

Challenges of a small insular developing state: Cape Verde

Desafios de um pequeno estado insular em desenvolvimento: Cabo Verde

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Abstract | The aim of the current study is to make the diagnosis of tourism in Cape Verde and point out major challenges to sustainable development in Cape Verde. To carry out this purpose, we conducted 19 in-depth interviews (22 April and 3 July 2019) with managers of different sector in Cape Verde. This number of interviews allow us to achieve the saturation. Cape Verde authorities should be aware that islands have lack of lodgings and infrastructures, small diversification of tourism products, high costs of water, energy, communications, and infrastructures as well as a limited quality of vocational training.

Keywords | SIDS, Cape Verde, sustainable tourism

Resumo | O objetivo deste estudo é apresentar um diagnóstico do turismo em Cabo Verde e apontar os maiores desafios para o desenvolvimento sustentável em Cabo Verde. Para realizar este estudo, realizaram-se 19 entrevistas em profundidade (22 abril e 3 julho 2019) com gestores de diferentes setores em Cabo Verde. Este número de entrevistas permite-nos chegar a conclusões significativas. As autoridades de Cabo Verde devem ter em atenção que as ilhas se deparam com uma série de falta de alojamentos e infraestruturas, pouca diversificação dos produtos turísticos, elevados custos de água e energia, comunicações e infraestruturas além de uma limitada qualidade de formação profissional.

Palavra-chave | SIDS, Cabo Verde, turismo sustentável

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1. Introduction

Tourism has become one of the world's largest economic activities, creating jobs, driving exports, and generating prosperity across the world both in developed and developing countries. In 2018, the World Travel & Tourism Council's (WTTC, 2019) research reveals that tourism accounted for (i) 10.4% of global GDP (USD 8,811.0 bn) in 2018 and by 2029 it is expected to grow by 3.7% pa to USD 13,085.7 bn by 2029 (11.5% of GDP); (ii) 319 million jobs, or 10% of total employment in 2018. By 2029, it is expected to support 420,659,000 jobs (11.7% of total employment) (iii) USD 940.9 bn of capital investment in 2018. This is expected to rise by 4.2% pa over the next ten years until it achieves USD 1,489.5 bn in 2029.

Across the regions in 2018, Asia-Pacific remained a strong performer, growing by 6.4%, but North Africa's performance – with 8.6% year on year growth – is particularly notable. This growth shows this activity's resilience as well as its capacity to bounce back from security shocks, but also its ability to spread its benefits widely across the world. Due to the enormous quantity of potential effects, tourism has a considerable impact on sustainable development, while at the same time it offers important opportunities for developing countries (WTTC, 2019).

In the case of Cape Verde, we can conclude that the total contribution of Travel & Tourism to GDP was USD 782.9 mn (44.9% of GDP) in 2017 and is forecast to rise by 5% pa to USD 1,316.1 mn (47.9% of GDP) in 2028. In 2017, the total contribution to employment, supported by the industry was 39.3% of total employment (93,500 jobs). This is expected to rise by 1.7% in 2018 to 95,500 jobs and rise by 3.1% pa to 129,000 jobs in 2028 (45.7% of total). Visitor exports generated USD 459.8 mn (65.9% of total exports) in 2017 and it is expected to grow by 5.5% pa, from 2018-2028, to USD 808.1 mn in 2028 (73.1% of total). Finally, Travel & Tourism investment in 2017 was

USD 144.2 mn (26.4% of total investment) and it should rise by 4.1% pa over the next ten years to USD 218.3 mn in 2028 (25.4% of total) (WTTC, 2018).

The aim of the current study is to make the diagnosis of the tourism in Cape Verde and point out major challenges to sustainable development in Cape Verde. By sustainable development here we mean the ability to develop human goals while simultaneously sustaining the natural systems to provide the natural resources and ecosystem services upon which the economy and society depend.

2. Methodology

We had a field mission with the application of 19 semi structured in-depth interviews as the main method of data collection with tourist companies and owners/entrepreneurs conducted throughout four months period (between 22 April and 3 July 2019). Each participant was interviewed for more than one-hour session. All interviews were conducted in a familiar environment to get more personal information as proposed by Polkinghorne, (2005). Modern research fields are multifaceted and use different methods of inquiry, which are never contradictory, but are often complementary tools that facilitate problem solving and knowledge creation (Coccia, 2018). This method had the advantage of not being too rigid and therefore allowed to achieve further answers as well as correct possible uncertainties (Silva & Oliveira, 2017). Moreover, these interviews contained different activities such as observation, asking questions, communicating, and testing those answers (Jalil, et al, 2018).

Through these interviews, the details of the respondent's own perception and accounts was explored.

Semi-structured interviews are widely recognised as a powerful and useful way to capture qualitative data (Weligodapola & Darabi, 2018, Qu &

Dumay, 2011; Silverman, 2005). Complementary to this exploratory research design, we carried out several informal conversations with other institutions and employees.

Secondary information was also used as to collect information about the country. This was achieved through the search of the most important official reports about Cape Verde.

Table 1 | Participants in interviews

Company	Contact	Position	Day
Binter Cv	Marina Ferreira	Commercial Director	24-04-2019
Enapor	Celso Martins	Director	25-04-2019
Hotel Pescador	José Castilho	Director	25-04-2019
Direção Nacional do Ambiente	Sónia Araújo	Director of Serviço de Conservação da Natureza	26-04-2019
Zona Desenvolvimento Turístico Integrado	Alberto Mello	ZDTI Administrator	26-04-2019
INE	Olga Cruz	Coordinator of Divisão de Estatísticas Sectoriais e de Empresas	26-04-2019
Comunidade cabo-verdiana de Cruzeiros	Conceição Monteiro	President	26-04-2019
Hotel Praia Mar	Muxima Veiga	Director	26-04-2019
Câmara M. Ribeira Grande de Santiago	Manuel Pina Leinilda Pereira	President Director of the President Office	29-04-2019
Instituto do Património Cultural	Jaylson Monteiro	Director of Museums	30-04-2019
Instituto do Património Cultural	Humberto Lima	Director of Immaterial Patrimony	30-04-2019
Câmara M. São Lourenço dos Órgãos	Valdano Furtado	Education city councillor	30-04-2019
Câmara Municipal do Tarrafal	Daniel Soares	Tourism councillor	16-05-2019
Câmara Municipal da Praia	João Varela António Silva	Tourism technician city councillor	16-05-2019
Câmara Municipal de Santa Cruz	Carlos Silva	President	02-05-2019
Polícia Nacional	Emanuel Moreno	National Director	02-05-2019
Direção Geral de Turismo e Transportes	Edison Barbosa	Director	02-05-2019
TACV	Djamila Neves	Marketing Director	03-05-2019
Direção Geral de Turismo e Transportes	Vladimir Fonseca	Assessor do Ministro do Turismo e Transportes	03-05-2019
Fundo do Turismo	Manuel Ribeiro	Manager	03-05-2019
ASA	Marcelo Silva	Praia Airport Director	03-05-2019
Electra	António Pina Silvino Leal	Administration	15-05-2019

Source: authors

3. Theoretical framework

3.1 Recent diagnosis

Cape Verde is considered a Small Island Developing State (SIDS). These countries can generally be described as a distinct group of countries facing specific vulnerabilities and challenges in terms of sustainable development due to some particular issues: their small size, remoteness, narrow resource and export base, exposure to global environmental challenges and external economic shocks, including impacts from climate change (Media Advisory, 2018). Under this context, since Cape Verde faces most of these vulnerabilities as well as challenges, the local government tried to find a new

economic direction, as it happens with tourism.

In 2016, the national economy grew by 3.8%, marking the end of a cycle of low economic growth and it is expected to reach 7% in 2021. Despite this projection, Cape Verde faces a demographic dynamic (the resident population is projected to rise from 531.239 in 2016 to 621.141 by 2030) that may impose a set of challenges including the need to create economic opportunities for young people and women, and increased spending on the social security, health, and education (GCV, 2018).

On the other hand, Cape Verde faces regional inequalities and asymmetries that can be measured by the uneven contribution of each island to the national economy. This because Santiago Island accounts around 52% of GDP, followed by São Vi-

cente (16%) and Sal (12%). The remaining six inhabited islands account for the remaining 20% of the national GDP (GCV, 2018).

This situation affects the distribution of poverty within the country. In 2015, 35% of the population lived in poverty, of which 10,6% lived in extreme poverty. In 2021 projections show a slight recovery to 28,2%.

In 2016, a population of 386.147 were aged over 15 years, of which 63.9% (246.680) were economically active, but only 209.725 working and thus 36.955 (15%) unemployed. In 2021 projections expect to reduce unemployment to 9,7% mainly due to the tertiary sector, the main generator of employment, averaging around 61 out of every 100 employees, but reaching 73% in urban areas (GCV, 2018).

From the interviews, we found out that even though all the country's 22 municipalities guarantee access to basic and secondary school education, higher education is only available on the islands of Santiago and São Vicente. In the case of tourism there is a lack of skills for high and intermediate jobs which requires an urgent introduction of improvements.

In the health sector, despite progress made, challenges remain with regards to access to, and the quality of, services and thus measures need to be taken to improve the complementarity between the public and the private sectors in order to strengthen human resource coverage, management capacity (including the maintenance of infrastructures and equipment), health information systems, inspection services and health regulation, as well as the consolidation of the infrastructure network – in this latter case, preceded by a comprehensive review of the Health Charter.

Regarding water, only 65% of households obtain their drinking water primarily from the public network, with this percentage being higher in urban areas, where it reaches 70%, than in rural areas (54%). In 2016, 89.6% of households had access to electricity as the main source of energy for ligh-

ting, a percentage that was also more pronounced in urban areas (93.0%) than in rural areas (83.1%). Whilst gas is the main source of household energy for cooking and used by the vast majority of urban households (76.0%), it is only used by (42%) of rural households where wood is still a more widely used source (55.2%), representing a threat to vegetation and soil cover. The current state of the environment in Cape Verde is characterized by the prevalence of strong pressures on the use and exploitation of natural resources putting the capacity of environmental systems to function for, and serve society, and the maintenance of ecosystems, at significant risk. Response measures and specific strategies are required to address this, including a response from civil society itself (Lemos et al., 2020).

Moreover, the physical, geographic, and ecological characteristics of Cape Verde significantly influence the load capacity of the territory, which, due to its fragmentation, has limited space for biodiversity. Equally important is the country's vulnerability to the effects of drought, floods and hurricanes all of which are predicted to become more intense as a result of climate change (Ezequias, 2020).

3.2. Major challenges to sustainable development in Cape Verde

Taking into consideration the SIDS situation, Cape Verde has historically been challenged with the need to promote a sustainable economy with inclusive growth in order to overcome the major constraints to development.

The country faces a significant number of natural risks and vulnerabilities:

- (i) Due to its volcanic origin, its geographic configuration as an archipelago, its location in the Sahel region it faces a scarcity of rainfall that cause severe droughts that are the

main cause of desertification and severe effects on the country's fragile ecosystems.

(ii) The insular and fragmented nature of the country, with steep and rugged topography causes a significant impact on the costs of providing basic infrastructures, public services, and other essential goods.

(iii) Due to Cape Verde's extensive coastline, and exclusive economic zone, it becomes particularly vulnerable to threats, such as drug, illegal immigration, and international crime.

(iv) Cape Verde's high external energy dependence (approximately 75%).

(v) Structural deficit of Payment balance since the country imports more than 80% of the food it needs. The balance of services, which although positive, only accounts for less than 50% of the negative balance in goods, is also aggravated by the negative balance in primary income.

(vi) Equilibrium is achieved through external transfers that have been fallen since 2007. Therefore, the country must find a solution that replaces foreign aid with private investment. However, this solution requires an enabling business environment, based on trust, a reduction of doing business costs, and the creation of conditions favourable to long term business sustainability (GCV, 2018).

3.3. Cape Verde of the Future

So, to overcome the country's challenges, the Government's Programme for the IX Legislature (2016-2021) stated a forward-looking vision for the country: "A developed Cape Verde, inclusive, democratic, open to the world, modern, safe, where

full employment and full freedom rule" (GCV, 2018: 8).

One of the main key drivers to achieve a dynamic insertion of Cape Verde into the world economy is therefore tourism. Along with this strategy, it is important to adjust the country's internal conditions to the new requirements of the global economy and therefore take the maximum advantage of its resources. With this strategy, the government will create an important confidence into the economy, minimize costs and ensure the sustainability of development.

If they succeed, they will be able not only to reverse the migratory dynamics which have affected the country last years but also to effectively fight against poverty (concerning access to employment, food, health, education, housing, safe drinking water, energy, sanitation and communications).

In order to achieve this, it is imperative that a new wave of decentralization is required in order to take advantage of the endogenous potential at regional and island level, in order to accelerate both local and national economic growth, reduce regional asymmetries, and promote regional balance.

Considering the human resource training policies, there is a need to start a profound reform in the education and vocational training systems, focusing on both curricular and pedagogical development.

Simultaneously, the success of economic performance of the country depends on its successful insertion into the global economy since these exterior elements may boost the economy and ensure the optimization of the advantages of insertion into the global economy.

If well managed, this strategy will allow the transformation of the economic, cultural and political environment in a way which will promote economic sustainable growth, development and progress.

Cape Verde's dynamic insertion into the global economy, is aligned with both the Programme and the Government's Vision for the IX Legislature,

and international development agendas, notably the Sustainable Development Goals, and the international commitments assumed by Cape Verde (GCV, 218).

4. Conclusion

The first development objective of the PEDS (*Strategic Plan for Sustainable Development*) is to **“Make Cape Verde a Hub Economy located in the Mid-Atlantic”** (see Figure 2). There are seven main programmes that provide the strategy for promoting the development of Cape Verde as a hub economy: (i) the development of a logistical port and transshipment facilities (Maritime Platform) to service international shipping fleets that pass or approach Cape Verde; (ii) the development of a logistical airport for the international distribution of passengers and cargo and to link the continents and countries bordering the Atlantic Ocean (Air Platform); (iii) the establishment of a critical mass of businesses to transform Cape Verde into an International Business Centre, to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and to promote local business initiatives (Commercial and Industrial Platform); (iv) creation of an international financial services platform (Financial Platform); (v) creation of conditions conducive to promoting and increasing the participation of Cape Verde citizens residing abroad in the country’s economic and social development and also to give priority to the ethnic and cultural dimensions of development (Ethnic Investment Platform); (vi) the development, consolidation, improvement and diversification of tourism and the diversification in internal destinations and products, making tourism a phenomenon that will extend to all the islands and all communities (Tourism Platform); (vii) development of the Digital and Nanotechnological Economy (Digital Platform and Innovation).

In order to achieve a hub economy, Cape Verde

needs to implement a strong strategy to capture foreign domestic investment (FDI) supported by a strong diplomatic strategy. Like many other SIDS, Cape Verde suffers from an enormous shortage of capital, technology, qualified human resources, high-level organizational capacity, and markets. FDI brings in resources and, in doing so, has direct, indirect, and induced effects on all sectors of economic and social life, as well as the improvement of macroeconomic variables, like GDP, the balance of payments, employment, income and government revenue (GCV, 2018; CM, 2019).

The programme to attract FDI, must focus mainly on three main areas to strengthen confidence, minimize costs and build a sustainable economy: (i) strengthening political, economic and social stability; (ii) reinforcing the predictability of currency exchange, tax and legal fields and (iii) strengthening economic freedom through improving performance in relation to key indicators in the economic freedom index.

Under this scope Cape Verde’s diplomatic efforts are expected to upscale to create the political conditions and the international cooperation required to enable Cape Verde’s dynamic insertion in the global economy. It is therefore a top priority for the diplomatic sector to deepen political and cooperation relationships within the Atlantic region and, in particular with the European Union (EU) and the Euro area, with European non-EU countries (including Russia), with the countries of the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), and in particular the USA, with the countries of West Africa (including Morocco, Mauritania and the Economic Community of West African States - ECOWAS) and with Southern Africa, (with emphasis on Angola and South Africa). Outside the Atlantic area, diplomacy will give special priority to deepening political and cooperation relationships with the Middle East (including Turkey, Egypt and Israel), the People’s Republic of China and East Timor (GCV, 2018; CM, 2019).

The second development objective of the

PEDS is to “**Ensure Economic and Environmental Sustainability**”. This objective focuses the importance of Tourism as a key sector since it is expected to be the catalyst for development in other sectors from the viewpoint of the chain value. Even though tourism competitiveness index passed from 86th place in 2016 and is expected to achieve 45th place in 2021, tourism in Cape Verde currently faces, at least four major challenges: competitiveness, sustainability, concentration, and maximization of the impact on Cape Verde citizens’ wealth and well-being (GCV, 2018; CM, 2019).

The promotion and development of tourism, as a generator for the dynamic insertion of Cape Verde into the global economy (which is expected to grow from 644.429 tourists in 2016 to 1.249.666 in 2021), has two essential dimensions that can be addressed in parallel: (i) stabilise the balance of payments. To achieve this objective, it is important to solve some negative consequences of internal migration, particularly in the areas of employment, health, education, housing, water, energy, sanitation and urban planning as well as to ensure, in the two main tourism destinations, Sal and Boa Vista, high tourist safety standards, and to minimize the negative environmental impacts resulting, in particular, from human actions; (ii) make Cape Verde a world reference country for sustainable tourism, well known by citizens of other countries, with diversified products based on the geography, history, culture and nature of each of the islands. Diversification of the tourist markets, destinations, operators, products, reception infrastructures and the reduction/ elimination of seasonality are therefore main objectives.

In order to promote domestic production and exports, fisheries, agriculture, light industry and the creative industries must be developed in parallel and in complementarity with the development of tourism. The interconnections and interlinkages of these sectors with tourism have an incalculable potential for the economic sustainability of Cape Verde, as well as a valuable contribution

to improving the well-being of the Cape Verde citizens.

To achieve this objective, it is important to implement some basic structural reforms, such as public sector reform comprising reform of the public administration, state enterprises, the administrative authorities and regionalization, the business environment, and financing the economy. But strategy relating to infrastructure and transportation, energy, land-use and environment and biodiversity are also fundamental to achieving the objective of guaranteeing the sustainability of the national economy. The development of infrastructures and means of transport must be one of the priorities to guarantee safety, efficiency and quality of movement of people and goods. An integrated, competitive, and secure transport system will be built to contribute in a relevant way to national wealth, the balance of payments, employment, and national and international mobility (GCV, 2018; CM, 2019).

Concerning maritime, air cargo and passenger transport systems, it is important to achieve unification of the national market and integration into the international market. In this context, infrastructures and means of transport should be considered as an integral part of the transportation and movement strategy, ensuring safety, efficiency, and quality in the movement of people and goods.

Cape Verde’s geostrategic position gives the country a privileged opportunity to become a major goods transshipment hub for the West African region and for the logistical interests of maritime operators, and a large bunkering services centre. This means that in order to have success in the maritime platform, Cape Verde must fulfil its commitments as a coastal, flag and port state within a sectoral sustainability framework.

The country’s geo-strategic location creates favourable conditions for success, implementation, and development of an air traffic distribution hub, generating income, jobs, and improving the competitiveness of the transportation value chain and

business tourism (GCV, 2018; CM, 2019).

But improving performance in the energy sector must not be neglected. The strategic guidelines for the energy sector programme must focus on energy security, price stability and energy bill reduction as key priorities. In this context, the National Programme for Energy Sustainability was elaborated with the following interventions: institutional reinforcement and improvement of the business environment, reform of the organisational structure of the energy market, investment in strategic infrastructure, development of renewable energies and the promotion of energy efficiency (GCV, 2018; CM, 2019).

The third PEDS objective is to “**Ensure social inclusion and the reduction of social and regional inequalities and asymmetries**”. This objective presents strategies for improving families’ living conditions and social inclusion, education, access to housing, decent work, youth, national health, the social security system, gender equality, culture, and sport. Poverty and social inequalities create living conditions difficulties for many households which still cannot meet their basic living needs. Poverty is a consequence of the existence of low levels of schooling and lack of basic skills which affect employment and quality of life, such as poor housing conditions, poor access to basic social services and consumer goods (GCV, 2018; CM, 2019; Furtado et al., 2014).

On the other hand, social inequalities are particularly related to gender, physical and/or mental condition, income, age, and place of birth, with a considerable part of the population, especially women, still unable to meet their basic living needs through paid work. Therefore, it is important to improve social inclusion to fight against social inequality. In order to overcome these challenges and mitigate the impacts of poverty and other social phenomena affecting Cape Verde society, Government must create policies focusing on social insertion and the promotion of the principles of human dignity and autonomy as a means to create a more

inclusive country through better employment, income, education, and boosting upward mobility for the poor, by improving access to paid work and enhancing income and quality of life (GCV, 2018; CM, 2019).

Employment and vocational training are also strongly linked and make a fundamental contribution to the achievement of Cape Verde’s vision for the future. The sectors identified as transformational for economic growth - namely the sustainable oceans economy, agribusiness, renewable energy, tourism, trade, industrial development, culture, and creative industries - have great potential for the generation of decent employment in skilled jobs to overcome these challenges and mitigate the impacts of poverty and other social phenomena affecting Cape Verde society.

Culture is the glue that binds people and communities, reinforces their identity, and contributes to national unity. The sector faces, several problems and challenges that demands the definition of a new paradigm and mind set to (i) enhance the availability of cultural and artistic products. To achieve this, it is important to develop technical and professional training programmes for strategic groups such as young women, female heads of households, young artists, in both rural and urban areas. With this, it will be possible to ensure the inclusion of all segments of the population that are in a situation of social vulnerability, through training and professional qualifications and the creation of job opportunities; (ii) the exploitation of Cape Verde’s historical, cultural, and touristic heritage. This needs to create a strategy of preservation, conservation, study, and transmission of cultural values for the generations to come and implement actions that allow a better understanding to heritage as a promoter of development, jobs, territorial differentiation, and regional and national identities (GCV, 2018).

Sports is also considered an extremely important resource in social stability for Cape Verde since it can be a developmental factor that inte-

racts with education, health and the well-being of the population, tourism, and the international projection of Cape Verde.

Regarding managerial implication, this research has contributed for the field of tourism by giving a new perspective through the theoretical literature. This research has provided knowledge

for the different constructs that are of most importance to build a successful and sustainable tourism strategy.

Consequently, governmental institutions should be aware of the opportunities they have in hands in order to maximize their effects to the society and the country.

Table 2 | SWOT analysis

<p>Strength Tourism represents 22% of national GDP History Soft weather Good beaches Geographic location Landscape diversity Strong cultural identity Young and affable population Safety at acceptable levels</p>	<p>Weaknesses Concentration in few destination markets Lack of lodgings and infrastructures Little diversification of tourism products High costs of water, energy, communications and communications Limited quality of vocational training Incipient Marketing Tourism concentration in two islands (Sal and Boavista) 54% of tourists come from four European countries: United Kingdom, France, Germany and Portugal In 2018, 77% of the tourists went to the island of Boa Vista The supply of large hotels on the islands of Sal and Boa Vista are dominated by only two companies Seasonality: Around 60% of tourism occurs between October and April</p>
<p>Threats Increased crime Risk of terrorism Local, regional and national demographic imbalance Non-sustainable management of tangible and intangible tourist heritage</p>	<p>Opportunities Diversification of tourism products Promotion of the blue economy Promotion of the green industry Improving agriculture to respond to tourism Streamlining inter-island transport Development of cruise tourism Streamlining rural and nature tourism</p>

Source: Authors

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