

the number of tourists in their area and begin to see the downsides of sharing their home area. Antagonism, the final stage, is achieved when residents reach their boiling point and overtly treat visitors with verbal or even physical abuse. Tourists are viewed as the root cause for the area's problems. This stage sets off a vicious cycle requiring increased promotional efforts to attract visitors and offset the deteriorating reputation of the region.¹⁴

What's in a Name?

So far, we have presented quite a list of problems, both environmental and cultural, that can result from tourism. What can be done to minimize these problems? In areas where tourism activities are still developing, long-range planning will address some of the potential problems in developing tourist destinations. In developing areas and in already popular tourist locations, many efforts can be taken that will help safeguard the environment and the people. These efforts are encompassed in a variety of initiatives that can be found under the umbrella of **sustainable tourism**. As you know, sustainable tourism maximizes the positive impacts and minimizes the negative impacts on Profit, Planet, and People. Figure 13.2 illustrates how sustainable tourism is distinct from mass tourism but has a variety of niche markets within it.

By many accounts, sustainable tourism is the fastest-growing phenomenon of the industry, especially when you consider all the related terms that have been attached to and arbitrarily used to describe sustainable tourism, there should be no doubt about this claim. It seems as though everyone finds marketing appeal in describing its service offerings as green, sustainable, or ecologically friendly.

Pick up a copy of any popular travel or tourism magazine and you will be hard pressed not to find at least one article dedicated to sustainability somewhere in the issue. It has become very popular for almost everyone in the tourism industry to tout its efforts at sustainability. Sustainability appears to be just as popular in the academic community, with entire journals dedicated to the subject. Usage of the term *sustainable* has become so prevalent that the concepts and practices of sustainable tourism are beginning to be lost in a semantics jungle.

One thing is for sure: No matter what these efforts to preserve resources are called, maintaining the positive benefits of tourism is in everyone's interests. Unchecked and unplanned tourism growth can lead to the eventual destruction of the very assets that originally served to attract visitors. Taking steps to preserve and protect tourist attractions will create a legacy for future generations. Achieving these benefits begins with awareness and education, and ends with actions!



FIGURE 13.2

Degrees of sustainability.