

# TourismConcern

research report

# Water Equity in Tourism

**A Human Right – A Global Responsibility**



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### Water Equity in Tourism:

*A Human Right, A Global Responsibility*

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Action for Ethical Tourism

## Executive Summary

This report argues that for tourism to be truly sustainable, its development and management must be premised upon a respect for human rights, including the right to water and sanitation for essential personal, domestic and livelihood needs. In many cases, tourism development is negatively impacting the quality, availability and accessibility of freshwater for local people, amounting to an infringement of their water and sanitation rights. This is posing risks to community health and well-being, hampering socioeconomic mobility – particularly of women – harming livelihoods, threatening food security, and undermining the sustainability of the tourism sector itself. These issues are explored and evidenced through a series of case studies from five popular tourism destinations in the global South: Zanzibar (Tanzania), Goa and Kerala (South India), The Gambia (West Africa) and Bali (Indonesia). All regions are highly dependent on tourism as a means to generate jobs and economic growth. However, tourism cannot fulfil its potential as a contributor to poverty alleviation and sustainable development while it so often causes the unsustainable depletion and inequitable appropriation of freshwater. While the challenges in each case study destination are varied and complex, emerging common themes are identified. These include shortcomings around infrastructure, governance, information and planning, coordination and cooperation, as well as issues of rule-breaking, unregulated water privatisation, and low levels of awareness. Additional pressures on water resources stem from urbanisation, population growth, climate change and wider watershed degradation. These challenges are likely to be similar to those faced in other tourism destinations around the world. Opportunities for improving water equity in each destination are also flagged, along with some examples

of good practice, which could provide useful learning for elsewhere.

More broadly, it is argued that the inequitable and unsustainable depletion of water resources in tourism destinations is a shared problem that requires a shared solution. Stakeholders in government, the tourism sector, the donor community and civil society all have important roles to play. A range of recommendations is offered in this regard. The core components of these are captured in nine Principles of Water Equity in Tourism. In particular, governments should not allow water and sanitation rights to be compromised by tourism. Clear regulatory frameworks for tourism and water resource management, which are based upon integrated and participatory planning, should be established and enforced in this regard. As well as taking further steps to reduce their water consumption, tourism industry stakeholders need to recognise and enact their business responsibility to respect human rights, as set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNHRC, 2011). The Guiding Principles offer a valuable framework for managing human rights impacts through a process of due diligence. Approaches emanating from the CEO Water Mandate, another major global initiative, also provide useful guidance for effective business engagement in sustainable water management (CEO Water Mandate, 2010). International donors must continue to fund improvements to water infrastructure in the global South, and encourage sustainable tourism founded upon principles of participation and respect for human rights. There is a need for improved cooperation and collaboration among all stakeholders with respect to the above, as well as with data gathering, information sharing, advocacy, capacity building, technology transfer, and sensitisation, including of tourists.

## Principles of Water Equity in Tourism

These Principles of Water Equity in Tourism aim to capture the essential points from the recommendations of this report (see page 27). The Principles are underpinned by the notion of water as a human right. They are based on the

recognition that there are shared risks to all water and tourism stakeholders if water is not managed equitably and sustainably. These shared risks give rise to a shared responsibility (CEO Water Mandate, 2010) of all stakeholders to

work together to address water issues, with particular responsibility conferred to those inequitably consuming water, in positions of power and with greater access to resources.

### GOVERNMENTS

- 1 The right to water and sanitation should not be compromised by tourism**  
Governments should uphold their international legal obligations to fulfil and protect the right to water and sanitation of citizens as a priority. Governments should issue guidelines to tourism businesses operating locally and overseas on their business responsibility to respect human rights.
- 2 Governments should implement clear regulations for sustainable and equitable water and tourism management**  
Destination governments should implement clear regulatory and institutional frameworks for sustainable, equitable, integrated water and tourism planning and management. Transgressors should be penalised; good practices should be championed.
- 3 Land use and tourism planning should be based on assessments of water resources**  
Land use planning should be based on assessments of water resources and infrastructure, and tourism carrying capacities established. These should take into account livelihood needs, food security, population growth, climate change, and wider watershed degradation.

### INDUSTRY

- 4 Tourism businesses should implement their business responsibility to respect the right to water**  
Tourism businesses should move beyond technical approaches and implement their business responsibility to respect the right to water and sanitation in their activities and supply chains.
- 5 Tourism businesses should abide by the law**  
Tourism businesses should adhere to national regulations governing water use and waste management, even where these are poorly enforced. This includes paying for what they consume.
- 6 Tourism businesses should reduce their water consumption**  
Tourism businesses should work towards reducing their water consumption and contributing to water conservation by making use of existing industry guidelines.

### ALL

- 7 Land use, tourism and water planning should be undertaken participatively**  
Land use, tourism and water planning should be undertaken transparently and participatively, with adequate community representation, particularly of women.
- 8 Governments and tourism businesses should be accountable to local communities**  
This includes providing access to redress where water rights have been adversely impacted.
- 9 Cooperation to further water equity should be pursued by all stakeholders**  
Cooperation and collaboration should be pursued by government, international donors, tourism and civil society stakeholders in resourcing and undertaking data collection, improvements to community water access, advocacy, capacity-building, technology transfer, and tourist sensitisation.

# Introduction

The right to water constitutes one of the most fundamental human rights. However, for many communities, particularly those living in the global South, this right is being compromised by tourism development.

The inequities of water access and consumption between resorts, large hotels and golf courses on the one hand, and local communities and small-scale tourism entrepreneurs on the other, are starkly played out in holiday destinations in some of the world's poorest countries. Typically, tourism development is most intense in coastal areas and on islands, where potable water is scarce, while peak tourist seasons coincide with the driest months of the year. However, while hotels may have the money and resources to ensure their guests enjoy several showers a day, swimming pools, a round of golf, and lush landscaped gardens, neighbouring households, small businesses and agricultural producers can regularly endure severe water scarcity.

## Every year about 2 million people – most of them children – die from diarrhoea-related diseases

A lack of access to clean water and sanitation both exacerbates poverty and is itself the result of poverty. Breaking this vicious cycle in the interests of sustainable development has been identified as a priority by the international community for many years. For example, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set a target of halving by 2015 the proportion of the population without access to water and sanitation (UN, 2000). However, today some 884 million people remain without access to safe water



(UNGA, 2010), while every year about 2 million people – most of them children – die from diarrhoea-related diseases (WHO, 2011). In fact, more children die every year from lack of access to clean water and sanitation than die from AIDS, malaria and measles combined (UNGA, 2010).

More often than not, such water

scarcity is not due to a physical absence of water, but is caused by inadequate or non-existent infrastructure, depleted or polluted groundwater supplies, and a lack of resources to secure water from other sources. The physically burdensome and time-consuming task of sourcing and collecting water usually falls to women.

In fact, just three per cent of the Earth's water is fresh and some 70 per cent of this is frozen in the polar icecaps. Meanwhile, water demand has tripled in the last 50 years (SIWI). Changing rainfall patterns,

rising sea levels and deforestation, the impacts of mining, intensive farming and other water-hungry industries, as well as rapid population growth and urbanisation, are placing unprecedented pressure on this precious resource (ibid).

This report explores these complex issues through five case studies. These illustrate how, in many cases, tourism's consumption of water is exacerbating poverty, curtailing socioeconomic opportunities and degrading the environment, while undermining food production, livelihoods and wider sustainable development. Our research indicates that extreme pressure on water resources to supply tourist demand is, in many instances, directly contributing to water scarcity and inequity, through the appropriation of public water supplies, over-exploitation of aquifers, lowering of groundwater tables, and contamination of freshwater by saltwater and sewage.

In places, this scenario is leading to conflict and resentment among local people, while threatening the

viability of the tourism sector. This also holds worrying implications given the heavy economic dependency on tourism in all the case study destinations.

Indeed, tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing services industries in the world. Global tourist arrivals are predicted to reach 1 billion in 2012 and 1.8 billion by 2030 – up from 940 million in 2010 (UNWTO, 2011). The potential for tourism to generate jobs, economic growth and foreign exchange, means it is harnessed as a development driver by countries all over the world. This includes many in the global South classed by the UN as 'least developed countries' (LDCs), as well as small island developing states (such as in the Caribbean).

These countries often lack major export industries, but are rich in coastlines and sunshine. Tourism is therefore keenly promoted as a tool for sustainable development and poverty reduction by the UN World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the recently formed UN Steering Committee on Tourism for Development (SCTD).

However, this report argues that tourism cannot fulfil its potential as a contributor to poverty alleviation and sustainable development while it so often causes the exponential depletion, and inequitable appropriation, of freshwater resources. It is argued that for tourism to be truly sustainable, its development and management must be premised upon a respect for human rights, including the right to water.

## Defining Water Equity in Tourism

Our use of the term 'water equity in tourism' is based on the UN definition of the right to water and sanitation. It refers to tourism development that does not infringe upon, or take precedence over, the right to water of communities in destinations for essential personal, domestic and livelihood needs. It implies the duty of states to uphold, fulfil and protect this right, including against abuses or unsustainable consumption by (tourism) businesses. Our definition also includes the responsibility of tourism businesses to respect human rights, as clarified in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (see page 6-7).

Almost 900 million people lack access to water and sanitation, including in many popular tourism destinations in the global South.



# The right to water

Water is intrinsically linked to life, to health and sanitation, food production, livelihoods, and our dignity and well-being as human beings. As such, the right to water is enshrined within a multitude of internationally recognised human rights standards. Some of these are legally binding on states, as well as conferring responsibilities on businesses.

This includes the right to life under Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR); the right to an adequate standard of living, enshrined in Article 25 of the UDHR

and Article 11 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; and General Comment No. 15 on the Right to Water, issued by the UN Social and Economic Council (2002).

More recently, in 2010, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution reaffirming the right to water and sanitation, while the UN Human Rights Council acknowledged that this right is legally binding in international law. These resolutions signify a strengthened recognition of the critical significance of water and sanitation to socioeconomic development, and a bid to bolster governments and the international community in meeting their commitments in this regard.

According to the UN, there are

several components to the fulfilment of the right to water. Water must be sufficient, safe, physically accessible and affordable, with non-discriminatory and equitable access for personal, domestic, and essential livelihood needs. General Comment No. 15 states that indigenous peoples' access to water on their ancestral lands should be protected from encroachment and pollution, and that indigenous peoples should be empowered to manage their own water resources.

Furthermore: "Water should be treated as a social and cultural good, and not primarily as an economic good. The manner of the realisation of the right to water must also be sustainable, ensuring that the right can be realised for present and future generation" (ECOSOC, 2002:5).

A farmer in the Tourism Development Area in The Gambia gathers water from a hand-dug well. The money she earns from selling her vegetables helps pay for school fees and food for her children. However, water availability is apparently declining.

Rebecca Latchford



Water for leisure and tourism is taking precedence over the right to water and sanitation in destinations across the world.



Dreamstime

## Role of governments

The majority of governments are signatories to the major international

those engaged in tourism – such as over-extraction, appropriation and pollution of water resources.

## Available water must be sufficient, safe, physically accessible and affordable, with non-discriminatory and equitable access for personal, domestic, and essential livelihood needs

human rights treaties. As such, they are obliged to respect, fulfil and protect the right to water and sanitation of their citizens. This means taking active measures to extend this right to all citizens. However, many poorer countries face major resource limitations in this regard. Governments are also obliged to protect water rights against abuses by corporate interests – including

## Business responsibilities

As elaborated in our briefing, *Why the tourism industry needs to take a human rights approach* (2011), the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) set out the business responsibility to respect human rights as a global baseline norm for all businesses, everywhere. This includes the right to water

and sanitation. Respecting human rights in this way is not only the 'right' thing to do, it also makes business sense by helping companies to identify and manage a range of operational, financial and reputation risks (UNHRC,2011).

According to the UNGPs, the business responsibility to respect exists independently of governments, because these often fail to protect – or are even directly involved in harming – citizens' rights. Indeed, as illustrated in this report, this is the case in many popular tourism destinations, where governments sell off land and siphon off natural resources, often ignoring democratic process and without due regard for the impacts on living standards and livelihoods of local people.

# Existing industry approaches

Where they exist, industry water initiatives are typically limited to reducing water consumption, and ignore wider business impacts on the lives and livelihoods of local communities.

Many industry players, such as hotels and tour operators, claim to be addressing their impact on water, and a range of water-related guidelines have been devised under various initiatives. These include 'The Tour Operators' Initiative for Sustainable Tourism Development, the International Tourism Partnership, The Travel Foundation, and the Travelife Sustainability System Criteria (Tourism Concern & EBDG, 2011). However, such initiatives generally take a narrow approach, framing water as a purely environmental issue and focusing on water conservation measures within hotels. This includes the installation of water-saving technologies in guest rooms (such as aerated shower heads and low-flush toilets), rainwater



Technical, hotel-based approaches to water saving fail to address wider impacts on the destination.

harvesting, the use of waste ('grey') water for garden irrigation, as well as staff sensitisation and training, and towel re-use schemes for guests.

Although such approaches are positive and should be broadened further, they ignore the wider impacts of tourism businesses' water consumption on the lives and

livelihoods of local communities and the environment. As our case studies show, in many instances the consumption and pollution of freshwater by the tourism industry is directly contributing to the infringement of the right to water of neighbouring communities. Tourism business complicity in such infringements, even if inadvertent, extends up through the supply chain, placing companies at risk of allegations of abuse while undermining the social, environmental and economic sustainability of both the company and the destination.

Tourism businesses are also involved in direct law breaking, such as the hotels and restaurants in Goa that have been found to be pumping sewage directly into Colva Creek (see page 15). As outlined in the UNGPs, by adhering to national laws in the first instance, as well as enacting the business responsibility to respect human rights through a process of human rights due diligence (see page 24), companies can reduce the risk of culpability or complicity in such socially and environmentally harmful behaviour.

## What is the 'tourism industry'?

The tourism industry is an interconnected assortment of local, national and transnational products and services, managed by a diverse range of businesses, associations and government authorities. The tourism product – the holiday experience – is an assemblage of travel, accommodation and other services, which depend upon people, place, culture, and environmental resources, including water (George and Varghese, 2007). Tourism entails complex global supply chains which interlink often powerful multinational companies, such as hotel groups, airlines and tour operators, with national-level businesses, local entrepreneurs and micro-enterprises, from land developers, to hotels, excursion organisers, taxi drivers, golf courses, laundry services, restaurants, and souvenir vendors.

In this report, we focus on the water consumption of the tourism industry in the destination. In particular, we focus on hotels, resorts and guesthouses, and by implication, their immediate supply chain partners, notably tour operators, and services, such as restaurants and laundries. We distinguish between small-scale tourism entrepreneurs (such as guesthouse owners in Goa and fruit vendors in The Gambia), who generally have limited access to financial capital and political influence (which affects their ability to access water), and larger hotels and resorts, which typically have the resources and power to secure their water needs.

# The case studies

The following case study destinations were chosen because they are all popular with UK and European holidaymakers, including independent travellers and package tourists. As such, many of the largest tour operators (such as Thomson, TUI, Thomas Cook, Kuoni, First Choice and Cooperative Travel) and international hotel groups (including

development driver in all the focus countries. Indonesia, Tanzania, India and The Gambia are ranked among the lowest 68 in the UN's Human Development Index. This indicates the real challenges they face in terms of poverty alleviation, sustainable development, and government capacity and resources (UNDP, 2011).

**These issues are by no means confined to the Southern hemisphere. All over the world... there is increasing pressure on dwindling water supplies**

Holiday Inn, Hilton, Four Seasons and Intercontinental) operate in one or more of these locations.

The case studies are selected from countries in the global South in order to link the impacts of the tourism sector's water consumption with wider sustainable development. Tourism is being utilised as a

However, these issues are by no means confined to the Southern hemisphere. All over the world, including popular European tourist destinations, such as Spain, Cyprus, Greece and even the UK, there is increasing pressure on dwindling water supplies due to climate change, growing populations and

industrial consumption.

In each location, the same basic research methodology was applied and a core set of questions addressed. The research entailed garnering the perspectives of various stakeholders in the tourism sector, government, local communities, and from tourists. The exception is the Alleppey case study, which is based on information provided by our local partner, Kabani.

Our research focuses on coastal destinations, because this is where tourism development tends to be most intense and water resources particularly prone to saltwater intrusion. However, challenges around water scarcity and inequity also present themselves in inland tourist areas, such as national parks and mountain ranges, including The Alps (e.g. see [alpwaterscarce.eu](http://alpwaterscarce.eu)) and The Himalayas (e.g. see [climate4life.org](http://climate4life.org)).

The full research reports are available at [www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk).



A boy washes clothes at a standpipe in Zanzibar. Groundwater levels have dropped as tourism development has intensified.



A community well in Goa lies abandoned due to saltwater contamination. Locals believe the salination was caused by the neighbouring 5-star Leela Hotel digging a lagoon.

# Zanzibar

Tourism is a major contributing factor to Zanzibar's economy and arrivals in 2011 reached an all-time high. However, despite tourism's on-going rapid expansion, almost half the population remain in poverty.

Zanzibar lies east off the coast of Tanzania and consists of two major islands, Pemba and Unguja. Tourist arrivals for 2011 hit a record high of 220,000 (ZATI, 2012), up from 19,368 in 1995. The industry has created many jobs, which have benefitted numerous sectors of society. However, despite the significant growth of tourism, 42 per cent of Zanzibar's population remain below the poverty line (UNDP, 2011). Just half of rural residents have access to a water source (DFID, 2011). Women in particular spend significant amounts of time fetching water. This diverts them from other income-generating activities and means women face the most immediate problems when freshwater is scarce.

Zanzibar depends upon the seasonal rains (March to May and November to December) to replenish its underground water supplies, which constitute the principal water source for the islands. Rainfall in the east is the lowest in the islands and this region has been classed as water poor. However, tourism is concentrated around the east and north and coasts of Unguja, with tourist numbers peaking during the dry season.

In the villages and popular resort areas of Kiwengwa, Nungwi and Jambiani, there are stark inequities between water access, consumption and quality for local communities and the growing numbers of hotels and guesthouses. All villages are facing increasing water scarcity and many residents report a daily struggle to access sufficient quantities. Water infrastructure and supplies to the communities are inadequate, while the over-extraction of groundwater by the tourism industry is causing salination

of local wells. On average, households across the three villages consume some 93.2 litres of water per day. The types of tourist accommodation in each village varies, but average consumption per room ranges from 686 litres per day for guesthouses, to 3,195 litres per day for 5-star hotels. This gives an overall average consumption of 1,482 litres per room per day: 16 times higher than average household daily usage.

Very few hotels surveyed undertake water conservation measures. Just two practise rainwater harvesting and the majority change linen on a daily basis. Only one hotel treats its grey water sufficiently for garden use. A minority reported using sewage treatment plants, with most disposing of their sewage into soak pits. This widespread use of unlined soak pits means sewage is leaching into the water table, posing a threat to human health and marine ecosystems.

### Conflict in Kiwengwa

Local communities are only too aware of the issues and inequities. In Kiwengwa, residents widely reported conflicts with hoteliers over water. Tourism in Kiwengwa is mostly high-end, including three 5-star hotels. Community wells have reportedly become salty since the arrival of tourism 15 years ago. Many residents say they must now buy water from private vendors who transport water in from elsewhere. However, not all can always afford to do so. In the mid 1990s, two hotels, Bravo Club and Venta Club, were granted government permission to pump water from a cave on the condition that they also supplied water to Kairo, the closest neighbouring area of Kiwengwa. The subsequent collapse of Venta Club has left Kairo

residents without pumped water. Local people also report that the hotels have not always honoured the agreement, and would prioritise their own needs over those of residents. Anger at this provoked some community members to cut the hotels' water pipes and to hold public demonstrations. Water pressure and quantity is often reportedly insufficient for the village's needs, particularly during dry seasons. "The caves that produce water... are the property of our village, but they are colonised by the investors and they do whatever they want", said one villager. Cave water sources are now guarded 24 hours a day by hoteliers.

### Inequity in Nungwi

Wall-to-wall hotels and guesthouses surround the village of Nungwi. Water supply is hugely problematic. Local residents report that well water has become too saline for use. The one remaining public borehole and pump are inadequate to service the area. This means most villagers must buy water transported from Channi, a town 20 kilometers away. Meanwhile, four of the larger hotels have sunk their own boreholes. The perceived water inequity between hotels and local residents has again resulted in conflict. Hotel water pipelines have been deliberately cut by locals. This has prompted some hotels to employ guards to patrol their pipelines. "Hoteliers were taking much water and communities decided to demonstrate and destroy the water system to the hotels", stated a local man. One hotel has bought its own truck to transport water. Trucking water is reportedly big business, with vendors charging hotels up to ten times what they pay for the water in Chaani.

### Health risks in Jambiani

In Jambiani, the majority of villagers do have access to piped water, either in their homes or through standpipes. Although the quality

is reportedly good, water pressure is often low. Water distribution depends upon an electric pump, which occasionally breaks or stops working during power cuts. In 2010, Jambiani experienced a three month power cut, which meant that there was no piped freshwater. This led to a cholera outbreak in which at least four people died. Such an incident suggests that groundwater had become polluted with sewage from hotel soak pits.

The persistent low water pressure is widely attributed to the hotels

**"The caves that produce water... are the property of our village, but they are colonised by the investors and they do whatever they want"**

using powerful pumps to siphon off water from the main public pipeline. Again, this is giving rise to anger and resentment among residents. One local reflected on a recent water shortage: "The hotels have huge tanks and strong pumps; it took them a while to fill their tanks while we were suffering and waiting to fill our couple of buckets for basic daily usage. It was not fair". Another resident stated that during the three-month power cut, he approached four hotels that were pumping water using private generators. "Unfortunately they refused. In the village we discussed how our neighbours refused to offer us even a bucket of water. We were so upset".

### Positive cooperation

In contrast, in the southern part of Jambiani village, there is positive cooperation between tourism businesses and the community. One hotel maintains a community pump and buys in water when this is not working. Other hotels have reportedly exerted pressure on the water department to fix broken water

infrastructure quickly. In fact, there are incidences of good cooperation between hotels and villagers in each of the villages. However, while such schemes can promote community water access, they leave villages subject to the whims of the hotels. Furthermore, many hotels close during low season, potentially leaving communities without water.

### Tourist perspectives

Among the tourists interviewed across the three villages, less than half indicated that they were aware

of water issues in Zanzibar. Although 60 per cent described themselves as committed to environmental sustainability, most delegated responsibility to their hotels. However, over half felt it would be acceptable to increase the cost of their holiday to pay for improved water infrastructure.

### Unsustainable for all

There are several factors underpinning water inequity in Zanzibar. Due to its superior infrastructure and purchasing power, the rapidly expanding tourism sector is appropriating vast quantities of water, while poor local residents struggle to secure enough for essential personal, domestic and livelihood needs. The over-consumption and pollution of water is threatening Zanzibar's natural environment upon which tourism depends. Shortages in government capacity mean that responsibility for community water provision in some areas has been designated to hotels. While there are positive examples of cooperation in this regard, hotels tend to prioritise their needs over those of communities. This situation is creating conflict and resentment, while curtailing tourism's potential to contribute to socially equitable and environmentally sustainable development.

This case study is summarised from *Zanzibar Case Study: Villages of Kiwengwa, Nungwi and Jambiani* (2011) by Lorna Slade of Mwambao Coastal Community Network on behalf of Tourism Concern.



With swimming pools as standard, it is not surprising that tourist awareness of water scarcity in Zanzibar is low.

## Goa

Tourism to Goa began in the 1960s and the state remains India's beach tourism capital. However, Goa is fast becoming a victim of its own popularity and is facing huge water challenges as a result of poorly managed tourism development.

Scenically located between the Arabian Sea to the west and the Sahyadri Hills to the east, the south Indian state of Goa is known for its sweeping sandy beaches and natural beauty. In 2010, some 2.6 million domestic and international visitors flocked to its shores, exceeding the state's resident population. However, Goa is facing serious water issues. These issues are threatening the sustainability of Goa as a tourism destination, as well as the well-being and livelihoods of local communities. These include small-scale tourism entrepreneurs, such as guesthouse and beachside restaurant owners. Tourism development is generally poorly planned and regulated throughout Goa's coastal belt. The state government's drive towards high-end tourism, characterised by 5-star resorts boasting swimming pools and golf courses, is seeing the increased privatisation of Goa's coastlines, while placing an intense burden on the already strained freshwater resources and infrastructure. Such high-end tourism typically consumes greater volumes of water (up to 1,335 litres per room per day) than smaller guesthouses (573 litres of water per room per day). The market for second homes, holiday apartments and timeshares is also booming, with new developments springing up along paddy fields and coastlines.

Our research in the coastal villages and resort areas of Cavelossim, Colva, Benaulim, Palolem and Calangute, indicate that water is being allocated and appropriated based on capacity to pay, rather than on human rights and needs. This is leading to the depletion of groundwater and the vastly inequitable appropriation and consumption of water by the tourism sector. The

problem is being compounded by the widespread pollution of Goa's rivers, groundwater and wells from untreated sewage and dumped waste (including countless empty plastic water bottles), to which the tourism sector is a significant contributor. The 'concretisation' of storm drains and land is also leading to major rainwater run-off.

### Traditional access eroded

Traditionally, Goan households access water via wells – either private or community-owned. However, as the quantity and quality of well water declines, households become increasingly dependent upon piped government supply. Yet this supply is irregular, erratic and of poor quality.

### “There is no incentive to do good, and no punishment of those who do bad”

Water pressure is weak because of over-demand and aged, leaking infrastructure. Furthermore, many large hotels and resort complexes reportedly attach large pipes to the mains supply, which siphon off the bulk of the water while further decreasing pressure and availability for neighbouring communities.



Goa's infrastructure struggles to cope with millions of tourists that descent upon its shores

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Many hotels also dig their own boreholes, which directly deplete local groundwater. Others purchase water from private water tanker trucks – an increasingly ubiquitous sight on Goa's roads. However, this growing privatisation of water apparently remains outside the law.

For example, in the densely developed resort of Calangute, the government is only obliged to provide piped water to households for two hours every other day. Donna, an elderly resident, reports: “All these hotels get a good supply of water. They can afford to buy from the tankers. There are no regulations for these. I don't know where this water comes from. We only get water every second day from the public supply and only for a couple of hours. This is hardly enough. Luckily I'm still OK as I have my well and the water is still OK. But the water level is depleting.”

A female guesthouse owner in

Calangute added: “The wells here have been contaminated for 10 years. The contamination has been partly caused by soak pits from tourism. Dirty water leaches into the ground. The soak pits are illegal. In the hot dry season – March, April, May – we get water for 20-30 minutes a day... Many people depend on tankers.”

There is a strong sense of injustice among many community members, including small-scale tourism entrepreneurs, regarding inequitable water access between themselves and large hotels. One guesthouse owner said: “Local people sometimes feel angry, but they recognise the benefits that tourism can bring. But it is we ordinary people who are suffering. We are drinking this water, they are not. Some can afford to buy water, some cannot.”

### Poor governance

Goa's water woes are underpinned by poor tourism and water governance. The monitoring and enforcement of environmental laws governing groundwater extraction, sewage treatment and pollution are minimal due to lack of resources, political will and corruption. “There is no incentive to do good, and no punishment of those who do bad,” said one Cavelossim guesthouse owner. “The local panchayat [village council] isn't bothered about water issues. They're responsible for granting licences for new buildings and are earning a lot of money from it”, reported a Benaulim resident. In this governance vacuum, the tourism industry is free to use unlimited quantities of water. Indeed, all hoteliers reported that they have uninterrupted water access and almost half admitted that they do not monitor their water consumption.

Sheela Gracias is a legal advocate involved in bringing cases against hotels for polluting waterways, including the Park Hyatt near Cansaulim. “The hotels all have lush lawns and borewells. The coastal soil is very porous... so there is contamination of groundwater and huge consumption of water by hotels lowers the water table. Wells in the neighbouring village have already become saline and unfit for human consumption.” Sheela and many others are standing up to the situation, but the court cases are time-consuming and expensive. “The local authorities are hand in glove with the hoteliers. This makes us very bitter, because it is your own people working against you. What we are doing now is damage limitation; we need to switch to nurturing mode”, said Sheela.

### Wasting away

Although the majority of hotels surveyed reported engaging in some kind of water conservation measures, including use of sewage treatment plants, water recycling and harvesting, re-plumbing



Private water tankers serving the tourism sector are a common site in Goa, but who is regulating their activities?

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and providing educational literature for guests, serious problems persist. In June 2011, a case was brought by the Colva Civic and Consumer Forum against several hotels and restaurants that were discharging sewage into Colva Creek, behind Colva Beach. This includes businesses on land owned by the Department of Tourism. A damning High Court ruling stated: “This situation, which has made the entire area very unhealthy and disgusting, has come about only because the authorities have neglected the situation”. The establishments were ordered to clean up their acts, but in November 2011 the Goan authorities recommended 20 should cease operations due to their failure to comply. As of January 2012, this recommendation appeared not to have been enforced.

Along Goa's shorelines, a seasonal proliferation of restaurants and beach-huts installs countless illegal toilets, which channel waste into soak pits. Tonnes of human sewage are absorbed into the soil, posing a huge risk of groundwater and marine contamination. In recognition of this health and environmental hazard, Goa's Shack Owners Welfare Association sought government financial support for the use of chemical toilets. However, the government refused. “We need a solution to this issue... [but] the government is not interested in supporting our businesses. The government only wants high end tourism and big planned resorts. The

5-star lobby, they rule Goa,” stated a beach restaurant owner.

In Cavalossim, the wells of the community neighbouring the 5-star Leela Kempinsky Hotel were found to contain traces of nitrate, which left an oily residue on the surface. The wells have reportedly been abandoned and the communities are now entirely dependent on the insufficient public supply. The problems allegedly began when the Leela dug a scenic lagoon, which caused saltwater intrusion.

This pattern is repeated throughout Goa's coastal belt, undermining livelihoods, the environment, the tourism sector, and wider socioeconomic development. The monitoring of groundwater resources and consumption is non-existent. Water infrastructure primarily benefits luxury tourist developments, while provision for local communities is limited. Meanwhile, untreated sewage is degrading surface and groundwater resources. Geraldine Fernandes, a guesthouse owner in Benaulim, said, “We are not anti-development; we want development that protects our livelihoods. There are lots of new constructions, including second homes. What do they give back to the village? But they use our resources – all the resources are from our land.”

This is a summary of *Reclaiming water rights: Towards an equitable social contract* (2011) by the Centre for Responsible Tourism (Goa) on behalf of Tourism Concern.

# The Gambia

The causes of Gambia's water challenges are complex and many, but include poorly regulated tourism, resource limitations, and low levels of awareness. This context is leading to inequitable water access between large tourism businesses and local communities, including small-scale tourism enterprises, and could hamper the country's efforts to pull itself out of poverty.

The Gambia is the smallest country on mainland Africa and sits on the continent's western coast. The great River Gambia intersects the entire country, running from Senegal in the east to Gambia's narrow coastline. Despite this prominent water feature, Gambia is facing serious water challenges.

Poverty levels in The Gambia are high. The country is classed as a Least Developed Country by the UN (UNDP, 2011). It has one of the highest population densities of Africa, with almost half of its 1.6 million residents living along the coast within or adjacent to the main tourism area. The Gambia is also among the top 20 per cent of countries facing the severest effects of sea level rises due to climate change. This has major implications for its tourism sector and freshwater resources.

## Tourism in The Gambia

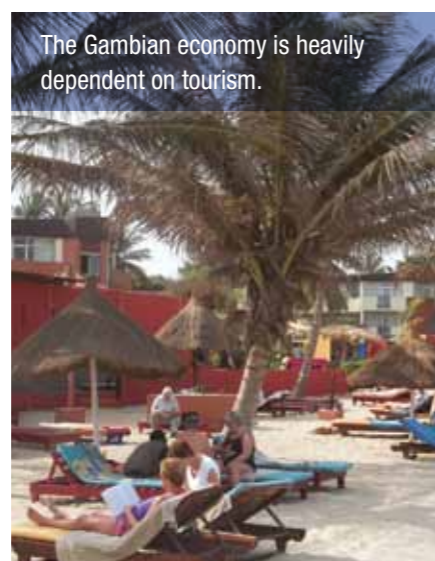
International tourists started arriving in The Gambia in the 1970s. The sector has swelled in the last 15 years, with arrivals reaching 146,000 in 2008. Tourism contributes 16 per cent to GDP; it is the prime foreign exchange earner and an important creator of livelihoods within both the formal and informal sectors. Cheap package holidays for Europeans eager to escape the winter run between October and March. Approximately half these tourists are from the UK. Tourism is concentrated along a 15 kilometer stretch of coast – encompassing almost two thirds of The Gambia's coastline – in a designated Tourism Development Area (TDA). Tourist arrivals peak

during the dry season, while the monsoon lasts just four months, from June to September. The Gambia depends upon groundwater resources, which are accessed via public piped supply, as well as private boreholes and hand-dug wells.

The expansion of tourism, as well as the diversification of agriculture and food self-sufficiency, are key facets of the government's 'Vision 2020' development strategy. However, both tourism and agriculture are heavily water-dependent and there is real risk that the government's strategy will falter if The Gambia's water resources are not managed carefully.

## Water security

Water issues in The Gambia stem from a weak regulatory framework, poor inter-departmental coordination, and lack of financial and institutional capacity to plan, monitor and equitably manage its freshwater resources. At watershed level, future water security depends upon

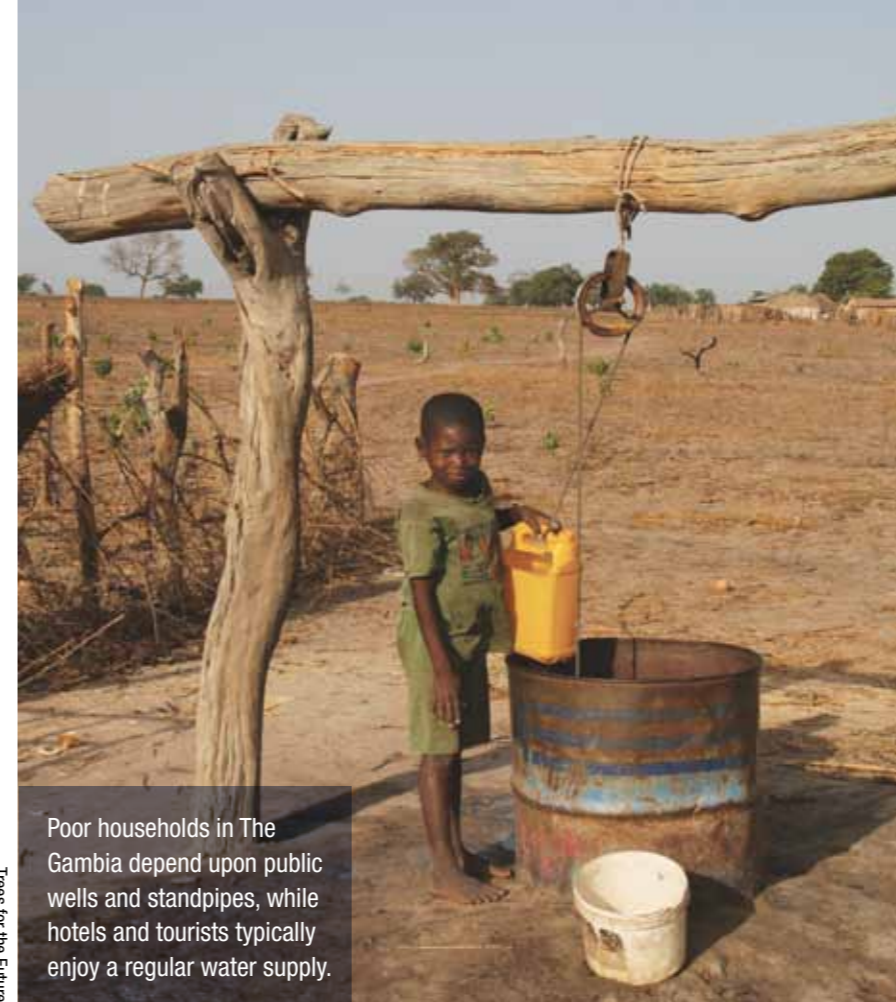


Adama Bah

The Gambia's continued engagement in a cross-border initiative to manage the River Gambia, which farmers and fishers utilise for crop irrigation and livelihoods. The river is also vital to replenishing groundwater. A new Water Policy was created in 2008, but there is no legal basis for its implementation. Lack of resources means that, while the government is implementing some programmes to increase water access and seems committed to promoting the right to water and sanitation, within the TDA just 25 per cent of the population has access to piped water. Here, ageing infrastructure struggles to meet the high demand. Up to a fifth of water is being lost to leaking pipes, which causes persistently low water pressure. Frequent power cuts mean that the electric pumps used to disburse water through the pipes cannot work. In Fajarah, the local water treatment plant and supply station are reportedly contaminated, which means the authorities cannot provide an adequate supply to local households. Meanwhile, public supply in rural areas is minimal, and provision depends heavily on international donors.

## Water free for all

In order to counter erratic supplies, most hotels and second homes dig private boreholes with electric pumps. However, this practice is entirely unregulated and unmonitored. The prevailing perception among hoteliers is that water from boreholes is "free" and "unlimited". This is a particular concern given the need for the water authorities to increase revenues in order to improve water infrastructure. Additionally, many hotels have faulty water meters. Therefore they pay the same amount regardless of occupancy rates. Overall, hotels have little idea of how much water they are consuming (estimates varied from 20 litres per room per day, to 1,310 litres per room per day), and little incentive to reduce their usage. Most hotels surveyed, such as in the areas of Kotu and Kololi,



Trees for the Future

also report filling up reserve tanks from the mains supply when available. However, because the hotel pipes are wider in diameter than those servicing neighbouring communities, they effectively siphon off the bulk of the water, apparently causing availability for residents to drop.

While most hotels reportedly undertook some degree of water conservation, such as towel re-use schemes, reduced toilet water flows, pipe maintenance and provision of guest information, overall their understanding of water issues was low. Most had garden sprinklers running in the middle of the day. Two 5-star hotels had grey water and sewage treatment plants, but only one hotel practised rainwater collection. Furthermore, intense development and concretisation of ground surfaces is exacerbating rainwater run-off and risk of flooding during the monsoon. There is a tendency to site boreholes on high ground (which limits rainwater replenishment of groundwater); or within 20-50 meters of the shoreline, which increases the risk of saltwater intrusion. Reversing salination would be a very expensive process and is of particular concern to the Department

of Water Resources (DWR). The DWR currently has no information on borehole numbers, sitings and usage, nor does it have the legal mandate to conduct the necessary investigations or enforce better practices.

**Low income households, which must rely upon public standpipes and piped supply... suffer the severest impacts. Women are disproportionately affected.**

## Opportunities stifled

While hotels are generally able to secure access to water, many small locally-owned tourism enterprises are struggling. This includes the fruit vendors and juice pressers who sell refreshments to tourists on the beach, as well as craft stall owners, taxi drivers and some beach bars and restaurants. Although some standpipe cooperatives among the fruit sellers are setting positive examples, most have to fetch water in 20-litre containers from other nearby businesses at a cost. None of the juice pressers reported having access to running water, while both said that obtaining water for personal and business needs presents a daily challenge. The head of the Association

of Women Fruit Sellers stated that "lack of access to running water is a barrier to the development [of the] businesses of the women." Unsurprisingly, most of these micro-enterprises are more conscious of their water consumption. "All of the women use water wisely simply because it is so hard to get," said the Association's head.

Likewise, local households reported that they frequently face low pressure and water shortages due to power cuts and the appropriation of the mains supply by hotels. The most acute problems were reported in Kotu and Kololi. The principal issue seems not to be the price or quality of water, but its failure to flow through the pipes at all. While higher and middle-income households can better cope by installing water tanks and even boreholes, the cost of sinking a borehole is far beyond the reach of the majority of Gambians. Low income households, which must rely upon public standpipes and have an average of 12 occupants, suffer

the severest impacts. Women are disproportionately affected. In Kotu and Kololi, women rise at 4am daily to start filling vessels with water. Power cuts typically cause the water to cease flowing by 5am; it does not resume until mid-afternoon and only then for a couple of hours. Women without a tap in their home must queue for hours to fill up containers at public standpipes, which are also affected by power cuts. This curtails the time they have available for other socioeconomic activities, and impedes their upward mobility.

This case study is a summary of *Water Equity in Tourism in The Gambia* (December 2011), by Rebecca Latchford and Dauda Niang on behalf of Tourism Concern.



# Bali

Bali has been promoted as a tropical island paradise for almost a century. However, despite a rainy season that extends across five months of the year, Bali is facing an acute water crisis. This would be catastrophic for its people, environment and agriculture, as well as for Bali's tourism industry and economy.

As early as the 1930s, tourists were flocking to the Indonesian island of Bali in their thousands (Picard, 1997). By 2008, two million tourists visited, significantly swelling Bali's resident population of 3.5 million. Foreign tourist arrivals are expected to increase 150 per cent by 2025, while Bali's population is set to grow to over four million. Tourism is an integral part of the Balinese economy, accounting for 481,000 direct jobs (25 per cent of the work force) and 30 per cent of the country's GDP (BPS, 2010).

While Bali's pending water crisis is being caused by a range of factors, rampant, unregulated tourism development, combined with poor watershed management, are arguably key. Of Bali's 400 rivers, 260 now run dry during the dry season (Bali Discovery, 2009). Bali's biggest natural water reserve, Lake Buyan, has dropped 3.5 meters in three years (Fogarty, 2007). Deforestation to make way for tourism, including in protected reserves, and encroachment upon greenbelt areas, are hugely damaging Bali's watershed. Balinese law states that buildings should occupy no more than 40 per cent of any plot of land in order to limit rainwater run-off, which is vital to replenishing groundwater supplies. However, this regulation was found to be widely ignored.

The decreasing levels of water availability and quality are experienced most acutely by the poorer sectors of society, which also remain largely excluded from tourism's benefits. Some 60 per cent of Bali's 800,000 rural farming families live below the poverty line (Bali Times, 2011), despite residing in a 'tourist paradise' where hotels charge up to US \$1500 a night.

According to Bali's Ministry of Health, over 50 per cent of infant deaths are caused by diseases related to poor sanitation, water and environment, and the island has a higher prevalence of diarrhoea (13 per cent) than the national average (9 per cent). Indeed, rural villagers report that lack of water is dominating their lives: "I cannot sleep because of worrying about water for our rice field", stated one woman. "This is something we never had to think about [before]. At least for the last eight years we have had less water, so that every night my husband has to stay in the rice field... because [the water] gets stolen by other farmers", she said.

## Bali is enduring a vicious cycle of increasing tourism development, deforestation, water depletion, augmenting water costs, and declining agriculture

### Cultural significance of water

Water has an important cultural significance in Bali. It is regarded as critical to maintaining a harmonious relationship with God and the environment (Windia and Dewi, 2011), while water temples and traditional community irrigation systems (*subak*) have been key to watershed management for a thousand years (Lansing, 2000). Yet due to the diversion of water to coastal resorts, coupled with declining incomes in the agricultural sector (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2009), Bali's iconic paddy terraces are now being lost at an average rate of 1000 hectares a year, leading local academics to warn of food shortages (Jakarta Post, 2012). One recent study estimates that the island is already short of 200,000 hectares of



Despite living in a tourist 'paradise', half of infant deaths in Bali are the result of poor water and sanitation.

agricultural land needed to feed current residents and tourists (Jakarta Post, 2010). Some farmers are selling up because, despite a 2010 moratorium on new resorts due to a room over-

capacity of 10,000, ongoing tourism developments are causing land values to spiral. This forces farmers adjacent to resorts to pay more tax on their fields (Bali Discovery, 2011).

Lack of infrastructure is further adding to the island's water inequity. Although some households are attached to the water mains, supply is woefully inadequate. Some reported "catching drips all day to collect sufficient [water] to bathe", while others stated that "water flows for two hours in the morning". Some have to collect water by hand, which can require travelling several kilometers. This involves considerable time and labour and is a task that typically falls to women. Other villages lacking piped water depend on hand-dug wells. However, these dry up

seasonally, forcing people to rely upon neighbouring villages' borewells or to purchase bottled drinking water. However, the price of bottled water has increased 25 per cent in three years, prompting poor villagers to buy 'refill' water from unregulated vendors. The quality of this can be highly dubious. Some locals spoke of increased cases of diarrhoea and reported seeing mud and larvae in the refill water.

### Watertables dropping

In order to counter the unreliable public supply, most hotels, laundries and other tourism businesses have dug wells with electric pumps. All are required to have permits and meters for their wells, and should be billed for their water consumption. However, these regulations were apparently unknown, ignored or unenforced. There is stark evidence that this widespread unmonitored extraction of groundwater is leading to its depletion. Most wells must now be dug to a depth of 60 meters – 20 meters deeper than before – in order to reach potable water. This is particularly problematic for communities relying on shallower

hand-dug wells, who cannot afford to pay for mechanical diggers or electric pumps. However, most tourism industry stakeholders interviewed were unaware of the need to conserve water, or of the impacts of their activities on the water table. Similarly, very few of the tourists interviewed were aware of Bali's water woes, with more than 90 per cent believing the island has enough water to cater for its population's needs. However, 95 per cent of tourists also thought their accommodation should be making efforts to conserve water.

### Contamination

The quality of Bali's water is also seriously deteriorating. "The ground water and wells in Nusa Dua, Tanjung Benoa and Legian areas are so heavily contaminated that the water is unfit for human consumption," said Ketut Sundra, a lecturer at Indonesia's Udayana State University (Xinhua, 2007). A lack of environmental awareness among tourism businesses and residents, coupled with the absence of sufficient waste management systems, means that much solid waste and sewage

is dumped in waterways. This waste ends up in irrigation channels and paddies, blocking storm drains and exacerbating flooding, while polluted run-off infiltrates the groundwater and flows out to sea.

### Climate of inaction

Overarching Bali's water issues is weak governance. Responsibility for water provision is distributed across 11 government departments, spanning national, provincial and 'regency' levels. However, roles are poorly defined and inter-departmental cooperation is weak. The resulting intransigence and lack of accountability means that there are numerous regulations, none of which are enforced. Many government officials interviewed seemed unaware of Bali's water problems, which remain conveniently obscured by an absence of monitoring and information. Corruption and the power and influence of the tourism industry are also likely factors in the climate of inaction. One local contact was threatened for posting online information about luxury hotels dumping waste near waterways, while a European journalist reported that farmers were afraid to talk, having been warned off for previously speaking to our researcher.

Bali is enduring a vicious cycle of increasing tourism development, deforestation, water depletion, augmenting water costs, and declining agriculture. Socially and economically marginalised communities, particularly rural farmers, are experiencing the greatest negative impacts, while benefiting least from tourism. Bali's pending water crisis is threatening both food security and the future of tourism itself, upon which its economy depends. If tourism collapses, then so could Bali's economy.

This case study is based on field research undertaken by Stroma Cole of the University of the West of England (Cole, 2012).



Tourists at Kuta Beach. Rampant coastal tourism development is contributing to Bali's pending water crisis.

# Alleppey, Kerala

Houseboat tourism is booming on the backwaters of Alleppey in Kerala. While this provides economic benefits for some, the livelihoods and drinking water access for many local communities are being severely threatened.

The southern Indian state of Kerala is a popular destination for both national and international tourists. In 2009, tourism contributed 9 per cent to Kerala's GDP (Deccan Chronicle, 2011), with international arrivals numbering over 650,000 in 2010 (Kerala Tourism, 2010). The coast of Kerala is fringed with a network of lakes, rivers and canals, which make up the idyllic backwaters. Alleppey (also known as Alappuzha) is the most popular backwater destination, attracting several thousand tourists every year, including many from the UK (Zacharias et al, 2008). Most visitors spend some time on a houseboat – a converted rice barge complete with sleeping quarters, bathroom, kitchen and staff. However, while benefitting some, the exponential growth of houseboat tourism is being met with mounting concern and resentment from many local communities.

Poorly regulated houseboat tourism is affecting water quality, ecosystems, and traditional livelihoods. Alleppey's waterways are home to over 10,000 people. Their entire way of life is intimately connected to the backwaters, which they rely upon for fishing, drinking, bathing, cooking, and other livelihood activities, such as rice farming and toddy-tapping (harvesting of mildly fermented coconut water). R. Visakhan, president of a local panchayat (village-level government) states: "Life is very much related to water. The livelihood of the people, such as agriculture and fishing activities, depends on the quality of water here".

## Houseboat boom

In recent years, houseboat numbers have mushroomed. The state tourism board, Kerala Tourism, estimates that 1000 houseboats now operate on the backwaters, with the majority of these concentrated around Alleppey. However, the true figure could be even higher. Larger operators from other parts of India are reportedly moving in, offering 'luxury' houseboats (some even boast swimming pools), and buying up waterside property to store their boats. This is pushing out local operators. In the same period, poor, rural backwater communities have started to experience increased scarcity of drinking water and declining fishing and agricultural productivity as Alleppey's waterways become

Alleppey communities use the backwaters for drinking, washing and fishing. Sewage and petrol from houseboat tourism is threatening health and livelihoods.



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increasing polluted (Harikumar, 2005; Thomas et. al., 2009).

Many houseboats reportedly dump sewage, kitchen waste and rubbish into the backwaters. There are designated locations for waste discharge, but these are commonly ignored by houseboat operators. Houseboat engines leak petrol and other pollutants directly into waterways, while careless refuelling often results in spillages. These petrochemicals dramatically disrupt the delicate aquatic ecosystems. Oil coats the gills of fish, causing their death or migration to less polluted areas. Several bird species have also dramatically declined within the last decade.

## Fish catches down

Local fishermen confirm that fuel and oil pollution are affecting the quality of fish and prawn catches. "Husbands have blamed their wives for the kerosene taste of the food... Now we know that the kerosene taste is from the fish itself. We are not able to sell fish because



Houseboat numbers have mushroomed in recent years. Is Kerala Tourism simply going to shift the problem to other areas?

Tourism Concern

of this kerosene. The houseboats are threatening our livelihood. The fish stock is also reducing," said K. Raju, a fisherman from Kainakari. Another fisherman reported: "We have taken a loan from the bank for the small fishing boat and net. Now we are unable to repay the loan because we are not getting enough catch and sale."

## Drinking water

Over 80 per cent of households living along or near the backwaters rely on its water for daily drinking and cooking. Less than half of these residents reportedly treat the water

we took drinking water from there. Now it is very bad because of the pollution from houseboats and other tourist boats. There are no piped water connections. I am responsible for collecting the water and doing the household jobs. I have to go too far, by boat, to collect drinking water. This is burdening my work."

A primary school teacher reported: "Most of our parent-teacher meetings nowadays revolve around the issues of water... Mothers and fathers are worried that the presence of tourists is a bad influence on the children. But they're mostly worried about their

**"People don't want to drink the lake's water anymore. It tastes of petrol and smells bad... they've asked for water from the city, but they don't give enough. Every morning they worry about the water."**

before consuming it. As the canal and lake waters become more polluted, locals are seeking alternative water sources where possible. However, government piped supply is limited. Few households enjoy access to piped water, and where they do, it is erratic and inadequate. Many have no choice but to depend upon contaminated sources.

Women are particularly affected by poor water quality. Lillikuttie, a resident of Kainakari, said: "Earlier the water in the lake was very good,

health, and them not drinking enough water as there are frequent shortages of drinkable water. It's a shame, given that we are surrounded by it!"

Another local man stated: "People don't want to drink the lake's water anymore. It tastes of petrol and smells bad. There's oil floating on the top, even after it is boiled. They're worried because they see the fish floating dead on the water, and the fish tastes bad as well. So they've asked for water from the city, but they don't give enough. Every morning they worry about the water."

## Agricultural impacts

Livelihoods within the agricultural sector are also being severely hit. Paddy fields are directly irrigated by the backwaters, which means that oil, sewage and rubbish from the houseboats easily flows into these agricultural units. Furthermore, farmers attribute recent incidences of ill health to prolonged contact with polluted water. A farmer of Thankamani reported: "Our paddy fields are in a very bad shape due to the pollution. We are not getting agricultural workers, because they are afraid to work in the polluted paddy fields due to health concerns. I am also suffering from skin diseases because of the long contact with the contaminated water."

## Stemming the flow?

In its 2011 tourism strategy, Kerala Tourism acknowledges that houseboat pollution and density is a problem (Kerala Tourism, 2011). Its answer is to "to disperse houseboat operation and cruise activities to relatively underused stretches and regions", while encouraging the use of improved waste management systems. However, unless it first establishes clear carrying capacities for all regions in consultation with local communities, and actively enforces and monitors boat numbers and their utilisation of waste management systems, it risks simply spreading the problem elsewhere.

# Key emerging themes

The case studies in this report share many factors that are contributing to water inequity between tourism interests (particularly large hotels and resorts) and local communities, including small-scale tourism entrepreneurs.

## Wider contextual issues

Besides increasing seasonal influxes of tourists and migrant labour to service the industry, all the case study destinations are experiencing strong population growth and urbanisation. This is adding to the strain on fragile coastal water resources and the broadly inadequate infrastructure. All are facing wider watershed degradation due to deforestation and the concretisation of greenbelt and agricultural land. Energy vulnerabilities and the impacts of climate change, such as rising seawater levels and increased risks of drought and flooding, are also common themes (see figure 1).

## Weak governance

Weak tourism and water governance are arguably the key factors giving rise to water inequity in tourism. This includes lack of coordination between government departments, weak regulatory frameworks, weak monitoring and enforcement of existing regulations, inadequate tourism and water planning, poor accountability, and corruption. These weaknesses stem largely from insufficient institutional and resource capacity, as well as low awareness levels and political intransigence. In the gaps created by ineffective governance, poorly planned and regulated tourism development is exerting ever increasing pressure on water resources. In particular, larger hotels and resorts use their superior purchasing power and influence to consume disproportionate and unsustainable volumes of water. The frequent improper disposal of sewage and dry waste, as well as increasing saltwater intrusion caused by groundwater over-extraction, is contaminating groundwater and

waterways, forcing communities to increase dependence on erratic public supplies or unregulated private vendors. An absence of information and monitoring means there is limited knowledge of existing and future water availability.

## Infrastructural inequality

Infrastructural inequalities mean that water is being directly appropriated from the public supply to service resorts and hotels at the expense of local people, including small-scale tourism businesses. For many households in Goa, Alleppey, Bali, Zanzibar and The Gambia, decrepid infrastructure and regular power cuts mean that piped water is only available for a few hours every one to two days. Poorer households, particularly the women, are most affected by such water shortages, and must spend considerable time queuing at public standpipes. Meanwhile, hotels and resorts affix wide pipes and pumps to the mains supply, which depletes availability and pressure for other users. Most hotels also invest in boreholes to ensure a regular

supply. However, this groundwater extraction largely goes unregulated and unmonitored, and the water is considered 'free'. This is alarming given the dire need for government authorities in all locations to recover revenues in order to improve equitable access to water and sanitation.

## Incremental privatisation

Insufficient public supplies, and depletion and pollution of groundwater, are forcing both tourism businesses and communities to secure their water needs through private providers. This includes those drilling boreholes and selling water transported in from elsewhere. Such incremental and broadly unchecked privatisation of water and water services is prevalent in Bali, Goa, Zanzibar and The Gambia. However, as demonstrated in Bali, rising costs leave some poor households with little choice but to pay for poor quality water, which poses serious risks to health.

## Rule-breaking

All the case studies highlight instances of rule-breaking, where tourism businesses take advantage of water governance gaps. For example, in Goa and Bali, widespread disregard of regulations governing sewage and solid disposal has led to pervasive water contamination. In Alleppey, designated areas for houseboats to

dispose of sewage and kitchen waste are apparently ignored by most houseboat operators. Similarly, many hotels in The Gambia admitted having faulty water meters, while the water authorities estimate there to be some 9000 broken meters in the Great Banjul Area, which incorporates the main tourism zone.

## Lack of incentive

The prevailing situation means that there is little incentive for hotels to implement water conservation measures. Installing water-saving infrastructure is costly and perceived as unnecessary where water can be extracted from the ground for free and broken meters go ignored. As stated by respondents in Goa, individuals in government are earning lucrative sums by granting land for tourism development, while a request for government support from local restaurant owners to install chemical toilets was turned down.

## Limited awareness

Nonetheless, many hotels are interested in water conservation, but lack the knowledge or resources to implement any such measures. Even basic methods, such as reduced linen changes, were limited in scope. For example, in Bali, half of tourists reported that their towels were changed daily.

## Erosion of community water management systems

The gradual erosion of traditional community water management and governance systems was prevalent in both Bali (*subak*) and Goa (*Goankari*). This erosion is linked to the on-going conversion of agricultural land for tourism development and is arguably contributing to wider watershed degradation. In Zanzibar, there were both good and bad examples of village Water Committees – a more recent example of a community-level water governance system (see page 24).

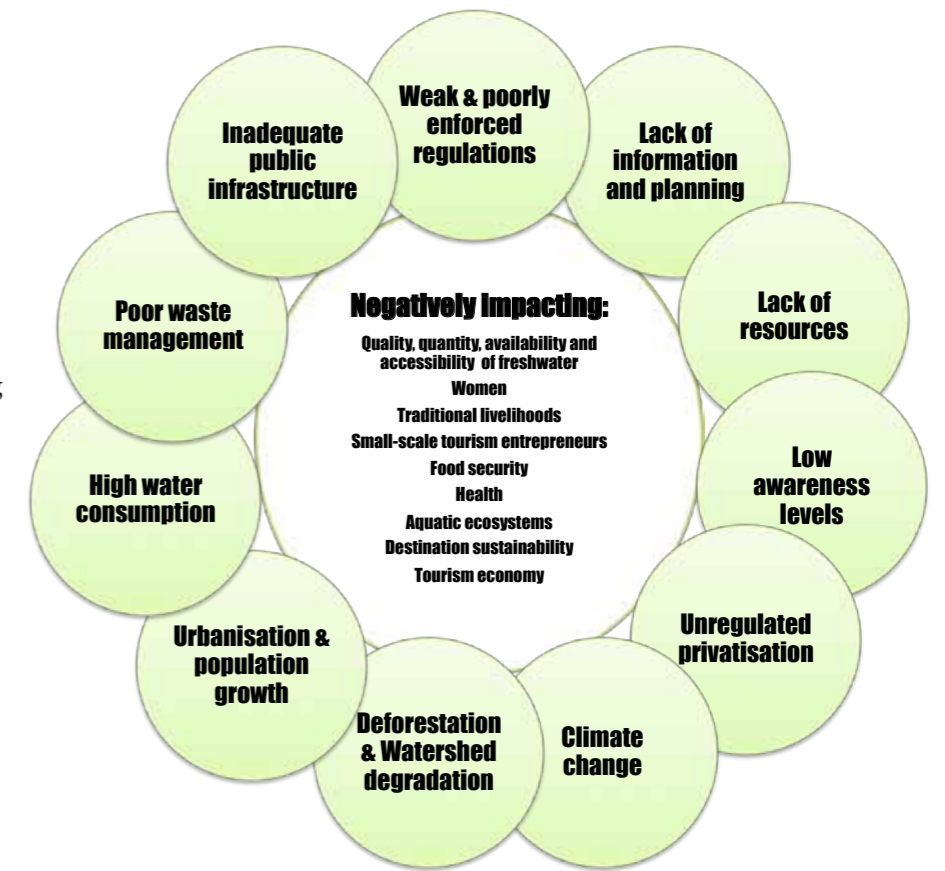


Figure 1: The range of causal factors and impacts undermining water equity and sustainable tourism development.

## Livelihood impacts

Inequitable and insufficient water access is harming livelihoods everywhere. Small businesses, such as beach shack restaurants and guesthouse owners in Goa, and fruit vendors in The Gambia, often struggle to meet their water needs. Agriculture is in decline in Goa and Bali because of the reduced availability of water and pollution of paddy fields, combined with poor returns and pressure to convert farmland. Fishing communities in Alleppey are seeing fish catches fall due to pollution from tourist houseboats. These examples raise critical questions around food security. Similarly, in The Gambia, the government's goal of achieving food self-sufficiency could be thrown into doubt without careful management of its water resources.

## Health risks

The depletion and contamination of freshwater due to tourism poses significant health risks to both communities and tourists. This is

perhaps evidenced most starkly with the cholera outbreak in Jambiani, Zanzibar. Farmers in Alleppey, Goa and Bali have reported skin infections from sewage entering their fields. In Bali, skin rashes, stomach upsets and ear infections among tourists are now common, caused by sewage contamination of the sea (BIMC Hospital 2012).

## Social conflict

The situation of water inequity is leading to increasing resentment and conflict among many communities towards the tourism sector. The most extreme examples of this can be seen in Zanzibar, where hotel water pipes have been vandalised and are now patrolled by guards.

Ultimately, the situation in all case study sites is unsustainable environmentally, socially and economically. Tourism's vast and inequitable consumption of water is undermining community rights to water and sanitation, while threatening the future of the sector itself, as well as wider equitable, sustainable development.



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## Discussion and Conclusions:

# Opportunities and ways forward

Despite the challenges, there are notable opportunities from improving water equity in each case study site. These can offer useful lessons for tourist destinations elsewhere facing similar challenges. Grasping these opportunities could help governments fulfill their obligations to uphold and protect the right to water and sanitation as a priority; and support tourism businesses in implementing their responsibility to respect these rights.

The significance of tourism to the economies of Zanzibar, Goa, Bali, The Gambia and Kerala makes it imperative for their governments and tourism businesses to take steps to ensure sustainable water management and equitable access. The superior infrastructure of luxury tourism developments and their capacity to pay for their considerable water consumption should be harnessed to support improved access for local communities. In all locations, there is a dire need for improved tourism and water governance, including with regard to the planning, regulation and monitoring of tourism development and its water use. It is essential that water resources be assessed and and tourism carrying capacities ascertained. Other livelihood needs must be taken into account, as well as pressures from growing populations, climate change and wider watershed degradation. Agriculture and, in the case of Alleppey, freshwater fishing, should be protected against overconsumption, pollution and land appropriation by tourism

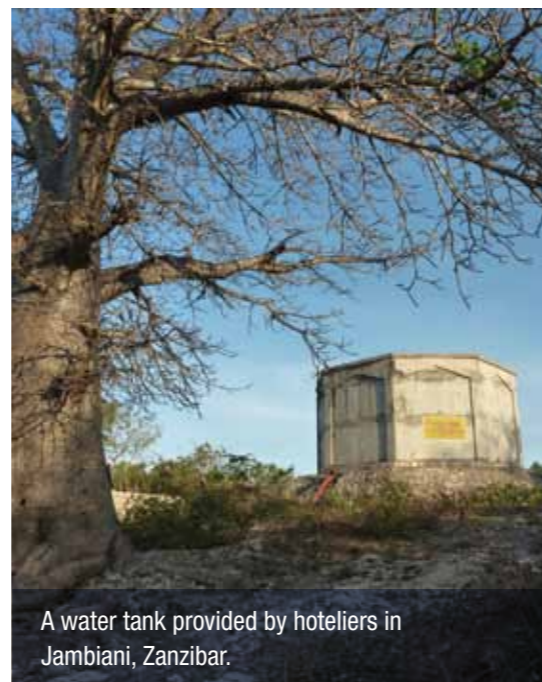
development. International tour operators and multinational hotel groups have a clear vested interest and responsibility to understand and help address these issues and impacts, and to influence local counterparts and authorities accordingly.

There is a need for on-going, coordinated donor support to help these destinations address the institutional and financial constraints they face in fulfilling the right to water and sanitation. The tourism sector and civil society can play a key role in capacity-building, technology transfer, sensitisation, and advocacy. Among the hotels contacted during the research, there is a strong appetite for training and resources in this regard. In Zanzibar alone, over half of the hotels interviewed were keen to participate in such initiatives. Those engaged in good practice should share expertise and serve as exemplars to others. Tourists must also be sensitised on how they can reduce their water consumption in support of water equity.

Some further specific opportunities are discussed opposite.

### ZANZIBAR

Zanzibar's Water Policy (2004) acknowledges the importance of community participation in sustainable water planning and management. The policy allows for the formation of village Water Committees. Given that the impacts of water inequity are disproportionately borne by women, their participation in such committees is vital. Although the role and effectiveness of the committees is currently questionable (many residents interviewed were unaware of their existence, doubted their effectiveness or expressed concerns regarding corruption), their potential to contribute to improved community-level water management is considerable (Slade, 2011). This could include more coordinated dialogue with hoteliers, tour operators and relevant authorities on water issues, as well as improved engagement in the various forthcoming donor-funded water projects. One such project is an African Development Bank piped water scheme for Kiwengwa



A water tank provided by hoteliers in Jambiani, Zanzibar.

and Nungwi, which is due to be implemented within two years. A detailed hydrology report has been undertaken, which will yield crucial information regarding available water resources, and which could inform the development of tourism carrying capacities. In Nungwi, a UNDP project aimed at supplying water to the community is due for completion in November 2012. The development of community protocols around tourism and water resource management was suggested by a local respondent, whereby communities could set out how they expect other stakeholders to engage with them (Slade, 2011).

### GOA

Goa's Centre for Responsible Tourism is calling for a 'social contract on water equity in tourism' to be developed and integrated into the state's Tourism Master Plan (CRT, 2011). Goa has an organised, active civil society, which is well-versed in challenging tourism-related water abuse through local government forums and the courts. Goa is also one of just two Indian states to have a policy regulating extraction of groundwater – the Goa Groundwater Regulation Act 2002. This offers scope for challenging unsustainable water extraction for tourism, including by private tankers and in relation to the illegal sinking of boreholes (Mukherjee, 2012). Aggrieved communities could additionally file a case with India's National Green Tribunal (ibid). The Tribunal was established in 2010 to consider all cases of environmental abuse and can order relief and compensation to be paid to victims of pollution. There is also scope for exploring the revival of aspects of Goa's traditional community-level water management system, *Goankari*, as a means for improving local water stewardship (CRT, 2011).



Tourism businesses need to expand water conservation measures and pay for what they use.

Tourism Concern

### THE GAMBIA

Key to achieving greater water equity in The Gambia is the revision of the National Water Policy and Water Bill with the participation of all relevant stakeholders, plus the creation of a legal basis and institutional framework for its effective implementation. Tourism planning should involve all relevant government departments, rather than be the sole responsibility of the tourism board.

### Tourism planning should involve all relevant government departments

While the government is demonstrating a commitment to the right to water and recognises that this is explicitly linked to tackling wider poverty, its efforts will continue to be undermined if tourism's water consumption remains unchecked. The Gambia should also continue to participate in the cross-border river basin management committee, to ensure the country is not adversely affected by plans for hydroelectric dams upstream on the River Gambia.

### BALI

Bali's government has acknowledged that the island is facing a water crisis. A water purification and sewage network project is planned (Jakarta Globe, 2011), while Bali's Environment Agency has threatened to revoke the operating licences of hotels and restaurants that fail to dispose of their waste and sewage properly (Bali Holiday Info, 2011). In order to stem the rapid decline in agriculture, the Indonesian Farmer's Union has called for differing tax rates for land used for commercial projects, including tourism, and farming (Bali Discovery, 2011).

### ALLEPPEY

As the houseboat sector is relatively new, there is an opportunity for the Kerala state authorities to develop and implement regulations to ensure it becomes sustainable. These should be developed with the participation of local communities. Communities negatively affected by the houseboats, or local civil society groups representing them, could also consider filing a case with India's National Green Tribunal. Again, Kerala has a groundwater act so there is scope for communities to challenge abuse on this basis where applicable.

## Discussion and Conclusions:

# Industry frameworks for change

As well as representing best ethical practice, adopting a rights-based approach to water can provide significant advantages in terms of business sustainability, identifying and managing risks associated with potential complicity in infringements of water rights, and promoting sustainable development in destinations (IHRB(ii),2011).

### A rights-based approach

The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (see page 7) offer tourism businesses a useful framework for fulfilling its responsibility to respect water rights, thereby promoting more sustainable water management.

The UNGPs state that company commitment to respect for human rights should be set out in a clear policy statement that is backed at the most senior level. Enacting the responsibility to respect means taking steps to ensure that company activities are not infringing on the human rights of others. This includes

employees, communities or entities who may be affected directly or indirectly by company activities. According to the UNGPs, companies

### There are examples where hotels, guesthouses or safari lodges have installed water tanks, wells or boreholes to facilitate community access to water

should work towards fulfilling their business responsibility to respect by undertaking 'human rights due diligence'. This is an on-going process of identifying, assessing and mitigating potential and actual

human rights impacts; of tracking and reporting on performance internally and externally; and of providing access to redress for those whose rights have been harmed.

Effective human rights due diligence necessitates direct engagement with potentially affected parties, including marginalised groups who may be disproportionately impacted but inadequately represented at 'community' or 'local' level, such

as women and indigenous peoples (UNHRC,2011). It should include assessments of wider socioeconomic, political and environmental factors that could influence the extent to which water rights are being fulfilled

in specific contexts. Particular due diligence should be applied in destinations where poverty levels are high, infrastructure is weak, political will or capacity is lacking, or where the political climate limits civil society space or capacity (IHRB,2011).

Human rights due diligence requires transparency and information provision to communities about business water consumption and management; and further activities that could impact upon water quality, access or availability. Such communications should be culturally and gender-sensitive, and take account of language, literacy levels, and access to technology.

### Building on good practice

*The Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria*, launched by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), are posited as "the minimum requirements that any tourism business should aspire to reach in order to protect and sustain the world's natural and cultural resources while ensuring tourism meets its potential as a tool for poverty alleviation" (GSTC, 2011). The criteria include a provision that: "The activities of the company do not jeopardise the provision of basic services, such as water, energy, or sanitation, to neighbouring communities." The GSTC are now launching a set of criteria for destinations to complement those for tourism businesses. Furthermore, the Travelife Sustainability System Criteria, a major international certification scheme for hotels and accommodation, is working to align itself with the GSTC, including in respect to water.

Some tourism operators take direct action to provide water to neighbouring communities. There are examples where hotels, guesthouses or safari lodges have installed water

### Off-setting impacts?

Good practice in one area should not be used to off-set bad practices elsewhere (UNHRC, 2011). For example, in Loliondo division, Tanzania, a group of indigenous Masaai pastoralists of Soitsambu Village have reportedly been denied access to an area known as Sukenya Farm, which has long served as traditional grazing lands and watering sources, since the area was acquired from a Government parastatal by a safari operator with links to the US (MRG,2011). The Masaai allege that they were not properly consulted about the Government's original appropriation of their lands, nor about the subsequent sub-lease, and argue that Sukenya Farm was not the Government's to lease. The case is currently pending appeal in the Tanzanian courts

Furthermore, agents of the safari operator have allegedly burned, damaged and removed the pastoralists' property and possessions from the disputed land. Since then, there have been further reports of beatings, shootings, harassment, extrajudicial arrests and detention of pastoralists when they try to access the grazing and water sources on the land (ibid). Elsewhere however, the safari operator has fostered positive relations with other local Masaai sub-villages. This includes supporting community development initiatives, including the excavation of boreholes (Thomson Safaris,2011).

This example also highlights the importance of human rights due diligence. Such a process should have alerted the safari operator to the existing land dispute. It should have seen them consulting with the Masaai with a view to obtaining their free, prior and informed consent to operate on their traditional lands (in accordance with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples); and in order to ensure the equitable sharing of benefits from such operations, before entering into any lease agreement.

A broader example relates to corporate philanthropy. The charity Just A Drop raises funds through global travel and tourism companies for water and sanitation projects in some of the poorest countries in the world. Although corporate donations should be encouraged and the work of Just A Drop is extremely valuable in promoting the right to water and sanitation, charitable giving should not be used as a means for companies to off-set potential complicity in the infringement of community water rights elsewhere.

tanks, wells or boreholes to facilitate community access to water, as in Zanzibar. However, as this case study shows, it is vital that any such interventions are developed in close cooperation and coordination with the communities concerned, as well as the relevant government authorities. Other examples exist of hotels and lodges providing financial support to community trusts, which may then allocate the funds to improving access to water and sanitation. Such approaches can promote community autonomy while strengthening local ownership over water and other village-level development projects. Tourism companies should manage all such community relationships

sensitively and transparently, and be wary of creating situations of over-dependency.

In 2011, international tour operator Kuoni held a stakeholder dialogue workshop on the theme of 'Fresh water and tourism'. Participants included the World Water Council, the Gender and Water Alliance and the United Nations Environment Programme. Kuoni recognises its stakeholders as including "NGOs, the media, our suppliers, our employees, our investors, our customers and our industry partners". Such a multi-stakeholder approach is broadly recognised as key to fostering sustainable and coordinated



MICCN

There is need for increased awareness of water equity in tourism issues across the board, including the business responsibility to respect water rights.

solutions (e.g. see CEO Water Mandate below). However, Kuoni's water dialogues apparently stopped short of recognising and involving the rightsholders themselves – communities in destinations – even though they stand to be the most immediately affected by the company's water consumption.

The UNWTO is the largest global tourism policy body, with a membership of 155 countries, seven territories and over 400 affiliates representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities. It has officially adopted the Millennium Development Goals, and in recognition of the importance of water to the tourism sector, has joined UN-Water, a body set up to strengthen

water and sanitation policy coherence among UN bodies. The UNWTO promotes the use of sustainability indicators in tourism planning and management in destinations, and claims to address water issues in publications dealing with climate change mitigation and adaptation. However, while these initiatives are positive, the UNWTO could play a stronger role in promoting a rights-based approach to water and sanitation in tourism development.

### CEO Water Mandate

Tourism industry stakeholders could also learn from the water stewardship approach advocated by the CEO Water Mandate (CEO Water Mandate, 2011). Launched by the UN Secretary-General in 2007, the Mandate is a

voluntary public-private initiative designed to help companies improve their water sustainability policies and practices. Corporate signatories recognise their role and stake in helping to address the global water challenge, and pledge to take actions in a number of key areas, including supply chain impacts and community engagement. The CEO Water Mandate offers a range of free guidelines and assessment tools in a bid to foster responsible and effective business engagement with water policy at the local, regional and international level. For example, it is producing a *Guide to Aligning Business Practice with the Human Right to Water and Sanitation*. This will offer an operational framework for applying business and human rights principles to water.



Shutterstock

In Bali, rice farmers are struggling and agriculture is in decline due to water shortages, pollution and rising land costs, caused in large part by poorly regulated tourism.

# Recommendations

Drawing on the findings of this report, Tourism Concern has the following recommendations for government, industry and civil society stakeholders in order to encourage and support them to:

- Address the current water inequities in tourism development
- Promote and protect the right to water and sanitation of local communities
- Maximise tourism's contribution to poverty alleviation

- Ensure wider socially, environmentally and economically sustainable development in destinations
- The core components are contained in our Water Equity in Tourism Principles on page 3.*

## GOVERNMENTS

**1** Governments must implement their fundamental duty and international legal obligations to uphold, fulfil and protect the right of their citizens to water and sanitation for personal, domestic and essential livelihood needs. This includes protection against infringements by tourism businesses. The right to water and sanitation should not come second to, or be compromised by, tourism development.

**2** Governments should sensitise tourism businesses operating locally and/or overseas of their business responsibility to respect human rights and offer guidance in this regard.

**3** Destination governments should not privilege allocation of water supplies or infrastructure to the tourism sector and should take steps to ensure public supplies are not appropriated by superior tourism sector infrastructure to the detriment of local communities.

**4** A clear regulatory and institutional framework for the coordinated development and implementation of sustainable integrated water and tourism planning and management should be established. Such a framework should provide for the adequate resourcing of clearly defined departmental mandates, roles and responsibilities.

**5** Any such regulatory framework should incorporate measures governing water provision by private suppliers, including water

tankers and providers of borewells. It should include measures and guidelines to encourage groundwater replenishment and protect watersheds.

**6** Land use planning should be based on an assessment of available freshwater resources, which should be a key criterion in establishing tourism carrying capacities. Such assessments should take into account: the water consumption and impacts of all tourism businesses and services; consumption discrepancies between high and low-end establishments; infrastructure capacities (including sewage, waste and electricity); population growth; urbanisation; competing livelihood needs; food security; climate change; and wider watershed degradation.

**7** Land use, tourism and water planning and decision-making should be undertaken transparently and participatively, with involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including communities, tourism and other large water consumers, such as agriculture. Special efforts should be taken to involve women, given their increased vulnerability to adverse water impacts, and other marginalised groups, such as indigenous peoples.

**8** Clear financing and incentives structures should be established with tariffs set according to size of establishment and rates of consumption, along with measures to recover user fees. In order to build upon the poverty alleviating potential of tourism, measures (such as

affordable tariffs and improved water infrastructure) should be introduced to support water access for small-scale tourism entrepreneurs.

**9** Destination governments should raise awareness of water issues among the tourism industry, local communities and tourists by communicating regulations and guidance.

**10** Adequate punitive action should be taken against tourism businesses found to be in breach of regulations. Good practice should be championed and publicised.

**11** Governments should be accountable and responsive in respect to water equity in tourism, with a clearly identified department and process to investigate and redress community grievances.

**12** Agriculture and fishing should be protected against over-consumption and pollution of freshwater by tourism. In order to stem the loss of agricultural land, governments should consider differentiating tax rates between commercial and farm land where relevant.

**13** The link between the erosion of community water access and the privatisation of land for tourism purposes should be recognised; measures to protect customary land rights and water access should be introduced, including those of indigenous peoples and other marginalised groups.

# Recommendations

## ALL STAKEHOLDERS

**1** Stakeholders in government, the donor community, the national and international tourism industry, civil society, and other affected sectors, such as agriculture, should recognise that there is a shared risk to all if water resources in destinations are not managed equitably and sustainably. This shared risk gives rise to a shared responsibility (CEO Water Mandate, 2011) to work together to address the issues, with particular responsibility resting on those inequitably consuming and polluting water resources, and those in positions of power and with greater access to resources.

**2** Relevant stakeholders should consider establishing multi-stakeholder initiatives in order to foster dialogue and understanding of water issues and impacts, and to develop collaborative approaches to address inequitable access. Measures should be taken to ensure adequate community participation, including of women and other marginalised groups.

**3** Such multi-stakeholder initiatives could include the formulation of destination-specific principles of water equity in tourism. They could serve as points for coordinating with, and providing input to, international donor-funded water and sanitation projects (Slade, 2011).

**4** Such initiatives could serve as a forum for the setting of transparent targets for managing and reducing industry water consumption; knowledge sharing and promotion of good practices; and fostering joint approaches to address resource limitations and training needs (CEO Water Mandate, 2010).

**5** Collaborative approaches whereby tourism businesses assist in the provision of water infrastructure and supply to local communities should be undertaken on an interim basis where no viable alternatives exist. They should form part of a coherent government policy and strategy and be implemented in accordance with clearly defined standards that ensure provision is equitable (Slade, 2011).

**6** Such collaborative approaches should be developed in partnership with local communities, with special consideration given to the needs of women and other users who may be disproportionately impacted by insufficient access to water and sanitation. The development of community protocols around tourism and water resource management, whereby communities set out how they expect other stakeholders to engage with them, could be explored (Slade, 2011).

## HOTELS, TOUR OPERATORS AND TOURISM BUSINESSES

**1** Tourism businesses should abide by laws and regulations governing water consumption and management, including monitoring and paying for water use, even where such regulations are poorly enforced.

**2** Tourism businesses should move beyond technical approaches to water conservation and recognise their business responsibility to respect the right to water and sanitation, as set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. This means taking steps to ensure that business activities, including in supply chains, are not infringing upon these rights, such as through groundwater depletion, pollution, appropriation of public supply, use of unregulated private providers, or privatisation of land.

**3** The advantages of adopting a rights-based approach should be recognised, in terms of sustainable business practice, managing risks associated with potential complicity in water rights infringements, and promoting wider development in destinations (IHRB(ii), 2011). The UN Guiding Principles, as well as the CEO Water Mandate, offer useful frameworks for change in this regard.

**4** Companies should work towards fulfilling their business responsibility to respect water (and other) rights through a process of human rights due diligence (UNHCR, 2011). This entails identifying potential and actual human rights impacts of their water consumption; integrating findings into company processes; addressing negative impacts; and reporting on performance (see page 25).

**5** Tourism businesses should be accountable to those whose water access or quality may be compromised by their activities, and support remedial processes for those who have been adversely affected.

**6** Corporate philanthropy or good practice in one area cannot be used to off-set bad practice elsewhere.

**7** Industry stakeholders should play an active role in advocating for, and engaging in, sustainable and equitable water policy and management at destination level, especially by doing so collectively (CEO Water Mandate, 2010). This should include awareness-raising with tourists.

**8** Industry stakeholders should provide relevant data and support the establishment of water resource baselines and tourism carrying capacities in destinations.

**9** Strategies to conserve and reduce water consumption should be broadened, with international tour operators and hotel groups providing further sensitisation, capacity-building and technology transfer to destination counterparts. Existing industry initiatives and toolkits should be utilised in this regard, although their short-comings with regard to the business responsibility to respect water rights should be recognised.

National, regional and international tourism organisations, associations and awards schemes are urged to:

**1** Communicate and engage their members on the need for sustainable, equitable water management, and of their responsibilities to respect the right to water and sanitation.

**2** Foster specific initiatives that seek to establish and promote respect for water and other human rights within the sector. Such initiatives could benefit from engagement with, and provide useful contributions to, the UN Working Group on Business and Human Rights.

**3** Work to align the criteria of sustainable tourism schemes and awards with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

**4** The UNWTO has a particularly important role in promoting a rights-based approach to water and sanitation as part of truly sustainable, equitable tourism development, and should align its policies, sustainability indicators and guidelines for destination governments and industry stakeholders accordingly.

## CIVIL SOCIETY

Local and international civil society has an important role to play in advocacy, capacity-building and sensitisation of governments, industry, and the wider public. This includes:

**1** Awareness-raising among local communities, industry, government stakeholders and tourists of water inequity issues; advocating for participative, rights-based approaches to tourism development.

**2** Empowerment of communities to advocate for their water and sanitation rights, and to effectively participate in tourism and water policy-making process and other multi-stakeholder initiatives.

**3** Exploration of opportunities to revive or strengthen community-based water management systems, with examples of successful models shared and replicated.



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Tourism Concern is an independent campaigning organisation founded in 1989 to challenge exploitation in tourism, particularly in the global South. It aims to increase understanding of the impact of tourism on environments and host communities among governments, industry, civil society and tourists; and to promote tourism development that is sustainable, just and participatory, and which is founded upon a respect for human rights.