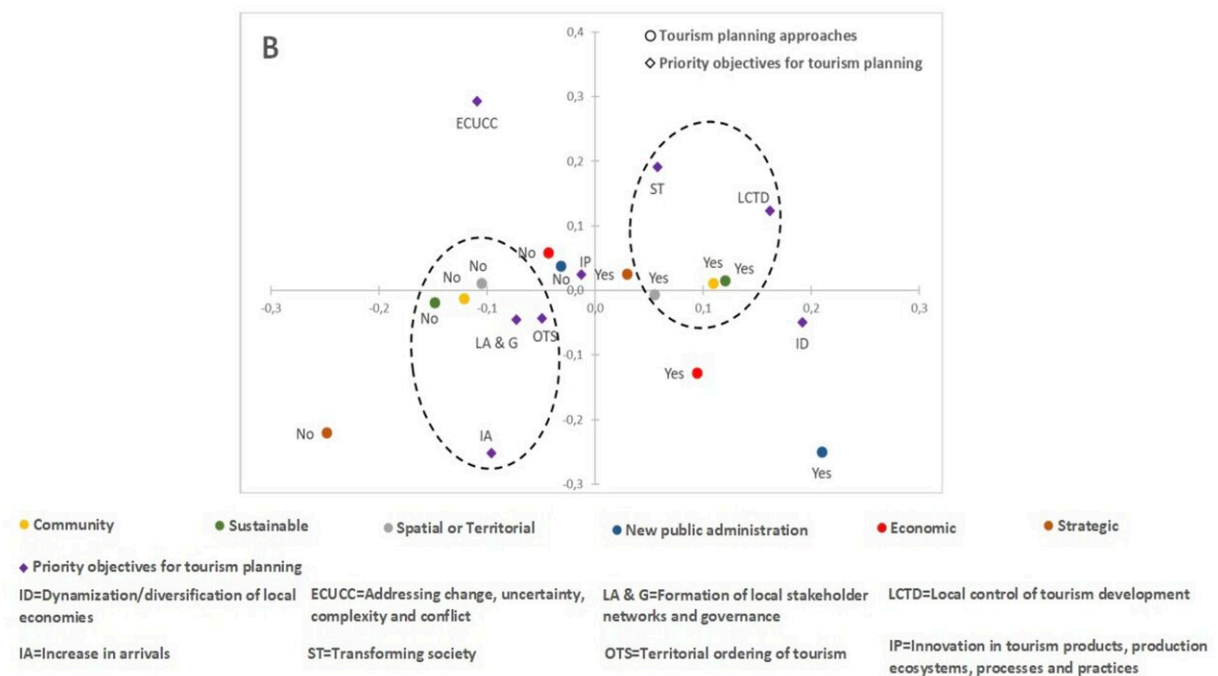


Tourism planning as a social practice in times of change and uncertainty: Views from a troubled Latin American country

April 2 2024



Tourism Planning Approaches Vs. Desired outcomes of tourism development.
Credit: Ricaurte C. et al., 2024

Given the limited capabilities within the public sector, tourism planning consultants play a crucial role in public policy efforts in Ecuador.

Based on social practice theory, this study examined the planning practices of 46 consultants hired by public institutions in the country between 2017 and 2021. Multiple correspondence analysis identified associations within four analytical categories: theoretical and empirical understandings, the rules and power relations in planning processes, as well as the values and purposes of planning.

Their findings revealed differentiated sets of tourism planning practices in Ecuador. These range from traditional approaches focused on spatial, technical, and strategic planning to emerging approaches that prioritize innovation, co-creation, and action toward [social change](#). By applying social practices theory, a new perspective is provided to understand tourism planning as a process strongly shaped by the knowledge, experience, beliefs, and context of tourism consultants in a developing country.

Given that disruptive events can disproportionately affect vulnerable actors and nature, leading to the emergence of new inequalities, it becomes essential to recognize the reciprocal relationship between individuals and the actions they undertake. Social practice theories present opportunities for practitioners and academia to critically reflect on [ethical dilemmas](#), [social values](#), biases, and political embeddedness in tourism planning practices.

The paper is [published](#) in the journal *Current Issues in Tourism*.

More information: Carla Ricaurte-Quijano et al, Tourism planning as a social practice in times of change and uncertainty: views from a troubled Latin American country, *Current Issues in Tourism* (2024). [DOI: 10.1080/13683500.2023.2300983](https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2023.2300983)

Provided by Escuela Superior Politecnica del Litoral

Citation: Tourism planning as a social practice in times of change and uncertainty: Views from a troubled Latin American country (2024, April 2) retrieved 2 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2024-04-tourism-social-uncertainty-views-latin.html>

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