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Stakeholders, ecotourism and sustainable development: The case of Bonito, Mato Grosso do Sul state, Brasil

133

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Resumo

O Desenvolvimento Sustentável, o ecoturismo e a participação dos *stakeholders* são os temas discutidos na pesquisa, que tem como objetivo caracterizar o ecoturismo no município de Bonito/MS e identificar a participação dos principais *stakeholders*. Para tanto, foram realizadas entrevistas com oito *stakeholders* no município, em que se destacam: colaboradores, comunidade, consumidores, reguladores, investidores, poder público (Secretaria de Turismo, Indústria e Comércio e o Instituto de Meio Ambiente de Mato Grosso do Sul) e o Conselho Municipal de Turismo. Os dados foram analisados a partir da técnica de análise de conteúdo. O *framework* utilizado para a condução do estudo foi o da eco-estratégia empresarial sugerido por Stead e Stead (2000). Os resultados indicaram que a participação dos *stakeholders* no turismo em Bonito/MS caminha em direção a sustentabilidade, sobretudo pelos valores divulgados, o emprego da tecnologia e as práticas dos *stakeholders* verdes.

Palavras-chave: Stakeholder; Turismo Sustentável; Bonito-MS; Ecoturismo; Desenvolvimento Sustentável.

Abstract

Sustainable development, ecotourism and stakeholder participation are the topics discussed in this present research, which aims to characterize ecotourism in the municipality of Bonito / MS as well as to identify the participation of key stakeholders. Several interviews were conducted with eight stakeholders in the municipality, represented by : local employees, community , consumers , regulators , investors , government (Department of Tourism , Industry and Commerce and the Environmental Institute of Mato Grosso do Sul) and the Council Municipal Tourism. Data were analyzed using the technique of content analysis. The framework used for the conduction of the study was the eco- business strategy suggested by Stead and Stead (2000). The results indicated that the participation of stakeholders in tourism in Bonito / MS walks toward sustainability, specially regarded to the amounts disclosed above, the use of technology and practices of green stakeholders.

Keyword: Stakeholder; Sustainable Tourism; Bonito – MS; Ecotourism; Sustainable Development

1. Introduction

The extractive production, environmental impacts, climate change and recurring environmental disasters have somehow aroused the concern on conservation of natural resources and nature in general. The concept of the Sustainable Development (SD) emerges within this context.

The diffusion of SD concept is also due to the participation of stakeholders, who can influence or be influenced by the decisions, for example, of organizations. The Stakeholders can be represented by members of companies, consumers, civil society as well as social movements that still have interest in the organization (Freeman, 1984).

For Steurer et al. (2005) SD and the Management Relationships to Stakeholders (MRS) may be seen as complementary concepts, once both seek the integration of economic, social and environmental issues regarded to organizational management routines. Considering the importance of the SD and stakeholders concept for the maintenance of strategies for Sustainable Development, it was identified that ecotourism is a practice that aims to harmonize economic, social and environmental interests. Regarding to ecotourism principles, Salgado (2007) presents: a) conservation and sustainable use of natural and cultural resources; b) information and environmental interpretation; c) resources generation; d) rollback of benefits provided for the local community and the conservation of

natural and cultural resources; e) it may also provide the community involvement.

Starting from ecotourism principles, the city of Bonito-Mato Grosso do Sul (MS) has been chosen as a research subject, especially for being considered an example case of the SD strategies use. For the 9th consecutive year the city had received the Award for Best Ecotourism Destination in Brazil, by Travel and Tourism Magazine in 2010.

The participation of stakeholders into the tourism management in the city and the SD practice are characteristics that qualify and justify the choice of Bonito for this present research. Therefore, it aimed to characterize ecotourism in Bonito, as well as the participation of its main stakeholders. Thus there were conducted researches on secondary data sources in order to characterize the object of study, as well as on primary data collection to support the proposed discussions.

2. Notes about the Stakeholders Theory

According to Freeman (1984) a stakeholder is any individual or group who can affect or be affected by the achievement of organizations' goals. The existing literature on this subject is vast, and it presents the contributions of Gupta (1995), Mitchell et al. (1997), Wheeler and Sillanpää (1997, in Clulow, 2005), Carroll and Buchholtz (2003), Fassin (2009) among others, who discuss stakeholders and the comprehension of their influence to the organizations.

In this context emerged the eco-enterprise strategy suggested by Stead and Stead (2000) which has an interface with the Stakeholders theory. The enterprise strategy has been proposed as a significant framework for the integration of environmental concerns with the strategic processes of organizations and the recognition that Earth is a legitimate stakeholder; a strategy for organizations that, somehow, can serve the planet. The ethical argument of this strategy goes beyond the interests of the human community, once it reflects the moral vision of the land ethic (Stead & Stead, 2000).

The main reasons to consider planet Earth the main stakeholder is based on the idea that it is the place where all business activities occur, being a source of resources requiring necessary energy to move the economy (Stead & Stead, 2000).

In this way, eco-enterprise strategy represents the idea that Earth is an "asset" to organizations' strategies thinking. In this sense, the authors have suggested the creation of a map with the green stakeholders, represented by: regulators, consumers, investors, NGOs, employees, insurers and regulating entities (Stead & Stead, 2000).

Regulators are represented by the government, the strictest and most influential of all green stakeholders. The green consumers are those who seek for social and ecological responsibility on products they consume. Investors seek to focus on investments in companies with good environmental and social performance. NGOs are also seen as an important group of stakeholders, once they have legal and financial

responsibility on property damages, as well as on the threats of environmental damage. Employees also are important stakeholders, considering they suffer the consequences of the environmental impacts of an organization. The last Stakeholder is represented by the entities, which exert regulation onto corporate activities. These entities were included due their important role on environmental performance and processes as the group of 14.000 of International Standards Organization (Stead & Stead, 2000).

Regarding to the importance of stakeholders on organizational sustainability management, Stead and Stead (2000) argue that it represents the central value of eco-enterprise strategy and is connected by a variety of valued instruments such as general vision (interconnection and interrelation between systemic patterns, economic, social, technological, political and natural in long term); dialogue (communication channels that take into consideration the demands of stakeholders); posterity (which emphasize both economic and ecological health of the organization in the long term); diversity (crucial to maintain an ecosystem that sustains life on the planet); humility-smallness (which means to carry out operations on small scale, being more controllable); community, quality (the quality of goods and services, quality of work and quality of life of the community) and spiritual fulfillment (involves the enhancement of spiritual realization that enables organizations to put the economic success and environmental protection in order to achieve the realization of a higher life

quality) (Stead & Stead, 2000; Carranco, 2010).

The search for quality means thinking about the little things. The sense of community cannot exist without a sense of wholeness, the diversity encourages the dialogue, the dialogue is necessary to sustain the community; interspecies and intergenerational equity are required to posterity which cannot exist without diversity, the spiritual quest means valuing quality over quantity, dialogue over conflict, diversity over intolerance, wholeness more than separateness (Stead & Stead, 2000). The instrumental values when taken together provide a solid insight into how to build a sustainable world.

Considering the framework, it is added up the emphasis on ecological issues. The population and wealth are marked with a plus sign (+) indicating that these factors are increasing, causing a stress on the ecosystem. The technology is labeled with a minus sign (-) indicating that technological advances have been successful in reducing the ecological stress.

Stead and Stead (2000) conclude that eco-enterprise strategy comprises the integration of sustainability centered on a value network, the issues of ecological system and the green map of the stakeholders. Together they provide support for the sustainability and sustainable strategic management (See Figure 1).

3. Methodology

This is a qualitative descriptive research that involves the characterization

of the tourist destination of Bonito-MS, as well as the identification of the participation and influence of its stakeholders. The data collection survey was conducted in two stages. **The first one** is referred to a secondary data collection throughout literature search, consultation of previous theoretical and empirical papers, available on the main academic databases, data provided by the municipal government and the Tourism Municipal Council (COMTUR) and the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE). The use of secondary data involved information about consumers and tourist attractions, from studies of Frata (2007), Lobo and Cunha (2009) and Velasquez (2010).

The second step was based on a primary data collection resulted from the application of interviews with the most relevant stakeholders. Therefore, the theoretical model was suggested by Stead and Stead (2000), however, some adjustments have been made due to the particularities of the studied case. Starting from the map of green stakeholder, there were identified and selected eight stakeholders, as shown on Table 1 (See Table 1).

The primary data collection was performed by the use (application) of different forms, one for each stakeholder, although they all had similar questions, especially related to their perception about Planet Earth. The survey forms were elaborated by Carranco (2010) who studied the complex ethical vision of tourism community sustainable strategy in an Andean community. The author added to the investigation, the economic, social and environmental dimensions suggested

by Elkington (2012), which were kept in the research, once they were able to lead to a broader view about the studied phenomenon.

The data collection was conducted with the representatives of the listed institutions on Table 1, and all interviews were conducted personally, except by the representative of the Non Governmental Organization (IASB) who preferred to answer the questions by email. The interviews were recorded according to the permission of the respondents and they were all transcribed by the use of a text editor, for later analysis. Just the representative of IMASUL didn't authorize the recording of the interview. In this case, all the information collected was noted in a notebook and then transcribed by the use of a text editor shortly after its ending. The interviews lasted an average of 40 minutes. Data collection occurred between January and March 2012.

The data analysis followed the methodology of content analysis proposed by Bardin (1977) involving the pre-analysis, categorization and interpretation of data.

4. Characterization of Bonito as tourism destination

The total area of Bonito is 4,934.425 km² and it is located in the State of Mato Grosso do Sul, Midwest region of Brazil. The city is situated on Bodoquena Mountain Chain, southeastern region of the state. The predominant bioma is the cerrado (very close to what is understood as a savannah). The geology, geomorphology and hydrology of the

region are propitious for the formation of a differentiated landscape, full of caves, waterfalls, rivers of clear water and rich biodiversity, a very suitable scenario for the ecotourism practice (Lobo & Moretti, 2008).

Agricultural activity was predominant in the region, fostered by a variety of projects and government incentives, gaining a more commercial character from the fifties. In addition to farming, at that time, mining was beginning to assume an important economic role in the context of the region. For the viability of both activities, large areas of native vegetation have been removed, either by replacement with pastures or by mining of limestone (Lobo & Moretti, 2008).

Tourism as an activity started by the nineties, right after the natural beauties were discovered at the same time an economic crisis was going on the region. Tourism, nowadays, is a key role in the local economy, especially the practice of ecotourism. There is a clear growth of tourism in the region. In 2000, the total number of visitors was 161,646 and in 2010 the total was 276,164. There was an increase of 70.84% in the number of visitors in the city in just 10 years (Salgado 2007; Comtur, 2012).

Nowadays the services have significant representation on the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) in the municipality, totalizing R\$ (Millions) 113.539 in 2009. This value is larger than the GDP of agriculture which represents R\$ (Millions) 63.533 and industry R\$ (Millions) 15.592 combined (IBGE, 2010).

4.1 Tourism organization in Bonito

The tourism strategy adopted by Bonito refers itself to the practice of ecotourism, presented by Comtur (2012) “(...) The ecotourist is not just an observer, but someone who interacts to the ecosystem (...)”.

From this statement, it is clear that the inclusion of tourism in the natural environment should be guided by a perspective of minimum negative environmental impact. The sensitivity of the natural heritage requires strict limits for the visitors (Lobo & Moretti, 2008).

Beyond the investigation of the ecotourism in Bonito other aspects of tourism were highlighted by the authors concerned to the environmental conservation, which makes the destination different from others: self-management system and organization of local tour guides. Self-management system is possible according to the Unique Voucher, a peculiar instrument to control the flow of visitors. The voucher serves as the entrance ticket to the tourist attractions and it is only purchased at travel agencies that hire the services of the tourist attractions, including consequently the services of a tour guide, who will attend the group of tourists or even a single tourist (Frata, 2007).

The voucher is a mechanism that ensures a minimal control of the number of visitors in Bonito, at the same time it controls the collection of taxes. Figure 2 illustrates the operating mechanism of the single voucher (See Figure 2).

The system was officially implemented by the Resolution No. 001/95 of COMTUR after a series of negotiations with the local tourist trade. One of the advantages it offers is the ability to

control all municipal taxes incomes generated by tourism on tourist attractions and travel agencies. The system also helps to control visitation on the tourist attractions (Lobo, 2006).

Tour guides are also an important part of the tourism system of Bonito. Their activity is regulated in the city by the Decree No. 011/95, which requires a tour guide monitoring on tourist attractions. The local guides have awareness concerned to environmental conservation and maintenance of tourism, which is perceived throughout their speeches, on their role (Lobo, 2006).

It is noted local tour guides are essential for the functioning and organization of tourism in the city. They are responsible for making the connection between nature conservation and economic and social development. Tour guides in town have received a training course to perform the activity, offered, through partnerships between Institutions, as Federal University of Mato Grosso do Sul (UFMS) and Brazilian Service to Support Micro and Small Enterprises (SEBRAE), being the Tour Guide Certification issued by the Brazilian Tourism Institute (EMBRATUR), according to the Law N° 8.623 from 28th January, 1993.

The local tourism organization also counts on the Tourism Municipal Council (COMTUR) which was created with a goal of implementing a tourism municipal policy, with the City Tourism Trade and Industry Department, as a consultative and advisory entity.

The region also belongs to the Geopark Bodoquena-Pantanal which aims to conserve, protect and enhance the cultural

and natural heritage situated on the Bodoquena Mountain Chain and on Pantanal. The Geopark is an area of 39,700 km², covering territories of 14 cities in the region. The fact may contribute to the practice of SD in the region.

5. Characterization and perception of consumers

The executed interview identified some elements that provide subsidies for the maintenance of SD strategies. Initially, the research reveals that Bonito's natural characteristics are the main motivation for its visitation.

I was motivated by the beauty of the city. (...) nature. (...) cleanliness and transparency of the water (...) conception of the city in preserving nature, (...) the calm and security the city offers, [...] direct contact we can have with both fauna and flora. (...) (Tourist, 2012).

When asked about the meaning of Planet Earth into the context of tourism, the respondent points out that "all other places on planet earth would have to take the example of Bonito regarded to the respect and preservation of nature" (Tourist, 2012).

It is easy to perceive the importance of nature conservation, especially of fauna and flora and the care with the water. The efforts of the municipal administration on maintaining a sustainable tourism were also pointed out on the respondent testimony.

By expressing the desire to experience nature, once thinking about natural wealth compared to other places, the consumers exercise their influence in the local tourism management and, consequently, into the maintenance of the SD strategies.

5.1 Characterization and perception of community

The interviewed community leader said the community supports tourism practiced in the city, once it generates jobs and income for the residents. Tourism also provides culture, sport and life quality. The negative side was related to the existent health system that offers no security for residents and tourists, as well as the lack of a firefighter team for emergency situations. The community has a certain concern regarding to the presence of tourists. Although in one hand tourists allow the income increasing, on the other hand, they may be responsible for bringing drugs and criminality.

Considering the importance of Planet Earth, the community leader expressed some concern about deforestation, environmental degradation and the extinction of native animals. There is some concern about the maintenance of ecosystems in order to keep the region off of these reported negative consequences.

The community is presented itself as an important Stakeholder; it suffers directly with the managers' decisions about tourism in the region, at the same time it can exert influences over these decisions.

5.2 Characterization and perception of employees

Employees in this present work are represented by tour guides, specifically, the president of Bonito's Tour Guide Association (AGTB). Once asked about the motivation to work with tourism, the respondent states he gradually began to realize that the city economy was shifting from agriculture to tourism and felt the need to "enter in that market," otherwise he would not accompany the existent changes and, therefore, he would probably have difficulties in obtaining job.

The tour guide has a great importance for the tourism system implemented in the city. The interview informs that the role of this profession can be understood as:

Leading the tourists, giving them the necessary information about the visited place, explaining them how the visited site had appeared and the causes that made it appear, explaining the visitors which are the cares of preservation that men needs to have with the environment, in order to make it to continue rich in natural beauty. (...) (President, 2012).

As a community leader, the president of AGTB reports that the biggest benefit provided by tourism is the income generation through the job positions offered. On the negative side, he stands out: little investment of public infrastructure, lack of professional qualification, which involves the lack of correct information about the tourism product traded.

Planet Earth was highlighted as a need of caring, in order to allow the practice of tourism in the region.

5.3 Characterization and perception of NGO's

Among the NGO's of Bonito, Bodoquena Mountain Chain Water Institute (IASB), deserves a distinction, once it acts along with the attractions of the region and has as its mission "to manage natural resources in a participatory and sustainable way in order to recover, conserve and protect soil, forests, rivers and biodiversity of Bodoquena Mountain Chain and region, providing better life quality" (Iasb, 2012).

Therefore, it is clear that the biggest interest of the institution is the fact that actions that aim to protect natural resources must be supported, even if focused on economic factors. The actions taken by IASB in the city are: projects in reforestation areas and environmental education and, incentive for nature conservation and protection of water resources.

When asked about the importance of Planet Earth on tourism development, there is a concern with the maintenance of ecosystems, both on environmental and economic perspectives.

Thinking Earth as Biosphere, we will consider it as a cycle with cause and effect. (...). If there is an increasing number of tourists in the region, there will also be an increasing of heating gas release effect (HGRE). As consequence, there will be acid rain; the river

water will have low quality and problems with wildlife, characteristics not favorable for tourism, not favorable for the maintenance of ecosystems, responsible for the life quality of all organisms. Considering Earth in the sense of Population / Globalization, where the quest for learning about new cultures and landscapes provide tourism in Bonito, it may be pointed a positive aspect, because the region is favored by actions of nature [...] (Iasb, 2012).

It was noted the concern and efforts in maintaining the SD strategies in the city. The influence of stakeholder in the management of tourism in the region is due to the interest in facilitating the conservation of the natural environment and environmental education.

5.4 Characterization and perception of investors

The investors are represented in this study by the President of the Tourist Attractions' Owners Association of Bonito and Region (ATRATUR). According to the respondent, the association has as its main interest the promotion of associativism and its benefits, such as information sharing, experience and industry professionalism by offering training courses.

Considering the reasons that led the institution to work with tourism, the respondent shows that the motivation was to work with the improvement of services. It was emphasized that the professionalization of tourism in the city

was very fast. Most of the investments come from private funds. In addition, it is noticeable the importance of the association in establishing standards for organizing tourism and the search for partners, in order to improve the offered services.

The respondent also stands out the importance of dissemination actions promoted by the association, at the same time it emerges the concept of sustainable development. Apparently, the used concept refers to the sharing of financial gains among members. It is clear the fact that it is a recurring concern of the President to not interfere in matters related to marketing of the attractions, which is a particular relationship between the owners of the attractions and receptive travel agencies.

When asked about his point of view about the SD, the respondent states that the subject is associated with the exercise of citizenship, valuing the local knowledge, but without thinking about global issues.

The association expectations related to the future of the relationship with tourism reveals the concern to maintain a closer relationship with the tourist. Apparently, the values of quality and smallness are presented in the testimony of the respondent, which in turn would be linked to the value of sustainability suggested by Stead and Stead (2000).

When asked about the importance of Planet Earth to tourism, the respondent emphasizes the importance of respecting local knowledge, especially the culture of the first residents, once they can help the understanding of the proper limits of the Earth.

Regarding to the problems faced in the city, there must be pointed out the concern within the limits to visitors, especially in high season and the problems related to health services, which were classified as poor.

5.5 Characterization and perception of regulators

According to IMASUL's representative, the main interest of the organization towards tourism is based on the conservation of natural resources and also on the application of environmental licenses, to ensure they are performed. The activities undertaken by the institution are: inspections with a purpose of releasing environmental licenses, inspections for the rehabilitation of degraded areas, inspections of legal reserves, inspections to attest the soil conservation.

Considering the importance of the activities carried out by IMASUL, in tourism, the main factor that motivated or influenced the development of tourism in the region was the decline of agriculture and, consequently, the discovery of the natural tourism potential. The existence of crystalline water rivers in the city is important for the attraction of tourists which, consequently, develop tourism.

The respondent was encouraged to indicate which factors supported and/or hindered the development of tourism in the region and he attested that people did not need to invest that much, once the major investment was nature itself. On the other hand, among the factors that could have contributed to complicate this process are the difficulties of attending

the environmental legislation, as well as the bureaucracy itself.

About the importance of Planet Earth concerned to the activities developed by Tourism in Bonito-MS, the deponent states that:

Nature provides us a scenic beauty [...], although there are some restrictions when it is time to preserve. People want the pros, but do not want the cons[...], to increase the conservation area on the banks of the rivers, they do not want to compromise their profit. People want to have profits with[...] Nature, but only do the minimum for it. [...] (Imasul, 2012).

The IMASUL's chief is latent when concerned to Planet Earth, just as discussed by Stead and Stead (2000). It is clear the presence of the holistic view that recognizes the interconnection and interrelation between systemic patterns, economic and especially natural in the long term.

Finally, the deponent states that the existent relationship between tourism in Bonito-MS and IMASUL makes the law get applied and enforced. The respondent adds that "It is not about to burden the producer", the producer will be taking care of his assets, once the law is taken to consideration and respected.

5.6 Characteristics and perceptions of tourism, trade and industry department

The Tourism, Trade and Industry Department Secretary of Bonito reported

that the tourism trajectory in the city is recent and it has developed itself by the last 15 years. At first, there was some resistance from the owners of tourist attractions in working with tourism. However, nowadays, tourism is presented as an important source of incomes for them. Many of them are already examples of successful tourism management and care for the natural environment.

Considering nature's care, there is recognition of efforts to conserve natural resources, maintaining the load capacity of the attractions. It realizes that the values associated to posterity, smallness and diversity are all present on the Secretary speech. The secretary emphasizes that the dialogue between the social actors related to tourism was important in the application of the sustainable tourism strategy, especially considering the fragile ecosystem in the region. He also highlights the importance of tourism guides and the voucher as essential mechanisms for maintaining the strategy of a sustainable tourism in the city, which are important elements for the nature conservation and concern for future generations.

When asked about the reasons for the sustainable tourism succeeds, the respondent replied that "tourism works out, because it generates profit." He also mentions the role of public power, private initiative and community as essential elements for the sustainability in Bonito. These elements are the "three main players in the great theater of life" who work together in order to make "tourism a model of efficiency and reference to Brazil and the world."

It also should be noted that the increasing visitor numbers, the income increasing and its distribution assume a distinct place according to the Secretary:

Last year we had in our planning an emblematic number of 300,000 visitations that we supposed to attend until the end of 2012 [...]. An year earlier, the goal was already reached. We have reached 304,000 visitations by 12.31.11. We grew almost 11% compared to 2010, when Brazil grew between 3.5% and 4% in tourism. Imagine that, the city's budget was 35 million and a half. Tourists, who have visited Bonito [...], have left in the city, something between 150 and 170 million. It is almost five times the budget of the town [...] (Secretary, 2012).

Highlighting the economic importance of tourism in the region, social interests were presented, including the low level of criminality and lower demand for social welfare programs. These low rates are the result of the number of jobs and income generated by tourism.

In environmental terms, there is a strong presence of concern for the natural resources conservation, existent on the way tourism is organized in the city (load limits for attractions and existence of the Unique Voucher) and environmental education programs.

When asked about the environmental and social impacts caused by the increase of people within the community, in spite of tourism, the respondent noted: the increasing consumption of water, bigger

impacts on natural attractions (even considering and respecting the carrying capacity of the attractions) and the increasing of garbage production. Apparently, there seems to be an orientation / intent to value quality over quantity, which is, the quality of visitation (longer stays of tourists in town) would be preferable to increase the quantity of people.

Considering the importance of technology to mitigate or at least help to reduce the stress of the ecosystem due to the increasing number of people and wealth, the respondent recognized the importance of pointing out the role of the Unique Voucher, which helps to control visits to the attractions. The technology also was remembered for assisting the tourism management such as: online booking system and security camera on The Public Bathing Area in Bonito.

Planet Earth has its importance for tourism because it is the provider of natural beauty, important for tourism. The efforts of many interviewed stakeholders are following this same way.

5.7 Characteristics and perceptions of the Tourism Municipal Council (COMTUR)

The COMTUR is an advisory Council, whose purpose is to promote and regulate the tourist activity in Bonito. It helps in the management of the Municipal Tourism Fund which consists of incomes from especially visitation of the Blue Lake Cave (attraction managed by the City Hall). Actions for promoting tourism are: financial support to local events, helping in the attracting process of

external events and participation in tourism fairs.

When asked about the beginning of tourism in Bonito, the respondent states that tourism has already emerged organized what makes him believe this is the explanation for the success of Bonito.

It is possible to perceive that COMTUR is a space for dialogue between the representatives of the tourist trade, "it is a great forum for discussion of all problems" (President, 2012). Although COMTUR does not have a community representative, the dialogue appears as one of the values in the network focused on sustainability suggested by Stead and Stead (2000).

When asked about the social interests of tourism in Bonito, the respondent states that the greater is the generation of income for the population. As environmental concerns, he stands out the importance of conserving nature through tourism, "the one that generates income" (President, 2012).

Regarded to economic interest, it is also presented the generation of income from tourism, as already presented, "the main interest of tourism in Bonito is to generate income, which makes economy, social and environmental wheel spin around" (President, 2012).

Considering the importance of Planet Earth, the deponent states that "All is Planet Earth," emphasizing the importance of the water, as responsible for so much beauty, such as the Caves and waterfalls.

6. CONCLUSIONS

All data illustrated the economic importance of tourism for the region, considering it generates employment and income. The economic dimension was evident, especially for the community leader, President of the AGTB, President of COMTUR and the Tourism, Industry and Trade Secretary of the city. It can't be said economic dimension has not been considered by other stakeholders surveyed, but it was not perceived any marginal concern of that perspective when compared to the environment. All stakeholders had concerns about the nature, the need for environmental awareness, and less attention to social concerns. Sometimes, the social was confused with the economic, showing a very close relationship between both dimensions.

Regarding to the role of Planet Earth, it was found that directly or indirectly, the maintenance of ecosystems was present on the testimony of respondents, as well as the concern about not clearing existing forests, conservation of flora and fauna and the awareness that only caring the planet is the actual activities that may continue in the future. Therefore Planet Earth is an important and legitimate stakeholder (Stead & Stead, 2000).

It was found that there are some instrumental sustainability values suggested by Stead and Stead (2000), such as diversity, posterity and quality. The smallness, was also remembered at the time it was emphasized the importance of keeping a limit load for the visitation on the attractions.

Considering the increasing number of tourists in the city, it is noticeable both a wealth growth, as well as a stress over the ecosystem. According to Stead and Stead (2000) stress can be mitigated by the use of technology. Thus, the Unique Voucher appears as a tool to assist in minimizing the ecological stress, controlling the number of visitations on tourist attractions.

The values of the community and aspects related to spirituality and dialogue were seldom mentioned by the respondents. However, regarded to dialogue, it is noted the tourism system in the city seeks to preserve this value through the creation of the Tourism Municipal Council (COMTUR), presented in the speech of its president. The general view or wholeness was recalled by IMASUL's chief and IASB's representative, when mentioned the dependent relationship between forest conservation and water availability. Figure 3 shows the framework suggested by Stead and Stead (2000) applied to the tourism in Bonito.

Apparently, the participation of stakeholders in tourism in Bonito is moving toward the sustainability, especially by the values disclosed above, the use of technology and the action of green stakeholders. This study contributed to the identification of some important stakeholders in the context of tourism in the region, particularly the role of NGOs that carry out important activities related to the SD, the interest of consumers eager for the maintenance of nature experienced during the tours, the interest of the community on income maintenance and nature and also of the tour guides who

seek in the profession, a way to obtain profits. There must be also pointed out, the efforts made by government, by regulators, investors and the COMTUR.

Finally, it may be concluded that the framework suggested by Stead and Stead (2000) which deals with the eco-business strategy was appropriate for the proposed analysis, especially by highlighting the importance of stakeholders in sustaining life on the planet and also for the strategies adopted in tourism in Bonito.

For future researches it is suggested the extension and application of this study in other tourist areas of the state of MS in order to verify the role of stakeholders and their influence on the sustainable development of those regions, whose main attraction is the nature.

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Table 1

Searched Stakeholders

Stakeholder	Searched Agent	Respondent	Used Technique on data collection
Regulators	Mato Grosso do Sul's Environmental Institute - IMASUL	The Chief of IMASUL's local unity.	Personal Interview (Notes made during the interview)
Investor or owners	Owner's Association of the tourist attractions - ATRATUR	The President	Personal Recorded Interview
Consumers	Consumers (Tourists).	A National Tourist	Personal Recorded Interview
NGO's	Bodoquena Mountain Chain Water Institute - IASB	An Environmental Technician	Form answered by email
Employees	Bonito's Tour Guide Association - AGTB	The Association President	Personal Recorded Interview
Community	Representative of Bonito's community	The Community Leader of Marambaia distric	Personal Recorded Interview
Representative of Municipal Government	Municipal Tourism, Industry and Trade Secretary	The Municipal Tourism, Industry and Trade Secretary	Personal Recorded Interview
Representative of Tourism Trade	Tourism Municipal Council – COMTUR	The President of COMTUR	Personal Recorded Interview

Source: elaborated by the authors.

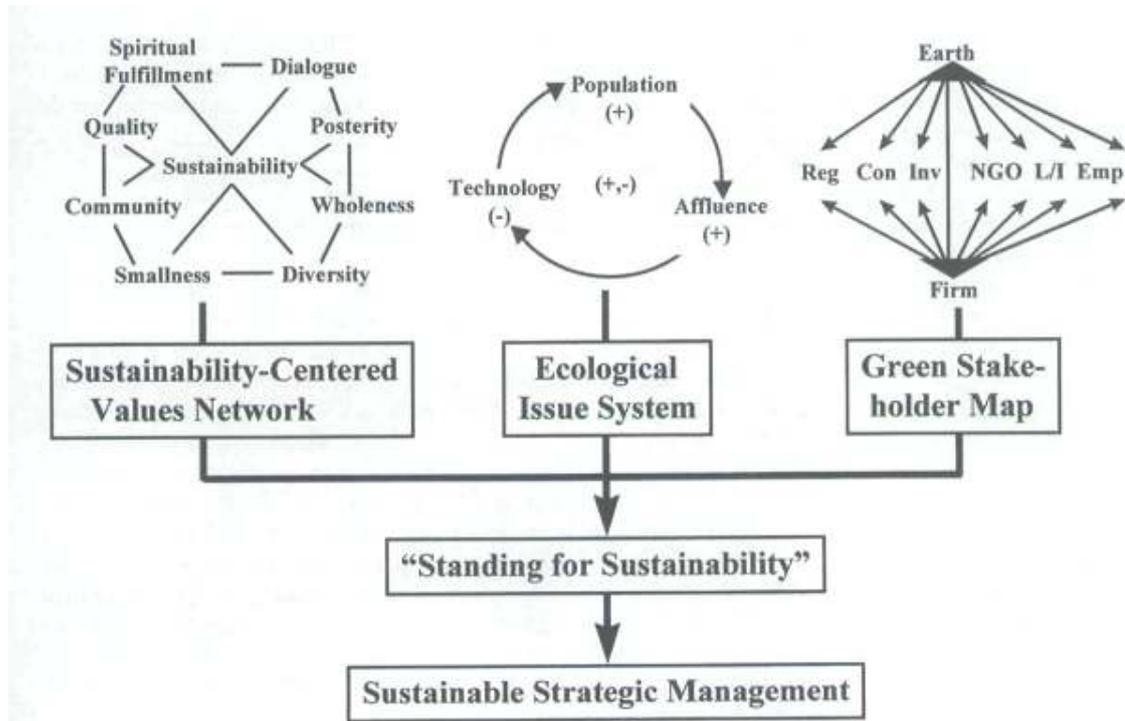


Figure 1. Eco-enterprise strategy. Source: Stead and Stead (2000, pp. 365)

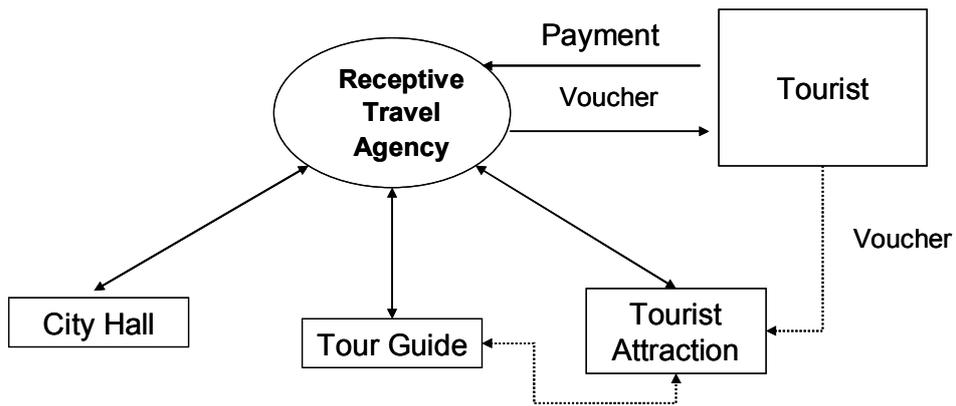


Figure 2. Roadmap Voucher. Source: Almeida (2010)

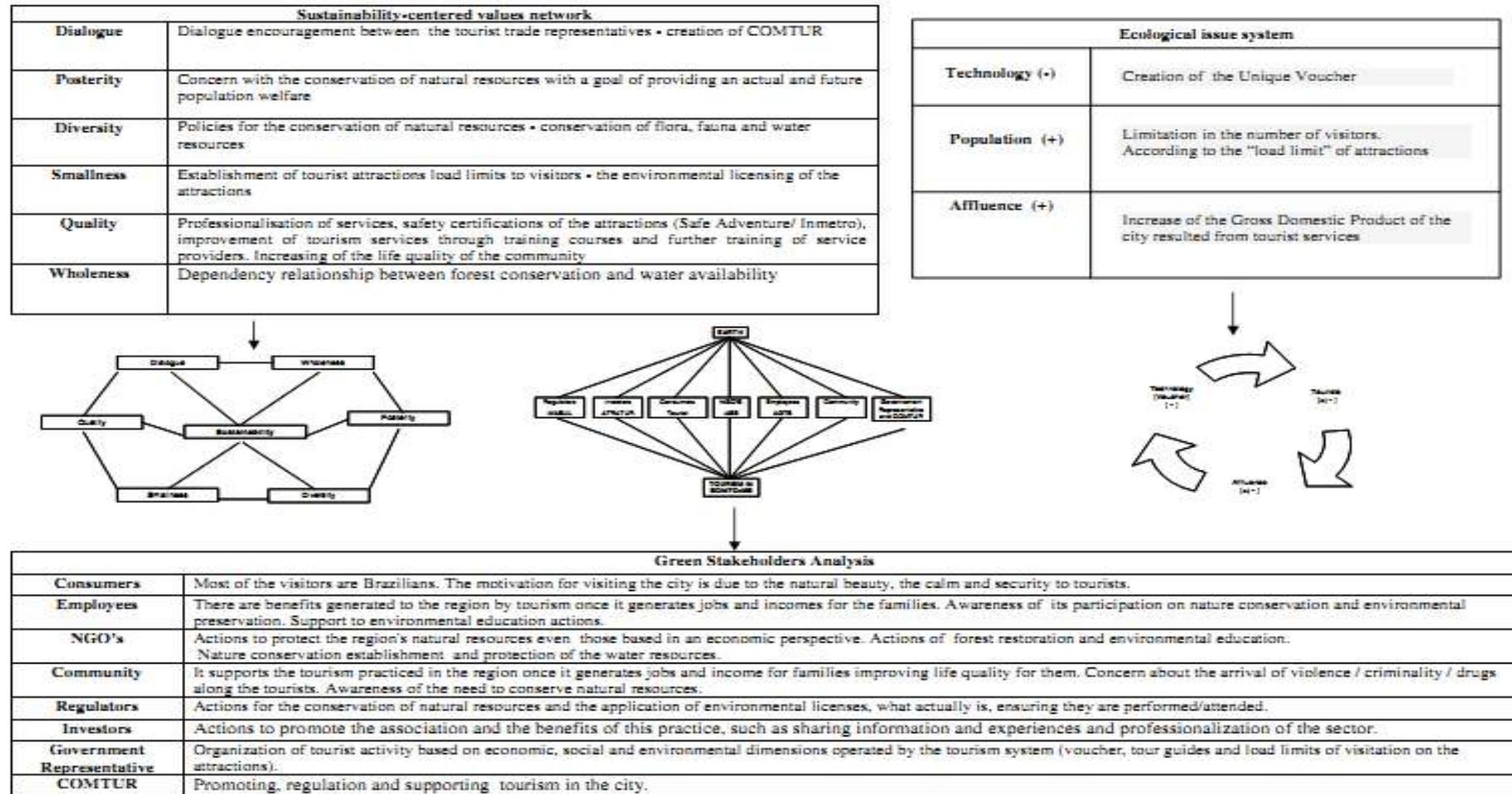


Figure 3 – Eco-enterprise strategy in Bonito. Source: Authors