

The Impact of Corruption and Organized Crime on the Development of Sustainable Tourism

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Purpose:

This study focuses on the phenomenon of organized criminality and corruption. Its purpose is to analyse and explain how organized crime and corruption impact the processes of environmentally sustainable development and, indirectly, the development of tourist destinations and activities.

Design/Methods/Approach:

We analyzed relationships between tourist destinations, sustainable tourism, organized crime, and corruption from secondary data. We further synthesize findings and supplement them with observations and previous research findings.

Findings:

Organized crime and corruption have a direct impact on the sustainable development of tourist destinations and also on the services and activities of sustainable tourism. Based on a comparison of several indexes, the sustainable development of tourist destinations is greatly (negatively) affected by eco-criminality which holds back the development of sustainable tourism. It can be concluded that countries with less corruption have a better developmental sustainability, which is the building block of sustainable tourism.

Originality/Value:

Developing theoretical explanations and systematic studies are necessary as a first order of business if countries wish to prosecute organized crime and corruption relating to tourism. This is the first study in Slovenia dealing with this problem, thereby opening many questions for future research.

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Keywords: sustainable tourism, sustainable development, corruption, organized crime, tourist destinations

Vpliv korupcije in organizirane kriminalitete na razvoj trajnostnega turizma

Namen prispevka:

Prispevek se osredotoča na področje organizirane kriminalitete in korupcije, in sicer je namen raziskati in pojasniti vpliv le-teh na proces trajnostnega razvoja in posredno tudi na trajnostni razvoj turističnih destinacij.

Metode:

Analizirali smo povezave med turističnimi destinacijami, trajnostnim turizmom, organizirano kriminaliteto ter korupcijo s pomočjo sekundarnih podatkov. Nadalje smo naredili sintezo ugotovitev ter le-te dopolnili in primerjali z rezultati preteklih raziskav.

Ugotovitve:

Organizirana kriminaliteta in korupcija neposredno vplivata na trajnostni razvoj turističnih destinacij kot tudi na aktivnosti trajnostnega turizma. S pomočjo primerjave med več kazalniki ugotovljamo, da na trajnostni razvoj turističnih destinacij močno negativno vpliva t. i. ekokriminaliteta, ki zavira razvoj trajnostnega turizma. Na podlagi ugotovitev zaključujemo, da imajo države z nižjo stopnjo korupcije boljši trajnostni razvoj, kar je osnova za razvoj trajnostnega turizma.

Izvirnost prispevka:

Razvoj teoretičnih razlag in sistematičnih študij je nujen korak, če želijo države preganjati organizirano kriminaliteto in korupcijo v turizmu. Pričujoča študija je prva v Sloveniji, ki obravnava to področje in posledično odpira mnoga področja za nadaljnje raziskovanje.

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Ključne besede: trajnostni turizem, trajnostni razvoj, korupcija, organizirana kriminaliteta, turistične destinacije

1 INTRODUCTION

In this study, we argue that mass tourism presents the greatest threat to sustainable development as people often choose this form of vacationing because it's cheaper than "individualistic tourism", even though the latter is usually more environmentally friendly. The downside of sustainable tourism is that the "product" – travel, vacation facilities, etc. – sometimes carries a high price. Tourism in general has a detrimental effect on local cultural heritage and the natural environment, the very qualities that attract tourists. This is the major contradiction of mass tourism – it destroys its own marketable "product". Furthermore, tourism destroys natural environments and endangers animal and plant species, and tourists compete for often scarce natural resources (e.g., water, electricity, space) with the local population. Another problem is the pollution caused by the air and road traffic necessary to bring tourists to and from tourist destinations. Tourists are relatively unaware of their negative impact on local communities, but expect to be warmly welcomed by the locals. We should not forget other negative consequences

of tourism suffered by locals, e.g., local residents are pushed off their land because it's needed to build hotels, tourist facilities are substandard and so cause more environmental pollution, and prostitution proliferates, as do gambling and other criminal activities.

Protection of the natural environment, which is the basis of sustainable tourism, has become one of the most pressing global issues, just as are issues regarding the relationship between energy needs and ecology. Crises and fluctuations in energetics and ecology quickly pass from one form to another (Mekinc & Cvikl, 2011). Developed countries have adopted legislation, implemented ecological taxes, and formed police units and other institutions with various mandates to combat pollution, the depletion of natural resources, and decrease of biodiversity (Brack, 2002). It's hard to say when in history these efforts started, since each country implemented its protective legislation at a different time. The USA started implementing laws to protect the environment at the end of World War II, and this legislation proliferated in 1970. In Europe, under the leadership of Great Britain, legal protective measures regarding the environment were adopted relatively early; the first laws were issued at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th (Šturm in Eman & Meško, 2012). In 1876, Great Britain issued a law on the protection of water sources from pollution; in 1911 Belgium issued a law on the protection of nature; in 1956 Great Britain proclaimed an act to regulate air pollution; in 1966 Sweden was first to implement a comprehensive legislation to ensure protection of its natural environment. Other countries followed suit: Romania in 1973, Japan in 1974, Hungary and France in 1976. In 1970, the USA proclaimed a national law on environment protection; the German Democratic Republic regulated its environmental issues by adopting constitutional laws in 1968; China did so in 1982. In all these countries there the need arose to not just implement national legislation, but also to establish international cooperation in the form of bilateral, multilateral or regional agreements (Eman & Meško, 2012).

Contemporary tourism faces many challenges, and one of the biggest is sustainability. The most developed and environmentally aware countries invest considerable resources to ensure the sustainability of their tourism. Sustainable tourism is impossible without effective state policies on environmental sustainability. Tourist resorts that function on principles of sustainability can only be successful if the natural environment and cultural heritage are sufficiently protected. The greatest threats are always linked to eco-criminality, which often quite directly endangers individuals, communities and whole countries. As established by Eman (2012), eco-criminality often has indirect effects on security, because it destabilizes natural environments and threatens the safety of local communities; the negative consequences of eco-criminal activities can also spread across state borders. Organized crime and corruption are two significant factors of eco-criminality.

In addition, organized crime directs money away from sound investments towards low quality one, which in the end generate relatively little future-oriented economic activity. Criminal finance encourages investment in non-productive sectors (International Narcotics Control Board [INCB], 2002). Thus criminals often invest their criminal proceeds in real estate, as well as in sectors that are familiar to them such as bars, restaurants, prostitution, cars and transport companies (Unger,

2007). This has also been confirmed in a study on organized crime in Europe 2004 (Fijnaut & Paoli, 2004). The cooperation of citizens in combating the (criminal) interests of individuals and capital is crucial. They can alert authorities when they detect illegal activities and help avert decisions that are potentially hazardous for all. Organized criminal groups are extremely flexible in changing their *modus operandi* and easily adapt to new socio-economic conditions and business trends. Tourism and enterprises that endanger the environment have always attracted the criminal element striving for influence and looking for profits.

This study focuses on the phenomenon of organized criminality and corruption, which means that we will intentionally leave aside the otherwise no less important consequences, such as environmental pollution, water shortages, and various social, cultural and economic impacts. Organized crime uses corruption as a means to achieve the realization of illegal enterprises, as has also been determined by the International Narcotics Control Board (International Narcotics Control Board [INCB], 2011: 3): *“... the most successful criminal organizations are usually those that are able to make use of corruption (supported by violence and systematic intimidation) to weaken official controls and law enforcement. That is why cities, countries or other geographical areas exposed to intense drug trafficking activities often have a high incidence of corruption (and violence). In some instances, criminal organizations also manage to buy the protection of public officials so that they can undermine the activities of competing criminal organizations.”* It so happens that certain tourist destinations are completely controlled and managed by criminal organizations.

The influence of transnational crime in our modern global societies is illustrated by some numbers published in a United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime report (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime [UNODC], 2011: 99): *“The estimated US \$ 2.1 trillion of crime proceeds believed to be generated every year by crime, of which US \$ 1.6 trillion are believed to be available for laundering, including crime proceeds of US \$ 0.9 trillion from transnational organized crime, of which some US \$ 0.6 trillion are thought to be available for laundering, create a large number of negative socio-economic consequences, depending on the specific predicate crimes.”* Criminal organizations are increasingly focusing their activities into eco-criminality and tourism. Our goal is to make an overview of the various forms of organized crime in the world, which are, through eco-crimes and corruption, holding back or thwarting the development of sustainable tourism. Because corruption is often the main tool used by organized crime to carry out illegal activities that impact sustainable development, we shall also analyze the relationship between these two hindering factors. Corruption at local and state levels can independently and directly influence the sustainable development of an environment. We often see that there is a conflict of interests in regard to how local communities are managed. Corruption which impacts sustainability is most evident in administrative procedures led by local or state officials. How serious the problem of transnational crime and its influence on local communities is, was exposed in a UN Security Council Report in which it is noted: *“... with concern the serious threat posed in some cases by drug trafficking and transnational organized crime to international security in different regions of the world.”* (UNODC, 2010: 231).

In combating eco-crime, institutions of repression and legislative bodies often deal with well organized criminal groups which use corruption, bribery and intimidation to influence tourism activities, all in contradiction with the principles of sustainable tourism and development. Grizold (1999) states that the universality of security is clearly evident from: the integrity of its contents, the interconnectedness of all aspects of life in a society (economic, political, cultural, educational, environmental, military, etc.), and the reciprocal nature of the interdependence of all living beings on Earth. This thought is based on the fact that an interdisciplinary approach is necessary to achieve sustainable tourism at any location.

2 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

To understand the phenomenon in question, we need to clarify some basic terms; firstly *tourism* and *sustainability*, then we shall go to the meanings of *sustainable tourism* and *sustainable development*, and finish with *sustainable tourism development*. In tourism literature, we can often read about the economic benefits of tourism, it's present and future trends, and the like. Tourism can indeed be considerably beneficial to economies, but we will stay focused on sustainability and environments, as rapid growth is often responsible for a considerably negative environmental impact. Neto (2003) explains that natural resource depletion and environmental degradation associated with tourism activities pose severe problems to many regions favoured by tourists.

As an industry, tourism, has an enormous impact on nature, and this impact is an important factor when talking about sustainable development and sustainability. The number of people travelling abroad reached 1 billion in 2012 (United Nations World Tourism Organisation [UN WTO], 2012). Tourism is the world's fastest growing industry, employing 7% of the world's workers, and is growing even faster with globalization (UN WTO, 2012). Tourism is a powerful force of change in the economies of both most and least developed countries (Cottrell, 2001; Gumus, Eskin, Veznikli, & Gumus, 2007; Luo, 2011). Neto (2003: 212) considers tourism as one of the most remarkable socio-economic phenomena of the 20th century and says: "*It is an increasingly important source of income, employment and wealth in many countries.*"

Countries where tourism is an important driving force of the economy are becoming more concerned with environmental issues.

Nowadays, sustainability has become one of the newest hot topics. The term came into widespread use in 1987 with the publication of *Our Common Future*, a report by the World Commission on Environment and Development (World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED], 2005), and then spread all over the world and through different industries (Luo, 2011). The best way to introduce sustainability is therefore with a quote from the WCED (1987: 46) report: "*Generally speaking, **sustainability** represents an idealized state of society where people live to satisfy their needs in environmentally sound and socially just ways so as to not compromise the ability of other human beings from doing the same now and in the future.*"

The World Travel and Tourism Council et al. (World Travel and Tourism Council, World Tourism Organization, Earth Council [WTTC-WTO-Earth Council], 1995: 30) defines **sustainable tourism** as: "... *sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems.* "

The first call for the implementation of national sustainable development strategies was made at the UN Conference on Environment and Development [UNCED] in Rio in 1992 (Brodhag & Talière, 2006). To follow with WCED's (1987: 40) pioneering work, the definition of **sustainable development** would be: "... *it is development that meets needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own.*" Definitions of sustainable development are comprised of two parts: the meaning of development and the conditions necessary for sustainability (Miltin, 1992). Dudley (1993) explains *development* which in his words is not just about increased wealth, but mainly means change; in behaviour, in aspirations, and in the way which one understands the world around one. Tosun (2001) points out that sustainable development is predominantly considered a long-term strategy to preserve and conserve the environment. Nunkoo and Ramkissoon (2009) agree with that and say that while the roles of tourism in the economic development of cities and in bringing several benefits to the locals are well recognized, tourism development has "*affected the community negatively*" in numerous ways. Communities are likely to suffer from traffic congestion, increasing crime rates, waste water generation and increased cost of living.

While introducing the term *community*, Eshliki and Kaboudi (2012: 335) also point out possible negative consequences and say: "*Community attitudes are crucial for successful and sustainable tourism development because an understanding of a community's attitudes and perceptions and how these perceptions are formed regarding tourism development would be valuable knowledge for decision-makers. Community is the most important party, since it is they who will be most affected either positively or negatively by tourism planning and development.*"

The topic of sustainable tourism and development has been intensively researched over the last three decades, as confirmed by Tosun (2001) who says that following the popularization of sustainable development as an environmental management concept by the World Commission on the Environment and Development and by Our Common Future report in the late 1980s (WCED, 1987), a growing proportion of the tourism research literature has focused on the principles and practice of sustainable tourism development. However, interdisciplinary field investigating crime and corruption that come with tourism development has been under researched and is therefore focus of this article.

3 ORGANIZED CRIME AND CORRUPTION

If we wish to understand the influence of organized crime and corruption on sustainable tourism, it's necessary to first comprehend the effects of eco-criminality

on sustainable environmental development. With each passing day, we become more aware that our natural environment is endangered, and perhaps it's even on the verge of destruction. Proof of this, are the climatic changes and natural disasters manifested globally from which no destination on Earth is exempt. The survival of mankind depends on the survival of our natural environment. Mankind cannot exist without nature, because it's a part of it and is constant and directly connected to it. But our wish to constantly develop and make a profit has now exceeded the bounds of rational exploitation of natural resources. This results in widening areas of destroyed and depleted environments worldwide. Illegal endangerment and destruction of the environment, called eco-criminality, is defined as any activity not in compliance with (criminal) laws protecting the environment (Pečar, 1981). Eman and Meško (2012) define eco-criminality as any temporary or continuous action, prohibited by law, which causes any kind of damage to the environment or illegal change to the natural characteristics of the environment. The perpetrator of such a crime can be anyone of us: a business or corporation, a group of likeminded individuals, unconnected individuals, organizations, local communities, the government, etc. Special to eco-crime, are its victims – people are endangered directly or indirectly through the misuse of biotic and abiotic environmental elements. This definition of eco-crime also comprises all criminal elements, be they criminal organizations or anyone else who uses corruptive methods to cause environmental damages. Direct or indirect damage to the environment affect sustainable development as the basis of sustainable tourism.

The most significant definition of organized crime internationally is found in the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, in which it is stated that an organized criminal group is a structured group of three or more persons who, over a longer period of time, act in coordination to carry out one or more severe criminal acts with the goal to, directly or indirectly, gain financial or other material benefits (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime 2004). A slightly different definition was proposed by Abadinsky (1997), who says that organized crime is an un-ideological association of a certain number of individuals from closely related social structures; the association is organized as a hierarchy and its goal is to gain power and make a profit. A comparatively similar definition of organized crime is used by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (US Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], 2010); according to them every group with a formal structure and the goal to accumulate money through illegal activities can be labelled as organized crime.

These organizations establish their social standing through threats and violence, bribery of state officials, and extortion; they have a huge influence on people, local communities, regions and the state as a whole (FBI, 2010). Dobovšek (1997) warns that we should distinguish between classic organized crime (theft, robbery, drugs and arms trafficking, gambling, prostitution, etc.) and entrepreneurial organized crime. The latter was defined by Pečar (1981) as the most organized form of organized crime; criminals of this calibre know a lot about business and management, economic matters and the law, and have connections in the administrative and public sector, government institutions and the labour market. These are criminal associations of well educated individuals in prominent positions in business and/or politics. Such organizations are also referred to as

organized white-collar crime. This type of criminality is far more dangerous than classic organized crime, and it's especially difficult to persecute (Dobovšek, 2009). The distinction between classic organized crime and white-collar organized crime is important in regard to the influence these two forms of criminality have on the development of sustainable tourism. Each type supports different interests, which often overlap. Classic organized crime has an interest for tourism, because it's possible to exploit this area by placing on the market certain services under its control, e.g., prostitution and drug trafficking. Mekinc, Cvikl and Dobovšek (2011) state that prostitution, as a criminal act, is only indirectly connected to tourism, if it is carried out in tourist destinations where there is sustainable tourism. On the other hand, there is a lot of "sex tourism" in destinations known for the prevalence of mass tourism.

Organized crime is very interested in taking control of both legal and illegal gambling. In the past decade classic organized crime has played a part in tourism also by employing illegal immigrants in tourist resorts. The before mentioned classic "services" provided by organized crime – prostitution, gambling, drug trafficking, illegal migrations – of course prosper in conditions created by mass tourism. Mass tourism came about when large numbers of tourists converged on certain locations.

Mass tourism comprises all the relationships brought about by the sheer numbers of travellers eager to spend time in tourist resorts. In everyday life individuals are responsible for their actions, but when they merge with a large population of fellow tourists they suddenly cease to feel self-responsible (Mihalič, 1994), and this means that organized crime can operate more effectively. Mass tourism is obviously in the interest of classic organized crime, but it's just as obviously in opposition to sustainable tourism. Moreover, the consumption of mass tourism is highly "spatially polarised", involves a large number of participants and is segmented by nationality and concentrated in a relatively small number of areas (Shaw & Williams, 2002). Mass tourism is also appealing to organized crime because poses opportunities to invest illegally gained money into infrastructure objects, more or less architecturally appealing hotels and other facilities, which rarely mirror the local culture.¹ It's easier to organize prostitution and launder dirty money in large tourist resorts; this can be done through organizing gambling and ownership of local pubs and restaurants. Mass tourism, as a specific exploitations subculture, causes long-term pressures on the environment and the results are seen as changes to the traditional cultural landscape. This means that mass tourism has many negative effects on the sustainable development of tourist destinations because it inevitably impacts the natural and cultural environments

¹ *Powerful transnational corporations (TNCs) continue to dominate the international tourism market. Estimates suggest that about 80% of international mass tourism is controlled by TNCs. These companies have an almost unhindered access to markets and use this to drive down the cost of supplies. The result is high levels of financial leakage, and limited levels of revenue retention in the destination or host countries. Financial leakages tend to occur due to various factors, including importation of foreign building material, skilled labour and luxury products, and packaged travel arranged with TNCs. This is as opposed to locally sourcing the necessary resources. It has been estimated that, on average, at least 55% of tourism expenditure flows back out of the destination country (Ashley, Roe, & Goodwin, 2001).*

of local populations. Typical results are: pollution caused by car traffic and other means of transportation, hotels which architecturally stick out of their traditional surroundings, and irresponsible littering by tourists. In tourist resorts, cheap labour is usually exploited, with illegal migrants and workers who are literally owned by criminal organizations. Much damage is indirectly caused due to the indiscriminate use of limited natural resources like water and this can have long-term negative consequences. Local residents are often forced off their land to make place for new hotels which totally destroys local cultures. Mass tourism is synonymous with a lack of respect for traditional local values and cultural heritage because most tourists never venture outside tourist compounds. All this was also noted by Vanhove (1997: 52) who says that "... mass tourism involves the participation of a large number of people enjoying tourism in the same place, which is the first feature. The term "mass tourism" implies that the holiday is standardised, rigidly packaged and inflexible." The negative effects are further enhanced by organizers of mass tourism who are glad if vacationers spend all their time any money within the tourist compound.

Entrepreneurial organized crime derives its influence on sustainable tourism from a neoliberal economy since the structure and functioning of modern (neoliberal) societies is closely tied to the destruction of nature (Eman, 2010). Similar are the findings of Elliot (2009), who says that eco-criminality is widespread and has become transnational when criminal organizations started exploiting the advantages of economic liberalization and globalization. Organized crime thus gained limitless possibilities to launder money and channel profits into legitimate businesses, quite often into tourism. Threats to the environment are relevant for local residents as well as to the economic sectors tied to a certain environment. Besides tourism, farming is also dependent on the preservation of the natural environment and local cultural values. The maintenance of sustainable tourism in a certain spot depends on the relationship between environment and safety, the latter meaning the ability to withstand the pressure of all types of organized criminality – safety directly or indirectly impacts sustainable tourism in a certain place. Bačić (1999) stresses that it's possible to talk about organized eco-criminality, when criminal groups infiltrate themselves into business and the local economy, and when they collude with corporate eco-criminality with only one goal in mind, to make a profit. Odar, Dobovšek and Eman (2012) define organized eco-criminality as the activities of structured groups which want to reap the biggest possible material gains by actively and directly endangering people and nature; and to achieve this they use bribery, blackmailing, intimidation, and violence. Indirect and direct negative effects of organized eco-criminality on sustainable tourism are most easily visualized with the help of their manifestations (Betreuungs-gesellschaft für Umweltfragen, 2003; Elliott, 2009; Environment Investigation Agency [EIA], 2008; Situ & Emmons, 2000; White, 2008): illegal dumping of waste, transport and commerce with toxic and radioactive waste, trafficking with illegal substances which are thinning Earth's ozone layer, unreported and uncontrolled fishing, illegal trafficking in protected animal and plant species, and illegal forestry. Especially dangerous to sustainable tourism is the eco-criminality of the wealthiest and most influential classes, i.e. corporate eco-crime, entrepreneurial eco-crime, and industrial environmental

pollution (illegal toxic waste dumps, inappropriate storage of industrial waste, and toxic industrial emissions (Eman, 2008).²

In the field of sustainable development and ecology, different levels of corrupting activities can be detected because administrative procedures, public tenders, and local governments allow the destabilization of natural environments and consequently hinder sustainable development of a tourist destinations, especially so, because the desire to maximize profit is constant. The administrative procedures which carry the hallmark of corruption³ at a local level are most often the ones carried through in cases of public tenders and calls for proposals pertaining to landscaping and real estate. Organized crime usually bribes and otherwise corrupts top level officials, therefore local authorities neglect to detect irregularities and often turn a blind eye to out rightly illegal interventions into the environment, or pass out only minimal fines (Malis Sazdovska, 2011; Pešič, 2011).

The influence of politicians on the legislation, which will facilitate sustainable tourism, is not negligible. Regrettably, we don't have data on the influence of politicians in this area in Slovenia, but a study of the situation in North Cyprus presented by Yasarata, Altinay, Burns, & Okumus (2010) is of interest. Their research was methodologically adapted to situations in small countries, so we assume that certain finding can be applied to Slovenia. Yasarata et al. (2010: 345) investigated ways in which political obstacles inhibit the formulation and implementation of sustainable tourism development and their findings suggest that: "... understanding the intricate political system and power structure in a society is the key to understanding sustainable tourism policy development, planning and implementation. In the case of North Cyprus, policy development is a product of political influence, specifically the use of public resources as an instrument for political power, retention, and the politicisation of the public sector is the underlying cause of the weakened progress in sustainable tourism development." Thus it can be concluded that it's very important to thoroughly understand political relationships and interests to support sustainable tourism.

In a narrow sense, violations of the rules of public tenders can be seen as violations in procedures of public financing or in the use of budget monies to finance the purchases of goods or services and investments in real estate. Public tenders can be issued for low-value projects or for big investments into communal infrastructure and public building projects. Other public calls for proposals can be focused on public/private partnerships, and on concessions or permits for various businesses and services provided for the public. Local zoning and building regulations are often not respected in all phases of administrative procedures. The

2 *After an industrial accident in Ajki, an aluminum plant in Hungary, contaminated sludge inundated the nearest town. This ecological catastrophe took nine lives, fluded an area of 40 km² in size, and polluted the Donava River and it's tributaries all the way down to the Black Sea.*

3 *UNDOC defines corruption as a complex social, political and economic phenomenon that affects all countries. Corruption undermines democratic institutions, slows economic development and contributes to governmental instability. Corruption attacks the foundation of democratic institutions by distorting electoral processes, perverting the rule of law and creating bureaucratic quagmires whose only reason for existing is the soliciting of bribes. Economic development is stunted because foreign direct investment is discouraged and small businesses within the country often find it impossible to overcome the "start-up costs" required because of corruption (<http://www.unodc.org>).*

planners of local environmental regulations – most often this task is outsourced to landscaping companies or architectural bureaus – follow the directives of their employer or contractor, i.e. local community governments. Those community governments can consciously overstep regulations or intentionally interpret them wrongly in order to: (1) be able to bend the legislation to the requirements of certain influential individuals with private economic interests, (2) to satisfy significant companies which are already doing business in the local community, and (3) hope to do so at locations where they won't be constricted by laws that protect the environment and people. Capital and private economic interests always come before the interests of citizens, nature, and a healthy and unpolluted environment. Local communities are often absent, marginalized, or at least very limited in the decision-making process regarding the development of tourism. This is especially the case in developing countries (Dola & Mijan, 2006).

An important step in fighting all types of corruption and simultaneously ensuring conditions supportive of environment protection policies and sustainable tourism was taken by the United Nations with the *Global Compact* program (www.unglobalcompact.org), which promotes the implementation of ten principles in regard to respecting human rights, providing decent working conditions, opting for environmental protection and sustainable development, and the fight against all forms of corruption. The principles which speak exclusively about environmental protection and the fight against corruption are: the 7th principle, which mandates that corporations support preventive approaches to environmental challenges; the 8th principle, which mandates that corporations take the initiative to promote higher levels of environmental awareness and responsibility; and the 9th principle, which encourages the development and implementation of environmentally friendly technologies. The 10th, and last, principle mandates that companies act against all forms of corruption, including bribery and blackmailing. The Corruption Perceptions Index⁴, which is published every year by Transparency International, shows that for the past several years the more developed countries have acquired higher indexes. The 2011 Corruption Perceptions Index shows that public frustration is well founded. No region or country in the world is immune to the damages of public-sector corruption, the vast majority of the 183 countries and territories assessed, received score below 5 on a scale of 0 (highly corrupt) to 10 (very clean). New Zealand, Denmark, Finland, Sweden, Singapore, Norway, Netherlands, Australia, Switzerland and Canada top the list, while Somalia, North Korea, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Sudan, Iraq, Haiti and Venezuela are at the bottom (Transparency International [TI], 2011).

For this research, we found it interesting to compare (Table 1) countries from the The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index – Corruption Perceptions Index (those that are tourist destinations) with environmental sustainability published in

⁴ *The Corruption Perceptions Index ranks countries according to their perceived levels of public-sector corruption. The 2011 index draws on different assessments and business opinion surveys carried out by independent and reputable institutions. The surveys and assessments used to compile the index include questions relating to the bribery of public officials, kickbacks in public procurement, embezzlement of public funds, and questions that probe the strength and effectiveness of public-sector anti-corruption efforts (www.transparency.org).*

State/country	Transparency International – Corruption Perceptions Index 2011 (183 countries and territories)	World Economic Forum – The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2011 – environmental sustainability (139 countries)
Australia	Very clean	Fair
Canada	Very clean	Good
Netherlands	Very clean	Very good
Denmark	Very clean	Very good
Finland	Very clean	Very good
New Zealand	Very clean	Good
Norway	Very clean	Very good
Singapore	Very clean	Good
Sweden	Very clean	Very good
Switzerland	Very clean	Very good
Luxembourg	Clean	Good
Iceland	Clean	Good
Germany	Clean	Very good
Austria	Clean	Very good
United Kingdom	Clean	Good
United States	Clean	Negative
Slovenia	Clean	Good
Czech Republic	Corrupted	Good
Malaysia	Corrupted	Fair
Croatia	Corrupted	Good
Montenegro	Corrupted	Good
Slovakia	Corrupted	Good
Italy	Corrupted	Fair
Argentina	Highly Corrupted	Negative
Mexico	Highly Corrupted	Negative
Egypt	Highly Corrupted	Negative
Dominican Republic	Highly Corrupted	Fair
Philippines	Highly Corrupted	Fair
Maldives	Highly Corrupted	N/A
Russia	Highly Corrupted	Negative

Table 1:
A comparison between countries according to the Corruption Perceptions Index 2011 (TI, 2011) and The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2011 (WEF, 2011)

RANK (Very clean, rank from 1–10, Clean, rank from 11–50, Corrupted rank from 51–100, Highly Corrupted 101–)

2011 by the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2011). The World Economic Forum only lists 139 countries which means that countries with the highest rates of corruption, with the exception of Venezuela⁵, aren't even listed. This is due to the fact that it is impossible to determine an index of tourism competitiveness in some countries

⁵ Venezuela was ranked 101 place on the WEF Index for 2011 regarding environmental sustainability.

and this is a statement in itself about the rule of law and the extent of corruption in these countries.

Results show that countries with less corruption (very clean and clean) are more developed in terms of sustainable tourism (very good and good), however a reliable comparison is difficult to make as most corruptive countries are not listed in WEF Index.

3.1 Types of Corruptive Activities

At the formal level, the procedures required to make **an environmental/urban plan** (needed before investments can begin) in a local community should be transparent and democratic; the public good should always prevail over partial/private interests. This should be achieved by taking into consideration guidelines and opinions given by various subjects participating in environmental and communal planning; each expert has a mandate to facilitate development that is focused towards balance and sustainability. But in practice local communities, backed by influential investors or consortiums, often organized crime, use pressure to realize their investment goals. It should be noted that changing farming land into building areas, and designating these “newly acquired” estates as reserved for tourism, the price of the land rises steeply, as do the profits of landowners and real estate agents.

The basic tool used by criminal organizations in achieving these goals is **bribery** in one form or another. An act of bribery will usually directly affect a few people, such as unsuccessful bidders for a contract, but also has an effect on the general integrity of the bidding system and hence on many future contracts, for example. It is at this stage that distinctions between public-sector and private-sector corruption often come into play: bribing public officials is almost always seen as more serious than private commercial misconduct. The seniority of those involved in corruption is also a factor, as is an assessment of whether corruption has become widespread and institutionalized or whether it occurs only in occasional cases. Successful anticorruption efforts must be based on integrity, credibility, and be trusted by the general public (United Nation Centre for International Crime Prevention [UN CICP], 2002). Personal integrity is especially vital in the effort to uncover and persecute corruption. Personal integrity means consistent, beneficial, honest, and ethical conduct and responsibility on the part of individuals and organizations. This is conduct focused into mitigating or eliminating risk, so that a government, an official position, or mandate to make decisions is used in compliance with the laws, legally feasible goals, ethic codes, and never to cause damages to individuals or organizations, as defined by the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption RS (2012).

The above mentioned dilemmas also become apparent in relation to **zoning regulations** and tourist infrastructure, and in administrative procedures which result in building permits. Locations which are experiencing a development of tourism are, by rule, visually attractive and rich in cultural heritage, therefore, building in such spots is heavily regulated by law. Sea coasts, lake and river banks all come under the title “common good” which must stay available to everyone

under the same conditions. The same goes for natural resources, cultural and historic heritage, national parks and other areas of national significance. Forests, the best farming land and watersheds, as well as areas prone to flooding and landslides or earthquakes are also protected. In some cases the level of protection is so high that planning tourism is impossible, in others it is possible if certain limitations are considered. It is hard to prove corruption in the process of planning projects, but this doesn't mean that it doesn't happen. Presumably corruption is most prevalent at local levels, in relationships between a local community and an investor, because here the interests of both parties are similar. Local communities see the expansion of tourist facilities, even if these aren't up to environmental standards, as an opportunity to get more money through communal and other taxes, more workplaces, commerce of goods and service, and better infrastructure; all this makes a place more accessible and thus easier to promote. The investor is interested mainly in making a profit by marketing tourist attractions and exploiting natural and other available resources at minimal costs to the business. These types of "partnerships" between local politicians and capital are most evident in larger tourist destinations, e.g., on the Slovenian coast, in winter resorts, spas and in casinos.

Local communities which have jurisdiction over environmental and urban planning and zoning absolutely favour "*local initiatives*", projects that are significant to the local community. Among the most often used initiatives are those that seek to change regulations to enable building tourist facilities on previously protected land. Influential individuals, organizations and businesses, and most notably investors achieve their goals by bribing individuals who give the initiative to bring about the desired changes. Investors are the ones who benefit the most from communal planning which is in accord with their business pursuits. Organized crime all over the world has always shown a lot of interest for investing criminal proceeds into tourist infrastructure, because this is one of the best ways to launder illegally gained money. Identifying **money-laundering** activities and recovering criminally acquired assets remains a key tool in the fight against organized crime and corruption. However, there remain few cases of successful prosecution, particularly with respect to corruption cases (UNODC, 2012a).

Local communities and investors often employ **lobbyists** to realize bigger projects such as building hotels, apartment buildings, theme parks and entertainment centres, casinos, marinas, and other infrastructural objects on sea coasts or alongside river banks, at natural water springs, also golf areas, equestrian centres, and sports centres. If lobbyists are not successful, investors, especially those connected to organized crime, start offering bribes or try to get what they want through intimidation and violence. If both the local community officials and the public (civil initiatives, NGOs) are opposed to the proposed projects then investors employ communication and public relations experts to help sway public opinion. These experts create an idealized image of the project and its positive effects on the community, while at the same time they try to minimize all the possible negative effects, especially hindrances to sustainable development, and they say that opponents are slowing progress. The borders between legal lobbying,

certain benefits offered by investors to decision-makers and outright bribery are usually unclear.

Different types of corruptive behaviour can be seen in the process of **gaining the administrative permits** to make changes in the environment, since interpretations of regulations, especially those pertaining to urban planning, can vary. Corruption can also play a part when zoning permits are in question and discrepancies between building plans and what is actually built come under scrutiny. Making life easier for subcontractors chosen by the investors and shortening the time which is usually needed to get all the papers required translates into less costs for investors. Because tourist infrastructure projects are more often than not quite large investments linked to bank loans and EU funding we can safely conclude that at least some effort is put into trying to influence the time in which permits are granted and the contents of contracts, so as to adapt conditions to an investors interests and requirements.

4 CONCLUSION

A free market offers many opportunities to managers in the tourism industry to make profits. But this practice also gives opportunities for criminal activities. Freedom of movement, capital, people, and services are very often misused by criminals (Edelbacher, Theil, & Kratcoski, 2012). Bases on a comparison of several indexes, the sustainable development of a tourist destination is greatly (negatively) affected by eco-criminality which holds back the development of sustainable tourism. Inappropriate interventions into natural environments, environmental pollution, exploitation of biotic and abiotic sources, destruction of historic and cultural heritage for infrastructural facilities, are only some of the activities that have roots in organized crime and corruption at all levels. Of course organized criminality can also directly or indirectly impact sustainable tourism services. This is done by limiting or eliminating legal service providers by unfairly low prices for certain services (e. g., gambling, prostitution, mass tourism). The comparison of two indexes, the Corruption Perceptions Index (TI, 2011) and the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index (WEF, 2011) indicate similarity among counties with less corruption and better sustainability development. At the same time countries (WEF, 2011) which have, according to the TI Index (TI, 2011), more corruption are not even ranked in the index of tourism competitiveness. The only country – Venezuela – which the TI awarded 10th place among the most corruptive states was placed at 101 (among 139 countries) on the index of environmental sustainability. The common characteristics, as confirmed by UNODC (2012b), of the countries with the highest rate of corruption are: local instability, inadequate national legal frameworks, corruption, an uneven institutional capacity to govern effectively, and limited cooperation among countries.

Even sustainable tourism and sustainable development can have positive synergic effects. Without sustainable development it's impossible to implement the policy and guidelines for achieving sustainable tourism in any tourist destination. The elements of sustainable tourism are inseparable from the environmental,

historical, and cultural aspects of a place, that is why they should be protected and maintained, but are instead destroyed and depleted by organized crime and corruption. Sustainable tourism generates services and facilities that support sustainable development. Without sustainability in development there can be no sustainability in tourism, and vice versa. This is a symbiosis of two crucial factors. The negative effects of organized crime and corruption can also be felt in tourist destinations, where sustainable tourism hasn't yet been established and developmental possibilities are still open for both mass tourism or more eco-friendly and sustainable forms of tourism (in this case the negative effects are focused towards the opposite of sustainable tourism), as well as in places where sustainable tourism has been established, but has become a factor of contention because of the interests of criminal organizations. Where is the contention and how does it manifest itself? Sustainable tourism and sustainable development can have positive synergic effects in a certain place only under the condition that an appropriate level of legal protection at the state level has been put in place. If there is a rule of law in a tourist destination then the mechanisms and tools to fight corruption and organized crime (which inevitably thwart the development of sustainable tourism) can be effectively put to use.

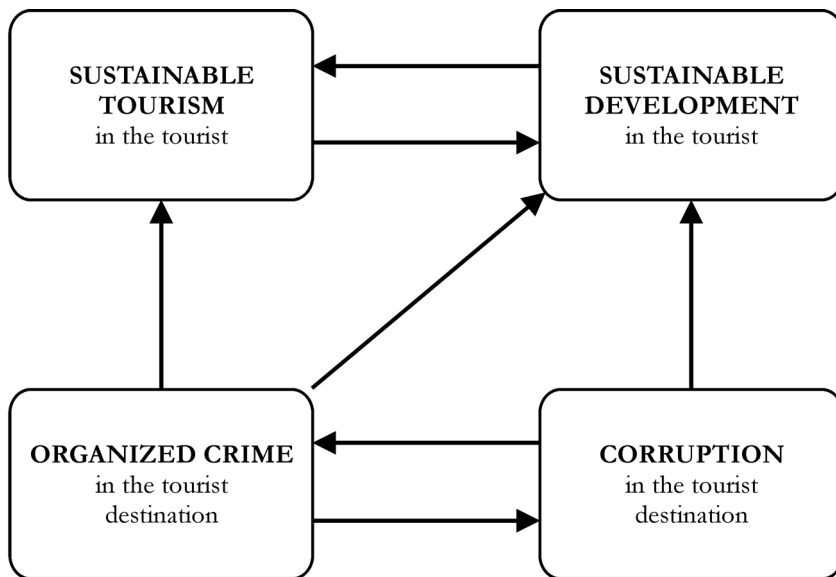


Figure 1: The relationships between sustainable tourism, sustainable development, organized crime, and corruption in the tourist destination

To understand the relationship between the components in Figure 1, they must be put into the framework of a tourist destination, be it a country or region. These components in their relationships adversely affect each other in the direction shown in Figure 1. The phenomena of organized crime and corruption in the tourist destination directly influence each other, because the perpetrators of organized crime with their activities, such as bribery, promote corruption. On

the other hand, the prevalence of corruption in a particular tourist destination attracts organized crime, which so easily meets its objectives. Organized crime in activities related to eco-crime directly or indirectly affects both sustainable development as well as sustainable tourism. As projects that are highly rewarding at the same time ecologically questionable, harmful or even dangerous, are supported by structures often associated with organized crime. Such projects will inhibit or destroy sustainable development and sustainable tourism in the destination. Similarly, corruption in the tourist destination makes it possible for those involved in organized crime to achieve their goals, which is contrary to sustainable development and sustainable tourism. Sustainable development and sustainable tourism in this context have a negative effect on each other. In the tourist destination where sustainable development is poorly developed, sustainable tourism also has only limited potential for development and instead it is focused on the more unsustainable forms of development, such as mass tourism, with its accompanying elements such as prostitution, crime, etc. Finally, non-sustainable forms of tourism, the incorrect use of natural resources and the cultural heritage, have a negative impact on the development of the sustainable tourism destination. However, in a tourist destination with a healthy environment, sustainable tourism and sustainable development complementarily positively influence each other, but this is not the case which we present in Figure 1.

The protection of the natural environment, and the historic and cultural heritage are all crucial elements of sustainable tourism, but this is also true for tourism in general, for a certain tourist destination and its local community. The degradation and illegal depletion of natural resources and extreme changes to the environment diminish the opportunity to have sustainable development, and consequently sustainable tourism. The effects of such activities can easily be seen in nature; the damages are difficult to repair, are costly and take time. Citizens must actively and critically monitor what is happening in their local community on a larger scale. They should not be focused only on their immediate vicinity or work place. Their vigilance is crucial, if certain criminal activities, enabled through corruption, are to be detected and sanctioned.

It's important to solicit the cooperation of citizens in combating the interests (criminal) of individuals and capital. Citizens as individuals or in groups can alert authorities when they detect illegal activities and help avert decisions that are potentially hazardous for all. How do they do the latter? Organized criminal groups are extremely flexible in changing their *modus operandi* and easily adapt to new socio-economic conditions and business trends. Tourism and enterprises that endanger the environment have always attracted criminal elements striving for influence and looking for profits. In both areas organized crime has effectively adapted to legislative changes; they simply pushed their businesses to the limits of legality. By employing corruptive methods and exploiting "holes" in the legislation, especially inconsistencies in regulations pertaining to the building sector and environmental protection, or opportunistically exploit the fact that legislation is constantly changing. In this way criminals can perpetrate crimes against the environment and cultural heritage without suffering repercussions and punishment. Due to the dynamic nature of these crimes, the environmental

and cultural heritage can only be protected by an effective legislation and legal system (Ljuština, 2010). The key factor of success in this area is an effective fight against all forms of corruption. Sustainable development and sustainable tourism are not possible without the elimination of criminality and corruption in tourist destinations. The global situation and economic crisis make the fight against organized crime and corruption even more difficult, but positive movements in contemporary society can be found, as stated by Edelbacher and Norden (2012: 47): "... [the] new configuration of public space, the blending of inner and outer security, the institutionalization of security science, and the outsourcing of security services to private entrepreneurs are undeniably new developments in the field."

As we have discussed above, one of the main tools of organized crime are various illegal or semi-legal financial transactions used to launder dirty money, for bribery or as investments into other acts of corruption. Financial malversations and corruption can only be controlled by a rule of law, by the integrity of the people working as public officials, local administrations and communities in tourist destinations. Mass media can support these efforts, but only if journalists are incorruptible and willing to expose cases of corruption and shed light on the activities of criminal organizations. The great importance of mass media was also stressed by Mills (2012: 206) who says: "... when we form a picture of the frontline in the fight against corruption, we usually think of law enforcement officials, governments and government agencies, inter-government organizations like the United Nations (UN), and non-government organizations (NGOs) such as Transparency International. However the media constitute other crucial actors often overlooked in the anti-corruption battle."

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