A Comparative Analysis of Sustainable Tourism, Planning and Development between Sligo and Donegal County Councils

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Declaration

I confirm that the enclosed is all my own work with acknowledged exception.

Signed

J. Mc Nelis

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And to Martina, Patricia and Rosie – be forever young!

List of Abbreviations

WTO World Tourism Organization

WTTC World Travel and Tourism Council

UNEP United Nations Environment Programme

OECD Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development

ICAO International Civil Aviation Organisation

IATA International Air Transport Association

IHRA International Hotel and Restaurant Association

NDP National Development Plan

EIA Environmental Impact Assessment

PASLOP Product Analysis Sequence for Outdoor Recreation

LAC Limits of Acceptable Change

ROS Recreation Opportunity Spectrum

EC European Commission

EU European Union

ITIC Irish Tourist Industry Confederation

NSS National Spatial Strategy

NASC National Association Standards Committee

ICBAN Irish Central Border Area Network

WCED World Commission on Economic Development

DCC   Donegal County Council

SCC   Sligo County Council

CDB   County Development Board

NWT   North West Tourism

DCDP Donegal County Development Plan

SCDP Sligo County Development Plan

Abstract

Sustainable Development requires appropriate and continuous planning and management of economic, socio cultural and environmental resources. Tourism planning calls for continuous collaboration among tourism agencies, local authorities and local communities for success of the industry.

While evidence suggests that tourism planning has been extensively documented, it is apparent that Donegal and Sligo County Councils have, in some cases failed to adequately address the significance of planning of the tourism industry for the North West of Ireland. This was investigated through interviews with chief planners of Donegal and Sligo county councils and was conducted in conjunction with the analysis of county development plans; which were formulated by both organisations involved in this study. Evidence suggests that although tourism is extensively documented by Donegal and Sligo county councils, neither of the two local authorities have developed implementation strategies to facilitate the promotion of sustainable tourism development.

This research compares and analyses Donegal and Sligo county councils and how they plan for sustainable tourism development. It outlines the role of the county councils in relation to tourism planning and how Donegal and Sligo compare in how they plan for such a significant industry in the North West of Ireland. It highlights the importance of implementation tools and methods and offers future directions that can assist in the development of sustainable tourism.

1.0   Introduction

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to conduct a comparative analysis of sustainable tourism, planning and development between Sligo and Donegal county councils. The need for a sustainable approach in tourism planning has been increasingly documented (Inskeep 1991; Harrisson and Husbands 1996; Gunn 2002).

Planning is essential for the future success of the tourism industry. Tourism is an activity that has the potential to generate positive economic, socio-cultural and environmental benefits. For balanced and well managed development, it is necessary that appropriate planning of tourism is carried out. On balancing the economic, social and environmental impacts of the industry, tourism will have the potential to become sustainable.

The aims and objectives of this study were as follows:-

Aims

-To define the concept of sustainable tourism and its role in tourism development in the North West of Ireland.

-To identify similarities and contrasts involved in the planning and the development of sustainable tourism between Sligo and Donegal county councils.

Objectives

- To define 'sustainable tourism' and discuss its importance in maintaining a viable tourism region in the North West, Sligo and Donegal.

- To identify the role of Sligo and Donegal county councils in relation to the planning, development and implementation of the tourism policy.

- To examine the development and planning process used by both agencies.

- To examine the similarities and differences in tourism planning through comparative analysis in both county councils.

- To identify best practice and models from an international context and evaluate the possibility of their application in this region.

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The case study method was selected as the appropriate method as the question to be asked was 'how' or 'why' Yin (1989). The researcher carried out the comparisons using strategic open ended interviews as well as a textual analysis tool which was developed to analyse county development plans of both Donegal and Sligo county councils.

Relevant theory was analysed in the literature review to identify approaches and processes necessary for tourism planning and sustainable development. Due to the complexity of the tourism industry in that it interrelates with multiple sectors of society, it is essential that it is planned for at all levels including international, national and regional. It is vital that the relevant tourism organisations, national government and local communities make joint efforts for developing sustainable tourism.

Tourism planning is a broad concept that incorporates various types of planning which are integral to overall sustainable development. Socio-cultural, economic and environmental issues must be addressed extensively as they are key factors of successful proactive tourism development. Planners need to take into consideration all factors which influence developments in the tourism industry and how they assist in achieving sustainable development.

The most prominent models have been highlighted and applied to support developments of the tourism industry. PASLOP – Product Analysis Sequence for Outdoor Recreation (Lawson and Baud Bovy, 1977) is an early model of tourism planning and was developed to analyse and monitor, on a continuing level the various factors which contribute and influence developments in the tourism industry.

The LAC framework – Limits of Acceptable Change Stankey et al (1985) was developed as a means of improving recreation management of protected areas. Since the development of this framework however, various planning processes have been developed including carrying capacity which was identified as an important aspect of this particular study. Supply and demand of tourism is also imperative to the planning process as all destinations vary in terms of characteristics. It is necessary therefore to establish the needs of the area as well as what is already been supplied.

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The regional planning concept Gunn (2002) is a more recent idea which illustrates specific geographical segments of a region. This type of model is useful for identifying potential destination zones for future developments.

Tourism policy is an essential tool for planners as it attempts to address prominent factors that require mass consideration as part of the planning process. Some of these factors include environmental, socio-cultural and economic aspects as well as carrying capacity.

Tourism planning in Europe has become increasingly important since the 1980s when various approaches have been adopted for the development process. Tourism planning in Ireland has also become significant in recent years and been increasingly documented by tourism organizations and national and local governments. This is evident from the literature review through the many policies and laws that have been formulated to guide developers towards sustainable tourism.

Donegal and Sligo County Development Plans which were formulated under the planning and development acts, 1963, 2000, 2002 were significant for this study. The development of a textual analysis tool assisted in analysing these documents. The plans were discussed and in-depth analyses of the documents were conducted.

Results and findings derived from the analysis of the county development plans and the responses received in interviews. From this emergent themes are highlighted and comparisons drawn up on how Donegal and Sligo plan for tourism, and if sustainable development of the industry is a primary focus.

Recommendations were drawn up which attempt to address and facilitate factors that may require implementation strategies for sustainability of the tourism industry. These recommendations are based on information received on how Sligo and Donegal County Councils plan for tourism. Specific issues relating to tourism development were highlighted where Donegal and Sligo County Councils have inadequately addressed and attempts to develop strategies and implementation tools that could be used to encourage sustainable tourism development in the North West of Ireland.

2.0   Literature Review

2.0   Literature Review

This literature review provides an account of published material on matters pertaining to tourism planning and sustainability in Ireland and Europe. The need for a sustainable approach in tourism planning and development has been increasingly documented in recent years (Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Murphy, 1983; 1988; Farell and Mc Lelan, 1987; Blank, 1989; Keogh, 1990; Inskeep, 1991; Harrison and Husbands, 1996; Gunn, 2002). Appropriate planning at all levels is pertinent to the future success of the tourism industry. This review outlines the significance of planning at various levels ranging from international through to regional. Tourism is the world's fastest growing industry generating employment opportunities and promoting economic growth. This amplified growth has provided a social and economic windfall and has become a priority for nations and communities universally Gunn (2002).

Various authors have attempted to construct definitions of tourism, (Mathieson and Wall, 1992; Gunn, 2002) Tourism is described as a movement of people to destinations outside their normal places of work and residence, the activities undertaken during their stay in these destinations and the facilities created to cater to their needs. This earlier definition focuses on the tourist, and provides no indication as to what relationship the tourist has with the destination.

Recent times, however have witnessed the emergence of definitions focusing on the broader concept. An example is presented as follows, 'the movement of people, a sector of the economy or industry and a broad system of interacting relationships of people, their needs and services that respond to their needs' (Chadwick, 1994 cited in Gunn, 2002 p9). Although the ranges of definitions vary, it is apparent in such contemporary definitions that the tourist and the environment are the dominating factors.

A more holistic view illustrates tourism as a 'system' rather than just individual counterparts. Due to the nature of tourism it is difficult to define its idiosyncrasies. Tourism can be defined as an abstraction, according to Gunn (2002) a field made up of physical program and action parts.

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Gunn (2002) highlights the fact that it is not under the control of any one owner but rather it is directed by governments, non-profit organisations and commercial enterprise.

Attention was drawn to the significance of how environmental impacts affect the tourism industry (Dasman, Milton and Freeman, 1973; Cohen, 1978; Bosselman, 1978; OECD, 1980; Pigram, 1980 and Travis, 1982). Further attention has been given to this topic area in recent years for promoting sustainable tourism development. Tourism planners need to maintain a high quality environment due to the increasing demand of tourists and their requirements. Tourists are becoming more sophisticated Inskeep (1991), and now seek tourism destinations that are of high quality, clean and pollution free. It is important that tourism planners approach planning with a primary focus on the environment. Individual tourist facilities and resources must also be planned in conjunction with overall planning objectives, so that they will be achieved more effectively and efficiently for a sustainable tourism. The increased sophistication of tourists for a pollution free environment has drawn attention to the development of Environmental impact assessment (EIAs). The purpose of EIAs is to ensure negative impacts are analysed and minimised. The EIA approach ensures that future developments will not create negative impacts on the environment, and also includes social and economic factors as well as impacts on the physical environment. EIA's were developed to follow a particular format, which have to be approved by governments. They include social and economic factors and impacts on the physical environment. EIAs assist in promoting the protection of social, environmental and physical impacts of tourism ensuring they are considered before plans are developed. Issues of an environmental nature include pollution of noise, water, air, destruction of flora and fauna and the likelihood of natural disasters depending on the country in question.

2.1   Evolution of Tourism Planning

In the past tourism planning was concerned with issues like new hotel development, transportation access to the destination and attractions, advertising and promotion. The development of the tourism industry grew rapidly post WWII, resulting in a significant rise in mass tourism. This occurred partially because there was a 'lack of appropriate planning carried out thus leading to large numbers of tourists visiting destinations causing harm to host communities and the environment' (Inskeep 1991 p15).

'Town planning has been a continual process in the UK for over two centuries' (Cherry, 1984 p187 In Gunn, 2002 p6). 'The transformation of economies and societies resulted largely due to Industrialization and it was soon recognized that if it went out of control the consequences would be detrimental to the environment'. (Swarbrooke, 2000)

Planning towards a sustainable tourism environmentally, socially and physically is essential for the success of the industry. According to (Inskeep, 1991 p25) 'planning is organizing the future to achieve certain objectives'. Although this statement appears simple, planning is an essential and integral part of overall success; (Inskeep) puts forward the notion that in order to achieve a future goal one must plan how it aims to be achieved.

Planning is a multidimensional activity and seeks to be integrative. 'It embraces social, economic, political, psychological, anthropological and technological factors. It is concerned with the past, present and futures' (Rose, 1994 p45). This is indeed a broader classification, a statement that provides scope for development. It encourages internal and external factors to play a key role in the development process. Although the idea of planning has been around for many years the concept of tourism planning is relatively new (Gunn, 2002 p7). In order to avoid negative effects that result from mass tourism, it is important to plan carefully to ensure the sustainability of the industry.

The notion of sustainability relates to the appropriate maintenance of natural resources for preservation and conservation purposes. Sustainable tourism highlights the increased need for enhanced spatial environment and economic balance of tourism development. 'This requires innovative and integrative public and private approaches as well as the adoption of policies' (Godfrey, 1996; Coccossis, 1996 Manning and Dougherty, 1999 In Gunn, 2002 pp.75-100). The World Tourism Organization defines sustainable tourism as a tourism that meets the needs of the present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future WTO (2002). The term sustainable development - our common future was coined by the Brundtland report 1987 and agreed at the Rio Summit in 1992. Sustainable tourism involves using resources sustainably, reducing over consumption, supporting local economies and involving local communities (Gerken, 1988; Eber, 1992; Mc Intyre, 1993; Bramwell and Henry, 1996; WTTC, WTO and Earth Council, 1996; WTO and UNEP, 1998).

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Sustainability has been more recently transferred from a buzz word to a course of action that is vital for success, particularly the future success of the tourism industry.

The concept of sustainable tourism points to the need for better spatial, environmental and economic balance of sustainable development Gunn (2002). Sustainability for tourism has three primary aspects and also referred environmental, socio-cultural and economic impacts. Environmental issues are essential to tourism; however tourisms relationship with the environment is complex. Tourism involves activities that can have damaging effects on the environment which can subsequently destroy resources which tourism depends on. Socio cultural impacts of tourism relate to how tourism affects host communities. Tourism can bring about negative changes in value systems, behaviours and lifestyles. However, tourism can also generate positive impacts and act as a force of peace between host communities and tourists. Tourism generates extensive benefits for developing countries; however as with the other impacts economic growth and development can also bring about negative effects. When socio cultural, economic and environmental resources are optimized and adverse effects are minimized sustainability of tourism can be achieved.

Many definitions have been proposed for sustainable tourism; however the majority, according to Gunn (2002), include the concept of fostering development that is least destructive in the long run of the resources upon which it depends.

The link between tourism and sustainability was noted by various authors in the 1980s (Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Farrell and Mc Lellan, 1987). Sustainable Tourism is an approach to managing an industry which attempts to control negative impacts of tourism while maximizing the social, physical and economic benefits. It is envisaged as leading the management of all resources that will promote economies, ecological processes, biological diversity and the life support systems WTO (2002). It is a concept that plays a pivotal role in addressing problems associated with mass tourism, while supporting alternative tourism and ecotourism. It is necessary therefore in order to meet these objectives, that tourism should be planned appropriately. According to Inskeep (1991), it was recognized by Globe 90 that there was a need for balanced development between tourism and other sectors for the achievement of sustainable tourism.

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The need for sustainable tourism planning during the 1980s and 1990s became evident, and community-driven tourism planning emerged as a topical research theme. (Murphy 1979, 1983, 1988; Haywood, 1988; Blank, 1989; Keogh, 1990; Prentice, 1993; Simmons, 1994; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Harrison & Husbands, 1996)

The nature of tourism makes it a rather complex activity as it interrelates with multiple sectors of society. Tourism is, in many parts of the world viewed as a less developed industry, and it is imperative that governments and tourism organisations are aware of the increased importance of planning. It is vital that planning is conducted at national and regional levels for sustainable tourism in years to come. Tourism planning is an integral part of overall sustainability. When tourism is planned for accurately, it has the potential to ensure the maintenance of cultural and natural resources.

2.2   Levels of Planning

Planning takes place at varying levels where each of these levels focuses on factors and aspects that are specific to that region. Planning should be conducted on a general level by large organizations and governments which hence encourages planning at smaller scales on a more specific basis.

International tourism planning refers to issues concerning transportation services and the development of major attractions and facilities. These developments are controlled and monitored through organizations like the WTO (World Tourism Organization), the ICAO (International Civil Aviation Organization) and IATA (International Air Transport Association. This level of planning depends on individual countries working and cooperating together Inskeep (1991). The WTO is an organisation, which is vested by the United Nations and plays a central role in promoting the development of responsible and sustainable tourism. The WTO in conjunction with its regional commissions of which it has six (Africa, the Americas, East Asia, the Pacific, the Middle East and South Asia establish regional tourism policies and standards that assist the development of the tourism industry Inskeep (1991).

IATA and ICAO deal with transportation issues, and the WTTC (World Trade and Travel Council) communicate with the IHRA (the International Hotel and Restaurant Association) in establishing standards associated with quality. Such associations in conjunction with the regional commissions set standards that are inter-related in the tourism industry. Formulation and implementation of these issues promote development and set the standard for other countries to follow in the development process.

National tourism planning should be carried out in the light of broader national development goals and objectives (Acerenza, 1985 as cited In Pearce, 1999). Planning at national level is critical as it encourages sustainable development of the industry and promotes planning at regional and sub regional level. Governments, particularly in less developed countries need to adopt strategies that will encourage sustainable development at national level. It is paramount for the prevention of adverse effects caused by mass tourism that appropriate planning is conducted at this level as it will in turn encourage development and economic growth. National planning faces issues affecting and relating to tourism policy, structure, access to the country, transportation networks and education and training and the marketing of tourism. An example of planning at national level in Ireland is the recently established National Development Plan. The NDP was formulated to strengthen and enhance Ireland's international competitiveness. The objective of the plan is to support and balance economic and social development and it involves significant investment in health services, education, infrastructure, rural development and waste water services.

Regional planning is planning for a specific region of a country. At this level the necessary considerations should include regional policy, access and transportation issues and the initiation and coordination of programs e.g. in education. Regional planning is similar to national planning; but it depends on the size of the country and region. It is important however that regional planning is carried out regardless of the size of the country. Regional planning is viewed differently in every region, 'depending on the concentration of activities and facilities available to tourists' (Pearce, 1999 pp249-279).

In Ireland Regional Planning is carried out under the remit of 88 local planning authorities, which comprise 29 county councils, 5 county borough corporations, 5 borough corporations and 49 town councils. These are in turn obliged to follow the guidelines laid out in the Planning Act 2001. Each Authority depending on the levels of tourism activity in the region subsequently develops a tourism plan.

Physical land use planning was identified as a tool for achieving sustainable development in tourism The 'land use' model planning structure developed by Hunter and Green (1996) investigates policy at all levels and focuses on controlling development.
The classic approach to land use planning is based on the analysis of the current situation, the generation of alternatives, evaluation and implementation. Many land use plans are based on the concept of zoning, which is the allocation of specific areas for particular land uses. According to Swarbrooke (2000), zoning in tourism could have two dimensions. These include: zoning of tourism uses away from other land uses, and zoning to separate different types of tourism or tourists who may not be compatible, e.g. different personalities. The land use planning approach involves the establishment of zones for various types and intensities of land uses Inskeep (1991). An example of zoning was used at Borobudur National Archaeological Park in Java, Indonesia.
Examples of zoning in Ireland can be seen in local authority documents in relation to how specific areas of land are divided and used for various developments.

Socio-cultural planning refers to relationships between cultures and according to Armour (1992) the social impacts are changes that occur in people's way of life, their culture and their community. The rise of mass tourism has resulted in uncontrolled development due to a lack of planning in many parts of the world. This development has left behind problems within society, Inskeep (1991). These problems include overcrowding, loss of amenities for residents, loss of economic benefits and general social problems. It has also been documented by Mathieson and Wall (1982) that tourism contributes to problems such as crime and drugs, and these problems have subsequently created friction and hostilities between the tourist and the host community.

The tourism industry can generate benefits and problems respectively to society and its cultural patterns. If tourism is well planned and managed in a socially responsible manner, it can bring about many socio cultural benefits to both hosts and tourists (World Tourism Organization, WTO (1994).

Economic planning is an integral part of overall planning for the tourism industry. The positive and negative economic impacts of tourism have been extensively documented through the years (Archer, 1971;Bryden, 1973; Eadington and Redman, 1991). The economic impacts of tourism refer to the generation of income and employment that result from tourist activities in a particular country. Such contributions can also cause positive and negative effects to the economy and these effects, in turn, reflect standards of living and regional and national economic growth. Government revenue from taxation can be used to develop and maintain infrastructure and public services which are important factors of the tourism industry (Mc Intosh, Goeldner and Ritchie, 1995). The tourism industry also has the potential to generate employment, however it is faced with problems of demand and supply. This is directly related to the seasonal nature of the industry.

One of the primary focuses centering tourism development is the building of a strong tourism economy Gunn (2002). Tourism is often sought after as a resolution for poor economies in less developed countries. Tourism planning and development can assist in the development of economies as well as promoting a balanced sustainable growth.

Environmental planning is essential for the development of sustainable tourism. The environment comprises all the natural and cultural surroundings of people Inskeep (1991). The natural environment is what already exists, climates, the weather, land and soils. The built environment is composed of man made physical features. The tourism industry also creates positive and negative effects on the environment. The negative effects include pollution of air and water, the depletion of natural resources, loss of habitat and erosion. The positive effects are raising awareness of the environment, maintaining its quality and tourism organizations actively planning for a sustainable tourism.

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Tourists have in recent times however developed positive attitudes towards environmental awareness Inskeep (1991). These developments have been encouraged through planners, developers, governments and tourism bodies who are focusing on the future and sustainability of the industry.

2.3   Planning Models and Frameworks

Many models have been devised and applied to support the planning and development of tourism. In 1977 Lawson and Baud-Bovy published an approach to planning tourism development called Product Analysis Sequence for Outdoor Recreation - PASLOP. This model was later revised by Baud-Bovy (1982) and it was stressed that planning should be a continuous process due to the vagaries of tourism overtime, most notably the economy and politics.

This early model of tourism planning concentrated on the various aspects affecting the tourism industry like competitors, resources and facilities and it outlined step by step guidelines to achieve a successful plan. This particular model consisted of four phases Phase one included scientific investigation and analysis monitoring tourism flows as well as the nation's structures and politics. The second phase was the Identification of development objectives. These looked closely at the various market segments, market products and destination attractions. Phase three was the creation of the physical plan which depended on the results of the second phase, and phase four looked at the environmental and socio economic impacts of tourism.
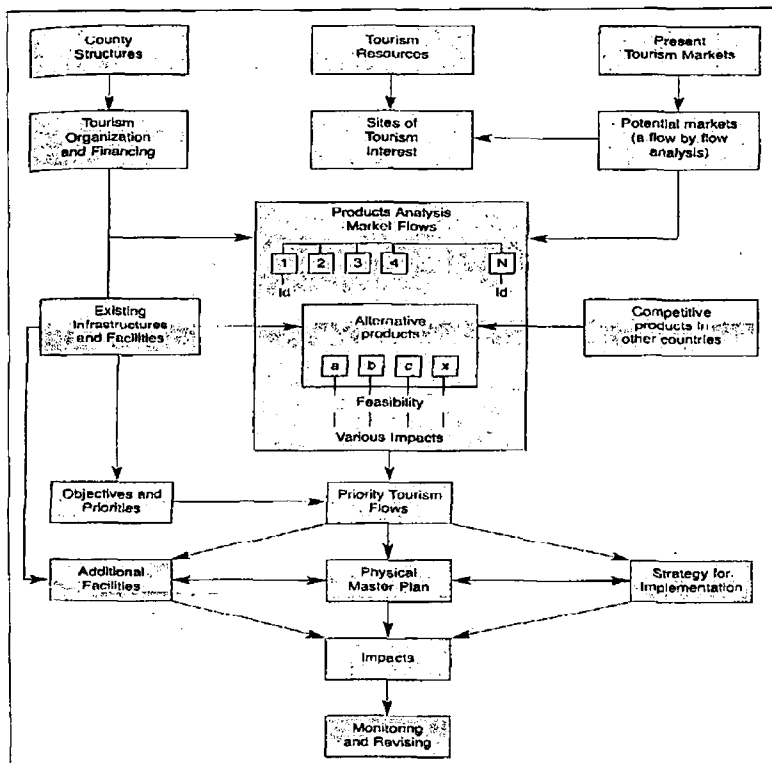
Table 1 – The PASLOP Model for Planning

Source: Gunn (2002) Tourism planning, basics, concepts and cases. 4th eds, Routledge

The LAC framework was proposed to assist development. It was developed by Stankey et al (1985). The LAC – 'Limits of Acceptable change outlines a sequence of steps that can help define a set of desired conditions for a specific area' Stankey et al (1985). Previous studies have been carried out which focus on issues relating to the tourism industry and they have been grouped into categories representing economic, environmental and social characteristics. Economic characteristics refer to standards of living, improved investment and infrastructure (Pizam, 1978 pp.8-12; Rotham, 1978 pp.8-13; Milman and Pizam, 1988 pp.191-204; Perdue, Long and Allen, 1990 pp.586-599). Early attention was drawn to the importance of considering environmental impacts of tourism (Dasman, Milton and Freeman, 1973; Cohen, 1978; Bosselman, 1980; OECD, 1980; Pigram, 1980 and Travis, 1982 as cited in Inskeep, 1991 pp.339-363).

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Environmental conditions take account of the state of the natural environment, (Belisle and Hoy 1980: 83-101; Liu and Var 1986: 193-214), social characteristics related to changes in value systems, collective lifestyles and safety levels (Butler, 1974 pp.100-111; Aeld, 1975 pp.109-115; Kadt, 1979 pp.36-49 and Keogh, 1989 pp. 233-275). The LAC framework stems from two earlier concepts developed to support the management of protected and/or multiple use areas Stankey et al (1985).

Such concepts like 'carrying capacity' gained recognition in the ecological sciences. Many authors highlight the relevance of carrying capacity in the tourism context. It is still invoked as part of the effort to make tourism use sustainable (Odum, 1959 as cited In Ahna, 2002 pp.1-15; Uysal, 1990 pp.327-333; Canestrelli and Costa, 1991 pp.295- 311; Hawkins and Robert, 1997 and Savariades, 2000 pp.147-156). Carrying Capacity, however, has been criticized by many authors (Graefe, Vaske and Kuss, 1984 pp.395-431; Stankey, 1991 pp.12-17) as it holds out to the promise of being objective though it requires subjective and judgemental decisions Although it is an appealing concept, it has failed to take into account relationships between use and impact or to consider perspective measures regarding what kinds of conditions should be in place.

A contribution to the LAC framework is the ROS model - Recreational Opportunity Spectrum (Driver and Brown, 1978 pp.24-31; Clarke and Stankey, 1978 pp.98). This model was developed to assist managers and planners of tourism and outdoor recreation, to consider methods to align physical settings with appropriate user activities. An example of the LAC in operation in conjunction with the ROS was to examine visitor experiences as they related to settings in the Great Barrier Reef Maine Park.

According to Gunn (2002) an essential aspect of regional tourism planning is the identification of the areas competitive position. (Ritchie and Crouch 2000 as cited in Gunn, 2002 pp.306-315) look at factors that influence such competitiveness and sustainability, taking into account aspects of a destination from historical/cultural and physical to economic development. Their model begins with a foundation, starting with core resources and through a series of steps it proceeds to management level, policy and qualifying and amplifying development.

If all steps are achieved accordingly a destination will reach competitiveness and sustainability.

The destination lifecycle model of the evolution of tourism was devised by Butler (1980). Butler borrowed the idea from the model of the product lifecycle which suggests that products go through various stages eventually ending in decline, and since a destination can be considered a product that is developed and marketed it would also proceed through stages, and unless efforts were made to extend the cycle the final stage would be characterized by decline in arrivals. Butler (1991) suggests that prerequisites such as coordination of policies, proactive planning and commitment to long term vision should be fulfilled during the early stages of planning. This model, among many others proposes to stay close to the vision of sustainable development. A holistic and integrated approach should be adopted. Agarwal (1994) disputes Butler's model by stating that it assumes a destination has a single product rather than being comprised of various elements that make up a destination. She maintains that each element that makes up the tourism product display their own lifecycle and at any given time some may show growth and others may display signs of decline.

A reinvention stage was proposed by Baum (1998) which would allow for an extension to the cycle. Others suggest a framework for analysing development; however these depend on the characteristics of specific destinations (Waldrop, 1992 Russel and Faulkner, 1999 pp. 411-423). It is recognized in many studies as a useful model for description and analysis of the evolution of tourism (Meyer-Arendt, 1985pp. 449-466; Williams,1993pp. 24-32; Baum, 1998 pp. 116-137 Russell and Faulkner, 1998, pp.95-115). Many authors have emphasized the usefulness of Butler's model and conclude that it is a practical framework for research and development (Wall, 1982 pp. 52-56; Hovinen, 1982 pp. 570-573; Haywood, 1986 pp.154 - 167; Getz, 1992 pp.752- 770 Bianchi, 1994 pp. 181 - 193; Prosser, 1995 pp.6-9; Russell and Faulkner, 1998 pp. 95 - 115).

'The two main drivers of tourism are supply and demand' (Gunn, 2002 pp.33-72) and planners need to address these issues when future developments are being considered. A destination must possess the ability to provide supply side factors, in order to satisfy market demand. Supply side factors are the key to reaching the ultimate in correct tourism development (Taylor, 1980 p56). The tourism system is a model that describes the various mediators involved in the composition of the sector. These include attractions, accommodation providers and transportation services, and are elements of the so called 'tourism industry'. (Boniface and Cooper, 1987 In Gunn, 2002 pp. 33-72) Similar tourism supply elements were identified by Pearce (1981). These also included attractions, transport, accommodation, sporting facilities and infrastructure. Other issues were also outlined including spatial patterns of supply, demand, geography of resorts, tourist flows, and impacts of tourism and models of tourism space. Such topics have an enormous effect on the tourism industry and are paramount for development without the focus being purely on economic and political development (Pearce 1997: p247).

Many authors share Pearce's views (1997) and concerns for geographical issues and studied interrelated aspects of planning in developing countries (Murphy, 1979; Hellenier, 1979; Hyma and Wall, 1979 and Collins, 1979). The regional planning concept, highlighted by Gunn (1965) illustrates tourism's geographical scale. The concept of the model illustrates three geographical parts of a region which include 'the circulation corridor', community attraction complex (destination) and non attraction hinterland. The aim of this model assists planners in identifying potential destination zones for future development.

COMPETITIVENESS & SUSTAINABILITY

QUALIFYING & AMPLIFYING DETERMINANTS

COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGES

COMPETITIVE MICRO ENVIRONMENT

POLICY, PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT

MANAGEMENT

CORE RESOURCES & ATTRACTORS

SUPPORTING FACTORS & RESOURCES

MACRO ENVIRONMENT

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES
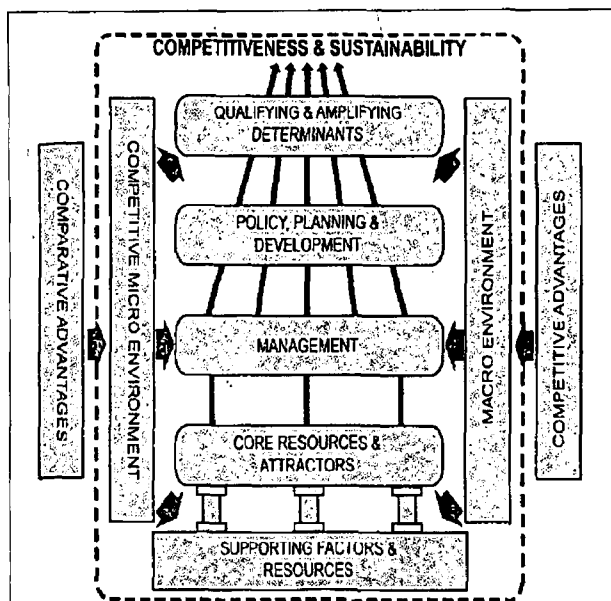
Table 2 – Regional Planning Concepts

Source: Gunn (2002) Tourism Planning, basics, concepts and cases. 4th eds, Routledge

The concept of market segmentation is to assist developers and marketers make decisions on marketing techniques and physical development Gunn (2002). A recent model of market segmentation was put forward by Burke and Resnick (2000), which divides tourism markets into four segments. The idea of these segments is useful according to Burke and Resnick (2000) for planning and development as planners need specific market characteristic input from professional travel market specialists. The four segments are as follows:

Demographic: This refers to personal characteristics such as age, income, occupation, family size and levels of education. It is important for planners of tourism to identify how such variables influence travel.

Geographic: This segment refers to where the tourists come from and where they choose to go on holiday. Their decision can be influenced by travel distances and wealth.

Psychographics: This type of segmenting groups travel markets according to their interests, attitudes and lifestyles.

Behaviourist: These groups have people are segmented due to their buying habits.

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Literature suggests that the classification of markets into segments is a useful technique and is an important element of future development (Smith, 1992; Forbes and Forbes, 1992). It is an integral part of overall development that planners are aware of the various needs of travellers to encourage development in the right direction.

There are three primary aspects to the planning process Inskeep (1991). These include market analysis, integrated analysis and analysis of institutional elements. Market analysis relates to tourist facility needs, transportation and any infrastructure requirements that are significant aspects of the tourist product. Other infrastructure considerations would include water supplies, selecting tourism developing regions and possibilities for conservation of resources. The integrated analysis is of the physical social and economical factors including the natural and built environments. Areas addressed by such an analysis include tourist attractions and activities, and the importance of appropriate plans and policies for the establishment of these. Carrying capacity at national and regional levels is also an issue must be addressed among integrated analysis. Careful planning and appropriate planning and management with consideration for an areas carrying capacity is necessary to avoid over exploitation and potential destruction of physical resources. Carrying capacity refers to a point beyond which further levels of visitation or development would lead to an unacceptable deterioration in the physical environment and of the visitor's experience (Getz, 1983: O'Reilly, 1986).

Carrying capacity analysis is a technique used in tourism and recreation planning to systematically determine the upper limits of development and visitor use, and optimum utilization of tourism resources. This technique that contributes to appropriate development has been highlighted by many authors (Mc Cool, 1978; Getz, 1983; O'Reilly, 1986; Romeril, 1989; Inskeep, 1991). As defined by (Mathieson and Wall, 1982 p21) carrying capacity 'is the maximum number of people who can use a site without an unacceptable alteration in the physical environment, and without an unacceptable decline in the quality of experience gained by visitors'. This definition has been expanded, somewhat by Inskeep (1991), who argues that it should also include without an unacceptable adverse impact on society, economy and culture of the tourism area.

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It is important for the purpose of adequate planning at national and regional levels that carrying capacity is taken into consideration, and in particular for major tourist attractions, facilities and development sites. However it should be conducted more precisely for individual sites at community planning level.

The World Tourism Organisation (1983) highlighted two aspects to be considered for measuring carrying capacity. The first was the indigenous physical and socioeconomic environment, which relates to the capacity that can be achieved without resulting in damage to the physical environment. The second aspect mentioned was the tourism image and the tourism product which refers to numbers of visitors and their compatibility with the image of the tourism product. The criteria for determining optimum capacity levels are categorized under the following:-

Physical – These include acceptable levels of visual impact, the point at which ecological systems are maintained, conservation of wildlife and the acceptable levels of air, water and noise pollution.

Economic – This involves the extent of tourism that provides optimum economic benefit and the level of tourism employment within the local community.

Socio-cultural – This is the extent of tourism development that can be absorbed without causing harm to the socio-cultural lifestyles of the community, and the level of tourism that will maintain cultural movements. These movements include arts, crafts, cultural beliefs, customs and traditions.

Infrastructure – To ensure adequate availability of transportation facilities and services, adequate availability of water supply, sewage and solid waste disposal and telecommunications, and sufficient community facilities and services such as health services and public safety.

2.4   Tourism Policy and Plan Formulation

As there are many types of tourism resorts there are, therefore various forms of tourism development. The type of planning and development necessary in specific areas depends greatly on the type of area in question.

According to Inskeep (1991), these areas can be resort based tourism, town resorts, adventure tourism, urban tourism, cruise ship tourism and residential tourism. These areas all differ significantly and require special plan formulation for development.

- Resort based tourism is a common form of holiday tourism. It is essentially an area that is self contained but provides a range of tourist facilities and services.

- Town resorts are generally oriented to a specific attraction feature such as a beach or a ski resort. Tourists visit these areas for the purpose of the attraction feature and also utilize other facilities in the town.

- Adventure tourism refers to tourists who travel for a particular activity. Examples would include sport and leisure pursuits, archaeology, history and marine environments.

- Cruise ship tourism has become significant in recent years in coastal areas. Many cruise packages offer tourists the opportunity to visit cities and towns on stop-over.

- Residential tourism refers to cabins, holiday homes, retirement homes and apartments. Although some of these people are not necessarily tourists, they still use facilities that are available within the local communities.

These various types of tourist resorts require different forms of development. It is important that all categories of resorts are developed according to the individual characteristics that the area possesses. Tourism policy is imperative for plan formulation and communities should adhere to policy for a sustainable future in the tourism industry.

Tourism development policy is determined in the formulation stage of the planning process. The suitability and appropriateness of a tourism development plan is drafted on a preliminary basis before it is finalized. Policy stems from analysis and synthesis of previous development patterns, infrastructure, tourist attractions and tourist markets. Socioeconomic and environmental matters as well as carrying capacity are important factors in the formulation of tourism policy that require significant consideration Inskeep (1991).

It is the role of the government to lead the way for developing policy so as economic, social and environmental concerns are addressed to meet a balance within the country. It is necessary for governments and local authorities to play an active role in the development of tourism and to ensure that development is well planned to achieve sustainability. Collaboration among governments and local communities improves the coordination of policies, according to Benveniste (1989). It is, however only in recent years that governments have become more involved in tourism planning and the formulation of policy Gunn (2002). Many tourism plans stage development over a period of time and these stages ensure development is economically viable for the region being developed (Inskeep, 1991; 1993)

The concept of continuous planning action grew out of the science of cybernetics, developed by mathematician Norbert Weiner, in 1948. The concept of this process was to control complex mechanisms by interrelating relevant information. It was previously applied to the nervous system of an animal and also used for engineering purposes to control guided missiles. An essential part of cybernetics is feedback where corrections can be made for further developments. The concept of continuous planning was devised from this model. Within each component of the tourism functioning system is vast involvement from public agencies. From such a model the tourism system has continuing planning with the involvement of organizations in the public and private sector and this leads the way for successful planning in the future Gunn (2002).
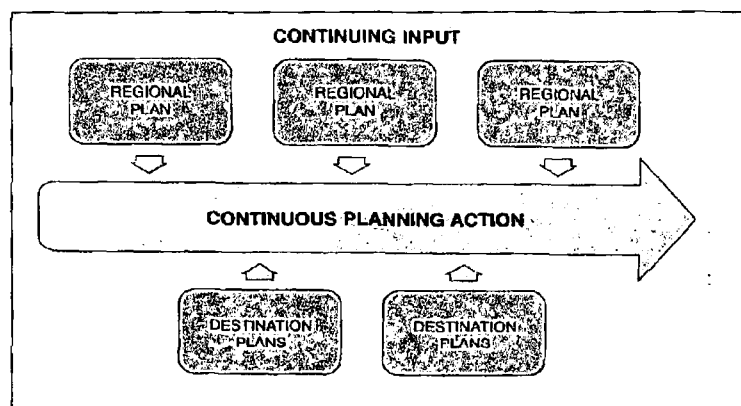

Table 3 – Continuous Planning Action

Source: Gunn (2002) Tourism Planning, basics, concepts and cases. 4th eds, Routledge

Tourism development in recent years has not considered either local inhabitants or the environment in sufficient measures that planners can take to improve the prospects of sustainability May (1991). In order to sustain product development in the future there needs to be collaboration between both public and private sectors Klem (1992). Recent literature outlines the importance of increased collaboration for the planning process to be successful (Marsh and Henshall, 1987; Keogh, 1990; Long, 1991; Hunt, 1991; Jamal and Getz, 1995). Some authors put forward a definite argument concerned with the impact of tourism or community development, however, the most argued point among literature is the need to more actively involve all persons in the proposed development (Jamal and Getz, 1995 pp.186-204). Environmental problems across the globe are increasing and guidelines should be implemented for sustainable development. These problems can be resolved by responsive tourism planning with the help of government and industry D'Amore (1992).

Two schools of thought exist regarding tourisms role in the economy. (Lea, 1988; Sautter, 1999) A political economy view poses tourism as an exploitative force which emanates the desire of middle classes in metropolitan countries. This suggests that residents of a destination have little if any voice in the development process of the tourism function, and, as a result can only react to its consequences on their home environment. The functional view approaches tourism as a proactive force, which if developed appropriately seeks to maximize positive returns to a community's overall growth while minimizing the costs to the environment. This cooperative approach toward its development is advocated in research through collaboration Keogh (1990). These collaborative efforts are defined by Jamal and Getz as 'processes of joint decision making among key stakeholders' (1995). Collaboration in the planning process avoids the cost of resolving adversial conflicts among stakeholders in the long term. Collaboration improves the coordination of policies, (Lane, 1994 and Healy, 1998) while promoting consideration of the economic, environmental and social impacts of tourism resulting in sustainability. Healy (1997) outlines that policies are developed by collaborative alliances and are likely to have more leverage if they arise out of the local knowledge of participants.

Although developing nations have in recent years vested particular interest in development programmes for tourism, many have criticized specific points that would hinder future development of the tourism industry (King, Mc Vey and Simmons, 2000). It has been noted that lack of consultation between stakeholders and consultants, inadequate commitment to implementation and failure to achieve national self reliance poses negative effects for the future of tourism (Douglas, 1994; 1997). Although there are various academic critics who focus specifically on sustainability and tourism planning, there is also substantial literature that offers assistance that can guide developers in the tourism sector in relation to planning and sustainability (Nash and Butler, 1990; Weaver, 1991; Jarivoulma, 1992). The need for tourism destinations to be successful involves the result of a well adapted plan (Dowling, 1993). Tourism is not just driven by a geographical location, according to Ascher (1985) however; it tends to be driven by the level of economic development.

(Murphy, 1985 as cited in Gunn, 2002 pp.33-72) argue that 'tourism planning is concerned with anticipating and regulating change in a system to promote orderly development so as to increase social, economic and environmental benefits '. Tourism development planning seems to be evolving beyond an exclusive emphasis of physical land use planning. This has led to economic evaluation and more recently to the assessment of the environmental and sociocultural implications of tourism development Inskeep (1991).

Literature highlights the need for increased collaboration in the planning process (Marsh and Henshall, 1987 pp.47-54; Keogh, 1990 pp.449-465; Hall, 1991 pp.3-28; Long, 1991; Jamal and Getz, 1995 pp.186-204). Where critics argue about the impact of tourism and the effects it may have on development, the most common point among literature is the need to involve all persons affected by the proposed development (Jamal and Getz, 1995 pp.186-204).

2.5 European National and Local Planning

Since the late 1980s academic debate has focused on Central Europe whose future free market depends on planning, especially in the tourism industry. Tourism contributes to changes by unifying various economic sectors with smaller businesses (Kerperl, 1990; Hall, 1991).

As the tourism is primarily composed of small and medium sized enterprises it is seen to be central to the planning process.

A variety of approaches have been outlined, ranging from the 'old' centrally planned model of tourism to the import of western techniques. The 'old' model is seen to be playing an important role in the process of planned economic change (Allcock and Przeclawski, 1990). Various researchers (Buckley and Witt, 1990 pp.7-18; Hall, 1991 pp.3-28; Hall, 1992 pp.252-264; European Commission, 1992; Witt, 1994 pp.217-225; Williams and Shaw, 1988) group together constraints that are important in the planning process, they include economic restructuring, fiscal constraints, administration, human resources, environmental image and infrastructure. Where Europe has initiated much of the expertise for the process by importing international aid, it is also important that the general principles of tourism, planning and development are imported into central Europe with sensitive implementation (Allcock and Przeclawski, 1990; Mc Intyre, Hetherington and Inskeep, 1993).

Tourism in the Canary Islands accounts for approximately fifty percent of the gross domestic product - a leading destination receiving more than 13 million tourists a year (Canarian government 2001). Literature suggests that the Canary Islands are overcrowded with most of the coast line built up, more so than any other European island.

The Dept. of tourism (2001) and Canarian Government (2001) identified problems focusing on the exploitation of and potential destruction of physical resources. These include employees working for less than minimum wage, the ;lack of trained staff, and with the amount of 'downloading' onto tourism by the construction industry one may be tempted to call it 'concrete tourism'. However one of the most optimistic approaches taken by the government on the islands is the laying down of a 'protectionist measure', namely a tourism moratorium which will help limit construction of further developments (Canarian government 2000). It must consider all the effects of regulations and should focus on a multiplex of tourism (Inskeep, 1993; Dwyer and Forsyth, 1993 pp.751-768; Kaplan and Norton, 1996; Miller, 2001 pp.351-362; Agarwal, 2002 pp.25-55; Hughes, 2002 pp.457-477). A reasonable planning objective is that tourists pay according to their interests, the places they visit and their impact on the environment.

Sustainable tourism was noted as being a global objective, an objective that was a priority and responsibility of the EU to encourage sustainable development and promote it globally (The European Commission).It involves bringing together social, environmental and political scales to invest in the long term for future generations. In this strategy, a number of threats were outlined namely, transport congestion, poverty and waste volumes. Evidently action is required in order to minimize the negative effects and assist in the promotion of a better Europe. Some of the main issues raised to help these problems included involvement and leadership, varying approaches to policy making and the setting of proposals and recommendations. The EU Strategy for sustainable development plans on a comprehensive review annually and is adamant that corrective measures are taken to ensure sustainability remains a key objective to benefit future generations

Between 1989-1993, and 1994-1999, the Irish Government adopted the Operational Program for Tourism which concentrated on product development, marketing and training. However, little emphasis was placed on environmental matters. In 1998 the Irish tourist industry confederation outlined the importance of environmental awareness to overseas customers of Irish tourism, and highlighted the following statement, 'They look for holidays that have a low impact on both the physical and cultural environments, blue flag beach standards and World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), green globe are influencing destination choices and eco friendly programs are appealing to a growing segment of the market' ITIC (1998). The notion of sustainable development pervaded from an insignificant theme to a crucial concept that altered the Irish government in relation to the future of the tourism industry.

In 1997, a sustainable strategy for the department of trade, enterprise and employment was published (Irish Government). This strategy highlighted issues affecting tourism, the environment and planning policies and regulations. Several principles were highlighted in connection with sustainable tourism and how the government departments, tourism organizations and local authorities would adopt such issues. Ireland has, in recent years become a responsible tourism destination when it comes to planning and sustainability.

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This appears evident in this strategy. Improved planning, the spread of activity and seasonality, interactions with the landscape and appropriate development of facilities and infrastructure have been prioritized in recent years to enhance successful development. Ireland has also paid particular attention to the use of land, planning policies and made extended efforts to avoid becoming a mass tourism destination in order to protect the environment, the cultural heritage and the preserve wildlife. Recent years have seen regional authorities maintaining and improving roads, sewage systems and improving waste services, the inhabitants have improved at being environmentally friendly and the Irish government is becoming more involved in the development process.

Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland, published in April 1997, provides for local authorities to complete Local Agenda 21 Plans for their areas (www.irlgov.ie [1]). Each county council and county borough has a designated Local Agenda 21 Officer, and these officers are networked at regional and national levels. The operation of the national network, established in 1998, is facilitated by the partnership arrangement of the Department and the Institute of Public Administration

Since 2000, each local authority has established a city or county development board. They have been put in place as part of the process of renewal of local government along with the integration of local government and local development systems (CDB). The primary focus of this process is to achieve coordination of services at point of delivery to citizens of the state.

2.6   Planning Law and Policy, Ireland

The planning system in Ireland was introduced on October 1, 1964 when the local government planning and development act came into force. In 1997 an action program for the millennium was initiated which comprised a comprehensive review of planning legislation (www.irlgov.ie [2]). The aim of the review was to ensure the planning system was strategic and contributed to sustainable development. The planning and development act, 2000 was the outcome of this review. This act consolidates all previous acts (Irish Government).

The physical planning system in Ireland is managed by 88 local planning authorities, which comprise 29 county councils, 5 county borough corporations, 5 borough corporations and 49 town councils. The main objectives are:-

-Making development plans

-The need for planning permission

-Exempted development

-Appeals against planning permission

-Planning enforcement

The main instrument for regulation and control of development is the development plan. Each planning authority is required to publish notice of its intention to review its plan, no later than four years after the making of a development plan. A new plan must be made every six years. The plan will outline policies for land use, development and promotion in the specified area. The plan will show its objectives for the use of particular areas e.g. residential, commercial, industrial and agricultural.

Local Government Planning and Development Act – This act allows the Minister to increase the number of members of An Bord Pleanála in order to carry out its functions (www.irlgov.ie [3])

The *national tourism development authority act, 2003* promotes the development of tourism services and facilities through Bord Failte. It provided for the dissolution of Bord Failte and C.E.R.T.

Local Agenda 21 is a process that facilitates sustainable development in the community (www.irlgov.ie [4]).

It is an approach which respects social, cultural, economic and environmental aspects of development (UN). The following are the general themes of local agenda 21:

- It will take into account the well being and quality of life of the entire community in the long term

- It will include a high level of participation at local level, giving particular attention to participation by minority or under-represented groups

- It may focus on a particular social, economic, cultural or environmental issue it will present an integrated vision of how the other aspects of community life will be affected.

The sustainable energy act, 2002 – this act promotes and assists energy efficiency and renewable sources of energy (www.irlgov.ie [5]). This will impact on tourism in relation to carbon tax in the near future. It also aims to promote and assist the minimizing of the impact on the environment of the production, use and supply of energy.

The Heritage Act, 1995 - promotes public interest in and knowledge, appreciation and protection of the national heritage (www.irishstatutebook.ie [6]). It also aims to establish a body to be known as an Chomhairle Oidhreachta to define its functions and to provide for the exercise by the Minister for Arts, Culture and the Gaeltacht of functions in relation to the national heritage and to provide for other matters in relation to this. (Irish Statute Book)

The Irish Wildlife Acts, 2000 - It strengthens and deepens the 1976 wildlife act and promises stronger protection for our wildlife and flora. It is the management and regulation of the use of land in relation to the interests of wildlife and, where appropriate development and improvement of land having regard to those interests (www.iwt.ie [7]).

Environment Protection Agency Act, 1992 – This act is funded by the National development plan. It provides the basis for understanding our environment and helps to develop innovative solutions to environmental problems The EPA is mandated to prepare programmes for environmental research (www.irishstatutebook.ie [8]).

Waste management Act, 1996 – Encourages the adoption of reasonable steps to prevent or minimise the production of waste arising from any agricultural, commercial or industrial activity (www.enfo.ie [9]).

Water pollution Act, 1977 (1990) - includes a general prohibition on causing water pollution, provisions concerning licensing of discharges to waters and to sewers, water quality standards, water quality management plans, nutrient management plans, civil liability of polluters and bye-laws regulating agricultural activities (www.enfo.ie [10]).

Coast protection Act, 1963 - If satisfied that land within the county is being progressively damaged by the continuing encroachment of the sea, as distinct from occasional or abnormal storms, and that the encroachment is liable to endanger the safety of a harbour, the buildings or amenities of a residential area or other valuable property, may declare that the promotion of a coast protection scheme is expedient and that the Commissioners should be asked to carry out a preliminary examination (www.irishstatutebook.ie [11]).

The National Development Plan (2000-2006)

This plan was designed to ensure that balanced economic and social development was achieved throughout Ireland. The NDP was devised for the period 2000-2006 and it involves a significant investment of public, private and EU funds. The primary objective of the plan is aimed at strengthening and improving Ireland's international competitiveness (www.ndp.ie [12]).

The strategy of the NDP is as follows:

-Ensuring continued and sustainable, national economic employment and growth

-Increase tourism revenue by 4.7% per annum

-To improve Ireland's international competitiveness

-Foster balanced and regional developments and promote social inclusion

National Spatial Strategy

This is a 20 year plan designed to enable all parts of Ireland reach its potential, irrespective of size or location (www.irishspatialstrategy.com [13]). It recognises that the various regions of the country have different roles. It seeks to organise and co-ordinate these roles in a complementary, win- win way situation. It is concerned with enhancing competitiveness among regions according to their strengths and not against one another.

The National Biodiversity Plan

This National Biodiversity Plan sets out the framework through which Ireland will provide for the conservation and sustainable use of biodiversity over a five year period.

Under fifteen themes and sectors, it details actions which will be pursued to achieve this objective (www.societyofirishforseters.ie [14]).

A Strategy for Irish Tourism 2003 – 2012

The new vision for Irish tourism is that of a dynamic, innovative sustainable and highly regarded sector offering overseas and domestic customers a positive and memorable experience beyond their expectations (www.irlgov.ie [15]). Irish tourism requires a new strategy to chart the way forward at a pivotal point in its evolution. It has come through a period of major development and success in the 1990's.

The key components of the strategy include:

-A clear vision of where Irish tourism wants to go

-An understanding of the underlying forces that are shaping the industry.

-The establishing of challenging targets and objectives.

-An enhance capability to innovate and respond effectively to unforeseen circumstances.

-A decision-making framework that facilitates the formulation of such a strategy.

The Green Box, Ecotourism plan 2002-2004

'The Green Box' is Ireland's first area based integrated ecotourism plan. The primary objective of the green box is to create a wide geographical network of ecotourism areas. The areas suitable for the ecotourism plan were identified as follows, Donegal, Sligo, Leitrim, West Cavan, Fermanagh, North Sligo and South Donegal. This area is surrounded by natural water boundaries of the Atlantic coastline to the North, the Erne system and the Shannon Erne waterway to the South and East, and to the West Lough Allen and Lough Arrow. The 'box system' is understood as delivering fresh organic produce direct to subscribers on a regular basis. The plan seeks to deliver an ecotourism destination, a conceptual and spatial 'Green Box', a defined region containing environmentally sustainable products, and accommodation and attractions within a context of clean natural resources (www.organicconsumers.org [16]).

Finally, planning has been shown to make a positive contribution to sustainable tourism development. Planning helps to increase economic, social and environmental benefits and minimize associated costs (Pearce, 1999 p279). It is imperative that goals and objectives are clearly defined and related to all levels, local, regional and national. Tourism is a growing industry, and it is crucial for all future planning that tourism organisation, developers and planners work towards its expansion on a continuous basis. Increased local participation is therefore a necessity. Stakeholders, local government and local communities should be involved in the planning process in order to make it an integrated approach.

It is vital that planning and development is carried out through the guidance of the relevant laws and policies highlighted by national and local governments. Appropriate concepts need to be clear and methods and techniques need to be adopted accordingly. Planners and developers need to ensure that aims and objectives for tourism planning are supported with implementation strategies and tools that are achievable and measurable. Proposed implementation strategies should be achieved through the collaboration of various tourism agencies, local authorities and the general public to ensure that the focus is on sustainability of the tourism industry for the future.

3.0   Methodology

3.0 Methodology

Research involves a close examination of information that is used to produce or enhance knowledge. It is a process that facilitates the researcher when seeking additional information about a given phenomenon, which is valid and reliable. It is an activity that gathers information on a phenomenon using scientific rigour and academic acumen. (Jennings, 2001 p13) This piece of research is 'a comparative analysis of sustainable tourism planning and development between Sligo and Donegal county councils'. This chapter will outline the aims and objectives of this study, while also providing a detailed account of the actual research methods used and a justification of these methods. The actual research tools developed specifically by the researcher to conduct this study are then highlighted.

3.1 Aims of this Research

-To define the concept of sustainable tourism and its role in tourism development in the North West of Ireland.

-To identify similarities and contrasts involved in the planning and the development of sustainable tourism between Sligo and Donegal county councils.

3.2 Research Objectives

- To define 'sustainable tourism' and discuss its importance in maintaining a viable tourism region in the North West, Sligo and Donegal.

- To identify the role of Sligo and Donegal county councils in relation to the planning, development and implementation of the tourism policy.

- To examine the development and planning process used by both agencies.

- To examine the similarities and differences in tourism planning through comparative analysis in both county councils.

- To identify best practice and models from an international context and evaluate the possibility of their application in this region.

3.3 Research and Tourism

Initially tourism research focused on the counting of numbers and determining economic benefits. This occurred because tourism was viewed as an economic development tool. More recently, however, the attention has turned to the nature of the tourist and their experiences, the social, environmental and economic impacts of tourism and training and education in the industry Brundtland report WCED (1987). The rise of mass tourism in the latter part of the twentieth century has lead to an advocated increased need for tourism research and research has become a vital tool for tourism development at all levels ranging from international to regional.

Due to the complexity of the Irish tourism industry research in tourism enables managers and planners to measure the motivations and expectations of tourists which can assist in satisfying their needs and wants. For the Irish tourism industry to remain successful, tourism research should be carried out at all levels and within all enterprises irrespective of size.

The significance of research has proved to be incomparable in the field of tourism in recent years. (Gunn, 1994; Mc Intosh, Goeldner and Ritchie, 1995; Veal, 1997 In Jennings, 2001 pp6-30)) Research studies have boosted the industry through the construction of databases, proposing strategies and monitoring and evaluating trends.

With the increased EU directives and subsequent Irish environmental and operational legislation, it is extremely important that research and evaluation in all aspects of the Irish tourism industry is an on going process. This may in turn allow organisations to remain competitive and facilitate improvements in the Irish tourism industry. Research such as this should be beneficial to planners and managers at all levels, as well as providing information on the positive or negative social, environmental and economic impacts of tourism.

3.4 Research Methods

There are two general categories of research, qualitative and quantitative. Both types were used in the course of this study, however qualitative methods were more appropriate in this context due to their exploratory nature. Many research studies have been conducted using both methods on a simultaneous basis.

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The qualitative method is used to obtain information on a particular subject in a social setting. It deals with the quality of social life within a particular setting and is used to obtain in-depth knowledge about a specific area of study where little or no information is already known. A broad definition of qualitative research, proposed by (Strauss and Corbin, 1990 p10) indicates the qualitative method is any kind of research that is not arrived at by means of statistical procedures.

More specifically it refers to studies conducted on people, their experiences, attitudes and behaviours, and organizational functioning. The researcher must be involved in the research process.

Quantitative research methods involve retrieving information through the use of statistical analysis. As opposed to the qualitative method the researcher does not necessarily have to be present while the research is being conducted. This method does not rely on context; rather it depends on statistics to arrive at particular conclusions.

The nature of qualitative research is that a small number of respondents will be researched but greater information will be uncovered from these respondents. This would not be possible through the use of quantitative methods as this study required in-depth information on Sligo and Donegal county councils planning and development processes in relation to tourism.

3.4.1 Qualitative Research Methods

In the research method selection process, the investigator chose a number of methods and studied them in detail. The purpose of this process was to ascertain which method appeared to be more appropriate for this particular study. The researcher focused on several research methods which are briefly explained below.

3.4.2 Action Research – Action Research can be described as a family of research methodologies which pursue action and research at the same time. It is an emergent process which takes shape as understanding increases, and it is therefore an iterative process which converges towards a better understanding of what happens. Dick (1999) This method of research is time consuming as the researcher develops an understanding over a time period.

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3.4.3 Grounded Theory - The objective of grounded theory is to develop a theory, which can explain a social or psychological process (Streubet Speziale & Carpenter, 2003, p107). Grounded theory explores what the underlying causes are. It is an approach that is different to qualitative research methods. Instead of a description based on an existing theory it develops the theory itself (Steubert Speziale & Carpenter, 2003, p107). This method was not suitable for this study as the theory was already in place.

3.4.4 Ethnography - Ethnography is a long term investigation of a group that is based on immersion and, optimally, participation in that group. It provides a detailed exploration of group activity and may include literature about and/or by the group. It is an approach which employs multiple methodologies to arrive at a theoretically comprehensive understanding of a group or culture. The issue for the observer is how the particulars in a given situation are interrelated. Ethnographic research is time consuming and insufficient amounts of information can lead to false assumptions.

3.4.5 Narrative Inquiry - Narrative inquiry is the process of gathering information for the purpose of research through storytelling. The researcher then writes a narrative of the experience. Connelly and Clandinin (1990) note that humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and collectively, lead storied lives. Thus, the study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world.

3.4.6 Short-Term Observation - Short term observational studies list or present findings of short term qualitative study based on recorded observation. Observation in the studied group's natural setting is a key aspect of qualitative research. The terms group and culture are used in a loose sense here because for the researcher, a group or culture may include populations such as an individual classroom of students, a set of employees in the workplace, or residents of similar geographical or cultural areas or backgrounds. Short term observational studies differ from ethnographies in that they focus more narrowly on specified categories of group behaviours. This type of research functions well as a means of fleshing out quantitative research that would otherwise do little more than list numerical data.

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3.4.7 Case Studies - A case study is an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution or social group Baker (1994). A case can be an individual, a group, an institution or a large-scale community through which specific research questions are investigated. Robert Yin (1989) proposes that case studies are appropriate when the research question to be addressed asks *how* and or *why*. Case studies are often used to determine the success of an organization.

3.5 Selection of the research methodology

The case study method was chosen for this research as it assisted in identifying key specifics about Donegal and Sligo County Councils. It was used to illustrate their actions, decisions and successes, where the primary focus of the study looked at the issues of planning and sustainable development of tourism through the case study method. Case studies are the preferred method of investigation when the research questions asked are 'how', and/or 'why', thus such a study often seeks an explanation. It is a suitable research tool when a wide range of information is involved, and would appear to be a more appropriate method for a study of this nature.

It is a method of research identified by Yin (1989) as an empirical enquiry, which investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context. This study will examine development plans and processes and how these organizations plan for sustainable tourism. A case study is a strategy which focuses on organizations, institutions, events, decisions or policies Baker (1994). Within the context of this study the focus of the investigation is based on Donegal and Sligo county councils. Decisions and policies undertaken by these institutions in relation to tourism were addressed and discussed throughout the course of this study. The depth of inquiry possible through the case study method is noted as being greater than other research methods, such as surveys Lubbe (2003).

Several types of case studies can be applied to the tourism industry. From these Yin (1994) identified two particular types which were particularly appropriate to this study, single and multiple case studies.

Single case studies are used for conducting only one case, such as a tourism organization, and multiple involve the researcher studying several studies that may be similar in nature.

The nature of this study seemed to relate to multiple case study analysis as the researcher was seeking information about two county councils as well as other smaller scale tourism organisations within both counties.

3.5.1 Justification of research methodology

The justification of the case study method and it capability and appropriateness for seeking explanations in a wide range of disciplines including tourism has been validated (Yin, 1989; Stake, 1995; Baker, 1994; Lubbe, 2003) The case study method allows for the use of methodological triangulation, which involves the researcher acquiring information using various methods. The methods of collection for this study included conducting interviews, studying documentation, archival records, and participant observation, and were important and useful to the researcher in the course of this study.

Triangulation is used widely in tourism research because there may be no 'single' way to solve the research problem. Therefore various methods are used through the course of the study, i.e. semi- structured interviews, documentation and archival records to allow for methodological triangulation allowed the researcher to demonstrate the validity and reliability of what was being investigated by using the same semi-structured interview questions for all respondents involved.

3.6 The Development of this case study methodology

3.6.1 Ethics and Bias in the case study

The case study methodology implies an intensive study of a subject area. This study was based on two county councils, Donegal and Sligo. The information that the researcher obtained from these councils was carefully analysed and interpreted. The investigator of this research respected the information that was received, and interpreted this information in a manner that was not influenced by their own personal opinion, as this might have assumed bias on the part of the researcher. At commencement of the interviews, the researcher asked the interviewees for their consent to utilise their quotes for the study. The researcher also indicated before conducting interviews that they were strictly confidential. Throughout this research study the researcher had various responsibilities to all participants involved in the study, whether they were human or non human participants.

These participants' rights were protected and respected during the course of study, regardless of the amount of contribution they dedicated to it.

The researcher also had a responsibility to society in general while conducting the study. It was vital that the rights of the scientific community were protected, as the researcher herself is one of a group of researchers highly regarded for the quality of its work It was, therefore, important that the status and reputation of this group be maintained throughout the course of this study and is hopefully reflected in this written work.

3.6.2 The significance of uniformity in recording data

A significant element of this research project was uniformity in recording data. It was necessary to define specific aims and objectives before the researcher commenced collecting the evidence. Specific tools were designed to ensure uniformity in recording data. In relation to the county councils plans a textual analysis tool was developed and is detailed later in this chapter. The actual uniformity in the interviews was monitored as much as possible by development of an open ended strategic questionnaire. The researcher put together a set of interview questions (See p46 Table 7) which reflected the aims and objectives of the research. These questions were structured in a way that would prove useful to all interviewees.

3.6.3 The Formality of the case study research methodology

The case study method has often been described as an informal method of research. Stake (1994), however this method of research requires a formal structured approach. It is vital that before the research is conducted for this study that protocols are established. The protocol is a master plan that illustrates the design of the case study. It includes the interview questions for the informants, procedures outlined for the researcher and the sources of evidence that will be used throughout the course of the study.

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3.6.4 Limitations of case studies

The main problem associated with case study research is that it cannot be generalized to the larger population. Other difficulties have been outlined by Yin (1994) in relation to case studies. These include generating theory from the case study, the ability of the researcher to access the company being researched, data collection and quantity, and the problem of effective analysis. However, the case study method allows for methodological triangulation where the researcher can use varying methods to acquire specific information which can assist in the understanding of complex relationships.

3.7 The Case Study Protocol

For this study, the protocol was a major tactic for carrying out the research study. The protocol includes the following areas. An overview of the study, the steps of the case study, key issues of the research, an interview schedule and questions and field procedures and guidelines for writing the case study report.

3.7.1 Overview of this study

The primary objective of this study was to carry out a comparative analysis of sustainable tourism, development and planning between Sligo and Donegal county councils Information was obtained from Donegal and Sligo County Councils in relation to their development plans for tourism. The primary focus addressed concerned sustainable tourism planning, and how both organizations plan for future development.

The roles of both organizations were identified in relation to tourism planning and development. A comparative analysis was carried out to establish how these organizations plan for tourism, how they minimize the negative impacts and what they do to maximize the positive economic, social and environmental impacts. The researcher conducted interviews with Donegal and Sligo County Councils planning officers, and also with a select number of members from tourism related organizations and communities in both counties. This was carried out using semi-structured interviews which gave informants the opportunity to provide information on tourism issues.

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An interview schedule was developed that guided the investigator when conducting the interviews with the county councils, and the members of the public.

3.7.2 Steps in case study design

The following is a series of stages that the researcher established to complete the design of this case study; identifying the issue, determining the type of case to be used, selecting the case, negotiating access to the setting, entering the setting, analyzing the data, leaving the setting and reporting the findings.

3.7.3 Identify the issue – The main focus of this study involved the researcher conducting a comparative analysis of sustainable tourism, development and planning between Sligo and Donegal county councils.

3.7.4 Determine the type of case to be used – The types of case study that appeared most suitable for this study were multiple case studies, identified by Yin (1994).

3.7.5 Select the cases – The college library was used to conduct secondary research through the use of the textual analysis tool where the researcher studied the development plans of both counties. The interviews with the planning officers took place within the actual council buildings. For the other organizations the setting was within their respective offices and places of work. For the community, the researcher conducted telephone interviews.

3.7.6 Negotiate access to the case setting – The researcher developed a relationship with a gatekeeper within the various organisations who facilitated the interviews of informants. These included the chief planning officers in Sligo and Donegal county councils, members of small-scale tourism organisations and members of the general public.

3.7.7 Enter the setting and begin data collection - Data collection for this study began when the researcher looked in detail at development plans of both organisations.

These are known as archival records and this collection method was used in conjunction with semi- structured interviews which were carried out within the council offices. The researcher used the library facilities with a textual analysis tool to look at the development plans and direct quotes provided by the chief planners in Donegal and Sligo county councils through the interview transcripts.

3.7.8 Analyse the data – The information that was retrieved was interpreted and analysed by the researcher using a textual analysis tool for the comparative analysis of both development plans. An open ended strategic questionnaire was utilised to retrieve data from the actual planners. This was tape recorded and the information was analyses and coded from each interview. The use of a qualitative research analysis tool such as N6 was considered. However due to the low numbers of interviews and cost considerations the traditional method was implemented. This involved physical typing out transcripts of the interviews and analysing each one. These were coded and themes or any emergent ideas or theory were highlighted.

Development of the Textual Analysis Tool

This textual analysis tool was designed to assist the researcher in retrieving information about Donegal and Sligo county councils with a primary focus on the county development plans of each county. The tool was developed through findings that emerged as a result of the literature review. These findings were highlighted in the review as critical factors that influence and affect the process of tourism planning.

Textual Analysis Tool for County Council Development Plans
The researcher reads the development plans
(i) The researcher analysis how the plans were developed
(ii) Determine if there is a specific tourism plan
(iii) Specific tourism plans are analyzed using the following headings
a) Goals and Objectives for tourism
b) Tourism Policy
c) Tourism and the environment, management and conservation
d) Coastal Development
e) Heritage protection and Tourism development
f) Caravan and Camping Parks
g) How carrying Capacity is addressed
h) Physical land use planning and zoning
i) Signage
j) Local Agenda 21
k) Environmental Impact Assessment
l) Eco Labelling
m) Waste Treatment and Recycling
n) Researcher analysis conformity to legal and national policies
o) Analysis of Plan Implementation and Evaluation

Table 4 – Textual Analysis Tool

Evidence which this case study was based

The major sources of evidence of data collection that were used for this study included documentation, archival records, interviews and direct observation.

3.7.10 Documentation: This source of evidence plays a pivotal role in data collection and was an important tool for this research study. The documents included proposals of both county councils made to illustrate the importance of sustainable tourism. Newspaper articles were also important, where some contained particular reference to the councils planning issues for future development. These were found in local and regional newspapers in Sligo and Donegal, and in neighbouring counties.

3.7.11 Archival Records: These included organizational records, maps, charts and survey data. These tend to be quantitative in nature and can sometimes be difficult to obtain. In this study however, the main archival records used for this research were the development plans of Donegal and Sligo county councils. These plans range in dates from 1988 to 2000. Maps of both counties were also relevant with particular reference to issues of 'zoning' and 'land use planning'.

3.7.12 Interviews: Interviews were conducted for this study to provide in-depth information relating to the research aims and objectives. The interviews were semi structured and were conducted within both organizations. The use of open ended strategic questions in the interview allowed the informants to elaborate on a variety of tourism related issues.

The researcher conducted seven interviews for the project and these included chief planners in Donegal and Sligo County Councils as well as local entrepreneurs and members of tourism organizations.

3.7.13 Direct observation: This includes the researcher being 'in' the research setting in an active sense. The researcher participated in the interview proceedings with the councils and other organizations in the tourism business.

3.7.14 Leave the case setting – This study required the use of a range of settings in order to acquire the necessary information. These settings included library facilities; planning offices in Sligo and Donegal county councils, select communities and tourism organizations in these two counties. In some cases a revisit was necessary to ensure accuracy in the case, and all respondents were informed on completion and thanked for their help throughout the course of the study.

3.7.15 Report the data – The data is reported in the findings and recommendations of this study.

3.8 Key Issues of the research

The main issues involved in this study include the following:

- To establish an understanding of sustainable tourism.

- To conduct a literature review on sustainable tourism and planning

- To establish how Donegal and Sligo County Councils plan for sustainable development

- To ascertain whether both councils comply/ are complying with proposed development plans

-The researcher will observe how both organizations plan for tourism

-To examine the development and planning process used by both agencies.

-To examine the similarities and differences in tourism planning through comparative analysis in both county councils.

-To identify best practice and models from an international context and evaluate the possibility of their application in this region.

3.9 Field Procedures

A.	Locate Gatekeepers in the planning departments of Donegal and Sligo County Councils
B.	These informants should be senior managers or officers in their respective fields
C.	Make initial contact with both organisations at managerial level
D.	Arrange dates and times for interviews
E.	Organise equipment necessary for interviews
F.	Conduct interviews
G.	Ensure that verbal information supplied is supported by archival records
H.	Arrange interviews with all organisations within a particular time period
I.	If possible try to ensure that interviews take place in respective organisations

Table 5 – Field Procedures

3.9.1 The Case Study Report Guidelines

The report began by providing an understanding of sustainable tourism and sustainable tourism planning. It contains an in depth understanding of Donegal and Sligo county councils role as a local authority in relation to tourism planning. The development plans for both organizations were studied by the investigator and an analysis of each was drawn up. This analysis was used with the aid of a textual analysis tool. The researcher established specific headings for this analysis, and the same headings were used for both county councils to ensure uniformity and formality.

These headings were as follows: -

Planning processes used by county councils
Tourism policy
Consultation for policies
Tourism and the environment
Coastal developments
Heritage Tourism
Caravan and Camping parks
Carrying Capacity
Physical land use planning and zoning
Local Agenda 21
Environmental Impact Assessment
Waste Treatment and Recycling
Eco Labelling
Plan Implementation and Evaluation

Table 6 – Headings for Analysis

3.9.2 Informal Interview Questions

a)	What is the role of the county council in relation to tourism planning?
b)	Is there a specific tourism development plan for this county?
c)	What process is used for tourism development and planning?
d)	What legislation was taken into account for the purposes of tourism planning?
e)	Have any planning models been used to assist you in devising the tourism plan?
f)	What methods of consultation have been used for the development of this plan?
g)	Who was consulted?
h)	How is the plan implemented?
i)	How much funding is allocated for implementation of the plan?
j)	Is the plan evaluated after implementation?
k)	Are there any similarities between Donegal and Sligo Co.Co.'s in relation to tourism planning?
l)	What does the term 'sustainable tourism' mean to you?
m)	Is there Eco labelling of the accommodation sector in the county

Table 7 – Interview Questions

4.0   Discussion and Analysis of Donegal County Development Plan

4.0 Discussion and Analysis of Donegal County Council Tourism Development Plan

4.1   Introduction

The draft of the Donegal County development plan 2000 was first published in 1998 for a statutory time period. During this time the general public had the opportunity to submit objections, ideas or criticisms about the draft plan.

This plan was formulated under the guidelines outlined by the 1963 planning and development act, which was the legislation in force at the time. This plan came into force on October 1st, 2000 and replaces the previous plan. The previous Donegal county development plan was formulated in 1988. Since then, however, there have been major changes in the external environment, which affects the functions of the council. There are several issues highlighted in section 2 under key analysis which have developed as problem issues since the 1988 county development plan.

4.2   (i) Generation of the present county development plan

The County Donegal development plan 2000 was designed by Donegal County Council on a six year basis but looks outside that to a 10 to 15 year framework. During the course of preparing the document, a working group of elected members was set up to deal with critical decisions and complex issues that circulated at the time of formulation.

The draft plan was published in 1998 and a series of meetings were held within the county. A notice was advertised to the general public to provide them the opportunity to inspect the draft plan.

It is evident from the plan that Donegal County Council endeavour to identify the direction in which the county wish to go in terms of future development. It outlines goals and objectives, and the actions needed to achieve them.

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Textual Analysis Tool for Donegal County Development Plan
(i) The researcher reads the development plans
(ii) Focus on Key Analysis
(iii) Determine if there is a specific tourism plan
(iv) Specific tourism plans are analyzed using the following headings
a) Goals and Objectives for tourism
b) Tourism Policy
c) Tourism and the environment, management and conservation
d) Coastal Development
e) Heritage protection and Tourism development
f) Caravan and Camping Parks
g) How carrying Capacity is addressed
h) Physical land use planning and zoning
i) Signage
j) Local Agenda 21
k) Environmental Impact Assessment
l) Eco Labelling
m) Waste Treatment and Recycling
n) Researcher analysis conformity to legal and national policies
o) Analysis of Plan Implementation and Evaluation

Table 8 – Textual Analysis Tool for Donegal County Development Plan

4.3   (ii) Focus on Key Analysis

The Donegal county council have outlined a number of key issues within the development plan. These are summarised as follows:

Natural Resource Development: This relates to the potential for afforestation, aquaculture and the development of peat lands. These issues in 1988 were concerned with lack of development, however the volume and rate of activity in these areas has increased, (Donegal County Development Plan (DCDP) 1.2.1 PP.16) hence resulting in the emergence of problem issues.

Decline in smaller towns and villages: The primary focus in small towns and villages looks at the fall in agricultural employment as well as the rationalisation of services.

Environmental Issues: The previous county development plan dealt with issues concerning the environment, however, the current plan expresses the following issues (DCDP 1.2.3 pp.16) that are culminated in the activities of the council and highlight the increasing importance of these issues to future developments.

Population Changes: The Donegal County development plan outlines the following population issues that are currently affecting the county (DCDP 1.2.4 pp17). There is a notable shift in population to the East of the county. There is a continued impact of the high population growth, and there is a distinguished reduction in the population of children attending school.

Tourism Intensification: The Donegal County Development plan outlines tourism as a key issue (DCDP 1.2.5 pp18) due to the fact that it is a major growth sector and one in which Donegal has comparative advantage. The primary resources highlighted in the development plan as key areas for the future development of tourism are natural, man made and heritage resources.

Power and Communications: It is evident from the plan that Donegal County council endeavour to cooperate with the relevant provider agencies to facilitate optimum supply of modern telecommunications and power.

4.4   (iii) Determination of a specific tourism plan

Donegal county council do not have a tourism plan. Within the Donegal county development plan there is, however a specific section on tourism policy. The plan highlights four policies which the council are developing for the future of the industry in the county. The primary focus in this section, is however the goals and objectives of the council in relation to tourism.

4.5   (iv)

a) Goal: Donegal county council aim to support the economic development of sustainable tourism and promote this as a key element of the overall economic strategy at county and national level.

Objectives: - To manage and conserve the natural and man made heritage which provides a core resource for the industry.

-To support development of a quality environmental image for the county.

-To support product development based on the heritage of the county.

-To promote development of strong tourism identity areas.

-To support the development of traditional seaside resorts.

-To provide and manage to the highest standards a range of support infrastructure.

It is evident from this tourism development plan that Donegal county council approach the development of tourism through various programmes and frameworks which are discussed in the literature review. These include the Operational programme for tourism 1994 and developing sustainable tourism – Bord Failte 1994 through planning and development acts and the requirements of Local Agenda 21. The council aims to develop a more proactive and focused involvement of tourism in the county in the period up to 2006.

4.5 (b) Tourism Policies for the county

The Donegal County development plan 2000 highlights within the sub section on tourism several policies which are discussed below.

Tourism Policy No. 1 – Management and Conservation

The council refer to the conservation of the natural and built environment (DCDP p91) with particular reference to developing strategic frameworks for coastal zone and upland management, the development of area management initiatives for heritage areas, the preparation of beach management with priority to blue flag beaches and the adoption of a tourism eco label for tourism areas within the county.

Tourism Policy No. 2 – Product Development

Donegal county council focuses on areas of product development based on the cultural, natural and built environment. Areas that will receive priority will include marine leisure, walking routes and wildlife.

Tourism Policy No. 3 – Tourism identity areas and resort development

The council aim to pursue two distinct tourism area development approaches (DCDP p93).

These will consist of a number of distinctive tourism sub areas with the county based on strong distinctive cultural or physical characteristics, and the initiation of a pilot programme for traditional seaside resorts.

Tourism Policy No. 4 – Supporting Infrastructure

The aim of this particular policy is highlighted to work in conjunction with the core infrastructural policies and programmes for roads, water and sewerage.

Tourism driven policies will include the development of coach/car tourism routes, the provision of new and upgraded picnic areas and the renewal of traffic and tourism information signs.

4.6 (c) Tourism, the environment, Management and Conservation

There is no specific policy outlined in the tourism section of the Donegal county development plan, however environmental issues are referred to in tourism policy no.1 (DCDP pp.91). This policy is specific to issues concerned with management and conservation. It relates to the natural and built environment. The council propose developments of strategic frameworks for coastal zones, the development of area management initiatives for heritage areas, the preparation of beach management and the adoption of an eco label system for tourism areas.

Management and conservation issues are also highlighted in the Marine Resource and Coastal development policy where the council recognise the increased need for partnerships within the context of coastal zone management.

There is, however, a specific section of the development plan dedicated to environmental issues.

The goal of the council in relation to environmental services and protection is to support sustainable development of the county through the provision of quality environmental services and protection of the environment. The objectives projected by the council which focus on the environment are the protection of resources, the provision of a quality waste management service, and the promotion of waste minimisation.

4.7   (d) Coastal developments

This tourism development plan does not have a specific policy for coastal development; however it is referred to in Tourism policy No. 3 (DCDP pp.93) which is Tourism identity areas and resort development. In relation to tourism coastal developments the council aim to initiate a pilot programme for seaside resorts which will improve and the physical environment and promote the development of marine leisure and tourism facilities. Within the overall development plan, there is a specific sub section which focuses on The Marine Resource and Coastal development. The most attractive elements of County Donegal are obvious from its outstanding features, the county possess the longest coastline in the country, has a premier fishing port at Killybegs and the highest sea cliffs in Europe. It would appear that Donegal council aim to promote and encourage sustainable development through the improvement of the network of piers and harbours, the initiation of a management approach to coastal zones and provide support to island communities through access and infrastructural development.

4.8   (e) Heritage protection and Tourism Development

Heritage and tourism development is not mentioned within the tourism section; however the council make reference to this matter in a section titled conservation of the natural and built environment (DCDP pp70). It is evident from this section that the council aim to conserve the uniqueness of Donegal's natural and built environment for future generations while optimising its contribution to sustaining local communities. They propose to protect heritage areas, heritage buildings and special protection areas and areas of conservations. This section appears to adequately cater for the protection of one of tourisms most primary features in Donegal which is its heritage. A specific tourism heritage policy could facilitate the relevant protection agencies in the management of tourism activities on these unique sites.

4.9   (f) Caravan and Camping

Caravan and camping parks are not addressed within the tourism section, however they are included in a separate section in the appendix. Caravan parks are a popular form of accommodation in Donegal, particularly along the coastline.

The proliferation of caravan and camping sites throughout the county, notably Rosnowlagh and Bundoran would seem to call for specific caravan and camping tourism policy. If the county council is to encourage sustainable tourism development as outlined in its tourism policy it must have specific policy and implementation strategies to deal with this matter. The sub section within the Donegal county development plan dealing with this is relatively broad; however it appears to lack specific information that is needed to encourage sustainable caravan and camping developments.

The county council encourage this type of development in a manner that would not cause harm to the environment but would benefit the economy. It is highlighted in this section that developments of this nature should not have negative impacts on the amenity value of the area, that is, where the character of the area is not changed by saturating it with temporary structures. Within this also, the council emphasis that caravan and camping parks must not interfere with archaeological or historical sites and they must comply with landscaping requirements, traffic safety and public health requirements.

4.10   (g) Carrying Capacity

After analysis of the county development plan there was no mention of carrying capacity in relation to tourism activity in national parks or in relation to sewage and effluent. However carrying capacity was adequately addressed under the section on caravan and camping sites. Carrying capacity is one method of establishing a point where development will become unsustainable. Carrying capacity has been designed for the mass tourism resorts in Donegal, therefore it is possible that these resorts i.e. Bundoran would have far exceeded their carrying capacity which means during peak season for example sewage, car parking and emergency services would be far reached.

Donegal county council advises 50 caravans per hectare with a minimum of 8m between any pitch and the public road. Also included in the appendix are the capacities and allowances for other developments including hotels, public facilities and major developments.

4.11 (h) Physical Land Use Planning and Zoning

Physical land use planning is addressed within the overall plan in relation to all the varying topics ranging from urban development to marine to tourism etc. Donegal county council have dedicated appendices and glossary items which include details on specific land uses for hotel developments housing and other services.

The subject of zoning is not outlined as part of the tourism development plan, however zoning is an integral part of land use planning and Donegal county council have a set of maps within the overall document where the issue of zoning can be seen. The use of physical land use planning and zoning can not be underestimated as a method of controlling development to make sure development is sustainable.

4.12 (i) Signage

This plan includes a general area on signage; however it is not mentioned in the tourism section. From this it appears that the county council highlight that it is their responsibility to erect signs under categories including directional, interpretative, welcome and advertising. The directional sign policy pays particular reference to tourism indicating that tourist attraction facility signs must be an agreed brown and white colour. The welcome signs into towns and villages should indicate the name of the area at entry point for the benefit of the visitor.

4.13 (j) Local Agenda 21

Local Agenda 21 is mentioned in the opening section of the overall development plan (DCDP pp.11) for Donegal. This plan highlights the endorsement of Agenda 21 from the Earth Conference in Rio de Janeiro, 1992. Donegal county council address the importance of sustainable developments in relation to environmental protection, the quality of life and the interaction between the environment and development and provision for the future.

It is evident from the plan that Donegal county council have recognised the need to prepare a Local Agenda 21 through the establishment of sustainable principles and the subsequent translation of these principles into practice.

4.14   (k) Environmental Impact Assessment

Environmental Impact Assessments are an essential part of sustainable development and Donegal county council do not mention in their plan their intention to carry out EIA's nor do they highlight an intention to have them carried out by developers.

4.15   (l) Eco Labelling

Donegal county council make reference to 'eco labelling' within the tourism policy as part of their policy for management and conservation, Donegal county council propose to adopt a tourism eco labelling system for tourism areas within the county.

Eco Labelling has the capabilities of addressing many issues concerned with sustainable tourism development and it is imperative that sensible adaptation of eco labelling is encouraged by Donegal county council.

4.16   (m) Waste Treatment and Recycling

Donegal County Council does not mention waste treatment and recycling within the tourism section, however; this issue is highlighted in the environmental services and protection section of the overall development plan. With respect to waste management Donegal county council has embarked on a new waste management plan under the waste planning regulations, 1997. The council propose to take into account the government policy document 'waste management, changing our ways', the EU directive landfill 1999/31/EU, as well as the licensing requirements of the environmental protection agency under the EPA Act, 1992. The EPA Act is also highlighted in the literature review.

It is recognized that the funding for infrastructural development for the waste treatment and recycling facilities has only come on line and the evidence from this research shows that there have been radical improvements; however, this is an area that needs to be continuously improved in order to meet the standards of eco labelling and sustainable development in the county.

4.17 (n) Conformity to legal and National Policies by the Council

Donegal county council formulated this development plan for County Donegal under the planning and development act 1963, which was the legislation in force at the time. The planning and development act, 2000 and amended act, 2002 was also consulted as the document was published in 2000. This was the main piece of legislation used to guide the county council for the formulation of this plan and it is evident that Donegal County Council has adopted this plan under the guidance of the relevant legislation.

4.18 (o) Plan Implementation and Evaluation

Implementation of the overall plan is done through an operational programme which was prepared to set out the type of activities to be followed through the overall plan. There are a series of topics in the overall plan and Donegal county council are involved in rolling out the various projects and activities that are highlighted within these topics. The Donegal County development board is also responsible for implementing various aspects of the development plan.

Evaluation of this plan takes place in July 2004. There has been no evaluation carried out to date on this plan.

It is apparent from the analysis that there is no comprehensive implementation strategy incorporated into this plan in relation to tourism policy. It is also evident that without these strategies it is difficult to evaluate tourism policy.

An Strateis – Donegal County Development Board

'An Strateis' is a document published by the Donegal CDB for the time period 2002 – 2012. It outlines the Donegal strategy for economic, social and cultural development. The primary task given to each CDB in the first two years of their existence was the preparation of a comprehensive integrated development strategy to cover economic, social and cultural matters. These strategies were designed to present a long term vision for the county and short to medium term strategies.

In relation to tourism, the Donegal CDB aim to:-

Improve and develop the diversity of tourism products throughout the county, whilst valuing Donegal's unique natural environment, heritage, culture, islands and languages

Sustain a coordinated and integrated marketing strategy for the county under the Donegal brand identity.

Improve access facilities and infrastructure to and within the county

To develop employment within the tourism industry as an attractive and viable career option

Further improve coordination between all stakeholders concerned with the future development of tourism in the county

Work in cooperation with cross border interests, with a view towards promoting the North West as a tourism destination.

While being a relatively new document put in place by a relatively new body (CDB), it attempts to provide a comprehensive integrated development strategy for tourism development. As the Donegal county council tourism section provides no specific implementation strategies or criteria for evaluation it seems 'An Strateis' has been handed a difficult task to prepare such a comprehensive integrated development strategy for tourism. However, the Donegal CDB has addressed a number of important sustainable tourism development issues such as access/infrastructure/employment which are integral to the development of the tourism industry.

4.2

Discussion and Analysis of Semi Structured Interviews with Planners and Tourism Organisations, County Donegal

The following are the summarised and analysed results recovered from the qualitative strategic open ended interviews. Due to the sensitive nature of politics and planning, no direct quotes are used and no persons name has been divulged, however where possible the most senior person has been interviewed.

The following are a list of participants who were interviewed for this study. These include:

Donegal County Council (DCC)

Donegal County Development Board (DCDB)

North West Tourism (NWT)

Dolmen Eco Centre (DEC)

4.2.1

(a) What is the role of the County Council in relation to tourism planning?

-Under the planning Act, 2000, it falls part of the range of topics that are looked at in terms of spatial planning. Our role as a local authority is in terms of spatial planning. (DCC)

-The County Council and other agencies work for tourism by coordinating development. (DCDB)

-The role of the County Council is to formulate and develop County development boards. (NWT)

-It is the role of the county council to look after environmental issues. (DEC)

Discussion Points- All participants have varying ideas as to what role County Councils have in relation to tourism planning. However, the County Council firmly believes that tourism planning is not their role. It is evident, therefore that there is no specific tourism planning carried out in County Donegal County Council.

4.2.2

(b) Is there a specific tourism development plan for this county?

- Not that they are aware of. Tourism is not our responsibility. Donegal County Council do not have a specific tourism plan, tourism is just a component within the overall plan. (DCC)

- There is a tourism element within the County development plan which the county council adopts. (DCDB)

-Initially they were produced by tourism committees but this subsequently fell into the work of the County Councils within the County development boards. (NWT)

- No (DEC)

Discussion Points – It would appear that there is no definitive answer to this question although it is highlighted that tourism is a component of the overall county development plan.

4.2.3

(c) What process is used for tourism development and planning?

- The process that is used for tourism is the same process that is used for all the other elements within the county development plan. This involves going through the planning and development act, 1963 which was the legislation in force at the time this plan was in draft. (DCC)

-The CDB's process for development is through the use of a tourism sectoral forum. (DCDB)

-Development and planning is carried out via the tourism County boards. (NWT)

- It is a collective responsibility of the general public, local communities, tourism organizations and the county council. In this centre Donegal county council had little involvement in the development process. (DEC)

Discussion Points –One participant highlights that the process of tourism planning is carried out through the work of the County Development Boards and others consider that it is a collective responsibility of the council along with various tourism agencies.

It would appear that the 'process' of planning for tourism is through collective bodies, and under the guidance of the relevant legislation, however it did not emerge from interview whether a specific process or model exists in terms of tourism planning.

4.2.4

(d) What legislation was taken into account for the purposes of tourism planning?

-The planning and development act, 2000 (Amended in 2002) (DCC)

- Plans are carried out in light of documents produced by Bord Failte. This is specific to the County Development Boards. (DCDB)

- All legislation is important for tourism planning including environmental and health and safety. Legislation is not a barrier to planning. (NWT)

-The planning and development act, 2000. (DEC)

Discussion Points – Although it is agreed by the participants involved that much legislation is necessary for the purpose of tourism planning; only the council have highlighted the significance of the most important legislation which is the planning and development act, 2000, 2002.

4.2.5

(e) Have any planning models been used to assist in devising the tourism plan?

- Methods of consultation (DCC.)

- The CDB follow an eight step process. (DCDB)

- No, other than consultancy which the County Councils brought in themselves. (NWT)

- Consultation (DEC)

Discussion Points – Participants collectively agree that consultation is essential for tourism planning; however there are no specific models outlined for tourism planning which are highlighted in the literature review. Tourism in Donegal is planned for in the same way as the other components of the plan, however there is no particular model used to plan for tourism.

4.2.6

(f) What methods of consultation have been used for the development of this county plan?

- Under the planning and development act, 1963 the main consultation process was after the first draft plan was produced. The methods of consultation included notices in newspapers and consulting others consider that more action should be taken in this process. (DCC)
- Members of the general public (DCDB)

Discussion Points – *No model was identified as being used for tourism planning, however it emerged that consultation was part of the overall process. Consultation, however is not a tourism planning model, therefore it is evident that suitable models for example supply and demand of tourism and implementation were not used in this instance.*

4.2.7

(g) Who was consulted? Were you?

- The general public, through newspaper notices. They got the opportunity to object, criticize or put forward ideas. This happened when the draft plan was published in 1998 for a statutory time period. Around 14 or 15 public meetings were held. (DCC)
- The County development plan was formulated before the CDB was established. (DCDB)
- Yes North West Tourism was consulted. I could not comment whether the private sector were, however it is advertised in the papers for public inspection. (NWT)
- Yes, in relation to ongoing developments. (DEC)

Discussion Points – *All participants agree that the same groups of people were consulted; however it seems to be an advantage if people are apathetic, then apathy will mean very little consultation.*

4.2.8

(h) How is the plan implemented?

- The overall plan was implemented through the establishing of an operational programme which set out the type of activities you would follow through the overall plan. There are 10 topics within the core document including a range of activities and projects and the council are involved in rolling out some of these projects. (DCC)

- Actions in relation to tourism have not had a home until now. (DCDB)

- This goes back to funding and whether the private sector is willing to invest in the industry. There is a huge need for accommodation in Sligo and it is an issue which requires attention from planners and developers. (NWT)

Discussion Points –It appears that an attempt is made to implement the plan through an operational programme. The DCDB feel they were developed to carry out an implementation process and others consider that more action should be taken in this process, however it appears that implementation strategies are not highlighted.

4.2.9

(i) How much funding is allocated for implementation of the plan?

- There is no specific budget allocated for a plan. One aims to target the various funding sources either at national or local level. It's about how much money you can access. (DCC)

- The County council put quite an amount of money into tourism. There are specific amounts set aside for marketing and technical assistance. (DCDB)

- The County development plan must be realistic. The issue of tax incentives is crucial and it is important that the National Development Plan is consulted. (NWT)

- There is a problem in Donegal in that there are no property taxes when people come from Northern Ireland to purchase houses they do not have to pay rates. This is a problem. (DEC)

Discussion Points – Tax incentives and local taxes have emerged as issues that need to be addressed in terms of ongoing developments.

NWT advise consultation with the NDP and although the DCDB emphasize that the council put a lot of money into tourism the council itself do not indicate a specific sum which is allocated to tourism development.

4.2.10

(j) Is the plan evaluated after implementation?

- In July 2004, there is the beginning of the 6 year review. The first step should be evaluation, however there has been no evaluation carried out to date. (DCC)

- Through a monitoring and evaluating system for the CDB. (DCDB)

- There was an evaluation think tank in Donegal recently; however it is important to remember that the second effort is always an improved one from the first. External factors and influences play a role in how developers draw up their own plans. (NWT)

Discussion Points – There is no evidence of an ongoing evaluation of the county development plan, however the six year review commences in July this year.
For the success of any plan it is vital that it is evaluated on a regular, if not continual basis.

4.2.11

(k) Are there any similarities between Donegal and Sligo County Councils in relation to the tourism development process?

- Apart from that they are guided by the planning and development act, 2000. In relation to tourism this could not be answered. (DCC)

- Not aware of what Sligo County council do. (DCDB)

- There would be similar templates for the document and similar barriers. The most obvious one being access to and from the North West. (NWT)

- Sligo is on the same footing as Donegal. It is pretty underdeveloped. Both counties suffer as a result of the troubles in Northern Ireland. (DEC)

Discussion Points – It is obvious that all participants agree that similarities exist in terms of legislation; however, there is no evidence of any major collaboration between the two counties in terms of sustainable development.

One bonus; however is that both counties have the same regional tourism manager who works for the Regional Tourism Authorities covering both areas and this should ensure some conformity.

4.2.12

(l) What does the 'term sustainable tourism' mean to you?

- What it means is what it says in the plan. A statement that came from the Bord Failte document in 1994. (Donegal CC)

- It is tourism based on natural resources. (DCDB)

-Sustainable tourism means something that you turn into money. Business growth generated sustainability of that business. (NWT)

- People come here for a product that we have, that is 'Our Green Environment'. (DEC)

Discussion Points – Participants proposed varying definitions for sustainable tourism, however all ideas appear to generate back to Ireland's tourism product – which is essentially our 'green environment'.

The definitions proposed and mentioned by the participants are insufficient and a common statement defining sustainable tourism should be highlighted in order for all tourism organizations, including the local authorities can plan and develop tourism in the same manner.

4.2.13

(m) Is there any Eco Labelling of the accommodation sector in the county? /Are you aware of Eco Labelling of the accommodation sector?

- Not aware of. There was an eco label project for areas within the county but it did not extend to accommodation. (DCC)

- There was a pilot project in Donegal but I am not aware of what happened in relation to this. (DCDB)

- Yes, there are twice as many tourists taking health holidays as there are tourists taking golf holidays. Promoting the brand of a clean environment has become a priority for the West Coast of Ireland. (NWT)

- These are misused terms. Environmental matters should be taught in secondary schools. (DEC)

Discussion Points – It is obvious that Eco Labelling is an issue that has not been appropriately addressed as there is no common theme emerging from the answers.
Eco Labelling has the capabilities of addressing many issues concerned with sustainable tourism and as it is increasingly becoming an important element in the development of sustainable tourism all those involved in the tourism industry in Donegal should be made aware of this for developing sustainable tourism.

5.0 Discussion and Analysis of Sligo County Development Plan

5.0 Discussion and Analysis of Sligo County Council Tourism Development Plan

5.1 Introduction

The following is a discussion of the present Sligo county development plan 1999-2004 and it is followed by a discussion and analysis of the new draft plan for county Sligo 2005-2011.

The Sligo county development plan presents Sligo county councils medium term view of the future development of the county. It outlines the councils overall objectives of promoting and facilitating development, conserving environment and achieving optimum use of resources.

5.2 (i) Generation of the present county development plan

The county development plan reviews and updates the previous county development plan which was adopted by Sligo county council in 1985. This plan recognises major changes that have occurred since then, and aims to redress enduring problems that have occurred. Sligo county council aim to incorporate these changes in legislation, departmental guidelines, EU directives and socio economic factors that impact on the development process. The purpose of this to provide a concise document that will guide and inform the achievement of sustainable development.

Textual Analysis Tool for Sligo County Development Plan
(i) The researcher reads the development plans
(ii) Focus on Key Analysis
(iii) Determine if there is a specific tourism plan
(iv) Specific tourism plans are analyzed using the following headings
a) Goals and Objectives for tourism
b) Tourism Policy
c) Tourism and the environment, management and conservation
d) Coastal Development
e) Heritage protection and Tourism development
f) Caravan and Camping Parks
g) How carrying Capacity is addressed
h) Physical land use planning and zoning
i) Signage
j) Local Agenda 21
k) Environmental Impact Assessment
l) Eco Labelling
m) Waste Treatment and Recycling
n) Researcher analysis conformity to legal and national policies
o) Analysis of Plan Implementation and Evaluation

Table 9 – Textual Analysis Tool for Sligo County Development Plan

5.3 (ii) Focus on Key Analysis

This plan does not include a specific section on key analysis. Key issues might include factors that have changed or developed since the previous county development plan. Sligo County Council does not indicate any matters that may have altered their focus on development.

5.4   (iii) Determination of a specific Tourism Plan

The Sligo county development plan does not include a specific tourism plan; it does however include a general policy and appears to be more like a description of what Sligo has to offer tourists. This is evident from the following quote. 'The mountain areas provide the most spectacular scenery in county Sligo and have major potential for activities such as touring, sightseeing, mountaineering, hill walking and pony trekking' (Sligo County Development Plan (SCDP) 3.4 pp.10). There are no specific issues on sustainable development although they do attempt to highlight the major resources in the county in terms of how they can preserve and protect such resources.

In the present plan no specific **a) goals** and **objectives** are mentioned in relation to tourism.

5.5   (iv)

(b) Tourism Policy

The Sligo County Development plan 1999-2004 does not specify tourism policies within the section dedicated to tourism, they do however mention in general terms the policy of the council in relation to tourism planning. Such policies include advancing the development of tourism through the provision and extension of existing amenities (3.4 pp.10), controlling development in sensitive rural landscapes and encouraging these developments through the use of its statutory powers.

5.6   (c) Tourism, the Environment, Management and Conservation

This plan does not mention the environment or management and conservation issues in the tourism section, however section 7 of the draft plan addresses environmental quality which takes into account the natural environment, sensitive areas and landscapes.

A symbiotic relationship exists between tourism and the environment and it is imperative that this area is addressed and emphasized in relation to tourism. The literature review discusses the importance of environmental issues and their reflection on the tourism industry in relation to the promotion of sustainable development and Sligo county council need to establish areas that are priority for such developments.

There is no reference to management and conservation issues within the tourism and they are only briefly documented in a section on coastal development. This is an area that also requires more attention owing to the fact that the appropriate management and conservation are crucial to the contribution of sustainable tourism.

5.7 (d) Coastal Development

This is also an essential element of overall tourism and sustainable development which is however not addressed in the context of tourism. It is mentioned in a separate section within the overall plan where the county council aims to draw up strategic coastline policy (SCDP 3.11 pp.18). It is important that Sligo county council coordinate such policies with reference to the tourism industry also.

5.8 (e) Heritage Protection and Tourism Development

This plan does not include a specific heritage protection element within the tourism section. It is however addressed as a separate matter within the general document. From this it is evident that Sligo county council commits itself to preserving the unique character of the county and promoting awareness among the general public on the significance heritage the county possesses. The council appears to be addressing heritage protection in this section; however it is vital that if they are proposing policies they must outline the necessary actions they will take in ensuring these issues are addressed sufficiently.

5.9 (f) Caravan and Camping

This plan does not mention caravan and camping parks within the tourism section, however it is addressed in a separate sub section of the overall document. It appears that Sligo county council has highlighted the importance of this issue through the recognition that an increasing number of people are using self catering accommodation. From this section (SCDP 6.9 pp.50) it is evident that the council aim to ensure the compliance of all parks with specific guidelines and to ensure that all sites will have the necessary facilities and amenities provided to them. Although this is an important factor in relation to this type of accommodation it is also important that Sligo county council develop strategies that will encourage sustainable caravan and camping development.

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5.10 (g) Carrying Capacity

Carrying Capacity is addressed in the section for caravan and camping parks; however it is not addressed in relation to tourism activity in national parks or in relation to sewage treatment. Although it is an important tool in relation to caravan and camping parks (SCDP 6.9 pp.50), it is also significant in relation to other tourism activities in the county. Carrying Capacity is a method of establishing where development will become unsustainable and Sligo county council need to address carrying capacity and recognize its significance in relation to tourism activities on a broader scale.

5.11 (h) Physical Land Use Planning and Zoning

Physical and use planning and zoning are not specified in this county development plan. It is crucial that the council do not underestimate these methods of controlling development as they are important for developing a sustainable tourism.

5.12 (i) Signage

It appears that Sligo county council has not highlighted signage throughout the document. The county council is responsible for erecting signs throughout the county for the benefit of the tourist as well as the host community. The council needs to address this issue and follow international practices and hence this will encourage the development of sustainable tourism.

5.13 (j) Local Agenda 21

It is evident from this plan that Sligo County Council recognizes and addresses the aims of Local Agenda 21. The council recognizes the need to prepare a Local Agenda 21 through the establishment of sustainable principles and the subsequent translation of these principles into practice.

5.14 (k) Environmental Impact Assessment

There is no evidence form this plan that suggests Sligo County Council have carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment.

5.15 (l) Eco Labelling

There is no indication in this plan that mentions Eco Labelling. Eco Labelling has the capabilities of addressing issues concerned with sustainable tourism and county councils should encourage that adoption of sensible eco labelling throughout the county.

5.16 (m) Waste Treatment and Recycling

This plan does not mention waste treatment and recycling in the tourism section, however a separate sub section exists on waste management. From this Sligo County Council outline a specific policy through the guidance of EU and National government 'waste hierarchy' (SCDP 3.2 p18).

An important component of this policy is promotional methods outline by the council which include educational campaigns, the introduction of home composting units for bio waste and the enforcement of the 'Litter Act, 1997'.

Although this area has been addressed and policy has been identified by the council it is important that policies and strategies that are put in place are monitored and evaluated on a continual basis.

5.17 (n) Conformity to Legal and National Policy

The research satisfied that Sligo County Council conformed as much as possible to the relevant legal and national policies in relation to tourism planning.

5.18 (o) Plan Implementation and Evaluation

It appears that there is no comprehensive implementation strategy integrated into this plan in relation to tourism policy. Sligo County Council need to ensure that strategies are developed for tourism policy as difficulties will arise in evaluating tourism policy that do not have strategies included in them.

5.2   Discussion and Analysis of Sligo County Council Draft Development Plan
2005-2011

5.2.1   Introduction

This Sligo county development draft plan is inactive as yet and is still in the ten week development/consultation stage at the time of write up.

5.2.2   (i) Generation of the draft plan 2005-2011

This draft plan has been prepared under Section 11 of the Planning and Development Acts, 2000-2002. A meeting was held on April 26th of this year, 2004 where members of the county council decided to publish the draft plan and invite the general public to inspect the plan between 12 May, 2004 and 23 July, 2004.

It is evident, therefore that this draft plan remains to invite submissions before at the time of write up of these results.

5.2.3   (ii) Focus on Key Analysis

This plan does not include a specific section on key analysis. Key issues might include factors that have changed or developed since the previous county development plan. Sligo County Council does not indicate any matters that may have altered their focus on development.

5.2.4   (iii) Determination of a specific Tourism Plan

The Sligo county development plan does not include a specific tourism plan. The tourism section however consists of two pages and is a sub section of the overall plan.

This section does, however recognize the importance of the blueprint from tourism in the West and it focuses on ten specific tourism objectives. (Sligo Draft Plan 5.6.3 p.50)

These objectives are summarized as follows:-

a) Protect and conserve natural, built and cultural heritage.

b) Promote the development of tourism in a sustainable manner

c) Promote the development of high quality tourist accommodation

d) Ensure high standards of architectural and urban design

e) Promote County Sligo as a tourist destination

f) Promote the development of eco tourism

g) Support and promote heritage sites and features of archaeological interest

h) Promote the development of interpretative signs

i) Work with North West Tourism, West Sligo Forum and other organizations in the promotion and development of tourism in the county

j) Promote walking, rambling and cycling as recreation and tourism activities

5.2.5 (iv)

(b) Tourism Policy

This Sligo County Development draft plan 2005-2011 does not specify tourism policies within the tourism section. The plan addressed ten objectives which are previously mentioned.

5.2.6 (c) Tourism, the Environment, Management and Conservation

The tourism section of the draft plan does not include a specific section on the environment; it does however make reference to the environment within the ten objectives. From these objectives the council aim to (Sligo Draft Plan 5.6.3 p.50)

a) Protect and conserve natural, built and cultural heritage and b) Promote the development of tourism in a sustainable manner.

5.2.7 (d) Coastal Development

Coastal issues are integral to the development of sustainable tourism; however such issues are not highlighted within the tourism section of this draft plan. There is however a specific section which outlines coastal zone management (Sligo Draft Plan 6.2 p.57) and from this it is evident that Sligo county council aim to achieve a more efficient and sustainable use of the coastal resource. (Sligo Draft Plan 6.2.1 p.57)

5.2.8 (e)Heritage Protection and Tourism Development

This plan does not include a specific heritage protection element within the tourism section. It is however addressed as part of the overall objectives for tourism. From this it appears that Sligo county council (Sligo Draft Plan 5.6.3 (a) p.50 aim to protect and conserve the natural and built heritage features that form the basis of the county's tourism.

It is evident that although heritage issues are addressed they are however insufficient and the adoption of a specific heritage policy could assist the relevant protection agencies in the management of tourism activities on these unique sites.

5.2.9   (f) Caravan and Camping

There is no mention within the tourism section of caravan and camping parks; however they are addressed in a section for recreation and tourism. From the objectives which are outlined for recreation and tourism it appears that the council aims to ensure that future caravan and camping facilities with particular reference to coastal areas, will not be visually intrusive or impact on sensitive coastal areas. (Sligo Draft Plan 6.2.7.1 p.61)

Although this plan attempts to identify an issue for caravan and camping parks, it is an area that requires more specific information for the promotion of sustainable development.

5.2.10 (g) Carrying Capacity

Carrying Capacity is not addressed in the tourism section and Sligo county council cannot underestimate the importance of this development tool as it is significant in relation to other tourism activities in the county. Sligo county council needs to address carrying capacity and recognize its significance in relation to tourism activities on a broader scale.

5.2.11 (h) Physical Land Use Planning and Zoning

Physical land use planning and zoning are not specified in this draft plan, however comprehensive and detailed physical land use planning and zoning have been identified in the Strandhill development plan. This is impressive and it indicates areas where industrial development, residential development and recreation would take place. It would also be important that this is carried out throughout the county for all types of developments and it is crucial that the council do not underestimate these methods of controlling development as they are important for developing a sustainable tourism.

It is evident from this plan that zoning is used throughout the county in smaller towns and villages; however an overall zone map for county Sligo would be worthwhile.

5.2.12 (i) Signage

It appears that Sligo county council has not highlighted signage throughout the document; however a reference is made to signage within the tourism objectives (Sligo Draft Plan 5.6.3 (pp.50). The council needs to address this issue and follow international practices which will in turn encourage the development of sustainable tourism within the county.

5.2.13 (j) Local Agenda 21

It appears that this draft plan, unlike the current plan does not make reference to Local Agenda 21 within the tourism section. It is vital that Sligo county council recognizes and addresses the aims of Local Agenda 21 and prepare a Local Agenda 21 through the establishment of sustainable principles and the subsequent translation of these principles into practice.

5.2.14 (k) Environmental Impact Assessment

There is no evidence from this plan that suggests Sligo County Council will carry out an Environmental Impact Assessment and EIAs are essential for overall sustainable development.

5.2.15 (l) Eco Labelling

There is no indication in this plan that mentions Eco Labelling. Eco Labelling has the capabilities of addressing issues concerned with sustainable tourism and county councils should encourage that adoption of sensible eco labelling throughout the county.

5.2.16 (m) Waste Treatment and Recycling

Sligo county council do not include within the tourism section the issue of waste treatment, however; there is a section on infrastructure which highlights and discusses an array of issues including waste management and sewerage.

This plan highlights proposed waste management facilities and it appears that Sligo county council aim to support and promote the importance of recycling throughout the county.

Sligo county council have adequately emphasized the importance of this matter and it is important that continuous efforts are made in relation to waste management for sustainable development.

5.2.17 (n) Conformity to Legal and National Policy

The research satisfied that Sligo County Council conformed as much as possible to the relevant legal and national policies in relation to tourism planning.

5.2.18 (o) Plan Implementation and Evaluation

The draft plan briefly discusses implementation of the aims of the plan in the opening section of the core document. Sligo county council outlines constraints that may influence the implementation process of this plan. These constraints have been identified by the council as economic, political and funding sources. The council also emphasizes the fact that the objectives of this draft plan cannot be assumed however it is also stressed that the council will attempt to exercise all legal powers to ensure that objectives are implemented.

County Development Board Strategy

Sligo County Development Board devised an integrated economic, social and cultural strategy for County Sligo 2002-2012. The primary task given to each CDB in the first two years of their existence was the preparation of a comprehensive integrated development strategy to cover economic, social and cultural matters. These strategies were designed to present a long term vision for the county and short to medium term strategies.

The key priorities highlighted for tourism are outlined as follows:-

-The development of rural tourism.

-The clustering of smaller attractions to enhance their sustainability.

-Development of the tourism product, accommodation, transport and services.

-Environmental enhancement programmes.

-The development of flagship programmes.

-Product development to extend the tourism season.

The Sligo county development board presents strategies which aim to cover tourism issues extensively through the above objectives, however as the Sligo county development plan does not highlight specific implementation strategies it seems that the Sligo county development board need to face these issues by putting in place implementation strategies to encourage sustainable development.

5.3.0

Discussion and Analysis of Semi Structured Interviews with Planners and Tourism Organizations, County Sligo

The following are the summarised and analysed results recovered from the qualitative strategic open ended interviews. Due to the sensitive nature of politics and planning, no direct quotes are used and no persons name has been divulged, however where possible the most senior person has been interviewed.

The following are a list of participants who were interviewed for this study. These include:

Sligo County Council (SCC)

Sligo County Development Board (SCDB)

North West Tourism (NWT)

Western Development Tourism Programme (WDTP)

5.3.1

(a) What is the role of the County Council in relation to Tourism Planning?

-The role of Sligo County Council in relation to tourism planning is to promote orderly development and create foundations for growth. ---The County Council, in conjunction with other tourism agencies attempt to adjudicate and balance development in relation to tourism. (SCC)

- The County Council provide funding for marketing programmes as well as providing technical assistance and assisting in the application process. (SCDB)

-The role of the County Council is to formulate and develop County development boards (CDB's). (NWT)

- They have a role whereby they ensure that the tools are available to bring tourists in. (WDTP)

Discussion Points – All participants project varying ideas in relation to the role of the county council in tourism planning; however there is no specific tourism plan for Sligo which would indicate that there is no tourism planning area in County Sligo.

5.3.2

(b) Is there a specific tourism development plan for County Sligo?

-No, Tourism is referred to as a component in the County development plan. (SCC)

- Not aware. (SCDB)

-Initially they were produced by tourism committees but this subsequently fell into the work of the County Councils within the County development boards. (NWT)

- Sligo Marketing Forum has a marketing plan. (WDTP)

Discussion Points – It would appear that there is no tourism plan for county Sligo, although some participants were unaware if a tourism plan exists at all. There is no tourism plan for Sligo, in the 1999-2004 document there is a little over a one page general broad based statement and in the draft plan 2005-2011 there is a two page component that highlights ten tourism objectives.

There is, however no detailed plan for tourism which could put tools in place to plan for this thriving industry.

5.3.3

(c) What process is used for tourism development and planning?

-The tourism component within the development plan is carried out under the planning and development Act, 2000, 2002. (SCC)

- Consultation. (SCDB)

-Development and planning is carried out via the tourism County boards. (NWT)

- This question should be asked to County Development Boards. (WDTP)

Discussion Points – All participants agree that legislation and consultation are major elements of the process of tourism planning, however it appears that there is some confusion as to what the process is. The CDB feels that consultation is a process. It did not emerge from interview whether any specific models or processes were put in place for the purpose of planning.

5.3.4

(d) What legislation was taken into account for the purposes of tourism planning?

-There is a wide range of legislation that must be taken into account for planning in all types of industry. These include environmental, food, fire and health and safety laws. Tax incentives are vital otherwise development would not be permitted. (SCC)

- Environmental legislation. Heritage and Archaeological restrictions can hinder development. (SCDB)

- All legislation is important for tourism planning including environmental and health and safety. Legislation is not a barrier to planning. (NWT)

- Central government and EU Directives. (WDTP)

Discussion Points – All participants agree on the importance of legislation when planning for tourism. And it is evident that Sligo county council have conformed to all relevant legal and national policies.

5.3.5

(e)Have any planning models been used to assist in devising the tourism plan?

-Consultation with stakeholders and community groups play a key role in the development of the overall County development plan. (SCC)

- Zoning issues within local draft plans. (SCDB)

- No, other than consultancy which the County Councils brought in themselves. (NWT)

- Best International practice. (WDTP)

Discussion Points – The majority of participants highlight the wide use of consultation among key stakeholders is used for devising plans, however consultation is not a planning model. Planning models are highlighted in the literature review for example the significance of monitoring supply and demand factors when planning for tourism.
It appears that again there is confusion in relation to the difference between 'models' and 'methods of consultation'.

5.3.6

(f) What methods of consultation have been used for the development of this County plan?

-Stakeholders were consulted along with community groups and the general public is given the opportunity to input as notification of the draft plan is published in local and national newspapers. (SCC)

- Public and private sector would be consulted. Meetings held within the county. (SCDB)

- The initial plan involves wide consultation and everyone gets the opportunity to input and inspect the draft plan. (NWT)

- Approached by private sector. (WDTP)

Discussion Points –It appears that there is no knowledge of exact method of consultation. Participants did agree on who was consulted, however the method of consultation was not divulged. The draft plan is still in the inspection stage of which has a duration of ten weeks where the public get the opportunity to observe and make suggestions.

5.3.7

(g)Who was consulted? Were you?

-I feel this has been answered already. (SCC)

- Public and private sector were consulted. (SCDB)

- Yes North West Tourism was consulted. I could not comment whether the private sector were, however it is advertised in the papers for public inspection. (NWT)

Discussion Points – Again they agree that the public and private sector were consulted. The general public are informed through advertisements in newspapers and have the opportunity to inspect the draft plan.

5.3.8

h) How is the plan implemented?

-The role of the local authority in this instance is to ensure that nothing happens to degrade the landscape. Sligo County Council aims to protect development and promote this within appropriate areas. (SCC)

- Through funding of various projects. (SCDB)

- This goes back to funding and whether the private sector is willing to invest in the industry. ---There is a huge need for accommodation in Sligo and it is an issue which requires attention from planners and developers. (NWT)

- They realize their place. (WDTP)

Discussion Points – It is evident from the answers received that funding is an issue for implementation, however there is no implementation strategies put in place. Some participants believe that the accommodation sector requires funding from planners. This is an issue that should have been addressed in the new draft plan for 2005-2011. Planners feel that implementation is ensuring nothing harms the landscape; however no guidelines have been in place in which people can follow. This seems to be reactive rather than proactive.

5.3.9

(i) How much funding is allocated for implementation of the plan?

-We are not an implementation body for tourism. I am not aware of what is spent for the purpose of tourism. There are many tourism related projects and funding is allocated to them. It is not the role of the County Council to drive tourism. (SCC)

- Not aware. (SCDB)

- The County development plan must be realistic. The issue of tax incentives is crucial and it is important that the National Development Plan is consulted. (NWT)

- This is a question for Sligo County Council. (WDTP)

Discussion Points – No participant appeared to be aware of how much is spent on tourism plans. Even though it was highlighted that funding is allocated to tourism projects no specific sum was mentioned in any of the interviews that took place.

5.3.10

(j) Is the plan evaluated after implementation?

-Again it is not the role of the local authority to implement the tourism policy. (SCC)

- Perhaps internally. (SCDB)

- There was an evaluation think tank in Donegal recently; however it is important to remember that the second effort is always an improved one from the first. External factors and influences play a role in how developers draw up their own plans. (NWT)

- Interim reports and self evaluation. (WDTP)

Discussion Points – No common theme emerged from interview in relation to this question, however the plan for 1999-2004 does not specify a tourism policy therefore it would be an impossible task to carry out evaluation.

The council responds by indicating it is not their role to plan for tourism, however the council deal with mainstream projects like infrastructure therefore they automatically facilitate the development of the tourism industry. This would mean they do play a role in planning for tourism.

5.3.11

(k) Are there any similarities between Sligo and Donegal County Councils in relation to the tourism development planning process?

-There are similarities and differences. They are both governed by the same legislation. Some parts of Donegal are overdeveloped whereas this is not the case in Sligo. (SCC)

- Not aware. (SCDB)

- There would be similar templates for the document and similar barriers. The most obvious one being access to and from the North West. (NWT)

- They are both looking for a slice of the tourism cake. (WDTP)

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Discussion Points – Participants agree that both are guided by the same legislation; however it also emerged that Sligo is not as developed as Donegal. It is obvious, however that both counties are dealing with the same industry and both address the same issues only in slightly different locations.

5.3.12

(l)What does the term Sustainable tourism mean to you?

-It is important that there is a balance between planning and practice, and planners should be aware of the economic value of tourism and the fact that it creates jobs. (SCC)

- We have a product that we want people to come back to. (SCDB)

-Sustainable tourism means something that you turn into money. Business growth generated sustainability of that business. (NWT)

- It is a philosophy, a practice that is built on the unity of the local community and stakeholders. (WDTP)

Discussion Points – Some participants feel that sustainable tourism is about making money and others consider it to be a balance between planning and practice, however there is no generic sustainable tourism definition and if Sligo is planning for sustainable development a common statement of what sustainable tourism is should be made available to them.

5.3.13

(m)Is there any Eco Labelling of the accommodation sector in the County? / Are you aware Eco Labelling of the accommodation sector?

-Eco labelling is in existence within the county, however it is not as developed in Ireland as it is in Europe but it does build on additional planning. (SCC)

- Familiar with eco labelling but unaware of it in accommodation sector. (SCDB)

- Yes, there are twice as many tourists taking health holidays as there are tourists taking golf holidays. Promoting the brand of a clean environment has become a priority for the West Coast of Ireland. (NWT)

- There is none in Ireland. (WDTP)

Discussion Points – According to the answers some are aware of eco labelling. It would appear that this is an issue that needs to be addressed and all involved in the tourism industry need to realize the importance of the role of eco labelling in the tourism sector.

6.0   Findings

6.0 Findings

The aim of this research was to carry out a comparative analysis on sustainable tourism, development and planning between Sligo and Donegal County Councils. This study involved the researcher developing a textual analysis tool which identified specific elements that are significant for the purpose of tourism planning and development. In conjunction with this, the researcher developed semi structured questions for planners in the county councils and members of tourism organizations to ascertain how tourism is planned within each respective county. A discussion of the results is presented as follows using the headings from the textual analysis tool and interview questions.

6.1   Plan Generation

6.1.1   Donegal County Council

The Donegal County development plan 2000 was formulated under the guidelines outlined in the Planning and Development Act, 1963 which was the legislation in force at the time. However after the draft plan was published any changes that were necessary consulted the planning and development act, 2000, 2002.

6.1.2   Sligo County Council

The current development plan 1999-2004 was devised under the guidelines outlined in the planning and development act, 1963.

The Sligo County development plan 2005-2011 was also formulated under the guidelines outlined in the Planning and Development Act, 2000, 2002.

6.1.3   Comparisons

Both development plans for Sligo and Donegal have followed the relevant legislation highlighted by the National government which is the Planning and Development Act. The 1963 planning and development act was appropriate in terms of the timing of these plans, however where necessary the act in 2000 which was also amended in 2002 also proved relevant in both councils.

6.2   Goals and Objectives

6.2.1   Donegal County Council

Donegal county council do not have a specific plan for tourism, however a subsection of the overall plan deals with tourism issues and from this the council have specified goals and objectives through which Donegal county council aim to plan for sustainable tourism.

6.2.2   Sligo County Council

None of the two plans 1999-2004 or the new draft plan 2005-2011 outline tourism goals within the section for tourism; however ten objectives are highlighted in relation to tourism in the draft plan.

The current plan simply indicates what Sligo has to offer as a tourist destination whereas the draft plan has made an attempt at addressing tourism in greater detail.

6.2.3   Comparisons

The Sligo draft plan 2005-2011 includes ten objectives for tourism. These objectives focus on important factors which influence the tourism industry and it appears that these matters are addressed in a more appropriate manner than the current plan.

Donegal County Council have however specified goals and objectives for tourism in their plan 2002.The tourism component of this plan is quite specific and it is evident that Donegal are attempting to address tourism with a sustainable future in mind.

6.3   Specific Tourism Plans

6.3.1   Donegal County Council

The Donegal county development plan does not include a tourism plan; however there is a tourism section within the development plan which highlights tourism policy areas. It is evident that Donegal county council has attempted to address specific policies within this section that affect the tourism industry.

6.3.2 Sligo County Council

In the current development plan for Sligo county 1999-2004 there is a subsection on tourism. This section comprises a one and a half page general broad statement on the resources available to tourists in Sligo County. This has improved h

6.4 Tourism Policies

6.4.1 Donegal County Council

Donegal County Council addresses a number of policy areas within the tourism section of the plan specifically for the tourism industry. Theses policies are as follows:-

Tourism Policy No. 1 – Management and Conservation

Tourism Policy No. 2 – Product Development

Tourism Policy No. 3 – Tourism identity areas and resort development

Tourism Policy No. 4 – Supporting Infrastructure

Donegal have attempted to address these policies in relation to tourism and in a manner that would promote sustainable development.

6.4.2 Sligo County Council

Sligo County Council appears to have underestimated the importance of policies for tourism. In the draft plan they have failed to highlight the ongoing developments in the county at present, namely the developments in the accommodation sector, and it is evident that they have overlooked the need for policies to direct such developments.

6.4.3 Comparisons

It appears that Sligo has not addressed policies for developments in the tourism industry and this needs immediate attention. Policies are significant when planning for tourism and although Donegal have identified specific policies they need to identify strategies for them and outline methods of implementation to pursue such developments.

Sligo County Council needs to realize the importance of policies and in with particular reference to the tourism industry. This has not been done.

6.5 Tourism, the Environment, Management and Conservation

6.5.1 Donegal County Council

Environmental matters are not apparent in the tourism section of the Donegal county development plan, however Donegal county council clearly define their goal in relation to environmental services and protection and for the purpose of sustainable development through several objectives. The policy for environmental issues is summarized as follows:-

This policy is specific to issues concerned with management and conservation. It relates to the natural and built environment. The council propose developments of strategic frameworks for coastal zones (DCDP p.91), the development of area management initiatives for heritage areas, the preparation of beach management and the adoption of an eco label system for tourism areas.

6.5.2 Sligo County Council

These matters are highlighted separate to the tourism section in both the current plan and the draft plan, however a number of the tourism objectives outlined in the tourism section relate specifically to the environment and conservation. Sligo county council aim to (SCDP p.50) protect environmentally sensitive areas, protect and conserve natural and built heritage that form the basis of the county's tourism industry including areas of important landscape, wildlife and coastal scenery.

Sligo County Council does not adequately provide a policy on the environment in relation to tourism nor do they highlight the need for strategy in these areas to make tourism uses sustainable. Sligo County Council needs to specify strategies and identify how they will be implemented if they aim to promote sustainability of tourism.

6.5.3 Comparisons

Donegal County Council has adequately discussed the environment and conservation and has highlighted important matters in more detail than Sligo. Sligo County Council needs to realize the importance of the relationship between tourism and the environment if they intend to focus on sustainable tourism development.

6.6 Heritage Protection and Tourism Development

6.6.1 Donegal County Council

While there is no actual heritage protection policy in relation to heritage development the council sufficiently caters for this in a separate section of 'Conservation of the natural and built environment'. The Donegal county council is in a unique position to provide a policy in relation to heritage protection and tourism which would allow the various agencies involved in the area for example the OPW (Office of public works), the national parks and wildlife services and local heritage organizations to manage the impact tourism has on the heritage.

6.6.2 Sligo County Council

Although there is no specific policy for heritage in the tourism section of the draft plan, Sligo County Council have referred to heritage and protection within the tourism objectives. Similar to the current plan the council recognizes its role in protecting and conserving the natural and built heritage in the county (SCDP 5.6.3 p.50). The objective in relation to heritage states that Sligo County Council aim to protect and conserve the natural, built and cultural heritage features of the county.

6.6.3 Comparisons

Both County Councils have identified the importance of heritage; however a specific policy for heritage developed in conjunction with other relevant tourism agencies in each respective county would assist in managing heritage and protecting heritage sites within the county.

6.7 Tourism and Coastal Development

6.7.1 Donegal County Council

Donegal County Council adequately provides a tourism policy on tourism coastal development. They aim to initiate a pilot project and provide a sub section on the marine resource; however, they do not provide any strategies or guides for implementation of this policy.

6.7.2 Sligo County Council

Sligo county council do not address coastal matters within the tourism section, however a specific section of the draft plan addresses coastal management (SCDP 6.2 p.57). Sligo county council aim to carry out coastal zone management through the formulation of objectives that will protect coastal areas and promote sustainable development.

6.7.3 Comparisons

It appears that both Sligo and Donegal county councils have addressed coastal issues adequately in their development plans.

Sligo County Council have however provided a more detailed section on this and attempt to carry out objectives to ensure sustainable development in coastal areas.

6.8 Caravan and Camping Parks

6.8.1 Donegal County Council

Donegal county council, while having a sub section outside of the tourism policy on caravan and camping parks; it seems to be very broad and unspecific. Considering the huge visual economic, environmental and social impacts these sites have on surrounding areas it is imperative that specific policies are developed. Such policies should be developed through collaboration and in a way that are achievable and measurable.

6.8.2 Sligo County Council

Sligo county council in their current plan adequately address caravan and camping in the current plan 1999-2004, and they are only mentioned briefly in the draft plan (SCDP 6.2.7 p.61) under the section for recreation and tourism. This is insufficient as it does not contain a specific policy for this type of accommodation that is so popular in coastal regions of the county and in particular a popular mode of accommodation used by tourists.

6.8.3 Comparisons

Although Donegal have attempted to address this it is vital that both Sligo and Donegal address specific policy areas in relation to caravan and camping sites.

Taking into consideration the impacts these sites have on surrounding areas it is crucial that policies are development through efforts of collaboration with the relevant organizations and local community groups.

6.9 Carrying Capacity

6.9.1 Donegal County Council

While Donegal provides adequate information on carrying capacity in relation to caravan and camping sites it has not recognized the importance of carrying capacity in relation to tourism facilities, destinations or tourism development. On a basic fundamental level it is recognized that if some attempt is not made at establishing carrying capacity the fundamental flaw of far exceeding a destinations carrying capacity would be reached. This could manifest itself visually in relation to the inability for treatment plants to deal with waste water which would result in loss of blue flag status for destinations like Bundoran and Rosnowlagh.

On a more basic level, the lack of adequate car parking, thus resulting in high traffic congestion which could impede emergency services while at the same time frustrate host communities.

6.9.2 Sligo County Council

Sligo County Council does not make specific reference to carrying capacity in the current plan or in the draft plan. Carrying capacity is a method of establishing where development will become unsustainable and it was a tool designed to assist development in particular for areas like coastal regions.

6.9.3 Comparisons

Although Donegal County Council has adequately recognized the importance of carrying capacity it has not been addressed in relation to tourism and Sligo county council appear to have overlooked carrying capacity entirely.

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6.10   Physical Land Use Planning and Zoning

6.10.1 Donegal County Council

While Donegal County Council utilize zoning it is not evident that this planning tool has been utilized to the capacity which would curtail tourism development in sensitive areas and encourage development in well managed areas.

The political sensitivity of zoning, however may account for the lack of specific conservation or tourism zones being developed within the county.

6.10.2 Sligo County Council

On analysing the draft plan it is evident that Sligo county council adequately addresses zoning with the inclusion of maps of some of the towns and villages through the county. These maps clearly outline various types of development and where they take place. These developments include industrial, recreational and residential to name but a few. This is an improvement on the current plan as zoning is not addressed in the same detail.

A comprehensive and detailed physical land use and zoning plan has been identified in the Strandhill development plan which is also impressive as it details specific developments and where exactly they take place.

6.10.3 Comparisons

Both County Councils address zoning however it is unclear that it is uses as a planning tool specifically for tourism development. Both county councils need to adopt and address zoning with a particular reference to tourism if they aim to promote sustainable development.

6.11   Signage

6.11.1 Donegal County Council

Donegal county council has attempted to address the issue of signage but some international practices should be followed to avoid spoiling the natural landscapes and encourage the development of sustainable tourism.

6.11.2 Sligo County Council

The current plan and the draft plan make no specific reference to signage in the tourism section or indeed in the overall document.

Sligo county council briefly mention within their tourism objectives (SCDP 5.6.3 p.50) that they will promote the development of interpretative signs and information boards at important sites of archaeological and natural interest. Sligo county council needs to address the importance of signage not just for tourists but also for local communities.

6.11.3 Comparisons

Donegal county council has attempted to address this issue whereas Sligo has only briefly mentioned signage in the draft plan. The proliferation for tourism signage has not been adequately addressed. International best practice shows that tourism lay-bys with directional maps and tourist information can avoid landscapes being spoiled with too many signs with a limitation in relation to the number of signs any one attraction can utilize.

6.12   Local Agenda 21
6.12.1 Donegal County Council

Local Agenda 21 is mentioned in the opening section of the overall development plan (DCDP pp.11) for Donegal. Donegal county council address the importance of sustainable developments in relation to environmental protection, the quality of life and the interaction between the environment and development and provision for the future.

It is evident from the plan that Donegal county council have recognised the need to prepare a Local Agenda 21 through the establishment of sustainable principles and the subsequent translation of these principles into practice.

6.12.2 Sligo County Council

Sligo county council in the current plan makes specific reference to and outlines the purpose of Local Agenda 21; however the draft plan does not include any detail on this.

6.12.3 Comparisons

Donegal county council has attempted to highlight the purpose of Local Agenda 21 as well as the contribution it can make to sustainable development. Sligo county council has overlooked this in the draft plan and as it is necessary that all local authorities address Local Agenda 21 Sligo county council need to realize its importance.

6.13   Environmental Impact Assessment

6.13.1 Donegal County Council

It is not evident from the plan that Donegal have carried out an EIA.

6.13.2 Sligo County Council

It appears that Sligo have not carried out an EIA.

6.13.3 Comparisons

Both county councils need to realize the importance of carrying out EIA and recognize the contribution EIA have on promoting sustainable development.

If the county council wants to encourage sustainable development they must carry out EIA on accommodation and attractions

6.14   Eco Labelling

6.14.1 Donegal County Council

While it is evident that eco labelling is in the embryonic stages within Donegal county council, it is important they move on from the pilot study and implement a policy with specific strategies to encourage widespread use of eco labelling within the county. Specific guidelines for eco labelling are available from the EU and at present the Western Development Programme are developing this within the green box.

6.14.2 Sligo County Council

The draft plan for county Sligo makes reference to eco tourism within the tourism objectives; from this Sligo county council aim to promote and develop eco tourism.

This is broad and unspecific; however it is an improvement on the current plan as it was not mentioned at all.

6.14.3 Comparisons

Donegal county council have attempted to address Eco Labelling in a more specific way than Sligo, however; both county councils need to realize the importance of Eco Labelling in the tourism industry and develop policies and strategies that can be implemented in a way that will promote eco labelling in both counties.

6.15   Waste Treatment and Recycling

6.15.1 Donegal County Council

While it is evident there have been radical improvements from the past, in this area it is important that Donegal county council invest in collaboration with the relevant parties to develop waste treatment and recycling facilities to encourage sustainable tourism. It is important to recognize at this stage that the requirements for eco labelling ensure extensive and elaborate waste treatment and recycling facilities are provided by accommodation, attractions and destinations.

6.15.2 Sligo County Council

The draft plan provides an improved section on infrastructure which comprehensively highlights waste treatment and recycling (SDCP 8.3 p.88). Sligo county council clearly define their role in promoting developments to ensure management of waste is effective.

6.15.3 Comparisons

Both the Donegal and Sligo development plans describe in detail the issue of waste . treatment and recycling. It is important however that both councils collaborate with the relevant people involved for on going developments of waste treatment and recycling. It is also vital that both councils inform the general public and encourage them to understand the importance of recycling and waste treatment for environmental protection.

6.16 Conformity to Legal and National Policy

6.16.1 Donegal County Council

The researcher satisfied that Donegal county council has highlighted and conformed as much as possible to the relevant legal and national policies in relation to tourism and national planning.

6.16.2 Sligo County Council

The researcher satisfied that Sligo county council has highlighted and conformed as much as possible to the relevant legal and national policies in relation to tourism and national planning.

6.16.3 Comparisons

Both County councils have complied with policies relating to and affecting them through the process of formulating the county development plans.

6.17 Plan Implementation and Evaluation

6.17.1 Donegal and Sligo County Councils

Sligo and Donegal County Councils do not appear to have highlighted any implementation strategies in their development plans in relation to tourism policy. Implementation strategies are essential for the planning process and neither of these organisations has addressed the importance of this for future developments.

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7.0   Recommendations and Conclusions

7.0   Recommendations and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to compare Donegal and Sligo County Councils and how they plan for tourism. The researcher highlighted specific objectives for this study and these are discussed below in terms of what was identified after the research was carried out. Finally, from the findings recovered the researcher highlights recommendations which Donegal and Sligo County Councils could consider in an attempt to encourage and promote sustainable tourism development.

7.1 *To define sustainable tourism and discuss its importance in maintaining a viable tourism region in the North West of Ireland, Sligo and Donegal.*

Sustainable tourism points to the need for better spatial, environmental and economic balance of sustainable development Gunn (2002). Sustainable tourism requires the balance and appropriate management of economic, social and environmental resources. Although Sligo and Donegal county councils, have in their development plans and in interview highlighted the need for a sustainable approach it is unclear as to what sustainable tourism means to each council. The term sustainable development appears to be misused by these organizations and no common definition of sustainable tourism exists.

For success of the tourism industry in the North West and for the appropriate management of available resources it is vital that local authorities and tourism organisations address this accordingly to promote and encourage sustainable development in these areas and maintain the North West as a popular tourist destination.

7.1.1 Recommendation

It is recommended that local authorities, in collaboration with tourism partners develop a common definition of sustainable tourism to allow for appropriate sustainable tourism development. In order to achieve sustainable tourism it is vital that all relevant organisations are working towards the same goal, which in turn will ensure a viable tourism industry for the future.

7.2 *To identify the role of Sligo and Donegal County Councils in relation to planning and the implementation of tourism policy.*

According to Sligo and Donegal county councils tourism planning is not their responsibility; however both organizations plan for tourism indirectly through the provision of roads and services which are necessary for the host community and tourists alike. Specific policies have been highlighted by Sligo and Donegal in their County Development plans relation to tourism planning; however there is no specific implementation strategies outlined. Policies are ineffective unless strategies for implementation are outlined with the capability of being measured and evaluated.

7.2.1 Recommendation

As tourism relies heavily on infrastructure for example roads, rail, sewage and water treatments it is imperative that the county councils specifically address sustainable tourism development needs when planning for infrastructural maintenance and expansion. Donegal and Sligo County Councils need to clarify their role in tourism planning for industry and the relevant stakeholders. This should be integrative and comprehensive, clear and transparent so that any gaps evident in the planning process are addressed accordingly. It is essential that tourism policies are accompanied with implementation strategies and such policies could, perhaps be implemented with the assistance of the County Development Boards.

7.3 *To examine the development and planning process used by both agencies*

Donegal County Council plan for tourism in the same way they plan for other developments whereas Sligo County Council mentioned legislation when asked about planning processes. However, no specific process or models were identified by Sligo and Donegal County Councils.

7.3.1 Recommendation

In order to monitor and evaluate the successful implementation of the planning process it is important to recommend that an official transparent and clear process for planning is outlined by the county councils. As highlighted in the literature review planning should be integrated and carried out on a continual basis. It needs to be monitored and evaluated to ensure the effectiveness of the planning process chosen.

7.4 *To examine the similarities and differences in tourism planning through comparative analysis in both County Councils*

Donegal County Council appears to have adequately planned for the tourism industry. Within their county development plan they outline key goals, objectives and policy areas in the tourism section of the overall development plan. They have attempted to address the tourism industry through four specific policy areas.

The Sligo county development plan 1999-2004 reads like a geographic description of the area, and although the current draft plan is a slight improvement is not comparable with the Donegal County development plan. The current draft plan for Sligo consists of two pages specific to tourism; however policies are not identified for future developments.

7.4.1 Recommendation

It is recommended that both Donegal and Sligo County Councils look at international best practice in terms of policy and plans that are specific to the tourism industry. Sligo and Donegal County Councils also need to collaborate closely on development planning in order to ensure similar goals and strategies in achieving sustainable tourism development for the North West of Ireland. Sligo County Council needs to put more effort into their tourism planning process in order to compare with Donegal County Council to ensure that their planning policies meet the needs of the tourism industry.

7.5 *To identify best practice models from an International context and evaluate the possibility of their application in this region*

It has been emphasised that continuous tourism planning action requires collaboration among local communities and local governments in order for it to become successful and sustainable. There is a need in these areas for more consultation with local tourism business as well as other organisations like North West Tourism. Consultation can promote and encourage local communities to assist in the development of sustainable tourism.

The literature review highlighted planning models for tourism which can assist in the promotion of sustainable tourism development. There is no indication that any of these models have been utilised to plan for tourism in the North West.

7.5.1 Recommendation

It is recommended that models should be identified by Sligo and Donegal County Councils and applied to the tourism planning process. Specific tourism planning models have the capability to support and promote the development of sustainable tourism in these regions. Both Donegal and Sligo County Councils need to adopt tourism planning practices that have been used and identify models which may assist in the planning process for these counties. The PASLOP model of tourism planning, which is highlighted in the literature *review could be researched by the* County Councils to establish how a planning process for tourism could be put into practice.

7.6   Goals and Objectives

7.6.1   Donegal County Council

An essential part of planning for any industry is to highlight specific goals and objectives. Donegal have outlined specific goals and objectives for tourism, however there is no mention of specific strategies on how these objectives will be implemented.

7.6.2   Recommendation

Donegal county council need to develop strategies which are measurable and achievable and strategies which will meet the goals and objectives highlighted by the council in relation to the tourism policy within the overall development plan.

The literature review highlights issues which are significant to tourism planning such as carrying capacity and EIAs. Donegal County Council needs to understand the importance of these matters in relation to tourism planning and develop strategies to address them.

7.6.3 Sligo County Council

The Sligo plans both current 1999-2004 and the current draft plan 2005-2011 do not highlight specific goals for tourism; however an attempt has been made to address objectives in the new draft plan. Although Sligo County Council has attempted to outline objectives specific to tourism development they are poor.

7.6.4 Recommendation

It is recommended that Sligo county council highlight specific implementation strategies to support the goals and objectives highlighted in the tourism component of the development plan. It is important that both Sligo and Donegal County Councils define sustainable tourism in collaboration with respective partners for example other tourism agencies and design goals and objectives to meet this definition.

7.7 Specific Tourism Plans

7.7.1 Donegal County Council

Donegal County council does not have a specific tourism plan; however tourism is addressed as a component of the county development plan. Donegal County Council does not see itself as having a role in tourism planning, however they are responsible for major developments which relate to tourism and therefore it is obvious that it is their role to plan for and develop the tourism industry. It is important for Donegal county council to understand what role they have as a local authority in relation to sustainable tourism development.

7.7.2 Sligo County Council

The Sligo county development plan (current and newly developed draft) does not include specific tourism plans.

Similar to Donegal county council they have a subsection for tourism and it is important that Sligo county council also realise the importance of the contribution they make as a local authority to the tourism industry. This is evident from the 2002 figures (CSO Failte Ireland) where tourism generated approximately €97m in Sligo and Donegal respectively. Due to the nature of the tourism industry and due to the fact that local authorities develop mainstream projects like infrastructure they are essentially planning for tourism even though they specify that it is not their role to plan for it.

7.7.3 Recommendation

It is recommended that both Sligo and Donegal County Councils develop specific tourism plans as it such a significant industry in the North West of Ireland. In conjunction with the relevant tourism organisations, both Sligo and Donegal County Councils need to understand the importance of tourism to these counties and to ensure that if tourism is to become sustainable they need to collaborate their efforts to guarantee that they are all planning for sustainable development.

7.8 Tourism Policies

7.8.1 Donegal County Council

Donegal County council has adequately addressed specific policy areas in relation to tourism within the tourism component of the development plan. Policies are vital for promoting well managed development and it is evident that Donegal county council have identified the need for policies. It is recommended however that Donegal county council identify specific tourism policies and strategies to ensure successful sustainable development.

7.8.2 Sligo County Council

Sligo county council has not highlighted specific tourism policies within either the current plan or the draft plan and it is important that they develop policies for tourism development. In conjunction with this it is recommended that when policies are identified specific strategies should be put in place for implementation.

7.8.3 Recommendation

It is recommended that both Sligo and Donegal County Councils develop policies and implementation strategies that are specific to the tourism industry and focus on the future development of sustainable tourism. These policies must, however be supported with implementation strategies that are achievable and that can be monitored and evaluated on a continual basis.

7.9 Tourism, the Environment, Management and Conservation

7.9.1 Donegal County Council

Donegal county council makes reference to these issues as part of a tourism policy for management and conservation. A policy for environmental management and conservation issues should be developed in collaboration with tourism agencies strategies of implementation need to be highlighted which are achievable and measurable.

7.9.2 Sligo County Council

Sligo county council have not specifically addressed the environment or management and conservation in relation to tourism; however these areas have been addressed elsewhere in the plans. Although objectives have been highlighted Sligo county council do not envisage how these objectives will be implemented and have not identified implementation strategies for them.

7.9.3 Recommendation

If both county councils aim to encourage sustainable development these issues need to be addressed within the context of tourism.

It is recommended that specific policies are outlined as well as specific strategies of implementation, and for effective results this should be done in collaboration with tourism related organisations in the North West as well as the local community.

7.10   Heritage Protection

7.10.1 Donegal County Council

Heritage is addressed comprehensively in a separate section of the development plan for Donegal; however specific policies in relation to tourism are not clearly defined. Although the county council aims to protect heritage areas heritage buildings and special protection areas and areas of conservations they need to specify how this will be done by defining implementation tools and strategies. This policy should be developed in collaboration with these agencies and have strategies of implementation which are both achievable and measurable.

7.10.2 Sligo County Council

Sligo County Council while having recognized their role in protecting and conserving the natural and built heritage they have not attempted to identify specific policy for doing so. Collaboration with the relevant agencies in conjunction with identifying strategies for implementation would be recommended for Sligo county council in order for them to fulfil this role in heritage protection.

7.10.3 Recommendation

It is recommended that a specific heritage protection and development policy is adopted in conjunction with strategies for implementation.

Although Sligo County Council have highlighted heritage areas as part of the tourism objectives in the current draft plan it is inadequate. Sligo County Council has failed to realise the importance of heritage in relation to tourism development. A specific heritage policy needs to be addressed due to the significance of heritage in Sligo County and how it is such a major tourist attraction. Both Sligo and Donegal have inadequately addressed this important area in relation to tourism and policies for heritage protection need to be outlined by both organisations. For example the vandalism of Queen Maeve's cairn on Knocknarea by tourists is the result of poor planning and collaboration between all tourism agencies as well as Sligo County Council. The County Council have a role to develop heritage tourism policies to ensure the sustainable use of our heritage is protected.

7.11 Tourism and Coastal Development

7.11.1 Donegal County Council

It is important that Donegal county council not only provide a specific policy for coastal development but it is also vital that methods of implementation are established which can encourage involvement at community level and also ensure that the policy can be assessed easily by the council and at a practical level.

7.11.2 Sligo County Council

It is evident from the subsection on coastal development that Sligo county council aims to carry out coastal zone management. This is highlighted by the council in connection with formulation of objectives that will protect coastal areas and promote sustainable development.

7.11.3 Recommendation

Although both county councils have addressed coastal developments it is recommended that specific policies are developed along with strategies for implementation. Again such policies can encourage community involvement as well as address the important issues of coastal areas to the tourism industry.

7.12 Caravan and Camping

7.12.1 Donegal County Council

Donegal County Council needs to address in detail this important part of the tourism industry in Donegal. Specific policies for Caravan and Camping need to be highlighted by Donegal County Council if they are working towards sustainable development. It is important that Donegal County Council realise the significance of caravan and camping within the county and recognise the need for policies as it is such an important aspect of the tourism industry in County Donegal.

7.12.2 Sligo County Council

Sligo county council need to firstly recognise the importance of caravan and camping sites as they are an important segment of the tourism industry in the county.

It is vital that Sligo county council develop strategy or guide book which will address relevant issues relating to caravan and camping sites and which will attempt to bring these sites to European standards.

7.12.3 Recommendation

Sligo and Donegal County Councils need to develop implementation strategies specifically for caravan and camping facilities. Collaboration among public and private tourism businesses would encourage sustainable development in these coastal regions.

It is recommended that a specific policy, strategy and/or guidebook be developed for caravan and camping sites which addresses the provision of services and aims at bringing these sites to European standards. Currently the EU are implementing the Eco Labelling of caravan and camping sites and the county council should aim attempt to work towards these standards.

7.13   Carrying Capacity

7.13.1 Donegal County Council

Donegal county council needs to develop carrying capacities for high impact tourism destinations. These capacities will not be exceeded until infrastructural developments have taken place to ensure sustainable tourism development. It is recognised that it is difficult to establish carrying capacities for a destination; however the capacity of the waste water treatment plant may be suggested as a place to start.

7.13.2 Sligo County Council

The current draft plan for County Sligo 2005-2011 does not mention carrying capacity although it was mentioned in the plan for 1999-2004.

Sligo County Council also need to address carrying capacity as it is an essential tool for planning and one that can be used to promote orderly development particularly in areas that have far exceeded their development. It is recommended that Sligo develop carrying capacities for the purpose of ensuring sustainable development takes place.

7.13.3 Recommendation

It is recommended that both Sligo and Donegal County Councils develop carrying capacities if they are planning for sustainable tourism development. Carrying capacities are used to establish where developments will become unsustainable and both Sligo and Donegal County Councils need to highlight the need for carrying capacities particularly due to the coastal location of both counties.

7.14   Physical Land Use Planning and Zoning

The use of physical land use planning and zoning cannot be underestimated as a way of controlling development. It is essential for Donegal and Sligo County Councils to recognise the importance of these control methods for the purpose of planning.

7.14.1 Donegal and Sligo County Councils
7.14.2 Recommendation

It is recommended that zoning be utilised as a method of minimising tourism development activity in sensitive areas and encourage development in well managed destinations. Due to the political nature of zoning, it is proposed that these zones be developed in collaboration with the host community; public and private sector and thus encourage the protection of Donegal and Sligo amenities for future generations.

7.15   Signage
7.15.1 Donegal County Council

It is important that the local authority and the community collaborate in an attempt to develop signage at lay-bys in a manner that would not harm the natural landscape. The county council in conjunction with local communities can develop a policy for signage and outline achievable strategies to ensure its success.

7.15.2 Sligo County Council

Sligo County Council needs to address signage policies as well as outline strategies for this in conjunction with local community participation.

7.15.3 Recommendation

It is recommended that both Sligo and Donegal County Councils come together to ensure that the same policies are in place in both counties in relation to signage. The adoption of similar policies will ensure that informative signs will be available to tourists and local communities while lay bys will be left unspoilt and unharmed thus working towards the development of sustainable tourism.

7.16   Local Agenda 21
7.16.1 Donegal and Sligo County Council
7.16.2 Recommendation

It is recommended that both Donegal and Sligo county councils realise the importance of Local Agenda 21 and realise their role as a local authority to conform to and promote this process which will facilitate the development of sustainable tourism.

7.17   Environmental Impact Assessment
7.17.1 Donegal and Sligo County Councils

EIAs are an essential part of sustainable development and local authorities must realize the importance of such assessments if they want to achieve sustainable development. The cost of this must be put on the developer. Specific areas of this should be highlighted in a document by both Sligo and Donegal county councils.

7.17.2 Recommendation

It is recommended that both Sligo and Donegal County Councils highlight the significance of EIA's to developers and accommodation providers in the tourism industry. The county councils can put the onus on developers and business owners to pay for EIAs to be conducted. This, in turn will encourage the development of sustainable tourism in the regions of Sligo and Donegal.

7.18   Eco Labelling

7.18.1 Donegal and Sligo County Councils

Eco Labelling is not part of the integrated sustainable tourism management plan Donegal or Sligo and it is recommended that Donegal County Council in collaboration with the CDB adopt and implement sensible eco labelling within county Donegal.

7.18.2 Recommendation

Eco labelling has the capabilities of addressing sustainable tourism issues and both Sligo and Donegal County Council need to understand the importance of eco labelling in relation to sustainable tourism developments.

It is recommended that eco labelling is implemented within counties Sligo and Donegal in collaboration with the EU as well as the National Standards Authority.

7.19   Waste Treatment and Recycling

7.19.1 Donegal and Sligo County Council

If Donegal and Sligo aim to develop a sustainable tourism industry and adopt eco labelling, the issue of waste treatment and recycling must be further invested and continually developed to meet the needs of the tourist and the growing demands of certification bodies.

7.19.2 Recommendation

It is recommended that both county councils develop specific tourism policy on waste treatment and recycling in collaboration with all parties to facilitate developers in meeting the needs of certification programmes, for example the EU flower which manifests itself in the form of eco label accommodation providers. In granting new planning permits the onus should be on the developers to mitigate all waste treatment and recycling issues.

7.20 Conformity to Legal and National Policies

7.20.1 Donegal and Sligo County Councils

Both Sligo and Donegal County Councils appear to have conformed to legal and national policies and have developed their county development plans under the relevant planning and development acts.

7.20.2 Recommendation

In order for both Donegal and Sligo county council to continue to meet and conform with legal and national policies, it is imperative that they develop specific policies, implement strategies and possibly even publish guidebooks for specific tourism activities which highlight the areas that need to be met to ensure conformity and encourage public and private sector to conform and mitigate on the impacts of their tourism development in relation to these legal and national policies.

7.21 Plan Implementation and Evaluation

7.21.1 Donegal and Sligo County Councils

It is apparent from the analysis that there is no comprehensive implementation strategy incorporated into this plan in relation to tourism policy in either the Sligo or Donegal development plans. It is also evident that without these strategies it is difficult to evaluate tourism policy.

7.21.2 Recommendation

It is recommended that Sligo and Donegal County Councils support all policy areas with the necessary implementation strategies for each policy. Such strategies need to be measurable and achievable and it is important that tourism planning policies and strategies are monitored and evaluated on a continuing basis to ensure that they are effective and successful and that they are contributing to sustainable tourism development

Conclusion

Planning is essential for the overall success of the tourism industry and particularly if the focus is on sustainable development. Tourism planning should take place at all levels, international, national and regional. If goals and objectives are to be achieved it is important that planning is integrative and carried out on a continual basis to ensure that proposed implementation strategies are effective.

This study compared Sligo and Donegal County Councils and how they plan for sustainable tourism. County Development plans of both counties were analysed to ascertain what processes and methods of planning were used for tourism. From this it appeared that neither Sligo nor Donegal County Councils have highlighted specific plans for the tourism industry in their respective counties. Sligo and Donegal county councils have attempted to address the needs of this significant industry in the North West, and although Donegal have done so more effectively than Sligo whose appear to be inadequate. Although both organisations have highlighted policy areas and objectives specific to tourism, implementation strategies were not apparent in the county development plans. The need for implementation tools cannot be under estimated as they are essential for the development of strategies and the achievement of objectives. Donegal and Sligo County Councils have failed to address these needs which therefore leave policy areas futile and ineffective.

County Development boards were established in both Sligo and Donegal as in all local authority areas in Ireland in 2000. The purpose of the county development board is to promote and coordinate social, economic and cultural matters in each respective local authority area. It appears that the Donegal County Development board through their strategy 'An Straiteis' are more advanced in this coordination stage than Sligo. The Donegal County Development board have addressed specific issues relating to tourism which they aim to develop and it is evident, therefore that Donegal CDB have designed appropriate strategies for the tourism industry in the county. The Sligo CDB, although they address tourism in their strategy do not specify implementation methods to promote tourism development in the county, therefore they are not fulfilling their role as comprehensively as the Donegal CDB.

The future role of the County Development Board cannot be underestimated as an effective tool for all and for collaboration on tourism policies and implementation in sustainable tourism planning. Donegal seem to be more advanced than Sligo and it is recommended that the Sligo County Development Board take a look at the strategies the Donegal CDB have developed specifically for the tourism industry.

This study indicates that Donegal and Sligo County Councils take some, although not a great deal of responsibility for tourism within their respective counties. Donegal and Sligo County Councils need to clarify their role in relation to tourism planning. On establishing this it will then be evident what role all other tourism agencies will have in the development process.

As both Sligo and Donegal County Councils have highlighted that they are planning towards sustainable development it is essential that both organisations develop a common definition for sustainable tourism to allow for appropriate sustainable development to take place.

It is evident from this study that both local authorities have attempted to address policy areas in relation to tourism, however these policies are ineffective unless appropriate implementation strategies are outlined. Donegal and Sligo County Councils need to collaborate closely on sustainable tourism development planning in order to ensure that they have similar goals and objectives if they are planning for sustainability of the tourism industry. These goals and objectives must be supported with implementation strategies which need to be monitored and evaluated on a continuing basis as this will ensure the effectiveness of these strategies in the planning process.

It appears that planning models and processes have not been researched by either local authority and it is recommended that models like those outlined in the literature review are consulted for future reference.

In conjunction with all tourism agencies in the North West specific tourism plans must be developed by both Sligo and Donegal. These plans will assist in the planning process of the tourism industry and ensure that developments are sustainable. Tourism plans need to address on a broad scale areas like heritage, the environment, waste treatment and recycling, accommodation and signage which are significant to the tourism industry. On developing specific tourism plans with tourism agencies in both counties it will be possible to recognise the role of all tourism agencies in the tourism planning process and this can also be done through community involvement and participation.

The need for a sustainable approach has been addressed briefly by both Sligo and Donegal County Councils; however they must realise the importance of adopting suitable policies and strategies for developments in the tourism industry. Sustainable tourism development requires appropriate planning and the collaboration of tourism businesses along with local authorities and host communities. Successful planning also requires a process which monitors and evaluates such strategies on a regular basis for continued success. Sligo and Donegal County Councils need to collaborate with their respective partners, adopt specific tourism plans and strategies which will encourage and promote the development of sustainable tourism for future generations.

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9.0   Appendices

9.1   Sample of Literature Review Matrix

Article, Title, Year	Author: Source	Specific Key Issues	Quotes of relevance by	Models / Frameworks	Personal Evaluation
Book: Tourism Planning, Basics, Concepts and Cases 2002	Clare A. Gunn with Turgut Var Fourth edition Routledge	Step by Step purposes of planning Case studies worldwide	Inskeep 1987/1991 Rose 1984 Gunn 1965 – 2002 Douglas and Pearce	PASLOP LAC/ROS Competitiveness and sustainability	Excellent book giving great insight into the basics of planning Easy to understand language and models
Article: Tourism development in the Canary Islands 2003	By Sergio Moreno Gil Annals of Tourism Research 30 (3) 744 – 747	Problems at present due to overcrowding and rushed development	Agarwal 2002 Kaplan and Norton 1996 Canarian govnt. 2001 Dept of tourism 2001	Tourism Moratorium – Which will help limit development	Interesting article, quite statistical about various segments in the canary islands, employment etc
Article: Tourism strategy planning, the case of Hungary 1996	By J. Fletcher and C. Cooper Annals of tourism research 23 (1) Ixi - 200	Central Europe debate, imposition of outsiders. Promoting development, the need for effective development	Buckley and Witt 1990 EC 1992 Hall, D 1991 Allcock 1990	Approaches to economic change.	Main focus on central Europe. Places must emphasis on the need for effective planning and collaboration

Article, Title, Year	Author: Source	Specific key issues	Quotes of relevance by	Models / Frameworks	Personal Evaluation
Article: A societal marketing approach 2000	By Key, Mc Vey and Simmons Tourism mgmt 21	The need for increased collaboration Places much emphasis on the impacts of tourism	Douglas Inskeep 1991 Main authors King and Mc Vey	No specific model however excellent guide for planners	One of many articles which highlights the importance of stakeholder participation
Article: Managing stakeholders. A tourism planning model 1999	By Elise Sautter Annals of tourism research 26 (2) 321 – 328	Looks at political and economical aspects Planning based on 2 views	Jamal and Getz 1995 Lea 1988 Keogh 1990	2 schools of thought - functional view - political economy view	Another article that continuously emphasizes the need for collaboration
Article: Collaboration in local tourism policy making 1999	By Bramwell and Sharmon Annals of tourism research 26(2) 392 – 415	Implication caused by collaboration Discusses impacts and how they result in sustainability	Healy 1998 Lane 1994	No specific model highlighted	Looks at implications of collaboration which some other articles did not
A conceptual tourism marketing planning model	By Socrates l. popadopoulos European journal of marketing 23 (1)	Tourism marketing planning, focuses on tourism in the service industry	Getz 1986 Kotler 1985 Porter 1982	Tourism marketing planning process Tourism marketing audit	Less relevant to main theme of review but good insight into marketing planning

Article, Title, Year	Author: Source	Specific Key Issues	Quotes of relevance by	Models / Frameworks	Personal Evaluation
Article: Sustainable tourism planning for a new millennium 1996	By W Trousdale Presented at the 1996 world congress on marine and coastal tourism	Main focus on a study of the Philippines	Stankey 1990 Williams 1994	A participatory approach Evaluating alternatives – methods	Excellent view of planning and development in the Guimaras
Article: Revisiting the destination lifecycle model 2001	By Gary R. Hovinen Annals of tourism research 29 (1) 209 – 230	Based on a study of Lancaster county, Pennsylvania. Transformation through 2 decades	Plog Hovinen Butler 1980/1981	Butler's lifecycle model – evolving from product to destination lifecycle model	Shows descriptive uses for and origins of Butlers' model
Article: Operationalizing sustainability in regional tourism planning	By Ahna, Leeb and Shafrec	The LAC model in practice Issues relating to and affecting the environment	WCED Gunn 1988 Kadt 1979 Butler 1974	Limits of acceptable change ROS model	Gives a detailed description of both models and how they contribute to planning and development
Article: The vicious circle of tourism development in heritage cities 2002	By Antonio Paolo Russo Annals of tourism research 29(1) 165 – 182	Looks indepthly at 'carrying capacity' issues, economic and development	Martin and Uysal 1990 Plog 1973 Debbage 1990 Butler 1980	Resort development spectrum Carrying capacity concepts	Immediately links to previous articles with regard carrying capacity and economic issues

9.2 Interview Schedule

Date	Organisation	Location	Interviewee
21/05/04	Donegal County Council	Planning office in Donegal county council	Planner
20/05/04	Sligo County Council	Planning office in Sligo	Planner
25/05/04	Western Development Commission	Sligo IT, Centre for sustainability	Manager
11/05/04	North West Regional Tourism Authority	North West Tourism, Regional Office, Sligo	Manager
22/05/04	Dolmen Centre	Kilclooney, Co.Donegal	Member
24/05/04	Donegal County Development Board	Public Service Office, Letterkenny	Manager
25/05/04	Sligo County Development Board	Public Service Office, Sligo	Manager