

Developing a new typology for a behavioural classification of stakeholders using the case of tourism public policy planning in the snow sports industry

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Abstract

Stakeholders have been broadly described as those people or groups with an interest in the outcomes of the actions taken by others, which includes actions by commercial businesses, not-for-profit organizations, and those of all levels of government as well as their delegated representatives. In considering their role the types and classification of stakeholders has become increasingly important to the efficient management of the public policy planning process, particularly in the tourism industry with its very diverse stakeholder population. In recent decades research on stakeholders in public policy making has been described in detail (through studies of attributes, interests, and influences) and has sought to categorize

stakeholders (especially in identifying who should be a stakeholder and who is a genuine stakeholder) to better manage the consultative process involved. Using the process of constructing a strategic plan for the government controlled ski resorts in the State of Victoria (Australia) which involved substantial involvement from the public, businesses, property lessees and skiing enthusiasts, this paper reviews the utility of currently used stakeholder classification schema from both a theoretical and practical viewpoint and posits that a better approach to understanding differences would consider the behavioural variations between the stakeholder groups as they participate in the consultative phases of the process. It concludes that public policy managers can improve their understanding of potential stakeholder responses and proactively engage these people and groups in the public policy planning process by understanding the impact of the outcomes and nurturing their different levels of involvement and on-going support. This can be expected to improve acceptance and support of final policy decisions that are made, especially when difficult compromises between alternatives are required.

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