

Historic Centre of Santa Cruz de Mompox, Colombia, a World Heritage Site

**How to stimulate tourism and to prevent its
possible negative impacts**

**CONSERVATION AND MANAGEMENT OF
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Abstract

Tourism, the first industry in the world, can be at the same time the generator of good possibilities for the site and its inhabitants, but also the cause of negative impacts on delicate places as cultural or heritage patrimony sites are.

This paper aims to explore possibilities to increase the present low affluence of tourism in Mompox, Colombia, a World Heritage site since 1995, but at the same time, to look for alternatives to avoid or diminish the world round known negative effects that tourism can carry on those places.

Introduction

Localization



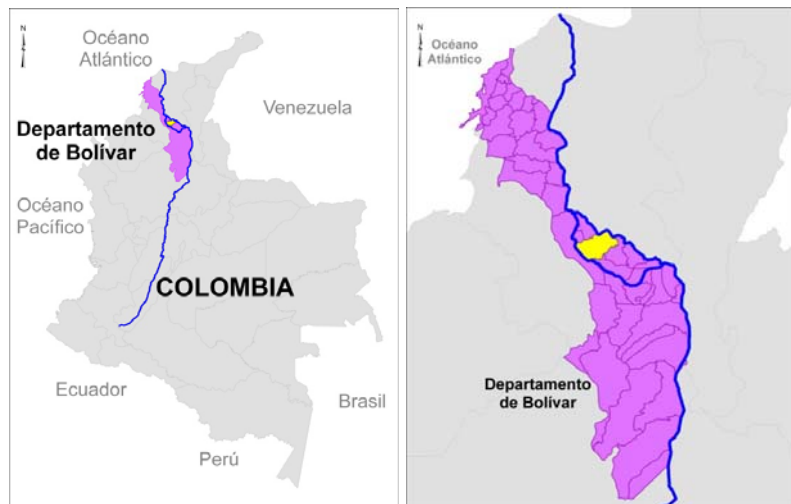
Street of Mompox: high sidewalks.

Santa Cruz de Mompox is one of the only two Colombian historic centres included in the World Heritage List in 1995. It is located at the north of the country, near the Caribbean Sea, in a very plane and humid region where water takes most of the surface (near 70%), conditions that generates continuous floods in the city and had demanded physical characteristic to answer to it, such as high sidewalks.



location of Mompox. Source: Google Earth

Mompox is located in an island surrounded by two branches of the Magdalena River, the main one of Colombia, which goes from south to north throughout most part of the country.



Location of Mompox, Magdalena river and department of Bolívar in Colombia; location of Mompox in the department of Bolívar. Source: Zabala, S, 2009)

Mompox is a typical tropical place, located 33 meters over the sea level, with an average temperature of 30°C (all the year) and a humidity of around 70 to 90%.

General Historic Information

Santa Cruz de Mompox was founded in 1540 by Juan de Santa Cruz, in the same place where the pre Hispanic settlements were located.

Mompox became soon (in less than hundred years) an important place, due to its location on the riverside of the main branch of Magdalena, in a middle point between the coast and some of the recently born cities at the inner areas, and in the place of intersection

of some of the main routes of gold and commerce. Five religious communities, a Royal Factory of Aguardiente (Liquor) located just on main cities at that time, many houses of brick (usually most of the houses were made of not permanent materials in not such important cities), are some of the elements that shows the relevance of Mompox at the colonial period.

Mompox was also the first city that got the independence from the Spaniers, fact that increases its importance on the historic context in Colombia.

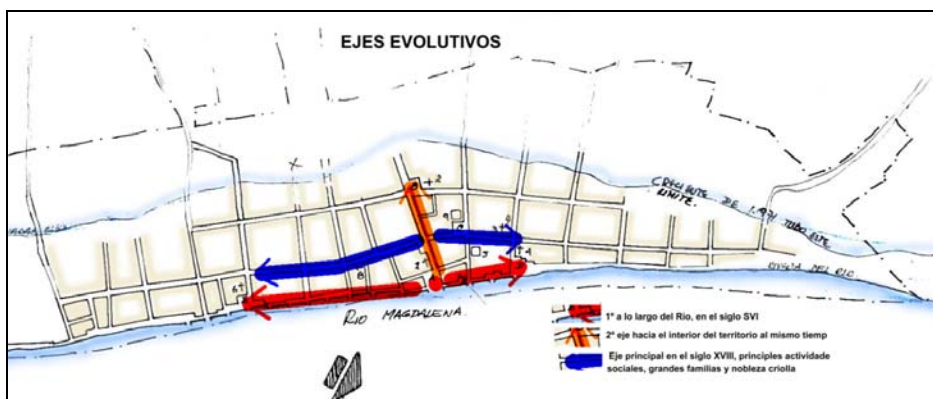
Due to different causes of natural and manmade orders, at the beginning of XIX century, the branch of Mompox of Magdalena river left its importance and the other branch (brazo de La Loba) became the main one.

From this moment and it is possible to say that until nowadays, Mompox has been detained on time due to the difficult accessibility, the loose of economic activity and the lack of almost any kind of opportunities. Being the river the reason of the existence of Mompox, the changes on it created deep difficulties to the city.

Anyway, despite the social and economic problems created because of that situation, the isolation of Mompox has also been the main cause of its preservation on such a good state that allowed this place became part of World Heritage List.

The controversial point today is how to preserve the great values of the city, but at the same time how to use that heritage as the main source (and perhaps the only one) to increase life quality of its inhabitants.

Tourism seems to be one of those possible activities to be developed in that context, but based on the knowledge about the problems tourism can generates, the aim of this paper is to develop some recommendations to allowed Mompox to increase its tourism, diminishing as much as possible the negative impacts.



Map of Mompox with axes of historic evolution.

Because of the interaction between Mompox and the river, the city grew along the riverside (red edge called La Albarrada) and just later started the growth to the west, to the inner part of the territory, on the

edge of the street that went to one of the main churches and later on to the cemetery (orange edge called calle 18 – La Concepción – Pinillos – Santo Domingo).



Two of the main streets of Mompox: La Albarrada and calle 18

The third edge (blue one called Calle Real del Medio) started to grow north and south of the east-west edge and became the location of homes of most of the main families of the city.



Calle Real del Medio, Mompox.

Values

As most or all the World Heritage site, and due its special conditions, Mompox is definitely an attractive place, full of values to be shown, used and preserved:

- Its singular urban fabric, unusual for the towns created by that time in America with a very regular layout, which generates closed perspectives and special views.



Mompox from the air (source: <http://santacruzdemompox.spaces.live>;

calle 20 to the west

- An attractive townscape produced by the layout, the particular vertical windows repeated along the town, the direct relation with the river and other causes.

- The very well preserved conditions of built heritage, the public space, the natural elements and the low quantity of four wheels vehicles (9% cars and buses, 91% motorcycles). All together creates a very special place to admire.



Calle Real del Medio; cemetery of Mompox.

- A variety of movable heritage, traditions and events such as the celebration of the Holy Week, the particular jewellery method (filigrana), music, dances, food, religious pieces of art, crafts, others.



Filigrana handicraft; traditional dances; traditional handicrafts.



Religious procession by Calle Real del Medio; Holy Week at Mompox.

- The preservation of the historic centre as a place of residence and not just the site of working areas, commerce and services.
- The natural patrimony related to its location in very fertile lands, the proximity to Magdalena River and the consequent presence of verity of animals and plants.

Problems

Despite all those values, Mompox has many problems of different kinds, but it is possible to affirm that all, or most of them, lead to the main one of them: a very difficult socio-economic situation.

Been a World Heritage Site, Mompox has not been able to take advantage of all the opportunities offered by that condition. On the contrary, some inhabitants feel that since Mompox was included in the National List of patrimony and the World Heritage one, they have lost some benefits because now they have the “obligation” to preserve the built heritage, to give us (all the rest of people) the “right” to enjoy it.

Despite all the values of heritage, people of Mompox have not had the possibility to take advantage of all the opportunities it offers. They of course use the houses and buildings as their homes, shops, schools, hospitals, etc.; and they are proud of the cultural values of the place, and enjoy living there. However, heritage is the only or at least the main resource Mompox have to change the tendency towards bad life conditions and it has not been used as that yet.

The municipality finances depends mainly (near 82%) on the transferences that national government gives them, because the low economic activities on Mompox does not allowed them to have high profits generated by taxes.

Table 1: municipality incomes in Mompox

MUNICIPALITY INCOME (2007)	AMOUNT (Colombian pesos)	%
Local taxes	1.514'133.000 (about US\$760.000)	11.37
Transferences from the National Government	10.889'778.527 (about US\$5'500.000)	81.79
Own resources	911'139.000 (about US\$460.000)	6.84

Source: Secretaría de Hacienda Mompox, 2008

The difficult socio-economic situation is the result of many factors:

- The very bad accessibility: it is the cause of most of its problems and at the same time, it is one of the reasons for adequate conservation of built heritage. Isolation caused by the problems of accessibility affects directly the life quality of Mompox inhabitants and diminishes the possibilities to develop competitive economical activities due to the costs and time taken for transportation of materials, products, visitors, etc. Despite the fact Mompox has an airport, it is used just for special occasions; anyway its existence is an opportunity for future actions. Tourism is definitely one of the activities affected by problems of accessibility.



Two kinds of transportation by Magdalena river to go to Mompox

- An economic activity based completely on local commerce -local sell of products and services- (89.65%) without industry, commerce and services of higher scales, as to be offered or sold to other cities. This problem is directly related to the bad accessibility. Almost the 50% of shops and companies are owned by one person and 83% generates less than two employments, 81% of them without all the legal conditions for the employs.
- Tourism, as one of the economic activities of Mompox, is mainly a potentiality because it does not work as an organised and productive action. The facilities and services for tourists have not enough quality to develop it as a competitive activity. Hotels, restaurants, touristic guidance, internet and phone communications, timetable of places to visit, do not have now the conditions to receive tourists appropriately.
- Some problems related to the idiosyncrasy of people such as difficulties to team up.
- The resources to generate a better economic future are unexploited and most of them are limited and of a local scale.

Tourism emerges as one of the main possibilities to take advantage of the heritage to increase the life conditions of the inhabitants of Mompox.

As it is known that very often, tourism causes many negative effects mainly on those delicate places as protected heritage sites, the challenge is to allow the opportunity to increase it but at the same time to diminish or avoid the bad impacts on the heritage, the site and the people. The answer seems to be on **sustainable tourism**.

Tourism and World Heritage Sites



Vender of the streets of Mompox

The same reasons UNESCO has to include a site in World Heritage List are the same why people want to go to visit them. Actually, many people interested in cultural tourism, decide their holiday's destinations based on that list because it is like a seal of quality about its values.

“In fact, the believe that World Heritage sites belong to everyone and should be preserved for future generations is the very principle on which the World Heritage Convention is based” (Pederson 2002: 3)

Nevertheless, tourism has been one of the main preoccupations of entities an people related to either natural or cultural heritage sites, due to its negative impacts on the places, which increases or decreases according to the level of planning and control and as an answer of the concern of avoiding negative impacts and taking advantages of the positive ones.



Mompox, view from Magdalena river

Those who think that it is necessary to avoid tourism in a World Heritage Site based on the possible negative effects are wrong, but also do those who believe in tourism as the only answer and therefore do not put limits to it: **Sustainable Tourism** arises as the answer.

Tourism has an important place in the economy: 12% of the world total GNP (Pederson 2002: 11) is generated by tourism and it has been an option used or proposed to diminish poverty in the world.

Consequently, tourism can be an opportunity:

- To improve infrastructure
- To generate economical resources for the cities and the inhabitants of the site
- To generate employment
- To improve different aspects of the site

Nevertheless, tourism can also generate multiple problems:

- Environmental problems such as noise, pollution, garbage production
- Change of uses: commerce, services, facilities for touristic activity, second residences, usually take the place of original uses such as housing, traditional retail, local industries
- Destruction or affection of the integrity of the sites
- Bad distribution of profits of touristic activity

The key point in sustainable tourism is then maximising the positive effects, minimising the possible negative impacts that can diminish the values of the place and, in this case, of the cultural heritage.

The World Tourism Organisation defines sustainable tourism as *“Tourism development that meets the needs of the present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future (...) in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological integrity and life support systems”* (Pedersen 2002: 24)

Proposal

As mentioned at the beginning of this report, Mompox is a World Heritage Site, which has not enjoyed all the benefits of that distinction.

To increase tourism is one of the aims of the city, the authorities and inhabitants, based on the fact that its cultural and natural heritage is one of its main resource to increase life quality, municipal finances and general improvement.

This proposal is an answer to that aim and will be developed in two main parts: first, the establishment of key points to increase tourism in Mompox, and then, the definition of practices needed to avoid negative impacts of tourism and to increase positive ones.

General issues

The fact that Mompox has not had a well-developed tourism is one of the main opportunities for the site, because everything is to be done and, consequently, it is possible to work with a preventive strategy based on recommendations of experts and in good and bad examples of how to manage the activity.

Mompox must avoid turning into a place just to the service of tourism, where local identity is lost and where the wealth generated by the activity is on the hand of few and foreign people and companies.

Challenges

The management of tourism activity in Mompox must:

- Guarantee protection of environmental, architectural, urban and cultural values that, at the same time, are the attractors for tourism.
- To take advantage of different values of Mompox, such as natural and cultural heritage, traditions, skills and products such as handicrafts, music, dances, etc., in order to have a diverse product.
- To look for solutions for some of the problems Mompox is facing (such as bad accessibility) that will increase life quality, at the same time as tourist activity will have better conditions.
- To vouch for a balance between arrival of external investors and local distribution of benefits and profits of the activity.
- To guarantee the permanence of residential use, as well as traditional uses.



Traditional facade composition of houses in Mompox

How to increase tourism in Mompox

Competitiveness factors on tourism must be the bases to increase tourism in Mompox.

Factors of support

These are basic factors, which have direct incidences on life quality of inhabitants but also do on the development of touristic activity:

- **Accessibility:** It is compulsory to enhance accessibility. Solutions can come from simple organization of programmes to go to pick the tourists up, to more complete actions such as improvement of roads, construction of bridges, implementation of charter flights or the reopening of the airport for current flights (depending on demand). Despite that fact it is difficult to arrive to Mompox, well-organised reception tourism can manage it as a service.
- **Local basic services:** Mompox must improve basic services as health attention, water supply, communications (telephone and internet) as a guarantee for life quality of inhabitants but also for tourists' attention and safety. Lack or not enough covering or quality of those services, as well as a problem for inhabitants, can generate difficulties to a better-qualified tourism.
- **Public space:** as the face of a city, public space need to be enhanced with basic actions (such as cleaning) but also with other actions such as lightening, landscaping, hideaway cables, use of urban furniture, others.
- **Touristic signalization:** it is necessary planned and environmentally friendly signalization to show to tourists, visitors and of course inhabitants, the remarkable places of the city, the way to arrive to them and some other information.

Factors of attraction



Santa Barbara church, the main icon that identify Mompox

These are the factors related directly with the vocation of the place as a touristic destiny; that is, those aspects which tourists are interested in:

- **Sites of touristic interest:** it is necessary to improve signalization, specialised guidance, brochures, opening hour's organization, and other materials and aspects related to the place.
- **Technical guidance texts:** it is needed the unification of information about the places and the elaboration of technical guidance texts.
- **Touristic products:** mix of them to diversify the visits of tourists and make them longer. The products can mix the natural and cultural heritage, including traditional festivities.

Factors of production

These factors are related to aspects of tourism as an economic activity that needs to be competitive and productive: training on different aspects, e-commerce, management, capacities, promotion, others:

- **Training** in different aspects related to tourism to qualify the activities.
- **Strategic alliance:** to help organisation of local companies, this is one of the most important points to avoid bad effects of tourism on the site.
- **Benchmarking:** study of other places which can compete with Mompox for same tourist's groups.

- **Associative capabilities:** training in this abilities, use of helps to create productive chains, handicrafts training, others.
- **Touristic services and facilities:** there is a need for improvements on hotels, restaurants, internet facilities, change of currencies, communications and the different services and facilities for the tourist.

Factors of management



Calle de San Agustín, Mompox

These factors are related to the association capacity of actors of touristic activity, institutional coordination, touristic planning process, others:

- **Tourist information points and centres:** creation of at least two of them.
- **Touristic information system:** it includes organization of information, evaluation, surveys, statistics, information about hotels, other services and facilities, etc.
- **Strengthen** of institution in charge of tourism administration in Mompox and of other organisations and entities related to the point.

How to diminish negative effects of tourism in Mompox

Mompox presents specific characteristics due to its natural and cultural heritage, which means care actions focused on minimizing possible risks and social, economic and environmental impacts.

The management of tourism effect in Mompox is directly related to the use of strategies of sustainable tourism directed to the three dimensions of sustainable development:

- **Socio-cultural dimension:** promotion of respect for the socio-cultural authenticity and contribution to the intercultural tolerance.
- **Environmental dimension:** optimum use of natural resources, preservation of biodiversity.
- **Economic dimension:** assure long term, well distributed and viable economic activities, which will generate employs and be a contribution to decrease poverty and increase life quality.

Actions on those three directions must be preceded by some **management strategies** that may affect the level and nature of exploitation of a site and its environment, seeking to minimise or reduce the impact of visitors.

The level of affection and the factors to be impacted depends on:

- Visitor's behaviour
- Number of visitors
- Types of activity
- Physical and social resistance and resilience of the site and the environment

In the specific case of Mompox, as tourism has not been enough developed, number of visitors is not yet a general problem.

However, as it was told before, the advantage of Mompox is that it is possible to define measures to prevent the negative impacts of tourism so the managers must define actions on those different aspects. As far as the problem today is that tourism is not developed, it is compulsory to be very accurate to establish the balance between promotion and other measures to increase it, and restrictions to assure a sustainable development of tourism.



Calle Real del Medio, Mompox

Changing visitors' behaviour

It is fundamental for the purpose of balance:

- Interpretation of education programmes to:
 - Teach about the importance of Mompox and its different values.
 - Teach about the possible problems they can create as visitors and how to avoid them by low-impact techniques.
 - Edition of printed guidelines for visitors including both aspects above mentioned: values of the site, how to avoid impacting it negatively. Reasons why somethings must be done or avoid have to be clearly explained on the basis of weakness of the site and the relevance of the values to be preserved.
 - *“visitors must believe that a given issue is real and serious, that a given action is necessary, and that they can make a difference”* (Pederson 2002: 69)



Calle de San Agustín, Mompox.

- Rules of behaviour: visitors can sign rules of behaviour in the site, related to sustainability of the three dimensions: socio-cultural, environmental and economic.
- Rules of behaviour can include aspects such as managing litter, social behaviours, respect for the cultural and natural heritage and some other commitments facing to diminish negative impacts.
- Tax for entrance: Colombian laws allow specific touristic places to use a tax for entrance that besides an economic help to finance the actions to care the site. It is an opportunity to show visitors they are entering to a special and delicated site, where

they have to behave in a particular way in order to preserve what they came to appreciate and enjoy. It is also the possibility to give visitors the rules and guidelines of behaviour and to show them.

- Define rules of behaviour for tourism operators and servers, to be part of the aim of sustainability: washing of towels, other environmental measures, social inclusion, respect for the sit and the inhabitants, others.

Reducing the amount of people

Nowadays Mompox needs to increase the number of visitors, to take advantage of its heritage as the main resource the city and its inhabitants have to improve their life conditions. In that sense it would be possible to say that this measure is not needed, however, huge number of visitors can be one of the worst problems for a site like this, so, in order to act with preventive actions, it is compulsory to be prepared to avoid excesses.



Typical window of Mompox. It is another of its icons

The first point is to establish the carrying capacity of the historic centre and its different parts and sites, but then it is necessary to have programmes to follow the behaviour of tourism and the amount of visitors, in order to put into practice, the limits established.

Number of visitors often increases in moments such as the ends of the year or the wholly week, but limits possibly are not still surpassed.

To reduce number of visitors when needed, authorities must:

- Define the limits according to the carrying capacity
- Get the institutional infrastructure and the people needed to measure it and to control it.
- Restrict the permissible length of stay, depending on the part of the year and just if carrying capacity is near the limit.
- Limit group sizes in general and for the entrance of specific places. This must be used just if necessary.
- Define entrance fees for places or increase them. Also to be used just if needed. The charges for entrance can vary according to the day of the week in order to avoid concentration of visits on certain days, as for example weekends, and to encourage the visit on no so crowded days. It is also a way to increase tourism in out of seasons' time.
- Not providing facilities in those places where resilience is lower and encouraging visitors to go to those sites with better levels of it.

Limiting and regulating types of activities

- Not allowing in the site certain activities that may create negative effects, mainly those that can go against some of the main values but at the same time with lower resistance and resilience such as residential use at the historic centre.
- Restrict opening hours



Santa Bárbara church from the river

Increasing resistance and resilience of weak aspects

It is possible to harden those aspects that may suffer more easily with negative impacts of tourism:

- Improving infrastructure to protect the site as barriers, signalisation, shelters, corridors over original floors, parking, etc.
- Defining regulation on key aspects, linked to solutions for the possible problems generated to them, such as:
 - Prohibit entrance of cars of visitors besides parking lots outside the historic centre, local transportation facilities from them to the site, pedestrian streets or comfortable sidewalks.
 - Regulation of number and quality of hotels, souvenir shops, restaurants and other services and facilities for tourists, in order to avoid conversion of Mompox into a place just for the service of tourists.
 - Urban and architectural regulations which must forbid false antique new interventions which may diminish values of authentic heritage; opening of new doors on facades for commerce or any other purpose; other regulations to protect architectural values.
 - Regulation of the use of public space by artists, retailers, other groups.
- Giving some economic benefits and incentives to traditional uses such as housing, handicraft industries, traditional retail
- Having different rates of taxes for traditional inhabitants in relation to foreign owners. It includes benefits for people who remain living in the houses of historic centre making productive part of them by means of small retail or industries, renting rooms as hostels, others.

Distribution of benefits

Socio-cultural effects can be reduced also if benefits from the touristic activity are well distributed between different groups of population.

In places as Mompox, where capability to manage tourism has not been well developed, there is a risk on having benefits from tourism just in the hands of few people or, even worst, in the hands of foreign operators and servers.

- Assure local people will get economic benefits from the touristic activity. They must be part of the economic activities.
- Training for business, selling, enterprise capability, operation of hotels and other services and facilities, guidance, and other many aspects and skills, is a critical aspect on sustainability of tourism in Mompox.
- Benefits must be also reflected in the improvement of their life quality by means of improvements in aspects such as accessibility to the site, domiciliary services, public space, others.

- Show inhabitants the benefit of preserving heritage and support them with incentives and helps.
- Giving inhabitants employment opportunities but also the option to create companies.
- Define actions to reduce conflicts between visitors and inhabitants, and between different kinds of tourists.
- Incorporating socio-cultural values into the site's management planning by increasing community participation.
- Enough control of authorities and locals to assure the fulfilment all the aims and regulations.

Sustainable Socio-cultural practices

Other practices and actions related directly to the sustainability of socio-cultural aspects are the included in next table:

POSSIBLE IMPACTS	FACTOR	PROPOSAL OF GOOD PRACTICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lose of cultural identity • Deterioration of material and non material cultural heritage • Social risks generated by touristic activities: prostitution, drugs problems, beggarliness. • Conflicts between tourists and inhabitants • Breaking of family unit • Touristic products without identity. 	Actions to preserve and manage cultural behavior	• Identification of organizations and entities working on preservation of cultural heritage in Mompox, to establish programs on cultural management
		• Promotion of patrimony intervention and use of traditional materials
		• Enhancement and promotion of values and characteristics of the historic centre of Mompox.
		• Design of thematic specialised guides on the cultural values of Mompox and training of touristic guides and operators in general.
		• Campaigns focused on the knowledge of norms about historic centre
		• Promotion of incentives and easy credits for restoration
		• Organization of cultural events (existing and new ones)
		• Promotion of regional gastronomy
	Prevention of social impacts	• Support to inhabitants who produce handicrafts and traditional products; support to traditional clothing, music, dances, others.
		• Collective construction of codes of good behaviour for tourists, operators, services and facilities servers, and inhabitants
		• Promotion and distribution of a code to prevent social negative influence of tourism (part of the rules of behavior)
		• Campaigns to prevent social risks, mainly directed to children, Young people and other fragile groups of the society
		• Action of authorities in prevention and control of social risks.
		• Social control on problems generated by tourism
		• Defining the maximum number of hotels and other services and facilities to avoid

POSSIBLE IMPACTS	FACTOR	PROPOSAL OF GOOD PRACTICE
		residents leaving the historic centre

Sustainable Economic practices

Other practices and actions related directly to the sustainability of economic aspects are the included in next table:

POSSIBLE IMPACTS	FACTOR	PROPOSAL OF GOOD PRACTICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displace of historic centre original inhabitants. • Lose of leadership of inhabitants from the management and control of business generated by tourism: accommodation, guidance, transportation, touristic operation. • Arrival of foreign investors which may displace locals, • Not balanced conditions of salaries and employment • Raising of land cost and costs of essential products. • Impoverish of local population • Exportation of de profits and importation of external primary materials • Socio-economical segregation 	Image and promotion	• Design and application of a strategy to promote Mompox as a cultural and natural sustainable destiny
		• Creation of a tourist image that will detach natural and cultural values of Mompox with a responsive management
		• Promotion for visitors, operators and servers about values, attractions, possible problems generated by tourism and how to avoid them in a responsive way.
	Generation of employment and development of enterprise capabilities	• Identification and help through incentives, credits and technical assistance to create new small or family companies which will rescue cultural values of Mompox: handicrafts, traditional gastronomy, touristic lodging in family houses, etc.
		Enhancement of chain of values towards sustainability
	Creation of some local companies managed and own by inhabitants of Mompox	• Identification and support to traditional productive activities.
	Security	• Implantation of a program for prevention and management of emergencies and disasters.
		• Measurement of level of satisfaction of visitors
	Development of technical capabilities for the management of tourism	• Training and technical assistance to improve skills for different kind of employments.
		• Training to increase the existence of local enterprises since a competitive, sustainable and differential principles.
• Training to operators to work with sustainable criteria		

Sustainable Environmental practices

Other practices and actions related directly to the sustainability of environmental aspects are the included in next table:

POSSIBLE IMPACTS	FACTOR	PROPOSAL OF GOOD PRACTICE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Atmospheric, visual, and noise contamination • Waste of energy and water. • Lose of biodiversity • Bad management of rubbish 	Manage de of waste products	• Programs of separation, classification and manage of residues
		• Campaigns to reduce the generation of solid residues
		• Training to employs and guests in manage of residues
	Water manage	• Measure of consume and drinkability properties
		• Establishment of programs of control and good use of water including reuse of rain water
	Energy manage	• Establishment of programs of control and good use of energy
		• Promotion of alternative energy generators
	Use of chemical products	• Campaigns to use less chemical products and those more environmental friendly
		• Campaign to diminish washing of towels
	Manage of pollution	• Identification of sources of contamination and measure of different kinds of them
		• Actions on controlling sources of contamination
		• Promotion of the use of native plants and vegetation.
	Support to programs on environmental conservation and management	• Participación y apoyo en programas de conservación y manejo dentro de su área de influencia.
• Promotion of responsible visits to natural areas		
• Identification of local plants and trees with signalization to teach about them		
• Prohibit consume, sell and exhibition of products, animals and vegetation in danger of extinction		

Conclusions



Mompox needs to develop its “Developing Tourism Plan” which must includes at the same time competitive and sustainable focuses in

order to achieve both, the improvement of touristic activity and prevention of its feasible negative impacts.

In both cases, the key point is the planning action to avoid as much as possible improvisation and to have a clear north where to go.

Increasing of tourism is mainly related to the competitive focus and must include actions to improve conditions of the site, not just related to tourism. It means possibilities to solve some of the problems that inhabitants of Mompox are now suffering, in aspects such as accessibility, domiciliary services, economic activity, others.

Improvement of tourism activity demands lots of actions and efforts, but the possibility to improve life quality and economic possibilities of people of Mompox, throughout its heritage that is their main resource, is an enough reason to do whatever is has to be done, even it is not easy.

Anyway, if heritage is the main resource of Mompox, there is an extra reason to preserve it so all the efforts to diminish the possible bad effects of tourism and any other activity, have to be part of the actions on this World Heritage site.

Fortunately in Mompox everything is to be done and that permits to take all the preventions to avoid the negative impacts of tourism, learning from other experiences.

Preservation of historic buildings deals everyday with many different aspects of the reality of the place, and its conservation depends on many different facts, as for example poverty of its owners, pressures for new developments and buildings, high costs for maintenance, and so on. Tourism good and bad effects on a historic centre is another of those realities and is one of the activities directly related to heritage that preservation must face day by day.

Developing this report for the curse was a very constructive experience to face that aim: the Conservation and management of Heritage.

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