

*Uniting Culture, Nature,  
Preservation, and Economics*

***Geotourism:  
Focusing on the Power of Place***

World Heritage Conference  
8 June 2009 - Bergen, Norway

# Center for Sustainable Destinations

## CSD Mission:

To protect and enhance the world's distinctive places through wisely managed tourism and enlightened destination stewardship.

Core concept for achieving the mission: *geotourism*

# geotourism

Tourism that **sustains or enhances the geographical character** of a place—  
its environment,  
culture,  
aesthetics,  
heritage,  
and the well-being of its residents.



# DESTINATION TOURISM STYLES DIFFER IN RELATION TO PLACE



# DESTINATION STYLE DRIFT . . .

if development unchecked, unguided



**Unspoiled  
destination**

**SPOILED ?**

# Tourism and sustainability

## UNSUSTAINABLE TOURISM:

- Overcrowding
- Lower quality of experience
- Loss of distinctiveness
- Erosion of culture and environment

## GEOTOURISM:

Now, celebrate  
the place

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISM:**  
First, do no harm.

# geotourism

Tourism that sustains or enhances the **geographical character** of a place—  
its environment,  
culture,  
aesthetics,  
heritage,  
and the well-being of its residents.



# FLORA AND FAUNA



# HISTORY





# ARCHAEOLOGY



# GEOLOGY





# TRADITIONAL ARCHITECTURE



# LOCAL MUSIC





CUISINE







# LOCAL CRAFTS



# NIGHTLIFE

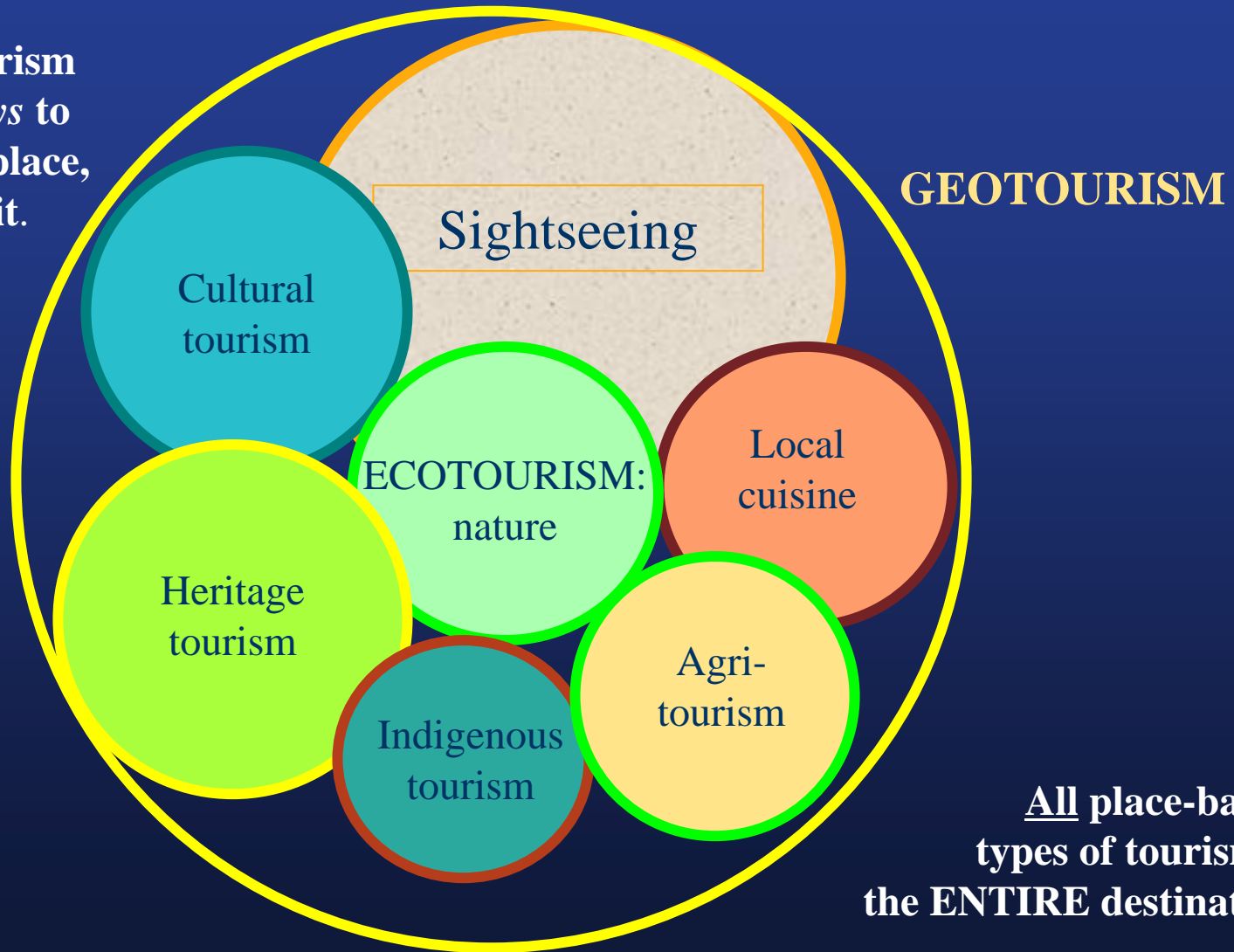


# ARTS



# From eco- to geo-

Manage tourism so that it *pays* to protect the place, not destroy it.



**Businesses  
(differentiation)**

**Residents  
(pride and  
benefits)**

**THE  
PLACE**

**Tourists  
(enthusiasm)**

**Government  
(policy)**

# The geotourism appeal:

Holistic

Pervasive

Open to enhancement

Marketable

Competitive

Informed & Interactive

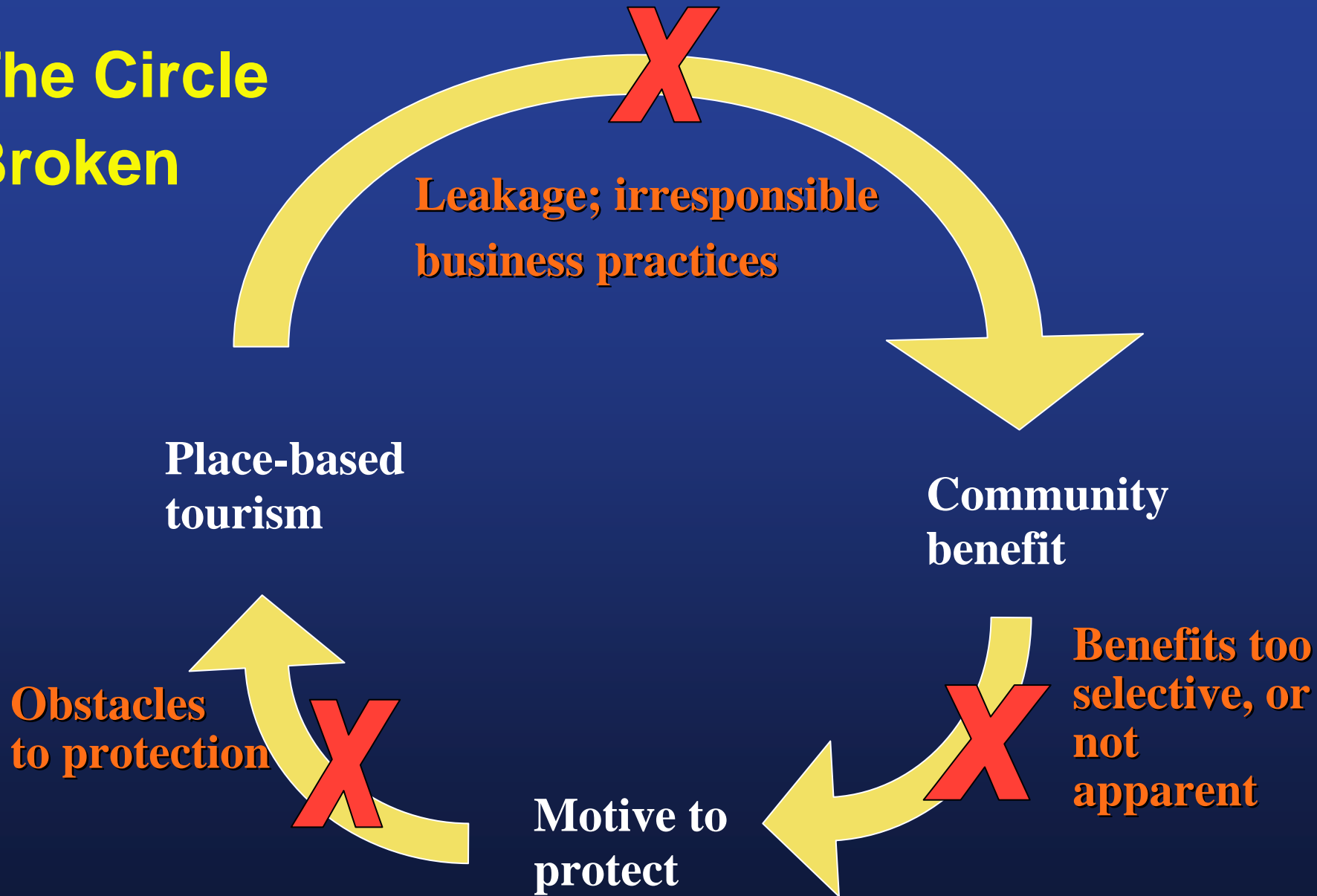
# Geotourism Virtuous Circle

Place-based  
tourism

Community  
benefit

Motive to  
protect

# The Circle Broken





Plus!

Puerto Vallarta Cruising

48 Hours in Adelaide

Boyd Matson in Antarctica

Inside Travel Insurance

New in Madrid



NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC

MY IRELAND  
THE LONG WAY HOME

# TRAVELER

All travel, All the time

Nov/Dec 2006 \$4.95

94  
Places Rated

Our experts score the best (and worst) of  
the world's classic destinations.

AUSTIN



# Destination Assessment

## SIX CRITERIA

- Environment
- Cultural integrity
- Aesthetics
- Built heritage
- Tourism Development
- General outlook

## RATING SCALE

**0-2 Catastrophic**

**3-4 In serious trouble**

**5-6 In moderate trouble**

**7-8 Minor difficulties**

**9 Authentic, unspoiled,  
and likely to remain so**

**10 Enhanced**

A large crowd of tourists is seen climbing a massive, ancient stone staircase. The staircase is wide and made of dark, weathered stone blocks. Many people are wearing hats and casual summer clothing. The background shows the ruins of an ancient temple with stone walls and doorways. The scene is busy and captures a popular tourist activity.

2006 STEWARDSHIP SURVEY:

## 94 World Heritage Destinations

“Destination” = WH site + gateway region

**The  
Best:  
scores  
78-87**

**87 Norway: Western Fjords**

**81 Spain: Alhambra/Granada  
France: Vézelay**

**79 Mexico: Guanajuato  
78 Portugal: Evora**

**Doing  
Well:  
68-77**

**75 France: Loire Valley; Avignon  
Australia: Uluru**

**71 Brazil: Pantanal  
70 UK: Jurassic Coast**

**68 Croatia: Dubrovnik  
Syria: Aleppo**

**So-so  
(mix of  
good  
and  
bad)**

**59-67**

**67 India: Ellora and Ajanta**

**63 Greece: Medieval Rhodes**

**59 Tanzania: Kilimanjaro**



**In  
Trouble:  
49-58**



**56 UK: Stonehenge**

**52 Dominican Rep.:  
Colonial Santo Domingo**

**50 China: Lijiang/  
Three Parallel Rivers**

**Worst rated:  
39-48**



**48 Cambodia: Ankor**

**44 Ecuador: Galápagos**

**39 Nepal: Kathmandu Valley**

# The Geotourism Principles

1. Integrity of place
2. International codes
3. Community involvement
4. Community Benefit
5. Tourist enthusiasm
6. Conservation of resources
7. Protection and enhancement  
of destination appeal
8. Planning
9. Land use
10. Market Diversity
11. Interactive interpretation
12. Market Selectivity
13. Evaluation





# Norway

Geotourism Charter  
signed 31 Aug 2005

# Geotourism Principle 1

- Integrity of place:

Sustain and enhance geographical character





# Maintaining Integrity & Quality of Place = Great Experiences





It's about the place, past and present ...





Also, the people of the place!





# Geotourism Stewardship Councils . . .



- Sonora GSC



- Arizona GSC

. . . get involved with a project—Geotourism Map-Guide, festival, or other program.

# Geotourism Principle 7

- **Manage and encourage destination appeal:**  
Protect natural habitats, heritage sites, aesthetics, culture; avoid overcrowding





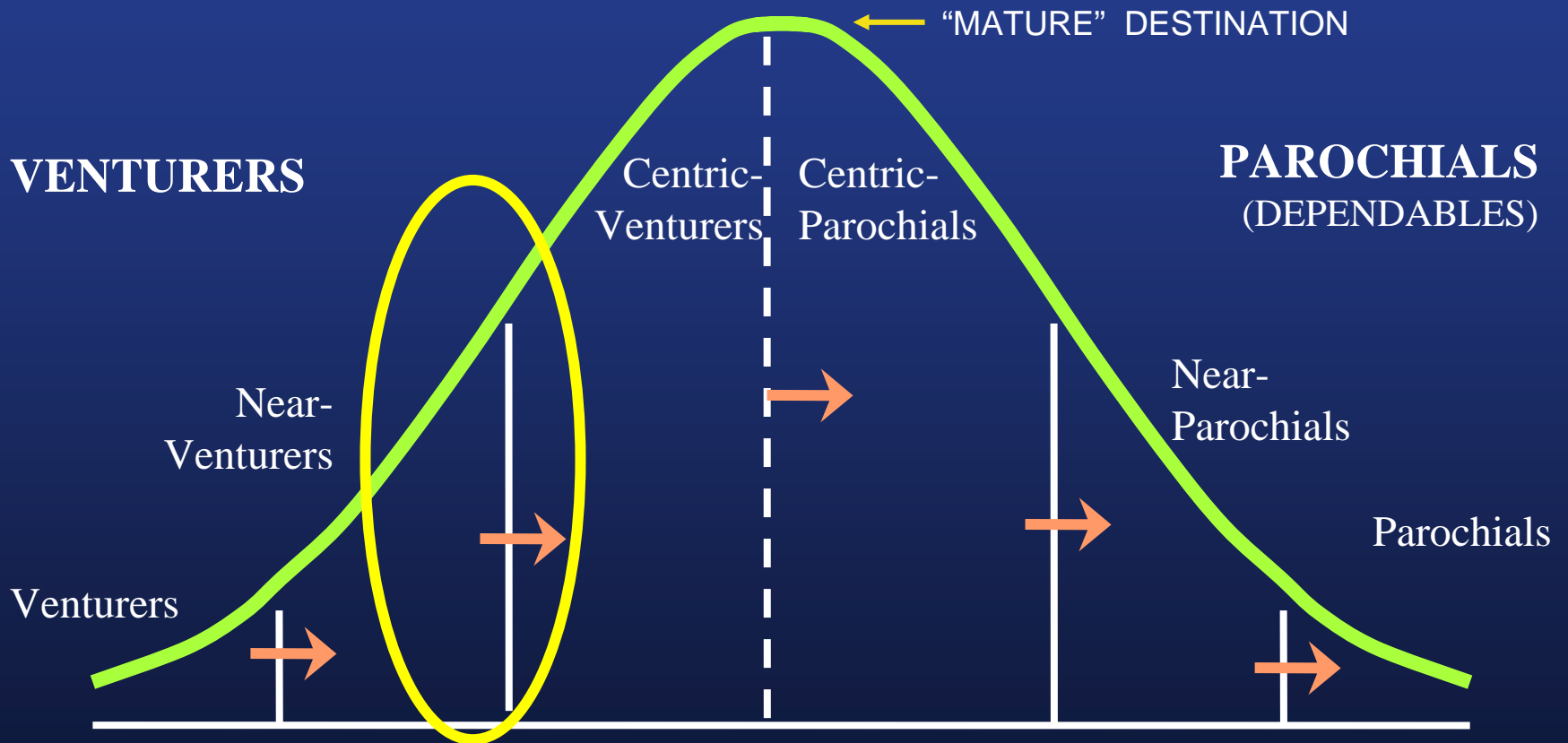


Businesses contribute to visitor experience & local economy



# Plog's psychographic continuum

After Stanley C. Plog, PhD

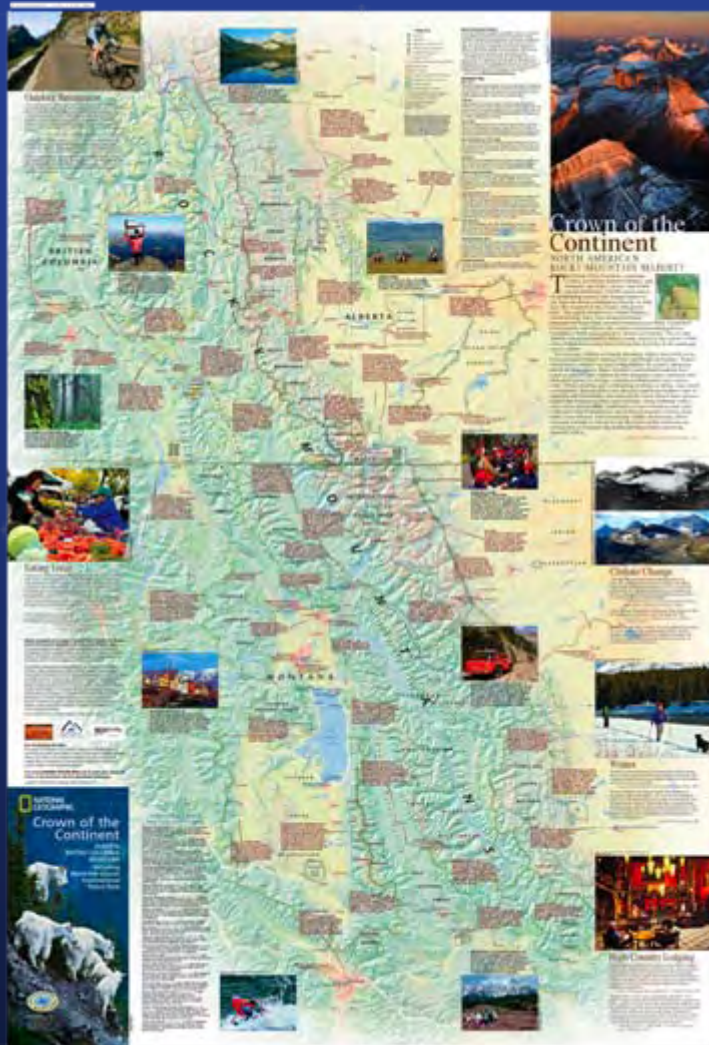


# Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park, Canada-USA

World Heritage destination

Trans-border  
Geotourism Stewardship Council  
and MapGuide project





# Geotourism Principle 11

- **Interactive interpretation:**

Engage both visitors and hosts in learning  
about the place !











**geo·tour·ism** *n.* tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of the place being visited—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents

# The Geotourists

## Phase One: Executive Summary

sponsored by:  
NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC  
**TRAVELER**

prepared by:  
**TIA**  
Travel Industry Association  
of America



## Une ville pour les enfants

Pour Emma Lopez-Hernandez, 9 ans, Montréal signifie « aller au Bonal pour voir les animaux ». Pour Tzu-Hsiang Wu, 10 ans, c'est « passer du temps avec ma famille au parc Lafontaine ». Pour Charles Chung, 9 ans, Montréal est une ville caractérisée par « le pain, la culture et le plaisir ». Les enfants qui la visitent se trouvent tout d'un coup immergés dans une ville qui leur ressemble.

À cinq minutes du centre-ville, on a accès à une magnifique plage, au parc Jean-Drapeau, pour s'amuser en été. L'eau est peu profonde et très propre, un endroit idéal pour les enfants. Il y a aussi une piste

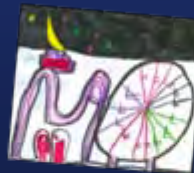
dans le parc pour la pratique du vélo et du patin à roues alignées.

Il y a aussi l'Observatoire, que les enfants adorent visiter. Les programmes en français dans le Vieux-Montréal sont des moments inoubliables pour les enfants. Dans le Vieux-Port, les sont fascinés par les bateaux.

— Isabelle Girard, 12 ans, du Collège de Montréal



## Dessins des enfants



National Geographic

## Center for Sustainable Destinations

Working to protect the world's distinctive places through wisely managed tourism and enlightened destination stewardship.

MAIN

GEOTOURISM

FOR PLACES

TRAVELERS

PROFESSIONALS

IMPACT MAP

CSD NEWS

RESOURCES

ABOUT CSD



### Historic Sites Rated for Authenticity, Stewardship, Tourist Footprint

[LEARN MORE »](#)



### Video



#### Video: What Is Geotourism?

Learn about geotourism by seeing what real practitioners have done.

#### Video: Choices

Choices travelers and communities make today shape the destinations of tomorrow.

### CSD News

- [Photo Gallery: Geotourism Principles](#)
- [World's Historic Sites Rated for Authenticity, Stewardship, Tourist Footprint](#)
- [Ashoka Changemakers—The Global Geotourism Challenge 2009](#)
- [Read More News](#)

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### About Geotourism



Working to protect the places we love through wisely managed tourism and enlightened destination stewardship.

[More About Geotourism »](#)

### For Places

### Support our programs »

### Resources

[Destination Scorecards](#)  
How do your favorite places stack up?

[Writers Guide](#)

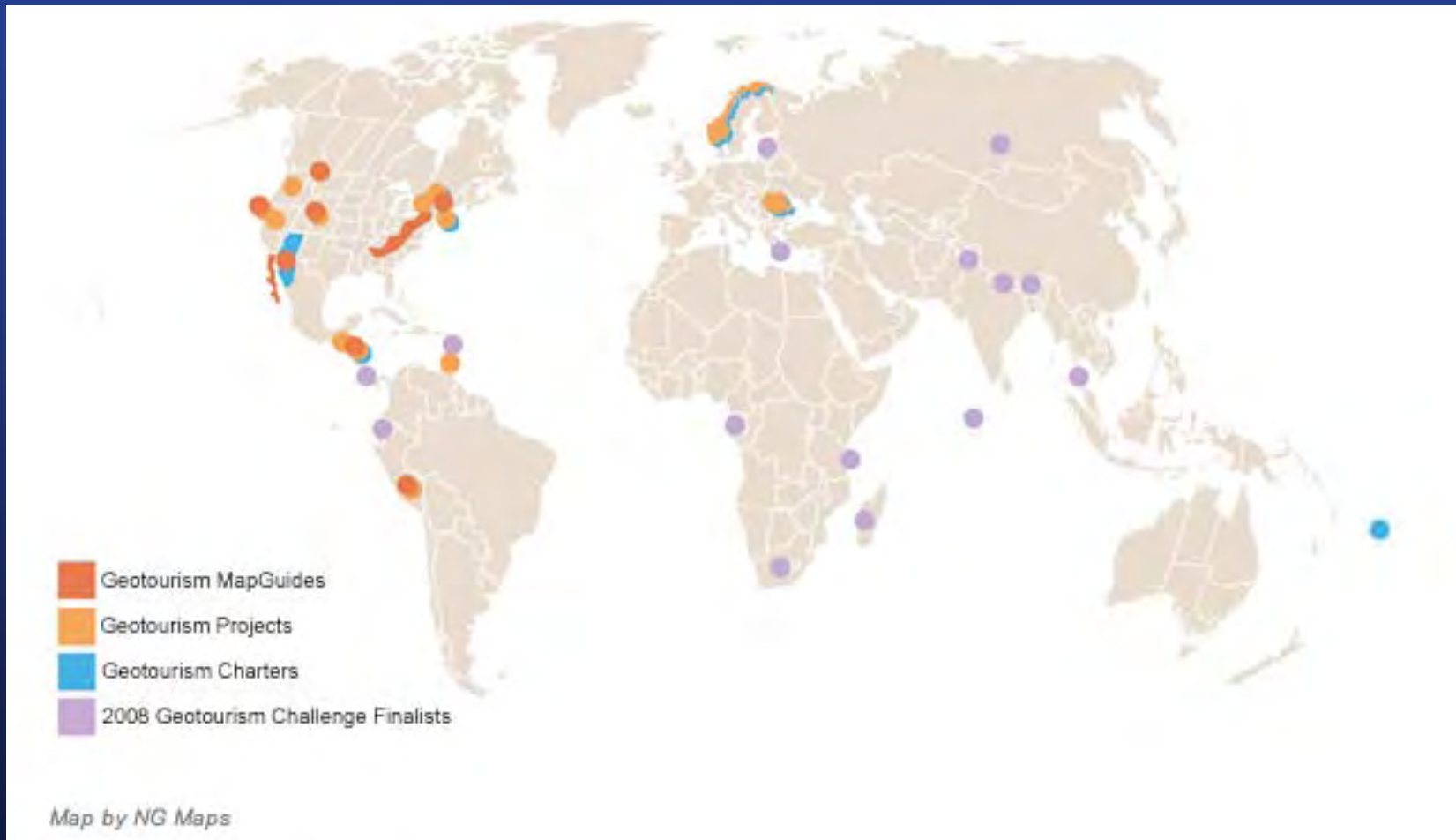
How to get the real story



**Geotourism Challenge 2009  
POWER OF PLACE**



# Developing: Global geotourism mapping platform



# The online Geotourism Challenge, a global collaborative competition



GEOTOURISM CHALLENGE 2009  
**POWER OF PLACE**  
Sustaining the Future of Destinations

National Geographic and Ashoka's Changemakers

[www.changemakers.net/geotourismchallenge](http://www.changemakers.net/geotourismchallenge)

**2009 Judging begins July 14**

**Winners announced September 9**

A man with a beard and glasses, wearing a bright yellow and black high-visibility jacket and dark pants with reflective stripes, stands on the deck of a boat. He is playing a violin. The background features a steep, snow-dusted mountain on the left, a calm body of water in the middle ground, and distant hills under a clear blue sky. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a sunny day.

**The geotourism test: Are we sustaining or enhancing the character of our place?**





**NATIONAL  
GEOGRAPHIC**