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**Jim Macbeth:** “There are important philosophical and ethical questions to be asked about western researchers fanning out across the developing world asking questions thought up in developed countries.” [Interview on page 3](#)



### Director's Cut: “Langue de bois”



The post-modern wonder going by the name of Wikipedia - in a stub article defines *Langue de bois* or ‘wooden language’ as the eastern, soviet bureaucratese dialect of yesteryear. Perhaps, but what about the current language of western politicians, officials and consultants, dear wikifolks? In the field of sustainable tourism has anyone observed the endless permutations of sets of words (and expensive Internet keywords by the way):

*stakeholders, triple bottom line, sustainability, paradigm, best practice, pro-poor, strategic, communication, development, intelligence, platform, responsible, ethical, fair, corporate, participation, collaboration, implementation, identification, real needs, methodology, facilitation, design.*

You can use the above words at will, even in the same sentence, if you throw in with some potent verbs: implement, explore, demand, measure up to, necessitate, facilitate, ensure, develop, assure, reassure, ensure,...

A recent example:

*“Strategic communication methodologies are necessary for facilitating stakeholder participation in the design and implementation of development policies and projects that identify and respond to real needs, develop local ownership and ensure sustainability”.*

For more fun at the office on Monday morning, try our automated [Profundity Producer](#).

*Antonis B. Petropoulos*

### ECO-PHOTO : ‘Spot the elephant’



*Guides, one of which a former tribal poacher, looking out for wild elephants, in Periyar National Park, a protected area in the Western Ghats of Kerala, in southern India.*  
More eco photos at the [ECOCLUB.com Gallery](#)

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## ECOCLUB.com Ecolodge Awards 2006: Voting starts June 1

Learning from, and building on the success of the past two annual ECOCLUB.com Ecolodge Awards we are now calling for applications for our 2006 Awards. This year, the Awards aim to fund / co-fund three projects that are initiated, conducted and completed by ECOCLUB.com Ecolodge Members from 15 March 2006 until 31 December 2006. Winning projects must be initiated by August 15, 2006 at the latest and be completed by December 31, 2006 at the latest.

The 2006 Awards are open to all active ECOCLUB Ecolodge Members that are full and active Members on May 25, 2006. Past winners are eligible, however they must not re-submit the same project. The total Award fund this year has been raised to Euros 2,000 (approx USD 2,400). Three prizes will be awarded (1st, 2nd, 3rd) according to number of votes received. 1st winner will receive Euros 850, 2nd winner will receive Euros 650, 3rd winner Euros 500. (*More details about the Awards background can be found at <http://www.ecoclub.com/awards.html> )*

The candidates are as follows:

Candidates & Projects are, in the order that they were submitted:

A - [The Boat Landing Guesthouse](#) (Laos): "Network Building Study Tour".

To lower impacts of tourism, we will initiate a team building/networking building process by taking the guides and villagers on a study tour to another community-based tour program to learn from their experiences.

B - [The Eco Hotel Uxlabil Atitlan](#) (Guatemala): "Rescue of Fishermen's Small Boats". Cayucos –fishermen small boats- are disappearing. Uxlabil proposes to improve 30 old and unsafe cayucos, to preserve a Lake Atitlan tradition and an income source.

C - [3 Rivers Eco Lodge](#) (Dominica): "Composting Toilet Installation & Workshop".

The installation of a composting toilet during a workshop at our sustainable living education centre, teaching locals the benefits and uses of composting toilets, and enabling us to showcase the system for community replication.

D - [Ranweli Holiday Village](#) (Sri Lanka): "Planting of Mangroves".

Replanting mangroves from the mouth of the river in the estuary in the south of Ranweli Holiday Village up to 1 km towards the north, with the assistance of stakeholders.

E - [La Selva Jungle Lodge](#) (Ecuador): "Creation of a Pig Farm".

Building a pig farm to provide whole pigs or butchered pig meat to our closest indigenous neighbours so that they will hunt even less the wild game in our area.

F - [Sukau Rainforest Lodge](#) (Malaysia): "Tree Planting Project".

Rehabilitating a section of the river bank by planting a diverse range of tree species, to provide corridor for migrating wildlife and fruiting trees to attract more birds and animals.

G - [Black Sheep Inn](#) (Ecuador): "Building Rural Andean Recycling Centre"

Permaculture says, "Your problems become your solutions." The village of Chugchilán along with Black Sheep Inn wants to turn its waste into a resource by creating a sustainable Recycling Centre.

The full details are available to Members at a special forum at the ECOCLUB.com Community at <http://www.ecoclub.com/c/index.php?showforum=21>

## ECOCLUB.com Ecolodge News

**Catalonia, Spain: Mas Lluerna** is building a straw house in their farm, as part of an educational, experimental workshop called "*EMBÁRRATE II (la fuerza de la tierra)*" to be held June 23-25, for architects and those who enjoy building their own house! Several techniques will be explored such as wood working, building walls and furniture with mud and straw, and a garden roof, the idea being to return back the vegetation space the house 'stole' from the earth.



More details, in Spanish, can be found at <http://www.casasdepaja.com/?pag=noticia&noticia=4>

For Booking Enquiries:

► <http://ecoclub.com/lluerna>

**Cambodia: Yaklom Hill Lodge**, in the Ratanakiri province of northeastern Cambodia is pleased to inform us that Green Globe 21 has recently certified Yaklom Hill Lodge as “Benchmarked Accommodation 2006”, the first and the only one establishment in Cambodia to be benchmarked against environmental and social indicators set by Green Globe 21. For Enquiries:

► <http://ecoclub.com/yaklom>

**Dominica:** At the Dominica Hotel & Tourism Association First Annual Awards dinner on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> May, **3 Rivers Eco Lodge & Sustainable Living Centre** was proud to receive the honour of The DHTA Eco Best Practices award, in recognition of their ‘Positive Action for Sustainable Tourism’ in Dominica. For those who are interested, or those who took part in the filming, the first showing of highlights of the 3 Rivers Documentary, Rivers And Dreams, is about to be aired on BBC World, Fast track programme. The initial airing is a 10 minute slot of highlights, the full 50 minute documentary will be out the autumn (fall). The documentary tells the story of Jem Winston quitting his bank job in the UK, travelling 6 years around the world, ending up in Dominica with the will to develop something special, and presents some of the difficulties encountered in the process. The show is scheduled to go out towards the end of June (Weekend of 24/25th in UK and 25 to 29th on “The Fast Track programme on BBC World”.

► <http://ecoclub.com/3rivers>

**Guatemala: Eco hotel Uxlabil Atitlán** announced it has received a Competitiveness Award from the Guatemalan government, amounting to USD 10,000. Uxlabil plans to use this award to reinforce service quality, to increase assistance to local artisans and fishermen, and implement an international marketing campaign. Improved facilities already include a new private deck and two kayaks, while the lodge is also creating a small organic plantation, with avocado, macadamia, banana and oranges, for demonstration purposes.

► <http://ecoclub.com/uxlabil>

### THE ECOCLUB INTERVIEW

**JIM MACBETH**

**Associate Professor in Tourism**

School of Social Sciences and Humanities

[Murdoch University](http://www.murdoch.edu.au), Perth, Western Australia



*While studying in the UK, Jim Macbeth took a ‘chance’ job at the University of Western Australia in Perth in 1972, thinking that he could work for a couple of years in Australia before returning to Canada. Perth is that kind of place: it is easy to stay. Three years later he joined Murdoch University, also in Perth, as a foundation staff member. He has ‘survived’ with one employer because of a number of things, not least of which is that Perth is such a good place to live and the other universities in town don’t offer the sort of interdisciplinary challenges and flexibility. But, Jim has also varied the focus of his academic career every 8-10 years with the shift from sociology to tourism in the mid-1990s, both for teaching and research. That said, all of Jim’s research is informed by the ‘sociological imagination’ (C. Wright Mills) and a wider concern for communities on the one hand and the experience of individuals on the other. The latter was the focus of Jim’s Doctoral study that was informed by and contributed to the sociology of subcultures.*



*Ocean sailing became one of Jim’s passions in the 1970s and has remained an interest ever since. He owns an ocean sailing yacht but these days uses it more as an office than for sailing; but, life does go in segments and the last few years have been dominated by tourism work and travel as well as the horses of his daughter.*

*Murdoch University is a relatively small research intensive university (about 12000 students) that was established in Western Australia when there was only one other university. It is renowned for its teaching excellence (top five star rating 10 of the last 11 years on graduate assessment), its success in research and in postgraduate research. Jim Macbeth shares in this passion for research and supervision being involved in a wide range of funded projects and postgraduate research. He received the 2005 Vice Chancellor’s Excellence in Supervision Award for his postgraduate work.*

*Associate Professor Macbeth developed the undergraduate tourism course in 1995 and has been program chair since that time. The course has a social science bias with a concern more for policy and planning than for product development or marketing, for example. There are currently four majors available within three different degrees, reflecting the interdisciplinary and cross-school philosophy at Murdoch, with tourism studies in science, tourism and commerce (go to <http://handbook.murdoch.edu.au/courses/> and enter ‘tourism’ in the Course box).*

*As noted above, Jim has seen his career follow 8-10 year cycles and another cycle is about to begin: he has been appointed Interim Head of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, a school of about 50 staff. If that appointment is confirmed in 2007 into a longer term then the next cycle will be underway. Jim will be able to maintain his tourism research and postgraduate supervision but to a lesser degree with the new responsibilities in a rapidly changing higher education sector.*

*The Interview follows:*



*Western Australia is promoting itself as Australia's most environmentally -aware destination while Perth, where you are based, as a "city in harmony with nature", also dubbed the "City of Lights" by overflying astronaut John Glenn in 1962, and named "the most isolated city in the world" by America's Cup skipper Dennis Connor. It sounds like a tourists' paradise, but has development in isolation inevitably lead to any environmental and social problems, and may be Tourism contributing to the amelioration or accentuation of these*

Promotion and marketing come out of wishful and creative thinking and what some people think the market wants to hear. But, as with your statements, it is not all incorrect. I've lived in Perth for 35 years after migrating from Canada via the UK and this is an isolated western developed city, although in many ways we don't feel it. A short air flight for me is 3 hours; it is all relative. We are not isolated in the sense of being out of touch with or unaffected by the machinations of 21<sup>st</sup> Century global development pressures and the pre-eminence of the dollar and right wing fundamentalist politics. That said (fortunately), we are unimportant enough to be ignored by many. But, this is a sparsely developed state where it is a four-day drive to the Kimberley in the north, one of our premier outback destinations, and there are no cities in between. Make no mistake about it, though, the landscapes of Western Australia are awesome! And, that is said by someone who grew up near the Rocky Mountains in Canada.

Tourism is an important part of our economy and is vital to a number of towns and regions. But, it is the resources boom that drives this place into a frenzy of tax revenue and consumer spending. There is, of course, environmental damage from tourism development and the activities of tourists. But, it has to be said that much of the damage is done by developers whose main interest is often property development for residential purposes with tourism used as a hook to attract financial and government support. We have also had some important environmental 'wins' in tourism, the most notable being the eventual rejection by the State government of an inappropriate development at Maud's Landing, near Coral Bay on the coast beside the Ningaloo reef, 2 days drive north of Perth. A new development strategy is being proposed for Coral Bay itself, a high demand area that badly needs infrastructure in the face of the travelling hoards.

There is a lot of research and strategic planning current and while not all of it will result in strong environmental protection, it is not open slather for developers or for tourists.



*From your research in Western Australia, are sometimes captive wildlife facilities better than the real thing in terms of removing pressure from the environment, guaranteeing satisfaction to the tourists, and in general increasing carrying capacity and tourism popularity of an area, or is the preservation of the image of authenticity, anticipation of the unknown, exploration and independence a dominant factor for commercial success of a 'quiet' outback area?*

I think the implied dichotomy in your question masks the key issues. There is no doubt in my mind (and from my academic and personal background) that humans like to 'explore' and that exploration takes many forms, including learning new knowledge and walking the unknown trail, sailing the oceans.

Captive wildlife facilities (zoos?) serve a variety of purposes, including important conservation functions. They are also places where tourists can see animals they would never see in the wild simply because those animals are hard to find. And, yes, there are times when it is desirable to use captivity as a way to protect animals and habitat. But, any form of captivity is also an ethical question that we have to address. (see Newsome, D, M. Hughes and J. Macbeth 2005 Captive Wildlife Tourism in a Natural Setting: Visitor Satisfaction as a Measure of Success at Barna Mia, Western Australia. *Journal of Ecotourism*. Vol. 4, No. 2, pp73-91)

Tourism academics question the notion of 'authenticity' and will do so forever. What is it? Who knows? Is it in the experience of the person? Our limited research in one facility found the respondents did experience this captive experience as authentic. Fine.

But, there is no substitute for the quiet outback, as on the ocean at night 100s of miles from land and lights – it is a big sky when seen like that and while we may feel insignificant we can also feel part of a pretty special place.



*Some, who could be called sustainable tourism revisionists, would argue that 'stage-managed' indigenous performances, artificial villages and souvenir shops, within luxury all-inclusive resorts, are less obtrusive and disruptive for indigenous communities, and more efficient in terms of revenue generation and poverty reduction. Do you find any merit in this argument, with reference to indigenous communities in Australia, your native Canada and elsewhere?*

I don't believe I can generalise and say that this, or any other solution, is always, if ever, right for particular people. But, it is an important alternative strategy to consider and has been used by 'closed' communities to keep tourists at a distance while still

satisfying the tourists' curiosity and consumer interests. Often, the answer to your question lies in an understanding of power relationships and then in questions of empowerment. Who has the power in determining a strategy and are indigenous people empowered in the process?



*You are both a skilled yachtsman and an expert on the academic side of private ocean sailing or cruising, with your Ph.D. thesis concluding that cruisers are cultural 'heroes' within the western individualistic value system, and although in a way deviant, their deviance can contribute to positive social evolution. So does it follow that tourism is always a positive force as long as tourists are satisfied on an individual level, or does this satisfaction need to be within a certain 'ethical' platform that also values the greater impact on the community?*

Thanks for getting me to revisit a document I wrote over 20 years ago. People following their own needs for adventure, self-reliance and challenge are only cultural heroes within a particular society and ideology. Twenty years on I would write a different abstract, if not a different thesis. But, yes, in a corporatised world these people managed to 'escape' but they also sought to create a lifestyle closer to nature and more dependent on their own skills and resources. While they are not self-sufficient, they are self-reliant. People explore, they search and they push their own boundaries and these people had a fundamental critique of western society of the 70s. They interested me because of their expression of an uneasiness about modern society, an expression found in their actions and in their writing. Further, given the wide readership of this expression, they represented something, maybe a fantasy, for millions of others. But, one of the reasons I was interested in these people was because they represent the advantaged, a part of society too little studied. This was the middle class searching and it needed expression.

I used the word 'deviant' because I wanted to emphasise the notion that to be different from the mainstream, to deviate, isn't always about things like street gangs or drug use. To deviate is often to look for something better in life for oneself and loved ones and/or for one's society. Some of our most famous deviants were responsible for the environmental movement that is so vital to the survival of humanity. (see Macbeth, J. 1985. Ocean Cruising: a study of affirmative deviance. PhD Thesis, Murdoch University, Western Australia, available electronically; and Macbeth, J. 1992. Ocean cruising: a sailing subculture. *The Sociological Review*. Vol. 40, #2, pp319-343.)

It certainly does not follow that tourism is always a positive force when individuals are pursuing their own form of nirvana. To assert this would be laughable given the damage being done around the world by hedonistic and selfish individuals posing as tourists or developers of tourist products. Yes, it does take a particular ethical position(s) for there to be a chance that tourism will be a positive force. (see Macbeth, J. 2005. Towards an ethics platform for tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*. Vol. 32(4), pp. 962-984). The fact that it has been necessary to develop and use a concept such as pro-poor tourism or its relative Sustainable Tourism-Eliminating Poverty (ST~EP) is not only an important initiative but a sign or recognition that much tourism is not serving the needs of the disadvantaged.



*Which brings us to the next question. Most branches of science are currently researching 'Ethics', with the usual argument being that technology development is running faster than ethics development, and 'ethical' dilemmas appearing with greater frequency. Is there a similar situation in Tourism with advances in technology taking the form of improved transport (cheaper flights to everywhere) and communication (TV, Internet, mobile phones)? And in practice, how would you convey the concept of 'Tourism Ethics' in a short, memorable way, to an airport audience composed of an 18 year old backpacker on his way to Ibiza, a 30ish couple on their way to their all-inclusive honeymoon in the Maldives, a 68 year old retiree heading to Pattaya, and a travel photographer on his way to remote Burmese villages? And would it have any effect you believe?*

You don't ask hard questions do you! Now, how do I get out of this one late on a Saturday night with good music playing? Prevaricate and say you develop a variation on 'do unto others as you would have them do unto you'. Then you have to help people understand their impacts and why those impacts are important. Will it do any good? In some cases, yes; in others, of course not.

My work on ethics in tourism is concerned with informing our policy and planning frameworks within a sustainable development context. It is not primarily for tourists but for planners and policy makers (see Macbeth, J. 2005. Towards an ethics platform for tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research*. Vol. 32(4), pp. 962-984)

On a slightly different aspect of technology, I'm involved in a project on virtual nuclear tourism. One of my colleagues in multi-media has had a long interest in presenting the Cold War dynamics of nuclear testing, especially in Australia, in a virtual tourism product. Many of the nuclear sites are either closed to visitation or are largely inaccessible. And, of course, the testing sites don't have a lot of evidence to look at! We got funds for a scoping study to investigate ways to make these sites accessible through multi-media and are doing (or did) the scoping field trip to the South Australian sites in June (Maralinga, Narungar, Emu Junction and Woomera).

One last thing here: changes in technology are changing tourism and tourism's impacts but it is also important to recognise that these changes also work independently of tourism. For example, it is pretty hard to blame tourists for 'infecting indigenous

communities with Western ideals' when those same communities have television and are faced with a plethora of western consumer goods.



*From your research findings, are Backpackers or Luxury tourists more appropriate 'customers' for emancipated local communities, or is it up to the - after all emancipated - local communities to decide for themselves?*

Good decisions are only made with good information. It is possible to be emancipated yet not have good information and thus to make decisions that are bad for your community, your culture and your environment – we do it all the time and, as I said earlier, power relations are an important dynamic. Each of your dichotomised alternatives above may be appropriate together in managed numbers and in certain contexts. There are no simple decisions possible in the complex world of intercultural, globalised tourism development. I have explored this in some research we did on tourism in Byron Bay, an icon backpacker location on the east coast of Australia. (See Westerhausen, K. and J Macbeth. 2003. Backpackers and Empowered Local Communities. Natural Allies in the Struggle for Sustainability and Local Control? *Tourism Geographies* Vol. 5, No. 1, 2003, pp. 71-86.)

All tourists have impacts and the crucial question then becomes one of setting policy frameworks and developing planning guidelines that will improve the chances of meeting the complex demands of a truly sustainable tourism, one that contributes positively to social, cultural, economic and environmental dynamics in a destination. While so-called backpackers are widely believed to produce one of the best economic yields (they spend the most and a lot of it goes in small businesses) they too have impacts, both positive and negative, in places where they 'hang-out'. The following article explores a framework for planners to help them think about maximising sustainable yield on all dimensions. (See Northcote, Jeremy and Jim Macbeth. 2006. Conceptualising Yield in Sustainable Tourism Development: An Integrated Model.' *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol.33, no. 1, pp. 199-220)

Another way in which we've approached understanding tourism and communities is through social capital and related cultural and political issues. We were concerned not only for evaluating a community's 'readiness' to undertake and control tourism but also to understand what impacts tourism might have on social, cultural and political capital. The debates around these concepts are very interesting and a rich source of ideas about communities and their enhancement. (See Macbeth, Jim, Dean Carson and Jeremy Northcote. 2004. Social Capital, tourism and regional development: SPCC as a basis for innovation and sustainability. *Current Issues in Tourism*. Vol. 7 (6), pp. 502-522.)



*Many studies try to measure the social impact of tourism at a local level, (usually as a decision tool before financing further expansion in tourism), through resident perception surveys. Can these be relatively accurate, as for example election polls, provided that the proper methodology is applied, or is there something inherently wrong about trying to evaluate resident's perceptions and indeed the social impact of tourism in this way? (And in that case, why not go for the real thing, hold direct elections about tourism issues.)*

As I've written elsewhere, understanding how residents and other stakeholders perceive tourism impacts is important in managing a tourist destination. But, I don't believe perceptions are the same thing as actual impacts. There are actual changes going on in any situation that may not be noticed by residents, some of which may be positive by most definitions. So, to really understand tourism impacts we have to measure perceptions, employment changes, aspects of social capital, real estate prices and ownership changes of business and infrastructure – and the list goes on. (see Northcote, Jeremy and Jim Macbeth. 2005. Limitations of Resident Perception Surveys for Understanding Tourism Social Impacts: the Need for Triangulation. *Tourism Recreation Research*, Vol. 30(2), pp.43-54.)

Obviously, we would argue that direct elections/plebiscites about tourism developments are less than satisfactory, if for no other reason than the result are mainly about perception (this is arguable). However, I would go further and revisit the issues of power and of the failures of elections, especially non-preferential, to deliver a result that represents the complexity of residents' views. Anyway, are votes/residents the only stakeholders to get a say?



*As someone who has successfully supervised many Ph.D Tourism students, do you at all sense that Tourism Ph.D. theses topics tend to get slightly more commercial / exotic / attractive / "nichey" each year? Is academic integrity at all sacrificed for future publishing and consulting success, are perhaps topics influenced by commercial pressures and available funding for students, or is it a case of Universities ("finally" as cynics would say) producing research that is relevant to real world problems?*

Yes, but .... that is not the whole story. Funding does drive many research projects because the funding is provided to ask certain questions and this is the case in all disciplines to some degree. In tourism, we have seen a massive increase in Australia of tourism scholarship through all types of research. The Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre in Australia currently funds almost 100 PhD scholars throughout the country. A student's academic integrity is not compromised by this funding although the questions they need to ask is directed. Their work can still be academically competent while we still may

decry the way funding skews the research agenda. Governments throughout the world place strings on most funding and Australia is no exception with our universities micro-managed by the whims of Federal politicians (they have more money than State politicians so we pay attention to more of their whims). Do I contradict myself?

The really frightening thing about research funding in Australia is that it is so heavily skewed to the health and bio-sciences that the humanities and social sciences are simply starved out of the research loop. What is frightening is that without the social science, humanities and creative industries doing serious and well-funded research we will develop societies managed through ignorance and without an understanding of the complexities of human nature and needs. And, this is to say nothing of the military-industrial-research industries! This year I have had two PhD students receive clear passes from all three of their examiners, one just came today. I'm ecstatic. But, my point in raising this is that neither of them did industry directed research.



*In this context, field research in remote and dangerous parts of the world is increasing in importance for Tourism academics. Recently, and on your initiative, your Institution developed a scholarship in the memory of a tourism researcher who perished in Thailand during the Tsunami. Should "tourism-research-related tourism" be recognised and organised perhaps, like Voluntourism, as a separate and important genre of Tourism, indeed due to its double importance and contribution to local communities, and be given due attention and support by relevant bodies including governments, airlines and tourism professionals?*

From a research point of view, no we should not further segment our knowledge by developing yet another special area of research. That said, there are important philosophical and ethical questions to be asked about western researchers fanning out across the developing world asking questions thought up in developed countries. But, I don't think that is the question you are asking and is not my whole answer. Business travel is an important component of the tourism activity of many destinations. One could argue that tourism researchers (do you include consultants?) are another form of business travel and some destinations would do well to facilitate the work of such tourists – provided the society isn't afraid of the answers that hard questions sometimes throw in your face.

Murdoch University named its most prestigious International Postgraduate Scholarship after Lisa Jones, a UK national and Murdoch postgrad who died on the North Andaman coast doing what she cared about - working with endangered species (sea turtles) and local communities. Her research, under the supervision of myself and Associate Professor Carol Warren, was about empowering local communities in the face of the global forces of tourism development, including decision-making by central governments divorced from the needs of local and indigenous people. (The 2006 inaugural Lisa Jones Memorial International Postgraduate Scholarship is held by Stephanie Chok, a Singaporean student who already has a masters degree in development studies; she will be doing work with tourism and poverty alleviation, probably with a field focus in Thailand).



*Finally, is there something else you would like to say, perhaps on your or your institutions future projects?*

My life has developed in 8-10 year segments and the last 10 years in tourism has been one of the most dynamic in terms of research and scholarship so I'm looking forward to more of it. Throughout these times, one of the most important aspects of my own intellectual background has been the social sciences and a fundamental critique of the way our societies disenfranchise their peoples. While I've never engaged in the radical edge of that critique, much of my work has an underlying flavour of that perspective. My tourism research began in earnest in 1995 when I did what seemed then a small project on community tourism management/planning in rural Australia. That was part of my commitment to rural and regional communities and became a turning point in my academic career. Much of the research funding I have managed in that time has had a regional community focus and that will continue.

I get funding from two major Cooperative Research Centres (national funding bodies), one with the title 'Sustainable Tourism' and the other 'Desert Knowledge'. In the former, tourism is the key focus (see [www.crctourism.com.au](http://www.crctourism.com.au)), is almost an end in itself. In the latter, the key issue is sustainable communities (see [www.desertknowledge.com.au](http://www.desertknowledge.com.au)) with tourism as a means to an end. That suits me so that my involvement in a new 5 year project on desert 4WD tourism bodes well for my future research.

But, to return to where we started – Thailand. The death of my student in the tsunami affected me greatly and I look forward to our being able to do more work that will carry on the tourism objectives of Lisa Jones. Stephanie Chok's new Phd won't be the same, of course, but it will address many of the same underlying tourism and globalisation issues. It will be the most radical research of my tourism period.



**ECOCLUB: Thank you very much.**

**UPCOMING EVENTS – June 2006**

Members, plan ahead by checking the full listings at <http://www.ecoclub.com/events>

*BUILDING TOURISM RESILIENCE IN SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES (SIDS)  
"MAXIMISING ECONOMIC BENEFITS & SUSTAINING TOURISM IN DEVELOPMENT, NASSAU,  
THE BAHAMAS*

June 7-9, 2006

The conference objectives are to create a forum to identify and discuss economic, environmental, social and other relevant factors that support economic resilience building in the tourism sector in SIDS; recommend practices and measures to strengthen tourism's economic resilience and assist SIDS in mitigating their vulnerabilities; provide a strategic way forward in tourism resilience building in SIDS and guidelines for regional and international agencies to assist these States in managing vulnerabilities in the development of their tourism sector.

[http://www.world-tourism.org/regional/americas/sem\\_bahamas/bahamas.pdf](http://www.world-tourism.org/regional/americas/sem_bahamas/bahamas.pdf)



*E-CLAT CLIMATE CHANGE AND TOURISM CONFERENCE, NOORD-BRABANT, THE NETHERLANDS*

June 11-14, 2006

The international research network e-CLAT (electronic climate Change and Tourism) and the NHTV Centre for Sustainable Tourism and Transport of the University of Breda, the Netherlands are organizing the conference with the theme 'tourism and climate change mitigation'. The conference wishes to cover the full spectrum of climate-tourism relationships, with a special emphasis on aspects of mitigation, including the following themes: methods & data; emission reduction; policy options and instruments.

<http://www.cru.uea.ac.uk/tourism/mitigation/mitigation.html>

*ECO-ARCHITECTURE 2006: THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE HARMONISATION BETWEEN ARCHITECTURE AND NATURE, THE NEW FOREST, UK*

June 14-16, 2006

This conference will be of interest to architects, engineers, planners, physicists, economists and other specialists interested in presenting and discussing the latest developments in ecological building and the harmonisation of architecture and nature. The following topics will be addressed: Historical and philosophical aspects, Ecological and cultural sensitivity, Human comfort and sick building syndrome, Energy crisis and building technologies, Carbon neutral design, Alternative sources of energy (wind, solar, wave, geothermal etc), Design with nature, Design with climate, Siting and orientation, Reuse of brownfield sites, Material selection, Minimal transportation approaches and use of indigenous materials Life cycle assessment of materials, Design by passive systems, Conservation and re-use of water, Building operation and management, Applications in different building types, Regulations and contracts

<http://www.wessex.ac.uk/conferences/2006/eco-arch06/index.html>

*5<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM ON ASPECTS OF TOURISM "IMAGINE THERE'S NO COUNTRIES: INEQUALITY AND GROWTH IN THE AGE OF TOURISM", HILLBROW, UK*

June 22-23, 2006

The emphasis of this conference is on the progress of tourism as a tool for poverty reduction in poor and economically underdeveloped regions. The conference aim is to bring together a group of peers to discuss theoretical and practical issues around tourism's role in development and poverty alleviation. Themes include: Global and Local Conflicts in Tourism, Tourism Corporations and Corporate Social Responsibility, South-South Solutions to Global Problems, Tourism and the Millennium Development Goals, Anthropology in Action, Economic Exploitation of the Exotic, New Waves in Tourism Development and Planning, Tourism and Development Methodologies, Gender Equality and Participation, Paradoxes and critiques of ecotourism and Fieldwork Methodologies.

<http://www.brighton.ac.uk/ssm/sympo2006/>

*12<sup>TH</sup> INTERNATIONAL INTERDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE ON THE ENVIRONMENT, KAILUA-KONA, HAWAII*

June 22-24, 2006

The Interdisciplinary Environmental Association is committed to an interdisciplinary approach to environmental issues and is now accepting submissions of papers and posters for the 2006 conference. To participate as a presenter please submit abstracts and/or papers by May 12, 2006. The conference welcomes research that crosses the boundaries of traditional disciplines to frame problems, propose working models or initiate field or community projects. Areas of special interest include (but are not confined to): · Environmental issues in the Pacific Rim · Ecotourism and park management · Coastal and wetlands management issues · Community activism · Agriculture and natural resource issues · Economic, legal and business strategies within the environment · Environmental policy and ethical considerations · Health and urban environmental challenges.

<http://www.ieaonline.org>

**THE THREE MINUTE ECOTOUR™**



**YALA National Park, Sri Lanka**

(Latitude 06°16' - 06°42' North / Longitude 81°15' - 81°42' East)



**Location:** Yala National Park (divided into Yala East and Yala West) is situated in the southeast corner of Sri Lanka, approximately 300 kilometres from the capital, Colombo. The park covers a surface area of roughly 129,700 Ha which hosts a diversity of ecosystems ranging from dense jungles, grasslands and lakes to waterholes, wetlands, flat plains and sandy beaches. Only a sixth (14,000 Ha) of the park is open to visitors.

**Famous for:** the highest concentration of leopards (*Panthera pardus*) in the world (est. 35) but also elephants, crocodiles.

Also

Cultural sites, like the Magul Maha Vihara ruins, dating from the 1st century BC.

**Weather:** Generally hot and dry as the park is located in an arid region of the country. There are several rainy periods: November to January, March/April and September. The dry season falls between May and August. The average annual temperature is 27 C.

**Biodiversity:** More than 130 bird species have been observed in the park including five endemics such as the black-necked stork and the endangered red-faced malkoha. The elephant, leopard, sambhur, spotted deer, sloth bear, peacock, monkey, wild boar and crocodile are some of the many animals present in the park.

**Cultural:** The vast Magul Maha Vihara site, dating from the 1st century BC and the Ruhunu Kingdom, with ruins spreading to around 10,000 acres among them a palace, a monastery and stupas.

**Issues:** The [2004 Tsunami](#) killed many park visitors and employees, and destroyed the information centre, but the park is now open for visitors. Many animals fled to the eastern region of the park however, reports indicate that they have since returned. Illegal poaching, logging and gem mining occur within or along the park boundaries. Jeep safaris are causing some animals to retreat into the less accessible areas of the park. The ceasefire between the government & the Tamil Tiger insurgents is no more.

**Getting there:** Tissamaharama is the closest town to the park.

**Allow:** 3 Days to see the whole park, usually on 'jeep-safari'.

**Within a 100 kilometre radius:** Sinharaja Forest Reserve: a World Heritage site and last extensive primary tropical rain forest in Sri Lanka. Located in [Sabaragamuwa](#), [Southern Provinces](#). Bambarakanda Falls: the tallest of Sri Lanka's waterfalls (789 feet). Best time to visit is during wet season October to March. Located near Kalupahana. *Horton Plains National Park: visit the park's famous landmark, World's End, a sheer precipice with a 1050m drop.* *Uda Walawe National Park: famous for its large herds of wild elephants, near Embilipitiya.* 400 year old Bogoda bridge and Bogoda Cave, near Badulla.

**Where to stay / further info:** Within the park in bungalows maintained by the Department of Wildlife Conservation or at one of three ECOCLUB Ecolodges: **Tree Tops Jungle Lodge** <http://ecoclub.com/treetopsfarm> **River Garden Resort** <http://ecoclub.com/rivergarden> or **Ranweli Holiday Village** <http://ecoclub.com/ranweli>

**ECOCLUB, Year 6, Issue 80, May 2006:**

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