Indicators of Sustainable Tourism for Yangshuo China

Final report from a study and workshop process using the WTO Indicators methodology

July 2005
Acknowledgements

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The complete list of participants and resource persons for the Workshop is attached as Annex D (to be included)

Note that this report is the product of a case study for Yangshuo, Guilin, China, on-site research and interviews, review of information and visits to specific sites and attractions in Yangshuo and surrounding parts of Guilin City and Guanxi Province. The report also draws upon the discussions and conclusions of participants in a three day workshop held in Yangshuo and involving experts from China and abroad, local stakeholders, and tourism managers from throughout Guanxi.
Acknowledgements .................................................................................................................. 1
Executive Summary .................................................................................................................. 3
Recommendations .................................................................................................................... 5
Guilin (Yangshuo) Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development Indicators ............. 6
Part One: Introduction .............................................................................................................. 9
  Sustainable Tourism Development in a Situation of Rapid Growth .................................. 9
  Table 1.1: 1985~2003 Tourist Numbers ............................................................................. 9
Part Two: Use of the WTO Indicators Approach in Yangshuo .............................................. 12
  Fact Sheet ............................................................................................................................ 14
  Key Sustainability Issues for Yangshuo ............................................................................. 15
Part Three: Methodology for Indicators Identification .......................................................... 16
Part Four: Yangshuo – Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats ............................. 18
  Area Delimitation ............................................................................................................... 18
  Characteristics of the Yangshuo Destination .................................................................... 18
  SWOT analysis for Yangshuo (summary table – each is elaborated below) .................... 19
STRENGTHS ......................................................................................................................... 19
WEAKNESSES ....................................................................................................................... 20
OPPORTUNITIES .................................................................................................................... 21
THREATS ............................................................................................................................... 22
Data Sources: .......................................................................................................................... 24
Part Five: Issues and Indicators for Yangshuo ....................................................................... 25
Part Six: Conclusions .............................................................................................................. 48
  References ......................................................................................................................... 49
  Annex A: Q1 Model Community Questionnaire applied to Yangshuo ......................... 51
  Annex B: Q2: Model Exit Questionnaire Applied to Yangshuo ..................................... 53
  Annex C: Indicator Selection Worksheet ........................................................................... 54
  Annex D: Indicators Development and Reporting Worksheet (Workshop Use)............ 55
  Annex E: Research and Workshop Results Summary Table: Issues and Possible Actions ......................................................................................................................... 57
  Annex F: list of participants ............................................................................................... 65
Executive Summary

This report presents the results of the case study and associated workshop held in Yangshuo Guilin China. The workshop focused on the Yangshuo area, located within the Karst region of China and brought together experts from the region and other parts of China and stakeholders in the region’s tourism to discuss sustainable development of tourism in the region and how indicators could assist.

This study is based on several sources of information: background data and prior feasibility studies relating to the tourism industry of the region, interviews with selected officials on site, discussions of the workshops; and analysis of information acquired during the field study period. These data have been used to build the specific framework for indicators which can respond to the key issues for Yangshuo.

The Yangshuo study revealed that most of the WTO baseline indicators were applicable to the study area, with those relating to planning and organization, control of tourists, and protection of the key natural assets of the region being of greatest importance.

The main impact of the workshops and study has been to bring together all those most concerned with the future of Yangshuo and its tourism, and to create a dialogue which will hopefully lead to cooperation in the creation of a sustainable future for Yangshuo and its tourism. It is hoped that ongoing monitoring of key trends and use of the indicators will be a continuing process for Yangshuo, linked to the new Sustainable Tourism Observatory which was established in Yangshuo and inaugurated at the workshop. The key issues are identified below in a summary table, and elaborated in greater detail in the study.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Components of the issue</th>
<th>Priority Indicators</th>
</tr>
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</table>
| Local Satisfaction                   | Concern with overcrowding on West Street, rapid change                                                                        | • Percentage of residents who believe they benefit from tourism  
• Percentage of residents who believe tourism is good for Yangshuo  
• Percentage of residents who are employed in the tourism sector                                                                                       |
| Effects of tourism on communities    | Impacts on youth, image, need for capacity building to take advantage of tourism                                               | • Number of persons (and % of village) involved in tourism  
• % of GNP derived from tourism                                                                                                                          |
| Tourist satisfaction                 | Fear that rapid change will alter Yangshuo and eliminate attractiveness                                                        | • Level of satisfaction by visitors on exit questionnaire (see Annex XXX for a model questionnaire adapted to Yangshuo)  
• Perception of value for money (also from the questionnaire)                                                                                               |
| Health                               | Lack of standards for home stays and small premises                                                                              | • Number of reported accidents/incidents involving tourists and their causes (particularly reported gastrointestinal disease)  
• % tourists who agree that Yangshuo is a safe place to visit (exit Q)                                                                                   |
| Tourism seasonality                  | High period in April to October with low use off season                                                                          | • Tourist arrivals by month or quarter (distribution throughout the year)  
• Occupancy rates for licensed (official) accommodation by month (peak periods relative to low season) and % of all occupancy in peak quarter or month  
• Number and % of tourist industry jobs which are permanent or full-year (compared to temporary jobs)                                                    |
| Community and Destination Economic Benefits | Lack of reasonable mechanism for distribution of benefits among stakeholders (local residents, government and enterprises) | • Number of local people (and ratio of men to women) employed in tourism  
• Average tourism wage relative to overall average wage  
• Number of tourism enterprises (% locally owned)                                                                                                             |
| Protecting critical ecosystems       | The hills and wetlands around Yangshuo are a critical part of its attraction – and increasingly visited by tourists            | • Number of protected sites (plus area and level of control/protection)  
• Intensity of use for key sites (number of tourists per Km² (Number of boats and rafts per linear Km for rivers)                                         |
| River/Lake water quality            | The Li and Yulong rivers are the main draw to Yangshuo – use levels and land based contamination can harm its image and utility | • Level of contamination of river water (faecal coliforms, campylobacter)  
• Tourist perception of river water quality (on exit questionnaire)                                                                                                |
<p>| Energy Management                   | Growing use and costs is an issue. If Yangshuo is to label itself green it needs to show progress                               | • Percentage of tourism sector businesses participating in energy conservation programs                                                                 |
| Sewage Treatment                    | Many smaller establishments and communities have insufficient waste water treatment                                               | • Percentage of tourism establishments (including those in small communities) on approved treatment systems.                                                                 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Components of the issue</th>
<th>Priority Indicators</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Solid waste</td>
<td>Litter is a problem in both urban and rural areas</td>
<td>• Percentage of tourists who were bothered by excessive litter in the streets and tourist destinations (exit questionnaire)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual pollution/image</td>
<td>Vistas are central to the Yangshuo experience</td>
<td>• % of tourists who agree that Yangshuo has maintained its authentic village/regional style (exit questionnaire)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Intensity of tourist use | • Tourists congregate at specific sites such as Yulong river West Street, riverboat landing, Banyan Tree, Shangri-la | • Intensity of use for key sites (number of tourists per Km² for key sites)  
• Number of boats and rafts per linear Km for rivers – mean number, peak)  
• % of tourists who found sites/Yangshuo overcrowded (exit questionnaire) |
| Integrated planning | • Tourism in the region is not yet fully integrated with other sectors in the planning of the destination | • Presence of tourism in integrated regional plan/planning process (level of integration – subjective indicator) |
| Trip circuits and routes | • Sites do not work together consistently to plan and market products | • Length of stay of visitor (domestic, international)  
• Number of different sites visited in Guanxi during the visit |
| Variety of tourism experience | • Yangshuo has a major comparative advantage in its variety | • Number of different attractions in or near Yangshuo  
• Perception of variety by tourists (exit questionnaire) |
| Maintaining image of Yangshuo | • Yangshuo has a clean green image which could be imperilled if new development is not well managed | • Tourist satisfaction (as per exit questionnaire)  
• % of tourists who have a positive image of Yangshuo (exit questionnaire)  
• % of tourists who would recommend Yangshuo to their friends (exit Q) |

**Recommendations**

The definition of indicators, their calculation and reporting procedure and application in planning and management activities is a long-term process. The case study and the workshop provided exercises to demonstrate the indicators definition and application process in a few days, and resulted in an initial analysis of the sustainability and risk management factors.

For the application of indicators in practice, there is a need for an effective follow up to this workshop, with a strong political will to further coordinate the implementation of a monitoring programme through indicators, as it was clearly underlined stated in the declaration the adopted at the workshop which is printed in full on the following page.
Guilin (Yangshuo) Declaration on Sustainable Tourism Development Indicators

The participants gathered at the WTO National Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Development Indicators, held in Yangshuo, China from 25 to 28 July, agreed on the following:

Recognizing that:

1. China is one of the fastest growing tourism destination countries in the World, considering both domestic and international tourism growth.
2. China contains many of the World’s most unique and fragile cultural and natural tourist sites, and there is an increasing pressure on the natural and cultural environment caused by tourism development
3. The sustainability of tourism development is critical for China and for its destinations
4. Better information on social, economic and environmental aspects of tourism will be central to the decisions which support sustainable tourism in China and in destinations, like Guilin and Yangshuo
5. Good indicators are critical support tools for tourism planning and management of destinations which will ensure sustainability in the longer term.
6. Yangshuo is the first pilot destination in China for the application of sustainable tourism indicators. It is also designated as a WTO Sustainable Tourism Observatory
7. The effective implementation and use of indicators in Chinese tourism destinations will involve many partners, including
   - Government authorities
   - Private sector organizations and individual tourism businesses
   - Communities
   - Academic and research institutions
   - Other organizations (e.g. NGOs)
8. The lessons learned in Yangshuo regarding the application of the WTO indicators and workshop methodology can be replicated and applied in other destinations of China

We therefore declare the following:

1. The National Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Development Indicators, held between 25-28 July in Yangshuo is the first significant step towards the effective use of sustainable tourism indicators in China
2. Yangshuo will serve as pilot destination in order to generate experiences on the application of sustainable tourism indicators in the long term
3. The indicators methodology will be implemented in Yangshuo as part of its ongoing planning process, and part of the activities of the WTO Yangshuo Sustainable Tourism Observatory
4. The indicators will be measured and evaluated on a regular basis, and reported to the tourism stakeholders of Yangshuo and Guilin, as well as to WTO, in order to share experiences with other destinations.
5. The Zhongshan University will provide expert support on a continuous basis for the implementation of the sustainable tourism indicators programme in Yangshuo, through the Sustainable Tourism Observatory.
6. The China National Tourism Administration and Tourism Authorities of other Provinces will consider initiating other pilot destinations through organizing similar stakeholder workshops in order to spread the application of sustainable tourism indicators and monitoring programmes throughout the country
7. The China National Tourism Administration will ensure a good exchange of experiences between the pilot destinations and inform WTO regularly on advances.
8. The World Tourism Organization will provide technical advice for the application of indicators. WTO will also review the experiences generated in China and make certain that they are widely shared with the international tourism community.
Recommendations for Yangshuo

1. It is recommended that Yangshuo undertake to put in place the key indicators which have been identified through this study and workshop.
2. It is recommended that a local committee be identified to help guide the indicators implementation (in cooperation with the Yangshuo Sustainable Tourism Observatory).

Recommendations for Guilin

1. It is recommended that Guilin provide support to Yangshuo County in its establishment of an indicators pilot.
2. It is recommended that Guilin begin to expand some of the indicators to other sites within the City.

Recommendations at the level of Guanxi Province

1. It is recommended that Guanxi identify other suitable destinations within the Province where indicators of sustainable development for tourism will be of use, and hold workshops to stimulate further understanding of indicators and their use in these and other sites.

Recommendations for China

1. It is recommended that the China National Tourism Authority (CNTA) translate the report into Chinese and make copies widely available to other destinations in China. It is also recommended that a Chinese translation of the Guidebook “Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations”, be done and widely distributed.
2. CNTA is urged to promote the application of sustainable tourism indicators by initiating similar processes and investigations in other destinations of China.

Conclusions and considerations regarding further development of the WTO Indicators Programme

1. It is recommended that WTO examine the possibilities for follow up activities related to the study site of the workshop particularly related to the new Sustainable Tourism Observatory. The subsequent implementation process and use of the identified indicators would be an important experiment and demonstration for the further advance of the indicators methodology.
2. It is recommended that WTO will continue to take an active role in helping planners and managers of Yangshuo gain access to methods, models and examples of best practice worldwide.
3. It is recommended that WTO will ensure a wide distribution of the results of this workshop, and subsequent products from the Observatory.
The workshop provided an opportunity for all in attendance to discuss and experience the indicators development process and to meet others with similar problems. This effort could lead to future collaboration within the region toward the promotion of sustainable tourism. Participants also had the opportunity of using enhanced participatory techniques to address tourism planning processes. The recommendations above reflect the discussions on application and next steps, and recognize the opportunity for the sharing of information which the participatory approach provided.
Part One: Introduction

*Sustainable Tourism Development in a Situation of Rapid Growth*

Tourism has been steadily growing, expanding geographically, and evolving very dynamically worldwide, despite the fluctuating political and economic situation and major global threats, such as terrorism, natural hazards and epidemics. Yangshuo, the case study destination of the workshop, is a rapidly growing destination which is directly affected by these global trends and is located in one of the fastest growing domestic and international tourism markets in the world.

Yangshuo has seen tourism grow in twenty years from less than 30,000 tourists (overnight stays) in 1986 to more than 512,000 in 2004. As well, those visiting by river cruise (most of whom are day visitors) rose from 1.2 million in 1986 to over 1.75 million in 2004. (Guilin Municipal Tourism Bureau statistics).

![Tourist Numbers Graph](image)

**Table 1.1: 1985~2003 Tourist Numbers**

Over this period, the mix of tourists has changed from nearly 100% foreign visitors to more than 80% domestic travellers. The essence of the indicators program of WTO is risk management and provision of critical information to those in planning and management so that they can anticipate and prevent unacceptable and unsustainable outcomes. Better information through indicators provides the ability to define risks to key assets, to communities, to the values most important to the communities and tourists, and the levels of preparedness of destinations in the event of problems or as a means to anticipate and prevent them. The WTO Guidebook: Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations (2004) is designed to help identify key issues
and the indicators which can help managers respond effectively to them and sustain what makes a destination viable and attractive.

Indicators are defined as “measures of the existence or severity of current issues, signals of upcoming situations or problems, measures of risk and potential need for action, and means to identify and measure the results of our actions. Indicators are information sets which are formally selected to be used on a regular basis to measure changes that are of importance for tourism development or management.” WTO Guidebook 2004 p8) Used properly, indicators can become key management tools – performance measures which supply essential information both to the managers and to all of the stakeholders in tourism. Good indicators can provide in-time information to deal with pressing issues and to help guide the sustainable development of a destination. In the context of rapid growth in tourism and changing demands, such as that experienced recently by Yangshuo (and to some extent in most Chinese destinations), the indicators are key management and decision-support tools.

At each tourism destination there exist certain data and information that can serve as sustainability indicators if their relevance is understood. Tourism professionals work regularly with indicators. The most commonly used and understood indicators are of economic aspects like tourism revenues and expenditures, tourism base line data and statistics like tourist arrivals, overnights spent, accommodation capacities, etc. These are reference points for business decisions. There are many existing indicators that can be used as sustainability indicators, when their relevance to sustainability issues is understood. For example, the number of tourists, a baseline figure, can be considered a sustainability indicator, when it is related to use levels of a certain destination or to known limits of capacity, or to measure tourist response after a disaster. As part of a carrying capacity assessment or estimate of limits to acceptable change, tourism numbers (in particular peak use figures) can be related to the sustainable use of natural resources (e.g., energy consumption per tourist,) or used to indicate potential level of stress on the system (e.g. density of tourists on West street, number of rafts on the river). When these same tourist numbers are compared with the number of local residents, a ratio is formed that can serve as an indicator of potential social stress - one indicator of the socio-cultural sustainability of tourism. The objective of the indicators process is to reduce future risks to the tourism industry and to destinations like Yangshuo.

Some of the benefits from good definition and use of indicators can include:

- better decision-making - lowering risks or costs
- identification of emerging issues - allowing prevention
- identification of impacts - allowing corrective action when needed
- performance measurement of the implementation of plans and management activities – evaluating progress in the sustainable development of tourism
- reduced risk of planning mistakes - identifying limits and opportunities
• greater accountability - credible information for the public and other stakeholders of
tourism fosters accountability for its wise use in decision-making
• constant monitoring can lead to continuous improvement - building solutions into
management

Indicators can be inputs to company level or site level decision-making and planning
processes. Some indicators may measure overall trends, for example, tourism in the
region or in Guanxi as a whole. Sustainability indicators for a destination (e.g.,
Yangshuo) or for specific sites within a destination (e.g., the Yulong river) are often
based on data collected at a more specific level from key tourist use sites, operators of
attractions such as the rafting, and specific tourist attractions (e.g., the Big Banyan tree),
and individual tourism establishments, among others. Destination level indicators are
essential inputs for regional level planning processes that further cumulate information
which can support the development of indicators at the Provincial or even national level.
Part Two: Use of the WTO Indicators Approach in Yangshuo

Yangshuo is located in an area of outstanding natural beauty. Hundreds of Karst peaks rise vertically out of the rice paddies and river banks. Beautiful vistas are visible in all directions. The town of Yangshuo (part of the City of Guilin) is considered to be one of the prime locations in the Karst region, and is increasingly receiving recognition (in International Guidebooks, magazines and websites, as well as for internal tourism) as one of China’s “must see” destinations. Until recently, Yangshuo was a tiny village, generally visited by those taking a river tour down the Li River from Guilin (the urban centre which has international recognition, international air access, and is the economic and administrative centre of the City). Yangshuo had limited visibility, receiving visitors primarily based on tours focused on Guilin. The exception, for over 20 years, has been foreign backpackers who “discovered” Yangshuo and made it part of the international “backpacker experience”. But recent rapid growth, led by burgeoning Chinese domestic travel, has increased the range of activities available at Yangshuo, seen rapid expansion of hotels and guest houses, and annual increases in tourism in excess of 20%. The rapid growth of tourism, and particularly in the growing domestic market, is bringing both opportunities and threats to Yangshuo and to the sustainability of its tourism.

The key tourism assets of Yangshuo and the region can be summarized as follows:

- The unique landscape of Karst peaks rising directly from the alluvial plain
- Navigable rivers which flow among the peaks
- Cave systems
- Small traditional villages in photogenic settings
- Nearby access to other natural and cultural sites (the Longji terraces, mountain climbing and walking areas, white water streams) which augment the variety.

Development has also added:

- Increasing variety of built attractions – theme parks, shopping streets, cultural events
- Easy transport access to major cities of the southeast (Guangzhou, Hong Kong, Shenzhen)
• Widening range of rural/farm and village tourism – home stays, guest houses, local restaurants

The image of Yangshuo (where it is known) is of a green, natural area generally focused on adventure travel, backpacking and low cost rural vacations; rapid growth may change this.

For Yangshuo, the challenge will be to maintain the assets listed above while accommodating, each year, greater numbers of tourists. Investors from other parts of China and from abroad (e.g., Singapore, Malaysia, Korea) have begun to look at Yangshuo and the Li river valley as a good place to invest in tourism attractions.

The pace of development is quick, and may be bringing stresses to some of the sites, to infrastructure, and to the ability of government agencies to respond effectively – to anticipate and act to prevent non-sustainable forms of development.
**Fact Sheet**

**Location:** Yangshuo is located on the Li River in Guilin City, Guanxi China. The location within the Karst topography area of southeast China draws tourists both internationally and from throughout China. Yangshuo is approximately an eight hour drive (one hour flight) from the major south China centres of Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Hong Kong and approximately three hours by air from China’s other major gateways of Beijing and Shanghai.

**Size:** Yangshuo has a population of about 300,000, nearly half of which live in the river port town of Yangshuo.

**History:** Yangshuo was first discovered as a tourism destination by Western travellers in the 1980s, it became a Mecca for backpackers and a range of services were developed, catering initially primarily to western visitors on limited budgets. Yangshuo began as a small service centre for farming on the Li River, then as tourism opened, became the downriver terminus for boat tours down the Li river from Guilin. The past ten years have seen the relocation of some chemical industry away from Yangshuo, aimed at enhancing its appeal to tourists. As well, an increasingly mobile Chinese population has discovered Yangshuo as an attractive family-oriented destination with a variety of attractions besides the outstanding scenery.

**Physical description:** Yangshuo is located amid the Karst peaks which line the Li river in central Guanxi province. The topography is exceptional – with hundreds of limestone peaks rising vertically out of a flat plain covered with farms and watercourses. Yangshuo is in the centre of the most picturesque of the peaks; the town itself is located on the west bank of the Li river, 65 Km south of the major regional centre of Guilin.

**Climate:** The climate of the region is very hot and humid in summer, and drier and temperate in the winter season. High temperatures of 40 degrees Celsius occur in July and August – which is also a peak season for tourism. The river is navigable for tour boats in most seasons, but may be closed to the large boats due to low water in the Fall and Winter and is occasionally closed due to high water in the rainy season (May-June). Cool wet weather is a factor in reduced tourism in the winter months.

**Flora and Fauna:** The plains are generally cultivated and have been for centuries. The peaks remain forested, with some bird life. The peaks adjacent to the Li river have been protected and no construction is permitted on them. Many of the scenic areas are managed as parks and charge admission.

**Local governance:** Yangshuo is part of Guilin City which exercises control over general planning, including the Li river plan. Local planning occurs in Yangshuo County – generally focused on physical planning and site plan control. At the time of the study, a Tourism Plan was in preparation for Yangshuo, with participation from both levels of government.

**Attractions:** The topography of the region, Moon Hill, cruises down the Li River, rafting down the Li and Yulong rivers, cycling from village to village, climbing the peaks, rafting and tubing on the rivers, Shangri La (theme park and crafts) Impression Sanjie Liu sound and light show on the Li river, rock climbing, caving, hot air ballooning, village tourism. Many of the attractions are easily accessible on guided bicycle tours.

**Nearby Attractions:** Tourists to Yangshuo normally also visit Guilin City and the Longji rice terraces are less than three hours drive from Yangshuo

**Tourism Accommodation:** Two three star hotels, many small two star hotels and a growing number of rural inns, village guest houses and farm stays are available.

**Tourists:** Number overnight guest arrivals 2004 was 512,419. At the same time, the town was visited by 1.75 million cruise passengers who left the Li river cruises at Yangshuo.
Key Sustainability Issues for Yangshuo

As noted in the following chapters, the main issues for Yangshuo relate to the management of growing tourist numbers, provision of infrastructure, and regulation of building, provision of sufficient services to the tourists and local residents, and protection of the key assets of the destination. As well, there are concerns related to the participation in benefits, the focus of marketing, and the control of the impacts of increasing numbers, so that growing number of tourists continue to have enjoyable experiences and the destination benefits from the tourism. See part 4 for a more thorough assessment of issues and a SWOT analysis for tourism in Yangshuo.
Part Three: Methodology for Indicators Identification

The methodology for indicators development can be defined as a phased approach which will result in operational indicators for a destination, ideally integrated with the ongoing planning and management process and reinforcing its effectiveness. The methodology features a participatory workshop process which, in itself, produces benefits for the destination and for the participants, and is used as a training tool. Readers seeking additional information on the process and logistics are referred to Part Two of the WTO Guidebook (2004) which details the process and workshop methodology in some detail. The forms and templates used in this process in Yangshuo can be found in Annexes A through E of this report.

The WTO indicators development and implementation process has twelve phases, each logically leading to the next. (From the WTO Guidebook). The focus of the workshop is on those sections marked with *italics*:

**Research and Organization**
1. Definition/delineation of the destination.
2. Use of participatory processes.
3. **Identification of tourism assets and risks.**
4. **Long-term vision for a destination.**

**Indicators Development**
5. **Selection of priority issues**
6. **Identification of desired indicators.**
7. Inventory of data sources.
8. Selection procedures.

**Implementation**
10. Data collection and analysis.
11. Accountability, communication and reporting.
12. Monitoring and evaluation of indicators application.

In workshops like that held in Yangshuo, in the workshop itself the discussion focuses on the elements of this process (*shown in italics*) which identify key issues and select and evaluate indicators which will be most important to the destination – that is on steps 3-6. In the Yangshuo case, the stress was placed on indicators which could address the issues arising from rapid growth in a relatively fragile area. In addition to the work to define key indicators, participants were encouraged to consider the steps necessary to carry out the remaining phases based on their work – to actually implement an indicators program and to take key indicators through to the point where they are systematically monitored and used to support decisions and to showcase performance.

The study prior to the workshop is designed to address some of the earlier elements in the process – to begin to gather information pertinent to the study and to provide the workshop organizers and local participants with knowledge of key issues and areas of
concern. The final part of the workshop sessions is designed to stimulate follow through on the later elements – the actual establishment of an indicators program and its use in the planning and management process. The establishment of Yangshuo as a Sustainable Tourism Observatory is seen as a critical element in the implementation of the indicators program and the ongoing monitoring of key indicators.
Part Four: Yangshuo – Strengths Weaknesses Opportunities and Threats

Area Delimitation

For the purposes of this study, the focus is defined as the County of Yangshuo. This includes the town itself, the Li and Yulong river areas which flow through the county and such attractions as Moon village, Fuli village, the Shangri La tourist attraction, and other tourism sites within the county. The heavy dependence on tourists arriving by river cruise from Guilin City, thus the links with tourism in Guilin City should be considered in any analysis of Yangshuo. It should be also noted that Yangshuo is part of a larger tourist region centred on Guilin, and which includes the attractions in Guilin urban area, the Longji rice terraces in Longshen County, and the Li river – major draws for tourism to the region. While the focus is on Yangshuo itself, the conditions affecting the sustainability of the broader region in and around Guilin City are also of relevance. Yangshuo town is the centre of Yangshuo County which is one of twelve counties of Guilin City.

Characteristics of the Yangshuo Destination

In the assessment of key issues for Yangshuo, a SWOT approach was used and was introduced to the workshop group as a good way of thinking about key issues – in particular to develop a list of key issues which reflect not just problems but also opportunities. As well, participants were urged to consider these issues from all of economic, environmental, socio-cultural and administrative perspectives.

The table which follows on the next page is a general SWOT analysis of Yangshuo based on several sources. Following the table is an expansion of the strengths weaknesses, opportunities and threats derived in part from the SWOT done for the Yangshuo tourism planning process. As part of an ongoing tourism planning exercise a SWOT analysis of Yangshuo’s tourism development was undertaken in 2004-2005. (Draft Yangshuo Tourism Plan 2005) The SWOT table has drawn heavily on this draft; sections on specific elements are extracted and summarized below with some additions based on interviews and the workshop deliberations.
**SWOT analysis for Yangshuo (summary table – each is elaborated below)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Rich natural assets (Outstanding natural features in the Karst formations)</td>
<td>• Lack of a strong economic base and access to investment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Colourful cultural resources</td>
<td>• Insufficient infrastructure to support tourism growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Clean natural environment</td>
<td>• Poor condition of much accommodation and services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Pleasant rural atmosphere</td>
<td>• Poor quality of urban growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Good international links</td>
<td>• Lack of strong integrated planning and management, policy and planning to control and direct growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Location and access</td>
<td>• Weak site plan control, environmental review and enforcement for protection of natural assets. Overcrowding, noise and waste issues in key high-density locations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Expanding tourism infrastructure</td>
<td></td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunities</th>
<th>Threats</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Increasing demand based on growing domestic holiday market</td>
<td>• Excessive focus on Li River</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Increase in the number of tourists choosing Yangshuo</td>
<td>• Increasing competition in the domestic tourism market.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Improved road access</td>
<td>• Lack of development coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Access to National Support Programs for Tourism Development</td>
<td>• Risk of too rapid or excessive growth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interest from large-scale investors</td>
<td>• External problems and crises affecting tourism in Yangshuo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**STRENGTHS**

- **Rich Natural Assets**
  Because of the Karst formations, the region around Yangshuo is famous both in China and internationally for its scenery of green mountains, beautiful water, exquisite caves and fantastic rocks. Accessible rivers flow through the Yangshuo area, which includes the most beautiful part of the famous Li River landscapes and similar vistas on the Yulong River.
• Colourful cultural resources
Yangshuo has colourful cultural tourism assets. The Impression of The Third Sister Liu, which is directed by famous director Zhang Yimou, is performed on the large-scale, natural out-door water stage of the Li River with the lit mountains as backdrop. Performances of the Zhuang Nationality culture are done each evening. Small villages near Yangshuo retain their rural character set among the peaks.

• Clean natural environment,
The natural environment in Yangshuo is visible, with fresh air, green trees, some of China’s cleanest rivers and streams and accessible natural areas. In addition, the climate makes Yangshuo a suitable place for travel most months of the year.

• Pleasant rural atmosphere
Local people welcome tourists to simple rural villages, friendly and hospitable culture and a relaxing environment which is both accommodating to tourists but permits relaxation among the beautiful natural scenery.

• Good international links
Yangshuo is home to many foreigners and visitors from abroad and other areas of China can get food and services they are familiar with, as well as a range of experiences which may be exotic to them. Good internet connections and multilingual hosting is strong relative to most other rural destinations in Asia.

• Location and access
Yangshuo has good access to markets and location relative to arrival points and other outstanding attractions. Guilin is one of four important gateways to China for foreigners. Many foreign visitors regard Guilin as the first stop to travel in China and Yangshuo is 65 km from Guilin city by road or river. Yangshuo is located near the Pearl River Delta, one of the largest domestic markets in China.

• Expanding tourism offer
Growing range of products and experiences all within easy range. Convenient access to variety in food, lodging, transportation means, types of tours and cultural experiences.

WEAKNESSES

• Lack of a strong economic base and access to investment
Little local economic capacity (agriculture has been main economic base with little surplus). Low per capita GDP (9th of 12 counties in Guilin) limits ability to generate investment locally.

• Insufficient infrastructure to support tourism growth
Tourism development is concentrated in the area of Yangshuo Port and several tourist spots in and around Yangshuo town. These scenic spots are reasonably served by
facilities. Tourism development in other scenic spots still remains at an early stage of development with inadequate and sometimes ill maintained roads. Tourists crowd roadways and many (roads and tourists) become muddy during the rainy season limiting attraction for tourists.

- **Poor condition of most accommodation and services**

  Some basic tourism service facilities are in relatively poor condition. There are 222 lodging facilities now in Yangshuo, few with star ratings. In Yangshuo there are 1 Four-star Hotel, 2 Three-star Hotels, 2 Two-star Hotels and 3 One-star Hotels. Most other accommodation is unrated. In addition, there are few tourism entertainment projects. While the *Impression of the Third Sister Liu* project has helped to fill the deficiency in the field of Yangshuo entertainment products to a certain extent, because of the price and seat limits, there remains a need for more.

- **Poor quality of urban growth**

  Poor current urban construction has restricted tourism development – both growth potential and impact on the tourism image. Yangshuo is surrounded to the south and west by hills and the east borders on the Li River, facing the east range. The interrelation of Yangshuo and its surroundings has resulted in the saying “The city is in scene while the scene is in the city.” Around the urban area, the natural landscape and human cultural sites are plentiful. There has been insufficient ability to maintain the urban and mountain-scapes, and to keep construction compatible with this vision.

- **Lack of strong integrated planning and management**

  The limited development capacity in and adjacent to Yangshuo’s scenic areas is the key limit to continued expansion in the scale of tourism industry and the generation of benefits. Organization, planning, integrated product development and marketing and greater coordination between all partners in Yangshuo development is required.

- **Weak site plan control, environmental review and enforcement** for protection of natural assets. At specific sites there is overcrowding, and as well, noise and waste issues in key high-density locations

**OPPORTUNITIES**

- **Increasing demand based on growing domestic holiday market**

  Although sightseeing has dominated the domestic market, recreation is growing as a new tourism product. With improvement of the national living standard, more and more Chinese tourists are seeking quality of life, especially for those from urban centres. Flexibility in how holidays are taken allows domestic tourists time to visit new areas like Yangshuo and to spend time in a variety of recreational pursuits. This is a rapidly growing market and Yangshuo is well positioned to serve it.

- **Increase in the number of tourists choosing Yangshuo**

  There is an emerging change in the market and visibility for Yangshuo – with increasing numbers seeking to use Yangshuo as the centre of their tour.
Because of its role as the terminus of the Li river tour, Yangshuo used to be a short stop on the whole Guilin-based Li river tour. Tourists did not stay long (most spent from one to two hours in Yangshuo—mainly in the street markets) spending little in the community. But with the development of a more varied tourism, more and more tourists are staying longer. Increased visibility for Yangshuo as a premier destination (the Lonely Planet 2005 shows it as one of the top ten “must see” places in China) the market is likely to continue to grow strongly.

- **Improved road access**

A new expressway from Guilin to Wuzhou (to be completed in 2007) will complete the high speed road connection from Yangshuo to the cities of the Pearl River Delta, allowing tourists to travel by road in an easy one day drive. Guangdong Province, along with the adjacent Hong Kong and Macau has a large population and is one of the wealthier areas of China. Many have considerable discretionary income. Now the expressway has been partly finished. It takes only 6 hours to travel from Guangdong to Yangshou, permitting weekend visits. When the highway is completely finished, it will take only 4 hours to travel from Guangzhou to Yangshuo, and only an hour or two more from the large cities of Hong Kong and Shenzhen.

- **Access to National Support Programs for Tourism Development**

Yangshuo is in one of the Provinces eligible for support under the Go West project, designed to support development in the west of China. Guanxi is the nearest province to the southeast coast to be eligible for this program. National funding will focus on prime areas, and Yangshuo qualifies. The first tranche of funding is 15,000,000 RMB followed by 11,000,000 RMB, in support of tourism structure construction. This is a signal opportunity to effectively obtain and use support for sustainable tourism for Yangshuo.

- **Interest from large-scale investors**

Given its unique tourism resources and the pace of development of recent years, Yangshuo has been receiving increased attention from large-scale enterprises interested in investment in tourism in the region, as well as investment in related sectors. This can likely be mobilized effectively to support sustainable tourism in Yangshuo and the region as a whole.

**THREATS**

- **Excessive focus on Li River**

The effect of the brand of Li River Tourism is a potential threat to tourism on the Yulong River. There is continuing competition between the two scenic areas, but with different players. Li River tourism is mainly organized by travel agencies as part of packages out of Guilin, while those of the Yulong River are not. Different levels of government are involved in the development and control, risking the loss of advantages of product co-development and marketing and the joint packaging of the assets of the region. The large concentration of cruise boats in space and time causes...
congestion of tourists and transportation services, and environmental problems (e.g. noise, pollution from emissions)

- **Increasing competition in the domestic tourism market**
  With the rapid development of tourism and the increase in the number of scenic spots on the market throughout China, there is growing competition for tourists. Firstly, the gold tour route from Pearl River Delta to Guilin. There are many opportunities to strengthen the competitiveness of tourism. There are rapidly growing intervening opportunities for tourists from the Pearl River Delta, (e.g., Zhaoqing, Zhaojing. Wuzhou and Hezhou are also destinations with many attractions, similar cultural assets and customs and diet close to that of delta residents. )These destinations are much more accessible to the prime market for Guilin and Yangshuo. Rapid development of Guilin may also draw tourism from Yangshuo (although it may also reinforce Yangshuo if co-marketed).

- **Lack of development coordination**
  Rapid uncontrolled development can threaten the assets which make Yangshuo so attractive. Widespread development may build on the farmlands, fruit gardens, paths and next to the village houses which are an important part of Yangshuo’s tourism resources. Insufficient planning and control of development may undermine the rural and environmentally sustainable image important to Yangshuo.

- **The pace of growth**
  While rapid growth in tourist numbers is also an opportunity, too rapid growth can create problems of impact and stress the capacity of authorities to control.

- **External problems and crises affecting tourism in Yangshuo**
  Yangshuo, like all other destinations, is vulnerable to events outside the region and even outside China. SARS, risk of avian influenza and river flooding have all had some impact on visits to Yangshuo in recent years, although the destination has shown considerable resilience. Problems related to terrorism abroad can threaten foreign arrivals. Preparation for potential threats will be very useful.

The SWOT shows a range of issues with which Yangshuo must deal if it is to develop in a sustainable way. The specific issues with related indicators which respond to this analysis follow in Part 5.
Data Sources:
The study revealed a number of good reliable data sources which could be drawn upon both to assist in defining the key issues and for data to support indicators. Some of the most potentially useful are noted below:

1. Yangshuo Tourism Master Plan, 2005, By Tourism research and planning centre of Sun Yat sen university and Yangshuo Government
2. Tourism Master Plan of Yulong Scenic Area, 2002, By Tourism research and planning centre of Sun Yat sen university and Yangshuo Government
3. The tenth Five year plan of Yangshuo economic and social development, Yangshuo County.
5. Feasibility study of the preservation and development of the Western street of Yangshuo County, 1999, The Guilin investment consulting company, Guilin Building Design Institute and Guilin Urban Planning Institute
Part Five: Issues and Indicators for Yangshuo

This section contains the key substantive results of the workshop and the study process. Key issues as identified in the Yangshuo study and workshop are shown initially in the chart below (organized according to the same typology as that used in the WTO Indicators Guidebook but containing all the issues identified as important by participants and those interviewed by the expert team.)

While many issues were identified in the research and the SWOT process done in the workshops, the challenge is to extract from the list those areas of problems and opportunities where indicators can make the most difference. This table contains only those issues which, based on the discussions and on additional sources and interviews, are of significance to the sustainability of Yangshuo as a tourism destination. (Those shown in bold received specific attention in the workshop sessions). Table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue Area</th>
<th>Yangshuo Application – Problems/Opportunities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Wellbeing of Host Communities</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1 Local Satisfaction With Tourism Attitudes, Dissatisfaction, Community Reaction</td>
<td>Many local residents are satisfied with the growth of tourism but some are left out of benefits. Both within villages and between them there are differences. Some small villages have river access (Xingping) or tourism development (Moon Village) but others have no tourism or have lost access (Fuli). Specific concerns expressed regarding over-commercialization and disappearing of the characteristics of West Street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.2 Effects of Tourism on Communities - Baseline Issue</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Attitudes, Social Benefits, Changes in Lifestyles, Housing, Demographics</td>
<td>Several small communities have begun tourism enterprises – hotels, restaurants. Change in village function – some impact on youth, Need for capacity building for villagers and local businesses to take full advantage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Sustaining Cultural Assets</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1 Conserving Built Heritage Cultural Sites, Monuments, Damage, Maintenance, Designation, Preservation</td>
<td>Lack of funding for restoration or preservation of some older buildings – much new building not vernacular, growth is a threat to some areas without preservation controls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3 Community Participation in Tourism</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.1 Community Involvement and Awareness, Information, Empowerment, Participation, Community Action</td>
<td>Training of villagers and business persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Tourist Satisfaction</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1 Sustaining Tourist Satisfaction - Expectations, Complaints, Problems, Perceptions</td>
<td>Some enterprises (e.g. Shangri-la) survey visitors. Several one-time surveys have been done in Yangshuo, Liriver, Guilin, but no regular monitoring. Concern regarding over-commercialization and impact on image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 Health and Safety</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.1 Health Public Health, Community Health,</td>
<td>Good health service available locally. Limited safety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue Area</td>
<td>Yangshuo Application – Problems/Opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Food Safety, Worker Health and Safety | training/equipment observed  
Hygiene, food safety (particularly in home stays)  
(hygiene issues) |
| 5.2 Coping with Epidemics and International Transmission of Disease Facilitation, Contingency Planning, Impacts on Tourism | SARS had some short impact. Local plan for emergencies (flood, tourist accidents?) |
| 5.3 Tourist Security Risk, Safety, Civil Strife, Terrorism, Natural Disasters, Impacts, Management Response, Contingency Planning, Facilitation | At site level, some sites lack railings.  
Emergency response, fire safety in accommodation |
| 6 Capturing Economic Benefits from Tourism | |
| 6.1 Tourism Seasonality Occupancy, Peak Season, Shoulder Season, Infrastructure, Product Diversity, Employment | Peak season for Guilin is April to October. Water levels are low on rivers in off-season limiting river tours which are key draw. Many other activities spin off from the main attraction. |
| 6.3 Employment Training, Quality, Skills, Turnover, Seasonality, Pay Levels | Tourism pay levels are higher than farming but many are seasonal. Skills training needed? (Some guides and agents not currently controlled or licensed) |
| 6.5 Community and Destination Economic Benefits - Baseline Issue Capturing Benefits, Tourism Revenues, Tourism Contribution to the Local Economy, Business Investment, Community Investment, Taxes, Satellite Accounting | Lack of reasonable mechanism for distribution of benefits among stakeholders (local residents, government and enterprises. Some business tax on formal enterprises, informal enterprises not covered. Yet draw on infrastructure – and cause costs)  
Management of business environment  
Distribution of benefits among business persons  
Control of external investments |
| 6.6 Tourism and Poverty Alleviation Equity, Micro Enterprises, Employment and Income Opportunities, SMEs | Many small village enterprises are entering tourism in villages – hotels, farm stay, restaurants etc. Marketing and quality control may be challenges |
| 7 Protection of Valuable Natural Assets | |
| 7.1 Protecting Critical Ecosystems Fragile Sites, Endangered Species | Inventory of ecosystems done as part of Li River plan – some protection. Heavy tourist concentration on some sites  
Environmental damage and pollution  
Environmental protection and enforcement including training for personnel  
Protection of the Li River |
<p>| 7.2 River/Lake Water Quality Contamination, Perception of Water Quality | Some tourist access areas do not meet level 2 standard for swimming and fishing |
| 8 Managing Scarce Natural Resources | |
| 8.1 Energy Management Energy Saving, Efficiency, Renewables | Inefficient use of resources (specifically energy) |
| 9 Limiting Impacts of Tourism Activity | |
| 9.1 Sewage Treatment - Baseline Issue. Wastewater Management, Extent of System, Effectiveness, Reducing Contamination | Some city treatment. Many small villages and rural residents have cesspool treatment. Non-point source is a problem (cattle, fertilizers, pesticides, septic seepage) Problem handling waste from tourism sites/stops. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9.4 Controlling Noise Levels</td>
<td>Measuring Noise Levels, Perception of Noise. Noise is issue for some travellers – notably West Street in Yangshuo – complaints from hotels on street</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.5 Managing Visual Impacts of Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure. Siting, Construction, Design, Landscaping</td>
<td>Concern for new construction – may not be compatible with local architecture and image. Declining quality of landscapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Controlling Tourist Activities</td>
<td>Some sites very crowded – at particular times linked to boat arrivals, bus tours. Most tourists arrive in Yangshuo at same time –no staggering of departures/routes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2 Managing Events</td>
<td>Sport Events, Fairs, Festivities, Crowd Control. Crowding issue as visitors/buses leave boat area, Impression Sanjie Liu.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Destination Planning and Control</td>
<td>Integrating Tourism into Local/Regional Planning Information for Planners, Plan Evaluation, Results of Plan Implementation. Master plan for Yangshuo has strong tourism element, as does overall plan for Li River. Overall land use plan also is in place as is EIA for major projects including tourism sites. <strong>Need for effective integrated planning and management</strong>. Improved awareness of tourism by government officials. <strong>Need for an effective management capacity in government</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2 Development Control</td>
<td>Control Procedures, Land Use, Property, Management, Enforcement. Review procedure done for all new land use/proposals. Plan designed to protect agricultural land, designate growth areas. <strong>Authoritative implementation and enforcement of government planning</strong>. Need for the development and implementation of effective standards for operations. Conflict of interest between enterprises and government, enterprises and local villagers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.3 Tourism-Related Transport</td>
<td>Mobility Patterns, Safety, Transport Systems, Efficiency, In-Destination Transport, Transport to/from Destination. Issue re timing of boat and bus tours, simultaneous arrivals, design of tours to keep tourists in Guilin overnight, lack of stops by boats in Li river villages, bus parking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 Designing Products and Services</td>
<td>Creating Trip Circuits and Routes Corridors, Links, Cooperation. Lack of integrated tour product packaging, co-marketing of attractions and trips</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.2 Providing Variety of Experiences</td>
<td>Product Diversification, Range of Services. Yangshuo has wide variety (boat tours, walks, cultural and natural sites, hot springs, caves, village visits, climbing, bicycling.) Product quality and control of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue Area</td>
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<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 12.3 Marketing for Sustainable Tourism  
“Green” Marketing, Products and Experiences Emphasizing Sustainability, Market Penetration, Tourist Response, Marketing Effectiveness | Yangshuo wishes to become known and recognized as a sustainable tourism destination. Concern re how to best market this and assure quality control |
| 12.4 Protection of the Image of Yangshuo  
Branding, Vision, Strategic Marketing | Current Yangshuo image is very positive – but focus on low end/backpacker/day trip image. Image is linked (and not differentiated) from Guilin. Gradual separate recognition as a good place separate from Guilin. Variety, nature and value for money are key elements. **Excessive pursuit of economic returns/ over commercialization which has led to too many tourists and declining tourist experience** |
| 13 Sustainability of Tourism Operations and Services  
13.1 Sustainability and Environmental Management Policies and Practices at Tourism Environmental Management Systems, Social Responsibility | Very little activity in this area at present, but important if Yangshuo is to market itself as a sustainable destination |

In the workshop, a prioritization process was used to select the issue areas which were of greatest interest to the participants: all of those receiving support are addressed in this table. The top eight as indicated by workshop participants are shown in boldface with key indicators also bolded. The extensive table in Annex E elaborates these issues and provides additional information. The indicators which respond to these are addressed in the following section of this report.

The selection of key issues was based on a voting system where all participated. Note that each participant was given four votes and that the list is a summary of what was seen collectively as the highest priorities – this guided the selection of which issue areas to discuss in more detail in the following sessions. As well, within the time available, selected important issues and specific indicators were then analyzed in some detail, using the recommended review procedures contained in the Guidebook.

**Identification of Indicators**

A long list of potential indicators was identified by the working groups which could respond directly to the most important issues.

Then, each of the possible indicators was systematically reviewed relative to the following criteria:

1) **Relevance** – is it important to have this information and who will use it? Does it really help to understand or respond to the issue?  If the answer was no, the potential indicator was set aside.
2) **Feasibility** – is it reasonable and practical to obtain the information to support the indicator. If the answer was yes, (that is, upon initial scan it seemed likely that the information was available from an existing source or could be reasonably easily generated) the indicator was retained for further examination.

3) **Means to use the indicator (includes concerns for credibility and clarity)** where does the data come from – is it likely to be believed or is the source questionable? Does it need further work? How will the indicator be portrayed so that it will be easy to understand? Will it need additional manipulation to be a good indicator?

4) **Benchmarking or comparability** – are there standards or benchmarks which can be used to compare this indicator with other destinations or sites, if not, will it be possible to use it to show change over time in one destination?

The first two criteria – relevance and feasibility are critical while the other criteria help stimulate initial deliberation on how the indicator will actually be collected, used and understood. At the same time, the discussion of the indicators focused on both how the indicator could be used to plan and manage long term sustainability, and which of the indicators would be of primary importance in the context of shorter term action.

The workshop participants followed the indicator selection process with some work on a small sample of selected indicators – to follow the entire process through to implementation for a few indicators. Using the Indicator Development Worksheet (See annex B) they worked in groups to begin to elaborate selected indicators, responding to selected issues.

Worksheets containing the results of deliberations on how to put selected indicators in place and next steps required for key indicators are contained in Annexes A to F

**SPECIFIC ISSUES AND THEIR INDICATORS**

This section provides discussion on the most important issues relating to the sustainable development of tourism for Yangshuo and identifies the indicators which are likely to be of greatest value. The indicators evaluation work done by the participants in the July training workshop is one of the key inputs into this evaluation. Some of the issue areas have not been addressed in detail; these are the areas which, while being raised in interviews or at the workshop appeared to have less support/interest and significance at this time for Yangshuo). Those indicators shown in **boldface** were the ones seen as most important by the workshop participants.
**Issue: Local Satisfaction With Tourism (WTO baseline issue 1.1)**

Many local residents are satisfied with the growth of tourism but some are left out of benefits. Both within villages and between them there are differences. Some small villages have river access (Xingping) or tourism development (Moon Village) but others have no tourism or have lost access (Fuli). Specific concerns were expressed regarding over-commercialization and disappearance of the characteristics of West Street.

Local residents are directly involved in tourism, both as active employers, and employees in the industry and as persons impacted by the numbers of tourists who visit the town, the villages and the rural areas. Tourism affects not only those who are willing and active participants (running shops, providing transport, accommodation, tourist services) but also those who are, by the fact of their residence and work, part of the tourist experience. In Yangshuo, those who live near West Street cannot avoid the large tourist numbers, noise and music, long hours and crowding associated with growing tourist numbers. In scenic spots such as Moon Village, and along the Yulong river and its access points, farmers and other residents are both part of the scene sought by tourists and potential beneficiaries or victims of tourism. As the number of attractions, routes and tours rises, more and more residents are affected by tourism – both positively and negatively. Thus the satisfaction of the local population becomes a vital factor in the sustainability of Yangshuo as a destination.

**Indicator(s):**

- Percentage of residents with specific opinions on the impact of tourism on them and their community (as per suggested questionnaire Annex XX)

**Reason for the use of these indicators:** Only by directly querying the residents can their opinions and reactions be measured. These are essential early warning indicators of perceived problems which may emerge – changes in attitude (which can also be done for specific localities such as West Street or the villages along the Yulong River) are signals of either success or increasing problems.

**Source(s) of data:** A sample survey of residents (which may be stratified to ensure that specific subsets of residents are included).

**Means to use the indicators:** It is expected that the tourism planners can use this as both risk management and input into the tourism planning and management process, and as performance measures for the plan.

**Benchmarking:** Because this is unique to Yangshuo, the best benchmarking will be relative to baselines set at the first use of the questionnaire. It will also be possible to disaggregate results to permit comparison of different parts of Yangshuo (e.g. those near West Street or the river compared to those in more rural parts).
**Issue: Effects of Tourism on Communities (WTO Baseline Issue 1.2)**

As tourism arrives in smaller communities, the very nature of the community can change. The demographics, attitudes (as noted above) and the economic and social costs and benefits tend to change, affecting lifestyles, housing and the local social structure. Several small communities near Yangshuo have begun tourism enterprises – hotels, restaurants, guiding, attractions and these are changing the village function. Some changes may be positive (improved incomes, housing, services, job opportunities) while others may be viewed as negative (see 1.1 above for some indicators which may help). There may also be training and capacity building needs for residents to take full advantage of the changed opportunities. (see also community economic benefits – 6.5)

**Indicator(s):**
- Number of persons (and % of village) involved in tourism
- % of GNP derived from tourism
- Number of homes (and %) in the village with tourism functions (home stays, guiding, food services, crafts, cycle rental)
- Number of tourists per day in the village/community (average and for peak day)
- Number and capacity of social services available in the village (and services attributable to tourism)

*Reason for the use of these indicators:* One of the objectives of tourism development is to benefit the local community and region – not just economically but also in the form of social services, jobs and opportunities. Tourism sector managers and planners of overall development need means to judge whether tourism is bringing positive effects and to document the extent.

*Source(s) of data:* The exit questionnaire noted above, with explicit questions on who benefits, whether the village or community is perceived to be better or worse and other questions on specific local issues is the key source. Local tourism authorities can count tourists regularly. Local authorities Yangshuo Industrial and Business Management Bureau) can provide annual data on number of shops, beds for rent, restaurants etc. It may be useful to do a regular inventory of tourist and social services for each village: this is not yet in place.

*Means to use the indicators:* The main client for these indicators are the town and village managers and leaders – who are involved in taking decisions on how much new tourism of which kind to permit and where. The planning office, tourism department, and municipal services will also find these useful inputs to their planning and control of services.

*Benchmarking:* Each community will be unique but will share areas of concern with others in Yangshuo -the best benchmarking will be relative to baselines set at the first use of the questionnaire and for comparisons between communities.
**Issue: Community Involvement and Awareness. (WTO issue 3.1)**

As tourism spreads, there is increasing need for good information at the level of the community or village, business and individual. This can lead to greater participation and ability to mobilize all parts of the community (government, business, and institutions) to achieve common goals. For some, this may involve capacity building and training to participate more fully in sustainable development. There are now many small entrepreneurs, larger businesses and organizations involved in tourism in Yangshuo and there is a need for greater involvement.

**Indicators:**
- % of population participating in tourism planning in their communities
- Degree to which the community is satisfied with the information it is receiving on tourism and on sustainable tourism issues
- Several of the questions on the questionnaire re participation in tourism and level of benefits

*Reason for the use of these indicators:* This can be a good early warning for authorities regarding emerging issues at the community level, as well as a performance measure for degree of inclusiveness in the planning and benefits from tourism (the latter being an important issue for Yangshuo – sharing of benefits)

*Source(s) of data:* Most will come from a resident survey. Actual participation levels can be measured at e.g., public meetings,

*Means to use the indicators:* Demonstrate that tourism is bringing benefits, Can help to measure progress in increasing involvement by the community and increasing the understanding of tourism.

*Benchmarking:* Can be compared among communities and help understand equity issues, Over time may signal changes in how communities perceive tourism.
**Issue: Sustaining Tourist Satisfaction (WTO Baseline issue 4.1)**

Tourist satisfaction is considered a fundamental success factor in sustaining a tourism destination. Changes in tourist expectations and whether these have been fulfilled, numbers of complaints, tourist reports of problems or good experiences all affect future tourism. Tourist perceptions may be one of the most important factors affecting long term sustainability – of both enterprises and destinations. Concerns have already been registered by some (visitors and tourism managers) regarding over-commercialization, rapid development (some of which may not maintain the desired image) and the impact which this can have on the image of Yangshuo.

**Indicator(s):**
- Level of satisfaction by visitors on exit questionnaire (see Annex XXX for a model questionnaire adapted to Yangshuo)
- Perception of value for money (also from the questionnaire)
- % of return visitors
- Complaints registered (at hotels, tourist office)

**Reason for the use of these indicators:**
Yangshuo currently has no systematic and regular means of monitoring tourist reaction. What do they like and dislike. Why do they come? What do they want more of, or less of? Were there any barriers to them enjoying themselves. This is critical information for the ongoing planning and management of tourism in Yangshuo – and can greatly strengthen the sustainability of the destination and of key components of the tourism experience in Yangshuo and in its attractions and establishments.

**Source(s) of data:**
While some enterprises (e.g. Shangri-la) survey visitors, this provides only a partial view of what is important to the destination. What is needed is a regular exit questionnaire. Because there is a limited number of access points, (two major roads, one airport, a small number of river landings) it would be possible to sample visitors as they pass key points. For example, a small random sample could be taken on the buses returning to Guilin (pick six seats at random and do the survey on the bus) to get a sample of Li river tourists. Exit surveys of those who travel by air could be done in the departure lounge at Guilin – with the first question being “did you visit Yangshuo” or a survey done for all of Guilin – asking where you stayed – and stratified to get a sampling of each major destination within Guilin. The new Observatory could be the organizer. The tourism students in the new University could be the ones to do the survey.

**Means to use the indicators:** Basic information regarding success of tourism. Baseline for planning and management at all levels.

**Benchmarking:** Because many of the questions are the same or similar as those in use in other destinations, some comparisons can be made.
**Issue: Health (WTO 5.1)**

Health of tourists was raised by both officials and attendees at the workshop as an area important to the future of tourism in Yangshuo. While Yangshuo is generally perceived as a healthy and environmentally clean destination in China, with good health services available, growing numbers of hotels, restaurants and homestays increase the risk of health concerns, notably fire safety, food safety/hygiene, and public health. As well, limited safety training/equipment was observed in tourist facilities and venues. Note that these same indicators are of relevance relative to international transmission of disease, and ability to respond (e.g. SARS, avian flu).

**Indicator(s):**
- **Number of reported accidents/incidents involving tourists and their causes (particularly reported gastrointestinal disease)**
- % of restaurants regularly inspected and found in compliance with food safety
- % staff in tourism businesses with first aid training (particularly in such enterprises as climbing, cycling, river tours, caving)
- % tourism enterprises with a risk management plan (including fire, flood)
- % tourists who agree that Yangshuo is a safe place to visit (exit Q)

**Reason for the use of these indicators:** As has been clear from SARS and contagious disease outbreaks worldwide, health is a fundamental component of sustainability. If a destination is not healthy, or is perceived to be unhealthy, it loses tourism. Authorities need to monitor risks to health, and be prepared to act quickly to remove or mitigate problems.

**Source(s) of data:** Public health authorities – the Yangshuo disease control centre regularly quarterly report to the publics and the Health Authorities on the risks of the epidemic disease and the infective diseases. Exit questionnaire – particularly the items “I found Yangshuo to be clean” and “I had good health on my visit to Yangshuo”.

**Means to use the indicators:** Can be used as an early warning system for key risks – in concert with health authorities. Can also be used to prove to tourists that the destination is healthy.

**Benchmarking:** Because much of the same health data (particularly for reportable diseases, injuries) is international, there is good ability to compare results with other destinations and global averages.
**Issue: Tourism Seasonality (WTO Baseline issue 6.1)**

Peak season for Yangshuo is determined by two factors: the weather, and the scheduled holiday seasons for their two main markets (China – where national holiday periods such as Fall Festival are the key peaks) and the international market, where July and August are peak holiday seasons for most source countries. These coincide with the periods when Yangshuo is warm (in some cases very hot) and when the rivers are high, permitting best access to the scenic areas. The winter season is the low season: some facilities have less than 20% occupancy in winter. There is strong interest in expanding the shoulder season, and enhancing product diversity. The peak season for Guilin (and for employment in tourism related enterprises) is April to October. Water levels are low on rivers in off-season limiting river tours which are a key draw. Many other activities spin off from the main attraction.

**Indicator(s):**
- Tourist arrivals by month or quarter (distribution throughout the year)
- Occupancy rates for licensed (official) accommodation by month (peak periods relative to low season) and % of all occupancy in peak quarter or month
- % of business establishments open all year (and % tourist accommodation open all year)
- Number and % of tourist industry jobs which are permanent or full-year(compared to temporary jobs)

**Reason for the use of these indicators:** Variation in occupancy, use levels and employment reduce the ability to obtain revenues, retain staff, obtain revenue streams to support investment in facilities and infrastructure. Often facilities need to be built to accommodate peak use levels but lie vacant in the off season. Efforts to spread tourism into shoulder and low seasons can help to stabilize the industry and overall development.

**Source(s) of data:** Arrivals data is already collected by the Guilin Tourism Department. Occupancy rates for registered hotels is also collected but not for small inns or home-stays. Boat visitors are also monitored. Data regarding employment and seasonality of hotels and businesses Monthly report of hotel and travel agency data is available; however partial employment is not monitored

**Means to use the indicators:** These data can show needs and opportunities for diversification of the product, development of attractions to strengthen shoulder seasons and off-season tourism, and act as performance measures to show whether or not the policies and projects are successful. Principal user will be the Tourism Department.

**Benchmarking:** Comparable data for most of these measures is available for other destinations in China and abroad (basic tourism statistics).
**Issue: Community and Destination Economic Benefits (WTO Baseline Issue 6.5)**

Discussion with Yangshuo stakeholders revealed a number of concerns relating to the capture and distribution of benefits from tourism. Components of this issue included the benefits retained in the community, concern regarding the effectiveness of mechanisms for distribution of benefits among stakeholders (local residents, government and enterprises) and the means of taxation of tourism enterprises relative to their draw on public services and infrastructure.

**Indicator(s):**
- Number of local people (and ratio of men to women) employed in tourism
- Average tourism wage relative to overall average wage
- Number of tourism enterprises (% locally owned)
- Tourism revenue as percentage of total revenue generated in the community (tourism as % of local GDP)
- Total tax revenue from tourism

**Reason for the use of these indicators:** Where tourism is the most important engine of development, as in Yangshuo, it is important to monitor its effects, and to determine the extent it is a positive contributor to community welfare. (Note: several of the indicators relating to tourism and poverty alleviation – focusing on the distribution of benefits should also be considered)

**Source(s) of data:**
Government data: Statistical Bureau

**Means to use the indicators:** These indicators are basic information on the economic vitality of the industry and its contribution to the local economy. These can be important performance measures for Guilin Tourism in its management of the sector.

**Benchmarking:** Can be used to compare net benefits among different parts of Guilin, if the same measures are used in other counties.
**Issue: Protecting Critical Ecosystems Fragile Sites (WTO 7.1)**

An ecological inventory has been done for the Li River and also for key scenic spots in the county. Many of these have some protection, and some (for example Green Lotus Peak and Xilang Shan which have entry control) but heavy tourist concentration on some sites is causing environmental damage and pollution and some guidebooks have been critical of “bus choked” sites and crowding. The Yangshuo environment is the central asset which draws tourists; its continued health is critical. The discussion of protection also revealed concern for levels of control and enforcement and for sufficient training for protection personnel.

**Indicator(s):**

- **Number of protected sites (plus area and level of control/protection)**
- **Percentage of fragile ecosystems (from inventory) with protection and Percentage/area considered degraded**
- **Intensity of use for key sites (number of tourists per Km²; Number of boats and rafts per linear Km for rivers)**
- **Number of trained protection officers**

**Reason for the use of these indicators:** The Li and Yulong river systems, and the various scenic spots (hills, vistas) are the reason visitors travel to Yangshuo. These indicators, along with those cited earlier regarding tourist reaction to Yangshuo, are critical information regarding the state of the Yangshuo environment and the level of ability to continue to sustain tourism.

**Source(s) of data:** Environmental Protection Bureau – has both inventory of key assets and also information on use levels for key sites.

**Means to use the indicators:** Key performance measure regarding the maintenance of the prime tourism assets.

**Benchmarking:** Because of the unique nature of the natural assets of Yangshuo, these indicators should be used for linear comparisons – to show problems or improvement. Some benchmarking regarding other sites or between sites is possible.
**Issue: River/Lake Water Quality (WTO 7.2)** Nearly all visitors to Yangshuo make direct use of the rivers and local water bodies as part of their tourism experience. Whether they only view the water (Li river cruises, rafting, photography of Yulong vistas, watching Impressions Sister Liu), the waterways of Yangshuo are central to the tourism experience. Swimmers in the Li and Yulong, persons canoeing or fishing have even more direct contact with the water. Some tourist access areas do not meet the required level 2 standard for swimming and fishing, and when the water appears polluted, the experience can be adversely affected, and may even cause infections. While significant efforts have been made to remove sources of contamination (sewage treatment, closing of factories) pollution events (often from agricultural and other non-point sources) can contaminate the watercourses.

**Indicator(s):**
- Level of contamination of river water (faecal coliforms, campylobacter)
- Tourist perception of river water quality (on exit questionnaire)

**Reason for the use of these indicators:** Contamination level is critical early warning system – essential if tourists and locals swim in the rivers.

**Source(s) of data:** Daily sample of river water in key areas. (To be done by Environmental Protection Bureau and supplied daily to tourist bureau and municipal officials – who can post warnings and/or close swimming areas if needed).

**Means to use the indicators:** Daily posting of water quality warnings if needed – in key swimming and boating sites and in hotels.

**Benchmarking:** Compare to World Health Organization standards.
**Issue: Energy Management (WTO Baseline Issue 8.1)**

Growing tourism requires increased energy - for cooking, heating, cooling. Most new tourism properties in Yangshuo have air conditioned guest rooms, even many of the small village inns. Tourists normally use much more energy per capita than local residents, and rapid growth may place strain on the power grid.

**Indicator(s):**
- Per capita consumption of energy (overall, and for the tourist sector, per person day)
- **Percentage of tourism sector businesses participating in energy conservation programs**

*Reason for the use of these indicators:* Sustainable tourism development includes efficiency of resource use. Energy management is one of the easiest, and most productive means for the tourism sector to contribute to more efficient, cost effective and sustainable forms of development.

*Source(s) of data:* Not currently available – if used, it will need to be collected directly from hotels and resorts

*Means to use the indicators:* This can be used both for energy planning and management and to showcase greening activities in Yangshuo. Ideally, a “sustainable tourism destination” will be able to publicize indicators such as (“over 80% of our hotels have energy saving programs, and we have one of the lowest per tourist energy budgets in south China”)

*Benchmarking:* Comparative data are available from many other destinations – who are documenting per tourist energy use.

**Issue: Sewage Treatment – (WTO Baseline Issue 9.1)**

More than most destinations, sewage treatment is important to Yangshuo. Because so many tourists spend much of their time on or near the water, sewage contamination is central to maintaining the image of the destination (see also river water quality above).

**Indicator(s):**
- Percentage of sewage from the destination receiving treatment
- Percentage of sewage from communities along the Li and Yulong rivers receiving treatment
- **Percentage of tourism establishments (including those in small communities) on approved treatment systems.**
- Percentage of scenic spots with suitable sewage/toilet systems

*Reason for the use of these indicators:* These are indicators of the level of management of waste water both by tourism and the others whose waste may contaminate the key assets for tourism.
Source(s) of data: Municipal Authorities, Li River Program, EPB

Means to use the indicators: These indicators help substantiate the need for sewage treatment systems and can act as performance measures

Benchmarking: Goal is 100% on suitable systems.

Issue: Solid Waste Management (WTO Baseline Issue 9.2)
The management of solid waste is a growing issue in Yangshuo, as it is in most tourism destinations worldwide. Garbage is created by tourists and locals alike, and increasing quantities of that garbage do not degrade naturally. The workshop discussed the issues of waste including potential for reduction, reuse, recycling. Many locations and sites have insufficient waste management, and growing tourist numbers are increasing the job of garbage collection. Participants identified problems of unofficial dumping, of accumulation of garbage (mainly plastics) on roadside and river banks. At the time of the workshop, recent flooding on the Li river had decorated the trees on the banks with plastic bags up to the high water mark – as waste was washed into the river by the exceptionally heavy rains. While there is some risk of disease, the greatest impact of waste-lined roads and rivers is on the image of the destination.

Indicator(s):
- Total volume of waste produced in Yangshuo (and by tourism enterprises)
- % of waste recycled
- Quantity of waste collected from roadsides riverbanks and public areas
- Percentage of tourists who were bothered by excessive litter in the streets and tourist destinations (exit questionnaire)

Reason for the use of these indicators: Tourists both produce waste and are often bothered by it. Different tourists (e.g. north Europeans, Japanese) can be more sensitive to waste than others less accustomed to cleanliness in public places.

Source(s) of data: Agency and or companies who collect solid waste. Disposal facility fees (if charged per tonne or per load) can be a source. Garbage counts done in key sites on a periodic basis can also serve as a suitable data collection process.

Means to use the indicators: These indicators will show whether or not waste is an issue, and if so whether or not it is affecting tourism sustainability (and if so in which markets) Main client would be Tourism bureau and tourist sector businesses who could help to stimulate action to control littering, help put recycling in place. Destinations seeking to be perceived as “green” (e.g. India’s Nilgiri Hills where plastic bags and containers have been completely banned from the jurisdiction) use positive results as a form of advertising.

Benchmarking: These are primarily a performance measure to show progress over time in the same destination and specific sites
**Issue: Managing Visual Impacts of Tourism Facilities/ Infrastructure. (WTO 9.5)**

Both in the interview process and workshop, concern was raised that new development may be harming the aesthetics of Yangshuo, the skyline, traditional house and building forms and vistas of the mountains. It was noted that much of the new construction of taller buildings did not follow the traditional styles; some was part way up hills and blocking views of the mountains. At the same time some expressed concern for the declining quality of landscapes – with intrusive new construction reducing the visual impressions so important to tourists. At the same time it was noted that no construction has been permitted on most mountains (no visible construction on hillsides visible from the Li river), and that much new construction aimed at tourism in small villages was of good quality and reflective of traditional house types.

**Indicator(s):**

- Height of new construction (average height, number over 2 stories)
- Percentage of new construction which matches local styles/vernacular
- % of hillsides with natural cover
- % of tourists who agree that Yangshuo has maintained its authentic village/regional style (exit questionnaire)
Reason for the use of these indicators: One of the key assets for Yangshuo is its image of tile-roofed village houses set against the verdant hills. If design criteria are established to try to retain the ambience of Yangshuo, these become performance measures. The final indicator is a measure of tourist reaction – a measure of success in the eyes of the tourists.

Source(s) of data: Municipal records (the Yangshuo Planning Commission and Yangsuo Construction Bureau monitors construction permits). Environmental Protection Bureau, question in exit questionnaire. Note that some agreement will be needed on what styles are considered suitable – for the use of the indicator regarding local/vernacular architecture.

Means to use the indicators: General measure of the integrity of the image of Yangshuo – can be used to prove authenticity of Yangshuo for marketing.

Benchmarking: Not easy to compare with other destinations as what constitutes local architecture varies greatly. Use instead to measure changes over time.

Issue: Indicator(s): Controlling Use Intensity (WTO Baseline 10.1) Some sites in Yangshuo are very crowded – full bus parking lots, crowds on West Street, large numbers of boats on the Li river, rafts on the Yulong, lines at attractions. Much of the crowding occurs at particular times linked to boat arrivals, bus tour schedules, or end of performances (Impressions).

- Intensity of use for key sites (number of tourists per Km² for key sites (e.g. West Street, riverboat landing, Banyan Tree, Shangri-la)
- Number of boats and rafts per linear Km for rivers – mean number, peak
- % of tourists who found sites/Yangshuo overcrowded (exit questionnaire)

Reason for the use of these indicators: While tourist numbers are a measure of success, excessive crowding can diminish the experience, cause safety problems, and diminished numbers or revenues if a site or destination is degraded.

Source(s) of data: Some data on total numbers is collected regarding boats, rafts, total tourist numbers, but not much is site specific where and when the excessive crowding occurs. Crowd counts can be done for use intensity and river use levels (random and for peak days). Tourist reaction can be gauged by questions on the exit questionnaire.

Means to use the indicators: Key early warning measure for excessive crowding, impact, can stimulate mitigation measures (e.g. timing of tours, cruises, quotas for numbers of buses or rafts per hour, control and scheduling) as well as design measures to reduce impacts, enlarge paths and parking etc.
**Benchmarking:** Can be compared among sites and over time. Some ability to compare to studies of use intensity in other jurisdictions based on their use of the same measures.

**Issue: Integrating Tourism into Local/Regional Planning (WTO 11.1)**

**Issue: Development Control (WTO Baseline 11.2)** Planning control and enforcement were the issues which received the greatest attention in discussions and workshops. A key problem was seen as lack of coordination between agencies, and limited capacity to implement and enforce planning and development control.

The Master plan for Yangshuo has a strong tourism element, as does the overall plan for the Li River. A structured land use plan also is in place as is the legal framework for Environmental Impact Assessments for major projects including tourism sites. The government has a review procedure done for all new land use/proposals and has the ability to protect agricultural land, and designate growth areas. Despite these measures, there remains concern over the effective integrated planning and management, improved awareness of tourism by government officials and the capacity of government officials to understand and deal effectively with sustainable tourism issues. Effective enforcement remains a challenge.

**Indicator(s):**
- Presence of tourism in integrated regional plan/planning process (level of integration – subjective indicator)
- % of projects receiving thorough review (% of tourist projects)
- Number of violations of site plan control
- % of area subject to design control, density etc limits
- % of government officials who have received training in subject areas related to tourism and sustainability

**Reason for the use of these indicators:** Authorities need to understand the extent to which their policies and programs make a difference. These indicators help measure the effects and effectiveness of programs designed to make tourism more sustainable. The last indicator is a measure of the degree to which officials (including those in key other departments and agencies) understand how their decisions relate to tourism.

**Source(s) of data:** From key departments – would likely require data gathering

**Means to use the indicators:** Mainly for internal government use to help define new needs and identify progress.

**Benchmarking:** Compare internally and between jurisdictions within Guilin.

**Issue: Creating Trip Circuits and Routes (WTO 12.1)**

A destination is a composite of many products. Cooperation is an important factor in successful sustainable destinations, where different attractions, accommodation, transport, and government agencies create linkages and joint products which
strengthen the destination. At this stage in its development, Yangshuo lacks coordination and integration: there is a lack of integrated tour product packaging, co-marketing of attractions and trips, coordination of activities so that tourists are encouraged to see and do more, and make it easy for them. While Yangshuo has traditionally gained from the Li river boat cruises, little is being done to spread the benefit, package Yangshuo, Longshen (Longji), etc experiences with the others. This can affect the length of stay and sharing of benefits, as well as missing many opportunities to spread the custom more widely. For example, both the Li River and the Yulong could be packaged as linear routes – with tourists taking several days to walk, cycle, boat etc the length of the river, staying at different villages each night and experiencing a range of attractions. At present, only independent travellers can do this, by making arrangements on site.

**Indicator(s):**
- Length of stay of visitor (domestic, international)
- Number of different sites visited in Guanxi during the visit
- Number of communities involved in developing packages
- (tourist satisfaction can also be used)

**Reason for the use of these indicators:** Many saw the spreading of both impacts and benefits to be an important issue. This type of linear or route marketing may be a useful solution, and an unexploited opportunity.

**Source(s) of data:** Tourism Department statistics, exit questionnaire

**Means to use the indicators:** Can help in getting collaboration in more cooperative marketing and sharing.

**Benchmarking:**
Use as time series
**Issue: Providing Variety of Experiences (WTO Baseline12.2)**

Yangshuo has wide variety (boat and raft tours, walks, cultural and natural sites, hot springs, caves, village visits, rock climbing, bicycling, ballooning, tubing, culinary variety, cultural events, markets, village stays) Product quality and control of marketing is seen by many as a problem, with many ad hoc tours and unlicensed providers. Diversification and differentiation of products is an important factor in the ability to market a destination and to retain return visitors. As well, tourist services (food, lodging, banks, medical services, etc.) support the needs of tourists as well as locals.

**Indicator(s):**
- Number of different attractions in or near Yangshuo
- Perception of variety by tourists (exit questionnaire)
- Range of tourist services available in destination
- Average length of stay
- % of return visitors

*Reason for the use of these indicators:* Variety is one of the main motivations for tourists to visit a site. Changes in the variety or how it is seen by tourists can affect the decision to come or to stay.

*Source(s) of data:* Tourist Department data, exit questionnaire

*Means to use the indicators:* Both a measure of changes to the product, and a source of information for marketing the variety of experiences.

*Benchmarking:* Not easy to compare with other destinations – use instead to measure progress within Yangshuo.

**Issue: Protection of the Image of a Yangshuo (WTO 12.4)**

The image of Yangshuo is probably its most important asset, separating it from many other communities similar in size in China. Most elements of the current Yangshuo image are very positive – linked to beauty, nature, variety. At the same time, where Yangshuo is known, many tourists also link it to a low end/backpacker/day trip image. For most tourists, the Yangshuo image is linked (and usually not differentiated) from Guilin – “the other end of the Li boat ride from Guilin”. While Yangshuo is earning gradual separate recognition as a good place apart from Guilin, and a place where it might be nice to spend some time, not just a short stop en route to the bus, it has not yet clearly established this image in the minds of tourists and operators. In 2005, one major international Guidebook, Lonely Planet, gave Yangshuo a significant boost, listing Yangshuo (not Guilin) as one of the key places to visit in China. Variety, nature and value for money are key elements. At the same time, very rapid growth can also imperil Yangshuo’s current image: some workshop participants contended that excessive pursuit of economic returns has already spawned over-commercialization which has led to too many tourists and declining tourist experience.
**Indicator(s):**
- Tourist satisfaction (as per exit questionnaire)
- % of tourists who have a positive image of Yangshuo (exit questionnaire)
- % of tourists who would recommend Yangshuo to their friends (exit Q)
- % of operators who perceive Yangshuo to be safe, interesting, environmentally sound, good value destination (would need specific survey)
- % of potential market who recognize Yangshuo as a specific destination and who correctly identify its key assets (would need specific survey)
- Image as portrayed in the print media and on websites

**Reason for the use of these indicators:** The decision to visit Yangshuo and how long to stay is very often made with limited direct knowledge of Yangshuo. Instead, it is based on the image a person has of Yangshuo – obtained from books, brochures, recommendations of friends, and travel agents. If tourists who leave have a positive image they may tell friends, decide to return, maybe stay longer. If the destination is widely known to be varied, interesting, high quality etc., it is more likely to be chosen as the place to visit, and to visit for a longer period to take advantage of all of the attractions and amenities.

**Source(s) of data:** These data can only be obtained via surveys – the exit survey recommended for many of these opinion-based questions, and a specific survey of travel agents and inbound operators (and/or potential tourists in key markets). For a less expensive surrogate indicator it could be useful to do a review of recent tourist publications and websites to assess what image (if any) Yangshuo receives.

**Means to use the indicators:** This is essentially a management indicator – showing current perception and may lead to actions to change that perception or to better brand Yangshuo.

**Benchmarking:** If a survey is done, it may be useful to ask comparative questions regarding level of knowledge and image of other destinations in China and abroad as a means of obtaining comparisons.

**Issue: Sustainability and Environmental Management Policies and Practices (WTO 13.1)**
If Yangshuo wishes to brand itself as a sustainable tourism destination, it will be important to be able to show progress in the management of the ecological footprint of hotels and resorts as well as any other major components of the tourism sector. A “green” destination will be expected to have policies and environmental programs - Environmental Management Systems, certifications and monitoring programs – both at the destination and enterprise levels. In many destinations worldwide, hotels and resorts are being encouraged to seek and maintain environmental certifications.
**Indicator(s):**
- % of establishments with formal certification (e.g. ISO 14000, EMS, HACCP or similar)
- % staff trained in environmental responsibility
- Use of key environmentally sensitive technologies (e.g. energy conservation, water savings, waste recycling)

**Reason for the use of these indicators:** These measure progress in obtaining buy-in and action by the private sector

**Source(s) of data:** Municipal authorities or Hotel/resort associations (or the certifying bodies)

**Means to use the indicators:** Showcase compliance. (e.g. over 80% of our hotels now have recycling programs” or more than half of all rooms are now in properties with environmental policies and EMS).

**Benchmarking:** Many destinations post their level of achievement of EMS or ISO on their websites. Others (e.g. Sustainable tourism zone for the Caribbean) post standards they see as long term goals – such as 80% by 2009 etc. (Shangri-la shown below has achieved certification for ISO 14000)
Part Six: Conclusions

The Yangshuo area is a tourism destination with exceptional topography and immense potential for tourism development. At the same time, the area is fragile, and the work has revealed that there are needs for more integrated planning and management to ensure that the key assets are sustained.

The WTO approach has proven very successful as a tool to generate dialogue on the future of Yangshuo and to mobilize support for sustainability. For many stakeholders, the workshops were the first opportunity to participate in discussion of the future of Yangshuo, and to share in the ideas of others. The establishment of an observatory for sustainable tourism in Yangshuo will help to foster a continuing participatory process and act as a catalyst for sustainable development of tourism in Yangshuo.
References


### Annex A: Q1 Model Community Questionnaire applied to Yangshuo

Please indicate your opinion on each of the following questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1 Strongly Disagree</th>
<th>2 Disagree</th>
<th>3 Neutral</th>
<th>4 Agree</th>
<th>5 Strongly Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| A) Tourism is good for Yangshuo  
B) I personally benefit from the tourism industry  
C) Tourism in my community/region has the following effects: (bulleted below):  
• creates jobs for local residents  
• employs local youth  
• raises prices for goods  
• helps the community obtain services  
• causes rise in crime rates  
• harms moral standards  
• harms the environment  
• stops locals from river/forest access  
• helps stimulate local culture and crafts  
• uses natural resources needed by local residents (e.g., fish, game, water etc)  
• My community has control over tourism  
• The money spent by tourists remains in my community  
• Local residents have easy access to the areas which tourists use  
I am personally affected by tourism by:  
• Working in tourism  
• Selling goods to tourists  
• Having to speak to tourists regularly  
• Tourists bothering me while I work/play  
• Tourism is growing too fast  
• I am satisfied with my ability to participate in development planning for Yangshuo  
(others can be added as appropriate) – to address new issues or to elaborate on specific ones (e.g. - for tourism industry employees only - : I feel secure in my job” or “tourism helps me obtain new skills” |
Overall, what is your opinion of the tourism in your community?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Very Unsatisfactory</th>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Excellent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Would you want more or less tourism in future in your community or region?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Much Less</th>
<th>Less</th>
<th>Same</th>
<th>More</th>
<th>Much More</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is your main concern regarding tourism in your community?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

What could be done to improve tourism in your community/village?
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Comments___________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________

Note 1: Where specific additional issues or concerns are known, a question in the above formats could be added. The question can respond to the issues raised in the community or identified through participatory processes. Such issues can be very specific to a destination or even a particular site (too much noise at night, loss of access to the beach, lack of control of trespassing by hikers, fear of loss of job). Care needs to be taken to not add too many questions – as excessively long questionnaires may be seen as a burden and can reduce response rates.

Note 2: It may be useful to collect some information about the respondent – do this at the end. Suggested data could include: gender, length of time resident in community, occupation, place of residence in the destination, whether or not they are employed by the tourism industry. Take care with any questions about age, income, ethnicity, religion or social class as these can be considered offensive and may even be illegal to ask in some jurisdictions.
Annex B: Q2: Model Exit Questionnaire Applied to Yangshuo

Why did you visit YANGSHUO?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Is this your first visit?</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Please respond to the following questions with the appropriate answer:</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Circle best answer</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a) I enjoyed my experience in Yangshuo</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) I found access to/from Yangshuo to be good</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) I found Yangshuo to be clean</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) I found enough to do in Yangshuo</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>e) The tourist sites were not too crowded</td>
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<tr>
<td>f) I had a good experience involving the local culture</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>g) I had good health during my visit</td>
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<tr>
<td>h) The scenic places were clean and pleasant</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i) I was able to buy good souvenirs and artefacts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j) I had good opportunities to enjoy local cuisine</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>k) I feel I received good value for money</td>
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<tr>
<td>l) I would recommend a visit to Yangshuo to my friends</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>m) I felt safe while in Yangshuo</td>
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<tr>
<td>n) I will return again to Yangshuo</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

What would cause you to visit Yangshuo outside the peak May - September season?

___________________________________________________________________________

Were there any activities which you expected to find in Yangshuo which were missing?

___________________________________________________________________________

Comments re any of the above answers:

___________________________________________________________________________

What could be done to improve your vacation next time in Yangshuo?

___________________________________________________________________________

Date:_________ Nationality of tourist__________________________ Hotel stayed__________________________
Annex C: Indicator Selection Worksheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>KEY AREAS WHERE INDICATORS ARE NEEDED (Issues)</th>
<th>CANDIDATE MEASURES (Specific Indicators)</th>
<th>Rating/RELEVANCE</th>
<th>FEASIBILITY</th>
<th>PROSPECTIVE USE (clarity and credibility)</th>
<th>BENCHMARKING</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

Indicators Selection Worksheet - Notes for use:

Selection of promising indicators: Initially, all possible means of measuring are considered. This sheet is designed to help in discussion of what is likely to be a good indicator in the particular destination and in response to each of the priority issues. Note that a general discussion is done regarding the issue area and candidate indicators. The key criterion is the first – that is: is the indicator relevant (i.e., *is it useful to the tourism industry and its partners to help resolve or manage the issue – how will it help and who will use it?*)? If the discussion concludes that it is likely to be very useful, the other criteria are considered. Based on the discussion, it may be useful to use a shorthand for each criterion: for example the symbols H (high) M (medium) or L (low) can be assigned for each potential measure (WTO specific indicator – on a chart, wallboard etc to help in an overview of all potential indicators). Users may wish to discuss the relative ratings of each measure which could respond to an indicator requirement (WTO issue). Those agreed to be most useful (likely with high ratings against all criteria) will go forward to more detailed evaluation in the next phase: the best of these will ultimately be implemented. The overall objective is to identify a short list of useful and practical indicators which are critical indicator/measures for the issue in question and the management of the site/destination, and important for management decisions which the tourism sector takes or influences.
### Annex D: Indicators Development and Reporting Worksheet (Workshop Use)

This sheet is used to guide elaboration of selected indicators for potential implementation. (This form is designed to help define each indicator chosen and to document characteristics and methods of use. It summarizes some of the key elements which will need to be built into any indicator which is actually implemented. A separate more detailed worksheet is available for technical development of an indicator.)

1. **Issue or risk to which the indicator responds (brief description):**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

2. **Indicator (include precise statement of indicator):**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

   **Data source(s):**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

   **Precise method of calculation:**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

   **Intended users:**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________

3. **Logistics of indicators production:**
   Who will gather and process the data and information?
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   Who will compile the indicator and prepare for reporting?
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   **Frequency of production:**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   Time needed between data collection and production/use of the indicator: (e.g., is data released only annually or can it be obtained and used immediately?)
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   **Confidentiality considerations:**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
   
   **Form of reporting (specific tables, graphs, etc to be produced, reporting in brochures, reports, website, etc.):**
   
   ________________________________________________________________
Difficulties expected in data gathering and processing:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________


Observed trends to date:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Benchmarking (comparison with similar destinations) Is there any specific standard, other destination, or guideline which will be used for comparison. (If available, how do the observed trends compare?)

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Desired trends, objectives (clearly defined), standards or thresholds to be met:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Actions taken so far (results), existing regulations, policies or references:

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

Expected actions (including plans to improve information collection and analysis, if necessary):

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue Area (based on WTO Guidebook)</th>
<th>Yangshuo Application – Problems/Opportunities</th>
<th>Possible Areas for Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 Wellbeing of Host Communities</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1.1 Local Satisfaction With Tourism - Baseline</strong></td>
<td>Many satisfied – but some left out of benefits. (E.g. Fuli lost its river boat access,) some small villages have no tourism but next village does. Benefits not equally shared within villages. Conflict between providers of rafting, cycling – complaints regarding “unofficial” rafts, guides</td>
<td>Regular survey useful. Will be key indicator. Tourism Dept plus Observatory is best positioned to do this. Participatory study on Yulong river (rafts) and in Yangshuo City (bicycles, guides) could help clarify extent of conflicts, define potential solutions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.2 Effects of Tourism on Communities - Baseline</strong></td>
<td>Several small communities have begun tourism enterprises – hotels, restaurants. Change in village function – some impact on youth, employment,</td>
<td>Useful to document benefits and level of participation – could be good comparative study with indicators component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.3 Access by Local Residents to Key Assets</strong></td>
<td>Pricing of access to key attractions – price of Impressions, some other sites - very high for local residents. (some locals get free access to Shangri-La, Impressions)</td>
<td>Costs of access could be component in local survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.4 Gender Equity</strong></td>
<td>Visible participation by women in most roles. Many women active in tourism and in village services to tourists – seem to have equal access to credit.</td>
<td>Not a priority issue – but might be useful to document positive impacts of participation levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1.5 Sex Tourism</strong></td>
<td>No problems noted</td>
<td>Not a priority issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 Sustaining Cultural Assets</strong></td>
<td>Lack of funding for restoration or preservation of some older buildings – much new building not vernacular, growth is a threat to some areas without preservation controls Minority peoples – maintenance of authenticity and cultural assets New protection legislation and regulations put in place to protect key historical relics</td>
<td>Monitoring of tourist satisfaction could include question on authenticity and ambience of the villages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue Area (based on WTO Guidebook)</td>
<td>Yangshuo Application – Problems/Opportunities</td>
<td>Possible Areas for Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3 Community Participation in Tourism</strong></td>
<td><strong>3.1 Community Involvement and Awareness. Information, Empowerment, Participation, Community Action</strong></td>
<td>Concerns regarding level of involvement in broader planning process for the communities and for tourism. Some consultation has been part of new plans – e.g. tourism, Li river plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 Tourist Satisfaction</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.1 Sustaining Tourist Satisfaction - Baseline Issue Expectations, Complaints, Problems, Perceptions</strong></td>
<td>Some enterprises (e.g. Shangri-la) survey visitors on exit. No formal destination level surveys for Yangshuo, Li River, all of Guilin. Some specific research but no ongoing monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4.2 Accessibility Mobility, Older Tourists, Persons with Disabilities</strong></td>
<td>Steps limit access to older or handicapped in many sites (parks, boats, most restaurants). Some hotels have wheelchair accessible rooms but many public rooms are less accessible. Focus of most current tourism is on fit, younger adventure travellers, although some sites in region (e.g. Longji terraces) have sedan chairs for less able tourists. Need for more access in other sites (some parks and peaks, wharves) as market matures?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5 Health and Safety</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.1 Health Public Health, Community Health, Food Safety, Worker Health and Safety</strong></td>
<td>Good health service available locally. Limited safety training/equipment observed generally, and in tourism sector. Widespread use of lifejackets on water attractions (rafting, tubing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5.2 Coping with Epidemics and International Transmission of Disease Facilitation, Contingency Planning, Impacts on Tourism</strong></td>
<td>SARS had some short impact. Local plan for emergencies (flood, tourist accidents?) Contingency planning is needed as part of broader planning processes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>5.3 Tourist Security Risk, Safety, Civil Strife, Terrorism, Natural Disasters, Impacts, Management Response, Contingency Planning</strong></td>
<td>At site level, many scenic spots and tourist sites lack railings, some stairs and trails are poorly maintained</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue Area (based on WTO Guidebook) (Those identified as important to Yangshuo are shown in boldface)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.4 Local Public Crime, Risk, Harassment, Public Security, Tourist Anxiety</td>
<td>Yangshuo is considered a safe destination. Some harassment at dockside and in busy markets, some reports of theft (pickpockets, muggings) but very limited.</td>
<td>Medium priority at this time for indicators. Could be a good early warning indicator, and current baseline (low number of occurrences) would be a reference point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Capturing Economic Benefits from Tourism</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.1 Tourism Seasonality - Baseline Issue Occupancy, Peak Season, Shoulder Season, Infrastructure, Product Diversity, Employment</td>
<td>Peak season for Guilin is in April to October. Water levels are low on rivers in off-season limiting river tours which are key draw. Many other activities spin off from the main attraction. Length of stay is a key issue (most stay only short time – day trips, overnights)</td>
<td>Important for Yangshuo. Many tourist activities and levels of visitation depend on water levels, weather conditions etc. (also consider link to climate change). Strategic to monitor seasonality of the industry and of components, employment as well as length of stay (by segment). % return visits by tourists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2 Leaks Imported Goods, Foreign Exchange, Internal Leakage, External Leakage, Invisible Leakage</td>
<td>Some investment from other Chinese regions and other countries in major tourism attractions, hotels, caves, resorts – several joint ventures. Most tourist services are locally owned. Most tourist souvenirs are not local.</td>
<td>Interest was expressed in the workshop in increasing the amount of goods bought and made locally. It would be useful to do a baseline study of current level of local production to establish a baseline for further monitoring.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3 Employment Training, Quality, Skills, Turnover, Seasonality, Pay Levels</td>
<td>Tourism pay levels are higher than farming but many are seasonal. Skills training may be needed. (Some guides and agents not currently controlled or licensed). Rapidly expanding tourism industry is source of many jobs. May be over-competition in small enterprises – e.g booths selling souvenirs, tours.</td>
<td>The new university in Guilin will be a focus for tourism training. It can likely be a partner in monitoring training levels locally and more broadly in the community and relevant officials. Too many rafters, vendors relative to market? (can monitor numbers and use)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4 Tourism as a Contributor to Nature Conservation. Financing for Conservation, Local Economic Alternatives, Constituency Building, Tourist Participation in Conservation</td>
<td>Most attractions have entry fees; these go to general revenues</td>
<td>A study of levels of support for conservation in the Yangshuo area would be useful – could be done in concert with EPB, others. As tourism grows, the costs of maintenance and protection are likely to also grow, and may stress resources,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5 Community and Destination Economic Benefits - Baseline Issue Capturing Benefits, Tourism Revenues, Tourism Contribution to the Local Economy, Business Investment, Community Investment, Taxes, Satellite Accounting</td>
<td>Rapid growth in tourism (over 20% per annum) stresses local infrastructure. Concern over unequal distribution of the benefits from tourism (at family level, village level and enterprise level)</td>
<td>This is a very important area where there is anecdotal evidence of rapid change. A study could help establish a baseline for future monitoring – both of local benefits and impact on county, town resources.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Issue Area (based on WTO Guidebook)</td>
<td>Yangshuo Application – Problems/Opportunities</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>6.6 Tourism and Poverty Alleviation</strong>&lt;br&gt;Equity, Micro Enterprises, Employment and Income Opportunities, SMEs</td>
<td>Many small village enterprises are entering tourism in villages – hotels, farm stay, restaurants etc. Marketing, public health and quality control may be challenges. Data not complete at this level</td>
<td>The emergence of local small and micro-enterprises servicing tourism is a very significant new development – with potential effects on many social and economic concerns. Monitoring of extent and impact is likely to be important to keep control of quality and benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6.7 Competitiveness of Tourism Businesses.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Price and Value, Quality, Differentiation, Specialization, Vitality, Business Cooperation, Long-term Profitability</td>
<td>Yangshuo has a rapidly expanding tourism industry. It is highly internally competitive, but with some interesting control systems (e.g. on numbers and pricing of boat tours, limits on numbers of rafts on Yulong. Change is very rapid – would be good to monitor some of the key changes in value for money, numbers in key sectors, quality image which may be at risk.&lt;br&gt;Concern expressed re over-commercialization of Yangshuo – related to tourism</td>
<td>Important to measure tourist response to perception of image, value for money and quality. This is a key early warning indicator – but will require a questionnaire process.</td>
</tr>
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<td><strong>7 Protection of Valuable Natural Assets</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>7.1 Protecting Critical Ecosystems</strong>&lt;br&gt;Fragile Sites, Endangered Species</td>
<td>Inventory of ecosystems done as part of Li River plan – some protection. In place in many scenic places. Vistas on Li river controlled – no building permitted on peaks closest to river or on riverside sites. Heavy tourist concentration on some specific places and times. Boats, buses tend to arrive together exacerbating congestion and impact. (e.g Li river flotilla leaves en masse from Guilin at 9-9:30 arriving at 2-3 in Yangshuo and returning together up river in late afternoon.)</td>
<td>Many opportunities exist to plan and control tourist activities – related to reducing stress levels on specific sites, creating energy efficiency, and perhaps spreading benefits. Key step would be review of regulations and controls on transport and activities. Indicators of intensity of use, and on impact on congested sites will be useful.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>7.2 River/Lake Water Quality</strong>&lt;br&gt;Contamination, Perception of Water Quality</td>
<td>Some tourist access areas do not meet level 2 standard for swimming and fishing. Problems with waste from restaurants, service areas along Yulong river. Non-point sources of contaminants (farm runoff, Water Buffalo and geese in water, seepage from domestic cesspools.)</td>
<td>Need to monitor water quality on regular basis in areas where tourists swim, other key sites. Can support programs to reduce contaminants at source, particularly near watercourses. Likely need to also monitor level of compliance by boats with regulations re sewage management.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>8 Managing Scarce Natural Resources</strong></td>
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</table>
| **8.1 Energy Management - Baseline Issue**  
*Energy Saving, Efficiency, Renewables* | Increasing use of air conditioning in tourist hotels and restaurants, lack of widespread conservation initiatives at enterprise level. Significant energy waste in transport due to scheduling (buses arrive empty in Yangshuo from Guilin, boats return up river empty, no tours in opposite direction) | Many opportunities exist for energy conservation – from insulation, retrofit of windows, climate control, energy efficient lighting etc which have not been done. As well, transport efficiencies can reduce energy use and costs. Opportunity to re-examine strategy. |
| **8.2 Climate Change and Tourism**  
*Mitigation, Adaptation, Extreme Climatic Events, Risks, Impacts on Destinations, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Transport, Energy Use* | Floods are annual problem. Heat is an issue with some tourists – notable those from cooler climates. Extremes may affect tourism. Some hotels and restaurants publish temperature predictions. | Opportunity for information provision for tourists related to heat risk, advisories. |
| **8.3 Water Availability and Conservation - Baseline Issue**  
*Water Supply, Water Pricing, Recycling, Shortages* | Water is generally available but not potable. Supply systems rapidly expanding to keep up with high growth rates. | Useful to monitor water use levels relative to supply capacity. Opportunity for conservation measures such as grey water re-use. |
| **8.4 Drinking Water Quality - Baseline Issue**  
*Purity of Supply, Contamination Impact on Tourist Health and Destination Image* | Most drinking/cooking water is bottled. Tap water supply is considered not potable. | |
| **9 Limiting Impacts of Tourism Activity** | | |
| **9.1 Sewage Treatment - Baseline Issue**  
*Wastewater Management, Extent of System, Effectiveness, Reducing Contamination* | Some city treatment. Many small villages and rural residents have cesspool treatment. Non-point source is a problem (cattle, fertilizers, pesticides, septic seepage) Problem handling waste from tourism sites/stops. | Need for ongoing monitoring of sewage – most notably where river contamination is possible. Also need to measure degree of compliance from existing sites and new tourism construction. Level of investment in sewage infrastructure. |
| **9.2 Solid Waste Management - Baseline Issue**  
*Garbage, Reduction, Reuse, Recycling, Deposit, Collection, Hazardous Substances* | Waste separation limited. Problem of unofficial dumping, plastics on roadside and river banks. Floods resulted in many riverside trees being decorated with plastic bags to considerable height. | Important indicator related to public image. Should be monitored – both for volume and for tourist reaction. |
| **9.3 Air Pollution**  
*Air Quality, Health, Pollution from Tourism, Perception by Tourists* | Some visible air pollution from river boats and buses. Very little industrial pollution – most sources closed and removed in past to foster tourist nature of Yangshuo | Not currently an important issue. If baselines for air quality readily available they should be documented for possible future indicators should the situation change. |
| **9.4 Controlling Noise Levels**  
*Measuring Noise Levels, Perception of Noise* | Noise is issue for some travellers – notably West Street in Yangshuo – complaints from hotels, some tourists. (no systematic data collected) | Need for site specific monitoring (decibel meter) on a sample basis, Also could be included in exit survey and in survey of local merchants. |
<table>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>9.5 Managing Visual Impacts of Tourism Facilities and Infrastructure. <em>Siting, Construction, Design, Landscaping</em></td>
<td>Concern for new construction – may not be compatible with local architecture and image. Older construction (and some innovative new wood structures) are vernacular architecture and some new structures have compatible design. As yet no skyscraper/towers in city and most vistas of peaks are still there – but some new construction of 5-6 story buildings is eliminating vistas.</td>
<td>Not yet considered a problem. Relates to level of control on construction and design. May be useful to monitor tourist reaction to “ambience” or authenticity of Yangshuo on exit questionnaire (e.g. Yangshuo has maintained its authentic character as a visually pleasing destination (Agree/disagree)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Controlling Tourist Activities</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10.1 Controlling Use Intensity - Baseline Issue <em>Stress on Sites and Systems, Tourist Numbers, Crowding</em></td>
<td>Some sites very crowded – at particular times linked to boat arrivals, bus tours. Most tourists arrive in Yangshuo at same time – no staggering of departures/routes. Some sites exceed carrying capacity at peak times. Negative effects on experience</td>
<td>Useful to measure level of crowding (persons per square metre) and tourist reaction. May lead to further mitigation action, crowd control. (e.g expansion of pedestrian precinct) Perception of crowding on Yulong river and Li river due to number of boats and rafts by some tourist segments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.2 Managing Events <em>Sport Events, Fairs, Festivities, Crowd Control</em></td>
<td>Crowding issue as visitors/buses leave boat area, Impression Sanjie Liu.</td>
<td>Possible alteration of access points. Need to monitor levels of crowding – relative to tourist reaction and possible public safety/access issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 Destination Planning and Control</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11.1 Integrating Tourism into Local/Regional Planning <em>Information for Planners, Plan Evaluation, Results of Plan Implementation</em></td>
<td>Master plan for Yangshuo has strong tourism element, as does overall plan for Li River. Overall land use plan also is in place as is EIA for major projects including tourism sites.</td>
<td>Support integration and coordination among planning procedures. Use selected indicators as performance measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.2 Development Control - Baseline Issue <em>Control Procedures, Land Use, Property, Management, Enforcement</em></td>
<td>Very rapid growth in tourism and in services and attractions. Rates exceed 20% per annum and may stress capacity (both infrastructure and institutional) Review procedure done for all new land use/proposals. Plan designed to protect agricultural land, designate growth areas. Issue re capacity and understanding of officials regarding tourism and sustainability</td>
<td>Need basic measure of growth rates in tourism and in specific services/attractions Useful to measure degree of review/compliance as part of performance measures for controls Need to show how to manage growth and foster sustainable solutions during rapid change (see 13.2 re education and training)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.3 Tourism-Related Transport</strong> <em>Mobility Patterns, Safety, Transport Systems, Efficiency, In-Destination Transport, Transport to/from Destination</em></td>
<td>Issue re timing of boat and bus tours, simultaneous arrivals, design of tours to return tourists to Guilin each evening, lack of stops by boats in Li river villages, bus parking crowding in Yangshuo, some scenic spots. Road net considered insufficient – particularly rural areas. New highway may impact Yulong river.</td>
<td>May recommend review of boat and bus scheduling and location of stopping points – there seem to be opportunities for efficiency, cost reduction, impact reduction and broader spread of benefits which have not yet been addressed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>11.4 Air Transport - Responding to Changes in Patterns and Access</strong> <em>Environmental Impacts, Planning and Security</em></td>
<td>Most long distance Chinese and foreign tourists arrive at Guilin airport. Concern expressed that few direct flights arrived from overseas, meaning that foreign tourists must change planes in e.g. Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Hong Kong.</td>
<td>Useful to measure at regional level the degree of access to key source cities for tourists (both Chinese and foreign). Could assist in efforts to influence decisions on routes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12 Designing Products and Services</strong></td>
<td>Lack of integrated tour product packaging, co-marketing of attractions and trips. Some entrepreneurs having difficulty accessing operators for more varied packaging. Marketing still fragmented – much done independently by specific hotel or attraction – and increasingly on the net.</td>
<td>Need for greater collaboration among attractions and jurisdictions relative to packaging, creation of integrated vacation packages/routes etc. Could monitor extent and variety of packaging. Possibility for new tourist spots to help spread impact and benefits, reduce pressures on key hot spots.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12.1 Creating Trip Circuits and Routes</strong> <em>Corridors, Links, Cooperation</em></td>
<td>Yangshuo has wide variety (boat tours, walks, cultural and natural sites, hot springs, caves, village visits, climbing, bicycling.) Product quality and control of marketing is problem – many ad hoc tours without quality monitoring.</td>
<td>Need for greater collaboration among attractions and jurisdictions relative to packaging, creation of integrated vacation packages/routes etc. Could monitor extent and variety of packaging. Current policy can be barrier to variety (e.g where boat or bus tours go, when they leave, where they stop).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12.2 Providing Variety of Experiences</strong> <em>Product Diversification, Range of Services</em></td>
<td>Yangshuo wishes to become known and recognized as a sustainable tourism destination. Concern re how to best market this and assure quality control.</td>
<td>Useful to measure image regarding Yangshuo as a “green, natural destination”. Use exit questionnaire and possible broader survey of potential visitors. Baseline study could be useful. Need to work with travel agencies, operators to match image to reality and desired tourism.</td>
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<td>Issue Area (based on WTO Guidebook) (Those identified as important to Yangshuo are shown in boldface)</td>
<td>Yangshuo Application – Problems/Opportunities</td>
<td>Possible Areas for Action</td>
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| **12.4 Protection of the Image of a Destination**  
*Branding, Vision, Strategic Marketing* | Current Yangshuo image is very positive – but focus on low end/backpacker/day trip image. Image is linked (and not differentiated) from Guilin in eyes of most tourists, although there is a gradual growth of separate recognition as a good place different from Guilin. Variety, nature and value for money are key elements. 2005 edition of Lonely Planet Guide to China (largest selling guide in English) highlights Yangshuo as one of ten premier destinations in China. Previous editions listed Guilin (with Yangshuo as a footnote) | Same as above: Useful to measure image regarding Yangshuo as a “green, natural destination”. Many interviewed have a vision of Yangshuo as a low intensity, garden-like destination. Use exit questionnaire and possible broader survey of potential visitors. Baseline study could be useful and could identify key attributes of Yangshuo which attract tourists – as baseline for further monitoring on exit questionnaire |
| **13 Sustainability of Tourism Operations and Services** | | |
| **13.1 Sustainability and Environmental Management**  
*Policies and Practices at Tourism Environmental Management Systems, Social Responsibility* | Few hotels have EMS, but some attractions (e.g. Shangri-La have obtained ISO 14,000 certification. For Yangshuo to be seen as a leading green destination, the extent of such policies/programs will have to increase. | Possible to monitor number (%) of major hotels and attractions which achieve environmental certification(s) |
| **13.2 Need for Environmental Education and Training** | Some concern that locals and tourism officials have insufficient education and training re sustainability issues – environment and tourism | New tourism university could consider courses in awareness for local residents and authorities |
Annex F: list of participants

(List to be added by Guilin Yangshuo organizers)

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Annex I: List of Meetings with Stakeholders in Yangshuo
(attendees, contents, suggestions)

(to be prepared – Dr Qiu – do you have any notes from the meetings which we should include?)