

NODA Project 4053: Identifying sites/opportunities for forest-based ecotourism. Northern Ontario.

**Report 1**

**DRAFT**

**Review of the development of ecotourism with  
respect to identifying criteria for ecotourism for  
Northern Ontario**

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## Executive Summary

This report identifies criteria suitable to ecotourism within a Northern Ontario context. It represents the initial step in a multi-stage project to develop a methodology to identify sites and opportunities for ecotourism within the forest environment of Northern Ontario. Criteria were selected on the basis of a review of literature on ecotourism. The review highlighted the following points:

- there is no generally accepted definition of ecotourism
- the nature and scale of ecotourism present has bearing on how it is defined
- ecotourism has recognized linkages with other types of tourism (alternative) and ideas related to environmental management (sustainable tourism development)
- although the term was first coined in 1983 it has a long and diverse history
- ecotourism has been enthusiastically embraced by the tourism industry without much evaluation and acceptance that there are economic, environmental, social and institutional consequences associated with this tourism type.
- ecotourism within Northern Ontario will be very much different than ecotourism found in areas which are more noted for it (tropical areas of Latin America, Asia, and Africa, and isolated regions like the Arctic and Antarctica)

Within the context of Northern Ontario, ecotourism is defined as:

**"a responsible nature travel experience, that contributes to the conservation of the ecosystem while respecting the integrity of host communities and where possible ensuring that activities are complementary or at least compatible with existing resource based uses present at the ecosystem level"**

On the basis of the review of the literature, seven key attributes are noted as having applicability in identifying appropriate elements of



ecotourism in a Northern Ontario setting. It is argued that ecotourism in Northern Ontario should be:

- environmentally and socially responsible
- focused on elements of the natural environment
- managed in such a way as to have minimal environmental and social impacts
- nonconsumptive
- capable of providing desired economic benefits to local residents
- compatible with other resource uses in the area
- appropriate in scale for conditions and environment

Based on the above attributes of ecotourism, the following criteria are selected to identify sites within Northern Ontario:

- **naturalness**; absence of permanent settlement, absence of evidence of cutting, undrained wetlands, unmodified rivers/lakes, absence of intrusive sound
- **wildlife**; suitable habitat for key species, migration routes/flyways, wintering sites, feeding/drinking sites, deer yards, nature reserves/zones
- **cultural heritage**; designated historic sites, historical parks, historic routes
- **landscape**; significant features, rock outcrops, viewpoints
- **community**; services, access, employment opportunities

Measures and characteristics were identified for attributes of each of the five criteria listed above. These varied from being expressed in terms of absolutes, e.g. absence or presence of permanent settlement, to being expressed in terms of a continuum. The next report will follow up on the criteria, attributes and characteristics identified in this report to determine what elements of these can be determined using Geographical Information Systems (GIS) related data.

## 1.0 Introduction

This report represents the initial step in a multi-stage project to develop a methodology whereby sites and opportunities for ecotourism can be identified within the forest environment of Northern Ontario. Specifically, the focus of this first report is to identify criteria within this context. The authors are of the view that the selection of criteria that are considered to have merit, should be reached on the basis of a thorough understanding of what is meant by the term ecotourism and its various dimensions. It should be noted that this report is not a bibliography of material on ecotourism, but rather a critique and assessment of past research in order to identify relevant criteria. The emphasis of this report is, therefore, on the activity of ecotourism rather than on those who are participating in this type of tourism, namely the ecotourist. With respect to this last point, while, the authors remain cognizant that an understanding of ecotourism does to an extent involve understanding those engaging in the activity, at the same time, the focus of this review is ecotourism itself and not those it attracts. That does not mean that the literature on ecotourists was not examined, rather, where it was considered to be of value to the overall goal of this phase, literature on ecotourists was integrated into the discussion.

For the most part, the literature search focused on work undertaken by academics, tourism researchers, consultants and interested lay people. Discussions were held with a number of tourism "experts" within Southwestern and Northern Ontario. The authors reviewed journal articles, several books, annotated bibliographies, conference proceedings, symposia reports, government studies, newsletters, and consulting reports in order to compile the report.

This report comprises eight sections. Following this introduction (section 1), the problems in defining ecotourism are addressed in section two. Section three outlines the linkages between ecotourism, various concepts and other types of tourism. A brief history of ecotourism is also documented. A fourth section provides an evaluation of ecotourism. Section five addresses the economic, environmental, social and institutional consequences of ecotourism. A discussion of the elements of ecotourism considered to be suitable for Northern Ontario are discussed in section six. Based on the preceding discussion, a seventh section outlines appropriate criteria of ecotourism within a Northern Ontario context. An eighth and final section offers some concluding comments.

## **2.0 Toward Definition**

What is meant by ecotourism? What are the various elements of this form of tourism? From a review of the literature, it would appear that, as for many recent environmental buzzwords, such as sustainable development and sustainability, there is no unifying or generally accepted definition of ecotourism. The term ecotourism implies a form of tourism which is ecologically based. Many terms have been used to describe the same phenomenon, including nature travel (Laarman and Durst, 1987), nature-oriented tourism (Durst and Ingram, 1988), nature tourism (Wilson and Laarman, 1988), nature-based tourism (Valentine, 1992), and special interest tourism (Weiler and Hall, 1992, Inskip, 1987), and as a result there are problems of definition. In addition, Butler, J.R. (1992), noted that ecotourism was not always the established term used, while Scace et al. (1992) identified 35 terms that have links with ecotourism, such as alternative tourism, and



sustainable tourism (Appendix 1). These authors suggest that it is necessary to present the term in its broadest context in order to secure the broadest possible support for it. The dangers inherent of allowing ecotourism such scope, is that ecotourism can fall prey to indiscriminate use as a catchall phrase for almost anything that links tourism with nature (Farrell and Runyan, 1991). The interrelationships between ecotourism and other forms of tourism are discussed at greater length later in this report.

In light of the foregoing comments, a precise definition that outlines the limits of what is ecotourism and what is not ecotourism would be beneficial. The most commonly used definition of ecotourism is that stated by Hector Ceballos-Lascurain, who first coined the term ecotourism in Mexico City a decade ago. He defines ecotourism as "traveling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas" (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1987, in Boo, 1990). Simply put, ecotourism has become the new slogan for conservation (Cerovsky, 1992; Harvey, 1990 in Kusler, 1991). It is therefore not surprising that bodies such as the IUCN have embraced this definition. The main weakness of this definition is that it lacks an economic component, in other words, it fails to address the economic opportunities that this form of tourism can offer. The Ecotourism Society, addresses this oversight in its definition. The society defines ecotourism as "...the purposeful travel to natural areas, to understand the cultures and natural history of the environment, taking care not to alter the integrity of the ecosystem, while producing economic opportunities that make the conservation of natural resources beneficial to local people..." (Wood, 1991 et al.). The issue of balancing environmental and economic considerations is

advocated by others. Choegyel (1991), examining ecotourism within the context of national parks and wildlife reserves in developing countries, defines ecotourism as the successful balance of (1) showing people the best of remote and beautiful areas with the minimum of environmental stress, (2) involving local communities and (3) benefiting both the local and national economies.

Others identify a symbiotic link between ecotourism and sustainable development. Within this context, Cater (1993) outlines three components that are necessary in order for ecotourism to be sustainable. It must: meet the needs of the host population; satisfy demand of tourists and continue to attract them in order to meet the first need; and safeguard the natural environment in order to achieve previous aims. Lane (1991) sees ecotourism as a form of tourism which integrates the sustainability ethic by addressing the visitor, the place, and the host community, viewing all three to be in equilibrium against the external influences that are or may be present. It is therefore not inconceivable to view ecotourism as a component of sustainable development.

Another problem in defining the term is the fact that it is portrayed, at times, to have a number of dimensions. Wilson and Laarman, (1988) for example, classify ecotourism as having "hard" and "soft" dimensions when the interests of travelers and the physical rigor of the experience itself are taken into account. For instance, "hard" or dedicated natural history ecotourism, is the kind practiced by the likes of geologists, botanists, ornithologists, and scientists in general, as opposed to "soft" or casual natural history travel which combines nature-oriented travel with other tourism activities such as visiting the beach and shopping for crafts and souvenirs. With respect to the physical rigor of the experience, ecotourism that is considered "hard" involves trekking in undeveloped regions, camping, and accepting poor sanitary



conditions. In contrast, "soft" or easy ecotourism is equated with travel where the tourist stays in quality accommodations, eats in restaurants and uses established modes of transport. A similar typology is offered by Ziffer (1989) where four types of ecotourism are noted: hard-core, dedicated nature, mainstream nature and casual nature. Ziffer (1989) points out that perhaps one of the reasons why ecotourism has eluded firm definition is because it is multi-purpose, attempting to describe an activity, set forth a philosophy, while at the same time espouse a model of development. With respect to its philosophy, Ziffer sees ecotourism as not just people turning to the natural environment, but rather as an ethic of how to turn to the natural environment and a way of doing it (in J.R. Butler, 1992).

In the absence of achieving a unifying definition, it is necessary to note the general characteristics that distinguish ecotourism from other forms of tourism. Scace et al. (1992) identify four distinctive elements: (1) it is a specialty type of tourism, (2) creates low to minimal impact on the resource base, (3) promotes environmental conservation and (4), offers local and national community a sustainable economic activity. Butler, J.R. (1991) in working on a protected areas vision for Canada, goes considerably further, and argues that there are eight characteristics that describe ecotourism:

1. promotes positive environmental ethic
2. it does not degrade the resource; no consumptive erosion of the natural environment visited
3. the focus is on intrinsic rather than extrinsic values
4. it is biocentric rather than homocentric in philosophy
5. it must benefit the wildlife and environment
6. it is a first hand experience with the natural environment

7. it has an "expectation of gratification" that is measured in terms of education

8. it has a high cognitive and effective experiential dimensions.

This is, perhaps, the most extreme view of ecotourism and, although it is the most expansive and detailed list to date, the authors of this report express doubt on the credibility of some of the dimensions and the fact that many are virtually impossible to identify, let alone measure. First, it is naive to believe that ecotourism does not degrade the resource (#2). All forms of tourism leave impacts. The nature and scale of these impacts, however, may vary given the type and scale of tourism present, but the fact that tourism is a phenomenon that is concentrated both temporally and spatially, means that it is inevitable that impacts will result. Second, it is unclear why it is necessary for the wildlife to benefit (#5) and more importantly, how this might be achieved. An additional aspect for consideration is that there is no accommodation in the above criteria for the fact that ecotourism should, by many definitions, maintain and enhance the quality of life of the host community from both a social and economic perspective (e.g. CEAC and CPS workshops in Canada, 1991).

One issue which has to be recognized is that the definitions of ecotourism have changed appreciably over the decade since the term was introduced. Ceballos-Lascurains definition suggests a form of tourism which is little different in effect from much of what has traditionally been regarded as wilderness recreation in North America. His definition notes the following points:

- undisturbed/uncontaminated natural areas
- studying, admiring, enjoying (i.e. non consumptive use of) scenery, flora and fauna.

- studying, admiring, enjoying cultural manifestations

It says nothing about resource degradation, nothing about having positive impacts on the flora or fauna, nothing about economic impacts or benefits on local communities, and nothing about the nature of the experience or satisfaction derived by the visitor.

Subsequent definitions, as discussed earlier, have added ideological and value laden attributes to the term. They have served to obscure rather than define the meaning of ecotourism and have made ecotourism, as defined most recently, of marginal relevance to much of Canada.

One final point should be made with respect to defining ecotourism. As a concept, ecotourism should be viewed as dynamic and flexible, prone to change given the various settings in which it occurs (e.g. coastal regions, forested landscapes, national parks and protected areas, wildlife reserves, private land) and the range of experience sought by those traveling to such varied landscapes. In principal, therefore, in order to understand ecotourism, an integrative approach is needed where it is understood that no one definition is suitable for all settings and that certain elements will have greater value than others given the environment that ecotourism is being promoted.

Scace et al., (1992) suggest the following ideas to be useful in defining ecotourism. First, it should be brief and simple to avoid misunderstanding. Second, it should endorse partnerships, noting linkages between heritage resources and the host community. Third, it should stress the meaningful contributions ecotourism offers to conservation. And fourth, it should demonstrate the support ecotourism has for enhancement and maintenance of the integrity of natural conservation and host populations.



In light of the above discussion on the problems with definition, it is necessary that a working definition is given for ecotourism as it relates to the project at large. Scace et al., (1992, 14) in their study of assessing the opportunities for ecotourism in Canada, defined the term to be "an enlightened nature travel experience that contributes to conservation of the ecosystem while respecting the integrity of host communities." While the authors agree with the principles in this definition, it is felt necessary to expand it to incorporate and account for other resource related activities that are present at the ecosystem level. Emphasis here is placed on the extent to which they are compatible to, and complementary with, each other. Given this standpoint, ecotourism is defined for the purposes of this study as :

**"a responsible nature travel experience, that contributes to the conservation of the ecosystem while respecting the integrity of host communities and, where possible, ensuring that activities are complementary, or at least compatible, with existing resource-based uses present at the ecosystem level."**

In light of the above, ecotourism must be an environmentally and socially responsible form of tourism, that the focus should be on the intrinsic attractions of the natural environment, rather than development, it should operate in such a way as to minimize impacts on the host environment and community, and should provide economic benefits to local residents when these are desired. It is important that it does not affect negatively existing resource uses in the area.

### 3.0 Linkages

As stated in the previous section, one reason why it has been difficult to have consensus on defining ecotourism is the fact that ecotourism has been linked to many other types of tourism and ideas related to environmental management. This section provides an examination of these linkages, develops a model that illustrates these interrelationships, and the nature of the linkages and speculates on future trends and directions which each tourism type might take. Scace et al., (1992) noted 35 aspects that were related to ecotourism. It not the intention of the authors to illustrate the linkages among all 35 ideas for a number of reasons. First, even though many of the ideas are expressed a number times using different adjectives, identifying all such linkages would be too complex and subject to much uncertainty, given that often no specific information is available to justify linkages made. Second, having too many terms would mask key interrelationships that are present among related ideas. Third, the exercise would be rendered meaningless and instead of reducing complexity as models are supposed to do, the overall goal of explaining the relationships would be rendered impossible. For the purposes of this study, the model, therefore, outlines the relationships between ecotourism, alternative tourism, sustainable development, and mass or conventional tourism. Before pursuing the discussion of the model, it is necessary to outline what is meant by these other forms of tourism and their relationship with sustainable tourism development.



### 3.1 Sustainable Tourism Development

Much has been written about the relationship between the environment, development and the economy as most noted in the Brundtland Commission (WCED) report, *Our Common Future* (1987). Although tourism is regarded as the second largest industry in the world today, and possibly will be the largest by the year 2000, it is surprising that no specific reference was made to tourism and tourism resources in that report. By its very nature of often total reliance on the environment for its continued well being and existence, many have noted that tourism often lends itself well to the idea of sustainable development (Wall, 1993b; Sadler, 1988). However, as Butler, R.W. (1993a) pointed out, the enthusiasm for linking sustainable development with tourism may need to be tempered by the reality that there is still a lot that is not known about tourism, its linkage with the environment, and that there is still a paucity of empirical information to demonstrate clearly that tourism can be sustainable in nature. While it can be suggested that certain forms of tourism such as ecotourism, nature tourism and alternative tourism may lend themselves more to sustainability than others, other forms of tourism do not e.g, mass or conventional tourism. Butler, R.W. (1993a) noted that the difficulty of linking tourism with sustainable development principles stemmed in part from the lack of a clear definition of sustainable tourism development. To that end, he offered the following definition:

"...tourism which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the

successful development and well-being of other activities and processes."

(Butler, R.W. 1993a, 29).

This should not be seen to be the same as sustainable tourism. According to Butler, R.W. (1993a), sustainable tourism may be thought of as "a form of tourism that is able to maintain its viability in an area for an indefinite period of time" (1993a, 29).

Sustainable tourism development can be viewed as a central idea to understanding the relationship between different types of tourism and sustainability. The elements of sustainable tourism development include:

#### Principles of

- inter- and intra-generational equity
- equity in terms of access
- use levels kept below carrying capacity limits
- conservation based (enhancement of area that offers tourism)

#### Planning

- long term
- proactive rather than reactive
- adaptive rather than ad hoc
- integrative rather than separate
- local involvement encouraged

#### Management

- accountability/assigned responsibility
- interdisciplinary in nature
- integrative with partnerships encouraged with other activities.

While this is not an exhaustive list of attributes of sustainable tourism development, it serves the purpose for comparing different forms of tourism which previously stated, that may have closer ties to sustainability than others. With this perspective in mind, the following discussion addresses different forms of tourism.

### 3.2 Alternative Tourism

The concern over the impacts that tourism generate, whether they are of an environmental, social or economic nature, has led to the search for alternative types of tourism which are considered to have minimal impact. A review of literature on alternative tourism has focused on defining it and outlining its various elements. It is generally accepted to represent a departure away from the characteristics that have become synonymous with mass forms of tourism such as, large numbers, significant environmental and social impacts, emphasis on western ideals, ugly developments, architectural styles that do not suit the landscape, and limited, generally exploitive interaction with the local community. In contrast, alternative tourism is viewed as small-scale tourism, developed by local people and based on local nature and culture. In particular, special attention is paid to functioning within an area's environmental and social carrying capacity (Krippendorf, 1987; Jones, 1992). Examples of alternative forms of tourism are responsible tourism, adventure travel or tourism, nature tourism, sustainable tourism and ecotourism.

While any departure away from negative aspects of mass tourism may be considered as a laudable goal, alternative tourism is not without criticism. Comparisons like those noted above are criticized on the basis that they are too



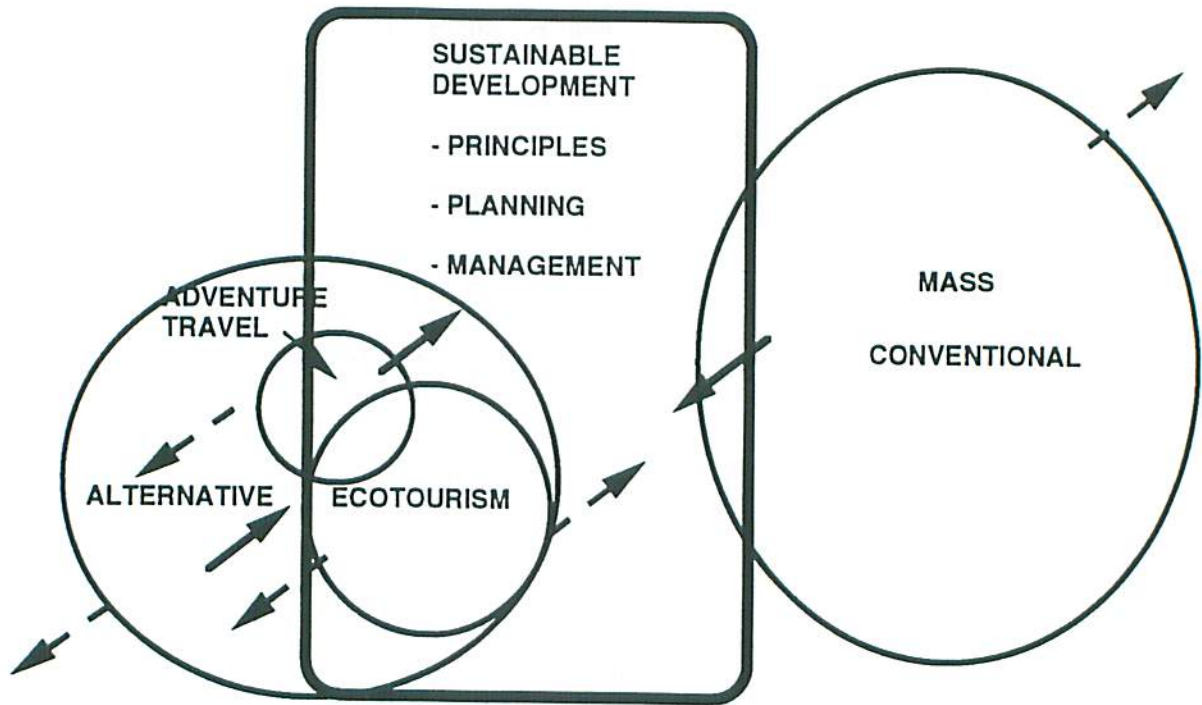
simplistic and often idealistic. Wheeler (1991, 1992) argues that alternative forms of tourism are not a solution to mass tourism, given the numbers of people that are involved. Alternative forms of tourism involve small numbers, whereas mass tourism operates at a much larger scale. Furthermore, he views alternative forms as being no more than precursors to mass tourism. Butler, R.W. (1990) points out that alternative tourism is not always planned, that comparisons fail to be made between alternative tourism and having no tourism at all, that it is elitist in nature, and worse of all, it spreads tourism to areas that have not yet been spoiled by tourism. In essence, he argues that the problems, the implications, and the potential costs have generally been ignored, and that in some situations the cure may be worse than the symptom (Butler, R.W. 1990, 40). Cohen (1989) sums up these concerns when he states that the problems associated with alternative tourism are the consequences of ideals that were set too high with unrealistic hopes for them.

Despite such criticisms, it should be pointed out that the types of tourism which can be categorized under this umbrella term are those types which frequently have witnessed the greatest growth in recent years. The reality that more and more people are seeking alternatives to more conventional tourism requires that these forms be developed and promoted along the lines of sustainable development.

Figure 1 shows the interrelationships present between different forms of tourism, and sustainable tourism development. Ecotourism is viewed as fitting within the sustainable development framework. There is a certain amount of overlap with adventure travel, which to many is a form of ecotourism that involves a higher degree of risk and possibly environmental impact. The extent of the latter attribute explains why it should not be placed in its entirety within the sustainable tourism development framework. At the

Figure 1

Relationship between sustainable tourism development, ecotourism, adventure travel, alternative tourism, and mass (conventional) tourism



Perceived as a negative development/  
trend



Perceived as a positive development/  
trend



opposite end of the spectrum, mass tourism is shown to be operating generally in isolation from sustainable development principles, and given the scale of tourism involved it is hard to think that much of it could operate along these principles. A long term view for tourism types is illustrated by the dashed and solid arrows. Tourism that develops in line with sustainability principles is viewed as overall being extremely favorable. In contrast, forms of tourism that are promoted in isolation of sustainability principles is viewed as being negative.

### 3.3 Historical Developments

As a topic for research, ecotourism has become very popular. This is highlighted by the multiplicity of papers that have emerged in the past few years, the fact that annotated bibliographies have been developed (Robson, et al., 1992; Eagles et al. 1993; Whitlock et al., 1991); numerous books have been produced and that ecotourism has been the central theme of many conferences; reports by consulting groups and recently the agenda within many government agencies.

Ecotourism developed for many of the same reasons as those already noted for alternative tourism. What set it apart from other alternative tourism types was that it focused primarily on nature, the ecology and wildlife of destination areas. Noted by many to be a new form of tourism there is evidence to suggest that this is not so. It predates 1983, the year in which the term ecotourism was initially coined by Hector Ceballos-Lascurain. Ecotourism activities, for example, such as trekking within the Himalayan foothills (Jefferies, 1982; Warner, 1991), or wildlife viewing in game reserves in Eastern Africa (Western and Henry, 1979; Olinda, 1991), have been operating

from as early as the 1970s. Passive viewing of game in Africa was present in the 1920s, and activities such as birdwatching have an even older history.

Ecotourism destination areas have, for the most part, been geographically focused on developing nations within the tropical regions of Latin America, the Caribbean, Asia and the grasslands of East Africa. In the last decade attention has broadened to include Australia, New Zealand and remote landscapes of the Arctic and Antarctica. There has been less attention given to the temperate and often less exotic landscapes found within the developed countries. This trend, however, may be changing, partly in response to the potential that ecotourism may offer marginal local economies, and also in part to the realization that there may be a declining number of new exotic and rare landscapes available that can be marketed as ecotourism destination areas in the traditional regions.

As ecotourism has developed, the experiences it promotes and the forms in which it takes place, have varied. It has been suggested that experiences may be classified as falling along a spectrum, ranging from hard to soft (Ingrate and, 1989; Fennell and Eagles, 1990); specialist to generalist (Ferne, 1993). At the same time there exists a spectrum with respect to the number of visitors (ecotourists) to a possible site, ranging from the individual (unorganized) to groups on a escorted tour (organized). In addition, over time it is possible to suggest that a spectrum is implicit with respect to the level of knowledge visitors have about the areas prior to visiting, ranging from expert to total ignorance. In light of this last point, there exists a viewpoint that the educational component offered within ecotourism sets it apart from other alternative forms of tourism, and in particular, nature tourism (Eagles et al., 1992, Fennell and Eagles, 1990; Eagles and, 1992; Laarman and Perdue, 1989). Education may be an important component of ecotourism, but to suggest that it



is a requirement is misleading. Not all visitors may want to be "educated" while on vacation, and there is a difference between education and information. Visitors traveling alone to observe the wildlife and scenery, who are sensitive to the fragile nature of the landscape but who do not engage in any formal education process in the area, are engaging in ecotourism just as much as those visiting on an escorted tour with formal guides. The latter, because of numbers involved, may even leave a greater impact on the landscape than the responsible individual or group of individuals.

Ecotourism has become big business (Berle, 1990). The economic benefits that may accrue from ecotourism have resulted in many nations deliberately promoting this form of tourism within their borders. Examples of this include, Kenya (Olinda, 1991), Ecuador (deGroot, 1983; Kenchington, 1989), Thailand, (Dearden, 1989; Dearden and Harron, 1992), Australia, (Valentine, 1992), Costa Rica (Eagles et al., 1992; Fennell and Eagles, 1990), and more recently Dominica (Weaver, 1991). Within the context of the tourism industry in general, the alternative tourism sector is reported over the past decade to be the area experiencing the greatest growth. With respect to ecotourism alone, Whelan (1988) points out that over \$25 billion dollars annually are being transferred from the northern to the southern hemispheres. Volumes of tourists are also increasing to the extent that early ecotourism destinations like Kenya (Olinda, 1991), the Galapagos Islands (Kenchington, 1989) and Thailand (Dearden and Harron, 1992) have suffered extensive impacts. Herein lies a major concern about ecotourism, namely, that it has the potential to develop into a smaller form of mass tourism, and in so doing brings with it problems that are inherent to mass or conventional tourism.

As ecotourism continues to increase both in terms of numbers of visitors and in areas promoting it, an evaluation is necessary to identify the

benefits and constraints that are associated with this form of tourism. Understanding the impacts of ecotourism on the host environment, facilitates the identification of appropriate sites in northern Ontario.

#### 4.0 Evaluation

This section examines the components of ecotourism, and addresses the economic, environmental, social and institutional consequences that are associated with the term.

Nelson (1993) is critical of ecotourism on a number of grounds. As a form of tourism, it offers no solution for the environmental losses (e.g. wildlife, soil erosion) that have accrued in the search for the concept of ecotourism itself. It cannot operate in isolation and without the cooperation of other parties, and so the interest in the term alone is not sufficient to implement policy. He considers ecotourism to be less useful than the idea of sustainable tourism development as the former does not address issues such as equity and ethics. Ecotourism is taken to be no different to other forms of tourism, as it still has to be planned and managed on the basis of sustainability principles. Nelson argues that it is imperative that the goals, prospects and opportunities for ecotourism be defined in economic, social and environmental terms and worked out on the ground where they are being proposed, given that conditions will vary from place to place.

Initially viewed as being both ecologically benign and economically profitable, ecotourism was considered to have merit for those areas where ecological integrity must be kept intact (Wall, 1993a). Wall notes, however,

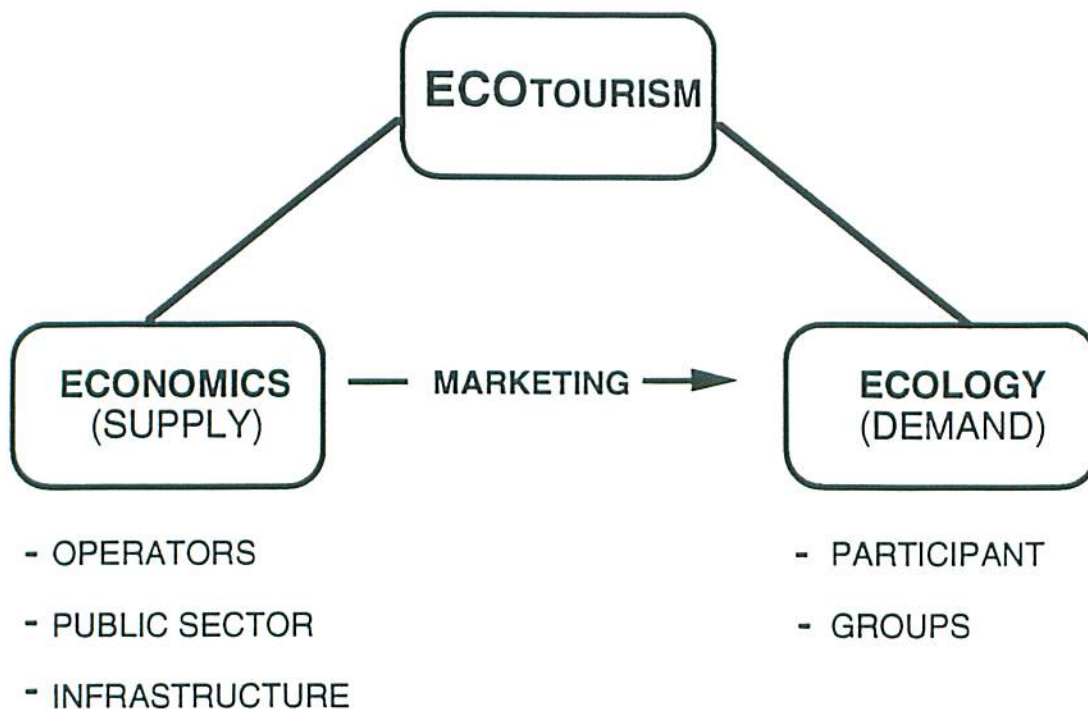
that when the environmental, social and economic consequences are taken into consideration, much of ecotourism is little more than "old wine in new bottles", essentially, be the early stages of tourism development. He suggests that the emphasis is misplaced and that instead of promoting ecotourism, the tourism industry would be wiser to focus on the larger problem of devising sustainable forms of mass tourism, as it is inconceivable to believe that the majority of tourism in the future will be ecotourism. The imprecise terminology and attributes of ecotourism have offered the industry the opportunity to use the concept as a marketing tool. As such, ecotourism is seen not as simply meeting an existing demand but, rather, is driven by a demand that is generated through the effective marketing of the concept by the supply (industry) side (Figure 2) (Wall, 1993a; Butler, 1993b).

Another concern raised by Wall (1993a) and others (Butler, 1993b) is that there is a lack of understanding of the nature of ecotourism, that inevitably it operates within the overall tourism system, and that an emphasis on the ecological component, inherent in ecotourism, fails to take this into account. In light of this, it is advocated that ecotourism should be based upon a balanced understanding of both ecosystems and tourism systems (Wall, 1993a).

Swanson argues that a new paradigm (as proposed by Dunlop and Van Liere (1978)) should serve in the future as a model on which ecotourism should be based. In doing so, she cautions that ecotourism must be ethically responsible to generate local development and protect the natural resource base, that it should not be viewed as a panacea for all the problems of tourism, and that it remains only one element of the larger conservation/development picture.



Figure 2: Ecotourism - Relationship between Economics and Ecology



Source : ( Butler, R.W. 1993)

Swanson notes five components:

- *valuing nature for its own sake*, accounting for inter- and intra-generational equity.
- *planning and acting to control risk* through evaluation of impacts, operationalizing short term plans and tying rural and community development to ecotourism.
- *recognizing real limits to growth*, adopting the spaceship earth concept to ensure that ecotourism is controlled and managed so as areas are not exploited and spoiled.
- *believing in the need for a new society*, and illustrated by ecotourism to involve capitalism which is rural in focus and small scale; sensitivity in terms of communication, and building awareness of environmental issues.
- *reliance on individual participation*, demonstrated in terms of employment, local control, and experiences.

Machlis and Bacci (1992) suggest that more praise has been given to ecotourism than it deserves. They question whether ecotourism is not ideologically biased, elitist, short-sighted, anti-democratic and unsustainable in nature. They charge that it may be ideologically biased because of the tendency for ecotourists to conform to certain codes, whether they be dress, behavior, or the money they spend. A charge of elitism is based on the premise that ecotourism destination areas can become exclusive international nature resorts where the local and national population is unwelcome, and often priced out. The myopia that ecotourism may suffer from is that, despite claims to the contrary, it cannot solve the problems of the whole tourism industry. Anti-democratic tendencies are expressed through an often stressed de-emphasis of urban culture, through management decisions that are based on class bias, and where the recreational needs of the local population are not

taken into account. Last, these authors question the ability of ecotourism to be sustainable, given that it may be a short term phenomenon as a large repeat customer base is not always evident, as local visitors and national citizenry are often not central to its concerns, and because sustainability requires national political support to ensure that protected areas are afforded the protection they need for ecotourism to be a long term venture.

A final concern to be noted about ecotourism is that it has often been developed in areas where there has been no prior system set in place to control growth, monitor impacts, regulate use, and assign responsibility (Butler, 1993b). As a result, irreparable change may be brought to areas as well as many of the problems that are commonly associated with mass tourism.

This section of the report has not painted a completely positive assessment of ecotourism. That should not be taken to mean, however, that ecotourism does not offer opportunities, but not all areas are suitable for ecotourism. Any developments should take such criticisms into account, recognize that impacts occur, and develop in line with sustainability principles. The next section addresses ecotourism impacts in detail citing actual case situations where applicable.



## 5.0 Impacts

This section discusses the economic, environmental, social, and institutional impacts associated with ecotourism.

### 5.1 Economic

Ecotourism has the potential to be a major revenue generator for local and regional economies, with the former often found in isolated rural areas (Boo, 1992; Budowski, 1990; Lindberg, 1991). In addition, much of the capital generated is used to protect the very landscape on which the continued existence of ecotourism is dependent (Berle, 1990; Boo, 1991). This has been demonstrated by ecotourists stating a willingness to pay more to support the conservation of the areas they visit (Boo, 1990; Eagles et al., 1992, Laarman and Perdue, 1989). In short, ecotourism offers an economic justification for the conservation of areas that might not otherwise receive protection (Boo, 1990). Economic multiplier effects can lead to long term employment for local communities; the Rara Avis project in Costa Rica is a case in point. As noted before in this report, ecotourism is big business. For example, it is reported that Kenya receives over 350 million dollars annually in tourism receipts from wildlife tourism alone (Olinda, 1991; Whelan, 1991); that the Galapagos Islands in 1986 generated \$180 million for Ecuador (Healy, 1988); and that the state of Wyoming in North America generates on average over \$1 billion dollars annually (Kruckenberg, 1988). Canadian examples are equally impressive: bird watching in Point Pelee National Park generates \$6 million annually (Hvenegaard et al., 1989); whale watching of the coast of Vancouver Island in 1988 generated \$4.2 million (Duffus and Dearden, 1990); adventure travel

within British Columbia in 1986 accounted for \$134 million (Ethos Consulting Limited, 1988). With economic returns of such magnitude, it is not surprising that many countries are enthusiastically promoting ecotourism.

Unfortunately, not all the money generated remains in the area where ecotourism is present. Whelan (1991) notes that only \$7 million of the \$350 million generated by parks in Kenya is returned to them. Control of the market is predominantly in the developed countries, and the majority of the profits have been repatriated (Wall, 1993a). The local populations fail to benefit often because they do not have the necessary skills, knowledge, and language for operators to work within the region (Lucigi, 1984). Ecotourism, is unlike conventional forms of tourism, as the majority of money is spent at the place of origin and not at the destination, as ecotourism is often promoted in rural settings with limited infrastructure present which are isolated from major centers. As Wall (1991) points out, there is not much a tourist can buy in the true wilderness. In addition, ecotours are often small in their size, so any profits that are channeled into the local economy, from the buying of products necessary on the tour, will not be that great. But as Wall (1993a) points out, the presence of an economic imperative suggests that growth is possible in the direction of mass tourism.

## 5.2 Environmental

The environmental consequences of ecotourism have been well documented (Boo, 1990; Whelan, 1991; Valentine, 1992). Some of the common concerns are: the difficulty of identifying measurable parameters for carrying capacity, noting tolerable-level estimates, the removal of unique features as souvenirs, increased litter, water and waste pollution, disruption of

wildlife, loss of habitat, killing of wildlife, impact of deforestation on wildlife, over fishing, burning and destruction of vegetation base, conflicts between ecotourists and particular aspects they seek, overcrowding. Environmental consequences more often result from the fact that areas which offer ecotourism are sensitive environments where even small successive increments of use can result in environmental degradation (e.g. visits to Antarctica, Marsh, 1992; Nicholson, 1990). One point that is often not taken into account is that an assessment of the environmental consequences of ecotourism should include impacts occurring offsite and enroute (Wall, 1993a).

The extent of environmental impact will vary given the fragility of the environment, the degree of interaction with wildlife, the visitor numbers involved, the nature of the use-impact relationship, and the type of activities that are undertaken. If anything positive can be said concerning the environmental impacts, it is that they tend to be smaller in scale given that ecotourism is seen as being a less demanding form of tourism and tourist. However, the fact that ecotourism sites are often found in fragile landscapes, the size of the impact is somewhat meaningless, as small ecological changes may result in irreparable damage. Control and management of both tourists and the sites visited are crucial to impact mitigation and reduction.

### 5.3 Social

The presence of ecotourism can have a positive social impact on local communities. The involvement of local people creates a sense of pride, and a form of ownership in the area which can act as a buffer against interests outside an area which may encroach upon it (e.g. poaching inside national parks in Costa Rica, ( Boo, 1990)). On the part of the ecotourist, the acceptance



and appreciation of local conditions, customs, and food, enrich the vacation experience and enhance the cultural richness of the area. It has been recognized that carefully designed interpretative programs can make an area the focus for fostering local knowledge, skills, and lifestyles which perpetuate values within the community and educates outsiders about them (Kutay, 1989).

In contrast to the above, ecotourism can impact on the traditional way of life of the local population. Developing suitable sites for ecotourism has led to local populations being removed from their land (e.g. Costa Rica). Once ecotourism has been established, the local citizenry may find they are prohibited from such areas and out of the need to survive they find themselves engaging in activities such as poaching or slash and burn agriculture. Ecotourism is often found in areas where the practices by the indigenous population have more often than not been sustainable and relatively environmentally benign (Swanson, 1992; Helu-Thaman, 1991). The introduction of ecotourism not only may result in the disruption of local life and resentment of visitors (Mishra, 1984), but may culminate with local people moving out of the area completely (e.g. Masai tribes, Kenya (Olinda, 1991)). In other situations, for example Northern Thailand, local residents may relocate to non authentic village sites in order to cater to the misperceptions of ecotourists (Dearden and Harron, 1992). Another social concern is that the goals of ecotourism, which are often long term in nature, are markedly different than the short term goals of local people, such as stabilizing shifting agriculture, and assisting with local built infrastructure (Wallace, 1991). An overall antagonism may develop toward the tourist as they degrade the environment or because benefits of ecotourism by pass the local community.

#### 5.4 Institutional

Institutional is taken here to include the whole tourism industry down to the local operator. A frequent constraint is a lack of leadership with respect to marketing, training, codes of standards and practices (Scace, 1993). With respect to the latter, code of ethics for both the visitor and the ecotourism companies are being developed in several areas. Institutional arrangements are often inhibited by the lack of agreement on ecotourism and expectations by operators themselves, by the lack of understanding of who should manage sites and assume responsibility for the impacts that occur, and by the absence of baseline data against which to measure impacts and the knowledge of impacts in general. The Galapagos Islands are a good example, despite limits being set by management, as the numbers of visitors increase the limits are raised but ignored by locals and consequently the numbers visiting increase. As for the case of Thailand, there is continual promotion and adjustment. An example closer to home would be Point Pelee National Park where modification of the landscape with boardwalks and tram system accommodate increasing numbers of bird watchers for a short period of the year.

#### **6.0 Discussion of elements of ecotourism suitable for Northern Ontario**

The purpose of this section of the report is to identify what elements of ecotourism are appropriate to northern Ontario and to determine what lessons Northern Ontario can learn from this broad discussion of ecotourism, its definition, linkages, history, benefits and constraints. An ecotourism opportunity identification study undertaken by Development Consulting

Limited (1991) for the Policy and Program Development Branch of the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, concluded that ecotourism was already an amply demonstrated economic opportunity, that Northern Ontario was extremely well-suited, and well-positioned to successfully develop this new potential, and that early lessons in other regions' ecotourism activities suggested several key features of a preliminary Northern Ontario approach to ecotourism. Ecotourism featured as a component within the recently completed study on Specialty Outdoors Tourism in Ontario (Marshall Macklin Monaghan Limited, 1992), stressing the need to identify and assess ecotourism resources and opportunities, but offered no framework within which this could be accomplished. On the basis of the review of literature and previous discussion, seven key attributes are suggested as having applicability.

Ecotourism should be:

- Environmentally and socially responsible.
- Focused on elements of the natural environment
- Managed in such a way as to have minimal environmental and social impacts
- Nonconsumptive
- Capable of providing desired economic benefits to local residents
- Compatible with other resource uses in the area
- Appropriate in scale for conditions and environment'

#### 6.1 Environmentally and social responsible

This attribute refers to the earlier discussion on the linkages between ecotourism and other forms of tourism. Ecotourism in North Ontario should be developed in line with principles of sustainability by addressing both the



environment and society. Responsibility can be taken to mean a commitment for both the immediate and long term interests of the environment, the local populations and the visitors, and in so doing addresses the issue of ethics and inter- and intra-generational equity that are often not equated with ecotourism.

## 6.2 Focused on elements of the natural environments

It is important to understand that the type of landscape present in Northern Ontario is unique. It has its own distinctive features, such as the Shield, forests, rivers and lakes, and as a result the type of ecotourism promoted will be tied to these particular elements of the landscape. It will not be as exotic as many of the venues around the world where ecotourism is promoted, but rather it will have a specific Canadian identity and image. In terms of the experience offered, it will be markedly different than that found in areas such as Costa Rica, Belize, Kenya, Thailand or Nepal if for no other reason that the environment itself is very different. The extent to which the landscape is 'natural' is subject to the reality that much of the forests in Northern Ontario are not indigenous to the region, and that the original forest cover has been cut down and removed from the landscape in many areas. This discussion is extended in section 6.8 below

## 6.3 Managed to minimize environmental and social impacts

The first point that should be made given the discussion earlier of the impacts of ecotourism, is that regardless of the best management structure, impacts will occur within Northern Ontario as a direct result of ecotourism

activities. The extent of these impacts will depend on the duration of stay, and the type of ecotourism sought. If one accepts that a spectrum of ecotourism exists, Northern Ontario, by way of the fact that the area has experienced considerable development over time, would lie toward its lower end. The nature and extent of impacts would vary between those ecotourists who participated in short trips to areas in close proximity to large urban center as opposed to those wishing to explore isolated areas for a longer period of time. Given the evidence from the literature on the user impact, it would be safer to say that short excursions to easily accessible sites would cause the greater impact because of the successive and incremental use they would involve. Areas explored by the "hard" or "specialist" ecotourist, because of the difficulty in reaching sites and the anticipated lower frequency of use would experience fewer consequences resulting from ecotourism. The mode of travel, regardless of what areas are explored, whether remote or easily accessible, will generate impacts as the nature of accessibility of Northern Ontario will often frequently require the use of all terrain vehicles, or vehicles that have four wheel drive, (as in Australia and much of Latin America).

#### 6.4 Nonconsumptive

By definition this would suggest that existing fly-in lodges are excluded as areas that can be promoted for ecotourism, unless a catch and release policy was pursued. Also by strict definition, an ecotourism opportunity within Northern Ontario could not involve the practice of hunting. However, given that the region is for the most part very isolated, and extremely large in size, it will be difficult, and perhaps impossible to ensure that no hunting occurs. Unless ecotourism sites/areas can be identified which are of the size where

managers can easily police the area, hunting will occur. Where this occurs it will not be regarded as ecotourism and given the strength of emotion on this issue, both from hunters and non local anti hunting lobby, the two activities should be left apart.

#### 6.5 Capable of providing desired economic benefits to local residents

Communities that are located in close proximity to ecotourism areas can be used as a base of operations for ecotours. Numerous case studies within the literature have demonstrated that the indigenous people who reside near ecotourism areas are the most familiar with the environment. It would therefore be reasonable to expect that locals would be employed as guides on tours, suppliers of essential goods and services, and as managers of the sites themselves. Economic leakage's could be minimized by ensuring that as many products as possible were bought locally and the local tradesmen are employed to upkeep and repair existing sites and to develop new ones.

#### 6.6 Compatible with other resources in the area

Ecotourism must take into account other resource-based industries found in Northern Ontario. This acceptance will possibly mean that ecotourism areas will be developed around established industries in Northern Ontario such as forestry, mining, agriculture and those areas where wetlands are a predominant element of the landscape. In light of this, it is hoped that where ecotourism cannot be complementary with these older industries, that there exists the potential for them to be compatible and not be in conflict over the same resource base.



### 6.7 Appropriate in scale for conditions and environment

With respect to this last component, an emphasis will be placed on identifying and understanding the limits of certain areas. Although there are inherent difficulties in identifying the carrying capacity of a particular area, other management techniques such as Limits of Acceptable Change (LAC) (Stankey, et al., 1985; McCool and Stankey, 1992), the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum (ROS) (Clark and Stankey, 1979), the Tourism Opportunity Spectrum (TOS) (Butler and Waldbrook, 1991), the Visitor Activity Management Process (VAMP) (Graham et al., 1988), the Visitor Impact Management Process (VIMP) (Loomis and Graefe, 1992), and the Prioritizing the Operational Limits for the Administration of Rivers (POLAR) (Butler et al., 1992a, 1992b) can be utilized where considered appropriate. The question of the scale of operation that is possible is dependent on the nature of the landscape itself. A recognition of control over the growth of ecotourism areas will ensure that ecotourism within northern Ontario will not develop to the degree to which either the quality of the areas or the quality of the experience is severely damaged to the extent that the unique image of northern Ontario is affected.

### 6.8 Northern Ontario as a setting for Ecotourism

The ecotourism population is, for the most part, well educated, affluent and mature. It would also appear to be sympathetic to what may be termed "green" principles, essentially those of sustainable development, small scale rather than large, traditional rather than modern resource development, non-consumptive rather than consumptive use of wildlife except by indigenous peoples, and especially in the areas they are visiting for ecotourism,

protection of resources and the landscape, rather than exploitation of these features. These beliefs and attitudes, while held at varying strengths, may work against a perception of Northern Ontario as an area suitable for ecotourism to the global market, and certainly for the market in Canada and North America, which have some knowledge of Northern Ontario and its resource development history.

The ecotourism population is also primarily urban in origin, and is attracted to areas which epitomize the opposite to home environment, that is, areas which are thinly populated or in which people and settlements are very few, which exhibit a great degree of "naturalness", however defined, and which have exotic or very different flora and fauna from their home areas.

In many respects, Northern Ontario appears to have many of the attributes needed for the successful development of ecotourism. It is largely free from urban settlements, it has vast expanses of apparently untouched landscape, it has a rich vegetation cover, considerable wildlife, and an indigenous population which traditionally, and in some locations still does, lived off the land. As well, there has been recreational and tourist use of the area for a considerable time, and thus some basic facilities and infrastructure exist. Finally, there have been established a number of provincial parks, which further the recreational-tourist presence and help to safeguard some of the natural features.

However, it should be readily apparent to a careful observer that the ecotourism in Northern Ontario will have to be somewhat different in form from that found, for example, in Latin America, Africa or Asia. While Northern Ontario does have the attributes noted above, in reality many of these factors create difficulties as well as presenting opportunities to the development of ecotourism. They are discussed briefly here in order to



provide a background against which the identification of potential ecotourism sites can be conducted.

The urban settlement which does exist in Northern Ontario holds few attractions for the potential ecotourist. They are likely to use these centres at best as entry points and possibly as supply/outfitting bases only, and not use them as unique or containing particular elements making them appropriate stop over locations. Those communities with industrial development will likely be received as even less attractive as tourist bases.

The resource development of Northern Ontario, basically forestry (and pulp/paper production), mining and trapping/hunting, are not activities which are viewed as attractive, or in the extreme cases, even as acceptable, by some ecotourists. The concept of clear cutting of forests, while it may be an acceptable and efficient method of harvesting the timber resource of an area, is not generally viewed with sympathy by the ecotourism population. The attraction of Northern Ontario, in the abstract at least, is virgin old forest, especially of pine, and such is relatively scarce. It will be important to either change the image of modern forestry, not easily done, change the perceptions of ecotourists, equally difficult, or keep the two apart. It may, however, be necessary to utilize logging roads as a means of access into areas, where this is feasible. To counteract or compensate for this problem, it may be possible to utilize the interpretation of logging and timber operations as a tourist attraction, as is the case in Algonquin Park. As a general practice, it would be unwise, and certainly counter productive as far as creating a desirable image of the area is concerned, to expose ecotourists to logging operations, especially clear cutting, or evidence thereof.

Modern mining is equally unattractive to ecotourists although again, interpretation of old prospecting and mining practices may be an attractive



element to ecotourists. Mining operations are normally nothing like as spatially extensive as logging operations, so avoiding them with ecotourists should not be too great a problem. It is important, however, that the importance and historical significance of mining and prospecting be made explicit to ecotourists, who after all, will be coming in part at least, to gain understanding about the region's cultural fabric and development.

The recreational mix which presently occurs in Northern Ontario lends itself well to ecotourism, indeed some would argue much of it is ecotourism, with one or perhaps two notable exceptions. To ecotourists in general, sport hunting is not an acceptable or desirable activity in an ecotourism area. Hunting for food by indigenous peoples is acceptable, within certain limits, but the consumptive use of wildlife for sport is not. This attitude also applies, among some segments of the ecotourism market with respect to sport fishing, even where it is of the catch and release type. It may be necessary, therefore, to ensure ecotourists and hunters, whether local or visiting, and possibly sport fishermen, are not put in contact with each other.

In many regions which currently serve the ecotourism markets, the indigenous population is portrayed and utilized as a major attraction to the visitors. They may be used as guides, provide accommodation in traditional villages and houses, and produce and sell native artifacts. Above all perhaps, they are "sold" as exotic, primitive, different and desirable, however inaccurate biased or racist that may be. In general such a portrayal of Northern Ontario Indian band members would be unacceptable, inaccurate and possibly conflict with the legal system. Most Indian reserves and settlements in Northern Ontario do not have the exotic appeal or attraction to ecotourists that a Thai hill tribe village might. In many cases they may not be much different from other small northern urban communities. Unless there

was strong support and desire from individual bands, there would not be a great deal to be gained by "selling" the indigenous peoples of Northern Ontario as part of the ecotourism package. This does not preclude the involvement of indigenous peoples as guides for, and operators and owners of ecotourism offerings, or of selling local produce and artifact, but their involvement must be on their terms and not taken for granted. They may wish no involvement with any form of tourism, nor wish to have ecotourists on reservations.

The historical relics of early Caucasian penetration into Northern Ontario does not yield a great deal to ecotourism. Many of the early structures no longer exist as they were not built of stone, and thus the principal heritage is in features such as routeways, such as those of the voyageurs, and associated portages, landing sites etc., or the sites of fur trading posts. As with other traditional resource activities in Northern Ontario, fur trapping does not rank high in attraction with ecotourists, even when practiced by indigenous peoples. The portrayal of the historic importance and development of this activity should be of interest, but present day trapping, limited though it is, is probably a feature to avoid in the context of ecotourism.

The last features, the physical attributes and scale of Northern Ontario are less problematic, but do present problems of access and seasonality. Distance between features and the attractions in this area may be vast at times, certainly compared to some tropical ecotourism destinations, and great variety does not frequently exist within a few miles in Northern Ontario as for example, in Costa Rica, Movement to and within the area may be difficult and air travel and use of four wheel drive vehicles, which is in contrast to many other ecotourism areas where travel is often on foot or in non-powered traditional water craft.



While Northern Ontario has considerable flora and fauna, it is not comparable in variety, guaranteed visibility or accessibility to many other areas currently used for ecotourism. The northern forest does not have the variety nor the appeal, therefore, of the tropical rain forest or cloud forest. Bird life is much less, in numbers and variety, and mammals are relatively few and not easily seen. Visitation for wildlife viewing will at best be limited and probably to very specific areas only. There is, for example, nothing to compare with the Kenyan game parks, overused though they may be.

The seasonal variation in Northern Ontario, although traditionally a disadvantage compared to non-limiting seasons in tropical areas, might be turned to limited advantage, while blackfly season may remain unattractive for tourists, late Fall and Winter have an appeal of their own which is relatively unique in ecotourism areas, and may be possible to develop. If not, then the season for tourism development is severely restricted compared to many other areas.

These points have been noted, not to disparage the appeal of Northern Ontario to ecotourism, but to clarify some of the issues to be faced. Forms of ecotourism already exist in Northern Ontario and can undoubtedly be developed further. What is important, however, is to note that ecotourism in this area, will, by necessity, be different in many aspects, from that found in more traditional areas. The attributes of Northern Ontario must be carefully matched to the attributes and demands of ecotourism, in sympathy with the needs and preferences of the local population. The next section outlines in detail the criteria suitable for ecotourism within a northern Ontario context.



## 7.0 Criteria for Ecotourism in Northern Ontario

Within the context of Northern Ontario, potential sites can may be based on the following attributes of ecotourism:

- naturalness
- wildlife
- cultural heritage
- landscape
- community

The following are considered as appropriate attributes for the above criteria:

### Naturalness attributes

- absence of permanent settlement
- absence of evidence of cutting
- undrained wetlands
- unmodified rivers/lakes
- absence of intrusive sound

### Wildlife attributes

- suitable habitat for key species
- migration routes/flyways
- wintering sites
- feeding/drinking sites, deer yards, etc.
- nature reserves/zones

### **Cultural Heritage attributes**

- designated historic sites (plaques etc.)
- historical parks/ historical zones
- historic routes, voyageurs, portages
- Indian reserves (possibly)

### **Landscape attributes**

- significant features, cliffs, rock outcrops, etc.
- viewpoints

### **Community attributes**

- not within site, but close enough to provide base, services and local population for economic benefit
- close enough for primary access to the site(s), e.g. airstrip, float plane/boat, dock, road/rail access

Within the context of these criteria, it is necessary to provide measures or characteristics of the individual attributes, e.g. uncut forest, distance from community etc. Some of the attributes can be expressed in terms of absolutes, e.g, absence or presence of permanent settlement, many, however, can best be expressed in terms of a continuum. Some work on the attributes and capability of areas for recreation use and wildlife production was carried out in the 1960s under the A.R.D.A. land capability inventory. Where applicable, this information will be utilized in the determination of criteria.

**NATURALNESS**

Permanent Settlement in area	Absent	Present
Absence of cutting	> 10% red/white pine	>80% deciduous
Undrained wetlands	Absence of dams	Dam
Unmodified rivers (1)	Absence of dams	Dam
Unmodified rivers (2)	Absence of bridges	Bridges
Absence of intrusive sound	10 miles to near sound	1 mile

**WILDLIFE**

Suitable habitat (1)	ARDA 1 Capability	ARDA 7
Suitable habitat (2)		
Migration Route	On primary routeway	not on routeway routeway
Wintering site	Yes	No evidence
Feeding site	Yes	No evidence
Nature reserve	Nature reserve Provincial Park	Nat. Reserve zone Provincial Park

**CULTURAL HERITAGE**

Designated Historic Sites	Yes	None
Historic Parks	Historical Provincial Park	Historical zone Provincial Park
Historical Routes	Present	Absent
Indian Reserve	Traditional Desired visit	Modern Not desired



## LANDSCAPE

Significant feature	High relative relief >100 metres	No relief
Viewpoints	Present	Absent

## COMMUNITY

Not within site, but close enough to provide base, services and local population for economic benefit	5 miles	Over 20 miles
Close enough for primary access to site(s)	Access features	No access

These represent a first attempt to identify attributes and characteristics of ecotourism sites in the context of Northern Ontario. The next report will represent a following up of these features by identifying specific attributes which can be determined from the Geographical Information Systems (GIS) related data and incorporated into the study.

### 8.0. Conclusion

This report has set the context in which the remainder of the study will be conducted. It has reviewed the development of the concept and growth of ecotourism, noting the linkages and relationships between this and other forms of tourism, particularly within the framework of sustainable development. The report has identified the basic features and attributes of ecotourism in general, and specifically in the context of Northern Ontario, and also the relevant attributes and characteristics of the Northern Ontario setting

itself. The last section of this report has introduced criteria which can be utilized in the next stage of the overall study, which addresses the incorporation of Geographic Information System technology in the identification of potential sites for ecotourism in the study area.

## APPENDIX 1

### Terms Drawn From The Literature That May Possess Links To Ecotourism

<u>Terms for Ecotourism</u>	<u>Associated Activities</u>
• Nature Tourism	• Nature Vacations
• Wilderness Tourism	• Wildlife Recreation
• Environmental Education	• Rural Tourism
• "Nature-Oriented" Tourism	• Alternative Tourism
• Environmental Tourism	• Anthropological Tourism
• Low-Impact Tourism	• Travel With Mother Nature
• Adventure Travel	• Safari Tourism
• Cultural Tourism	• Primitive and Remote Travel
• "Drifter" Tourism	• Jungle Tourism
• Environmental Conservation	• Nature Areas Travel
• Green Tourism	• Ecotravel
• Soft Adventure Tourism	• Science Tourism
• Special Interest Tourism	• Resource-Based Tourism
• Ethnic Tourism	• Biotourism
• Sustainable Tourism	• Ethical Travel
• Ecological Tourism	• Appropriate Tourism
• Socially Responsible Tourism	• Ecotripping
• Ecoventures	

Source: Scace, Grifone and Usher, 1991 in Nelson et al., 1993.



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