

# Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

## CBRM Database

<b>Date:</b>	<b>04/22/2013</b>	<b>Entry Number:</b>	<b>1294</b>
<b>Case Study Name:</b>	<b>Community Agency and Sustainable Tourism Development: The Case of La Fortuna, Costa Rica</b>		
<b>Author:</b>	David Matarrita-Cascante, Mark Anthony Brennan & A. E. Luloff		
<b>Document Type:</b>	Paper in a Scientific Journal		
<b>Year:</b>	2010		
<b>Language:</b>	English		
<b>Document Location:</b>	Journal of Sustainable Tourism		
<b>Full Citation:</b>	Matarrita-Cascante, D., Brennan, M. A., & Luloff, A. E. (2010). Community Agency and Sustainable Tourism Development: The Case of La Fortuna, Costa Rica. <i>Journal of Sustainable Tourism</i> , 18(6), 735-756.		
<b>Region:</b>	Latin America and the Caribbean		
<b>Country:</b>	Costa Rica		
<b>Ecosystem Type:</b>	Tropical Forest		
<b>Social Characteristics:</b>	Urban Communities		
<b>Scale of Study:</b>	National		
<b>Resource Type:</b>	Tourism		
<b>Type of Initiative:</b>	Research Driven-Project		
<b>Community-Based Work:</b>	Development Planning		
<b>Keywords:</b>	Community agency, Sustainable tourism, Community-based tourism, Costa Rica, La Fortuna, Field theory		
<b>Summary:</b>	<b>Previous sustainable tourism research has called for the promotion of community-based tourism as a</b>		

means of achieving sustainable development goals. Such community-based development has been noted as essential for sustainable practices because of its capacity to benefit local populations while reducing tourism's negative consequences. Nonetheless, some researchers have warned that community-based tourism, by itself, does not necessarily lead to sustainable practices. This study examines local social interactional elements necessary for the achievement of sustainable tourism practices. Such practices are attainable when certain attitudinal, organizational and/or behavioral conditions are present within a community. Using a case study methodology, this article examines the interactional elements by which residents of La Fortuna, Costa Rica, engaged in sustainable tourism practices. The study was based on the theoretical notion of the *community field*. It used key informant interviews and participant observation. The study shows how economic, social and environmentally sustainable practices were made possible through community agency, the construction of local relationships that increase the adaptive capacity of people within a common locality. Key factors found to enable community agency are strong intra- and extra-community interactions, open communication, participation, distributive justice and tolerance.