Enviromentally Sustainable Tourism – A Lodge Case Study

Hospitality and tourism industry is one of the world's largest and fastest growing industries. Over 200 million in the world and 12.5 million workers in the United States are employed by the hospitality and tourism industry. Global economists forecast continuing international tourism growth, ranging between three and six percent annually, depending on the location. The industry continuous growth will place great stress on remaining biologically diverse habitats and indigenous cultures, which are often used to support mass tourism. Tourists who promote sustainable tourism are sensitive to these dangers and seek to protect tourist destinations, and to protect tourism as an industry.

Sustainable tourism is about the protection and enhancement of the natural environment and resources for future generations, while at the same time ensuring long-term economic viability for businesses, and providing socio-cultural benefits to the wider community.

Sustainable tourism involves operators to make their business practices more energy, waste, and water efficient, to involve the community in decision making, to identify and manage the environmental effects associated with their activities, to identify opportunities to market a business as sustainable, to identify key partnerships, and to add quality to the 100% PURE product. Sustainable tourism also involves visitors: Making choices and taking actions to minimize the environmental impacts associated with their travels.

The following case is one of a successful lodge cases for environmentally sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism in the Caribbean is understood as the optimal use of natural, cultural, financial and human resources for national development on an equitable and self-sustaining basis in order to provide a unique visitor experience and an improved quality of life for its citizens. The 2006 American Express Caribbean Tourism Environmental Awards, presented last year in Miami, during a special awards luncheon as part the annual Caribbean Hotel Industry Conference (CHIC), paid tribute to the hotels that are models of responsible environmental and social performance in the region.

The 2006 American Express Caribbean Tourism Environmental Awards winners obtained the highest combined scores, based on their performance in the following five criteria: Environmental Management & Stewardship, Infrastructure, Awareness, Conservation, and Health & Safety. The 3 Rivers' Eco Lodge & Sustainable Living Centre, Dominica, reiterates in 2006 its commitment to sustainability after earning this award in 2005. Located in Dominica, this family business lives by a fundamental goal: to live in harmony with, yet has as little harmful impact as possible on the unspoiled natural beauty of its surroundings and community.

Their philosophy is driven by a belief in their role to protect and enhance the environment for guests, as well as the residents of the local community. Keeping in line with their goals, every aspect of the hotel has the environment in mind. The management embraces a sustainable lifestyle, minimizing the use of all resources, and monitoring all systems.

The sun powers the entire property. Even the water supply is pumped from the river using a solar powered pump, which works in silence to avoid disturbing the surrounding natural habitats. Likewise, solar hot water heating systems are used. To minimize water consumption, gray water is treated and then re-used in the garden and campers use dry toilets.

The hotel composites all kitchen and garden waste, and uses that compost to grow as much organic food as possible without the use of chemicals or fertilizers. A truly original invention is the modification of a pick-up truck that has been retrofitted to run on used vegetable oil as well as diesel fuel. With the 'cooking oil truck' they have reduced harmful emissions by some 93%, and are able to re-cycle oil that had been previously discarded by local restaurants in local rivers and ravines. Whenever possible, the hotel avoids purchasing packaged goods. The hotel shops locally, recycles and uses biodegradable products, and tries to keep waste products to a minimum. Water, electricity, gas, solid waste and paper consumption are monitored daily to continuously find new ways of reducing usage.

An important aspect of 3 River's philosophy is to involve the local community. Employees come from local villages, and they are trained in sustainable living. As an Eco-Lodge, the hotel owners feel that
community-based tourism is essential in order to ensure that their local friends benefit from the hotel's existence. Bearing this in mind, the hotel offers a number of local community based activities for the visitors' enjoyment, which, at the same time, help many native people earn money to provide for their families. The activities give guests a true taste of life in Dominica, as seen by a Dominican, and are as innovative as they are engaging. They include:

- Learning traditional farming methods and how to make & taste one of Dominica's national dishes - Calalou Soup.
- A day at an organic herb farm, discovering traditional herbal medicines & remedies, and tasting various bush teas.
- Coffee and cocoa preparing and roasting - where tourists can take some home at the end of the day.
- Visits to the local village primary school - getting to know the kids, sharing experiences with them and learning the local history.
- Band practices with the local Reggae and Calypso stars - The Blazing Squad.
- Learning to make ancient knitting or flower crafts, among others.

These are just some of the responsible practices that 3 Rivers Eco Lodge proudly undertakes.

"Environmental issues concern not just the air we breathe and the water we drink; they also concern our obligation to each other, and to future generations to protect our planet," said CHA President, Berthia Parle, MBE. "In the Caribbean hospitality industry, businesses that utilize the most solid social and environmental practices benefit communities and save not only our environment, but our heritage as well."

(This case study is taken directly from the Caribbean Hotel Association announcement http://hotelexecutive.com/hapa/newswire_article.php?id=8868)

Please answer the following questions/請回答下列問題

1. Through the discussion above, please analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the 3 Rivers Eco Lodge & Sustainable Living Centre. Think about what the dominant foci that permit the success within the eco-lodge. Please write about 200 words in Chinese to summarize this case. What are the key points of this case? (40 分)

2. Do you agree environmentally sustainable tourism? If so, how can we ensure sustainable development? Have you ever been an eco-tourist? What are the pros and cons of ecotourism? (30 分)

3. The similar case may likely happen in Taiwan. What aspects of environmentally sustainable tourism are important for travel and tourism operators and the government to understand? (30 分)