,300 species of flora, 51 percent are endemic, 54 species of mammals, 350 birds, 106 reptiles, 42 amphibians, 1,400 of molluscs, 15,000 insects and 14,400 Arachnida.<sup>83</sup> Cuba is considered by diving enthusiasts to offer the best diving in the Caribbean. Over 30 beaches offer scuba diving and snorkelling, 1,600 cays and islets, and extensive reefs. There are between 280-300 beaches in Cuba. The island also contains a large number of limestone caverns. Cuba has the perfect climate along with an abundance of biodiversity and natural resources for developing the ecotourism product.

There are numerous swamps in Cuba, fertile farmlands and rolling plains as well as vast coral reefs and mangrove forests. There are endless possibilities for the development of ecotourism on the island. For example the Botanical Gardens "Eco-Restaurant, is the only organic and vegetarian restaurant in Cuba and is sighted as a good example of the use

---

<sup>82</sup> Interview with Enrique Lanza, Physical Planning Institute.

<sup>83</sup> Directorio Turístico De Cuba, pg. 261.

of this appeal to ecotourism.<sup>84</sup> Delta Resorts, a Canadian hotel chain in Cuba ran five small inns in the mountains of Cuba's eastern region which attracted eco-tourists. The tropical mountain rainforest of Cuba is a rare attraction that has become a part of the overall tourist attraction. Many birds that fly south for the winter either make their home in Cuba or use the island as a stop over. Therefore, a large number of those birds can be seen on the island from the period of November until April. Some examples of birds that are endemic to Cuba include the Bee Hummingbird, Zapata Wren, Zapata Sparrow, Zapata Raii, as well as many others. One specialist and bird watching guide stated, "that Cuba has the potential to attract many ecotourists interested in bird-watching."<sup>85</sup> Currently, he provides guided tours to different provinces in Cuba where one can observe the array of birds that are found there.

Several independent companies in Cuba such as Rumbos and Cubatur have realized the potential for ecotourism in Cuba and have taken advantage of the growing ecotourist market. Cubatur states, "having realized not only that it is the fastest growing market in the world, but also how competitive, specialised and demanding nature tourism is, we became associated with the Tikal Tour Operators from Costa Rica, thus achieving an ideal combination."<sup>86</sup> These tour companies provide guided tours to several places in Cuba.

There are eight important physical regions for the development of ecotourism. These include; Guanahacabibes, Sierra del Rosario, Southern part of the Island of Youth, Zapata Swamp, Guamuha (Escambray Mountains), Sierra Maestra Region, and Toa Blades.

---

<sup>84</sup> Cuba Business Volume 8, pg. 2.

<sup>85</sup> Interview in Havana.

<sup>86</sup> Cubatur. ECOCUBA/The New Division. Havana, 1995. pg. 2. (BROCHURE)

One specialist has estimated that Cuba's potential room capacity for ecotourism is between 2,000-5,000 rooms. This is according to the carrying capacity in the places that have been studied for the potential of ecotourism development. Most of the rainfall is in Guantanamo between 3, 400 mm to 3, 500 mm and the total rainfall in Cuba is 4,400 mm. Guantanamo is considered to be the most important region for ecotourism development due to its tropical forests and endemic species. The study undertaken has suggested that 20 percent of all the rooms will be in this region, in particular in Toa River Blades.

The Sierra Maestra is also an important area for ecotourism. This region has four important national parks; the Desembaraco del Granma, Turquino, Ballamesa, and Baconao. This area will attract many different types of ecotourists such as the adventure tourists for those that love mountain climbing. There are also many small sites in Cuba that can be developed for ecotourism.

Cuba features heavily vegetated mountains, lush valley, rainforest, large mangrove swamps, fresh water rivers and of course the dominant sandy beach coastline, a series of cays and coral reefs enriching much of the island. Cuba is also fortunate to have a rich and diverse history with at least three distinct period's -Spanish colonization up to late 1800's after the Spanish American war, up to the late 1950's, and the socialist revolution to the present day. Each provides strong tourist attractions. The fact that historic sites, architecture and artefacts have been preserved from all these periods and they are widely available through museums makes it even more attractive.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>87</sup> Interview with Charles Suddaby.

The Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment has established a research department for natural resources and tourism. The objectives of the department are to evaluate the physical area where tourism investment is taking place and to make recommendations to protect the environment during the construction process; the department teaches seminars on a given ecosystem so that investors learn how to handle and preserve the environment; and focus on rehabilitating the affected areas due to improper construction.<sup>88</sup> The Department of Natural Resources and Tourism includes four specialists: an economist, a biologist, an industrial engineer and geographer. For each project, they organize a wider team of experts in co-ordination with other research centers. In 1993, the National Group for Ecological Tourism was created, to make tourism work for the environment and vice-versa. It includes the Ministry of Tourism, Cubanacan and those studying the country's natural resources. The group was responsible for locating potential areas for ecotourism development. The group is also in charge of training guides for ecotourism.<sup>89</sup> The government also has a Department of Protected Areas which is responsible for legislating, controlling and inspecting all of the protected areas in Cuba. There are currently 80 protected areas of national importance and 200 which are of local importance. The government has decided that a percentage of ecotourism revenue must be spent on park infrastructure, management and protection.<sup>90</sup>

If properly planned, the development of ecotourism could help Cuba to protect its environment. Due to the current economic crisis in Cuba, however, it seems that the

---

<sup>88</sup> Alina Cepero. "Ecotourism a New Option for Cuba." Cuba Update, New York, No.1-2, 1993, pg. 43.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, pg. 43.

<sup>90</sup> David S. Collis. Tourism/Ecotourism in Cuba. Association of the Study of Cuba's Economy, 1996, pg. 454.

government has not been able to fully develop ecotourism's potential on the island. David Collis points out that the preparation of sites requires extensive scientific study, determination pathways, hotel construction, training of guides, and education of the local population. Funding to start up these processes simultaneously is lacking. In most cases the typical complex resort has taken precedence over alternative forms of tourism development. Much of Cuba's ecotourism potential has yet to be fully developed.

### ***III.11 Environmental Policy and Implementation***

The Cuban government will keep increasing the number of hotels and other facilities for tourist use probably up until the year 2,000 or until the government feels that tourism has reached its full potential. New facilities all over Cuba will continue to be built or remodelled. The government has done studies on more than 67 locations potentially-suited for future tourism endeavours. With the increase in tourism development, the Cuban government is faced with the dilemma of how to plan tourism sustainably. If tourism is not properly managed, than it could have damaging effects to the environment. The protection of the environment is increasingly becoming a condition for sustaining tourism over the long term. It is necessary to focus on Cuba's environmental policies and legislation, as well as their enforcement, in order to assess whether Cuba can develop a sustainable tourism product.

After the revolution in 1959, the government created institutions for the study, protection, and conservation of its natural resources. The improvements in educational training and scientific capacities also helped in the solution of some of the existing environmental problems at that time. There are now several policies and legislation in

place that shows that Cuba has a commitment to protecting its environment. In 1976, the government created the National Commission for the Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources (COMARNA). In 1981 the Cuban government establishment Law 33 to help protect the environment. Key sections of Law 33 that concern the Tourism Industry are below.

**Table 5 Key Provisions of Law 33 That Effect Tourism Development**

<b>Section I Water</b>	This section deals with planning for the use and development of fisheries resources in rivers lakes and lagoons; establishes the need for rational use of water and the utilization of treatment water technologies in all new projects and the prohibition to locate any project in areas designated as source aquifers.
<b>Section II Soils</b>	Article 42 establishes that all persons dedicated to mining activity, road construction and/or another economic activity affecting the soils must adopt the necessary programs to replace or rehabilitate the construction site. The cost of rehabilitating the site must be included as part of the investment.
<b>Section IV. Marine Resources</b>	This section applies to coastal areas, estuaries, beaches, dunes, barriers, coral reefs, fish and wildlife, and regulates the dumping of all materials into marine waters. It prevents and/or restricts the dumping of materials adversely affecting human life, the marine ecosystems, or the economy. Along with the goals to preserve the marine resources, the following is prohibited: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unauthorized use of mangrove forests in coastal zone</li> <li>• Exploitation of marine sand without a permit</li> <li>• Dumping of any kind of ship waste, petroleum products, industrial waste and/ or municipal waste.</li> <li>• Unauthorized construction of any building or structures in coastal zones.</li> </ul> The Law also establishes some protected areas in order to protect marine resources.
<b>Section V Flora and Fauna</b>	This section seeks to preserve endangered and threatened species. It establishes the National Systems of Protected Areas and procedures to exploit the forests. It outlines the considerations to maintain, preserve and manage the forests and wildlife.
<b>Section VI Atmosphere</b>	The major provisions of this section are intended to set goals for cleaner air and the establishment of permits for industrial emissions level. It also outlines the responsibilities of all national or foreign investors to limit the level of contaminant emissions. In the case of new industrial projects, approval of construction in a proposed location depends on standards and related to human settlement, climatic conditions, and topographic relief.
<b>Section IX Landscape and Tourism Resources</b>	The law prohibits the construction of any type of development in coastal zones without authorization. The zones dedicated to foreign tourism have special administrative status issued by the Council of Ministries. Tourism developments located in areas within the National System of Protected Areas have special regulation.
<b>Chapter III</b>	Law 33 created the "National System of Environmental Protection and the Rational Use of Natural Resources." The functions of the National System are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Coordination and control of the established policies for protection of the environment and the rational use of natural resources.</li> <li>• Creation of rules and regulations to protect the environment.</li> <li>• Elaboration and control of environmental contingency plans.</li> </ul>
<b>Chapter IV</b>	Actions and/or omissions which violate standards and provisions for environmental protection and the use of natural resources by the Law will be subject to penalties through different procedures established by the Council of Ministers.

Adapted from Ralph Barbra and Ampero E. Avella's. "Cuba Environmental Law".  
Association of the Study of Cuban Economy, 1995, pg. 226-280

In 1994, the Academy of Sciences was replaced by the Ministry of Science Technology and Environment (CITMA) as a governing body in environmental matters and in the process strengthened the environmental commitment at a provincial level by establishing offices in each province commissioned to applying and regulating environmental policies.<sup>91</sup> The government also created the Coastal Ecosystem Research Centre (CERC) in 1991 as well as other research institutions. One of CERC's areas of expertise is to assess the development of hotel projects in sensitive ecological areas and give their approval for its development. The department also studies coastal protection and preservation of underwater flora and fauna, which is another aspect of ecological tourism. There have been several groups formed in Cuba to study coastal development in order to minimize the negative impacts of tourism development.

The current environmental legislation in Cuba is in the process of being revised and expanded, due to the changing climate. For example, the government has recently included a chapter on the environment in the Law on Foreign Investment. This section stipulates measures which must be taken before the execution of any investment takes place. These measures include environmental impact assessments and carrying out on going inspections and pertinent controls to maintain the environment.

The current Foreign Investment Law states:

**Article 55.** The Ministry of Foreign Investment and Economic Co-operation, in pertinent cases, submits the investment proposals it receives for the consideration of the Ministry of Science Technology and Environment, so that the latter may evaluate the investment's suitability from the environmental point of view and

---

<sup>91</sup> Environmental Policy and Tourism in Cuba. pg 2.

determine whether an environmental impact evaluation is required, as well as the suitability of granting the pertinent environmental licences and establishing a control and inspection program in accordance with current legislation.

**Article 56.1.** The Ministry of Science Technology and Environment institutes the measures, which may be, required to properly control situations that could lead to damage, dangers or risks for the environment and the rational use of natural resources.

2. The person or company responsible for the damage or harm is obliged to re-establish the previous environmental situation, repair material damage and indemnify the injured parties.<sup>92</sup>

If properly managed, this legislation could help Cuba to protect its natural resources. The Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment resolution on the Direction of Environmental Policy (Project 1draft April 1995) authorizes ecotourism to be carried out in areas designated as such providing that certain administrative requirements are met. This is subject to administrative, management plans and the provision of personnel for such purposes.<sup>93</sup>

The Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment will prepare a bill to replace Law 33, of January 10, 1981 which helps to protect the environment in Cuba. This move reflects the necessity of the government to make adjustments that reflect national as well as international changes that has taken place in the world. The new legislation is supposed to help guarantee that at the peak of tourism in the country limited environmental effects will occur and that in particular ecotourist activity are properly defined and

---

<sup>92</sup> Republic of Cuba, Foreign Investment Law. Havana, 1995. pg. 25.

<sup>93</sup> John McLachlan-Karr. Evaluation of Eco-tourism in Valle de Vinales, Cuba Center for Latin American Studies, John Hopkins University and the Cuban Academy of Sciences, 1994, pg 15.

controlled. Many other resolutions taking place within the new legislation are in line with adhering to important international agreements in the sphere of the environment.

The Ministry of Tourism and the Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment are working on a "National Program for Tourism Development" some of the objectives of the project will include:

- Guarantee the rational use of the intrinsic natural resources for tourist development in the country, making emphasis in adequate management of biotourism in its integral expression of the ecological cultural and social aspects; the protection projects, rehabilitation and coastal zones managing and development of the territorial classification and methodology for the sector.
- Elaborate and to propose programs intended to offer environmental education to the population linked to the tourist development areas and to personal that works in tourism.
- Investigate the different economic activities that have an environmental impact on the tourist areas and to propose measures to eliminate those which have negative results.
- Study and propose constructive solutions, architectural, and urbanistic adapted for the keys and other places that are located in areas of scarce resources and others with high degree of natural resources.

Within this program, three projects related to the environment have been prioritized:

1. Rational use of energy and resources in the engineer systems in the tourist facilities.
2. Technologies for the treatment and residual waters in tourist facilities.
3. Smart system for the energetic control of the hotels.<sup>94</sup>

The objectives of the government's National Tourism Program are to minimize negative impacts to the environment as a result of tourism development: "all new development brings a unavoidable degree of environmental alternation. A permanent objective of the tourist planning is to search for solutions that would imply minimal environmental alternations."<sup>95</sup> Cuba wants to plan sustainable tourism and is searching for a necessary balance between profitability and sustainability.

---

<sup>94</sup> Dr. Teresita Borges Hernandez and Dr. Norman Medina Pérez. *op.cit.*, pg. 6.

<sup>95</sup> Dr. Teresita Borges Hernandez and Dr. Norman Medina Pérez. *op.cit.*, pg. 6.

The government has developed a number of national parks and protected areas to prevent the extinction or destruction of the important biodiversity found in these areas. The level of protection varies: "these range from areas that forbid all forms of economic activity and most visitors (except for scientific researchers) to national parks and forests opened to limit activity."<sup>96</sup> In 1959, there were 9 National Parks and as of 1998 there are over 200 protected areas of different categories in Cuba, four of them are Bioserves declared by UNESCO.<sup>97</sup> The government takes great pride in preserving the environment because it belongs to the society. The concept of ecotourism has even been incorporated into the constitution which establishes the protection of the environment and the country's natural resources. The development of tourism has helped to preserve historical sites and parks which might not have been preserved otherwise.

There has been an increase in public awareness in the world of the need of achieving sustainable development. The Cuban government recognises the importance of sustainable tourism development and is making transformations and modifying existing environmental legislation to reflect this need. Even with the current changes in environmental legislation however, enforcement is still difficult and there still exists a number of problems associated with constructing and planning tourism development. There are areas where much work remains to be improved. There seems to be several inconsistencies in the development of the ecotourism product. For example one visitor states, "we had the opportunity to visit the Cueva del Indio in Viñales where we toured a cave in a

---

<sup>96</sup> Armando H. Portela. "Sanctuaries and Reserves." CubaNews, January, 1996, pg. 10.

<sup>97</sup> Environmental Policy and Tourism in Cuba. The Ministry of Tourism Cuba, 1997, pg 5.

motorboat". This would be considered totally unacceptable to an ecotourist.<sup>98</sup> The economic situation in Cuba is also causing the government to make decisions that are not environmentally sensitive. For example, constructing large resorts in pristine wilderness habitats that should not be disturbed. Like many other developing countries, it has become difficult for Cuba to protect its environment when the economic situation of the country is suffering. Developing large hotels and other tourist amenities is the priority in order to obtain hard currency. When developing these hotels it becomes difficult to construct an environmentally sustainable hotel when there is no access to the materials and there is a need to finish these hotels quickly so the chances for environmental degradation becomes larger.

The Cuban government in theory has integrated environmental issues into tourism development, however past history has shown that in practice tourism development was not integrated into the environment. Like many countries in the world, Cuba has made decisions without regard to future consequences which has resulted in environmental problems. Perhaps with the current changes in the environmental legislation including the requirements for Environmental Impact Assessments this may provide the necessary link between environmentalists and investors in the tourism industry to work together to protect the environment. The Cuban government realizes the importance of the environment not only for the tourists, but for the Cubans as well. David Collis believes that the economic crisis has increased pressures on the environment but at the same time, it has also allowed for some inexpensive environmentally sound tourism. The Cuban government has taken

---

<sup>98</sup> Dr. Marion Joppe. *Tourism Legislation*. School of Hospitality and Tourism Management. Faculty of Business, Ryerson, pg. 9, 1995.

some positive environmental decisions but at the same time, they have also has also taken some environmentally-destructive ones.

In the next section, a case study of tourism development in Cayo Coco and its impacts on the environment will be presented in order to examine whether tourism development is sustainable or can be in the near future. Until the end of the 1980's, the keys essentially remained undeveloped. Recently, the government has prioritized some of the coastal keys for tourism development. According to one analysis, "together with some remote mountains or inaccessible swamps, the keys preserve the least disturbed ecosystems in Cuba and enjoy a high biological diversity, in many cases serving as shelter for animals and plants living exclusively in these reduced parts of the world."<sup>99</sup> As a result, of tourism development in these fragile areas there has been significant ecological damage.

#### **IV. Methodology**

Five months were spent in Cuba gathering sufficient data for this study. A triangular approach to the data collection was used. The approach assumes that no one data collection could ever be sufficient. The study involved three principle methods of data collection: (1) a review of secondary and primary documentation, (2) interviews with key officials in the tourism industry and (3) a survey of 200 tourist respondents.

A review of current literature on tourism and sustainable development references was carried out. Secondary Literature was compiled through library research, Internet and CD ROM searches. As much primary documentation was gathered in Cuba as possible. The Coastal Ecosystem Research Center (CERC)) has a library which contained government

---

<sup>99</sup> Armando H. Portela. "Keys." CubaNews, Volume 4 No. 7, July 1996.

reports, and research reports conducted by CERC. When I was in Havana, I went to the Escuela de Altos Estudios de Hoteleria y Turismo Documentation Center in Old Havana. There I was able to obtain Cuban tourism journals magazines and bulletins. Finding written information in Cuba on tourism besides the Granma newspaper is very difficult. A lot of their materials just don't exist or they only have one copy and no photocopying facilities.

In-depth interviews took place with people in the National Institute for Physical Planning, the Ministry of Environment Science and Technology, the faculty of Geography at the University of Havana, the Provincial Ministry of Tourism in Ciego de Avila, the Center for Protected Areas, Rumbos, Cubatur, The Coastal Ecosystem Research Center, Director of Animation, nature tour guide, Room Manager, travel operators as well as other staff at the Hotel Tryp Cayo Coco. This allowed me to learn more about tourism development and to identify whether the current development strategies for this island effectively addresses and incorporate sustainability into its plans.

The third part of this study involved the administering of 200 survey's to examine the potential to develop alternative forms of tourism development. The set of surveys was directed towards tourists who bought packages to Cayo Coco from various countries. The surveys were distributed randomly at the Hotel Tryp Cayo Coco. The survey was administered over an eight-week period.

The results of the study are broken down into three sections. First, I provide a description of the study area and examine past and future tourism development plans for the area. Second, I examine the potential for the development of alternative forms of tourism development through the analysis of the survey results. Fourth, I discuss the

different approaches that tourism development in the island can take and provide guidelines and recommendations for a more sustainable approach. Finally, I present evidence that alternative forms of tourism development can take place on the island and that there is a potential for market for this type of tourism. I also provide evidence that past tourism development plans for this island did not take into consideration the environment and was not sustainable.

## V. OVERVIEW OF TOURISM IN CAYO COCO

**Figure 1 Playa Larga, Cayo Coco**



Cayo Coco is one of several islands in the Sabana-Camagüey Archipelago region. It is located in the northern central region of Cuba and is the second largest offshore island in

the area. The Archipelago covers five provinces (Matanzas, Villa Clara, Sancti Spiritus, Ciego de Avila and Camagüey) and it is the most extensive group of Cays in the area. Cayo Coco lies 750 km from Havana and is connected to the mainland by a 27-km long causeway over the sea. Cayo Coco and adjacent islands (Cayo Guillermo located west of Cayo Coco and Paredon Grande located to the east of Cayo Coco) are characterized by miles and miles of beautiful pristine beaches which make them attractive for tourism development. Besides the beautiful pristine beaches, "Cuban ecological surveys rates this region as containing some of the country's most outstanding coastal and marine areas, based on biological landscape diversity, as well as scientific, historical, archaeological and cultural values."<sup>100</sup> Ernest Hemingway, described in his novel *Islands in the Stream* what it was like: "A marvellous place where the east wind blows night and day, a territory as virgin as when Columbus arrived on these coasts."<sup>101</sup>

It was in the 16th century that these group of Cays: Cayo Coco, Cayo Guillermo and Cayo Romano located next to the old Bahamas channel became the setting for many pirates and privateers. From these keys, pirates would set sail to attack the north coast of the island. In the 1800's, pirates and privateers had given away to smugglers and slave traders, who took advantage of the geographical difficulties to flaunt projectionist or abolitionist laws. In 1901, the first permanent dwelling on Cayo Coco was constructed and owned by a Spaniard, Juan Vives. In 1927, the property was bought to start up a cattle and pig ranch and to plant orange trees. The project was short lived however, when it was

---

<sup>100</sup> UNDP. "Protecting Biodiversity and Establishing Sustainable Development of the Sabana-Camagüey Ecosystem." United Nations Development Program and the Government of Cuba, 1992. pg. 1.

<sup>101</sup> Eduardo Cabrera. "Cayo Coco, between dreams and reality." Sol y Son. International de Cubana de Aviacion. vol 40, no.1, 1997, pg. 10-26.

discovered that the land was relatively infertile, and the buyer was unable to complete payment. After, the land was used for the production of charcoal, which employed between 500 and 600 workers; however, they stripped a large part of the island forest until it brought a drastic reduction in this activity. In 1944, another attempt was made to breed livestock. During the same time, a U.S. company began to look for oil in the northern part of Cayo Coco. From the 1960's onwards, these activities were abandoned and the keys were deserted until the construction of the causeway was completed in 1988 to develop a potential tourism area.

### ***V.1 Status of Resources***

The Cuban government established Cayo Coco as a pristine wilderness site with a wide variety of marine and terrestrial ecosystems located on the island. This would include coral reefs, sea grass beds, muddy bottoms, mangroves, various coastal shrubs and a wealth of flora and fauna. The island is made up of mostly mangrove and bush. Over 90% of the territory is covered by vegetation, of which 77% is forest. The former Academy of Sciences in Cuba (ACC) and the National Commission for the Protection of the Environment and Natural Resources (COMARANA) designated Cayo Coco as one of the high priority areas for its biodiversity and productivity.<sup>102</sup> The region is considered to be a critical winter habitat for hundreds of migratory species. The island remained virtually uninhabited until the government identified this region as a high-priority tourist destination

---

<sup>102</sup> The Sabana-Camagüey region is a group of islands of the northern coast of Cuba which includes Cayo Coco. The Sabana-Camagüey has been designated as a pristine wilderness area. UNDP Project Document. Cuba Protecting Biodiversity and Establishing Sustainable Development in the Sabana-Camagüey Ecosystem. July 1993.

in the late 1980's. Due to the fact that the island remained virtually uninhabited until recently, it has an extensive natural habitat.

Cayo Coco and the rest of the archipelago contain unique elements of the Cuban natural heritage that cannot be found elsewhere. The United Nations Development Program states,

Recent inventories have resulted in the discovery of 46 vertebrate taxa and hundreds of invertebrates that are endemic to isolated islands or cays along the Cuban coast. The reason that so many species are restricted to the cays may be that these islands represent the last remnants of several habitat types that have been eliminated on the main island. Agricultural development and consequent loss of natural habitat began very early in Cuba—more than 400 years ago in many regions. Because of Cuba's extensive low-lying terrain, much of the country was suitable for sugar production and was converted to monoculture for sugar cane. Habitat modification has therefore been both extensive and of long duration (the new Atlas of Cuba indicates that the category "Highly Modified Landscape" has increased). The result is that many plant formation and habitat types have been eliminated on the main island.

For example, Cayo Coco is home to more than 15,000 flamingos. Given the areas wealth in terms of biodiversity, it is important that the government takes measures to protect the existing biodiversity in these fragile areas.

The main natural resources of importance for tourist development in Cayo Coco are; more than 20 km of beaches, the coral reef barrier, sandy dunes surpassing 10m of altitude (exclusive of this region and very good natural "miradors"), large number of birds, especially flamingos with the most important population in the Cuban Archipelago, and great floristic diversity and relatively high endemism.<sup>103</sup> The natural resources of the area make it a very attractive place for tourists to visit. At the same time, Cayo Coco, is

---

<sup>103</sup> Eduardo Salinas Chavez, Eros Salinas Chavez, ect. Landscape Planning for Tourism in Tropical Islands. A Case Study of Coco Key, Cuba. INSULA International Journal of Island Affairs, France, Year 4 No. 1, September, 1995, pg.13.

considered to be a priority area for biodiversity protection and adequate management of Cayo Coco must take priority to protect the large number of species that may become extinct in the near future. Therefore, tourism development in Cayo Coco must be developed in a manner that is sensitive to the natural resource base of the region, to provide substantial economic benefits and environmental protection. In less than four years, this island will become one of Cuba's main tourism destination spots. Tourism development on this island is rapidly expanding.

## ***V.2 Tourism Development***

**Figure 2 Tryp Club Cayo Coco**



In the early 1980's several studies were conducted to assess the potential use of the land for tourism development. In 1985, the construction of roads on the island began and in the middle of 1986 the construction of a causeway started and was

completed by 1988. This was the first connection of Cayo Coco to the mainland and it allowed for the construction process for tourism to move more rapidly. In 1990, the first master plan for the development of the area was published. Since 1989, a large Spanish-Cuban tourist complex (Hotel Tryp Cayo Coco formally known as the Guitart) has been built on the north east shore of Cayo Coco and a nearby a second hotel was completed and opened on Dec 20th, 1996. In 1997, a new hotel opened called the Sol Club Cayo Coco (from Melia). In construction: Melia Cayo Coco, Hotel La Laguna and Hotel El Manglar. Tourism related developments are planned for other areas in Cayo Coco and other islands in the archipelago. For example, in Cayo Guillermo there are open: Villa Cojimar (Italians) and Villa Vigia and in construction hotel Villa Gregorio (Italian and Cuban owned) is under construction. These hotel developments have resulted in the construction of an international communications centre, worker's village (Bautista), numerous roads, (both for transportation and for accessing water lines), electrical service, and limestone quarries for building materials on Cayo Coco. Most of the roads on Cayo Coco and adjacent islands are unpaved and only 65 cm wide. A paved highway runs from the causeway to the Hotel Tryp, west to Cayo Guillermo, and east to Bautista. Several of the smaller roads were built to access water lines. On the west side of Cayo Coco, a small airport has been in operation since 1995. Cayo Romano and Cayo Peredón Grande, located to the east of Cayo Coco are largely uninhabited.

The Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment (MSTE), formally known as the Academy of Sciences of Cuba (ACC), created and built the Coastal Ecosystems Research Centre (CERC) on Cayo Coco. CERC was established on

November 28, 1991 to regulate, from the ecological point of view, the economic development of the region. CERC serves as the focus for collecting and managing scientific and environmental information.<sup>104</sup> At present, there are more than 40 employees at the centre staffed by (MSTE). Approximately 30 are specialists and technicians devoted to research tasks and or environmental studies in several branches of the natural sciences. The scientific activities of the centre are carried out through seven working groups. These working groups are assigned to work on several projects of multidisciplinary research and assume integrated studies of impact assessments and environmental management of coastal zones subjected to economic development. The United Nations Development Program under the Global Environmental Facility Project (GEF) has assisted CERC with the proper scientific, logistical, and communicational facilities necessary to undertake these tasks. GEF will assist Cuba in establishing a scientific basis for the protection of its biodiversity. This also includes developing a sustainable tourism plan. Currently, CERC is working on the impacts of tourism development in Cayo Coco.

### ***V.3 Tourism Planning in Cayo Coco***

In the 1980's, detailed physical plans for development were drawn up for Cayo Coco. Interdisciplinary investigations were carried out by a considerable number of researchers, scientists and technicians. The research involved four Institutes of the former Academy of Sciences of Cuba (Institute of Oceanology, Institute of Ecology and Systematic, Institute of Geography and the Institute of Meteorology) among other

---

<sup>104</sup> UNDP Project Document. Cuba Protecting Biodiversity and Establishing Sustainable Development in the

national institutions (e.g. University of Havana, Center of Fisheries Investigations, Commission of the Environment and Natural Resources, etc.).<sup>105</sup> Some of the recommendations of the investigation included:

- Avoiding or minimizing man-introduced ecological impacts caused by the construction of roads through the sea from the mainland to the keys, between keys, and through mangrove systems (bridges, sewers, relocation of projected roads, etc.)
- Zoning of sea and land use areas.
- Zoning of the different categories of projected areas.
- Zoning species composition and community structure of flora and fauna of the sea and keys.
- Zoning and description of the geomorphological features of the Archipelago.
- Zoning of man-induced modifications to the environment.
- Zoning of the hydrological and sedimentological features of the sea.
- Establishing rules for the protection and improvement of the beaches.
- Establishing a future monitoring programme and a monitoring methodology.<sup>106</sup>

The people involved in the initial planning for tourism in Cayo Coco used a zoning planning process that permitted the rational organization of the use of space and is the end result of extensive surveys and evaluations of touristic resources in the area. "By means of zoning the type of management which should be assigned to each area according to its natural, historical and social economic features, can be

---

Sabana-Camagüey Ecosystem. July 1993, pg 8.

<sup>105</sup> Pedro M, Alcolado and Leda Menendez. "Interdisciplinary Environmental Assessment of the Archipelago Sabana-Camagüey (Cuba), Prior to the Extensive Tourism Development Projects." 1995, pg. 125.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., pg. 125.

identified."<sup>107</sup> There were eight functional zones assigned for touristic use in Cayo Coco. These zones included:

**Intensive Use Zones:** These include beaches, dunes and subaquatic landscapes in the north coast shelf located in shallow waters. This coincide with most of the areas of touristic recreative activities and the high numbers of visitors and allows for modifications and changes in the landscape since they are the main supporter of development and concern lodging and services infrastructure.

**Extensive Use Zones:** These are the natural and semi-natural forests and shrubs, internal lakes and mangroves that have floristic, faunistic and forestal importance and constitute detached elements because of their protective regulative function in the landscapes. In these territories special activities are allowed, including diving, photo hunting, walking, etc.

**Rehabilitation Zones:** These are zones that underwent a strong human modification the social economical assimilation process. Rehabilitation would take place by means of improvements in, for example, old quarries and deforested areas.

**Special Use Zones:** The infrastructure to support tourism will be located in such areas. They may also have other functions of productive, social or scientific character<sup>108</sup>

The other areas included an Integral Management Area, Touristic Natural Areas for north coastal zone, Floristic Reserve for the middle-north sector with high floristic diversity, Natural National Monument for the high dunes and a Fauna Refuge to protect the flamingo colonies and other important birds in their natural habitats. However, none of these zones exist today and there are currently no established protected areas in Cayo Coco.

Although extensive research was carried out before the development of tourism took place on the island, the Master Plan remained stereotypical of tourism

---

<sup>107</sup> Eduardo Salinas Chavez, Eros Salinas Chavez and Eduardo Veiga Jimenez. "Landscape Planning for Tourism in Tropical Islands. A Case Study of Coco Key", Cuba. International Journal of Island Affairs, Year 4, No.1, Sept 1995, pg 15

development and did not take into account the changing market for tourism in the Caribbean. The construction of hotels along the strip of Playa Larga is typical with resort development in the Caribbean whereby resorts have sought their own exclusive stretch of beach. As one Cuban planner stated, “the first Master Plan for Cayo Coco was not a sustainable tourism development plan. At that time, there was not a great emphasis on environmental considerations, especially the concept of sustainable development.”<sup>109</sup> After the completion of the Master Plan, which made several positive recommendations towards protecting the natural surroundings, decisions were made that were not in line with the environment, (for example, the construction of the causeway). At that time, Cuba was in a position that it was necessary for them to obtain hard currency quickly. One way that the Cuban government thought to achieve this was developing other tourist spots, such as Cayo Coco. The Spaniards who wanted to invest in Cayo Coco also had their own ideas about how and where they wanted to build their hotels. For example, the investor Guitart wanted to have a better view of the beach and built the second hotel on the sand dunes, which is one of the principal causes of soil erosion.

The Master Plan was not published until the end of 1990, by that time the construction of the roads and causeway were completed. Due to the economic situation of the country, the government did not have time to wait for the studies to be completed. It was in 1989, that Cuba lost its principal trading partner and needed to obtain hard currency fast. At that time, some of the decisions were made too quickly

---

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., pg. 16-17.

<sup>109</sup> Interview with Enrique Lanza, Physical Planning Institute.

without careful consideration of the future impacts for Cayo Coco and the surrounding areas. There did not exist the level of knowledge, experience and legislation which exists today to protect the environment.<sup>110</sup> It was not until the completion of the report that the government saw that a need existed to control and regulate tourism from an environmental view.

There are only three hotels fully completed on the island, the Tryp Cayo Coco, the Tryp Club Cayo Coco and the Sol Club Cayo Coco. The hotel designs are in line with recent touristic development (relatively low elevation). The construction and the materials used to build the hotels however have caused a loss of habitat for that area as well as other environmental effects. The second hotel opened at the end of 1996. The same company as the Hotel Tryp manages the new hotel Tryp Club Cayo Coco. The hotel has 714 rooms, the largest hotel to be built in Cuba. Two more hotels are in the process of being built on the opposite end of Playa Larga and are expected to be completed in 1998. Hotel Manglar will have approximately 250 rooms and the Hotel la Laguna 400 rooms. Hotel EL Peñon is in the process of being started and has yet to begin construction. All of these hotels will be developed along the same strip of beach, near the research centre. Other possible future facilities for Cayo Coco include; a health clinic, offices, more beach bars, golf course, more resorts, and more marinas.

In their initial assessment, the former Academy of Sciences first approved the development of a maximum of 16,000 hotel rooms without harming the environmental integrity of the ecosystems on the island. After reassessing touristic

---

<sup>110</sup> Interview with a Scientist at the Coastal Ecosystem Research Center.

development in Cayo Coco they have reduced the number of rooms to between 11,000 to 12,000 rooms. All of the necessary infrastructure for the development of tourism is in place. Future tourism development plans consist of constructing more hotels along the other beaches in Cayo Coco. For example, Playa Flamingo was supposed to have 4,000 rooms constructed. Now, this has been reconsidered to include one convention hotel and 2-3 ecovillages. In Playa La Concha there are plans to build two hotels with 400 rooms each.<sup>111</sup>

The Provincial Ministry of Tourism developed a four-year master plan for Cayo Coco and the rest of the keys. The Physical Planning Institute, the Provincial Ministry of Tourism, local tourism companies and the local government developed the master plan. The plan for Cayo Coco includes the development of 2,300 rooms by 1997 (this was not reached in 1997) and approximately 2,000 rooms per year until the maximum capacity has been reached. However, there may be less than the maximum capacity planned for the island depending on investors and other factors.<sup>112</sup> The tourism master plan aims at controlled and balanced tourism, the objectives are growth oriented focusing on the expansion of tourist visitor numbers, facilities and services. Local environmental planners and government officials have recognized the need to promote environmentally- sensitive tourism planning. The Coastal Ecosystem Research Center and other interested parties are currently working on an assessment of the potential for ecotourism development for the island. They are also working towards the establishment of protected areas.

---

<sup>111</sup> Interview a with Physical Planner Nov 26, 1996.

<sup>112</sup> Interview with an official with the Provincial Ministry of Tourism, Ciego de Avila, Dec 19th, 1996.

In 1995, the government passed a law requiring investors to undergo an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) before the construction of any new hotels. With the approval of EIA'S and the requirement to obtain environmental licences many of the scientists interviewed at CERC agreed that this would allow them to provide recommendations for the measures, actions and forms of construction. It will help to minimize the amount of environmental impacts caused by the development of more hotels. Any future tourism development plans for Cayo Coco (or other areas of Cuba) will require an environmental license. The Coastal Ecosystem Research Centre has in place an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process which must be performed before any new construction can take place on the island. Developers must obtain a signed permit from CERC, or other similar agencies that were given official approval. The investors must go to the Physical Planning Office where they will provide them with the zones in which they can construct. After they must go to an architect who makes plans for the design of the hotel. The investors and the Construction Company must show their plans to the Center that can complete the EIA assessment and once it has been approved the investors must then go to the environmental office where they will grant them the license to start the construction process. This approval than allows the investor to construct new developments on the island. Prior to 1995, there was no EIA approval necessary for investors to begin construction for tourism development.

The EIA provides for a detailed assessment of the physical, social and economic impacts of each proposed project with identification of any problems which should be resolved through the modification of the project. CERC has completed its first

transport and other activities supporting the rapidly growing tourism development. In 1996, the Province of Ciego de Avila's (which includes Moron, Cayo Coco and Cayo Guillermo) income from tourism was 25 million and it is predicted to reach 40 million by this year. In 1995, the number of tourist arrivals was 40,000 and at the end of 1996 it was expected to increase by 20,000 to reach 60,000 tourists to the province. It is estimated that 80 to 90 percent of tourists go to Cayo Coco or Cayo Guillermo and the rest of the tourists are divided between Ciego de Avila and Moron. Between 200 and 300 tourists per week however, travel outside of the keys for day trips, principally to the city of Moron since it is the closest city to the keys. Tourism is now the principal economic earner for the province and the second is the sugar industry.<sup>114</sup>

It is estimated that the development of these resorts in the keys will create some 16,000 new jobs. Currently, there are approximately 5,350 personnel who work in some aspect of tourism in Cayo Coco and Cayo Guillermo. With the construction of the new hotel La Laguna it is estimated that during construction stage it will employ approximately 600 people and during operation there will be over 410 personnel, the construction of the new hotel will provoke an increase in employment by almost 20 percent.<sup>115</sup> The average age of the hotel workers is 23, most of them speak a foreign language and almost 100 percent have a least a 12 grade education. Many of them have been trained at the hospitality school in Moron or have a university degree in another field of study. In discussions with hotel employees, in most cases, they left

---

<sup>114</sup> Interview with the Ministry of Tourism in Ciego de Avila, Dec 19, 1996.

<sup>115</sup> Interview with a researcher at the Coastal Ecosystems Research Center, Cayo Coco, Cuba, Nov 1, 1996.

Environmental Impact Assessment on the construction of a new hotel (Laguna) on Playa Larga beach in Cayo Coco. The scientists at the research centre after their Environmental Impact Assessment (approved with conditions) in which the builders of the hotel must comply with. For example, the Center recommended that instead of building 450 rooms it should only construct 400 and the builders are now complying with the recommendation.

In a interview with the former director of CERC, he stated that, "tourism development in Cayo Coco will never be like another Varadero since tourism development will only cover 4 percent of the total island however, this was once a pristine wilderness site therefore any development of the island will have a noticeable negative impact."<sup>113</sup> The EIA is only one part of the process towards a sustainable tourism strategy. Several other components make up a sustainable tourism strategy:

The next section will explore the positive and negative impacts of tourism development in Cayo Coco.

#### ***V.4 The Costs and Benefits of Tourism Development***

##### ***V.4.1 ECONOMIC***

The development of these resorts in this area will cause several economic, social and environmental impacts, both positive and negative. Some of the positive economic impacts include, the creation of employment for Cubans living in Ciego de Avila province, the generation of income in the province and the country, and considerable economic activity related to the procurement of building materials,

---

<sup>113</sup> Interview with the former of Director of CERC Dec 15, 1996

their field of specialization to work in the tourism industry. There are several reasons for this, access to hard currency, better remuneration, learning about other cultures and practicing a foreign language were the main reasons given. Tourism has a major employment impact in Cuba both because of the size of the tourism industry, and also because tourism is a labour intensive industry.

Of course, the most positive economic benefit comes from the increase of hard currency through tourism development. The negative economic impact which is not isolated to Cayo Coco is the economic leakages. For example, "until 1995, foreign tourists with U.S. dollars could not patronise private restaurants which dealt only in pesos, nor could they buy goods produced by the private sector. The result has been that most of the hard currency earned from tourism has remained in circulation within the tourism sector, hence minimizing the trickle-down effect."<sup>116</sup> However, with the recent economic changes which included the legalization of the dollar, benefits of tourism development are now being felt in the local communities. With the legalization of the dollar, Cubans are now permitted to hold hard currency and the Cuban population is now allowed to buy goods available in the tourist dollar shops. The Cuban government made several economic reforms in 1993 and 1994 that helped to stimulate production of the Cuban economy. For example, in Cayo Coco local artisans sell their handicrafts at the hotels. Everyday there is a group of artisans who come and set up their crafts near the lobbies of the hotels. These artisans keep the profits they earn.

---

<sup>116</sup> Polly Pattullo. The Cost of Tourism in the Caribbean: Last Resorts. Latin America Bureau, London, 1996. pg. 46.

The following are some examples of other economic reforms:

**Table 6 Examples of Economic Reforms in Cuba**

Foreign Investment	The Cuban government has entered into a great number of agreements with many countries, granting concessions, in petroleum, mining, telecommunications, tourism, etc.
Self Employment	A total of 151 130 licences have been granted for self-employment, but Cuba has limited the type, size and scope of these businesses.
System of Taxes	In order to increase revenues, the Cuban government has announced the introduction of taxes on income and personal property.
Reduction of Subsidies	A reduction of subsidies has increased the prices of cigarettes, alcoholic beverages and fuel. This has also for the first time, established prices for cultural and sports activities which previously were free.
Other Reforms Include	The establishment of agricultural co-operatives on state lands which public employees can join; the implementation of higher domestic prices, such as electricity, communications, transportation; and the establishment of farmers' markets, in order to overcome food shortages. <sup>117</sup>

The impacts of these economic reforms are more noticeable in Havana where many paladars (private restaurants) can be readily seen as well as other entrepreneurial activity.

#### **V.4.2 SOCIAL**

Since there is no local community in Cayo Coco, the negative social impacts usually associated with tourism development are not found to be as significant as in

<sup>117</sup> Amparo E. Avella and Allan S. Mills. " Tourism in Cuba in the 1990's: back to the future? Hospitality Management Journal, January, 1996, pg. 58.

other places in Cuba. One of the most important negative social impacts of tourism development in Cayo Coco, however, is the restriction of nearby communities from having access to beaches and other places of Cayo Coco. Currently, only Cuban tourism workers, the people that work at the Coastal Ecosystem Research Center and tourists are allowed to enter the causeway. Some people might not understand the measure and may become resentful. There is a tourist apartheid in Cayo Coco.

With the development of new hotels on the strip of beach near the research centre, it may limit the people who work in the territory from entering the beach. Since most of the hotels are all inclusive, tourists must wear bracelets to distinguish that they are paying customers. At the Tryp Hotel, Cubans who do not work at the hotel are not allowed to descend near the strip of beach where the hotel is located. All-inclusive, unlike other hotels, restricts access to those who can afford expensive day passes, thus effectively barring the majority of Cubans from the premises. It becomes possible that in the near future, Cubans will not be able to enjoy the sandy beach with the construction of three more hotels in the area. Another negative impact lays in the inequality between people employed in the tourism industry, who are better remunerated, and the rest of the population deprived from direct access to hard currency. There is a separation between those with access to dollars through tips and those who do not have such access.

There are many Cubans who left their professions to work in the tourism industry because of better pay and access to dollars, the best paying jobs are now in the tourism industry. Thus, many professionals now want to drive taxis or work in the hotel industry instead of being doctors or teachers. This has caused problems in other

sectors of the economy. For example, there is a shortage of professionals, such as teachers and engineers. It became important for the Cuban government to take measures to avoid the exodus of professionals. They established various attention systems to the workers affected by this exodus of professionals from their traditional positions, to motivate them spiritually and materially, for example, providing more vacations for Cuban workers in international hotels which has helped to decrease the number of professionals leaving their jobs.

The principal persons who work in tourism development in Cayo Coco are fundamentally from the cities of Ciego de Avila and Moron. In Ciego and Moron however, there are not enough people to work in the construction of the hotel facilities therefore, it became necessary to bring workers from other provinces. The workers are mostly from the eastern provinces such as Santiago de Cuba. With the increase of migration of workers to neighbouring cities this has had a considerable social impact which can not be ignored. As one Cuban researcher states, “psychologically it can produce instability in the individual, in its family, and in the social relationships outside work.”<sup>118</sup> As a result of the increase in tourism and the migration of workers to Ciego de Avila there has been a noticeable increase in crime. There was a failure to plan for the influx of workers and their families from other provinces which has also placed a burden on living spaces and social services in particular in Ciego de Avila.

The main centre supporting the development of tourism in Cayo Coco is the city of Moron, the second in importance in the province, located 55 km from Cayo Coco.

---

<sup>118</sup> Interview with a researcher at the Coastal Ecosystems Research Center in Cayo Coco, Cuba, Nov 1, 1996.

Many of the workers take busses to work, because permanent settlements in the island are forbidden, so as to decrease the negative impact on the environment. There is temporary housing available for the hotel workers and the construction workers, but most travel to and from work. Many of the people that work at the hotel receive benefits such as shampoo, soap, etc. that help them to cope with the current economic situation in Cuba. The workers' conditions in the tourism industry are much better than the working conditions of many others in Cuba. The cultural level of many of the hotel workers and families will increase because they must study and become more sensitive to other cultures. There is an increase in social interaction between tourists and the personnel. This interaction might allow for Cubans and tourists to have a chance to learn about each other's countries. Many of the workers interviewed during my stay agreed that they are a lot better off than many other Cubans. They see the tourism industry as a way to increase their standard of living. Since tourism development in Cayo Coco is a recent phenomenon, many of the negative social impacts can only be speculated.

#### ***V.4.3 ENVIRONMENTAL***

There are several negative environmental factors associated with the development of tourism in Cayo Coco. One of the first results of the research works carried out to manage the ecosystems of Cayo Coco established that only four percent of the total area of the island should be appropriated for tourism development, which regulation has been seriously taken into consideration by the government. However, the construction and operation activities of tourism are always associated with

environmental damages at different degrees. In the case of Cayo Coco, one of the most outstanding harmful effects of development have been caused by the construction of the causeway which links the small territory with the mainland and the clear-cutting of forest areas for the construction of hotel buildings, facilities and access roads. The causeway was the first to be built in Cuba. There was a lot of debate over the construction of the causeway. Many environmentalists were concerned over the negative environmental impacts. Castro stated in a speech given at the opening of the first hotel in Cayo Coco that; "the idea of building a causeway has been around for more than 20 years, but not with the objectives that we have today, not with our minds set on international tourism, and building up the wealth that our country needs so much at this time."<sup>119</sup> As a result of methods used to construct the causeway there were immediate indications of environmental damage. The causeway blocked tidal flow and damaged breeding grounds of marine fauna. It was linked to the disruption in the natural circulation patterns of the water flow. Some of the other negative impacts included, eutrophication and severe water quality changes, disruption of the habitat, minor pollution from cars, decrease of fishing activity, decrease of genetic and species diversity, biodiversity reduction, turbidity and bad smells of water, loss of mangroves and aesthetical value.

Sea life was drastically reduced and as a result there has been a decrease in fishing resources for the area. One-author states, "the result was predictable: entire areas of these waters have been reduced to salty lagoons, with low oxygen levels and

---

<sup>119</sup> Fidel Castro. "We're not going to develop just any kind of tourism, we must create quality tourism and most of all, one that is in harmony with nature." Granma International, Havana, December 1, 1993. pg. 4.

little life."<sup>120</sup> The causeway was built solid all the way across the inner bay by using gravel and pavement. Although, the Cuban government knew that the construction of the causeway would cause some environmental damage they continued because alternative plans that would allow for them to build a bridge was too expensive and access to these materials are extremely difficult because of the economic blockade.

After two years' working, the specialists at the CERC completed a multidisciplinary research work on the zone of the causeway. The studies showed that this construction was one more cause among several that influenced the environmental quality of the inner bay, where cumulative effects produced by some other factors also affected the ecosystem. The recommendations drawn from these studies were immediately put into practice by local authorities and a certain number openings were placed in critical sections of the causeway, whose actions have provided the place with a more convenient flow of water. The positive results have been seen sooner than expected and in the place where there was a considerable stretch of dry mangrove trunks new plants have begun to grow. At the same time, further monitoring has shown a considerable increase in the water quality and the presence of a larger number of marine species in the area. Current studies are still ongoing to ensure that the negative environmental impact as a result of the construction of the causeway remains at a minimum.

Some of the other negative effects of tourism development include the building of access roads, temporary lodging for the workers, dredging of the littoral and lakes,

---

<sup>120</sup> Amparo E. Avella and Allan S. Mills. *op.cit.*, pg. 59.

high noise levels in some places with a high concentration of tourists, and visits to natural areas. The present situation of disposing of garbage at the hotels, construction sites and beach bars located on the different beaches in Cayo Coco is an environmental problem. Although, there is a disposal site located on Cayo Coco many of the workers dump the garbage at the nearest available spot instead of taking it five miles down the road. Since the island is large there are plenty of locations to dump garbage without being noticed. There are forest conservationist hired to protect the forest from such things, however they do not have a car, plane or any other method besides on foot to ensure that the destruction of the forest does not happen. Without the proper technical support it becomes difficult to watch over such a large key. The littering of the beaches by tourists and the locals is also becoming a noticeable problem. Aesthetically, it does not look very nice and it would also deter tourists from returning to Cayo Coco. Currently, Cayo Coco does not have the resources to police conservation regulations effectively.

The construction of the first two hotels on the island did not take into consideration the protection of the surrounding environment. The bull dozing of the land, filling in a lagoon, and building concrete structures have caused a loss in habitat for the area. Furthermore, the lagoon became affected by the pollution of the construction of the first hotel Tryp and resulted in negative impacts in the ecosystem and the loss of some of its principal ecological and aesthetic values.

The construction phase of both of the hotels generated pollution by the noise of the equipment; powder and gas emissions of combustion; pollution of the lagoon by suspensions of materials and liquid residues and solids. The construction of the Hotel

Tryp and Hotel Club Cayo Coco also did not take into account the natural landscape. Hotel Tryp was constructed to look like a colonial town which is more appropriate for places such as Trinidad than for Cayo Coco. Hotel Club Cayo Coco is built too close to the beach (sand dunes) and environmental damage has occurred as a result. The hotels should have been constructed in relation to its natural surroundings. "The modern concept of a resort is that it is planned as an integrated development with consideration given to its compatibility with the natural environment and possible benefits to the local community."<sup>121</sup> Also, in the construction stage of these hotels the construction workers had no consideration for the natural surroundings. The construction workers walked over the sand dunes, cut wood from trees, littered and destroyed plants that might be endemic to the area. The construction workers must also gather wood to cook with because they are not provided with the fuel to do so. This has caused damage to the forest area in Cayo Coco because the workers cut down trees that are important to the biodiversity of the area. Clearing of vegetation has also eliminated some forest and mangroves in the area, destroying habitats, displacing local fauna and causing damage to the biodiversity of the area. Many endemic plants are found only in these areas. Current research has shown that it is seasonally important dispersal habitat for many residents and recently arrived migrant birds. Some species with extremely restricted ranges in Cuba (e.g. Bahama Mockingbird, Banaquit and Thick-billed Vireo) occur only in this habitat and only in the Archipelago de Sabana-Camaguey.

---

<sup>121</sup> G.McIntyre. Sustainable Tourism Development. pg 53.

Before the construction of these hotels, there were no regulations or laws in place that required for a builder to obtain approval through an Environmental Impact Assessment. Most of the environmental damage could have been avoided if the people involved from the beginning of tourism development in Cayo Coco would have taken the recommendations made by researchers in the first master plan more seriously. For example, the master plan included several recommendations to help protect the environment some of these included: avoiding the employment of methods of clearing the forest vegetation, since this brings as a consequence the imbalance in the regeneration of the vegetation and the flora and fauna; the architecture of the construction of the keys will have to be integrated in a way harmonic to the natural surroundings; and the construction of causeways through swamps must guarantee the existing water flow in the channels.<sup>122</sup> Some of these recommendations were overlooked when it came to developing the island for tourism.

There have long been feral cattle, horses, dogs, cats, pigs, rats and mice on the island. In the early 1990's there was a program underway to round up the cattle. This was dropped when it was decided that tourists liked them. The introduction of big horned bulls came in about 1994. Cattle are destructive non-native herbivores that pose a threat to native plants and animals. They do not enhance Cayo Coco's image as a "Fauna Reserve;" rather they impart a barnyard aura to the island.

Air pollution may also become a serious problem in this area. There will be an overall increase of traffic on this island, which currently includes, and will continue to

---

<sup>122</sup> Academy of Sciences of Cuba. Estudio de los Grupos Insulares y Zonas Litorales del Archipiélago Cubano con Fines Turísticos. Cayos Guillermo, Coco y Paredón Grande. Havana, 1990.

include, many trucks with inadequate mufflers and pollution control devices. The airport may also cause noise pollution particularly as it relates to colonial water birds (e.g. Greater Flamingos, and many heron and egret species). All of the birds are extremely vulnerable to disturbances at their nesting colonies.

The increased traffic on the coral reef in Cayo Coco for snorkelling and scuba diving can also cause problems if not properly supervised. There needs to be strict rules on how divers conduct themselves on reefs. At Key Largo where there is an underwater national park, the reefs are in disastrous conditions, in some areas dead from heavy traffic. Reefs are adversely affected when people touch coral (by hand or flipper), and collect coral or other invertebrates. There is also an accumulation of oil on some of the beaches which is not caused by the construction of tourism but has an indirect impact none the less.

Currently, the impact of tourism on the environment in Cayo Coco is not as significant as in other places in Cuba such as Varadero. The reason is because tourism is a relatively new development. There are only three hotels completed on the island. However, there is much potential for further environmental problems, in particular on the landscape and on the natural resources of the island given the relatively large magnitude of tourist development. The future tourism development plans for Cayo Coco are to develop hotels on almost all the beaches in the area. It also includes the development of tourism on Peredón Grande which is the one of the adjacent keys to Cayo Coco. <sup>123</sup> Evidence now supports the notion that travellers are reacting against

---

<sup>123</sup> Travel and Tourism Environment and Development. World Travel and Tourism Environment Review, Oxford, 1991 pg. 3.

resorts which have become over-developed and suffered erosion of their environment and quality generally. A quality tourism product - of which the environment is an essential component is therefore going to become even more important throughout the 1990's to maintain success as the number of competing destinations increases. If the current plans go forward without regard to the environment as in the past, then Cayo Coco will become a typical tourist spot like in many countries where the surrounding environment has become ruined by construction and development.

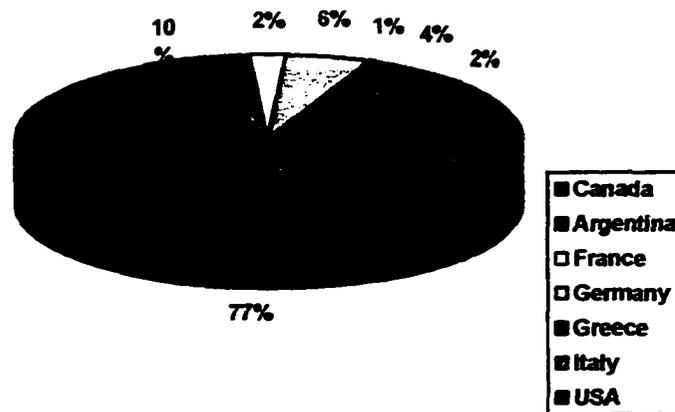
## **VI. SURVEY ANALYSIS**

Over a period of two months, I conducted and collected 200 surveys of tourists at two hotels, the hotel Tryp and Club in Cayo Coco. The surveys were administered during the high season in Cuba (December and January). The objective of the survey was to obtain a general indication of the type of tourists currently coming to Cayo Coco and their potential interest in nature/cultural related activities. Although the survey does not provide an ecotourist perspective, as there is no ecotourism on Cayo Coco, it does provide specific information about the opinions and activities of those tourists currently being attracted to Cayo Coco. The Ministry of Tourism has already developed certain areas in Cayo Coco for mass tourism development. The tourists who are currently selecting Cayo Coco as their destination of choice are attracted to this area because of the sun, sand and sea. However, there is much potential to attract these tourists to embark on ecotourism activities. All of the surveys were processed by personal computer and analyzed using the Sociological and Psychological Statistical

System (SPSS) program. The analysis provided statistical as well as descriptive results of the information gathered. What follows is an analysis of the survey data.

The tourists surveyed came from a variety of countries; Canada, Argentina, France, Germany, Greece, Italy and the U.S. with 153 (77%) of the tourists coming from Canada. The reason that such a large number of Canadians are selecting this destination is due in large part, the promotional efforts by the tour companies in Ontario and Quebec. Cayo Coco is promoted and marketed aggressively as one of the top new destinations in Cuba. The second largest group with 20 (10%) surveyed came from Argentina, the third was Germany with 7 (11%), the fourth was Italy with 7 (4%), the fifth was France with 4 (2%), the sixth was the U.S. with 3 (2%), and the last was Greece with 2 (1%).

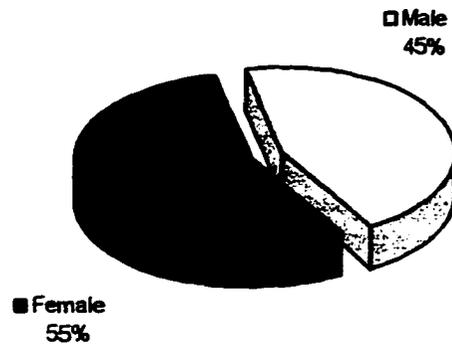
**Figure 3 Percentage of Tourists from Each Country**



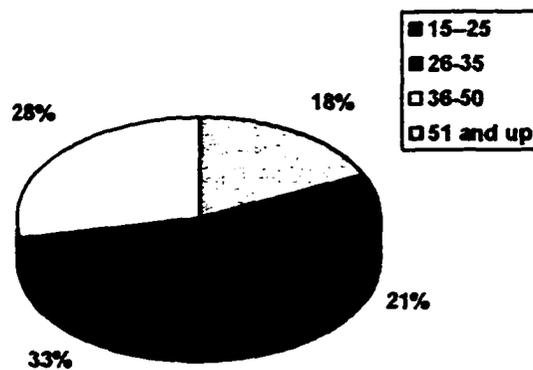
A total of 88 (45%) males and 112 (55%) females were surveyed. Most of those surveyed were between the ages of 26-50, 42 (21%) were between the ages of 15-25 and 36 (18%) were 51 and up. Over half of those surveyed 129 (65%) said that it was their first trip to Cuba. For the 71 (35%) that indicated that it was not their first trip to Cuba, it was either their second or third trip to the country. Many of those surveyed traveled with one other partner 123 (62%). Only 10 (5%) traveled alone and 67 (33%)

traveled with two or more people. This is significant because over 70% of all travel to Cuba are part of a group (IHA Update, 1990, pg. 34). Most of the tourists surveyed in Cayo Coco were either couples or families.

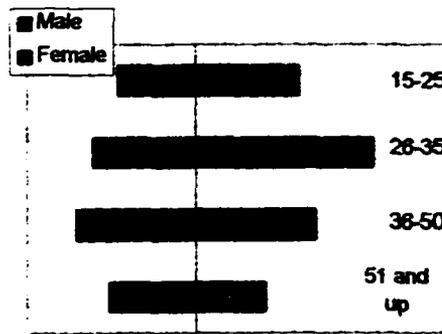
**Figure 4 Percentage of Females and Males Surveyed**



**Figure 5 Percentage of Age Classes Surveyed.**



**Figure 6 Age Distribution by Gender.**



Of the 200 responses to the question of employment, professionals accounted for 60 (33%). A total of 24 (12%) considered themselves as managerial or supervisor. Skilled workers and tradesmen accounted for 20 (10%). Service industry showed 16 (8%). Self employed accounted for 29 (14%). Students accounted for 20 (10%). Others accounted for 31 (16%). In the Others category many of them indicated that they were either retired or a housewife.

**Figure 7 Percentage of Occupation Distribution**



While the above data and figures show the demographic profile of the tourists surveyed, the following figures indicate the reasons for choosing the destination and their degree of interest to participate in nature-based/ecotourism activities. This is significant if Cayo Coco is to develop any future alternative forms of tourism development.

Three questions were asked to the respondents as to their reasons for choosing Cuba and their final destination of Cayo Coco. There were 200 responses to all of the questions. In the questionnaire they indicated by circling which apply to them. Visiting Friends and relatives was the least likely choice with only 4 (2%) indicating that it was one of the reasons why they choose to come to Cuba. There were 5 (3%) that choose business and conventions as one of their choices. Sun, beaches and entertainment had the highest response with 183 (91%). Sightseeing had accounted for 47 (23%). Culture and native history accounted for 38 (19%). These findings could be a clear indicator that people are still choosing Cuba as a “sun, sand and sea” destination. It also indicates that tourists who come to Cayo Coco are interested in relaxation and the beach.

In response to question 6, on what influenced them to choose Cuba as a travel destination spot, there were 200 responses. The highest influence indicated was friends and family with over 76 (38%). The second influence was attractive prices 73 (36%). The travel agent was next with 53 (26.5%). Advertisements 24 (12%) and other reasons 11 (5%) were last. According to the responses, many people are influenced to choose Cuba as a travel destination because of its attractive prices and recommendations by friends and family.

For question 7, what influenced them to choose the final destination of Cayo Coco, the highest response was the travel agent with 79 (40%), next was recommendations by friends or relatives with 55 (27%), advertisements 42 (21%), other was 26 (13%) and accommodations was last with 10 (5%) indicating this as one of the reasons why they choose Cayo Coco. Travel agents play an important role in marketing and promoting this destination spot, especially because it is fairly new tourist spot in Cuba and many people have not heard about this destination.

The surveys indicated that 81 (46%) said that the natural environment was either the main reason or was important in influencing their decision to come to Cayo Coco. Over 64 (36%) gave some degree of importance to the natural environment and 31 (18%) indicated that it was not important. There were 22 respondents that indicated it did not apply and 2 that did not answer the question. Many stated that they did not know much about the natural environment before coming to Cayo Coco. There is not a lot of information available on this area. The tourist's brochures only give a very brief description of the natural environment. However, when asked whether the natural environment plays a significant role in attracting tourists 148 (71%) choose either extremely important or very important as their answer.

In response to question 12, the most popular nature-related activity in which tourists in Cayo Coco participated in was scuba diving/snorkeling with 73 (36.5%). The second most popular activity was boat trips with 47 (23.5%). The third activity was nature trails with 38 (19%), hiking and bird watching were the same with 37 (18%), wildlife watching was 27 (13%), horse back riding 20 (10%), botany 6 (3%), and other 16 (8%). Marine related activities are the most popular for tourists to

participate in Cayo Coco. Other nature-related activities, however, are not strongly promoted and the facilities to support these activities are not in place.

When asked what they would most like to visit (nature trail, National Park, museum, night club, beach) over the next 24 hours the most potential popular nature-related activity was visiting a nature trail with 56 (22%) respondents. Visiting a National Park was second with 43 (22%) respondents. Many of them stated that the reason for choosing a nature trail or a national park was to view the wildlife, flora and fauna. Over 50 percent of the people surveyed would prefer to participate in a nature-based activity. Twelve people (6%) choose a museum and six people (3%) choose a nightclub. However, the beach is still the most popular with 83 (41%) respondents, not surprising since this destination is promoted as such. When asked how much they expected to spend on the above trip, a variety of answers were given. I realized that I should have given a range of prices because it would have been more accurate. The results however indicate that many of these tourists would spend between 20-50 dollars on an ecotour.

Tourists were asked to rank in order of importance seven different methods that Cayo Coco can use to increase its tourism. The number one ranking in tourists opinion with 66 (33%) was to provide more facilities for beauty, scenery, and wildlife and the number two was to provide more cultural activities with 41 (20%) respondents. The number three ranking again was cultural activities with 42 (21%). The fourth and fifth ranking was to provide more facilities for sports with 32 (16%) and 44 (22%). In the number one category entertainment came in second. Providing more hotels and restaurants 64 (32%) was ranked last. Many tourists stated that they did not want to

see a strip of hotels along the beaches. They enjoyed the privacy and the beauty of the area. The survey results indicate that tourists prefer to see more facilities that would allow them to enjoy the beauty, scenery and wildlife of the area, they want more cultural activities, entertainment as well as facilities for sports.

**Table 7 Response to Methods to Increase Tourism in Cayo Coco**

- A. provide more hotels and restaurants
- B. provide more entertainment
- C. provide more cultural activities
- D. provide more beach resorts
- E. provide more facilities for beauty, scenery, Wildlife
- F. provide facilities for sports
- G. provide more marine facilities

1	19 11%	34 19%	21 12%	27 15%	62 35%	5 3%	9 5%
2	16 9%	28 16%	40 23%	25 14%	30 17%	18 10%	20 11%
3	11 6%	26 15%	40 23%	26 14%	18 10%	26 15%	30 17%
4	17 10%	28 16%	26 15%	26 15%	21 12%	34 19%	25 14%
5	20 11%	25 14%	15 8%	21 12%	13 7%	42 24%	40 23%
6	29 16%	24 14%	20 11%	37 21%	17 10%	25 14%	26 15%
7	65 37%	12 7%	15 8%	15 8%	16 9%	27 15%	27 15%

Tourists were asked if they felt that Cayo Coco would be facing any particular environmental problems as a result of tourism development by indicating yes or no. The responses were fairly evenly distributed with 95 (48%) indicating yes and 102 (51%) indicating no. Those that responded yes cited pollution as a possible negative environmental impact. There were 3 that did not respond to this question.

In response to question 25, have they visited other places in Cayo Coco or surrounding areas 93 (47%) indicated yes and 106 (53%) indicated no. Of those that answered yes, the two most popular places indicated were Morón and the Jabali Cave. A little over half of the people surveyed stayed in the confines of the resort. There was one missing response to this question.

Of the tourists surveyed, 177 (89%) said that they would return to Cuba and 23 (11%) indicated that they would not return. Out of those that responded yes, 74 (37%) said that they would return to Cayo Coco. In response to where would they would return; Havana had 26 (13%), Varadero 62 (31%) Trinidad 21 (11%), Santiago de Cuba 23 (12%) and other places in Cuba had 58 (29%). According to these responses, Cuba has a high rate of return visit. Varadero still seems to be the most popular spot for many tourists. Most of the tourists surveyed were satisfied with their trip to Cuba and Cayo Coco, 171 (86%) was either extremely impressed or just impressed. Most of the tourists surveyed stated that Cubans are very friendly and above 193 (95%) felt that Cuba was very safe for tourists, the rest did not respond.

When asked what could be improved, tourists gave a wide range of answers. Many of them mentioned better information such as, maps, promotional materials and signs. If this area will be promoted as an ecotourism destination than these educational materials must be made available to the public. When asked what they liked best about their stay in Cayo Coco, the most common answers given were the friendly staff, the beach, and the weather. When asked what they least liked about their stay in Cayo Coco, the most common answers were too isolated, the food, and lack of activities offered. For question 26, what do you think tourists could do to help

preserve the environment in Cayo Coco, the most common answer given was to stop littering. Many of the respondents felt that the beach was the best natural resource in Cayo Coco.

When asked whether they would participate in more nature-based/ecotourism activities if offered 134 (67%) indicated they would and 67 (34%) indicated that they would not participate in more nature-based/ecotourism activities. This shows that there is potential to attract tourists who are not necessarily ecotourists and for whom the sun, sand and sea are the most important.

According to the survey results, males (males 68%, females 66%) are slightly more likely to participate in ecotourism activities. People over the age of 51 (83%) are more likely to participate in ecotourism activities. Those between ages 26-35 are less likely to participate in ecotourism activities, with 44% indicated that they would not participate in more ecotourism activities. Tourists from the U.S. are the most likely to participate in ecotourism activities with 100% indicating they would; Italy is second (86%), Argentina is third (80%), France is fourth (75%), Canada is fifth (67%), Germany is sixth (36%), and Greece is last with no one indicating yes. It would be difficult to make any real assumptions due to the small sample size of tourists coming from other countries besides Canada.

Those surveyed that are most likely to participate in ecotourism activities are students (80%), others (74%), and professionals with (73%). Those least likely to participate in ecotourism activities are skilled workers; over half (55%) opposed to going on an ecotour; managerial professionals are split 50% yes.

There is a direct relationship between how much the environment influenced their decision to come to Cayo Coco and whether or not they would participate in ecotourism/nature-based activities. For example, of those that cited the environment as the main reason for choosing Cayo Coco, 80% said yes to more ecotourism activities. Of those that responded not important, 48% said that they would not participate in more ecotourism activities. There is also direct correlation between those that regard the natural environment and cultural activities as high priorities and whether or not they would participate in ecotourism activities. Of those that indicated to provide more facilities for beauty, scenery and wildlife as their number one choice to increase tourism in Cayo Coco, 85% said yes to more ecotourism. Of those of that cited it as their last choice, 69% percent said that they would not participate in more ecotourism activities. Of those that responded to provide more cultural activities as their number one choice to increase tourism, 68% said that they would participate in ecotourism and of those that indicated it as last choice, 71% said that they would not participate in ecotourism activities. Tourists who are interested in the natural environment and cultural activities are more likely to participate in ecotourism activities.

Of the tourists who stated that they have visited other places in Cayo Coco and surrounding areas, 76% said yes to more ecotourism/nature-based activities with only 24% indicating no. Of those that did not visit other places, besides the beach resort, 59% said yes to participating in ecotourism activities and 42% said no. This indicates that tourists who go off the confines of the resort are more likely to participate in ecotourism activities.

## **VI.1 RESULTS**

According to the survey results, the amount of nature-based activities that tourists participated in while in Cayo Coco directly influences whether or not they would participate in ecotourism activities. The more activities they participated in the higher response to participate in ecotourism activities. For example, of those that did not participate in any activities 48% said yes to more ecotourism while 53% said no. Of those that participated in one nature-based activity, 66% said yes while 34% said no. Of those that participated in five nature-based activities, 75% said yes while 25% said no. Of those that participated in six nature-based activities, 100% indicated yes to more ecotourism. The more active a tourist is on vacation, the more likely they would purchase an ecotour.

Tourists who are more concerned about the environment are also more likely to participate in ecotourism activities. For example, of those that cited yes to tourism causing environmental problems in Cayo Coco, 82% said yes to more ecotourism activities with only 18% indicating no. While those that cited no, that tourism has not caused environmental problems, 53% said yes to more ecotourism with 47% indicating no.

The results of the survey provide an overview of current attitudes of tourists who are coming to Cayo Coco and their potential to participate in ecotourism/nature-based activities. It is clear, that there is a huge potential to develop “add on” tourism in Cayo Coco aimed at people who travel to destinations for reasons other than ecotourism. Marine based activities and nature trails would be the most popular nature-based

activity for tourists to participate in Cayo Coco. Katrina Bradon notes that “few of these tourists would pay a large sum of money exclusively to visit special natural or cultural sites. But are willing to spend a portion of their vacation, and more money and time, for a unique experience which adds to their overall vacation or trip.”<sup>124</sup> Cayo Coco could develop both add on tourism for those that want to go on one day excursions and true ecotourism for those that are more adventurous and enjoy the rugged outdoors. Currently, most of the tourists coming to Cayo Coco are there to enjoy the beach however, there is a strong indication that many of these tourists are concerned about the environment and would participate in ecotourism activities. The attractions and image of a destination can influence the type of tourists coming to Cayo Coco. Since the surveys were conducted with tourists who bought package tours in order to enjoy the sun, sand and sea, a true ecotourist profile is still needed for those interested in attracting the “true” ecotourist to Cayo Coco or to other similar destinations.

According to the results of several surveys conducted in various countries, males seem slightly more likely to participate in specialized nature outings. Data available on ecotourism travel indicates that there is no “average age” for ecotourism travelers; however based on review of several studies, the ages commonly referred are 26 to 65.<sup>125</sup> The majority of ecotourism travelers are from the upper-middle class. A study of Canadian travelers showed that 13.7% had annual incomes over 70,000 while

---

<sup>124</sup> Katrina Brandon. “Ecotourism Conservation: A Review of Key Issues”. April 1996, The World Bank. April 1996, pg 5.

<sup>125</sup> Fennll and Small. “Ecotourism Market Demand Assesments”, 1992, pg. 2.

36.2% of ecotourism travelers were in this income bracket.<sup>126</sup> Many ecotourists have a university degree. A study of Canadian tourists found that 20.7% had university degrees, while 64.9% of ecotourism traveler were at that level.<sup>127</sup>

Activities of interest to ecotourists vary. According to a study conducted by Paul E. Eagles in 1992, Canadian ecotourists are motivated by several factors such as tropical forests, birds, lakes and streams, trees, wildflowers, mammals, mountains, and ocean side. These were all ranked in the top 15-motivations to visit an area. Another studied examined the reasons why Canadian ecotourists were attracted to Costa Rica. They cited wilderness areas, national parks and reserves, rural areas, mountains, lakes and streams, and ocean-side.<sup>128</sup> In 1988, a study conducted by the World Wildlife Fund found that tourists were most interested in wildlife observing and boats trips.<sup>129</sup> Paul Eagles study indicates that Canadian ecotourists are motivated by nature, adventure, being physically active, and meeting people of similar interests.<sup>130</sup> According to a study conducted by Lawrence Huntly of the potential market for tourists to Cuba from the U.S.A. The most attractive features of Cuba, according to the ranking, 1) coastlines, 2) water, 3) traditional music and dance 4) mountains and caves, 5) were handicrafts and art, and 6) historical buildings.

---

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, pg 2.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, pg 2.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, pg. 27

<sup>129</sup> Elizabeth Boo. Ecotourism The Potentials and Pitfalls, Volume 2, World Wild Life Fund, Washington, Dc., 1990, pg. 4

<sup>130</sup> Paul F.J. Eagles. "The Travel Motivations of Canadian Ecotourists." Journal of Travel Research, Fall of 1992, pg. 4-5.

The ecotourist tend to spend more money than the average tourist does. Ecotourists are also willing to pay more for their tour package. A U.S. study found that “green” travelers were willing to spend an average of 8.5% more for travel services and products provided by environmentally responsible tour operator.<sup>131</sup> A Survey conducted in Montana discovered that on average, wild land-based activity tourists spent 25-50% more than the non-wild land tourists; this includes all expenditures while in state.<sup>132</sup> The Ecotourism Society has concluded, based on a survey conducted by ARA consulting firms of North America, that there is no major difference between ecotourists and general tourists when it comes to household composition however, the majority of ecotourists surveyed prefer to travel as a couple. The length of stay varies however; the largest group of experienced tourists preferred trips lasting

The study conducted by Paul Eagles confirmed that ecotourists do not require luxurious accommodations, food or nightlife. They are willing to accept and appreciate local conditions, culture and food. However, according to Sorenson; “the adventure-travel market is typified by professionals and business executives who are accustomed to staying in upscale hotels and resorts but who show a preference for properties with “local flavor” or activities fitting their interests.”<sup>133</sup>

The most important challenge facing local tourism planners in protecting the environment in Cayo Coco is to devise a sustainable form of mass tourism or beach

---

<sup>131</sup> Cook et for all the Travel Industry Association, 1992, p. 43-44.

<sup>132</sup> Yuan and Moisey, 1992, pg. 23.

<sup>133</sup> Sorenson, 1993, pg. 26.

tourism. Ecotourism will not solve the existing environmental problems associated with developing mass tourism. However, ecotourism should be considered as part of an overall plan to ensure that there is minimum impact to the environment as a result of tourism and to also make a diversified and interesting tourism product. The process of obtaining the objectives has led to the following recommendations, which addresses the purpose of this study.

## ***VI.2 Major Findings***

1. The vast majority of respondents mostly middle class Canadians, came to Cayo Coco to enjoy the sun, sand and sea. They want a place for rest and relaxation. They find the Cuban people friendly and the service good. They were highly comfortable about their safety in Cuba.
2. Many of the respondents were interested in returning to Cuba and viewing other places in the country. The most popular place to visit is Varadero. The major attraction is the beaches and low prices.
3. A majority of those surveyed would participate in ecotourism activities. They project an interest in nature trails, or scuba diving/snorkelling and other water-based activities.
4. Many of the tourists felt that there needs to be more facilities available to enjoy the beauty, scenery and wildlife of the area. Cultural activities were a high priority for many tourists as well as more entertainment.
5. The respondents show a concern for the environment and feel that the environment plays an important role in attracting tourists to a country.

### **VI.3 Limitations:**

1. Most of the surveys were conducted with tourists interested in sun, the beach and relaxation.
2. As a follow up, there needs to be a survey conducted of tourists who come specifically to Cuba to participate in an ecotour in order to examine the differences between those whose main purpose is to enjoy the beach and for those whose main purpose is to enjoy nature.
3. Some of the questions were misunderstood and therefore prevented some of the questions from providing a more accurate perspective on those surveyed.
4. The surveys were translated into French and Spanish. However, there were some whose native language was none of the above and this might have caused some of the questions to be misunderstood.

## **VII. ECOTOURISM IN CAYO COCO**

The opportunity to develop ecotourism in Cayo Coco is great due to the islands abundance of natural resources such as; the barrier coral reef, large florist diversity, endemism and high sand dunes. There exist many natural surrounding areas that have not been touched by the construction of tourism development which may be used for alternative forms of touristic development. From the top of the highest dunes in Cayo Coco it is possible to view the various ecosystems, which shows a perfect combination to develop ecotourism in the area. The many species of birds, flora and fauna makes it a perfect place for people interested in viewing what nature has to offer. Cayo Coco is the fourth island in extension of the Cuban archipelago 370 km<sup>2</sup>, with abundant of

tropical forests, where exists more than 340 kinds of plants which some are endemic and others are very rare in other territories; 170 kinds of floral, of them about 50 are endemic to Cuba. There are large Flamingo colonies which are of supreme interest to ecotourists. The assorted coastal landscapes with about 22 km of beaches offers a framework adapted to tourist development.

The current tourism development in Cayo Coco is conventional. Although the conventional tourists and the ecotourists will be in the same area and undertake some of the same activities, the ecotourists expects a pristine wilderness site and experienced guides. Their attitudes, interests and activities may radically differ. Among the activities of interest to ecotourists in Cayo Coco are scuba diving, snorkeling, wildlife observation (particularly bird watching), nature hiking, nature photography, botanical studies and research. The development of important infrastructure for conventional tourism has already been implemented. Electrical service, international communications, residual treatments, water supply, roads, and an airport helps to assure the development of tourism in Cayo Coco.

Most tourists who descend on Cayo Coco come to enjoy a relaxing time on the beach. Many of them are honeymooners. However, this does not mean that tourists can not enjoy or take part in protecting the environment. As Jean Holder, the President of the Caribbean Tourism Organization stated: "All of our tourists may never be ecotourists. But even those, who come primarily to laze on our beaches, can by the provision of creative programmes, be interested to participate in an activity which teaches them a great deal more about us

and our country and, ultimately, about themselves."<sup>134</sup> Developing ecotourism on the island will provide alternative recreational activities that are environmentally friendly and at the same time would allow for Cuba to access a growing market, the ecotourist.

Cayo Coco is perfect for snorkelling and scuba diving. It would allow for tourists to observe the coral and other underwater treasures in the sea. The Sabana-Camaguey archipelago has the second longest reef in the world. Trained professional guides would prevent tourists from disturbing the natural habitat or removing "souvenir" objects. Instead of staying in resorts, they would stay in an "ecolodge". An ecolodge is defined as, "a nature-dependant tourist lodge that meets the philosophy and principals of ecotourism. At a purist level an ecolodge will offer a tourist an educational experience, be developed and managed in an environmentally sensitive manner and protects its operating environment."<sup>135</sup> Although, the number of tourists who will descend on the island at one time will be smaller than the typical beach resorts, the ecotourist usually pays a fairly high cost to enjoy nature and at the same time the government will be helping to preserve the environment.

Cayo Coco also has the potential to become an eco-haven for bird-watchers. Numerous birds spend their winter season in Cuba (approximately five months). Most of the birds that descend on Cayo Coco are shore birds, and depend on coastal wetland habitats for their food and shelter in the winter months. They inhabit mangrove and other types of coastal wetlands in the area. There are many bird watchers willing to travel to

---

<sup>134</sup> Polly Pattullo. The Cost of Tourism in the Caribbean: Last Resorts, Latin American Bureau, London, 1996, pg. 118.

<sup>135</sup> Donald Hawkins and Megan Epler Wood. The Ecolodge Sourcebook for Planners and Developers. The Ecotourism Society, Vermont, 1995, pg. X.

Cayo Coco to view the concentration of birds and the mixture of species which can be found there. For example, bird watching has attracted nearly 30 million North Americans.<sup>136</sup> It provides an opportunity for them to view and study these species.

#### **Ecotourism Benefits Potentially Achievable for Cayo Coco**

- Ecotourism can help to protect areas that might otherwise be subjected to destructive economic activities, such as mass tourism development.
- Ecotourism can also be very profitable for the area. "The World Tourism Organization recognizes that nature travel accounts for seven percent of all travel world-wide and represents many billions of dollars."<sup>137</sup> More and more tourists are coming to enjoy the natural surroundings.
- It provides foreign exchange to the country.
- Nature tourism or ecotourism will have less of a negative environmental impact than mass tourism development when implemented properly.
- Ecotourism will help to protect the biodiversity of the area.
- It would provide environmental education about the natural area to tourists, personnel in the tourism industry and residents in neighbouring communities.
- Ecotourism will help to attract an alternative market to that of mass tourists which will help to diversify the tourism industry's potential.
- It will also be an add on feature of the current tourism market in Cayo Coco and the surrounding areas. Many tourists who come to Cayo Coco stay for at least one and

---

<sup>136</sup> R. C. Scarce, E. Grifone and R. Usher. Ecotourism in Canada. Canadian Environmental Advisory Council, Ottawa, March 1992, pg.20.

<sup>137</sup> David Weaver. Ecotourism in Manitoba. Rural Development Institute, Winnipeg, 1995, pg. 5.

sometimes two weeks. As indicated in the survey results many of these tourists would participate in a one-day nature-related activity, if offered. This would provide the tourism industry with extra revenue and at the same time be satisfying tourists needs.

Currently, there are a small number of projects related to nature tourism in Cayo Coco. Some of the completed projects and future plans to develop for certain ecotouristic development are explained below. There are three potential ecotourism development areas in Cayo Coco. The first is "Loma del Puerto" which consists of a nature trail that takes you into the mangrove forest and along a path that leads you to a lagoon and the highest sand dunes in Cayo Coco. It is also close to the beach which allows for tourists to view a variety of ecosystems at once. The trail is 2 km in length and takes approximately two hours to walk. There are signs along the path that explain the natural history of the place and there are two trained interpretative guides that will explain in detail the natural history of the area. The interpretative centre is managed by the Ministry of Flora and Fauna and advertised through the Cuban agency Rumbos. Many of the tourists who come to the nature trail are from the neighbouring province on a one day or afternoon excursion to Cayo Coco. The Coastal Ecosystem Research Center and Protected Areas department under the Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment would like to classify this 1600 ha of land as protected and a national monument of nature. The Protected Areas Department plays a pivotal role in the establishment of national parks and protected areas. A protected area is defined as "an area of land or water that is managed for the protection and maintenance of its ecological systems, biodiversity and/or specific

natural, cultural or aesthetic resources.”<sup>138</sup> In order for an area to become protected they must submit a proposal to the government for approval. A proposal has been submitted to the government for consideration. Currently there are no protected areas in Cayo Coco. The proposed system of protected areas in Cayo Coco would allow for the protection and preservation of indigenous animal and plant species as well as other important ecosystems. It would also provide for sustainable outdoor recreation activities, a greater understanding of the ecological systems by providing opportunities for ecological and other scientific research, and environmental educational opportunities.

If Loma del Puerto is going to be developed as an ecotourism spot than it must be developed in a environmentally sensitive manner. It is considered to be one of the most fragile areas in Cayo Coco and should be established as a protected area in order to provide regulation and to protect the area from any future tourism development. Currently, Cuba has a national system of over 200 protected areas which covers some 12% percent of the country and includes representative samples of 98% of the islands landscape types.<sup>139</sup> The sand dunes in Loma del Puerto posses important landscape value. They are the highest sand dunes in the key and in the second in importance to the country with heights between 10 and 15 meters in height. Currently, this area is not under any type protection and could not be considered as a true ecotourist spot until such regulation is established.

The second ecotourist spot is Sito "La Guira" which represents a typical farm house in Cuba and was developed to recreate the history of the key. It was opened in March of this

---

<sup>138</sup> "Towards a National Park System of Protected Areas for Jamaica." December 1995. Internet.

<sup>139</sup> Valerie Barzetti. Parks and Protected Areas and Economic Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The World Conservation Union, Washington D.C., 1993.pg. 9.

year for tourists interested in viewing and experiencing how rural Cubans live. Tourists may stay over night in the farm house or in a "baraentierra" which is a traditional triangle shape hut made from twigs that farmers used to sleep in or stay out of the rain or sun while they were worked in the field. The farmhouse is made of pine and the roof is made out of leaves from palm trees. The small complex includes a restaurant which serves typical Cuban food, a bar, a place that sells local crafts, stables for horses and a few small buildings made from wood. There are also trails that take you into the forest either by foot or horse.

The observatory "La Silla" (the chair bar) which is located at the beginning of Cayo Coco has several marine paths that consist of visits to different zones of the interior of the bay "Bahía de los Perros" that includes "The Greeks", a place of abundance of flamingos and a wide assortment of birds which permits tourists to observe their natural surroundings. The path is continuous until Cayo Alto where tourists can observe great quantities of Iguanas that inhabit this zone. This tour has a duration of approximately five hours.

Another place in Cayo Coco which has plans for ecotourism development is "Naturaleza" which is located in the south part of the road to Jabali cave. In the development plans, there will be a 100-room hotel that is made to cater to the ecotourist.<sup>140</sup> There are also plans to develop nature paths that would connect to the paths that exist in Loma del Puerto and El Sito. Cayo Coco also has a number of old dirt

---

<sup>140</sup> Interview with Enrique Lana. Institute for Physical Planning.

access roads that are not in use and would be perfect for bird watching. The roads would have to be cleared of old growth and maintained.

At the hotel, they offer excursions to many different areas in Cayo Coco and neighbouring keys. These excursions are made by boat, Jeep or bus and consist of nature walks, snorkelling, scuba-diving and tours into neighbouring communities. The problem is that many of the tourists that come to the hotel Tryp are there to enjoy the beach. The marketing that is currently projected to tourists is sun, sand and sea and not nature based tourism. The travel agents from other countries promote Cayo Coco as a place for relaxation and to catch some rays. Many tourists who were interviewed found that there was a lack of information about Cayo Coco and the surrounding keys. Most of them did not know about areas such as Loma del Puerto or El Sito and many have not heard about the Coastal Ecosystem Research Center located next door to their hotel.

The Coastal Ecosystem Research Centre has the potential to become involved in developing and maintaining ecotourism in the area through several possibilities. CERC may become more involved in promoting educational and scientific experiences to the island. Marine ecology, special biology, geology, botany and among other experiences can be studied on land or in water. CERC has specialized scientists and other professionals on hand to help one or several persons to obtain scientific information about Cayo Coco and the rest of the small islands in the archipelago. CERC has the opportunity to create an open dialogue with other researchers from around the world. In particular, those who have a strong interest in small island environments. They offer the technical support necessary for people to conduct research in a variety of fields and the archipelago provides for a diverse natural sea and landscape to study. There is also potential for them to work with other

ecotourist agencies or groups from around the world who are interested in sending ecotourists to Cuba to view the natural wonders and beauty of the island. The centre can provide train professionals in ecological studies to assist in guided tours of the northern cays.

CERC has started to develop a scientific museum at the centre which includes a collection of flora, fauna, birds, reptiles and insects. With the increase in tourists in the area due to the construction of new hotels there is potential for the Centre to become an educational site for tourists. CERC must develop the museum further by providing information about the research centre, and more scientific displays with pictures of the surrounding area. This will help to educate the tourists on the importance of protecting the environment in Cayo Coco. The Centre could provide information about the research centre (in different languages) to the hotels with the time and dates that one can visit. Perhaps, making a small entrance fee or a donation box that could be used towards research to help preserve the environment in the area. There is a need in Cayo Coco to develop an interpretation center for tourists. CERC is ideally located and in walking distance from all of the hotels.

CERC has completed an inventory of significant natural resources in the archipelago which could sustain a certain level of nature-based tourism. CERC has in place the necessary technical support to properly carry out environmental impact assessments on the areas where there is potential for ecotourism development. They can work close together with interested parties who would like to invest in the development of ecotourism in the Cays to ensure that the proper planning and development takes place. CERC could also

provide training courses for local operators and guides on the potential impacts and sensitivity of the area that will be the bases for ecotours.

There is much potential for this spot to be promoted as a true ecotourist destination because it provides for both a nature and cultural experience. It is educational and enjoyable for the tourists. Although, Cayo Coco has begun the construction of resort development there still remains an opportunity to develop "soft forms" of tourism that can be supported by hotels with a higher standard of comfort and service. Resort hotels can adopt policies to make its operation more environmentally-friendly and can offer guests at the hotel an alternative adventure: "the international resort industry must seize the opportunity to participate in the destinations' plans for conservation and sustainable development. In partnership with planning authorities, resort operators can participate in designing the ecotourists' experience and thereby become an integral part of it."<sup>141</sup>

The development of ecotourism on Cayo Coco will not solve the existing negative environmental impacts that tourism has caused. There is a potential for further disturbance of sensitive habitats, wildlife species as well as other impacts that may be associated with tourism development. However, with the proper site selection and planning, impacts can be positive, encouraging conservation and participation and benefits of the surrounding communities. Ecotourism in Cayo Coco will also provide for the economic justification for the protection of areas on the island that might not otherwise be protected. It will also provide a good "add on feature" for tourists who come to the island to enjoy the beach to offer alternative activities that will allow them to enjoy the nature in the area. Providing

---

<sup>141</sup> Hana Ayala. "Resort Ecotourism: A Paradigm for the 21st Century." Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, Oct 1996, pg.53.

more activities may also increase the likelihood of a longer stay. Cuba is becoming well known for international tourism, most of its tourism is not nature-oriented. There is significant potential for Cuba to become better known for nature tourism, and attempt to attract more nature tourists.

In Cayo Coco, with slated further tourism development along the same strip of beach, Playa Larga, it is important for the Cuban government to insure the protection of the rest of Cayo Coco from similar types of development. With the ecological value, the preservation of the principal natural areas, the great biodiversity, the high dunes existing in the area, the potential for the development of educational activities and environmental interpretation paths are tremendous.

### ***VII.1 Parks and Protected Areas for Cayo Coco***

The potential for parks and protected areas in Cayo Coco is immense. A protected area can be defined as, “ an areas of land or water that is managed for the protection and maintained of its ecological systems, biodiversity and/or specific natural, cultural or aesthetic resources.”<sup>142</sup> Parks and protected areas will allow for the protection of the biodiversity at the same time, supporting tourism and recreation to the area. There are several benefits in implementing protected areas such as maintaining the natural balance of the environment through protecting the biodiversity; providing opportunities for scientific research, ecological monitoring and

---

<sup>142</sup> Towards a National Park System of Protected Areas. Natural Resources Conservation authority, December 1995, pg.2

education, enhancing economic development through creating and maintaining employment opportunities and supporting the use of sustainable resource.<sup>143</sup>

According to the United Nations Environment Program the Sabana-Camaguey Archipelago, in particular, Cayo Coco constitutes in ecologically sensitive zone. The presence of endemic and rare species with some degree of threat makes it an ecologically sensitive area. The Coastal Ecosystem Research Center with the help of UNEP established different degrees of ecologically sensitive areas. They used the system which UNEP uses to rate potential sites for protected area rating is as follows: Very High, High Middle, Low and Very Low. Very high or High corresponds with ecosystems which present a high degree of diversity and biological endemism, with endemic, rare and threatened species. The landscape is characterized by high values of ecosystem wealth. Middle: as a rule these landscapes exhibit a degree of geological modification and although they do not possess the values of the previous ecosystems, they preserve and important biodiversity and contains habitats of value for different biological communities that include threatened or endemic species. Low or Very Low: characterized by a loss of natural values and biodiversity; the landscapes present a high degree of geological modification, such as forest development and infrastructure construction. These activities have caused some degree of environmental damage.

As a result of studies conducted by CERC, Cayo Coco has been categorized according to the above criteria. The categories are listed below; Very high: Includes swamp ecosystems, halophytes communities, sand dunes, beaches, interior and coastal

---

<sup>143</sup> Louise Fallon Scura and Tom Van't Hof. The Ecology and Economics of Bonaire Marine Park. The World Bank Environment Department Divisional Paper 1993-1994, September, 1993, pg. 8.

lagoons, tidal lands and coastal scrubs, and high semideciduo forest. High: located in the middle semideciduo forest. In this area there is a great diversity of flora and fauna, unproductive soil and high diversity of ecosystems. Middle: located in the certain parts of the semideciduos forest areas. It is in the forest area that has suffered certain alterations by forest utilization (mainly coal production) Low: found in zones altered with secondary vegetation, mainly in the tectonic abrasive flatness. The biological wealth has decreased as well as the diversity of the ecosystems. Very Low: present in sites where human interaction, and tourist infrastructure. These areas have great losses in the natural components (vegetation, soil, and fauna).

The government must act quickly in establishing and enforcing protected areas because it is possible that in the near future some of these areas will be degraded beyond a level that makes them worthy of such protection. Cuba has important marine and coastal wildlife. Another important area is the Archipelago de Los Canarreos it contains a combination of limestone, sand and mangrove small islands as well a large coral reef that has been very well preserved. The islands have a number of threatened and endemic species of plants, mammals' reptiles and birds. For example, "these islands are very important nesting grounds for sea birds and other migratory birds. More than 500 species of fish, 60 species of coral, and more than 100 species of sponges have been recorded from the coral reef. There are 64 submarine archaeological sites, mainly shipwrecks from the 17th and 18th centuries. There is also a particular important and interesting system of underwater caves."<sup>144</sup> These areas

---

<sup>144</sup> A Global Representative System of Marine Protected Areas, Volume 11. IUCN World Conservation Union., 1995, pg. 30.

along with many others are included in the Cuban National Protected Areas system. The Cuban National Protected areas system uses the same area of categories as the IUCN (see table below). Despite the importance of protected areas as a conservation tool there is not proper management in place to ensure its protection. There is a lack of resources and personnel available and with the increase in tourism development and fisheries activities it requires more management for its long-term sustainability.<sup>145</sup> If the Cuban Government is to establish a protected area in Cayo Coco it must also have the proper management in place to ensure its protection.

---

<sup>145</sup> Ibid., pg. 30.

**Table 8 Protected Area Categories and Management Objectives**

Category	Type	Objective
I	Scientific/reserve/strict nature reserve	Protect nature and maintain natural processes in an undisturbed state.
II	National Park	Emphasize study, monitoring, education and maintenance of genetic resources.
II	National Monument/national Landmark	Preserve nationally significant natural features and maintain their unique characteristics
IV	Management nature reserve/wildlife sanctuary	Protect nationally significant species, groups of species, biotic communities or physical features of the environment when these require human manipulation for their perpetuation
V	Protected Landscapes	Maintain nationally significant natural landscapes characteristics of the harmonious interaction of people and land while providing opportunities for public reaction and tourism within the normal life-style and economic activity of those areas
VI	Resource reserve	Protect natural resources for future use and contain development that could affect resources pending the establishment of management objectives based on appropriate knowledge and planning
VII	Natural biotic area/anthropological reserve	Allow societies to live in harmony; with the environment undisturbed by modern technology
VIII	Multiple-use management area	Sustain production of water, timber, wildlife, pasture, and outdoor recreation. Conservation of nature-orientated to supporting economic activities (although specific conservation objectives)
IX	Man and Biosphere reserves	Recognise that people are vital to the ecosystem. Might include conservation, research, monitoring, training and demonstration.
X	World Heritage Sites	Conserve natural features of universal value

As of July 1998, there have been no protected areas established. There are many organizations and individuals that would like to see protected areas established for this

island since it contains a large number of endemic species. Currently, tourism development on the island is the priority.

The following section contains recommendations that cover potential opportunities for developing alternative and sustainable tourism and improving the overall service in Cayo Coco. These recommendations were formulated on the basis of the surveys and interviews conducted as well as personal observations.

## ***VII.2 Recommendations***

### ***Marketing and Promotion***

1. Promotion of Cayo Coco should address or feature the coastlines, waters, rest and relaxation, however, it must also include snorkelling and scuba diving as a major part of its promotional package. It should concentrate on the natural beauty of the area and the nature-based activities available.
2. Promotion of Cayo Coco to attract ecotourists should be based on the following features; waters for fishing, snorkelling, scuba diving and boating are essential. Bird watching, wildlife observing, and scientific exploration. The lagoons, endemic species and the flamingo colony will be a major attraction to ecotourists. In order to attract the ecotourists, the local companies should work with foreign ecotourism operators.
3. In order to design or market ecotourism in Cayo Coco, one must decide on what types of ecotours will be offered. For example, for those currently being attracted to Cayo Coco it is best to offer one-day tours or excursions. If one were trying to attract the true ecotourists would one want them to have a weeklong package in Cayo Coco? What would the weeklong package include? Or would one want them to be part of an

organized tour with perhaps a one or two day stop in Cayo Coco or both? These factors must be considered. Some examples include;

4. There is a strong potential to attract bird watchers to Cayo Coco. There are birds that can only be found in Cayo Coco. There are also many other places in Cuba excellent for bird watching. Currently, there is organised bird watching tours to other parts of Cuba and Cayo Coco could become a potential stop along the tour. Participants would stay at the hotels in Cayo Coco for one or two days.
5. There are many researchers, scientists and students interested in studying coastal marine areas. The Coastal Ecosystem Research Center is an excellent facility with well-educated staff to assist in research expeditions. The Center would have to be expanded to include more rooms.
6. Scuba diving is a major attraction for many tourists and Cayo Coco is an excellent place for scuba diving and snorkelling due to the coral reef and its profuse sea bottoms, as well as the variety of species.
7. More technical information needs to be provided; i.e. maps of Cayo Coco that depict the different natural areas. This would also help to enhance tourists' knowledge of the surrounding area and encourage them to participate in ecotours.

***Environmental Education:***

8. Training in environmentally responsible tourism should be provided to all personal involved in tourism development which includes but not limited to constructors, administrators, investors, planners, managers, tour operators, and general staff. The classes could be part of their tourism education course through the tourism and hospitality schools or through one to two week courses taught by professionals.

9. To promote more environmental education opportunities in order to raise the conscience of personnel, tourists and Cubans. For Cubans, this would include but not limited to schools, radio, TV. and print. For example, in Canada many school children participate in cleaning up beaches. This one way to increase awareness about the dangers of littering. Support for environmental education programs are needed to sensitize the decision-makers, planners, investors, workers and nearby communities about the negative environmental effects that unplanned tourism could have on the environment.
10. To provide tourists with ready access to educational materials that would enhance their knowledge about the environment in Cayo Coco. There needs to be more information provided to the tourists upon arrival at the hotel about Cayo Coco. This would include a list of do's and don'ts as a responsible tourist. The information provided to the tourists should also include information on what can be seen and done in Cayo Coco.
11. There need to be signs on the beaches and other critical places where there are large amounts of people asking them not to litter and place garbage cans where it will be visible.
12. It is important for tour operators at the hotels in Cayo Coco to provide a pre-departure briefing on the place the tourists will visit. If they are visiting a local town, they must provide them with the local customs, expected behaviour, appropriate attire, etc. If they are visiting a natural area, they must provide them with a list of do's and don'ts. For example, don't throw garbage, leave plants and animals undisturbed, walk along

the trails provided etc. A code of conduct for tourists should be established and maintained.

***Protected Areas and Nature Trails, and Parks***

13. To establish and legalize a system of protected areas for Cayo Coco, including the zoning and managing of these areas. Clear objectives are needed, such as the biodiversity conservation. Zoning is an important part of providing protection to the area. Katrina Bradon explains, “ in zoning for tourism, there should be an emphasis on maintaining core areas which are “off limits” for visitation and on minimizing the impact on wildlife.”<sup>146</sup>

14. The protected areas must include controlled access points, guided as well as self-guided nature trails for those that are established for tourist use, interpretative center, signs and observation points.

15. The nature trails should have signs or labels in English and Spanish explaining the ecosystems in the area. It should be well marked and maintained.

16. The natural trails should:

- Be a one way loop beginning and ending at the same point.
- Contain 12-30 major features to view along the trail
- Be inviting, clean, well maintained, and have a comfortable walking time of 30-60 minutes
- Contain adequate entrances and directional signs
- Contain adequate and readily available information and interpretation materials

---

<sup>146</sup> Katrina Bradon. “Ecotourism and Conservation: A Review of Key Issues. “ *Environmentally Sustainable Development. The Word Bank*, April 1996, pg 13.

- **Minimize side cuts**
- **Disturb natural vegetation as little as possible and ensure drainage is off the trail**
- **Use curves and avoid straight stretches, steep hills, and waterlogged areas**
- **Provide rest stops and benches.**<sup>147</sup>

17. **Guided as well as self-guided tours of the nature trails should be provided.**

**These tours should include:**

- **An explanation of the current environmental research that is being undertaken in Cayo Coco.**
- **A short description of the types of birds, reptiles, plants and other species that can be found in the area.**
- **Guides should provide tourists with the rules and regulations of the park or nature trail.**
- **The guides should be knowledgeable about the environment and trained to provide interpretation of the area.**
- **There should be a limit to the size of the group depending on the number of tour guides and the fragility of the area. There is a need to establish a carrying capacity that will be strictly adhered to. There needs to be a limit on the visitation and trail use to protect and preserve the environmental quality of the area.**
- **It is important for the guides to know the interests of the tourists before beginning the trail and should start by asking a few questions in order to find out how much experience they have had or what they might be interested in. For example, they**

---

<sup>147</sup> ARA Consulting. *Tourism Land Use and Resources*. Prepared for the Government of Trinidad and Tabago, August 1995, pg.40.

could start by asking if any of the tourists have gone on a guided nature trail before?

- The guides should make the tour interesting by allowing for designated stops that have a particular attraction, such as the lagoon in Loma del Puerto. This would also allow tourists to have a rest.
- Visitors who want to go on self-guided trails should be given information about what things they might find in the area and a map. It could either be posted on a board or put in a brochure. This will help visitors understand the major features of the park.

18. An admission fee should be established. This fee will help to maintain and enhance the resource base of the area and pay for the guides. For those that are going as part of a tour from the hotel, the price of the admission fee should be built in to the tour. The admission fee will depend on the length of the trail and whether it is guided or self-guided. There should be two set prices for guided and self-guided tours.

19. An interpretative center should be developed to provide tourists with an opportunity to learn about and enjoy the natural environment in Cayo Coco. It should provide vital information about the biodiversity of the area and current environmental research being undertaken in Cayo Coco, and be well advertised in all of the hotels in Cayo Coco and in the towns of Moron and Ciego de Avila.

20. Bicycle tours of the island should be offered for those who are more active.

The departure would take place from the hotels. Information would be provided on the necessary items to bring (i.e. mosquito repellent, water, sunscreen, bathing suit) and the physical demand that it would require. It should also include a map of the

route for them to follow and how long it would take. A maximum of four to eight people depending on the number of guides should be allowed. The trip should include Loma del Puerto to explore the nature, El Sitio to explore the culture and have lunch and then to Playa Flamenco for a swim and back to the hotel. This would also cut down on pollution from the use of vehicles.

***Eco-Hotels and Resorts:***

21. In order to provide the “true ecotourist” with an exceptional experience, Cayo Coco needs to build ecological hotels. “Ecological engineering approaches should be used in the construction and planning of all facilities. Such potential designs should include solar energy for water heating, recycling of garbage, natural cross ventilation instead of air conditioning, self-sufficiency in food generation and blending of architectural design with the natural surroundings. Buildings should not overpower or compete with the natural landscapes and vegetation but should blend in with them to create an “away from it all experience.”<sup>148</sup>
22. When developing ecotourism they should use the following indicators that were provided by the GEF/UNDP Project:
  - a) An estimate of 10% of the land and/or marine territory of the protected area will be used as public use
  - b) only one accommodation site by area and/or sector, in the public use zone
  - c) An indicator of 4 rooms per each km<sup>2</sup> of the public use zone

---

<sup>148</sup> John McLachlan-Karr. Evaluation of Ecotourism in Vale de Vinales, Cuba. Center for Latin American Studies, John Hopkins University and the Cuban Academy of Sciences, 1994, pg. 21.

d) the establishment of the ecotourist installation should fulfil the following requirements:

- **Environmental License**
- **Use minimal space, integrated into the landscape with minimal disturbance to the habitat that lives in that zone. Bulldozers should be prohibited.**
- **Construction should be made of soft materials such as wood, palm-tree leaves, tiles or other similar synthetic materials**
- **The system of roads will have a broad maximum of 5 meters without asphaltic layer.<sup>149</sup>**

20. Other indicators should be used;

- **a carrying capacity should be established (amount of tourist capacity at the hotel, beaches and parks at one time).**
- **waste management control (how much waste is being treated and produced?)**
- **Tourism's contribution to the local economy (how much money is going back into the local economy?)**
- **are customers being satisfied with the tourism product? (use of questionnaires would be helpful to obtain this information)**
- **are locals, in this case workers satisfied? (again use of questionnaires would be helpful to obtain this information)**

---

<sup>149</sup> "General Limits for the Planning and Managing of the Keys: Santa Maria, Guillermo, Cayo Coco and Sabinal." GEF/UNDP Project, 1997. pg. 2.

- **Planning Reviews and Assessments on an on-going base are needed. This would include but not limited to monitoring wildlife levels, vegetation and landscape features.**

### ***Sustainable Tourism Planning***

21. **The local Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment and the local provincial Ministry of Tourism needs to work more closely in using effectively the scientific data gathered by the scientists at the Coastal Ecosystem Research Center. Basic information available such as the current number of endemic species on the island can be used more effectively to assist in sustainable planning of the island.**
22. **The local Ministry of Science Technology and the Environment needs to work more closely with the investors, planners and developers and the people affected by the tourism industry. They need to facilitate more discussion groups on strategic planning for developing sustainable tourism.**
23. **Today, more and more tourists are concerned about the environment. The hotels should make a concentrated effort to recycle where possible. Many of the tourists surveyed mentioned the number of plastic glasses being used. Hotels that show a concern for the environment could attract more tourists to their establishment.**
24. **There should be a limit of four hotels on Playa Larga. Many of the tourists displayed a concern that the beach would become too overdeveloped. People are choosing Cayo Coco because it is not overdeveloped and it is private.**
25. **There needs to be strict controls established over the fulfilment of obtaining Environmental Licenses and Environmental Impact Assessments (EIA).**

**Environmental Inspections need to take place regularly; to enforce the requirements established by the EIA.**

- 26. Tourism in Cayo Coco should be designed to increase linkages with mainland tourism.**
- 27. The construction of a golf course in Cayo Coco is not feasible. It would require too much fresh water and would take away from the beauty of the landscape. The maintenance would be quite expensive.**
- 28. Existing legislation to deter the removal of flora and fauna from land and marine habitat should be enforced, and where such legislation does not exist it should be implemented.**
- 29. Existing legislation regarding the dumping of waste and garbage in Cayo Coco should be enforced, and where such legislation does not exist it should be implemented.**

**These are the most important recommendations that were concluded from the data collected from the surveys, interviews with key respondents, observations and a review of the current documentation available. Whether the above is adequate enough to ensure that sustainable tourism will exist on the island once implemented is beyond the scope of this study.**

### ***VII.3 Future Direction and Framework***

**Currently, Cayo Coco is being developed and promoted as a beach resort destination. The government's promotion and development of conventional tourism in such a pristine habitat can only be explained as a necessity and not a choice. The**

current situation in Cuba does not provide the government with many options for economic growth. Burdened with the task of diversifying its economy and bringing in hard currency receipts, the temptation to bring in more tourists, build more beach hotels, and develop pristine areas in order to boost the tourism industry is only too clear.

Cayo Coco has been chosen by the government as a tourism destination spot. The island has been slated as one of the top new destinations in Cuba. In increasing tourism development in this area, there are key issues which need to be addressed. A decision concerning the level, and rate of tourism development to be promoted (low key versus, intensive tourism development), and the ability to sustain tourism in this area over the long-term. Future plans for investment in this area appears to be headed towards intensive tourism development. What would be the benefits of developing low key tourism development vs. intensive tourism development in this area? According to Janice Joope a Professor of Tourism at Ryerson University; "By neglecting other aspects of tourism development, and by being too accommodating to large, international hotel corporations, Cuba is in danger of becoming a "destination almost anywhere," with large modern hotel complexes that can be found in almost any country of the world dominating the water front." There are many other destinations in the Caribbean that offer the sun, sand and sea product.

The government has taken positive steps towards a sustainable tourism planning strategy. The establishment of Environmental Impact Assessments to predict and correct the potential environmental effects of tourism development helps to support sustainable tourism development planning. Existing legislation is comprehensive and

incorporates environmental protection and sustainable development. In comparison to Varadero or other areas in the Caribbean, environmental problems as a result of tourism development in Cayo Coco is not as severe, however tourism is in the beginning stages and in view of future development plans to increase more beach resorts, the island could potentially become eroded. The promotion and planning of ecotourism/nature-based activities does not in itself constitute sustainable tourism. According to Karen Ziffer of Conservation International, "We are pretty sure, ecotourism, by itself, cannot assure conservation. However, it can be a very powerful part of an overall strategy." (Ecotourism Society, 1995) In order for Cayo Coco to become sustainable, the government must ensure that it has in place not only relevant legislation and policy, but a framework which would allow them to enforce these policies and promote sustainable tourism development planning. Cayo Coco is not an isolated case many other countries in the Caribbean and around the world have not effectively integrated environmental decision making and planning within their tourism development plans.

## **VIII. CONCLUSION**

The review of tourism planning in Cayo Coco has identified areas in need of improvement. The type of planning that was developed for Cayo Coco did not take into consideration the environmental sensitivity of the area. As a result, some negative environmental impacts have occurred. Future tourism development plans for the Island are still stereotypical of other Countries in the Caribbean (i.e. developing beach

resorts). Cayo Coco is endowed with a variety of natural resources that could attract tourists interested in viewing the natural beauty of the island. These assets should be preserved for future generations. Tourism development that does not take carefully into account environmental concerns could very well eliminate the very thing that makes Cayo Coco so attractive to tourists.

The people involved in the economic development of the island must assist in promoting the type of planning that supports sustainable tourism development. Providing alternative nature-based tourism activities is only a small part of this process. It is obvious that Cayo Coco will not be turned into an ecotourism haven. Cayo Coco is being developed and promoted as a beach resort destination. It becomes important then to devise a sustainable tourism strategy that would include nature based tourism as a component of the overall strategy. Sustainable tourism on the island will only be achieved with the appropriate policies and careful planning in place.

The local government has rectified some of its past mistakes, for example the causeway linking Cayo Coco to the mainland, and is concerned with the future of the environment in Cayo Coco and in Cuba. There is every indication that in the future tourism development planning for Cayo Coco will be based on a more environmentally conscious decision making process. However, with the increasing economic pressure and the strong interest from foreign companies to open hotels in Cayo Coco and other parts in Cuba it becomes even more difficult for the government to ensure that protection measures and legislation are enforced. It is necessary for the Cuban government to find a balance between the facilitation of tourism growth and

the preservation of its natural resources, bearing in mind that tourists are attracted to a country because of its natural resources.

Cuba's tourism industry has the potential to develop a sustainable tourism product. The beauty of the island with its relatively unpolluted environment provides for an opportunity to develop environmentally sound tourism. Currently, Cuba's tourism industry is booming and there is the potential for growth in other areas such as ecotourism, educational tours, etc. Cuba's tourism industry has not yet reached its full potential. The Cuban government is focusing on developing a tourism product without many of the negative impacts (environmentally, socially and economically) that tourism is associated with. In general, however, the case of Cayo Coco and other islands shows that current plans for tourism development have not taken into consideration the changing tourism market as well as encouraging a more sustainable tourism strategy. The Cuban government faces many challenges ahead of them including the development of a sustainable tourism product.

## IX. APPENDICES

### IX.1 Appendix: Table of Hotel Accommodations in Cuba

Table: Hotel Accommodations in Cuba by Province/Region and Category, 1995

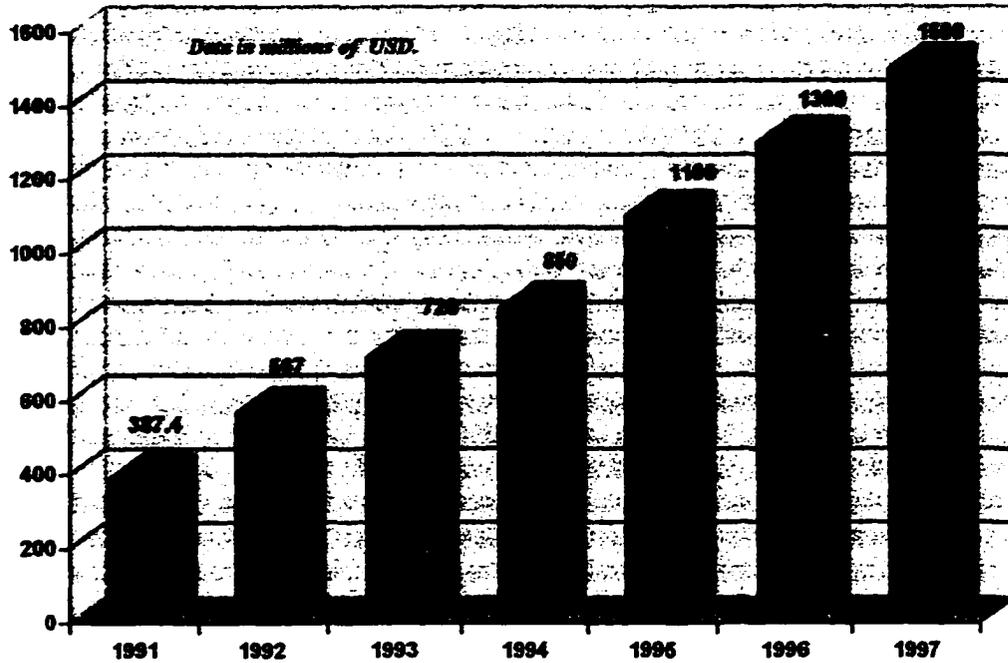
Province	Number of rooms	5 Star	4 Star	3 Star	Other
Camagüey	1 507	0	356	991	160
Ciego de Avila (incl. Keys)*	1 556	458	726	372	0
Cienfuegos	581	0	0	581	0
Granma	690	0	344	280	66
Guantanamo	227	0	0	214	13
Havana City (incl. beaches)	8 370	1 984	3 257	2 457	672
Havana Province	680	0	279	162	239
Holguin	2 021	0	845	896	280
Isla de la Juventud	103	0	83	20	0
Cayo Largo	413	0	401	12	0
Las Tunas	283	0	0	154	129
Matanzas					
Varadero Province	6 308	1 278	2 719	2 311	0
Pinar del Rio	438	0	0	90	348
Sancti Spiritus	504	0	20	264	220
Santiago de Cuba	946	0	210	626	110
Santiago de Cuba	1 673	302	258	941	139
Villa Clara	513	0	0	374	139
<b>Total</b>	<b>26 813</b>	<b>4 022</b>	<b>9 498</b>	<b>10 745</b>	<b>2 548</b>

Source: Lila Haynes. "CUBA" *International Tourism Reports. Travel and Tourism Intelligence*, no 3, 1996, pg. 15.

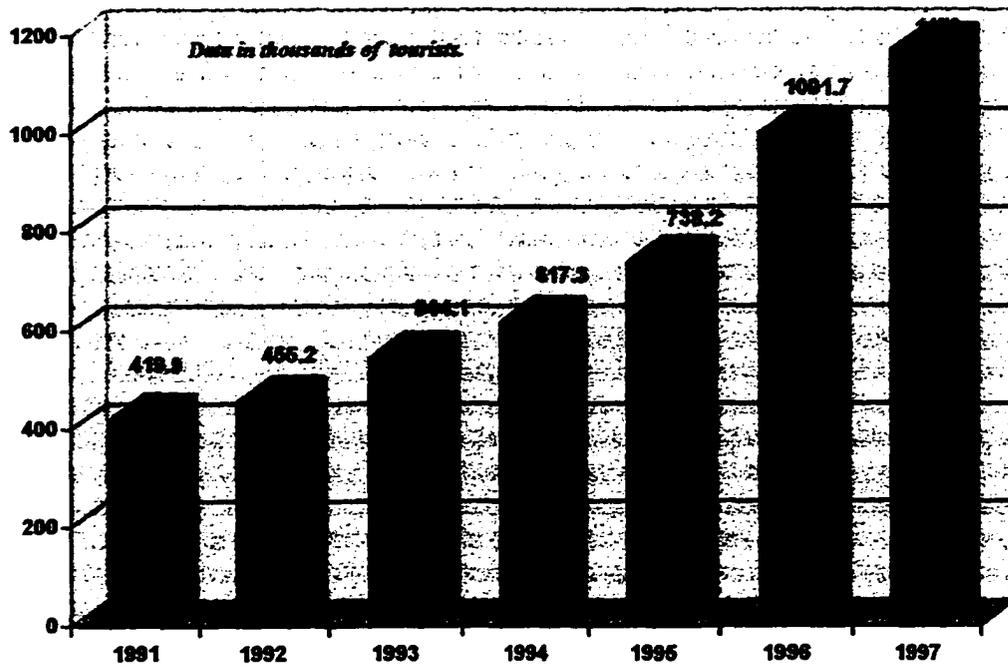
\* This figure now includes the new 4 star hotel, Tryp Club Cayo Coco.

NB: The total is slightly less than the figure given by the WTO in its 1996 publication, *Tourism Market Trends-Americas*, and by Cuban tourism officials in public statements. This, according to tourism officials, may be due to changes in the number of rooms in certain refurbished hotels.

**IX.2 Appendix: Graphs of Cuba's Gross Earnings in the Tourism Industry and Cuba's Tourism Arrivals.**



**FIGURE 4. Gross Income of the Tourism Industry in Cuba between 1991-1996.**



**FIGURE 5. Arrivals of Tourists to Cuba between 1991-1996.**

**IX.3 Appendix: Chart of Environmental Impacts of Tourism in Cayo Coco.**

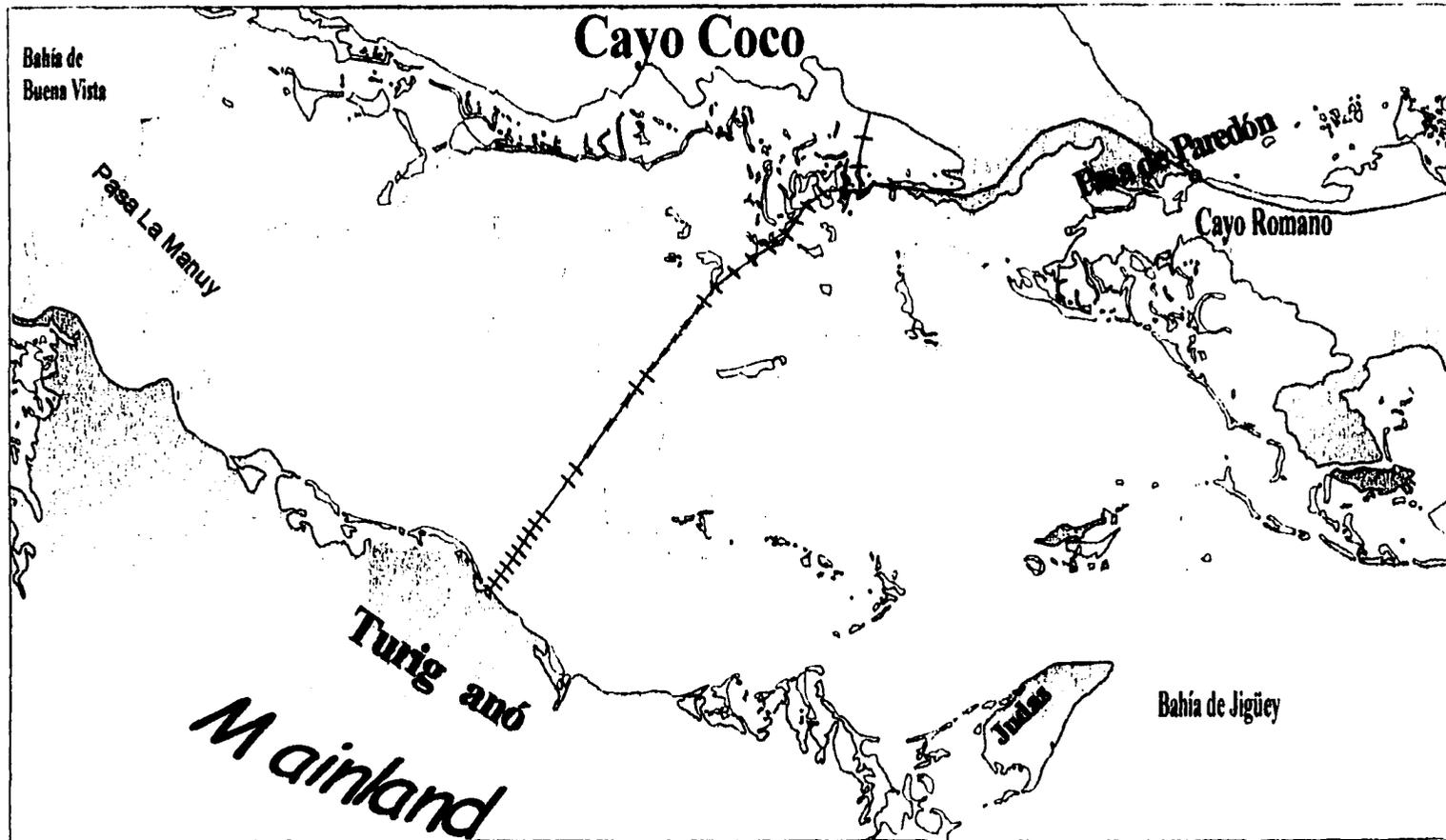
**Tourism Development Impacts in Cayo Coco**

<p><b>Environmental (negative impacts)</b></p>	<p><b>Reduction of Habitats</b>                      deforestation for hotel construction, towns, gravel pits, dumps, future golf course and other infrastructures                      road building                      draining and filling in lagoons/mangroves                      increased human traffic on beaches by foot, horseback and jeeps                      increased human traffic on sand dunes by foot and jeeps                      soil erosion                      disruption of water tables (ongoing use of wells, interrupted natural drainage patterns due to lagoon filling and road building)                      wood cutting for construction materials, firewood and charcoal production</p>
	<p><b>Pollution</b>                      Land: dumping of garbage, and chemicals in forests and wetlands by hotels, and construction projects; lack of sewage treatment facilities in La Jaula and Bautista; malfunctioning of existing hotel sewage treatment facilities; lack of sanitary facilities at construction sites and beach bars; general littering.                      Water: dumping of waste and chemicals in lagoons and wetlands.                      Air: increase in overall island traffic, fumigation for insects, wood burning for cooking and charcoal manufacture, and garbage dumping                      Noise: traffic, construction sites, and airport</p>
	<p><b>Direct and Indirect Impacts on Flora and Fauna</b>                      loss or degradation of nesting/breeding habitat                      loss or degradation of roosting/loafing habitat                      loss or reduction of plant/animal populations (biodiversity reduction)                      loss or reduction in marine life</p>
	<p><b>Loss and Degradation of Aesthetic Values</b>                      all items mention above have, to varying degrees, negative impacts on the aesthetic values of the island                      construction of more large beach hotels                      littering and dumping of garbage</p>
<p><b>Economic</b></p>	<p><b>National</b></p>

<p>(positive impacts)</p>	<p>increase foreign exchange to the country  increase of employment and salary levels for people working in tourism</p> <p>Provincial  generation of income into the province  expansion of industrial and agricultural activities in the province which has in turn increased employment  increase business activity for the neighboring towns</p>
<p>(negative impacts)</p>	<p>foreign leakage as a result of foreign companies taking profits outside of Cuba</p>
<p>Social  (positive impacts)</p> <p>(negative impacts)</p>	<p>Provincial/ National  increase level of education (for example, learning foreign languages)  increase access to hard currency for people employed in tourism  increase standard of living for people employed in tourism</p> <p>Provincial/National  restriction of Cubans to Cayo Coco  increase migration of workers from other provinces which has caused a shortage of housing and other social impacts  inequality between those who work in tourism and those who do not and thus a new social class is emerging in Cuba.  increase of crime and prostitution in Cuba  exodus of people working in other professions, such as an engineer to work in tourism</p>

**IX.4 Appendix: Maps of Cayo Coco, Causeway and Potential Ecotourism Spots.**

**Connection of the causeway from mainland to Cayo Coco.**



Causeway Turiguanó-Cayo Coco.

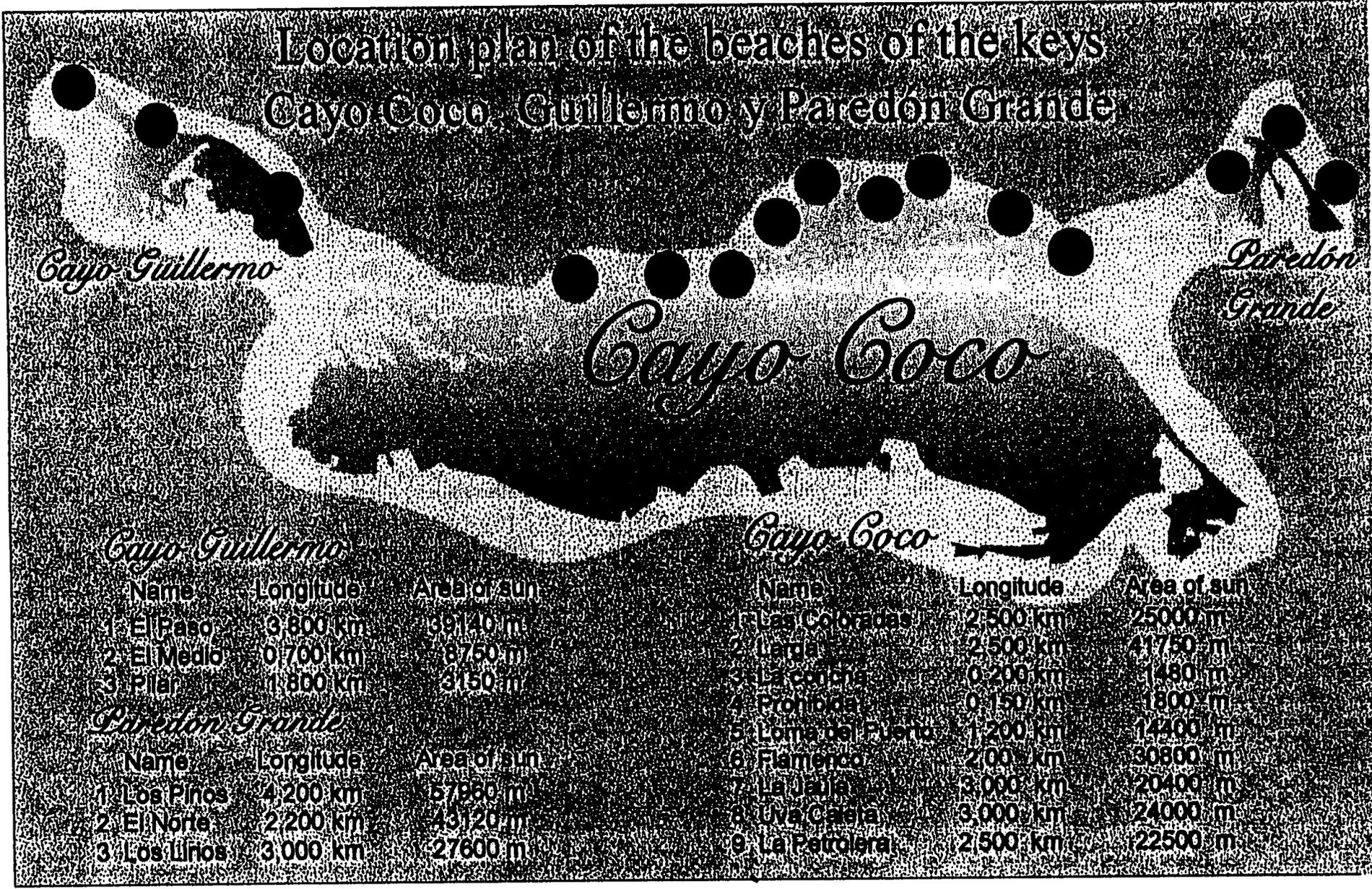
Bridge

Drains

Source: Coastal Ecosystems Research Center

Designed by Adán Zúñiga River & J. del Campo

# Location plan of the beaches of the keys Cayo Coco, Guillermo y Paredón Grande



### Cayo Guillermo

Name	Longitude	Area of sun
1. El Paso	3,800 km	39,140 m <sup>2</sup>
2. El Medio	0,700 km	8,750 m <sup>2</sup>
3. Pilar	1,800 km	3,150 m <sup>2</sup>

### Paredón Grande

Name	Longitude	Area of sun
1. Los Pinos	4,200 km	57,880 m <sup>2</sup>
2. El Norte	2,200 km	43,120 m <sup>2</sup>
3. Los Lirios	3,000 km	27,600 m <sup>2</sup>

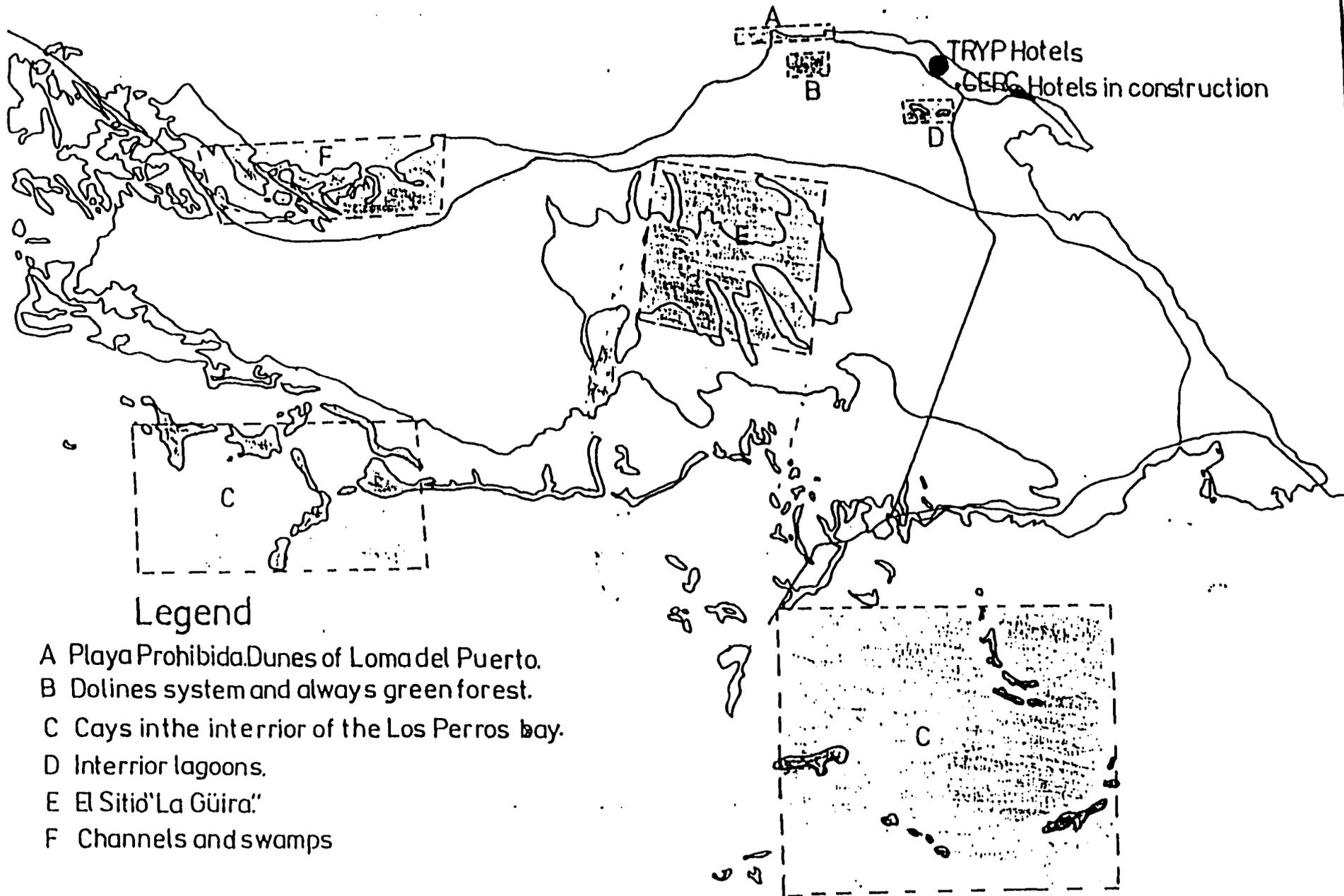
### Cayo Coco

Name	Longitude	Area of sun
1. Las Coloradas	2,500 km	25,000 m <sup>2</sup>
2. Guardia	2,500 km	41,750 m <sup>2</sup>
3. La Concha	0,200 km	1,480 m <sup>2</sup>
4. Prohíbase	0,150 km	1,800 m <sup>2</sup>
5. Loma del Fuerte	1,200 km	14,400 m <sup>2</sup>
6. Flamenco	2,100 km	30,800 m <sup>2</sup>
7. La Jaula	3,000 km	20,400 m <sup>2</sup>
8. Uva Cañera	3,000 km	24,000 m <sup>2</sup>
9. La Petrolera	2,500 km	22,500 m <sup>2</sup>

Designed by Adán Zuñiga Ríos.

Source: Coastal Ecosystems Research Center

# POSSIBLE ZONES FOR ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT.



## IX.5 Appendix: Tourist Survey

### Tourist Questionnaire

I am Canadian student conducting a tourism study in Cayo Coco as part of my master's thesis research and would like to ask you to participate in this study by answering the questionnaire as accurately as possible. The information I obtain will help me to assess the country's tourism industry and the potential use of Cayo Coco as a nature-based tourism area. It is important to answer all the questions.

In what country do you live? \_\_\_\_\_

2. What is your gender?

1. Male    2. Female

3. What is your age range?

1. 15-25    2. 26-35  
3. 36-50    4. 51 and up

4. What is your occupation or profession? (circle one)

- A. professional  
B. managerial, supervisory or clerical  
C. skilled workers or tradesmen  
D. service industry  
E. self employed  
F. student  
G. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

5. Is this your first trip to this country? (circle one)

1. yes                      2. no (how many times have you been before?) \_\_\_\_\_

6. Why did you choose Cuba as a travel destination? (circle as many as apply)

1. Visiting friends or relatives  
2. Business or convention  
3. Sun, beaches, entertainment  
4. Sightseeing  
5. Cultural, native history  
6. Natural history (i.e. wildlife)  
7. Other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

7. What influenced you to choose Cuba as a destination? (circle as many that apply)

1. own idea  
2. recommendation by friends or relatives  
3. advertisements  
4. travel agent  
5. attractive prices

6. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

8. What influenced you to chose Cayo Coco as your vacation spot in Cuba? (circle as many that apply)

1. own idea  
2. recommendations by friends or relatives  
3. advertisements  
4. accommodations  
5. travel agent  
6. other (specify) \_\_\_\_\_

9. To what extent did the natural environment influence your decision to come to Cayo Coco? (circle one)

1. main reason  
2. important, influenced my coming here  
3. somewhat important  
4. not important  
5. does not apply

10. How many people are with you? \_\_\_\_\_

11. Did you engage in any of the following nature-related activities while in Cayo Coco? (please circle which apply)

1. bird watching                      6. horseback riding  
2. wildlife watching                7. botany  
3. hiking                                8. boat trips  
4. nature trails                        9. other (specify below)  
5. scuba diving / snorkelling      10. does not apply

12. Given a choice over the next 24 hours, which one of these facilities would you most like to visit? (please circle one)

- A. national park                      D. night club  
B. museum                              E. beach  
C. nature trail

12 b) What would you most enjoy about such a visit?

\_\_\_\_\_

12 c) How much would you expect to spend, for yourself, on such a visit?

\_\_\_\_\_

13. Do you feel that there were adequate nature tours and other nature-related activities offered? (please circle one)

1. yes                      2. no (if no, please specify some examples of what you would like)

14. Would you participate in more ecotourism/nature based activities? (please circle one)

1. yes 2. no

15. Do you think Cayo Coco is or will be facing any particular environmental problems as result of tourism on the island? (please circle one)

1. yes 2. no

If yes, what type of problems?

16. Please list four things you liked best about your stay in Cayo Coco.

- 1. 2. 3. 4.

17. Please list four things you did not like about your stay in Cayo Coco.

- 1. 2. 3. 4.

18. Listed below are seven different methods that Cayo Coco can use to increase its tourism. Please rank them in order of importance. The method that you think will be most effective should be ranked one and least effective should be ranked seven.

- A. provide more hotels and restaurants
B. provide more entertainment
C. provide more cultural activities
D. provide more beach resorts
E. provide more facilities for beauty, scenery, wildlife
F. provide facilities for sports
G. provide more marine facilities

19. Do you feel that the natural environment plays a significant role in attracting tourists? (circle one)

- 1. extremely important
2. very important
3. fairly important
4. somewhat important
5. not too important
6. of very little importance
7. of no importance

20. In your opinion, what should be done to improve the quality of the visit and experience?

21. Would you consider coming back to Cuba? (please circle one)

1. Yes 2. No

If yes, please circle where.

- A. Havana D. Cayo Coco
B. Varadero E. Santiago de Cuba
C. Trinidad F. Other

22. Overall, were you satisfied with your trip to this country and your destination of Cayo Coco? (please circle one)

- 1. yes, extremely impressed
2. yes
3. was not so impressed
4. no, quite disappointed

23. In your opinion what do you think of the hospitality of Cubans?

24. Do you consider Cuba a safe place for tourists activities?

25. Have you visited anywhere else in Cayo Coco or in the province besides the TRYP Hotel? (please circle)

1. yes 2. no

25 b) If yes, where have you been?

26. What do you think tourists can do to help preserve the environment in Cayo Coco?

27. What are the most important natural resources you have found in Cayo Coco?

***IX.6 Appendix: Photos of Cayo Coco.***



*The Coastal Ecosystem Research Center (CIEC) in Cayo Coco.*



*Loma del Puerto: Highest Sand Dunes in Cayo Coco*

## X. REFERENCES

### Books

- A World Tourism Organization Publication. National and Regional Tourism Planning, Routledge, London, 1994.
- Academy of Sciences of Cuba. Estudio de los Grupos Insulares Y Zonas del Archipelao Cubano con Fines Turisticos. Cayo Guillermo, Coco Coco y Perdon Grade. Havana, 1990.
- Barzetti, Valerie. Parks and Protected Areas and Economic Development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The World Conservation Union, Washington, D.C., 1993.
- Barzetti, Valerie. Toward a Green Central America Integrating Conservation and Development Kumarian Press, Connecticut, 1992.
- Blutstein, Howard and Black Jan Kippers. Area Handbook on Cuba, Library of Congress, Washington, 1976.
- Boo, Elizabeth. Ecotourism The Potentials and Pitfalls Volume 1, World Wildlife Fund, Washington D.C., 1990.
- Boo, Elizabeth. Ecotourism The Potentials and Pitfalls Volume 2, World Wildlife Fund, Washington D.C., 1990.
- Britton, Stephen and Clarke, William. Ambiguous Alternative Tourism in Small Developing Countries, Commonwealth Geographical Bureau, 1987.
- Caribbean Tourism in the Eighties, Ryerson International Development Center, Toronto, 1980.
- Carter, Erlet and Lowman, Gwen. Ecotourism A Sustainable Option?, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1995.
- Cleverdon, Robert. The Economic Impact of International Tourism on Developing Countries, The Economist Intelligence Unit Ltd, London, 1979.
- Colin, Michael and Baum, Tom. Island Tourism Management Principles and Practice. John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1995.
- Coe, Robert. Cuba Pearl of the Caribbean, Passport Books, Illinois, 1995.

- Cuba Protecting Biodiversity and Establishing Sustainable Development in the Sabana-Camaguey Ecosystems, UNDP, New York, 1995.
- English, Phillip. The Great Escape? An Examination of North South Tourism, Sampson and Company, Boston, 1986.
- Environmentally Sound Tourism in the Caribbean, The Banff Centre School of Management, Alberta, 1988.
- Ferrier, Perez Eugenio. Guide to Cuba, Gianni Constantino, Hall and Co, Italy, 1989.
- Grady, Alison. The Challenge of Tourism, Ecumenical Council Coalition on World Tourism, Bangkok, 1990.
- Gravette, Gerald. Cuba Official Guide, Macmillan Publishers Limited, London, 1988.
- German Federal Agency for Nature Conservation. Biodiversity and Tourism Conflicts on the World's Seacoasts and Strategies for their Solutions, 1997.
- Hall, Colin. Tourism, Politics, Policy, Power, and Place, John Wiley and Sons, New York, 1994.
- Harrison, David. Tourism and Less Developed Countries, Halten Press, London, 1992
- Howe, Ward, Julia. A Trip To Cuba, Negro University Press, New York, 1969.
- Inventory of Caribbean and Marine Coastal Protected Areas, Office of International Affairs, National Park Service, Washington, D.C., 1988
- IUCN, A Global Representative System of Marine and Protected Areas, World Conservation Union, Geneva, Volume 11, 1995.
- Jafari, Jafar. Role of tourism on the Socio-Economic Transformation of Developing Countries, Cornell University: Master's Thesis, New York, 1975.
- Kadt de Emanuel. Tourism Passport to Development?, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1979.
- Krippenorf, Jost. The Holiday-Makers, Heinemann Professional Publishing, London, 1989.
- Lea, John. Tourism and Development in the Third World, Chapman and Hall Inc, New York, 1988.

- Lindberg, Kreg and Hawkins, Donald. Ecotourism A Guide for Planners and Managers, The Ecotourism Society, Vermont, 1993.
- Mathews, Harry. International Tourism: A Political and Social Analysis, Schenkman Publishing Company, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1978.
- Mathieson, Alister and Wall, Geoffrey. Tourism Economic, and Social Analysis, Longmon Group Limited, London, 1982.
- McManus, Jane. Getting to Know Cuba: A Travel Guide, St Martin's Press, New York, 1989.
- McNeely, Jeffery. Guidelines: Development of National Parks and Protected Areas for Tourism. United Nations Environmental Program, June 1995.
- Meso-Lago, Carmelo. The Economy of Socialist Cuba, University of New Mexico Press, Albuquerque New Mexico, 1981.
- Nelson, J.G. and Butler, R. Tourism and Sustainable Development: Monitoring, Planing, Managing, Department of Publication of Geography Series, University of Waterloo, 1992.
- O'Grady, Ron. Tourism in the Third World, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, New York, 1982.
- Oppenheimer, Andres. Castro's Final Hour, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1992.
- Pearce, Douglas. Tourist Development, Longman Group Limited, New York, 1981.
- Perez, Ferrier, Eugenio. Guide To Cuba, Gianni Publishers Costantino, Italy, 1989.
- Preeg, Ernest. Cuba and the New Caribbean Economic Order, The Centre For Strategic and International Studies, Washington D.C, 1995.
- Ryan, Chris. Researching Tourist Satisfaction Issues, Concepts, Problems. Routledge New York, 1995.
- Rudolph, James. Cuba a Country Study, Foreign Areas Study, Washington, D.C., 1987.
- Saengar, P. and Hegerl E. First Report on the Global Status of Mangrove Ecosystems. International Union for Conservation of Natural Resources, Australia, 1981.
- Scarce, R.C., Grifone E, and Usher, R. Ecotourism in Canada. Canadian Environmental Advisory Council, Ottawa, March 1992.
- Schroeder, Susan. Cuba: A Handbook of Statistics, G.K. Hall and Co, Boston, 1982.

- Sealy, Niely. Tourism in the Caribbean, Hodder and Stoughton Educational, London, 1982.
- Seaward, Shirley and Spinard, Bernard. Tourism in the Caribbean: The Economic Impact, The International Development Research Centre, Ottawa, 1982.
- Singh, Tej. Towards Appropriate Tourism: The Case of Developing Countries, Peter Lang Publishers, New York, 1989.
- Smith, Stephen. Tourism Analysis Handbook, Longman Group, London, 1989.
- Stubbs, Jean. Cuba the Test of Times, Monthly Review Press, New York, 1989.
- Suddaby, Charels. "Cuba's Tourism Industry." Cuba in Transition, Washington, D.C. Volume 7, 1997, pg. 122-125.
- The Ecotourism Society. Collection of Ecotourism Guidelines, Vermont, 1995.
- Truslow, Francis. Report on Cuba. International Bank of Reconstruction and Development and the Government of Cuba, Washington D.C., 1950.
- Veal, A.J. Research Methods Leisure and Tourism A Practical Guide, Longman Group, London, 1992.
- Villalba Garrido, E. Cuba Y El Turismo Ciudad de la Habana, Cuba: Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1993.
- Weaver, David. Ecotourism in Manitoba. Rural Development Institute, Winnipeg, MB., 1995.
- Whelan, Tensie. Nature Tourism Managing for the Environment, Island Press, Washington D.C., 1991.
- Wong, P. Tourism Vs Environment: The Case For Coastal Areas, Kluwer Academic Publishers, London, 1993.
- World Tourism Organization. Agenda 21 and the Travel and Tourism Industry, Madrid: WTO, 1995.
- WTT. Travel and Tourism, Environment and Development. World Travel and Tourism Environment Review, Oxford, 1991.

## **Publications, Journals and Documents**

- "A Firm that doesn't plan for a future will not have a present." Business Tips on Cuba, August 1994, pg. 10.
- Acosta, Dalia. "Development-Cuba: Tourism the Industry of the Next Century." World News Inter Press Service. (<http://www.oneworld.org/ip2/jan98/cuba.html>).
- Albuquerque, Kluas. "Caribbean Small-Island Tourism Styles and Sustainable Development Strategies." Environment Management. Volume 16, No.5. pg 619-632.
- Alcolodo, M. Pedro. " Interdisciplinary Environmental Assesment of the Archipelago Sabana-Camaguey," Havana, 1995.
- Alyala Hana. " Resort Ecotourism: A Paradigm for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." Cornell Hotel and Adminstration Quaterly, 1996, pg. 48 – 54.
- ARA Consulting. "Tourism Land Use and Resources." Prepared for the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, August, 1995, pg. 1-64.
- Avella, Amparo and Mills, Alan. "Tourism in Cuba in the 1990s: back to the future?" Journal of Hospitality Management, January, 1996, pg 55-59.
- Ayala, Hana. "Resort Ecotourism: A Paradigm for the 21st Century." Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, 1996, pg 47-53.
- Badaach, Louise Ann. "Conversations with Castro," Vanity Fair, March 1994, pg 129-223.
- Barclay, Juliet and Ferguson, Dienne. "Caught between the devil and the deep blue sea, the development of tourism in Cuba," Community Development Journal, Vol.27, Oct 1992, pg 378-421
- Barbra, Ralph and Avella, Ampero. "Cuba's Environmental Law." Association of the Study of Cuban Economy, 1995. pg. 226-280.
- Berman, Scott. "The Challenge of Cuban Tourism," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Quarterly, Vol 35, No 3, June 1994, pg 10-15
- Brandon, Katrina. "Ecotourism Conservation: A Review of Key Issues." The World Bank, April 1996. pg 1-16.
- Bradon, Katrina. "The Bottom Line: Getting Biodiversity Conservation Back into Ecotourism." The Ecotourism Equation: Measuring the Impacts, Yale University Conference Proceedings, 1996, pg 28-37

- Brenner, Phillip. "Cuba Blocked by New Regulations," Cuba Update, Cuba Resource Centre, Vol 2, 1992, pg.6.
- Cabrera, Eduardo. "Cayo Coco, between dreams and reality." Sol y Son. International de Cubana de Avacaio, Volume 40, No. 1, 1997, pg. 10-26.
- Carter, Erelt. "Ecotourism in the Third World: problems for sustainable development", Tourism Management, April, 1993, pg 85-89.
- "Cashing in on the Caribbean." South Survey, June 1990, pg., 55.
- Castro, Fidel. "We're not going to develop just any kind of tourism, we must create quality tourism and most of all one that is in harmony with nature." Granma International, Havana, December 1, 1993, pg. 4.
- "Cayo Coco, between dreams and reality." Sol Y Son. La Revista Internacional de Cubana de Aviacion, no 40, 1997, pg 10-27.
- Cepero, Alina. "Ecotourism: New Option for Cuba," Cuba Update, Sept, 1993, pg, 43.
- Chavez, Eduardo and Chavez, Eros. "Landscape Planning for Tourism in Tropical Islands, A Case of Cayo Key, Cuba." INUSLA International Journal of Island Affairs, France, Vol. 4 No.1, 1995. pg. 13 -18.
- "Coastal Tourism." United Nations Environment Program, Nairobi, 1982, pg.1-13.
- Cochrane, Catherine. "Tourism: A Socialist Solution Escape From the Whorehouse." New Internationalist, No.142, 1984, pg 15.
- Collis, David. "Tourism/Ecotism in Cuba." Association of the Study of Cuba's Economy, 1996, pg 452 -456.
- Copa, Victorio. "The Doors Open to Tourism", Prisma, Sept 13, 1981, pg 1-4.
- Coyula, Mario and Lapidus, Luis. "Cultural Heritage in Cuba and Latin America Encounters and Disencounters." Havana, August, 1993.
- "Cuba's Economy Open For Business," The Economist, December 4, 1993, pg. 71.
- "Cuba's Ecotourism", WebNet, March 1, 1995.
- "Cuba Hookers Round Up at Infamous Resort." Knight Rider Newspapers, June 7, 1997, pg 2.
- "Cuba International Tourism Reports," The Economist, No.2 1986, pg. 69.

- "Cuba Investment and Business" Concas, 1994-1995, pg 67-71.
- "Cuba Keeping the Faith," Economist, Oct 9, 1993, pg 46-48.
- "Cuba Tourism on the Move," Granma International, Special Edition, July 7, 1993, pg. 2-8.
- "Cuba Trying to Attract Tourists," Rider Newspaper, September 14, 1998, pg. 2.
- "Cuban Hotels Will Receive Certificates of Category." Destino Cuba, January-March, 1997, pg 17.
- Doggart, Caroline. "Environmental Impacts of Tourism in Developing Countries." Travel and Tourism Intelligence, No. 2, 1996, pg.87
- Eagles, Paul. "The Travel Motivations of the Ecotourists." Journal of Travel Research, Fall of 1992, pg, 4-8.
- "Ecotourism in Canada", Canada Environmental Advisory Committee, March 1992.
- "Ecotourism in Cuba," Cubanacan, 1995, pg 1-10
- "Environmental Codes of Conduct." United Nations Environment Program. 1995.
- "Environmental Policy and Tourism in Cuba." The Ministry of Tourism, Havana, 1997.
- Espino, Dolores Maria. "International Tourism in Cuba: An Economic Development Strategy?" Cuba in Transition Vol 1, 1992.
- Espino, Dolores Maria. "Tourism in Cuba: A Development Strategy for the 1990's," Cuban Studies, Vol 23, 1993, pg 49-69.
- Farah, Douglas. "In Havana, Cubans and Tourists are dining out in style," The Winnipeg Free Press, September 30, 1995. pg C4.
- Fennell, D.A. and Smale, B.J. "Ecotourism and Natural Resource Protection." Tourism Recreation and Research. Vol 17(1), 1992, pg 21-32.
- Fernades, Desmond. "The Shaky Ground of Sustainable Tourism." TEI Quarterly Environmental Journal, Vol.2, No.4, Oct-Dec, 1994, pg 4-38.
- Flemming, William and Lorin, Toepper. " Economic Impact Studies: Relating Positive and Negative Impact of Tourism Development." The Journal of Travel Research, Vol 29, 1990, pg. 20.

"Focus Cuba" Focus South, Vol 1, No.10, Nov 4, 1992, pg 5.

Forestell Paul. "If Leviathon has a face, Does Gaia Have a Soul? Incorporating Environmental Education in Marine Eco-tourism Programs." Ocean and Coastal Management. Volume 20, 1993, pg 267-282.

"General Limits for the Planning and Managing of the Keys: Santa Maria, Guillermo, Cayo Coco and Sabinal." GEF/UNDP Project, 1997, pg 1-5.

"Gestion Y Desarrollo Del Turismo, En Los Momentos Actuales En Cuba. Su Proceso De Inversiones, Turismo Ecological." Cubanacan, 1994

Gillette, Bill. "Days Agreement Targets Cuba," Hotel and Motel Management, Feb 20, 1995 pg. 3.

"Good Year For Tourism In the Caribbean 1994," World Tourism Organization News, Aug 8, 1995, pg 4.

Goodrich, Jonathan. "Socialist Cuba: A Study of Health Tourism." Journal of Travel Research, Vol 27, No.1, Summer 1993, pg 36-42.

Gonsalves, Paul. "Cuba's New Push," ConTours, Vol 6, No 6, 1994, pg 10-11

Gonzalez, Gary. "The Development of Tourism in Cuba." Cuba Turismo, No.1, March 1980, pg 23-25.

Gunn, Gillian. "The Social Impact of Rising Foreign Investment," Cuba Briefing Paper Series, No.1, 1993, pg 1-16

Haines, Lila. "Reassessing Cuba Emerging Opportunities and Operating Challenges." The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1997, pg. 49.

Haynes, Lilya. "CUBA". International Tourism Reports. Travel and Tourism Intelligence. No3, 1996

Hart, Cherie. "The Caribbean Caught in a Tourist Trap?" World Development, UNDP, Vol 12, No.4, 1989, pg. 9.

Hernandez, Teresita and Perez, Norman. Politica Ambiental y Turismo en Cuba, Report at the Cultural Tourism Conference, Havana, Nov 18-24, 1996.

Hinch, Thomas. "Cuban Tourism Industry: Its Re-emergence and Future." Tourism Management, Vol 11, Sept, 1990, pg 214-226.

- Hockstader, Lee. "Tourist Royally Entertained in Cuba, The Penurious Communist Hold Out. Information Services Latin America, Vol 44, No.4, May 22, 1992, pg 97.
- Hollander, Paul. "Political Tourism in Cuba and Nicaragua," Society Journal, Vol 32, No.4, 1986, pg 28-37.
- Huntly, Laurence. American Perceptions of Cuba. As A Re-Examining Caribbean Tourist Destination. Master's Thesis for Hospitality and Tourism at the University of Wisconsin Stout, May 1992.
- Inman, Christ. "Impacts on Developing Countries of Changing Production and Consumption Patterns in Developing Countries: The Case of Ecotourism in Costa Rica." United Nations Environmental Program, 1997.
- James, Canute. "Cuba Launches a Campaign to Increase Tourism Business." Globe and Mail, Sept 11, 1982, pg. 28-37.
- Jenkins, Garth ed. Cuba Business "U.K. Direct Flight," Vol. 5, No.6, Dec 1993, pg 2.  
 "New Hotels," Vol. 5, No. 6, Dec, 1991, pg. 2.  
 "Tourism Report," Vol. 5, No.6, Aug, 1991, pg. 2.  
 "Wooing the U.K. Investor," Vol 5, No.2, April 1991, pg. 3.  
 "First Joint Venture Hotel," Vol 4, No. 3, June 1990, pg. 11  
 "Foreign Investment Pick Up," Vol 4, No.3, June 1990, pg. 10.
- Jenkins, Garth and Haines, Lily. "Cuba prospects for reform trade and investment." The Economist Intelligence Unit, 1994, pg. 87-162.
- Joppe, Marion. "Report on Cuba." School of Hospitality Management. Ryerson, Toronto, 1995.
- Kirk, John. "Sol's Operational Experience." Cuba Business Journal, Vol 9, No. 1, Jan/Feb 1995, pg 2-4.
- Lane, Patricia. "Ecotourism in Cuba". Lane Environment Limited, May 1994.
- Larrubia, Evelyn. "Tourism Reborn," Cuba News, Vol. 1, No.4 Dec 1993, pg. 6.
- Lasaga, Manuel. "Dollarization: Scrambling For Foreign Exchange," Cuba News, Vol.1, No. 1, Sept, 1993 pg.2.
- Leon Heras, Hector. "The International Tourism in Cuba: Progress and Contradictions." Economia Cuba Boletin Informativo, March-April 1995, pg 24-29.
- Loverseed, Heliga. "Group Dynamics," Destination Business Traveler, Vol 10, Oct 1992, pg. 50.

- Maigot, Anthony. "Quid Pro Quo with Cuba," Hemisphere, Vol 5, No.3, Sept, 1993. pg. 22-25.
- Macaulay, James. "Tourism and the Transformation of Cuba," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Quarterly, Vol 35, No 3, June 1994, pg 16-21.
- McLachlan-Karr, John. "Evaluation of Ecotourism in Vale de Vinales, Cuba." Center for Latin American Studies, John Hopkins University and the Cuban Academy of Sciences, 1994.
- Manning, Edward. "Managing Sustainable Tourism: Indicators for Better Decisions," World Congress on Adventure Travel and Ecotourism, Sept 20-23, 1992.
- Manning, Edward. "Sustainable Tourism: Preserving the Golden Goose," Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly, Vol, 36, No. 2. April 1985, pg 29-43.
- McAthur, Douglas. "Canadian Hoteliers' Cuba," Globe and Mail, Saturday, Feb 12, 1994, A11
- McGeary, Johna and Booth, Cathy. "Cuba Alone," Time Magazine, Dec 6, 1993, pg 22-26.
- Miller, Marc. "The Rise of Coastal and Marine Tourism." Ocean and Coastal Management. Volume 20, 1993, pg 181, 1999.
- Mills, Allan and Amparo, Avella. "Tourism in Cuba in the 1990's back to the Future?" Hospitality and Management, January, 1996 pg. 55-60.
- "More than 1,000 Participants at Tourism Convention, Granma International, April 1992, pg 3
- Nozar, Robert. "Where Canadian travel, Delta Follows," Hotel and Motel Management, Sept 6, 1994, pg 18.
- Odendaal, Francois. "Trail Runs as a Tool for Responsible Ecotourism Development." The Ecotourism Equation Measuring the Impacts, Yale University Conference Proceedings, 1996, pg 182-191.
- "Officials Claim Cuba Safe For Tourists, " The Mail Star, No 13, 1993, pg B5.
- Perez, John. "Definitions of Sustainability," Institute of Behavioral Science, University of Colorado, August 1989
- Portela, Armando. "Sanctuaries and Reserves." CubaNews, January, 1996, pg. 10.

- "Protecting Biodiversity and Establishing Sustainable Development in the Sabana-Camaguey Ecosystem." UNDP Project Document, July 1993, pg. 1-38.
- Reed, Gail. "Cuba Tourism Revival: No Country is an Island," Cuba Update, April, 1992 pg 24-40.
- Simon, Fracoise. "Tourism Development in Transition Economies The Cuba Case," Columbia Journal of World Business, Vol XXX, No 1, Spring 1995, pg 26-39.
- Slevin, Peter. "Island Visitors Needed, Resented." Information Services Latin America, Vol 46, March 8, 1993 pg. 131.
- Sprole, Keith. "Sustainable Tourism Development in the Caribbean." Prepared for Caribbean Conference on Sustainable Tourism, Nov 29-Dec 2, 1995, pg.1-26.
- Steif, William. "Foreign Firms Gain Foothold in Cuba Hotels," Hotel and Motel Management, April 4, 1994, pg 1.
- Stinger, Martin. "Cuba's Economic Strategies for Survival." Windows on Latin America Canadian Journalists Report, Canadian Foundation for the Americas, 1996, pg 71-83
- Stewart, Carolyn. "Sustainable Tourism Development and Marine Conservation Regimes." Ocean and Coastal Management, Volume 20, 1993, pg 201-217.
- Surette, Ralph. Sun, Sweat and Equality, Atlantic Insight, May 8, 1988, pg. 27.
- Sweeting, Jane. "Marine Ecotourism Information Package." The Ecotourism Society, Vermont, 1995, pg1-13.
- "The Environment in U.S. Cuba Relations: Recommendations for Co-operation." Inter-American Dialogue, A Conference Report, Washington, D.C., January, 1997, pg 1-52.
- "Tourist Development in Cuba," Investing in Cuba Today, Adian Communications, 1993, pg 50.
- Travel Industry Association of America. "Discover America: Tourism and the Environment." Commissioned by Discover America Implementation Task Force, Prepared by US Travel Data Center, 1992.
- "Varadero Growth and Development," Sol De Cuba, No 1, April 11, 1991, pg 19.
- Wallach Amei. "Fidel Castro The Tourism Promoter," The San Fransisco Chronicle, June 24, 1977, pg. 54-55.

Wall, Geoffrey. "Ecological Reserves and Protected Areas: The Challenge of Ecotourism." Prepared for a Seminar on the Environment of the Academic and Scientific Community of Mexico, National Association of Mexican Universities and Inter-American Organization for Higher Education, Toluca, Mexico, Feb 199.

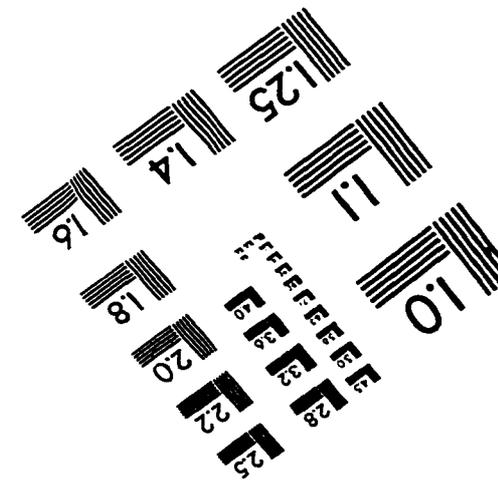
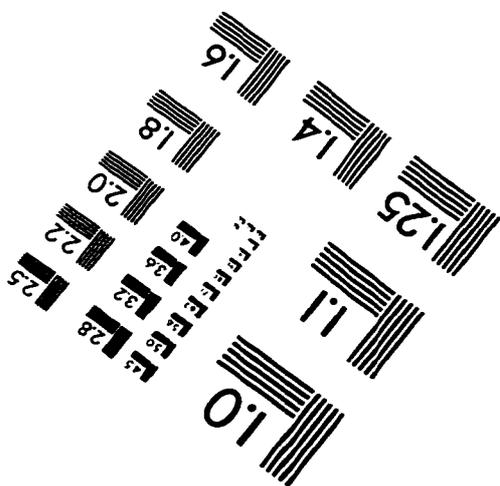
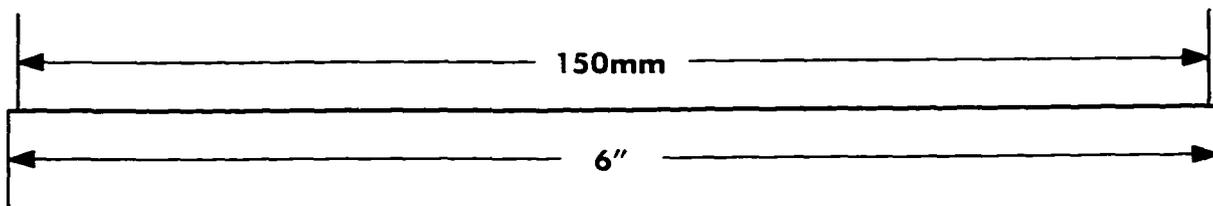
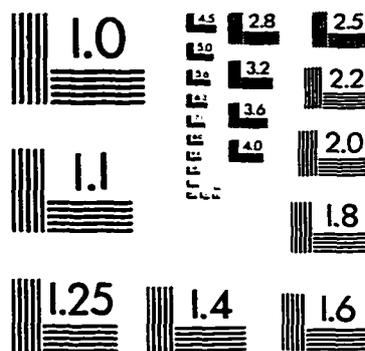
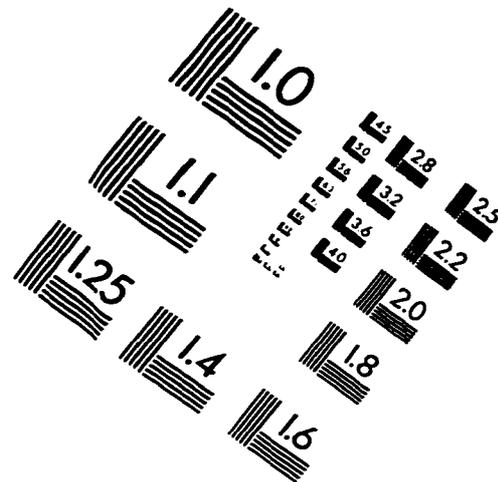
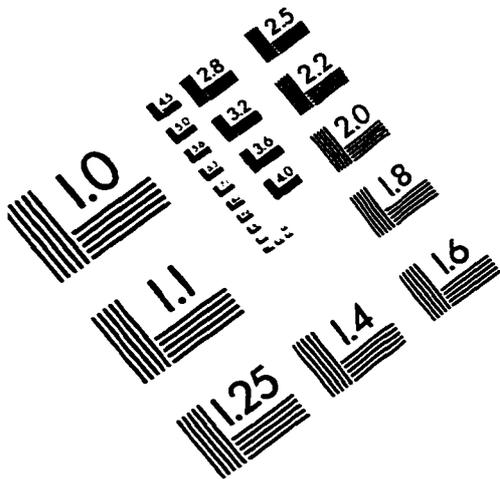
Webster, Gerald. "Cuba Moving Back to the Future with Tourism," Journal of Geography, Sept/Oct 1992, pg 226-233.

Whitefield, Mimi. "Cuba Enterprise Planning New Capitalist Style Tourism," Information Services Latin America, Vol 42, No 1, March 1991, pg 109.

Wiarda, Howard. "Is Cuba next? Crisis of Castro's Regime," Problems of Communism, Jan-April 1991, pg. 84.

Wolf, Carlo. "Checking into Cuba: The Brave New World of Cuban Tourism," Lodging Hospitality, Vol 48, No.5, May 1992.

# IMAGE EVALUATION TEST TARGET (QA-3)



APPLIED IMAGE, Inc  
1653 East Main Street  
Rochester, NY 14609 USA  
Phone: 716/482-0300  
Fax: 716/289-5989

© 1993, Applied Image, Inc., All Rights Reserved