

**Understanding Development through Tourism:
A critique & strategising alternatives**

**Interventions of International Tourism NGOs in the
World Social Forum 2004, Mumbai, India**

TOWARDS DEMOCRATISING TOURISM

TOURISM WATCH



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Preface

The World Social Forum is the first genuine people's attempt at a global citizens forum. Started in the hitherto unknown town of Porto Alegre in Southern Brazil, by the Workers Party [PT], it quickly grew to becoming a focal point of peoples' movements across the world. The WSF is now one of the major events on the world development calendar. The participants come from across the globe and cover the spectrum of development actors - from the grassroots farmer, to the 'alternate policy expert' to the various levels of implementation and advocacy. This richness of participation provided a unique opportunity to 'mainstream' tourism and services as a development issue per se to what is a virtual captive audience for a week. The WSF thus has become an event for making wider links and for deepening existing coalitions.

The interventions were undertaken by four tourism groups (**EQUATIONS (India) Ecumenical Coalition On Tourism (Hong Kong SAR- China) Tourism Watch (Germany) Arbeitskreis Tourismus Und Entwicklung (AKTE) – (Switzerland)**) and were in the form of seminars, panels, a press conference, stall, surveys, strategy meetings etc.

The press conference was organised by the four groups to brief the media and to set expectations on the interventions during the conference. The themes addressed during the seminars were wide ranging, covering issues such as '*Sustainable tourism in the context of privatisation, liberalisation and de-regulation*', '*Community decision making in tourism*', '*Vulnerable and marginalized groups –impacts of tourism on them*'. The seminar participants were multi-regional and the discussions linked regional specificities to overall patterns in each of these themes addressed. This led to a rich learning from each other's experiences and success. Activists, network partners, community representatives, representatives of local self-governance bodies and those running community based initiatives were present.

An "*Intercontinental Dialogue on Tourism – impacts on marginalised communities and resources*" was the theme for the panel discussion which was primarily to highlight case studies and testimonies on the impacts of tourism from different parts of the world, specifically voices of victims of tourism. The discussion highlighted strategies to combat anti-people policies and developments, and led to sharing of experiences and learnings from struggles from different parts of the world.

The activists' strategy workshop was conducted to enable a more focussed opportunity for global groups and networks on tourism to align, strategise, build solidarity, and work together on global campaigns. The participants were from tourism NGOs and activist groups from all over the world.

Other interventions were a survey which was conducted among the people who attended the WSF conference, which has provided interesting data and generated interest on the issues. A stall was also put up by the groups which was visited by numerous people. The stall acted as a catalyst of tourism interventions and experience sharing and made a considerable impact on the overall tourism interventions in the WSF2004

An interactive session on '*Who Really Benefits from Tourism*' was held aimed at generating awareness among young persons about the impact of tourism, the interactive session made use of audio – visual media, discussions, talks and dissemination of information material as tools for dialogue with the youth. A statement of concern was released at the end by the four groups which reiterated their commitment to change the character of global tourism towards a tourism that is just and equitable for people in destinations

Delegates of the tourism interventions

Adama Bah is the Coordinator of Gambia Tourism Concern (GTC) in Gambia. GTC aims to raise awareness of both negative and positive impacts of tourism development in the Gambia and to undertake or promote initiatives that will involve consultation and input from local people, working together to improve their position and competitiveness within the industry.

Albertina Almeida is an activist and a practicing lawyer. She is an active member of Bailancho Saad (*Women's Collective* in Konkani), a Goa based movement, which work on issues such as rape, domestic violence, woman-teasing, discrimination at the workplace and other forms of gender injustice.

Alka Sabharwal coordinates the mountain tourism programme at the International centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal. She is trained as a social anthropologist and has been involved with various grass root organisations/local communities on livelihood issues.

Ashok Bharati is the National Coordinator of the National Conference of Dalit Organisations and the founder of the World Dignity Forum. He is s also the founding chairperson of the Centre for Alternative Dalit Media.

Ashok Rao, a trade unionist is the Secretary General of the National Confederation of Officers Association for Central Public Sector Enterprises in New Delhi, India. He is a prominent member of the Indian Peoples Campaign Against the WTO.

L Antonysamy is the Coordinator of the Tamil Nadu Environment Council and Convenor of the Social Action Movement, an umbrella organisation of over 600 NGOs and Peoples Movements working towards social change. He has been at the forefront of struggles for environmental rights and social justice in Tamil Nadu, India

Charm Tong is a member of the Shan Womens Action Network (SWAN). SWAN is also a founding member of the Womens League of Burma. She has been involved in the Boycott Burma campaign which has brought to light how foreign exchange generated by tourism ensured that the dictatorial regime continued in power.

Christine Pluss is the coordinator of AKTE Arbeitskreis Tourismus & Entwicklung (Working Group on Tourism and Development) since 2000. In AKTE she has been a researcher and campaigner since 1988, advocating critical examination of the many facets of international tourism.

Ely Fernandez de Lima is from the fishing village Prainha do Cana Verde in the North East of Brazil where she is a member of the village association. She is also a tourist guide and a teacher for the children's choir. Ely is a member of both the tourism council and the Tourism and Handicraft cooperative, which was formed in the year 1998 in the village.

Esther Neuhaus is a geographer and a journalist dealing with development issues. She is working as a coordinator for community-based tourism in the Instituto Terramar, a NGO created in 1993, in Fortaleza-Brazil. The organisation works for sustainable development for fisher communities in the North East of Brazil.

Heinz Fuchs is a staff member of the Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst/Church Development Service (EED) in Germany and has been managing the special desk "Tourism Watch" for five years where awareness raising and lobby activities for social responsibility in tourism are the main tasks.

Jose David Ugarte Vega Centeno is an anthropologist by training and is presently the Regional Director of the National Institute of Culture in Cusco, Peru. He was previously Mayor of the Provincial Municipality of Cusco.

Joy Dasgupta is Research Fellow at the West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences at Kolkata, India. His research interests include Environmental Law and Anthropology.

Joyatri Ray is with EQUATIONS, India. She specializes on issues ranging from child trafficking, child labour, sexual exploitation of children and women's empowerment in the context of tourism development.

K T Suresh is the Coordinator of EQUATIONS. He has been working on issues related to tourism for the past 18 years. He specialises in tourism policy analysis on issues ranging from community led tourism initiatives, environmental impacts of tourism to the implications of international trade negotiations on sustainable tourism initiatives..

Luc Ferran is the Tourism Coordinator at the End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of children for sexual purposes (ECPAT International) Secretariat in Bangkok. He represents ECPAT International on the World Tourism Organization Task Force and Executive Committee to Protect Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism.

Marina B. Durano is the Research Coordinator of International Gender and Trade Network Asia and is currently finishing her PhD dissertation in Economics at Manchester University.

Nelisa Peralta is a specialist on regional development planning. She has worked for five years as the ecotourism coordinator at the Mameerahwa Institute for Sustainable Development in Amazon (Brazil). This NGO manages the protected area where she helps seven local villages to implement an ecotourism project.

Paul Gonsalves is a General Body member as well as a founder member of EQUATIONS. He is presently based in Kolkata and is an independent consultant on development issues.

Prof. Nina Rao is a General Body member of EQUATIONS. She is presently in her second term as the Southern Co- chair of the Tourism Caucus in the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development.

P G Padmanabhan is presently member of the Kumarakom Grama Panchayat (local government) one of the most prominent tourism destinations in the southern Indian state of Kerala. He is a lawyer by profession, and a well-known activist of the Kerala Shastra Sahitya Parishad.

Pankaj Sekhsaria is with Kalpavrisht an Environmental NGO in Pune, India and is author of the book '*Troubled Islands - Writings on the indigenous peoples and environment of the Andaman & Nicobar Islands*'.

Patricia Barnett is presently Director of Tourism Concern in the UK. Tourism Concern is today an advocate for hundreds of groups and individuals in the South who argue that tourism impacts negatively on their cultures, societies, economies, and the environment.

P.Krishnamoorthy coordinates the networking programme in EQUATIONS; His specialization areas include local government, community decision-making and tourism and is involved in networking of groups concerned on tourism developmental issues.

Ramesh Jangid is engaged with a small tourism initiative called Apni Dhani in Rajasthan, India and runs the Ecolodge with the concept of sharing the benefits to communities. He also conducts tours and facilitates NGO action within the communities.

Rodrigo Rubio Ruiz represents the Asociacion Para la Defensa y Desarrollo de Kuleap, Peru. He is involved in the struggles against the privatisation of the Fort Kuleap and displacement of communities.

Roland Martins is with the Goa Documentation Education Solidarity Collective in the state of Goa in India. He has also been associated with the Jagrut Goenkaranchi Fauz a tourism activist group.

Rosemery from Movimento Sem Terra (MST) is a campaigner in landless people's struggles in Brazil. She actively conducts Solidarity tours in Brazil and fosters cultural interaction between the people.

Sameer Mehta is with the environmental watch dog Bombay Environment Action Group (BEAG) The BEAG works on issues related to town and country planning, policy framing, legislation and litigation on environmental and rights issues.

M. A. Sekar is a well-known activist on coastal issues hails from the coastal community in Tamilnadu. India. He is the founder member of the East Coast Forum for Development Action and has been involved in mobilizing fisher-women and self-help groups in the coastal areas of North Tamilnadu.

Sheelu Francis is president of the Tamilnadu Women's Collective, which has a membership base of 75000 women in 20 districts in Tamilnadu. She is the Regional Coordinator of Asia Pacific Network for Food Sovereignty.

T. T. Sreekumar teaches social sciences at the Hong Kong University of Sciences and Technology in Hong Kong China. He is also a General Body member of EQUATIONS. He has written extensively on the impacts of tourism investment, on the environment and communities.

Steffen Schulein from Fern Weh, Germany –Tourism Review group, is a social economist. Fern Weh is a project committed to raise awareness in Germany on critical tourism issues on social hierarchies, intercultural encounters, cultural stereotypes, and racism

Sunita Dubey is Associate Director of the Environment Justice Initiative based in New Delhi, India. The EJI aims to bridge the gap between the human rights movement and the Environmental Movement.

Ushakumari A.G. is President of Kumarakom Grama Panchayat (Local Government), Kerala, India. As Panchayat President, she was instrumental in evolving a People’s Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Kumarakom with people’s participation.

Ziaul Hoque Mukta is with Action Aid Bangladesh and works on their programme on the WTO and International Financial Institutions.

List of Abbreviations

ADB- Asian Development Bank

CRASA-Compassionate Rural Association for Social Action

DFID- Department For International Development

ECOT-Ecumenical Coalition of Tourism

ECPAT-End Child Prostitution, Child pornography and trafficking of children for sexual purposes

EED- Evangelischer Entwicklungsdienst

EU-European Union

FDI- Foreign Direct Investment

GATS- General Agreement on Trade in Services

GEF-Global Environment Facility

WTO-OMT -World Tourism Organisation

TNCs-Trans National Corporations

UNDP-United Nations Development Programme

UNESCO-United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural organization
USAID-United States Agency for International Development
WB-World Bank
WHO-World Health Organisation
WSF- World Social Forum
WTO- World Trade Organisation

I A curtain raiser

Who really benefits from Tourism?

Press Conference: Organised by the Tourism Interventions Group at the 4th WSF 2004
January 18, 2004, 3.00-4.00 pm, Venue: Stall Numbers 122-125, World Social Forum, Mumbai.

Background: The four groups (EQUATIONS (India) Ecumenical Coalition On Tourism (Hong Kong SAR- China) Tourism Watch (Germany) Arbeitskreis Tourismus Und Entwicklung (AKTE) – (Switzerland)) that jointly organised the tourism related interventions at the 4th World Social Forum called for a Press Conference to brief the media on the tourism related events and the need for organising such events at the WSF space. Representatives from all the four Tourism Interventions Organising groups were present at the press conference. Flyers announcing the Press Conference were widely distributed a day before the event at the Media Centre. Press kits containing notes on all the events, briefing notes and papers by speakers were given to media persons during the press conference.

Chairs and opening remarks: TT Sreekumar (EQUATIONS) and Nina Rao (EQUATIONS)

Speakers : K T Suresh (EQUATIONS)
: Christine Pluss (AKTE)
: Tan Chi Kiong (ECOT)
: Heinz Fuchs (Tourism Watch)

Discussions:

TT Sreekumar of EQUATIONS began the press conference by welcoming the press and stating that this was a historical occasion for civil society groups working on tourism issues. He stressed the importance of getting tourism on the WSF calendar, as *“the tourism industry has not been scrutinised by the media or the public for its ethical performance, contribution to sustainable development and respect for human rights”*. K T Suresh of EQUATIONS put the tourism interventions in perspective by stating *“this is an important political shift by tourism groups to highlight the impacts of tourism on communities and resources at the WSF space instead of the yearly ITB trade fair in Berlin, which is a space dominated by Industry”*.

Christine Pluss said *“Despite tourism being one of world’s biggest industries, in the anti-globalisation movement it is often underestimated and not considered to be a serious issue. It doesn’t make the news like work in the mines or under-age prostitution. Our idea at the WSF is to change that”*. Tan Chi Kiong of ECOT cautioned that, *“It is little known that the tourism industry is often guilty of human rights abuses such as forceful displacement of indigenous communities from their traditional lands”*.

Speaking on Globalisation and International Trade Nina Rao of EQUATIONS said, *“The world trade rules clearly indicate a case of democratic deficit. The WTO’s General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) is aimed at deregulating international markets in tourism to ensure that corporations are provided non-discriminatory rights of entry into markets worldwide. Local governments across the world are unaware of the commitments that their national governments*

have made under GATS, and this has led to ignoring the welfare and social development aspects of tourism”.

Heinz Fuchs elaborated on the different tourism initiatives at the WSF and ended by mentioning that, *“our workshops will not only provide a critique of mass tourism. They will also showcase initiatives by communities who are working with real alternatives to the present top-down bureaucratic approach in tourism planning”.*

II Sustainable tourism in the context of privatisation, liberalisation and de-regulation

Seminar: January 18, 2004, 5.00-8.00 pm, Venue: A – 18, World Social Forum, Mumbai

Background: Tourism's continuous geographical spread and diversification of products has resulted in it being a prominent part of international services trade. Connected to this has been trade liberalisation under the World Trade Organisation's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) to allow Multinational Tourism Providers equal access to the burgeoning markets and natural resources of the developing world. Tourism policy makers now accept the package of privatisation, trade liberalisation and de-regulation in the sector as the 'mantra' for development of the Global South.

In this context privatisation of common property resources for tourism purposes has been evident in several tourism destinations. This has had severe repercussions on people's right to resources –especially for communities who live in tourism destinations. The four case studies on privatisation presented include tourism's encroachment into the fragile Sunderbans islands in Bangladesh and India, the struggle of indigenous communities to stop the privatisation of Machupichhu in Peru, the privatisation of a hill in India and the attempt by a local government in South India to hold the tourism industry accountable. Other issues to be addressed include the impacts of de-regulation of environmental laws, labour rights in tourism, mass tourism in Goa and the successful struggle against the "all inclusives" in Gambia. The seminar took stock of these 3 interrelated issues and critically assessed experiences from across the world.

Schedule:

Welcome: Christine Pluss (AKTE)

Presenting the Panel: Rosemary Viswanath (EQUATIONS)

Speakers: TT Sreekumar (chairperson), Joy Dasgupta, Ziaul Hoque Mukta, Adama Bah , P G Padmanabhan Patricia Barnett ,Sameer Mehta , Sunita Dubey, Roland Martins, Prof. Nina Rao .

Case studies:

Sunderbans - India & Bangladesh: Encroachments of the final frontiers.

Joy Dasgupta from the National University of Juridical Sciences, India felt that Sunderbans would be an extremely controversial issue in the coming years. It is a unique ecosystem that comprises the largest mangrove forests in the world. Today, even though it is a notified national park and sanctuary only half of the original area is intact and the rest is degraded or converted into agricultural land. Mr.Dasgupta said that the initial stages of tourism in the Sunderbans were difficult, as it had virtually no infrastructure and basic facilities. People came by country made boats, stayed for two days and went back. Today, the West Bengal government has literally jumped into investments in the area." Any regulation is anathema to the government" he emphasised.

The Sahara group, a prominent Indian corporate house, is planning to invest 7000 million rupees to build a floating city, which is expected to be 10-20 kms wide. To promote tourism, charter flights are to be introduced and tourists are to be transported by helicopter. Floatels and golf courses are to be set up. Four out of the five sites identified for the project, will affect livelihood of the fishing communities. None of the groups are aware of the issues involved and Sahara has been reticent to share data. Efforts are being made to stop such interventions by the Sahara group.

The initiation of the project would mean the coming of thousands of tourists and hovercrafts moving about in this area. There are plans to have a zoo with white tigers, build ropeways etc. Efforts are being made to seek alternatives to the present proposal by Sahara. Civil society groups are closely monitoring the process and the issue is likely to snowball into a major controversy when plans are initiated.

Ziaul-Hoque Mukta with Action Aid, Bangladesh mentioned that about 60% of the Sunderbans are situated in Bangladesh. Its total size including the Indian part is more than 10,000 square kilometres. On February 6, 1997, the UNESCO declared it as a world heritage. The forest is presently under threat because of the different kinds of interventions such as the large-scale intervention under the rubric of 'eco-tourism' that destroys plants and animals and various development interventions initiated by ADB, WB, USAID and DFID.

These interventions were organised under several 'development' initiatives such as the ADB's Forestry Sector Project from 1997 –2002 and Fourth Fisheries Project of the WB, UNDP, GEF, DFID from 1999 – 02. In this context he mentioned that it was important to resist the Sunderbans Biodiversity Conservation Project (SBCP), which was funded by ADB and some other donors with an investment of 77.5 million USD. Assessing the SBCP Mukta said that "*the main tenet behind the project is that the people are destroying the forests*". The project does not address the actual root cause of the destruction of plant and animal varieties in the Sunderbans. Among the declared objectives of the project is the promotion of Ecotourism. In fact each component of the project deals with tourism issues. The project has proposed "Build and operate" formula to ensure investments from trans national corporations. It should be mentioned clearly that the TNCS have taken two approaches to take over the forests and natural resources. On the one hand, they are influencing the multilateral trade negotiation in WTO and guiding the GATS negotiations. On the other hand, they are receiving help from the international financial institutions like the ADB and WB who have already started work on privatising forest resources.

In the GATS negotiations Bangladesh has received nearly 55 proposals for the opening up of its service sector. The European Union (EU) has requested Bangladesh to open up 6 sectors including tourism. In fact Bangladesh has already offered parts of its tourism sector to the EU. The government has not had any discussions with the local community and the others concerning this. He mentioned that the efforts are to be made to stop the GATS negotiations and to resist the International Financial Institutions.

Privatisation of Hills: Amby Valley in India

Sameer Mehta from the Bombay Environmental Action Group, India said that Amby valley in the state of Maharashtra in western India is a classic example of the deregulation and privatisation of hills stations in India. The tourism industry has aggressively marketed the hills. Three hill stations in Maharashtra have been declared environmentally sensitive. In 1960, Maharashtra received 6400 tourists per year and in 1991, tourist arrivals rose to 960,000 tourists per year. Considering the present growth of tourism in the area, there is a need to develop alternative forms of tourism in the hills. Any suitable area at appropriate height and suitable topographical feature can be declared by government for the purpose of development as hill station. Recent changes in laws allowed the development of a hill station to be treated as an industry and this was likely to have severe repercussions on the community and the environment. In the case of Amby Valley, the court agreed that development was illegal but could be legalised. 900 cottages, 18 – 27 hole 24-hour golf courses, development of an airstrip and helipad were sanctioned. Construction of nearly dozen lakes each involving diversion of natural watercourses is presently under way. There are now barricades that prohibit the entry of local people into the Amby Valley. He ended emphasising that “civil society groups should address squarely the question of legislative changes by governments that promote such skewed investments in fragile areas”.

Gambia: Case study of ‘all-inclusives’

Adama Bah from Gambia Tourism Concern said that Gambia is a package that is sold to tourists. People are packaged and sold to the consumers as packaged tourists. All people want freedom to say “yes” or “no” to tourism, which is their fundamental right. All people need to live in dignity. All people need prosperity and right to work. He mentioned that people in destinations invest everything and even their identity, which is marketed by the tour operators. The kind of investments people make in the tourist destinations needs to be acknowledged and therefore they are equal stakeholders. But instead of reaping the benefits, they are in poverty. In most developed countries, development projects are not financed by governments but by the financial institutions. But in destinations it is the people who are investing and thus they are stakeholders not only from a moral, but also from a very principled point of view. People have invested heavily and they are repaying those loans. If people are calling for a fair share of tourism, it is justified because they have invested heavily.

“All inclusives” is the extreme form of denying local people their freedom. “All inclusives” means the tourist buys everything before they reach the destination. This would include entertainment, food, beach sports etc so that there is no reason for the tourists to go out. Small-scale enterprises are denied their share of the profits. The local people are even charged a fee to go inside the hotels. People in Gambia certainly do not want “all inclusives”. Following opposition from locals the Government suspended the “all inclusive packages” last year but it tried to surface again and there has been resistance from the people. We hope that the Gambian government has now understood that people do not want “all inclusives”.

Appropriating the Commons: Case of Machu Picchu

David Ugarte Vega Centeno, former Mayor of Cusco and now with the Instituto Nacional De Cultura, Peru said that Machu Picchu represents for Peru and the world, one of the outstanding marvels of harmonic combination of nature and human intervention, that of the inhabitants of Peru, the Incas. Nevertheless, ensuring its conservation and preservation over time is continuously being threatened by privatisation.

One single transnational enterprise, Orient Express monopolises the tourism activity. Orient Express is the owner of the Peru Rail and it is also the owner of the airline that carries the tourists to Machu Picchu Pueblo and to Aguas Calientas. It also owns the luxury hotel in Cusco and they are presently planning a cable car system. This kind of package tourism in Machu Picchu does not benefit the region and the local population. The tourists do not have any contact with the local people. They only see them through the windows of their buses and do not benefit the village in any way. The only benefit that comes to the local population is through the backpackers (who are Americans or European) who stay in the hotels in the village. Only 4% of the income generated benefits the local people.

David Ugarte mentioned that they were strongly against the monopoly of the economy by the private operators. As part of their resistance against the cable car project, the University of Cusco mobilized solidarity with 150 other universities worldwide.

Labour Rights / Practises in Tourism

Patricia Barnett from Tourism Concern in the UK questioned why tourism, one of the fastest growing industries, couldn't be a significant part of the fair trade initiative. As part of the efforts by Tourism Concern to find out they looked at labour conditions in the tourism industry. The tourism industry does not talk about the quality of work and wages received by the employees. She spoke about the situation of the porters in the Himalayas and Tanzania. They come from different religions, languages and climatic conditions. The porters are extraordinarily abused. The porters are made to carry heavy loads under freezing conditions. In the Himalayas, the tourists are picked up by the helicopters but the porters have to walk down by themselves and many a time they fall ill. There are examples of three porters dying in Kilimanjaro and there are others who have died in the Himalayas. The porters have no contracts and are often paid low wages.

A meeting of tour operators was called by Tourism Concern to raise issues concerning the porters and to get the industry to accept the guidelines for the porters. The tour operators seemed to be better informed about the situation and the problems of the porters. It is so competitive for the tour operators that they did not want to make contracts and pay higher wages. Now in Kilimanjaro, the porters have formed themselves into a union, but there is much more work to be done before there are fair wages for the workers in the tourism industry.

Democratizing tourism in Kumarakom

P G Padmanabhan member of the Kumarakom Grama Panchayat (local government), India mentioned that Kumarakom is a recently developed tourist destination in Kerala, South India. Kumarakom received much publicity when the Prime Minister of India chose to holiday there a couple of years ago. The main attraction is its vast lake, fish and birds that are both local and migratory in nature. The motorboats, speedboats and the houseboats ply in ever increasing numbers as a result of the increased tourism activity. Over the last ten years, tourism promotion in this village has led to pollution of the lake while also killing the fish and is a threat to the migratory birds. Another direct impact is on agriculture. The hotels offered exorbitant prices for land near the Vembanad Lake and the local people began to offer their agricultural lands to the tourism providers. The conversion and commodification of land has reduced agricultural production and employment in the village.

Padmanabhan mentioned that the Panchayat has discussed matters concerning the impact of tourism on the local population with the neighbourhood groups. Every fifty households have a neighbourhood group. Under the leadership of the leadership of the village administration and the neighbourhood groups, the local people have intervened in tourism. He said that they were registering a society for People to People Tourism to ensure people's participation in sustainable tourism development. He said that there were possibilities for establishing and encouraging a variety of micro enterprises in tourism sector such as cultivation of vegetables, fish, establishing of small hotels and home-stay etc.

The society for People to People Tourism is expected to help organise such small and micro enterprises with a view to increase economic and social benefit for host communities from the tourism industry. The society can receive tourists and arrange their stay, food and travel, according to everyone's needs and budget. This will establish and strengthen relations between host communities and visiting people. Padmanabhan mentioned that they were making efforts to network with people from other countries working on community-based initiatives for improving the collective benefits for the community from the tourism sector.

De-regulation of Environmental Laws

Sunita Dubey of the Environmental Justice Initiative, India began by stating that Laws are mainly to control the poor and the marginalised. She spoke about the 1991 Beas River case where the Central Environment Minister diverted the river to flow close to the hotel. The minister was taken to court and the Supreme Court ruled in favour of the environment. Natural resources like rivers, beaches and forests do not belong to a certain class of people. The government should act as a trustee to pass it on to the next generation. She mentioned the numerous dilutions to the Coastal Regulation Zone, since its formulation in 1991, which have benefited the tourism industry. She ended by saying that there was an urgent need to bridge the gap between the human rights and the environmental movements to push for progressive laws on Environment protection.

The great sale of Goa

Roland Martins with GoaDesc and Jagrut Goenkaranchi Fauz, India pointed out that Goa is only a tiny state on the west coast of India but it creates exclusive packages for rich and the famous. Goa had been under Portuguese rule for 451 years but in the last forty-five years, it has seen a new form of colonisation. The government of India is propagating Goa as another Singapore or Hawaii. Tourism was not an issue rather poverty was an issue. He also mentioned that close to Goa is Sindhudurg, which has been declared as a Special Tourism Area. A lot of the people are not aware about what is happening in the area. The Maharashtra Government has planned to build an international airport. After Vietnam, the hippies came to Goa in the 1960s. The tourists came to Goa looking for people. The “all inclusives” were also present in Goa and it created a lot of wealth for the tour operators. The present mode of tourism promoted by the government denies prosperity to the people. The informal sector is denied their fair share of the benefits because of the “all inclusives”. The population of Goa is 1.4 million and there are 1.4 million tourists. Goa became a state in the year 1987. He critiqued the move of the government to promote Goa and sell it as a tourist destination irrespective of its wealth and history. He spoke on the issues of commercial sexual exploitation of children in Goa. He warned that the issue of tourism needs to be taken seriously and said that the people in Goa would have to stand up for their rights.

Discussions:

Prof. Nina Rao of EQUATIONS chaired the open forum. Questions from the floor were focussed on the lack of information from the Government on mega tourism projects which would enable local communities to take informed positions. In the case of Sunderbans Joy Dasgupta pointed out that three letters asking for information were addressed to the concerned minister and bureaucrats. Responding to a query from the floor David Ugarte mentioned that there were community tourism initiatives that are being explored where indigenous people will have better salaries and working conditions in Machu Picchu. The issue of the Government acquiring land for tourism purposes was a contentious issue in Goa and Roland Martins responded by saying that adequate compensation must be paid to the community. The issue of dubious “public interest” must be addressed. Prof. Nina Rao ended the open forum by stressing that there was an urgent need for more case studies that will awaken people. People who got to know about the all inclusives were ashamed that they had taken the “all inclusives”. Tourism groups need to build more awareness in the media and the public on the critical issues that local communities face because of tourism projects.

III An Intercontinental Dialogue on Tourism- Impacts on marginalised communities and resources

Panel: January 19, 2004, Hall 2, 9.00 A.M. To 12 Noon, World Social Forum, Mumbai

Background: The first ever-intercontinental dialogue on tourism at the WSF worked with themes such as privatisation of commons in tourism sites, displacement of communities and struggles of local people against undemocratic and unplanned tourism development. For each of the chosen themes, a testimony was presented. These testimonies, from Africa, Latin America and Asia, elaborated on how tourism had positively or negatively affected communities. Issues highlighted included the privatisation of Machu Picchu in Peru, the Tourism boycott Burma campaign, impacts of tourism on the indigenous communities of the Andaman and Nicobar islands in India, displacement of indigenous communities from Kuleap in Peru and the response of the civil society to the sexual exploitation of children and women in tourism.

Each of the testimonies was followed by responses from a panel representing Dalit, Environmental, Labour, Globalisation and Gender issues. The respondents from the panel brought perspectives and experiences from their sectors into the issues raised by the theme speakers. The objective was to highlight the impacts of tourism's march on the world development scenario. The testimonies from the ground helped the respondents and the audience to make the connection between what happens in their own local context and the larger issues related to tourism development and globalisation.

Schedule:

Welcome: K T Suresh (EQUATIONS, India)

Moderator: Jurgen Hanefeld (NDR, Germany)

Speakers : Jose David Ugarte Vega Centeno, Charm Tong, Adama Bah, Luc Ferran, Pankaj Sekhsaria, Rodrigo Rubio Ruiz, Sheelu Francis, Ashok Bharati, Marina B. Durano, L Antonysamy, Paul Divakar, Ashok Rao

Vote of Thanks Heinz Fuchs (Tourism Watch, Germany)

Case studies

Privatization of Machu Picchu

David Ugarte presented the problems faced by local communities in Machu Picchu, Peru - a historical site, which was built by the Incas. It is a religious site as well as a place to rest and therefore, is a tourist and religious destination. Of late, there has been an immense interest displayed by private enterprises to gain monopoly over Machu Picchu and its resources. An enterprise is currently holding ownership of railways not only from Lima to Machu Picchu, but also from Lima to Cusco. Locals are unable to make use of the service due to cost factors. Private companies own most of the hotels in Machu Picchu and are also attempting to secure 25 years leases for the pathways leading up to Machu Picchu. This is in contradiction to the religious beliefs of the people of Machu Picchu - nature belongs to the Gods, not for humans to own. A private enterprise will never understand this. As David put it, "*This kind of behaviour is*

aggression on us". David said that a comparison of Machu Picchu with other sites would help in appreciating the problems faced by local communities there. He cited the example of a company proposing to build a lift inside the Cathedral in Rome. People would be aghast and be ready to die to prevent such a thing from happening. The Incas worship the sun and hold a place called 'Intiwana' – the place where the sun is, as sacred. An enterprise wanted to film publicity shot in the location and broke a statue there. He asked, "*If the arm of Christ were to be broken while filming it, what would the reaction of the Christian world be?*"

What the people of Machu Picchu want is tourism which is sensitive to their culture, religion, traditions and people, which displays considerate behaviour to locals. The Inca religion considers the mountains and mother earth as sacred and the people expect outsiders to respect it. He concluded by stating, "*Clean tourism is what we want. We don't want tourism, which means some enterprise will use our important sites to give us benefits*".

Boycott Burma Campaign and Tourism

Charm Tong of the Women's league of Burma began by stating that she will refer to her country as Burma and not Myanmar, a name given by the military regime. Through her address, she wanted to highlight the human rights violations that the military regime has wreaked on the people of Burma and the so-called tourism that they are trying to introduce to derive monetary benefits.

Since 1962, Burma was taken over by the military. General elections took place only in 1990 and the party 'Nationalities League of Democracy' led by Aung San Suu Kyi won by an 80% margin. But, the regime annulled the elections and placed her under house arrest where she remains till date. Charm herself is a refugee in Thailand and cannot express her views in her own country while tourism is being encouraged to bring in people from other countries. From April 1994 till May 1995, approximately hundred thousand visitors came to Burma and left behind 30 million US dollars in the country, thereby helping the military regime.

Hotels in Burma make use of slave or forced labour and inhabitants of tourist destinations have been relocated. The forced relocation programmes give local people only four-five days to pack their belongings and move out of their homes of several generations. The military regime has also imposed systematic sexual violence against ethnic women. She said that a report is available which details 173 incidents of rape. But in only one case was the soldier punished. The regime is constantly telling the international community that Burma is facing crises such as HIV and drug menace. But, most of the crises are created by the regime itself. By securing international aid, they have shown to the external world that the drug problem is under control. The regime ironically calls itself the 'State Peace & Development Council'.

Many of these violations take place in areas that are not open to tourists. So, the experience they have of Burma is very different from reality. She made a plea to tourists to consider the fact that all the money they will spend on a visit to Burma will support the military – in oppressing the people of Burma and help in keeping the regime in power. "*As a tourist, you are supporting human rights violations in the country*" was her closing remark.

Struggle against "all inclusives"

Adama Bah from Gambia Tourism Concern said that Gambia was one of the smallest countries in West Africa and tourism there was about cheap package tours, which promoted the sun, beaches, and to certain extent sex tourism. He said that tourists coming into Gambia expect the

local people to satisfy their egos. Today tourism is big business in Gambia and therefore the people of Gambia want returns for their investment. In this context it was important that the Gambian government had a holistic policy for tourism, which accounted for the triple bottom line- economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism. But in the case of the “all inclusives” promoted by western tour operators tourists coming into Gambia paid for practically everything in their countries. This ensured that there were no benefits whatsoever for the local small and medium tourism services providers. Through a successful struggle local groups have convinced the government that this was a difficult proposition . The vertical integration in the tourism market ensured that the same company owned the tour operator, the hotels and the airlines. The all inclusives also had a taxation problem in the sense that it was not clear who was paying the taxes – the tour operator who got the lump sum would determine the prices and this often resulted in lesser revenues to the government. This weak link was used to convince the government to take a position against the “all inclusives”.

Unplanned Tourism and Displacement of communities in the Fort of Kuleap

Rodrigo Rubio Ruiz from the Asociacion Para la Defensa y Desarrollo de Kuleap, Peru said that the Kuleap was a historical fortress close to Ecuador. There is a political and economic context that should be examined if one needs to analyse tourism in the present context. The root of the problems can be traced to the economic restructuring programmes of the World Bank and the IMF that were imposed on the governments advising them on how best to use the natural resources of the developing world. This led to the marginalisation of societies and many other related problems as governments blindly followed this idea. Several studies pointed to the Fort Kuleap as a potential to test out the idea of using natural resources. It is one of the first cases of the privatisation of a cultural resource. The process of privatisation included 3000 meters of hotels, discothèques and other entertainment facilities built around the fortress. Communities who lived around these areas had to move away. The government is committing a clear case of human rights violation by removing all the locals from around the fort. The community in Kuleap has organised to fight for the protection of the Fort and networked with several groups in Peru who were fighting against privatisation of public utilities. *“It is important for us to win the battle of Kuleap because it is the starting point for the privatisation of the natural resources of our country”*. The campaign believes that governments have to take into account the social and cultural context before accepting policies imposed by foreign institutions.

Ecotourism and its Impacts on Indigenous Communities in Andaman and Nicobar islands

Pankaj Sekhsaria began by stressing that the indigenous communities in the Andamans have been living there for over 20,000 years but there is very little history on their background. Today they comprise only 260 individuals but they will survive if they are left alone. In the last 40 years forests have been burnt to make way for a number of settlements. There is a large timber industry there, which was started by the British colonialists. One of the biggest threats today to the Jarawas (one of the indigenous communities) is the Andamans Trunk Road. They get no benefits out of the road. Earlier they were a very aggressive community and there were a number of killings when they defended themselves. There is now an insidious kind of tourism promoted called “Jarawa Tourism” where tourists give them alcohol, tobacco and biscuits. There are also reported cases of sexual exploitation of Jarawas. The Supreme Court of India has ordered the closure of the road where it directly affects the Jarawas but it is still in operation The Court has

also ordered that tourism should be so developed that it is in conformity with the needs of ecological conservation and cultural integrity of the islands. He mentioned that other major issues in the islands were the Phuket connection and new areas being identified. There are attempts to make Phuket in Thailand a twin city of Port Blair. He felt that it was important to create awareness in the islands of the other side of the tourism industry in Phuket. Ten new areas have been identified for intensive development for tourism promotion – these include beaches on remote uninhabited islands and even entire islands. Sekhsaria mentioned that there was little information to the public on these plans and the government should be very careful if it is going ahead with this.

Social and Economic Impact of Global Sex Tourism and the response of global civil society

Luc Ferran briefly mapped the development of global sex tourism from the deregulation of tourism industries in the West during 1970s and early 80s, which provoked a gigantic wave of migration of tourists to other parts of the world, causing numerous problems. In areas where sex trade was already established, the problems grew in intensity. It is known that 300,000 Japanese travel to the Philippines for sex, 5000 people travel yearly for sex in a small country like Costa Rica, Cambodia is rife with paedophilia networks, Cameroon and the Dominican republic are facing an enormous growth in commercial sex tourism. In 1990, a group of social, religious workers took stock of the situation of commercial sex tourism in Southeast Asia and launched the ECPAT movement - 'End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism'. With attention from around the world, it became an established NGO and now means 'End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes'. There are instances of combating commercial sex tourism. In Italy, it is required by law that tour operators inform tourists of the situation of commercial sex tourism in the destinations they are headed to. In Germany, the plan of action against commercial sexual exploitation of children requires that military personnel abroad are trained about commercial sex tourism and be made aware of the impact of the military. In Thailand, from 1996, a comprehensive programme was started to change the image of the country as a commercial sex tourism destination. It involved education programmes with alternative employment, crack down on tourists seeking commercial sex tourism and awareness among government officials about the problem. But, as Luc pointed out, "*We are not absolved of responsibilities. We must report commercial sex tourism if we observe it occurring on our streets. At the minimum, we must find out which are the correct authorities and agencies to report it to. It is not a problem that will be solved from top down only and requires co-operation from both sides*".

Respondents:

Paul Divakar from the National Campaign for Dalit Human Rights said that all the presentations were extremely educative for him. The comprehensive presentations provided him glimpses of implications of such scenarios for the Dalits in India. It was clear that the present mode of tourism with little consent from communities would lead to destruction of livelihoods. He accepted that Dalit groups had presently no strategies to address the concerns raised by the presentations. Global tourism objectifies Dalits and Adivasis making them like animals in a zoo. He felt that Dalit movements need to take stock and see the tourism industry in a different way. He mentioned that he was encouraged by the successful struggle in Gambia and there is need for

a policy in India that takes the triple bottom line of addressing economic, environmental and social consequences of tourism projects.

Ashok Bharati from the World Dignity Forum agreed that tourism has hardly been looked at from the perspective of Dalits. The government is talking of privatisation of airports, national parks and historical sites and it is now clear that it is mainly for the global tourism industry. Tourism is an industry that is used by the elite and in the context of the Dalits it is likely that they will continue to be further marginalised by it. Examples from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Peru and the Gambia show that it is communities that have paid the cost of tourism. We need to critically look at the issue of National Parks – they cannot become showcases for the rich, – governments need to focus on the indigenous communities who live in the national parks. When the industry is set up the most menial jobs as scavengers and porters will go to the Dalits. Tourism is not only about accommodation but a number of ancillary industries, which should also be addressed in the interventions.

Sheelu Francis of the Tamil Nadu Womens Collective began by extending support to all the panelists and their causes. She observed that tourism is a business with heavy investment and expectations of high returns. But, the social costs paid by communities are much higher than the returns that are gained by the tourism industry, whether it is environmental degradation, unfavourable labour conditions or sex tourism. The objectification of women, especially in Adivasi areas of the Western Ghats is a trend that is often seen .In Kodaikanal (a popular tourist destination in the southern Indian state of Tamil Nadu), most of the population is Dalit and do not have access to safe drinking water and electricity. According to WHO standards, the minimum water requirement of a person is 135 litres/day whereas the Dalits hardly get 35 litres. The hotels in these areas have 24 hours running water and abundant electricity.

In tourism locations, the prices of commodities invariably rise to ten times more than the normal price. While tourists can afford these goods, the local people cannot. Another major concern is sexual exploitation and harassment of women and children in tourism. Tourists visit places under the cover of anonymity and are therefore, entering a ‘no man’s land’. This gives rise to inappropriate and violative behaviour such as eve teasing and sexual harassment. In the last 10 years, the number of girls being trafficked due to tourism-induced displacement has increased. Like ‘all-inclusives’ mentioned by Adama Bah, sexual exploitation is a part and parcel of the tourism today, which is evident in Goa, Tamil Nadu and Kerala in India. Another common trend is widespread displacement. In Chennai’s Marina beach, more than 100,000 people will be displaced because the state government has signed an agreement with the Malaysian government to beautify the beach and set up resorts. This will affect the community as a whole, particularly the women and children.

Marina Durano of the International Gender and Trade Network echoing Sheelu’s views, added information to support the impact of tourism on women. It is sufficiently clear from case studies on tourism that governments have taken a very narrow view about development. Along with the issues that Sheelu mentioned, the other bad news is that under the GATS agreement, the entry and exit of tourists and investment on tourism will be freed from regulations. Tourism is about increasing profits. Women as workers are usually given jobs with meager pay and low skill requirements. They are also subject to exploitative working conditions. If development is about increasing choices, this is not true for women. Most development plans and programmes fail to see the different roles that women play and safely state that a major portion of women ‘do not

work'. This view does not take into account the work put in by women at home. Housework limits choices for women and restricts capacity building among them. In tourism, work given to women is an extension of the work they do at home and therefore, one finds a concentration of women in the service sector. The income in tourism is based on the exploitation of women. Even if some of the money does feed into social welfare programmes, one finds cuts there too and women being deprived of security. The conclusion one can draw is that in tourism the work done by women is not valued at all.

Ashok Rao, Secretary General of the National Confederation of Officers Associations of Central Public Sector Undertakings mentioned that the common thread from all the presentations reminded him of the tourist resort of Cancun in Mexico. The venue of the recent failed ministerial meet of the WTO was 25 kilometres of sheer decadence for rich tourists from Europe and the US. No local lives in this area and the whole area is owned by outsiders. It is a clear example of the fallacies of the neo-liberal belief that FDI works for developing countries. History has shown that no country has survived by using resources from other countries. Developing countries need to find their own resources to develop. In India several public owned hotels are being sold in the name of competition and efficiency but it is only leading to crony capitalism as in the case of the Centaur hotel in Mumbai, which was re-sold at a tremendous profit within a matter of weeks. Most of India's tourism was built on public- sector enterprises. Today all of it is being sold at a pittance to domestic and foreign corporates.

L.Antonysamy from the TamilNadu Environmental Council and Social Action Movement-India mentioned that there were several international conventions and agreements that looked at tourism as a critical developmental issue. The UN Agenda 21, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, The International year of eco-tourism in 2002 and the Convention on Biological Diversity all recognise that tourism development needs to be subject to three basic values- Sustainability, Participation of local communities and Benefit sharing. Presentations from the panel makes one wonder whether this is happening at all – it is clear from the case studies presented that governments don't seem to be interested in using any of these instruments to ensure that tourism is indeed sustainable. This is an area of concern for everyone. There are similar experiences from Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu where the tourism industry exploits the ground water and the local community has virtually no access to water. In the nearby Kolli hills the government is building dams promising people that tourism will lead to development. In Kodaikanal a hill station,- in South India, tribals from the Palani Hills are to be evicted soon. This is the pattern from across the developing world. In several areas the environmental impact of large-scale tourism investment has been landslides. In our experience the way tourism is promoted we (the local people) are losing the environment as well as livelihoods.

Heinz Fuchs from Tourism Watch in Germany thanked the speakers on behalf of the organising group, which consisted of EQUATIONS (India) Ecumenical Coalition On Tourism (Hong Kong SAR- China) Tourism Watch (Germany) Arbeitskreis Tourismus Und Entwicklung (AKTE) – (Switzerland)

IV Community decision-making in tourism

Seminar : January 19, 2004 ,13:00 hrs to 16:00 hrs Venue C-93 World Social Forum 2004, Mumbai, India

Background

The unregulated tourism industry has little interface or interaction with the local community even though they are considered “host communities” in tourism locations. Local community involvement in influencing tourism policies and plans are negligible in tourism locations of many countries.

If local communities and local self-governments are involved in tourism development initiatives, negative impacts could be minimized with regulatory as well as accountability mechanisms. Kumarakom in India is a case in point to show how Local Self Governments could intervene through a “People’s Charter for Sustainable Tourism” and put regulatory checks on the tourism industry. Tourism will not be sustainable unless local stakeholders are involved in decision-making, benefit-sharing mechanisms are negotiated as well as implemented, and aspects of corporate accountability are put in place. In Brazil, community controlled tourism activities are both contributing to the improvement of quality of life of the local population (Prainha do Canto Verde) and the conservation of unique ecosystems and biodiversity (Mamiraua, Amazon). Transparency and accountability are prerequisites of this democratization process. To realize these ends, making tourism industry accountable to local community, creating informed consent among all stakeholders and finding ways and means to enhance the local participation is imperative. In Gambia and Tanzania, local communities are trying to participate in the tourism development.

The proactive role of local governing units in determining the regulatory framework and imposing corrective measures on tourism industries is the way to democratize tourism development and debate. Involvement of local communities in decisions that affect their lives and livelihood sources is to be looked into. The local self-governments’ involvement in three primary areas - social, environmental, and economic justice is to be critically analyzed.

This workshop has captured the diverse trends and critical issues of community’s proactive actions and struggles for democratic space and asserting the rights across the world.

The Seminar

L.Antonyamy of EQUATIONS welcomed the delegates and said that Community decision-making is a critical area in tourism and it is very important for local self-governments to assert their rights and responsibilities. He introduced the organizers and their core interest areas.

Adama Bah of Tourism Concern, Gambia, the moderator of the Seminar, said that community’s participation from the planning stage and involving them in policy-making is critically important. He has put forward a host of questions that need critical debate before the speakers. The questions include: *Whose interests and voices are taken in to consideration in tourism- whether tourism industry’s or communities is a critical component. Whose agenda is*

predominant in determining the communities' aspirations and priorities? Who decides communities' involvement in community based tourism development? Whether NGOs or communities themselves? Whether NGOs feel that community based tourism initiatives is the best way to go. The issues of transparency and accountability are also important issues in tourism. Whether due to engagement in community-based tourism, community is benefiting or not? How local governments are involved in monitoring the tourism projects? How communities have done, whether community initiatives are also focused up on in the tourism debate. He emphasized that the speakers should enrich the debate on community decision-making by pitching upon the experiences

Speakers: A.G. Ushakumari, Esther Neuhaus, Ely Fernandez de Lima, Nelisa Peralta, Alka Sabharwal, Rosemery, Ramesh Jangid, Steffen, P G Padmanabhan

Case studies

Kumarakom Panchayat's experience in democratizing Tourism

A.G.Ushakumari, President of Kumarakom Grama Panchayat (Local Government) said that Kumarakom is a recently developed backwater tourist destination in Kerala, India. In the initial period, people welcomed tourism in this tiny village with the hope that local people would reap benefits out of tourism by way of employment opportunities. At that juncture the local people did not know much about the implications of tourism and when they became aware the local people started getting involved in the process. To democratize tourism planning, Kumarakom adopted local level planning. Kumarakom has a unique type of planning unit called Neighbourhood Group, which is a group for every 50 households. There are 5000 households in Kumarakom and accordingly there are in total 98 neighbourhood groups formed to involve local people in tourism planning.

To ensure wider participation of all strata in local planning process, Kumarakom also has self-help groups (SHGs) of women. There are 162 SHGs with total membership exceeding 3000 women, actively involved in the local planning process. Ward committees of the local government and the General Assembly of People-(Grama Sabha) have discussed the issues confronting them in the framework of tourism. Tourism affecting the means of livelihood like shell collection, fishing by local fisher folk and encroachments of the lake and canals have been brought up in the discussions. The problems created by tourism establishments by way of blocking the natural flow of air due to clustering of resorts with huge buildings on the bank of Vembanad Lake were vehemently attacked in the discussion. The open outlet from the toilets in the houseboats is affecting lake water and polluting it.

At this critical juncture, the Panchayat decided to take on this menace created by tourism development. The follow up was to draft the People's charter for Sustainable tourism. The People's Charter was discussed and debated at Panchayat and Ward Members level, and subsequently adopted. Sourcing from People's Charter, the Panchayat has decided to ban all forms of plastics inside the village, setup provisions to safeguard the mangroves and land use pattern while granting licenses. A.G.Ushakumari, Panchayat President categorically said that Panchayat has powers to grant license for resorts and establishments and that they will not allow

big buildings near the lake. To translate the People's Charter into practise, they have distributed the copy of Charter to Hotel owners and are taking steps to implement People's Charter in totality.

After ten years of tourism development and increase in revenue from tourism, infrastructure facilities such as road, electricity, and drinking water supply for the local populace is very poor. Interruption and low voltage power supply is the order of the day. The revenue to Panchayat (local government) is also not substantial. Due to continued promotion of tourism in Kumarakom by the State Government with scant respect to protection of local environment, Kumarakom has been facing tremendous pressures-such as depletion of precious mangroves in Vembanad, depletion of rare species of Kumarakom Karimeen- (fish resources) due to letting out waste from houseboats- (nearly 160 houseboats are plying in the lake) and ultimately these are impacting the livelihood of fisher folk and agriculturalists.

In the 2002-2003 plan, the state government has allocated Rupees twenty million for the development of tourism infrastructure. Out of this Rupees five million rupees is for constructing tarred roads and fifteen million for deepening of canals and constructing parking facilities. Now the Panchayat has decided to take on tourism development on its own and the process of initiation of People to People Tourism is on. A.G.Ushakumari sought the help of groups like EQUATIONS and mentioned that they were making efforts to network with people from other countries working on community-based initiatives for improving the collective benefits for the community from the tourism sector.

(She spoke in Malayalam language and P G Padmanabhan, Member of the Kumarakom Grama Panchayat Kerala, India translated her speech into English.)

Communities Perspective in tourism in the Himalayas

Alka Sabharwal from International centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), Nepal focused on the aspects of local control in mountain tourism. The impacts of tourism in terms of conservation and biodiversity are not looked at. Conservation and Biodiversity issues are rarely considered in the conceptualization of local ownership under the domain of control over resources. The issues of informed local control, environmental conservation and enhancing the benefits to local community are far more important in community decision making in tourism. Local control could be established by forging mutual understanding of partnerships and sharing knowledge systems. When communities explore new livelihood options, tourism comes in handy. Local communities can take leadership role in planning, decision-making, management, and monitoring the mountain projects. Maximizing the informed participation, enhancing the bargaining power of local communities to fight for local control of resources and sustainable use of resources are critical areas in community decision-making in tourism. The Hindukush region, which stretches across 3500 kilometers in Indo-China region, and has a very fragile local environment, communities have legal rights to use land and resources. In Nepal, Annapurna Conservation is a case in point of how communities have the power to control resources. The Government of Nepal has left all land fallow in 1961 to regenerate the resources. In 1971, the Government gave the forest back to the community. Due to the democratization process and active role of NGOs, tourism is locally articulated as a viable local option. Revenues go back to the local community and not to the state treasury. Local communities came up with guidelines to be strictly followed by all parties concerned, and to utilize tourism revenues in a

collective manner. Not only have they concentrated on conservation but also regeneration, which leads to tenure security.

Nevertheless, in Indian Himalayan region, local communities have no legal rights over resources and people are unable to stop the horrendous impact of tourism on their culture and environment. Degrading water sources, abuse of locals by tourists, taking photographs without consent are going on in this region. When tourists are ready to offer money for the services provided by the local people, local guides are preventing it by asking legal papers on land used by local populace.

Community Based Tourism Experiences in Brazil

Esther Neuhaus (Instituto Terramar, Brazil), Ely Fernandes de Lima (Tourism and Handicrafts Cooperative, Prainha do Canto Verde, Brazil) and Nelissa Peralta (Mamiraua Institute, Amazon, Brazil) presented their experiences in four parts:

Introduction with political context and tourism policy, Case study of Prainha do Canto Verde, Amazon Experiences and Conclusions with focus on opportunities and Strategies for sustainable tourism.

Esther Neuhaus observed that Brazil is attracting 9 million international tourists and 65 million domestic tourists every year and aggressive promotion of tourism is going on currently. A single tour operator controls 60% of all tourism circuits in Brazil. Some amount of confusion exists between Ecotourism department and Ministry of Environment that controls Ministry of tourism with regard to the formulation of tourism policies. The environmental implications, particularly on the coastal mangroves are to be critically looked at. Construction of an International Airport in the coastal area is also another issue. The Government is processing tourism development plans in 9 states of Brazil and they want to achieve double the number of visitors in the coming year.

Ely Fernandes de Lima talked about the community tourism in Prainha village. She explained about how the local community was organized and how fishing is considered as the principal economic activity, whereas tourism is treated as a complementary activity. Fisher folk have organized cooperatives and are in the process of creating fish reserves. Women earn money out of tourism by producing handicrafts. Tourists are also aware of local traditions and respect it.

Nelissa Peralta highlighted that in Brazilian Amazon Region, Sustainable Development Reserve has been created. The project on Sustainable tourism is located in this region. The region spreads over 450 kilometers with in area of 1,100,024 hectares. In 1990, Brazil has created Ecological Station based on the policy on Protected Area of National Systems. This reserve does not allow people to live in these areas. Hence, NGOs and local communities were involved in preparing a Management Plan and recategorising protected area during 1990-1996. This recategorisation enables traditional local population, whose subsistence is based on sustainable exploitation of natural resources, to be settled in such reserves without relocation. The components such as protection of nature and maintenance of bio-diversity are crucial. The people consider various subsistence options like Forest Management, Fishery Management, Family Agriculture and Eco tourism. There is a strong correlation between conservation and generation of economic benefits. These benefits act as incentives to conserve the environment. There are four steps followed in the

process of Community Tourism initiative. Step I is Community discussions and building collective understanding. In the community meetings, discussions take place on what kind of tourism they want, what eco tourism is even what tourism is and potential impacts of tourism. Economic feasibility study was the second step to know about people's expectations on what kind of tourism they like to have, with what kind of infrastructure. Step three was capacity building in various fields of tourism and step four was marketing and monitoring. Ongoing monitoring is important for the continued success of the initiative.

The community has decided to host only a thousand tourists per year and not more than four guests a day. They have formulated a local code of ethics and rules for tourists. Seven community village organisations have been strengthened due to community based tourism initiatives. Community has allocated 50 % of tourism income to environmental protection and the other 50% for themselves based on various parameters such as to what extent they have contributed to the community tourism initiatives; comply with management rules and investment on social functions. NGOs are monitoring this aspect of investment of tourism revenue for social cause. This gave the people a choice –to stay in the village or to migrate and migration has reduced. Conservation of specific fish species has been increased to 300%.

Esther again focused on the basic factors underlying their initiatives. Land tenure, land ownership for the locals, infrastructure, exchange of experiences, marketing, local investments, management training, stakeholder participation, and programme for conservation of eco system. Environmental awareness and networking are the focus of community-based tourism. The big challenge is to build and to keep alive these initiatives and make Community based tourism into public policy.

Community initiatives in Tourism

Ramesh Jangid (Apni Dhani, India) narrated about how tourism is monopolized and controlled by particular caste groups in Rajasthan, India. He explained about how he took pains and efforts to build an alternative way of living in his eco-lodge. Minimizing the impact of tourism, protecting cultural identity, sustaining the small local initiative amidst competitive markets are some of the challenges in community based tourism. After 18 years of existence, his initiative draws only 6-33 % and at the average 18% of occupancy.

Community tourism from a livelihood perspective

Steffen Schulein , FernWeh (Tourism Review ,Germany) has focussed on the issues such as whether tourism could act as a viable economic options to communities or not? As tourism development is subjected to current as well as emerging developments that affect tourism, this question is critical to communities. Seasonality in tourism also affects the dependency of communities on tourism income. Impacts of tourism on communities are visible in terms of social, cultural and environmental impacts now. Is communities can exercise control over current tourism development and mitigate negative impacts is to be debated intensively.

Sharing the experiences of Solidarity Tourism

Rosemary (MST, Brazil) explained solidarity tourism practices adopted by MST. People from various cultures and segments are interested to know about MST's land struggles and interested in living in camps of MST and settlements. Initially they had a tour operator to run the tour and after some point of time the tour operators had created some problems. Hence MST has decided to run the solidarity tours by themselves during the World Social Forum. MST is fighting for justice and liberty of people and for life with social justice. People are interested to witness lifestyles of landless people and involve in the land struggles.

Open Discussion

Participants stressed the need for involvement of local government, awareness education for tourists, coastal laws, replicating community based tourism projects with suitable modifications and regulatory provisions for tourism industries.

P.Krishnamoorthy while co-moderating the open session observed that there is a need to locate the role of local governments in tourism. Tourism policies and plans are often formalized at higher level, ignoring the bottom up planning and consultation with local government. In this backdrop, how local communities are going to assert and struggle for their rights to control resources is a critical area. Transparency and accountability are other important areas which need attention in the dialogue.

Christine Pluss in her vote of thanks said that tourism is more than just welcoming guests and providing facilities. It is more about political issues and struggle for rights. There are many examples of successful assertion by communities. These struggles are encouraging for people to go on .A critical aspect of the whole debate is how to lobby, with the tourist sending countries, for an international economic and trade policy which allows for communities to assert their rights.

V Vulnerable and marginalized groups –impacts of tourism on them

Seminar: January 19, 2004 ,5.00-8.00 pm ,Venue: B-30, World Social Forum, Mumbai

Background:

Tourism is viewed as a major economic growth opportunity in most countries. The rapid growth of tourism represents an economic boon on one side but on the other side produces negative socio cultural impact for the communities inhabiting these tourist destinations. Processes in tourism development that increase the vulnerability of communities range from land alienation & denial of access to resources to loss of traditional occupations, lack of employment opportunities in the formal tourism industry & forced movement of labour to the informal sector to unbridled cultural change and sexual exploitation of women and children to the curtailment of decision-making capacity.

Children are omnipresent in tourism. They are employed in the small hotels and shacks for very low wages. They sell trifles on the beaches. They provide massages to the tourists. These marginalised children who scramble for a share of the trade are highly visible, but the perils of these children are much less visible. Most children involved in tourism activities run the risk of being sexually exploited. Of the many faces of child exploitation, trafficking is increasingly being acknowledged the world over as extreme violation of child rights. These young people suffer severe physical and psychological injury, as the worldwide campaign against commercial sexual exploitation of children has clearly demonstrated in recent years.

Among marginalised groups in tourism, Indigenous peoples and local communities are paying a high price. Governments, especially of the Global South, and multinational corporations have disregarded the interests of indigenous peoples and local communities in their desire to cash on the billion-dollar profits from the industry. The effects of these policies are that these communities have been evicted from their traditional lands. Their control and access to their traditional homelands has been compromised. They have suffered social degradation brought about by foreign influences and the commercialization of their culture.

This workshop brought out the experiences from different parts of the globe to deliberate and discuss on the impacts of tourism on marginalised and vulnerable groups. It highlighted the challenges that are being faced by the communities in the context of tourism development.

Profile of the dance Troupe

SANVED, the voice of Sanlaap, platform of cultural expression, platform of activists, dancers who speaks on the issue of violence against women and children - researches with the contemporary language of dance.

Speakers: T. T. Sreekumar (moderator), Luc Ferran, Albertina Almeida, M. A. Sekar, Patricia Barnett, Joyatri Ray

The seminar:

Heinz Fuchs, EED-Tourism Watch, Germany welcomed the participants and introduced the seminar. He said that international tourism needs to be more human. The rapid growth of tourism does not only represent an economic boon for most tourism destinations; it often produces negative socio-cultural impacts. There is a need to take a deeper look into the role of women and children in tourism. Among the marginalized groups, women and children pay a very high price. The sexual exploitation of women and children in tourism is a problem, which concerns all countries worldwide- tourism receiving and tourism sending countries alike. He said that the seminar is aimed at bringing in experiences from different parts of the world and highlighting the challenges that lies before us.

Dance Performance: Daughter of This Earth

Sanved, the voice of Sanlaap, an organisation based in Kolkata, commenced the seminar with a dance performance.

The language of these dance performances are different from that of traditional forms and therefore do not adhere strictly to tradition. The commitment is to assimilate the traditional into a contemporary form. This new approach of dance translated through the body language and physical movements not only harmonizes the soul and the body of the performer, but communicates the viewers too. These new forms help immensely to bridge different cultural gaps both in the national and international level.

Case studies:

Luc Ferran: Promoting responsible tourism to protect children from sexual exploitation in tourism: Responses of tourism industry, Civil Society and Government to the campaign

The tourism industry has facilitated the travel, accommodation, impunity and anonymity of child sex offenders the world over. The tourism industry exposes thousands of children to those who seek sexual contact with children. He said that the global tourism industry employs millions of people worldwide. He emphasized that in order to successfully combat CST, these companies must not only be accountable but also actively involved. He laid emphasis on the importance of involving private sector in combating CST. He said that involving the private sector means, challenging the perceptions of tourism sector, sustainable long-term investment, outlining positive action, understanding Public Relations, stressing the power of consumer choice and Legal implications.

He stated that tourism industry is successful in demonstrating the value of child-friendly tourism by providing support and technical expertise and is working closely together with the civil society. There are 46 signatories to the code of Conduct prepared and implemented by Tourism Industry along with ECPAT International, to protect children from sexual exploitation in travel

and tourism. Some of the tourism operators, such as, Taj resorts and palaces, Pan Pacific Hotels and resorts have initiated 'Employment Programmes: Prevention and Rehabilitation'.

He concluded by saying that '*Promoting responsible tourism should be forceful, positive and empowering*'. Socially and environmentally responsible tourism is central to protecting children from commercial sexual exploitation and safeguarding children's rights. It is the only way to ensure stable tourism growth and long-term socio-economic stability.

Albertina Almeida: Impacts of tourism on women in Goa

The consequences of tourism promotion are felt by various sections of society, by both women and men; but it is women who have to doubly bear the brunt of it. She said '*The sexist and racist advertising indulged in by the tourism Departments of the Government of Goa and the Government of India as also by the hoteliers have presented a distorted picture of Goan culture in their portrayal of Goa as a land of wine, women and song, thus displaying total insensitivity to our feelings and the drastic ill effects of such unscrupulous advertising on the women in Goa*'. Besides distorting the image of women in Goa this has led to increasing sexual harassment. The government and big hoteliers with the sole aim of tourism promotion disgustingly misuse the traditional feast and festivals of Goa. While the Carnival initially was a spontaneous celebration by people, over the past decade or so, commercial interests began to intervene with a view to enhancing business interests and to attracting tourists and making a quick buck.

The celebration of carnival has been robbed of its spontaneity, fun, gaiety and has been distorted into a commercialized and vulgar display of floats and dances. These floats, where scantily dressed women gyrate to western music, have projected a perverted image of women in Goa.

In the question of employment, she said '*precisely cooks, butler... and to this may be added jobs of receptionists, massage girls and bell-boys are all that is afforded to people in Goa by way of employment in the star hotels*' She stressed that '*tourism development will effectively wipe off Goa's toddy tappers, farmers, fisherwomen and fishermen who live and make their living on its shores*'. She emphasised that employment of women, which in many cases takes the form of receptionists in these hotels is often seasonal, and on a temporary or 'hire and fire' basis. '*Given that the government is orienting the economy of Goa to tourism and given that even in a full tourism economy, only handful of jobs can be created, what are all the remaining people expected to do?*' - this was the question raised by Albertina.

She voiced her concern about the golf courses. She said that golf is not being promoted for the sake of the game, but with a view to boost tourism and attract the elite tourist in order to earn foreign exchange. '*Even if it is only a game why should our lifestyles be disrupted and our environment threatened for sake of the golfing pleasure of few elite locals and foreigners?*' She voiced her concern about the huge land requirement, about which panchayats are not informed. She said '*the special consequences when golf courses are located in plateaus, you must realize that during monsoon huge amounts of toxic chemicals (i.e. the insecticides, pesticides, fungicides, herbicides, used) will be washed off from the plateaus into fields, rivers and water sources contaminating the paddy crops, fish and the drinking water sources of the people in Goa*'. As a result, women have to walk miles to get fresh water for drinking and domestic use.

With globalisation, local people are increasingly finding themselves on the fringes of the economy with multinational companies and big sharks from elsewhere invading the Goan scenario. We need to wait a see whether this era will result in a resurgence of local identities

with an army of employed/ underemployed/oppressed and exploited section of the people to uphold their rights and identity.

M. A. Sekar: Marginalisation of coastal communities in Mahabalipuram, Tamilnadu.

He presented the significance of fisheries and coastal communities in development today. Fisheries provide 16% of animal consumption around the world and in India, fishing activities are distributed along an 8000-kilometre coastline. Earlier fishing communities would use traditional, eco-friendly material and the fish was seen as community produce, not as a commodity to be owned by any individual. But with entry of multinational corporations, a massive modernization of fishing has taken place aimed at generating large amounts of produce for European markets.

This has led to depletion in fish, unplanned fishing and marine pollution. The major causes for marginalisation of fishing communities have been the non-availability of market support for traditional fisheries, aquaculture and coastal tourism development related displacement.

Although India has a large coastline and supports many important species and communities, the laws to protect it are weak. The only Act is the Environmental Protection Act, which does not address nuanced issues of the coast. On the other hand, there exist separate Acts for prevention of water and air pollution. These acts are merely act as a paper tiger.

There have no spaces for communities to participate in law making. In states such as Tamil Nadu, even the Director of Fisheries is not part of committee for Coastal Protection due to political dynamics. As a result of the suppression of the voice of the coastal communities, there is no law that recognizes the rights of the fishing community as workers. Welfare legislations for other marginalised groups such as sex workers, beedi workers are considered, but the coastal communities have been consistently ignored. The communities need to strengthen advocacy work to bring their concerns to the forefront.

In tourism, communities have been facing massive slash in income from their traditional occupation. With pollution and unplanned tourism development, the fish produce is affected. Women from the community have to procure fish from other places to sell to the local restaurants. But they are not given fair rates under the threat that the hotels will procure the fish from cities if they do not sell fish at the said rates.

Communities also do not find equitable alternatives to fishing in tourism. They are not provided with training or work with fair amount of wages. There exists a fear among the industry that if fish workers become workers in tourism, they will unionise and use their community strength to negotiate with the industry.

Law and policymaking are merely academic processes, consisting of conducting studies, with communities pulled in at the final stages merely as showpieces. Sekar concluded his talk by stating that tourism planning and environmental laws should have local participation. Panchayats or communities are usually not kept informed. The rights of the coastal community must be upheld.

Open discussion:

Patricia Barnett highlighted the issues of the various groups that had been represented, inviting responses and comments from the participants.

A group of researchers from Kolkatta University made a brief presentation on the perils of an eco-tourism project, which is being planned in Bangladesh. The project is intended to be introduced into an ecologically fragile area and will have many repercussions both on the environment and on the communities. The planning processes have not taken the unique ecosystems of the areas into mind and are attempting to introduce many other forms of tourism under the guise of 'ecotourism'.

The case study of Gokarna was presented highlighting the impacts of a heavy influx of 'hippie' tourists from Goa to the area. It has given rise to cultural changes, which is affecting the norms and mores of local communities, especially the Hallaki tribals who inhabit the area. It is a change that is forced, with tribal communities having little control over its momentum.

Closing:

Shirley Susan from ECOT proposed the vote of thanks. She said that the eminent speakers clearly brought before us the complexities that exist in present day tourism and therefore the challenges that are there before us. Laws are being subverted for tourism and there is a constant denial of the existence of the problems of the vulnerable and marginalized groups.

VI Reaching the people

Report of the Stall: Beyond the Continents ...

The World Social Forum is now one of the major events in the world development segment. The participants come from across the world comprising of grassroots, civil society organisations, various NGOs, activists etc. This richness of participation provided a unique opportunity to bring tourism and its impact as a debate into the present development debate.

A stall was set up by the EQUATIONS, ECOT, Tourism Watch and AKTE as part of the tourism intervention in the WSF for facilitating the discussions and disseminating information on tourism to the participants. The stall (No. A 123 – 125) attracted a large number of visitors and acted as a catalyst of tourism interventions and experience sharing making a considerable impact on the overall tourism interventions in the WSF2004.

Our posters which posed the question “*Who really benefits from tourism?*” resulted in many people seeking an answer to the question reaching the stall giving us opportunities to initiate very interesting conversations on this theme. .. Most of the people were unaware of the critical issues involved in tourism activities. There was considerable interest to understand the potential impact of the industry, the critical issues like sustainable tourism, community involvement in decision-making in tourism, community control over resources and benefits, community based tourism initiatives, corporate accountability, role of local self-governments, vulnerable and marginalised groups and the impact of tourism on them etc.

The posters and publications, cartoons, brochures and calendars by the four international organisations and publication materials from, Brazil, Gambia were among the major attractions of the stall. The materials (in the form of detailed kits) were distributed to media persons, various organisations, researchers, students etc.who visited the stall. A video show was an added attraction of the stall. The videotapes of - *The bee, beer and the Kuruba, beyond the inner lines, Protest in paradise – Goa, The wings of Kokkre bellur, Bekal beckons, Of hosts and hostages, Looking beyond the brochures, Children are not for sale* were shown in the stall during the WSF. The video sessions were attended by many and sometimes facilitated discussions debates as well.

The stall also acted as a meeting point of different personalities and organizations .A series of formal and informal meetings were conducted in the stall. Activists from Plachimada, Narmada, members of the students’ movement, Dalit organisations, women organisations etc visited the stall. Labour party MP and anti-war activist Jeremy Corbyn from the UK and member of Kerala Legislative Assembly Dr.Thomas Isaac were among the visitors. Media persons including visual media came to the stall and interviewed the organizers.

Survey on an ‘Information Network on Tourism Issues’

Venue: The 4th World Social Forum: 16th – 20th Jan 2004

The World Social Forums have been meeting spaces for thousands of people from the different parts of the world, espousing varied causes. The Tourism Organizing Group at the WSF 2004 decided to utilize the diverse nature of the participation to conduct a survey and collect

information from a cross – section of people on their interest in being part of an information network on tourism related issues. The information would be used to form a database for future information dissemination and networking.

For this purpose, a survey form was developed internally in EQUATIONS and a team of volunteers from Mumbai was formed to collect information at the WSF. The volunteers consisted of college students and youth who were employed on a part – time basis. They were between the ages of 17 – 25 years. They had not been part of social action groups previously and had little or no exposure to tourism related issues.

The first day i.e. 16th Jan 04, was set aside as an orientation training session and a test-run of the survey. The volunteers were provided with basic training on the issues that were being covered through the tourism interventions at WSF, the methodology of the survey and on conducting the survey itself. After the training session, volunteers were directed to approach members of the Tourism Interventions Group and also, EQUATIONS network partners to collect information, under the supervision of survey team in-charges.

It was noticed that many of the volunteers were unable to formulate clear opening lines with which they could approach people and were instead opening up a debate on tourism and its benefits, which they were unable to engage in. The team brainstormed together and drafted a paragraph with which the volunteers could begin conversations with survey respondents and also, responses to commonly asked questions that had been discerned from the test-run. They were also provided with information on the tourism interventions at WSF, which they could provide to all respondents and increase awareness of tourism interventions at WSF.

The survey began in earnest from 17th Jan 04 and team meetings were held every morning and evening to share experiences, clarify doubts and plan ahead. In the meetings, volunteers shared many personal impressions and expressed comfort level with the exercise. They faced difficulties such as inability to hold back people to complete the forms, rude behaviour and confusion while handling questions on issues. But most of them had also gained confidence through successes with improvisation and persistence. Team leaders built on techniques that were used by the volunteers themselves, adding a few suggestions. Volunteers also found it reassuring that an entire tourism intervention team was present to back them, in case of awkward situations.

In the course of the survey, a conscious effort was made to forge team spirit whereby volunteers would assist each other and also, hold each other accountable for keeping up with punctuality for meetings and filling in forms. This helped volunteers feel a sense of togetherness and minimize anxiety at meeting daily targets. Although the set target was approximately 70 forms/day for each volunteer, they could reach this target only on the last day i.e. 20th Jan 04.

The result of the survey was that 2,123 forms were completed, in a matter of 4 days. Along with this, a significant outcome was the wide dissemination of information on the tourism interventions at the WSF and increase in the inflow of visitors to the stall. Interest and curiosity was generated among respondents by volunteers initiating debates and also, providing information on nature of material that was available at the stall.

Tourism interventions at the Intercontinental Youth Camp: *'Who Really Benefits from Tourism?'*

Interactive session on *'Who Really Benefits from Tourism'* on 20th January 2004

Aimed at generating awareness among young persons about the impact of tourism, the interactive session made use of audio – visual media, discussions, talks and dissemination of information material as tools for dialogue with the youth.

The participant strength was 20 – 25 persons, from different parts of India (south, north – east, west) and also, from countries such as Africa and Taiwan. The team that conducted the session on behalf of the Tourism Interventions Group consisted of Paul Gonsalves, Joyatri Ray (EQUATIONS), Meena Pai (EQUATIONS), Shirley Susan (ECOT) and Joy Dasgupta (National University of Juridical Sciences, India).

The session began with screening of the documentary *‘Look Beyond the Brochure’*, set in Gambia, which presents both the tourists’ as well as the host community’s perspective on tourism’s effects and benefits. Post-screening, the floor was opened to questions and responses. The participants expressed surprise about the impacts of tourism, which were unknown to them. A dominant response was to support local participation in tourism, especially in securing economic benefits. They felt that workers in tourism must organize themselves to prevent exploitation and also, be given space to develop entrepreneurship.

On the other hand, some participants who hailed from tourism locations did not agree with the ‘moderate’ view and felt that tourism development is inherently flawed. Local communities give up their culture, livelihoods and environment to pave the way for tourism. In return, they get pittance such as low level/low paying jobs and have to face issues such as sex tourism and ecological damage. Tourism was also perceived as advancing stereotypical notions of locations and its people, thereby not meeting its promise of cross pollination of cultures.

Paul Gonsalves tied up responses from the floor and presented tourism in the context of a globalized world order where the movement of knowledge and goods is entirely based on buying power. He also highlighted the fact that tourism is one of the few industries where the product must be consumed on site and therefore, has deep implication for the nature, culture, religion and livelihoods of the people in tourism destinations.

Joy Dasgupta emphasized the perils of growing domestic tourism in India. Many new locations are being opened up and hitherto prominent places are fading due to ‘over-exposure’. He cited the example of Darjeeling, which was once a popular East Indian destination and now suffers from severe water scarcity and ill-managed waste due to years of unplanned tourism activity, while tourists are moving onto the less explored location of Gaya.

The session was wound up by Joyatri who highlighted the need to be ‘responsible’ tourists by supporting people in destinations to preserve their heritage and forge ahead under equitable conditions.

The methodology of the session gave an opportunity to address tourism related issues first from the youth perspective and then, add components to develop understanding in a global context. It also provided space for a spontaneous exchange of views with team members responding to queries in an impromptu manner. Many of the youth held clear standpoints on tourism, based on personal experiences. A strong feedback was that the concerns are relevant for youth action and therefore, must be consistently brought to such forums.

VII Reaching out to grassroots...

Report of the network partners meeting during the WSF at Hotel Benzy Palace

Venue: Benzy palace January 16-21,2004,Mumbai

The World Social Forum is the meeting place of thousands of people who have come from diverse backgrounds—from activist to academic and cadres to leaders of movements from across the world. Now it has become a focal point of peoples' movements across the world. The forum—for the first time—shifted out of Porto Allegre to Mumbai in India. The forum has immense diversity in its content and participation. This gives a unique opportunity for greater participation from Asia and particularly from India. This diversity and the level of participation provides an immense opportunity to exchange ideas and learn from each other.

EQUATIONS has a strong networking relationship with grassroots, civil society organizations, local self-governments and vulnerable groups within the society. Representatives of various organizations such as womens' organizations, representatives of local self-governments, members of community initiatives in tourism destinations and activists from all over the country actively participated in WSF as part of EQUATIONS delegation. It was an attempt to share their experiences and learn from each other.

Meetings and experience sharing of the delegations were conducted every day and these meetings made possible an intercultural exchange and discussions on various issues.

Series of meetings have been facilitated by EQUATIONS at the Benzy palace hotel. P.Krishnamoorthi, Network coordinator of EQUATIONS moderated the meeting and explained the activities and relevance to the tourism interventions and WSF in general.

Ms Ezhilarasi, the president of the Thottikalai Panchayath, Tamilnadu and also the youngest Panchayath president in India explained her predicaments in public life. She also emphasized the need for a change. She said that she would transfer her experiences in the WSF to the people in her panchayat.

Smt.Devi Ravindran, President of Ajanoor Gram Panchayath (Bekal Special Tourism Area) shared her experiences in general and tourism in particular. She pointed out myths around the tourism such as employment generation and foreign exchange earning attracting common people to the tourism industry. She emphasized the importance of awareness among the people on the impacts and other crucial issues involved in tourism. She was confident that these learnings would help her in future panchayath activities in tourism.

Mr.Yesupadam Taneti, CRASA, Andhra Pradesh shared his experiences from the various workshops and seminars he participated in the WSF. He pointed out the need for protecting resources such as water, land, etc.

P.G.Padmanabhan, member of Kumarakom Gram Panchayath and an activist of Kerala Sasthra Sahithya Parishath, explained community based tourism initiatives in Kumarakom. He said that he could learn very many things from this interaction.

P. Gagarin, President of Vythri Panchayat Kerala expressed his hope for a future intervention in tourism activities in his Panchayath with these insights. He also said that the womens

participation and leadership in the WSF was impressive and he would transfer this fact to the Gram Sabha and various women forums in his area. He has expressed that this participation in the WSF is a lifetime opportunity given by tourism interventions groups.

Ushakumari, President Kumarakom Gram Panchayath, Puttu Kulkarni an activist from Mangalore, Albertina Almeida (Bailancho Sad, Goa), M.A.Sekhar (ECDN, Chennai) were among the others who spoke at various occasions.

VIII Going forward

Activists Strategy Meeting

Date: 22nd – 23rd January 2004, Venue: YMCA, Mumbai Central

A two-day Activists Strategy Meeting on Tourism was held on the 22nd & 23rd January 2004 at the YMCA, Mumbai immediately after the 4th World Social Forum (WSF). ECOT organized the Meet as part of a wider process of reflecting on the WSF tourism interventions and to enable a more focused opportunity for global tourism groups to align, strategise, build solidarity and work together on campaigns. These efforts would be complementary to tourism interventions at the successive World Social Forums. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working on tourism from India, Asia, Africa, Latin America and Europe participated in this strategy meeting.

The discussion was centred on the slogan "*Who Really Benefits from Tourism?*" that was launched at the 4th World Social Forum through various tourism interventions. It was felt that a concerted effort must be made to answer the question through studies and available experiences from the grassroots. The groups discussed issues such as the need to shore up funding issues, create a strong international network.

Forming a global forum of activists, including international, regional and local tourism groups, was proposed. The forum would also be open to the travel trade; governments and consulting groups who needed to better understand local peoples' concerns and consequences of myopic development policies. Strengthening information-exchange networks, upgrading research capabilities, databases and media contacts, becoming active on the lecture circuit, etc. were envisaged as part of the background work towards the global forum. Plans were also made to utilise opportunities presented by the World Tourism Organisation (OMT-WTO) and becoming part of the United Nations system, which welcomes the involvement of civil society. As a step forward towards forming a global network of tourism groups and organisations, a declaration was prepared to convey the focus and intent of the tourism interventions groups present at the Meet.

Statement of concern

From Mumbai to Porto Alegre -Statement of Concern of the Tourism Interventions Group at the 4th World Social Forum

Who really benefits from Tourism?

We, the Tourism Interventions Group, at the 4th World Social Forum (WSF) in Mumbai (16-21 Jan. 2004) declare our commitment to change the character of global tourism towards a tourism that is just and equitable for people in destinations. Our interventions (including an intercontinental dialogue on tourism and four seminars) brought tourism issues to the forefront of the WSF agenda.

Through testimonies of community struggles and initiatives, we highlighted a wide range of responses to globalised tourism at the grassroots. Our interventions at WSF provided a platform for a meaningful intercontinental dialogue on the social, economic, political, cultural and environmental impacts of tourism.

In an 'Activists Strategy Meeting on Tourism' (Mumbai, 22-23 Jan. 2004, hosted by the Ecumenical Coalition on Tourism –ECOT) we evaluated the impacts of our interventions and committed ourselves to carrying forward the momentum to the next WSF at Porto Alegre, Brazil in 2005. The Strategy Meeting emphasised the need for wide dissemination of the news of our successful interventions at Mumbai. Discussions on future actions will be shared with communities, movements, network partners, and other groups. It was also decided to form the Global Tourism Interventions Forum, which would take forward this important work.

We decided to strengthen and uphold the grassroots perspectives of tourism, which position our interventions against those of the World Tourism Organization (WTO-OMT), the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) and other mainstream definitions of tourism policy and development. As the WTO-OMT is now a specialised UN agency, we will address its new mandate and take forward civil society engagements to democratise tourism.

A primary concern is the undemocratic nature of the ongoing negotiations in the World Trade Organisation's General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) that are slated to end by January 2005. We stress the urgent need to bring in experiences from the grassroots on the environmental and social costs of tourism to inform the negotiating positions of governments and underline the need for a rollback in the negotiations.

Highlighting tourism issues within a multitude of anti-globalisation and human rights movements such as those related to women, children, dalits, indigenous people, migrants, unorganised labour, small island, mountain and coastal communities, as well as struggles related to land, water and access to natural resources, is crucial to sharpen local struggles and community initiatives of those impacted by tourism. Networking is at the core of future strategising to identify areas of common concern, forge alliances with like-minded individuals, organisations and movements and influence tourism policy agendas. Democracy, transparency and corporate and governmental accountability in tourism will be placed high on the agenda for concerted action and strategic interventions.

From our experiences of working on tourism issues we are extremely sceptical about the claims of tourism being a provider of jobs and earner of foreign exchange. We are concerned that the actual benefits that finally reach people in destinations are negligible compared to the profits of transnational tourism corporations. Leakages constitute a major loss of income for host communities and countries. At the same time it is local communities who bear the costs of tourism development in terms of social, cultural and environmental impacts.

At the next WSF in Porto Alegre, Brazil, in 2005, we will continue to highlight critical issues in tourism. We look forward to working in solidarity with local community representatives, activists and researchers from various parts of the world to strengthen our struggle and develop strategies for a tourism that is equitable, people-centred, sustainable, ecologically sensible, child-friendly and gender-just.

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ECUMENICAL COALITION ON TOURISM (Hong Kong SAR- China)

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