

A Statistical Analysis of Surf Tourism Research Literature

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Abstract

Surf tourism is a rapidly expanding market segment of the wider tourism industry and the purpose of this study is to provide an analytical representation of surf tourism research literature. Tracing the development of surf tourism research produced from 1997 through 2010, published and unpublished materials were collected through a mixture of inquiry, including the search of a wide range of academic journal databases and communication with authors in the field. A systematic review was employed to identify and statistically analyze the nature and types of research emerging in the field, including the gray literature, journal publications, institutional contributors, and graduate studies leading to degree conferrals and repeat authorship. The study identifies the genesis of surf tourism research as a new body of literature in the touristic academe and serves to frame the history and nature of the field. We find that this new subfield of research has arisen, not by well-known theoreticians writing about it, but by graduate students and consultants first, and academics later, and this is evident in the gray literature and degree conferrals leading to a variety of publications in the field. More than fifty percent of the total research has been produced in the previous five years. Key topics in surf tourism include coastal research, ecotourism, sustainable tourism, tourism management, and socioeconomics, wherein sustainability, management and surfing events are the most prolific areas under discussion to date. An appendix provides a bibliography of 118 pieces of research included for review.

Key words: surf tourism; systematic review; interdisciplinary; sustainability; management
