An overview of tourism in the Caribbean

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An outstanding marine and coastal biodiversity

- 26.000km of coral reefs (7% of the world's reefs)
- 2nd and 3rd longest reef barriers in the world (Belize and S. Andres)
- 30 species of marine mammals
- 6 out of the 7 sea turtle species in the world
- ~600 species of reef fish

Threats and impacts

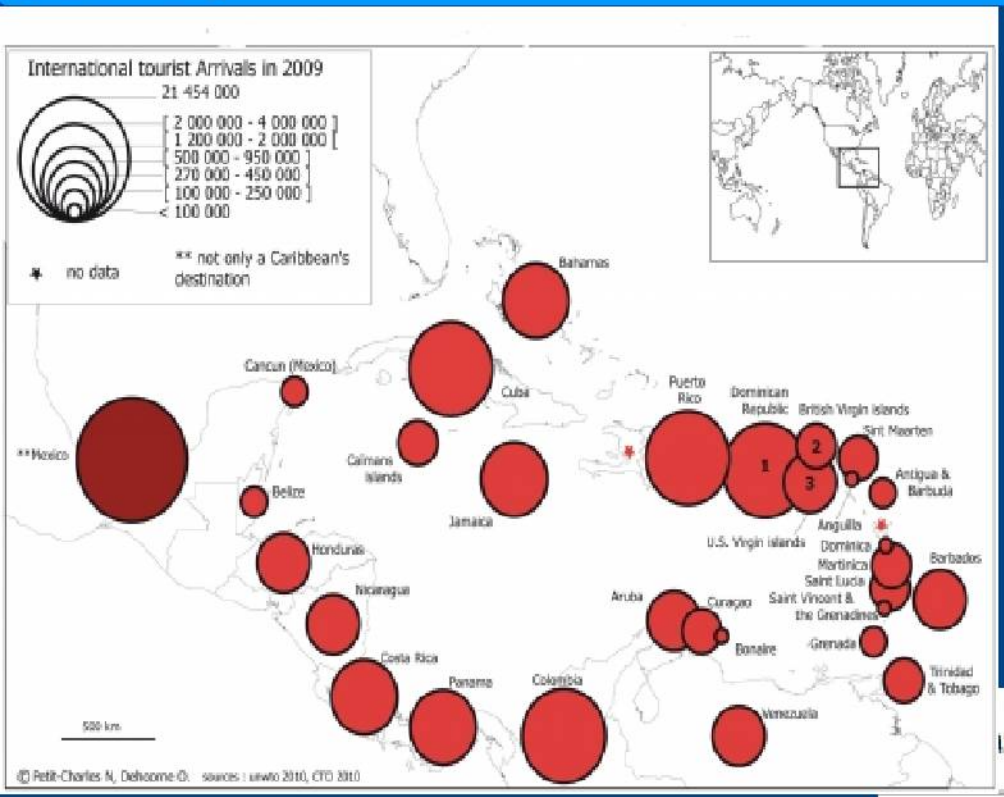
- Uncontrolled coastal development
- Habitat destruction
- Land-based pollutions
- Overfishing
- Marine activities (seismic research, oil,...)
- Invasive alien species
- Climate change
- Natural events (hurricanes, storms, …)

➔ Some of them directly or indirectly related to tourism

Tourism is one major source of income

- Mostly short stays (8-10 days)
- Cruise flow > arrivals by air
- Main markets = USA, Canada, Europe (UK) with some exceptions (FWI, Dutch Caribbean)
- Tourist season = almost all year long, with a break in September ; more arrivals by air in summer, by sea in winter
- Nb of tourists annually often exceeds the total population in islands
- Primarily tourist offer relies on marine and coastal environment

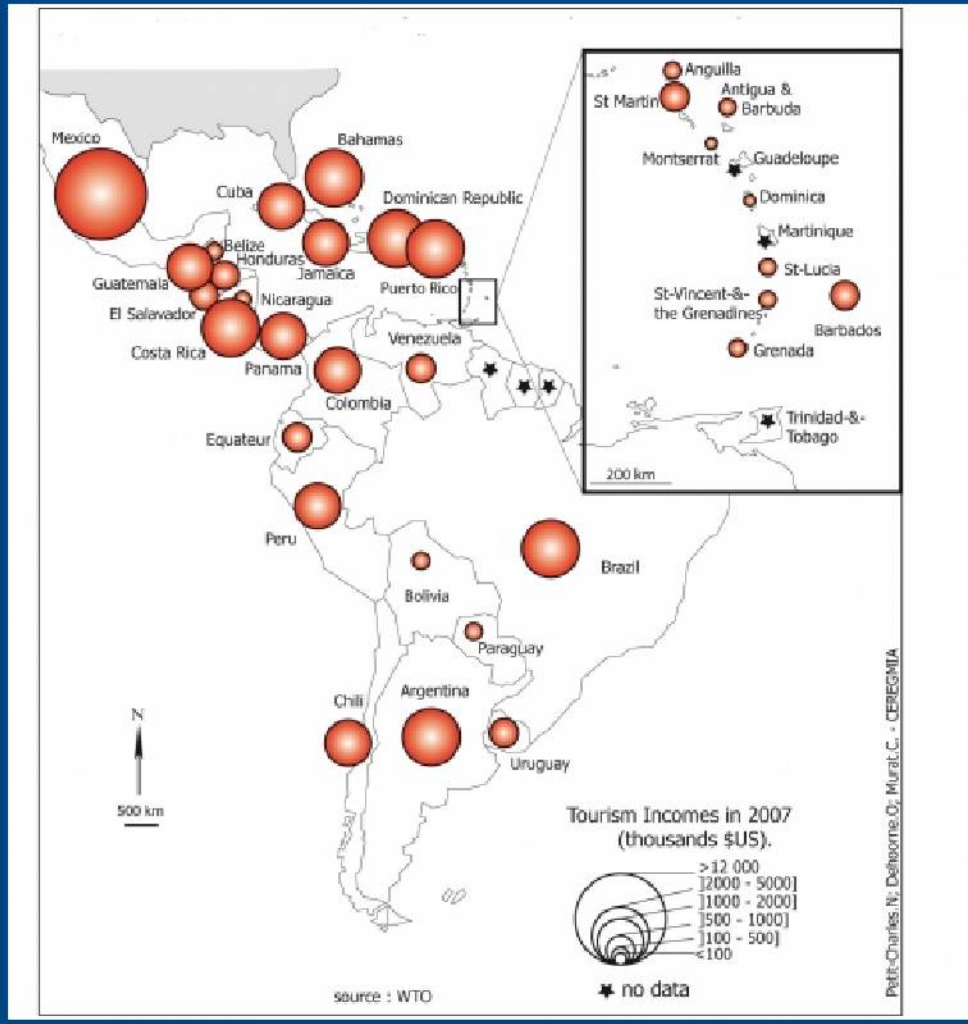
International tourist arrivals and destinations



...n Islands	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010
Puerto Rico	2,560,000	3,131,000	3,341,000	3,686,000	4,130,000
Dominican Republic	1,305,000	1,776,000	2,978,000	3,691,000	3,680,000
Cuba	327,000	742,0000	1,741,000	2,261,000	2,510,000
Bahamas	1,562,000	1,598,000	1,544,000	1,608,000	1,368,000
Jamaique	989,000	1,147,000	1,323,000	1,479,000	1,922,000
Aruba	433,000	619,000	721,0000	733,000	825,000
US Virgin islands	463,000	454,000	446,0000	697,000	691,000
Barbados	432,000	442,000	545,0000	563,000	532,000
Martinique	283,000	457,000	526,0000	484,000	476,000
Saint-Martin	545,000	449,000	432,0000	468,000	336,000

Tourism is one major source of income

- Mass tourism has developed over the last 30 years mainly
- 4 of the 6 main destinations are SIDS (Dom. Rep, Bahamas, Jamaica and Cuba)
- Redeployment of « elite » tourism in selected (and sometimes new) destinations
- Tourism-related GDP = the highest in the world (~ 30%) > ~ 30 millions tourists/year ; Saint Lucia (64 % GNP), Antigua and Barbuda (74 %), British Virgin Islands (82 %)
- Fist sector for employment (25%)
- Cruise ships arrival : exponential increase over the last 10 years (58% globally)
- Good recovery region-wide in 2012 despite the crisis the past years



Most touristic activities are related to marine and coastal biodiversity

- « Landscape and climate activities » : beaches

- Nature/outdoor activities

- Kayaking, boating, surfing, kite-surfing, etc

- Directly related activities

- Whale-watching, manatee-watching
- Sea turtle tours
- Diving :
  - ➢60% of the world's divers
  - –Income = **2 billions US $ /year**
- Net income generated by **coral reefs** :
  - ➢**663M US $ /an**: tourism and recreational activities

- Increasing interest for « eco-tourism » or at least more nature-oriented activities

Most touristic activities are related to marine and coastal biodiversity

- Impacts can be :

- indirect : coastal development, anchoring, pollutions etc
- direct : overdiving/watching, etc
- conflict between activities

- Each category of impact to be addressed specifically, and by the relevant stakeholders

- Revenue generation also to be separated in various categories : type of expenditures, beneficiary, etc

➔ Tourism can be a pressure for MPAs

➔ But it can also help finance them sustainable

Thank you for your attention!

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