

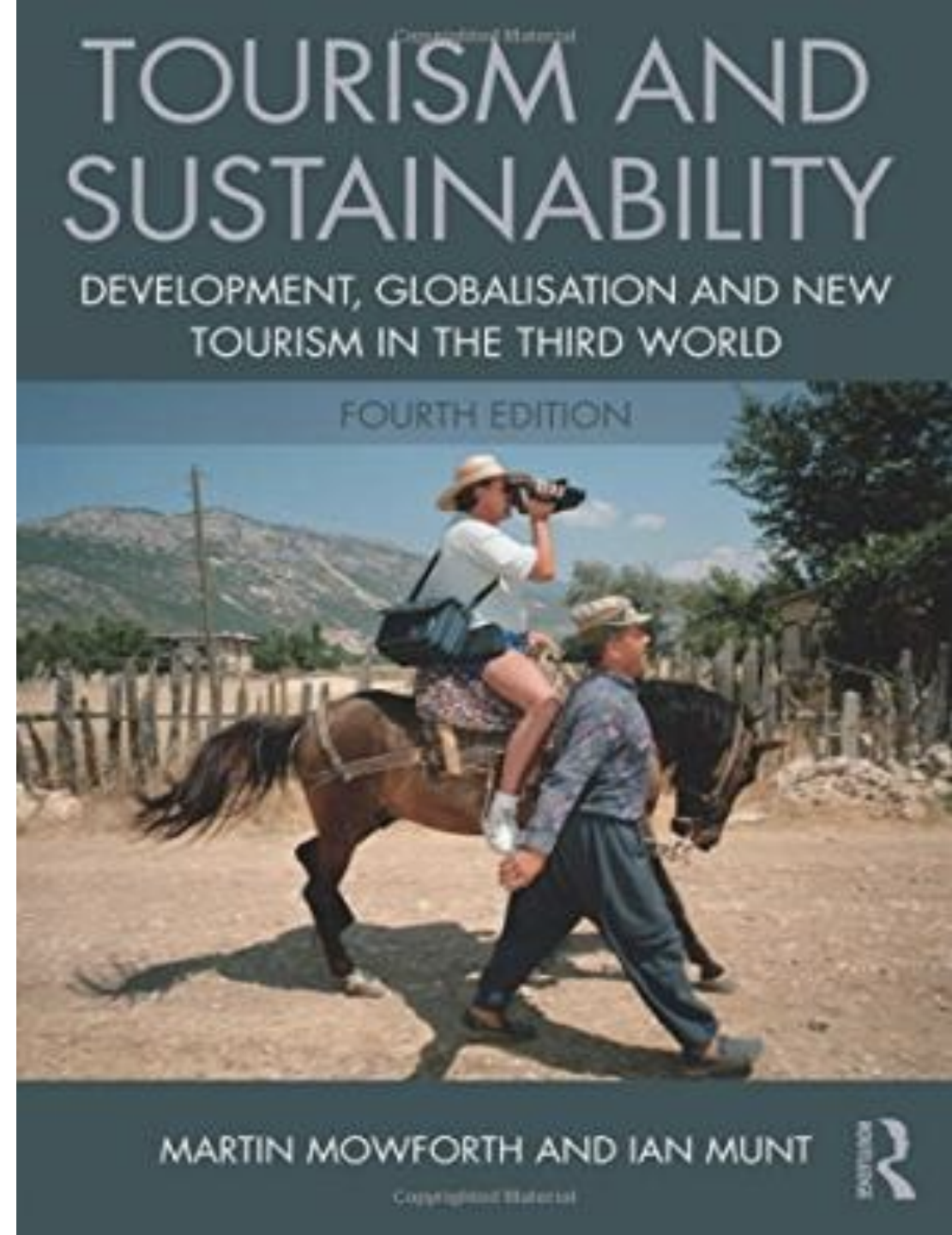
Week 4. Nature Tourism and Ecotourism. Trendies on the Trail



Readings

-Mowforth and Munt 2003 (Chapter 5) A new class of tourist: trendies on the trail. In Mowforth and Munt 2009 *Tourism and Sustainability. Development and Tourism in the Third World*, pp. 125-155

-Cohen, Sott 2011 Lifestyle travellers: backpacking as a way of life, *Annals of Tourism Research* 38 (4)



Objectives

_introduce and define nature tourism & ecotourism as modalities/niches/models within the tourism industry

_ nature tourism, neoliberalism & sustainability

_who are the natural tourists?

_reflect on the “natural stage” and “natural encounters” as elements in the tourist gaze of encounter



“Tourism can be used to differentiate and exploit both socially and spatially”
(Mowforth and Munt)

NATURE-BASED TOURISM AND NEOLIBERALISM

- Nature-based tourism recreates and redefines nature in ways that make it more compatible with the logics of neoliberalism
- Capitalization of nature
- Implies a process of aesthetization of wilderness /risk



- Commodification of nature: nature can be conserved or saved because of its market value, and hence it can be transformed into an economic resource, a commodity

Commodification of nature through tourism

- Nature is produced, reproduced and redesigned as a tourist attraction
- Nature as a product to be consumed to make profit

NATURE BASED TOURISM, ECOTOURISM

WHAT IT IS?

-One of the most prevalent forms of alternative tourism since the mid 1980s, early 1990s

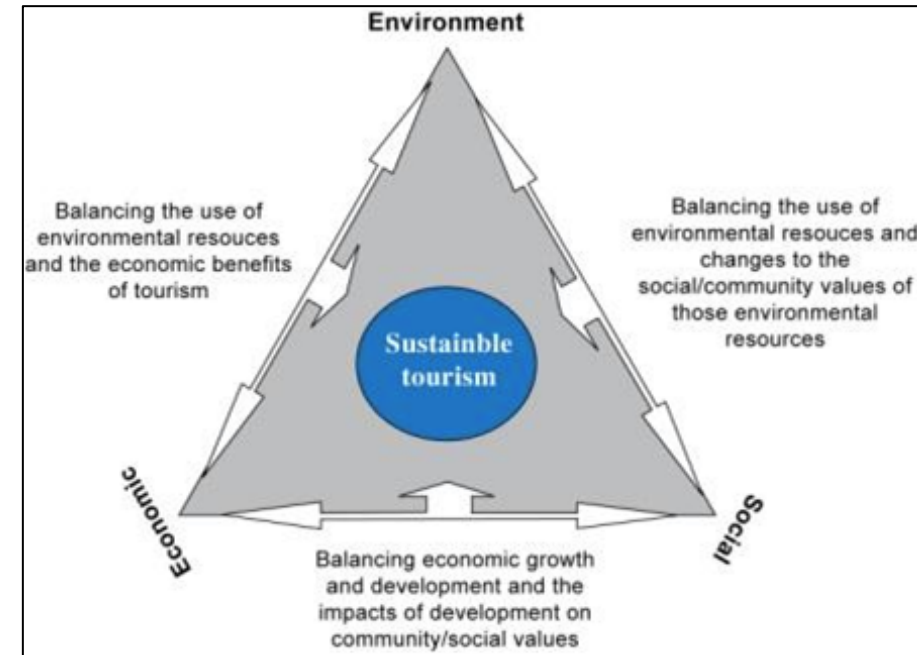
-Parallel to the emergence of the **global environmental awareness/movement**:
One planet, one Earth

-**Sustainability**: economy + environment+ society

-Awareness and creation of Natural Protected Areas

In tourism scholarship it has been referred to as

TRAVEL, TRENDY, TRECKING TOURISM



REACTION AGAINST the 'ERE WE GO', 'ERE WE GO' Spanish Costa Style

- Sea, Sand, Sea and Sex Mass Tourism
- Tourists: narrow minded, undiscerning, unenergetic, inexperienced, unimaginative, unintelligent, boring, unreal, false & highly unsustainable

PLAY 1: Benidorm Series (23")

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSqb8jXEPkE>

A DEFINITION of NATURE BASED TOURISM- ECOTOURISM

- A form of responsible travel to areas of high environmental value + helps to conserve those environments + contributes to local economies

PLAY 2: Celestun, Biosphere Reserve Promotion (2')

<http://vimeo.com/3500240>



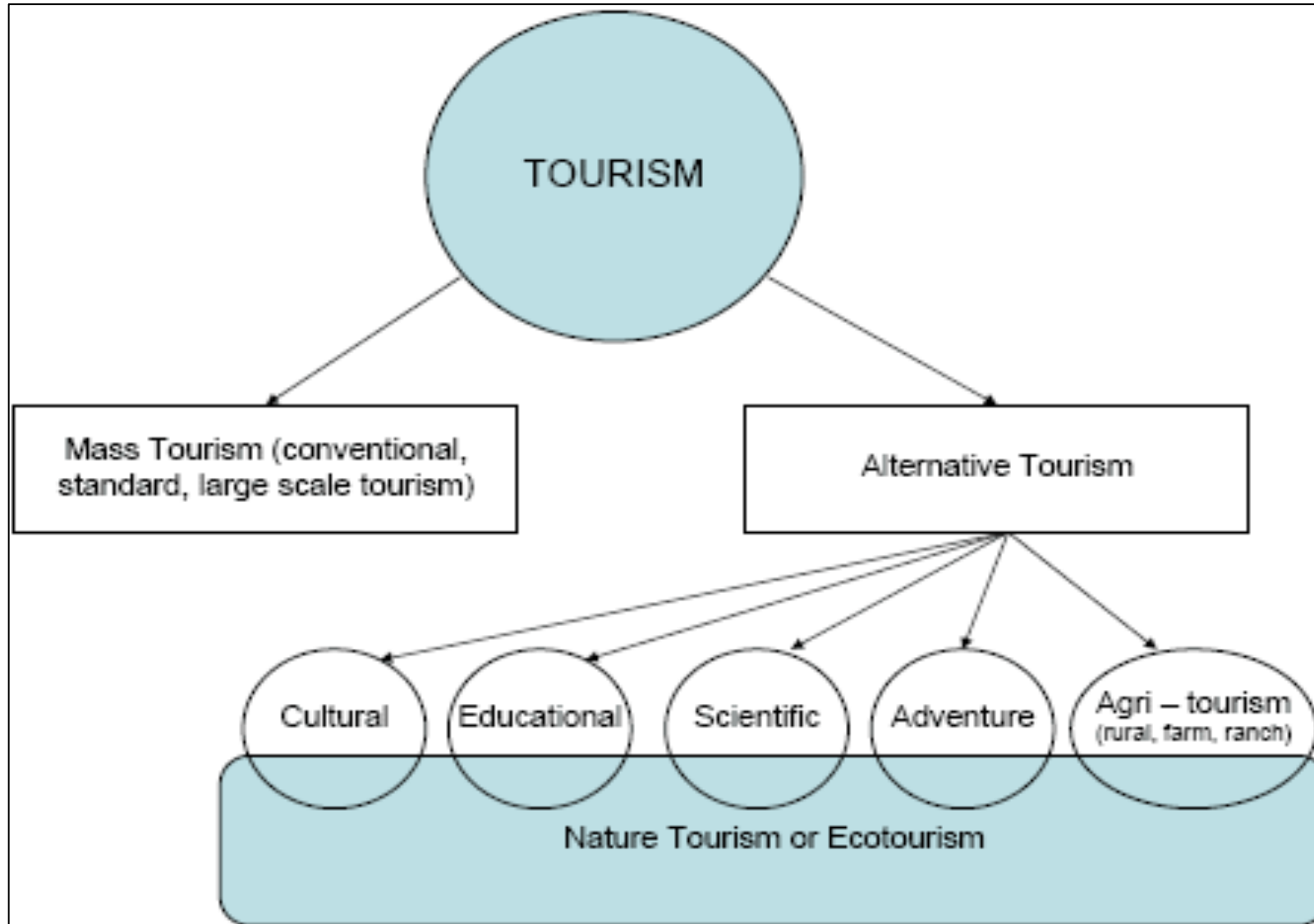
IN DETAIL from NATURE TOURISM TO ECOTOURISM: EDUCATION ABOUT NATURE/IN NATURE

- Defined in the [2002 Capetown Declaration](#) as tourism which...
- ✓ minimizes negative economic, environmental, and social impacts;
 - ✓ generates greater economic benefits for local people and enhances the well-being of host communities;
 - ✓ improves working conditions and access to the industry;
 - ✓ involves local people in decisions that affect their lives and life chances;
 - ✓ makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, to the maintenance of the world's diversity;
 - ✓ provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social and environmental issues;
 - ✓ provides access for physically challenged people;
 - ✓ is culturally sensitive: engenders respect between tourists and
 - ✓ hosts, and builds local pride and confidence.

(See Ron Mader, at <http://www.transitionsabroad.com/listings/travel/responsible/article/ecotourism-and-responsible-travel.shtml>)



Since the mid 1990s, all tourism models claim to be “sustainable” on discourse but we need to pay attention to practices!!!



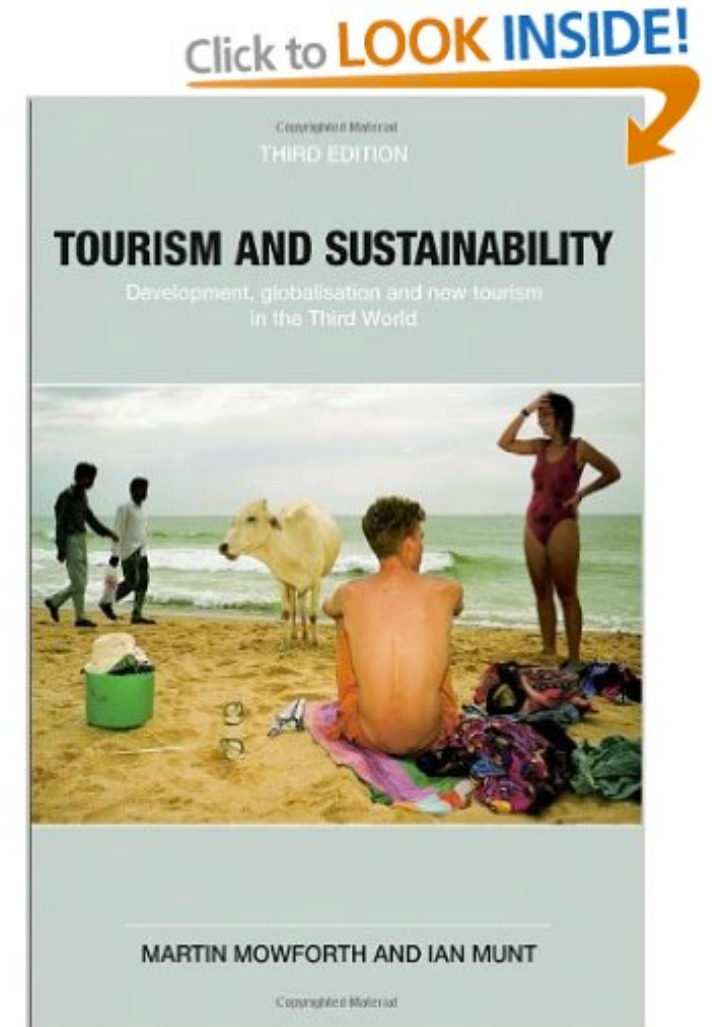
ADVENTURE



WHO ARE THE NATURE TOURISTS?

ECOTOURISTS: The new bourgeoisie

- Older and professionally successful tourists...”the cream of Manhattan and the City”
- High economic and cultural capital
- Interested in the “environment”
- Able to pay high prices for such holidays



PLAY 3: Travel Guide to a South African Safari (5')

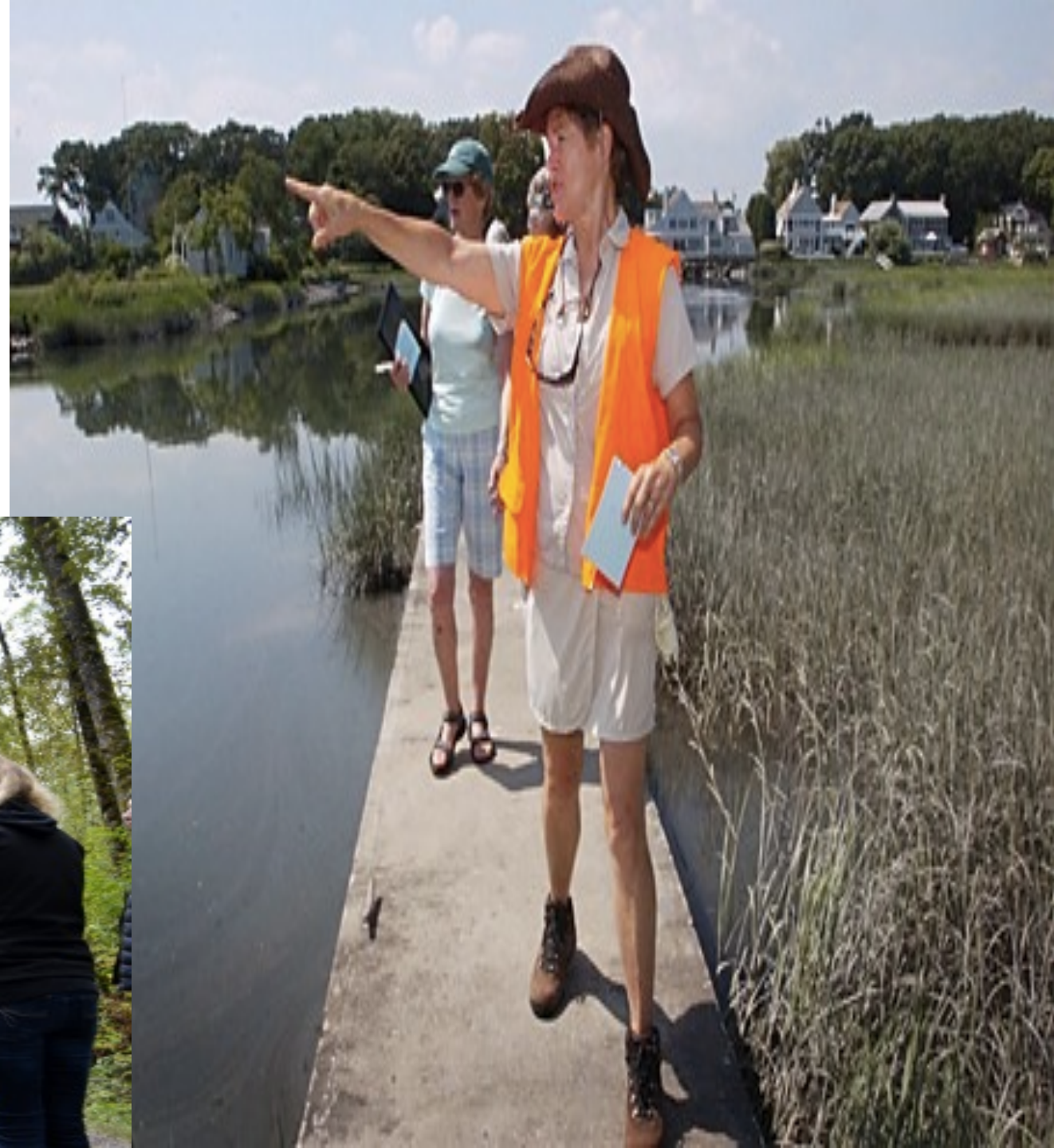
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M46ybQC GM4s>

The new intellectuals

- beyond relaxation towards learning & exploring
- cultural superiority?

The travel professionals

- tour leaders



EGO-TOURISTS: The new petit bourgeoisie

- Not so high economic and cultural capital
- Taste makers; trend setters
- Look in travel an alternative lifestyle, distinction back at home
- “People who care”



Towards a NEW WAVE TOURISM: NEW TRENDIES ON THE TRAIL

(Mowforth and Munt)

- tourist as an insult// **travellers** instead: adventurous, broad-minded, intelligent, discerning, energetic, experienced, keen, imaginative, independent, intrepid, real, true
- More **thoughtful** tourism approach: from the middle classes
- More **individually** centered and **flexible** holidays
- search for **authentic** experiences
- romantic solitary gaze
- craving for social and geographical distance

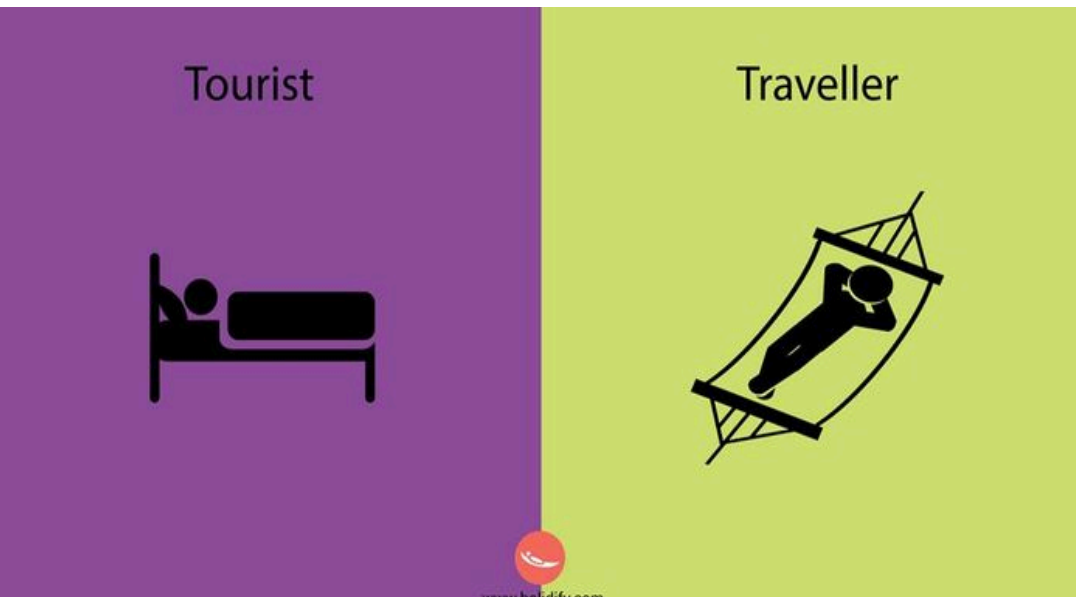
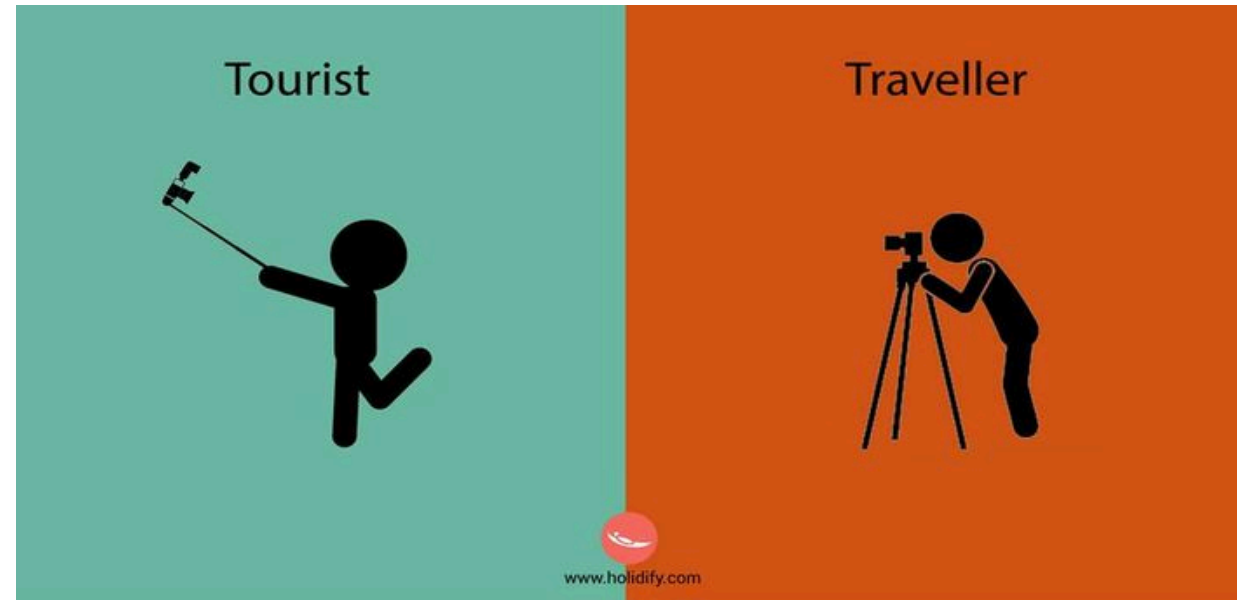
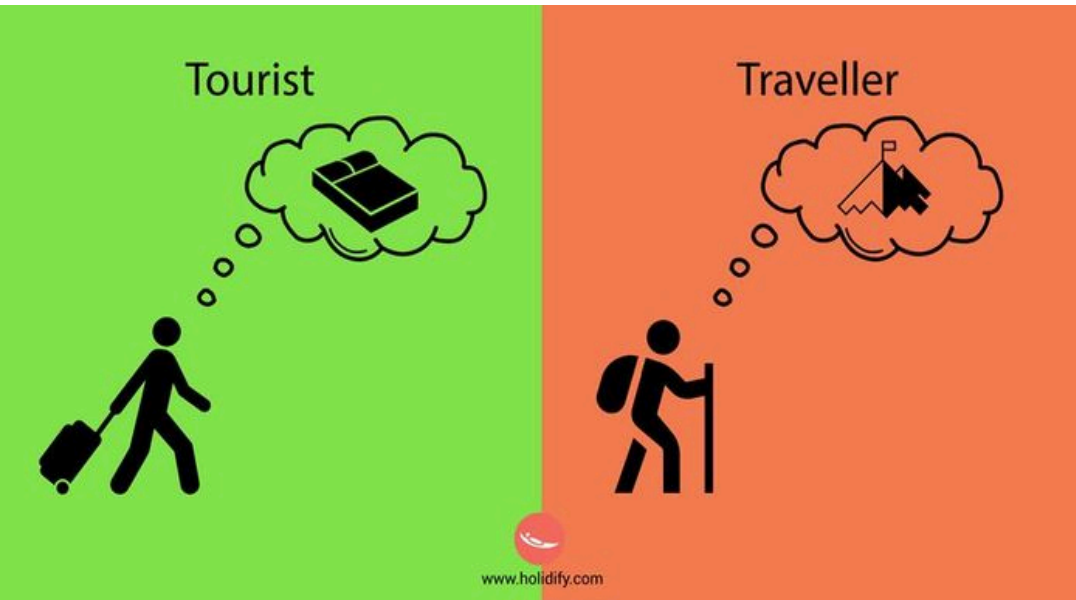


NEW TRENDIES ON THE TRAIL WANT TO BE CONSIDERED TRAVELLERS

See: <http://www.scoopwhoop.com/inothernews/tourist-traveller-posters/>



Concept of the traveller builds upon certain **body dispositions & motivations**



FROM LIFESTYLE TRAVELLERS TO BACKPACKING TOURISM

-travel as a way of life



BACKPACKING TOURISM: MAIN CHARACTERISTICS

- Main motivation: “meeting the people”// ”meeting nature”
- Travel alone or small groups
- Travel for longer time, “extended holidays”
- Budget tourism
 - not high-spending tourists
 - status constructed out of living cheaply
- Flexible tourism style
- Look for what is outside the books



<http://www.tryanythingonceblog.com/2012/05/i-became-a-backpacker-in-my-30s.html>

Watch: 10 Things Backpackers Need

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7ywr0NzJmgl>

BACKPACKER STEREOTYPES

- Associated with “hippy”, “drifter”, non mainstream tourism of the 60s and 70s
 - “Unkempt, immoral, drug-taking individual” (Scheyvens)
 - _ Permeate the imaginaries of this tourist niche
- “Bargain hunters”
- “Ego-tourists”
 - do not search for real encounters with others but with themselves



IDEALIZED IMAGES OF BACKPACKERS

- Associated with a more responsible and culturally aware individual
- “A curious and adventurous traveler in search of ‘authentic’ experiences” (Cohen)
- Engages in meaningful consumption
- **Lifestyle travellers** (Cohen)
- not even tourists but a way of life
- lifelong wanderers /gap year /respond to a crisis

Please be a traveler,

not a *tourist*.

Try **new things**, meet **new people**,
and **look beyond** what's right in front of
you.

Those are the keys to

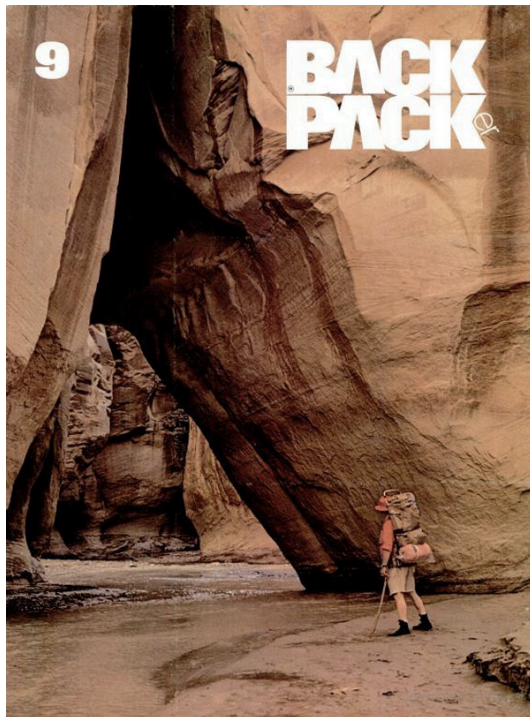
**understanding
this amazing world**

we live in.

-Andrew Zimmern-

IDEALIZED IMAGES TRANSLATES INTO AN ACRITICAL DESIRE FOR BACKPAKER TOURISM AS A TOURISM SUBMARKET & TOURIST IDEAL TYPE : encounters with nature

- Embrace and generates deeper cultural contact per se
- Morally better and higher than other forms of tourism
- Talks higher about yourself back at home



Nature Tourism relies upon certain **technologies** and **infrastructures**, ideally beyond “packages”; and towards idea of **adventure**, and uniqueness of experience

Tourist

inform relatives

book hotel

start packing
3 weeks before

book travel
tickets

Traveller

pack a bag!

GO !

Tourist



Traveller



Tourist



Traveller



Tourist



Traveller



Several “musts” in nature tourism will better fulfill travellers motivations of adventure and maintain places as nature tourism destinations...

Nature Tourism in Natural Protected Areas

- _small scale
- _less infrastructure development
- _nature centered: isolated from humans (zoning)
- _encounter with nature, sometimes just single resources (Western ideas of environment)



- _encounter with “others” in nature: face to face interactions minimal (marketing)

Romantic and solitary tourist gaze of encounter demands series of infrastructures to go there & ways of being and moving there

Tourist



Traveller



Tourist



Traveller



Tourist



Traveller



Tourist



Traveller



NATURE ADVENTURE & HUMAN SETTLEMENTS ISOLATION : implications for local populations

_commodification of nature
(particular species)

_new servitude for local
populations (no fishing, no
cutting wood)

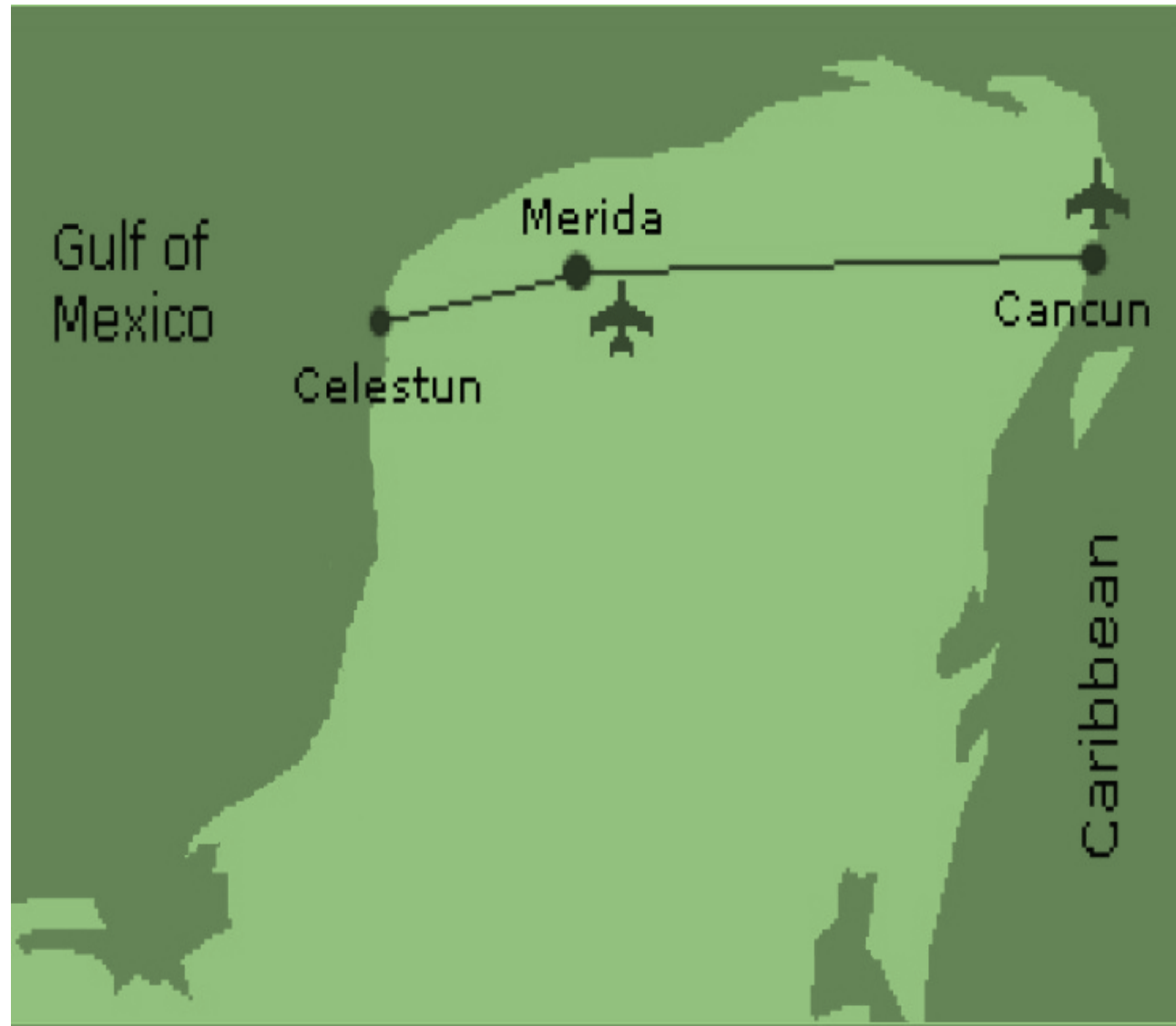
_road to sustainable
development?



Biosphere Reserve Ria Celestun, Gulf of Mexico Coast, Yucatan Peninsula

_UNESCO Natural Protected Area (1989)

_Ecotourism as alternative strategy towards *sustainable* development (1990s)



The region's must see packaged “nature stop”

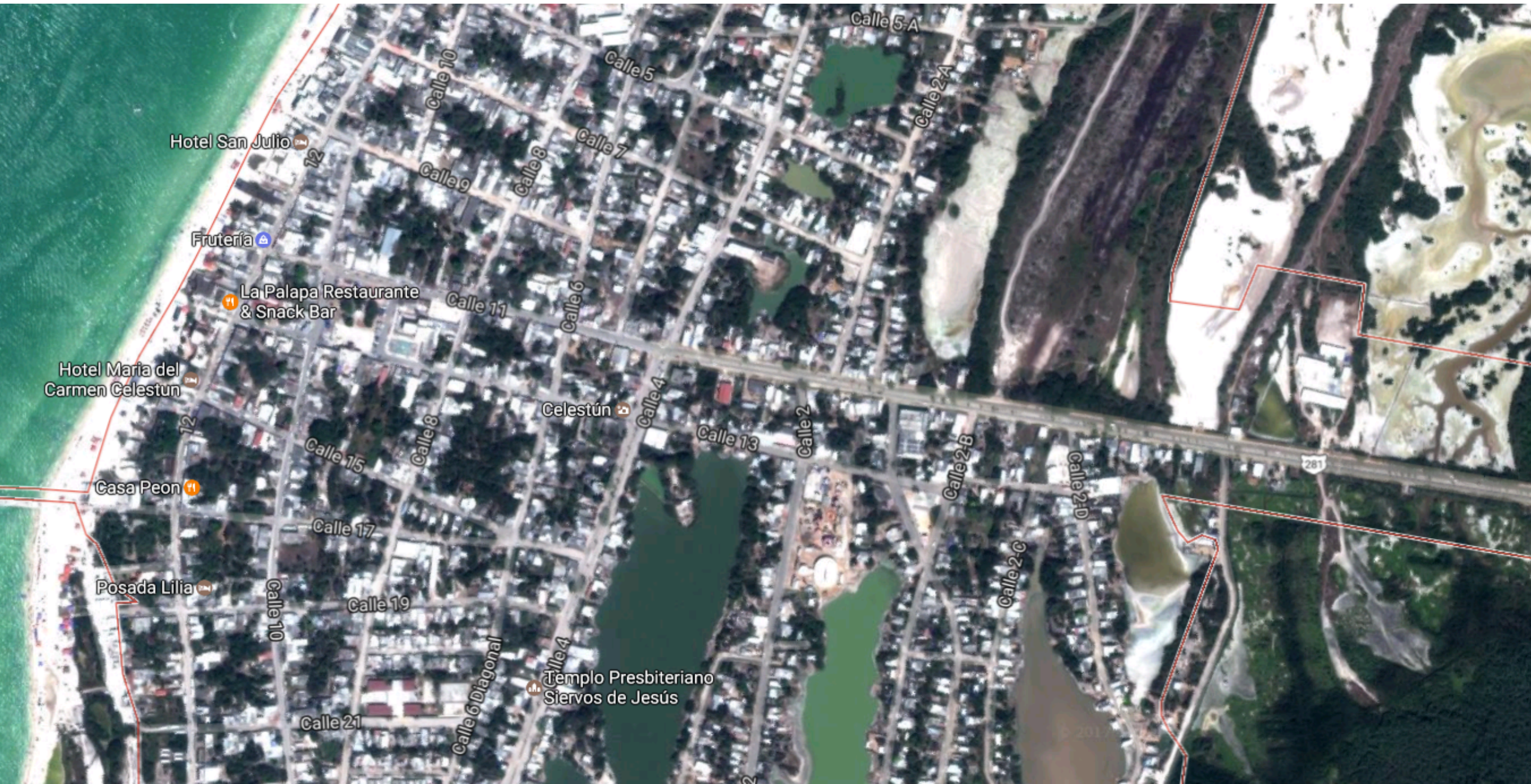
A-geographical site, a conservation area with no clear culture or place attached to it; a “biodiversity”, “island-like” “virginal paradise”



Island-Image enabled by morphology of place as detached from inland, connected by 1km bridge built in 1987



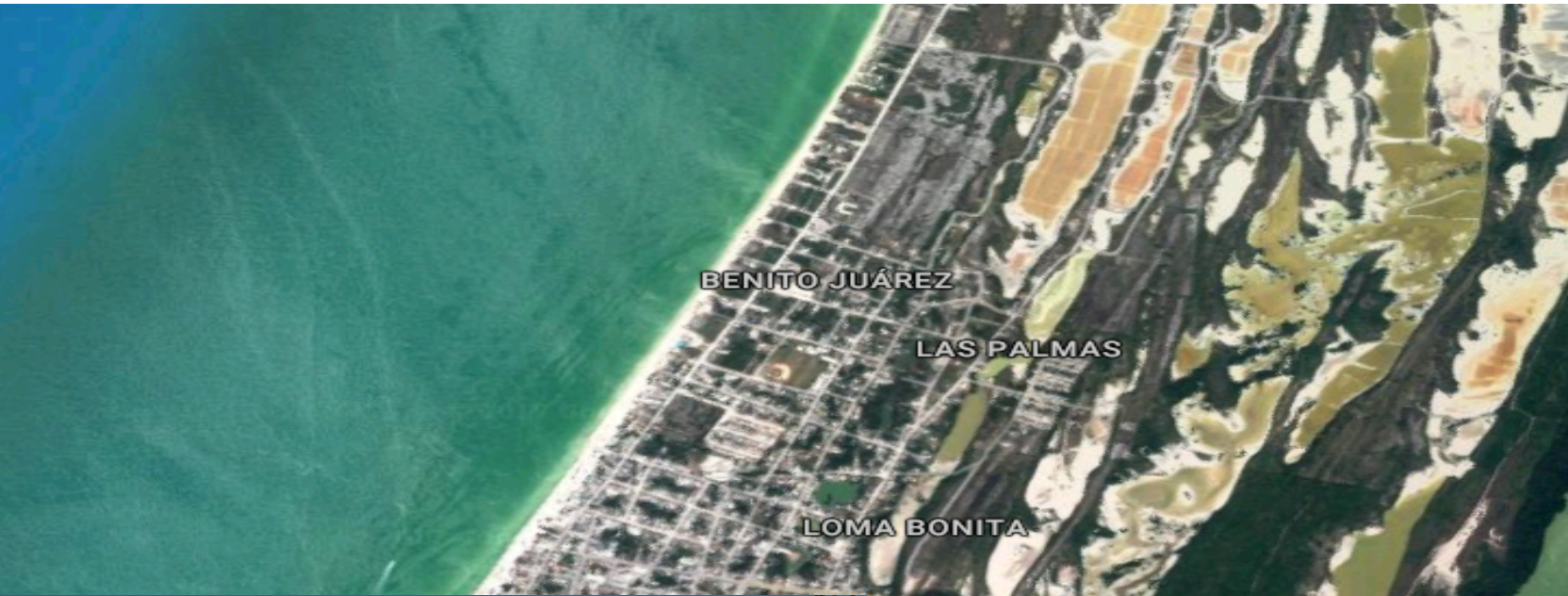
Celestun is densely urbanized and 2nd biggest fishing port of Yucatan



1990s-...Ecotourism as sustainable alternative to sea, sand and sun tourism; “el campo” and fishing
_“The Pink-Packaged Tourism” / “The Biosphere Tourism”



Spatial re-organization around pink flamingos



_nature tourism infrastructures & practices deepening spatial and social inequalities



“The Afghanistan of the Maya Coast”



"Gringo Trails" refers to the well-trodden paths across the globe by "big groups of travelers with power."

Are tourists destroying the planet—or saving it? How do travelers change the remote places they visit, and how are they changed? From the Bolivian jungle to the party beaches of Thailand, and from the deserts of Timbuktu, Mali to the breathtaking beauty of Bhutan, GRINGO TRAILS traces stories over the course of thirty years to show the dramatic long-term impact of tourism on cultures, economies, and the environment.

<http://icarusfilms.com/new2013/gt.html>

