

Tourism and Development in Tropical Islands: Political Ecology Perspectives
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Chapter 2

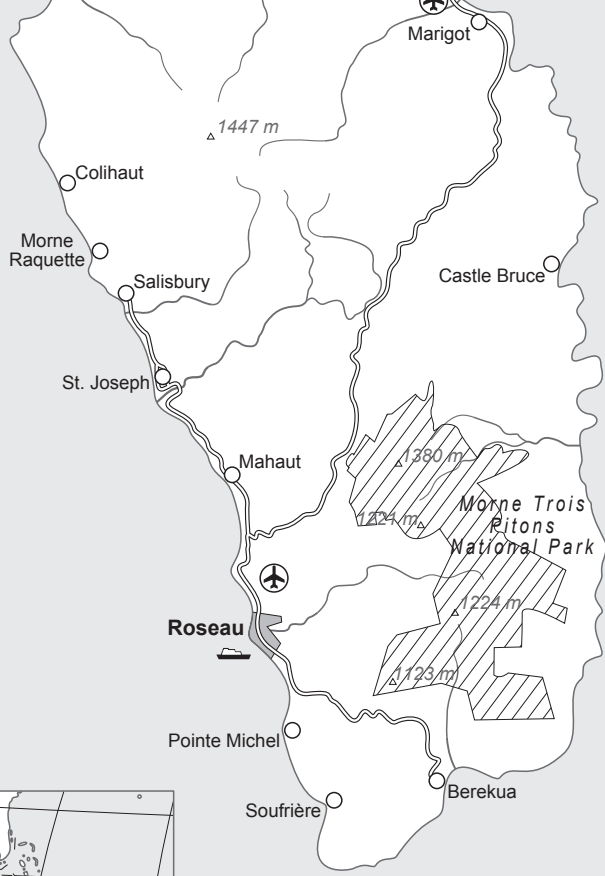
Political Ecology of Tourism in the Commonwealth of Dominica

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Dominica



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2. Political Ecology of Tourism in the Commonwealth of Dominica

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INTRODUCTION

It has long been recognized that small island developing states (SIDS) are confronted with a unique array of developmental challenges and opportunities. Their smaller scale often means that the many forms of everyday civic participation themselves constitute national level discourse. The selective identification and representation of environmental problems and crises is itself a political process (Blakie and Brookfield 1987; Bryant 1998; Rigg and Stott 1998). The complex and dynamic nature of island life means that problems embedded in political and economic structures are difficult to understand in cross-sectional, or discrete, analyses. The importance of understanding the community as a whole is often lost in polarizations that emphasize single issues and complexities that reinforce the status quo.

In response, the study of political ecology has sought to widen the range of acceptable scientific questions by testing for the frequency and disparity of asymmetrical costs and benefits following from development processes. The aim is to improve the lot of marginalized or socially disadvantaged groups by highlighting conflicts, disparities, and the political and human-environmental interactions that drive them, while challenging the path dependent nature within each dynamic. Such consequences have been documented at various scales (Bryant 1992, 1998; Bryant and Bailey 1997); from local considerations such as threatened livelihoods (Bryant and Bailey 1997), indigenous knowledge bases (Bryant 1998), gender and household resource control (Rocheleau et al. 1996; Schroeder 1993), to broader economies, ecologies, and policies between national (Peluso 1992), and (to a lesser extent) internationally relevant institutions (see review Bryant 1998). This chapter takes such a scale-based approach to the political ecology of tourism in the Caribbean Commonwealth of Dominica. It focuses on issues

that routinely and forcefully engage the island population but which have escaped analytical discourse or examination to date, and whose persistence suggest they will widely influence the future allocation of tourism costs and benefits.

Dominica is a Caribbean, mountainous, and volcanic island of 750.6 km², located between the islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe in the Lesser Antilles, about one-half the distance between Puerto Rico to Trinidad/Tobago. It is the largest, least populated isle (94.8 persons/ km²) of the Windward Island chain, with a population of 70 158 (2001 census). Unemployment estimates range from 15 to 25 per cent of the workforce and 27 per cent of island residents live in extreme poverty, unable to meet basic needs (PAHO 1999). Such conditions demand that policy makers pursue national strategies with the aim of invigorate the island economy, and tourism is seen as the principle hope to do so.

Non-market contributions to welfare on the island are great, in large part because the successful human-social and human-environmental relationships that have been developed over long extents of time. Inevitably, as tourism brings about rapid changes, unintended consequences have arisen. Negative social and environmental impacts from the visits are evidencing themselves directly, from the development of tourism infrastructure/services and utilization of tourism attractions and amenities (DNBSAP 2002), and indirectly as impacts impinge upon ecosystem goods and services or slowly uproot culturally embedded forms of sharing and social cohesion. These threaten the knowledge, culture, and resource bases that make direct and substantial contributions to Dominican well-being and to the longer standing economic disposition of the island.

RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter presents information collected during a two-year study initiated for the University of Maryland/University of the West Indies atelier workshop 'Sustainable Tourism in Small Islands of the Caribbean: Lessons from Dominica'. Rapid assessment data gathering techniques, interviews with governmental and private individuals, and development of a dynamic model (Patterson et al. in press) preceded extensive on-site visits, stakeholder consultations meetings and expert panel discussions, which resulted in over 50 hours of tape-recorded interviews. Issues prominent in the interviews, consultations, and national discourse, yet absent in the quantitative studies following from the workshop (Patterson et al. in press; Rodriguez et al. 2003; Thurlow 2002), receive special consideration for the political ecology analysis at hand.

Our aim is to shed light on the relationships within and between economic, social and natural systems, and the dynamics determining the distribution of costs and benefits, including past and present class and ethnic conflicts, access to trade venues, and exercise of power in terms of authority, markets and institutions. Analysis is realized at three scales; the domestic scale focuses on the appropriation of market and non-market values in the Carib Territory, and examines the role of social capital in tourism outcomes for gender, land tenure and micro-enterprise in Dominica. The trans-national scale explores three issues: formal and informal institutions with respect to foreign development, the effect of cruise lobbies and foreign ownership of infrastructure, as evidenced by increased imports to satisfy non-native consumptive habits; and finally, current foreign investment incentives, perception of environmental risk, and local involvement in tourism development projects. The international scale focuses on the history of the Dominica's voting position in the International Whaling Commission to illustrate the interrelatedness between tourism and politics at both national and international levels.

The chapter is structured as follows: we begin with a brief overview of Dominica's geography, economy and tourism activities. The natural history of Dominica and its ecological vulnerabilities follow, as does review of race, ethnicity, class and cultural orientations within Dominican society. These preliminary sections provide economic, ecological and social background for a political ecology analysis of the island's tourism issues at each scale described above.

ISLAND OVERVIEW

With black volcanic beaches, waterfalls, and over 20 per cent of its surface allocated to national parks and protected areas (CEP 2000), Dominica distinguishes itself from nearby 'sand, sun and surf' islands with the title 'The Nature Island of the Caribbean'. The rainforest environment, scuba diving, whale watching, birding, extensive hiking trails, and the opportunity to visit the only remaining Kalinago (Carib) Indian Territory in the Caribbean attract a particular set of tourists.

Nature-based assets contribute to tourism prospects and the lives of inhabitants alike. Large portions of islander's welfare are due to a broad range of natural capital commodities not accounted for in Gross Domestic Product (GDP); those range from food and building materials to elements of cultural heritage and national identity. In addition, Dominica's social systems are characterized by the persistence of widespread, high quality

social networks, which generate many positive externalities that promote well-being (Collier 1998; Narayan and Pritchett 1997). This provides a necessary complement to natural capital, especially benefiting the most vulnerable members of the population. Such positive effects are reflected in World Development Index (WDI) statistics: age expectancy is high (74 years) and infant mortality is low (8.75 per 1 000 live births) for the region, despite the island's average annual per capita income of only US\$2,800 (WDI 2000).

While the tourism sector has optimistic growth prospects, greater foreign investment is projected to increasingly expatriate profits, and subject greater portions of the island economy to volatile global economic dynamics (NDC 2001; Cater 1996). The particular vulnerability of the island's environment to anthropogenic impacts and environmental hazards, suggests that any desirable economic change on the island would maintain the structure and function of the ecological and social systems that support the well-being of Dominican citizens.

ISLAND GEOGRAPHY, ECONOMY, AND TOURISM HISTORY

Dominica is politically divided in ten parishes. The capital Roseau (21 000 inhabitants) and the cities of Portsmouth in the North and Soufriere in the South are located along the more sheltered Western Coast. Sometimes called 'a patchwork of enclaves', the communities of the mountainous interior and the Eastern Coast were extremely isolated until roads improved communication and transport between the east and west coasts in 1956 (Honychurch 1995a; Trouillot 1988). There are currently 780 kilometers of road, half of which are unpaved; the limited road network has curbed the penetration of tourism into many village communities, especially those of the highlands.

The Dominican economy is characterized by high-energy costs, based on local hydroelectric (52.2 per cent) and imported diesel (47.8 per cent), though the potential for other energy sources (micro-hydro, geothermal, and so on) is substantial (Flomenhoeft 2003, pers. com.; IMF 2000; Roberts 1985). Tourism (EC\$112.3 million), manufacturing (EC\$65.1 million), banana exports (EC\$38.9 million), and an offshore services sector ('economic citizenship', off-shore banking, and internet gaming) (EC\$9.71 million) are the largest contributions to GDP (Dominica budget report 1999). Inflation has averaged a moderate 2 per cent per year and the EC dollar conversion is pegged (EC\$2.7 = US\$1). Economic growth is low (0.9 per cent annual) and outstanding debts are high in relation to other island states

in the Eastern Caribbean, representing 65 per cent of GDP, while debt servicing accounts for 17 per cent of the government's budget (Dominica budget report 1999).

Dominica's economy is highly vulnerable to global market fluctuations, as well as to severe weather events such as hurricanes. The export economy is in turmoil due to World Trade Organization (WTO) rulings against the colonial preference system of the United Kingdom (Dominica's former colonial ruler). As a result, the trade balance has fallen from EC\$-142.3 millions in 1995 to EC\$-185.6 millions in 1999.

In contrast, the tourism sector has substantially increased in recent years. Increasing arrivals have been drawn by government initiatives, foreign aid lenders, the efforts of enterprising Dominican and foreign private investors, and multinational cruise conglomerates foreign aid, which have sought to take advantage of increasing global tourism demand. In raw terms, Dominica's cruise tourism visitors (202 003) nearly increased 300 per cent in the past eight years, while stay-over visits (73 506) have increased nearly 100 per cent over the same period; primarily from other Caribbean Nations (60 per cent), the US (20 per cent), and Europe (16 per cent) (DTR 1999). Average stay-over visits were a mean of 9 days, with a mode of 4-7 days (DTR 1999). The island had 867 rooms in 1999, 563 rooms in hotels, and the remainder in family-owned guesthouses and cottages. A relatively high (56) percentage of tourists stay in private residences. Sixty-nine per cent of Dominica's tourists arrive by air, the majority landing at Melville Hall (82 per cent) in the Northeast, with smaller 'island-hopper' planes arriving to Canefield airport, just North of Roseau. Dominica relies on trans-Atlantic flights, as wind direction and mountainous approaches mean that neither airport is able to accept international jet arrivals. Several attempts have been made to finance an international jet airport, although this is seen as unfeasible by international lending institutions (IMF 2000). The island has two cruise ship berths, one in Roseau (98 per cent of cruise arrivals) and another in Portsmouth. A small number of Caribbean resident tourists access the island via ferry from Guadeloupe, Martinique and Marie-Gallant.

Time constraints limit cruise-ship visitations inland, as many tourists are unwilling to risk an untimely return to their ship. Most visits are thus concentrated at a small number of intensively used coast and waterfall sites. While independent vendors of souvenirs, crafts and refreshments have established themselves along 'tourism corridors' between these sites, vendors at the primary site parking lots (national parks etc.) are highly regulated by the National Development Corporation (NDC), a public organization responsible for tourism management. Meanwhile, the NDC has made attempts at 'community tourism', assigning the management of peripheral site kiosks to various village councils. These have been met with mixed

success, as they are subject to the mercurial strengths and weaknesses of village politics (Thurlow 2002).

ISLAND NATURAL HISTORY AND VULNERABILITIES TO TOURISM

Dominica's rich flora includes 155 families, 672 genera and 1 226 species of vascular plants including 11 endemic species such *Sabinea carinalis*, the national flower – the island has the most diverse wildlife of all small Eastern Caribbean islands. All faunal groups are present, with birds and bats species particularly abundant. Two endemic parrot species, the imperial parrot or 'Sisserou' (*Amazona imperialis*) and the red-neck parrot 'Jaco' (*Amazona arausiaca*) are both considered threatened and are specially protected under Dominican law. Extensive plantations were never as pervasive on Dominica as other islands, nor has the island been targeted for large hotel or enclave resort construction; as a result, natural vegetation still dominates 65 per cent of the landmass. Biome classifications from the 1940s (elfin-montane, canopy rain-forest, dry littoral forest, coastal shrub) have remained largely relevant, with rain forest still covering 42.5 per cent of the total surface (DNBSAP 2002; Hodge 1943). However, fragmentation and reduction of forest area still generate adverse effects on wildlife habitat, water quality and quantity, and soil retention. Biodiversity loss and environmental damage are most evident in areas with concentrated human activity, such as estuaries and near-shore areas. The invasion of the lemon grass *Cymbopogon citratus*, coupled with widespread burning, has halted succession over large areas, especially in the dry littoral and coastal forests, and where soils are disturbed by erosion or construction of housing, hotels and tourism facilities. Colonization thus presents an acute threat to island biodiversity for over 50 per cent of the land area (Patterson 2001).

The Lesser Antilles chain is distinguished ecologically and topographically by its volcanic origin, in contrast to the uplifted limestone karsts that forms most Caribbean islands. Dominica has one of the highest concentrations of active volcanoes in the world (8 in only 751km²), with harm to island residents predicted within the next hundred years (Honychurch 2001; Shepard et al 2001). However, the most common and historically most significant natural hazards in Dominica have been tropical storms and hurricanes. As was well-documented following storms Hugo and Lenny, hurricanes can cause accelerated erosion to coastlines, and can damage physical features with high amenity values, such beaches and reefs. The island's human population (Lugo et al 1983, p. 202), agricultural production (Grossman 1998), terrestrial biota (CCA 1991), and reefs

(Hughes 1994; Wilkenson 2000) are seriously impacted approximately every 15 years. Some studies have shown that Dominica's forests are relatively resilient if structural composition is maintained, but as logging diminishes windbreak capacity, storms can spur changes in forest structure, species composition, and increases in forest gap sizes (Lugo et al 1983). Hurricane readiness, and fear of increased susceptibility to severe storm damage (resulting from global warming) continues to be a broad public concern (B. M. John 2001, Dominica Environmental Coordinating Unit, pers. com.), but until recently no disaster preparation planning had been developed (Honychurch 1995a, p. 270; Ward 1980, p. 357.).

Tourism-driven development has had unintended consequences for Dominica. The island's volcanic origins attract tourists to the 'boiling' lake, mineral baths, and 'champagne' scuba diving while the rainforest is prized for bird watching and extensive hiking trails. Much of the island is categorized at high (37 per cent) and moderately high (20 per cent) erosion risk (DNBSAP 2002); more than EC\$316,000 annually is spent clearing landslides from roads (CCA 1991). Damage along tourism-dedicated trails is ongoing, and shoreline tourism infrastructure is particularly susceptible. Constructions of harbors, marinas, airports and hotels have had particularly severe environmental impacts for islands with narrow coastal shelves such as Dominica's (Widfeldt 1996; Wilkinson 2000). While rapid coastal drops-off make the island popular with dive tourists, corals and other sea life are limited to near-shore depths, and are thus more vulnerable to effluent discharges. With some areas of the island receiving 400 inches of rain annually, high discharge levels of eroded sediments, toxins and untreated sewage has caused visibly apparent damage (Christian 1992). One of the primary impacts to local marine biodiversity is quarrying for concrete sand (the majority going to tourism infrastructure); moreover, measures to protect that infrastructure (for example, modifications of river groins, retaining wall and sea wall structures) have caused severe erosion to beach and recreation areas such as Bell Hall and Douglas Bay (Burnett 2001, pers. com.; DNBSAP 2002). The anthropogenic effect of draining estuaries and wetlands for hotels (for example, Cabrits freshwater wetland) has changed the ecology of several areas by varying salinity and affecting nursery and refuge sites for several species.

ISLAND RACE, COLOR, CLASS, AND ETHNO-CULTURAL ORIENTATIONS

The social and environmental processes occurring throughout the history an area impel the degree to which those groups have had authority and

hegemony, thus influencing the empowerment or disempowerment of stakeholders (Blakie and Brookfield 1987). Thus, distinct political, racial, and cultural groups have arisen over time in Dominica, controlling access to resources, and the way they are used. A contemporary tendency is to view tourism as the great social equalizer, presenting win-win scenarios in which cultural differences are seen as positive attributes rather than sources of potential conflict. Such optimism obscures subtle, widespread, and pervasive issues that influence tourism development trajectories (Duffy 2001). Failure to consider difficult historical realities (imperialism, slavery, ongoing racism, among others) in Dominica's collective experience risks misunderstanding current power relations, and preempts opportunities for more equitable future outcomes.

The Caribbean has been a site of human settlement for over 4 000 years. Between 3000 B.C.E. to 400 B.C.E. the Ortoroid people controlled the area, followed by the Arawak tribes. From 1400 A.D. onward, the Kalinagos, or Carib Indians controlled the area (Honychurch 1995a, pp. 15–8). Aided by the rugged island terrain and vegetation, Kalinagos held off colonizers from the island for 300 years after European 'discovery' (Campbell 2001). With the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748) Britain and France agreed to leave the island to the Amerindians. Yet foreign aggressors continued to arrive, and by 1760 most Caribs had been driven to a portion of the Northeast coast (Boromé 1972; Campbell 2002). Three more disputes between France and Britain between 1756 and 1783 volleyed possession of the island between the two colonial powers. The treaty of Versailles (1783) assigned Britain final possession, but language (English and French-Creole), bureaucratic formations, and social customs evidence the island's mixed colonial history.

While much of Dominica's land-area was deemed unsuitable for plantations due to topography or poor soil fertility, like other plantation-based colonial societies, the island's economy was formed around inexpensive African slave labor, a socioeconomic system that only ended with emancipation in 1834. The period of British domination marked an explosion in the Caribbean slave trade, and in the five years following the Seven Year's war alone, over 41 000 enslaved West Africans were brought to the island especially for sugar plantations (Rogoziniski 1992, pp. 122–4). However, many escaped to the forested mountains and by 1785, thirteen self-sufficient subsistence communities of runaway slaves (called maroons) had formed in the highlands (Honychurch 1995b). This self-sufficient ethic, coupled with loyalty conflicts between maroon and plantation communities, contributed to a tendency of some villages to remain isolated from the island's economy over time, and provides some explanation as to why so many today remain physically and economically removed from tourism as a marketplace.

When the slave trade ended in 1834 and over 14 000 slaves were freed, many took up legal smallholdings, or squatted on Crown lands. Unlike other Caribbean islands, a portion of land (deemed less suitable for agriculture) was placed in land-trust for the Caribs in 1860, although the Carib Territory was not officially established until 1903. This territory includes 1 480 hectares on the eastern mountains, under authority of the Carib chief. The territory maintains a system of communal land tenure that has existed since pre-Columbian times and is probably the only substantial remnant of communal land in the region today (Dominica Environmental Profile 1991). In contrast, large estates outside Carib Territory have been divided and sold since independence in 1978; the increasing demand for land has resulted in government distribution of Crown lands to farmers. Nevertheless, forest encroachment is prevalent, though shifting cultivation was prohibited in 1946. Illicit land occupation is still a source of dispute for those maintaining subsistence gardens in the forest, but also for permission to occupy the 'queen's chain' (coastline currently held by the government), which is widely seen as a politicized issue (J. Tonge 2001, Planning Division, pers. com.).

The use of the force, the exercise of colonial status, and social custom largely maintained social stratification in Dominica prior to 1823. Thereafter force equilibrium shifted, and postcolonial power was transferred to non-ruling, non-economic elites to a greater degree than on other Caribbean islands (Green 1995). The co-existence of peasant-enclave (quasi or non-market), and plantation (market) modes of production in Dominica influenced the degree of cultural and racial integration. This is not suggesting that racial differentiation is absent in contemporary Dominica. Racial disparities in landholding persist into the present day (Trouillot 1988). Differentiation in village social structure contrasts the social stability of the longstanding 'peasant ridge villages' with the 'post-plantation valley villages', which suggests that historical patterns of race and class continue to influence contemporary economic development, including tourism (Honychurch 2001).

At the national level, debates of tourism development frequently polarize around class differences, especially the broad rift between Afro-Creoles elites and poor. The former actors advocate specialization, high standards, and licensing while the latter tend to lobby for increased basic employment and improvement of community level coordination to bring tourism enterprises to villages (Thurlow 2002). Caribbean societies exhibit disparities among islanders and foreigners, currently driving many racial or nationalist aspects of landholding and investment. Class and empowerment issues have also focalized on race, prominent examples that affected tourism development are events associated with the Black Power Movement in the

1970s. Coupled with the conflict in Grenada, disputes promoted an international perception of political instability that limited tourism development in Dominica for more than a decade.

POLITICAL ECOLOGY AT THREE SCALES: DOMESTIC, TRANS-NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL DYNAMICS

The description of economic, ecological, and social conditions outlined in the previous sections provide us with the background needed to examine the dynamics of political ecology of tourism in Dominica at three different scales: the domestic scale, which refers to interactions between Dominican actors within the borders of Dominica, the trans-national scale, which refers to dynamics among Dominican and foreign actors, and the international scale, which refers to issues at the interface between Dominican national, foreign, and global policy. Within this section, a set of relevant examples is developed to explain the dynamics at each scale.

Domestic Scale Dynamics I: Appropriation of Value from the Carib Territory

The current tourism system of visits to the Carib territory illustrates a common paradox within tourism. Dominica's poorest community (de Albuquerque and McElroy 1999; PAHO 1999), is itself a tourist attraction, and contributes to the distinctive images promoted by the island. Meanwhile, potential Carib guides, vendors, and others are dissociated from opportunities of equitable tourism earnings. The great majority of tourists to the territory are stay-over visitors who lodge outside of the territory and arrange visits through hotel tour operators, or with city taxis. Cruise ship visitors purchase guide and transport services from cruise ship franchises, or negotiate arrangements on the dock, paying around US\$60 for a 6-hour tour. No entry fee to the territory is assessed to tourists or tour companies; moreover, taxi drivers, tour guides, and Carib vendors interviewed estimate the average visitor spends less than EC\$1.50 while visiting the territory.

Tourism actors appropriate economic value of indigenous heritage primarily through commodity, amenity, and marketing values (Lal and Young 2000; Zeppel 2000). The primary commodity value is through souvenirs, mainly the sale of handicrafts such as baskets woven of the *larouma reed*, or bags made of *heliconia* leaves. Traditional weaving is a cultural remnant of a social system which centered on fishing as the primary Carib economic production; when commodities were held in collective, and personal property and property rights were not culturally embedded in Carib

society (Honychurch 1995b). When a designation in the 1860s relegated the Carib territory to an area of particularly dangerous sea-access, primary economic production shifted to increasingly individual pursuits: agriculture, forestry, and (since the 1980s) tourism. As established patterns of economic production have altered over time, respondents report delayed, but concurrent changes in culturally embedded forms of social control (i.e., aspects of dispute resolution, division of labor, ritual practice, the centrality of elders in the community, and overall wealth distribution) (Lipsanen 2001). Meanwhile, education, employment, and logistics place territory residents at the bottom of the occupational hierarchies in each sector (de Albuquerque and Mc Elroy 1999), suggesting limits on the advancement opportunities offered by economic transition of this form. Barring attention for these conditions, net social costs may outweigh net social benefits in future growth of the tourism industry.

With regard to amenity values associated with Carib territory tourism, such as hiking, fishing, or access to specific sites on territory land, no fees are currently assessed. Some have questioned the practicality of instituting such fees, citing fear of discouraging tourism visitation. Meanwhile, tourist access to the territory brings costs to local residents that are more difficult to articulate in terms of dollar value (for example, photographing residents without permission). As one young respondent explained, he didn't want to be compensated by money, but instead expressed the desired compensation using the word 'respect'.

Marketing values (that is, the use of images to promote sales) are a third means of appropriating economic value from the territory. From web pages to tourism investment brochures, Carib images are more likely to be found promoting the entire island rather than the territory itself. Images of Caribs have been present since the first representations of tourism on the island, in 'decent dress' (1960s), shirtless, with drums and grass skirts (1970s), or in reproduction of traditional dance costume (1980s). The rapid shifts in such portrayals illustrate a primary challenge to Caribs: their images are appropriated, made 'trendy', and promoted, yet their social status remains politically and socially disempowered and far removed from the active tourism marketplace.

There are many difficulties to articulating a distinctly Carib vision for the territory and integrating Carib knowledge in tourism development. Many Caribs perceive conservation and tourist efforts as uncoupled in current efforts, and programs initiated by non-Caribs all too frequently fail to adequately reflect a sense of 'Caribness' (Joseph 2001, Carib Chief, pers. com.). This sentiment is reflected by comments in regards to the Caribbean Development Bank-funded 'Carib model village' constructed during the interview period: 'If this is a Carib place, why did they get men from Roseau

to build it? . . . It is just political corruption, wasting money'. Another respondent referred to the fact that involvement in the Carib village was itself a politicized process, citing the exclusive involvement of certain individuals over others. The institution of 'standards' (limiting the market to select producers) was seen to conflict with communal ideals: 'This village won't be Carib, it is just a place for a few families . . . only some get to participate'. Concerns have been expressed with regards to the extent that non-Carib, or non-Dominican development can ever meet the full extent of the culturally relevant needs of the territory population.

Concomitant with changes in the market values already mentioned, discontinuities among economic, social, and ecological cycles have also brought about declines in the stocks of non-marketed forms of capital in the Carib Territory. Natural capital such as ecosystem goods and services (Costanza et al. 1997) and cultural capital, understood as the set of attitudes, practices and beliefs that are fundamental to the functioning of a particular society's system of values and customs (Throsby 1999), are in decline. Combined, they support territory residents and continued tourism visitation alike, yet some losses can be directly traced to tourism developments.

The decline of the stock of natural capital in the territory is especially apparent in the prevalence of bare and compacted soil, and changes in the vegetation patterns in areas subjected to anthropogenic stress. Ecosystem services such as soil formation and retention, water supply and regulation, habitat and genetic resources, are particularly threatened due to intensive agriculture, forest burning, and modifications of riparian areas in the territory. The most common explanation is that the Caribs tribe members are not able to hold land title to what is considered collective land property. To be more explicit, the disruption of the traditional resource management systems and the breakdown of community-based institutions have altered group boundaries and organizations that regulate the use of the ecosystem goods and services. This has disrupted those social functions which previously served as monitoring activities, conflict resolution capabilities, and which reinforced both trust between the members, and the rules and norms that regulated resource uses. In the communal lands of the Carib Territory this most typically occurs when one land tenant leaves the land for a period and others immediately assume the use of it. Rapid tenure turnover eliminates most of the immediate incentives to following crop rotation calendars, corresponding fallow periods, or costly soil conservation measures. Communal lands cannot be used as collateral for loans, and as education and occupation levels are low with respect to other Dominicans (Pezeron 1993), this compounds the difficulty of securing capital for land improvements or other investments.

Changes associated with tourism development may prove to have devastating effects on natural capital stocks, setting the ecosystem on an irreversible trajectory, especially when fire is employed for forest clearance and land use includes soil and vegetation disturbance. Roads are frequent vectors for such changes, and the first asphalted road to be cut through the territory (1970) was no exception. Occurring simultaneously with forest and riparian area removal, the soil that formed the base of the paved area was brought from other areas of the island. According to territory residents, this soil brought with it seeds for two particularly persistent grasses that were not present in the reserve prior to the road. When burning (a traditional means of controlling small areas of bush) was regularly applied to the grasses, winds frequently spread the fires out of control, while the roots of the grasses persisted.

Large physical infrastructure projects designed to assist tourism access are often not accompanied by ecological or social contingency plans to deal with externalities. Respondents to a National Biodiversity Strategy and Planning (NBSP) consultation reported widespread losses of species abundance and diversity in territory gardens and in the wild. The loss of trees and riparian vegetation have precipitated a loss of streams, especially in the last 50 years, while discontinuation of government supported soil-conservation programs have greatly increased sediment run-offs to streams and coastal areas that support Carib fisheries. The changes noted in the NBSP consultations can be seen as evidence that Carib social institutions are failing and the current configuration of the Carib Territory representation in the Government of Dominica is inadequate to preserve their natural and cultural patrimony.

Moreover, research conducted by the Environmental Coordinating Unit suggests that traditional knowledge bases are declining especially among Carib youth. Parents report interest in cultural traditions such as Carib dance, language, or craft making is atypical among their children. Many youth express enthusiasm towards tour guiding careers, although most who do so will need to leave the territory to pursue their goals in Roseau or Portsmouth. When individuals leave the territory to seek work elsewhere, human capital losses are joined with a loss of cultural capital. Such cumulative effects jeopardize traditional knowledge and environmental literacy of the Carib population, further endangering the territory's ecosystem goods and services. Environmental literacy is still higher among Caribs than their Afro-Creole counterparts (Honychurch 2001), generating differences in the perception and valuation of ecosystem goods and services between the two groups (Rodriguez et al. 2003). Unfortunately, despite high awareness for disappearing species and changes to landscape and ecology, formal education rates are lower for Caribs than any other group in Dominica (de Albuquerque

and McElroy 1999) and underscore the concurrent need to control human capital losses and disparities, among ecological and cultural concerns.

The current structure of power in the Carib Territory and the configuration of indigenous and governmental institutions are insufficient to deal with the profound and difficult problems facing the territory. A Carib chief, a parliamentary representative and the Carib council serve the primary governing bodies of the territory although the Government of Dominica 'is responsible for the overall planning and development of the Carib reserve' (Carib Reserve Act). Unfortunately, with exception of occasional visits from agriculture extension officers, national assistance in resource management is not provided from outside the reserve. The Carib territory is considered outside the jurisdiction of the Forest Service, and exceptionally few environmental officers, or enforcement visit the territory.

The process by which economic, public, and indigenous institutions collectively deal with tensions between individual and communal needs, will eventually also influence the environmental impact of tourism on the territory. The lack of environmental, forestry, siviculture, and waste collection/treatment services, is a large barrier to controlling the impacts of an expanded tourist visitation to the territory, and is a barrier to increasing tourism returns to one of the poorest areas of the country that also has real economic potential. Solid waste collection for toxics and non-degradable is inadequate to non-existent. When profits accrue, they do so to non-Caribs, while the territory is left to bear the impact costs to natural and cultural capital without the support of government services. An effective tourism policy for the Commonwealth of Dominica depends on its ability to include effective investment in the Carib territory as an asset, and to adapt policies for the needs of a communal and culturally sovereign part of the country. Effective institutions operating on a culturally relevant means for the Caribs will preserve for future generations of residents and visitors the Carib culture as a cultural heritage asset.

Domestic Scale Dynamics II: Gender, Social Networks and Land-Tenure

It has been estimated that less than 240 km² (32 per cent) is under cultivation or inhabited (Trouillot 1988), most of which is not considered suitable for enclave tourism development. The island exhibits a combination of private and commonly held tenures, which contributes to asymmetrical political ecology outcomes. The costs and benefits of tourism impacts on shared or public lands are not effectively accounted for, in part because of the tendency for profits to accrue to individuals and costs to accrue to communities. Further, as tourism presents opportunities of immediate profits coupled with delayed or latent costs, this predisposes areas with high land tenure turnover

to problems of intergenerational distribution. In this way, socio-political hierarchies are sustained that promote inequity in the distribution of resources and power and alter existing social systems, including smallholders associations and gender-based institutions. In this section we briefly explore the role of social capital, defined as the norms and networks that facilitate collective action (Woolcock 2001), as it relates to land-tenure, smallholder involvements in new tourism enterprises, and gender divisions of the tourism labor pool.

Social capital is a broad concept that is still in process of development and formalization. Current considerations of social capital indicators exhibit site-dependency, and thus allow for a collection of variables, which describe rates of social capital (Grootaert and van Bastelaer 2002; Isham et al. 2002). Some proxy variables for social capital refer to the existence of associations in the community, the participation rate of group members, and the occurrence of leadership. The pervasive women's networks can be seen as evidencing strong social capital in Dominica. They promote positive externalities (Collier 2002) as a consequence of social interactions: information sharing about the behavior of others, about the environment and resources, and mainly the promotion of collective action. Nevertheless, debates (as to whether or not those forms of association effectively guide the creation of social capital) are still open as membership and participation can take different forms.

Social capital contributes to wealth distribution and effective management of both land and sea resources on Dominica. The treatment of common property as it relates to daily life is not limited to the past, nor is it exclusive to the Carib population. It is pervasive in contemporary life across the island, and contributes to social cohesion and equitable distribution of resources. For example, daily fish harvests in Soufriere are announced by a call blown on a conch shell. All who assist with bringing in the bay net bring home fish, in an array of non-written norms where group boundaries and quotas are well defined. Social networks and norms also play a part in smallholdings, which are prevalent as national land redistribution efforts broke up most large estates, and a French historical precedent divides land equally among all heirs of a deceased person. Thus today, Dominica's land-tenure scenario is dominated by a large number of smallholders, especially banana farmers, which have demonstrated a clear disposition to work among well-organized collectives. Agriculture networks have improved information sharing, income distribution, informal lending opportunities, and cooperative labor in rural areas (Grossman 1998). These factors have strengthened the tendency of smallholders to enter new marketplaces, including that of tourism, and underscore the importance of social networks in Dominica.

The island's West-African roots of the Afro-Creole culture are apparent in the strength of Dominica's matriarchy. Women's networks have been particularly active in the power and mobilization of the agriculture hucksters union, and many small businesses and cooperatives are owned and managed by women (Grossman 2000). The success or failure of many smallholder ventures on the island has been determined by the strength of the women's network behind it. Large-scale foreign financiers and aid organizations, in contrast, typify most tourism development on the island. These tend to operate among networks that are institutionalized, established, and apparent, and thus more likely to cooperate with outwardly visible groups of entrepreneurs or lobbyists. In Dominica, these are considered exclusive cohorts, presenting a challenge for the inclusion of women, communities, and smallholders in tourism development.

Gender and social position regularly influence the range of attainable employment, as well as salary levels and management responsibility (Davidson, Jones and Schellhorn 2001). Tourism is not exceptional in this sense – women typically fill the lowest paying service jobs such as housekeepers, cooks, hotel reception, etc.. Such jobs are unlikely to be unionized in Dominica; even organizations such as the Taxi Drivers Association or the Hotel Owners Association are unable (or perhaps unwilling) to support reform or improvement of working conditions. While tourism opportunities increase formal employment opportunities for some, domestic and social obligations for working women do not decline (Bolles 1997; Davidson, Jones and Schellhorn 2001; Momsen 1994). In 1991, women headed 36.6 per cent of all Dominican households, the vast majority of which are single-parent homes (PAHO 2001). While reliable statistics are not available, respondents suggest that these women routinely work double shifts while also caring for their families. Thus, the combined burden for those who maintain households (or at least childcare) in addition to as many as three jobs may reduce well-being, rather than improve it (Davidson, Jones and Schellhorn 2002; Moser 1993). This has strong implications for the effects that growing tourism might have on the social structure and domestic life of Dominicans, and clearly demonstrates that women have borne (and will continue to do so, barring reforms) a disproportionate share of resulting social costs.

Trans-National Scale Dynamics I: Formal Policies and Informal Networks

Dominicans have a great deal of pride in their island culture, and a reverence for the natural forces and beauty of the island that borders on spirituality (Honychurch, 1988). Self-sufficiency, well-being and cultural identity are

characters particularly strong in Dominican culture (R. Lawrence 2001, Chief Cultural Officer, pers. com.). Social interactions related to these characters have reinforced the abilities of small, unaffiliated entrepreneurs to enter the tourism market, and have also upheld the ability of the island as a community to resist prospectively deleterious foreign-driven developments. One example is the (narrowly-avoided) Canadian BHP copper mine which would have affected 10 per cent of the island, and most all of the Carib territory, in return for 5 per cent of net profits (A. Martin 2001, Caribbean Conservation Association, pers. com.). In other words, Dominica's strong social capital networks have promoted collective actions, allowing weaker actors to withstand such external forces with regards to broad scale, environmentally destructive development. The successes of grass-roots initiatives highlight the importance of maintaining the networks and social cohesion in the future. Further, this point also applies to future orientations of foreign aid and foreign tourism investments. A critical degree of consonance with Dominican social networks and domestic life is necessary for projects to avoid high transaction costs and the insufficient social embedding that promotes project failure.

Environmental ethics have played a quiet, but nevertheless present aspect of national policy. Dominica's current major political associations are the United Workers Party (UWP), the Freedom Party (DFP), and the Labor Party (DLP). A coalition between the DFP and DLP helped to elect Pierre Charles (DLP) as Prime Minister in 2001. Some of this cooperation has been attributed to shared environmental priorities, employment promotion plans, and economic development issues, common to both parties' agendas, and central to many current government policies. Evidence that social institutions on the island are more effective than others in the Caribbean is most clearly reflected in the high proportion of the island still under forest cover, and efforts on the part of the government to raise island awareness for global issues such as climate change. Some proponents of ecotourism enterprises argue that public policy should not deviate from a national policy of conservation and environmental controls, highlighting the importance of non-market ecosystem services, such as clean air and water. Still, a majority of Dominican citizens might believe that clean water is not enough. Such divisive issues leave the island's polity fragmented, limiting efforts to articulate a shared vision.

Trans-National Scale Dynamics II: Tourism Multipliers and Foreign Ownership

Tourism developing is often promoted by foreign investments based on vigorous publicity, infrastructure development, and tax cuts (Apostopolous

and Gayle 2002). The Caribbean as a whole has been cited as the most tourism-dependent area in the world (Gayle and Goodrich 1993). Tourism visits to Dominica remain relatively low, and the challenges to maintaining a diversified economy are significant.

Dominica (as other small island states) is under great pressure from an increasingly globalized economy. Historically, the country has made few efforts towards developing a self-supported economy (Mandle 1996); imports currently compensate for the limited ability of the island economy to accommodate diverse demands. Localization policies (minimizing transport and encourage economic diversification) have been suggested (Norberg-Hodge 1996). Nevertheless, a narrow resource base and physical isolation limits Dominica's ability to exclusively supply the developing tourism sector. This is not uncommon among island nations, even when they possess great natural wealth, they must promote themselves to the world, often competing with other destinations that provide similar experiences at lower prices. Moreover, they must be able to provide the high level of amenities to which tourists from the industrialized countries have become habituated.

The cruise tourism industry highlights an example of excessive foreign ownership and vertical integration of multinational corporations. Apart from potable water, which the ships load from Dominica, cruise tourism purchases few local products. Many challenges exist to link tourism to local agricultural production (Belisle 1984; Momsen 1998), not the least of which are agreements that bind the cruise ships to buy products before departure in Florida (G. Thomas 2001, Dominica Export Import Agency General Manager, pers. com.). Thus, a banana consumed by a cruise ship tourist while whale watching in Dominica is likely to have been grown in South America, transported to Florida, and brought into Dominican waters for consumption. Another related issue is that cruise lines must negotiate permission to dump waste and wastewater on Caribbean islands, as part of the annual visitation contracts. Because individual islands rely on cruise tourism to generate foreign exchange and rectify trade imbalances, island negotiation positions are weakened (G. Thomas 2001, Dominica Export Import Agency General Manager, pers. com.). This is especially the case when it is publicly perceived that cruise companies are threatening reduced visitation in response. Efforts for island destinations to bargain collectively (in order to negotiate more favorable trade agreements, or controls or compensation on tourism impacts) have been unsuccessful, and small island nations remain divided.

Partly because of their smaller size and relative isolation, small island states tend to have more open economies than their larger continental counterparts. Increased tourism volumes may generate trade imbalances, as they attempt to satisfy the demands of a tourist population with foreign

consumptive habits, importing products from food to modern electronic devices, developing costly infrastructure improvements, and accepting profit repatriation in exchange for foreign investment (Widfeldt 1996). Therefore, although tourist volumes may grow, financial benefits to host countries may decline. The tourist multiplier effect – the extent to which funds spent by foreign visitors continue to be re-spent within local economies – is well documented in the literature (Bull 1991; Lea 1988; Lundberg 1995; Saleem 1994). Tourists in Dominica spend less than their counterparts on more developed islands and consume fewer imports (Weaver 1991). This means that for each tourist dollar spent locally, a relatively smaller proportion leaves the country to buy foreign goods, thereby contributing more to the local economy. This effect has been enhanced by the high degree of domestic ownership in the tourism industry. As late as 1991, Dominican investors directly controlled 62 per cent of local hotel assets and shared management of an additional 19 per cent (Weaver 1991). However, evidence suggests this situation has changed substantially since 1995, with a larger share of new tourism profits being expatriated by either foreign owners or locals investing abroad (Cater 1996; Patterson et al. in press).

Trans-National Scale Dynamics III: Incentives, Risk, and Local Communities

Dominica is characterized by very steep and rugged terrain, covered by natural forest. The extreme topography is a major constraint to development, because approximately 70 per cent of the island surface is unsuitable for human settlements and agriculture due to erosion risks, water logging or poor soil quality. Historically, the bulk of Dominican settlements have been limited to a narrow coastal belt with generally flatter land. However, much of the current development (especially of tourism facilities) is taking place in coastal areas vulnerable to storms and erosion, or in relatively flat but ecologically fragile riparian areas. Increased urbanization has changed the composition and volume of solid and liquid wastes, with subsequent negative environmental impacts. Modern waste collection, treatment and disposal systems are being established, but these have yet to significantly mitigate the impacts of human waste on coastal areas (Christian 1992).

Vulnerabilities to hurricanes, flooding, or bank instability are among a set of risk factors which frequently escape thorough evaluation in the development feasibility studies performed by foreign professionals. In contrast Caribbean residents, who have witnessed the impacts of severe natural disturbance events over the past decades, are risk averse and tend to view ambitious tourism developments as foolhardy, or motivated merely by short-term profit. One respondent pointed out that many foreign-spurred

developments benefit from tax holidays and foreign-aid dollars: 'Only a fool would build there, they just want the profit for the first years and the insurance money when it falls'.

Many infrastructure ventures are developed within agreements to cede ownership from foreign investors to the Dominican government after 5 years. Not surprisingly, many structures begin to express a high level of deterioration and incur high maintenance costs thereafter. For hotels over five bedrooms, profits for the first 20 years are tax-free in Dominica, and a broad range of additional tax exemptions cover building materials, furniture and equipment. Foreign investors are allowed to repatriate 100 per cent of profits and receive special treatment in land acquisition, such as exemptions from licensing fees, and government assistance in expediting the land sales (Dominica Investment Information Checklist, NDC 1999). The 'economic citizenship' program offers benefits of overseas tax shelters and income tax exemptions. While all these benefits are justified in order to promote employment opportunities for Dominicans, foreign ventures usually use resident work permit grants to fill higher paying mid- and upper-level management positions with foreign labor.

When it comes to interaction with foreign counterparts, many community, government and local non-governmental representatives have extensive experience. Yet all too frequently, this amounts to personally witnessing discrepancies between what is planned and promised by foreign actors, and what results. Once initiated, development projects may encounter skepticism from local actors who, despite incentives or intentions to include local enterprise, thus resist vesting themselves personally in broad-scale foreign initiated development. Similar difficulty can be encountered while attempting to include local participation in foreign initiated studies, conservation, or research efforts. Local community members may view efforts as quixotic, while their reactions register with foreign planners as apathetic host community response. This poses a genuine challenge to numerous initiatives targeting 'local community involvement' in tourism enterprise, research or conservation efforts (Young and Eristheé 2002).

International Scale Dynamics I: Dominica in International Policy Arenas

Coincident with forces at domestic, and trans-national scales, international events affect tourism dynamics on the island. In the international policy arena, Dominica is vulnerable to many pressures and conflicts. The case of Dominica's voting position on the International Whaling Commission (IWC) illustrates the interrelatedness between national, and international politics, and the tourism industry.

The IWC includes 35 countries, including 6 nations members of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). World attention has focused on the IWC annual meetings since OECS nations unexpectedly proposed in 1998 a resolution to resume coastal whaling of species not present in Caribbean waters. International media concurrently reported Japanese donations of extensive fisheries complexes. Internationally, a portion of public impression registered that Dominica and other poor island nations had been 'bought off' by wealthy whaling nations, while others argued that Dominica's efforts to maintain a diversified economy logically required investing and economic assistance from foreign sources. Locally, each year the IWC votes, the island is effectively polarized among economical and ethical lines, with government making the final call. Thus, one portion of the population, witnessing decline of island coastal fisheries, cites the need for economic assistance from whatever sources offered. Others, noting increasing receipts from the whale-watching industry, and the growing perception of Dominica as 'the nature island of the Caribbean', express fears of boycott, tourism cancellations, and layoffs. These are not unfounded concerns, as leading up to the 2001 vote (when Dominica voted to lift a whaling ban), international environmental organizations appealed to sentiments of tourism markets in Europe and the U.S., calling for an island-wide boycott. Minor impact on island visitation resulted (C. Armour 2003, Anchorage Hotel, pers. com.).

The official government position considers whaling to be an issue of sovereignty and political expediency. As one policy maker expressed, 'Dominica as a country, does not vote with or for anybody. Evidence is presented, and decisions made'. From this point of view, attempts to sway national governing strategy through fisheries aid or tourism boycotts are akin to denying the government the right to pursue its best national interest, as well as the right to use the best scientific evidence to make decisions. Nevertheless, some have expressed reservations that the island was prepared to deal with the scientific uncertainty surrounding sustainability questions; they also voiced discomfort at the idea that small island states would effectively decide such issues for the rest of the world. Meanwhile, other Dominicans consider that the right of international influence should be defended, arguing that environmental choices taken by other countries affect small island nations disproportionately (i.e., global warming).

The way in which small island states comport themselves in international policy deliberations reflects the strength of various economic lobbies, social groups and the effectiveness of civil democracy. However, in Dominica a referendum on a topic such as the IWC vote is unlikely to occur, due to perceived education and knowledge gaps between elites and 'typical banana farmers'. This points out the difficulty in developing truly representative and

responsive public policy as many Dominican residents feel that decisions reached at the international level should reflect a shared national vision with respect to environment, society, and tourism development strategy.

CONCLUSIONS

Development has been slower and less dramatic on Dominica than other Caribbean islands. The importance of non-market assets and social cooperation remains central to the daily life of many residents. Long-standing cultural beliefs, social mechanisms and institutions have supported environmental quality and a strong sense of community. Human well-being is derived from a range of market and non-market goods and services, produced and protected by individual and collective actors. Certain components of a human-ecosystem support short-term production of assets, opportunities and relationships, while others support their long-term nature. Faced with such changes, any factors contributing to insular prosperity will depend on social and economic flexibility (Apostopolous and Gayle 2002). However, there is danger in structuring economies, societies or ecosystems around short-term goals such as reorganization and throughput, while sacrificing or ignoring factors that contribute to longer-term sustainability.

Such aspects of this arrangement are apparent in tourism development in its present form. In a capitalist market-driven economy, transactions favor values realized by the market, or through individual actors (for example, labor, property, or amenity values) over those represented by non-market, or socially collective attributes (for example, ecosystem services or domestic production), and profits which can be realized immediately take priority over assets which could support future generations (for example, topsoil loss and fishery exploitation). Government, particularly eager to stimulate employment opportunities, foreign exchange, aid and investment, may make additional offerings which due to inadequate planning, implementation or monitoring, prove to have unintended consequences for such societal-collective or non-market goods and services.

Another source of threat is associated with the degree to which Dominica and other Caribbean islands are sensitive to system-wide disturbances, and the manner in which risk and reward are understood and distributed. Broad-scale external disturbances test human-ecosystem resilience and their capacity to reorganize, while contributing to the demands that influence governmental decisions. These may be of natural (hurricanes, ENSO, climate change), or anthropogenic (shifting trade preferences, international laws, trends in tourism visitation, global recession) origins or a combination of both. Disorder and reorganization can be brought about by forces that are

severe and punctuated (as above), or persistent and pervasive (for example, tourism). While local-level costs are disproportionately borne by those least able to avoid them, Dominica is itself victim to repeated instances of 'capital flight', following international investor decisions. The country is thus faced with the challenge that seeking larger-scale solutions inevitably requires subjecting a larger proportion of the economy and society to global forces and instabilities.

A third source of threat emerges from interactions between the structure and function of formal (for example, laws, governmental units, enforcement) and informal (for example, cultural rules and norms, civic networks) social institutions. This chapter has cited several cases in which market mechanisms inherent in tourism development are at odds with social institutions that sustain non-market, collective values. Value is routinely appropriated from socially disenfranchised or marginal actors by more powerful actors, following historical patterns of wealth, political lobbies, and the contemporary and growing scale of globalized/foreign interest. These impacts can be direct – as more powerful actors directly appropriate land, labor, capital, or indirect – as tourism affects an ecosystem or community's ability to provide self-sufficient and sustainable levels of goods, services, and organization. This chapter has attempted to illustrate local Dominican perceptions of such exchanges, and outlined some of the barriers to overcoming them.

It bears repeating that the issues covered in this chapter are viewed as latent to many forms of analysis, and thus have received little prior attention. Issues which are viewed as 'too complex' are sometimes so because they are embedded in economic and social structures which uphold elite interests, are manifesting in areas or populations viewed as marginal, or because drawing attention to them involves challenging existing cultural, political, and economic arrangements. Accordingly, a political ecology perspective of tourism development in Dominica argues for the continued exposure and exploration of such examples. Thus acquired learning will better ensure the conservation of institutions and social mechanisms that take special account of aspects of natural, cultural, and economic patrimony that might otherwise be lost in efforts to develop the country's tourist industry.

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