

"Tourism brings enormous benefits to less economically developed countries and very few problems"

▲ tourist is a person who stays for more than one night in a place that is not their usual environment. Tourism is everything to do with tourists, including the activities they take part in and the services that support them. ▲ LEDC is a 'less economically developed country'; this can be measured by income (per capita), GDP (gross domestic product), life expectancy and literacy rates.

Tourism has grown for a variety of reasons, the main reason being greater affluence, people in the UK have fairly high salaries and also workers receive more paid holidays which gives them the incentive to go on holiday. Greater mobility and improved accessibility also encourages people to travel, for example, 72% of the British population have at least one car and with easier access to airports and domestic locations thanks to better roads more people can travel with ease. ▲ Also the booming popularity of no-frills airlines can get people anywhere in the world for more than half the price 10 years ago. Changing lifestyles and recreational activities have also increased international tourism. People are a lot fitter now than before and retire early to take advantage of their fitness and to travel more, this maybe a reason why active holidays are becoming more popular. The pressure of work is increasing therefore longer, more frequent breaks are required. ▲ Advertising and TV programmes are also boosting tourism as they are promoting new and different places. Many travel companies now promote family holidays and theme parks are becoming more important.

The most visited LEDC is Mexico with 21.4 million tourists in 2006 and 2007. There is a decrease in active holidays, which means countries like Mexico with its unique history and favourable climate would benefit from this. South East ▲ Asian countries like Malaysia and Thailand are following suit with a blend of its cultural heritage and its relaxing beaches. Countries in ▲ Africa such as Kenya provide Safari holidays which are very popular for Europeans.

Rank	Country	World Tourist Arrivals 2006	World Tourist Arrivals 2007
1.	France	79.1 million	81.9 million
2.	Spain	58.5 million	59.2 million
3.	USA▲	51.1 million	56.0 million
4.	China	49.6 million	54.7 million
5.	Italy	41.1 million	43.7 million
6.	United Kingdom	30.7 million	30.7 million
7.	Germany	23.6 million	24.4 million
8.	Ukraine	18.9 million	23.1 million
9.	Turkey	18.9 million	22.2 million
10.	Mexico	21.4 million	21.4 million

The economic benefits of tourism in LEDC's are that it creates more jobs both directly and indirectly towards tourism. For example in ▲Antigua a new hotel development will employ 2000 people in addition to the 6000 who are already working in Hotels. Locals business will supply services for these new hotels. This will also attract more business to come and set up in these areas and more jobs will be created especially foreign investment which as well as local businesses will rely on tourist spending and more tourist spending means more income for the locals. This creates a very positive multiplying effect as more investment comes in the more jobs created and therefore more income. This income will return to the government in the form of tax and the taxes will be spent on improving the infrastructure and tourist services of the country. In LEDC's tourism is vital in pushing the economic development of the country and it is most likely to stabilize and increase the GDP and economic position of the country.

On the other hand, many countries are far too dependent on tourism, ▲Antigua generates £200m from tourism and this is the only revenue that they can generate as the country lacks industry or agriculture and of this amount of money 96 cents of every dollar goes back to the USA▲. This is the same with many other LEDC's as the money that goes towards the hotels and holiday resorts is provided by foreign investors. The money invested by foreigners is only being spent on hotels, holiday resorts etc. not vital resources such as hospitals, schools

etc. Also a fall in visitor numbers will be likely to hit the economy hard. Local trade is discouraged by the holiday companies and the rise of the all-inclusive holidays mean that local businesses are losing out.

A main social benefit for tourism in LEDC's is 'Community Tourism' where tourists are being encouraged to live with local communities and appreciate the local way of living. This benefits the locals in a major way as they can earn money which was hard to come by previously. In Gambia locals are the ones that are running this type of tourism with little interference from the government. History based holidays is also attracting more tourists. Tourism is encouraging locals to preserve and celebrate their culture as well as providing cultural exchange between tourists and locals. The new facilities created due to tourism can also benefit the residents. Tourism also promotes the learning of new languages and new skills which can help the natives a lot in finding jobs etc.

On the contrary tourists can disrupt the local way of life and are sometimes ignorant of the local way of life; this could lead to the gradual erosion of traditional values. Also local culture may fade away as locals will change their ways to earn more money from tourists by setting up amenities that would be familiar to tourists in their homeland and this could lead to a downfall in terms of visitor numbers as tourist will not be sampling a new culture but one that that they would experience at home. Tourism brings a lot of crime as the poorer natives will be ready to take all they can from the visitors. Prostitution is now a very big industry in Thailand due to the emergence of tourism which started after the Vietnam War. There are around 200,000 prostitutes in Thailand, originally from small villages and they are mainly to cater for the tourists. This is a major blow to Thailand as they have lost 200,000 able workers; this could turn out to be a major loss of revenue for the government. There can also be Human Rights offences involved in tourism as people have been displaced from their land for the building of a new beach resort, for example.

Environmental benefits of tourism are the fact the country's flora and fauna are a main reason why tourists visit, Ecuador, Thailand and Antigua have a vast range of Biodiversity and is a major factor in convincing people to come to visit their countries. When tourists take their vacations in LEDC's, this encourages the residents to look after their area. Antigua has 'a beach for every day of the year' and these are the kinds of hooks that get western tourists to come. LEDC's are arguably more environmentally spectacular than most MEDC's and LEDC's are using this to their advantage and rake in the tourists. There is likely to be a

rise in locally grown food which will support the farmers who grow them as well as possibly creating a new source of income for the locals.

Alternatively, the local wildlife and landscapes are being destroyed to make more tourist areas, like in Antigua the marine life and coral reefs are being destroyed in favour of new hotels that are by the beach and green areas are decreasing. There will be a large increase for limited resources such as water and land, which could ultimately result in land deprivation and degradation. Also in LEDC's where sewage and sanitation are not as good as MEDC's, tourists will directly be responsible for adding to sewage problems and a lot of water will be wasted when it could be more useful things, like water supplies for the locals. In Thailand elephants are badly mistreated for the tourism trade and around 50% of elephants die for tourism. For some LEDC's the best time to view their natural beauty is in the off-season and this could affect tourism rates, which is the harsh reality for these countries. Pollution is also a major factor in effecting the environment when tourism is concerned.

Eco-Tourism is now being pushed in many LEDC's. Eco-tourism is a form of tourism that appeals to those who are environmentally aware and socially conscious. Eco-tourism involves activities that minimise the harmful aspects of mass tourism on the environment and develop the cultural pride and honour of people. A good example of a country benefiting from eco-tourism is Ecuador. They realise that there is a lot of money to be earned from Eco-Tourism as more people are becoming environmentally aware. This leads to the conservation and preservation of the country's natural resources and can also revitalize an entire country. This type of tourism is sustainable and therefore can be carried on for generations to come, and so is bound to attract more visitors to these countries. This is also good because LEDC's will not have to spend excessive amount of money to make this work and instead just rely on what they already have. Tourists will not lose out, the government will not lose out and most importantly the locals will not lose out.

There are many interest groups involved when it comes to tourism. Interest groups are people who are interested or involved in tourism. These groups can vary from the tourist authority to the animal protection organisation. Below, I have created a Conflict Matrix for Thailand showing 7 different groups and how they conflict.

Interest Group	Locals	Tourism ▲uthority	PET▲	Hoteliers	Tour Companies	Elephant ride operators	Police
Locals	—						C
Tourism ▲uthority	C	—					
PET▲			—			C	
Hoteliers	C	C		—	C		
Tour Companies	C				—		
E.R.O						—	
Police							—

From the Conflict Matrix above there are a few conflicts that arise between interest groups. The main conflicts occur between the Tourism ▲uthority, Hoteliers and Tour Companies. This is probably down to the fact that they will all need each other for themselves to make maximum profit which is not surprising. There are also conflicts between Tour Companies and Locals. Locals will want the tour companies to attract tourists to them so they can make more income for themselves. Tour companies tend to keep tourists away from local businesses and this is why they are in conflict. This in turn makes locals clash with police as they are being treated very unfairly and are losing a vital source of their income. In addition to this there is a conflict between the PET▲ and the elephant ride operators. This is because of the poor treatment of the elephants but the operators would argue that their income would suffer if they were to discontinue their business.

I think that in the current climate that tourism is going to decrease in the near future for a variety of reasons. The main one being is that the current financial situation means that there is going to be less disposable income and of the little disposable income people have, holidays will not be the number one priority anymore. ▲s environmental awareness increases and oil resources will be largely decreasing in the next few decades travel companies will find it hard to get the business that they would need. This may possibly lead to travel companies getting into financial difficulties and this could make those who may be still

willing to travel not want to travel. Those who will be affected most by this will be the LEDC's as they rely so much on tourism. The locals will not be making any income and a knock on effect of this will be that the GDP of the country will reduce.

In overall conclusion I think that the statement: "Tourism brings enormous benefits to less economically developed countries and very few problems" is incorrect. Economically it provides huge benefits for the LEDC's by bringing in foreign investment and enabling local businesses to flourish. Socially, there is a gradual erosion of culture to adapt to tourists tastes and the crime and prostitution rates are increasing in many places. Environmentally, the wastage of resources, especially water by the tourists means that there is less for those who need it more. Green areas are being destroyed to make room for tourist accommodation. Mass tourism is very unsustainable and the only method of making tourism more sustainable is eco-tourism. I think eco-tourism will increase profit, enhance the culture of the country as well as promoting preservation and conservation of the land. It is also sustainable and therefore can continue for many years to come. Eco-tour is only in an infant stage at the moment but if this idea is backed by the governments, in all probability the answer to this question would be very different in the future.