

Valentina Castellani - Serenella Sala

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM  
AS A FACTOR OF LOCAL DEVELOPMENT

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Valentina Castellani - Serenella Sala  
*Sustainable tourism as a factor of local development*  
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# Introduction

## A counterpoint for sustainability

This book presents the results of the congress “Sustainable tourism as a factor of local development”, held in Monza in November 2008 and organized by GRISS, Research Unit on Sustainable Development of the University of Milano Bicocca.

The organization of the congress came from the willing of creating a connection between research, institutions, enterprises, local NGO's and cultural bodies, for the definition of new patterns and models for local development. The Brianza area, location of the event, represents an interesting context, especially because of the tourist outlook for the next years, with particular reference to tourism forecast related to Expo 2015 (29 million visitors, according to a study performed by the local Chamber of Commerce).

Therefore, purpose of the congress was to highlight strength and weakness of sustainable tourism as a key factor for local development, to investigate the possibility of a sustainable approach in the development of new tourism offers, to identify new strategies for sustainable tourism and recreation in urban areas and to define the role of local actors of tourism sector in the process of planning for local development, with a focus on the occasion of a worldwide event as Expo 2015.

The issues related to sustainable tourism are complex and interconnected. There is a strategic need of consider several aspects from an interdisciplinary point of view, trying to overcome disciplinary approaches. The congress results in a **counterpoint**<sup>1</sup> of tourism perspective in which sustainability is considered from several disciplines, giving the opportunity for debate to representatives of the scientific world, institutions and NGOs at local, national and international level. From the scientific world, representatives of the faculties of architecture, engineering, literature, sociology, economics and geography have answered to the call fostered by the Department of Environmental Science, testifying a wide interesting for an interdisciplinary dialogue about contents and methods.

The book opens with an introduction about sustainable tourism: its role for local development and a review about the most relevant policies and trends in European Union and worldwide. Core of the book is

<sup>1</sup> Counterpoint is the technique of combining two or more melodic lines in such a way that they establish a harmonic relationship while retaining their linear individuality

the collection of the scientific papers presented by speakers during the conference, organized in seven sections. Finally, the last chapter is represented by some reflections that summarize the topics discussed during the congress, with a special reference to the upcoming event of Expo 2015 and its possible effects on the city of Milan and the Monza and Brianza province; this contribution tries also to combine the different perspectives that have been meeting during the two days of the congress (both from the scientific side and from the operational point of view), such as representatives of numerous faculties from Italy and abroad and local representatives of institution, NGOs and tourism business.

*Valentina Castellani and Serenella Sala*

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