Understanding and Managing Tourism Impacts: An Integrated Approach, C.M. Hall and A. Lew., Routledge, Oxon, 2009, 365 pp + xx, AUD\$76.00 (pbk), ISBN 780415771337.

Ralf Buckley

International Centre for Ecotourism Research

Griffith University, Australia

Phone: 07 5552 8675

Fax: 07 5552 8895

E mail r.buckley@griffith.edu.au

Michael Hall and Alan Lew are well known and prolific contributors to tourism research, and their 2006 collaboration on the *Geography of Tourism* is used widely. This volume takes a rather different approach. It is presented as a textbook, with short sections on learning goals and revision questions in each chapter. Certainly, it does seem to present existing materials rather than new research.

From the reader's perspective, however, it is a bit hard to follow the fine structure. There is a lot of material, including photographs, case studies, quotations and conceptual diagrams, much of it from previous publications by Hall; but the thread linking them together can become tenuous at times. The Contents lists only chapters, not subheadings: essentially, a division only into economics, society, physical environment and management. This might be a feature of Routledge house style, but not all Routledge books follow it.

The overall effect is of a collage, rich and intriguing under detailed inspection, but perhaps lacking the smooth and unadorned shapes which simplify immediate comprehension. Even this, however, may be a matter of personal preference. Different people consume information in different ways. The authors present their own varied experience in bite-sized chunks, with just enough sauce to fill the interstices; and the chunks provide more savour than the sauce.

There are indeed some intriguing nuggets of information, though some leave the reader with unresolved queries. On page 215, for example, the global tourism industry is quoted as consuming 5 TWh of energy and 10 million megalitres of water annually. On page 120, however, the global hotel industry alone is quoted as consuming 100 TWh of energy and 450-700 million megalitres of water each year. The lower figures are derived from the 2003 *Tourism Footprint* report by Conservation International (CI), which was actually more concerned with biodiversity. The higher figures are quoted from a chapter by Paulina Bohdanowicz in the 2009 book *Sustainable Tourism Futures*, edited by Gössling et al. This chapter, however, actually relied on a 2002 article by Stefan Gössling for energy consumption figures, and a 2000 *Resources for the Future* report for water consumption, so these are no more recent than the CI report. Energy and water consumption are perhaps the most easily measurable indicators of tourism impact. If available estimates differ so widely, readers might reasonably expect the authors to make some critical comment on reliability.

There are several items where information provided, though correct, is incomplete. Page 222, for example, mentions the likely impacts of climate change on ski resorts in the European Alps. There is corresponding work in North America, e.g. by Dan Scott and colleagues; and in the Australian Alps, by Catherine Pickering, but neither receives a mention. Similarly, page 135 mentions work by Hall and Rusher on the lifestyle motivations of New Zealand bed and breakfast operators, but with no reference to the extensive research in Europe, or Claudia Ollenburg's work in Australia.

Whilst the book aims to address economic and environmental as well as social impacts, it is the social components which receive most attention. National parks and other protected areas, for example, receive less than a page in total (pp. 245-246); though the early US policy debates between John Muir and Gifford Pinchot are also mentioned on pp. 44-45, and on page 4, there is a reference to the impacts of human respiratory disease on Ivory Coast chimpanzees.

There are one or two throw-away comments which might not be accepted by all readers. Do the residents of Hawaii's Waikiki really think of themselves as living in a 'sacrifice area', as stated on page 126? Or do they think of Waikiki as a very successful beach resort town? How would the residents of Australia's Gold Coast, or Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, see such terminology?

Fortunately, amongst this mass of detail and complexity, the authors have also found room for humour, intentionally or otherwise. Table 6.3 on page 263, for example, lists a bird species, the hooded plover, as a 'wildflower'. This table is apparently cited from a 1998 book or report by Hall and McArthur published, somewhat surprisingly, by the UK Government Stationery Office. On page 317, there is an illustration of an election poster for the 'ACT Party' in New Zealand, with the word 'emissions' misspelled. And on the book's opening page, we learn that Prince Philip apparently considers tourism as prostitution. Really? If that's the industry we are all working in, we are underpaid!