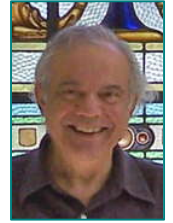


Sponsored by:

Hana Maui Botanical Gardens (www.ecoclub.com/hanamai), Jorth Consult Limited (UK) (www.jorthconsult.co.uk), Pacuare Lodge (www.junglelodgecostarica.com)
Maris Hotels Traditional Apartments (www.maris.gr/alternative), Vythiri Resort (www.vythiriresort.com), Beyond Touring (www.beyondtouring.com)

The return of Odysseus **PROFESSOR MICHAEL ROMANOS** *Interview on page 2*



Director's Cut:

✂ [On page 2](#) an Interview with Professor Michael Romanos, a modern Odysseus who after working around the globe for 30 years returned to assist his homeland develop ecotourism & sustainable tourism!

✂ [On page 7](#) an interesting study on the potential and problems of Ecotourism in Ethiopia, by our Member **Asaf Leshem**.

✂ [On page 10](#) an article on the use of wind power in an Ecolodge, by our Members **Lisa Kivirist and John Ivanko**

✂ [On page 11](#) a report from our Member **Andres Hammerman and Michelle Kirby** of Black Sheep Inn, on the progress of their community recycling project, which won the 1st award in the ECOCLUB.com Ecolodge Awards, earlier this year.

✂ Warm congratulations to [Glass House Mountains Ecolodge](#) who have won the "Sunshine Coast Environmental Councils Eco-tourism award for 2006" in Australia, an award that usually goes to a much bigger organisation, and to **Mr Albert Teo**, Managing Director of [Sukau Rainforest Lodge](#) on his appointment as Adjunct Lecturer at Edith Cowan University, Australia, the first appointment of its kind by the University.

✂ Members are invited to a virtual December Solstice Party at <http://www.ecoclub.com/chat> on 21 December, an important day in many of the world's civilisations. In Ancient Greece the Triesperon (three nights) used to start on the night of 21 December, on the longest night of the year, and last until the night of December 24 to 25, after the night started becoming smaller again.

✂ We plan to publish a special issue, the last for the year, at the end of December, but just in case you will be away, best wishes for a prosperous and very eco 2007 to all our readers☺

Antonis B. Petropoulos

[More Director's cut](#)



Global Ecotourism Oslo, Norway
Conference 2007 May 14-16, 2007

ECOCLUB is a proud Media Partner of the
Global Ecotourism Conference, Oslo, Norway, May 14-16, 2007
Visit <http://www.ecotourismglobalconference.org>
for details on this important ecotourism meeting.

THE ECOCLUB INTERVIEW

PROFESSOR MICHAEL ROMANOS:

“Environmental and social justice are at the heart of sustainable development”




Michael Romanos is professor of planning and economic development at the University of Cincinnati, in the U.S.A. The recipient of the 2005 D. Cohen Award for Excellence in Teaching, the highest such recognition of his university, he has lived and worked in many parts of the world, especially Southeast Asia, where he has served as senior advisor to Indonesia’s Ministry of Economic Planning, was a Fulbright and Asia Foundation Senior Professor in Indonesia and Thailand, and lead a multi-year program of higher education reform in these countries. He directs the Summer Field School in Sustainable Development, which conducts sustainable development planning studies for tourism-oriented communities all over the world. A native of Crete, he holds architecture and planning degrees from the National Technical University of Athens and Florida State University, and a Ph.D. in Regional Science from Cornell University.




The University of Cincinnati was established in 1819 as a city institution, and later became part of the state of Ohio university system. With a student body of about 37,000, of which about 10,000 are graduate students, and a faculty of about 2,500, the University of Cincinnati is a Carnegie I research institution. It is a comprehensive university offering instruction in all disciplines except the agricultural sciences. Its School of Planning is one of the largest in the US, with a student body of over 300 in two undergraduate, one master’s and a Ph.D. program, and a faculty of seventeen. Known for its cooperative education undergraduate planning program, the School offers graduate-level specializations in physical and environmental planning and design, economic development, and international planning and development. Its award-winning Summer Field School has been operating since 1984 and has conducted student-faculty educational programs in Indonesia, Thailand, Brazil and Greece.

The Interview follows:


 *As someone who has worked in many and vastly diverse corners of the planet, what would be the most valuable lesson you have learned in terms of tourism policy & planning and which you would share with aspirant planners in tourism and the environment?*

There is a perception in every corner of the world that tourism could instantly solve a place’s economic and social development problems. This is a dangerous fallacy which often leads governments to misallocate resources, raise unreasonable expectations among local populations, and “sell out” a place in order to attract tourism-related investments and/or achieve quick profits. Often local and regional governments do not realize that in order to have a successful tourism development, in addition to the natural beauty or cultural resources of a place, transportation, communications and environmental infrastructure must be at least adequate, the training of personnel on all aspects of the tourist trade is absolutely essential, and the education of the local populations on how to deal with tourism and visitors is imperative. When the impacts of tourism development have not been carefully thought out, the environmental, social and cultural implications of uncontrolled, exploitative tourism can not only destroy local cultures and lifestyles, but may also ruin the attractive characteristics of a place, thus also destroying the future potential of the place to support sustainable tourism.

 *Does an expatriate or visiting consultant in your line of work need to know the issues, the politics and the people at least to a depth normally available to natives, or is it better to have an Aristotelian ‘unscribed-tablet’ (tabula rasa), to choose your own successful formula and apply it objectively regardless of local objections and special interests?*

A consultant must learn and understand a place and its people, their capacities, constraints, potentials, and aspirations in depth before (s)he can make recommendations for any kind of planning. Tourism planning makes this principle imperative, because by its nature tourism cuts into the very lives of the people of affected communities. Visitors go to a place in order to experience the local culture and resources. If planning for this kind of development does not understand the fragility, idiosyncrasies, values and attitudes of the local population, how could it ensure their protection and long term sustainability? Application of a “formula” would be a mechanistic way of dealing with people and ecologies; and it would assume that individual characteristics of the place and its communities do not matter. The plan that would be produced out of such a set of assumptions would be insensitive to the local people and their landscapes, and would either fail because it would not be accepted by them, or it would be implemented by government fiat but would be resented by the affected people.


Understanding the local politics is a different matter. Yes, you need to understand the local politics in order to be able to generate any kind of plan with hope to have it implemented. But if local politics are corrupt, and/or local politicians are self-serving, a good plan would stand no chance of being implemented unless major compromises were made to accommodate their greed. I have had more than my share of such experiences....

 *Cincinnati, were you teach, is an architectural gem, and historically important in terms of planning as the first American boomtown in the 19th century, and a border town during the American Civil war however it has since stagnated with population in the city having dropped 40% since 1950. What is the current state of urban tourism in Cincinnati and can it revitalize the inner city?*

Cincinnati in the nineteenth century was one of the great gates to the West, and for many years it was a major economic and industrial centre, thanks to its location on the Ohio river. It gradually lost its primacy as railroads gradually gained dominance over river and canal transportation, and eventually became part of the American "rust belt" as its manufacturing base aged and lost its competitive advantage. More recently, the city has been making major efforts to transform itself into a modern economic centre based on the New Economy, with advanced technology, services, research and education, and tourism as its foundations. The effort has been only partially successful. The regional economy is thriving (Greater Cincinnati encompasses a 15-county metropolitan region with 2.2 million people and steady population and employment growth), but the city has been unable to reverse its population losing trends to date. The racial conflicts that caused riots in the mid-1960s and again in 2001 also gave a serious blow to the efforts of the city to cast a more tolerant and diverse image of itself. In fact, they have affected its tourism sector considerably, because after the 2001 riots, a number of African-American and other socially minded organizations from around the country cancelled plans to hold conventions or other public functions in Cincinnati, on account of its image as a racially insensitive city.


But tourism continues to be one of the anchors of the local economy. A few years ago the city and Hamilton County, the regional entity containing Cincinnati, made a long term financial commitment to the local baseball and football teams to replace their sports facilities. With an estimated investment of over a billion dollars, the Cincinnati riverfront now has two magnificent, state-of-the-art sports facilities, which attract large crowds from a wide region to their games. The city's convention centre, recently renovated and expanded, is one of the most modern and largest in the Midwest and is constantly in use. Luxury hotels, gourmet restaurants, and entertainment districts have been sprouting in and around the downtown on both the Ohio and the Kentucky sides of the river. And this year, the efforts of the city to radically change its image of a racially segregated place finally are bearing fruits as a young and progressive African-American mayor has been elected and a number of city groups have come together to address and resolve their social problems, which include poverty and unemployment among the majority African-Americans of the central city.

Whether or not the short term successes of these efforts indicate a longer term ability to solve the social and economic problems of Cincinnati's inner city, is questionable. The vast area north of the downtown known as Over-the-Rhine has recently been designated by the National Trust for Historic Preservation as one of the eleven most threatened historic urban areas in the country. Most of its 6,000 plus residents are poor, unemployed, and have few opportunities to get a job within the neighbourhood. Its housing stock is deteriorating, and its businesses are closing down at alarming rates. Tourism and entertainment developments in the area in the past several years have largely left the residents out. Further housing and commercial developments, unless coupled with an effort to include the local residents, may just produce neighbourhood gentrification pressures. On the other hand, if tourism and residential rehabilitation investments are expanded into the area, there will be no other chance of improvement for its population. This problem has been around for many years, and it is by now clear that fragmented development attempts by the private sector alone will not be able to solve it. Recently, a number of private-public partnerships have been established to implement an ambitious comprehensive development plan and program, in which tourism plays a role but is not the main emphasis. These partnerships are making serious efforts to engage the local residents, and are giving priority to housing rehabilitation, public space improvements, school enhancement, and social services expansion. Their priority is the improvement of local living conditions, the assumption being that a stabilized neighbourhood will better be able to attract and retain business, including entertainment and other tourism-related activities.

 *Your native Crete, for which you also completed a study between 1998-2003, is a smallish island (250 km x 30 km) that receives some 4 million tourists annually, flown in by charter flights most in the course of the 3 summer months. The current government is pro-business, pro-tourism development, but surely, there must be limits to growth? Indeed, you have not lived in Greece for many years, but as an impartial observer with deep understanding, if you could fix one thing in Greece's tourism sector, what would that be and why?*

It is not "one thing", but it is the bundle of actions, national government policies and local controls that would reduce the rampant growth of cheap tourism that makes international tourism agencies and large operators wealthy at the expense of local resources, populations and the environment. In Santorini, which is the latest of the studies I have directed in Greece, up to 10,000 visitors disembark per day during the high season, brought to the island by a number of large cruiser boats. These people are shuttled around in oversize buses, pollute the island's air, congest its streets, crowd its beaches and archaeological sites, leave very little money on the island, and learn even less about local culture in the few hours they spend on the island. They do not benefit Santorini's population, but they enrich the – mostly outside the island – business involved in these mass tourism excursions. In Hersonissos, one of the "hot" destinations in Crete, hundreds of young visitors go berserk every night from the


use of alcohol and drugs, causing damage to local property, hurting people and themselves, causing numerous accidents, and creating such unpleasant conditions that chase desirable tourism away.

 *The 2004 Olympics, a great urban planning project, came and went, and their legacy can be observed today in Athens, some of it good like the subway & the tram, some not so good like the creation of so many expensive stadiums for unpopular sports, the missed chance to create more green spaces and introduce environmental technology in buildings, and not the least, the Eur 8bn-10bn bill. As a tourism planner, and a tourist, could you name three measures to help finally take 2,600 year old Athens, usually avoided by most tourists, to its deserved place as a top spot for city breaks and sustainable urban tourism? Le Corbusier, a great admirer of the Parthenon, famously proposed the demolition of a vast part of central Paris - would you go that far (assumed it was ever possible)?*

LeCorbusier was a great architect but was a miserable city planner. He never understood the roles, functions and actions of the human beings and communities that constitute the city. To him, the city was a design artefact, and could be repaired by design or erased and be rebuilt. No one involved in modern urban planning today takes such ideas seriously. Athens is a great city, filled with all the opportunities of culture that make cities such desirable places to live. Architects and developers did their best during the last part of the twentieth century to destroy its character, demolish its old buildings, erase its neoclassical character, and fill its neighbourhoods with *polycatoikies*; and were successful in producing today's impersonal, featureless city neighbourhoods. But time will change the city's fabric. The city's population is gradually leaving the urban core, and that will eventually reduce urban densities and create opportunities for redevelopment.


A city is a living organism, and has beautiful and ugly aspects. A city can be a tourism destination, but that is not its purpose. Its purpose is to provide quality of life to its residents. The characteristics that will make that quality of life possible may or may not attract urban tourism as well, and that is fine. But the Athens of today for visitors has such great museums, archaeological sites, and cultural opportunities, that the city can capitalize on them for its tourism. Visitors interested in these features will find Athens a very attractive place. The others can go elsewhere.

But there are things that we can do to make the city more attractive to visitors: Continue and complete the excellent plans for the unification of all the archaeological sites, and include in the network other cultural locations, green spaces, entertainment districts, and shopping areas; bring the marbles back from London; convince the government to be more generous to its people, so that they do not strike during the high tourism season; keep museums and archaeological sites open longer hours; educate taxi drivers, gate keepers, store employees to be polite and scrupulous to visitors; and keep the city clean, the trees watered, and the graffiti under control.


 *You have recently completed a study of the iconic Mediterranean island resort of Santorini with the cooperation of the local Municipality, entitled "Plan for the Future of Santorini - Building the cultural centre of the Eastern Mediterranean". What were the main conclusions, and what is actually happening on the ground, following your study?*

We identified the following major problems with the development of the island, and determined their causes and ways to address them: Rampant construction and expansion of tourism facilities on the island eats up all the open space and agricultural land; The entire economy of the island is dominated by tourism; The development policies for the island favour hotel and entertainment development, but pay no attention to the island's permanent population needs such as education, health, infrastructure, environmental conditions, cultural preservation and enhancement, or quality of life; The quality of tourism on the island deteriorates each year, even as the numbers of visitors keep increasing; The confluence of increasing supply of facilities and increasing demand for entertainment, combined with declining per visitor profits and a dramatic shift towards short-visit, cruiser boat tourism, are robbing the island of its quality of life, contribute to the decline of its environmental resources, are adulterating the cultural images and architectural character of its settlements, and are affecting the cultural characteristics of the native population; Nothing appears worthy of protection on the island, while everything is being sacrificed on the altar of tourism profits. Continuation of present trends will drastically and irreversibly alter the ecology and the architecture of the traditional communities of the island in ten years.

Neither the national government neither the local authorities have been able to address these problems. There is no political will to implement existing plans calling for land use controls, land growth management, congestion reduction, infrastructure improvements, enforcement of architectural standards, or building permits. None of the plans produced for the island so far has been implemented, because of lack of political will to act against the interests of large tourism investors. Our own planning proposals were developed over two years of intensive work, during which every single organization and professional group on the island was interviewed, participatory procedures were employed to define the goals and priorities of development, a number of international experts participated in technical studies to address every significant development issue, and every past study and recommendation was considered carefully. The proposals that were produced by these efforts were widely accepted to all the constituencies and stakeholders on the island. The public acceptance and approval of the study and its proposals by the community during the public presentation of our work at the Nomikos Conference Centre in August 2005 was overwhelming. The municipal administration originally characterized the study and its proposals as excellent, reflecting the realities of the island, practicable and feasible, and worthy of implementation. Unfortunately, the study was later condemned by the same individuals as politically motivated and rejected. Hence my comment about the need to understand politics, in question # 2 above.

 *Much is being made about the importance of 'stakeholders' these days. What is your understanding of the role of 'stakeholders' in terms of sustainable development planning: Is the term undemocratic, revealing special interests & corruption, or an acknowledgement of how things are done since "all animals are equal but some are more equal than others"?*


The whole idea of sustainable development is to create a synergy among environmental, economic and social goals. Environmental and social justice are at the heart of sustainable development, so the concept, far from being undemocratic, is a vehicle to achieve more participatory democracy and more democratic planning and development. In this sense, then, stakeholders are the beneficiaries of the plans and the development programs, and since these plans and programs advocate resource conservation, resource management, controlled growth, conservation of land, nature-friendly life styles, and several other similar principles, their interests are not "special" interests, but rather those of society as a whole. Now, special interests may intervene in the sustainable development/planning process in order to insert their own goals and priorities, but these are external agents, and the plans would not be partial to their concerns. If the process is carried out fairly, sustainable development planning will not favour these special interests but rather the stakeholders that who constitute the communities for which the plan is produced. It is up to the special interests to join the ranks of community stakeholders or not. In the Santorini plan, for example, most of the professional organizations participated in the planning process as stakeholders. But some special interests objected to the direction of the plans, because they were advocating limits to rampant growth, management of the land and other natural resources, protection of the landscape, and regulations for construction. These special interests could join the ranks of stakeholders, and be part of the planning decision process, but in this case they felt that their personal and business interests deviated from those of the rest of the community.

 *Famously you left Greece and Crete to escape the 1967 -1974 military junta that had temporarily imprisoned you, but in the course of your planning career, in the 1970s and 1980s you had to work with authoritarian governments / juntas, then proliferating in the developing world. So is democratic governance or autocracy, from your experience, more conducive to planning? Some would think that state planning is by definition autocratic?*

Far from me to advocate for anything autocratic or authoritarian as even worthy of consideration as a planning tool! Urban and/or regional planning is done by free-thinking people for free-thinking people. Anything else is forceful imposition of an authority's will on people, and that is not planning, it's tyranny. We will not go there....

Good planning is done following sound methodologies, honest use of data, employment of social and environmental justice principles, and the active and continuous participation of those who will benefit or be affected by the plan. Only a plan that is widely accepted by the communities affected has a chance of being implemented. And plans are not supposed to be fixed overtime. What makes sense to today's citizens may be considered unacceptable to younger generations five or ten years later, because the economic conditions, social norms, or ways of thinking about the future may have changed. An abundance of resources may make people ready to use them without constraint, while a shortage of them may trigger goals of conservation. But in all cases, in order for these goals and priorities to be viable, they must reflect the communal will of the affected citizenry, and that can only be accomplished with democratic procedures, the people's participation, and ample and open communication.

Having said that, I must acknowledge that I have over the years worked in many countries where democracy was not the modus operandi. But I want to believe that the purpose of my work there was to establish democratic procedures that would ensure a more participatory planning and a better quality of life for the client communities. For example, my work in Indonesia during the 1990s took place partly under the [Soeharto](#) dictatorship. Working within the system with a number of dedicated expatriates and native planners, though, we were able to develop networks of regional development for the island provinces of that country that altered the ways by which funds were allocated to peripheral regions, and thus were able to enhance the infrastructure of the affected places through improved port facilities, more frequent sea connections with the main islands, better decision making procedures for the local communities, a stronger role of these communities in the regional and national development deliberations, and an elevated understanding and protection of their environmental and cultural resources. This is another good example of how important it is to understand the local culture and politics before you could embark in any serious efforts to change local decision making patterns and transfer power from the established domains to the affected stakeholders.

 *University departments around the world, in particular those in applied topics such as Tourism and the Environment increasingly work as consultancies, mostly as a result of declining state subsidies. The positive impact is easy to detect - fresh, pioneering ideas applied in the -so called- real world, and in turn - there is a reality check for these pioneering ideas, while first-class academic experts can offer their services directly to the economy. Could there be a downside however, for example students getting too result & money-oriented & conservative at an early age, or professors getting distracted from their professorial duties?*

I think that university faculty and student involvement in the planning and development of communities which do not have adequate resources to hire professional consultants, both locally and around the world, is a terrific way for students to learn and gain experience in applied situations, for professors to test new approaches and methodologies and stay focused on the practical aspects of their field, and for communities to benefit from innovative, creative, fresh approaches to the solutions of their problems and needs. I am not sure that I understand what the downsides of such practices would be, especially your reference to the money orientation of the students. I cannot talk about other universities and programs, but I can tell you that the University

of Cincinnati Summer Field School in Sustainable Development never receives any money from the places for which we conduct planning and development studies. We cover our own expenses, buy our own tickets, and receive no remuneration for our work from the host communities. Our students are not paid to participate in these programs. On the contrary, they pay the entire cost of the program as well as their own university tuition. In fact, they make major financial sacrifices to participate in these programs, because they forgo income they would have if they stayed home and worked, as practically all our students have part time jobs – up to 35 hours per week – that allow them to support themselves. Many of our students cover the cost of their participation in the summer program through student loans, advanced by the US government, and payable after the student's graduation. The communities, for which we do the planning projects usually, but not always, provide us with accommodations, and occasionally some of the meals and the local transportation. All other expenses are the responsibility of the program.

 *What are your immediate future plans, and how can interested readers keep up with your work?*

We are very fortunate to have received a lot of positive publicity for our international work over the years, and to have received many invitations for planning collaborations as a result. For example, the Santorini planning and development study we completed last year was recently recognized by the American Planning Association as the best tourism planning study by a United States university team in 2005. In the last year alone we have received invitations to conduct planning studies in collaboration with local governments or academic institutions from three different municipalities in Crete, three islands in the Cyclades, and two states in the south of Brazil. However, our immediate plans are to spend the summer of 2007 on the island of Thirasia ([see map](#)), as guests of the Community of Oia and its mayor Mr. George Halaris, and conduct an ecological and cultural preservation and conservation study for this unique island, for the purpose of guiding its tourism development, land management, and traditional community protection under a general comprehensive plan. A team of twenty students and faculty are already at work at the University of Cincinnati preparing for this important project, which is unique for Greece and will be a model for small island development and preservation in the future.

 *ECOCLUB: Thank you very much.*

FACES OF ECOCLUB MARCIA PALANQUE



Marcia Palanque was born in Lisbon, Portugal. She developed an early awareness of the impacts of travel and tourism as her parents owned a tourism publishing company which specialised in the Portuguese and African markets. This allowed her to travel extensively around the world, especially in Africa and also lived in Cape Verde for two years.

Marcia studied Hospitality & Tourism Management back in Portugal, and as part of the course she had placements in various departments of prestigious hotels. During this time she became more aware of the environmental impacts of tourism and so she decided to go to the UK to complement her degree with Environment Management at the University of Gloucestershire. Her dissertation entitled 'The potential for ecotourism in Angola' showed her commitment to Africa and sustainable tourism. Her long-term ambition is "to make a real contribution in

conservation and ecotourism especially in Africa" where she is now preparing a community project.

Ms Marcia Palanque was ECOCLUB's Most Helpful Member for November 2006.

SPECIAL REPORT ECOTOURISM IN ETHIOPIA*by Asaf Leshem**

At the dawn of a new tourism era in Ethiopia, ecotourism is seen as one of the most lucrative niches, drawing in a number of stakeholders to develop and invest in it. There is no argument that in Ethiopia, imprisoned by chronic economic problems, yet rich with natural and cultural resources, ecotourism can assist in various problems from poverty alleviation to creating alternative livelihoods for rural communities, health and education (Chapman & Fikre, 2004; Williams, 2004).

Ethiopia is Africa's oldest independent country, spreading over 1.13 million sq km (437,794 sq miles) home to some of the most spectacular sceneries and diverse cultures in the world. And yet, to most people outside of Africa, it is mainly known for the images of drought, famine and border wars with Eritrea (*ibid.*) that a lot of us get from major news channels and Bob Geldof type documentaries. With a population of over 73 million people, most of which live on less than one pound a day the country is in critical need for revenues from every possible source. Weaver (1998) points out that in recent years a lot of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) have placed high priority on tourism as means to achieve desired economic outcomes. However, where as neighbouring Kenya had more than 1,130,000 arrivals in 2004, Ethiopia had just 186,000 in 2003 (WTO, 2005). Indeed the actual number may be closer to 70,000 as Addis Ababa is home to the Economic Commission of Africa (ECA), African Union (AU) and hundreds of local and foreign agencies and NGOs. The employers of these organisations travel frequently on missions and are visited by friends and family (VFR). Thus, rich in natural, cultural and historical resources, Ethiopia has not seen much of the regional share of tourism receipts. Already in 1996, Sagaye (1996) argued that tourism development could provide a solution to Ethiopia's dependency on coffee trade (50% of the country's export at the time). In the past 5 years a few successful tour operators and a handful of Ecolodges have emerged. As recently as Christmas 2005, a new national poverty reduction strategy (PASDEP) document was published, in which tourism was highlighted as one of the major sectors to be included in future donors' planned projects (MoFED, 2005).

Current major forms of tourism in Ethiopia involve the history tour namely Axum, Gondar and Lalibela; cultural tourism, the most famous example of which is tribe tourism in South Omo Valley and Nature tourism, mainly hiking in the Simian and Bale mountains.

There are currently three bases for ecotourism in Ethiopia:

- *The privately owned* and managed Ecolodge – these are owned and managed by a private investor or a tour operator, there is a partial employment of local community members, though not in management levels. There are various levels of economic benefits to host communities and different levels of social, cultural, and environmental conservation. The privately owned Ecolodges are all members of the Ecotourism Association of Ethiopia and are either tourism professionals or invest in ecotourism, which is a small part of their bigger business operations.
- *The community-organised, aid agency supported* – in some cases there was a private investor involvement in the past; currently organised and owned by the community with technical support (e.g. in financial management or marketing). These projects are in different stages of development (from planning to exit stage) and different models are examined.
- *The community based and owned, supported by NGO* – here as well, different parts of the community own different parts of the project (e.g. accommodation, horse treks, etc.); and a small NGO, supported by several donors (embassies or bigger NGOs) helps with marketing, capacity building of management, tourism training, and so on.

Set against this background, the research aimed on defining the Ethiopian ecotourism paradigm and constructing a model of stakeholder collaboration that would be suitable for the current Ethiopian socioeconomic conditions. Also, to present and interpret the views of stakeholders interviewed and make recommendations which could be implemented in existing or future projects. Although ecotourism is normally a rural tourism activity and often nature based, most stakeholders and various people with interest in ecotourism in Ethiopia, are based in the capital Addis Abeba itself.

At the time of the research there were approximately 5 to 10 projects and businesses, which defined themselves as ecotouristic and had at least some ecotourism components. Also, at the time of the study there were another 10 to 20 ecotourism business/projects in different stages of development. The ecotourism projects researched were located all over the country (See figure below). All of the above destinations have management, ownership or some kind of marketing representation in Addis Abeba; thus, the Ethiopian capital, was chosen as the study area.

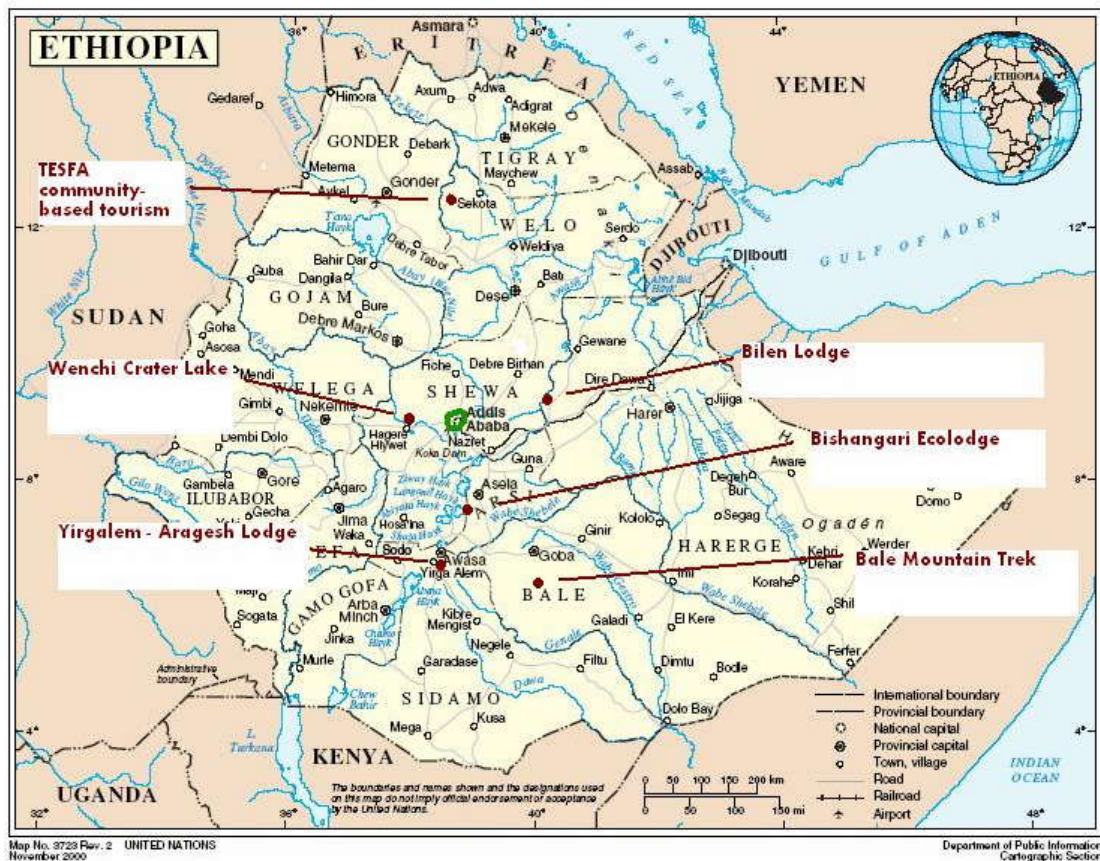


Figure 2, The red dots indicate locations of ecotourism projects in Ethiopia; where as the green circle, the capital Addis Ababa is where the research was conducted.

Key research conclusions include the following:

- There is a positive change from the previous “Wild West” situation. Most stakeholders acknowledge the need to work together in order to succeed, they also have ideologies and agendas that are closer to each other than to other ecotourism practitioners around the globe.
- Ethiopian communities do not currently have the capacity to develop or fully manage ecotourism business by themselves.
- Through collaborative ways of work, stakeholders can achieve ecotourism targets in the short term and in the long term enable community-based or community-organised ecotourism in Ethiopia.
- True sustainability in tourism can be achieved through government providing regulations and incentives; responsible private sector ownership and management of hospitality; non-profit sector supporting environmental and social parts of the business and building community capacity; community members participating in ecotourism development and slowly learning related skills.



Tukul (traditional housing) serving as reception at a Local Ecologne

In addition the study recommended:

- the expansion of the activities of the Ecotourism Association of Ethiopia and opening it to people and organisations outside the private sector.
- the creation of regulatory frameworks for the development of ecotourism
- the diversification of ecotourism activities

Most stakeholders are waiting for the newly established tourism ministry to be more powerful and more active in creating the much needed regulatory framework. Although, the current situation allows stakeholders relative freedom in their operations, it is an obstacle when it comes to development of sustainable ecotourism. The exception is the province of Oromia working locally on the development of ecotourism codes of conduct with the German technical corporation GTZ.

The last of these crucial prerequisites is diversification of types and levels of ecotourism practices. At the moment, most of the Ethiopian tourism market revolves around the country's history, culture and nature, and the relatively new Ecolodges are simply based in places of natural beauty. This large and beautiful country can and should have field schools and interpretation centers; coffee ecotourism; more established bird watching and other Rift Valley related ecotourism; more conservation programs as the Simian Fox UNDP initiative; and improvement of the country's national parks. Such variety can also include various types of stakeholders' interactions within the development culture of the country. Considering the current development stage of the rural Ethiopian societies this dependency of host communities on outsiders and stakeholders on each other is necessary. Nevertheless, most people in Addis Ababa believe in the social evolution that is rapidly taking place in Ethiopia right now; therefore, in 15 to 20 years the findings of this research may change considerably.

However, the main ingredient is political stability. At the current instability much of the efforts spent on tourism development in Ethiopia are suspended; both development money and tourist revenue money have slowed down and in some cases completely stopped. The researcher's last visit to Ethiopia included staying in an Ecolodge with 20% hut occupancy, in the midst of the usually popular Christmas week!

**Asaf Leshem is an Ecotourism Consultant with Gamma Tours Karmiel-Misgav and a Member of ECOCLUB. This article is derived from Mr Leshem's BSc (Honours) Ecotourism Degree dissertation on "Ecotourism Stakeholders Collaboration in Ethiopia" which won the prize for best dissertation in the Department for Environmental Management of the University of Central Lancashire, Preston UK. Prior to studying ecotourism, Mr Leshef worked and studied in various sectors of the tourism industry, in New Zealand, China, Poland and Israel, and as a consultant to an environmental NGO in Ethiopia, studying the potentials and constraints of establishing a community based ecotourism in two destinations near Addis Ababa. He can be reached at asafleshem[at]yahoo dot com.*

NEW PUBLICATION REVIEW

'In' Magazine, Florina, Greece



Edited by the mercurial Konstantinos Gogos, an architect and rural development expert, and published by 'inFlorina', a destination management company, this new publication, in Greek, aspires to cover Florina and the broader Western Macedonia region of Greece, and fulfil its needs in terms of tourism information for Agrotourism and Ecotourism enthusiasts and aspiring tourism entrepreneurs alike. The first issue, with Florina's trademark sweet red pepper on the cover, discusses issues as diverse as wine tourism, ornithology, eco architecture, traditional ovens, and regional development in a down to earth way which appeals to all readers. This first issue is printing is on a rather heavy, glossy paper however the full online version is a big plus and is recommended. We hope for many and frequent future issues and an English version soon!

► For the e-version of the magazine visit <http://www.inflorina.gr/magazine/index.php>

Do you wish us to review your new publication? Please see <http://ecoclub.com/news/information.html#Review> for details.

ECOCLUB EXCLUSIVE Winds of Change: Generating Power from a Wind Turbine*

by John Ivanko and Lisa Kivirist

**Excerpted from "Rural Renaissance: Renewing the Quest for the Good Life" by John Ivanko and Lisa Kivirist and available from Renewing the Countryside at www.ruralrenaissance.org**Solar thermal system on roof of Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast*

Not to be confused with the abandoned windmills still dotting the countryside across parts of the United States, designed to mechanically pump water from wells or grind grains, a wind turbine generates electricity by utilizing the wind, doing so without creating any water or air pollution or waste.

We have a windy site at Inn Serendipity, located in southwestern Wisconsin. There are times when we come inside after working in the gardens with red faces, not from sunburn, but windburn. Sitting high on the ridge where we can see for many miles southwest into Illinois, our farm is well situated for electricity generation with a wind turbine.

While many have seen or read about the large commercial-sized turbines, our wind turbine is a residential-sized system, grid-connected, and rated for electricity generation at 10 kilowatts (kW). Like our PV system, our wind system avoids the bank of batteries needed for energy storage, instead using the grid as storage for excess electricity produced. If we overproduce in any given year, our net metering contract would entitle us to a rebate check from the utility company. In Wisconsin, and in many other states, net metering arrangements are limited to a maximum of 20 kW of combined generating capacity (including wind, PV and hydroelectric). Increasingly, prices for home-sized systems are dropping, and their presence is becoming more readily accepted by utility companies. Still, given the initial investment, energy conservation and efficiency options should be exhausted before an investment in a wind turbine is made.

Wind turbines have five main components:

1. Turbine (generator): The electricity generator which is attached to the top of the tower.
2. Rotor: The set of rotating aerodynamic blades that turn when air masses move through. The load on the air foil-shaped blades is captured by the generator to which the blades are attached. The amount of so-called swept area is determined by the rotor diameter; generally, the greater the diameter, the better the generation. Two or three blade rotors are most common. Three blade rotors, while less efficient, spin more smoothly, extending the life of the equipment and allowing the turbine to start up at lower wind speeds.
3. Tail: The component which tracks the wind's direction.
4. Governor: The mechanism which limits the amount of electricity produced, protects the equipment from overproducing and burning up in high winds, and limits the centrifugal forces that might endanger the system.
5. Tower: The post upon which the turbine is mounted. It is made from various high-strength materials with three common styles: free-standing, guyed lattice and tilt-up. Towers help the generator avoid ground wind drag (the friction between the earth and moving air masses), and turbulence caused by obstacles on the Earth's surface.

Wind Turbine System at Inn Serendipity

Turbine System: Bergey Excel-S, 10 kW grid

connected system without battery bank

Tower: 120-foot guyed lattice tower

Inverter: GridTek 10 Power Processor

Rotor Diameter: 24 feet

Annual average output: 9,000 kWh

Installed cost: \$39,465

(including labour and in-kind contributions)

Actual net out-of-pocket financial cost: \$15,480

(after \$15,595 state grant and in-kind support)

There are several keys to successful wind energy production. First, the site must have consistent wind at an average speed of 8 to 12 miles per hour, on average or higher. A site assessment should be completed using national wind speed data collected by the US Department of Energy or other appropriate sources. The site should also have enough space to allow a turbine to be placed on a tower with its rotor at least 30 feet higher than anything within 500 feet of the tower. Typically, a half acre of land would suffice for the actual tower and equipment. In the United States, the US Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) allows towers to be erected no higher than 200 feet without significant and expensive additional requirements. Zoning regulations or proximity to airports can resent additional requirements.

Besides the wind itself, there are several variables that determine how much energy can be generated, each having a trade-off in the cost and complexity (and maintenance) of the system. In general, the larger the rotor diameter, the greater the wind swept area and the greater the energy generated. Additionally, the higher the tower, the faster and more regularly flowing the wind, the greater the energy generated. It's usually cheaper to install a higher tower than install a larger wind generator.

Each wind turbine has different features that provide advantages and drawbacks over its competitors. The key variable for our system, however, will be reliability and on-the-ground system monitoring (i.e., where monitoring the system does not mean climbing a 120-foot tower). Our surplus generation sold to the utility company helps offset the service contract we signed with a wind turbine service specialist, since neither of us want to be dangling from the top of a tower to do repairs or maintenance.

Just as with a photovoltaic, or PV, system, a simple contract with the utility, certificate of liability insurance in excess of \$300,000, equipment specification sheets, and a lockable external AC disconnect (to allow our utility to isolate our system when needed) are needed to complete our local electric utility's requirements for a grid intertie system.

**Besides the 10kW Bergey wind turbine system, John Ivanko and Lisa Kivirist have added a 780-Watt photovoltaic system, a solar thermal system for their domestic hot water and another solar thermal system to heat their greenhouse, and have learned enough about growing their own food to meet about 70-percent of their food needs. Their home and Inn Serendipity Bed & Breakfast is powered by 100-percent renewable energy and is now carbon-neutral. For more information, see www.innserendipity.com, or pick up a copy of their latest book, Rural Renaissance: Renewing the Quest for the Good Life, at a discount from the non-profit organization Renewing the Countryside (www.ruralrenaissance.org).*

ECOCLUB.com ECOLODGE AWARDS UPDATE

Andres Hammerman & Michelle Kirby Report from Chugchilán, Ecuador, on the progress of their recycling project, which was funded by ECOCLUB in the context of our annual [Ecolodge Awards](#)

We have had a setback to the building project: the community nearest the recycling site refuses to give us water access. We have stayed out of this negotiation completely. Apparently there is a long standing mistrust and disagreement between this community and the Italian Mission nearby. All the materials are on the recycling site, except there is not yet a water hook up. The Italian Mission have promised the water installation. We do have a temporary agreement to use the closest neighbor's water provisionally, in order to build, yet even this temporary water source has not been installed. In the meantime it has been raining quite a lot, so building work would not be able to start anyway. The day we left Chugchilán to begin our trip (first to the United States and then to Thailand) the village worker, Manuel, who sweeps and sorts the garbage suddenly died. He was not sickly, but he was over 80 years old. His family has since taken over the job of sweeping and sorting. They are eager to maintain the income he was bringing in. Manuel's salary had been doubled just a week before his untimely death. His family is doing a great job of both sweeping and sorting the garbage into organic and inorganic. The recycling site continues to be maintained in a clean and orderly fashion, we continue to sell some recyclables in Latacunga (in fact today we are sending out 245 lbs of cardboard, 89 lbs of scrap metal and 105 lbs of plastic bottles). The good news is that the mayor also asked someone at the Black Sheep Inn to sign in our absence for the 3-wheeled motorcycle/pick-up truck that he has offered us as a donation. This Italian made diesel motorcycle will be the recycling transport vehicle of Chugchilán. We are confident that we will be able to put up the recycling building. We are happy to have won the EcoClub Award and the community will continue to benefit from this project for years to come.

The project expenses so far are as follows:

RECYCLING LAND PURCHASE	26-Feb-06	\$ 150.00	
6 GARBAGE BARRELS	13-Apr-06	\$ 70.00	
PAINT FOR BARRELS	20-May-06	\$ 20.00	
LUNCH FOR MINGA	21-May-06	\$ 10.00	
PLYWOOD FOR SIGNS	30-May-06	\$ 16.00	
PAINT FOR SIGNS	25-Jun-06	\$ 30.00	
LABOR FOR PAINTING SIGNS & BARRELS	26-Jun-06	\$ 25.00	
MAKING 1000 ADOBES	11-Jul-06	\$ 110.00	
LUNCH FOR ADOBE WORKERS	11-Jul-06	\$ 10.00	
2 GARBAGE BARRELS	30-Jul-06	\$ 30.00	
MOVING ADOBES	31-Jul-06	\$ 40.00	
LUNCH FOR ADOBE MOVING CREW	01-Aug-06	\$ 10.00	
CANDY FOR KIDS WHO HELP SORT RECYCLING	05-Aug-06	\$ 5.00	
2 GARBAGE BARRELS	06-Aug-06	\$ 20.00	
REBAR AND STRUCTURAL METAL	07-Aug-06	\$ 300.00	
RUBBER GLOVES	08-Aug-06	\$ 10.00	
REBAR TRANSPORT	09-Aug-06	\$ 35.00	
RECYCLING WORKER MONTHLY SALERY INCREASE	10-Sep-06	\$ 25.00	
RECYCLING WORKER MONTHLY SALERY	10-Oct-06	\$ 25.00	
			Income
	Total	\$ 941.00	\$1,349.75
			Balance
			\$ 408.75

- ▶ More details about Black Sheep Inn at <http://ecoclub.com/BlackSheepInn> and <http://www.blacksheepinn.com>
- ▶ More details about the Project at <http://ecoclub.com/awards2006-1st.html>

UPCOMING EVENTS

For more details and future events, check <http://www.ecoclub.com/events>

14-16 December, 2006 - Elche, SPAIN

Conference: International Oasis and Sustainable Tourism Congress

Organisers: The Oasis' Culture Association, Spain

Venue: Centre de Congressos 'Ciutat d'Elx' s/n, Filet de Fora Street, Elche

► <http://www.culturaaoasis.com>

15 January 2007 – Cotonou, BENIN

Roundtable: Benin National Ecotourism Roundtable

Organisers: Benin Ecotourism Concern & Ministry of Tourism & Handcraft

Venue: International Centre of Conferences, Cotonou

Email: contact [at] beninecotourismroundtable dot org

► <http://www.beninecotourismroundtable.org>

**ECOCLUB, Year 7, Issue 86, November 2006:**

ECOCLUB[®], International Ecotourism Monthly[™], is the free, open-access e-Magazine of ECOCLUB.com – International Ecotourism Club, published at <http://www.ecoclub.com/news> in PDF form. Join ECOCLUB[®] at <http://www.ecoclub.com/join.html> for more ecotourism news, specialist resources (Jobs, projects, real estate, publications and others) and discounts at genuine Ecotourism lodges worldwide.

Submissions: We welcome article contributions. Contributor guidelines & benefits can be found at: <http://www.ecoclub.com/news/information.html>

Disclaimer: Any views expressed in this newspaper belong to their respective authors and are not necessarily those of ECOCLUB SA. Although we try to check all facts, we accept no liability for inaccuracies - which means you should not take any travel or other decisions based only on what you read here. Use of this newspaper is covered by the Terms & Conditions of the ECOCLUB.com Website as stated at <http://www.ecoclub.com/terms.html> and by your uncommon sense and good humour.

Published by ECOCLUB SA, PO BOX 65232, Psihico, Athens, 154 10 – GREECE, www.ecoclub.com
Copyright © 1999-2006 ECOCLUB SA. All rights reserved.



**ecotourism holidays, projects, jobs, events, news,
lodges, real estate, connections, chat, friendships
and much fun @**

<http://ecoclub.com>