TOURISM AND CHINA'S DEVELOPMENT

Policies, Regional Economic Growth and Ecotourism

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To Our Mothers

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Contents

List of Figures	xix
List of Tables	xxi
Preface	xxv
Chapter 1: Tourism, Economic Growth and Sustainable Development	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 China and the Global Development of Tourism	4
1.3 Tourism Development as a Response to Economic Growth	6
1.4 Tourism Development as a Contributor to Economic Growth	8
1.5 Expansion of Tourism and the Achievement of Sustainable Development	11
1.6 The Nature and Scope of this Study	12
Chapter 2: Tourism Development and Changing Policies in China: An Overview	15
2.1 Introduction	15
2.2 Policy Changes and the Administration of Tourism in China	16
2.2.1 <i>Tourism before 1978 in China</i>	16
2.2.2 <i>Encouragement of international tourism in China since 1978</i>	16
2.2.3 <i>The administration of tourism in China</i>	18

2.3	Features of the Growth of Inbound Tourism to China	19
2.3.1	<i>Overall growth of inbound tourism to China</i>	19
2.3.2	<i>Observations on tourism growth to China</i>	21
2.3.3	<i>Statistical trends in inbound tourism</i>	24
2.4	An Analysis of the Composition of China's Inbound Tourism	25
2.4.1	<i>Market segmentation of inbound tourists to China</i>	25
2.4.2	<i>Change in the number of foreigners visiting China</i>	28
2.4.3	<i>Comparison of growth rates for number of compatriots and foreigners visiting China</i>	28
2.4.4	<i>Composition of foreign arrivals in China</i>	31
2.5	Growth of China's Domestic Tourism Industry	33
2.5.1	<i>Basic data and trends with inbound tourism comparisons</i>	33
2.5.2	<i>Relative composition of all tourism in China</i>	35
2.5.3	<i>Growth rate of domestic tourism compared to inbound and their volatility</i>	35
2.5.4	<i>Caution needed in projecting trends</i>	39
2.6	Notes on Outbound Tourism from China	39
2.7	Environmental Concerns and Sustainable Tourism, Especially Ecotourism, in China	40

2.8	Concluding Comments	47
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Chapter 3: Regional Economic Disparity and Tourism Development: Theories and the

	Chinese Case	49
3.1	Introduction	49
3.2	Theories of Regional Development and Inequality: An Overview	49
3.2.1	<i>Inverted-U paradigm and balanced development</i>	52
3.2.2	<i>Unbalanced economic development across regions</i>	54
3.3	Regional Income Inequality in China: History and Current Situation	56
3.3.1	<i>Income inequality between 1949 and 1978 in China</i>	57
3.3.2	<i>Income inequality since 1978</i>	58
3.4	Inequality Between Coastal and Inland Areas	61
3.4.1	<i>Growing income disparity between the coastal and inland areas</i>	61
3.4.2	<i>Principal reasons for the expanding disparity between coastal and inland China</i>	64
3.5	Does Regional Inequality Need to be Considered for Policy Purposes?	68
3.6	Concluding Remarks	74

Chapter 4: Spatial Distribution of Tourism in China: Its Nature, Determinants and Consequences

4.1	Introduction	76
4.2	Distribution of Demand-Side Factors in China's International Tourism	77

4.3	Distribution of Supply-Side Tourism Factors in China	80
4.4	Lorenz Curve and Gini Coefficient Analysis	83
	4.4.1 <i>More sophisticated methods</i>	83
	4.4.2 <i>Lorenz curve analysis</i>	84
	4.4.3 <i>Gini coefficient</i>	88
4.5	Regression Analysis of Factors Affecting the Spatial Distribution of Tourism	92
4.6	Further Discussion of Influences on the Regional Distribution of International Tourism in China	96
	4.6.1 <i>Entry ports factor and tourist attractions</i>	98
	4.6.2 <i>Connection with overseas Chinese</i>	99
	4.6.3 <i>Foreign direct investment in the coastal areas and business travel</i>	100
4.7	Discussion on State-Owned Hotels, Hotel Operations and Regional Distribution	101
4.8	Concluding Comments	105

Chapter 5:	Trends in the Regional Distribution of Tourism in China and their Implications	108
5.1	Introduction	108
5.2	Overall Changes in Spatial Distribution of Tourism in China	109
	5.2.1 <i>Trends in concentration of international tourism on the coastal area of China</i>	109

5.2.2	<i>Trends in Gini coefficients for the regional distribution of tourism</i>	110
5.3	Changes in Spatial Distribution of Tourism within China's Coastal Area	112
5.4	Changes in Spatial Distribution of Tourism Indicators within China's Inland Area	114
5.5	Coefficient of Variation	116
5.6	Regional Convergence in Tourism Versus Divergence in the General Economy	117
5.6.1	<i>Regional divergence in the Chinese economy</i>	118
5.6.2	<i>Convergence of tourism in China as indicated by Gini coefficients</i>	121
5.6.3	<i>Convergence of tourism in China indicated by the absolute values of some major tourist indicators</i>	121
5.7	Discussion About Regional Convergence in Chinese Tourism	123
5.7.1	<i>The opening up of China</i>	124
5.7.2	<i>Improvement of tourism facilities in the interior</i>	124
5.7.3	<i>Hotel operations and the state-owned hotels</i>	125
5.7.4	<i>Growth in ecotourism</i>	127
5.7.5	<i>International tourist arrivals: Source and their spatial dispersion</i>	128
5.8	The Dispersal of Domestic Tourism	131

5.9	Regional Economic Impact of Tourism Does Not Depend Solely on Regional Relativities	134
5.10	Parting Detailed Snapshots by Regions of Proportionate Growth of Visits by China's Inbound Tourists	136
5.11	Concluding Remarks	140

Chapter 6:	Ecotourism: Its Nature, Sustainability, and Other Issues	141
6.1	Introduction	141
6.2	The Boundary of Ecotourism	142
6.2.1	<i>Ecology and ecological systems</i>	142
6.2.2	<i>Definitions of ecotourism</i>	144
6.3	Principal Participants in Ecotourism	148
6.3.1	<i>Ecotourism industry — the business sector</i>	148
6.3.2	<i>Ecotourists</i>	151
6.3.3	<i>Government sector</i>	154
6.3.4	<i>Non-profit groups</i>	155
6.4	Can Ecotourism Grow Sustainably?	156
6.4.1	<i>Global environment deterioration</i>	157
6.4.2	<i>Resource encroachment from other industries</i>	157
6.4.3	<i>Inappropriate tourism development</i>	159
6.4.4	<i>Economic expectations for ecotourism</i>	160
6.4.5	<i>Ecotourism and local communities</i>	162
6.4.6	<i>Criticisms of ecotourism development</i>	165
6.5	Market and Government Failure in Ecotourism	166
6.5.1	<i>Market failure in ecotourism</i>	166

6.5.2	<i>Government failure in ecotourism</i>	168
6.6	Concluding Remarks	170

Chapter 7:	Evaluating Resources for Ecotourism, Particularly in China	173
7.1	Introduction	173
7.2	Welfare Economics and Ecotourism: A Review	174
7.2.1	<i>Environment and resource: Externality and market failure</i>	174
7.2.2	<i>Market and public solutions to externalities</i>	176
7.3	Evaluating Ecotourism Resources: Existing Methods and Limitations	177
7.3.1	<i>Argument about values</i>	177
7.3.2	<i>Techniques for measuring both marketable and non-marketable values</i>	183
7.3.3	<i>Travel cost method</i>	187
7.3.4	<i>Contingent valuation method (CVM)</i>	192
7.3.5	<i>A comparison of the travel cost and contingent valuation methods (CVM)</i>	195
7.4	Application of Valuation Techniques in LDCs and Ecotourism	196
7.4.1	<i>Valuation of resources in LDCs</i>	196
7.4.2	<i>Valuation and resource use related to ecotourism</i>	198
7.4.3	<i>Limitations of valuation methods in their application, especially in China</i>	201

7.5 Conflict Between Ecotourism and
the Maximisation of Total Economic
Value and Nature Conservation 203

7.6 Conclusion 206

Chapter 8: Tourism Development in Yunnan:

A Case Study 209

8.1 Introduction 209

8.2 Tourism, Especially Ecotourism,
in Xishuangbanna 210

8.2.1 *General introduction to
Xishuangbanna* 210

8.2.2 *The Dai nationality and
conservation* 211

8.2.3 *Tourism as the major industry
in Xishuangbanna* 212

8.2.4 *The state nature reserve of
Xishuangbanna and ecotourism* 218

8.3 Tourism in Yunnan Province 229

8.3.1 *Major tourist attractions
of Yunnan* 229

8.3.2 *Tourism development in Yunnan* 230

8.3.3 *Tourism supply in Yunnan* 231

8.3.4 *Tourism demand in Yunnan* 233

8.3.5 *Domestic tourism in Yunnan* 234

8.3.6 *Major problems in current
tourism development in Yunnan* 234

8.4 Dali and Lijiang: Further Tourism
Centres in Yunnan 235

8.4.1 *Dali — home of the Bais* 235

8.4.2 *Naxi culture and matriarchal
society in Lijiang* 237

8.5 Analysis of Tourism in Yunnan 238

8.5.1 *Spatial distribution of tourism
in Yunnan* 239

8.5.2	<i>Seasonality of tourism in Yunnan</i>	241
8.5.3	<i>Difference in destination choice</i>	243
8.5.4	<i>Tourism in the regional development of Yunnan</i>	244
8.6	Concluding Comments	247

Chapter 9:	Unbalanced Growth, Growth Pole Theory and Tourism Development	249
9.1	Introduction	249
9.2	Theories of Unbalanced Regional Development: An Overview	250
9.3	Comparison of Central Place and Core-Periphery Analysis	251
9.3.1	<i>Central place theory</i>	251
9.3.2	<i>Core-periphery model</i>	252
9.4	Growth Pole Paradigm	253
9.4.1	<i>The concept of a growth pole</i>	254
9.4.2	<i>How growth pole influences other areas</i>	256
9.5	Applications of Growth Pole Strategy	258
9.5.1	<i>Application of growth pole paradigm</i>	258
9.5.2	<i>Failure in the application of growth pole theory and analysis</i>	260
9.6	Arguments Concerning Service Sectors and Tourism as a Growth Pole or Leading Sector	264
9.6.1	<i>Expansion of the service sector and tourism industry</i>	265
9.6.2	<i>Potential of tourism as a growth pole</i>	267

9.6.3	<i>Doubts on the service industry and tourism as a growth pole</i>	271
9.7	New Growth Theories, Growth Poles and Regional Development	273
9.8	Concluding Remarks	275
Chapter 10: Identifying Whether Tourism is a Leading Sector or Growth Pole:		
	Application of I-O Analysis	277
10.1	Introduction	277
10.2	Tourism as a Growth Pole in Inland China	278
10.3	Tourism as a Growth Pole in Yunnan Province	283
10.4	1990 Input-Output Tables of China	286
10.5	Input-Output Table for Yunnan Province	290
10.6	Tourism as the Seventh Sector in the Yunnan Input-Output Table	293
10.7	Impact Analysis of Tourism in Yunnan	297
	10.7.1 <i>Brief review of tourism multiplier analysis</i>	297
	10.7.2 <i>Impact analysis using input-output tables</i>	298
10.8	Linkages of the Tourism Sector in Yunnan	299
10.9	Limitations of Input-Output Analysis	303
10.10	To what Extent can Tourism as a Growth Pole work in Yunnan?	304
10.11	Measures to Promote Tourism as a Growth Pole in Yunnan	307
10.12	Concluding Observations	311

Appendix: Total Employment, Income and Output Multipliers in Yunnan	312
Chapter 11: China's Tourism Development in Retrospect and Prospect	314
11.1 Introduction — Retrospect	314
11.2 Important Findings and their Nature	318
11.3 Concluding Remarks	322
Bibliography and References	326
Author Index	361
Subject Index	371

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List of Figures

- Fig. 1.1 Some possible influences of economic development on the expansion of tourism in a country.
- Fig. 2.1 Annual growth rate of international tourist arrivals and receipts in China, 1980–1998.
- Fig. 2.2 Actual and fitted number of arrivals of inbound tourists to China, 1978–1998.
- Fig. 2.3 Composition of China's international tourism receipts, 1998.
- Fig. 2.4 Annual change in the number of foreigners visiting China, 1978–1998.
- Fig. 2.5 Annual growth rate (%) for the number of foreigners and compatriots visiting China, 1978–1998.
- Fig. 2.6 Estimated growth trends in number of compatriots and foreigners and overseas Chinese tourists to China.
- Fig. 2.7 Number of domestic tourism trips, China 1984–1998 and changes in these.
- Fig. 2.8 Estimated growth trends in inbound number of visits and domestic tourist trips in China.
- Fig. 2.9 Estimated growth trends in domestic tourist trips and number of visits by foreigners and overseas Chinese tourists, China.
- Fig. 3.1 Map of China in which the “coastal” region is shaded.
- Fig. 4.1 Lorenz curve for receipts of the 30 localities (regions) of China, 1995.
- Fig. 4.2 Lorenz curve for hotel rooms of the 30 localities (regions) of China, 1995.

- Fig. 4.3 Lorenz curve for GDP of the 30 localities (regions) of China, 1995.
- Fig. 5.1 Number of hotel rooms in 12 coastal and 18 inland localities, 1986–1998.
- Fig. 5.2 Tourist arrivals in inland and coastal China, 1986–1998, in thousands ('000).
- Fig. 5.3 Logarithms of growth ratios of international arrivals for inland provinces and coastal areas of China, 1998 relative to 1986; based on Table 5.13. Note that Hainan has been excluded.
- Fig. 6.1 Boundary for four types of tourism.
- Fig. 7.1 Possible conflict between ecotourism development and nature conservation.
- Fig. 7.2 A case in which ecotourism development is unlikely to compromise nature conservation.
- Fig. 8.1 The location of five subreserves of the Xishuangbanna State Nature Reserve and major ecotourism sites.
- Fig. 8.2 Prefectures of Yunnan with Xishuangbanna, Dali and Lijiang shown.
- Fig. 11.1 Phases of the development in China in its reform era.

List of Tables

- Table 1.1 World's top ten tourist destinations in 1999 (preliminary results).
- Table 1.2 World's top ten tourism earners in 1999 (preliminary results).
- Table 2.1 Inbound tourism growth in China, 1980–1998.
- Table 2.2 Composition of inbound tourists to China, 1978–1998.
- Table 2.3 Composition of international arrivals to China, 1986–1998.
- Table 2.4 Major tourist generating foreign countries for China 1998 in terms of number of arrivals in China.
- Table 2.5 Domestic tourism in China, 1984–1998.
- Table 2.6 Composition of total tourism market, China 1978–1998 in terms of arrivals and domestic trips in millions and percentages.
- Table 3.1 Economic and demographic indicators for the coastal region of China as a percentage of those for China as a whole.
- Table 4.1 Economic, demographic, and demand-side indicators for 12 coastal regions in China with comparisons for the whole of China, 1995.
- Table 4.2 Supply-side indicators and some ratios of China's international tourism, 1995.
- Table 4.3 Proportion of 1995 receipts of the 30 localities (regions) of China by ascending order.
- Table 4.4 Proportion of 1995 hotel rooms of 30 localities by ascending order.
- Table 4.5 Proportion of 1995 GDP of the 30 localities (regions) of China by ascending order.

- Table 4.6 Gini coefficients of selected economic and tourism variables in China, 1995.
- Table 4.7 Correlation coefficient matrix of regional variables.
- Table 4.8 Ratio of hotel arrivals to hotel employees in state hotels (1000 per hotel employee).
- Table 5.1 Tourism indicators for 12 coastal localities in China as a percentage of national totals, 1986–1998.
- Table 5.2 Gini coefficients for major tourism indicators in China, 1986–1998.
- Table 5.3 Gini coefficients for major tourism indicators for 12 coastal localities in China.
- Table 5.4 Percentages of tourism receipts of each locality within coastal areas.
- Table 5.5 Percentages of hotel employment of each locality within coastal area.
- Table 5.6 Gini coefficients of major tourism indicators for 18 inland localities in China.
- Table 5.7 Coefficients of variation of the regional distribution of some tourism indicators in China.
- Table 5.8 Gini coefficients for major socioeconomic indicators.
- Table 5.9 Gini coefficients for coastal and inland China for selected years from 1982 to 1998.
- Table 5.10 Ratio of total hotel revenue to hotel employees.
- Table 5.11 Ratio of total hotel arrivals to employees.
- Table 5.12 Overseas patrons received by hotels in China, 1995.
- Table 5.13 Regional arrivals and receipts from inbound tourists, China 1986 and 1998 with growth ratios, classified into coastal and inland areas and shown by descending order of growth ratios of arrivals.

- Table 6.1 Estimated value of ecotourism worldwide, 1980–1989 (\$ billion).
- Table 8.1 Tourism growth in Xishuangbanna, 1991–1999.
- Table 8.2 Economic and tourist indicators for Yunnan and its major tourist areas, 1994.
- Table 8.3 Comparison of the number of overseas tourists received by some travel agencies in Yunnan by months, 1994.
- Table 8.4 Comparison of tourism with other sectors in Yunnan.
- Table 10.1 Direct coefficient tables for China, 1990.
- Table 10.2 Total input-output multiplier effects in the Chinese economy, 1990 (yuan million).
- Table 10.3 Direct coefficient table for Yunnan, 1990 (yuan million).
- Table 10.4 Total multiplier effects in Yunnan, 1990 (yuan million).
- Table 10.5 Breakdown of international tourism expenditure in Yunnan, 1990.
- Table 10.6 Allocation of tourism expenditure required for the input-output table of Yunnan.
- Table 10.7 Transaction table for Yunnan with tourism sector included, 1990 (yuan million).
- Table 10.8 Total multiplier effects of tourism in Yunnan, 1990.
- Table 10.9 Backward linkages for open direct coefficient matrix column, Yunnan, 1990.
- Table 10.10 Forward linkage of tourism in Yunnan, 1990.
- Table 10.11 Comparison of the composition of industries in Yunnan Province (1952, 1980 and 1994) in terms of production and employment.
- Table 10.12 Comparison of the composition of industries in four major tourist centres in Yunnan Province in 1994.
- Table A.10.1 Total employment multipliers in Yunnan.

Table A.10.2 Total income multipliers in Yunnan.

Table A.10.3 Total output multipliers in Yunnan.

Preface

We first began jointly researching on tourism in China in 1989. At that time, Julie Wen was a graduate student and Clem Tisdell was a visiting professor at Nankai University in Tianjin, China, lecturing on tourism economics. His visit had been arranged by Professor Mao Yushi, a former student of Nankai High School, classmate and friend of Chou-en-Lai, and at that time a professor at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS). Without this visit, it is unlikely that this book would have been written. We are grateful to Mao Yushi.

From 1989 onwards, we wrote several joint articles on tourism in China. In the 1990s, Julie Wen came from lecturing in management at Zhongshan University in Guangzhou, to study for a Ph.D. in Economics at The University of Queensland. Clem Tisdell was appointed the principal supervisor of her thesis and Joseph Chai the co-supervisor. While this book draws heavily on the material in this thesis, extensive rewriting and updating has been undertaken and considerable new material has been introduced. The result is a “fresh” manuscript based on the earlier foundation.

When we first began our research into tourism in China little did we know that China would, before the end of the 20th century, become one of the world's top ten nations as a destination for international tourists. This is a particularly remarkable achievement because China is the only developing country to make it to the top ten — most developing nations do not even approach the top ten. China's performance in developing tourism is all the more remarkable because in 1978 its tourism industry was insignificant by world standards.

Apart from considering the overall expansion of tourism in China and its implication for China's economic development, this study pays particular attention to the regional distribution of tourism in China and the potential of tourism to act as a regional economic growth-pole. In addition, ecotourism in China's interior, the sustainability of China's tourism development and

environmental problems faced by the tourism industry are given consideration. Throughout this book, we endeavour to relate our findings for China to general theories and principles both of economic development and of the growth and nature of tourism.

Most books rely on the support and assistance of others for their production. This one is no exception. First we have benefited from some support with resources from The University of Queensland and The University of Western Sydney, Hawkesbury. Furthermore, the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) provided some financial assistance for our research in Yunnan from ACIAR Research Project 40. We are thankful for this support.

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