

Development and Tourism

Continuing the 2017 International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development in this environmental education series by Jeanie Clark

‘Development’ is a complex concept. As part of the 2017 International Year (IY) of Sustainable Tourism for Development (STD), this article will explore it, with discussion activities and website references better suited for older students than those in previous articles*. With respect to curriculum, this fits under English and Humanities, in the 8 KLA’s, and year 9/10 Geography (Description VCGGK152)¹ in Vic F-10.

Development means...

What does ‘development’ mean? Refer to a dictionary for its various meanings. The one for this IY is about improving living conditions - “the economic, social, and political changes that improve the well-being of people”².



How might we raise awareness of any need to improve people’s well-being? Firstly, look at what you do to improve your family’s and/or community’s well-being – eg. recycling (e.g. photo left is at a tourist spot in France). What is the benefit of sustainability actions if not improving well-being now and for the future? What stops us doing more at home or as tourist, anywhere? Money? Time? Values?

Images flash on a TV advertisement of children and a request for ‘our’ help. They are in crises: poverty, malnutrition, lack of food, drought, war, etc. How do we respond? Do we question why these children have such needs? Can this be a stepping stone to awareness of some of the deep inequalities that exist in our world? To what development might look like in such places?

Global scale development goals

What aspects are there to improve human well-being, inherent in these inequalities and crises? In 2000, 191 United Nations (UN) member states agreed to combat poverty, hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation and discrimination against women by 2015 under the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). As a global effort, there was much, but not full, success. The MDG 2015 Report³ has simple

* Summary of this IYSTD series in previous Otherways 2017 issues

The first article explored the concept of tourism, the aims of this IY, and where these fit in the new Vic curriculum F-10.
The second used mapping and statistics to discover more about tourist patterns, from family to global scale.
The third focussed on the concept of sustainability, with some Melbourne and Wimmera tourist examples, and its fit in the AC Sustainability Priority.



infographics that will aid understanding of the scope of this meaning of ‘development’.

These were followed in 2015 by the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)⁴, above. Look at this broadening in the meaning of improving well-being.

Discuss these. Then choose an image of a tourist place from a family holiday, magazine, or other resource. 1) Look for evidence of progress towards these goals. 2) What practical actions can a tourist do to ‘develop’ people in this place?

For example, this photo was taken in a Berber tourist village in the Atlas Mountains in Morocco. 1) Identify any features which might address the SDG’s. The building is a traditional mud-brick one, with a water tank and a satellite dish on its roof (SDG 9- infrastructure). The water comes directly down the valley above (SDG 6- clean water). 2) How could a tourist support development here? See the pots out the front? This is a traditional food seller’s shop – a delicious ‘casserole’ is in each pot, ready for locals or tourists to eat. Buy local! (SDG 12 – responsible consumption).



Ethical / Responsible Tourism

Are there other terms which convey the idea of STD? Consider: nature tourism, green tourism, ecotourism, responsible tourism, ethical tourism.

Responsible tourism is a concept from 2002 “making better places for people to live in and better places for people to visit”⁵. “Ethical tourism simply means tourism which benefits people and the environment in different destinations. It can offer a better income to families living in the area, by sourcing products and services locally.”⁶ The change of terms doesn’t really matter, actions do.

Issues for Responsible Tourism

What issues matter for tourists and tourism? Australia's International Centre for Responsible Tourism lists these issues under 'resource links'⁷: climate change, bushfire risk, environment, community, cultural heritage, as well as economic development. Consider these, by choosing a familiar destination: 1) Be the tourist provider - What planning is needed to provide a tourist experience responsibly in this place? 2) Be the tourist- plan for STD-aware behaviour/activities.



How do we decide how to behave as tourists, especially in a world of differing values?

Should a responsible, ethical, STD-aware tourist do an adventure activity conflicting with the local people's cultural values? For example, should tourists NOT climb Uluru?

- 1) There is basic infrastructure to do so⁸.
- 2) However, traditional owners' law forbids it.^{8,9}

Another conflict of values concerns a proposed gondola for the Grand Canyon – the 'Escalade'. Locally and nationally there is disagreement on this 'development'¹⁰. Money is to be made! (By whom?) Engineering can provide easy access to the river below¹¹. Local Native People's views vary – an effect of tribal boundaries? Traditional owners say it is culturally wrong. Park lovers fear it will ruin this iconic view and place¹². What tourist developments could fit with an STD-aware view?

Tourists can help 'development'

What is available for a tourist who wants to help places or people develop? Use the web, to see what volunteer opportunities exist to visit ... virtually anywhere. Two examples follow. Parks Victoria has a wide range of volunteer activities¹³ to help in their natural places. Over busy holiday periods, 'volunteer track rangers' camp and hike, while helping keep other hikers safe. WA 'campground hosts'¹⁴ volunteer their time to look after people and environment in one place.

What about helping grow food? Community gardens or farms locally or at holiday destinations may welcome helpers. Willing workers (WWOOF)¹⁵ come to learn about others while staying on organic farms around the world. (Sign up to find out where volunteers are needed.) For example 'Olombo's Paradise Organic Farm'¹⁶ is on an island, one of 27 Kenyan WWOOF farms.

IY2017 STD Logo

Logos communicate ideas, e.g. the IYSTD logo¹⁷.

- 1 What messages do you think should be conveyed for this IYSTD? Design a logo for this.
- 2 Look at the IYSTD logo¹⁷ on this page. What does it show? What meaning do you see in it? This design¹⁷, by the UN World Travel Organisation (UNWTO), features a dandelion blown by the wind.

Why a round shape? (Planet Earth) Why a dandelion? (Many people together on Earth) Seeds flying off? (Tourists visit new places.) The green and blue? (Land and sea, green and clean behaviour, sustainable and responsible travel).

Towards future tourists

The aims of the IYSTD challenge us to teach values related to tourism to younger people. This doesn't have to be via overseas travel. We can instil sustainable tourist habits in trips to new places no matter how far away. It doesn't have to be to exotic places. We can cultivate sensitivity to local people wherever we visit. This training can develop adult tourists who travel sustainably, conscious of their impacts on destinations and people, and aiding well-being for providers and themselves – i.e. adult tourists who understand

"the fundamental purpose of travel: breaking boundaries, growing understanding and connecting culture and knowledge all around the world.... By travelling, these seeds connect to others through knowledge and culture, and they build a better future."

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References and website links

- 1 VCAA level 9 &10 < <http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/the-humanities/geography/curriculum/f-10#level=7-8> > click VCGGK151
- 2 VCAA Geography < <http://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/the-humanities/geography/introduction/rationale-and-aims> > click glossary
- 3 2015 UN Millennium Goals, pages 4-9 especially, <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/2015_MDG_Report/pdf/MDG%202015%20rev%20%28July%201%29.pdf>
- 4 2015 UN Sustainable Development <<http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>>
- 5 2002 Cape Town Declaration on Responsible Tourism in Destinations. <<http://www.icrtourism.com.au/responsible-tourism> >
- 6 Travel MattersUK <<http://www.travelmatters.co.uk/ethical-tourism/>>
- 7 ResponsibleTourismAustralia <<http://www.icrtourism.com.au/links>>
- 8 ABC Radio National – see photo <<http://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/offtrack/climbing-the-rock-why-do-tourists-still-climb-uluru/6603640>>
- 9 Parks Australia Uluru <<https://parksaustralia.gov.au/uluru/do-we-dont-climb.html> >
- 10 2014 Fedarko, K. The NY Times Sunday Review <<https://www.nytimes.com/2014/08/10/opinion/sunday/two-development-projects-threaten-the-grand-canyon.html> >
- 11 2014 My Grand Canyon Park.com <<https://www.mygrandcanyonpark.com/park/escalade-gondola-tramway-resort> >
- 12 Grand Canyon Trust < <https://www.grandcanyontrust.org/stopping-grand-canyon-escalade> >
- 13 Parks Victoria <<http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/get-involved/volunteer>>
- 14 WA Parks and Wildlife Service <<https://www.dpaw.wa.gov.au/get-involved/volunteering-opportunities/100-campground-hosting>>
- 15 Willing Workers on Organic Farms <<http://www.wwoof.com.au/> >
- 16 Olombo, N. HelpX. Host list. Kenya <http://www.helpx.net/hostlist.asp?host_region=944&network=9 >
- 17 2016 UNWTO < http://www.tourism4development2017.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/iystd_logo_terms-of-use-1.pdf>

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