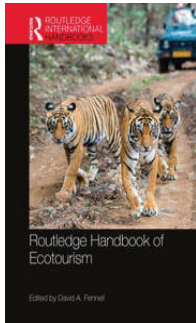


## BOOK REVIEW



### **Routledge Handbook of Ecotourism** **David A. Fennell**

Routledge Taylor & Francis Group

The Routledge Handbook of Ecotourism, edited by David A. Fennell, is a comprehensive and thought-provoking exploration of the critical nature and diverse aspects of ecotourism. This timely volume offers an extensive overview of the central themes and burgeoning areas of research, policy, and practice in the field. Consisting of 438 pages and divided into four key themes - sustainability, ethics and identity, change, conflict, and consumption, and environment and learning - this handbook presents 28 chapters which dealing the complexities and nuances of ecotourism.

The book's first objective is to bring new perspectives to the conversation, including early-career academics, new case studies from diverse contexts, and a balanced gender representation. The second objective is to provide a state-of-the-art and provocative overview of the essential nature of ecotourism, exploring novel areas of research with potential implications for policy and practice. It succeeds in achieving both objectives, showcasing fresh perspectives while delving into critical areas of research.

As previously mentioned, the first section focuses on sustainability, the cornerstone of ecotourism, examining macro sustainability issues that impact the field and emphasizes the crucial role of ecotourism in contributing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Tourism has the potential to contribute, directly or indirectly, to all of the goals. The section presents a review of 64 countries' Voluntary National Reviews of the SDGs and corporate social responsibility activities of 60 tourism companies. In particular, the chapters within the section highlight the connection between ecotourism and the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, emphasize the role of ecotourism as one of the most environmentally friendly and responsible forms of tourism.

The second section addresses a number of topics that take ecotourism research in new and exciting directions. This section, centered around ethics and identities, introduces a number of new topics that are taking ecotourism research in new directions. In their chapter, Caton, Hurst, and Grimwood engage with the concepts of enchantment and care ethics - the latter gaining significant traction in tourism studies research - to explore the complex interactions between humans and other living entities. Included is a chapter on enriching indigenous ecotourism with culturally sensitive universalism, which offers new insights into the evolving ethical considerations in ecotourism.

The third section encompasses a wide array of subjects, from the often-overlooked area of persons with disabilities in ecotourism research to the intriguing concept of ecotourism as a form of luxury consumption. It presents a variety of viewpoints, some of which are fairly recent additions to ecotourism research. Garrod's research on ecotourism and individuals with disabilities echoes Schweinsberg and Darcy's argument for improving accessibility in ecotourism for people with different types of disabilities. Garrod contends that this overlooked area of study (and implementation) has an ethical obligation to employ careful strategies towards establishing a model of exemplary practices.


The fourth and final section addresses environment and learning with regard to sustainable tourism. These diverse perspectives provide a more comprehensive understanding of the changing landscape of ecotourism. Additionally, this section underscores the connection between ecotourism and learning about the natural world, with chapters that include an in-depth theoretical exploration of rewilding Europe.

Featuring contributions from authors around the world, this handbook provides a unique platform for local voices from developed and emerging countries to share their perspectives on ecotourism. Touching on many different topics, the editor acknowledges the perception that ecotourism's most productive days from a research standpoint might be in the past from a research standpoint and points to the declining prominence of ecotourism in job postings and international conferences. In addition to the topics mentioned, this book includes topics such as the impact of ecotourism on people's livelihoods and well-being, female entrepreneurship and ecotourism, ecotourism and accessibility for people with disabilities, climate change, animals in the crossfire, anti-ecotourism, socialization, and more.

The concluding chapter by Stronza, Hunt, and Fitzgerald, examines the complex and long-standing relationship between conservation and tourism, tracing back to Budowski's (1976) early classification of this relationship as conflict, coexistence, or symbiosis. A major gap in ecotourism research is the lack of longitudinal studies that offer deeper insights into governance,

conservation, biodiversity, and ecosystem integrity. Future research should prioritize the study of competing land uses (as discussed in this and other sections of the book), shift the focus from species-level analyses to landscape or ecosystem-level analyses, and examine the social consequences of ecotourism, such as attitudes toward environmental ethics, conservation, and social dynamics that develop due to power imbalances.

Overall, the Routledge Handbook of Ecotourism is an invaluable resource for researchers, students, and practitioners working in the field of tourism and sustainability. Its multidisciplinary and international scope ensures a comprehensive and thorough examination of the field, making it essential reading for anyone interested in understanding and contributing to the future of ecotourism.

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