

As international tourism grows, host destinations and communities often struggle with the impact of rapid growth on their environment and community life. Leonardo (Don) A.N. Dioko and his writing team explore this issue with special reference to the dramatic changes occurring in Macau, Special Administrative Region, China. I shall like to thank Don and his team for their detailed, multi-disciplinary analysis – they have grappled with the theme issue question and drawn out an array of valuable insights and action points for all who face this challenge.

Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes (WHATT) aims to make a practical and theoretical contribution to hospitality and tourism development, and we seek to do this by using a key question to focus attention on an industry issue. If you would like to contribute to our work by serving as a *WHATT* theme editor, do please contact me.

Richard Teare
Managing Editor, WHATT

How can communities manage rapid tourism growth? The experience of Macao and other destinations

Tourism activity, both on industrial and personal levels, has progressed at a remarkable rate over the past decades and development continues unabated. Destinations large and small, from large highly urbanized cities to small towns and rural villages, are buckling under the weight of substantial numbers of visitors. Communities around the world now conduct the normal course of their social and economic lives not only amongst their fellow and familiar residents but also palpably close to visitors. Residents and non-residents now inhabit, move and share places in uneasily intimate and frequent ways.

The strategic question for this theme arose from two sources. First, it was inspired by the recent experience of Macao, a Special Administrative Region of China that counts among the smallest city-states in the world, and its formidable efforts to manage high-impact tourism growth and its ramifications on the fabric of society. Second, the theme issue question addresses a perceptible mounting opposition among communities around the world to further growth in high-impact tourism.

In tackling this issue's strategic question, the team of authors drew on their extensive network and data, both from on-going and new initiatives in their areas of expertise. Two important guiding principles steered the team effort. One was to approach the issue of rapid tourism growth from a broad-based perspective – not only tourism but also a conceptual lens that incorporates stakeholders in the community grounded by the philosophies of their own areas of expertise. Given the approach, the writing team for this issue includes academics, architects, business proprietors, urban and transport planners, social activists and public policy researchers. The articles draw their data from engagement and deep-level conversations with various subjects and stakeholders in the community and/or derived from broader and macro-level technical and social data. In at least three articles, the critique of rapid tourism growth comes from extensive in-depth interviews with specific community groups. The other approach was to avoid focusing merely on impacts; the academic literature is already replete with tourism growth impacts (though not many specifically addressing *rapid* tourism growth). Instead, an evaluation of actions taken and an objective critique of strategies implemented – whether they show favourable outcomes or otherwise – underscores each article.

Leonardo (Don) A.N. Dioko
Theme Editor



About the Theme Editor

Leonardo (Don) A.N. Dioko is a Professor at the Institute for Tourism Studies, Macau (IFT), where he teaches courses in tourism and hospitality marketing and management. He is concurrently the Director of IFT's Tourism Research Centre (ITRC), which conducts policy research commissioned by the Macau S.A.R. Government, the most significant of which is the annual study on Macau's Tourism Carrying Capacity, as well as studies related to Macau's tourism policy development and significant social issues. Don's scholarly research and publications embrace destination branding and tourism marketing, assessing and managing the impacts of rapid tourism growth, sustainable issues and examining unique aspects of travel behaviour and psychology. He obtained his PhD in Organization and Management in what is now ISCTE Business School, Portugal, his MSc in Strategic Management from the University of Macau and his BSc in Business Administration at the University of the Philippines (Diliman).