



tourism infocus

Summer 2008

Tsunami Landless
The Second Wave

Slum Tourism
Tourism or Voyeurism?

Responsible Tourism
Visiting Palestine

Local men in Kaipaniuppam in Southern India, where responsible tourism is being hotly debated.



Rachel Noble

Kerala: a different point of view

This is in response to the article by Sumesh Mangalassery regarding the International Conference on Responsible Tourism held recently in Kerala. I feel the piece he wrote was neither objective nor factual, and only furthered a campaign that has been started by a few individuals.

While I certainly disagree with almost all he has written, I think the important point in this response is to inform you about the injustice done to a very useful conference by unbalanced reporting.

Sumesh continues his tirade against Kerala tourism, overlooking the simple fact that the conference was discussing developments across the world, and was certainly not organised to 'project' Kerala. On his suggestion that the conference should be called 'Conference on Irresponsible Tourism', I can only say that this insults the 503 delegates from 29 countries, who spent their money and time to participate.

It was not a forum to market Kerala, but a gathering to discuss and debate the developments in responsible tourism across destinations. The detailed conference programme highlights the diverse nature of the papers

and case studies presented. The conference had a wide ranging representation of local and village level governments (panchayats), women's self help groups, activists, NGOs and civil society organisations of Kerala. There was also a large representation from a variety of NGOs from other regions in India and from outside India. Complimentary and concessional registration was extended to scores of delegates. I would invite you and your readers to take a look at the full text of the Kerala Declaration, agreed and adopted at the end of the conference:

(www.responsibletravel2008.org/keraladeclaration.php)
Dr Venu, Secretary of Tourism, Government of Kerala

Tourism Concern's Response

We welcome the many letters we have received about the article on page 7 in the last edition of *In Focus* (Spring 2008) written by Sumesh Mangalassery from Kabani, an NGO based in Kerala. We are pleased that this article, which highlighted the opinions of various civil society groups in Kerala, has created more open and much-needed discussion between the NGOs and government in Kerala as well as academics in the UK.

We would like to make an apology to Angela Kalisch who had written to us with her comments on sustainable tourism in Kerala for the Spring issue of *In Focus*.

Shortage of space led us to print one quote only, which she feels resulted in an unbalanced, negative perspective of her stance on Kerala.

Angela would like to highlight that she respects the sensitivity and complexity of the issue and that she made reference to some of the problems that Kerala faces in the wider, global political and economic context. She feels that her original remarks included very positive comments on Kerala's achievements alongside some more critical observations.

Front cover pictures, clockwise: A sign advertising land for sale in Arugam Bay, Sri Lanka. Despite the sign still standing, land is not selling here, possibly due to the ongoing conflict in the region (Rachel Noble); The Morrinho scale model of the favelas in Brazil is internationally recognised as having cultural value and is part of a wider slum tourism project to bring economic and social benefits to the community. Find out more on page 8. (NGL Morrinho); Fishing boats parked in front of a guesthouse in Arugam Bay. Although tourism developments in the area have been stalled, the continued beautification of the coast suggests that there are plans for further developments. The question is: will the needs of local people be addressed? (Rachel Noble); A lone fisherman casts his line in the popular tourist area of Galle, Sri Lanka. Since the tsunami, much of the fishing community has been relocated to the nearby hills whilst tourism on the coast has been allowed to thrive. (Rachel Noble).

editorial

IN THIS EDITION OF IN FOCUS, WE VISIT

some of the peoples of the world most marginalised by tourism. We've been out in the field talking to local communities in tourism destinations as we feel that this is an integral part of our campaigning work, enabling these communities to really get their voices heard in the UK tourism industry and by UK-based tourists and travellers.

Our campaigns staff has visited Sri Lanka and India to look into the ongoing struggle of coastal communities displaced by the tsunami. Many people are still suffering the consequences of the tsunami and living in temporary housing whilst the land grab for tourism continues. Rachel Noble reports her findings on pages 4 and 5.

Director Tricia Barnett, who has recently been accredited as a Pioneer for Sustainable Tourism by Condé Nast *Traveler* and was shortlisted for an Ethical Award by *The Observer*, has been in Northern Thailand speaking to the Padaung community. The Padaung women, originally refugees from Burma, wear brass rings around their necks and consequently are trapped in 'tourist' villages due to their economic worth. Forbidden to leave Thailand to relocate, they tell us more about their existence of exploitation and dependence. Find out more on page 7.

Our campaign and work on Burma has been overshadowed by the cyclone that ravaged the Irrawaddy delta in May and our thoughts go out to the people of Burma at this time. But this tragedy has only brought to the forefront the underlying concerns that our long-standing campaigning has focused on: that tourism has been used to bolster a military regime whilst its people languish in poverty.

With the military junta putting the brakes on humanitarian agencies distributing aid to the countless people desperately in need, it seems they have used the distraction to extend Aung San Suu Kyi's house arrest for another year. The junta has also passed a referendum approving a new military-backed constitution for Burma which bans Aung San Suu Kyi from holding elected office. Our book review on page 11 highlights one Burmese man's plight and his escape from the regime.

Please take at least one of our campaign actions and sign up to our Campaigns Action Network to keep up to date with our work. Go to page 11 to find out how. We, and the people exploited in tourism destinations around the world, need you to take action more than ever!

Best wishes,

Kelly Haynes

Editor



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Tourism Concern wishes to state that the articles published in In Focus represent the individuals' opinions and they do not necessarily represent the views of the organisation.

Tourism In Focus

Editor: Kelly Haynes
Managing editor: Tricia Barnett
Sub-editors: Ann Noon, Paul Smith
Design: Andrew Carton-Kelly
Print management: Lithosphere

Tourism Concern staff

Director: Tricia Barnett
Finance Officer: Alan Nguyen
Information: Siobhan Adeusi
Projects: Guyonne James
Fundraiser: Gillian Cooper
Campaigns: Rachel Noble

The Second Wave

Tourism Concern continues to highlight the impacts of tourism on coastal people in the wake of the tsunami.

Rachel Noble, our campaigner, reports on the situation in South India and Sri Lanka, and how the new tourism policies are pushing local communities out.

Tsunami-affected communities in Tamil Nadu and Kerala are facing a second wave of displacement due to aggressive land acquisitions for large-scale tourism developments around the southern Indian coast.

The states have been earmarked by the Indian government as major emerging tourism destinations and investment is being actively promoted. Substantial funds are being channelled into tourism departments, whose coastal developments are placing tsunami survivors – many of whom are still desperately in need of re-housing and livelihood support – under renewed threat of displacement.

In Sri Lanka, many fishing communities which have lived by the sea for time immemorial have now been permanently relocated to new houses several kilometres inland, allegedly to protect them from another tsunami. They cannot afford the daily journey to the coast and have nowhere to store their boats and nets. Many have abandoned fishing but have no other way to earn a living, making them dependent on government handouts and forcing them into poverty.

Meanwhile, tourism developments along the southern coast have flourished and, while the continuing conflict in the east has quietened the government's earlier outspoken drive to develop tourism and promote investment, the signs that this is still on the cards are there. A new international airport is planned, which will be linked to the east and south coasts by a new road, built using EU tsunami funds. Coastal beautification projects have also been facilitated by tsunami funds, despite the fact that many survivors continue to languish in temporary camps. In Batticaloa, a picturesque promenade complete with benches and gazebos now encircles the lighthouse. Local fishermen must store their nets in corrosive sea water and their boats among the few coconut palms on either side of the development. A USAID plaque proudly declares the development as a gift "from the American people".

These findings come following Tourism Concern's recent visit to India and Sri Lanka, where we are partnering with grassroots organisations to raise awareness of the threat posed by tourism developments to tsunami-affected communities. The programme will build the capacity of coastal communities to challenge such developments, which are threatening to consume their land and undermine livelihoods. We are also developing our own campaign to reinforce the efforts of our partners in India and Sri Lanka by raising awareness and harnessing the support of the UK public, who gave so generously in the aftermath of this unprecedented natural disaster.

Take Action Now

Visit our website for updated information about Tourism Concern's work to empower coastal communities in the aftermath of the tsunami and join our Campaigns Action Network. Find out how on page 11.

Hemmed in and sold out



One of many advertising hoardings which appear along the East Coast Road of Tamil Nadu, India, promoting newly built hotels and second homes. Many coastal peoples are now landless due to the tsunami, but more recently because of the push for tourism.

Around the fishing village of Kaipaniuppam, Tamil Nadu, real estate agents have been buying up land for the last ten years and selling it on to tourism developers. The pressure placed on the community to sell is immense, with business-savvy brokers exploiting the fisherfolks' inexperience in dealing with global market forces. The village is now hemmed in on all sides, but urgently needs land to rebuild homes destroyed in the tsunami. However land prices have rocketed.

Although the boats and equipment washed away by the tsunami have been replaced, fish catches have plummeted, placing livelihoods under renewed threat and forcing many families into levels of poverty never seen here before. There's no money to send children to school beyond the age of ten, and no opportunities to develop alternative means of income.

An Indian hotel group has acquired large areas of land around the village and plans to construct a luxury hotel. It's been attempting to sweeten villagers with promises of jobs but residents realise that their lack of education and their inexperience would mean they would only be employed in menial roles.

The community is fearful of the future. They asked the hotel group to return six acres of land so that they could rebuild homes, but this was declined. The women say they don't know how they are going to feed their families from one day to the next.

In the village of Mararikulam, Kerala, whole communities have been talked into selling their land and relocating, only realising the consequences when it's too late. Developers have also been 'privatising' communal beachfront land by building roads, erecting fences and posting security guards.

Significant amounts of tsunami funds are allegedly being diverted into tourism developments in Kerala, prompting further displacement and loss of livelihoods. The Kerala Tourism Board apparently plans to fund 22 projects with tsunami funds, including an artificial reef in Kovalam. Officials justify the project by claiming the reef would provide protection from another tsunami, whilst promoting tourism to the area. However, the use of fish breeding grounds for tourism and curtailed access to the shore will severely impact on the livelihoods of fishing communities which are demanding that the reef project is put off until a full needs assessment has taken place.

campaigns

Pay increases for Inca Trail porters mask other problems

Tourism Concern's longstanding campaign to improve porters' rights alongside local organisations working in trekking destinations has been successful in helping to improve conditions for porters. In the past we've reported on porters being paid a pittance, wearing plastic bags in sub-zero temperatures and even dying on popular tourist trails.

Louise Norton of Leap Local (formerly International Porters Protection Group) tells us how conditions have improved for porters in Peru but why there is still a lot to do.

ON PERU'S INCA TRAIL TO MACHU PICCHU, THE GOVERNMENT HAS TIGHTENED up control of the regulations designed to improve pay and conditions for porters by fining agencies that don't comply, or even removing their permit to operate on the trail. This has benefited some porters who say that they are being paid £8 per day, as required by law, double what most were being paid in 2004.

However, there are still disreputable agencies that pay their porters just £3 and avoid sanctions by forcing them to sign receipts for more. Agencies are now also supplying more equipment for porters but the weight limits sometimes confound these improvements. One cook for a reputable upmarket agency commented that they have to remove the metal frame from their carrying harnesses to help carry their loads because it weighs two kilos and would put them over the weight limit brought in to regulate what porters have to carry, bringing sanctions for the agency.

If you're thinking of trekking in Peru, remember that low cost tours mean your porters will often be the ones paying



Arturo Usandivares

the price. The bureaucratic tangle that surrounds Machu Picchu makes it hard to guarantee that porters receive fair pay and decent working conditions. But there are steps you can take.

Action To hike ethically, find a recommended local and independent guide on www.leaplocal.org.

To find out more about our porters campaign which began in 2002, visit: www.tourismconcern.org.uk.

Battle for Bimini continues



CAMPAIGNERS WHO OPPOSE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A mega-resort on the Bahamian island of Bimini are continuing their fight to establish a Marine Protected Area (MPA) in an attempt to salvage the economic and

ecological future of the island, despite alleged threats of legal action by the Florida-based developer, Capo Group. Locals are concerned about how the island will cope with hurricanes after natural defences have been destroyed for the development.

Over the last few months Tourism Concern has repeatedly contacted the Department of Sustainable Tourism at the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism, but has yet to receive a response.

Bimini was first proposed as an MPA in 2000, but implementation has been continually stalled. Local media recently reported that the government is "working feverishly" on the issue, but there has been no real progress to date.

Meanwhile, substantial land-clearing and destruction of ecologically critical mangrove swamps continues. This is reportedly beginning to encroach on land designated for the MPA.

Bimini Bay Resort is set to accommodate ten thousand people, swelling the island's population by 700% and placing an unprecedented strain on resources and infrastructure.

Over 25% of the mangroves in north Bimini have now been bulldozed, and dredging has had a devastating impact on marine life. This, combined with the privatisation of coastal land, has placed the fishing-based livelihoods of local people under threat. Cheap labour from abroad has been drafted in to work on the development, while the construction of 'secondary resort homes' – separated from the rest of the island by a high wall – has triggered a sharp increase in the cost of living.

Take Action Now

The people of Bimini need your support! Take action now by writing to the Prime Minister of the Bahamas and the Bahamas Ministry of Tourism. See our website or contact the office for a sample letter and contact details. Watch Save Bimini Association's video at www.youtube.com/savebimini

Communities meet tour operators

IT TOOK A SMALL NGO BASED IN CHIANG MAI, NORTHERN

Thailand, to do what the multi-million dollar world tourism industry rarely manages: bring together communities and tour operators to discuss their needs and how best to attract punters to visit community-based tourism projects, in this case in Thailand.

It was organised by Thailand's Community-Based Tourism Institute (CBT-I), supported by the Travel Foundation, which handpicked a bunch of UK and Thai tour operators – those with a sensitive approach to tourism development – as well as Tourism Concern, to engage in two days of brainstorming. Each UK tour operator was then paired with a Thai tour operator and went off to visit one of the communities – from hill tribes in the north to fishing villages in the south.

The workshop learned that community-based tourism (CBT) in Thailand means that income from tourism should be a supplement to the economy, not an end in itself, and that quality not quantity of tourism was what mattered to local people. In that way, traditional economies remain sustainable. "Without our culture we're no different from any other tourist destination," said Na Sur, a young community representative. The CBT-I has another objective: to show how tourism can be a tool for development by empowering communities through tourism.

Such encounters may be like a grain of rice in an



Polly Parrullo

Karen women weaving near Mae Klang Luang village, Northern Thailand, one of the villages the tour operators stayed with. The local women's work is displayed for tourists to buy.

overstuffed granary but, according to Peter Richards, CBT-I's co-ordinator of the project: "The participants worked hard to define practical ways where they could assist each other to meet their needs."

They worked even harder during a "cultural cook-in" in which Thai participants were subjected to the delights of British cuisine, including haggis and baked beans. Perhaps you can sometimes take cultural exchange just a little too far!

UK tour operators participating were: The Adventure Company, Exodus, Explore, Gecko Travel, Hands Up Holiday, Meet the People, Symbiosis Expeditions, The Imaginative Traveller, Go Differently.

Meeting the Padaung

As part of the CBT-I's brainstorming meeting, Tourism Concern's director, Tricia Barnett, visited a Padaung community in Northern Thailand to find out more about their experiences as an update to the article in the last edition of *In Focus*.

Close to the Thai Burmese border in Northern Thailand is Kayani Ta Ya village. Here a unique tribe of Kayan refugees live, whose women wear coiled brass rings around their necks. Having fled persecution in Burma, these families continue to be persecuted because of the income they bring through tourist visits.

A Padaung refugee, her aunt and a friend explained how they are separated from the main refugee camps which hold about 23,000 people because of their attraction as tourist objects and the income they bring in to the people who manage the village. Due to this separation they receive none of the health and education services provided through the UNHCR and are not categorised by the Thai government as refugees.

Invitations to move to Australia, New Zealand and Finland are not open to them because they don't hold refugee status and without this the Thai authorities will not give them permission to leave. The Padaung are far too lucrative.

One of the women stated: "We feel very sad and we don't know what to do about it. If we don't get a regular salary we don't know how to manage. I feel much pain in my heart which I cannot express. I would like to live freely."

In a recent development, a Thai businessman has opened a new tourist village near Bangkok. Some 19 Padaung women have reportedly been moved here to lure tourists. The district chief insists that the women are willing to move. "This is better than staying in their home region and starving," he said.

Tourism Concern fights exploitation. This is because we recognise that our holidays are other people's homes. Our holidays should be as good for the people in the destinations we are visiting as they are for ourselves.

We frequently get harassed by locals without realising that it's often because they're not getting any real benefits from our holidays. On the contrary, those living in popular tourist destinations often suffer when precious resources, such as water, are diverted from agriculture into hotel swimming pools. People even get thrown out of their homes for new developments.

Tourism generates huge wealth and can be a force for good for millions living at destinations, but they receive little, with most of our money never reaching them.

Please join us to fight exploitation.

Your actions make changes happen!

A Padaung girl having her picture taken with a 'dressed up' tourist. The Padaung women earn 1,500 baht (£25) per month and support their families because the men are not allowed to work. Outside the tourist season the families receive food aid.



Polly Parrullo



Slumming it...

Slum tourism can be a controversial issue, with some seeing it as beneficial to local communities and others as exploitative, with tourists 'ogling' slum inhabitants as if they're in a zoo. Can slum tourism really be beneficial?

Joao Vergara, a consultant and volunteer on the Morrinho Project since 2005 and one of the founders of Cama e Café, tells us how slum tourism is impacting on people in the slums of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil...

The Morrinho Project is a tourism project in the slums of the Rio favelas. It began in August 2007 in the Community Vila Pereira da Silva, which has approximately 5,000 inhabitants. The main focus is to support controlled community tourism activities and provide income generating opportunities for local people.

The NGO Morrinho consulted 24 elected community leaders, shopkeepers and a local council member on how they thought the project should be structured. This led to the organisation of a workshop last October to begin the process of participatory planning for tourism to the area, enabling the local community and other stakeholders to be involved. Most of them had seen some tourists, but it was the first time that they had been consulted about tourism development. Only one person considered tourism to have a negative impact. Most regarded it as beneficial for the community, as well as a means of improving the image of the place.

Kelly Martins Oliveira, President of the Association of Residents in Vila Pereira da Silva, says: "The tourism project includes a guesthouse called Pousada Favelinha (little slum), tours and shows at the square. It gives visibility to the community in a positive way and promotes wealth generation. The community likes hosting tourists as they can show how proud they are of their home. In time, the benefits could be larger, with more people being involved by, for example, hosting tourists in their own houses. Money generated by tourism activities could be invested in social activities. I believe the tourists themselves would welcome the chance to invest more in the community."

Tourists already stay in local hostels and hotels. Morrinho has implemented training and language lessons for tour guides and community members, and handicraft courses so that other locals can generate an income. Recycling waste has also been introduced, as well as promoting community events to raise money for the poorer members of the community.

The aim is for the Morrinho Project to generate additional funding for a school, hospital and child care and for each family to have an income of £80 per month. The project is still in its infancy and is centred on the NGO Morrinho and in the Pousada Favelinha, one area of the favela. But it is developing at a pace which allows the project to be sustainable. Even the youngsters, the 'new generation' of the favelas are getting involved, and they are brilliant.

This project still depends on the help of institutions, government and volunteers and is certainly a tough, long-term challenge. But our vision is that by 2012, the Pereira community will be recognized as a community that has achieved sustainable development through tourism.

Local voices

Left: The Morrinho scale model, initially created in 1996, is now over 300m² and comprises of more than 20 favelas of Rio. It has now become a tourist attraction. Read more at: www.morrinho.com

Photo: NGO Morrinho

About the Organisation

NGO Morrinho was set up by the founders of Brazilian bed and breakfast network Cama e Café (www.camaecafe.com.br) to include Rio and favela residents in the process of development through tourism.

The NGO aims to enable people from the Pereirao community to work together for the sustainable development of tourism, including economic, social and cultural improvements. This includes creating job opportunities and organising workshops and courses to enable local people to gain the skills needed for managing their own tourism.

The NGO supports the community to market their products whether they be guesthouse accommodation, tours or handicrafts. It also supports the training of local guides and reinvesting in the local area so that the benefits are felt throughout the community.



Souvenirs at the community centre craft market in Langa Township, Cape Town's oldest township. Items are made there and sold directly to tourists.

Photo: Rainbow Tours

Are slum visits tourism or voyeurism?

“Although some people feel tours into poor areas are voyeuristic, I think this is an excuse for avoiding confronting the reality of how many people live. Certainly in South Africa it is always tourists who venture into the townships; rich South Africans living parallel lives just a few kilometres away virtually never go there. Last time I stayed in a well-established B&B in a Cape Town township the proprietor told me she had never had a white South African as an overnight guest!

Tours need to be run sensitively. They should operate in consultation with the local community; they should include opportunities for interaction

(for example a meal and a drink) in a locally run café; they should visit community upliftment projects and include opportunities to purchase community-made crafts. If the community agrees, visits should be on foot so that tourists can engage with locals, not just by staring at them through the window of a coach.

We find our tourists often declare their township experience to have been the highlight of their trip.”

Roger Diski, Director of Rainbow Tours which arranges township tours in South Africa

What are your thoughts on slum tourism?

Email us and let us know at: info@tourismconcern.org.uk



Pascal Ducourant

Israeli and Palestinian NGOs have an active role to play in raising tourists' awareness of Palestinian heritage and one way they do this is by organising tours. This Alternative Tourism Centre guide is describing the 'Fence-wall' behind him which separates Jerusalem and is criticised as part of the ongoing Israeli settlement expansion.

Palestine has a developing tourism economy but this can be unstable due to the political situation with Israel. When violence broke out in 2000, the number of tourists dropped drastically and the tourism industry has been trying to recover ever since. Due to tourists visiting the sites in the Palestinian Territories for just a few hours and then staying in Israeli hotels, increased tourism doesn't mean increased revenue for Palestinians.

However, *The Observer* has reported that Palestine is an up-and-coming destination, with the number of guests doubling in the past year. The number of tourists staying at hotels in the Palestinian territories rose 108 per cent last year to levels not seen since the Intifada. In 2007, 315,866 guests spent 673,458 nights in the region's 82 hotels. Palestinian hotel firms have plans to add 10,000 rooms in east Jerusalem, Jericho and Bethlehem over the next three years.

Another Palestine?

Visiting Palestine as a tourist may be a surprise choice. The mass media have conditioned us to believe that Palestine is a hotbed of violence, hatred and extremism. But with the many wonderful cultural and religious sites, is there a way to visit Palestine and benefit the community as well?

Pierrette Nicolosi, founder member of *Tourisme Autrement*, is committed to human rights in tourism in Palestine. She has worked to develop contact with Palestinian and Israeli NGOs using tourism as a tool to promote peace.

MASS TOURISM IN PALESTINE HAS EXISTED FOR CENTURIES IN THE GUISE OF PILGRIMAGE TOURISM, BASED around visiting religious or spiritual sites. This mainly focuses on the Christian faith and does not take into account the political issues between Palestine and Israel. After the Intifada (or Palestinian uprising), the tourism industry crashed and since then has been dominated by Israel, which recognises the importance of tourism and is reaping the benefits, with many individuals and small enterprises setting up tourism ventures.

Like other sectors of the economy, tourism has been affected by 60 years of Israeli occupation. Unfair measures are taken to weaken Palestinian tourism. Restrictions handicap the movement of guides and infrastructure cannot be developed. Palestinian cities such as Bethlehem and Nablus are banned from tour itineraries, areas are closed to tourists and the image of Palestine as a dangerous destination is kept well polished. Such measures are intended to increase unemployment, damage the economy, and create a national sense of having been abandoned.

Those who choose to visit Palestine as part of a regular tour group will find the pilgrimage experience offered to them almost industrialized as they are rushed from site to church to temple, completely ignoring local people. Despite this highly controlled experience, visitors will hear only temperate language from local people, despite the violence they face on a daily basis. The Palestinians are determined to defend their right to a just peace, giving them the right to move freely, work, go to school, travel and to have prospects for the future.

There are ways of visiting Palestine differently by organising your trip through a local organisation such as 'Association d'Echanges Culturels Hébron France', which trains tourist guides in Hebron. This enables 'Hebronite' youths to connect with their own history through the history of their city and with social activities run for local people. Visitors can spend several days there, as accommodation is organised with local families. In this way, a visitor is much more likely to engage with a people justifiably proud of their culture and inheritance. Once this connection is made with the 'human face' of Palestine, the stark contrast between the stereotypical media image and the everyday reality becomes apparent.

Palestine offers real potential for tourism – and not only pilgrimage tourism. There is an incredible concentration of historic sites: the Nativity Church in Bethlehem; Al Aqsa Mosque; The Patriarch House in Hebron; and the old souks of Nablus and Jerusalem. For the Palestinians, visitors offer a possibility of communication, a chance to 'put their case', to express the injustice they feel, and above all the opportunity to break out of the isolation they experience. The visitor is cast as witness and advocate almost by default. Grassroots communities in Palestine can be given a real sense of self-worth when their culture and traditions find a voice through tourism and are nourished by it. Responsible tourism and Palestine can co-exist and simultaneously help to combat injustice.

To find local places to stay and tours to Palestine, visit the Alternative Tourism Group: www.atg.ps

Take action:

Join the Campaigns Action Network

Tourism Concern's email alert system has had a new lease of life. We're urging all our members and supporters to join and take part in campaign actions and receive exclusive updates.

Once you've signed up you'll be at the forefront of our campaigns and will receive regular emails highlighting key issues and the actions you can take.

You really can make a difference. In the past, our campaigners have helped stop a huge tourism development planned for north Zanzibar which threatened thousands of local people and their livelihoods.

Join the Campaigns Action Network.

It ensures that you're on the front line fighting exploitation in tourism!

To sign up, visit our website and go to the 'Get Involved/Campaign With Us' page.

Fundraise at the click of a mouse!

Help raise vital funds by using the Tourism Concern 'Everyclick' search engine. Everyclick works like any other major search engine, except each time you search you generate funds for Tourism Concern.

Over 100,000 people are signed up nationwide, supporting the charity of their choice. So far, 40 people have signed up as fundraisers for us, helping raise over £200. But we need more of you to sign up.

Simply visit www.everyclick.com, click on 'Become a fundraiser' and follow the easy instructions. You can join as an individual, company, school or college.

You can also help raise more funds by using the 'Spread the Word' tools to encourage your friends and family to sign up.

There are no fees or hidden charges, so sign up as an Everyclick fundraiser today and spread the word – it doesn't cost you a penny!



Do you have any ideas for how Tourism Concern could raise funds, or would you like to organise or take part in a fundraising event on our behalf?

We would love to hear your suggestions – please contact the office at info@tourismconcern.org.uk.

What's On...

- Third International Conference on Sustainable Tourism, 3-5 September 2008, Malta. Visit www.wessex.ac.uk/conferences/2008/tourism08 for more information.
- Have your say and join the Leap Local website debate on "what constitutes a 'local' in tourism destinations". Leap Local is an organisation which aims to alleviate poverty through giving local communities access to tourism. www.leaplocal.org (go to the forum page on what is a 'local'?)

From The Land of Green Ghosts:

A Burmese Odyssey

Pascal Khoo Thwe
Non-fiction/biography
£7.99, Harper Collins
ISBN: 0007116829



This extraordinary book follows the life of Pascal Khoo Thwe, a Padaung man of the Kayan tribe, born into a rural life in Burma, who becomes a freedom fighter before moving to England and gaining a degree from Cambridge University.

Pascal wants the reader to understand his background and details the minutiae of his family's daily life. On the one hand, there are stories about his grandmothers, about his tribe and shamanism, football, food and home-made brews. While on the other there is the steady destruction by the Burmese regime of everything his tribe hold precious.

His journey of innocence from the village to university in Mandalay is beautifully chronicled. His political consciousness is then awakened by horrific events in Mandalay, where protesters are slaughtered, and later by the fate of his fiancée, Moe, who was raped and killed by the military.

Pascal eventually joins Karenni guerrillas who have been fighting for decades for independence. We learn of his rescue by an English don from Cambridge, who supports his education.

This book gives the reader a special insight into the people who bear the brunt of the atrocities of the Burmese generals. Pascal Khoo Thwe not only bears witness, but he also helps to educate us about a country ignored by the world for too long.

Tricia Barnett

Keep your diaries free for
Tourism Concern's
Annual General Meeting 2008
on Saturday 4th October

**At the Postgraduate Suite, London Metropolitan University,
Holloway Road, London N7**

Come along and join in our Moral Maze debate on climate change:

**'Offsetting the Benefits: Do the gains to the
destination outweigh the damage to the planet?'**

We have a great line-up of speakers so it's sure to be lively!

www.tourismconcern.org.uk

I would like to support TourismConcern

giftaid it

I would like:

- to become a Tourism Concern supporter with a **donation** of £ _____
£24 or over (waged) or £15 (unwaged) entitles me to become a voting member of Tourism Concern.
- to give a year's gift membership
- to pay by standing order – please send details
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