16 Living in Hope: Tourism and Poverty Alleviation in Flores?[1]

S. COLE

Centre for Leisure, Tourism and Society, University of the West of England, UK

Introduction

A growing body of literature exists that suggests tourism can be used to create pro-poor growth and benefit the poor in areas where there are limited resources for development (e.g. Ashley *et al*., 2001; DFID, 1999). However, while tourism to remote parts of the less economically developed world has seen constant increased growth, evidence seems to suggest that this has provided scant benefit to the poor. Moreover, the literature suggests that for tourism development to help alleviate poverty it should be developed from the bottom-up, but is this model a dream or reality?

This chapter presents findings from a longitudinal (1989–2005) ethnographic study on Ngadha, Flores, Indonesia. Methods have involved participant observation, focus groups, and interviews with a variety of stakeholders. It analyses why, despite impressive natural and cultural resources, tourism has done very little to alleviate poverty in the area.

The evidence suggests that cultural reasons, local hegemonies and power politics may limit entrepreneurship and the accumulation of capital. The research identifies the roles played by the government that have inhibited bottom-up development. As in many remote areas of less economically developed countries, bureaucrats lacking an understanding of tourism took decisions and planners believed that the local people were uneducated and too ignorant to be involved. Furthermore, due to the ubiquitous Indonesian patrimonial system, decisions made by the authorities could not be questioned. The New Order government has been responsible for restricting participation, belittling villagers, and creating fearful, unconfident communities. In addition, the impact of recent anti-backpacker policy that has discouraged the types of tourists Flores, and other remote marginal communities, need to attract, is explored.

The final part of the chapter examines how global, national, natural and political disasters have besieged Indonesia's tourism and hampered the villagers'

attempts to make a living from tourism. Forest fires, the Asian financial crisis, political unrest on other islands, bombs in Bali, negative travel advisories, SARS-induced panic, and the 2004 tsunami have meant that the numbers of tourists to Flores has been unpredictable. In many cases the villagers on Flores were unaware or did not understand why the number of tourists that visit fluctuated or why their tourism dried up 'without explanation'.

The study questions if a community could rely on tourism as a prime tool for development, even if their government encouraged local community participation and was committed to pro-poor tourism development. Tourism numbers and the benefits they bring are not within the control of a local community. They are not able to control their destination image, international media, or foreign governments' travel advisories. Tourism may bring the dream of development, and the hope of an end to poverty; however, the realities may be very different.

Tourism, Development and Poverty Alleviation

Tourism's potential contribution to development is the fundamental justification for encouraging the sector. While defining development has been subject to debate, present day conceptions can be summed up as a multidimensional process leading to 'good change' and seen to embrace self-sufficiency, self-determination and empowerment, as well as improved standards of living (Scheyvens, 2003).

The arguments for tourism as a vehicle for development and as a strategy for economic growth in developing countries are well rehearsed (de Kadt, 1979; Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Pearce, 1989; Richter 1993). Tourism is a growth industry, and it contributes to foreign exchange earnings, creates employment and leads to economic diversification. Tourism makes use of natural 'free' assets such as beaches and mountain views and, as such, has relatively low entry costs. Tourism also has the ability to attract inward investment for capital projects (Williams, 1998) and the infrastructure improvements needed for tourists will also help local communities. Unlike nearly all other industries, it is not subject to trade barriers such as tariffs and quotas (Lickorish, 1991). Furthermore, tourism is generally perceived as a smokeless industry that has less negative environmental impact than other sectors and can provide the economic incentive to protect habitats which might otherwise be destroyed. Seen from this perspective, it is not surprising that so many less economically developed countries promote tourism. This is especially the case in areas that have few primary resources and a small industrial base, where tourism often constitutes the only viable economic opportunity (Oppermann and Chon, 1997).

Added to these macro economic reasons there are a number of powerful arguments why tourism is believed to be able to alleviate poverty and contribute to local level development. Tourism is a labour-intensive industry and many less developed countries have severe unemployment problems (Tribe, 2005). Furthermore, many of the jobs in tourism are relatively unskilled, providing opportunities for women and other marginalized groups (Ashley *et al.*, 2001). As tourism delivers consumers to the product, locals have a new market for their products and services. Thus tourism has the potential for linkages particularly to

traditional livelihood occupations such as agriculture, fishing and handicraft production. This means that tourism expenditure has the potential to generate a large multiplier effect, which can stimulate various parts of the local economy. The economic multiplier in tourism is greater than in many other industries, especially in the informal sector, with its low entry barriers in terms of investment and skills.

While many less economically developed countries struggle to develop their tourism due to inadequate infrastructure, lack of trained personnel and corrupt, inefficient and inexperienced government bodies (Harrison, 2001), attention has turned to initiatives that develop tourism from the bottom up such as 'community-based tourism', 'pro-poor tourism', or 'alternative tourism'. A number of reasons for this new focus exist: if tourism is to be a tool for development it must focus attention on poverty alleviation. Evidence from the literature suggests small-scale enterprises present greater opportunities for control and profit by local people (Rodenburg, 1980) and that guesthouses import less than hotels and as a result the multiplier is greater (Milne, 1992). Furthermore, Britton argued that small-scale tourism enterprises have a greater impact on improving rural living standards, reducing rural-urban migration and countering structural inequalities of income distribution (Britton, 1982: 183). Small-scale tourism places value on natural and cultural resources and can be developed without great capital investment in remote and marginal regions where a disproportionate number of the poorest people live. Much of the labour requirements are for unskilled workers, improving the opportunities for women and disadvantaged groups to earn money (Roe and Khanya, 2001). As tourism can stimulate employment, the drive for young people to migrate to urban areas is reduced, leaving a more balanced population in remote rural areas. Tourism is also considered to stimulate small-scale and micro-enterprises empowering previously disadvantaged members of communities, and further helping to alleviate poverty.

As discussed elsewhere (Cole, 2006a) developing tourism in poor remote areas has benefits that go beyond economic. Tourism can be a powerful tool to empower marginal communities. Many researchers have discussed how tourism brings about pride (Crystal, 1978; Manspergerm 1992; Van den Berghe,1992; Boissevain,1996; Adams, 1997; Cole, 1997; Erb, 1998). Tourism can also enhance community cohesion (Sanger, 1988; Ashley *et al.*, 2001). Tourism increases access to information and external contacts (Ashley *et al.*, 2001; Forshee, 2001), as well as new language skills and globalized media (Williams, 1998). Through tourism, communities come to value their cultural assets; it increases their confidence and can strengthen their political identity (Swain, 1990; Johnston, 1992). These are all signs of empowerment.

A consensus of opinion in tourism and development literature suggests that to bring about tourism that will be effective as a tool for development in its widest sense, community participation is essential. This is a complex notion and includes questions over who makes up a community (Cole, 2006b) and at what level their participation needs to be.

Even if definitions were easier, and communities less complex, there are a number of reasons why active community participation is hard to achieve in practice: lack of ownership, capital, skills, knowledge and resources all constrain the ability of communities to fully control their participation in tourism

development (Scheyvens, 2003). In many communities, such as the ones discussed here, where monetary exchange is a relatively recent phenomenon, villagers fail to accumulate capital. There is often pressure from relatives to redistribute gains from tourism, and/or a desire to gain prestige from the conspicuous public display of wealth, such as donating livestock for rituals. Consequently, for many marginalized people, gains from tourism are short lived.

A lack of knowledge about legal and financial processes makes the poor venerable to exploitation by local elites and outside business interests. Several researchers have discussed how a lack of knowledge is the constraining factor in marginalized communities in the world (Sofield, 2003; Cole, 2006b). Participation beyond lip services and rhetoric cannot be achieved without elucidation (Cole, 1999). Knowledge of tourism must be a precursor for those who want to participate in decisions about tourism planning and management. Many communities lack any real understanding of what it is they are supposed to be making decisions about (Sofield, 2003). The villagers in this case bemoan their lack of understanding of tourism and this is one of the reasons that the reality of bottom-up development remains so elusive.

Evidence suggests community responses to tourism are partly determined by their prior access to local resources, the level of consensus and cohesion in the community and the degree to which they are able to work with outside institutions. Communities have adopted and adapted to tourism when in productive and sympathetic partnerships with external agencies such as NGOs and private sector players (Harrison and Price, 1996: 8–12). The ideal of many 'community based initiatives' is for the local community to have a high degree of control over the activities taking place and a significant proportion of the benefits accrue to them (Scheyvens, 2003: 10) but, as this study illustrates, locals are not likely to ever have a high degree of control over tourist arrivals due to global and national events outside of their control. It is for this reason that any tourism development strategy must be part of an integrated development strategy; tourism should only ever be one string on a community's bow.

Following a brief description of the study, I will examine the reasons why, in this community, poverty alleviation has been more about dreams than realities. It will evaluate the roles of aspects of the villagers' culture, Indonesian governance and policy, and external factors, which have resulted in roller coaster arrival statistics. It examines why the villagers participation has been largely limited to receiving tourists in their midst, the selling of crafts, and occasionally engaging with them.

Methods

This study was based on long-term research over a period of 15 years (1989–2005). I operated tours in the area between 1989 and 1994, which included 2-night stays in one of the villages under study. The success of the tours influenced the research that followed. Bringing tourists, income and piped water (Cole, 1997) developed trust and rapport with the villagers. In 1996 30 questionnaire-based interviews were carried out to explore the villagers' views

and attitudes to tourists and tourism. This provided the baseline for further study. Between July 1998 and February 1999 I spent 8 months carrying out ethnographic fieldwork to investigate the values, attitudes, perceptions and priorities of the actors in tourism. Participant observation was undertaken in a number of villages, and living in two villages provided the opportunity for interviews and focus groups with the villagers. Tourists were observed, interviewed and surveyed at different points during the study, and government officials were interviewed. Short return visits were made in 2001, to collect further data, and in 2003 to hold a seminar to share the results of my study. In 2005, with a grant from the British Academy, I returned for 1 month for a follow-up study to specifically evaluate the use of a code of conduct as a tool to educate tourists about their behaviour in the villages. (Cole, 2007a).

The Study

The study was based in two villages, Bena and Wogo, in the Ngadha region of Flores, Nusa Tenggara, Timor (see Fig. 1). Ngadha is positioned between two of the region's primary attractions: Komodo to the west (home of the world's largest monitor lizards *Varanus komodoensis*) is the main pull factor for visitors to eastern Indonesia (Erb, 2000). Keli Mutu, a volcano with three different-coloured lakes, draws the tourists further east.

The area is one of the poorest in Indonesia and tourism is considered the area's best option for economic development (Umbu Peku Djawang, 1991). The villages lie in a rugged mountainous region with steep slopes and poor soils. Most villagers live close to or below the poverty line by international standards. The villagers subsist on growing maize and vegetables for their own consumption. Small amounts of cash are derived from the sale of beans, coffee, vanilla and pepper, craft production and remittances from family members working away.

Drifters began visiting the villages in the 1980s and their numbers increased through that decade and into the 1990s. Erb (2000) reports an 18% annual increase between 1990 and 1995 in Manggarai (the regency of Flores to the west of Ngadha). Between 1987 and 1997 Indonesia's inbound tourism grew from just 1 million to over 5 million. By 1997 tourism accounted for 10.2% of Indonesia's exports (WTO, 1999). In that year, Bena's best, 9000 tourists visited the village (Cole, 2007b).

With increasing numbers of tourists the benefits of tourism were felt by the villagers. In the late 1980s and early 1990s funds from tourism brought piped water to both villages. Since then, in Wogo several houses have used electric pumps to run water to bathrooms (*kamar mundi*)[2] behind their houses. In Bena, an aid agency match-funded donations collected from tourism to provide one standpipe per four houses.

The roads in Flores were improved substantially in the last two decades of the 20th century. Although still inadequate, the road to Bena was upgraded, in part due to the needs of tourists, and the villagers are aware of this fringe benefit from tourism. The improvements mean that villagers can travel to and from
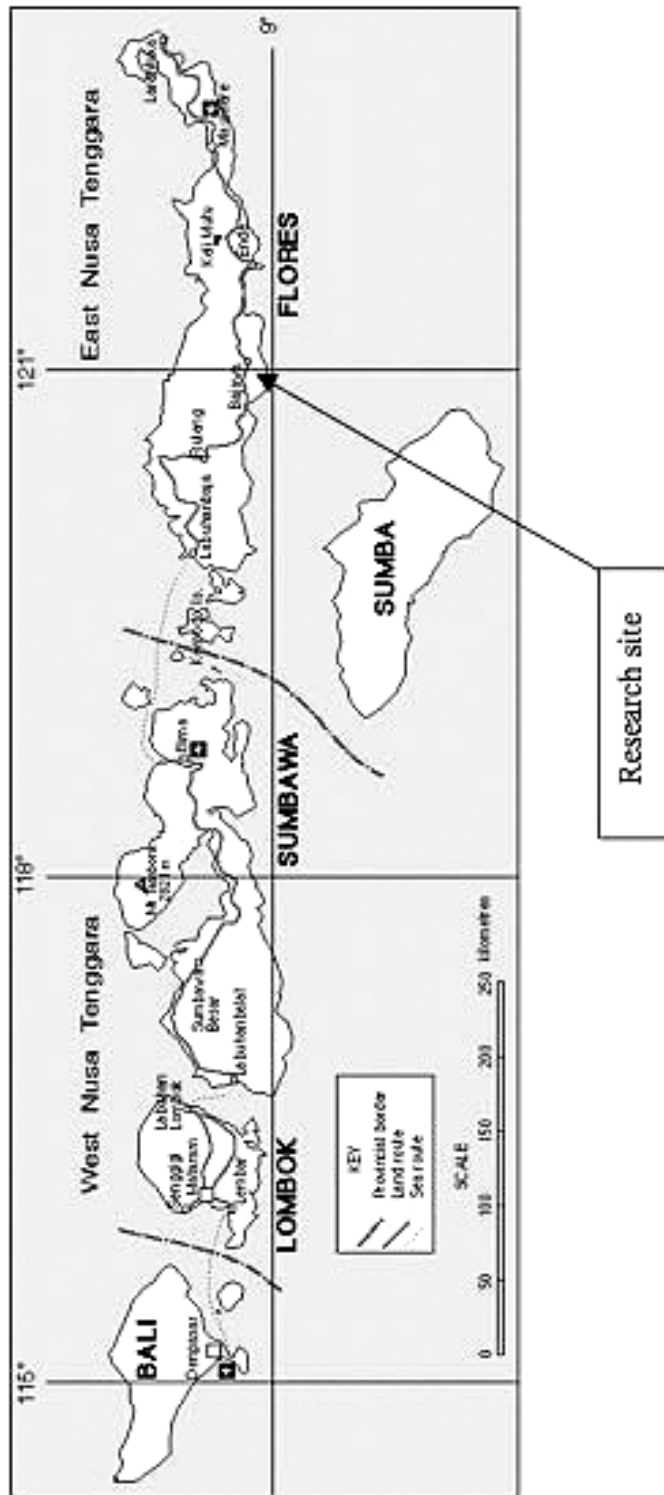
Fig. 1. Map of Eastern Isles showing location of research site.

Bajawa, the local market town, more easily. This has meant better access to schools for teenagers in Bena and the access has improved sales both of *ikats*[3] (hand woven fabrics) and agricultural produce. It has also facilitated the purchase of diesel for generators. However, as roads have improved, tourists are taken to more villages and spend less time in each village. This has had a negative impact on sales of souvenirs to tourists in Bena.

The cultural contact brought, in part, by tourism has had a significant impact on the villagers' lives. As tourists have shown interest in the villagers' lives, the villagers have developed a self-conscious awareness of their traditions. Their shame at being part of Indonesia's 'isolated peasantry' (Li, 2000) is being replaced with pride. They have seen the name of their villages (and specific people) appear in international guidebooks. Tourism has increased the villagers' self-esteem as people come all the way from the other side of the world to see their villages. Tourism has reduced their isolation; it has brought contacts in distant places, and links to the wider world. Knowing foreigners brings social and potentially economic advantage. The two members of the villages that have studied to postgraduate level outside Indonesia both worked as 'guides' in the early days of tourism. Other guides have used their European friends to help with education for themselves and for their relatives. Other tourists have helped with medical care or sent regular donations to help families in the villages. Through tourists some villagers have become well interconnected with the wider world.

In 1991 I stopped taking tour groups to Wogo and moved to a more remote village, the villagers (and I) were sure that they were at 'take-off'. The village had entered the Lonely Planet Guide Book and independent travellers visited the village on a daily basis. The villagers were enthusiastic about tourism: it had brought them hope of a new opportunity for development. In the survey in 1996 they talked of plans for the future, of ideas, of hopes and of dreams.

In Bena, tourism has become part of the economic fabric of the village. For a variety of reasons: greater scenic beauty, less fertile soils, better relations with local guides, Bena has received far greater government intervention in tourism (Cole, 2007b). However, as in Wogo, all villagers felt that tourism had the potential to bring further development to the village. Underlying the lack of development in Wogo and the slow pace of development in Bena are a number of factors. The factors can be divided into internal and external, although there is clearly interplay between the two. Before examining the external factors, the internal factors are discussed in turn below: peripherality, the history of outside authority, a hierarchical authoritarian government, a collectivist culture, a lack of confidence and feeling belittled, and an anti-backpacker policy.

Indonesian Governance and Policy: Contradictions and Challenges for Pro-poor Tourism Development

Ngadha is in a peripheral position as a result of geography, past processes and economics. The region is hundreds of miles from the provincial capital, Kupang, which is a remote outpost of a nation, itself, from many perspectives, peripheral

to the world system. Combined with its remote geographical position, the region has minimal industry, and as a result is peripheral in economic terms. Further, the Ngadha are Catholic and the majority of Indonesians are Muslims. The Ngadha are not part of the Indonesian mainstream in terms of cultural history, having never been part of one of the major Javanese or Malay kingdoms. Moreover, nothing yet has put the Ngadha on the 'cultural map' of Indonesia, unlike some other minority groups (e.g. the Toraja, Batak, or Dani).[4] Despite this peripherality the Indonesian government has had an important impact on the villages.

Under the leadership of the first president of Indonesia, Sukarno, the principles of *Pancasila*, the five principles to safeguard national unity, were formulated. *Pancasila* remained the national ideology under the New Order government of the second president, Suharto, who treated the principles as religious in nature (Erb, 2001) and used them as an ideological justification for authoritarian rule (Schwarz, 1999). In order to maintain unity, stability and economic growth, the New Order maintained order and control through authoritarianism, patronage and bureaucracy.

Across the archipelago, Javanese concepts of power and authority (Anderson, 1972), whereby reverence is shown towards people in power or otherwise high social standing, prevail. Accordingly, from high-level political jurisdictions, down to the village level, the top-heavy traditional perspectives of power remain strong (Timothy, 1999). Villagers accept and expect political and social control to be in the hands of the government. They are taught blind obedience to central government (Erb, 2000), and there is a belief that the government knows best (Gede Raka, 2000). The villagers' and local government's attitudes to tourism development need to be understood against this backdrop.

The hierarchical structure of the Indonesian government is highly bureaucratic, with the state administration extending to very local levels. The pettiest officer (*ketua* RT) administers only 12 households. The government has been heavily committed to a centralized, bureaucratic process of decision making. As Reisinger and Turner (1997) suggest, the authorities make decisions and they cannot be questioned. In dealings with state officials, the villagers' fear of authority could easily be sensed. While many villagers were openly critical of decisions relating to tourism development with me, they believed that decisions taken by higher authorities could not be challenged.

The villagers' experience of outside authority has also come from the Catholic Church. They have become used to acting on instructions and do not feel empowered to act without being directed. Further inaction resulted from 'the need to be asked'. The sale of ikats in Bena began when tourists asked to purchase ikat cloths hanging on washing lines. The request came from the tourists. Most long knives (*parang*) are still sold in this way although a few are now hung on terraces, in Bena, in a deliberate attempt to sell them. The villagers make and use rice baskets (*wati*), gourd bowls (*ngeme*), wooden and coconut ladles and draining spoons, but these are not offered to tourists. As these are kept in the inner sacred rooms of houses which tourists rarely enter, tourists do not see them or ask to purchase them. When villagers were asked why they did not sell these items to tourists, I was told, 'Tourists have not asked to buy them'[5]. The

tourists I took to Wogo did enter the inner rooms and requested to buy various items. The villagers were happy to give them away. 'Have it, we can easily make another one'. It did not occur to them to sell these objects. Later, when recounting their strange experiences with tourists, they would giggle and say, 'They wanted our old spoons'.

The tourism department endorsed the view of waiting for requests to come from tourists by saying 'villagers shouldn't force their wares on tourists but should provide them if requested'. While the government may have been trying to prevent tourists being pressured into purchasing souvenirs and services, it was communicated as an instruction and obediently followed. When, in discussions, I asked why they had not tried a number of initiatives to raise money, they always said, 'No-one has told us to' (*tunggu disuruh*). The villagers have become so accustomed to only acting on instructions from higher authority that they are apprehensive about following internal initiatives. The villagers lack confidence and wait for tourists to make requests rather than proactively marketing their crafts.

Indonesian culture is collectivist and group orientated. 'The focus is on group rights and needs….In all social relations the importance of group harmony and living together in harmony is emphasized" (Reisinger and Turner, 1997: 142). This has impacted on tourism development from two perspectives. First, the importance of the collective over the individual has consequences for entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurial spirit in individuals is frowned upon because it can lead to envy and bad feeling. Community consensus has to be guarded, it is the 'the mother of *adat*'(custom)[6] (Zainal Kling, 1997: 48). It is necessary due to 'the density and intimacy of social life' (Just, 2001: 110). Villagers find it hard to rise above the majority. This was borne out on numerous occasions in conversations and comments from the villagers. 'Don't grind too much coffee, or someone will see it and ask for some', 'There's no point in having a motorbike because everyone would use it', 'There are differences in wealth but we should not allow them to be seen'. Successful individual entrepreneurial activity can result in an observable difference in the community, leading to envy, resentment and lack of community cohesion. One villager brought groups of tourists to Wogo. His personal gains caused such rifts in the village that he has moved to Labuhan Bajo where he works successfully in tourism.

In such a closely-knit community, wealth is known and there is great pressure to share it. The pressure to distribute wealth means that few villagers are able to accumulate capital. When small gains are made it is frequently invested in pigs, which are then donated at public rituals. This conspicuous display of wealth brings social prestige, strengthens networks, and is a long-term investment (as all pigs donated will be returned at a later date, however, this may take generations).

Amassing wealth gained in tourism seemed especially hard. Tourists wander around the village. If they purchase a souvenir this transaction takes place outside, in view of other villagers who then know there is some cash around. The guides discussed the problems of working in such observable work. 'My family or friends can see if I have tourists, they know when I have a big group, they know I will have cash. Someone in the family always has some kind of pressing need, it's impossible to refuse.' Few of the guides appeared to be amassing any wealth from

their profession due to family obligations and pressures to redistribute wealth. Being part of a collectivist culture inhibits entrepreneurial activity and makes accumulating capital for individual projects difficult. The villagers acknowledged that projects needed community consensus; individuals were unlikely to go it alone.

Secondly, the collectivist culture is perceived at a national level. From a national perspective, development (*pembangunan*) is a pervasive state ideology. In order to bring about development, Indonesians 'should submit to the collectivity and put the needs and demands of the nation before individual, local, regional, ethnic and class interests' (King, 1999: 61). This involves the need to become Indonesian at the expense of one's own ethnic identity. Ethnic identity was considered a danger to state unity and the New Order government put policies in place to eliminate ethnic identities (Asian Development Bank (ADB), 2002). The government saw isolated people (*masyarakat terasing*) as a social problem, still '*primitif*' and in need of development. To be classified as indigenous, isolated, or native was negative and brought shame. State doctrine attributes 'underdevelopment in large part to a lack of education' (Dove, 1988: 7). Both state and church sponsor the hegemonic view that formal education is a precursor to development. As a consequence, the value of traditional knowledge has been undermined, leaving the villagers belittled. The villagers would say, 'We are only peasants'[7]. They do not feel 'developed' (*maju*) and have a low opinion of themselves, and they use their lack of formal education as a rationale not to try out new ideas.

While the authoritarian and patriarchal government has resulted in villagers who feel belittled, uneducated and lacking in confidence, their participation in tourism is further restricted by their lack of knowledge about tourism. They are unable to participate in the planning and management of tourism due to their lack of understanding. The villagers were not short of ideas about potential future developments but they did not have the confidence, knowledge or skills to put their ideas into practice. In both Bena and Wogo, the villagers bemoaned their lack of knowledge and expressed a desire for more tourism education. Villages in Bena blamed the state for not providing the necessary training.

Indonesian Anti-backpacker Policy

The rhetoric of community participation and empowerment is evident in the government publications on tourism. *Indonesia's Tourism Vision* suggests that local communities should be given the maximum opportunity to participate in tourism development and that there is a commitment to empowering communities (Gunawan, 1999). Furthermore, 'the community is at the heart of the development plan; local norms and values must be appreciated and respected' (Gunawan, 1999: 159). However, we must question how far this rhetoric is part of policy and strategies.

The literature suggests that independent travel can create proportionately more economic opportunities than international package tourism (DFID, 1999). Hampton (1997) suggests, 'backpacker tourism is a potentially vital tool for real

economic development' (1997: 376). However, the Indonesian government does not support backpacker tourism. Indonesia's official tourism policy has either tacitly ignored or actively discouraged backpackers (Richter, 1993; Hampton, 1998; Erb, 2000); although, as Dahles (1999) discusses, the government agreed to encourage small-scale projects, especially in the outer islands.

The lack of support for backpacker tourism is surprising since they are considered the pioneers in tourism development and, as Oppermann and Chon (1997) suggest, it is imprudent to ignore trendsetters. Furthermore, backpacker tourism creates a demand for cheap accommodation and a parallel structure of transport, restaurant and support services. Due to lower capital requirements, facilities for backpackers are more likely to be locally owned, resulting in a greater economic benefit for and more participation from the local community.

The Indonesian government's visa policy changes are the most recent and significant anti-backpacker policy that have come at a critical time for tourism in Flores and many of the other outlying destinations. Many changes (with the changing government and ministers) have resulted in confusion. The present policy (2007) is intended to be good for tourism generally, but is very detrimental for Flores and other remote marginal destinations that are dependent on backpackers.

Prior to the changes, tourists were entitled to a 60-day visa issued on arrival. This Visa on Arrival (VoA) is now limited to 30 days. This visa policy change is considered 'the most dramatic U-turn in the country's history of tourism' (Travel impact newswire, 2003). The policy was initially justified to fight terrorism and prevent terrorists entering the country, however, all the terrorists that have operated in Indonesia have been home grown.

The visa fee triggered massive protests. In Bali, local tourism players staged a street rally, not only fearing that the fees would put tourists off and thus the move would further dent the country's beleaguered tourism industry (see below), but also that the fees were collected by the central government and were not being given to Bali. In 2004 US$29 million was collected (Hudiyanto, 2005). Furthermore, visas on arrival are only issued at certain entry points. Lombok, for example, has not been included and 'even before the new measures 62% of hotels in Lombok could not cover their costs' (Osbourne, 2004).

For Flores the problem is the limited time allowed for tourists to stay in Indonesia. During my research in 1998/99 many tourists claimed to be running out of visa time, being in a hurry, or not spending as much time on Flores as they had wished. At the time tourist visas were issued for 60 days. The majority of tourists were Europeans, and Australian, many on travels through South-east Asia, on their way to or from Australia. In 2005 very few long-term travellers were in Flores. Backpackers that 'did' Indonesia only had time for Bali, the Gili Islands and the iconic sites of Java; visa time did not allow them to travel further afield. While tourist numbers in August 2005 were at record levels, the season in Flores was the shortest they had known and the type of tourists had changed. In April, May and June there were virtually no tourists. One couple stayed for 3 days and met no other tourists at all. In July there was less than a handful a day then in August tourists queued to walk up the steps from one terrace in the village to the next.

For a number of cultural, historic, geographic and policy reasons the villagers in Flores have struggled to gain the full potential that cultural tourism could bring. While it is possible to lay blame with the government policy, both past and recent, to understand the full picture we have to look beyond Indonesia.

External Forces

In this final section I would like to discuss how global events, many miles from Flores, have shaped the tourism development that has taken place. In many cases the villagers are unaware and do not understand why the numbers of tourists that visit fluctuate and why tourism dries up 'without explanation'. As discussed elsewhere (Cole, 2007b) the data for tourism in Flores are extremely hard to come by and very unreliable. However, it is possible to extrapolate from my frequent visits, and data from Bali and Komodo. While it is important to provide a little background to the Indonesian political situation I want to concentrate the analysis on the external forces: terrorism, other governments, and the media.

Tourists visited Flores in their greatest numbers in 1997. That year saw forest fires and a smoke haze spread across the northern parts of the archipelago. Television news screened pictures of sickness and impaired visibility. The smoke did not reach Bali and Flores but tourism there was affected when prospective tourists in Europe and America 'assumed all of Asia was in a dense brown cloud' (Leiper and Hing, 1998).

In the same year the Asian financial crisis unfolded. In July, Thailand floated the baht, and by August the Indonesian rupiah came under severe attack. It lost 45% of its value between January and September (Henderson, 1999) and the country experienced *krismon* (monetary crisis). By Novemeber the crisis had intensified, businesses failed, there was largescale unemloyment and prices increased. The inflation of the rupiah resulted in steep hikes in the prices of food staples – the price of rice tripled – so that many people could not afford to eat more than once a day (Hall, 2000). An estimated 50 million people were forced into poverty (Henderson, 1999).

Dissatisfaction with the government's handling of the crisis led to riots that began in Jakarta, where more than 500 people died, and quickly spread to other cities. This was locally referred to as *krispol* (political crisis). The political unrest reached its peak in May 1998 when president Suharto was forced to stand down. 'Graphic images of rioting, killings, destruction of commercial districts in Java and images of mass air evacuations of expatriates from Jakarta in May 1998, made the selling of pleasure travel to Indonesia a difficult task for marketers' (Prideaux, 2003: 481). The ethnic and religious unrest spread across the archipelago. While relatively minor in Flores, in some provinces the violence escalated and the negative image of Indonesia was reinforced.

The crisis did not affect tourism equally across the country (WTO, 1998). As Hitchcock (2001) discusses, Bali weathered the storm better than some other regions. The island was heavily marketed to domestic markets and in Japan and Korea. Flores experienced the price rises and those living in urban areas needed

the income from tourism more than *ever*. Despite relative calm on the island, tourism virtually dried up.

In 1999 East Timor voted for independence and violent clashes erupted between residents, local militia, and the Indonesian army. The Indonesian troops and anti-independence militia followed a scorched earth policy when they pulled out. They destroyed public buildings, looted banks, bombed bridges and devastated the infrastructure. Not only did the outbreak of violence devastate the East Timor economy, the brutality of the Indonesia army dealt another massive blow to Indonesia's tourism industry.

For the first time, the travel writing community[8] in Britain put out a press release suggesting tourists and tour operators should boycott Indonesia. In New Zealand a 'Boycott Bali' campaign emerged (Hitchcock, 2001). The Australians also took a strong stance, cancelling tours to Indonesia. As Burns (1999), Wheat (1999) and Holden (2005) discuss, such a boycott raises many ethical questions. Local people, dependent on tourism in Bali and beyond, may have been very unhappy about the actions of the Indonesia military but were incapable of influencing them. Boycotting tourism to Indonesia may have sent an important message to the Indonesian government but it further impoverished the lives of many who had become dependent on tourism. As one villager explained, 'We don't like what the army did, people in Timor are like us.[9] Why don't tourists want to come here, they will be safe?' While the events in East Timor had comparatively little overall impact on tourism to Indonesia, Flores' tourism was disproportionately affected. Not only because of geographical proximity to the troubled province, but because of markets that are particularly susceptible to human rights news, *e*.g. Australia and the UK were important markets for Flores.

Despite being a largely Muslim country 11 September 2001 had a relatively minor impact on tourist numbers to Indonesia. However, when terrorists targeted tourists in Bali the impact was dramatic and devastating. Immediately after two car bombs exploded in Kuta, killing 202 people and injuring 300 others, Bali's tourism virtually collapsed. Airlines re-routed and hotel occupancy tumbled from a comfortable 70% to less than 10% (World Bank, 2002).

The impact of the terror attack was made worse by the travel advisories. Criticized as politically motivated (*see* Tourism Concern's campaign) and unfair, Australia, the US and the UK all advised its citizens against non-essential travel to Indonesia. While tourists were encouraged to visit New York after 11 September and were not advised against travel to Madrid following the terrorist attack there, the travel warnings worked to keep tourists out of Indonesia. Sales revenues dropped by 71%, and 30% of schools reported children dropping out because their parents could not afford school fees. The UK, under pressure from Tourism Concern, changed its advice in June 2004. Australian travel advice, warning tourists to avoid all but essential travel to Indonesia, was still in place in 2007. Personal observation and booking levels in Bali in August 2005, suggest that many Australians were choosing to ignore their government's advice. When, in October 2005, tourists in Bali were targeted for the second time the same mass exodus did not result. Following the second bomb neither Japan nor Malaysia strengthened their advisories. However, newspapers reported occupancy levels falling to 20% and less in November (Flores Paradise, Nov 2005).

Despite the devastating impact of the bombs and the subsequent travel advice, SARS (*Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome*) had an even greater impact on tourism. SARS spread by travellers infected more than 4000 people and killed 230 in 25 countries. However, this is far fewer than die from seasonal influenza and SARS is five times less infectious than measles (APEC, 2003). It was the SARS-induced panic that led to the mass cancellations and devastation to tourism across Asia. Indonesia saw a 60% drop in arrivals despite no reported cases in the country. Europeans feared transit in Singapore, Hong Kong and Bangkok that all had SARS. Asians feared flying as the media reports emphasized that the virus travels with ease in confined aircraft cabins (LaMoshi, 2003).

For nine years global and national, natural and political disasters have besieged Indonesia's tourism. The country's destination image has been constantly damaged by one event after another. As soon as recovery looks possible another calamity dashes hopes. It should be noted that the greatest single cause of damage was SARS-induced panic; media-induced fear of a disease that never reached Bali let alone Flores. Meanwhile, a rabies outbreak on Flores posed a far greater threat to tourists but was never reported, despite the deaths of 113 people (Windiyaningsih, 2004). The media's impact on tourism should never be underestimated.

The events damaged Indonesia's hope that tourism would continue to increase in the same way as it did in the 1980s and early 1990s – a 475% increase between 1987 and 1997 (WTO, 1999). However, a look at the statistics shows relatively minor decline for the nation as a whole when compared with specific areas. For example, while Indonesia saw declining figures from 1997 to 1998 and 2001 to 2002 (both amounting to approximately 11%), overall the figures have remained stable between 4.7 and 5 million visitors. Compare this with Komodo National Park, which saw a 50% decline (from 30,000 to 15,000) and has never fully recovered (RARE, 2003). The later figures are a much more useful indicator of tourism arrivals in Flores and how seriously her tourism has been damaged.

Conclusions

Tourism has brought income, facilities, cultural preservation and revitalization, early signs of empowerment, and the potential for further development. As tourism has increased and villagers have become used to it, they have become proud to be associated with an activity representative of westerners and modernity. In the early days, tourism brought great anticipation of new opportunities. While many villagers remain enthusiastic, expectations have been reduced and optimism deflated.

Tourism development has been limited for a number of reasons. The importance of the community over the individual has restricted individual entrepreneurial spirit, and a lack of community consensus has limited community efforts. In a tightly knit community, pressures to redistribute wealth mean that accumulating capital is difficult. This is especially the case with money earned from tourism because it is such 'observable work' and earnings are

frequently known to other members of the community. As monetary exchange is a relatively new phenomenon, gains in tourism are frequently invested in the traditional fashion, in social prestige and strengthened networks, through the donation of pigs at rituals.

In its peripheral position, with limited resources Ngadha has, in the main, been bypassed by central government development initiatives. There have, however, been important impacts of the highly bureaucratic, hierarchical structure of the Indonesian state system. Governance in Indonesia has followed the top-down authoritarian model. 'The bureaucracy has positioned itself as the 'prima donna' of economic development at the expense of political development' (Gede Raka, 2000: 29). Decisions are made by bureaucrats, who then inform the people, who are considered uneducated (Timothy, 1999). Encouraging local involvement in decision making has then to overcome official reluctance to listen and consult (King, 1999).

Since the fall of Suharto and his government, participation and local autonomy have been encouraged. However, decisions on national tourism policy are not being made in the interests of remote, marginal, poor communities such as the one discussed here. The new government's change in visa policy may be as detrimental for Ngadha's tourism as all the New Order government policies.

Whatever the government policy, however the governance is delivered, Flores may have more impossible challenges to overcome. Indonesia's destination image, the media and foreign government travel advisories have meant that tourism numbers have fluctuated constantly. Events many miles from Flores have had a significant impact on tourism development. Tourism has offered the villagers chinks of economic light, and even the brightness of opportunity, only to see them fade and virtually disappear. It has offered hopes and dreams but for the vast majority it has changed the economics realities of their lives very little indeed.

While we present tourism as a potential to alleviate poverty in the world's most remote communities, it will brings hope and dreams. But, on its own, because of its vulnerability to fashion, media and international crisis, tourism as a tool for development may bring very little in the way of poverty elimination.

Endnotes

[1] Acknowledgements
The author gratefully acknowledges the time given by participants in Ngadha, and by colleagues and reviewers that have commented on the study over the years. She would like to thank the British Academy for their grant to carry out research in 2005. This chapter is a distillation of one area of ideas in a book published by Channel View: Cole, S. (2007) *Tourism, Culture and Development: Hopes, Dreams and Realities in Eastern Indonesia*. Channel View, Clevedon. ISBN 1–84541–069–6 (pbk); ISBN 1–84541–070-X (hbk); ISBN 1–84541–071–8 (ebook).

[2] An Indonesian bathroom consists of a large tank of water and a scoop. Water is splashed over oneself elephant style.

[3] Originally an Indonesian term, ikat has entered the international textile vocabulary (Hitchcock, 1991). The Indonesian verb '*ikat*' literally means 'to tie'. In reference to

weaving*,* it has come to refer both to the verb, i.e. the process to tie a bundle of threads so that they resist the dye, and the finished product of cloth produced using this technique.

⁴ See Stanley (1998) and Volkman (1990) on the official designation of some ethnic groups in Indonesia.

⁵ Belum ada turis yang minta. (Ind).

⁶ Adat, originally from Arabic, to mean customary law or tradition, the term is far more encompassing, it is essentially religious concept, relating to the rules from the ancestors.

⁷ They would use the expression 'Kami hanya petani saja' which uses two words for only, before and after the noun for emphasiz.

⁸ The British Guild of Travel Writers.

⁹ Timor is geographically and culturally very close to Flores.

References

Adams, K. (1997) Touting touristic "prima donnas": tourism ethnicity and national integration in Sulawesi, Indonesia. In: Picard, M. and Wood, R. (eds) *Tourism Ethnicity and the State in Asian and Pacific Societies*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

ADB (2002) Indigenous peoples/ethnic minorities and poverty reduction Indonesia. http://www.adb.org/Documents/Reports/Indigenous_Peoples/INO/default.asp.

Anderson, B. (1972) The idea of power in Javanese culture. In: Holt, C. (ed.) *Culture and Politics in Indonesia*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, pp. 1–69.

APEC Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (2003) www.apec.org./apec/news (accessed 8 October 2005).

Ashley, C., Roe, D. and Goodwin, H. (2001) *Pro-poor Tourism Strategies: Making Tourism Work for the Poor. A Review of Experience*. Overseas Development Institute, London.

Boissevain, J. (1996) Introduction. In: Boissevain, J. (ed.) *Coping with Tourists. European Reactions to Mass Tourism*. Berghahn Books, Oxford, pp. 1–26.

Britton, S. (1982) The political economy of tourism in the third world. *Annals of Tourism Research* 9, 331–358.

Burns, P. (1999) *An Introduction to Tourism and Anthropology*. Routledge, London.

Cole, S. (1997) Cultural heritage tourism: the villagers' perspective. A case study from Ngada, Flores. In: Nuryanti, W. (ed.) *Tourism and Heritage Management*. Gadjah Mada University Press, Yogyakarta.

Cole, S. (1999) Education for participation: the villagers' perspective. Case study from Ngada, Flores, Indonesia. In: Bras, K., Dahles, H., Gunawan, M. and Richards, G (eds) *Entrepreneurship and Education in Tourism*. ATLAS Asia Conference Proceedings. Bandung, Indonesia.

Cole, S. (2006a) Cultural tourism, community participation and empowerment. In: Smith, M. and Robinson, M. (eds) *Cultural Tourism in a Changing World*. Channel View Publications, Clevedon, pp. 89–103.

Cole, S. (2006b) Information and empowerment: the keys to achieving sustainable tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 14, 629–645.

Cole, S. (2007a) Implementing and evaluating a code of conduct for visitors. *Tourism Management* 28, 443–451.

Cole, S. (2007b) *Tourism, Culture and Development: Hopes, Dreams and Realities in Eastern Indonesia*. Channel View, Clevedon. ISBN 1–84541–069–6 (pbk); ISBN 1–84541–070-X (hbk); ISBN 1–84541–071–8 (ebook).

Crystal, E. (1978) Tourism in Toraja (Sulawesi, Indonesia). In: Smith, V. (ed.) *Hosts and Guests: the Anthropology of Tourism*. Basil Blackwell, Oxford.

Dahles, H. (1999) Tourism and small entrepreneurs in developing countries: a theoretical perspective. In: Dahles, H. and Bras, K. (eds) *Tourism and Small Entrepreneurs in Development, National Policy, and Entrepreneurial Culture: Indonesian cases*. Cognizant Communication Corporation, New York, pp. 1–19.

de Kadt, E. (1979) *Tourism: Passport to Development?* Oxford University Press, Oxford.

DFID (1999) *Tourism and Poverty Elimination: Untapped Potential*. Briefing Paper. DFID, London.

Dove, M. (1988) Introduction: traditional culture and development in contemporary Indonesia. In: Dove, M. (ed.) *The Real and Imagined Role of Culture in Development*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

Erb, M. (1998) Tourism space in Manggarai, western Flores, Indonesia: the house as a contested place. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 19, 177–192.

Erb, M. (2000) Understanding tourists, interpretations from Indonesia. *Annals of Tourism Research* 27, 709–736.

Erb, M. (2001) Uniting the bodies and cleansing the village: conflicts over heritage in a globalising world. Conference paper, EUROSEAS, SOAS, London University.

Flores Paradise (2005) Mengola isu sensitif parawisata. *Flores Paradise Tourism News* November, p. 5.

Forshee, J. (2001) *Between the Folds: Stories of Cloth, Lives and Travel from Sumba*. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu.

Gede Raka (2000) Entrepreneurship for tourism: issues for Indonesia. In: Bras, K., Dahles, H., Gunawan, M. and Richards, D. (eds) *Entrepreneurship and Education in Tourism*. Proceedings ATLASS Asia Inaugural Conference. ITB, Bandung.

Gunawan, M. (1999) Indonesian tourism: development policies and the challenge for research and education. In: Pookong, K. and King, B. *Asia-Pacific Tourism; Regional Co-operation, Planning and Development.*: Hospitality Press, Victoria, pp. 147–164.

Hall, M. (2000) Tourism in Indonesia: the end of the New Order. In: Hall, M. and Page, S. (eds) *Tourism in South and Southeast Asia: Issues and Cases.* Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford, pp. 157–166.

Hampton, M. (1997) Unpacking the rucksack: a new analysis of backpacker tourism in South East Asia. In: Nuryanti, W. (ed.) *Tourism and Heritage Management*. Gadjah Mada University Press, Yogyakarta, pp. 365–380.

Hampton, M. (1998) Backpacker tourism and economic development. *Annals of Tourism Research* 25, 639–660.

Harrison, D. (2001) Introduction. In: Harrison, D. (ed.) *Tourism in the Less Developed World: Issues and Cases*. CABI, Wallingford, Oxon, pp. 1–22.

Harrison, D. and Price, H. (1996) Fragile environments, fragile communities? In: Price, H. (ed) *People and Tourism in Fragile Environments*. Wiley, Chichester.

Henderson, J. (1999) Asian tourism and the financial crisis: Indonesia and Thailand compared. *Current Issues in Tourism* 2, 294–303.

Hitchcock, M. (2001) Tourism and total crisis in Indonesia: the case of Bali. *Asia Pacific Business Review* 8, 101–120.

Holden, A. (2005) *Tourism Studies and the Social Sciences*. Routledge, Abingdon.

Hudiyanto, O. (2005) The Balinese people – forgotten again www.asiafoodworker.net/ indonesia (accessed 10 November 2005).

Johnston, B. (1992) Anthropology's role in stimulating responsible tourism. *Practicing Anthropology* 14, 35–38.

Just, P. (2001) *Dou Donggo Justice. Conflict and Morality in an Indonesian Society*. Rowman and Littlefield, Maryland.

King, V. (1999) *Anthropology and Development in South East Asia. Theory and Practice.* Oxford University Press, Oxford.

LaMoshi, G. (2003) Tourism ailing, Jakarta toughens terrorism stance. Asian Times, April 17th 2003.

Leiper, N. and Hing, N. (1998) Trends in Asia Pacific Tourism in 1997–98 from optimism to uncertainty. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 10, 245–251.

Li, T. M. (2000) Articulating indigenous identity in Indonesia: resource politics and the tribal slot. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 42, 149–179.

Lickorish, L. (1991) *Introduction to Tourism*. Butterworth Heinemann, Oxford.

Mansperger, M. (1992) Yap: a case of benevolent tourism. *Practicing Anthropology* 14, 10–14.

Mathieson, A. and Wall, G. (1982) *Tourism: Economic, Physical and Social Impacts*. Longman, Harlow.

Milne, S. (1992) Tourism and development in south Pacific microstates. *Annals of Tourism Research* 19, 191–212.

Oppermann, M. and Chon, K. S. (1997) *Tourism in Developing Countries*. International Thomson Business Press, London.

Osbourne, S. (2004) Indonesia begins charging for Visas. UPI www.kabar-irian.com/pipermail/kabar-indonesia/2004-February/000668.html.

Pearce, D. (1989) *Tourism Development*. Longman, Harlow.

Prideaux, B., Laws, E. and Faulkner, B. (2003) Events in Indonesia: exploring the limits of formal tourism management trends forecasting methods in complex crisis situations. *Tourism Management* 24, 475–487.

RARE Centre for Tropical Conservation (2003) *Linking Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Tourism in World Heritage Sites. Site Assessment Report*. Komodo National Park, Indonesia.

Reisinger, Y. and Turner, L. (1997) Cross-cultural differences in tourism: Indonesian tourists in Australia. *Tourism Management* 18, 139–147.

Richter, L. (1993) Tourism policy-making in South East Asia. In: Hitchcock, M., King, V. and Parnwell, M. (eds) *Tourism in South East Asia*. Routledge, London.

Rodenburg, E. (1980) The effects of scale in economic development: tourism in Bali. *Annals of Tourism Research* 7, 177–196.

Roe, D and Khanya, P. (2001) *Pro-poor Tourism: Harnessing the World's Largest Industry for the World's Poor*. IIED, London.

Sanger, A. (1988) Blessing or blight? The effects of touristic dance drama on village life in Singapadu. In: *The Impact of Tourism on Traditional Music*. Jamaica Memory Bank, Kingston.

Scheyvens, R. (2003) *Tourism for Development, Empowering Communities*. Prentice Hall.

Schwarz, A. (1999) *A Nation in Waiting. Indonesia's Search for Stability*. Allen Unwin, St. Leonards.

Sofield, T. (2003) *Empowerment for Sustainable Tourism Development*. Pergamon, Oxford.

Stanley, N. 1998 *Being Ourselves for You: the Global Display of Cultures*. Middlesex University Press, London.

Swain, M. (1990) Commoditizing ethnicity in Southwest China. *Cultural Survival Quarterly* 14, 26–29.

Timothy, D. (1999) Participatory planning: a view of tourism in Indonesia. *Annals of Tourism Research* 26, 371–391.

Travel impact newswire (2003) Indonesia from feast to famine. Travel impact newswire, No. 36, 16/9/03.

Tribe, J. (2005) *The Economics of Recreation, Leisure and Tourism*, 3rd edn. Elsevier, Oxford.

Umbu Peku Djawang (1991) The role of tourism in NTT development. In: Barlow, C., Bellis, A. and Andrews, K. (eds) *Nusa Tenggara Timor: The Challenge of Development Political and Social Change.* Monograph 12. ANU University: Canberra.

Van den Berghe, P. (1992) Tourism and the ethnic division of labor. *Annals of Tourism Research* 19, 234–249.

Volkman, T. (1990) Visions and revisions: Toraja culture and the tourist gaze. *American Ethnologist* 17, 91–110.

Wheat, S. (1999) Editorial. Guide books *In Focus* No. 34.

Williams, S. (1998) *Tourism Geography*. Routledge, London.

Windiyaningsih, C. (2004) The rabies epidemic on Flores island, Indonesia (1998–2003). *Journal Medical Association Thailand* 87, 1389–1395.

World Bank (2002) *Vulnerability of Bali's Tourism Economy*. A preliminary assessment. Interim Consultative Group on Indonesia.

WTO (1998) Indonesia Presentation at WTO high level meeting on the economic impacts of tourism. Kobe, Japan 25–27 November 1998. Available at www.mct.go.kr/conf/wto (accessed 12 October 2002).

WTO (1999a) *Tourism 2020 Vision Executive Summary*. WTO, Madrid.

Zainal, K. (1997) Adat: collective self image. In: Hitchcock, M. and King, V. (eds) *Images of Malay-Indonesian Identity*. Oxford University Press, OUP, pp. 45–51.