

Tourism in Westland: Challenges for Planning and Recommendations for Management

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Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

This report provides a synthesis of nine separate reports (listed in Appendix 1) on key aspects of tourism in Westland, and makes recommendations for the future management of the sector. This case study of tourism in Westland constitutes the third case study (Kaikoura being the first¹ and Rotorua being the second²) into the evolution of, adaptation to, and management of tourism in New Zealand.

The overall goal of the research programme that encompasses these case studies is the improved management of tourism growth and development of better guidelines to ensure its sustainability.

The studies focus primarily on the important private / public sector interface in tourism planning and development. They are not marketing studies *per se* (although significant data are produced to inform marketing decisions) but are focused on public sector responses, and community adaptations to tourism, with a long-term view toward sustainable tourism at the local and national level.

Funding for these case studies has been provided by the Public Good Science Fund.

This introductory chapter describes why the case study area of Westland was chosen and the main objectives of the programme of research. It also provides a brief background to tourism in Westland.

1.2 Case Study Selection and Study Objectives

The key criterion in the selection of case study sites to date has been a broad assessment of tourism density³. Westland has:

- A modest number of visitors (both international and domestic) over a relatively small and dispersed resident population base.
- A low population base and scattered settlements.
- A distinctive natural environmental base on which tourism depends.
- Linear arrangement of natural attractions which accentuates the character of travel patterns, and increases the cost of managing amenities and attractions.

Thus Westland provides an opportunity to study tourism in a new setting which features medium density of tourists.

While other districts on the West Coast could have been chosen to meet these criteria, Westland has in its favour a major stream of tourists moving from Christchurch to

1 For the list of the Kaikoura reports please refer to Appendix 2.

2 For the list of the Rotorua reports please refer to Appendix 3.

3 Kaikoura represents high visitation over a very small population, and Rotorua represents high visitation over a modest population.

Queenstown. In addition, there is also a long history of tourism in some places such as Franz Josef and Fox Glacier. It was also necessary, with the resources available, to focus on one district only in order to study how tourism manifests at particular sites.

Each case study has six objectives which form three main foci. These foci are:

- Community and Maori expectations of, and adaptations to, tourism.
- Understanding tourist demand (in particular, decision making, expectations and experiences, and regional and national flows).
- Understanding the structure of the tourism economy and environmental management systems that shape the host/guest relationship and nature of tourism development.

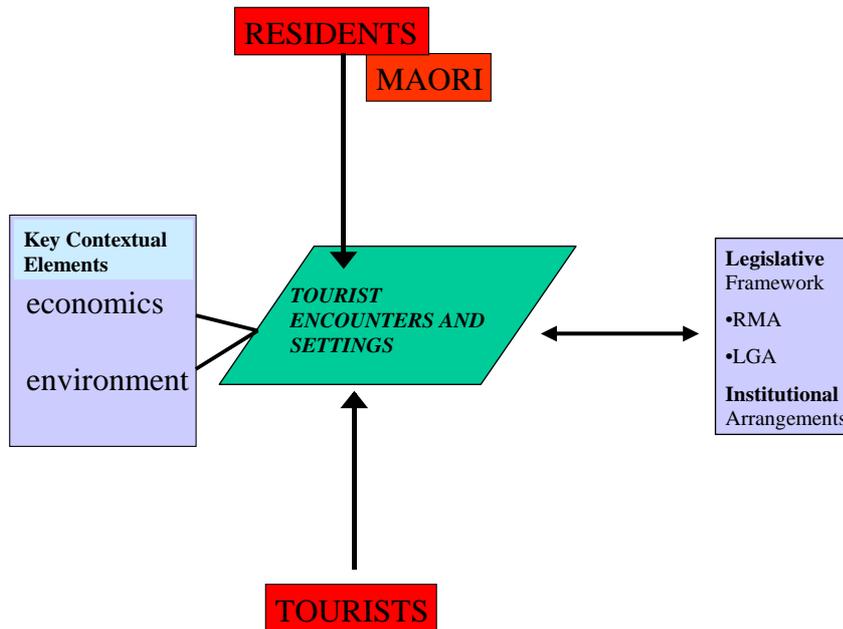
The myriad of relationships between ‘host and guests’ is well described as being the primary relationship in tourism. Guests (visitors) typically seek unique and rewarding natural and cultural experiences, while the host community typically is involved in providing the essential ‘hospitality atmosphere’ (Murphy, 1985; Simmons, 1994), landscapes, shared recreation experiences and facilities, as well as businesses, that allow tourism to function. At a fundamental level, if tourism fails to meet the needs and aspirations of local residents, the seeds of discontent are sown, resident attitudes sour, and destinations lose their popularity (Butler, 1980; Haywood, 1986).

The above ‘host-guest’ relationship is mediated significantly by three important features, which are incorporated as key elements to this study. These are:

- Economic. An understanding of the economic contribution and structure of the tourism sector is required for policy and development purposes. In addition, economic contribution, and where it occurs, is important because residents who gain financially from tourism have been shown to be more supportive of the industry than those who are not involved with the industry (Simmons, 1988).
- Environments. Tourists are drawn to, and share with residents (and domestic visitors), many natural attractions and features. Tourism can also be a significant source of environmental change, both positive (e.g., conservation advocacy) and negative (e.g., waste management, changes to the built environment). Research is needed both at the site (attraction) level and to address the provision (including cost) of necessary infrastructure (for a comprehensive review see PCE (1997)).
- Management systems. As our research has progressed (both in Kaikoura and Rotorua) it has become increasingly apparent that the form and style of local leadership, planning and management structures are a crucial factor in the outcomes of tourism development and its sustainability.

These objectives and relationships are depicted in Figure 1 and form the basis of the synthesis that follows.

Figure 1
Key Components of the Research



It should be noted, however, that this document provides only a summary of research, and as such omits details that are essential for a full understanding of the topics reviewed. Readers are cautioned against making conclusions about substantive research results without first reading the relevant reports, which are listed in Appendix 1.

1.3 Scope and Context of the Research

The primary focus of this research has been on the Westland District. However, in many respects – geographically, environmentally, with respect to socio-economic status, and in terms of tourist behaviours and flows – it should be considered within the wider West Coast region, which includes the neighbouring Buller District and Grey District. This case study therefore examines general approaches to tourism planning across all three Territorial Local Authorities (TLAs) and their links to Westland Regional Council responsibilities and functions. It also reports on the characteristics of visitors to the West Coast

Regional and local governments have a variety of roles in facilitating sustainable tourism development. For local government these include both ‘enabling’ tourism development and ‘management of its effects’. At first glance these appear to be in conflict. Transparency and accountability of decisions are therefore key management issues. Enablement of tourism development often includes economic development initiatives, including funding of regional tourism organisations (RTOs), the provision of amenities and attractions, and support for events, while management of effects includes the setting of environmental, health and safety standards, and provision of core utilities such as waste and water management. At the regional level, regional councils (with the agreement of all their constituent districts) can play a role within tourism planning and management. This has happened in the past on the West Coast. However public support for such a direct role has declined and the Council has

withdrawn to its core indirect roles of planning for integrated management of natural resources and monitoring environmental standards.

Within Westland District itself, the social, Maori, economic and environmental impacts of tourism (both good and bad) are examined in greater detail than the West Coast issues described above. To understand the day-to-day experiences of tourism by local people, four communities have been examined in detail specifically for their social adaptation and environmental management functions. These communities are: Franz Josef, Haast, Hokitika, and Harihari. Importantly, these too represent a continuum of 'tourist intensity'.

1.4 Background to Tourism in Westland

Unlike our earlier study of Rotorua, there is little documentation of tourism in Westland. Narayan (1995) provided an overview of tourism and tourism impacts which highlighted the important role that tourism plays in the West Coast economy, calculating that in 1994 the tourism expenditure of \$124m made it the largest economic production sector. Tourism numbers began to rise steadily from the 1960s, although Narayan (1995) notes that there was a slight downward trend from the mid-1980s when there was a downturn in the Australian market, especially for coach tours.

From the mid-1990s, however, there have been significant increases in tourist numbers visiting the West Coast. The International Visitors Survey (New Zealand International Visitors Survey, 2000) shows that international visitor arrivals to the West Coast increased from 271,235 in March 1999 to 318,079 in July 2000. The New Zealand Domestic Travel Study (Forsyte Research, 2000) found that 231,000 domestic tourists made an overnight trip to the West Coast in 1999 and stayed a total of 869,000 guest nights. Recent figures from the Statistics New Zealand Accommodation Survey (2001) for the period between December 1999 and December 2000 show the West Coast's guest arrivals rose by 23.8 per cent to 72,800, while guest nights increased by 20.3 per cent to 102,800. Nationally, arrivals and guest nights were up 18.2 and 14.3 per cent respectively. For the Westland District, guest arrivals rose from 35,416 in February, 1997 to 50,411 in February, 2001. Guest nights rose from 45,218 to 65,186 during the same period (Statistics New Zealand Accommodation Survey, 2001). Local tourist information centres have also experienced record numbers of visitors. For example, the Westland Tourist Information Centre in Hokitika noted a 21 per cent increase in visitor numbers between November 1999 and November 2000 (Westland District Council Agenda, December 2000).

In spite of rising tourist numbers during the 1990s, Narayan (1995) suggests that many West Coast residents do not realise that tourism has experienced a transition into one of the largest, if not the largest sector within the West Coast economy. The growing economic importance of tourism should not be underestimated and it is likely to play an even bigger role in the future. Local planners are taking a keen interest in tourism as a means to diversify the local economy, offset high unemployment rates and reduce regional income disparities. Tourism is also being recognised as an agglomeration of a range of products and services so that the benefits are felt across the economy rather than just by tourism operators.

For the West Coast in general, and in Westland in particular, the economy has in recent years moved away from primary production and extractive sectors towards tourism. Today, many people are looking to tourism as an engine for growth for Westland. The challenge is to manage tourism growth in ways that do not harm either the natural or the built environment.

However, while the environment is important and scenic beauty and national parks have a great deal to offer, tourism is not a ‘smokeless’ industry. It draws on numerous public goods including local hospitality, Maori toanga, as well as a clean environment. Our earlier research shows that tourism can rapidly become problematic when there are high flows over sparsely populated areas as is the case for Westland. In addition, this case study has highlighted that there is a critical issue concerning the scale at which tourism planning is best co-ordinated.

1.5 Report Structure

Summary results from the nine constituent reports are presented in Chapter 2 along with their recommendations for policy. In Chapter 3 the key points from each report are collated and synthesised, and then attention is given to recommendations for policy with a view to supporting the ongoing development of tourism in Westland. Chapter 4 then considers how to develop the tourism planning process.

Chapter 2 Report Summaries

2.1 Introduction

The following sections present summary data from the eight constituent reports. The order of the reports reflects our focus first on visitors, their economic and infrastructural impact, the responses to tourism from locals including Maori, and then finally the planning issues associated with tourism. For all but the first report, the summaries are structured around four topics, namely: objectives, methods, key findings and recommendations. For each report, the key findings are presented in a bolded paragraph at the end of the section.

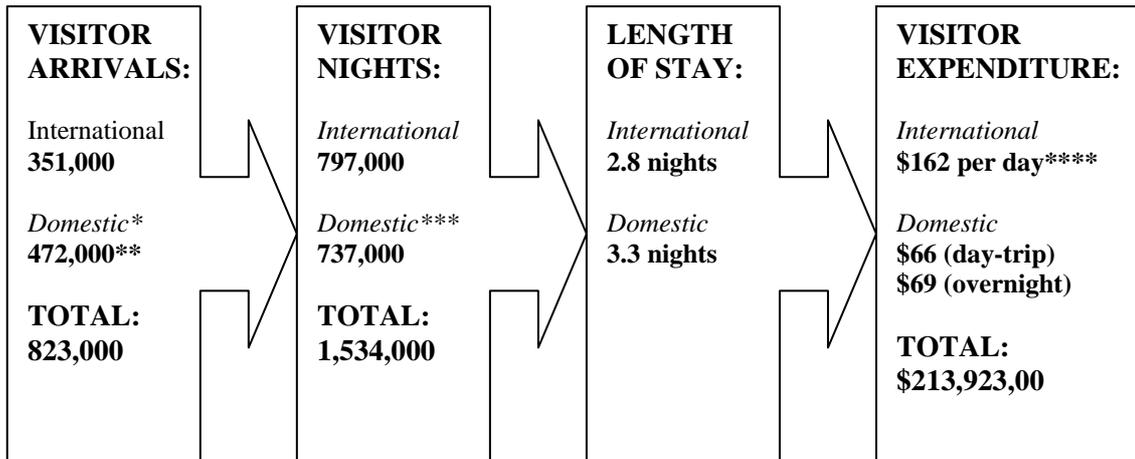
2.2 An Overview of Tourism on the West Coast (Report No. 20)

This background report presents data on visitors to the West Coast. It concludes that reliable data are needed by the industry, developers and those responsible for planning wider aspects of the tourism sector. These data can be obtained readily from existing sources. Because of the widespread use of the data their collation is a key role for the West Coast Tourism Council. The main recommendation is the establishment of a series of key tourism statistics in aggregate.

The West Coast is a destination which has more than 820,000 visitors per year over a resident population of about 35,000. These visitors spend, in total, over 1.5 million visitor nights on the West Coast, although the region does experience a season increase over the summer months and decrease over the winter months. In addition, there is a considerable number of day trips (395,000) and overnight trips (22,000) made by West Coast residents within the West Coast region.



Figure 2
Summary of West Coast Visitor Characteristics



Note: *: An additional 395,000 day-trips and 22,000 overnight trips were made by West Coast residents within the West Coast region, and are excluded from this diagram as they do not represent net benefits in the West Coast tourism economy.

** : Includes 263,000 day-trips and 209,000 overnight trips.

*** : An additional 132,000 'person nights' were recorded for West Coast residents within the West Coast region.

**** : Based only on overall national average figures.

2.3 Visitor Flows and Visitation Patterns (Report No. 21)

Objective. The main objectives were to identify where visitors travel between particular destinations and to map their detailed itineraries.

Methods. Interview 2,600 visitors and record places visited. There were 1,250 visitors who complete travel diaries. A total of 25,000 stops and 1,100 destinations were geocoded and the associated itineraries were collated and presented on maps.

Key Findings. The survey of visitors shows a clear pattern of visitation driven by key icon destinations both outside and within the West Coast. The significance of the glaciers in this is important, but so is the role of a developing North West of the South Island (Nelson etc.) and of changing patterns in Otago.

Within the West Coast patterns of visitor flows in respect to individual destinations are apparent, although the full identification of this awaits further analysis of specific itineraries. The pattern shows how international visitor flows are conditioned by established tourism attractions and marketing, while a number of less developed destinations attract substantially higher shares of domestic visitors.

The movement of tourists through the West Coast, and the concentration of their activities, reflects the generation of substantial ‘pulses’ of visitors via the three main points of access. The pattern of immediate previous night’s stay shows that these are dominated by Christchurch, Nelson and Queenstown, but that a large number of other origins are involved, which are expressed in different entry times to the Coast and different tourist behaviour.

The flow patterns show how the movements of international visitors are conditioned by established tourism attractions and marketing, while a number of less developed destinations attract substantially higher shares of domestic visitors. Visitors ‘pulse’ through the three main points of access, reflecting the importance of Christchurch, Nelson and Queenstown as immediate sources of visitors.



2.4 Visitors to the West Coast: Characteristics, Attractions and Decision-Making (Report No. 22)

Objective. The main objective was to survey visitors to the West Coast to determine general characteristics (e.g., age, gender, origin country, transport type, group type, etc.), perceived attractions on the West Coast and their decision-making processes (purpose of visit, the timing of itinerary planning, perceived influences on those decisions).

Methods. Three instruments were used to collect the data reported here. The first was a 'pilot' survey, administered by interviewers which asked basic questions about visitor characteristics (age, gender, nationality, purpose of visit, group type and size, transport, place previously visited, length of holiday, when decisions were made, what had influenced those decisions, etc.).

Of the two principal data collection instruments, the 'Exit Survey' also collected information on these characteristics (with some modification) as well as asking respondents to mark their trip on the West Coast on a map provided and give details of places stayed and expenditure. The second principal data collection instrument was handed to visitors on entering the West Coast area and took the form of a 'Diary' to be completed by the visitors during their trip. The first section of the 'Diary' collected very similar information to that collected in the 'Exit Survey'. Key access sites were used for interviews and for the distribution of 'Diary' surveys (which were returned by post). A combined total of 1,232 survey responses form the data set for this report.

Key Findings. A majority of visitors to the West Coast were international in origin (55.3%), travelled by private vehicle (47.3%) or hire vehicle (26.3%), were with partners or spouses (38.8%) or in family groups (21.0%) and there was an almost even number of males (50.6%) and females (49.4%). There was a broad distribution of ages with the greatest proportions of respondents being between the ages of 20 and 39 years and most groups had two adults (63.4%) and no children (86.4%). Domestic visitors overwhelmingly relied on private transport while visitors from overseas were more represented amongst users of hire vehicles, campervans and buses and shuttles. Domestic visitors also were older, on average, than international visitors.

Almost half of visitors had never been to the West Coast before (47.9%) yet 67.2 per cent of domestic visitors had been four or more times previously. Some 22.8 per cent of international visitors had been at least once before to the West Coast, with repeat visits by Australians explaining much of this.

Attractions of the West Coast were based predominantly on the natural environment. Scenic values ('nature', 'scenery', etc.) were most frequently mentioned in response to an open-ended question about attractions of the West Coast. A variety of natural features ('bush', 'coast', 'mountains' 'beaches', etc.), activities based upon the natural environment (e.g., kayaking, mountain climbing, blackwater canoeing, etc.), specific places in the natural environment (e.g., the Heaphy track, Jackson's Bay, etc.) and iconic natural features such as the glaciers and Punakaiki were mentioned by respondents.

Visitors' importance ratings of specific attractions, scenic features and walks reinforced the importance of the natural and scenic features of the West Coast as attractants. Interestingly, it also revealed that visitors' relationship to these features tended to be in terms of the

accessible places and activities rather than the ‘back country’ and alpine regions. Short exploratory walks, for example, were the most popular of all types of walk while remote walks received the lowest importance rating.

Decisions for both travel within New Zealand and specifically to the West Coast tended to be made at home with domestic visitors showing a greater tendency in this respect. A total of 59.4 per cent of visitors planned their itineraries for travel in New Zealand mainly at home and 67.1 per cent made the decision to go to the West Coast while at home. Visitors from some non-New Zealand origin countries, however, were particularly prone to making itinerary decisions while travelling (e.g., Germany, the Netherlands) while others were less likely (e.g., United States of America, Australia). Similar patterns emerge with the decision to go to the West Coast with those from Germany (46.8%), Scandinavia (44.2%), ‘other Europe’ (45.7%) and ‘other’ countries (40.4%) being least likely to make the decision while still at home.

Key influences on decisions to travel in New Zealand and to go to the West Coast were mainly informal sources such as the advice from friends and family (51.6%) and previous visitation (34.7 %), trip characteristics such as ‘cost/benefits’ or portable information such as travel books and brochures (43.5 %). Travel books were more likely to be rated as an influence by younger people and by those from overseas and who travelled by bus or shuttle or hire vehicle. Brochures were most often cited as an influence by those from the Asia/Pacific region.



Implications. In terms of method it was suggested that research in future should focus on collecting data to as fine-grained a level as possible, since important variations exist for visitors on a range of variables such as origin country and age. In terms of theory, it was noted that structural features may help to explain differences in decision-making processes between visitors. Also, support was found for Echtner and Ritchie’s (1991) dimensions of destination image.

Recommendations. Policy implications emphasised the absolutely central role that the natural attractions of the West Coast for visitors should have in any future tourism policy related to development, and the importance of integrating this with infrastructural needs. It was suggested that there is some potential for developing cultural and heritage tourism but this is also likely to depend on the natural environment for it to be successful. Information sources developed for promotional and marketing purposes need to be both portable and have some independence from obvious promotional activities if they are to be perceived to be influential by visitors. Finally, repeat visitation, particularly by Australians, was suggested to pose particular challenges for the future development of West Coast tourism.

Visitors to the West Coast are attracted to the natural environment including natural features, activities based upon the natural environment, and iconic features such as the glaciers and Punakaiki rocks. Decisions to travel to the West Coast typically are made at home and the main influences on this decision were informal sources (family and friends), trip characteristics (such as cost benefits) and portable information (such as travel books and brochures).

2.5 Visitors' and Locals' Experiences of Tourism (Report No. 23)

Objective. The main objective was to develop an understanding of visitors' and locals' experiences of the Westland landscape and infrastructure. The interest in landscape experience reflects the central role that both passive and active involvement in landscape plays in the Westland tourism industry. The interest in infrastructure reflects the critical role that provision of basic services to support tourists, and the management of the tourists' impact on the environment, will have in the development of sustainable tourism.

Method. Participating subjects sorted two sets of photographs according to what they liked and disliked. Factor analysis identified groups who sorted the photographs in a similar way. The selection of photographs for the two Q sorts was based on frameworks for landscape with general infrastructure (such as utilities), and for tourist infrastructure (such as accommodation, toilets, carparking etc.).

Key Findings. A total of 111 people were selected in a diverse, non-random sample with roughly equal proportions of both men and women, including 42 overseas visitors, 26 domestic visitors and 43 locals. For the landscape and general infrastructure Q sort, the **Pure Nature Experience** subjects emphasised untouched nature, favouring apparently unmodified settings that showed qualities of its pristine status. They disliked general infrastructure that damaged nature, and they had a neutral response to farming. The **Living in Nature Experience** subjects appreciated both nature and local buildings, which were symbolic of home. They disliked general infrastructure but were more accepting of commercial activities associated with local employment. Farming was slightly liked. The **Pastoral Nature Experience** subjects also appreciated nature, especially its visual qualities and the green colour, and liked the idea of living in Westland. They emphasised pastoral values of farming, livestock and country life in which humans are a part of nature. They disliked general infrastructure and commerce.

For the tourism infrastructure Q sort, the **Nature and Heritage Experience** subjects liked scenic nature, history, living in nature and favoured natural features and basic amenities which encourage a visit for varied activities including heritage. They were not keen on the modern visitor centre (Haast) but accepted familiar built structures. They disliked old rubbish bins and toilets that they probably do not use, and which perhaps gave a poor impression to visitors. The **At One With Nature Experience** subjects liked nature and enjoyed active participation in settings with minimal man-made facilities and where signs and facilities helped to protect nature. Emphasis was given to visual aspects and design so they disliked the modern visitor centre and buildings that were commercial, and which they felt were out of place. They accepted minor infrastructure elements such as well designed toilets and rubbish bins as part of the Westland experience. The **Cultural Heritage Experience** subjects liked cultural heritage manifest in older buildings, which allows connection to other people. They disliked tourist infrastructure that contrasted with natural surroundings, so they were not keen on the modern visitor centre. Toilets and rubbish bins were accepted provided they were discrete and well maintained. The **Quality and Care Experience** subjects liked the neat and tidy appearance of a variety of public amenities and attractions which also provided something interesting to see and do. They liked a variety of built structures including the modern visitor centre but disliked unkempt facilities such as old toilets.

Implications. Comparison of results in this study to earlier research in Kaikoura and Rotorua shows similarities in factors suggesting that among visitors and locals there are some fundamental and relatively constant experiences of tourist settings. Overall, the results

indicate that there is a strong consensus in core environmental preferences among overseas and domestic visitors and local residents. Design and facility management (for both the public and private sectors) is a critically important factor in planning for tourism development on the Coast. A recurring theme of locals and visitors has been the sensitivity of respondents to the appearance of infrastructure provision.

Recommendations. The patterns of agreement across factors in both Q sorts provide the basis for making specific recommendations for those responsible for provision of public amenities, tourism development and development generally. We recommend that:

- Any future development occurs in such a way that the features of water (sea or lake), bush and mountains, which are the core attractions for both visitors and locals, are maintained in a relatively undisturbed state.
- Buildings in natural settings are designed to integrate with the setting and minimise their visual effect on the perceived naturalness of the area.
- Refuse management be redesigned so that open rubbish dumps are redundant and can be rehabilitated.
- Essential infrastructure sites (water, sewage and electricity) be designed or landscaped to minimise impact upon natural settings or views.
- There is continued provision of well designed picnic amenities, that is, useful but modest facilities that provide opportunity to view and gain access to natural settings.
- There is a need for the Westland District Council and Department of Conservation to consider using a uniform sign or symbol that directs people to unobtrusive rubbish bins. The basic design of bins should reflect the natural qualities of the West Coast (perhaps pounamu coloured) or West Coast architecture. Similarly, toilets should be provided in ways that remove them from view but include clear sign posting. Toilets should be upgraded and designed in ways that reflect West Coast architecture.
- Visitor centres are designed to acknowledge West Coast architectural heritage and Heritage buildings continue to be restored and maintained to reflect the past.

Visitors and locals have three experiences of landscapes and general infrastructure, and these all emphasise aspects of nature. They have four experiences of tourist infrastructure, in which the main themes are nature and heritage. Similarities between these results and those from the earlier case studies suggest that the results are robust. Since there is strong consensus on core environmental preferences, attention to design and facility management are very important issues.



2.6 The Economic Impact of Tourism on Westland District (Report No. 26)

Objective. The main objective was to assess the economic impact of tourism in Westland.

Methods. Samples of tourism businesses were undertaken in Westland District to measure employment (N=250) and business expenditure (N=40). These data were then used to develop a GRIT (Generation of Regional Input – Output Tables) based analysis to determine multipliers, value-added and employment effects arising from tourism activity.

Key Findings. Approximately 810 persons (Full-Time Equivalent - FTE), on average over the year 2000, were employed directly in tourism in the Westland District. While more than 1,300 people in the District work in businesses which are primarily dependent on tourism, this figure is adjusted down to reflect the part-time and seasonal nature of the work, and the fact that many businesses sell only part of their turnover to tourists.

Every job in tourism leads, on average, to a further 0.11 jobs elsewhere in the District economy, increasing employment by 92 FTE to a total of 902 FTE. This excludes any jobs in social services (such as teaching) that might be lost if tourism (and hence employment) declined, and people emigrated from the District. Total employment in Westland District averaged over the year is estimated to be around 3,150 FTEs. Hence 29 per cent of all jobs in the District depend either directly or indirectly on tourism.

Total direct spending by tourists is estimated to be \$108m per year and this increased regional output by \$82m per year. Flow-on effects of visitor spending increased total visitor-dependent output in the District to an estimated \$98m. The direct spending figure is based on a census of employment of all businesses which sell directly to visitors, and rating this up by output per employee in these businesses (based on a detailed survey of a much smaller sample).

Value-added⁴ arising directly from tourist spending is estimated to be \$44m (including \$24m of household income). The flow-on effects of visitor spending increased total visitor-dependent value-added to \$52m (including \$28m of household income). Flow-on effects are very low, and reflects both the limited manufacturing base and business support services of the District, as well as the very low demand for external inputs in some businesses (particularly in land-based activities). The flow-on effect is only half that which occurs in Kaikoura, and less than a third of that in Rotorua. This reflects the very restricted range of manufacturing and business support services in Westland.

The economic impacts arise from the on-going operation of existing tourist facilities. In addition to these are impacts arising from capital injections into the industry (that is, injections additional to ongoing repairs and maintenance - which tend to include considerable minor capital works). Capital expansion is not believed to have been particularly significant in the case of Westland in recent years, primarily because of the long-developed nature of the industry in the District and the spare capacity. However, the rapid growth of the last two years may lead to major capital expenditure in the near future.

⁴ This is the total of returns to land, labour and capital. Hence it includes wages and salaries, income of the self-employed, rents on land profits, and depreciation of capital.

Implications. There have been suggestions that further tourism growth will require a substantial level of local government expenditure (pressures on water, sewerage, and rubbish dumps are commented on by other researchers in this programme). Operators were not asked to identify other areas where further physical investment by Council was needed, although a number mentioned that the Council's investment in tourism marketing needed to be expanded both in scale and in scope (in terms of what was promoted).

During the past 15 years there has been a slight decline in overall employment but a significant shift away from primary industries into the tertiary sector. In spite of having very low flow-on effects, tourism is responsible for almost 30 per cent of all employment in Westland District. This is half as much again as Rotorua District (20%) and about the same as Kaikoura (30%). Clearly Westland, like Kaikoura, is very vulnerable to tourism volatility. While tourism multipliers appear to have been declining steadily over the last decade or more, the high employment impacts of tourism suggest that growth of tourism continues to be an important force in regional development.

Tourism is a significant part of the Westland economy, where it contributes 29 per cent of all jobs. Tourism spending is estimated at \$108m annually in the District and, when flow-on effects are considered, generates approximately \$98m in benefits to the District.



2.7 Tourism, Water and Waste in Westland: Implications of Increasing Demand on Infrastructure (Report No. 27)

Objectives. The major objectives of this research were to develop models to estimate and project aggregated tourist water use and wastewater production at Hokitika, Harihari, Franz Josef, and Haast, and to assess the adequacy and resourcing of the facilities to provide water, manage wastewater and solid wastes associated with tourism.

Methods. This research develops a simple model based upon monthly tourist numbers entering a region and using proportional factors to determine demand placed on the specific centres. Standard engineering estimates of water use and wastewater production per capita were used to compare tourist and permanent resident monthly loadings. Despite having only limited independent variable data available, the model was reasonably successful in tracking monthly water use in the four centres, when compared to metered water use.

Key Findings. The model indicates that in centres such as Franz Josef, which have a small resident population, peak season tourist use of water is a significant proportion of monthly water use. A major tourism event, such as the Wild Foods Festival which attracts 20,000 people to Hokitika, similarly places a large peak demand on the existing water supply and wastewater systems. The model indicates that projected tourism growth will lead to design capacity being exceeded in some centres. Solid waste disposal occurs at ten sites in Westland District, only one of which has a resource consent. Major decisions are soon to be made on which option to use for solid waste disposal. Management by waste minimization will need to apply specific strategies in centres with relatively high tourist activity.

By payment of separate rates and user charges, users collectively meet the current and amortised costs of water supply, wastewater and solid waste disposal provided by Westland District Council. Charges are based upon actual use of the systems or proxies for use such as numbers of beds or number of toilets connected to the wastewater system. Wastewater charges based upon numbers of toilets on each property connected to the sewerage system may not detect the variation between properties in the volume of wastewater they produce. Similarly, reliance on property values can be a misleading basis for water charges where there is only a weak relationship between the value of a property and the actual use of the water services.

The Department of Conservation provides water supply, and disposal of wastewater and solid waste at several sites in Westland District. Visitor numbers vary greatly between sites, with approximately 250,000 people per year visiting the Franz Josef Glacier, and 95,000 per year visiting the National Park Headquarters building in Franz Josef township. Legislation allows the Department to charge for services provided in parks and reserves, but at present there are no charges for use of toilet facilities provided at the Franz Josef Glacier, or the Park Headquarters building in Franz Josef township. At Department of Conservation campgrounds and huts, bundling of services means that some revenue is collected from users to meet part of the costs of water supply and wastewater systems. Greater use of user charges for water supply and wastewater systems would reduce the need for general taxpayers to fund these systems.

Recommendations. This study has highlighted two key issues with respect to the impact of tourism on the infrastructure services of potable water supply, wastewater and solid waste systems. The key issues are the adequacy of these services, both present and future, and the

appropriateness of the pricing mechanisms for these services. We recognise that District and Regional Councils with low population numbers and densities, small regional economies, and significant influx of tourists, face real difficulties resourcing the high standard of services demanded by tourism. The West Coast population level and economy are small. Only about 15 per cent of the West Coast land area is rateable.

The Ministry of Health Register of Community Water Supplies clearly identifies that potable water supplies in the Westland District are of a low standard. Additionally this study demonstrates that both present demand and future trends, driven by growth in tourism, will increase the pressure on water supplies, wastewater and solid waste management services, particularly in Franz Josef, Fox Glacier and Haast. The authors acknowledge that Westland District Council is well aware of these problems.

In districts and regions with a high inflow of tourists, these issues are a national problem as much as a regional and district one. We recommend:

- That the Westland District Council and the West Coast Regional Council seek assistance from central government to carry out further research, and to implement strategies to provide adequate water supply, wastewater and solid waste services to the region.

If the WDC wants to achieve a fairer allocation of costs it needs to:

- Investigate whether more accurate charging policies for wastewater, based perhaps on metered water use, can be introduced at acceptable cost, to ensure that users meet their fair share of costs.



New solid waste services are required in many parts of Westland District. We recommend:

- That the WDC should investigate the charging mechanisms available and ensure that users meet their fair share of the costs of new solid waste systems.

The Department of Conservation provides environmental services at several key sites in Westland. In many cases these services are provided free of charge to users. If the Department wants to achieve a fairer allocation of costs, we recommend:

- That DoC investigates options for charging for use of more of these services to offset their costs of provision.

Modelling of demand for water and wastewater use showed that projected tourism growth will lead to design capacity being exceeded in some centres. Solid waste disposal is also reaching limits and potable water supplies are of low standards. The need for improved infrastructure heightens the significance of charging policies and there is a need to examine the potential of more refined charging systems. Two key tasks are indicated. First is the need to develop water and waste disposal systems at an appropriate level to meet existing standards. Second is the need to model and build capital works to meet anticipated peak demand which is driven largely by tourism. For both of these, equity in pricing (both between residents and tourists, and between generations) is a crucial issue.

2.8 Evolving Community Perceptions of Tourism in Westland (Report No. 24)

Objectives. The main objective was to assess local opinion about, and adaptations, tourism.

Methods. Three methods were used. The first was participant observation of tourism and locals' responses to it, and the second was in-depth interviews in four key areas (Hokitika, Harihair, Franz Josef and Haast). Finally, a telephone survey of local opinion.

Key Findings. Tourism is interwoven with the history of community development in Westland. Near the end of the nineteenth century accommodation facilities were available in South Westland including Hendes Ford near Harihari and at Franz Josef. From the 1930s until the 1960s the aviation industry provided the impetus for travel and community service in the absence of highways in the Haast region. When the Haast Circuit road was finally completed in the 1960s there was a resurgence of tourism interest in the area and numbers began to increase. The development of the pounamu (jade) industry in Hokitika also began to increase in the 1960s. Tourism numbers have been increasing rapidly since the late 1990s. This is in contrast to the struggling fate of other local industries such as logging and mining. Tourism has become a leading sector of the Westland economy and community planners are looking closely at its potential to further contribute to the local community and its economy.

Based on the telephone survey of local residents, three in ten survey respondents indicated that they were employed directly in tourism. Of those who indicated that they were directly employed in tourism, approximately one fifth worked in the accommodation sector. A second fifth were employed in restaurants, cafes or bars, 13 per cent in travel agencies or information centres, 12 per cent in tour guiding or tourist attractions and ten per cent in souvenirs, jade carving or art and craft. Approximately one third of respondents had one or more family members employed in tourism occupations.

Four out of every ten survey respondents mentioned the environment as a reason for living in the District. Many residents maintain a close affinity with the backcountry and are often aware of the global significance of the conservation estate in Westland. The peaceful, quiet and often isolated lifestyle with ample access to outdoor activities was mentioned by two fifths of survey respondents as an important reason for living in Westland. Residents often recognise that many tourists that visit the region also value these same lifestyle attractions and worry that increasing numbers of visitors will threaten their quiet and peaceful existence. Residents are also often aware of the potential negative impacts of tourism on the natural environment and take a close interest in the activities of tourism developers and the policies of the Department of Conservation. Developers that were interviewed also mentioned protecting the environment as a vital part of maintaining their livelihoods.

Survey respondents reported business/finance and employment opportunities as the main benefits of tourism in Westland. Tourism is also recognised by some Westland residents as a source of jobs in a region where finding employment can be difficult. However, residents are often aware that the jobs created in tourism can be on a part-time or seasonal basis.

Recommendations. Results from this study suggest the following recommendations:

- Westland District Council and the Department of Conservation should continue to increase communication with local community groups such as business and residents'

associations. Improved communication between various community groups and local authorities will assist all stakeholders in developing a shared tourism vision for Westland.

- Local authorities should monitor the social impacts of tourism development. For example, increased pressure on car parks, busier shopping areas and crowded recreation areas can quickly reduce local residents' acceptance of tourism.
- Given the current high levels of satisfaction, involvement in tourism and the necessity to sustain these characteristics, local authorities should continue to encourage local initiatives in developing tourism attractions in Westland (such as current funding initiatives by the Westland Working Group). This will allow for a style of tourism that is well integrated with local business and lifestyle.
- Tourism management strategies and activities should be integrated between the Westland District Council, the West Coast Regional Council, the Department of Conservation and Tourism West Coast. For example, relevant central and local government policies such as the district plan, regional tourism policies and the Department of Conservation Visitor Strategy should all be considered when developing tourism plans and strategies.
- Following the sentiments expressed by locals, the sub categories of recommendations to mitigate the physical impacts of tourism in Westland include:
 - Continue to monitor campervan dumping and provide more dumping sites where necessary.
 - Improve the cleanliness and image of public rest stops along Westland highways.
 - Provide information and education for campervan drivers regarding the appropriate disposal of waste.
 - Provide more public toilets at key townships and other locations throughout Westland.
 - Provide more rubbish bins and a rubbish collection service at key tourism sites throughout Westland.
 - The Westland District Council, the West Coast Regional Council, the Department of Conservation, Transit New Zealand and Tourism West Coast should continue to address specific tourism issues such as roadside effluent dumping.



Westland residents value the environment, have a close affinity with the backcountry and the conservation estate, and value peace and quiet and the often isolated lifestyle. They recognise that many tourists also value these same lifestyle attractions and worry that increasing numbers of visitors will threaten their quiet and peaceful existence. Westland residents stated that business and employment opportunities were the main benefits from tourism, although they believed that these jobs were often part time and/or seasonal. They were aware that there are a number of facilities coming under pressure as tourist numbers increase. A important theme in the recommendations was the need to have greater co-ordination of tourism planning.

2.9 Tourism and Maori Development in Westland (Report No. 25)

Objective. The main aim was to provide an understanding of the interactions of Maori and tourism in Westland. The objectives were to document accurately the current state of Maori involvement in tourism including current use of Maori culture, analyse Maori perceptions of tourism and the relationship between Maori and the natural environment and to identify barriers to Maori tourism development.

Method. A Kaupapa Maori Research approach was used in this study. It included framing the research according to aspects of Maori philosophy, values and practices and Western theoretical frameworks. The main sources of data were interviews with members of the local runanga, local Maori from other iwi (matawaka), key people from TRONT, tourism literature and Maori tourism publications.

Key Findings. A historical account of the development of Maori involvement in tourism showed that there had been very little Maori tourism in Westland. Pounamu carving and glacier guiding were the first forms of Maori tourism. The current state of Maori tourism is also noted for its lack of Maori participation. Maori tourist owner/operators include a pounamu tourist outlet, a glass studio, accommodation and helicopter tours. Most Maori participation in the tourism industry appeared to be in the service and interpretation roles such as guiding. Pounamu carving was identified as the main use of Maori culture as a tourist attraction in Westland. Apart from this, there is a lack of use of Maori culture. However, for some runanga members the natural environment, which is a significant part of their culture, was seen as a major use of taonga Maori as a tourist attraction.

There was a positive overall response to tourism and a strong indication of wanting to develop Maori tourism. A conceptual model based on Kaupapa Maori structured the interviewees' responses to tourism to capture what Maori tourism might mean for Poutini Ngai Tahu in Westland.

Data on Maori responses and perceptions of tourism and how tourism has changed the expression of Maori culture revealed a number of critical issues. These are barriers to Maori tourism development, inappropriate use of Maori culture in tourism and the lack of effective management of the natural environment in relation to tourism. A number of barriers to Maori tourism development were identified.

The inappropriate use of Maori culture in Pakeha tourism was perceived as having a negative effect on the culture. In response to the problem interviewees suggested that authenticity standards were necessary to protect their taonga.

Most interviewees expressed a strong connection to their natural environment reflecting their responsibility of kaitiakitanga. Most perceived tourism as negatively affecting this relationship and a number of concerns were expressed.

Recommendations. Based on the conclusions of the report, the following recommendations are suggested to provide for more effective Maori participation in the tourism industry in a way that ensures the integrity of their culture.

- A research programme be established and maintained on Maori and tourism, particularly Maori employment in tourism and tourist demand for cultural tourism in Aotearoa.

- National authenticity standards for Maori cultural products and practices in tourism need to be determined by Maori with the support of the government.
- Tourism agencies and TRONT fund specific education/training for Maori in areas such as business development and marketing, interpretation and tourism management.
- The local runanga and/or TRONT run courses in te reo, tikanga Maori and knowledge of their local histories for runanga members.
- Local Maori tourism operators establish a mentoring scheme for Maori to learn skills such as pounamu carving and business management.
- Increased capital funding be available for Maori tourism development to enable a greater role of Maori in the tourism industry. Funding could be part of the role of the proposed Maori regional organisations.
- Effective Maori representation in Tourism New Zealand be established.
- A regional Maori tourism agency for Te Wai Pounamu (South Island) be established.
- Good working relationships between various Maori organisations (i.e., iwi, runanga, and matawaka) involved in the tourism sector be developed by establishing steps such as a memorandum of understanding or establishment of a joint committee.
- DoC Head Office clarify whether Section 4 of the Conservation Act 1987 gives iwi rights to a percentage of the capacity of limited concessions.
- The specific issue of iwi rights to limited concessions needs to be resolved at the wider issue of implementing the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi and hence partnership under the Conservation Act.
- Maori tourism planning approach be developed and implemented at the national and regional level.
- Mechanisms be developed for linking and integrating Maori tourism planning in mainstream approaches.



There has been little involvement by Maori in tourism in Westland both historically and at present. Pounamu carving is the main way the Maori culture is involved in tourism. For some runanga members the natural environment, which is a significant part of their culture, was seen as a major use of Maori taonga as a tourist attraction. Maori want to be involved in tourism, see potential for involvement in eco-tourism, and are keen to control and manage any Maori tourism developments.

2.10 Evolving Role of Local Government in Promoting Sustainable Tourism Development on the West Coast (Report No. 28)

Objective. The main objective was to examine planning of tourism on the West Coast.

Methods. A survey of the three local authorities was completed, canvassing a variety of planning issues. These included the role of local government in promoting sustainable tourism development on the West Coast, through the dual roles of tourism enablement and the management of tourism effects.

Key Findings - Enablement of Tourism. Local government can play an important role in supporting and encouraging sustainable tourism development. On the West Coast, however, the extent of territorial local authority participation is constrained by their lack of resources. Differences between the three TLAs reflect visitor numbers and level of tourism development within each district. Generally, tourism related businesses on the West Coast would like to see their district councils take a more active role to enable tourism development within the region. Their main concerns regarding local government's enablement of tourism include:

- Lack of information on trends and development.
- A need for a more strategic approach for the enablement of sustainable tourism development.
- Lack of adequate facilities to attract and provide for visitors, particularly public toilets.

Tourism West Coast is seen to play an important role in promoting tourism but it covers a large jurisdiction with limited resources. Specific comments by the stakeholders interviewed include the need for:

- Greater consultation with the industry and other groups.
- A development strategy based on better understanding of tourism trends.

Key Findings - Management of Tourism Impacts. Concerns expressed by the tourism related businesses as well as the NGOs relating to the bio-physical environmental impacts of tourism include:

- A general lack of environmental awareness on part of decision makers.
- Ad hoc, reactive management.
- Lack of solid waste and sewage disposal facilities and need for strategic planning for funding utilities.
- Freedom camper dumping.
- Lack of enforcement of resource consent conditions.



Social concerns include:

- Council lack of understanding about tourism's benefits and impacts.
- Lack of council support for tourism.

- Inadequate planning for tourism and public consultation.
- Need to educate locals about tourism's benefits.
- Inadequate signage.

Tourism related business respondents perceive the RMA process as time consuming, relatively costly and restrictive. Concerns were expressed about lack of consistency in the way decisions were made under the Act and liberal public participation provisions. It is recognised, nevertheless, that the Act has generally raised the standard of development.

There is better understanding of the role of territorial local bodies compared with the role of regional council in management of tourism impacts.

Recommendations. Six specific recommendations are:

- The two regional authorities (the West Coast Regional Council and Tourism West Coast) and the West Coast District Councils need to respond to the specific concerns that have been articulated by the business and NGO respondents who took part in this study.
- Rather than responding on an ad hoc reactive basis, the above issues should be addressed within a strategic and integrated planning context, both within individual district councils and on an inter-organisational basis at the regional level.
- The West Coast District Councils, the West Coast Regional Council, the Department of Conservation, Tourism West Coast, businesses and NGOs within the tourism industry, tangata whenua and other community groups need to work collaboratively to develop a regional sustainable tourism strategy for the West Coast, and to build more effective partnerships between central and local government and between government and industry. The District Councils and Tourism West Coast should assume the lead roles in this exercise.
- A regional strategy for sustainable tourism development needs to clarify the service provision roles and funding commitments for local and central government authorities, Tourism West Coast, industry, tangata whenua and other stakeholders where relevant.
- A regional strategy for sustainable tourism needs to provide for the linkages between destination marketing and destination management, particularly in terms of monitoring and managing visitor impacts on the social and biophysical environments. Providing for the free flow of sectoral information is a key factor in managing these concerns.
- At the district level, the West Coast territorial authorities have a primary role to play in the process of developing and implementing a strategy for sustainable tourism development. A number of the issues and concerns that have been identified within this report need to be addressed within the annual planning cycle under the Local Government Act 1974 or within district plans processes under the Resource Management Act 1991.

There is an urgent need for strategic tourism planning on the West Coast. The TLAs should assume a lead role in this exercise. Broad-based community participation (including Maori, locals and the business sector) is recommended as a cornerstone of any such process. TLA plans also need to reach upwards and outwards to achieve strong regional integration and inform the national tourism strategy.

Chapter 3

Key Elements of a Regional Tourism Policy

3.1 Introduction

The summaries of research and recommendations presented in the last chapter are integrated below. These are used to distil two broad themes: common values and aspirations, and issues and tensions. Drawing from these themes allows us to make recommendations for tourism management. In this chapter the focus is broader than just Westland alone and considers the implications for the West Coast. This chapter prepares the way for recommending a planning process that will help achieve effective implementation of these recommendations, the topic covered in the last chapter.

3.2 Summary of Main Findings

The West Coast is a destination which has more than 820,000 visitors per year over a resident population of about 35,000. These visitors spend, in total, over 1.5 million visitor nights on the West Coast, although the region does experience a season increase over the summer months and decrease over the winter months. In addition, there is a considerable number of day trips (395,000) and overnight trips (22,000) made by West Coast residents within the West Coast region.

The flow patterns show how the movements of international visitors are conditioned by established tourism attractions and marketing, while a number of less developed destinations attract substantially higher shares of domestic visitors. Visitors ‘pulse’ through the three main portals reflecting the importance of Christchurch, Nelson and Queenstown as immediate sources of visitors.

Visitors to the West Coast are attracted to the natural environment including natural features, activities based upon the natural environment, and iconic features such as the glaciers and Punakaiki rocks. Decisions to travel to the West Coast typically are made at home and the main influences on this decision were informal sources (family and friends), trip characteristics (such as cost benefits) and portable information (such as travel books and brochures).

Visitors and locals have three experiences of landscapes and general infrastructure and these all emphasise aspects of nature. They have four experiences of tourist infrastructure in which the main themes are nature and heritage. Similarities between these results and those from the earlier case studies suggest that the results are robust. Since there is strong consensus on core environmental preferences, attention to design and facility management are very important issues.

Tourism is a significant part of the Westland economy, where it contributes 29 per cent of all jobs. Tourism spending is estimated at \$108m annually in the District and, when flow-on effects are considered, generates approximately \$98m in benefits to the District.

Modelling of demand for water and wastewater use showed that projected tourism growth will lead to design capacity being exceeded in some centres. Solid waste disposal is also reaching limits and potable water supplies are of low standards. The need for improved

infrastructure heightens the significance of charging policies and there is a need to examine the potential of more refined charging systems. Two key tasks are indicated. First is the need to develop water and waste disposal systems at an appropriate level to meet existing standards. Second is the need to model and build capital works to meet anticipated peak demand which is driven largely by tourism. For both of these, equity in pricing (both between residents and tourists, and between generations) is a crucial issue.

Westland residents value the environment, have a close affinity with the backcountry and the conservation estate, and value peace and quiet and the often isolated lifestyle. They recognise that many tourists also value these same lifestyle attractions and worry that increasing numbers of visitors will threaten their quiet and peaceful existence. Westland residents stated that business and employment opportunities were the main benefits from tourism, although they believed that these jobs were often part time and/or seasonal. They were aware that there are a number of facilities coming under pressure as tourist numbers increase. A important theme in the recommendations was the need to have greater co-ordination of tourism planning.

There has been little involvement by Maori in tourism in Westland both historically and at present. Pounamu carving is the main way the Maori culture is involved in tourism. For some runanga members the natural environment, which is a significant part of their culture, was seen as a major use of Maori taonga as a tourist attraction. Maori want to be involved in tourism, see potential for involvement in eco-tourism, and are keen to control and manage any Maori tourism product.

There is an urgent need for strategic tourism planning on the West Coast. The TLAs should assume a lead role in this exercise. Broad-based community participation (including Maori, locals and the business sector) is recommended as a cornerstone of any such process. TLA plans also need to reach upwards and outwards to achieve strong regional integration and inform the national tourism strategy.

Many aspects of the results are mutually supportive. For example, the West Coast visitor decision making survey (Report No. 22) found that 55 per cent of visitors were of international origin while the data used in the background report (No. 20) found that there were 60 per cent of international origin, which is a close match. The visitor decision making survey also found that the main attraction of the West Coast was the natural environment comprising nature, scenery, bush, coast, mountains, beaches and nature activities. These characteristics match closely those of the visitors and locals interviewed for the Q sort study of experiences of nature and infrastructure (Report No. 23), and the 40 per cent of locals who said the environment was a reason for why they lived on the Coast (Report No. 24). These parallel findings strengthen the claim in the experiences report (Report No. 23) that there is a strong consensus of core environmental values among both visitors and locals. The visitors and locals in that study rated highly the importance of environmental management (the score was on average 9.4 out of a maximum of ten) and this finding is consistent with the community study in which there was significant local awareness of the importance of improving infrastructure in order to mitigate the physical impacts of tourism. Local people were aware of the limits to the infrastructure that were documented in the environment report (Report No. 27) and as the community report showed, the historic development of tourism has always been linked to the development of infrastructure. Thus the infrastructural challenges to tourism at present, and how these are financed, are not new problems but are pervasive themes of West Coast history. There was also consistency in the estimates of numbers working in the tourism industry. The economic study (Report No. 26) found that 29

per cent of all FTEs worked in tourism while the community study found that 30 per cent of respondents said they worked in tourism.

Across all reports is the observation that the challenges for tourism are going to rely for their resolution on some kind of consensus or agreement. This is because the problems to be addressed are inherently linked, broad in their implications and, in many cases, are beyond the resources of any individual entity to address. There will be an ongoing need to develop and maintain relationships with affected parties.

In essence, the situation for Westland and most likely for the West Coast is as follows. Since the pioneer days of tourists going to places like Fox Glacier and Franz Josef, tastes have become more sophisticated and tourists are now demanding increased environmental accountability. The challenge is to ensure that strategic tourism planning systems are in place so that tourism development can proceed in tandem with enhanced environmental management and performance. Crucial areas are waste and water management, development of tourist facilities and conservation of natural character, and their development must be achieved in ways that ensure that tourists pay their fair share of the costs.

These main findings justify the approach adopted for this research. The objectives were to (1) document community and Maori expectations of, and adaptations to, tourism; (2) to understand tourist demand (in particular, decision making, expectations and experiences, and regional and national flows); and (3) to understand the structure of the tourism economy and environmental management systems. These objectives were sound and have provided an adequate basis for the study. In addition, the three dimensions cutting across these research objectives (economic, environmental and management) have proved to be critically important. The themes identified above are developed below to provide the basis for making recommendations that are particularly relevant to the Westland and West Coast situation.

3.3 Common Values and Aspirations

When taken together, the results of our research show that the goals and aspirations of both locals and visitors indicate some key common attributes shared by both locals and visitors alike.

- **West Coast lifestyle**

Tourism is a difficult phenomenon to see and describe, however its effects on the natural and built environment provides a useful mechanism to draw out discussion and concerns about its more intangible effects. The results of our research show that visitors' experiences of Westland are notable for the strong focus on "uncrowded, natural landscapes". There is a common desire to retain much of the present atmosphere among both residents and tourists and the indicates the need for strong advocacy in design and proactive management of tourist infrastructure.

- **Avoiding negative environmental impacts**

Elements of the environment, and the wider geographic context of West Coast, are the key attractions (products) that Westland offers as a tourist destination. While these are features for visitors, their management (planning, resourcing, and maintenance) is also a key concern for locals, and Maori in particular. Active management of these key public resources secures the environment on which tourism grows.

- **Employment**

Tourism has been an effective generator of employment in Westland. In many respects, tourism has grown to fill the gap left by government-led restructuring of the public sector in the mid 1980s. Tourism currently generates approximately 29 per cent of all employment on an annual basis, although much of this work is seasonal.



To date the growth of tourism in Westland is largely perceived as positive. It has grown rapidly to become a significant sector in the District. Tourism is, however, another 'resource-based' industry, and can be subject to the same boom - bust scenarios. Initial high levels of support and local economic gains can be eroded by both a disenchanted public and the loss of investment to outside investors. Research in New Zealand (NZTB, 1988) confirms the increasingly recognised belief

that a low or even moderate level of tourism can be a great boost to a community, but that those communities most exposed to risk are those with high seasonality of visitation, and high levels of economic dependence on the sector. Difficulties also arise if tourism no longer delivers benefits to locals - be it in direct forms such as jobs or household income, or in indirect forms such as modifying a community's sense of place through crowding, environmental degradation, or changes in the built environment.

Thus, while tourism generally appears to be well accepted in Westland it is appropriate to consider emerging evidence of issues and tensions between tourism and locals' aspirations and needs.

3.4 Issues and Tensions

The topic of issues and tensions can be addressed by focussing on the risks to tourism, that is, the things that threaten tourism if the issue and tensions are not addressed. There are four areas of concern.

- **Risk Management**

When tourism is introduced gradually to a location, the impacts are more easily absorbed, as the community develops adoptive strategies. However, Westland has experienced consistently high rates of growth in visitation in the past decade. Official forecasts for New Zealand tourism indicate a 57 per cent increase in tourist numbers between 2000 and 2006 (Forsythe, 2000). While these figures are yet to be disaggregated on a regional basis it is important to note that the West Coast has been achieving growth in visitation at or above the national figures in the recent past. These figures should therefore be best seen as a minimum. In the longer term, the New Zealand tourism strategy has indicated the potential of a further 80 per cent increase in international visitors in the next decade (from 1.8m to 3.25m visitors nationally per year) (NZTSG, 2001). Again, regional indicators have not been developed but it is generally accepted that tourist flows are showing increased dispersion on the back of more mature travel patterns and growth in the number of free independent travellers.

There are two sets of risks in an over-dependence on tourism.

- Because tourism is a ‘luxury good’, it fluctuates strongly with the availability of personal disposable income and perceptions of economic stability and growth. When tourism is a significant factor in the local economy, these communities are vulnerable to a downturn in tourism.
- The District’s environmental capacity to absorb tourism is not infinite. Over-expansion or poorly managed development can degrade the key qualities that visitors seek, or that local communities value. In other words, unmanaged tourism can be a significant risk to long-term community stability and well-being. Consideration, therefore, needs to be given to the overall style and size of tourism in Westland. A significant concern lies in the lack of involvement of small communities such as Westland in national level policies and plans for tourism.
- **Maori aspirations**
There has been little involvement by Maori in tourism in Westland both historically and at present. For some runanga members the natural environment, which is a significant part of their culture, is seen as a major use of Maori taonga as a tourist attraction. Maori want to be involved in tourism, see potential for involvement in eco-tourism, and are keen to control and manage any Maori tourism development.
- **Resourcing costs**
Our studies suggest that infrastructure for tourist provision is most problematic where there a high and increasing tourist flows and low levels of population. Provision of environmental services (e.g., rubbish dumps, high quality water) lags behind other places in New Zealand and tourists’ expectations. There is an urgent need to improve fundamental environmental performance as well as obtaining funding for future capital items. Local government rates in Westland are relatively low by New Zealand standards..

A fundamental principle of current economic practice is the notion that those who derive benefits from resources, or inflict costs on others, should pay. For tourism this indicates that the industry might be targeted as the primary source of funds for necessary infrastructure and resource protection works. The problems of small communities (and public agencies, e.g., DoC) in finding funds for essential visitor infrastructure is receiving increasing recognition (NZTSG, 2001), and again Westland’s experience in this regard needs to be incorporated into this wider debate.

- **Lack of a regional tourism strategy and plan**
Tourism is growing rapidly, and appears to be doubling every 7-8 years. TLAs need to adopt a strategic and integrated approach to tourism planning – one that integrates tourists’ flows and tastes with locals’ aspirations, their resources and the region’s infrastructure needs. In addition, the community study showed that there has been shifting of responsibilities among a number of organisations when it comes to tourism management and planning. This reflects the challenge of large problems and small resources available to deal with them. There is an urgent need for better planning that reflects what both locals and visitors want from their experiences of Westland. Tourism is a difficult sector to describe - within the private sector it involves a large number of industries (some quite indirectly) and it also has a broad public sector interface involving both local and national agencies. Tourism planning is emerging as an

increasingly specialised area that requires both a broad level of consultation and number of specific outputs. (These are addressed in the following sections.)

3.5 Recommendations

The overall conclusion of this study is that tourism in Westland appears to be at an economically and socially sustainable level at present. There are, however, questions about its environmental sustainability. While future growth seems assured in the short-term there are a number of challenges in maintaining the long-term sustainability of the sector, and its role in regional social and economic development. *The key areas of risk are those associated with the broader institutional, infrastructural, environmental and social elements of tourism management.* The main thrust of the results from this research programme is that tourism planning needs to focus at a broad level and integrate across sectors and issues. However, this report also has specific implications for the marketing of tourism, some of which are noted here. Many of our recommendations therefore apply to those organisations with a broader societal and environmental mandate than tourism alone. The following recommendations are grouped in the six areas of risk mentioned above.

Institutional. Neither the WCRC nor the TLAs have yet provided a robust, well-resourced institutional structure for tourism management at the level of sophistication that we observed in Rotorua. Results from this programme of research show that the issues of natural resource management, and of general public opinion about tourism, are important elements of tourism that must therefore be managed carefully. This is particularly important if the planning goal is to develop a viable long-term vision and strategy to ensure tourism's sustainability. We recommend therefore, that:

- A programme for reporting key tourism statistics in aggregate be established. These can be readily obtained from existing data sources. Reliable data are needed by the industry, developers and those responsible for planning wider aspects of the sector. Because of the widespread use of the data this a key role for the West Coast Tourism Council.

Since tourism has emerged as a large and growing sector on the West Coast and there is a need to develop a regional strategic planning processes involving all territorial authorities, DoC, WRC, WTC, community stakeholders and other relevant organisations such as Transit New Zealand. The output from this process would be a West Coast strategic tourism plan. In terms of executing the plan, there may a need for:

- A new cross-sectoral organisation.
- An enhanced role for the West Coast Tourism.
- With District Council agreement, an enhanced role for the Regional Council.

Infrastructural. A key issue is the adequacy of environment management, both present and future, and the appropriateness of the pricing mechanisms for these services. Provision of environmental services lags behind other places in New Zealand and for tourists themselves. Much of the existing infrastructure is a product of earlier state expenditure. There is an urgent need therefore to improve fundamental environmental performance as well as obtaining funding for future capital items. There is also a need to model future tourist flows against

current infrastructure provision and standards, and then model financial costs for constituent beneficiaries to develop equitable cost structures. The necessity of new infrastructure means that in meeting this challenge there is an opportunity to build to a high standard. We recommend that:

- The strategic tourism plan (noted above) develop ways to effectively and equitably fund infrastructural developments.

Given the critical role of infrastructure for tourism (for both minor facilities such as toilets and major facilities such as water supply) and the fact that their provision is hard to provide and is to a major extent relying on infrastructure developments from an earlier era, a case can be made that it will be in Westland's and the West Coast's interest to use some of the Timberland compensation fund to build infrastructure. This is not to say that some of the fund should not be used for tourist business. However, development of infrastructure will be important for tourism and the development of tourism will be important for both Westland and for the West Coast. In the longer term, important benefits, such as employment, will flow from such investment.

Environmental. Both domestic and international tourism in Westland relies heavily upon the desire of visitors to experience and appreciate natural settings. These include mountains, glaciers, coastline and lakes, and a number of cultural landscapes, such as heritage buildings. The overall ambience of the area, with small towns in a frontier setting, also appears to be significant. Previous experience (the 1980s) as well as these research results indicate that these qualities are vulnerable in several respects: development for commercial or residential uses; overcrowding; and site degradation. Long-term policies, plans, and design and management guidelines are needed to conserve the environmental qualities which underpin tourism at several scales: overall settings (e.g., all lake edges, urban fringes, main tourist routes), locations (e.g., the towns), and sites (e.g., glaciers). Design and management guidelines are an important means by which policies are put into effect: they are the important stimulus for the experience of visitors. We recommend that:

- The concept of sustainable tourism be pursued through the formation of a charter or other approach which involves the community and industry.
- The issue of design be recognised as a critically important factor in planning for tourist development in Westland and throughout the West Coast. A recurring theme in the study of both locals' and visitors' preferred experiences has been the sensitivity of respondents to the appearance of infrastructure provision. For buildings in predominantly natural settings, there is clearly a desire that they be integrated visually with the broader environment, to minimise their impact. Similarly, for other infrastructure elements, visitors seek a minimisation of the visual impact of larger features, while they prefer the appearance of small features such as picnic areas, campgrounds etc. to be as 'natural' as possible. There is opportunity to reinforce the experience of sustainable tourism through the style of design.
- Attention be given to the need for better information and understanding about the role of the RMA.

Market. Several aspects of the research point to distinct international and domestic visitor experiences within Westland. Evidence for these are seen in tourist flow patterns, attractions visited and experiences preferred. We recommend that:

- Tourism Westland refine its promotional strategies to target more directly different tourist tastes and behaviour.
- There is regular assessment of infrastructure quality as perceived by visitors.
- Rural and natural settings be protected by developing clusters of attractions that are managed to minimise environmental effects.
- New product development be based on opportunities for cultural and heritage products, although these will need to retain strong links to the natural environment which is the pervasive experience of Westland
- Information sources need to be portable (e.g., brochures) and retain their independence from promotional activities. Information should be delivered to tourists in their home situations which are the key locations of decision making.

Social. Tourism in Westland relies heavily upon the sense of security and comfort of visitors and on the friendliness of locals. We recommend that:

- There is community involvement in tourism planning. While residents are currently satisfied about tourism, they have growing concerns about the environment impacts of tourism and the need for a strategic approach to its future.
- There is explanation of the significance of tourism and its broad benefits (and costs) to local residents.
- Since Maori want to be involved in tourism in ways that acknowledge their priorities, aspiration and knowledge, particular attention should be given to find ways to retain their cultural heritage while enhancing economic opportunities.

National-level Risk. In the wider context of tourism development and planning in New Zealand, it has become apparent throughout this research and synthesis that local (and site) level tourism planning must be established within a national framework. Promotion and advertising decisions made elsewhere have significant downstream effects, and without input from key destination areas (such as Westland) and touring regions, too strong a ‘marketing’ orientation can distort community goals and local environmental realities. We recommend that:

- Relevant agencies (such as TWC) continue to communicate local needs to national level tourism organisations and government.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has taken the findings from the constituent studies and developed a set of recommendations based on common values and aspirations, and on issues and tensions evident in tourism in Westland and the West Coast. The recommendations have necessarily gone beyond the District and emphasised important regional implications for tourism planning. While some of the recommendations are challenging they also provide an opportunity to plan and manage tourism well and achieve improved delivery of infrastructure.

Given the importance of tourism to the economy, such planning is a vital, especially given current and projected rates of growth. Considered in the final chapter are ways to organise planning to most effectively achieve sustainable tourism in Westland.



Chapter 4

Developing a Planning Process for Westland

4.1 Introduction

The objective of this report was to provide a synthesis of nine separate reports (listed in Appendix 1) on key aspects of tourism in Westland, and makes recommendations for the future management of the sector. The last chapter delivered the recommendations and this chapter moves from them to the important planning process which is essential to achieve practical outcomes for improved management of tourism in Westland. In this chapter we focus on Westland only because it has been the primary focus of detailed analysis. We leave open the issue of wider West Coast tourism planning but recommend that the two remaining District Councils commence a review of tourism activity with a view to developing parallel strategic planning processes.

4.2 Requirements for Effective Planning

The above discussion highlights a need for a tourism planning process that sits alongside formal statutory planning processes (e.g., the District Scheme), agency plans (e.g., annual plans, DoC) and can give direction and shape to marketing efforts (strategic and annual plans). A consideration of the nature of tourism and current state of development in Westland, indicates the planning process needs to be:

- **Goal orientated**
The central questions for tourism planning are: “What sort of place do we wish Westland to be? How can tourism contribute to community goals of economic and social development?” Marketing and promotion are means to achieve wider community goals - *they are not ends in themselves*. Thus, the first step in a tourism plan lies in creating a future vision for Westland.
- **Consultative**
Planning for tourism involves active input from a variety of stakeholders, including the industry, government (local and national), resource managers (natural and cultural) and the general public. This is essential to clarifying community aspirations and tourism’s contribution to achieving a future vision.
- **Ongoing**
As tourism evolves over time, markets and tastes change and there is a need to readjust plans in the light of new knowledge. Tourism is also a complex industry, and multi-faceted. Ongoing involvement of all stakeholders is required to build a broad knowledge of its various aspects.
- **Systematic**
Tourism planning must continually integrate across the boundaries of private and public sector interests. In addition, it must also integrate across districts within regions and it must address infrastructure, utilities and amenities provision. Beyond this it must reach upwards and outwards and inform national tourism strategies and plans. Without such links, the planning of tourism in Westland will remain fragmented. Without co-

ordination with the much larger national tourism system, future tourism flows will be largely directed by other agencies with little detailed knowledge of local issues.

4.3 A Proposed Structure for Planning at the District Level

Given the key issues described above, there is a need for some cross-sectoral organisation to advance the tourism plan. Such an organisation would allow for representatives among key stakeholders and the development, over time, of the breadth of understanding necessary to achieve the level of integration required for sustainable tourism planning.

Key representation would need to come from:

- The District Council.
- The tourism industry (including larger and smaller operators).
- Local resource managers (e.g., DoC).
- Local Maori.
- The general public (e.g., retailers, professionals, farmers, retirees).
- Other regional agencies (e.g., Transit New Zealand, WCRC).

Responsibilities for managing the environmental impacts of tourism fall within the broad mandate of the RMA and this, plus, tourism's heavy reliance on public infrastructure, indicates that the District Councils should be the lead agencies. Because of the broad effects of tourism, and the need to draw on the experiences of other similar communities elsewhere, some outside assistance may be required to 'kick start' the process, but ultimately it must remain driven by the interests and needs of the local community.

4.4 Key Outputs

Key outputs from a planning process will vary depending on the structure and function of constituent agencies. Outputs might include:

- **A separate tourism strategy for the District Council** (to sit alongside the District Plan, Annual Plan and Asset Management Plan)
As a significant economic force in the District, tourism is beginning to generate significant 'urbanising' effects. Key policy issues derived from the research include:
 - **Infrastructure** (water and sewage reticulation especially)
Tourism adds to current pressures and needs to make a fair contribution towards these essential elements of resource management.
 - **Public facilities and sites**
The significance of the 'natural' ambience pervades all aspects of tourism in Westland. The design of public facilities and infrastructure, protection of views, nature interpretation etc. are all elements that can add to (or if unplanned and unmanaged, distract from) the visitor experience. Resourcing of key public infrastructure and attractions is a key issue.

- **Townscapes**
The visual effects of tourism on the character of settlements are where locals and visitors alike first notice growing tourism pressures. The development of performance standards for building design and location, colour and signage will require planning, advocacy and management.
- **Economic Development Strategies**
Residents' attitudes to tourism are significantly underscored by the economic returns (e.g., jobs, household income) they gain from tourism. Any economic development strategies need to ensure maximising local retention of the tourist dollar (e.g., by using local as opposed to outside suppliers). A second way for tourist dollars to enter the local economy is via wages and salaries. There is no evidence of a shortage of labour, but customer service skills are a priority for the industry. For Maori there are ongoing concerns about skills training, employment and representations of Maori Culture.
- **Strategic Direction**
To date tourism enjoys a relatively harmonious relationship with Westland residents. However, a key finding of this research has been the suggestion that Westland is on the verge of entering what Butler (1980) has called the *development* stage of tourism evolution. This transition is marked by increasing outside investment and a gradual loss of local control over decision making. Other indicators of concern are a growing (over) reliance on tourism. Although the research literature is unclear on when a threshold point is reached, a level of 30 per cent of local economy dependence on tourism has been mooted as a possible limit. Westland is rapidly approaching this point. Furthermore, visitation is marked by quite high seasonality that brings additional stresses in its wake. If the community is interested in further tourism development then building capacity in the slower winter months is one strategy that warrants further attention.

We urge the WDC develop a strategy for tourism but also advocate strongly for greater regional integration. There is a legal impediment⁵ in that for the Regional Council to be involved, all three Districts have to agree. Therefore each council needs to develop an independent policy.

4.5 Means to Achieve Strategies

The following five items specify how the strategy can be achieved.

- **Develop a comprehensive community-based tourism strategy as outlined above**
Key outputs will be advice on, and support for, a number of agency and district plans.

⁵ Changes currently mooted in the Local Government Act which would allow for greater strategic planning by districts or regions could overcome this serious impediment to regional tourism planning.

- **Develop a strategic marketing approach**
Once the community values and goals are clarified, marketing methods and approaches can be deployed to attract the style and volume of visitors (targets) that best take the community to its goals. Marketing is a means to achieve ends, not an end in itself.
- In time, **parallel plans need to be made by the other TLAs**, and an overall regional development strategy needs to be facilitated by the Regional Council. This is an important step because tourists (the primary driver of tourism) do not distinguish between districts. Their experiences are regional and have a similar character for any part of the West Coast.
- **Develop strong links to the national tourism strategy**
First, many of the contemporary issues of tourism development in Westland have been recently highlighted in the New Zealand Tourism Strategy (NZTSG, 2001). This strategy has identified ‘conserving the national, built, cultural and social environment with which tourism interacts’ as the first of four core objectives for tourism. In this, environmental protection, Maori participation, heritage promotion and community goodwill are the key goals.

Second, without any direct influence on off-shore or domestic marketing, promotional activity, or image generation, the Westland community will only have minimal long-term influence over visitor volumes or mix. Developing and enhancing national links is therefore an essential component in maintaining local control, and securing sustainable levels of tourism development.
- **Build local capacity in the skills needed to implement these actions.**
Development of integrated tourism, marketing and development strategies requires teamwork, skills and experience. The first step in achieving the strategy is to develop and enhance the capabilities of key agencies involved in tourism decision making.

As a small destination with increasing levels of visitation, the experiences and approaches of places such as Westland will be essential inputs into strategy implementation for tourism in New Zealand. Given the thrust of the strategy recommended here, Westland has the opportunity to be a leading example in demonstrating the important benefits of tourism planning and thereby achieve the accomplishment of sustainable tourism.



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Westland District Council Agenda, December 2000.

Appendix 1

List of Titles – West Coast Case Study (2001)

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Appendix 2

List of Titles – Rotorua Case Study (2000)

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Appendix 3

List of Titles – Kaikoura Case Study (1998)

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