

Preface

Tourism in Antarctica has rapidly increased in recent decades. In terms of technical practice and visitor guidance, the management of the tour operators is determining whether tourism has a negative or positive impact on the environment. This book aims to offer new elements for the debate, how co-existence of tourism and environmental protection could best be guaranteed by shedding light on the latest trends and the *modus operandi* of all parts involved. While some chapters deal with the development of polar tourism in numbers, forms and activities, others will focus on the apparent expansion of new activities carried out in Antarctica and the focus amongst Treaty Parties on the perceived challenges posed by such adventure tourism. The International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators, member organization, which aims to advocate and promote the practice of safe and environmentally responsible travel to the Antarctic, is also part of this study. In this context, special attention will be paid to its strategies dealing with adventure tourism—including both deep field and those additional or new activities taking place from traditional ship or yacht-based platforms. The analysis includes the aspects of risk management and environmental considerations as well as the views on the cultural perspectives on the Southern Continent.

Marisol Vereda examines visitor's representations of Antarctica as a remote destination. Taking into account the number of visitors who travel to the Antarctic Peninsula each summer season, she considers something essential to understand: how they value the area. Her study aims to help us understand the attitudes derived from this tourist practice in terms of a special appraisal of the attributes of Antarctica. This appraisal involves a learning experience, more knowledge about environmental issues and a deeper awareness on the meaning of Antarctica. The destination is associated with special wilderness values, remoteness and exceptional wildlife. These attributes reinforce the idea of the wild, last place on earth with a unique environment and will lead to sensations of remoteness, desolation and being exposed to an otherworldly beauty. Vereda's study shows an exceptional level of satisfaction, which is achieved by the tourists, as their expectations are not only met, but far exceeded by the on-site experience. She concludes that through specific

knowledge and direct experience, a deeper state of mind about the meaning of Antarctica has been gained.

Chapter 2, by Monika Schillat, aims to retrace the images of Antarctica as transmitted by the literature. Focusing on the literary production of two centuries, we are invited to revisit science-fiction productions, as well as eco-thrillers and action-adventure novels, as well as non-fantastic narratives, which take place in the everyday experiences on the White Continent and soul-searching in the later twentieth century. Limiting her study to Anglophone readers and travellers, Schillat reconstructs the images conjured in the literature, which might have influenced and motivated the expectations of modern-day travellers. Her article concludes by discussing how the imagery of polar heroes, as presented in the fiction, leads to proposals of extreme adventures and experiences, which might allow the traveller to retrace the steps of their idols from the past.

A different angle is offered in Chap. 3. In conjunction with the rapid growth and diversification of Antarctic tourism since the late 1980s, much emphasis has been put by States Parties to the Antarctic Treaty and academics on the need for regulating tourism activities and monitoring their effects in the Antarctic environment. Environmental non-governmental organizations have also addressed this issue critically. However, issues connected to the supervision of Antarctic tourism activities have been much less addressed by any of these groups. Rodolfo Sánchez and Ricardo Roura address aspects of Antarctic tourism supervision with a focus on shipborne tourism, which is the dominant form of conducting tourist activities in Antarctica. They focus on the way parties to the Antarctic Treaty and the tourism industry supervise the implementation of applicable regulations and conclude by discussing likely mechanisms to enhance supervision of the management of shipborne tourist activities in Antarctica, as well as proposing further lines of research on this issue.

Adventure tourism also poses new challenges for the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO). Monika Schillat focuses on how the IAATO, a member organization that aims to advocate and promote the practice of safe and environmentally responsible travel to Antarctica, has dealt with visitor guidance and the management of the tour operators in the past and discusses how the apparent expansion of new activities carried out in Antarctica are dealt with nowadays. Keeping in mind the aspects of risk management and environmental considerations, Chap. 4 aims to analyze IAATO's strategies towards these new activities.

Chapter 5 deals with the origins and development of Antarctica tourism through Ushuaia as a gateway port. Marie Jensen and Marisol Vereda offer an analysis of seaborne tourism to Antarctica using Ushuaia as a base port from 1958 to 2014. The comparison of different sources enables a revision of the voyages, tourist flows, evolution of seasons and factors that influenced the development of Antarctic tourism and the role of Ushuaia as a gateway city. Likewise, a reference to the "tourist boom" in the 1970s is given, since it is the period when Antarctic shipborne tourism consolidates as a tourist product, being the most active decade before the sustained growth that started in the 1990s. Also, the occurrence of large cruise ships is taken into account. Finally, an integrated analysis per period is provided.

Tourism in Antarctica

A Multidisciplinary View of New Activities Carried Out on
the White Continent

Schillat, M.; Jensen, M.; Vereda, M.; Sánchez, R.A.;
Roura, R.

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