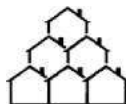


CUBA FACING FORWARD



BALANCING IDENTITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY



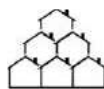
CUBA FACING FORWARD



BALANCING IDENTITY AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

Edited by
David White,
Lucas Spiro,
Victor Silva,
and Anya Brickman Raredon

Affordable Housing Institute
2018 Boston, MA



Affordable Housing Institute
77 Franklin Street
7th Floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02110

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Carmelo Mesa-Lago, "Voices of Change in Cuba from the Non-state Sector," in *Voices of Change in Cuba*, (Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018).

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Editor's Note

In 2015, the Affordable Housing Institute hosted *Cuba Facing Forward: Balancing Transition with Development in the Caribbean's Most-Watched Nation*, a one-day symposium that brought together the best forward-looking thinkers on the changes taking place in Cuba-US relations and how these changes might impact the built and natural environments in Cuba. The conference took place at William James Hall at Harvard University. The primary goals of the conference were to: create an open, frank, and constructive discourse on Cuba's future; explore the possible effects of transition on Cuba's built and natural environment, and how to harness the forces of change to improve both; and to foster an ongoing multi-party conversation.

This collection was inspired by the exciting and hopeful discussions and ideas generated during and after that symposium. It is our hope that the work contained in this book effectively builds on those ideas and provides academics, professionals, and students with a well-informed perspective.

We'd like to thank the organizers of the 2015 conference for their dedication and commitment: Dave Hampton, Ali Karimi, Anya Brickman Raredon, and Sandra Bonito

In addition to the sixteen contributors featured in this collection, *Cuba Facing Forward* would not have been possible without the invaluable editorial assistance of Belmont Freeman, Leah Demarest, Laura Grelet, and Vidhee Garg, and translation help from Mounia Tagma.

Finally, this book was made possible, in part, through a generous grant from the Christopher Reynolds Foundation, whose support is greatly appreciated.

Foreword

Belmont Freeman

Facing forward, our gaze invariably lands on a mirror that reflects our view backwards over the landscape that lies behinds us or, with a slight change of angle, directly back upon ourselves. In contemplating the future, one's inquiry necessarily loops back through history to elucidate the present and to seek guidance as to how one might move ahead. In the essays collected in this volume each author offers a critical look at the complex histories that influenced—or indeed still inhabit—the particular cultural, economic or political territories that he or she examines, and uses it to inform an assessment of the current situation and a speculation on, or aspiration for, the future. The composite product is a rich and intricate view of Cuba, facing forward.

This anthology grew out of a symposium of the same title that was held at Harvard University's Graduate School of Design in November 2015, in which I was privileged to participate as a respondent. Examining the current state of affairs within Cuba and between Cuba and the United States, and prospects for the future, the strength of the conference lay in its eclectic mix of participants, bringing together as it did experts, both

Foreword

Cuban and North American, in fields as varied as politics, law, economics, architecture, and science. Speakers presented critical insights as viewed through the lenses of their respective, but intimately interrelated—as became clear during the course of the symposium—professional and academic sectors. *Cuba Facing Forward*, the book, happily expands this multidisciplinary platform to include more voices, and with a format that allows broader and deeper exposition.

I would like to say that this book is coming out at the ideal moment, a moment of real change in Cuba, but we have heard that said of just about every publication on Cuba in recent years. For the past decade Cuba has seemed always to be on the cusp of change, however one might define or value such change. Expectations soared in 2008 when Fidel Castro retired from the Presidency of Cuba and passed the reins of power to his younger—and supposedly more pragmatic—brother Raúl; again in 2014 when Presidents Barak Obama and Raúl Castro initiated tentative but momentous rapprochement, symbolically culminating in Obama's historic visit to Cuba in March of 2016, and in November 2016 when Fidel died and, with him, his highly personal and rigid ideological grip on the island nation.

Indeed, the timing of the Harvard symposium seemed propitious, and the mood then was optimistic that the trajectories of US-Cuban relations and of Cuba's political and economic evolution were decidedly positive. Nobody, at that moment, could foresee the uncertainty into which the 2016 US election would throw the process of normalizing relations between the United States and Cuba. Recent actions by the Trump administration only demonstrates the fragility of detente. And, on the island, I sense pervasive frustration that the promised benefits of the opening the ostensible economic reforms have yet to flow to ordinary Cuban citizens.

Yet change is inevitable. Raúl Castro will step down from the Cuban Presidency in 2018, so next year Cuba will for the first time in over half a century almost certainly be led by someone without the surname Castro and who is too young to have fought in the armed Revolution. And the doors that the Obama administration cracked open—expanded travel, relaxed policies on remittances, new trade opportunities—are unlikely to be completely shut again. Most significantly, by simple generational attrition, the great majority of people in both the United States and Cuba

Belmont Freeman

have shed the hostility and suspicion that prevailed through the late twentieth century.

Yet, at the same time, Americans must get beyond the auto-centric attitude that the future of Cuba depends on US policy; that as soon as the embargo is lifted American wealth will flow south and problems will evaporate. To be sure, the United States has inflicted irreparable damage on Cuba in the past and this must be reversed; but we have to recognize and respect that meaningful and enduring change in Cuba must come from within Cuba, by the Cuban people, and this will take a long time. All of which is to say that for those of us who care about Cuba and what lies ahead for its people, facing forward must incorporate the long view and accept that our gaze will yet be deflected by the many mirrors, prisms, and opaque surfaces that populate our field of vision, facing forward.

Belmont Freeman, FAIA
New York City, November 2017

Participatory Construction of a Sustainable Tourism Development Model in Caibarién, Cuba

Manuel Ramón González Herrera and
Mercedes de los Ángeles Rodríguez Rodríguez†

Tourism is a key factor for development, prosperity, and wellbeing, due to its positive effects on employment, industry, exports, and infrastructure. At the same time, it's an important factor for sustainability and regional development.¹ According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), there has been a notable expansion and diversification in tourism in the last six decades, becoming one of the world's most dynamic economic sectors.² International tourist arrivals

† Translated by Victor Silva and David White

have increased from 25 million in 1950 to 1.19 billion in 2015. Similarly, international tourism receipts have increased from USD 2 billion in 1950 to USD 1260 billion in 2015. Finally, tourism generated USD 211 billion in transportation exports on passenger flights, cruises, and other forms of travel.³

Within this context, Cuba has been receiving more than a million visitors yearly since 1996, an amount that continues to grow every year, particularly in the last decade.⁴ In 2015, 3,139,764 arrived to the island, roughly equaling 3.6 hosts per visitor.⁵ It is important to note this statistic only covers the first seven months of 2015 and likely correlates to eased travel restrictions previously imposed by the US, as is evident by the more than 50% increase of US tourists from the previous year.⁶ According to the Minister of Tourism of Cuba (MINTUR), the island reached the four million visitors mark in 2016, which represents a 17% growth compared to the previous year.⁷ As a result, the sector is included as a strategic cluster for the development plan 2030.⁸

The gradual development achieved through tourism in Cuba could have profound implications for the island's natural resources, political history, and cultural heritage, despite the suboptimal touristic value achieved thus far. This increased activity has made tourism an important part of the economy, both because of its capacity to generate income and its potential stimulation of other economic activities. Therefore, tourism has been declared a sustainable development policy that benefits society and the environment.⁹

Tourism, particularly in the city of Caibarién, has become an important factor in stimulating local economic growth. The construction of a causeway to Cayo Santa Maria, a small island off the northern coast, improved access to a variety of valuable natural resources, particularly for visitors seeking sun and beach. A high percentage of tourists coming to Caibarién come with the purpose of exploring local beaches, but are motivated to explore the city's history, local culture, and cultural heritage. Nevertheless, urban attractions are not explicitly offered or promoted through official touristic channels, and visitors are generally unaware of what the city has to offer.

The purpose of this chapter is to present the results of an analysis of problems in Caibarién resulting from the recent development of tourism in the region. This analysis focuses on the local community's perception and identifies alternatives for a sustainable development of tourism in

the region. This study intends to provide a summary of useful information with the goal of improving the understanding of how the local tourism development model works and to provide guidelines for a more competitive and productive tourism system.

Characteristic Features of Caibarién

The municipality of Caibarién is located northeast of Villa Clara (Figure 1), which, as a functioning port and fishery, has positively influenced the region's economic and social development. Caibarién is 426.2 km² with 213.41 km² of land and 212.74 km² of cay, contributing to a coastal zone and an insular area of small cays, popular for its size and natural beauty. Since 1994, 48 km² of causeway has connected this insular zone (including Las Brujas, Ensenacho, and Santa María) to the coastal city of Caibarién.



Figure 1 Location of Caibarién, Cuba

Caibarién (Figure 1), is the main municipality city in the Villa Clara province and is mainly formed by plains with a long coast and a natural environment that has been heavily modify by urbanization. Caibarién is 92% urbanized and has a density of 148 people per Km²; its urban population is 33,000 people. The city is characterized to have a slow pace, it is common to see neighbors playing traditional games on their entryways or just casually talking.

Founded by Narciso de Justas y Martinez in 1832 as a fishing village on the north coast of Cuba, the village was initially known as Colonia de Vives, though later reverted back to its native name, Caibarién. Recent archeological evidence suggests the modern population can be traced

back to the colonial and pre-colonial periods.¹⁰ Although officially founded as a town in 1832, Caibarién had previously been functioning as a port, which helped facilitate the settlement and establishment of a fishing and trading economy, with the latter having a boom during the second decade of the twentieth century.¹¹ Its current population is 32,679 and it's considered a city of "Third Order" under Cuban nomenclature, meaning it has a population of more than 20,000.¹² In recent years, population growth can be attributed to inbound migration drawn by the expansion of tourism. The city layout is orthogonal, with wide streets that guarantee a functional and aesthetic connectivity between the different city attractions and all the city avenues starting at the ocean. The city offers a landscape of patrimonial structures built of bricks, covered with wood and traditional roof tiles, and featuring running portals and high struts that provide a compact block and coherence to the city.¹³ Towards the ocean, the city is framed by a pier connecting Cayo Conuco and Mar Azul beach, both places with local and provincial importance. This area represents one local attraction that could be further developed and promoted to increase tourist interest in the local landscape and culture.



Figure 2 Plaza La Libertad (left) and Beach Mar Azul (right), Caibarién

For more than five decades, the city has functioned as residential and commercial, while also existing as an industrial port and tourist destination linked to Mar Azul and Cayo Conuco. As a result, the urban structure of Caibarién has several different zones: historic center, periphery to the historical center, west zone, port zone, pier zone, south zone, beach and fishing city, Cayo Conuco, industrial zone, Van Troy neighborhood, La Torre neighborhood, and Marcelo Salado

neighborhood. The city serves as a hub for local and provincial tourism. The main destinations are the beach of Mar Azul that has been in use for more than fifty years and Cayo Conuco. Both have poor infrastructure that have undergone light maintenance to be able to serve the new demand created by tourism. Nevertheless, the city offers recreation around its historic center, the old port, the Malecón, industrial zone, and the Van Troy, La Torre, and Marcelo Salado neighborhoods.

Caibarién's economic activity is primarily based around fishing, industrial processing, and shipyards. Other industries include a saddlery, food production, and a bicycle factory. Caibarién's economy has gone through important structural transformations over time with several different social impacts. The port driven growth stopped in the 1930s after the port closed, and a declining sugar industry led to the closure of the Marcelo Salado in 2002. As a result of new national development strategies, the local population reoriented their economic activities towards tourism and culture like the popular Museum of Sugar Industry.

In this sense, the main economic activities of urban Caibarién have historically been linked to fishing and other related services. Since the 1990s, however, there has been an openness to international tourism as an important source of economic growth that mainly takes place around the paradisiac beaches and nearby cays. The city's historic attractions include local culture, cultural or educational activities, and local particularities. For example, there are popular attractions such as *Parrandas* (traditional provincial festivals), traditional parties with organized *comparsas* (town dances), celebrated with fireworks, carnival carriages, and town ornaments.

In this new tourism-oriented context, the city is situated as the closest settlement to the beaches and cays, making it the main source of direct and indirect labor and logistical support. At the same time, it allows a cultural offering complementary to the sun and beach, thus making the urban area more attractive and engaging. As a result of being a port during the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries, the city has a rich and historic infrastructure evident in old warehouses, custom buildings, and inns, which contribute to and enhance the tourist experience. Additionally, the traditional sugar industry has left an important patrimonial impact which can be seen at the agro-industrial museum, Museo de Agroindustria Azucarero Marcelo Salado, the old *Central Azucarero*, and old sugar cane plantations and trains. The

combination of these creates an experience that makes visitors part of history by consuming traditional products, riding old trains, and participating in traditional *guateques* dances.

Although increased tourism has encouraged economic development and expansion, it has nonetheless exacerbated environmental challenges and limitations on infrastructure and resources. The main problems for the locals are due primarily to limited infrastructure such as water supply, garbage collection, sewage, and electricity, as well as marine contamination and inappropriate management of the littoral. Other problems include diminishing forest coverage, deteriorating urban landscape, qualitative housing deficits, poor public health, lack of a sufficient road network, and limited communication systems within the city.

Until now, there has been no effective communication system to alert residents to possible risks or dangers like hurricanes. In fact, this need has not even been considered a problem. Given that tourism has been a recent option for development, the local population does not seem ready to identify this new set of problems.

With respect to local perception of increased tourism, there is a recognition that residents are being faced with changes. Some locals say “everything is changing ...how we live” and “our differences seem to be more acute. Incomes have created economic differences that are reflected in consumption and home improvements; but it also creates social differences because of how people are dressing and presenting.”

At the same time, the community recognizes positive impacts that come with tourism. “[D]uring community meetings there are discussions about environmental problems,” says one resident, adding “Sometimes the environment is discussed in the neighborhood during what is known as ‘Barrio Debate.’” Another participant commented that “Some shows such as *Mi casa bonita* and *Mi casa saludable* are aimed at promoting positive behaviors. After natural disasters such as cyclones there are communal activities around cleaning and recycling...[and] there is also attention on preservation of flora and fauna.

Young people have organized volunteer programs around preservation. Conferences and classes through radio have been organized to publicize how to take care of the environment. Tourism has promoted these learning instruments and increased awareness of the impact the environment has on the community.”

Because of its proximity to the shore, at sea level, the city is exposed to a higher risk severe weather events such as hurricanes. Hurricane Irma in September 2017, for example, had a devastating impact on the region. After almost twelve hours under the effects of 180 kilometer per hour hurricane winds and gusts of up to 215 kilometers per hour, according to the Meteorological Institute of Caibarién, citizens started to work to recover from the impact. The town’s response capacity is very important in the aftermath of such disasters, as are *the Zonas de Defensa*, created more than thirty years ago, and drills for disaster preparedness. Refuge was provided in coordination with the council of the Civil Defense, the government provided food and other resources such as personalized attention to victims of total and partial loss of their homes. At the time of this publication, damages are still not quantifiable, but included, among other things, flooding, partial and total destruction of houses, interruption to electricity, cellphones and land lines, and radio and television services as a result of damage to the telecommunication infrastructure. Other infrastructure such as water, roads, and dykes were also considerably affected; limiting access to touristic areas in Cayo Santa María.

Formation and Development of Tourism as a Social Phenomenon in Caibarién

The boom of port activity in Caibarién at the end of the nineteenth century created the need for hosting transient people, sailors, and other travelers. As a result, different entities opened to cover the required services. The first hotel, *El Union*, was opened in 1860, followed by commercial establishments linking their services to it, such as *El Internacional* and *El Comercio* (Table 1).

Participatory Construction of a Sustainable Tourism Development Model

Entities and Spaces	Origin and Function	Current State
Hotel Unión (1865-1866)	2-story building, few rooms, restaurant, bar	Abandoned
Hotel Internacional (1866)	Building of high architectural value	La Ruina Recreation Center
Hotel Las Baleares (1898)	Initially a private home, later converted to a hotel	Family house
Hotel El Comercio (1905-1918, 1926)	30 rooms - 107 rooms over 3 floors, elevator	Abandoned
Hotel España (1906)	24 rooms spread over 2 floors	Collapsed
Creación de Playita Rodal	Public beach, spa, restaurant and canteen	No longer in use
Apertura del Balneario Cayo Conuco (1928)	Recreational boat access	Cayo Conuco public beach
Apertura Playa Yacht Club (c. 1930)	Private club for whites only	Public beach, Mar Azul
Apertura Playa Militar (c. 1930)	Private officers club and civilian guests	Public beach, Mar Azul
Hotel Pasaje (c. 1930)	small 2-story hotel, restaurant	Family and home store
Hotel Sevilla (1935, 1952)	28 rooms, restaurant, cantina	Family house
Hotel América (1941)	12 rooms, restaurant, cantina	Family house
Hotel La Flor de Asia (1941)	5 rooms, Chinese restaurant, cantina	Popular restaurant
Campismo Cayo Conuco (1984); Villa Cayo Conuco (1997)	Rustic cabins and 24 cabins, restaurant, bar	Popular camping and villa beach
Campismo popular Cayo Frago (1984)	300 tent lots	Closed
Reconstrucción de la playa Mar Azul (1998 - 2004)	Various types of recreation	Public beach, Mar Azul
Hotel Brisas del Mar-Costa Blanca (2004)	Opened as a military club c. 1951, a hotel since 1970	Beach hotel
Hotel del MININT	Apartments	Beach hotel

Table 1 Main accommodations and activities characteristic of the touristic formation and development process according to colonial, neocolonial, and socialist phases.

The commercialization of beaches also emerged, peaking in 1930 with yacht clubs like *el Club de los Oficiales* and more recent examples like Playa Mar Azul and Cayo Conuco.

As previously noted, Caibarién is a city with a national touristic tradition associated with the ocean. The Mar Azul and Cayo Conuco beaches have been key elements of attraction in the central region of Cuba since the second half of last century. Nevertheless, since 1990, the emphasis on international development promoted around the country has tended to overlook or ignore local needs and wants of city residents; thus, it is possible to say that the growth period observed during these years is mainly due to activity related to the beaches and cays. In this sense, the city serves as logistical support for the regional expansion generated by tourism and for both the productive value chains and sociocultural exchanges.

This is without a doubt one of the main limitations in the process of adaptive re-naturalization: conversion of the touristic infrastructure in Caibarién and new touristic destinations at the Cayos. For example, in Caibarién there hasn't been a process for local and public consultation with respect to the plans and projects for touristic development, nor has the community been consulted about its needs or interests in relation to the development of tourism in their city and Cayos de Villa Clara. Media has also been unable to cover the topic in a transparent and participatory manner, especially to get to know the perception of local hosts.

Urban Based Touristic Attractions

The formations of the tourism system in the city are largely based on a history and landscape that emphasizes and reinforces Caibarién's maritime character. The most distinctive characteristic of the urban landscape is that of a maritime locale, which encourages visitors to enjoy the ocean environment, beaches, and fishing in small homemade ships or from the shore. Indeed, the main local attractions are built around the location and formation of the city, including: (i) Plaza La Libertad – Church of La Purísima Concepción, (ii) Caibarién High School (currently municipal museum) and old *Colonia Española*, (iii) Martí Walk, and (iv) the Pier. The last of these is a good example of living patrimony and multi-purpose use; the local population uses these places to go fish and enjoy the natural environment.

Yet, while maritime history may be a big tourist draw, there are a variety of attractions in its surroundings that are a product of life in the urban area such as Fort Crucero, Marcelo Salado Agro-Industrial

complex (now the 1859 Museum of the Sugar Agro-Industry), and the ruins of the Dolores Plant. All of these have considerable historic and cultural significance, which gives them tremendous touristic potential that has not yet been explored. This is in part due to some managers' lack of knowledge of how to promote the touristic value of such attractions. For example, in Dolores, nothing has been done to reconstruct and rescue the vestiges of patrimony from the sugar industry. Further, Cuban businesses and shops around Caibarién are not used to their full potential in the process of touristic development. These spaces are highly representative of traditional Cuban culture, with high functional, aesthetic, symbolic, and representative potential.

As part of the traditional and popular culture, ocean related folklore enhance the tourist experience. For example, customs and traditions are preserved and celebrated such as family fishing, crab catching, boat races, and popular culinary traditions with traditional sea food like "dog sauce" and *Macabí* balls. Similarly, handicrafts, a small but important part of any local economy, are also related to the maritime character; baskets used in pots for fishing, sewing with threads of tarpaulins and hammocks, elaboration of objects using corals, shells, snails and lobster shells, among others.

These cultural products and practices generate cultural tourist activities such as visits to historical sites, monuments, exhibitions, and the general enjoyment of cultural life and the urban marine atmosphere. In turn, they promote recreational activities, entertainment or participative leisure, cultural events, popular parties, and sports, among others. In this case, the events include unique expressions of culture including the tradition of Parrandas of Caibarién and *guateques* folk celebrations.

Composition and Structure of the Touristic Foundations

During the colonial and neocolonial eras, the main tourist draws in Caibarién were the Union Hotel (currently in ruins), The International Hotel (currently in ruins), and the Hotel Comercio (currently semi-demolished, advanced deterioration). In addition, the Hotel Spain was a popular spot with tourists until recently.

The rest were small lodging entities, which generally offered very limited services, some of which are not recognized by current tourism

requirements. The space of occupation and the constructed volume was also smaller.



Figure 3 Old and current view of Hotel Comercio, Caibarién

Currently, Caibarién is integrated as a tourism sub-region within the Villa Clara region, grouping four tourist poles, three of them based on the modality of sun and beach (Cayo Santa María, Cayo Ensenacho, Cayo Las Brujas), and one urban locale represented by the city, which makes it possible to integrate complementary options to the aforementioned attractions.

The city has very little capacity for hosting both Cuban and international visitors. The tourist base is made up of one beach hotel, several hostels, rentable private family rooms, all mostly located in the historic center of the city and Reparto Mar Azul. Holiday villas with rustic construction are also available. In Cuba, the extra-hotel industry is defined as any tourist accommodations other than hotels, such as restaurants, coffee shops, bars and any other related hospitality service. The significance of these touristic activities operated by informal and semi-formal companies is very little. In the last decade there has been a private sector increase offering housing services in Caibarién that are denominated hostels as well as *paladares*, primarily offering services to foreign tourists. These establishments have, from their origin, been registered and licensed by the government to operate, while others have established operating contracts with the state. In contrast, the coastal shoreline offers very comfortable housing infrastructure, and significant potential for hotel development (Table 2). It is one of the most important tourist destinations for sun and beach and has greater potential to grow at national and regional levels.

Hotel	Number of rooms	Year Opened
Villa Las Brujas	24	1999
Iberostar Ensenachos	506	2005
Meliá Buenavista	105	2011
Sol Cayo Santa María	300	2001
Meliá Cayo Santa María	358	2003
Meliá Las Dunas	925	2006
Playa Cayo Santa María	769	2011
Starfish Cayo Santa María	1368	2008
Royalton Cayo Santa María	122	2012
Memories Paraíso Azul	1386	2010
Eurostars Cayo Santa María	846	2013
Valentín Perla Blanca	1020	2014

Table 2 Hotel base of Villa Clara Keys

The policy of tourism development is aimed at strengthening Caibarién as a provincial tourist destination and preparing it for the impact of transient tourism. Accordingly, it aims to consolidate and develop Mar Azul beach as a provincial tourist destination, to promote Cayo Conuco as a tourism destination, and to provide the city with an infrastructure that guarantees services to transient tourism.

Understanding the Locally Oriented Development Model

Because tourism development is a relatively recent issue for Caibarién, an *Organización de Gestión de Destino* (Organization for Management of the Destination, or OGD) has not yet been created, nor has priority been given to authentic values and historical and cultural patrimony. The result is the development of spontaneous activities, not strategically planned actions that are consequential to management of impacts. This leads to actions that are, in a sense, more corrective than

preventive. The typologies of regional implementation of tourism are also similar; these are based on an integrated and planned archeogenic development model that, rather than focusing on urban expansion, is open and oriented to specialization in cultural historical tourism modalities. Such modalities are based on approaching development with a sustainable paradigm to protect vulnerable urban environments.



Figure 4 Hotel Villa Las Brujas (left) and Las Brujas Key (right), Caibarién

It is similarly based on small-town tourism that receives mostly visitors in transit to and from the beach through organized tours and self-organized trips. In some cases, the city is used as a hub to visit the beaches or to complement planned beach activities. The spatial structure of international tourist development tends to be mononuclear according to the distribution of the infrastructure and unipolar according to the motivations generated by the city, with a tourist system associated with the seasonal sun and beach destination. In the case of national tourism, there is a motivational orientation towards the Mar Azul and Cayo Conuco beaches, where the infrastructure that supports this use is distributed, with marked seasonality concentrated in the summer months.¹⁴

The scheme of morphological zoning around which the city bases its international tourist activities reveals a zone primarily concentrated in and around the historical center. So far, there has been no development of a secondary concentration zone within the city, and the isolated attractions popular with international tourists could be attributed to their proximity to other popular locations and attractions. Meanwhile, the main concentration zone for national tourism is ordered around the beach of Caibarién, with a zone of secondary concentration in Cayo Conuco. Thus, the city in its tourist function contains an urban nucleus of greater

significance for international tourism and two coastal centers of sun and beach for national tourist use.

Within the city there exists a tourist corridor for vehicular traffic to and from the cays and Santa Clara, as well as several pedestrian corridors that facilitate tourist mobility, including urban routes that connect the main attractions, the coastal boardwalk, and the flow towards the local beaches. This makes it possible to identify a more intensive-use zone associated with the area, with the highest tourist frequencies where urban tourist centers and their tourist influence areas are concentrated, as well as the corridors that mark the tourist flows towards the beaches. This functional zoning facilitates tourism management by focusing the influxes of visitors and the centers of attraction, making it easier to control the touristic system. The community also understands it as such; according to one resident, “Caibarién is more organized and pretty since tourism increased, especially by the Malecón, with all the construction... and so close to the park, it gives me joy to walk by that area...”

A Look into the Impacts of the Local Tourist Development Model

In order to gain insight into the Caibarién community’s perception of local tourist development, we interviewed the population during several workshops. Based on their feedback and opinions, we identified a baseline of the perceived positive and negative impacts of increased tourism. Afterward, the opinions were evaluated qualitatively, for which affected receptors (those who are affected as receptors of impact, negative or positive) were identified. The following reflects community perception regarding local tourism and their concerns about the future. Based on our qualitative analysis, we were able to identify the affected receptors and the dimension and indicators for each one of the positive and negative impacts identified by community members.

Among the areas most identified as being affected by tourism, and of greatest interest to residents were education, health, and culture. Moreover, participants recognized the positive value of tourism in relation to those aspects. One participant noted “there are more training courses. The Federation of Cuban Women (FMC) teaches a course on the orientation of women and family, and training for massages, hair cutting, makeup, manicure, and other languages, etc. The courses are open to all ages and genders; for everyone trying to improve their skills.”

Further, they recognize that “more people are getting educated, there is less unemployment, and you can see young people concerned about the community...”

Others noted that “the community is more stable. People are staying here. Even with the long-standing housing problem, new neighborhoods have been created and many have been able to obtain housing.” Another adds that, at the same time, “... the FMC is very active on the promotion of women, this is very positive for local social development.” In relation to health, one pointed out:

[t]here has been a lot of work on the promotion of environmental health, quality of life, and more healthy habits. There is promotion through the radio, this is very effective for the population. Before, health was only about having a hospital, now the concept has been expanded ... and there is a tendency to include the environment.

Regarding concerns about increased drug addiction and prostitution, one participant acknowledged that “In Caibarién we have had problems with drugs because of tourism,” but he was quick to add “[w]e don’t need to be afraid of tourism, it hasn’t created any health problems... It hasn’t been like in other municipalities where [more tourists have come and] there has been a bigger repercussion in relation to drugs and prostitution.”

In terms of tourists’ influence on individual health, some residents noted a growing imitation of tourists’ eating habits, and there are real concerns about poor nutrition and the dangers of smoking. The changes in habits that tourism has brought have not only been on purchase capacity, but they have also had a direct impact on health, including better nutrition habits.

In relation to local culture, tourism appears to have had a favorable impact. One participant mentioned that “Local culture is being rescued by tourism. For example, the tradition of musical trios and traditional music. Another example is the event “Ecoarte” that takes place in November, this is an art competition with the theme on the natural environment of Caibarién ...”

Perception of Predictable Impacts in the Short Term

The main impacts that must be subject to local management to minimize the adverse effects of the implanted development model are:

- a) Economic and political risk as a result of unstable relationship between Cuba and the US, which was marked by antagonism until becoming more open during the Obama administration.¹⁵ In particular, these changes affect the influx of US visitors. One local mentioned "...in reality we don't know what is going to happen. We were already getting ready for a potential boom of US visitors and apparently that will not be possible because their government won't let them come..."
- b) Irresponsible attitudes and behaviors of local residents towards visitors. This is the result of a lack of exposure to massive worldwide tourism.
- c) High pedestrian-vehicular flow in the access and exit areas of the city. This is worsened on the highway that leads to the touristic zones of the Cayos, which crosses rural communities that have never experienced such heavy vehicular traffic.
- d) Resettlement of urban population from other cities and their impact on traditional local services.
- e) Significant increase in volumes of water, electricity, communications and solid and liquid waste generation. A participant mentioned "... I have never had any problem with water supply in my house, but lately I'm worried about where we're going to get water for so many people."
- f) Alteration in the traditional styles and ways of life of the city with effects on the intangible heritage associated with the marine life.
- g) Contrasts in the urban landscape image between the areas of residence of the population employed in tourism and the rest of the city. This concern was best illustrated by one resident, who noted "The city is growing rapidly, you see new tourism related things everywhere, in reality only the houses of people that work in tourism are improving and look pretty, I would also like to be benefited by tourism ..."

In terms of the perceptions reported by the local participants in this research, the impact of the policies and the mitigation actions implemented in the region for the management of risk and damages are considered the responsibility of the state and local government, social and community organizations, health sector, and education sector. The most effective strategies for local management of negative impacts are those related to mitigation and resistance and or adaptation.

Diagnostic Set-up of the Current Situation of Touristic Development Internal Analysis: Touristic Destination

Through workshops with community participants it was possible to obtain a list of strengths and weaknesses as a baseline for the integrated management of tourism (Tables 4 and 5). This was created using a participatory methodology taking into consideration the social perception of impacts that tourism will have on the host community. The list indicates that one of the main concerns addressed by residents is related to the lack of readiness and awareness of basic tourism culture to be able to confront this rapid tourism development.

	City of Caibarién
STRENGTHS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strong cultural tradition of the city. 2. Existence of abundant talent in music, art, and dance. 3. Strong sense of belonging of its inhabitants and interest for tourist use. 4. Institutionalization of the entire cultural system. 5. Existence of cultural research that rescued traditions, recipes, legends, and folklore. 6. Growing interest of journalists and media makers of local mass media on the subject.

Table 4 List of main strengths

The lists of strengths and weaknesses (Tables 4 and 5) in relation to the development of regional tourism were developed in workshops with local residents. They demonstrate that even with the city's specificities there are base factors that guide and represent an integrated diagnostic for local management of a tourism culture from the host population.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor state of conservation of urban historic center. 2. Insufficient preparation of the population to interact with tourists. 3. Unawareness of local cultural values on the part of tourism managers. 4. Poor staff training culture for the culture-tourism relationship. 5. Emergence of an alternative to outside institutions with strong sense of belonging, and sometimes with higher quality than the institutional culture. 6. Absence of a communication strategy based on integrating the values of culture for all population segments. 7. Lack of interest in presenting culture as a complementary offering in this tourist destination. 	WEAKNESSES
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Table 5 List of main weaknesses

External Analysis – The Market

OPPORTUNITIES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Positioning segment of cultural tourism as a growth mode for experiential learning of history and culture of peoples. 2. Promoting general and comprehensive education in Cuba for better levels of training. 3. Conservation campaigns and respect for the cultural heritage by UNESCO and ICOMOS, among others. 4. Recovery of the tourist attraction to the historical and cultural cities. 5. Near tourist destination "Villa Clara Keys," where major hotel chains operate under the concept of Playa Plus interested in promoting the visit to the city. 6. Advantageous position of the Central University of Las Villas, the School of Hospitality and Tourism, as well as important research centers. 7. Strengthening the development and implementation of policies around national tourism Cuban tourism and diversification of tourist offerings. 8. Location in one of the eight regions prioritized for tourism development.
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Table 6 List of main opportunities

Through the implementation of the above mentioned methodology, it was possible to obtain a list of threats and opportunities to the site (Tables 6 and 7). The list is based on the recent framing of tourism as a social phenomenon in cities with touristic potential, but without the experience or background to adequately develop or support such an industry. With respect to the perception of the market, something totally

new for the city, a participant, making reference to the political dimension recognized that “politically we are forced to accommodate and adapt to this way of living ...,” which opens a lot of potential challenges, for example, not knowing how to handle competition, or relating to visitors from around the world.

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Global economic crisis with an unstable recovery in major source markets with interest in this destination. 2. Mass migration of trained professionals away from the tourist areas of the cays. 3. Strong concentration of national supply and demand of this tourism product in the urban center of Havana. 4. Increased promotional campaigns and marketing tourist destinations and cultural consolidated other new potentially competitive within the region emerging destinations. 5. Increasingly high expectations of the market segment that demands this product. 6. Location of international airport in the city of Santa Clara, more than 50km from these cities. 7. Relative proximity of the historical city of Trinidad, also in the central part of Cuba, as an alternative well positioned for the development of tourist programs. 	THREATS
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Table 7 List of main threats

Situational Analysis - SWOT

The analysis of the city as a cultural touristic destination is based on the participatory elaboration of the SWOT impact matrix.

By conducting an in-depth analysis of the SWOT matrix, we were able to identify the following generic strategies:

- Illusion quadrant: adaptive strategies to reduce or overcome the weaknesses that limit the maximum use of the opportunities identified in the environment.
- Strategy quadrant: offensive strategies to take full advantage of opportunities identified in the environment by relying on strengths.
- Attrition quadrant: defensive strategies to minimize the negative impact of threats identified in the environment by relying on strengths.

		<i>Quadrant 2: Strategy</i>					<i>Quadrant 4: Attrition</i>					
		Opportunities					Threats					
		1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	T
Strengths	1	5	-	5	5	5	3	-	1	1	5	10
	2	5	3	5	5	3	5	3	5	5	5	23
	3	5	-	5	5	-	-	-	3	3	5	11
	4	-	5	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	-	3
	5	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5
	T	15	13	15	15	8	66	8	6	9	9	20
Weaknesses	1	5	5	5	5	5	3	-	3	3	5	14
	2	5	5	5	5	5	3	-	3	3	5	14
	3	3	5	3	3	-	3	-	1	1	5	10
	4	3	-	3	3	-	3	-	1	1	5	10
	5	1	-	1	1	-	1	-	1	1	5	8
	T	17	15	17	17	10	76	13	0	9	9	25
		<i>Quadrant 1: Illusion</i>					<i>Quadrant 3: High Risk</i>					

Figure 5 SWOT impact matrix

Strategic Problem as a Touristic Destination

In determining the strategic problem that works as a basis for sustainable management of tourism in Caibarién, it's important to keep in mind that there is a lack of tourism culture in the region and understanding of tourist ecosystems among the local population. Further, the inadequate training of tourism managers makes it difficult to seize the opportunities that the current state of cultural tourism in Cuba presents such as the high value of cultural patrimony of the city. The lack of understanding and knowledge about tourism prohibits sector growth, resulting in visitor dissatisfaction with services, and decreased interest or willingness to return or recommend the city as a vacation destination.

According to different stakeholders that participated in this study, “the solution to the problem must be based on the creation of a tourism culture among the population and decision makers, with special emphasis on managers’ training to be able to take advantage of cultural and historical value.” At the same time, it’s acknowledged that “it’s necessary to make the city a more integral destination, which will require investment in infrastructure and improvement of the urban space...” This is related to the cross sector of tourism management, which a participant suggested could be achieved by “having weekly ‘system meetings’ with participation from doctors, families, community leaders, and government officials.”

The remedy outlined below corresponds to an adaptive strategy that aims to address the insufficient tourist culture within the local population and stakeholders, as well as the lack of preparation of tourism managers to take advantage of the opportunities. These include the positioning of the segment of cultural tourism as a modality in growth, favored by conservation campaigns, respect for heritage, and recovery of the tourist attraction to historical-cultural cities, and secondly, for the promotion of general and comprehensive education in Cuba.

Projections for Sustainable Local Tourism Development

As a new sector in the local economy, tourism must contribute to sustainable development by integrating in a compatible manner with the natural, cultural and built environment, while respecting the fragile balances that characterize urban spaces. For example, load capacity

needs to be taken into consideration; how many visitors Caibarién can handle in the city center and other areas such as the Malecón and the beach. Moreover, it is necessary to avoid activities or development that reduces the natural aesthetic quality and authenticity, which will affect the tourist experience. For example, the Parrandas must not subordinate to the visitor's interests; rather, visitors must adapt to the program and characteristics of these popular parties and the local customs and traditions in which they're rooted.

This focus necessarily presumes solidarity, mutual respect, and participation from all stakeholders involved in the process. Regarding visitor participation in the Parrandas, one local says, "I like it a lot that tourists are coming, and we feel proud when we can show our traditions, craftsmanship. What I don't like is that they take pictures of me without asking or that they pay no attention to the locals when they go out to show their coaches or their work at the plaza..." This attitude taken by visitors can denigrate the locals, thus, there must be a promotion of responsible, respectful, and mutually beneficial participation in these activities.

For sustainable development to occur in harmony with the areas of economy and society at the local level, consideration should be given to the contextualization of tourism activity in line with national and provincial integrated development policies, particularly the tourism sector. Likewise, the tourism process will be guided by the social policies and priorities identified at the national, provincial, and local levels.

In order to orient tourism activity to these ends, it's necessary to take into consideration, in addition to the arguments already mentioned, the following aspects:

- a) Preserve the tradition of the sugar industry and enhance the production of sugar cane and its derivatives, such as *mulata* rum, *guarapo*, and *raspadura*, which are part of the tourist attraction. This approach has been successful in cities like Trinidad del Mar, where traditional bars and restaurants such as La Canchanchara use traditional drinks and honeys, or at the Valle de los Ingenios close to the city, where tourists prepare their own drinks by grinding sugar cane.

- b) Maintain and increase the productive processes linked to the textile industry, reorienting the products to the internal demands generated by tourism development.
- c) Promote and encourage the preparation of young people in the Municipal University Headquarters, incorporating elements that contribute to the formation of an overall tourist culture. For example, through its tourism program, the Central de Las Villas University offers different courses from bachelor to doctoral degrees, as well as basic education on general touristic culture.

Identifying Positive Impacts of Tourism and Sustainability

One of the most evident benefits that touristic development can promote is economic growth and improvement of individual and collective wellbeing, as it relates to the particularities of the cultural-historic product. For example, given that the culinary industry is among the city's weakest sectors, local-oriented tourism will likely have a positive impact on restaurant offerings, increasing employment opportunities and providing better products and services for both tourists and locals.

Tourism has a multiplying effect in other industries and services such as agriculture, industry, and construction. New demands for products can stimulate production, thus stimulating the regional economy and demand for other products. Historically, most employment has been related to agriculture, construction, and the service industry. It is expected that tourism will slowly become the main source of employment either through state or private enterprises.

As a result of having been a tertiary destination, there is no precise statistical data about the number of visitors that come to the city; however, it is reasonable to assume that a significant increase in tourism will produce an increase in income. In order to orient the tourist activity according to this indicator, it is necessary to attend to the following features: (i) study in detail employment through phases in time, (ii) create and promote a stable offering of restaurants and nightlife, and (iii) promotion of statistical registry of visitor arrivals and tourism related income.

Promotion of trade associations and growth of other related sectors

A key factor for the successful development of the city as a touristic destination will depend on the established mechanisms for the promotion of local networks among different companies and their efforts to target the development of complementary industries. In this sense, it's in the best interest of the local administration to focus some of their efforts on the creation or integration of professional networks as a key area for development. For example, as a result of this initial stage of tourism development, the city has seen increased income in communications, transportation, and the use of new technologies, among many other indicators. There have been different steps taken to achieve this; however, all prioritize the creation of a local tourism cluster with the participation of all stakeholders to achieve this goal.

In order to orient the tourist activity according to this indicator it is necessary to attend to the following:

- a) Call for the creation of a space to incentivize local enterprises in a creative and challenging manner.
- b) Continue stimulating the implementation of different stages of the process of business improvement for the strategic positioning of local businesses to support tourism.
- c) Develop a prospective study about the need and growth opportunities of local economic sectors based on potential demand.

Attraction of Controlled Foreign Investment

Considering local characteristics and local touristic development projection, foreign investment will need to be carefully monitored and regulated. More than just new investments, this plan should also include the conversion of uses and functionalities, which generates value by using existing structures and development with minimum resources. Unfortunately, the investment process linked to tourism has been slow and has kept the elements of basic touristic offerings to a minimum. Moreover, it is necessary to obtain funds for preservation of historic and cultural heritage sites that have been negatively impacted or neglected

over time. This is precisely where capital management for investment in improvement of the infrastructure should focus.

In order to orient the tourist activity according to this indicator, it is necessary to attend to the following features:

- a) Study in detail the mechanisms for attracting small and controlled foreign capital investments for maintenance of the cultural heritage and its tourist value.
- b) Promote actions to develop the extra-hotel network in the city through the construction of new restaurants and other purveyors of food and beverage, which improves the quality of the offerings.
- c) Evaluate the possibility of putting into operation new stores dedicated to international tourism, since in practice they become necessary.
- d) Continue to work on the restoration and adaptation of old colonial and neocolonial buildings for multifunctional purposes.
- e) Strengthen the adaptation and diversification of the tourist offerings and extend it to other points of the province, mainly Santa Clara.
- f) Systematically evaluate the investment plan for tourism.
- g) Improve and complete infrastructure to support expanded local and regional tourism.

Conservation of Cultural Heritage and Local Way of Life

In the context of locally-oriented tourism, historic preservation and cultural heritage are of great significance. Given their complementary value to the Cayos de Villa Clara, restored or preserved sites should enhance the conservation of the cultural heritage of the region, its local culture, and the daily lives of local residents. Such an emphasis can make the area more attractive, engaging, and unique. The emphasis on historic preservation and cultural heritage positively corresponds to the collaborative platform established between the Ministry of Culture (MINCULT), the National Union of Artists and Writers (UNEAC), and the Ministry of Tourism (MINTUR). The document that guides this strategic alliance advocates making culture an active part of tourism,

hence the distinctiveness of the tourism product may have a markedly cultural stamp.

In order to orient the tourist activity according to this indicator it will be necessary to consider the following features:

- a) Education of all social actors through local patrimony valorization programs under the technical assistance of the local museum and cultural houses. Simple, practical, and participatory programs are recommended for the cultural training on interpreting and taking care of the patrimony.
- b) To familiarize all local residents with the holistic meaning of the terms “tourist heritage,” “natural heritage,” “lived heritage,” and “built heritage.” This has been successful in other parts of Cuba such as Havana, Santiago, and Trinidad del Mar.
- c) Work to improve local residents’ perception of the significance of their own cultural heritage in order to better promote its touristic value. In this case it’s important to work from different educational and cultural institutions, especially with kids and teenagers, as it has been done in other Cuban cities such as Santa Clara or San Juan de los Remedios.
- d) Encourage the preparation of specialized cultural managers and interpreter-guides responsible for enhancing tourist engagement with cultural heritage. In Cuba, there is no real experience with this, because of the limited history of international tourism; however, it’s starting to be systematized as a good practice with international experiences in historic US cities such as Boston, MA and Williamsburg, VA. In Cuba, different institutions and companies such as Gaviota have started a new tradition on training personal for this purpose.
- e) Encourage the visitor's experiential learning as part of the heritage interpretation process. Behavior codes (social norms for behavior and conduct) can be implemented for this, such as those that already exist in areas of touristic interest like Old Havana, Cienfuegos, or Camaguey, promoting the expanded use of tourist-friendly signs and cultural interpretative tours of the city and its surroundings.

Promotion of other Forms of Contemporary Culture

It is worth noting that, as a result of the current tourism trend, expansion and development of tourism has become a priority for Cuba. Although major cities tend to receive a disproportionate amount of attention, due to its proximity to Cayos de Villa Clara, Caibarién represents an opportunity for touristic development that is frequently overlooked in larger strategic planning.

Per MINTUR's policy, we seek to diversify the Cuban tourist product. Thus, it's critical that diverse events, festivals, and other forms of cultural expression are increased in frequency and better incorporated into the tourist experience; to achieve this it will be necessary to have funds available for tourism and to promote activities that allow to capture such funds. In order to orient the tourist activity according to this indicator it will be necessary to attend to the following features:

- a) Strengthen strategic alliances with entities that promote cultural tourism.
- b) Study national and international experiences to promote the tourist value of these forms of contemporary culture.
- c) Complete the inventory and characterization of the attractions to better-understand and promote local offerings and cultural events.
- d) Establish marketing strategies to promote the cultural products of the city.
- e) Take advantage of the possibilities offered by Gaviota S.A. in the region.

Preservation of the Environment by Improving the Use of Touristic Zones

The preservation of the built environment that supports tourist activities, and all the infrastructure needed, presupposes the care and preservation of the urban environment. In this regard, the MINTUR Delegation, the Institute of Physical Planning, and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment have been working on regional planning. Significant results have been achieved in terms of waste management and water and energy use, among others, which have

favorably affected the urban image. Still, there does not yet exist a detailed strategic plan for tourism development for the city, though it has been given due consideration and been carefully integrated into the general plan. In light of the touristic potential of the region, it is worth creating a more formal plan for local development. It's time to carry out a tourism zoning of the city in which all the functional relations generated by tourism in this area are established, highlighting the burdens that presuppose tourist flows and the conditions of community responses based on differentiated levels of vulnerability to impacts.

Tourism development has inherited an urban plan that was not conceived to fulfill the demanding functions that present-day tourism imposes on receptive destinations. This increases the complexity of the functions of management of urban heritage made available for tourist use. In order to guide tourism activity according to our indicators, it will be necessary to take into account the following:

- a) Draft a strategic plan of tourism development for the city.
- b) Promote the study of tourist load capacity for the urban historical center.
- c) Permanently monitor visitor flows in line with identified response potentials.
- d) Elaborate a plan of rearrangement and maintenance of the spaces of public use and green space.
- e) Hierarchize the design of the products and investments of the city in function of the strategies of planning established for the tourist pole, as well as the effectiveness of the commercialization mechanisms.
- f) Update the Environmental Strategy of the tourism system for the city, based on the territorial strategy, creating the necessary instruments for its application.
- g) Develop a program of tourist road signs and repair of the main roads, and expand the program of restoration and conservation of monumental properties according to criteria of environmental planning.

- h) Improve the design of the local tourist products in the city, incorporating the criteria of total quality and capacity in such a way that tourist offerings can satisfy the expectations and increasing requirements of the markets of interest for the destination.
- i) Design a quality management system of the tourist destination that allows obtaining an adequate quality and or price relation, counting on structures that take into consideration the quality function up to the level of each entity.
- j) Guarantee the visitors' expectations related to hygiene, accessibility, and security in the facilities and the destination in general through the fulfillment of the national regulations.
- k) Progressively choose certifications and awards that recognize the excellence of the quality management of the destination and tourist attractions.

Contribution to Local Quality of Life

Tourism development should be geared towards improving the quality of life of the local population as a guarantee of sustainability, so it is necessary to ensure that it positively contributes to this end. The recent local tourist development shows compatibility with the estimated capacity of perceptual load, which is likely why tourist development and the effects of increased tourism are perceived favorably by local residents. Nevertheless, this is not necessarily indicative of a lack of complaints from the local population.

The population is willing to work directly or indirectly towards building new employment possibilities that will generate tourism development. This is not indicative of a triumphalist attitude, however, because along with the multiple benefits produced by growth, there exists a number of negative impacts that could change the collective opinion of the population with respect to the host-tourist relationship, such as overcrowding, increase in cost of living, and introduction of exotic diseases. For that reason, it's important not to routinely stress or exceed the host's capacity to adequately receive and accommodate visitors.

At the moment, the local population does not receive direct economic benefits, but the indirect impact is evident in the improvement

of the image of the city, the education sector, and in the health of the population. Moreover, other indicators of quality of life, from the improvement of the façades of the houses to the reactivation of the local economy, and the consequent increase of the purchasing power of the population in general suggest momentum due to expanded tourism. As such, most locals acknowledge that the public administration has been involved in ensuring that tourism development contributes to local quality of life. Logically, this is a very difficult mission under the conditions of underdevelopment in Cuba, particularly within the framework of the global crisis of the sector, and in an initial stage of formation of the tourist destination.

For a minority of the population, tourism has brought another type of improvement in terms of quality of life, particularly those who have increased their income by offering their homes as short-term rentals to tourists.

In order to orient the tourist activity according to this indicator it will be necessary to attend to the following features:

- a) Promote opportunities for local residents to actively participate in tourism development, thus enhancing the direct economic benefits for the families of the city. This has been considerably important in other cities like Cardenas, which is very close to Varadero Beach, an increasingly popular destination for tourists.
- b) In the context of Caibarién, there is a recognition of the economic importance of tourism. One of the participants mentioned that tourism "...has contributed to the economic development of the country, the municipality, and the city, with tourism there has been a more complete development. Not only has it produced higher incomes, it has also contributed to other sectors such as health and education... In the end there is a positive balance..." Similarly, it's recognized by other participants that "the creation of employment has also come with social improvement; young people are not trying to 'do wrong things.' Now they can focus on training and work, thus tourism has allowed "growth for people" notwithstanding the negative things it can bring ..."

- c) Study carefully the impacts generated by the unequal access to the direct income of tourism in the city
- d) Maintain the policy of socialization of tourism benefits in the region with a strong impact on the most vulnerable indicators for the population, such as health, education, and recreation.

Coordination of Special Public and Private Interests

Any mechanism of coordination between the parties involved is of vital importance for the development of any activity, but in the case of tourism, it's particularly important due to the complexity of this sector. Coordination between Cubans and international visitors is significant, as the accumulated experience is not always as rewarding as it could be for the visitor or the host. The coordination between the different agents of the region should incorporate public and private interests, especially when addressing or trying to resolve issues that emerge from being a tourist destination.

There is a plan to promote small-scale investment between private capital associations and national entities, through which it is proposed to seek sources of financing for the improvement of the urban landscape environment and its heritage, as well as other small works associated with tourist services. According to the criteria of the investors on the Cuban side, these negotiations must be consolidated in accordance with the agreements established under the Foreign Investment Law in Cuba, which clearly addresses the issue of the protection of public and private interests.

In order to orient the tourist activity according to this indicator, it will be necessary to take care of the following aspects:

- a) Prioritize all levels of discussion on the issue of public and private interests with regard to tourist development in the region. Here it will be very important to carefully consider local residents' opinions regarding the investment process as part of the environmental impact studies prior to the granting of the environmental license.

- b) Study new mechanisms of coordination between the agents responsible for local development in order to ensure that the needs and wants of local residents are given greater consideration than those of tourists and international visitors.

Awareness of the Environmental, Social, and Economic Benefits of Tourism

One of the most interesting aspects of the local development of tourism is, without a doubt, the social and economic benefits of increased tourism. In order to achieve social appreciation by the local inhabitants and sustainability of this development model at work in their community, it is essential that all stakeholders be active participants in the growth process and outcomes. If local residents do not appreciate the social and economic benefits of tourism, they will not be willing to compromise. For this reason, the process of social awareness of this phenomenon is vital. The social awareness of the resident population in the city should be based on the process of forming the general tourist culture that should characterize the host community.

Conclusions

Without question, Caibarién is a touristic attraction for national and international visitors. Its rich history, maritime position and heritage, the value of its tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and popular traditions and customs of its population create a touristic destination in an urban setting with potential for development. In the context of development, it will be necessary to reorient the current traditional touristic model towards a model of sustainable development that incorporates the economic, social, and environmental dimensions in a compatible manner.

The integrated analysis of the key themes for touristic development in Caibarién provides a valuable guiding and instructional platform for policy makers, planners, and tourist entrepreneurs. The study of the urban local base in this city, its touristic use, and the available tourism infrastructure support the understanding of the model of touristic development of the city. Studying the process of formation and development of tourism in Caibarién allows for identification of

deteriorated touristic infrastructure, even as the industry continues to grow. This phenomenon is in contrast with the hotel and extra-hotel boom in Cayos de Villa Clara during the last decades, which has allowed it to be an international touristic destination. The diagnosis of the touristic development problem allowed for identification of different conditioning variables with a high level of impact and potential impacts. Thus, it required a management strategy to address the impacts at early stages and preventively mitigate negative effects that could emerge.

The integration of Caibarién as a territorial touristic product will help diversification of touristic supply and positioning of the northeast of Villa Clara as a competitive region that offers a diversity of modalities to be complemented with sun and beach, history, culture and traditions, nature, and rural environments. This will generate unique opportunities for touristic development for the region and the consolidation of an attractive, safe, and sustainable destination.

The new model of sustainable touristic development proposed for Caibarién will contribute to the revitalization and strengthening of local tourism, which will potentially be feasible to replicate in other Cuban cities with similar touristic development characteristics. Based on this study, it's possible to offer some projections or predictions about how the adopted model can be adapted and applied to other destinations. To do that, it is recommended that city officials develop a detailed analysis of the current state of touristic development, taking into consideration sustainability indexes that allow the creation of an integral diagnostic of internal and external conditioning factors. Based on these results, one can more reasonably create projections about local sustainable touristic development attending to the product of the desired location, in the potential identified market, and the competition that the destination will endure.

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- 12 Oficina Nacional de Estadísticas e Información, “Censo de población y viviendas,” in *Nomenclador nacional de asentamientos humanos* (La Habana, 2007).
- 13 Ibid.
- 14 Maximum demand in July and August.
- 15 Many of these changes have recently been halted or reversed by the Trump administration.