

After reviewing the Invisible Burden report, does it change your perception of the score you initially gave regarding your level of agreement with the quotation by Anna Pollock?

During class, I had scored my level of agreement with Anna Pollock's quote at an 8. I strongly agreed with what she was saying but the defeatist and pessimistic tone of her words discouraged me from agreeing with a 9 or 10. I was trying to have a more optimistic view about the tourism industry but after reading the Invisible Burden report, I would increase my score. The reality is that the situation is that dire and Anna was just saying it how it is. The first part of her quote raises the idea that the tourism industry is built on a consumption-production model. The report reinforces this, using quotes such as "tourism management seems to be entirely focused on promoting business. It is so tied to commercial and tax interest that the focus is less on how to manage the destination and more on how to develop destinations for commercial interests." The report also says that despite how the negative impacts are piling up, marketing budgets are still the priority for destinations which in turn supports this consumption-production model. Anna's quote also mentions how people and places are being exploited as resources. I always connected this with how people and places are expected to be the tourism product in many destinations even if they do not reap much of the economic benefits. After reading the Invisible Burden report, my understanding grew to include also how local people are forced to provide additional tax money as well as municipal labour and management costs to cover the costs of tourists. The next part of Anna's quote talks about the unaccounted for externalities of tourism. Before reading the Invisible Burden report, I have to admit that I ignorantly related these externalities primarily to environmental impacts. However, after reading the Invisible Burden I have a better understanding of the full risks and costs of tourism growth that she was talking about. There is little "recompense from the tourism economy" and I now agree with Anna completely that currently, the negatives outweigh the positives when it comes to the impacts of tourism on destination communities.

In the Invisible Burden report, what is the main "problem" as assessed by the authors? What are the main solutions to address this problem?

The main problem addressed in the Invisible Burden report is that there are hidden costs of tourism that are leading to unsustainable local economies. The authors uncover the invisible set of local budgetary obligations and risk factors that the tourism industry and government agencies fail to account for in their tourism development and growth plans. To address these "overlooked, misunderstood, or ignored" burdens of tourism, the authors suggest that destinations employ "holistic accounting measures, a better system for managing demand, a different tax allocation plan, public-private partnerships, and a new method of valuation of operational requirements." They explain how imperative financial managing processes are that measure and predict the costs per tourist in the long-term. The authors also suggest that destinations use financial tools such as "green bonds, municipal bonds, and Smart City bonds" for improving investment. The development of ESG risk analysis methods, along with forecasting and scenario analysis will also be crucial strategies. Additionally, the authors introduce solutions such as smart destination management and GIS-driven master planning. Overall, the authors explain how the solutions for the Invisible Burden involve mapping, recording and forecasting data in local economies. Not only this but collaboration between the tourism industry and universities, urban planning experts, financial experts, analysts, science-based agencies and governments is vital.

Epler Wood, M., Milstein, M., Ahamed-Broadhurst, K., 2019. Destinations at Risk: The Invisible Burden of Tourism. The Travel Foundation