

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

CBRM Database

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Case Study Name:	Developing Sustainable Tourism Through Adaptive Resource Management: A Case Study of Machu Picchu, Peru		
Author:	Larson, L. & Poudyal, N.		
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Region:	South America		
Country:	Peru		
Ecosystem Type:	Mountain Ecosystem		
Social Characteristics:	Other (World Heritage Site)		
Scale of Study:	Protected Area		
Resource Type:	Tourism/Ecotourism		
Type of Initiative:	Other (Adaptive Resource Management)		
Community- Based Work:	Conservation, Resource Management		
Keywords:	Adaptive Management, Community Development, Indicators, Machu Picchu, Sustainability, World Heritage Site		
Summary:	Machu Picchu, Peru, is recognized as a top international travel destination. Pressure from the approximately 900,000 tourists who annually visit the ancient Inca city threatens the ecological integrity, physical substance and		

cultural authenticity of the World Heritage Site and surrounding area, including the Inca Trail. Multiple organizations and agencies currently involved in the management of Machu Picchu have distinct agendas for the conservation and development of the city, and conflicts regarding public access, economic growth and cultural preservation are rampant. Attempts to establish carrying capacities have failed, with proposed daily visitor levels ranging from 800 to 4000. This paper explores the complex issues surrounding tourism at Machu Picchu and presents a potential solution: an adaptive management approach based on the UN World Tourism Organization's (UNWTO) sustainable tourism framework. This integrative strategy accounts for multiple perspectives and synthesizes disparate goals embraced by diverse stakeholders, including the Peruvian government, international conservation organizations, foreign tourists, private tour operators, regional authorities and indigenous communities. The focus on Machu Picchu as an adaptive management case study site outlines key steps leading to implementation, offering planning and policy implications for sustainability initiatives at numerous developing-world tourism destinations facing similar political and socio-economic challenges.