

Panel Discussions

Overtourism: A Critical State of the Art

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The aim of this Panel is to present cutting-edge research on the overtourism phenomena and to present diverse perspectives from a pool of researchers across the globe. Inspiration is drawn from two projects currently underway and due for competition in 2019.

The first is an edited volume due in June 2019 (CABI) titled *Overtourism: Excesses, discontents and measures in travel and tourism* (Milano, Cheer & Novelli, 2019). This volume draws on global perspectives of overtourism and responds to the growing ‘overtourism’ phenomenon, defined as the excessive growth of visitors, leading to overcrowding and determining residents suffering the consequences of temporary and often seasonal tourism peaks leading to permanent changes in their lifestyles, amenities and well-being. Delimiting the hysteria inherent in the current discussion, towards undertaking analysis that is cognisant of systems-thinking and contemporary paradigms around sustainable development, resilience planning and degrowth are taken. The second project draws from a Special Issue in the journal *Tourism, Planning & Development* titled ‘Overtourism and Tourismphobia: A journey through four decades of tourism development, planning and local concerns’ (Milano, Novelli & Cheer, 2019). While many scholars have maintained their interest in the classical debate concerning the impacts of tourism, some have attempted new conceptualisations, while others have converged with the narrative of a number of social movements, and the subsequent coining of the terms ‘overtourism’ and ‘tourismphobia’ have emerged (Milano, 2018). Saarinen’s (2013, p. 10) call that “in order to have tools for setting the limits to growth in tourism in a local-global nexus with less tourism-centric evaluation criteria, stronger governmental and inter-governmental policies and regulations are most probably needed” is evidently more pressing today.

The terms overtourism and tourismphobia have their genesis in the rapid unfolding of unsustainable mass tourism practices and the responses that these have generated amongst academics, practitioners and social movements concerned with the detrimental use of urban, rural and coastal spaces, among others, for tourism purposes. The commercially expedient practices of policymakers, destination managers and key firms in the tourism sector (especially airlines), has evidently led to unsustainable and inadvertent tourism outcomes, and excessive dependency on tourism at the expense of alternative economic sectors. Accordingly, quality of life and well-being of local residents has become central to the emergence of social movements across the globe protesting against the pressures that tourism growth has enforced.

The underlying intention of this Panel will be to invite contributors to the two projects referred to here in principal, and others where possible, to present, debate and discuss cutting-edge research on the overtourism phenomenon. Depending on interest and availability, there are

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up to 20 possible participants. As the two projects are largely unprecedented, this panel will make available pressing perspectives on overtourism to conference attendees. We also intend to launch the edited volume *Overtourism: Excesses, discontents and measures in travel and tourism* (Milano, Cheer & Novelli, 2019) with Claire Parfitt, Senior Commissioning Editor from CABI, also keen to attend the conference and set-up a book display.