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HOW MINING IS THREATENING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN NATURE TOURISM SECTOR AND CIVIL SOCIETY RESPONSE

Abstract:

South African tourism geography studies have largely ignored how issues of industrial pollution and development such as for mining have affected nature tourism and conservation sites. It is argued in this chapter that South Africa's transition to democracy has not necessarily resulted in improved governance and protection of nature tourism destinations from industrial developments, with the government approving mining licenses in these sites. Historical and new mining operations in South Africa are affecting nature tourism sites and sustainable tourism development. This chapter explores selected cases to examine how mining is affecting and/or has the potential to impact on nature tourism sites. It also examines civil society response to address mining development impacts in such areas. Results indicate that despite government apathy to protect nature tourism sites and enforce regulations, civil society has the potential to halt mining development and protect nature tourism resources. However, inter and intraracial/class conflict in local communities over mining development versus tourism needs to be addressed, in addition to the lack of tourism employment opportunities for local communities. Education about sustainable tourism development is essential to ensure long-term sustainable tourism and local development over mining

Keywords:

Nature tourism, Civil society, Conservation, Sustainable tourism development

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