

# Impacts and Conflicts Surrounding Dracula Park, Romania: The Role of Sustainable Tourism Principles

*Tazim Jamal and Aniela Tanase*

*Texas A&M University, College Station, Texas, USA*

Sustainable tourism principles are applied to a historical case study of tourism-related impacts and conflicts over Dracula Park and its proposed location in Sighisoara (Romania). Analysis of this large theme park project reveals a highly political landscape, with complex interdependencies attributable to a diversity of stakeholders and issues ranging in scale and scope from the local to the global. Cultural impacts are a significant problem with the proposed park. Local civic action, as well as other domestic and international NGOs, played key roles in opposing the proposed location adjacent to the medieval town and World Heritage site of Sighisoara. The study shows the benefit of integrating broader, global principles such as the Global Code of Ethics (World Tourism Organisation, 1997) with local-level principles to guide project development, evaluation and destination sustainability. In particular, the conflicts surrounding this project point to the importance of developing process principles that can facilitate cultural sustainability, by enabling those who stand to be most impacted by tourism to participate directly in development decision-making.

**Keywords:** sustainable tourism principles, cultural impacts, stakeholder conflicts, NGOs, Dracula Park, Romania

## Introduction

Post-communist Romania is emerging into a global marketplace and anticipates entry into the European Union in 2007. Tourism has been identified as one means for establishing a new national identity and strategic competitive advantage in the regional and international economy. Dracula Park (Romania) is a controversial theme park project initiated by the Romanian government and was intended to be located near the medieval town of Sighisoara, Transylvania. It encountered so much resistance from domestic and international stakeholders that construction, first scheduled to commence in 2002, was postponed until a new location was found near the capital city, Bucharest. An examination of the issues and conflicts encountered offers valuable insights to policy-makers, communities and NGOs. It reveals the importance of (1) identifying the many local to international stakeholders, and their interests and concerns, and (2) dealing with the intangible, often difficult to identify impacts on a people's culture and heritage.

Cultural sustainability was a key source of conflict in this project. Tourism planning includes identifying development-related principles, values and trade-offs, i.e. the level and types of impacts a destination's stakeholders might be willing to accept. In a complex domain where multiple stakeholders vie for

control over natural and cultural resources, difficult questions arise with respect to the politics of sustainability. Who determines what trade-offs a destination should make, and what risks it can assume in regard to the sustainability of its natural (ecological), physical (e.g. built), and socio-cultural resources? Who determines which principles are the 'right' ones to guide the sustainable development of destinations and projects like Dracula Park? The tourism industry? Local planners? The local people? Can one set of universal principles guide sustainable tourism? These are some of the questions addressed in this study.

It is argued here that if sustainability is to be a guiding paradigm in the tourism development domain, countries, destinations and projects like Dracula Park require an operational framework that can handle the local to global scale and scope of conflicts, issues and impacts, including more intangible cultural effects (Gunn, 2002; Hall & Lew, 1998). The framework has to be integrative and spatially comprehensive, inclusive of local community interests and able to account for broader-level regional, national and international influences. Substantive (content-related) as well as process-related principles are needed that enable stakeholders to have a meaningful say in the project, and work jointly to influence decision-making rather than act as adversaries (Jamal & Getz, 1995).

Following a description of the historical context of tourism development in Romania and an analysis of the issues and conflicts over the proposed park, global to local-level principles are applied to the impacts identified. This illustrates how macro-micro principles act as action-oriented guides to integrated planning. The final section elaborates on sustainability principles for setting and evaluating policies, and for garnering accountability and appropriate action from policy-makers, developers, NGOs, planners, communities and destination managers.

### **Tourism in Post-communist Romania: The Dracula Park Project**

Since its freedom from communist rule in 1989, Romania has sought to build a new self-image and position within the international community, drawing upon models of Western democracy and economic development. Its beautiful and varied landscapes contain a large variety of cultural attractions and historic places, as well as spas and health resorts: Bucharest the capital, the golden sands of the Black Sea Coast, the Danube Delta (a World Heritage site), the Carpathian Mountains, the famous painted monasteries from the regions of Moldavia and Bucovina, as well as several medieval cities and towns like Brasov, Cluj, Timisoara, Iasi, and Sighisoara. They represent a unique history, setting and folklore.<sup>1</sup> But international arrivals in the first post-communist decade show that Romania's tourism potential is under-realised (see Light, 2000; Light & Dumbraveanu, 1999; Turncock, 1990).<sup>2</sup> Its tourism revenues (\$500 million in 2000) are small compared to its neighbours Bulgaria (\$1 billion) and Hungary (\$2 billion) for the same year (Tomiuc, 2002). Lack of financing, expertise, and poor infrastructure pose formidable barriers to tourism development (Crick, 2002; Light & Phinnemore, 2001; Muresan & Smith, 1998). Under pressure to gain a foothold within a highly competitive, globalised marketplace, the newly emergent nation has had to seek creative ways to deal with its severe structural problems.<sup>3</sup> The government-sponsored project, Dracula Park, reflects these varied tensions. In

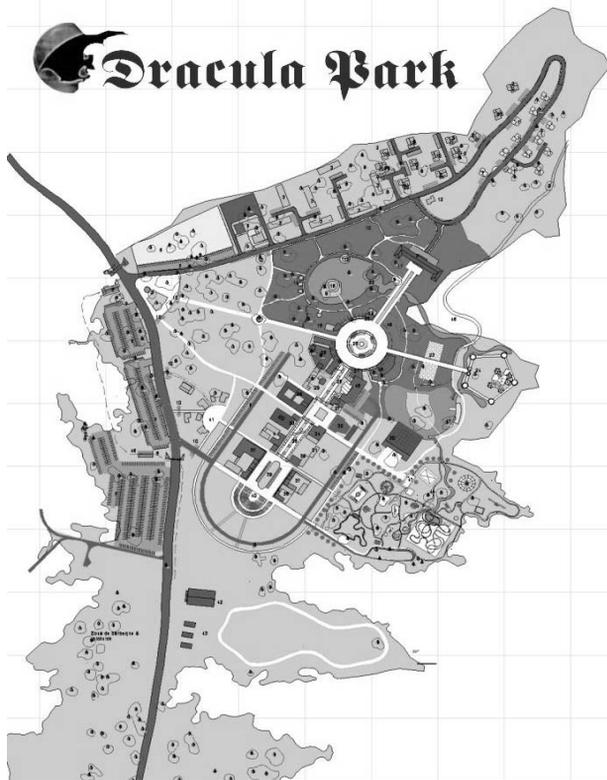
this tourism project, the past indeed becomes 'a foreign country' as heritage becomes appropriated into present-day reality through myth and myth-making – the life-blood of a successful tourism industry (Lowenthal, 1993; Selwyn, 1996).

### **Dracula-based tourism: Historical antecedents**

Popularised in Europe and the USA by German film director F.W. Murnau's 1922 silent epic, *Nosferatu*, Dracula became a Western pop-culture icon in the 1930s through Hollywood movies loosely based on Bram Stoker's book, *Dracula*, published in 1897. A tourism industry based on Hollywood-style Dracula began to grow in post-communist Romania, bolstered by director Francis Ford Coppola's 1992 Hollywood blockbuster film, *Bram Stoker's Dracula*. In 2001, Miramax filmed *Dracula Resurrection* (Parts II and III) in the citadel of Sighisoara. Hoping to stimulate tourism and take advantage of a lucrative myth (Dracula-based films, novels, clubs, etc.), the Romanian Minister of Tourism initiated Dracula Park, a large theme park located near the historic town of Sighisoara (Transylvania), 300 kilometres northwest of Bucharest. Project completion was slated for 2004.

Sighisoara is claimed to be the birthplace of Vlad Tepes, the 15th century prince whom the novelist Bram Stoker used as one source of inspiration to develop *Dracula*. The novel's action is set in Transylvania, the Romanian central region covered by the Carpathian Mountains (Stoker is, however, not known to have set foot there). Some outsiders consequently associate Transylvania with bats and vampires, while others assume the story to be fictitious. Locals, by contrast, perceive it to be a beautiful region with magnificent landscapes: Transylvania means 'the Land beyond the forests'. Stoker's book uses Borgo Pass as the access to the vampire-count's castle, but tourists arriving in the 1960s found no such castle until Hotel Count Dracula was constructed in the Pass in 1985, and aggressive marketing had turned Bran Castle, near Brasov, into Dracula Castle (Muresan & Smith, 1998). Of course, Bran Castle was only one of several such bastions that were linked historically to Vlad Tepes and, like the ruler, had no real association with Dracula.

The legendary 15th century prince (born c. 1431) had two nicknames. The first, Tepes (pronounced tse-pesh), stands for the Impaler (due to the system he set up of death by impaling as a deterrent to robbers, murders, bandits, beggars, usurpers and all others considered enemies). The second nickname was Dracula, which means 'son of the devil' or 'son of the dragon'. Vlad's father was named Vlad Dracul, having been vested with the Order of Dragon by a semi-military organisation dedicated to fighting the Turks. 'Dracul' in the sense of 'dragon' stems from this, but 'Dracul' also means 'devil' in Romanian from the Latin word 'draco' (McNally & Florescu, 1972). Vlad Tepes earned his nicknames well. A dreaded enemy of the Ottoman Empire, he fought the Turkish invasion of Romania and Europe with as much cruelty and vengeance as he ruled his homeland. A national hero who brought order and kept his province (Wallachia, south of Transylvania) free of invaders, his harsh rule and tortuous punishments also earned him a place in Romanian folklore and legends. Visitors to Sighisoara can be directed to the house where Vlad Tepes was said to be raised. Dracula Park represented the government's vision of a unique destination attraction (Figure 1), but the proposed site faced unexpected fierce opposition from many directions.



**Figure 1** Dracula Park, Romania: Proposed Site Plan near Sighisoara

(Source: [www.draculapark.ro](http://www.draculapark.ro). See also: [http://www.mtromania.ro/oferta\\_eng/attractii/dracula/dracula\\_park.html](http://www.mtromania.ro/oferta_eng/attractii/dracula/dracula_park.html). Accessed 03.17.02)

### Management issues at the proposed Dracula Park site

Based on a study by the National Institute for Research and Development in Tourism, the Park's 121-acre location was established in 2001 on Breite Plateau, near Sighisoara, a protected natural area containing one of the oldest oak forests in Romania. Most historical and fictitious Dracula-related attractions lay within a 60 miles radius; an international airport was accessible only after a five-hour road trip. First estimated at \$31.5 million, later projections rose significantly and funding was sought from public and private sources. The Fund for Developing Tourism Sighisoara (FDTS) was project managed and anticipated investing around \$12 million. Sighisoara Local Council, the Local Council of Mures, and the Ministry of Tourism together were to contribute \$2.17 million. The Ministry of Public Works, Housing and Transport, and the Ministry of Industry and Resources, anticipated making joint infrastructure improvements worth \$2.66 million. A share issue of \$5 million was launched in December 2001 at 10,200 lei/share (\$0.37 each), and netted \$3.3 million. Accommodation and facilities were to include a 700-room hotel (there were around six hotels in Sighisoara), inn-type lodgings, apartments, camping, restaurants (fast foods, snack bar, medieval

restaurant and theme bar), sports grounds, and a theatre hall. The on-site International Institute of Vampirology would house a resource centre with books, movies, and historical information. A replica of Dracula's Castle, catacombs, an artificial lake and a labyrinth garden were in the works (Figure 1). The plan included a security service to protect tourists. A closer look at the projected impacts discloses a contested site of concerned citizens, NGOs and the medieval town's UNESCO guardians.

### *Economic impacts*

The Dracula myth was clearly a 'tourism ministry's dream' (George, 2002a). Government-estimated annual profits ranged between \$21 and \$28 million, using a 10-year amortisation period (Andress, 2001; George, 2002b). While the Dracula myth had drawn 250,000 tourists annually over the past few years to Bran Castle and other related places, 1.1 million annual visitors were projected after the first four years of Park operation, with 20% expected to be foreign visitors (BBC News, 2001; George, 2002b). Also, 3000 new jobs in direct employment were to result for Sighisoara, where 17% of its 37,000 inhabitants were unemployed. Other positive impacts were anticipated, with almost 30 foreign companies showing interest in the economic potential of projects and services that would be required by the tourism industry, such as transportation, commerce, handicraft, agriculture, etc.

Park opponents questioned government projections, with unofficial sources arguing that only 300 long-term jobs would result for the local townspeople, and that big business stood to profit far more than locals, who would end up with higher costs of living due to inflated prices of goods, services and land (Ede, 2002). Another worry was that the medieval town of Sighisoara would become economically dependent on tourism due to the Park's proximity (5 km by road, but Park boundaries could be 1.5 km from the town). The \$21 to \$28 million per annum revenue forecast was too optimistic, some argued. Moreover, a \$25 entrance fee in an area where the regional average monthly salary was \$100 would make access prohibitive to residents. Yet 75% to 80% of the visitors were projected to be regional Romanian residents, returning for a couple of visits. Several historians and critics also felt that since the Hollywood-based legend of Dracula is foreign to many Romanians, the project's success lay in attracting Western tourists (Tomiuc, 2001). If the Park appropriated Vlad Tepes into its story-telling, it might have to 'embellish' the story to satisfy external Draculean thrill-seekers.

Further complicating this situation was the fact that Universal Studios (USA) had copyright on Dracula's image (having produced the original vampire movies that depicted him with bloody red fangs and lips, black cloak and white face). The Tourism Minister, Dan Matei Agathon, said an alternative image of Dracula would be created for the Park. How this change might affect visitor expectations was unclear (Ede, 2002).

### *Environmental impacts*

The Park was to occupy 5% of Breite Plateau, a natural landscape with 400-year-old oaks viewed to be a national treasure. Construction would be to EU standards, with an integral waste storage and disposal system. The Park was to be pedestrian-oriented, and alternate power supply options (solar cells on roof-

tops, wind power and geothermal sources) would also help minimise water or air pollution. However, environmental concerns about the Park's impacts ran high, and the brief Environmental Impact Assessment was questioned. Concerned NGOs declared that some ancient oaks were being cut in the development process, despite preservation promises. The Breite Plateau is also home to some rare species of flowers, wolves, stags, and eagles; environmentalists feared large-scale ecosystem and open space losses.

The international non-governmental organisation (NGO), Greenpeace, was one such concerned group.<sup>4</sup> 'Mihai Eminescu Trust', a UK based NGO supported by Prince Charles, was another, having assessed that locating the Park so close to Sighisoara would adversely affect the medieval town as well as fauna and flora in the area. Among domestic opponents were the Romanian NGO 'Pro Europe League' ('Liga Pro Europa') and 'Sustainable Sighisoara' (Sighisoara Durabila), a local NGO highly concerned about ecological and cultural impacts.<sup>5</sup> Although significant revenues were promised for conservation and preservation, UNESCO, too, was worried that the close proximity of the Park could adversely affect Sighisoara (claimed to be the best-preserved still inhabited medieval town in Europe and a monument to Gothic architecture). A number of architects, such as the Romanian born and internationally known British conservation architect Serban Cantacuzino (head of the Pro Patrimonio charity), expressed similar misgivings.

The transportation infrastructure and waste disposal essential for such a mass-market project were considered inadequate by some of the above groups, who felt that Sighisoara was too small and fragile to host a million tourists annually. Noise and congestion were also important issues. Despite the Park being pedestrian-oriented, increased vehicular traffic around the city could increase pollution and acid rain problems; an estimated 3300 cars per day emitting 8.3 tons of carbon dioxide/day during the four peak summer months would affect natural and built environments (Andress, 2001). Two new proposed airports close to Sighisoara would add to air and noise pollution. Twenty-one tons of tourist-related garbage estimated daily exceeded the capacity of local waste-management systems, said Dumitru Benone Mehedin, Vice-President of 'The Tarnava Mare Environmental Partnership', a local organisation in charge of the restoration of the Tarnava Mare River watershed (Andress, 2001).

### *Social and cultural impacts*

Local residents in the area held varying attitudes to the project. Some favoured it for jobs and income. Olimpiu Langa, a local entrepreneur and FDTS member, felt the Park would generate revenues needed to help preserve their historic town. Moreover, since Dracula is a myth, why shouldn't he sell it if people wanted it, said Langa, especially since a thousand books and 250 films made profits off this figure (Kim, 2001)? Other residents were not so comfortable. How would capitalising on this international myth affect the town's image and cultural heritage? Some worried that profit-seeking gaudy entertainment such as blood-red candyfloss and garlic-flavoured ice cream might replace its medieval character (ABC News Online, 2002). Visitor satisfaction might decline, particularly international visitors expecting an 'authentic' experience of Dracula. Moreover, wouldn't some expect the vampiric character to be located in the Transylvanian countryside rather than in a possibly kitsch Amusement Park?

Other significant concerns pertained to the project's fit with Romanian cultural identity. Religious leaders were one of the strongest opponents of the Park, no matter where in Romania it might be located. Some, like Hans Bruno Fröhlich, pastor of Sighisoara's oldest church, feared it would attract devil worshippers, drug users and satanic worshippers, earning a bad reputation for the town and region. Others also felt that Christian principles were being jeopardised by promoting entertainment and games characterised by cruelty, terror, occultism and vampirism. Fröhlich's concerns were numerous: 'You can build a theme park, but not one that attacks Christian values', he said. He also echoed a common worry that the Park might give a mistaken image of Romania; Dracula was based on literary fiction having little to do with the Romanian hero or the actual Transylvania. Hence, Fröhlich asked: 'For what price do you give up your culture?' (Kim, 2001).

#### *Political impacts: Domestic and international stakeholders*

A stakeholder analysis reveals the political landscape is extensive in scale and scope. Stakeholders can be grouped into domestic and international, each of which includes supporters as well as opponents of the project. The Ministry of Tourism (through Minister Dan Matei Agathon) adopted a fairly aggressive tourism policy as project initiators, hoping it could help build a new (post-communist) national identity and enhance Romania's image nationally and internationally. Some opponents argued that this was a misplaced vision – Dracula Park could impede Romania's goal for European Union membership, especially since UNESCO and the European Parliament had not extended approval. Sighisoara's local government was another important domestic proponent; Mayor Dorin Danesan was the founder of FDTS, the project management group. Also supportive were several tourism associations, including 'The National Association of Tour Operators in Romania' (ANAT), 'The Federation of Tourism Employers', 'The Federation Hotel Industry' (FIHR) and 'The National Association of Rural, Ecological and Cultural Tourism'. Their approval and future involvement were crucial to tourism in this area.

Local Sighisoara residents were important domestic stakeholders who stood to be greatly impacted by the project. They were not a uniform group; some were supportive while others opposed it or raised grave concerns. The local civic action group 'Sustainable Sighisoara' launched 'S.O.S. Sighisoara' in November 2001, a campaign uniting NGOs, experts, public and cultural personalities in Romania (Gala Premiilor Societatii Civile, 2002). Included in this local NGO were writers, doctors, art teachers, dentists, priests, and Sighisoara residents.<sup>6</sup> The leaders of the Orthodox, Lutheran and traditional Magyar Churches in Romania were notable domestic voices in this conflict whose concerns were listed earlier. Several internal associations not directly involved in the project had interests to protect as well. The 'Transylvanian Society of Dracula', for instance, worried about possible damage to the established image and following of this mythical cultural icon, Dracula.

Among the international stakeholders was UNESCO. Its evaluation report to the World Heritage Committee questioned the effects of such a large development on Sighisoara and its setting, a 'rural landscape of exceptional beauty' which contributed to its value and integrity (UNESCO-ICOMOS, 2002).

UNESCO's interests in conserving the greenbelt around the site complemented those of the NGOs mentioned earlier. But the local to global interests and issues surrounding Dracula Park increased the challenge of ensuring sustainable tourism development (STD) that 'meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future' (World Tourism Organisation [WTO], 1997: 30).<sup>7</sup>

### Examining the development from a sustainability perspective

Dracula Park poses challenging questions about the tangible and intangible impacts of tourism development. Does the project misrepresent cultural Romanian values? What messages are conveyed to residents and visitors globally by a destination image based on Dracula? The World Tourism Organisation (1998: 21–2) provides several guiding principles for local authorities, but it can be argued that greater direction is needed when impacts vary in scale (local-global) and scope (type and complexity). Consider, for instance, its Global Code of Ethics, consisting of 10 articles ([www.world-tourism.org/projects/ethics](http://www.world-tourism.org/projects/ethics), accessed 4/1/04):

- Article 1 refers to tourism's contribution to mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies, and complements Article 2 which addresses tourism as a vehicle for individual and collective fulfilment. Principle 2 of Article 1, for example, states that tourism activities should be conducted in harmony with the host country's attributes and traditions, and with respect for their laws, practice and customs. For Dracula Park this means that domestic stakeholder concerns must be addressed and their sensibilities about their cultural traditions and heritage considered.
- Article 3 situates tourism as a factor of sustainable development. Principles 1–4 of this article focus on safeguarding the natural environment 'with a view to achieving sound, continuous and sustainable economic growth . . .', and tourism development that saves precious resources and avoids waste production, should be given priority. The 'growth' orientation of this article notwithstanding, the Park project would need to pay careful attention to ecological sustainability, and address the concerns of international and domestic NGOs to protect the beautiful oak trees and open spaces.
- Article 4 notes tourism's roles as a user of the cultural heritage of mankind and contributor to its enhancement. All the four principles of this article focus on ensuring that cultural and heritage resources within a destination are respected, cared for and safeguarded – the destination communities 'have particular rights and obligations to them'. This article's focus on cultural sustainability is particularly applicable to Dracula Park.
- Article 5 identifies tourism development as a beneficial activity for host countries and communities. Principles here address equitable sharing of economic and cultural benefits (e.g. through direct and indirect jobs, and improved standard of living), and the responsibility of tourism professionals (particularly investors) to conduct impact assessments, share related information, and engage in dialogue with concerned or potentially impacted

parties. Several stakeholders of Dracula Park felt impact assessments were inadequate, and dialogue with local groups was lacking.

- Article 6 speaks further to stakeholder obligations, especially those of tourism professionals, public authorities and the press. Article 7 refers to rights to tourism, like access to leisure and tourism. Applied to Dracula Park, equitable access for domestic visitors was a concern: the admission price was seen to be too high for many Romanians.
- Article 8 addresses the liberty of tourist movements, while Article 9 refers to the rights of workers and entrepreneurs, and prevails on multinationals to not exploit their power. Dracula Park's potential for local entrepreneurship and involvement was limited, since large-scale infrastructure (requiring external investments) would be needed to accommodate the large numbers of projected visitors.
- Article 10 discusses application of the Global Code, and refers to public-private cooperation and the role of international organisations. Applied to Dracula Park, it could direct project initiators and investors to cooperate with international NGOs and others.

#### *The local-global nexus: Developing process-based principles*

The Global Code of Ethics offers guidelines for sustainability-oriented actions, as illustrated in Table 1 for Romania's Park project. Major impact areas are summarised in the first column, and applicable principles are illustrated alongside. But they are *general* global principles, and specific guidelines are also necessary at the local level, such as principles governing tourism businesses (like tour operators, resorts and hotels), or principles for local control over an area's cultural heritage.<sup>8</sup> Examples of specific community-based, *process*-related principles that could facilitate this for Dracula Park are described in Table 2.<sup>9</sup>

Table 2 addresses several key concerns, conflicts and impacts. For instance, participatory principles help to ensure that the costs/benefits are evaluated carefully by those who stand to be most impacted (Principles C2-2, C2-5, C2-6, C2-7 in Table 2). Principle C2-1 points out that tourism is not a given for economic revitalisation; it should be evaluated as one possible option. Principles C2-2 and C2-7 specifically deal with local control and equity (also see Principles C2-8, C2-9). Principle C2-10 (common in ecotourism and responsible tourism) addresses tourist behaviour and business responsibility through a situated code of ethics. Table 2 is not meant to be comprehensive; rather, it illustrates the importance of developing appropriate principles and practices at the local level (UNEP-ICLEI, 2003). It is argued, furthermore, that developing joint macro- and micro-level tourism principles (as illustrated by Tables 1 and 2) can facilitate integrated planning, evaluation and the sustainable development of local-global domains like Dracula Park, Romania.

#### **Expanding the scale and scope of sustainable tourism**

Numerous tools and initiatives like *Local Agenda 21* have evolved to deal with the environmental impacts of tourism at the regional and local level (UNEP-ICLEI, 2003), but attention to cultural impact management continues to lag (Robinson, 1999; Shackley, 2001). Some impacts, like the cultural ones related to Dracula Park, are difficult to identify and evaluate. The Sighisoara area's environmental,

**Table 1** Summary of impact type and global-local principles applied

<i>Impact type</i>	<i>Main impact concerns in the Park</i>	<i>Global Code of Ethics: Principles applicable</i>	<i>Local community-based principles (Table 2)</i>
Environmental	Ecology, e.g. ancient oaks, open spaces	3-1, 3-3, 3-4, 3-5	2-2, 2-8
Environmental	Waste management, resource use	3-2, 3-5	
Social	Community / Resident	4-1, 5-2	2-9
Social	Overall societal benefits from sustainable tourism	1-1, 1-2, 2-2, 2-3, 2-4, 2-5	2-2
Cultural	Preserving cultural resources (e.g. historic Sighisoara)	4-2, 4-3, 4-4	2-1, 2-2, 2-7
Cultural	Using cultural resources (e.g. art, craft, history, folklore)	1-1, 4-1, 4-2	2-7
Economic	Cost/benefit of tourism	3-3, 4-3, 5-1, 5-2, 5-3, 9-6	2-1, 2-2
Economic	Tourism industry and businesses	9-1, 9-2, 9-3, 9-4, 9-5, 10-3.	2-7, 2-9, 2-10
Political	Stakeholders (generally – domestic and international)	9-1, 9-4, 9-5, 9-6, 10-1, 10-2	2-3, 2-7
Political	Professionals, investors, media	5-4, 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-6	2-8, 2-10
Political	Romanian citizens/Sighisoara residents	5-1, 5-2, 7-1, 7-2, 7-3, 7-4	2-3, 2-5, 2-6, 2-7
Political	Planning, policy setting, destination management (country and local)	6-4, 6-5, 7-1, 7-2, 7-3, 7-4, 8-4, 10-2, 10-3.	2-4, 2-5, 2-6, 2-7, 2-8
Tourists	Responsibility of tourists	1-1, 1-5, 1-6	
Tourists	Responsibility to tourists	1-3, 1-4, 4-2, 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4, 6-5, 6-6, 7-1, 7-2, 7-3, 7-4, 8-1, 8-2, 8-3, 8-4.	

historical and communal well-being is mediated not only by UNESCO and the Ministry of Tourism in Romania, but also by a multitude of cultural brokers such as Universal Studios, Hollywood and the Irish novelist Bram Stoker appropriating history and (re)constructing heritage (Lowenthal, 1993). Through these virtual and real intermediaries, Dracula Park was conceived as a vehicle for economic and political gain, to cast Romania into the global stage. The issues surrounding its proposed location near Sighisoara indicate that greater attention must be paid to the scale, scope and character of impacts in sustainable tourism development.

**Table 2** Examples of community-based principles for sustainable tourism

<b>At the destination level: Community-based Principles C2-1 to C2-6</b>	
2.1	Evaluate the potential of tourism against other forms of economic development (don't assume tourism is a 'given').
2.2	Sustainable tourism principles should be followed in determining the equitable distribution of costs and benefits, where ecological, economic, social and cultural aspects have to be evaluated cumulatively and jointly (e.g. are the Romanian people willing to accept a 'foreign' myth into their national or collective culture and heritage for potential economic and political benefits?)
2.3	Local community should be involved in decision-making, e.g. about the types of tourism, how much tourism, creating joint direction for tourism in their community.
2.4	Appropriate policies for integrating tourism development; local, regional and national planning should be integrated; coordinate marketing and planning (match supply and demand for more effective impact management).
2.5	Conduct tourism impact management, develop and implement strategic planning with residents input: community vision (joint); inventory of resources; goals, strategies, action plans; implementation and monitoring (develop indicators for monitoring); include local, traditional and scientific/technical knowledge.
2.6	Appropriate organisations and processes for tourism development; clearly identify how and where the local residents and other stakeholders are to be involved in planning, development, management and monitoring of the destination's tourism impacts; obtain appropriate certification as a sustainable tourism destination.
<b>At the business level: Community-based Principles C2-7 to C2-10</b>	
2.7	Local control over community resources, including cultural and heritage related resources; foster local entrepreneurship and ownership (especially in culture and heritage); opportunities for job advancement and fair wages.
2.8	Partnerships (public/private), cooperation and collaboration among stakeholders; mechanisms for dispute resolution between organisations and local community over resource use and impacts (tailored to the local situation and context).
2.9	Ensure that residents benefit from tourism development, e.g. have equitable access to attractions and natural area destinations.
2.10	Code of ethics to guide responsible tourism (for tourists and tourism businesses; enabling an enriching experience for the tourist and meaningful host-guest encounters).

(Source: Adapted from Jamal & Getz, 1995; Jamieson, 1997)

### *Local-global stakeholders and local-global principles*

The diversity, range and interrelatedness of tourism impacts (e.g. political interests using Romania's cultural heritage for strategic purposes) means that careful attention must be paid to identifying, understanding and developing mechanisms to manage these impacts (Manning, 1999). While impacts are often described as 'positive' or 'negative' in assessment, this is dangerously simplistic and ignores important spatial, temporal and ethical consideration. Development

effect may be cumulative over time and space, and not easily evident or visible in short-term evaluations. Some impacts may be highly interrelated, involving social-cultural issues related to identity and belonging. Under these complex conditions, sustainability principles may be particularly helpful to guide substantive and process-related actions.

Tables 1 and 2 present an illustrative set of global and local-level principles, where general (global) principles are complemented by a set of community-based (local) planning and management-related principles to assist with developing and evaluating sustainable tourism in the Romanian context. Process-related principles include in the decision-making those who stand to be impacted by the development. They are especially important because they offer a means for addressing cultural sustainability, by involving in *meaningful* dialogue those whose cultural histories and traditions are being used in developing tourism. Moreover, active involvement of residents and other stakeholders helps to operationalise (implement) the concepts of sustainable tourism at the local level through the development of community-based principles informed by values (Apo, 2004).

### *The meaning of sustainable tourism*

This study indicates that complementary global, local and process-based principles may help the NGOs, residents and other concerned groups to work with national and international interests in evaluating the viability of Dracula Park from a sustainability-based perspective. Integrating global principles with community-based, local-level principles at the destination or organisational level helps to establish a clear sequence between the concept of sustainable tourism and its implementation. But after all the above, a puzzling question still remains: What is the *meaning* of sustainable tourism in the case of Dracula Park? The heritage, cultural, religious, and moral outrage of local to international societal and community members suggests that Dracula Park may be socially and culturally unsustainable, regardless of its economic viability. Is there room for a different discourse where the well-being and flourishing of human-ecological communities and societies take precedence? And who decides this? In the sustainable tourism domain, appropriating or interpreting a cultural myth is not a role for the public or the private sector. As a matter of individual, collective and national identity, it is the role of democracy, albeit a young, growing one in Romania.

## **Epilogue**

Early in 2003, the Romanian government announced a new Park location at Snagov, 25 miles northwest of Bucharest. Snagov Lake contains an island with a monastery said to house the remains of Vlad Tepes. Price Waterhouse Coopers (international consultants) projected the new site could draw a million visitors annually (BBC News, 2003). Park construction was expected to be ready by May 2005 (Marinas, 2004); however, recent news suggest the project has been abandoned (Marian, 2004). The new Park was expected to be much larger, and include a golf course, Water Park, and a racecourse. Its new name would have reflected a tourist and amusement park instead of Dracula Park (Rompres, 2003). It would also have been more expensive than the old one, ranging between 40 and 70

million Euro. Major cash contributions were provided by SIF Oltenia, a publicly owned company established to manage the former state industries in Romania (Moore, 2002). Coca-Cola Romania was expected to be the exclusive soft drink distributor, following the company's significant stock purchase. The Austrian brewing company Brau Union was another large international shareholder. After the park location changed, 1225 shareholders out of 15,000 withdrew investment capital, including Sighisoara Local Council (Business Day, nd; Reuters, 2004). But, as Alexandru Gota, the president of 'Sighisoara Durabila', said: 'Many high-ranking people have financial stakes in this project' (Moore, 2002).

### **Acknowledgements**

We are grateful to the local Romanian and international stakeholders who reviewed this case for us, and to the referees for helpful suggestions.

### **Correspondence**

Any correspondence should be directed to Tazim Jamal, Associate Professor, Department of Recreation, Park and Tourism Sciences, Texas A&M University, College Station, TX, 77843-2261, USA (tjamal@tamu.edu).

### **Notes**

1. See <http://www.turism.ro>. Also see <http://www.romaniatourism.com/main.html> and <http://www.mtromania.ro/>
2. Recently, government activity in Romania has focused on aggressive promotions such as: 'Romania – A country of wines', 'Cruises on the Danube', 'Super ski in the Carpathian Mountains', 'The 1st of May on the Black Sea Coast', 'Blue Flag', 'Infoturism', 'Let's Meet on The Black Sea Coast' (Agathon, 2003). Based on these campaigns, travel and tourism is anticipated to grow by 5.4% per annum in real terms between 2004 and 2014 (i.e. from approximately 490,607 jobs to 531,696 jobs), accounting for 1 out of every 18.5 jobs by 2014 (WTTC, 2004).
3. Case material was gathered from document analysis and web-based research. The case has been forwarded to several local and international stakeholders, as a courtesy towards those who work towards societal and environmental well-being, and hence are the source of our research. It also provides an additional source of corroboration for the information presented in the case. Please note that the main purpose of the case is to examine potential tourism-related impacts, issues and concerns surrounding the theme park (Dracula Park) from a sustainability perspective, in order to draw insights for the research and practice of sustainable tourism. Also see UNESCO-ICOMOS (2002) report.
4. Protests to the contrary were launched by a local group called 'Greenpeace Romania'. The international Greenpeace organisation objected that the local group had illegally used the Greenpeace name, since it had no legal licence agreement with the international NGO (Greenpeace, 2001).
5. Pro Europe League is one of the first non-governmental organisations in post-communist Romania. Its central programmes, implemented predominantly in Transylvania, are based on the promotion of intercultural, human and minority rights, on civic education and on preventing conflicts.
6. Sustainable Sighisoara's clearly stated mission was sustainable development and maintaining Sighisoara values (including historical, cultural, moral, religious, social, and ecological values) did not fit the proposed Dracula-based tourism project. This group noted that the local people had not been consulted about the project.
7. The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has begun to develop cases, tools and strategic initiatives for sustainable tourism, including Local Agenda 21

- guidelines for tourism (see <http://www.uneptie.org/tourism> and UNEP-ICLEI, 2003).
8. Some destinations and businesses have developed such additional principles (e.g. ecotourism operators). The Local Agenda 21 for Travel and Tourism (World Tourism Organisation, 1997) contains some broad principles for advising industry and local governments.
  9. See Bramwell *et al.*, 1996; Gunn, 2002; Inskeep, 1991; Murphy, 1985. In addition to community-related principles, there are management-related principles guiding organisations and associations (e.g. accommodation, entertainment, hospitality, tour operators, public sector agencies, NGOs), site-specific attractions (e.g. cultural, natural, urban, rural, community, built attraction), and organisational functions (e.g. marketing, planning, finance, accounting). Some of these are sector specific (see Berry, 1997). Others help to direct specific forms of tourism such as cultural or heritage tourism, and ecotourism (see Fennell, 1999).

## References

- ABC News Online (2002) Dracula threatens to suck charm from medieval town. On WWW at <http://www.abc.net.au/news/indepth/featureitems/dracula.htm>. Accessed 05.24.03.
- Agathon, D.M. (2003) The message of the Minister of Tourism in the opening of the National Tourism Fair – Spring 2003. On WWW at <http://www.romwin.ccir.ro/TNT/home.htm>. Accessed 03.02.03.
- Andress, M. (2001) International – letter from Romania, Nov. 19, 2001. On WWW at [http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/01\\_47/b3758126.htm](http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/01_47/b3758126.htm). Accessed 12.03.04.
- Apo, P. (2004) *Community Tourism: Empowering Communities to Tell their Own Stories*. Honolulu, HI: Hawaiian Hospitality Institute.
- Berry, S. (1997) Sustainable tourism: A regional perspective. *Tourism Management* 18 (7), 433–40.
- BBC News (2001) Romania has no stake in Dracula. On WWW at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/europe/1571560.stm>. Accessed 03.02.03.
- BBC News (2003) Dracula heads for Bucharest. On WWW at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2696553.stm>. Accessed 09.02.03.
- Bramwell, B., Henry, I., Jackson, G., Prat, A., Richards, G. and van der Straaten, J. (1996) *Sustainable Tourism Management: Principles and Practice*. Tilburg: Tilburg University Press.
- Business Day (nd) Theme park won't be sucking visitors dry. On WWW at <http://www.bday.co.za/bday/content/direct/1,3523,1379436-6078-0,00.html>. Accessed 03.06.04.
- Crick, M. (2002) Representations of international tourism in the social sciences: Sun, sex, sights, savings, and servility. In A. Yiannakis (ed.) *The Sociology of Tourism*. New York: Routledge.
- Ede, P.M. (2002) Countryside at risk from Romanian theme park. On WWW at [http://www.theecologist.org/archive\\_article.html?article=288&category=54P](http://www.theecologist.org/archive_article.html?article=288&category=54P). Accessed 12.04.02.
- Fennell, D.A. (1999) *Ecotourism: An Introduction*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Gala Premiilor Societatii Civile (2002). S.O.S. Sighisoara. On WWW at [http://www.galapsco.ro/1024\\_ro/projects.php?pid=177](http://www.galapsco.ro/1024_ro/projects.php?pid=177). Accessed 03.16.04.
- George, R. (2002a) Dracula Park Part I. On WWW at [http://www.rosegeorge.com/frameworks/generic/public\\_users/morearticles.asp?ArticleID=42](http://www.rosegeorge.com/frameworks/generic/public_users/morearticles.asp?ArticleID=42). Accessed 03.04.03.
- George, R. (2002b) Dracula Park is supposed to revitalize Romania Romania's tourist industry. But the locals think it sucks. *Independent*, London. On WWW at <http://www.ucs.Mun.ca/~emiller/DrPkRG.htm>. Accessed 03.07.2003.
- Greenpeace (2001) Greenpeace examines legal action against the group 'Greenpeace Romania'. On WWW at <http://ww.sustainable.sighisoara.com/gp.htm>. Accessed 09.02.02.
- Gunn, C.A. (2002) *Tourism Planning* (4th edn). New York: Routledge.
- Hall, C.M. and Lew, A. (1998) *Sustainable Tourism: A Geographical Perspective*. Boston, MA: Addison-Wesley.

- Inskeep, E. (1991) *Tourism Planning: An Integrated and Sustainable Development Approach*. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold.
- Jamal, T. and Getz, D. (1995) Collaboration theory and community tourism planning. *Annals of Tourism Research* 22 (1), 186–204.
- Jamieson, W. (1997) *Planning for Sustainable Tourism Development at the Local Level: A Workbook*. Calgary, Canada: Centre for Environmental Design Research and Outreach, University of Calgary.
- Kim, L. (2001) Can 'Dracula Land' put Transylvania in the black? *Christian Science Monitor* (31 October). Also reproduced in National Geographic News. On WWW at [nationalgeographic.com](http://nationalgeographic.com) and at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Dracula-Park/message/15>. Accessed 02.07.02.
- Light, D. (2000) Gazing on communism: Heritage tourism and post-communist identities in Germany, Hungary and Romania. *Tourism Geographies* 2 (2), 157–76.
- Light, D. and Dumbraveanu, D. (1999) Romanian tourism in the post-communist period. *Annals of Tourism Research* 25 (4), 898–927.
- Light, D. and Phinnemore, D. (2001) *Post-Communist Romania: Coming to Terms with Transition*. Palgrave: Basingstoke.
- Lowenthal, D. (1993) *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Manning, T. (1999) Indicators of tourism sustainability. *Tourism Management* 20 (2), 179–81.
- Marian, M. (2004) Plangere PNL la Parchetul General pentru Dracula Park Nastase si Agathon, acuzati ca au vampirizat banii investitorilor. *Adevarul* number 4443, page 3, 14.10.
- Marinas, R. (2004) Dracula Park to lure fans to Romania. On WWW at <http://www.reuters.com/newsArticle.jhtml?type=oddlyEnoughNews&storyID=4596688&section=news>. Accessed 03.20.04.
- McNally, T.R. and Florescu, R. (1972) *In Search of Dracula; A True History of Dracula and Vampire Legends*. Greenwich, CT, New York: Graphic Society.
- Moore, P. (2002) Dracula lives, but his theme park sucks. On WWW at [http://www.emagazine.com/september-october\\_2002/0902ib\\_dracula.html](http://www.emagazine.com/september-october_2002/0902ib_dracula.html). Accessed 11.03.03.
- Muresan, A. and Smith, K.A. (1998) Marketing heritage tourism in a transitional economy: A case study of Dracula Castle, Romania. Paper read at International Conference on Heritage and Multicultural Attractions and Tourism, Bogazici University, Istanbul, Turkey, 25–27 August.
- Murphy, P.E. (1985) *Tourism: A Community Approach*. New York and London: Methuen.
- Pro Europe League (2002) On WWW at <http://www.proeuropa.ro/press/SOS040702.html>. Accessed 03.17.04. Also on WWW at <http://www.proeuropa.ro/>. Accessed 03.17.04.
- Reuters (2004) Forget Disney: Vampire park to open: Dracula fans may soon have bloody good fun in Romania. On WWW at [http://money.cnn.com/2004/03/18/news/funny/vampire\\_park.reut/](http://money.cnn.com/2004/03/18/news/funny/vampire_park.reut/). Accessed 03.20.04.
- Robinson, M. (1999) Collaboration and cultural consent: Refocusing sustainable tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 7 (3), 379–97.
- Rompres (2003) Dracula Park va fi Mutat la Snagov. On WWW at [http://financiar.rol.ro/detalieri\\_stire.php?idn=113286](http://financiar.rol.ro/detalieri_stire.php?idn=113286). Accessed 01.10.04.
- Selwyn, T. (1996) *The Tourism Image: Myth and Myth Making in Tourism*. Chichester: Wiley.
- Shackley, M. (2001) The legend of Robin Hood: Myth, inauthenticity, and tourism development in Nottingham, England. In M. Brent (ed.) *Hosts and Guests Revisited: Tourism Issues of the 21st Century*. New York: Cognizant Communication.
- Tomciuc, E. (2001) Romania: Dracula Park expected to pump fresh blood into ailing tourism industry. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. On WWW at <http://www.rferl.org/nca/features/2001/11/08112001082145.asp>. Accessed 08.04.02.
- Tomciuc, E. (2002) Romania: Government seeks to tempt Western tourists. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty. On WWW at <http://www.rferl.org/features/2002/02/11022002100232.asp>. Accessed 03.20.03.

- Turncock, D. (1990) Tourism in Romania: Rural planning in the Carpathians. *Annals of Tourism Research* 17, 79–102.
- UNEP-ICLEI (2003) *Tourism and Local Agenda 21: The Role of Local Authorities in Sustainable Tourism*. Edited by International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI). Paris: United Nations Publication (UNEP).
- UNESCO-ICOMOS (2002) *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972–2002, 30th Anniversary*. World Heritage Committee, 26th session, Budapest, Hungary 24–29 June. Paris: UNESCO-ICOMOS.
- World Tourism Organisation (1997) *Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry: Towards Environmentally Sustainable Development*: World Tourism Organisation, World Travel and Tourism Council, and the Earth Council.
- World Tourism Organisation (1998) *Guide for Local Authorities on Developing Sustainable Tourism*: WTO: Egraf, S.A.
- World Travel and Tourism Council (2004) On WWW at <http://www.wttc.org/frameset3.htm>. Accessed 03.15.04.

Copyright of Journal of Sustainable Tourism is the property of Multilingual Matters. The copyright in an individual article may be maintained by the author in certain cases. Content may not be copied or emailed to multiple sites or posted to a listserv without the copyright holder's express written permission. However, users may print, download, or email articles for individual use.