

PROSPECTS FOR AN EMERGING TOURISM INDUSTRY IN GHANA

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Abstract

Like many developing countries facing severe foreign exchange problems, Ghana has embarked on a policy of export diversification. Lately, the country has concentrated on the promotion of international tourism as a major source of foreign exchange earning. The initial results are promising. The present paper examines the growth of this industry from its early and unremarkable inception in the mid 1950's to its present state where it is the third largest foreign exchange earner for the nation. A discussion on the country's tourism resource base, and the strengths and weaknesses of the industry are also presented as a basis for assessing the future prospects of the industry. Finally, strategies for ensuring the sustained growth of this emerging industry are proposed.

Introduction

Tourism, which involves the movement of people from their permanent places of residence and their temporary stay in other locations primarily for pleasure, leisure, recreation and business, has become a major global industry. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) estimates that the industry is the third largest in the World after oil and vehicle production, contributing approximately 12 percent of the World's Gross National Product (WTO, 1987).

In the developing world especially, increasing fluctuations in world prices for primary commodities have forced many countries to shift attention to other sources of foreign exchange earnings and tourism has been identified as a viable alternative source. In addition, tourism generates unlimited investment opportunities thereby creating employment, making additional contributions to national revenue and introducing new skills and technologies into destination areas. Tourism has thus become a reliable source of income and for capital redistribution. The above discussion however, does not exhaust the long list of benefits that accrue to tourism practitioners and that the potential contributions of the industry to national growth and development can be very many in most cases.

Despite these contributions to national prosperity however, few African countries have until recently, embraced tourism as a viable option for resolving their numerous and long standing development problems. Apart from Tunisia, Egypt, Kenya, Morocco, South Africa and perhaps Zimbabwe that have traditionally made tourism development a priority sector and have succeeded in crafting good destination images through better harnessing of their tourism resources and better promotional efforts, most of the countries (particularly those in sub Saharan Africa) have paid little or no attention to the development of the industry. This lack of serious attention has been the tendency in spite of the fact that Africa's huge tourism potential in her legendary wildlife and other natural and cultural resources are unrivaled throughout the world (WTO, 1995). Ghana has until recently epitomized this state of inactivity.

Whereas most of Africa's major tourism destination areas have been the popular safaris in Eastern and Southern Africa, Northern Africa's sunshine winter beaches and Egypt's ancient civilization sites, Ghana on the other hand offers new and unique attractions. These include those in rich African cultural heritage, rain forest tourism, conference tourism, Euro-African historical and monumental sites of the inhuman trans-Atlantic slave trade.

Before 1985 however, no serious efforts were made to harness these resources. The year 1985 marked a very remarkable turning point as it heralded the official recognition of tourism as a potentially viable industry in the national economy. As a result, it was accorded a priority status under the national investment code of 1985. It is currently the fastest growing sector in the Ghanaian economy with the prospects for outstripping mining and cocoa as the country's largest foreign exchange earner.

It must be noted however that tourism development can be a victim of its own success. It has a huge potential to bring economic prosperity and environmental improvements to destinations; but when it is poorly planned and managed, tourism can harm the very resources on which it is based. Empirical evidence of such experiences abound and critics of the industry contend among other things that actual benefits to the industry maybe meagre in the long run (Matthew, 1977).

Nonetheless, future tourism development in Ghana is forecast to contribute significantly towards national growth and development (ROG, 1994). In spite of this optimistic view, the viability and constraints of tourism development in Ghana are not well understood. The intent of this paper is to assess the future challenges and opportunities that may be encountered in this nascent industry. This will be accomplished through an examination of past and present day national tourism plans, policies and projects as well as the industry's resource base. The specific objectives of this study are as follows:

- a) to present an overview of Ghana's tourism resources and the policies and programmes shaping their development.
- b) to examine the recent rapid rate of growth of tourism in Ghana and the

challenges and prospects that it poses, and

- c) to discuss some initiatives that could be employed to ensure a balanced, sustained and orderly development of the industry in future.

The organization of the rest of the study is as follows:

Section 2 provides a description of Ghana's tourism resources. Section 3 is on the development of tourism in Ghana. It presents the country's past tourism plans, policies and programmes and to some extent, the level of their implementation. The fourth section discusses the present status of the industry while the fifth and sixth sections are on future prospects and potential challenges that may confront the industry and study conclusions, respectively.

Ghana's Tourism Resources

Ghana is a centrally placed West African country with an estimated population of about 16.4 million in 1993 (PIP, 1994). The land area is approximately 240,000 sq. km.

The country has a tropical climate that is characterized by abundant sunshine. Annual average temperature is about 25°C. There are two major seasons, the wet or rainy season which runs from April to July and the dry or harmattan season from November to February.

Ghana is endowed with numerous touristic resources which constitute a variety of attractions. The major ones include; first, ancient cultures, festivals and traditions of the people, rich in diversity, colour and pageantry. Areas of authentic cultural life include Kumasi, described as the cultural heart of Ghana, Bolgatanga, Bonwire and some craft villages that provide traditional and unique craftsmanship in goldsmithing and ethnic textile manufacturing and dress-making, traditional African rural architecture and shrines of traditional African religion. Of all the traditional cultural events that take place in Ghana, traditional festivals seem to have the greatest support from Ghanaian communities. Almost every community celebrates a major annual festival or observe periodic communal ritual, for such events reinforce the spiritual, social and artistic values of a society (ROG, 1975). All such festivals give special place to art, music and dance as a focus of community participation and these occasions have attracted significant numbers of heritage loving tourists from both within and outside the country.

Second, the 27 forts and castles built largely along the coast of Ghana between the 15th and 18th Centuries by major European powers - Britain, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, France, Portugal and Sweden - have become major tourists showcases. Some of these forts and castles have been designated as World Heritage sites by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The oldest and most famous of them is the 8,730 square meter Saint George's Castle built at Elmina in 1482 by the Portuguese and which became the first site for European settlement in the entire tropical world. This castle is reputed to have

accommodated Christopher Columbus, while a trainee navigator, ten years before he sailed to "discover" the Americas. Later, the use of these castles was expanded to become transit camps for West African slaves before their trans-Atlantic shipment to the plantations of the "New World". These monuments attract considerable numbers of both domestic and international tourists.

Third, the 550 kilometre expanse of safe, pristine, coconut-fringed and sandy tropical beaches of Ghana remain largely undeveloped. Beach resorts at Ada, Busua, Brenu Akyini and Ningo/ Prampram continue to attract local holiday makers and foreign tourists interested in sea, sand and sun tourism.

The fourth source of attraction is the virgin tropical rainforest with varied wildlife and which acts as a sanctuary for birds and some reptiles of rare species. The Kakum National Park and the adjacent Assin Atandanso Forest Reserve for example, provide a unique setting of tropical rainforest and different species of wildlife and also offer great potential for ecotourism development and research into different flora and fauna. These two nature reserve areas contain 420 butterfly species and are said to be comparable to any such collections in the world. High walking canopy provided in the park has greatly enhanced viewing and this has boosted the park's attractiveness.

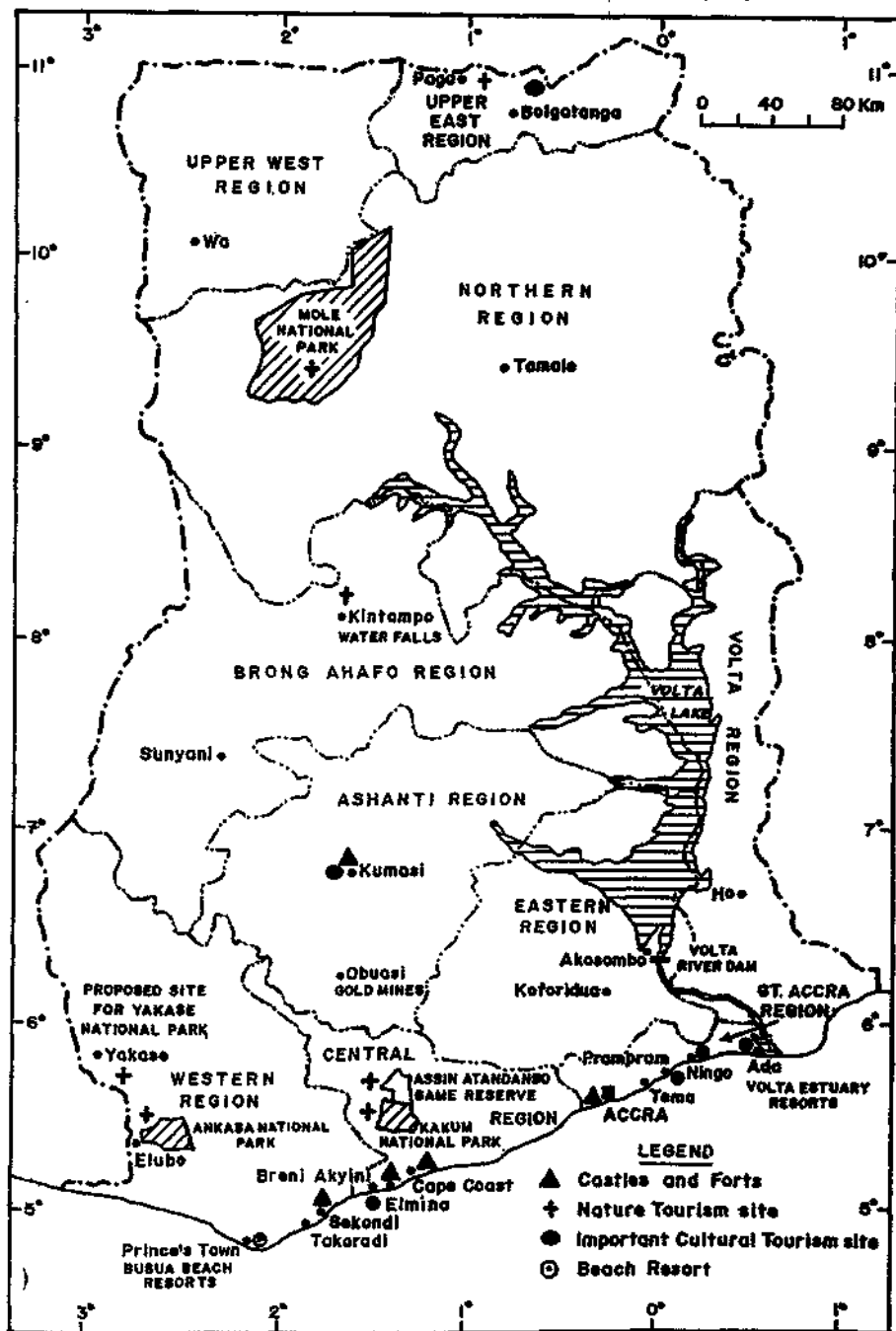
The Volta river and its environs also provide a very important source of attraction. The lake which developed behind the Volta river hydro-electricity power project in the mid 1960's is reputed to be one of the largest man-made lakes in the world. A number of islands dot the Volta riverscape and these islands have lots of tourists attractions in terms of varying aquatic flora and fauna and other man-made developments and activities. The estuary of the river at Ada provides avenue for water sports like swimming, canoeing and fishing.

Other minor attractions worth mentioning include numerous waterfalls at Boti and Wli, highlands at Amedzofe, monkey sanctuaries at Buabeng Fiema, large crocodile ponds at Paga and numerous game reserves dotted especially in the Savanna belts of country and exemplified by the 491,440 hectare Mole national park near Damongo in the Northern Region which is endowed with a wide variety of fauna. Fig. 1 gives the spatial distribution of some of these attractions resources.

Development of Tourism

The Government's pioneering attempt at tourism development was with the construction of a first class hotel with 110 rooms in 1956 in Accra for the accommodation of visitors who came to participate in Ghana's Independence celebration in March, 1957. Before this project, the accommodation sector of the industry was dominated entirely by privately-owned small sized budget hotels that were concentrated in the major urban centres of Accra, Kumasi and Sekondi-Takoradi.

Fig.1 GHANA'S TOURISM ATTRACTION SITES



Official recognition and ministerial administration for the tourism industry came about in 1960 when it became part of the Ministry responsible for Parks and Gardens. In 1962, the State Hotel and Tourist Corporation (SHTC) was established to develop and manage hotels and other tourist facilities. In addition, it was charged with the responsibility of serving as a catalyst for assisting private businessmen to invest in the hotel industry. In 1968, the Ghana Tourist Corporation (GTC) and the State Hotels Corporation (SHC) were created to replace the SHTC and in November, 1973, the GTC was transformed into Ghana Tourist Control Board (GTCB) and the Ghana Tourist Development Corporation (GTDC). While GTCB was responsible for defining overall development goals of the industry, GTDC was charged with the responsibility of providing financing mechanisms for potential developers in the industry.

The SHC succeeded in establishing and operating seven major hotels and numerous catering guest houses in various parts of urban Ghana. As part of the implementation of Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP), the need has arisen for the Government to divest itself from the pursuit of commercial activities that the private sector can effectively operate. This divestiture programme is currently being implemented and the SHC is likely to fold up soon.

In terms of tourism plan formulation, two of them are worth mentioning.

The Obuam Committee which was set up in 1972 came up with an evaluation report on Ghana's tourism resources. It highlighted on the potential areas for tourism investments and tax concessions and other incentives for potential investors. As a feasibility report, it lacked the depth and comprehension associated with tourism plans. The other report which was prepared by a Danish Consultancy firm, Hoff and Overgaard in 1973 through a Danish government financial and technical assistance to the government of Ghana was a masterpiece. This 15 year tourism master plan which was to be implemented over the period 1975 to 1990 covered three main areas. First, it evaluated Ghana's tourist assets and facilities. Second, it assessed the industry's manpower needs and requirements and finally it evaluated the country's physical, cultural and historical tourism resources (Hoff and Overgaard, 1977). The study which was completed in 1974 recommended among other things the concentration of the initial tourism development efforts along the coast because the coastal region was better endowed with infrastructural and more importantly substantial tourism specific infrastructure than the rest of the country. It also recommended for the integration of Ghana's tourism network with those of the West African sub-region to maximise resource use and benefits. Elaborate projections on tourist arrivals and earning were provided for the envisaged planned period. In spite of this painstaking effort, no attempts were ever made to implement the plan's proposals. This has been attributed to the political and economic instabilities that confronted the nation during and after that time period (Teye, 1988).

Tourism in Ghana, has in the past 10 years gained prominence in national development initiatives. As part of measures to ensure rational and speedy development of the industry, the Government came out in October, 1987 with a policy paper on tourism. The paper emphasized three (3) main areas of focus - in bound international tourism, regional tourism and domestic tourism. Emphasis was to be placed on the promotion of leisure and business travel. Among

the objectives of this policy was to use tourism to develop and enhance the country's environmental and cultural heritage (GTB, 1987). In April, 1991, the government set up a 13 member National Tourism Task Force with representatives from the public sector and Industry. Among the schedule of the task force was to review all the measures implemented under the government tourism policies of 1987 and also to prepare a medium term tourism plan to serve as a guide to the smooth development of the industry (ROG, 1991).

In the main, this three year medium term development plan (1993 - 1995) covers a review and recommendations for action in the following areas:

- a) Tourism Policy
- b) Tourism Administration
- c) Product development
- d) Manpower development
- e) Tourism financing and
- f) Tourism related Environmental issues

To further demonstrate the government's commitment to the promotion of tourism, the industry was placed under a full ministerial portfolio called the Ministry of Tourism in 1992. The Ministry now administers the affairs of the industry with the Ghana Tourist Board (GTB) which replaced GTCB as its executing agency. GTDC continues to exist and perform certain functions but on a very reduced scale because of limited public financial assistance that go to support its operations.

In recent years, fresh attempts have been made to devise a twenty year tourism development strategy spanning the years 1996 to 2006. The UNDP and WTO are providing technical assistance. This national strategy is expected to be evolved from the various regional tourism plans that have been drawn up already. The strategy is also to recommend measures that would help attract foreign and local investments into the industry as a way of meeting planned future development targets.

The industry is currently enjoying a lot of international donor support particularly in the areas of preparation of medium and long term development plans, establishment of tourism manpower training institutions and the development of attractions and markets for tourist products. International organizations involved in these programmes include:

1. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
2. The United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
3. The World Tourism Organization (WTO) and
4. The mid Western University Consortium (MUCIA) of the United States which provides consultancy services.

The Present Status of the Industry

Even though serious efforts at tourism development in Ghana has been a recent phenomenon, it must be noted that growth rates in the various aspects of the industry have been very attractive.

Before 1987, the number of international tourist arrivals was a little over 100,000. Growth ever since has been very encouraging. It rose from 103,440 in 1987 to 286,000 in 1995 reflecting a cumulative increase of about 110% since 1987. Table 1 provides these statistics.

Table 1 : International Tourist Arrivals to Ghana, 1995

| Year | Arrival | % Annual Growth | Cumulative Increase Since 1987(%) |
|------|---------|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1987 | 103,440 | - | - |
| 1988 | 113,784 | 10.00 | 10.00 |
| 1989 | 125,162 | 10.00 | 20.00 |
| 1990 | 145,780 | 16.47 | 36.47 |
| 1991 | 172,464 | 18.30 | 54.77 |
| 1992 | 213,316 | 23.69 | 78.46 |
| 1993 | 256,680 | 20.33 | 98.69 |
| 1994 | 271,310 | 5.70 | 104.39 |
| 1995 | 286,000 | 5.41 | 109.8 |

Source: Ghana Tourist Board (GTB), 1996

The mean growth rate is about 14.5 percent. GTB projects that these international arrivals will exceed one million by the year 2010.

The tourist are dominated by nationals of neighbouring member states of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) with citizens of Nigeria and Cote d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast) constituting the largest groups of foreign arrivals. Outside Africa, Europe, (particularly citizens of Britain and Germany) dominates. This is followed by North America, Asia, Middle East and South America in that order. In 1992 for instance, it was estimated that of all the 213,316 tourists that visited Ghana, 130,644 or 61.2 percent of them originated from Africa, 52,879 or 24.8 percent from Europe, 17,502 or 8.2 percent from North America, 10,260, or 4.8 percent from Asia, 1,618 or 0.8 percent from Middle East and the remaining 413 or 0.2 percent from South America (GTB, 1995). Increase growth in arrivals can be attributed to many factors which include the recent moderate growth of the national economy, which have averaged 5% per year over the last decade, improvement in infrastructure, increasing depreciation

of the national currency which has made cost of living in Ghana cheaper for foreign tourists, political and social stability and relative good image of the country abroad.

Majority (64.3% in 1992) of these tourists travelled for leisure and recreational activities while those who travelled for business purposes came next. The average length of stay was 9 days and expenditure levels averaged one thousand (1,000) dollars per trip (GTB, 1995)

In 1987, there were 421 hotels in the country with total room capacity of 8,652, giving an average of about 20 rooms per hotel. There are presently over 10,000 star rated hotel rooms in the country and an additional 30,000 budget class hotel rooms.

Disproportionate number of the hotel rooms are concentrated in the two major cities of Accra and Kumasi. Accra has half of the rated hotel rooms while Kumasi possesses a quarter. GTB estimates that hotel room occupancy levels for all categories of hotels are about 60%.

As at January 1992, hotel and restaurant workforce totalled 9383 with 70,000 additional employees in other areas of food and beverage service provision. Indirect employees associated with the industry is estimated at about 300,000 (ROG, 1997).

Earnings from the industry have correspondingly risen sharply in recent years with increases in foreign arrivals. It rose from a low figure of US\$36.49 million in 1987 to US\$233.2 million in 1995. Earnings have thus risen over six times since 1987. The dismal performance of the industry 1992 may be attributed to two factors. First, the fear and uncertainty associated with the general elections of 1992 and second, the overall poor growth in the economy. Table 2 gives the yearly trends of these tourism receipts.

Table 2 : International Tourism Receipts (US\$million)

| Year | Receipts (Million US\$) | %Annual Growth | % Growth From 1987 (Cumulative) |
|------|----------------------------|----------------|------------------------------------|
| 1987 | 36.49 | - | - |
| 1988 | 55.34 | 51.66 | 51.66 |
| 1989 | 72.09 | 30.27 | 81.93 |
| 1990 | 80.83 | 12.12 | 94.05 |
| 1991 | 117.70 | 45.61 | 139.66 |
| 1992 | 116.90 | 0.68 | 138.98 |
| 1993 | 205.62 | 75.89 | 214.87 |
| 1994 | 227.60 | 10.70 | 225.57 |
| 1995 | 233.20 | 2.46 | 228.03 |

Source: Ghana Tourist Board (GTB), 1995

The industry has also experienced rapid increases in the expansion and modernization of some of the basic and allied infrastructure and services. The road network and telecommunication facilities have been expanded and the International airport refurbished. The construction of a new International Conference Centre with seating capacity of 1,500, a new national theatre and the rehabilitation of the Kumasi and Tamale domestic airports are some of the public sector investments that have aided current developments in the industry.

Domestic tourism is pursued primarily for obligatory reasons like attending funerals and festivals; but data on it is almost non-existent. Domestic tours for properly planned recreation and leisure however are very minimal due to low disposal incomes of majority of the people and the lack of promotional drive and motivation on the part of the industry's practitioners.

The above perspective indicates that serious tourism development efforts have largely been recent and the level of development of tourism resources and attractions are modest and could be conveniently placed at the involvement stage of Butler's tourist resorts evolutionary model (Butler, 1980). The plans and programmes pursued have been less comprehensive and coordination with the other sectors of the economy remains weak. Effective implementation and promotional drives have also not been effectively pursued. Proactive changes are therefore desirable if the sector is to realize its future potentials.

Constraints and Proposals for Reform

Teye's authoritative study on Ghana's past tourism development efforts identified political instability as the single most important challenge facing the industry (Teye, 1988).

The relevance of this problem seems to be diminishing within the industry in recent times. This is because of the long political stability the country has enjoyed and also the institution of democratic governance. Current major concerns within the industry however include the following:

First, the tourism product range offered currently is very narrow. Several attractions especially the rural-based ones are yet to be developed. A policy of tourism diversification in terms of product, market and geographical areas needs to be promoted. A recent World Tourism Organization (WTO) publication indicated that tourism growth in Africa from 1995 to 2010 will principally be in the following sectors: (a) beach tourism; (b) nature, culture and heritage based tourism; (c) special interest or adventure and (d) Intra regional tourism (WTO, 1995) tourism. Government should accord areas endowed with such resources priority development attention.

Linked to the above challenge is the problem of redressing the spatial imbalances associated with tourism development in the major regions of the country. The legacy of the colonial system resulted in a structure characterized by spatial polarization of investments and the

development of some few enclaves made up of major cities and towns in southern and central areas of the country. This trend has not changed much since political independence as investments continue to be made principally to maximise economic gains without much consideration to their spatial implications. The Northern sections of the country, in particular, continue to suffer from these spatial inequities in national development. The tourism industry seems to be deepening these North/South disparities by concentrating development efforts in some few coastal enclaves to the neglect of the other potential sites outside this "core" zone. These seemingly neglected "peripheral" sites have exotic tourism potentials that can be developed with little capital to compliment the ongoing development activities in the "core" tourism areas.

Another important challenge is with the provision of tourism infrastructural and other supporting services. The Ghana Tourist Board (GTB) projects that foreign arrivals will increase from the present levels to about 400,000 by the year 2,000. This will represent about seventy-two percent (72%) increase over the 1995 arrivals. Added to this is the likelihood of increases in disposable income especially among the gradually increasing middle income households who may boost domestic tourism demand.

It is expected that such increases in demand would lead to excessive pressures on the use of existing tourism infrastructure and services. Presently, tourism accommodation requires an additional 8,000 rooms in the 3 to 5 star categories. Furthermore, the rapid increases in tourist arrivals would require improvements in various supporting facilities and services including expansion of the only international airport which caters for 60% of all foreign arrivals, construction of additional hotel accommodation, modernization of transportation and telecommunication facilities and improvement and expansion of travel and tour services.

The flow of investment into the industry for the provision of these facilities and services on the other hand has not been encouraging. In 1992, for example, 29 projects worth US\$5.5 million were approved for implementation. This is woefully inadequate in satisfying projected future needs of the industry since some of these approved projects may not even go beyond the approval stage.

If such a situation persists, it may have serious repercussions on foreign arrivals and this may reduce projected tourism receipts which are expected to rise from 1995 level of US\$233 million to about US\$400 million in the year 2,000. Furthermore, manpower needs of the various sectors in the industry are also expected to rise appreciably. Table 3 gives an illustration of this expected situation. Manpower requirements for accommodation and restaurant sectors and travel agencies are expected to rise by 28.6%, 25.8% and 69.5% respectively from 1993 to 1997. However, training facilities for meeting these needs are very limited.

Table 3 : Projections of Total Manpower Requirements, (in thousands) 1993 - 1997

| Secor | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 1997 |
|-----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| Accommodation | 7.077 | 7.537 | 8.027 | 8.548 | 9.104 |
| Restaurants | 2.377 | 2.578 | 2.667 | 2.824 | 2.99 |
| Travel Agencies | 0.55 | 0.629 | 0.718 | 0.82 | 0.932 |

Source: Manpower Survey of the Hotel and Tourism Industry, UNDP/ILO/GTB, 1992.

Concerns on environmental stress are also another potential challenge to the industry. The growth of tourism places serious environmental stress on destination areas. These stresses may be more damaging in environmentally sensitive areas like wetlands, game and wildlife reserves, lagoons and river estuaries which inevitably constitute some of the most important attraction sites in Ghana. In addition, problems associated with coastal dredging and constructional works, damping of old and wrecked fishing trawlers and vessels along the coast, urban environmental sanitation and waste disposal problems need serious attention.

Future targets that have been set can only be realized through better promotional efforts. The promotion of domestic tourism and the integration of our tourism system with those of the neighbouring states and the entire (ECOWAS) region as a whole, will greatly complement our efforts at attracting tourists from outside Africa. This issue is of great importance to the success of the industry particularly in the short term, as tourists from the West African region dominate Ghana's foreign tourist arrivals market. In addition to maximizing our earnings from the sector, these promotional efforts, especially at the domestic front, could generate numerous advantages. It could help promote national consciousness and pride. In addition, a good knowledge of the country by nationals could help speed up national integration and foster better understanding among people from different ethnic backgrounds. At the ECOWAS level, it could enhance good neighbourliness and create opportunities for the speedy realization of regional integration goals in the sub-region.

Based on the above exposition on the challenges within the industry, the following proposals are being made for the attention of policy makers and implementers.

First, an integrative tourism strategy is needed to help direct and control the future development of the industry. This strategy should help in promoting balanced spatial and sectoral development of the national space economy. In addition, the strategy should clearly define national tourism development priorities and philosophy. It should for example, be able to provide answers to some of the following pertinent issues --sectors of the industry that need special attention and development focus, kinds of investment regimes that are to be pursued, targetted originating countries and tourists mix and finally a clear definition of private and public sector roles and responsibilities. Additionally, a choice will have to be made on the spatial development strategies to be pursued, that is, for example, whether the emphasis is to be on the diffusionist strategy, which dwells on core-periphery structure and its anticipated

“spread” effects or on the dependency strategy with its characteristic foreign domination and minimal local inputs and initiatives (Oppermann, 1993). Without clear cut answers to some of these issues, it is unlikely that the currently evolving tourism strategic framework can meet future needs, expectations and aspirations of the industry.

Second, the investment needs for the future development of the industry which are immense should be accorded priority focus. Substantial investments are needed for the provision of services and facilities like hotels and other accommodation facilities, telecommunication and transportation services and travel and tour services. In addition, public goods and services like road network, health and educational facilities and security services will have to be modernized and expanded to meet the future demands of the industry. But since these investments may be beyond the means of the Central government, it becomes imperative that an elaborate drive to lure private investors, both local and foreign, should be initiated. Tax rebates and other favourable attractive terms should be used as lures. However, foreign domination of the industry should be avoided to prevent substantial currency leakage out of the country, a problem that is currently being faced in some developing countries, particularly those in the Caribbean (Seward and Spinard, 1982).

Third, environmental issues should be seriously addressed to ensure a sustainable development of the industry. Strict environmental monitoring codes and regulations should be put in place to cater for the existing facilities and sites while proposed projects should be subjected to Comprehensive Environmental Impact Assessment.

Fourth, domestic tourism, particularly among organized groups like school children, senior citizens, handicapped people, work place unions and other discernible social groups should be encouraged. Rebates on transport fares, accommodation and restaurant charges could be arranged with service providers. Furthermore, international tourist movements within the ECOWAS region, should be encouraged and protocols to this effect could be strengthened.

Fifth, local industries specializing in Arts and Craft should be aided both financially and technologically to produce more and better quality handicrafts and souvenirs for sale to tourists. This can generate additional incomes for individuals and also development revenue for districts and localities when local taxes are imposed on these products. Employment avenues will be created and migration to towns, in the case of rural areas with these production bases, will minimize.

Sixth, as an emerging industry in the national economy, the government is expected to contribute more to nurture and sustain its growth. Therefore, the “infant industry argument” holds here. Government guaranteed loans and assistance should be made available to existing and potential investors to help them promote viable projects. The Government with the assistance of foreign donors should continue to be responsible for the provision of more public goods and services that are basic to the development of the industry and whose capital and investment requirements may be beyond the resources of private capital and investors.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the factors that have been catalogued to aide the rapid growth of the industry should continue to receive serious attention from policy makers. The enabling environment that has been created for the recent upsurge in foreign arrivals should be sustained and improved upon. This is especially so with the present macro economic environment which is very conducive for the conduct of both public and private business activities and which continue to receive commendations from donors and other investing institutions.

Tourism Development Model

A model has been developed to highlight interrelationships among the pertinent factors that could help determine the future prospects of the tourism industry in Ghana. The model (Figure 2) provides a framework for a sustained assessment of some of the major decision variables that have been discussed above and which constitutes some of the most essential ingredients or inputs in any long term tourism strategy.

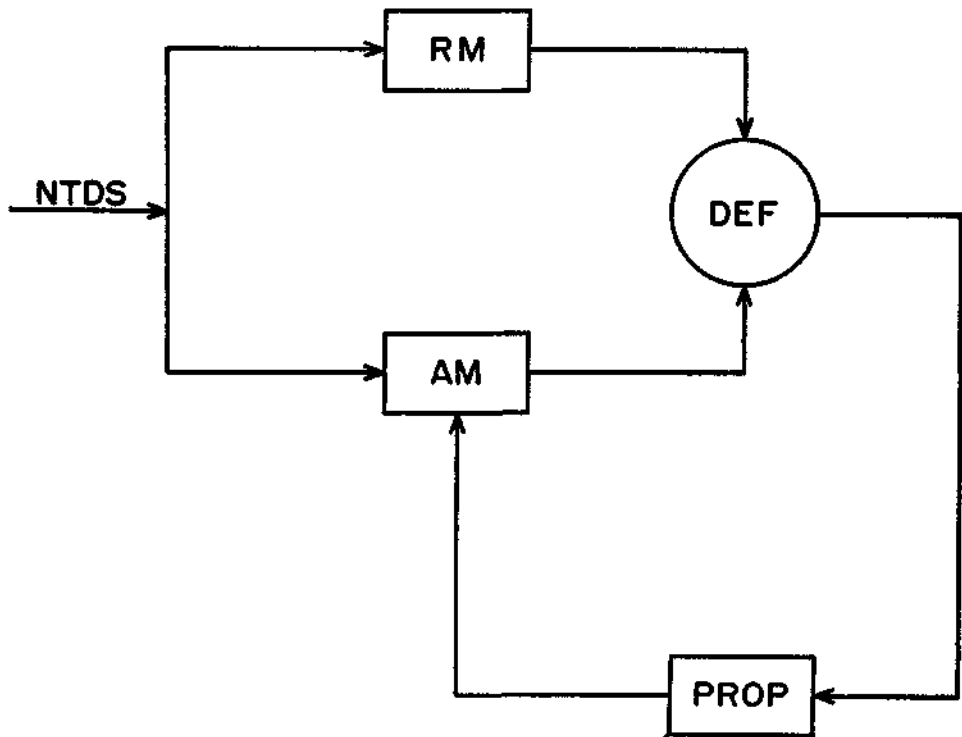
This model has four main components which are: Reference (RM), Adaptive (AM), Defect (DEF), and Proposal (Prop) sub-models.

The reference sub-model (RM) represent the industry's set targets for the future and which are usually spelt out in long term tourism strategies (NTDS). These targets serve as the template for assessing future performance of the industry. The Ghana Tourist Board (GTB) as already indicated elsewhere in the text, projects that foreign tourist arrivals may reach one million by the year 2010. This is an example of the tourist industry's target and exemplifies the RM. The Adaptive sub-model (AM) on the other hand represents the existing or current state of the industry's performance. It is the target that has been realized rather than the projected or planned targets as are normally indicated under RM.

The sub-model DEF reflects the differences or discrepancies that exist between the sub-models RM and AM. In other words, DEF represents the difference between the set targets of RM and what has been achieved in reality, that is AM. The likely sources of DEF may include short falls in the provision of requisite tourism-related infrastructural facilities like accommodation, telecommunication and accessibility, inadequate promotional efforts, lack of skilled manpower and political, social and economic instability. When the system is functioning optimally, RM should be equal to AM. At this point all defects (DEF) in the system are eliminated and all projected levels are realized. But this state is unattainable in real world situation (Landau, 1979).

Finally, PROP sub-model details out policy measures that may be fashioned out to deal with the problems outlined under the sub-model DEF. In other words, PROP sub-model represents or provides an opportunity for closing the gap between RM an AM and thereby leading to the attainment of the goals enshrined in RM. Examples of such policy measures under PROP

Fig. 2: A MODEL FOR FUTURE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT



NTDS (DEVELOPMENT POLICIES)— National Tourism development strategy

RM (REFERENCE MODEL)— Projected or Expected levels of Development

AM (ADAPTIVE MODEL) — Current or Existing Situation

DEF (SYSTEM SHORTFALLS)— Defects/Deficits in the System

PROP (PROPOSALS) — Policies for redressing these defects

include the formulation of better tourism strategy, the redressing of environmental problems and promotion of sub-regional and domestic tourism.

The utility of this model for long term planning and development is immense. Long term development strategies are usually partitioned into a series of short term "rolling" plans which allow for continuous assessment of the extent of realization of plan objectives and set targets. This model can provide very useful framework for monitoring and evaluating long term and future tourism strategies at different points in time during the implementation phase. It allows for the incorporation of quick remedial measures to resolve isolated problems at each point in the plan implementation process.

Conclusion

Even though the growth of tourism in Ghana has been a recent phenomenon, growth rates in the various aspects of the industry have been very phenomenal. It is forecast that tourism would continue to achieve high levels of growth in the future.

The study revealed that in spite of the unique and numerous tourism resources and the development potential that the industry possess, certain vital measures would have to be put in place to ensure its smooth and sustained growth.

These policy measures include the need for a comprehensive and visionary tourism strategy to guide and regulate the future development of the industry. In addition, it is recommended that problems associated with inadequate infrastructural facilities and services, environmental stress and spatial imbalances in the development of the industry should be adequately addressed. Furthermore, it is anticipated that promotional efforts would be vigorously pursued to enhance domestic tourism and also help to attract more tourists from the member states of ECOWAS. Finally, it is proposed that the Government's involvement in tourism should be intensified especially at this stage of the industry's development. Government should as a matter of priority expand her investments in the provision of public goods and services vital for the smooth development of this fast emerging industry.

Given the country's socio-economic and political stability and the present favourable external circumstance by way of the nation's good image abroad, the implementation of the above strategies should ensure continuous growth of tourism throughout this century and beyond.

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