
**Tourism -
A Sustainable Industry?
Exploring the Opportunities and
Threats to Rural Communities -
The Isle of Mull**

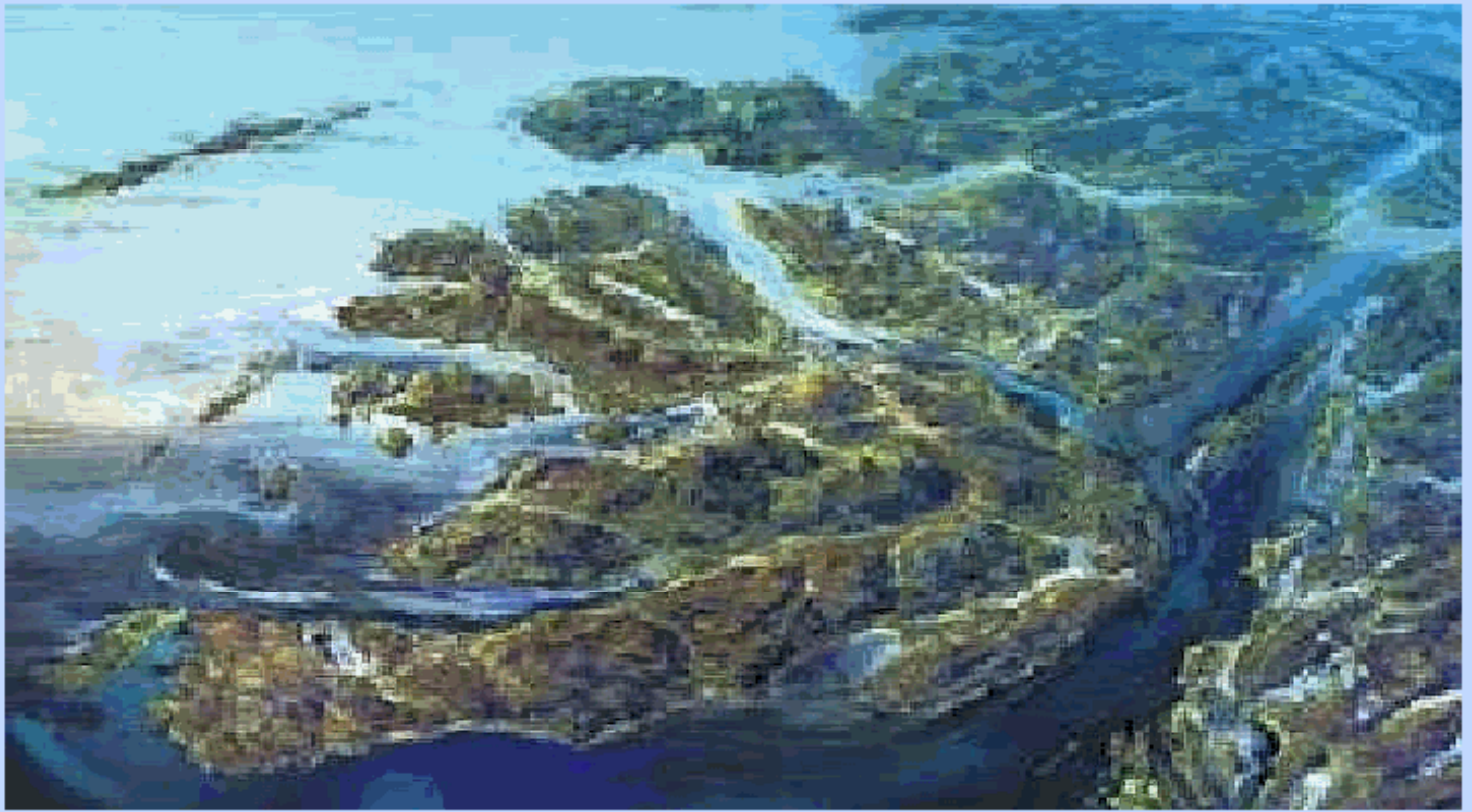


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Map of Mull (courtesy of Ronnie Leckie)

Tourism – A Sustainable Industry?
Exploring the Opportunities and Threats to Rural
Communities – The Isle of Mull

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Abstract

Agenda 21 was a result of the Earth Summit meeting held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. This paper was primarily a set of guidelines developed to protect and preserve the planets natural resources and introduced the concept of 'sustainability'. This concept has transcended all areas of business and peoples' everyday lifestyles.

This study attempts to identify, through analysing three case studies, the influences involved in the development of a sustainable tourism industry on the Island of Mull, on the West coast of Scotland. The main principles of sustainability are the environmental, the economic and the social impacts of, in this particular case, tourism and are central to the discussion. A key feature when developing a sustainable industry is that the host communities' priorities and concerns are taken into account. For this reason a telephone survey was carried out to ascertain an overall view of the community towards the development of tourism on the island.

Data was gathered from interviews with key people on the island and through telephone questionnaires with the local community. The research concludes that there are many tensions in developing a sustainable tourism industry, however with support from the local community, key environmental bodies and through government initiatives, there are opportunities available to struggling rural communities that are in keeping with the principles of sustainability.

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“This we know:

*The earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth.
All things are connected like blood that unites one family.
Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it.
Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself.”*

Chief Seattle, 1852

Chapter One

Introduction

Increased environmental awareness has been pushed to the forefront of Western thinking and development since 1987 when the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) produced the Bruntland Report '*Our Common Future*'. This report highlighted the need for 'sustainability' and defined it as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (WCED 1987:8)

Tourism is rapidly becoming one of this countries' biggest industries. Indeed it was predicted by the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) that by the year 2000 tourism would be the biggest single economic activity in the world (Taylor 1999:17). The WTO calculated that globally there were 567 million international tourist arrivals in 1995 and it is predicted that this will double by 2010. Tourism can bring vital economic support for rural communities and aid in the declining traditional industries that have historically supported these areas such as fishing and agriculture. Scotland has many assets that attract tourists to such rural areas such as wildlife, scenery and culture, however, in keeping with the ideas put forward in the Bruntland Report, it is important to protect these assets in order to preserve them for the future.

1.1 Aim and Purpose of Study

"Tourism growth is one of our greatest success stories of our times, but in recent years there have been increasing warning signs: the over-saturation and deterioration of some destinations, the over-whelming of some-cultures, bottlenecks in transport facilities, and a growing resentment by residents in some destinations"(Antonio Enriquez Savignaac, World Tourism Organisation, WTTC 1995:3)

It is important to research the feasibility of developing a sustainable tourism industry as it effects three major factors:

- The environmental impacts associated with visitors
- the effect on the community and their culture and heritage
- the possible economic gain of increased visitor numbers.

“It has been suggested that developing such an industry can provide jobs, enhance local economies, protect destinations and instil pride in local communities for their heritage and land (Hughes 2000:5)

This study will look at the development of the concept of sustainability, its principles and strategies. This concept will then be related to tourism in Scotland and in particular the Island of Mull.

The Isle of Mull is representative of many islands, particularly on the west coast of Scotland, and as such is a good example on the issues affecting these rural areas;

- Declining population
- Heavy dependence on tourism
- Decreasing tourist figures
- Unique scenery and wildlife

Through the three case studies this study will attempt to demonstrate the interrelationship between the major issues and factors previously mentioned. The case studies are all tourist-related businesses, with an environmental theme to their product and are all currently undertaking a new project to develop their business. The three case studies are:

- The Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust
- The Calgary Art in Nature Project
- The Isle of Ulva Heritage Centre

A key component of sustainability is to take into consideration the local community, their ideas and concerns. In order to assess these, a questionnaire was developed and

residents of the Isle of Mull were interviewed by telephone, to gauge their level of understanding and interest toward developing the islands tourism industry.

In addition this study aims to:

- identify the role of government and tourism bodies in the development of a sustainable tourism industry in Scotland;
- analyse the perceived impact of tourism on the island by the local community.

Chapter Two

Review of Literature

2.1 Sustainable Development

‘Sustainability’ first became a concept, which was brought to public attention in 1980 with the publication of the World Conservation Strategy (WCS). This publication was prepared by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) with assistance from the United Nations Environment Education Programme (UNEP), the World Wildlife Fund (WWF), the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The WCS was a strategy focused on the conservation of the Earth’s living resources. It came about as a result of increasing environmental problems and concerns such as pollution, deforestation and extinction of species. The strategy was developed by governmental organisations, non-governmental organisations and individual experts from over 100 countries. The WCS defined conservation as:

“The management of human use of the biosphere so that it may yield the greatest sustainable benefit to the present generations while maintaining its potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations” (IUCN 1980:s.1.6)

The three specific objectives of this strategy were:

1. To maintain essential ecological processes and life support systems (such as soil regeneration and protection, the recycling of nutrients, and the cleansing of waters) on which human survival and development depend.
2. To preserve genetic diversity (the range of genetic material found in the worlds’ organisms), on which the breeding programmes necessary for the protection and improvement of cultivated plants and domesticated animals depend, as well as much scientific advance, technical innovation, and the security of the many industries that use living resources.

3. To ensure the sustainable utilisation of the species and ecosystems (notably fish and other wildlife forest and grazing lands), which support millions of rural communities as well as major industries.

(IUCN 1980 1.7)

The strategy was the beginning of the notion that there was a relationship between conservation and economic development. It was also considered significant as it was a halfway mark between the 1972 United Nations Stockholm Conference on the human environment and the 1992 UN Conference on the Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro.

The Earth Summit meeting of 1992, as it has subsequently become known, was attended by leaders from 178 countries. One outcome of UNCED was Agenda 21, a comprehensive array of policies and programmes which provides a framework for action on developing sustainability into the next century by integrating environmental considerations into a whole range of human activities which constitute ‘development’ (SNH 1993:5). The publication of *Agenda 21* provided Governments and national bodies with a template from which national strategies could be developed and integrated with biodiversity conservation plans. The UK has given increased prominence to environmental policy. This is apparent with the White paper on the Environment, *This common Inheritance: Britain’s Environmental Strategy* (HMSO 1990) and the inclusion of the word ‘sustainable’ into the Natural Heritage Scotland Act (1991).

“Sustainable development is an important philosophical concept about the future of human kind and the link between society and its natural environment”

John Markland CBE, Chairman SNH 1999 (Crofts 1999:39)

By design, the concept of sustainability, linking the factors of economics, environment and social equity, is not completely straight forward, which has led to criticisms. Mckercher writes:

‘The inherent vagueness of sustainability is its greatest weakness....it is being used by both industry and conservation movement to legitimze and justify their

existing activities and policies.....thus exacerbating rather than resolving conservation/development conflicts (Mckercher 1993:131)

He goes on to state that ‘the tourism industry, like most forms of business, has tended to advocate a development orientated approach to sustainability while the conservation movement has adopted a more bio centric approach focusing on ecological preservation.... these contrasting views can be traced to differing interpretations of the fundamental issues of natural resource management’. The differing views of sustainability are also identified by SNH who say that the concept of sustainable development is interpreted differently by various protagonists (e.g. economists, ecologists, technologists, farmers foresters, planners) depending on how it relates to their activities (SNH 1993:8). From this there appears to be a number of unresolved questions as to the future of human development:

- Whether economic growth per se is unsustainable;
- whether development and conservation are mutually incompatible;
- whether technology, which has increased human welfare immeasurably in the past, will be able to ensure more sustainable development in the future.

(SNH 1993:8)

2.2 Tourism and Scotland

Tourism is a valuable industry to Scotland especially with the loss and decline of many of the traditional industries such as fishing, agriculture and engineering. In Scotland, in 1998 nearly 12 million tourists took overnight trips and spent £2.5billion. This supported some 8% of Scotland’s employment (StarUK 2000). The tourism industry provides more income to the Scottish economy than either whisky or other industries; it produces four times more revenue than the Scottish agriculture and fishing industries (Oban Times 2001). It is estimated that 176,116 people were employed in tourism related industries in Scotland in 1997 (NOMIS 2000). Of this tourism supported 2,035 jobs to island areas in 1997 that makes tourism-related employment 7.7% of all employment to these remote areas (NOMIS 2000). Tourism generates around £660m annually to the Highlands and Island economy, which helps

support around 26% of the regions employment, second only to public administration and health (Macdonald 2000:13). The importance of such an industry cannot be underestimated as it directly effects both individuals and whole communities.

Visitors to Scotland are made up of 11% of domestic (UK) tourists and 7% overseas tourists as a percentage market share of UK tourism (StarUK 2000). These figures have remained relatively unchanged for the last decade, however the Scottish Tourist Board (STB) are now reporting a decline in the number of foreign visitors to Scotland and a resultant decrease in spending from this market, but an increase in the number of domestic visitors.

Suggested reasons for this decline in visitors include the strength of the pound over other currencies, high petrol prices and perceived poor weather (StarUK 2000). These factors seem particularly credible when the mode of travel used by the majority of visitors to Scotland is car. 25% (1994) of overseas tourists and 69% (1998) of domestic tourists used a car as the main means of transport during their stay in Scotland (StarUK 2000). This is not surprising number considering the geographical distribution of many attractions and the lack of a comprehensive, integrated, public transport system in Scotland.

There could also be fundamental problems in the management of Scotland as a destination. Scotland has been traditionally marketed to tourists as the home of tartan, whisky, Scottish history and clans. However figures show that these factors are not the main attraction for visitors to Scotland. Some 86% of overseas visitors rated the scenery as the primary reason for visiting Scotland (StarUK 2000). Incorporating this into an increase in general interest over wildlife and the environment in society, demonstrated through the rapid increase in wildlife programmes and documentaries shown on all television channels, suggest a changing consumption pattern in society (France 1997). In an attempt to escape from the traditional sun, sea, and sand package holiday there is an increasing market who are looking for 'something different' (France1997:36). With interest in the environment and healthier lifestyles becoming more popular there seems room for new type of 'alternative' tourism and more sustainable options (France 1997:36). The statutory body with responsibility for environmental and wildlife conservation in Scotland, Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)

are currently developing 'ecotourism' in Badenoch and Strathspey, have already identified this apparent gap in the market. SNH believe that such developments in this area could see a substantial growth in the sector estimated at £57 million a year (Macdonald 2000:13).

Such developments in tourism, specifically related to wildlife, will have a profound impact on the workforce of the Highlands and Islands. Figures from 1997 show that over 1900 full-time and 600 part-time jobs are involved in wildlife tourism in Scotland. This is either directly or in businesses of organisations which offered wildlife viewing as part of their product. 420 jobs were located in the Highlands and Islands region, 111 in Argyll alone. This figure represents 18.5% of the total number of Scottish wildlife jobs in an area, which contains 1.5% of jobs in Scotland (Warburton 1999:8). From these figures it is apparent the importance of wildlife, environment and tourism to rural areas.

The majority of wildlife and environmental related positions are however affected by seasonality. While work during the summer months is constant and relatively well paid, the season is short and alternative work during the winter is hard to find. Of increasing concern to rural communities is the migration of the younger members to large cities in the pursuit of full-time employment.

2.3 The Environment and Tourism

A review of Scottish tourism carried out by the Scottish Tourist Board in 1991 identified a range of negative factors relating to tourism. The main concerns were firstly, that there might be a problem if certain areas, specifically rural areas became over-dependent on income from tourism (this is due to the decline of traditional industries of these areas such as fishing and agriculture). Secondly, the environmental impact of tourism. These potential environmental impacts include:

- **People Pressure;** footpath damage, wildlife disturbance, damage to wilderness areas.

- **Traffic Congestion;** on specific sections of road, slow moving traffic, pollution.
- **Visual Intrusion;** of certain tourist facilities due to poor positioning and planning, lack of screening and poor design.
- **Untidiness;** litter from picnic and car stops, rubbish from unofficial camp sites.
- **User Conflicts;** problems associated with the noise, intrusion and safety hazards imposed by certain activities upon other more traditional and sedentary pursuits and land owners.

(Scottish Tourism Co-ordinating group 1991)

In the above review, less obvious and potentially longer-term environmental impacts, to which tourist and visitor activity contribute, were also identified:

- Loss and deterioration of heather moorland;
- disturbance of sensitive bird and species habitats;
- introduction of non-native fish to freshwater lochs and streams;
- upland walking damage to vegetation;
- piste machine damage on ski slopes;
- loch side erosion;
- damage to the fabric of historic buildings and sites in a few places where visitors go in large numbers.

Suggested remedies to combat these impacts are:

- **The planning response;** open up and develop alternative sites to take pressure off existing ones;
- **the management approach;** encourage better use of existing provision;
- **the educational approach;** improve awareness and behaviour of certain participants;
- **the preventative response;** control and restriction of access and use of particular areas.

(Scottish Tourism Co-ordinating Group 1991:19)

Such problems are particularly relevant to rural areas as the impact of these environmental issues can have an impact on the number of visitors wishing to come to the area. Carrying capacity is a method suggested of evaluating the amount of visitors an area can comfortably accommodate before negative impacts occur (Barrow 1999, Honey 1999). It is also defined as the maximal population size of given species that an area can support without reducing its ability to support the same species in the future (Hall and Lew 1998:77). The carrying capacity of an area is, however, difficult to estimate as it depends on, the ecology of the area and the type of market the area is looking to attract. Visitor and community perceptions of the destination also have to be taken into consideration (Swarbrooke 1999:36).

The importance of the environment and tourism in Scotland can be seen by the fact that 40-60% of all international tourists are 'visiting a destination to experience and enjoy nature' (Taylor 1999:17). Additionally it is considered that 20-40% of the volume of arrivals are visiting a destination to observe wildlife. These statistics compare with surveys carried out on the Island of Mull. A survey conducted in 1999 for Argyll and Bute Council, Argyll and the Islands Enterprise and the area Tourist Board, showed that 43% of visitors chose to visit Mull for its quality of sightseeing and scenery. The survey also showed that 16% of visitors went specifically to a wildlife attraction (System Three, 2000).

The interconnected issues relating to tourism and the environment are now fairly well recognised and as such the concept of 'sustainability' is the central theme of the *New Strategy for Scottish Tourism, Strategic Plan 2000* (Scottish Executive 2000). This mirrors the government strategy paper for England and Wales '*Tomorrow's Tourism*' (DCMS 2000).

This increased awareness of the environment in relation to the economy has also led to the formation of the Tourism and Environment Forum. The forum consists of representatives' from a range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations. The aim of the forum is to ensure the industry adopts good environmental practices and capitalises on the advantages they bring: to promote the sustainable use of key national resources, to ensure a national and local integrated approach to tourism and

environmental opportunities and to deliver market research and environmental capacity information to the industry (Tourism and Environment Forum 1999:3).

The importance of these issues were highlighted by Simon Fraser, the North Areas Board Chairman at the Convention of the Highlands and Islands in October 2000. Fraser said:

“We have an invaluable natural heritage in this area. We can make more of it to bring badly needed economic development to the Highland and Islands. But we must also ensure that the development is not done in such a way, or on such a scale, that it destroys the very thing on which it is based” (Macdonald 2000:13).

2.4 Sustainable Tourism

The concept of ‘sustainable tourism’ emphasises the need to develop tourist resources as required but in a manner that will preserve them for the use of future generations. It has also been named ‘responsible tourism’ (Scottish tourism co-ordinating group 1991). This does not require total avoidance, as there will always be some impacts from the union between tourism, leisure and the environment. A sustainable approach is concerned with identifying, management and planning of tourism resources to minimise negative effects and secure a long-term future of the resource.

Frank Howie, lecturer in tourism at Queen Margaret College, at The Sustainable Tourism Development Conference in 1990, defined ‘sustainable tourism’ as implying a broadening of the sphere of influence of tourism beyond the purely marketing approach, to take account of:

- The role of tourism in regional economic and social development;
- the positive and negative impacts of tourism on environmental and cultural resources and values;
- the desirability of fuller participation of the ‘host community in tourism development;

- the need for evaluation of ‘intangible’ assets such as heritage, landscape and the ‘spirit of place’;
- the need for a strategic overview to guide tourism development in a given locality.

The challenging factor of sustainable tourism is the fact that there are no universal rules that can be applied to implement it. Sustainable tourism is a philosophy or an approach rather than a series of planning laws (Lane 1990:12). Each particular society must define its own set of values, and each government must make policy choices based on these social ethics (Hall and Lew 1998:82). However there are four interlocking strands, which are central in the evolution of ‘sustainable tourism’:

- Education;
- local tourism management plans;
- development of sustainable tourism forums;
- exchange of information on rural tourism development and management projects.

“Whereas some erosion and pollution of resources is caused by great numbers of visitors, most environmental damage is caused by lack of plans, policies and action to prepare for any economic growth.... tourism cannot be blamed for environmental deterioration caused by bad decisions rather than real visitor impacts” (Hall and Lew 1998:83)

Although Agenda 21 did not specifically cover tourism, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) in collaboration with the World Tourism Organisation (WTO) and the Earth Council developed ‘Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry’. The framework for sustainable development to be established by the Travel and Tourism Industry was based on the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development. As such the following guideline principles flow. Travel and Tourism should:

- Assist people in leading, healthy productive lives in harmony with nature;

- contribute to the conservation, protection and restoration of the Earth's ecosystem;
- be based upon sustainable patterns of production and consumption;
- environmental protection should constitute an integral part of the tourism development programme;
- tourism development issues should be handled with the participation of concerned citizens, with planning decisions being adopted at local level;
- should use its capacity to create employment for indigenous peoples to its fullest extent;
- development should recognize and support the identity culture and interests of indigenous peoples;
- should respect international laws protecting the environment.

(WTTC 1995:34)

It would seem, however, that the importance and significance of Sustainable Tourism does not lie in its definition, or lack thereof, but in its ability as a concept to continually evolve, moving the industry in the right direction (Clarke 1997). Tourism is continually growing and evolving, threatening the environment and destinations, but if steps are being taken to improve and protect resources then the concept of sustainability is clearly having a positive effect. Harmony is dependent on the ability to accept, absorb and adapt to change, large or small, expected or unexpected.

2.5 Ecotourism Defined

The concepts of sustainable tourism and ecotourism are closely related, the definitions of each become intertwined and are difficult to interpret as they both, in essence, have the same ideals and are concerned with minimising the negative impacts of tourism – social, environmental and economic, to sustainably utilise resources (Hughes 2000:11). Somewhere in the development of sustainability and ecotourism however, the latter has become a marketable product and simply a way of attracting new markets (Honey 1999), such as the environmentally conscious, relatively affluent, middle classes.



Figure 1. Major Types of Tourism and their variants (France 1997:17).

As can be seen in figure 1 there are many types of tourism each interlinking to create the tourist product. Ecotourism is in itself a form of alternative tourism, which encompasses a certain amount of nature tourism, community factors and adventure tourism, thus providing a particular experience for the client. Professor Paul Eagles of Waterloo University at a Sustainable Tourism Conference in Brisbane defined ecotourism as ‘travel for discovery of and learning about wildlife and natural environments’ (Taylor 1999:17).

“Tired of being chaperoned through staged cultural experiences, cocooned from the realities of everyday life, and complicit in ecologically destructive vacations, ecotourists are looking for new lesser visited, out of the way destinations.....these visitors are demanding vacations in pristine environments with uncorrupted local culture” (France 1997: 98)

Ecotourism, undeniably, benefits local communities as a source of income and can contribute to the preservation of species and habitats, but the prospect of taking advantage of natural resources for the financial gain of tour operators, raises questions about the positive impacts of this particular type of tourism. This, however, refers to large ecotourism operators such as desert safari trips, jungle safaris, trekking experiences, all aimed at markets which are financially able, but where the economic return to the host country is limited. In Belize for example, a popular ‘ecotourist’

destination, tourism has risen steadily from less than 100,000 visitors in 1985 to 250,000 in 1990. Revenue from the industry is estimated to account for 26% of the Belizean GNP (France 1997). The money, however, does not go to the areas in Belize where poverty is increasing but to developments such as a waterfront project; 'planners hope to build an exclusive downtown area complete with new hotels and shopping facilities'(France 1997:99). This shows that much 'Ecotourism' replicates the problems characteristic to traditional mass tourism, foreign ownership and environmental degradation.

Sustainable tourism, the main focus of this current study, is concerned with all types of tourism. The challenge is to manage the product and visitor in such a way as to provide a unique experience for the visitor and, not only protect the natural environment, but also benefit the local community.

Chapter Three

Methodology

3.1 Background

The study of sustainable tourism and the changing notions and practices related to it, was highlighted as an area requiring further research by Coalter (2000) and Warburton (1999). In particular, Warburton highlighted research into seasonality of the market and the effect this has on the local community and the attitude of local people towards tourism and wildlife.

For this study background information was initially collected from the Tourism and Environment Forum and the Scottish Tourist Board. This was to ascertain what developments were currently happening and provide a basis for the study. After speaking with these organisations the importance of rewards for good practices became apparent. Awards for such practices are, however, a relatively new phenomenon in Scotland. The Green Tourism Thistle Award, established by the Scottish Tourist Board has been running for only 5 years. It was after the results of Green Tourism Thistle Award were broadcast, which the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust won, that Mull (the base for the organisation) was chosen as a subject for the study. This was because there were clearly organisations on the island that were committed to developing the islands' tourism. In addition to this, other reasons for choosing this island as a study site were:

- The island promotes itself in a 'green' image;
- the island experiences seasonality;
- there is a decreasing younger workforce;
- the island had many tourism assets;
- there were many developing businesses on the island.

In order to understand the factors involved with the development of a sustainable tourism industry it was necessary to ascertain the views of the different parties involved, tourism related businesses on the island and the local community. To do

this, one week was spent on the island meeting with key members of the community and tourist-related businesses (see Appendix 1 for itinerary of trip to Mull). This research is formed on the basis of qualitative research methods which is an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a picture, formed with words reporting detailed views of informants and conducted in a natural setting (Creswell 1994:2). Alternatively the telephone survey results are formed using quantitative research methods, attempting to inquire into the same social problem but measured with numbers and analysed with statistical procedures to determine whether the predictive generalizations of the theory are true (Creswell 1994).

“The process of narrowing the focus means asking questions, developing process answers and asking questions again, and understanding that both questions and answers must be discovered in the social situation being studied. This cycle, this dance, is at the heart of qualitative research” (Ely et al. 1997:56)

When a new area is being studied using qualitative research methods, an emergent process is adopted (Ely et al. 1997). It can be related to snowball sampling (Blaxter et al. 1996) which refers to building up samples through informants. It was advantageous as the main contact on the island, Dr Chris Parsons of the Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust, was involved heavily with many aspects of developing the island and as such was able to give an overall view and point out the interesting cases. This then led to purposive sampling (Blaxter et al. 1996) where the case studies were hand picked depending on their situation. This was advantageous as the case studies were chosen for having particular criteria, which was considered good in demonstrating the principles of sustainability. The disadvantages of taking this approach were the time limitations of one week and the time of year of the visit, December, when many hoteliers and businesses were closed for the winter.

The research used a combination of semi-structured face-to-face interviews, structured telephone interviews, semi-structured e-mail questionnaires and desk research. This combination of methods and designs is known as the concept of triangulation (Cresswell 1994). This concept is based on the assumption that any bias from the methods or subjective points of views would be neutralized when used in

conjunction with other data sources, investigators or methods (Cresswell 1994). Hakim (1992) notes that no one type of study is inherently inferior or superior to another, rather, each should be chosen according to the nature of the issues or the questions to be addressed, and the resources and time available. In particular, Hakim (1992) continues, good research design is clear about what it can and cannot achieve. Hence the following sections show method selected and the associated strengths and limitations of each.

Sustainable tourism is a relatively new concept, and as such is still evolving, especially in the Scottish context. There has been much emphasis on how good sustainable practices can protect the environment and benefit local communities. In order to achieve this, greater awareness of individual cases is required to construct a bigger picture from which lessons can be learned for other businesses to build on, this was the overall aim of the research.

3.2 Case Studies

“The case study approach is particularly appropriate for individual researchers because it gives the opportunity for one aspect of a problem to be studied in some depth within a limited time scale” (Bell 1993:8)

It was considered appropriate to conduct semi-structured interviews with selected organisations as a means to obtain in-depth qualitative information relating to tourism developments on the Island.

“Qualitative research tends to focus of exploring, in as much detail as possible, smaller numbers of instances or examples which are seen as being interesting or illuminating and aims to achieve depth rather than breadth” (Baxter et al 1997:60)

The case studies chosen were all developing an aspect of their business and all relied specifically on tourism as their main income. The researcher visited the three case studies and conducted informal semi-structured interviews with them. This resulted in free ranging discussion, which provides answers to a set of prearranged questions

as well as providing the interviewee an opportunity to express points of interest or concern (see Appendix 2, Prompt questions for interviews).

3.3 Strengths and Limitations of the Semi-structured interview technique

The semi-structured interview means that questions are prepared in advance, but the interviewer is free to modify the order based on the perception of what is appropriate in the context of the conversation (Laird 1999). This allows the same questions to be covered with different respondents and, hence comparisons made without stifling information that may come to light during the interview. This adaptability is a major advantage of researching in this manner, an interviewer can follow up ideas made, probe responses and investigate motives and feelings (Bell 1993). Interviews are however, time consuming and with the time span of this visit, limited the number of interviews made. Interviews are also highly subjective and as a result can be prone to bias, it is important to translate the interviewees' results in an accurate manner. In an attempt to combat this the interviews were recorded from which quotes could be used. Finished sections were then e-mailed to the respondents to allow them to review and if necessary comment on the content.

3.4 Local community perceptions

The population of the Island of Mull is 2500. In order to obtain a random view from different areas of the island a telephone survey was the most appropriate method of research. A total number of 50 interviews, 2% of the population were interviewed; this was inline with previous research carried out by Hughes on a similar destination so that comparisons could be made. The main aim of the questionnaire was to gain an overall view of the community and to collect personal ideas for the development of tourism on the island. The questions were prepared in such a way as to be able to obtain a representative of responses enabling the objectives of the study to be fulfilled and provide answers to key questions (see Appendix 3 for phone questionnaire). The information for this section of the project was collected in quantitative manner. Quantitative research is concerned with the collection and analysis of data in numeric form (Blaxter et al. 1996). A Mull and Iona telephone directory was used and numbers chosen randomly from the pages.

3.5 Strengths and limitations of the telephone interview technique

It has been suggested that telephone interviews have many advantages of face-to-face interviewing, but rapport can be difficult to achieve (Laird 1999). Robson (1993) reports that the lack of rapport is compensated for by evidence of smaller interviewer effects and a lower tendency towards socially desirable responses. When dealing with a geographical dispersed group, it also has the advantage of securing high response rate, but at a substantially lower cost in terms of time and money rather than travelling for face-to-face interviews (Laird 1999). A random sampling strategy was adopted in this case (Blaxter et al 1996) as each individual in the sample has an equal probability of being selected, this enables the researcher to generalize the findings of the study to the entire population (Cresswell 1994). A disadvantage of random selection is that a percentage of each particular segment of society is not always achieved, if this was considered to be affecting results stratified sampling, identifying characteristics used in stratifying the randomly selected population (Blaxter et al 1996), may have been a more logical approach.

3.6 Additional questionnaires

Semi-structured questionnaires were also sent or carried out with the Tourism and Environment Forum, the Scottish Tourist Board, Holiday Mull and the Mull and Iona Community Trust. These questionnaires were to gauge how much research had already been done on this subject area and to gain their views towards development in Scotland and in particular Mull.

3.7 Data analysis

The data gathered from the case study interviews, other interviews and the phone surveys were gathered together and translated in the following way.

The case study taped interviews were analysed and transcribed. They were then colour coded as to the different sections the comments would fit into. The following categories emerged from the findings and as such dictated the presentation layout of the case studies in chapter four:

- Context and background;
- main objectives;
- staffing and funding;
- initiatives undertaken;
- possible future plans;
- overall assessment.

This seemed to provide a clear and logical breakdown of the case studies and information required in the interpretation of them for purposes of this research.

After carrying out the phone surveys, each question was broken down into responses and categories:

- Are the general community of Mull interested in tourism on the island;
- would they like to see it developed; and
- are they aware of current changes in tourism trends on the island?

Percentages were calculated as to the various responses. Important comments made by individuals was also recorded and integrated into the discussion.

Chapter Four

Results

4.1 Introduction

The Island of Mull lies to the west of Oban, its east coast roughly parallel to the mainland Morven shore. It is the third largest island in the Hebrides with an area of nearly 225,000 acres and a population of around 2,732 (Corrom Trust 1997). The largest village on the island is Tobermory, situated on the northeast, which has a population of approximately 843 (Corrom Trust 1997). The Island of Iona which lies off the southwest tip of Mull, is of great Christian importance. The highest point on Mull is the summit of Ben More (3170ft) but there are several other peaks over 2000ft. The largest landowner on the Island is the Forestry Commission who has vast plantations of Sitka spruce and larch in the northeastern part of the island. There are a few large farms and some crofting on the Ross of Mull, in the south of the island. The island is home for many retired people who have come to escape and enjoy the peace, quiet and sense of community of living on an island. The fishing industry, sea fishing and fish farming bring financial support to the economy. The tourism industry, however, is of vital importance, not only as a means of income for the islanders but it brings benefits to the community as a result of the wish and need to provide facilities for the visitor (Touchstone 1999).

4.2 Current Tourism Situation

It is estimated that more than 350,000 people visit Mull and Iona each year about 125 times the resident population (Touchstone 1999). Visitor numbers to Iona alone are around 150,000 per year, this makes the ratio of visitors to islanders 1800:1. Such figures immediately raise questions about sustainability, the overall benefit to the island and quality of visitor experience. The average peak number of visitors per day to the island is around 3,500. Although many tourists simply cross Mull to visit Iona, this number can be easily absorbed into the island. However, on Iona the average peak number of visitors per day to the island is around 1,500 which puts increased pressure on the community and the facilities on the Island (Touchstone 1999).

4.3 Present Marketing Strategies

The low population density of Mull provides a unique experience for the visitor. They can experience a sense of wilderness and space while still being in easy reach of populated areas. The wildlife and marine wildlife on and around the island is also particular to the West coast of Scotland and as such is a major attraction for most visitors. In addition, the island has some of the most spectacular beaches in Scotland. The main competitor for a similar type of market is the island of Skye, a bigger island which no longer requires ferry access.

The main bodies involved with the marketing of Mull are the area tourist board, Holiday Mull and the Mull and Iona Community Trust. The marketing of Mull and Iona is based increasingly on the islands image of a green tourism centre of excellence (Corrom Trust 1997). It is, however, difficult to demonstrate 'excellence' and a system of measuring quality, value for money and overall experience has been suggested by members of the community as needing development. Up to 40% of visitors to Mull are from overseas and the majority from countries such as North America, Germany, France (Corrom Trust 1997), where there are high standards of service and quality control. It is important when encouraging visitors to return that such systems are in place to maintain standards on the island. A SWOT analysis is a recognised way of realising potential for a product (see Appendix 5 for suggested SWOT analysis).

A report by Touchstone (1999), identified some major characteristics of visitors to Mull:

- Large numbers of visitors simply pass through Mull to visit Iona.
- Many come to the Island as a day trip either by coach, or their own cars.
- A substantial number however stay longer either one or two nights in 'Bed and Breakfast' and often one week or more using self-catering accommodation.
- There are many holiday homes on the island which shows peoples' affection for the island.

The report also identified characteristics of visitors to Iona:

- Many visitors come as a form of pilgrimage;
- the majority of visitors come for a few hours as part of an organised visit;
- a relatively small number spend the whole day on the island, exploring the abbey and complex;
- a limited number stay overnight on the island (this is subject to prior booking);
- a quantifiable number stay within the Abbey complex for an extended period;
- a very small number have their own accommodation on the Island.

Visitors to Mull appear to be older, 37% aged between 45 and 60 and 25% 30-44 age group (Laird 1999). They appear to be from professional occupations, and relatively affluent. It is estimated that tourism expenditure on Mull is around £38.4 million per year (Warburton 1999).

As such it would seem that particular problems associated with Mull's tourism industry are:

- The relationship between Mull and Iona;
- the length of stay of visitors on each Island;
- the substantial number of Holiday homes on the Island which although bring money to the Island can aid to a lack of community structure;
- the problem of seasonality;
- subsequent effects of lack of year round employment for the local community;
- in line with decreasing numbers of tourists to Scotland, Mull accommodation providers have also noticed a decrease in numbers in the last couple of years.

4.4 Evaluating the Case Studies

The findings of this report are based primarily on a review of three case study projects from the island of Mull which either specifically develop and promote sustainable tourism practices or which have a strong element of sustainable tourism within their remit.

1. Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust
2. Isle of Ulva Heritage Centre
3. Calgary Art in Nature Project

All the projects have been established in the past 15 years and are quite varied in origin of their product. The diversity of the projects and the fact that they work to different briefs and objectives and with varying budgets makes systematic evaluation or any quantitative assessment difficult. The case studies summaries have been compiled by examining written material, visiting the areas and carrying out in-depth interviews with the project managers, and talking to other participants in the process. For each case study the following topics will be discussed:

- The context and background;
- main aims and objectives;
- organisation, staffing and funding;
- initiatives undertaken;
- an overall assessment of what the project has achieved and the lessons, which can be learned;
- main points;
- possible future developments.

4.5 Case Study 1 - The Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust (HWDT)

4.5.1 Context and background

HWDT is a registered charity and was established in 1994. The trust is the first in West Scotland to have carried out extensive research and study into the conservation of whales, dolphins and other marine wildlife. The trust has a small visitor centre, with accompanying shop in Tobermory.

4.5.2 Main aims and objectives

- Through education and training, raise the awareness of the threats facing whales and dolphins in the Hebrides.
- Conducting research into whale and dolphins, their environment and associated species.
- Promoting sustainable use of the Hebridean marine environment.
- Provide job opportunities, education and support for the local community of Mull.

4.5.3 Organisation, staffing and funding

A board of 11 directors runs the trust from Argyll and all over the country. They currently employ 4 full-time staff, 2 part-time staff and several contracted researchers. In addition around 40 volunteers annually help run the centre and provide project assistance. The trust is funded mainly through educational and research grants e.g. SNH funds the Trust's three-year education programme, and the Worldwide fund for Nature provides funding for research into the ecology of minke whales and bottlenose dolphins. Financial backing is also provided through membership fees, merchandise sales and fundraising events.

Financial Summary	
Estimated Budget (based on 1999/2000)	£115,563
Cash Income	£71,508
Education Grants	41%
Research Grants	11%
Membership	8%
Merchandise sales	15%
Donations	7%
Fund Raising Events	13%
Misc. Income	5%
In-kind Income	£44,055
Volunteer and student salaries	96%
Office rental	3%
Centre renovation	1%
Expenditure	
Staff/Admin costs	70%
Projects	30%

4.5.4 Initiatives undertaken

- Two education centres one in Tobermory, which attracts over 18,000 visitors per year, and a newly opened centre in Oban.
- 75 page website which has had over 280,000 hits in 2000.
- A variety of interactive, multi-media activities and materials are used in the education strategy.
- School visits on the Islands of Mull, Coll, Tiree, Islay and Jura.
- Public talks on the marine environment
- A display of whales and dolphins at the Seal and Marine centre in Oban, a visitor centre which attracts over 100,000 visitors per year
- Whale and seal-watching code of conduct leaflet
- Marine mammal awareness courses for marine wildlife tour operators
- Development of a marine mammal science course developed for the University of the Highlands and Island and a Marine Ecotourism course at Napier University
- Substantial environmental library, open for use by local people.

- Actively involved with tourism research in not only on Mull but also Arisaig, Skye, Coll and Islay.
- Though such research HWDT has estimated that whales and dolphins bring around £11m to economy of Western Scotland each year.
- With aid from a segment of a £2m lottery grant HWDT will be developing a 'floating classroom' in the summer of 2001. This boat will provide a resource for school children from Coll, Colonsay, Oronsay, Islay, Jura, Lismore, Mull and Tiree which will travel around the Argyll islands and educate children and the public about the Scottish marine environment. It will also be open to tourists during the summer season.

4.5.5 Overall assessment

Over the 7 years of the trusts' development it has continued to expand its premises, product and audience. The educational grants have provided valuable support for projects and as such valuable research has been obtained. Although the Trust does not employ a huge number of staff, by attracting volunteers to the island income is provided to the local community accommodation costs, public house, groceries etc. The initiatives undertaken show complete commitment to the development of sustainable tourism as the projects cover all areas for protecting the environment, to community projects and education to encouraging tourism developments on the island in order to bring more money into the economy. This year the Trust was the winner of the Scottish Tourists Board's, Scottish Thistle Award for 'Tourism and Environment'. This demonstrates the effectiveness of bringing together the main principles of sustainable tourism.

4.5.6 Points of interest

- Using all media forms, extensive website, television appearances and newspapers.
- Partnerships with other nature or environmental organisations.
- Heavy involvement with development of tourism on the island.
- Good at obtaining funding from various sources.

- Keen to encourage community understanding and develop interests in wildlife.

4.5.7 Possible future developments

- Expansion or re-location to a larger centre as the present has limited space for not only staff but public access.
- Development of an additional visitor centre and research base in the Outer Hebrides.

4.6 Case Study 2 - Calgary Art in Nature Project

4.6.1 Context and background

Calgary Farmhouse hotel, which also has an art gallery and tearoom, are located on the west coast of the island. It is 20 kilometres from Tobermory and 100metres north of Calgary Machair, a site of special scientific interest. A popular beach is a short distance away and in the surrounding area there are a number of holiday cottages. Matthew Reade, the owner of the property is presently developing a woodland walk round small beach/mixed woodland of approx 2.4 hectares in size. The walk is to include pieces of sculpture, designed and made by local artists, who will “enlighten a general awareness of art in nature”. The walk is expected to take 3 to 4 years to complete. The hotel and adjoining restaurant are popular with tourists and locals, however Mr Reade has noted a decrease in visitors to the gallery and tearoom.

4.6.2 Main objectives

The creation of the sculpture walk/nature trail through the wood at Calgary is for the benefit of the general public and guests of the Calgary farmhouse hotel. It is hoped that the development of the project will:

- Increase visitors’ numbers to the art gallery and tearoom;
- encourage development of local arts and crafts, thus keeping Calgary a centre for arts on Mull;

- protection of the woodland and encouragement of wildlife habitats; and
- aid in the education of the local community, school and the general public in art and nature.

4.6.3 Organisation, staffing and funding

The management of the gallery and maintenance of the wood is undertaken by the husband and wife partnership of Matthew and Julia Reade. With the development of the woodland walk the following changes will be made to staffing:

- The gallery opening hours will be extended which will provide employment for a full time tea person/gallery sales assistant and a part-time pastry chef;
- artists and craftspeople have volunteered to assist the gallery on a part-time basis assisting with sales and promotion of exhibitions;
- a woodsman/gardener will be employed to carry out maintenance of the wood.

The estimated cost for this project is thought to be £36,085. Funding for the infrastructure of the woods is hoping to be received from:

- AIE Community Action Grant;
- SNH funding for education;
- Forest Enterprise – woodland improvement scheme;
- Argyll County Council Amenity Grant.

Funding for the artwork and sculptures to go into the wood and surrounding area is to be sought from the Scottish Arts Council.

In addition to this, further income is hoped to be generated through a number of measures:

- Art Workshops;
- commission on sculpture sales;
- additional gallery sales through increased visitor numbers;

- additional tearoom revenue through increased visitor numbers;
- donation boxes;
- sale of information sheets;
- sale of post cards.

Financial Summary	
Estimated Budget (based on 1999/2000)	£36,085
Income	
Community Action Grant	15%
SNH Funding for Education	40%
Forest Enterprise	20%
Argyll Council	10%
Extra generated Income	15%
Expenditure	
Staff and Administration	55%
Project	45%

4.6.4 Initiatives undertaken

Through visitors previous comments and advice it was ascertained what people would look for in a woodland. As a result it was decided that the principle advertising strategy would be aimed at visitors to the island by using local tourist information publications and widespread sign posting around the island.

The wood will have the following features:

- Footpaths, walkways, bridges and steps, which are suitable for all ages;
- woodland seats;
- a car park;
- signs and information on woodland habitats and ecosystems;
- sculptural pieces of art which will be in keeping with the environment and encourage the public to think about nature;
- deer/stockproof fencing and stone dyke restoration;

- the bio-diversity of the wood will be increased through selective woodland management;

Residential courses in sculpture, woodland crafts and ecology will be run in the gallery and hotel.

A local community group, An-tobar (the art and culture centre based in Tobermory), will be responsible for the art/sculpture and Education within the wood. As the group have strong links with the arts, the local community and schools, they will be responsible for:

- Arranging exhibitions;
- commissioning work from artists;
- promoting the wood within Scotland and directly to schools and colleges etc;
- to make recommendations for the general upkeep and maintenance of the wood;
- to co-ordinate/ make recommendations for workshops to be held at Calgary.

4.6.5 Overall assessment

This project shows adaptability, originality and forward thinking. Matthew Reade is working with the resources he has to develop his own business while including the main craft or interest of the local people in the area. He is aiming to do it in such a way as to enhance the natural surroundings and educate the visitor. Although on a small-scale, projects such as this show what can be done with limited space, resources and budgets.

4.6.6 Points of interest

- Use of local artists.
- Including the school in the development of the project.
- Linking art with nature.
- Willingness to develop over long period of time.

4.6.7 Possible future developments

- Secure long-term funding.
- Develop a nature adventure trail.
- Attempt to bring more customers into tearoom with incentives and offers such as: visitors completing the nature trail will receive a free drink.
- Increase advertising both locally and nationally.
- Develop annual arts and crafts festival for the island.

4.7 Case Study 3 - Isle of Ulva

4.7.1 Context and Background

The Isle of Ulva lies off the west coast of Mull. It is a privately owned island (by the Howard family), sheep and cattle farming, fish farming, oyster farming and the increasing tourism industry support the 16 people who live on the island. For tourists visiting the island it costs £4.50 per person, this includes return ferry fare. There are five main ‘attractions’:

- The Heritage Centre;
- the Boathouse tearoom;
- Sheila’s Cottage – a reconstruction of a traditional thatched cottage;
- the wildlife;
- interesting walks around the island and a developed woodland walk which has informative way points and a prepared leaflet which gives information on the natural and social history of the island.

The concept of developing the island for tourists began 10 years ago, when the public were only allowed on to the island 2 days a week. The potential market was soon realised and from there the island was developed to attract visitors, and to make a trip to the island value for money.

4.7.2 Main objectives

- To provide a unique experience for visitors to the island
- To show value for money.
- To maintain an income for the Island to support the community.

4.7.3 Organisation, staffing and funding

Jamie Howard, the landowner runs and manages the island. He employs one part-time person for the fish farm, two people to run the sheep and cattle farm who also run the ferry and one person in the coffee shop and heritage centre in the summer.

Financial Summary	
Estimated Budget (based on 1999/2000)	£38,000
Income	
Tourism	58%
Farming	25%
Miscellaneous	17%
Expenditure	
Staff and administration	60%
Projects	40%

4.7.4 Initiatives undertaken

- Expansion of Shelia's cottage to make a bigger heritage interpretation centre.
- Developing the main house of the island into self-catering accommodation.

4.7.5 Overall assessment

This case study is a good example of flexibility and adaptation. With the decline in income from the sheep and cattle farm, Jamie Howard has realised the new market available to him and developed his business to attract as wide a range of tourists as

possible. Of considerable importance is the stability of the island community, a current issue is the loss of a contract to ferry primary school children to the local school, which is a 3rd of the of the ferry mans' income. To compensate this, the price of tickets will have to be put up by 50p, perhaps deterring some visitors. Jamie Howard's philosophy is to give the customer value for money and as such is concerned to be taking such measures.

4.7.6 Points of interest

- Change from farming to tourism.
- Unique additional attraction to Mull.
- Large market for Genealogy – a large 'McQuarrie' clan gathering was held on the island of Ulva in 2000. Mainly American citizens looking for their heritage.

4.7.7 Possible future developments

- Development of guided nature trails.
- Lunchtime lectures on historical or natural facts on the island.
- Join the Green Business Award Scheme.
- Expand advertising to national papers
- Develop the island's website, which only possesses limited information at the moment.

4.8 Discussion on Case Studies

The primary aim of taking a case study approach for this particular study, was to demonstrate the issues related to sustainability in an in-depth manner. All three case studies show good environmental practices and a certain amount of community or local involvement. The economic gain to the community however is limited in the case of the Calgary farmhouse project and the Isle of Ulva as they employ a limited amount of people. HWDT, whilst they do not employ a large number of full-time staff, have many students living and working in Tobermory and as such contribute to the economy of the town through such means as accommodation, grocery and public house costs.

The financial standing of the case studies can also effects the practices and measures taken. Calgary Farmhouse and the Isle of Ulva are good examples of smaller operators fighting for survival which can lead to the operators losing sight of the bigger picture (Countryside Commission 1995). By this it is implied that smaller organisations could become introverted and forget about the opportunities that are available to them in the larger surrounding such as the advertising in local or national magazines and inclusion in the green tourism scheme. HWDT through the recognition given by winning the Thistle award will gain credibility and thus more opportunities become available to them, especially in the form of funding. Richard Robinson of SNH said how this year as well as looking for environmentally sensitive practices when deciding the winner of the award, the committee had tried to add focus on adding value and improving quality through initiatives people had taken. The original ideas shown in both of the other case studies could fit into this category and as such could provide additional sources of funding.

The main points shown by the case studies are:

- Signs of a developing tourism industry evolving round market wants.
- The adaptability required by farmers and landowners in the development of their property and land.
- The importance of financial backing for projects.

4.9 Local community perceptions

In order to promote and develop the tourism industry on Mull it is important to take into account the local people, their priorities and concerns. A phone survey was the most viable way of speaking to as many people as possible in the limited time available (see Appendix 3). The survey was carried out over a period of 4 weeks and the selection process was random. A total number of 50 surveys were carried out. The purpose of the survey was to answer the following questions:

- Is there an understanding of the economic value to the island from tourism?
- Do they know why people come to the island, and importance of natural beauty and wildlife?
- Has there been a noticeable decrease in tourism?
- If so what would be their reasons for this?
- What would be their ideas for improving the community through tourism?
- What would be their views towards an arrival tax for tourists?
- Are they aware of current developments on the island?
- Are they environmentally conscious?
- What factors affect this?

These questions were formed with reference to previous research and interest from the Mull and Iona Community Trust and Holiday Mull. These organisations realise the value of community input in the development process and were keen to get feedback from the local people with respect to there various initiatives.

4.9.1 Findings from telephone surveys

When carrying out the surveys it was interesting to note the interest shown from each person who agreed to take part. Although randomly chosen, a representative proportion of each major income grouping was shown. It has been previously mentioned that there is an ageing population on Mull, which was shown in the study sample; 48% of people interviewed were from the retired grouping. What was interesting was that even though a large amount of retired people were interviewed,

76% of respondents had a secondary income from a tourism-related product. This shows the impact of tourism on the island. It should be remembered when analysing these results that they are not facts but perceived views of the tourism industry. Below each question are additional comments made by members of the local community. This are presented as anonymous bullet points.

Question 1. What is the main income for your family?

Table 1. Main income of respondents.

Fishing	Tourism	Farming	Retired	Other
12%	26%	8%	48%	6%

Question 2. Is there a secondary income from a tourist related product however small?

Table 2. Secondary tourist related income of respondents.

Yes	No
76%	24%

- The diversity of secondary incomes showed originality and a huge range of different skills on the island. One woman dressed the local crab catches and sold the product from the end of her drive.

Question 3. Out of the following industries which do you think brings the most money to the island?

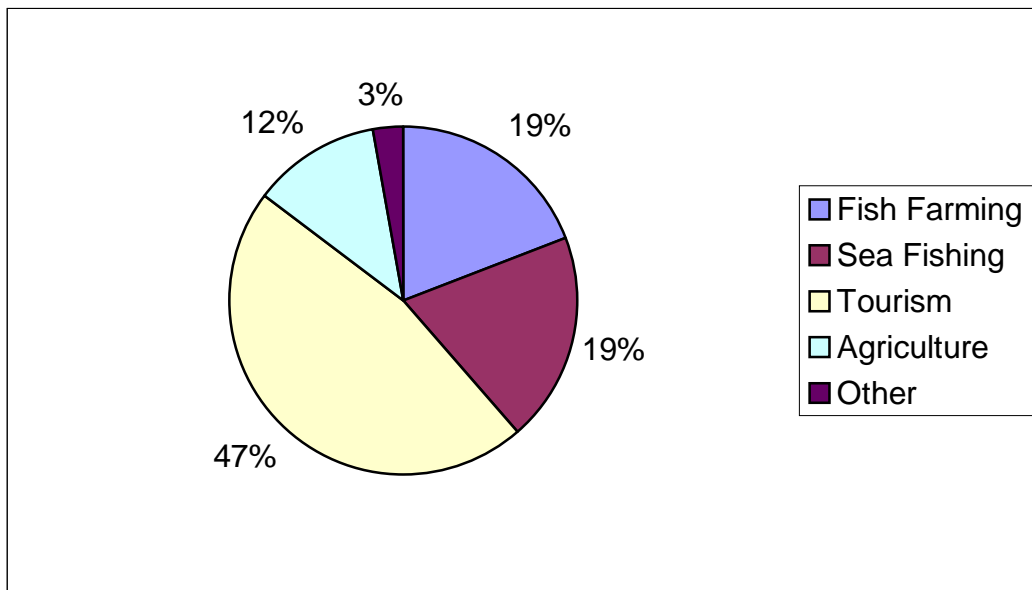


Figure 2. Perceived view of largest source of economic input to island

Included in the 'other' section were industries, which support the infrastructure of the island e.g. the building trade for holiday home construction that employs many young people.

From this it is apparent that the local community have an idea of the importance of tourism to the island. It is also apparent that there is general awareness of the difficulties faced by, and the decline of, agriculture and fishing.

Question 4. Recent figures suggest that tourism is decreasing, what do you think could be the reason for this?

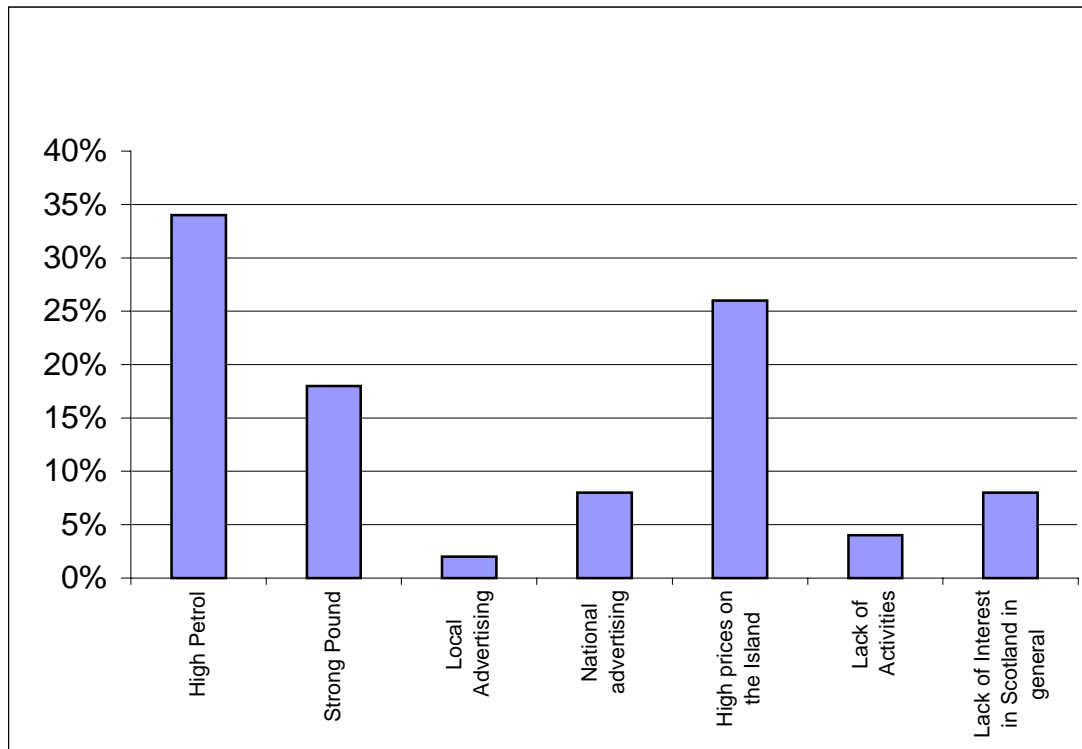


Figure 3. Suggested reasons for decreasing tourism

Additional comments made by respondents:

- Some people did not believe that tourist numbers were decreasing.
- One Bed and Breakfast owner commented that his business had increased steadily by 15% each year and (in January) this year he was 35% of his available rooms booked for the summer season.
- It is believed that Scotland is not marketed in the right way. Marketing of the tourism product in Ireland vastly supersede the marketing of Scotland. Also it was believed that there is not enough money put into marketing of Scottish tourism.
- High ferry prices deter tourists.
- People who are looking for this Scottish-type of holiday will come whatever the weather, if they want guaranteed sunshine it is cheaper to go to Spain.

Respondents were able to choose more than one. The results of question four, could be affected by the direct impact of these factors on the recipients themselves. A recurrent complaint was the cost of travel and the prices in the supermarket on the island. Other reasons suggested were the perceived weather and lack of bad weather tourist facilities.

Question 5. In order to try to get some money directly back into the community, it has been suggested that a charge of 50p should be charged to all tourists visiting the island. Do you think this is a good idea?

Table 3. Results of views towards arrival fee.

Yes	No
8%	92%

Additional comments by respondents:

- Comments were raised that this might look like islanders are begging for cash.
- It was suggested that tourists could be targeted to raise money for community projects but there should not be a compulsory levee.

The majority of respondents did not believe this would be a good idea. They thought ferry prices were expensive and to add an additional cost to the visitors may deter them from coming to Mull.

Question 6. Why do you think people come to the island?

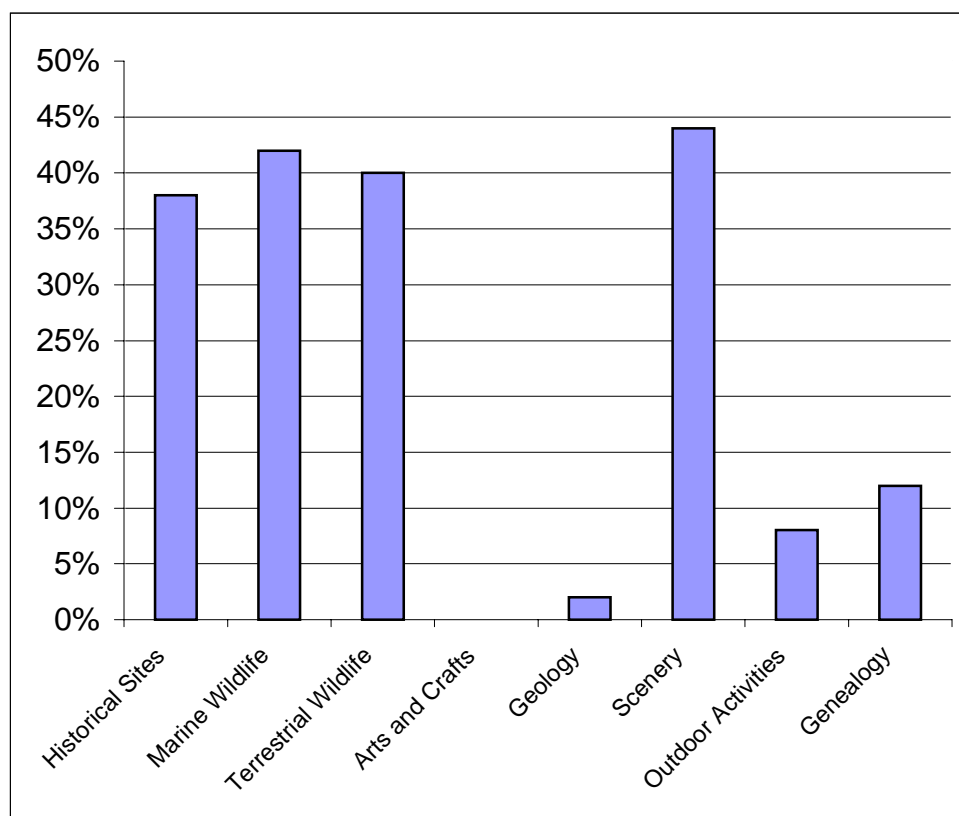


Figure 4. Perceived reasons for visitors coming to the island.

Additional comments from respondents:

- Iona brings huge numbers to Mull and Iona, makes a lot of money. However, this income is not shared equally throughout the island. Perhaps a small percentage of the Iona tourist income could be put into (community) projects on different parts of the island.

The results from this question show that the community realise the importance of wildlife and scenery to the island.

Question 7. Are you aware of the Ranger service on the island?

Table 4. Awareness of Ranger service on the island.

Yes	No
44%	56%

Question 8. What do you think is the most important tasks of this service?

The ranger service has only been operating for about two years. Lack of knowledge of the service could be because where the respondents lived on the island. If the interviewees knew about the service, they were very clear about what the service provided and the main tasks involved.

Question 9. Should there be a growth in tourism on the island?

Table 5. Views towards growth in tourism on the island.

Yes	No
64%	36%

Question 10. how do you think tourism could be developed to help the local community?

- Develop a hill phones system for walkers.
- Encourage tourists to stay longer than one-night trips.
- Develop special interest holiday's e.g. golfing, pony trekking trails, culture trips.
- Improve and integrate transport systems, e.g. there are few bus services and many of these do not link with ferry services.

- Self catering accommodation is now much more popular than bed and breakfasts style accommodation.
- Building a swimming pool, would benefit both the community and the tourists.
- Oban tourist information does not give relevant or correct information regarding Mull.
- Lack of quality assurance, the Scottish Tourist Board charge £89 to be part of the scheme but residents do not rate this as relevant or value for money. Quality assurance is something that German tourists specifically look for.
- The ‘weekend away’ market could be developed, in particular Hogmanay, near Valentines day etc.

Question 11. Do you consider yourself to be environmentally conscious?

Table 6. Did respondents consider themselves environmentally conscious.

Yes	No
82%	18%

Additional comments from respondents:

- Facilities for recycling on Mull are poor.
- It is expensive to recycle and the council demands that wheelie bins must be purchased at a cost above and beyond council tax charges; that is why there is an increase in fly tipping on the island.
- There has been some negotiations with Caledonian MacBrayne regarding removal of waste e.g. building waste from the island free of charge but this has not been followed up.
- It was thought that environmental education should be integrated into the school curriculum.

4.10 Discussion on telephone surveys

From the telephone questionnaire it was discovered that the majority of people questioned were involved in some form with the tourism industry. They therefore have a good understanding of why people come to the island and the importance of the environment. There is a great deal of enthusiasm for developing tourism and especially in such a way as to protect the environment. The community in general would like to see an improved and cheaper transport system and also some bad weather facilities. 82% of the interviewees considered themselves environmentally conscious. However some find the recycling and waste control facilities irregular and inadequate.

It was found through the survey that in general there is a good understanding by the community of Mull of the economic importance of tourism to the island. Many however had not noticed a great decrease in the number of visitors. If they had suggested reasons revolved around everyday factors that they themselves are confronted with. There were many suggestions for developing tourism on the island but the majority did not agree with the idea of charging an arrival fee on the island. In general they were up to date with current developments and were keen to be informed as to changes.

The results of the survey are encouraging because the local community show interest towards the developing tourism industry in a manner which is more environmentally conscious. This support is vital when considering a sustainable industry.

4.11 Current Government initiatives

As mentioned previously, in order to achieve sustainable development businesses need to think environmentally, the local community needs to be consulted through the planning processes and local government and governing agencies need to provide guidelines and support to implement changes. There have been a number of key papers and reports written which has shaped the development of sustainable tourism over the past 10 years (see Appendix 4 the development of the Scottish Tourism and the Environment Initiative).

4.11.1 Argyll and Bute Council

The Argyll and Bute Council produced a consultative draft of their proposed structure plan in August 2000. The plan is a strategic land use plan that has been guided by Government through the National Planning Policy Guidelines and based on the key priorities:

- Sustaining and developing indigenous business;
- attracting inward investment;
- improving communications; and
- improving skills and qualifications of the workforce.

The overall aim of the plan is to:

- Provide a land use plan which is based on the principles of sustainable development;
- present a long term vision covering at least 20 years;
- place high value on and adding value to environmental, economic and social based assets;
- encourage effective use of human and environmental resources through policies and proposals;
- recognise local community aspirations and their different needs in remote areas; and
- encourage local participation of the development plan process.

Long-term environmental protection is hoped to be achieved with the implementation of this plan. In addition problems surrounding the transport systems are hope to be addressed.

4.11.2 Scottish Executive

The Scottish Executive produced *A New Strategy for Scottish Tourism* in February 2000. This strategy is based around the main principles of sustainability and the overall aim is to develop:

- A modern tourist industry which is in touch with its customers;
- a skilled and enterprising industry which has embraced the culture of lifelong learning; and
- an industry dedicated to providing the high quality of service visitors demand;

After an extensive consultation process the main points of the strategy are:

- The importance of niche markets to Scotland, golf being the first developed one but others could include sailing, fishing, and bird watching;
- to recognise the rapid advances in internet and telecommunications technology;
- o recognise the strengths of Scotland, the unspoilt natural beauty and diverse wildlife; and
- a financial input of £11m to Scottish tourism.

Such comments have been welcomed by many outdoor operators, and could lead to increased partnerships and communication in an attempt to make such proposals work.

“We welcome the news of additional funding, particularly for niche marketing. We would like to work with the agencies involved and work with the executive so that our work is carried forward in a more structured manner with a better level of financial support” Jim Wilson, Sail Scotland, (The Scotsman 2000)

Chapter Five

Conclusion

This research attempted to answer the question – is a sustainable tourism industry feasible on the island of Mull. Current practices have been shown through the case studies, feedback from the community highlighted and government support detailed.

When making conclusions it is important to take into account the time limitations of this study, ideally the telephone survey would have been conducted on a larger proportion of the population to gain a larger representation. The study shows, however, that there is unlimited potential on the island of Mull due to its spectacular scenery and diverse wildlife. In addition the interest and support shown by the community can be used in a positive manner in the development of tourism.

The adverse effects of economic drive over the related environmental impacts will always show conflict. On Mull, however, the gap is closing and as such is in a good position to promote itself a sustainable tourism destination. The process, as already mentioned, is ever evolving and continuous and it important that, as shown by current government initiatives that proposed plans realise this for long term development.

5.1 Recommendations for the future

- Develop Mull as a wildlife or environmental tourism destination, this will give the island an identity.
- Introduce a voluntary levee for community or environmental projects
- Spread the wealth from the Iona tourist trade such as a road toll for buses , a parking fee for buses at Fionnphort or a surcharge on the Iona ferry for non-residents used to repair Mulls infrastructure.
- Investigate feasibility of designating Mull as a National Park.
- The area tourist board should rethink marketing strategy of such areas. Could develop an 'Eco' brochure which would include listing of people involved in

the environment as well as good areas for sighting wildlife, eco friendly accommodation and recommended walks/trails in the area.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Community Phone Questionnaire.

Local Community Phone Questionnaire Date Time Name

This questionnaire is a component of a 4th year Honours dissertation. The aim of the project is to explore the development of sustainable tourism on the Island of Mull, looking at current local initiatives and analysing government plans supporting this concept.

The Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust, The Mull and Iona Community Trust , and Holiday Mull have given support and backing for the questionnaire and are interested in gaining a overall view from the community regarding tourism on the Island.

1. What is the main income of the family? **Fishing Tourism Farming**

2. Is there a secondary income from a tourist related product?(However Small) **Retired Person** **Yes/No**

3. Out of the following industries which one do you think brings the most money to the Island?
(1-5 Level of importance 1= unimportant 5= very important)

Fish Farming 1 2 3 4 5	Tourism 1 2 3 4 5	Other
Sea Fishing 1 2 3 4 5	Agriculture 1 2 3 4 5	

4. Recent figures suggest tourism is decreasing, what do you think could be the reason for this? (1-5 Level of importance 1=unimportant 5=very important)

High petrol prices	1 2 3 4 5
Strong pound	1 2 3 4 5
Poor national advertising	1 2 3 4 5
Poor local marketing	1 2 3 4 5
High prices on the island	1 2 3 4 5
Lack of activities on the island	1 2 3 4 5
Lack of interest in Scotland	1 2 3 4 5
Other	

5. In order to try and get some money directly into the community it has been suggested the a fee of 50p should be charged to all tourists visiting the island. Do you think this is a good idea? **Yes/No**

6. Why do you think people do come to the Island?(1-5 Level of importance 1= unimportant 5=very important)

Historical sites	1 2 3 4 5
Marine Wildlife	1 2 3 4 5
Terrestrial Wildlife	1 2 3 4 5
Arts and Crafts	1 2 3 4 5
Geology	1 2 3 4 5
Scenery	1 2 3 4 5
Outdoor Activities	1 2 3 4 5
History-Genealogy	1 2 3 4 5
	Anything in particular?

7. Are you aware of the Ranger service on the Island? **Yes/No**

8. What do you think are the most important tasks of this service?(1-5 Level of importance 1= unimportant 5= very important)

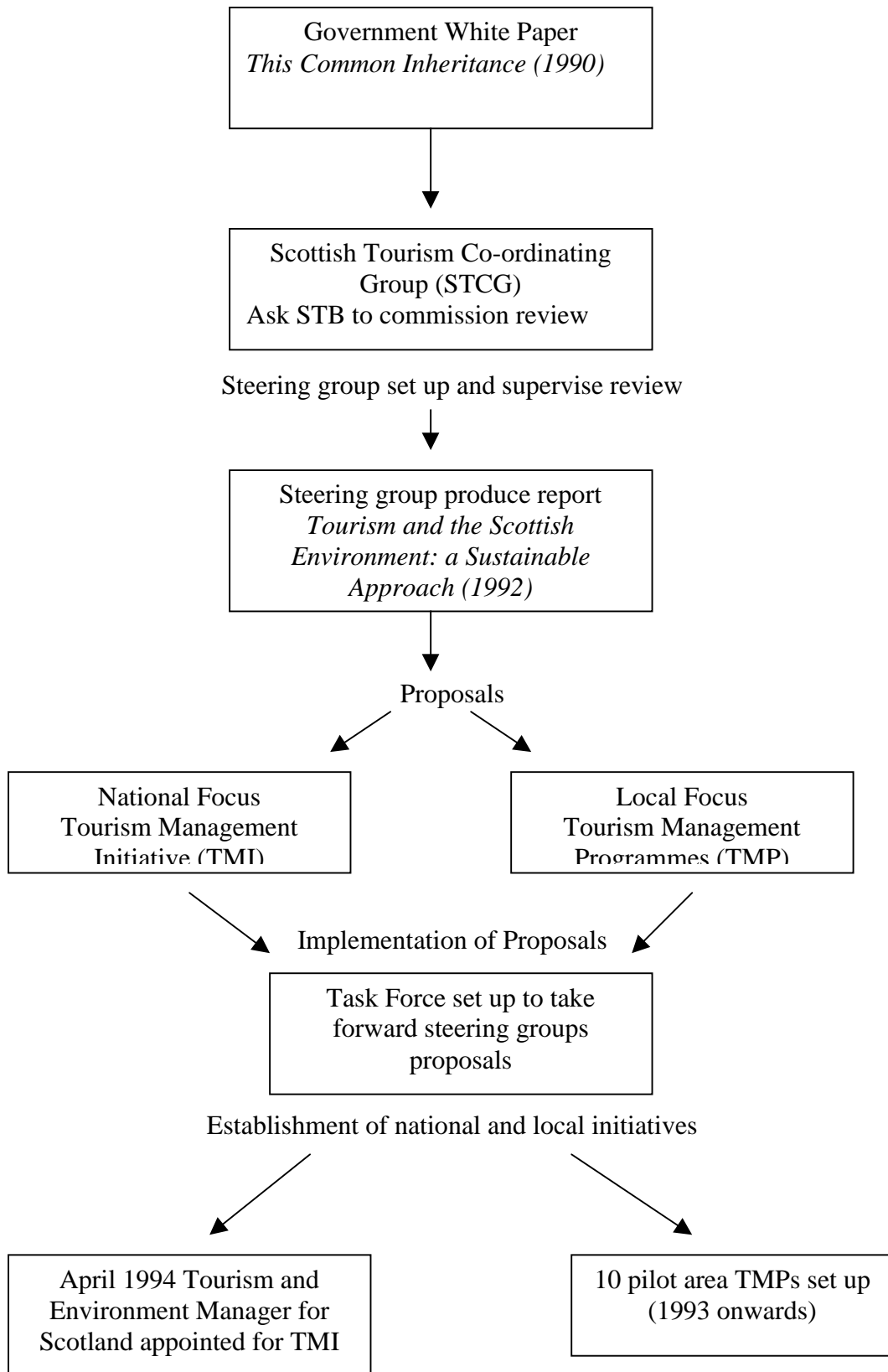
Protection and Preservation of the Environment	1 2 3 4 5
Environmental Education	1 2 3 4 5
Liaison between land owners/user groups	1 2 3 4 5
Promoting access to the countryside	1 2 3 4 5

9. Do you think there should be growth in tourism on the island? **Yes/No**

10. How do you think tourism can be developed to help the local community?

11. Do you consider yourself environmentally conscious? **Yes/ No**
If yes what particular actions do you take to maintain this?

Appendix 2. The Development of the Scottish Tourism and Environment Initiative.



Adapted from Hughes 2000:53

Appendix 3. SWOT Analysis of Island of Mull as Tourist Destination.

Strengths

- Unique wildlife both Marine and terrestrial
- Beautiful Scenery
- Large Mountains for hill walking and other such outdoor pursuits
- Safe and secure holiday destination
- Friendly Hospitality
- Many areas/sites of great historical interest
- Many areas/sites of great geological interest
- A very accessible 'Island' as has short ferry journey
- Gateway to many of the other smaller Islands
- Enthusiastic community, keen to develop tourism on the Island
- Mull and Iona Community Trust - committed to the locals and their needs

Weaknesses

- High number of day visitors, coming to visit Iona and encourage by cheap day return tickets on ferries
- Poor weather patterns
- Lack of wet weather facilities for Locals and Tourists
- Lack of clear identity or image
- Increasing amount of accommodation providers, apparently decreasing numbers of tourists
- Short summer season, leading to seasonality of most employment
- High prices of goods and travel such as ferry prices, petrol prices, groceries

Opportunities

- Increased environmental awareness globally leads to greater demand of destinations such as Mull
- Rapidly becoming top wildlife destination, can build on this to create identity
- Increasing trade during school holidays and Christmas and New year breaks
- Develop festivals/events and encourage greater marketing of these
- Encourage all businesses on Mull to use Internet as advertising tool, the more publicity the better
- Possible inclusion/development of National Park, would protect and enhance area
- Development of bridleways/mountain bike tracks on and around the Island
- Development of car trail round the Island

Threats

- Competition from similar and more easily accessible destinations in the Highlands and Islands
- Lack of funding
- Lack of promotion/development/marketing from Area Tourist Board
- Decreasing trends in the tourism market
- Negative impacts on the Environment of increased visitor numbers