Stakeholder Assessment and Collaborative Tourism Planning: The Case of Brazil's Costa Dourada Project

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The paper reviews approaches to identifying the stakeholders who are affected by a tourism project and who might participate in collaborative tourism planning. Two such approaches are discussed and analysed based on research carried out on stakeholders affected by the Costa Dourada project, a regional tourism planning initiative in north-east Brazil. The first approach involves assessing the stakeholders who had participated in the project planning by attending local workshops or project meetings intended to promote collaborative planning. The second involves interviewing a sample of stakeholders affected by the project and also stakeholders directly involved in the project planning, asking them for their views on stakeholders they consider relevant to the project but who were not participants in the planning process. These two approaches are used to examine whether the range of stakeholders participating in the planning process was representative of the stakeholders affected by the project and was also likely to encourage consideration of the diverse issues of sustainable development. It is found that varied stakeholders had participated in the planning process, but there was only limited participation by the private sector and environmental NGOs.

Introduction

It is seen as increasingly important for tourism planning in destinations to involve the multiple stakeholders affected by tourism, including environmental groups, business interests, public authorities and community groups (Gartner, 1996; Williams *et al.*, 1998). A stakeholder is defined here as 'any person, group, or organization that is affected by the causes or consequences of an issue' (Bryson & Crosby, 1992: 65).

Although it is often difficult and time-consuming to involve a range of stakeholders in the planning process, this involvement may have significant benefits for sustainability. In particular, participation by multiple stakeholders with differing interests and perspectives might encourage more consideration of the varied social, cultural, environmental, economic and political issues affecting sustainable development (Bramwell & Lane, 1993). Timothy (1998) argues that participation in tourism planning by many stakeholders can help to promote sustainable development by increasing efficiency, equity and harmony. For example, broad stakeholder involvement has the potential to increase the self-reliance of the stakeholders and their awareness of the issues, facilitate more equitable trade-offs between stakeholders with competing interests, and promote decisions that enjoy a greater degree of 'consensus' and shared ownership (Warner, 1997).

Assessments can be made of the stakeholders who are affected by a tourism project and who might participate in collaborative tourism planning arrangements. The identification of these stakeholders can be of critical importance for

technical, political and, eventually, operational reasons. Being identified, or conversely, not being identified, as a relevant stakeholder is an essential first step that affects the whole process of involving participants in collaborative planning as well as the likely outcomes of this planning.

The first section of this paper reviews several approaches to assessing stakeholders that have potential for application in tourism planning research and practice. Subsequently, the paper illustrates the potential value of two of these approaches based on a case study examining stakeholders affected by the Costa Dourada project, a regional tourism planning initiative involving ten municipalities in Alagoas State in north-east Brazil. The project focuses on tourism development, but in the context of investment in physical and social infrastructure and of sustainable development objectives.

The first approach to stakeholder assessment used in the case study involves examining the stakeholders who had participated in the project's planning process. Some of these stakeholders had been to one of several local workshops about the project and some had attended project meetings intended to promote a collaborative approach to planning. The second approach involves interviewing a sample of stakeholders affected by the project and also stakeholders directly involved in the project planning process, asking them for their views on stakeholders they considered relevant to the project but who were not participants in the planning process.

The purpose of the paper is to illustrate the value of the application of two approaches to stakeholder assessment to examine two specific aspects of sustainable development. First, to examine whether the stakeholders involved in planning for the Costa Dourada project were representative of the stakeholders affected by the project. And, second, to evaluate whether the range of stakeholders involved in the planning process was likely to encourage consideration of the diverse issues related to sustainable development. Was the range of participating stakeholders sufficiently broad that consideration was likely to be given to the varied concerns of sustainable development, which are social, cultural, environmental, economic and political, and relate to various geographical scales? The paper reports on just one aspect of a larger research programme on collaborative planning and the Costa Dourada project, and it is beyond the scope here to consider other questions about the ultimate effectiveness of stakeholder collaboration in the project planning process.

Collaborative Tourism Planning

Collaborative planning has been defined as a 'collective process for resolving conflicts and advancing shared visions involving a set of diverse stakeholders' (Gray, 1989). Jamal and Getz (1995: 188) describe collaborative planning in a tourism context as 'a process of joint decision-making among autonomous, key stakeholders … to resolve planning problems … and/or to manage issues related to the planning and development'. Collaborative planning in tourist destinations is usually considered to involve direct dialogue among the participating stakeholders, including the public sector planners, and this has the potential to lead to negotiation, shared decision-making and consensus-building about planning goals and actions (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999). Much collaborative planning is

made in working groups with a fairly small number of individuals, who often are representatives of organisations or stakeholder groups (Brandon, 1993). The number of individuals participating on a working group may be restricted in order to ensure the group is not unwieldly, to promote familiarity, understanding and trust among participants, and to encourage joint decision-making and consensus-building.

However, participation in tourism planning in destinations can be limited to collecting the opinions of stakeholders in order to provide fuller information for public sector planners, and this can be a largely one-way consultation process when there is little direct dialogue between the stakeholders and planners. This can occur when the opinions of stakeholders are collected using self-completion questionnaires, focus group interviews, drop-in centres and telephone surveys (Marien & Pizam, 1997). It is likely to be less complex to collect people's opinions than to involve them in direct dialogue with public sector planners or to seek negotiation and consensus-building through collaborative planning. However, the one-way collection of stakeholder opinions (often of many individuals) can provide valuable information for decision-making in collaborative working groups (often involving only a few individuals) (Simmons, 1994; Yuksel *et al.*, 1999). Stakeholders can also be consulted at several stages in the planning process so that it becomes an iterative, two-way planning process.

Approaches to Stakeholder Assessment

What approaches can be taken to assessing the stakeholders who are affected by a tourism project and who might participate in collaborative tourism planning arrangements?

A *first* potential approach is to examine whether the stakeholders who become involved in collaborative planning arrangements for a project adequately represent the affected stakeholders (Boiko *et al.*, 1996). If the collaborating stakeholders are not representative, then some needs might not be articulated and related planning alternatives could be ignored, and stakeholders who are excluded might reject the resulting planning proposals (Gregory & Keeney, 1994). Finn (1996) also suggests that problems can arise if some stakeholders are excluded from the early stages of the collaboration process. For example, it risks having to begin all over again as members joining at a later stage insist on discussing and negotiating about their understanding of the issues and about their views on planning options (Bryson, 1988; Gray, 1989). Another consideration is whether the stakeholders involved in collaborative planning includes parties with significant financial, institutional or political power and whose involvement might significantly broaden the planning options which are feasible for the other stakeholders (Warner, 1997).

A *second* approach involves passing information from assessments of relevant stakeholders to the stakeholders involved in collaborative planning arrangements in order to improve their understanding of the interests and viewpoints of other stakeholders (Finn, 1996). The information from these assessments might also assist the stakeholders to identify strategies to secure specific management or political outcomes (Bryson & Roering, 1987). For example, such information could enable stakeholders to identify parties who are supportive, opposed or

neutral to their collective interests. These stakeholders might then form coalitions among supportive stakeholders in order to enhance their power and also target neutral or 'swing' stakeholders with special lobbying (Bryson, 1988; Rowe *et al.*, 1994). Such political objectives may be very contentious.

A *third* potential approach is to identify stakeholders who are considered to have legitimate and important views but need to have their capacities raised to enable them to put these views forward and to negotiate in collaborative decision-making arrangements (Carroll, 1993). For example, they may lack technical knowledge about tourism planning or skills in presenting their views in meetings, and these might be developed through education and training. Warner (1997: 418) adopts a normative position that 'stakeholder targeting' is needed to create an equitable basis for collaborative negotiations, and that 'a "consensus" model of participation should direct early effort towards those stakeholders who are most polarized from a capability to negotiate collaboratively'.

The approaches mentioned so far can be developed further by a *fourth*: asking stakeholders affected by the tourism issue or project to identify other stakeholders who could be of interest to the researcher. Stakeholders can also be asked for their opinions on which stakeholders affected by a tourism project ought to be involved in its planning. Stakeholders' opinions can be collected using such methods as focus group discussions, interviews or questionnaires. The stakeholders who are identified by other stakeholders as relevant to a tourism project will reflect the value judgements of the stakeholders themselves (Mark & Shotland, 1985).

The snowball method is a useful means of identifying relevant stakeholders based on the views of other stakeholders. This method can involve identifying a core subset of actors who are affected by an issue or project and asking them to nominate other stakeholders they consider have relevant characteristics. These nominated stakeholders then can be asked to nominate others they consider have the characteristics, with the potential to repeat this process until few new stakeholders are identified (Finn, 1996; Rowley, 1997). The snowball method can be very useful at a local level. Political rather than personal knowledge may be particularly critical in the use of the snowball method at regional and national scales.

A *fifth* approach to assess relevant stakeholders is to place them on a diagram or map according to their key relationships to the issue. A network of arrows can then be used to show existing or likely relationships between the stakeholders, such as the involvement of some of them in collaborative planning arrangements. Patterns of particularly important relationships usually emerge, and these patterns can be portrayed on a revised map. The resulting stakeholder map, usually involving a complex array of multiple relationships, can be examined using social network analysis. The purpose of this analysis is to evaluate the relational networks between stakeholders, notably to determine interdependencies between stakeholders, how their positions in the network influence their opportunities, constraints and behaviours, and how their behaviours affect the network (Marin & Mayntz, 1991; Rowley, 1997).

Stakeholders affected by an issue or project can be positioned on a map according to many relationships (Harrison & St John, 1994). Only three of these

relationships are discussed here, although these three can be particularly important.

The first such relationship is the power of different stakeholders affected by an issue to influence the relationships between them (Eden, 1996). Mitchell *et al.* (1997) suggest that the power of a stakeholder in such relationships is related to the extent to which it can impose its will through coercion, through access to material or financial resources, or through normative pressure. A second relationship is the perceived legitimacy of the claims of different stakeholders. Legitimacy relates to perceptions that the interests or claims of a stakeholder are appropriate or desirable, with these perceptions being based on socially constructed values and beliefs. It has been claimed in the context of ecotourism that 'legitimacy is socially produced in the communicative interaction among stakeholders' (Lawrence *et al.*, 1997: 309). The third relationship is that of the urgency of the claims of different stakeholders. According to Mitchell, Agle and Wood (1997: 867), this urgency arises from 'the degree to which stakeholder claims call for immediate attention'. Such claims for immediate attention will be affected by views on importance, which in turn are affected by the other attributes of power and legitimacy. These three relationships are likely to be significant influences on which stakeholder groups become involved in collaborative planning arrangements around an issue.

The utility of the *first* and *fourth* of the approaches discussed above is now illustrated in an examination of the stakeholders affected by the Costa Dourada project. The two approaches are used to assess whether the range of stakeholders participating in the project planning was representative of the stakeholders affected by the project, and also likely to promote consideration of the diverse issues surrounding sustainable development. These issues are social, cultural, environmental, economic and political, and may also relate to various geographical scales. While the Costa Dourada project is a regional tourism development initiative, the analysis also considers these issues at the local and national spatial scales. This geographical hierarchy may be particularly important because government power can be highly centralised in developing or relatively newly industrialised countries (Milne, 1998; Tosun & Jenkins, 1998).

The Costa Dourada Project

The Costa Dourada project is a regional tourism development initiative covering ten municipalities in Alagoas State, in north east Brazil (Figure 1). The project area extends for about 100 km along a coastal belt about 20 km across. The ten municipalities form an economically poor region of Brazil and have a combined population of 148,080. The region's key economic sector is agriculture, notably sugar cane plantations, and the region suffers from very high unemployment, low salaries and high rates of illiteracy and endemic disease. Despite poor road access to the region, tourism has gradually intensified from a fairly low base since the second half of the 1980s (SEPLANDES, 1998). The coast is now dotted with a number of tourist facilities, such as hotels, bars, restaurants and holiday homes (Medeiros de Araujo & Power, 1993).

The Costa Dourada project forms part of a larger Programme for Tourism Development of the State of Alagoas (PRODETUR/AL). The PRODETUR/AL

runs from 1994 to 2010 and in the first phase it has US $300 million funding from the Interamerican Development Bank and federal, state, municipal and private sector sources (Becker, 1995; PRODETUR, 1993; SEPLAN, 1994). This programme seeks to create the infrastructure required to exploit the tourism potential of Alagoas State, within the broader aim of 'encouraging the region's socioeconomic development, taking into account its environmental preservation and restoration' (SEPLAN, 1994: 3; CODEAL, 1993). In 1991 Alagoas State attracted 128,018 domestic and 19,127 international tourists, with the largest number of international tourists being from Argentina, Spain and Germany. In 1994 it was estimated that by 2002–2010 the PRODETUR/AL will have boosted the annual average number of domestic tourists to 265,000 and of international tourists to 172,000, compared with an annual average number without the project of 139,940 domestic tourists and 50,892 international tourists (SEPLAN, 1994). Tourism development in Alagoas will be focused on three development zones, including the Costa Dourada project on its north coast.

Key elements of the strategy for the Costa Dourada project are 'the expansion and improvement of its main product, namely "sun and beach" tourism', and also product diversification (SEPLAN, 1994: 9). The diversification includes developing visits to small, farm-based rum distilleries, ecotourism, and tourism based on raft and boat trips to the offshore coral reef. Among the tourism-related infrastructure to be built or improved in the project area are main access roads, roads within urban centres, telecommunications and electricity supplies. The project aims to address 'the serious problems of [transport] access to the north coast which, together with the deficiency in basic urban services, according to
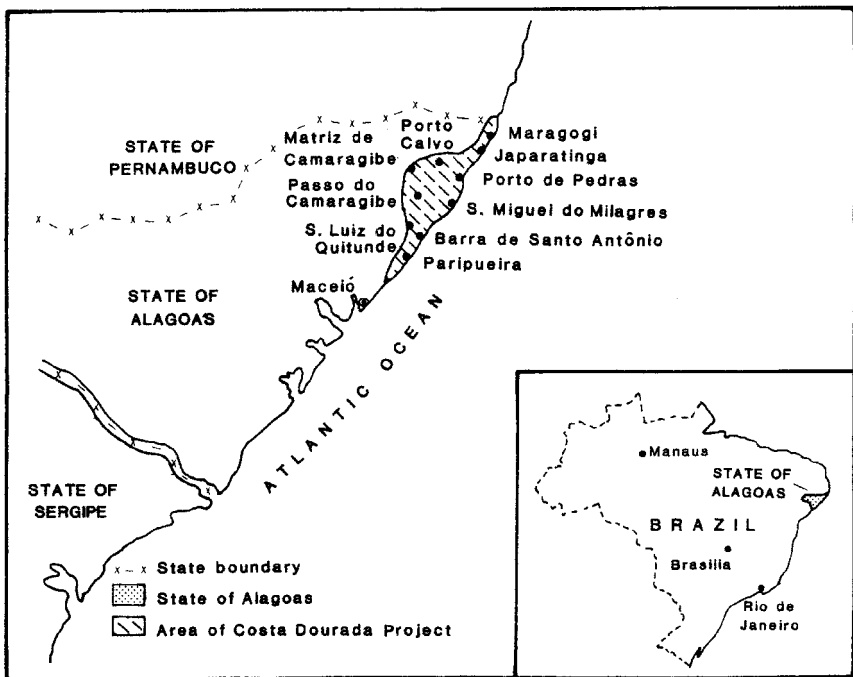

Figure 1 Location of the Costa Dourada Project

private investors, are the principal obstacles to the implementation of hotel projects in the region' (SEPLAN, 1994: 10). Investment in the project area will be concentrated in one major tourist centre, Camaragibe, and three smaller tourist centres in the municipalities of Paripueira, Porto de Pedras and Maragogi (Figure 2).
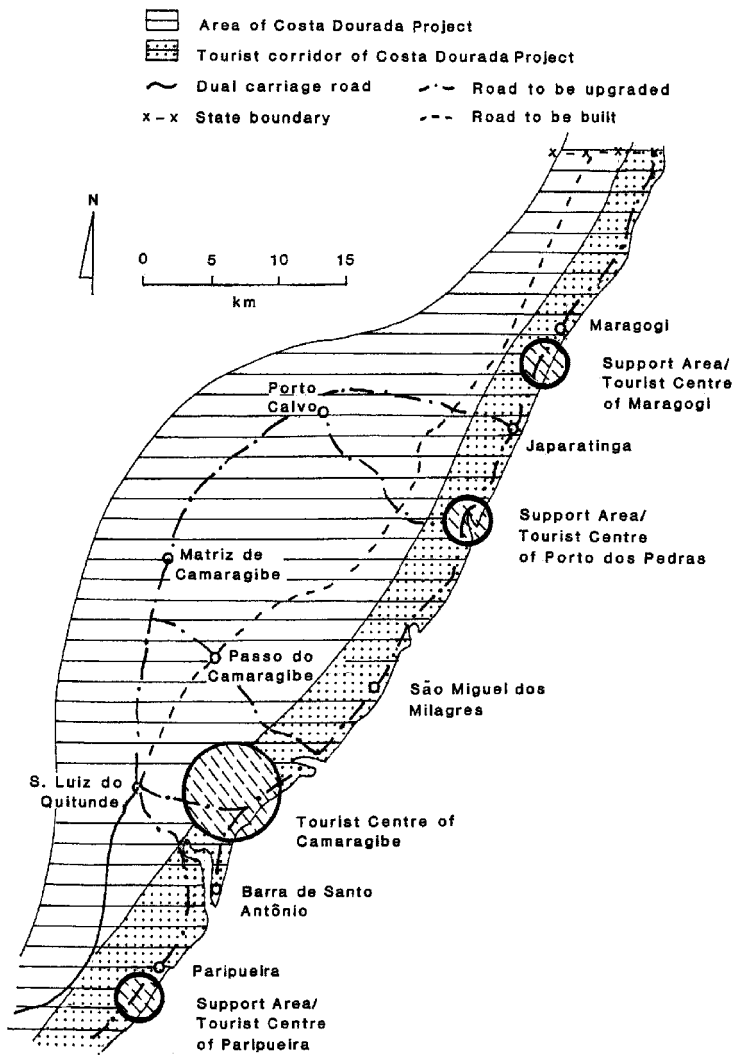

Figure 2 Costa Dourada Project tourism development areas

The Costa Dourada project uses tourism in order to promote sustainable development, and it includes investment in health care, education and social facilities, and improved access to the region. Alagoas is one of Brazil's poorest states and tourism has the potential to secure both economic and social development. In particular, it could diversify the north coast economy, which is highly dependent on sugar cane production and refining, coconut production and fishing. However, balanced growth may be illusive when there is 'economic and political control of the governmental administrative structures by a few economic groups, most of whom see conservation measures as potentially conflicting with their interests' (Medeiros de Araujo & Power, 1993: 302). Tourism development may add to environmental problems, such as urban sprawl and water pollution from untreated sewage.

One important intention of the PRODETUR/AL planners is to involve a broad range of stakeholders in the project planning process. This intention reflects a trend in Brazil towards encouraging broader participation in the shaping of public policies in various fields. Various collaborative arrangements between the government, private sector and NGOs have been established during the 1990s in north east Brazil, including in Alagoas State. A number of tourism partnerships have been developed recently in Alagoas, although collaboration is less common in this field than in education and health care (Gazeta de Alagoas 6/12/97, 6/9/99). However, the widening of participation has re-emerged only relatively recently in Brazil, with 20 years of military dictatorship only ending in the mid-1980s, during which time policy-making was highly concentrated within the national government. Because of the country's political history, there is only relatively limited recent experience of democratic structures and of broad stakeholder participation in planning (Vieira, 1995; Viola, 1987).

Stakeholder Attendance at Planning Meetings

The first approach to a stakeholder assessment of the Costa Dourada project involves examining the stakeholders who had participated in the project planning up to mid-1998. The project is scheduled to operate from 1994 to 2010. Two types of participation in the planning process are examined. The first is attendance by stakeholders at the project planning meetings organised by PRODETUR/AL that were intended to promote a collaborative approach to planning. An assessment is also made, secondly, of the stakeholders who had been to a workshop about the project in one of the municipalities.

The first of these types of participation was examined by identifying the stakeholder representatives who had often attended the project planning meetings. The number of stakeholder representatives invited to these meetings varied according to the issues being discussed and whether the meetings took place in the PRODETUR/AL offices, in a municipality or elsewhere. In these meetings PRODETUR/AL attempted to encourage collaborative planning involving discussion, negotiation and consensus-building among the participants. While there was direct dialogue in the meetings between the participants and the PRODETUR/AL planners, it is beyond the scope of the present paper to evaluate in depth the extent to which the meetings succeeded in promoting shared decision-making and consensus-building.

A preliminary list of participants who had often attended the meetings was compiled after discussion with two planners and others involved in the project and after evaluating planning documents and legislation. The Co-ordinator General of the Planning Unit for the project was then asked to indicate which of these participants, or others not on the list, were invited and often attended these meetings up to mid-1998, were accountable to their organisation, and exchanged information with the project planners. This process identified 29 stakeholder representatives who often attended these meetings.

Table 1 shows the stakeholder representatives who had often attended project planning meetings up to mid-1998, these being classified by stakeholder category and the geographical scale at which they had strongest interests. It shows that almost all the regular participants in these meetings were in the public sector. However, among these public sector organisations there is a broad spread across national, regional and local spatial scales and also between the policy areas of regional development, tourism, coastal management, transport, public utilities and environment. At the regional scale there is strong representation from the different policy areas of the Programme for Tourism Development of the State of Alagoas (PRODETUR/AL), and at the local scale there are representatives with environmental, health and tourism interests. The only organisations not wholly in the public sector are a public-private sector utility company, an NGO linking the local municipal authorities, and an environmental NGO.

Stakeholder Attendance at Workshops

The second type of participants in the planning process to be examined had attended one of the ten day-long workshops about the project organised by PRODETUR/AL, with a workshop held in each of the ten municipalities affected by the project. The workshops were designed to collect data and information, including stakeholder opinions on the project, and to identify actions to promote the development of institutions and infrastructure in the municipalities to support the project as a whole. Specific objectives for each workshop included designing a plan for public services in the municipality and identifying priority projects that need to be funded or coordinated by PRODETUR/AL (SEPLANDES, 1998).

Early in each workshop the participants were asked about their expectations and suggestions were sought on how the workshop should be conducted. A brainstorming discussion then followed, after which the participants wrote their own views on selected issues onto cards. These cards were posted on panels according to themes, these themes were then discussed and collective decisions were made to create, merge or discard some cards, and eventually various negotiated views were established. By these means the workshops were designed to promote discussion and consensus-building among the participants. However, they offered only very limited opportunities for direct dialogue between the participants and the PRODETUR/AL planners, with only one staff member and three consultants representing PRODETUR/AL attending each workshop. Instead, written summaries of the workshops were prepared to be considered subsequently by the project planners. At the same time, however, the workshops involved more than a one-way consultation process as they were used to dissem-

Table 1 Stakeholders that often attended planning meetings for the Costa Dourada Project

Geographical scale	Type of stakeholder	Stakeholder	Job title of representative
National	Government environment	Brazilian Institute for the Environment & Renewable Natural Resources (IBAMA)	Technical Director
	NGO environment	Foundation for Marine Mammals	National Director
	Government other	Service of the National Coastal Lands (DPU)	Architect
	Government other	Department for the Development of the North East (SUDENE)	Head of the Technical Department
	Private sector tourism	Brazilian Company of Airport Infrastructure (INFRAERO)	Superintendant for the State of Alagoas
Regional	Government environment	Institute for the Environment (IMA/AL)	Director of the Dept for Ecosystems
	Government environment	Coastal Management Project (GERCO/AL)	Co-ordinator for the State of Alagoas
	Government tourism	Tourist Board of the State of Alagoas (EMATUR)	Planning Co-ordinator
	Government infrastructure	Department of Roads of the State of Alagoas (DER/AL)	Assessor to Director General and President of DER/AL's Planning Unit for the Costa Dourada Project
	Government infrastructure	Water and Sewage Company of the State of Alagoas (CASAL)	Superintendant for Engineering
	Government tourism	Programme for Tourism Development of the State of Alagoas (UEE-PRODETUR/AL)	Co-ordinator for the Environment
			Co-ordinator for Administration and Finance
			Co-ordinator for Institutional Development
			Co-ordinator for Transport and Roads
			Assessor for Legislation
			Assessor for Project Development
			Assessor for Management of Partnerships and Marketing
			Co-ordinator General of the Planning Unit
	NGO other	Association of the Municipalities of the State of Alagoas (AMA)	President

Table 1 (cont.)

Geographical scale	Type of stakeholder	Stakeholder	Job title of representative
Local	Municipal government	Municip. of Barra de Santo Antônio	Secretary of Tourism
		Municip. of Japaratinga	Secretary of Health
		Municip. of Maragogi	Secretary of Tourism and Environment
		Municip. of Matriz de Camaragibe	Head of Mayor's Office
Local	Municipal government	Municip. of Paripueira	Secretary of Tourism and Environment
		Municip. of Passo do Camaragibe	Secretary of Tourism and Environment
		Municip. of Porto Calvo	Mayor
		Municip. of Porto de Pedras	Secretary of Administration
		Municip. of S o Luiz do Quitunde	Secretary of Tourism
		Municip. of S o Miguel dos Milagres	Secretary of Tourism and Environment

inate information and to promote coordinated local responses to the project planning. Another limitation of the workshops was that no more of them had been organised by mid-1998 to discuss more recent planning proposals.

Tables 2 and 3 analyse the workshop participants by municipality and by stakeholder category. The analysis excludes the PRODETUR/AL staff member and the three consultants.

Table 2 Stakeholders attending the workshop in each municipality

Municipality	Broad stakeholder category			Total stakeholders*	
	Alagoas State government	Municipal government	Other stake-holder	%	No.
Barra de Santo Antônio	4.6	63.6	31.8	100	22
Japaratinga	0	81.0	19.0	100	42
Maragogi	0	90.0	10.0	100	20
Matriz de Camaragibe	3.8	77.0	19.2	100	26
Paripueira	0	70.0	30.0	100	20
Passo de Camaragibe	3.6	53.6	42.8	100	28
Porto Calvo	0	87.5	12.5	100	16
Porto de Pedras	0	83.3	16.7	100	12
S o Luiz do Quintunde	8.6	62.9	28.6	100	35
S o Miguel dos Milagres	0	92.9	7.1	100	14

* Excludes a staff member and three consultants representing PRODETUR/AL at each workshop.

Table 3 Sectoral categories of stakeholders attending workshops in the municipalities

Broad stakeholder category*	%	Specific stakeholder category	%
Alagoas state government	2.6		
Municipal government	74.0		
		Tourism	3.0
		Public works and environmental services	2.6
		Culture and sport	1.7
		Education	20.9
		Health and social welfare	19.6
		Mayor and mayor's office	5.5
		Legislators	5.1
		Finance, legal and administration	14.0
		Other municipal government	1.6
Other stakeholders	23.4		
		Fishing	3.0
		Other business	5.1
		Rural workers	1.7
		Church and welfare organisations	4.7
		Residents' associations	3.0
		Other	5.9
Total percentage	100		
Number of stakeholders	235		

* Excludes a staff member and three consultants representing PRODETUR/AL at each workshop.

Arguably, Table 2 suggests that there was a reasonable attendance in each municipality affected by the project, with the smallest attendance being 12 in Porto de Pedras and the largest being 42 in Japaratinga. However, while it is notable that as many as 235 people participated in these workshops, this was still only a tiny fraction of the area's total population of 148,080. In addition, as many as 74% of participants were employed by municipal government, with these being in the majority in every workshop (varying from 53.6% of participants in Passo de Camaragibe municipality to 92.9% in S o Miguel dos Milagres). Particularly large proportions were in local government education and social welfare sectors, suggesting either that these groups were much involved in local affairs or that the project was expected to produce improved educational and social provision. Participants outside the public sector included local representatives from the fishing and agricultural industries, the business community, church and welfare organisations, and residents' associations.

Interviews with Stakeholder Representatives

The research literature reviewed earlier suggests that stakeholders affected by a tourism project can be examined using the opinions expressed by the stakeholders themselves. The potential value of this approach is considered now for the Costa Dourada project. Its application here involves examining in interviews the opinions expressed by a sample of 38 representatives of stakeholder groups affected by the project and also by the 29 representatives of stakeholder groups who had often attended project planning meetings. The interviews are used to assess the views of these representatives about the range of stakeholders participating in the project planning process.

The sample of 38 stakeholder group representatives who were affected by the project was selected to cover a broad range of interests, including interests in the public, private and NGO or non-profit sectors, at national, regional and local geographical scales, and of small, medium and large organisations and businesses. Government representation was focused particularly on departments and organisations with statutory responsibilities for tourism planning, economic development and infrastructure development. There was also a strong representation of stakeholders from three municipalities in the project area where the first phase of tourism development is to be concentrated. The sample was also developed using the snowball method described previously. This involved asking a core of stakeholder representatives to nominate representatives of other stakeholder groups they considered were significantly affected by the project, and when several respondents mentioned a particular stakeholder group it was added to the sample. The methods used to identify the stakeholder representatives who had often attended the project planning meetings were explained previously.

The interviews with the total of 67 respondents were conducted during mid-1998 as part of a broad research programme on collaborative planning, with only selected questions focused on the specific themes of this paper. The interviews were semi-structured based on a detailed schedule of questions and conducted in Portuguese. Respondents were contacted in advance to arrange the interview and they were assured about confidentiality, although the opinions expressed may have been influenced by political sensitivities. Interviews normally took place at the place of work or home of the respondent and were tape-recorded. Ritchie and Spencer's (1994) 'framework' approach was used to analyse the interview transcripts, which involves the systematic steps of becoming familiar with the material, identifying a thematic framework, rearranging the data according to appropriate thematic references, identifying key characteristics of the data, and interpreting the overall findings.

Stakeholder opinions on differences between participants and non-participants

At the start of the interview each of the 67 respondents was shown a list of the 29 stakeholder representatives who had often attended project planning meetings, and these were described to respondents as the participants who were more directly involved in the project planning. They were then asked what they considered were the differences, if any, between these 29 participants and other

Table 4 Differences that respondents mentioned between participants and non-participants in the planning meetings

Differences	Mentioned by	
	Respondents who had often attended the planning meetings	*Another respondent*
Participants are mostly from government organisations or have a public mission	11	7
Non-participants are mostly from the private sector or have profit motives	12	5
Non-participants are mostly in non-governmental organisations	7	3
Participants are responsible for building infrastructure	0	7
Non-participants will invest later	0	4
Participants have technical knowledge	8	5
Non-participants lack technical knowledge	2	4
Participants have financial resources or power	4	7
Non-participants have less financial resources or power	3	3
Non-participants know the local areas better or will be affected more	5	6
Participants can take a broader or more objective view	4	0
Other distinguishing characteristic	10	21
Little difference between participants and non-participants	9	7
Total mentions	75	79

stakeholders affected by the project. Table 4 categorises the characteristics that respondents mentioned as distinguishing these two groups. To simplify explanation, the former group are identified here as 'participants' and the latter group as 'non-participants' – in fact, some 'non-participants' might occasionally have attended a project meeting. Some respondents identified several distinguishing characteristics, and there is a large 'other' category because of the diversity of responses. Responses for the 29 respondents who often attended planning meetings are shown separately from those for the other 38 respondents.

Table 4 shows that the distinguishing characteristics mentioned most often were that participants were mostly in government or had a public mission, and that non-participants were mostly in the private sector or had profit motives. Several respondents identified the non-participants as mostly in non-government organisations. Hence, many people made distinctions around

the public sector being more directly involved in the planning process and the private sector not being involved in this way. A smaller number of respondents distinguished between participants and non-participants according to the former having technical knowledge, financial resources or power, and the latter lacking these attributes. Some respondents also suggested that non-participants knew the local areas better or would be more affected by the project, which suggests that they identified non-participants with interests that were focused in the municipalities.

Stakeholder opinions on the range of participants in the planning

In the interviews respondents were asked whether they considered all parties with an interest in the project were represented in the planning process. Table 5 shows that among the 29 respondents who had often attended a planning meeting, 65.5% considered that all relevant parties were represented in the project planning. By contrast, this was the opinion among only 31.6% of the 38 stakeholder representatives who were affected by the project but rarely or never attended a planning meeting. It is perhaps unsurprising that the former group considered all relevant parties were represented in the planning process, although even among this group almost a third identified other parties they considered should be represented. Some respondents who often attended planning meetings explained that the PRODETUR/AL planners had carefully selected the organisations to invite to the meetings. They had compiled an initial list of organisations, these organisations had then been invited to a meeting where they had discussed which other organisations to invite, and these other organisations were also invited to subsequent relevant meetings.

Several respondents who often attended planning meetings explained that there was scope to widen participation in later project stages. It was suggested that currently the project was focused on major infrastructure investment led by the public sector and in consequence it was premature to involve the private sector. There was a concern that the business sector would become impatient about the likely slow early pace of development if it was directly involved in planning activities from the early project stages. Some participants who often attended project meetings also suggested that additional parties could be involved once there was more evidence of physical development on the ground. A planner employed by PRODETUR/AL argued that there would be greater

Table 5 Whether respondents considered all parties with an interest in the project were represented in the planning process

Whether respondent had often attended planning meetings for the Costa Dourada Project	*Whether the respondent considered all parties with an interest in the Costa Dourada Project were represented in the planning process*				
	Number of respondents	*Yes*	*No*	*Not sure*	*Total %*
Had often attended planning meetings	29	65.5	34.5	0.0	100
Had not often attended planning meetings	38	31.6	60.5	7.9	100

private sector involvement during later project phases when 'we will have more financial conditions to implement the project more rapidly, to expand the scope of our actions. Nowadays our actions are limited. There is even under-utilisation of our consultants'. An airline representative who did not attend the planning meetings also suggested that airlines might become more involved in the planning when more infrastructure was in place.

A few respondents suggested that the private sector might not become involved even in the later stages of project planning. The representative of one municipality who often attended the planning meetings considered that, although commercial representation should be increased, 'They do not participate because most of them do not believe in these things [government projects] any longer … They think that there is too much talking and too little in result'. Another representative of a municipality stated that 'They [the private sector] only work with the government when they see practical results. Normally, they don't turn up because they have been consulted various times before and nothing has been built to the present time'. A staff member of PRODETUR/AL explained in relation to the private sector that 'We have already tried to involve them but their participation was small … what they really want is PRODETUR's resulting infrastructure'.

Later in interviews with respondents who had often attended the planning meetings they were asked for their opinions about why a wider range of parties with an interest in the project were not participating in the planning process. The most common response (six of the 29 respondents) was that some stakeholders had not participated despite having been invited to do so. Five respondents commented that it would be difficult to manage the project if more stakeholders were involved, with some noting that this applied in particular to the planning meetings. One stated that 'it would be very difficult to involve a broader number of organisations. It is already very complicated to work with the ones that had been involved so far'. The next most common response (four respondents) was that the range of parties involved is adequate for the current stage of the project and that others might be involved as necessary at a later stage. In addition, four respondents suggested that more parties might be involved if there was a stronger or more successful tradition of diverse stakeholders participating in planning activity. However, while some respondents mentioned shortcomings in the specific approach to the planning process taken by PRODETUR/AL, most suggested other explanations as to why the range of participants was not wider, such as disinterest among potential participants and the complexity of involving large numbers of people.

Stakeholder opinions on under-represented stakeholders

Respondents were also asked for their opinions about which stakeholders, if any, had not been represented in the Costa Dourada project planning but who ought to be represented. This question sought to identify the range of stakeholders that the stakeholders themselves perceived to be relevant to the project planning. The stakeholders so identified are presented in Table 6 according to whether they are in the private, public or other sectors, and in Table 7 in relation to whether their interests are focused at national, regional or local geographical

Table 6 Economic sector of stakeholders that respondents identified as un-
der-represented in the planning process

Whether respondent had often attended planning meetings for the Costa Dourada Project	Stakeholders the respondents considered had not been represented in the planning process for the Costa Dourada Project but who ought to be represented				
	Number of mentions of such stake-holders	Percentage of mentions by economic sector			
		Private sector	Public sector	Other	Total %
Had often attended planning meetings (N = 29)	92	42.4	27.2	30.4	100
Had not often attended planning meetings (N = 38)	145	44.1	27.6	28.3	100

Table 7 The geographical scale of stakeholders that respondents identified as under-
represented in the planning process

Whether respondent had often attended planning meetings for the Costa Dourada Project	Stakeholders the respondents considered had not been represented in the planning process for the Costa Dourada Project but who ought to be represented					
	Number of mentions of such stake-holders	Percentage of mentions by geographical scale				
		National	Regional	Local	Other	Total %
Had often attended planning meetings (N = 29)	92	10.9	31.5	31.5	26.1	100
Had not often attended planning meetings (N = 38)	145	4.8	45.5	29.7	20.0	100

scales. Both tables distinguish between the 29 respondents who had often
attended planning meetings and the other 38 respondents.

Table 6 shows that private sector stakeholders were identified most often as
under-represented in the project planning. This finding applies for respondents
who had often attended planning meetings and also for those not involved in this
way. Respondents gave numerous reasons as to why there should be greater
private sector participation. The justification offered by one tourist accommoda-
tion owner was that 'Tourism is not made by the government. The government
should provide the general direction. Tourism is made by the private sector'. A
spokesperson for local hoteliers argued that the private sector should be
involved to ensure that infrastructure developed by the public sector was appro-
priate for commercial hotel developers. He also contended that local hoteliers
had prior experience of solving the infrastructure problems of water and sewage
treatment and this experience would assist with the planning work. Another
argument was that local tourist businesses should be more involved because
skills and service levels in the sector need improving. A representative of an envi-
ronmental NGO argued for greater private sector participation so there would be

'an integration of their interests with the interests of the communities affected by the project'.

Stakeholders in the 'other' category, which includes various NGOs and community organisations, were also frequently mentioned as under-represented in the project planning (Table 6). A PRODETUR/AL manager suggested that more NGOs should be involved because many existing participants see the project as bringing largely benefits, such as additional jobs, and NGO representatives may assist them to recognise and avoid negative impacts. Other respondents considered that greater NGO involvement would help to broaden the representation of social groups, capture additional resources, speed up actions, and improve the effectiveness of implementation.

Just over a quarter of the mentions of stakeholders being under-represented related to stakeholders in the public sector (Table 6). Some respondents argued for greater participation in the project by municipal legislators, known as '*vereadores*'. An environmental group representative suggested that the munic-ipal legislators often fought for local community interests, and if they were involved in the project then 'diverse types of interests can be negotiated through them'. It was argued by a representative of the '*vereadores*' that municipal legisla-tors ought to be involved in order to explain to local residents that the project will bring significant benefits only in the long-term.

In Table 7 the stakeholders considered by respondents to be under-represented in the planning process are presented according to whether their interests were focused at national, regional or local geographical scales. The 'other' category includes stakeholders for whom this geographical focus was unclear. Stakeholders with regional interests were most often identified as being under-represented, followed by stakeholders with local interests. Several respondents stressed the importance of involving local communities in the plan-ning process. For example, a manager of tourist accommodation in Maragogi municipality asked: 'If Maragogi is going to benefit, who is Maragogi? It is its people … So they should participate in a direct way … If they live here, they know what affects them negatively and what benefits them'. A planner working for PRODETUR/AL argued that it is important to involve local people so that 'they grow with the project and they respect the project, and the project respects their culture'.

The respondents mentioned varied economic, environmental and social issues when explaining the stakeholders they considered under-represented in the project planning. For example, greater participation by fishing industry interests was advocated because fishing provides a livelihood for many people and brings substantial income to the area, and it may be affected by tourism development. Involvement by environmental groups was frequently justified in relation to specific environmental issues. Hence, one respondent wanted the Institute for the Preservation of the Atlantic Rainforest to participate in the plan-ning as it could provide technical expertise about rainforest remnants in the region as well as an ecotourism coordinator to assist in balancing tourism and environmental concerns. A few interviewees called for navy involvement in the project to encourage off-shore reef patrols in order to reduce the volume of boats and related damage to the reef. Two respondents argued for greater participa-tion in the project by representatives of agricultural workers so that these

workers could be helped to overcome poverty by producing fruit and vegetables for the tourist industry.

Conclusions

The paper has reviewed approaches to assessing the stakeholders affected by a tourism project who might participate in collaborative tourism planning. It also sought to demonstrate the value of two of these approaches in an evaluation of stakeholders affected by the Costa Dourada project. These approaches were used in the case study to examine whether the range of stakeholders participating in the project planning was representative of the stakeholders affected by the project, thereby providing greater potential to meet the equity requirements of sustainable development. An inadequate involvement of the affected parties can heighten the potential for conflict and reinforce inequalities. Acceptance of, and support for a plan is often enhanced when those affected by it are included in designing it. Using the two approaches, an examination was also made of whether the range of stakeholder participation was likely to promote consideration being given to the diverse issues affecting sustainable development. According to Wahab and Pigram (1998: 283), sustainable tourism requires that 'the planning, development and operation of tourism should be cross-sectional and integrated, involving various government departments, public and private sector companies, community groups and experts, thus providing the widest possible safeguards for success'.

It could be argued that a relatively broad array of stakeholders was included in the project planning. Such a conclusion may be appropriate in the context of a country only emerging from a military dictatorship in the mid-1980s and only relatively recently experimenting with more inclusive or participatory approaches to planning. Indeed, some of the interview respondents noted that the Costa Dourada project was unusual in the degree to which it sought to involve diverse stakeholders in the planning process. PRODETUR/AL's use of planning meetings and workshops involved stakeholders with varied economic, cultural, social, environmental, and political interests. For example, the public sector representatives who often attended the planning meetings were involved in a broad spread of policy areas, such as regional development, transport, tourism, coastal management, and the environment.

Inputs were also encouraged from representatives of interests focused at different geographical scales, notably the state and municipal scales. For example, each municipality had a representative in the collaborative planning meetings and there was a workshop in each municipality. In regional-scale planning initiatives such as this project it is particularly important to involve stakeholders from different geographical levels of the policy hierarchy (local, regional, state and national) as well as the various interests at each of these levels of governance. The network of multiple players involved in planning for the Costa Dourada project had potential to provide the social and intellectual capital through which planning outcomes might be developed more for the common good than for narrow sectional interests (Innes, 1995; Ostrom, 1990). Similarly, it provided some possibility that varied issues of sustainable development would feature in deliberations about the direction of the project.

However, there were significant gaps in the representation in the project planning of the stakeholders affected by the project. In particular, the stakeholders who often attended the planning meetings were almost all in the public sector, and local public sector employees were in the majority in the workshops. There was also no direct commercial sector representation among those who often attended planning meetings. The interviews with stakeholder representatives show that many of them perceived there was very strong public sector involvement and relatively weak commercial sector involvement in the project planning. Some of those interviewed hoped that the private sector would become more involved once the public sector had led the way by developing the initial infrastructure.

The limited private sector participation in the project after four years of operation could reduce future support from the business sector for the project objectives of sustainable development. It might also hinder subsequent work to put planning initiatives into practice. For example, Inskeep (1994: 240) argues that with tourism development 'Public-private sector coordination is an essential ingredient in successful implementation'. The commercial sector might have been reluctant to participate because it involves time being lost that could be used to earn income or because of suspicions about strategic planning and committees. They might also have been reluctant because some government projects in Brazil have suffered from intense political competition, problems of control and accountability in the bureaucracy, scarcity of funding and other resources, and corruption (Morah, 1996). It should be noted that the business sector is a powerful influence on tourism development, and it would gain even greater influence with more involvement in the planning process.

There was also scope for greater participation in the project by environmental interests, notably by environmental NGOs. Both NGOs and community groups were mentioned as poorly represented by a number of stakeholders who were interviewed. While environmental concerns have become more prominent in Alagoas in recent years, some parties affected by the project still regard environmental conservation as a low priority because of pressures for rapid economic development. Medeiros de Araujo and Power (1993: 299–300) argue that 'This attitude is deeply rooted in the cultural heritage of Alagoas, where a kind of ruling class has been accustomed to imposing its point of view through the control of public opinion'. The interviews suggest that some people were largely concerned about economic development and new community amenities, with little mention being made of the long-term environmental impacts. Tosun and Jenkins (1998: 109) suggest that 'The struggle to overcome extreme conditions of poverty are the main source of many environmental problems in developing countries … some countries or regions have no choice but to opt to develop tourism for immediate economic benefits at the expense of sociocultural and environmental impacts'.

However, in practice the number of stakeholders involved in collaborative planning must be manageable and has to be limited in order to sustain a productive dialogue and increase the likelihood of building trust and consensus (Williams *et al.*, 1998). Involving large numbers of stakeholders can make satisfactory outcomes difficult to achieve, a point made in the interviews by some of the stakeholders affected by the Costa Dourada project. It was also suggested

that some stakeholders were invited to attend and did not do so. But if legitimate stakeholders are excluded or ignored then the quality and degree of acceptance of the project plans will be questionable. In addition, it is very difficult to make definitive overall statements about whether the range of stakeholders involved in the planning process was representative of the stakeholders affected by a project. For example, how does one decide what is an appropriate balance between stakeholders with interests focused at national, regional and local geographical scales, particularly in the broader context of sustainable development? (Yuksel *et al.*, 1999). Similarly, what is an appropriate balance between stakeholders whose concerns are focused on economic and environmental issues?

Findings from this paper could be of assistance to planners involved in the Costa Dourada project. For example, the information about the under-representation of certain stakeholder groups could be used for 'stakeholder targeting' in order to broaden stakeholder representation in planning meetings. For instance, the findings of this study might encourage PRODETUR/AL to assess how the project might be affected subsequently by the limited involvement by the private sector and by environmental NGOs. The research showed that many stakeholders emphasised the economic impacts of tourism and its efficient use to create income, employment and infrastructure benefits for the region and communities. As the project is in a poor region of Brazil these priorities are perhaps unsurprising. However, these attitudes may change in the future as tourism develops in the region and the stakeholders recognise the disadvantages as well as advantages of tourism. If more environmental NGOs were to participate then the project might adopt a more cautious approach.

The case study was also intended to illustrate some aspects of stakeholder assessments that have potential value in the general field of tourism planning. Stakeholder assessments can assist planners to identify the interests, groups and individuals that are stakeholders in planning exercises, as well as their values, interests and relative power. The identification of the 'universe' of stakeholders is important for inclusive collaborative approaches to planning, such as the development of partnerships. Healey (1997: 271) also argues that such 'stakeholder analysis needs to be conducted in an explicit, dynamic and revisable way, as stakeholders may change over time in their concerns. Given the range of potential stakeholders, it is always possible that those involved in the strategy-making exercise will become aware of new stakeholders as they go along. Inclusionary strategy-making exercises need to be open to admit "new members" as work proceeds'.

Acknowledgements

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