

HAS THE MYTH OF TOURIST DESTINATION SUSTAINABILITY FADED? BEHIND THE CURTAINS OF THE GLOBAL CRISES

UDC 338.48:330.8

Lidija Petrić

Received 27 March 2013

Revised 29 March 2013

29 March 2013

Abstract

The world has often been experiencing different types of turmoil, resulting in more or less severe crises. Crises are deemed to be negative changes in the economic, political, societal, biological or environmental affairs. Most of them have local or regional impacts. However the most recent years have proved that a crisis may even widespread throughout the world causing serious problems on a global level. Such a crisis gets the prefix “global” which implies the highest level of complexity. Based on the chaos theory and complexity framework this paper tends to explain the impacts of the crises of different type and extent on the dynamical behaviour of a tourism destination system, recognized as a highly complex system. The questions that are to be answered here are as follows:

- Whether the growing number of highly unpredictable crises makes sustainability of a tourist destination impossible?
- Could the entropic tendencies within a destination caused by crises be diminished by applying cybernetics’ postulates in the management process?
- Could these postulates be of common values i.e. could they help in creating a generic management model or have to be individually tailored?

For the purpose of reaching these answers the following issues are to be explored: first a short literature review on the tourism and crises’ interplay will be given; then the impacts of crises on tourism industry will be explored and explained through the conceptual model. Finally, by applying the chaos theory and the study of complex systems the paper will try to explain the behaviour of a tourism destination seeking to implement cybernetics’ postulates with the aim of reaching the goal of sustainability.

Keywords crisis, destination, sustainability, chaos theory, complexity, cybernetics, management

Lidija Petrić, PhD, Full Professor
University of Split, Faculty of Economics
Head of the Tourism Studies
Head of the Department for National Economics
Cvite Fiskovića 5, 21000 Split, Croatia
Phone: ++385 21 430 670
Fax: ++385 21 430 701
E-mail: lipe@efst.hr