



Strategic Environmental Assessment for Tourism Planning: Issues, Formal Requirements & Methods

*Lars Emmelin
School of planning
Blekinge Institute of Technology
&
European Tourism Research Institute*



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School of Planning, Blekinge Institute of Technology, Karlskrona, Sweden

International Masters Programme:

European Spatial Planning

<http://www.bth.se/europeanplanning>

Research programme:

Tools for Environmental Assessment in Strategic Decision Making

European Tourism Research Institute, ETOUR Nature and culture research programme

Research areas:

Mountain recreation and tourism
Planning for tourism in archipelagos
Tourism in protected areas
Nature conservation and tourism

www.etour.se



Terms and concepts

Environmental Assessment, EA

generic term covering many forms of assessment

Environmental Impact Assessment, EIA

assessment of impact of *projects*

Strategic Environmental Assessment, SEA

assessment of impacts of *programmes and plans*

(ideally also of *policies*)

Environmental Impact Assessment, EIA

Assessment of impacts of projects:

Localised

Well defined project actions

Normally related to permit process

Well established methods

Competent consultants

but still often badly done!

Directive 85/337/EEC & 97/11/EC

Annex I: projects with mandatory EIA

Annex II: case-by-case or thresholds or criteria

Strategic Environmental Assessment, SEA

Assessment of impacts of programmes and plans

“To bring environment on par with economic and social considerations”

Should contribute to sustainability

Directive 2001/42/EC

“certain programmes and plans”

having significant impact

required by law

determining permit processes and conditions

Planning levels

and relation to EA

Regional planning

spatial development of region
arena for negotiating sustainability

Strategic Environmental Assessment, SEA

Comprehensive planning:

covering entire area of municipality
indicate municipal/public development intentions
identify opportunities, sensitive areas, conflicts

SEA

Detailed planning:

regulatory planning of the built environment

EIA or SEA

How is the SEA-directive implemented?

minimalist

intentionalist

environmentalist

Why do we do EA?

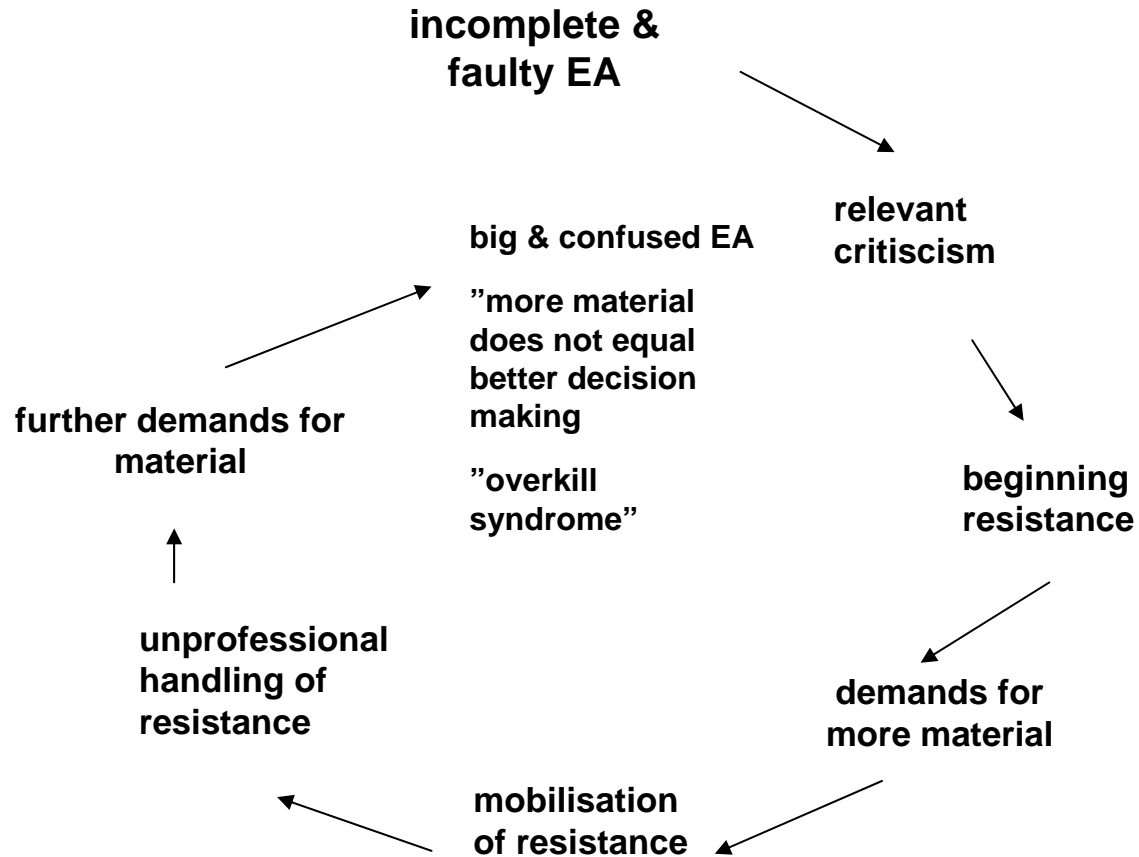
“because we have to”

often leads to bad EA, conflicts and costly delays

to plan for sustainable tourism!



The vicious circle of EA





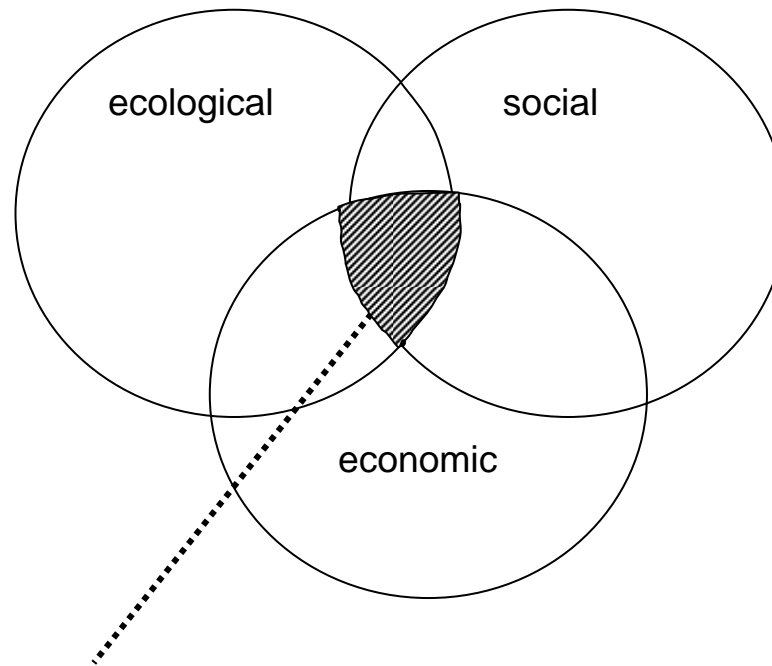
Why do we do SEA?

Consequence ethics: think before you act!

- avoid long term negative environmental impacts
- discover alternative solutions
- break mind set of planner & decision maker
- introduce precautionary principle
- show the need for action

Contribute so sustainability

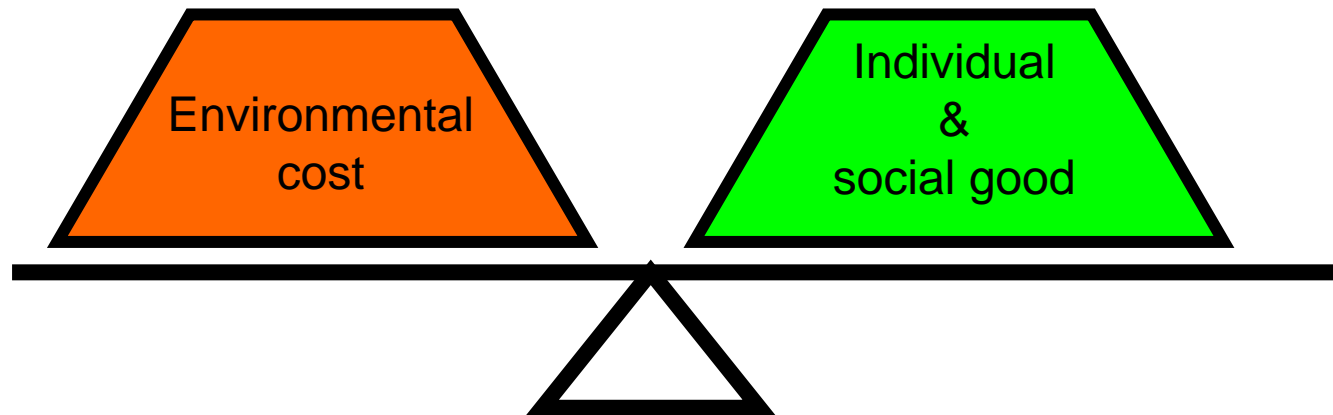
Sustainable development – the Brundtland model



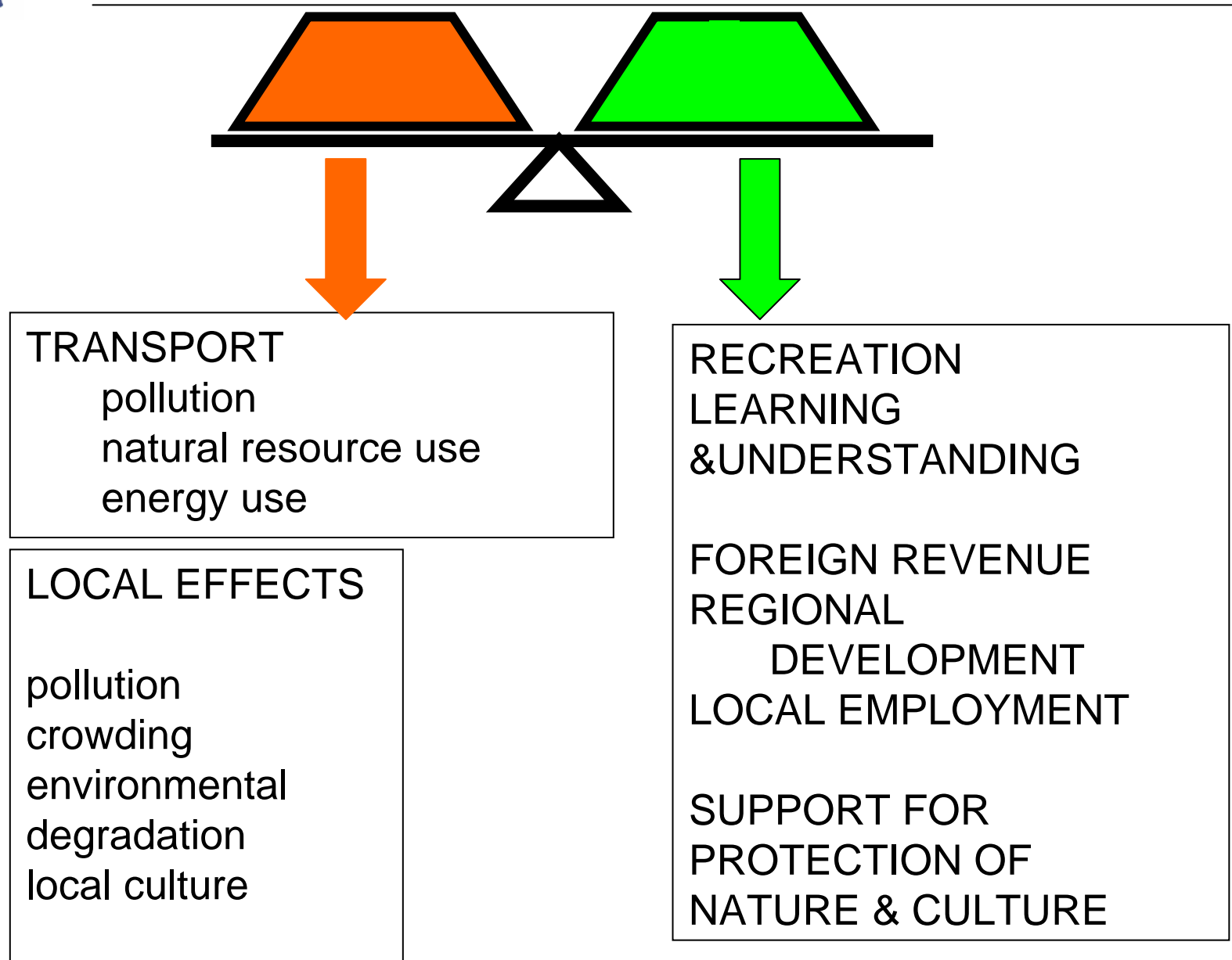
SEA: finding the area of overlap

The win-win-win assumption

Sustainable tourism is a balance:



SEA should clarify alternatives and means to balance

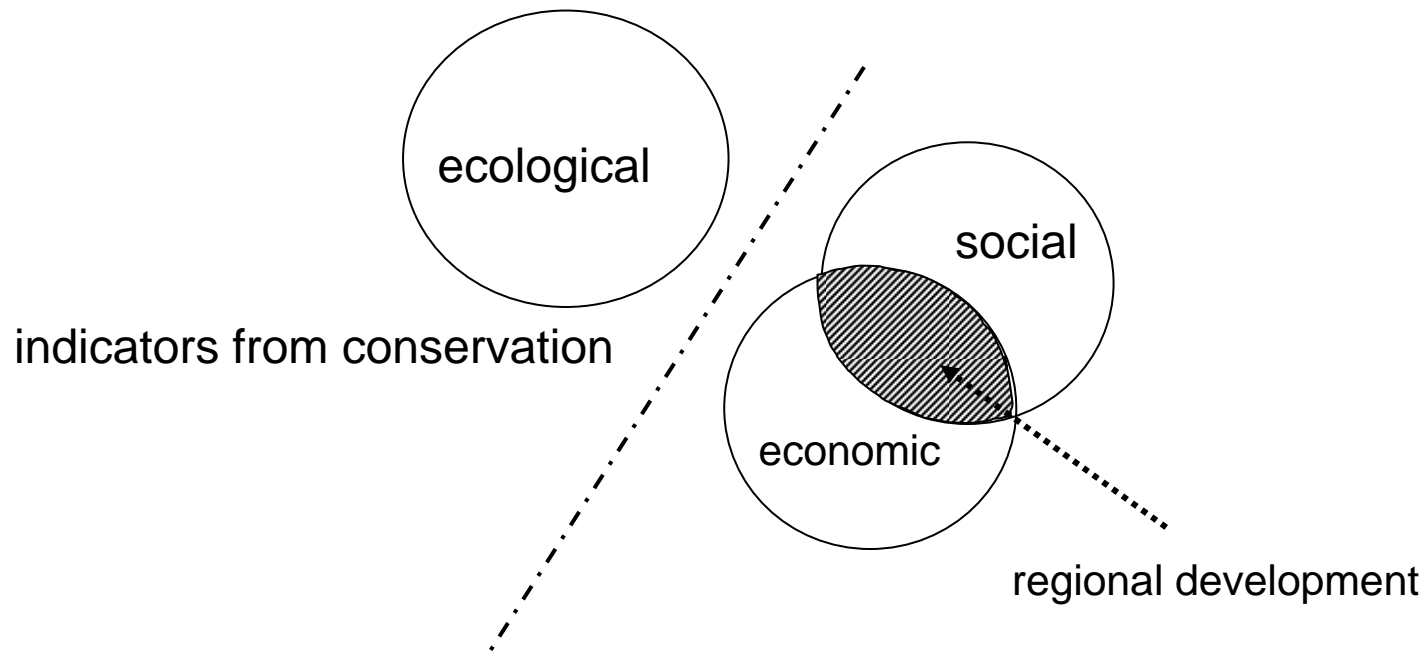


Two crucial issues in sustainable tourism:

Do we include transport ?

How is environmental sustainability handled:
determined separately
or negotiated with social and economic

Determined separately



a problem often perceived in tourism and regional development

Good practice criteria

Basis for the Decision Criterion: the SEA is to be the basis for the decision at hand

Result Criterion: the purpose or result of the proposal is to be explicit

Alternative Criterion: alternatives to the proposal are to be presented

Environmental Impact Criterion: environmental impacts of the proposal are to be described

Balancing or Compatibility Criterion: it must be possible for the decision-maker to bring together environmental and socio-economic information from an SEA

Checking Criterion: the SEA is to undergo public review before it is finalised

Steps in an EA:

screening

do we need to make an EA

scoping

what should it contain

base –line

what is the situation

alternatives

“reasonable alternatives to achieve the goals”

prediction of effect

handling uncertainty

valuation

“impact”

participation

“informing & being informed”

Environmental Impact Statement EIS

monitoring/follow up what actually happens/
what can we learn?

Scoping

Relevant concept of environment in the case

- Geographic scope
- Time perspective
- Reasonable alternatives
- Who will be impacted

“the art of intelligent simplification”
the daring to exclude

Base line

Plan documentation making scoping & prediction possible

Lack of time & resources

Scientists always want more data

- the “good enough principle”

Alternatives in SEA:

What is “a reasonable alternative” in/to plan

To break mind set of planner

Alternatives:

- no action
- alternative ways of reaching objectives
- worst case – is the plan robust?

Do decision makers want alternatives?



The use of scenarios:

- Show effects of present trends
- Illustrate different possible approaches
- Make alternatives concrete
- Discuss alternatives with stakeholders
- Show outcome of plan under different conditions



Prediction

The consequences of a plan?

what the plan permits
fully implemented

The Natura 2000 problem

Approaches:

- consultation and brain storming
- scientific & technical models
- best professional judgement
- structured reasoning from plan to impact



Participation

Early or late – an eternal dilemma

Determining who is stakeholder

Handling incoming information

Using the Internet creatively



The Environmental Impact Statement – EIS

- Complete and independent
- Non technical summary
- Specification of uncertainties, problems & deficiencies



Follow up:

- the missing link

Quality control

Monitoring

=> to create a learning system



SEA can legitimately serve as:

- **environmental assessment**

- when concrete predictions are possible and alternatives can meaningfully be defined

- **environmental base-line for policy and planning**

- identifying environmental conflicts, defining problems and setting rules for lower levels and/or EIA

- **environmental declaration**

- showing how environmental considerations have been included in plan or programme

Thank you for your attention !

