



Master thesis

# Revitalizing mature tourist destinations

a transition in progress? The Case of Platja de Palma



*Author:* Gabriel Martín Carrera s2219700

*Supervisor:* Prof. Dr. Gert de Roo



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## **Preface:**

Tourism is one of the main activities in Spain, for decades, it has acquired an essential role in the economy and it has provoked significant changes on the territory and environment. After a huge tourist development, a great deal of the destinations are in a maturity stage and therefore it is needed a revitalization. In this thesis is analyzed through the Tourist Area Life Cycle (Butler, 1980), the evolution of the mature tourist destinations based on sun and beach on the Mediterranean coast and it is introduced the concept of Transition Management as an ideal framework to face the current strategies in a more sustainable way and paying attention to new governance processes. Once presented and discussed the topic, the Spanish background and those concepts, the strategies and measures carried out in Spain and specially in Platja de Palma, are analyzed in order to check whether they can be conceptualized as a Transition.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Tourism is one of the most important economic activities in Spain. It has been a catalyst for socioeconomic development since the 1960s. The Spanish coastal land characteristics have contributed to develop a large-scale tourism growth, turning Spain into one of the greatest global tourist destinations only surpassed by France and the United States. According to the UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2013, Spain is a world leader in tourism, the second in incomes related to international tourism and the fourth in international tourism. Tourism activity is a key factor in the Spanish economy representing 10.2 % of GDP and 11.9% of employment. Also it is important for keeping the equilibrium in the commercial balance since inbound tourism contributes positively whilst outbound tourism negatively and, in the Spanish case, the inbound tourism is clearly superior. The development and growth of the Spanish economy during the last decades is incomprehensible without the role of the tourism, but *'in the last years is showing some exhaustion symptoms'* (Rebollo, 1994). Therefore, it is possible to talk about a light loss of competitiveness due to the lack of sustainability of the tourism's model in some aspects such as the socioeconomic and environmental impacts.

The traditional kind of tourism in Spain is mass tourism based on 'sun and beach'. From Cataluña to Andalucía, including Balearic Islands and Canary Island, the coasts have experienced significant changes, both qualitative (such as changes in the landscape, in the land uses...) and quantitative (especially in the number of buildings, facilities and infrastructures) since 1960s. The on-going occupancy of the Spanish coastal land has provoked an unprecedented urban sprawl. The whole coast has become a tourist destination based on the triad formed by accommodation, sun and the beach and is much related with the over dimensioned real state expansion which has gone hand in hand with tourism planning during the last decades. In the current globalization context favored by the new space-time conception shaped by the improvement in technologies, transports and communications, Spanish coast tourist destinations have to face direct competition

from other countries offering similar tourism products at the same prices or even at lower prices (for instance Croatia, Turkey, Tunisia or México).

Furthermore, one must regard the effects of this type of mass tourism in the territory. Associated impacts are varied and suppose an important environmental, social and spatial pressure which makes visible the progressive deterioration of these spaces and the unsustainability of that tourist model. One may point out several impacts caused by this sort of tourism, both environmental impacts -such as the uncontrolled urban sprawl, natural spaces destruction, landscape deterioration, overexploitation of water resources, pollution...- and social impacts -frequently are perceived in the host population as loss of the customs and local values, inequality (Rebollo y Monfort, 1994; Rebollo y Castañeira 2010; Clavé, 2012). Additionally, one cannot longer stop but pay attention to the complexity and uncertainty related to tourism. As Baggio et al. (2007) argue the task is not easy because tourism is difficult to measure and analyze. Their main reason is the fact that it is an industry with no traditional production functions, without a consistent measurable output, and without common structure or organization across countries or even within the same country. Besides, it is possible to list some factors that contribute to the increase of the complexity and uncertainty such as seasonally, climatic conditions, changes in the likes of the visitors, fragmented management, and planning.

Moreover, many of these coastal destinations are immersed in a mature stage, even decline, due to the lack of renewal, the obsolescence of their resources and tourist infrastructures and loss of quality and differentiation from other destinations. Therefore, the concept of maturity and renewal become essential for analyzing the present and future of the destinations. Renewal may be understood according to Rodriguez and Conejero (2011) as the process of repositioning the destination in the market. They conceive it as a renovation process in the destination which means the offer of a new tourist product focused on other demand segments, acquiring a double perspective: physical transformation (modernization of infrastructure and facilities) and intangible transformation (change of the image, new concepts, new paradigms and strategies). In addition, the renewal process could be comprehensive, a long-term approach through the restructuring of the tourist model, or partial, a superficial change or make-up operation.

With regard to the maturity term, one may define it as a deceleration phase in the evolution of a destination which has had a same pattern of development for a long period of time. Maturity is related to the life cycle of a product and designates a phase in which a product, a destination in this scope, has reached a level of sales in the market beyond which one enters into a stage of diminishing earnings and visitors, or in which the carrying capacity has been overpassed. It will be defined and discussed in the next chapter.

Thus, it is essential to develop new renewal strategies to improve the tourist activity in the country. In this study the focus is on determining tourist coast areas or destinations which have suffered a continuous transformation and growing during the last 60 years. The term destination is understood 'as a *highly specific territory of limited scope*

(*municipality, valley, island, county, etc.*) that is perfectly identifiable with a name or a brand' (Clavé, 2012). Those tourist destinations, primarily based on sun and beach, have arrived to a turning point where some changes are needed. It is possible to say that several tourist destinations are immersed in a crossover. *'Most of the tourist destinations are currently subject to uncertainties, because these areas are being affected by deep transformations in the global tourist context -for instance the changes in the behavior and preferences of the tourists'* (Pavón and Tabales, 2010 )

According to Pavón and Tabales (2010), the scientific literature constantly repeats that the role and the kind of tourist have changed. There is a new type of tourist who demonstrates other motivations, behaviors and also who has raised its exigency level with respect to destinations and tourist products. The demand from tourists is becoming more and more diverse, sun and beach is not enough anymore. Also, the way of travelling and organizing the trips have changed due to the improvements in technologies. Nowadays, self-organization of the travel is common because of the improvements in mobility (Tomás, 1998) as a consequence of the spread of low-cost airlines or the growth of the non-regulated supply of accommodation. According to Exceltur (2005) *'those changes can be traduced in a progressive reduction of the average expenditure of the tourist'*.

Santos and Tabales (2010) additionally point out the level of thoroughness as an important feature in the motivations of the tourist. Quality is becoming a key concept to understand the tourist demand. It is an attribute associable to the products, destinations, accommodations, activities and services, facilities, infrastructures, environment, landscape, culture, history, gastronomy... Of course the price remains as a fundamental factor but increasingly related with the quality creating what these authors named as the quality-price bynomy.

Other authors go beyond the quality and price of goods and services that a destination may offer and focus on what Gilmore and Pine (1999) termed as *'the Experience economy'*. According to them, *'experiences can touch people better than products or services'* (Binkhorst, 2007). One could relate that new type of tourist described by Pavón and Tabales (2010) to the *'new tourist'* of Poon (1993) who wants to be in charge and feel and create something new. Thus, Pine and Gilmore (1999) describe experiences as *'intangible and immaterial and although they tend to be expensive, people attach great value to them because they are memorable'*.

That amalgamation of changes in the demand together with the direct competency of new tourist destinations threatens the current model in the Spanish Mediterranean littoral. In addition to recently exposed, the relationships between tourism and the environment are also essential to understand the situation of the Spanish coasts. The constant alteration of the surrounding environment and landscape especially carried out by the progressive depletion of natural resources characterized by the large urbanization processes and real estate growth, make difficult to furthering the traditional tourist model. Stankovic (1991) states that *'tourism is a specific consumer of the natural resources, due to natural resources constitute the base for the tourist activity development'*, whereas authors as

Krippendorff (1987) even assert that '*tourism destroys everything it touches*'. Areas like Spanish Mediterranean coasts have developed for decades a spontaneous and disordered tourist activity without paying attention to preserve the natural environment. As a result, the destruction of the landscape has been intense and clear in these areas despite being a major factor for tourist development.

It must be highlighted the case of Mallorca, in the Balearic Islands, one of the most important tourist destinations during the last decades and a paradigmatic example of the mass tourist model development based on 'sun and beach' and real state growth. All the issues exposed above are characteristics of the tourist evolution of this Mediterranean destination. The specific case of Platja de Palma has been essential to develop this research due to that destination is facing a maturity stage and there have been some attempts to revert that situation through new strategies and measures fostered from diverse scopes and institutions. Thus, once presented the concepts of Tourist Area Life Cycle and the Transition Management one try to relate them and the focus is put on the Platja de Palma case in order to check whether the new measures and decisions proposed in the last years are indicators of change.

## **1.2 Aim of the research**

Consequently, the objective of this study is to analyze the strategies and measures carried out in mature tourist destination on the Spanish Mediterranean coast, during the last decades, especially in Mallorca, and see if that new strategies can be conceptualized as mechanism for transition in tourism planning and management.

In order to achieve it, the following questions to guide the research are introduced:

- How Mallorca can transform from a mature tourist destination into a new sustainable destination able to face with economic, environmental and social uncertainties?

This main question may be specified in several sub questions:

- How can we define the evolutionary stage in which those destinations based on sun and beach on the Spanish Mediterranean coast are?
- Is there a really need to change the strategies and tourism policies?
- Is the case of Platja de Palma an example of a Transition?

Consequently, the methodology (appendix 1) to underpin the research consists on the discussion of theoretical concepts with the aim of describing the state of maturity of Spanish coastal tourist destinations and the strategies used to revert that situation. Thus, literature review and a study case are the research methods.

### **1.3 Description of the following sections**

In the second section the Spanish tourism background is presented together with the politics, measures and strategies carried out in the last decades colouring a nonlinear development which makes necessary a nonlinear theory. Hence, in the third section a theoretical framework is presented, analyzed and explained in order to help in the research. It is mainly based on the analysis of two concepts: the Tourism Area Life Cycle – model created by Butler (1980) to determine the evolution process of a tourist destinations in several stages throw time- and Transition Management- alternative model based on new environmental governance tenet which seeks to guide the gradual, continuous process of transformation of sociotechnical systems-. The fourth section deals about a study case, the revitalization of the Platja de Palma. The last section is the conclusion and recommendations.

## **2. TOURISM BACKGROUND IN SPAIN**

Among the varied features of touristic attraction in Spain one may point out the climatic and physics characteristics as well as an important cultural and architectural heritage which, in addition to biodiversity and natural spaces, makes the country an attractive setting for visitors from all over the world.

In fact, Spain is the world's leader in tourist offer of sun and beach, as well as the second and thirty-fifth in cultural and natural tourist offer respectively (*The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2011* of the World Economic Forum, 2011). Also, it is essential to enhance the competitiveness in the prices which have generated a constant influx of middle-class tourist from Europe for decades, especially from Central Europe and Nordic countries. Thus, tourism has become the main economic activity, especially on the Mediterranean coasts.

The touristic industry is composed of several sub-industries (hotel industry, recreational spaces...) in addition to other related economic activities (agriculture, transport and communications...). Tourism produces countless jobs which, in spite of involving some impacts at the labor market structure such as temporality or job insecurity, are essential nowadays in the current crisis context with an unemployment rate about twenty-six percent. (INE)

The tourism development experience in Spain has been and is characterized by the massification. Poon (1993) defines mass tourism as '*a phenomenon of large-scale packaging of standardized leisure services at fixed prices for sale to a mass clientele*'. In accordance with Knowles and Curtis, it was the second generation of Mediterranean destinations and particularly those emerged in Spain, which can be synonymous with mass tourism. Today, the mass tourism in Spain keeps its supremacy in spite of the attempts to diversify and differentiate tourism destinations and tourism tips.

### **2.1 An overview of the Mass Tourism development on the Mediterranean**

Tourism, in his incipient form, was born as a wealthy people's fashion in the UK specifically in Bath, where was built the first spa resort towards the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. During the Enlightenment, the upper classes started travelling for cultural reasons, the Grand Tour (Sancho and Buhalis, 1998). Wealthy young Englishmen began taking a post-Oxbridge trek through France and Italy in search of art, culture and the roots of Western civilization (Gross, 2008). That 'fashion' started spreading in other countries and places of Europe. Later, bathing in the sea became also popular and thanks to the development of the railway, some places started to specialize in a primitive sort of tourism. Different destinations across Europe started to attract visitors during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Century. Famous destinations were Bath, Brighton or the Isle of Wight in United Kingdom; Zandvoort in the Netherlands or Biarritz in France. In Spain, the first destinations were formed in Catalonia in the early twentieth century, thus ushering the tourism development on the Spanish Mediterranean coast (Clavé, 2012).

However, after the Second World War tourism began to spread significantly. The development of the car was an important feature to arrive inaccessible places by railway. Clavé (2012) argues that *'tourism went from being a fashion for the elite to being affordable to the industrial working classes who at those times were the majority of the active population in the developed world'*. This provoked a significant impact on the on the Mediterranean coasts.

In Spain, that meant a significant rise in foreigners entering the country. According to Clavé (2012), there were 195,000 foreigners at the start of the 1930s, 1,263,000 in 1951, 55 million in 1988 and almost 58 million in 2012. He states that *'the initial demand for tourism amenities accelerated the supply to attract and satisfy further demand'*. López i Palomeque (1988) distinguished different stages in the development of Spanish tourism between 1950s and 1990s: take-off phase in the 1950s, expansion phase between 1960 and 1974, stagnation phase from 1975 and 1984.

It is also important to pay attention to the political and societal changes in the country during the second part of the last century. After a long dictatorship regime headed by Franco for almost forty years (1939-1975), there was a transition to democracy period when the state moved from the dictatorship of Franco to a restoration of the Spanish Monarchy. This linked to the Constitution of 1978 led to the establishment of a parliamentary constitutional monarchy. Furthermore, after the agreements reached in 1982, the State was composed of seventeen regions –Autonomous Communities with competences in several scopes such as spatial planning, urbanism, environment or tourism planning... which meant a continuous change in the policies related to tourism and spatial planning.

During the dictatorship period, the main target of Spanish authorities –also during most of the second half of the last century- was the growth in tourists. In addition, through tourism, the authorities wanted to show the friendly face of the country, isolated for decades.

The tourism planning was disorder, random and irrational, prioritizing quantity over quality. A good example of that is the 1956 Land Act *'which allowed a highly expansive growth of developed land'* (Oliveras 2012 in Clavé 2012). The lack of planning processes and planning tools led to *'the creation of a great many new towns in coastal areas along which they extended in their entirety without remedy'* (Alomar, 1975). This supposed a loss in the quality of the urban pattern and the destruction of natural landscapes, resources, and values.

In this respect Clavé (2012) considers that during the period of maximum growth in tourism *'the planning carried out by many of the municipalities on the Spanish coast solely concerned growth, increasing the number of inhabitants, the number of tourist and holidaymakers and especially building and more building'*. A continuous pressure in the demand, the accessibility to virgin natural resources and a strategy based on increasing construction were the most characteristic patterns of tourism planning (Exceltur, 2007).

In this phase, known as *tourist boom*, it is possible to differentiate two main destinations, planning models, the concentrated upwards model of Benidorm steered by the tourism entrepreneurship and the extensive model of Torrevieja where the protagonist was taken by the property developers. Moreover, Clavé (2012) points out other model followed in Mallorca '*constituted on a strong increase in the demand for tourist accommodation, accompanied by strong growth in the hotel and second residence sectors for tourists which led to the building wall of concrete and bricks right on the coast of some of the most interesting sites*'.

That first boom in tourism was followed by another two 'booms' during the periods 1981-1988 and 1991-2004, which had a great impact in the city and the island because of the '*strong increase in the edification of constructions others than hotels and by making the alarm bells ring due to the degradation and loss of the value of the areas environment and the landscape, with the corresponding loss of tourism quality*' (Salamanca 1999, Artigues et al. 2006, in Clavé 2012).

For instance in Cataluña, similarly to the rest of the Mediterranean coast, the tourism development was forceful, even with more influence of the Spanish visitors and with a marked importance of the second residences –very typical in the north of Cataluña, Costa Brava. As a result, the number of second residences grew considerably in the period 1961-1991, from 39,927 to 806,500 residences; most of them were located in coastal districts. Clavé (2012) states that in Cataluña the tourism development '*was especially intensive [...], because the coast already had large population nuclei and industrial zones, and more particularly due to the affluence of summer holidaymakers*'.

However in the 1990s, the trends started to change. From academic and institutional scopes began to warn about the lack of tourism and spatial planning plans and tools. Thanks to different documents and conferences such as the Manila Declaration on World Tourism 1980, the 1989 Hague Declaration on tourism, the Rio Summit 1992 etc. one may argue that '*the vision of urban development and expansion that had dominated the development of the coastal tourist municipalities came into confrontation with another that revitalized the landscape and favored the domination of qualitative over quantitative*' (Oliveras, 2012). This linked to the entrance of Spain in the 1986 in the European Union supposed an important fact to start paying attention to the new regulations, guidelines and recommendations from Brussels -more in line with heritage and environmental preservation and sustainable development. Besides, the Autonomous regions started to provide urban, spatial and environmental acts and regulations.

Nevertheless, the tourism expansion and its related urban spread have not stopped in the last two decades. Illuminating evidence about that are the property bubble and the massive development of tourist infrastructure and accommodations in the early 21st century till the deep economic crisis that began in 2008 and which still lingers.

## 2.2 Tourism Policies and strategies in Spain

The engagement of the different government (even no democratic governments) with the tourism industry goes back more than a century. At first glance, it is possible to distinguish two stages.

A first period featured by expansive tourist policies, from the postwar period to the mid-seventies. The growth in this period is amazing. In the beginning, everything is steered from the Central Government and the focus is on quantitative growth. It must be noted the creation in 1951 of the Ministry of Information and Tourism (it was the first time Tourism had its own ministry), the Land Act –with a great impact on tourism development- of 1957. According to Lara (2013) there were some important milestones in the sixties. In 1962 was created the Subsecretary of Tourism and in 1963 two significative laws were enacted: the Law on Centres and National Tourist Areas of aimed to the zoning and management of tourist areas and to the external promotion of Spanish tourism; and the Law of Competences which is considered the origin of the tourism legislation in Spain. However, The tourism development went hand in hand with the *desarrollismo* paradigm -developmentalism paradigm- which resulted in the submission of the tourism and spatial planning for economic growth. Moreover, Bayon et al. (1999) points out the ineffectiveness of these laws because of the juxtaposition of jurisdictions with the Ministry of Housing and the Land Act of 1957.

In 1974 was enacted the Decree on Management Measures of tourism supply with the objective of limiting tourism growth –in a timid way- and provide infrastructure to the destinations (Lara, 2013). Therefore, the first signs of the *desarrollismo* period end started. It was mainly due to the international Oil Crisis (1973) and the oversupply of tourist accommodation in the Spanish coastal destinations.

After the *desarrollismo* period and because of the crisis the criteria in tourism development and policies started changing. Moreover, this second period is featured by the transfer to the Autonomous Communities for the tourist promotion, managing and planning and by the cooperation among administrations (State, regions and local institutions). In this phase the aim was to coordinate the roles and performances of tourism ‘agents’ and to shape the new policies of differentiation of the Spanish tourist supply in accordance to attributes such as quality, sustainability, knowledge and innovation. Thus, in 1990 was published the White Book of Spanish Tourism that constituted the starting point of the tourism debate and its strategic vision for the future (Monteserín, 2009).

In order to fulfill that strategic vision and achieve the attributes of quality or sustainability, several plans were launched through a new comprehensive framework for action in tourist policy: The Competitiveness Framework Plan of Tourism in Spain. Those plans supposed a change in the analysis, definition and implementation of the tourist strategies (Clavé 2012):

- FUTURES I; *Plan Marco de la competitividad del Turismo Español 1992-1995*: The State's General Administration and the Autonomous Communities –regions- carried out various measures to consolidate the tourism as one of the main pillars of the Spanish economy. The strategies of FUTURES I draw the first communication networks between agents with special emphasis on public-private partnerships (PPP).

- FUTURES II; *Plan Marco de la competitividad del Turismo Español 1996-1999*: Towards a 'new model', sustainability and sustainable development are the guiding principles and terms such as coordination, engagement, sensibilisation and co-responsibility became fundamental.

- PICTE; *Plan Integral de calidad del Turismo Español*: due to the deterioration image of Spanish tourism during the 80s and 90s the PICTE aims to continue with the objectives of the FUTURES I and II plans and at the same time work in accordance with the EU guidelines. Quality is then the guiding principle and comprehensiveness is also a key concept. Quality is searched not only in the measures and policies from governmental institutions but also in the performance of the entrepreneurial sector, in the destination management and in the application and implementation of the sustainability criteria.

Despite the good intentions regularly expressed in these plans of the new framework, some authors as Brunet (2005) state that, as in the rest of the previous plans, the FUTURES I and II and the PICTE attend only to economic profitability and have a residual treatment of the environmental and social variables.

In the last years, there has been a new awareness about the tourism of the future. The economic crisis has highlighted the importance of tourism as the main economic activity in Spain and consequently the necessity to take care of the model and its development. In 2006, the Secretary of Tourism launched the Spanish Tourism Plan Horizon 2020 for the period 2008-2012 with the aim of renovating the mature tourist destinations and working with future scenarios. As a consequence of the economic crisis, there has been a necessity to speed up the plans in order to achieve the objectives and in 2008 the Council of Ministers approved the '21<sup>st</sup> Century Coastal Tourism Plan'. According to the Ministry for Industry, Tourism and Trade this plan 'is committed to promoting a National Strategy to revamp mature tourism destinations (...) specially those in Mallorca, Canary Island and Costa del Sol'.

With regard to the policies and strategies from a smaller scale –regional and local- and during the last thirty years there have been several restructuration and or reorientation strategies in a great number of destinations. According to Pavón and Tabales (2010) it is possible to distinguish three types of policies:

- 1) Those concerned with the renovation of destinations and tourist establishments during the 1980s featured by functional and formal improvement of the destinations and aimed to modernize and enhance the quality of the accommodations and the tourist supply.

2) From 1990 to mid-1990s the policies focus on the diversification of the destinations supply paying special attention to create new leisure products (golf, water parks etc.) Paradigmatic examples of this are Portaventura (Tarragona) or Marina D'or (Castellón).

3) Since mid-1990s, the strategy focuses on sustainability. However, the use of the concept is often more rhetorical than empirical. Therefore, the implemented initiatives have a limited outreach. Pavón and Tabales point out in these stage two kinds of measures: Possibilistic measures aimed to the protection and diffusion of natural and cultural heritage (Agenda Local 21, EMAS, ISO 14001) and other more coercive measures from the European Union scope.

In general terms, Spanish Mediterranean destinations have reacted in different ways to these measures and strategies, but in most of them there have been the same patterns during the last decades. In spite of the continuous arrival of visitors –both national and foreign- and the growing importance of the tourism in our country, it is possible to state that most of the characteristic destinations based on sun and beach and with a massified product are in a mature stage -stagnation and post stagnation phase according to Butler (1980)- and in an ongoing process of renovation, differentiation...

Ivars (2003) states that the final objective sought by the destinations -following these renovation and reorientation initiatives- is the repositioning of coastal destinations. However, one thing is the official discourse and quite another are the strategies carried out in most of the destinations in order to continue growing quantitatively or to maintain the market share in a context marked by uncertainty and changes (detailed above in the introduction). Some authors ask for deep structural changes in the tourist sector and policies (López i Palomeque 1999, Ivars 2003, Clavé 2004 and 2012).

A clear evidence about the remain and intensification of the traditional tourist model of Spanish Mediterranean coasts is the '*artificialisation*' (Pavón and Tabales, 2010) of the littoral because of the intensive and fast urbanization processes.

According to Rebollo et al. (2011) during the last years the academic and political arenas have put a lot of effort in changing these patterns through new instruments for the renovation of those matured destinations. In the table below one may see the different strategies and measures adopted to cope with the stagnation or maturity of the destinations, both from general terms and specific area of destinations. It is remarkable the effort put from different institutions, but the current socioeconomic crisis situation makes difficult implementing in an accurate and efficient manner these strategies. Moreover, it is quite hard to add these strategies for some destinations because despite that most of the destinations dealt have similar characteristics, the context and the cases are different in each case. In fact, it is possible to find cases where the renovation strategies, policies and measures carried out have been really useful (Clavé 2012) such as in Vila-Seca and Barcelona (Catalonia), Tenerife (Canary Islands) or some measures taken in Benidorm (Valencian Community). In order to review one of those strategies pointed out by and Rebollo et al. (2011), the focus of this study is put on the plan carried out in Platja de Palma during the last years.

*Instruments of the Spanish tourist policy for the renovation of mature destinations*

<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	<b>HORIZON 2020 SPANISH TOURISM PLAN TO REASSESS MATURE TOURIST DESTINATIONS</b>		<b>2007</b>
<b>SPECIFIC REGULATION</b>	Royal Decree 1916/2008 of 21 November regulating the modernization of mature destinations. It regulates the financing awarded to improve destinations from the point of view of the entrepreneurs		<b>2008</b>
<b>EXECUTIVE: SPECIFIC MEASURES</b>	<b>ENTREPRENEURIAL FIELD</b>	<b>RENEWAL PROGRAMME.</b> Line of funding in collaboration with the ICO in order to reform or rehabilitate tourism companies.	<b>2009</b>
		<b>FUTURE PROGRAMME.</b> Line of funding to foment energy efficiency in tourist facilities.	<b>2009</b>
	<b>AREA OF DESTINATIONS</b>	State Financial Fund for the modernization of tourism infrastructures (FOMIT) for access to the financing of mature destinations that wish to develop project in the framework of a global integral reconversion or modernization plan	<b>2008</b>
		Complementary aid to Tourism Development Plans	<b>2008</b>
		Special projects to reassess mature destinations Playa de Palma (Balearic Islands), Western Costa del Sol (Andalusia) and San Batolomé de Tirajana (Canary Islands)	
<b>STRATEGIC PLANNING</b>	<b>COASTAL TOURISM FOR THE 21 ST CENTURY</b>		<b>2011</b>

Source: Clavé 2012

### **2.3 Brief conclusions**

The tourist development in Spain has been spectacular during the last decades. Both in terms of supply and in terms of demand. Therefore, sun and beach tourism has usually maintained a positive evolution with regards to inbound tourism and revenues, but there is a clear dependence of the international socioeconomic context. The coastal tourist destinations have experienced a constant expansion from the first tourist boom in the sixties, but it has always been hand in hand with the urban sprawl and with a disorder planning and management. However, it is remarkable the improvements in that sense thanks to the adhesion to EU and to the legislation done from the region's institutions and even from the own destinations during the last years. Sustainability, restoration and renovation processes have been launched and sometimes successfully implemented which supposes positive news. Nevertheless, the results have been dissimilar and a lot of efforts have to be put on the future, even more with the current economic crisis.

### **3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

The aim in this chapter is to underpin the theoretical basis for the research. Most of the insights used to develop this study are derived from the literature dealing with the Tourist Area Life Cycle by Butler (1980) and the Transition Management by (Rotmans Loorbach). Thus, it is necessary to explain, discuss and connect those two theories as well as other concepts such as governance, sustainable development or carrying capacity.

The need for a change in tourism planning, mainly at the level of tourist destinations, is a need in several mature tourist destinations. The application of the Tourism Area Life Cycle is an effective tool for analyzing the state of some destinations and for having insights about the actions, measures and strategies to do, in order to revert several problems and issues in those mature or stagnated destinations. Thus, one may try to conceptualize those transformation dynamics as a transition, understanding it as a reorientation or revitalization of mature tourist destinations with a long term perspective based on concepts such as sustainable development or governance.

#### **3.1 The Tourist Area Life Cycle**

It is possible to find different theories that pretend to explain the dynamic of the tourist destinations. There are reference models like Butler's Tourist Area Life Cycle (1980), which allows identifying the different evolution stages or more deterministic approaches suggesting the irreversible decline of sun and beach destinations in the Spanish coast (Knowles and Curtis, 1999). In this study, the main reference to describe the trajectory and the situation of a tourist destination is the Tourist Area Life Cycle.

Butler (24:1980) states that tourist destinations are dynamic, *'they evolve and change over time'*. He argues that evolution *'is brought about by a variety of factors including changes in the preferences and needs of visitors, the gradual deterioration and possible replacement of physical plant and facilities, and the change (even disappearance) of the original and cultural attractions which were responsible for the initial popularity of the area'*

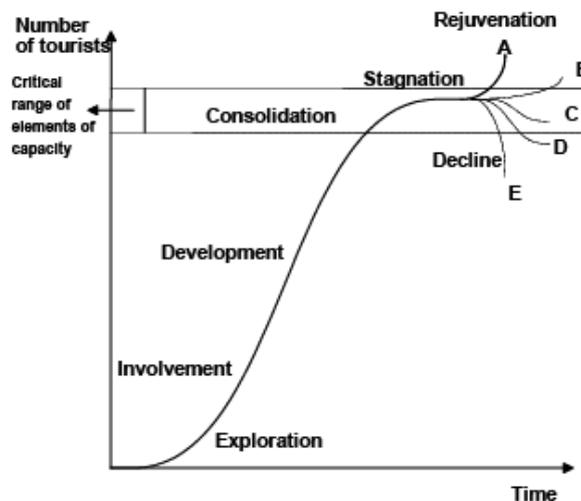
The Tourism Area Life Cycle allows describing and analyzing the evolutionary processes which come about in a destination, and attempting to forecast its future evolution. This model is based on the product life cycle (Vernon 1966) and it conceptualizes tourist destinations as products following a similar developmental pattern.

Butler distinguishes various stages or phases in time which are defined by the number of visitors, the services supply or the infrastructures in the destination. The stages are exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation and post-stagnation (at this stage the dynamic may be positive -rejuvenation- or negative -decline-).

- In the *exploration phase*, visitors do not travel through tour operators nor travel agencies. It is a kind of adventurous traveller who plans his trip autonomously. In fact, local services and infrastructure barely exist at the destination and the visitor

is in constant contact with the local residents. The physical and social environment remains unaltered.

- Gradually, the destination begins to evolve and moves to the *involvement stage* in which local residents start to provide services to tourists. Butler points out that in this phase it is possible to define a basic and incipient market for the visitors and the physical and social structure of the destination change with the construction of primary infrastructures as well. According to Perez (2012), Spain as destination went through this phase between the Civil War and the tourist boom in the 1960s.
- Once the destination offers a tourist product well defined and advertised and the local residents lose weight in the participation of tourists and services supply, the destination is within the *development phase*. At this stage, the physical and social environmental characteristics change notably and it will be necessary the public intervention at different levels. One may see this at the national level with the creation of the Ministry of Information and Tourism and, at the province level, the so-called *Patronato Provincial de Turismo* (Pérez, 2012). Moreover, the population of the destination increases during the tourist season due to the arrival of visitors, but also because national immigration becomes a fact because of the need to cover the new job vacancies of the tourist industry. Tour operators, travel agencies, and international hotel clusters will dominate a great portion of the market and the number of accommodations will increase considerably.
- Subsequently, in the *consolidation stage* the economy of the destination revolves around tourism. Marketing strategies are enhanced with the aim to expand the tourist season. The local residents in this stage start showing some signs of discomfort, especially those who do not participate or benefit from the tourism industry.



Source: Butler 1980

- Finally, in the *stagnation phase* the number of visitors in a destination reaches the maximum quote and the carrying capacity may be over passed. The results of this factor are usually environmental and socioeconomic problems.

It is important to point out what is the Tourism Carrying Capacity (TCC). According to Chamberlain (1997) it is *'the level of human activity an area can accommodate without the area deteriorating, the resident community being adversely affected or quality of visitors experience declining'*, whilst the WTO defines TCC as *'the maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time, without causing destruction of the physical, economic, socio-cultural environmental and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors satisfaction'*. Hence, this term can be related to the life cycle because when the TCC is overpassed in a destination it means that this destination is in a stagnation phase and measures should be taken to avoid and solve different problems that can arise.

Consequently, as Hernandez and Talavera (2010) warn, if measures are not taken in the stagnation phase the decline stage could become a fact. They consider that it is possible to talk about decline when a destination suffers a loss in the market share (defined in terms of revenue, not in terms of units) because of the inability to compete with other destinations. When this happens the consequences are negative for the destinations, resulting in a loss of quality due to lower ability to attract visitors which may affect the number of tourists and the reduction in tourist spending, employment and investment.

After explaining the different stages in the Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle, one can identify those stagnated destinations as mature. Maturity constitutes the critical phase *'from which a destination can move towards decline, but can also reorient itself towards reinvention, through restructuring, renovation and reassessment'* (Ivars 2003).

According to Agarwal (2002) the decline is the result of the interaction between internal and external factors. External factors increase the market competitiveness and internal factors decrease destination competitiveness. Also, she recommends adding a reorientation stage between stagnation and post-stagnation due to the total decline of a destination is unlikely. From an economic and political perspective, a total decline would be unacceptable. That stage consists in the reorientation of the tourist attractions, the reevaluation of environmental aspects and repositioning the tourist destination in the market.

An issue about the decline in a tourist destination is that it may be unnoticeable because it apparently remains in a long mature stage thanks to the actions carried out to keep the number of tourists (lower prices and a great deal of new offers) but without paying attention to other aspects related to the quality.

Butler (1980) relates massification and carrying capacity to decline as a consequence of the internal factors of the destination. The internal factors, habits, preferences, investments etc. would be those that generate inertia and local effects whilst the external factor, attitudes, technologies, politics and economy, would be those that generate

dynamism and global effects. Thus, the author argues that the main cause of the decline in a tourism destination is overcome carrying capacity.

However, it is difficult to define exactly when the carrying capacity is exceeded. With regard to the arrival of tourists, it can be understood that a decrease in the number of tourists is a clear decline feature, nevertheless there may be destinations where the number of tourists is growing but still, the decline is a fact. Also, attention should be paid to the interannual rates of tourist arrivals. Only with the number of arrivals is not possible determining whether it has exceeded the carrying capacity. Environmental and sociocultural differences, as well as the various kinds of tourist, make the carrying capacity which a destination can withstand be different (Diedrich et al. 2009; Soares et al., 2012).

In this respect, the European Commission proposes in a publication a new definition of tourist destination in decline: '*Destinations with a certain tradition in providing tourism, but characterized by one or more negative trends*' (Early warning system for identifying declining tourist destinations, and preventive best practices, 2004). Those signals are the decrease in the number of visitors, the loss of own characteristics and singular elements, lack of sustainability and other external factors such as political crisis, economic crisis, competitors, etc. This publication also integrates the concept of sustainability and points out that decline cannot be analyzed in terms of the decrease in the number of visitors or economic benefits, but in more subjective aspects.

López et al. (2010) summarize the options that a destination in decline has:

1. Do nothing and face a continuous decline.
2. Continue with the same product but seeking new markets.
3. Modify some or all the products in order to continue with tourism activity but perhaps at a lower level.
4. Drastically change the image and the product with the aim to attract a new market.
5. Leave the tourist activity.
6. Rethink and focus on different market niches.
7. Reconvert toward another form of tourism or radically change the nature of the tourist activity and the market.
8. Reconvert partially the supply for other uses.

Except the first and the sixth options, the others imply different transformative actions – innovation, segmentation, new marketing ideas, changing the product...- which can be more or less radical but with the aim of maintaining some tourist activity. Usually, authors (Vera et al., 1997; Agarwal 1997, Ivars 1999) state that Butler's model is sometimes too descriptive and deterministic because it is quite schematic, but according to Ivars (1999) it '*is a good framework to explain the evolution of tourist areas*'.

Notwithstanding, there are problems to apply the Butler's Tourist Area Life Cycle model. Even more in this study in which the analysis is sometimes huge and generalist, and also it is referred to a big area –the Spanish Mediterranean coast-. In addition, different areas

are taken into account, from Catalonia to Andalucía including the Balearic Islands and Canary Islands which despite not being in the Mediterranean but in the Atlantic, the tourist development has similar patterns and tourist products -sun and beach- and it is primarily based on mass tourism (Hernandez and Talavera, 2010).

Therefore, as Hernandez and Talavera (2010) argue *'it is not easy to define clearly in what stage of the Tourist Area Life Cycle is the Spanish Mediterranean coast as a tourist destination'*. It is difficult to identify the beginning and the end of the different stages if it is not *a posteriori* or as Priestley and Mundet (1998) say *'post-facto'*. Another difficulty of using the TALC is the quantification of the accommodation supply due to the contradictions between the statistics from different organizations or institutions. Besides, Hernandez and Talavera (2010) referring to Canary Island –but comparable to other areas - point out the possibility of finding different trends or dynamics in the same area, region or even municipality. Thus, these areas may have arisen or hatched at various times of tourism development. To conclude with these problems and also recognized by Butler (1980), there could coexist various cycles in the same destination and each of them may present a different evolutive stage.

In spite of these problems and constraints related to Butler's Tourist Area Life Cycle, it is possible to state that most of the tourist areas and destinations on Spanish littoral (those based on mass tourism and sun and beach as main product) are in a maturity stage that in the Butler's model would be between stagnation and post-stagnation stage.

A great deal of the most traditional littoral destinations in Spain belongs to the second generation of Knowles and Curtis (1999) classification, those which offer the product of sun and beach massified, typical of the Fordism production and featured by their low differentiation and standardization. These authors state that these kinds of destinations which emerged in the 1960s usually tend to a dramatic decline and a shorter evolutionary life cycle compared with other kind of tourist destinations based in other type of tourism. In order to avoid that decline, some destinations have adapted themselves during the last decades in varied ways but always with the same product, sun and beach. Nevertheless *'sun and beach remain as the main motivation for European tourist'* (Rebollo et al., 2011).

With respect to the adaptation processes carried out by stakeholders in the last decade of the 20th century and the early 21st century Clavé (2012) distinguishes three types of destinations: *reactive, creative and transitive*.

Good examples are destinations such as Calvià (Mallorca) or Benidorm (Alicante) which would be reactive destinations because they *'have adopted measures of adjustment fundamentally aimed at maintaining the activity'*, whilst creative destinations -for instance Sitges and L'Estartit (Gerona) - *'have proposed new development strategies based on the innovation generated by new products aiming to capture new visitors'* (Clavé 2012). The third kind would be destinations such as Benicàssim (Castellón) and Fuengirola (Málaga), which have adapted their strategy to the proactive promotion of new residential functions.

In subsequent chapters those changes, measures and strategies would be dealt in depth, overall those happened in the last decades in Spain, and especially in Mallorca.

### 3.2 Transition Management

Society nowadays faces different problems which do not have a clear solution and cannot be solved with traditional approaches. Loorbach (2010) considers that *'modern industrialized societies are confronted with many complex and unstructured problems for which long-term solution strategies need to be developed at the level of the society'* whilst other authors call such problems as *'persistent problems'*. Dirven et al. (2002, in Loorbach 2007) argue that these persistent problems are characterized by an unstructured way of involving stakeholders and a high level of complexity. They are surrounded by fundamental uncertainties and rooted in our societal structures and institutions. In the same line, Loorbach (2010) states that persistent problems are *'rooted in different societal domains, occur on varying levels and involve various actors with dissimilar perspectives, norms and values'*. According to Loorbach (2007) *'solution to such problems are not given and purely analytical approaches will not suffice'*. In order to deal with persistent problems, there is a need for societal structural changes, connected changes which reinforce each other in different social scopes and levels –or, in other words, a transition.

Rotmans et al. (2001) portray a transition as *'a long-term process of change during which a society or a subsystem of society fundamentally changes'*. Hence, the transition management approach has surged as a path to deal with problems embedded at the societal level and with the aim of doing it following new governance strategies aimed to sustainable development; and therefore breaking through the existing routines, ways of thinking and –sometimes-inflexible structures and institutions.

In the last decades, one may witness the strong emergence of concepts such as governance and sustainable development. Consequently, one has to give an insight about those notions in order to conceptualize and understand the transitions detailed in this study.

#### 3.2.1 Concepts related to Transition Management

In order to facilitate the research, it is important to give an insight about some concepts related to Transition management.

Governance is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as *'the manner of governing a state, organization, etc...'* According to Healey (2006) the term is often used in Europe to describe a *'particular transformation, from modes of government associated with a bureaucratized welfare state focused on universal service delivery to the more entrepreneurial modes of governance'*. Moreover, Loorbach (2007) refers to governance as the *'practice of government in making policy'* featured by the *'interaction with a diversity of societal actors'*.

Thereupon, one might point out that governance is the manner of governing or steer society and spaces in a specific way, taking into account multiple actors or stakeholders

at different levels and paying attention to the interactions and networks among those societal actors. Governance *'is not a new term'* (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Stoker (1998) states that in the political sciences scope the term governance has been used frequently as a synonym for government. However there has been a movement from government to governance. He defines governance as *'the emergence of governing styles in which the boundaries between and within public and private sectors have blurred'*.

There are different points of view about governance. It depends on the field of research, but many scholars from different scopes share some agreements: it is associated with a decline in central government's ability to steer society; the increasing relevance of multi-level government structures as the EU has been fundamental for the spread of new modes of governance (Jordan, Wurzel and Zito, 2005); governance emphasizes self-organizing and coordinating a network of societal actors (Scot and Jordan, 2005).

For Jänicke and Jörgens (2006) governance *'is an umbrella term for diverse forms of state and non-state political control exercised today at various policy levels against a backdrop of growing complexity in actor structures and the operating environment'*.

In the last years, there has been a shift away, from a perspective of object-oriented governance towards a vision in which intersubjectivity and participation are important factors. The top-down manner of steer society embedded for a long time in our societies is over in many aspects in some countries such as the Netherlands, UK, or Belgium. That way of governing a society has been challenged by other manners or perspectives which focus on horizontal and bottom-up strategies, and more important by the relations and flows between actors and levels.

With regard to sustainable development, it became popular after the Brundtland Commission (also known as *Our Common Future*, from the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development) as *'the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'*. Sustainable development may be divided conceptually in three interrelated dimensions: environment, economic and social. It means addressing at the same time economic prosperity, environmental quality and social equity.

Richardson (1997) argues that it was not invented but promoted in the Brundtland Commission and also states that it is *'sufficiently vague to allow conflicting parties, factions and interests to adhere to it without losing credibility'*.

Sustainable development is what De Roo (2012) calls a *'fuzzy concept'*. It is a diffuse, fuzzy or fluid concept *'accepted by many and recurrent in policy documents and plans but it often remains unclear how to achieve in practice'*. According to Loorbach (2007) *'sustainable development becomes rather complex when ones tries to operationalize it in terms of governance strategies'*.



Source: <http://www.conceptdraw.com/examples/venn-diagram>

Thus Jordan (2008) notes that *'the more effort society has put into developing more sustainably, the more clearly it has started to comprehend the full complexity of the task'*.

The ambiguity of the concept has positive things as well as negative consequences. On the one hand, the fact that sustainable development is an ambiguous or fuzzy concept is positive due to it is difficult to oppose to it. For instance Hajer (1995) and Jordan (2008) warn that once the term would have a clear and straightforward definition, *'the coalition for sustainable development would collapse'*. On the other hand, one may point out negative things about the fuzziness of the concept because it may become into mere rhetoric.

It is not an easy task to understand the concept. Creedy and Zuidema (2011) take into consideration the vagueness of sustainable development and sustainability. They say that the notion only covers a *'core of understanding'* but *once this core of understanding gets taken apart, a whole array of different interests an interpretations gets uncovered'*.

Loorbach and Rotmans (2007) argue that due to sustainable development is inherently a normative, ambiguous and subjective notion, a practical implementation of sustainable development has to incorporate the intrinsic conflicts between the values, interest and goals of many stakeholders.

In the above figure, one may see the typical graphic representation of sustainable development based on a set diagram that shows a balanced relation between the social, environmental and economic parts of sustainable development.

Once presented above two important concepts related to this study one may talk about Transitions. Transition management is a governance approach based on the insights from governance and complex system theory. Complex system theory understands the environment and the society as inherently complex and subject to uncertainties and always changing. The Transition management emerged in the last decade as a new model of *'governance approach for sustainable development'* (Loorbach 2010). This approach has been taken seriously in The Netherlands or UK in different scopes such as energy or

water management. Rotmans et al., (2001) define a transition ‘as a gradual, continuous process of structural changes within a society or culture’. They state that a transition is the result of ‘developments in different domains, a set of connected changes, which reinforce each other but take place in several areas such as technology, ecology, institutions, behaviors culture and belief systems’.

Thus, one may summarize in a simplistic manner that a transition is a process of structural change of society or a society subsystem. Loorbach and Rotmans (2007) start defining the concept of transition as a ‘shift in a system from one dynamic equilibrium to another equilibrium’. They consider that the process of change in a transition is ‘highly non-linear’ and that the ‘underlying mechanism is co-evolution’ due to several subsystem co-evolve with each other.

The change is applicable to any societal system such as water management, energy supply or tourism. Loorbach (2010) argues that transitions ‘come about when the dominant structures in society (regimes) are under pressure by external changes in society, as well as endogenous innovation’. A transition can be influenced, accelerated or even facilitate by extreme events such as wars, crisis etc. This kind of events is called by other authors as a ‘window of opportunity’ (Huitema and Meijerink, 2010). In this respect Loorbach (2007) states that ‘crises are small periods during which relatively big changes occur’.

In spite of each transition is unique in terms of content and context, Kemp and Rotmans (2004) points out that there are two kinds of transitions: evolutionary -not planned- and goal-oriented. For example, an evolutionary transition could be the transition from sailing ships to steam boats (Geels 2002; Geels and Schot, 2007) or from the horse carriage to the car. A goal oriented transition example could be the transitions in energy or water management carried out during the last years.

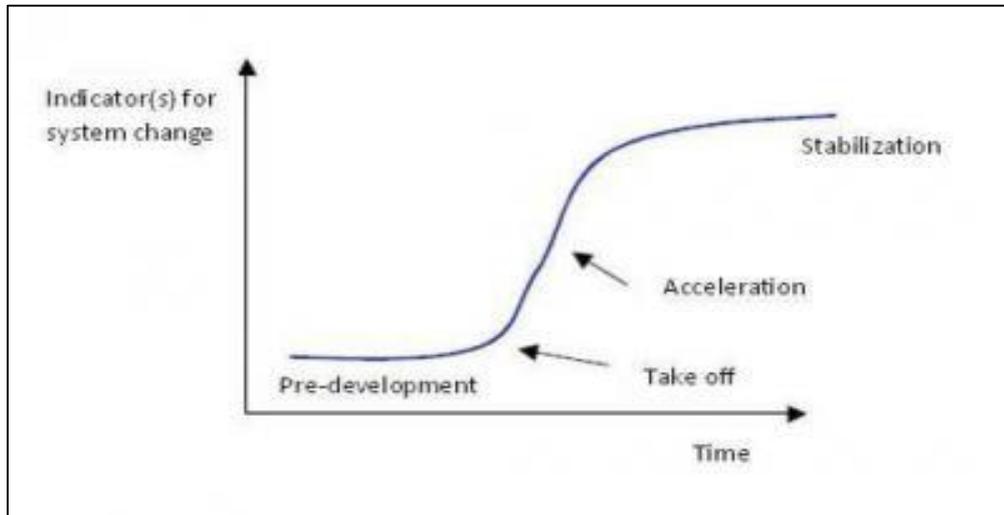
There are two basic concepts useful to analyze transitions, Kemp, Rotmans and Loorbach (2007) referred to them as the two key concepts of the transition framework which are the multilevel model and the motives or S-curve model (Rotmans, Kemp, and van Asselt, 2001)

### 3.2.2 The multiphase or S-curve model

In a transition it is possible to distinguish different phases developed in the multiphase concept or S-curve model ‘typical for innovation studies’ (Loorbach 2010) and which show that transition paths are non-linear. The stages are:

- A predevelopment phase of dynamic equilibrium where changes are not visible yet and the status quo remains.
- A take-off phase where change starts being noticeable
- An acceleration phase where structural changes are clear and the speed of change is important
- A stabilization phase where the system has reached a new equilibrium system.

The multi-phase or S-curve model



Source: Rotmans et al. (2001)

Thus, one must point out that the speed and acceleration of the transition or change is a matter of importance as well as the size. Rotmans et al (2001) state that the '*different social processes come into play during the various phases [...] and fundamental changes do not necessarily occur in all the domains at the same time*'. Nevertheless, they argue that the concept of speed and acceleration are relative because a transition is an on-going and long process where there could be periods of slow and fast developments.

Besides, they come to the conclusion that normally a transition has three system dimensions: the speed, the size of the change and the time period of change. That '*implies thinking in terms of stocks and flows*' (Rotmans et al. 2010). Stocks are attributes of a complex system that change relatively slowly over a long period of time, whilst flows are aspects that change relatively quickly in the short term and reveal relationships between stocks. Hence a transition is the result of long-term developments in stocks and short-term developments in flows.

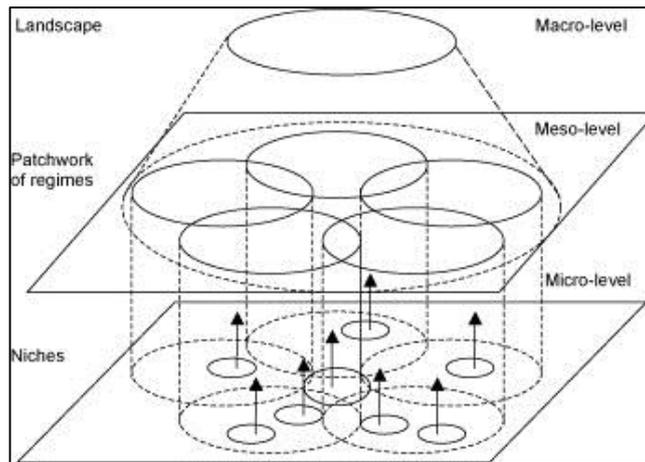
### 3.2.3 The multi-level concept

The multi-level concept describes a transition in terms of different scale dynamics, which are interlinked (Geels and Kemp, 2000; Rip and Kemp, 1998; Loorbach and Rotmans, 2007). A transition takes place at different levels: micro, meso and macro. Rip and Kemp (1998) use the concepts of niches, regimes and socio-technical landscape. In a transition it is possible to '*distinguish between innovations in niches, a dominant regime and an external landscape*' (Loorbach 2010).

The socio-technical landscape corresponds to the macro level and relates to political culture, coalitions, social values, natural environment, etc. involving diverse factors such

as political coalitions, financial markets, wars, climate events, demographic movements...Moreover, It is '*determined by slow changes in society*' (Loorbach and Rotmans, 2007).

The regime corresponds to the meso - level and relates to dominant practices, social norms, rules and shared assumptions. Geels (2002) argues that the regime is shaped by a set of organizational routines. The niches correspond to the micro level and relates to individual actors, local practices and technologies. At the micro level is where radical changes occur due to it is easier to innovate and experiment than in the others levels.



Source: Loorbach (2010)

### 3.2.4 The Transition management model

Transition management has become widespread in the last decade as a new approach to tackle complex societal problems as well as to find the ways to achieve it. Loorbach (2007) points out that '*transition management for sustainable development is in essence more an idea than an empirical fact or a hypothesis that can be empirically tested and validated*'. In addition, it is worth to point out that more than a revolution, a transition is an evolution. A transition management is a reflexive process characterized by adaptation, learning and anticipation (Rotmans et al 2001). As a result, Loorbach (2010) asserts that societal change is a reflexive process of searching, learning and experimenting.

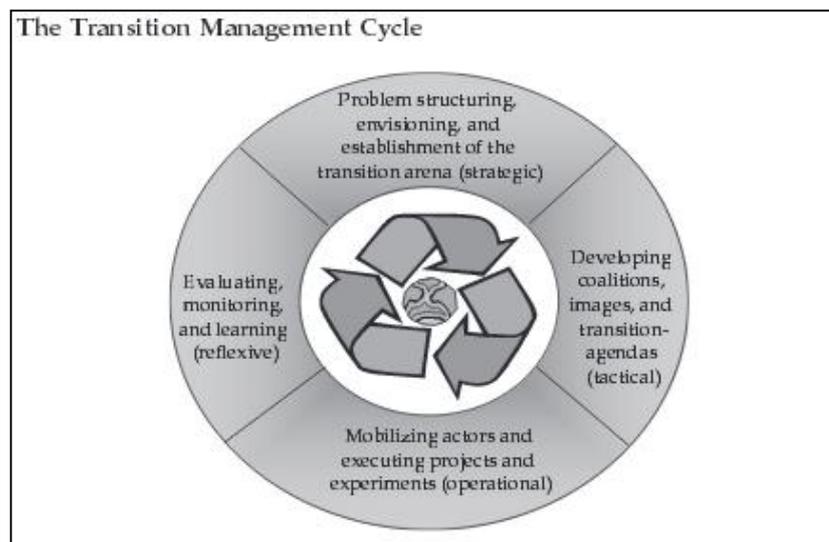
According to Loorbach (2010) transition management is a governance approach which offers a '*prescriptive approach towards governance as a basis for operational policy models and it is a normative model by taking sustainable development as a long-term goal*'.

Loorbach (2010) recognizes four different types of activities for transition management: strategic, tactical, operational and reflexive.

- He identifies strategic activities as processes of vision developments, long-term objectives and anticipation, strategic discussion.... Those activities have to be carried out at different scopes because it is quite difficult to talk about long-term objectives and goals within the political realm, for that reason different

stakeholders and individuals from inside and outside the political scope must try to institutionalize long term visions.

- As tactical he identifies steering activities that are related to the dominant structures or regime such as established patterns and structures –rules, regulations, institutions, networks, infrastructure- this includes actions such as negotiations, planning and control, financial support...
- Operational activities would be those related to experiments and actions short-term oriented, in other words, practices that operationalize new structures, ways of thinking or routines. Thus, innovation is essential.
- Reflexive activities relate to monitoring, assessments and evaluation of ongoing policies and ongoing societal change.



Source: Loorbach (2010)

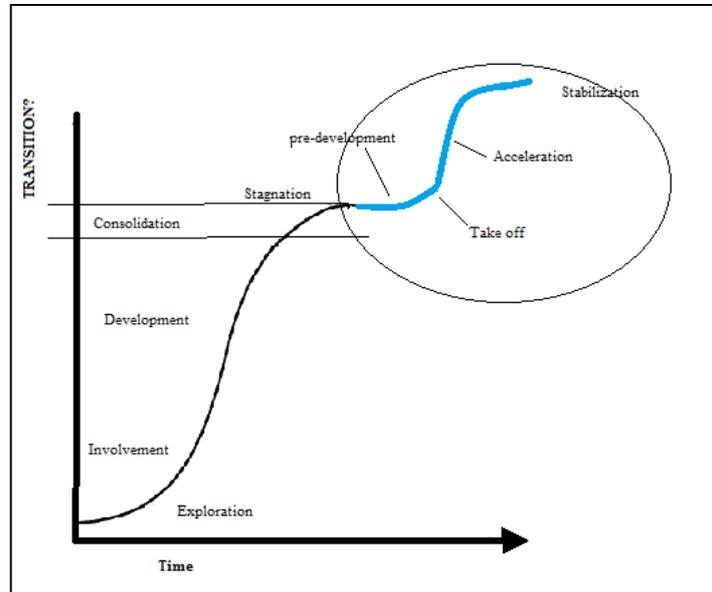
Loorbach (2010) captures those ‘systemic instruments in a cyclical process model as a basis for implementing the transition management approach’, the so-called Transition Management Cycle

As one may appreciate in the above figure of the Transition Management Cycle, it consists in a process based on adaptation and anticipation, continuous learning processes and monitoring. The first step is to achieve a common vision of the problem, which brings the development of long-term goals and the transition agenda. This is followed by the execution of experiments and projects aimed to system innovation and after that, there is a process of checking and learning.

### 3.3 The link between TALC and Transition Management

Both Tourist Area Life Cycle and Transition management approach –the multi-phase concept concretely- can be shaped and represented by an S-curve. In this study, the aim is to integrate in the TALC the multi-phase concept. In other words, one tries to

conceptualize or see those strategies and policies of renovation, restoration, repositioning, etc. so as to avoid the decline and characterizes the strategies aimed to reach the rejuvenation stage in mature tourist destinations as a transition.



Source: Own elaboration

In the above figure one may see the integration of both s-curves. The transition would be conceptualized as the intended rejuvenation phase of the destination within the TALC.

### 3.4 Brief conclusions

After presenting and discussing the Butler's Tourist Area Life Cycle, one can assert that it is a good model to draw certain conclusions on the development of tourist destinations in the Mediterranean coastline. The concept of mature tourist destination, constantly repeated in the literature, may be conceptualized as the stagnation phase in the Butler's model. The similarities are clear and the conclusion is that maturity is the threshold phase in which the destination move towards decline or rejuvenation. Moreover, the notions of restructuring, renovation, repositioning etc. referred to improvements can be characterized as necessary measures to reach the rejuvenation and prevent the decline.

But implementing that paradigm shift in the management and planning of mature tourist destinations is a complex task difficult to solve with traditional approaches. It is necessary new strategies which take into account the difficulty of changing social structures and reveal the need for new governance processes. Given the situation of maturity of many destinations, a Transition becomes a useful framework to accomplish that change of paradigm needed.

## **4. STUDY CASE: THE CASE OF PLATJA DE PALMA**

### **4.1 Palma de Mallorca: urban and tourism planning background**

#### 4.1.1 The beginning

Tourism is the backbone of Mallorca's economy from long time ago. The Mallorca Tourist Board or *Fomento turistico de Mallorca* was founded in 1905 by the president of the Chamber of Commerce with the aim of promoting the island but also in order to improve the communications within the city of Palma and the island. It was the first tourism institution in Spain. The first project carried out by the Mallorca Tourist Board consisted in the construction of a new road from Andratx to Estellencs.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that the tourism development in the city has been strongly related with the urbanism and real estate expansion since the beginning. In fact, the first tourist planning measures or initiatives emerged as a part of urban planning strategies. Already in 1917 were held the first intramural and extramural interventions directly linked to tourism activity through the *Plan General de Reforma de Palma* designed by Gaspar Bennassar who realized about the advantages of the tourism despite the lack of infrastructure in that moment (Gonzalez 2002). Bennassar visualized tourism as the principal sector in generating wealth in Mallorca. Hence, the city started changing shyly its morphology and some hotels and residential areas began to appear.

During this period the Platja de Palma was born conceived as a garden city following the tenets of E. Howard but with the peculiarity that it was not for the working class -nor for the urban bourgeois as in other garden cities designed in Spain-, but actually it was a garden city conceptualized as a primitive tourist destination model with secondary residences, cottages and hotels. The garden city was composed of two rows of blocks parallel to the coastline aiming to accommodate the new born and shy tourist flow.

With the outbreak of Spanish Civil War (1936-1939) the momentum for tourism promotion was diluted. However, in 1943 was approved the *Plan General de Alineaciones y Reformas* planned by Gabriel Alomar. This plan was in line with the '*neo-historicist architectural discourse*' (Gonzalez 2006) typical of the postwar period at the beginning of the Franco dictatorship. The pseudo urbanization and the wild urban development were a routine in this stage where big streets and buildings were built in some areas whilst deteriorate neighborhoods were demolished leading to other new unplanned and chaotic urbanization zones.

In spite of some unstructured development and the consequent speculation in the land prices, Gabriel Alomar designed the seafront, delimited the land uses, and gave more relevance to smaller social groups. Several authors argue that thanks to this plan Palma was in the vanguard of Spanish urban planning (Gonzalez 2006). According to Butler (1980) TALC, this stage would be the involvement phase owing to the changes in the physical and social structures of the destination with the primary infrastructures for the

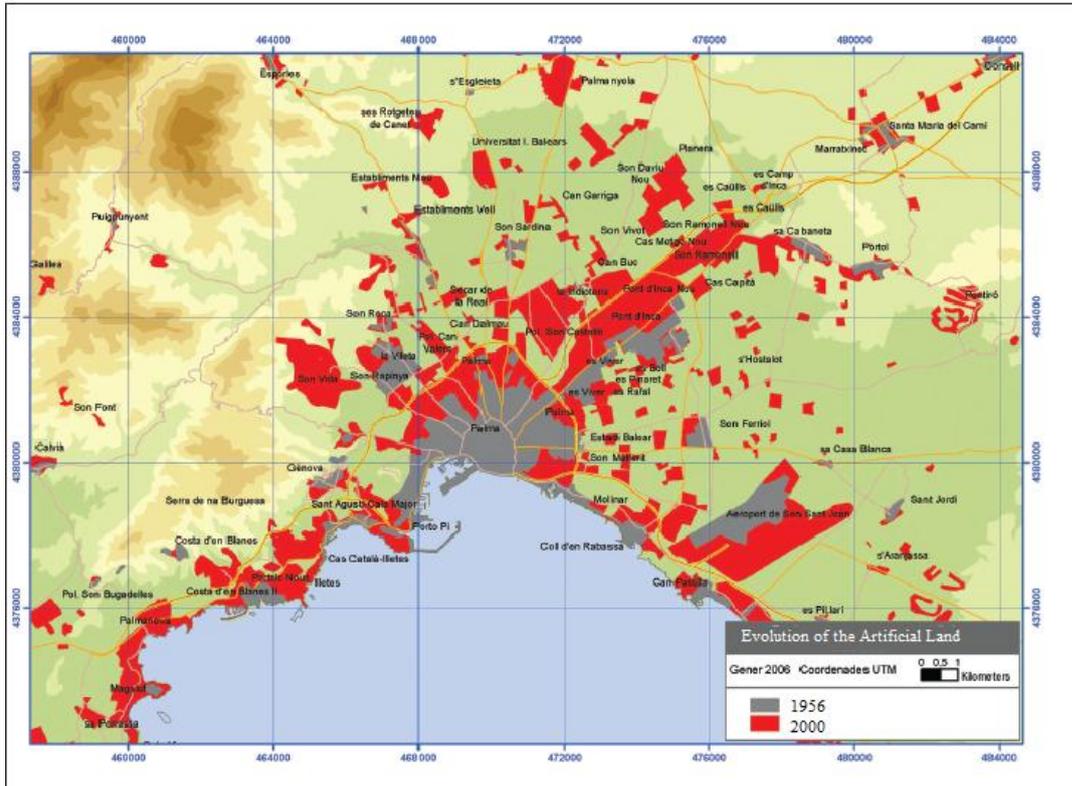
incipient market. The *Plan General de Alineaciones y Reformas* was the current plan during the postwar years and until the first tourist boom.

#### 4.1.2 Towards the touristic boom

In the 1950's the tourism started to recover due to the promotion of tourism with mythical campaigns like *'Honeymoon in Mallorca'*. Moreover, the Alomar's plan helps to develop a primitive hotel plant and some incipient tourist services which linked to the end of the autarchy period of Spain regime and the social and economic expansion of the northwestern counties – paid holidays, more leisure time, plane trips, etc. - contributed to the increase of tourism importance in the city and region's economy.

In 1953 was approved the Mallorca's *Plan General de Ordenación Urbana or PGOU* (Urban Planning Master Plan) in accordance with the posterior Spanish Land Act of 1956. It was aimed to solve the need of the tourist activity through *'developmentalist'* solutions. According to I Pons (2000) between 1951 and 1960 *'begins the great economic and social transformation of Palma de Mallorca and Mallorca, because of the development of the tourist activities'*. In addition, The *Plan de Estabilización* of 1959 – Stabilization plan of the Spanish economy- was a contributing factor to achieve an improvement in the conditions for foreign visitors thanks to measures such as the change in the visa requirements or the facilities in the foreign currency exchange.

*Evolution of the Artificial lands between 1956 and 2000*



Source: Gonzalez (2006)

As a result, the 1960s represents the consolidation of Mallorca as a destination which supposed the basis for the mass tourism. This period corresponds to the development stage in the TALC because according to Butler (1980) the destination started offering a defined tourist product and the physical and social environment changed notably. This period is known as the boom because of the strong increase in tourist arrivals and accommodation expansion. The *developmentalist* dynamic provoked an anarchic urbanism process in the Palma Bay –as well as in the rest of Spanish Mediterranean coasts as explained in the previous section.

In that decade, Mallorca became a key point for tourism and construction enlargement. The accommodation plant grew considerably both in hotels and extra hotel infrastructures (secondary residence, camping, hostels...). For that reason, in 1963 was adopted a new *Plan General de Ordenación Urbana* –Urban Planning Master Plan or *PGOU*- because of the great increase in tourist arrivals and also because of the demographic expansion in the city. Immigration became a fact and population from the peninsula start arriving in Mallorca due to the need to cover job vacancies in the tourist sector.

Pons (2000) states that in the period between 1960 and 1973 ‘*the increase in the supply and demand is really spectacular*’. He asserts that the number of visitors passed from 360.000 in 1963 to 2.900.000 approximately, with interannual rates of growing reaching the thirty per cent.

#### 4.1.3 Crisis and recovery

During the 1970s, it is possible to find out different trends. On the one hand, the *developmentalist* dynamic had to slow down as a result of the urban and social problems associated with the disorganized planning and management. Thus, in 1973 there were a revision and improvement of the 1963 *PGOU* carried out by *Manuel Ribas* and addressed to correct its flaws. But according to Gonzalez (2006) in this new master plan there were still some characteristics of the *developmentalist* paradigm. On the other hand, the dynamic of tourism flows suffered several changes because of the decrease in foreign tourist arrivals as a consequence of the Oil Crisis of 1973. However, at the end of this decade the trend is positive again and the arrivals incremented.

*Evolution of Passenger arrivals and inbound tourism 1971-2011*

	<b>1971</b>	<b>1981</b>	<b>1991</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Total Passenger arrivals</b>	3.800.000	5.500.000	7.900.000	13.200.000	x
<b>Inbound Tourism</b>	2.900.000	3.900.000	6.000.000	9.700.000	10.090.000

Source: Gonzalez (2006)

Pons (2000) points out that in the triennium 1973-1976 the inbound tourism rate decreased and it would not recover until 1978 when the three millions of visitors arrived to the Mallorca.

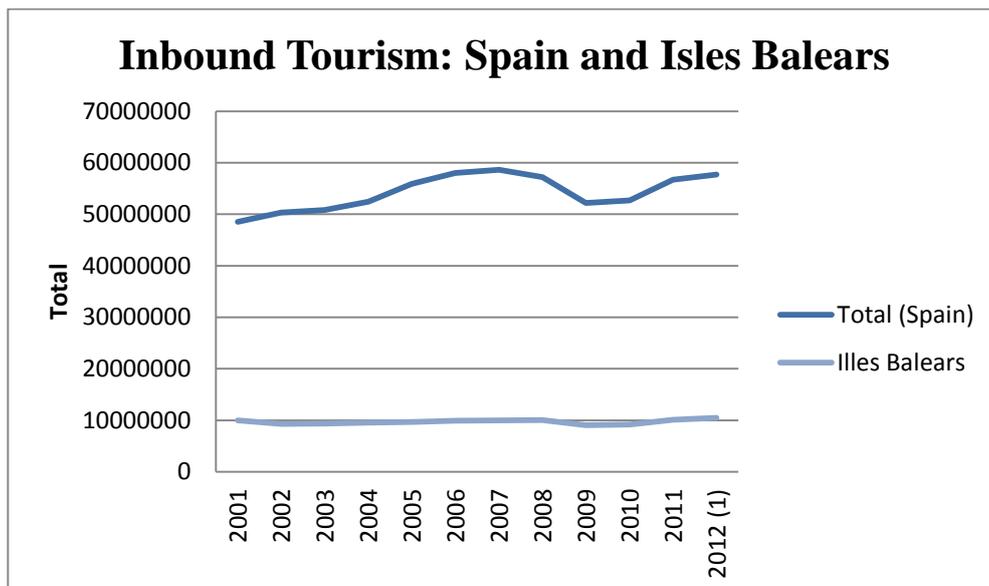
At some point in the 1980, the city expanded its limits towards rustic spaces outside the municipal boundaries. Meanwhile, there was a process of rehabilitation of the city centre following the policies and plans of comprehensive rehabilitation carried out by the progressist governments in the city –one must point out that the dictatorship finished in 1975 and during the 1980s, the democracy began to take the first steps.

However, the city started losing prominence in the tourist development in favor of the periurban area. For instance the Platja the Mallorca experienced a notorious growth again. This period would correspond to the second tourist boom (Salamanca, 1999). In those years was approved the third *PGOU* which was designed to reduce the growing rates in urban and tourist development and to improve the spatial distribution on infrastructures and facilities.

#### 4.1.4 Consolidation and Stagnation

In the 1990s and beginning of the 2000s, from diverse scopes began to talk about stagnation. The inbound tourism rates, as well as other indicators, were more or less positive; however several problems emerged as a consequence of the strong development of the previous decades. Already, at the end of the 1980s there was a change in the tourism evolution which had an array of common features with other tourist areas of Spanish Mediterranean coasts. Those features showed an obsolescence image, environmental degradation and loss of quality and competitiveness of the mentioned areas (Cladera 2011).

The behaviors and routines of some tourists – party and alcohol tourism, prostitution, violence- and the social, environmental, and visual degradation of some areas together with the competence of other emerging destinations on the Mediterranean and Caribbean countries supposed the entrance in the stagnation phase of the Butler cycle.



Source: Own elaboration from data extracted from the INE

Public institutions and tourism organizations tried to avoid using the term stagnation or decline because of the negative connotations that it supposed. But it was and it is a fact, Mallorca is dealing with the Butler's Tourism Area Life Cycle stage of stagnation and threatened by the decline if measures are not taken properly. Thereby, the case of Platja de Palma supposes an entrepreneurial example of the revitalization and renovation strategies taken on some the mature destinations.

#### 4.2 The Project of Platja de Palma

The Platja de Palma is one of the most classic sun and beach tourist places on the Balearic coasts. It is situated to the east of Palma de Mallorca between the municipalities of Palma and Lluçmajor. Actually this tourist area almost reaches the 1.000 Ha; it has 30.099 inhabitants, 43.109 tourist places and more than 1.248.000 tourist a year (Consortio de Palma, 2010).

Nowadays, Platja de Palma is one of most important urban consumption spaces in Europe due to the urban-tourist restructuration. This area has been over developed during decades with the aim of keeping the market share and the inbound tourism, following a marked *Fordism* (Ivars 2003, Yigro et al, 2011, Bonet and Salom, 2012) path for a long time.

Platja de Palma is the main intensive tourist focus based on sun and beach in Mallorca. In the beginning, it constituted an area outside the city but over time it has turned into a diffuse space within the metropolitan area of Palma de Mallorca which reaches the municipal boundaries of Lluçmajor.

During the 1960 the chaotic tourist and urban development produced an '*over densified space and environmentally unsustainable*' (Gonzalez 2006). This situation hardly changed in the next decades because of the destruction of natural spaces for the construction of low-quality urban-tourist spaces which constituted has been a natural dynamic. In spite of the improvement strategies carried out during the last years of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century, *the degradation of this coastal area is visible* (Gonzalez, 2006).

Actors of the Project:

Spanish Government/ Ministry of Tourism	Business institutions and individuals
Regional Government of Balearic Islands	Trade Unions
Mallorca Council	Neighbors' coalitions
Palma de Mallorca City Hall	Professional, cultural and environmental institutions
Lluçmajor City Hall	Citizen groups

Source: Own elaboration

Therefore, with the aim of offering a strategic solution for a *mature destination facing the decline* (Documento de síntesis), the Project of Platja de Palma came up as a comprehensive project, a plan for the future decades, based on a public-private

partnership (PPP) and on a long-term ambition. In the table above, there is a summary of the different actors involved in the Project of Platja de Palma. The actors of the project form a diverse group with presence from different scopes, gathering civil society (neighbors 'coalitions, citizens groups, unions, business institutions) with local (city halls), regional (Mallorca's Council and the Government of Balearic Islands) and national governments .

#### Timeline of the Project

**2005:** Constitution of the *Consorcio de Platja de Palma* to foster the tourist possibilities of the coast of Palma de Mallorca and Lluçmajor.

**2006:** The project starts to define its goals and objectives. A multisectoral event is created to contribute with ideas for the approach.

**2007:** In order to select an architecture office a public tender for ideas is done. The Dutch company *West-8* is chosen.

**2008:** Tourism and Commerce State Secretariat are raised to the rank of Ministry which supposes the momentum from the national Government to the Platja the Palma project and, as a consequence, the figure of the Commissioner for the Platja the Palma Consortium is created.

**2010:** Presentation of the Comprehensive Action Plan as a master plan for the revaluation of the Platja the Palma. It would be accompanied by an urban document, the *Plan de Reconversion Integral* or *PRI* (Comprehensive Reconversion Plan) to support the Master Plan

**2011:** There is a change in the city hall team and *Consorcio* team because of the change in the government. The PP political party replaces the PSOE and for that reason several changes in the organization chart are done.

**2012:** The financial problems in the Spanish institutions at all levels endanger the problem because of budget cuts in the Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Trade.

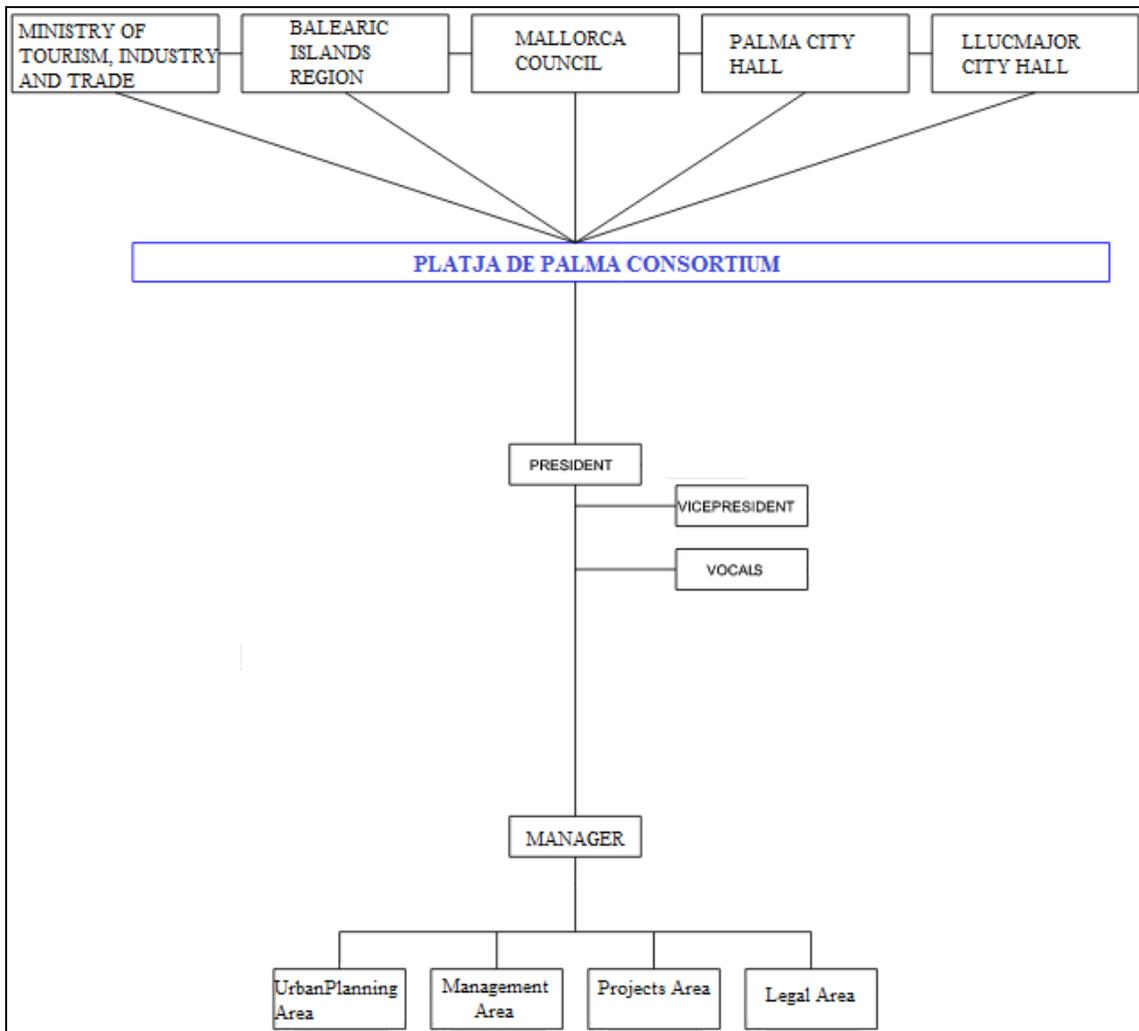
**2013:** In the end of September a (*PRI*) Comprehensive Urban Reform Plan will be approved. This new plan will replace the previous one but not the Master Plan or CAP.

### 4.3 Consorci Platja de Palma

In 2005, the *Consorcio Urbanístico for the improvement of the Platja de Palma* was established with the aim to promote the rehabilitation of the accommodation infrastructure, the urban environment and tourist services.

From the beginning until today, there have been several changes within the Consortium, both related to the members of the Consortium as related to the goals and visions of the future. The main objective of the *Consorci Platja de Palma* is to set up a tourist paradigm shift towards a new model shaped by sustainable development, climate change, global

change, social cohesion, equity, new governance processes, etc., definitely, a new model for a new destination. In order to achieve it, many experts and specialist from diverse backgrounds and from several scopes such as economy, environment, engineering, tourism, urbanism or architecture have been involved in the Consortium.



Consortio de Palma Organization chart. Source: Consorci de Palma website

The above figure shows in a hierarchical way the structure of the Platja Consortium. The *Consortio* was signed as a coalition agreement with the following institutions: Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Balearic Island Autonomous Community, Mallorca Island Council, the City of Mallorca and City of Lluçmajor. The consortium is steered by a managing board with a president, vice president and vocals, and managed by an chosen manager in charge of different areas and teams.

From the beginning of the *Consortio* to date, there have been many changes in the institutional manager team. Moreover, it is worth to point out the participation of the Tourism ministry who decided to boost the project from the Council of Minister of the Spanish Government, creating the figure of the Spanish Government Commissioner.

Long-term ambition and comprehensiveness are two of the most representative attributes of this coalition with which it is *'sought to change the current model of tourism with the objective of redeveloping the area and making it into a reference point for national and international coastal tourism.'* (Consorti Platja Palma CAP, 2010).

#### **4.4 The Comprehensive Action Plan**

The CAP is the cross-disciplinary tool for the operational planning of the Comprehensive Revitalization Strategy for Platja de Palma. It is as a master plan presented to deal with the maturity state of the destination and the challenge of changing the model away from the end of the period of haphazard tourist and random real state growth of the last half century on the Spanish Mediterranean coasts.

According to this document, the old patterns of development have contributed to depreciate the natural resources, to reach the carrying capacity and to diminish the quality of the tourist offer. Thus, the Plan proposes a comprehensive restructuring of the area based on an ambitious tourist and planning repositioning, *'combining a consideration for climate change, reduction of the ecological footprint and with the objective of achieving a zero carbon balance and with 100% renewable energies [...] renouncing to simple real state growth in order to back a comprehensive rehabilitation based on excellence, a shrink in tourist accommodation and a reduction in environmental impact'* (Introduction of the CAP)

The CAP is presented in a document organized in three parts. The first one explains in five chapters the Master Plan, in the second part is outlined the plan's programs and actions and in the last part there are several opinions from specialist and experts.

The plan's central goal is to *promote the comprehensive revitalization of the Platja de Palma, stimulating a new cycle of innovation, prosperity and sustainability for the area at a time of global change'* (CAP 2010).

There are seven strategies to achieve that goal and addressed to fulfill thirty objectives. (Appendix 8.2). According to the Plan the process of strategy definition and their objectives are developed in a three part cycle: firstly from top-down approaches in which the Consorcio provides all the heads of the collaborating teams a complete vision of the project, secondly, from bottom-up approach in which the heads make a proposal for each of their fields of work and a final definition by the consortium.

Once outlined the seven strategies and objectives, the CAP presents the programmes and actions that pinpoint the implementation of the strategies and objectives. According to the document, the programmes span areas of systemic action (tourism model, climate change, quality of life etc.) and at the same time define a group of operative actions that will allow their attainment.

The 29 Programmes and 98 Actions of the process described are set out in a spatial and time framework through eight strategic concepts: the first three correspond to tourism, ecology and quality of life and are fundamentally policy designs to be developed by other

programmes or to be applied to specific lines of work, supporting decision-making processes. The next four are related towards urban, construction, mobility and ICT implementation and the last focus on the management of the CAP and governance processes. This array of programmes and actions are an indispensable tool for implementing the strategies. The measures are taken both in the short term, medium term and long term.

Most of the programmes will be taken in three specific zones, the 'Driving Spaces' (DS) of Las Maravillas/La Porciúncula; Can Pastilla / Ses Fontelles and S'Arenal de Palma/S'Arenal de Lluçmajor, each with its own comprehensive attraction and capacity to upgrade their revitalization in their urban surroundings. Also, it is important to point out that at the same time, in the surroundings of the DS, a set of integral residential and tourism Refurbishment Programmes are intended to develop. However, with the future approval of the PRI, as a result of the change of government and Consortium's team, diverse programmes will be changed.

Regarding the time framework, the Programmes and actions are structured in:

- *Immediate terms*: until 2012 with a budget of 405.944 €
- *Short term*: 2012-2015 with a budget of 803.822 €
- *Medium term*: 2015-2020 with a budget of 998.117 €
- *Long term*: beyond 2020

The investments come from the different governmental institutions involved in the project and they are linked to specific investments from private institutions and companies. Therefore, the PPP becomes essential in order to fund and develop the project.

#### **4.4 Conclusions**

Platja de Palma has been, since the touristic boom, one of the main tourist destinations in the Mediterranean coast. Despite the inbound tourism rate is still positive, the economic returns are decreasing and the physical and functional obsolescence is a fact. Platja de Palma is without doubts a mature tourist destination. Therefore, it is indispensable to concrete measures to ensure the rejuvenation of the destination.

The development of the Project of Platja de Palma steered by the Consortium created in 2005 has been an important step to boost the redevelopment of the destination. The Project has a strong sustainability rhetoric with a holistic approach focused on the touristic, urbanistic and social dimensions of the destination.

The creation of the consortium has supposed a great innovation because it has been the first strong consortium with the participation of different actors, at several levels, in terms of tourism management in Spain. Moreover, the CAP is designed as a legal instrument and a planning framework to operationalize a comprehensive revitalization strategy for the destination.

## **5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Conclusions**

After a thorough literature review about the development and evolution of the Spanish coastal tourist destinations and the policies and measures carried out from different governmental institutions at all levels, one may state that behind a long process of mass tourism development based on sun and beach, most of the destinations are immersed in a mature stage. Thus, several changes are needed in the tourism management and planning in order to avoid the dreaded decline and adapt to the uncertainties and complexity that shapes society nowadays.

Besides, it is not only avoiding the decline phase of Butler's TALC, but changing the paradigm of urban tourist development which threatens the natural, cultural and social resources. Nowadays, given the changes in the tourism offer and demand or in the role of the tourist -mentioned in the first section-, and added to the vast competence from destinations all over the world, one should not forget that the main reason for a tourist travel is the place visiting and the experience lived. Consequently, if the artificial land expansion and the depletion of the natural and cultural heritage follow, the attractiveness of the Spanish littoral destinations will become extinct.

Although, it is difficult to answer the question about the way to transform mature destinations able to cope with the changes in tourism and society carried out by different administrations in the last twenty years, multiple strategies have been launched aimed at renewing them. As Vera Rebollo et al (2011) indicate '*identifying the improvement process carried out by destinations is a challenging task of reconversion, restructuring, renovation, repositioning, modernization, rehabilitation, and even reinvention*' among other concepts that are sometimes used synonymously and may correspond to the processes addressed to reach the rejuvenation phase in the Butler's TALC. Moreover, special attention should be paid to the own characteristics of each destination because the context and the development through time of each destination is dissimilar. Thus, according to Clavé (2012) '*the success of the process of reinventing (renovating, repositioning...) a destination is due to hitting on the right design of the territorial model for its transformation*'. Successful examples such as Vila-seca (Clavé 2012), where the trends in tourism activity have grown sustainable during the last decade, shows the benefits of a flourishing plan based on a strategic vision in long-terms of all stakeholders involved and on a comprehensive planning which integrates urban, spatial and tourism development.

Subsequently, one may state that aiming to ensure the continuity of the destinations and its sustainable development it is essential to integrate tourism in the spatial planning and adequate it to the features of each destination and thus end the chaotic development, which has occurred in many coastal areas.

With regard to the question of how to define the situation and evolution of a destination, one may state that the Butler's TALC is a helpful concept to achieve it and also to

understand the process. The model has been useful to take insights about the phases that have traversed Spanish tourist destinations. According to this concept and to the literature review done in this research one may consider that most of the destinations referred to are in the stagnation phase that in the Spanish academic literature and in this research are conceptualized as mature destinations. Therefore, taking the TALC as a reference framework, one could predict the decline of many tourist destinations in the next decades on the Spanish Mediterranean littoral, but as acknowledged in section two and according to Agarwal (2002) that should not happen because tourist managers, politicians, business companies and other social actors try to take measures to avoid it. That may result in a continuous loop of stagnation – rejuvenation – stagnation, which cannot be ruled due to the lack of efforts in changing truly the tourist paradigm in the Spanish coasts.

Furthermore, these mature tourist destinations, with a long trajectory are continuously subject to the uncertainties derived from tourism. For instance, it is a fact that the inbound tourism and the tourist average expenditure in Spain have not suffered a considerable decrease. Actually, after a significant fall due to the financial and economic crisis – especially in 2009- there seems to be stabilization in the trends. Hence, in 2012 and 2013 it is possible to talk about an upswing referred to the inbound tourism both in the national scope and in Mallorca. This does not mean that the shyly changes taken in the restoration, renovation, rejuvenation, etc. measures have become truly effective. However, it would be more related to events as the *Arab spring* in the Maghreb's countries which are direct competitors of the Spanish tourist industry; the economic recovery of some northwestern countries and the considerable tourist flow from other markets such as China or Russia.

The diverse strategies of renovation befallen in different tourist destinations are usually short-term and *continuist* (Pavón and Tabales, 2010) solutions in which the use, more rhetorical than real, of concepts such as sustainable development or participative governance is common. Many of these strategies are based on sustainability and comprehensiveness tenets, taking into account the protection of the environment and cultural heritage and in line with the recommendations from supranational organizations (for instance EU or UNWTO), but sometimes the implementation of those tenets and advises is quite complicated and the complexity in changing societal structures and behaviors is obviated.

With regard to the case of study, with the focus on Mallorca and especially on the Project of Platja de Palma, one may point out that it is an interesting strategy from diverse perspectives. The creation of the Consorcio Platja de Palma supposes an unprecedented step in the Spanish tourism policy and planning. In this project are acknowledged the issues shaping one of the Spanish destination par excellence, and through a comprehensive plan drawn on the agreement of multiple actors and long-term vision, it is pretended to revitalize the destination. It must be taken into account that in the Project there are concepts and strategies quite attractive and innovative, particularly those addressed to tackle the social and environmental degradation, as well as those aimed to the adaptation to climate change and the engagement with sustainable development.

Nevertheless, the attempt made in Mallorca with the Project of Platja de Palma could not be conceptualized as a transition although it is true that there are many similarities with the transitions explained in the theoretical framework.

For instance, simply the fact of the coalition agreement which was made by the consortium could be seen as an innovative structural change in the tourism planning and management of the destination. In addition, the master plan surged from the Project is underpinned in new governance processes aiming the revitalization of the area under sustainable development tenets. Thus, one could state in the same line with Loorbach (2010) that the project is based on a governance approach for sustainable development, or according to Rotmans as a gradual continuous process of structural change within a society or culture.

Another similarity is the long-term ambition of the project and the multiphase character of the programmes and actions. In Rotmans' and Loorbach's researches the long-term approach is one of the main characteristic of a transition. In the same mode of a transition, in the Project of Platja de Palma are envisaged long-term developments in stocks (adaptation to climate change, reduction of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, tourism positioning) and short-term development in flows (transformation of physical spaces and urban refurbishment, technological improvements in the hotel plants, ICT services, delimitation of driving spaces...) and generally the long-term vision is highlighted.

An additional common point of the project with a transition is the accent put in the co-evolution of different domains; because changes are contemplated to happen in a time framework and at different societal scopes: tourism sector, city services, urbanism, spatial planning, politics, ecology, institutions...

However, there are some features that distance the project from being a transition. First of all, the changes in the governmental administrations break the previous agreements and coalitions and threaten the process. Secondly, citizenship may be present in some steps or processes of the project, but the 'governance approach' designed supports to some collectives more than others. The politicians and some businessmen have much more power in the design of the project and the decision making than other actors and stakeholders.

Thirdly, according to the recent events<sup>1</sup> there will be a new 'philosophy' during the next months in the urban reconversion process (a new *PRI*) which will be based on the private investment, deregulation and 'flexibilisation' of the urban space, instead of the public investment and the alliance between public and private institutions in a more democratic way planned before (Artigues and Salom, 2012). It is true that a transition highlights reflexive process shaped by flexibility, monitoring, consultation and co-operation but the

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<sup>1</sup> [www.hosteltur.com](http://www.hosteltur.com) 'Platja de Palma approves a urban plan radically opposed to the previous plan designed' 17/06/2013  
[http://consorciplatjadepalma.palmademallorca.es/portal/PALMA/cpp/contenedor1.jsp?seccion=s\\_fnot\\_d4\\_v1.jsp&contenido=65775&tipo=8&nivel=1400&layout=contenedor1.jsp&codResi=1](http://consorciplatjadepalma.palmademallorca.es/portal/PALMA/cpp/contenedor1.jsp?seccion=s_fnot_d4_v1.jsp&contenido=65775&tipo=8&nivel=1400&layout=contenedor1.jsp&codResi=1) 'Advance the future of the new PRI Platja de Palma' 25/06/2013

changes attempted are more related to disagreement in values and interests between political parties.

Fourthly, it is a fact that the project of revitalization of the Platja de Palma emphasizes long term vision, but the time framework planned does not exceeds 20 years scenarios and according to Loorbach (2007) a transition covers at least one or two generations (25 years correspond to a generation). And lastly but not least important, one must remember that the design of a transition developed by Rotmans, Loorbach, Kemps, etc. underlines the necessity of innovation changes at the niche level to push the process, but in this case the developments in niches are quite ignored and drive through the regime giving little room to *'interaction between different scale levels'* (Loorbach, 2007).

## **5.2 Recommendations**

The successive attempts to revitalize and renovate mature destination in accordance with a new paradigm made by public institutions and bodies demonstrate the sensitivity and importance of this subject in the Spanish economy and society. The recognition of the necessity of new tools and instrument to carry out those changes is an important step. The constant introduction of concepts such as sustainable development or governance is central and indispensable, but once those concepts have to be implemented in real actions and measures many problems emerge.

For that reason it would be advisable to have some general –at the state level- tenets, rules and laws well defined whilst there should be room for innovation and own developments according to each destination due to their singular characteristics.

The use of sustainable development and governance has to be real, not rhetorical. As mentioned previously in section 3 they are fuzzy concepts difficult to put into practice but that is not a reason to forget them when strategies and measures begin to take form. Many times all these new strategies become in old routines more related to the economic profit than to the real desire of changing the patterns in tourism.

In spite of the efforts made by the central government, the autonomies and the own destinations to carry out plans, guidelines and strategies, both generally and specifically, it is a tough task. For the implementation of those strategies and policies, it is essential a strong commitment and engagement of all institutions and agents involved. This is quite difficult to achieve because of the instability produced in every change of government, both in the national government, the regional government and the local authorities of the destinations. In many cases, the new teams change diametrically the path. In fact, there could be possibilities of the dilution of the Platja de Palma project due to the changes in the organizational chart of the consortium as well as the changes in the Mallorca's and Spain's governments.

Therefore, one would recommend working within the precepts of the transition management approach. It could be a good approach to solve all the flaws that strategies experiment during its implementation. Moreover, the use of the transition management

Cycle as a framework of reference to design this kind of revitalization, renovation... strategies could be really useful.

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## **6.2 Public Documents**

European Commission (2004). ‘*Early warning systems for identifying tourist destinations and preventive best practices*’.

Exceltur (2007) ‘*Estrategias turísticas integradas en los planes vigentes de Ordenación del territorio en zonas del litoral mediterráneo, Baleares y Canarias*’. Exceltur. Madrid

*La revalorización de la Platja de Palma: plan de acción integral*. Consorci Platja de Palma, 2010.

## **6.3 Internet resources**

Consorci Platja de Palma:

[http://consorciplatjadepalma.palmademallorca.es/portal/PALMA/cpp/contenedor1.jsp?seccion=s\\_fnot\\_d4\\_v1.jsp&contenido=65775&tipo=8&nivel=1400&layout=contenedor1.jsp&codResi=1](http://consorciplatjadepalma.palmademallorca.es/portal/PALMA/cpp/contenedor1.jsp?seccion=s_fnot_d4_v1.jsp&contenido=65775&tipo=8&nivel=1400&layout=contenedor1.jsp&codResi=1)

Ministry of Industry, Energy and Tourism

<http://www.minetur.gob.es/es-ES/Paginas/index.aspx>

Spanish Tourism Institute. Turespaña

<http://www.tourspain.es/es-es/Paginas/index.aspx>

Spanish Statistics Office (INE)

<http://www.ine.es/>

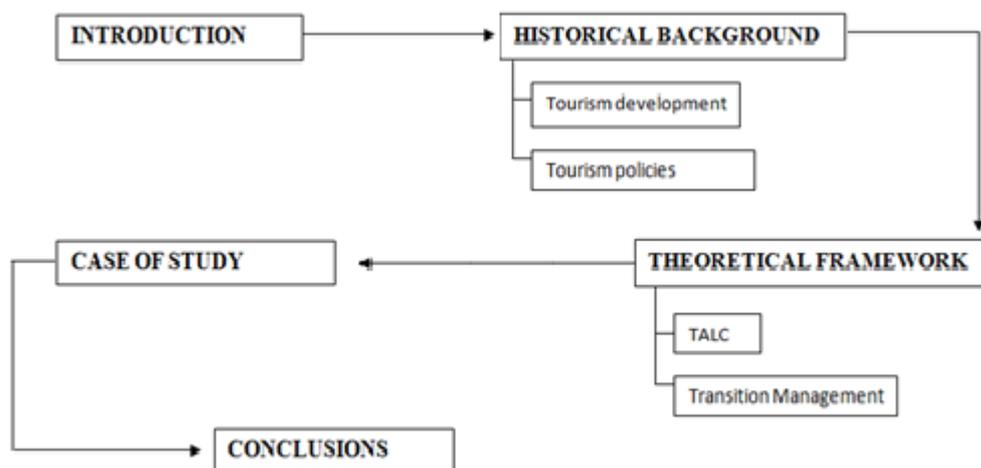
<http://www.conceptdraw.com/examples/venn-diagram>

## **7. APPENDIX 1**

### **7.1 Methodology**

According to Marshall and Rossman (1995) it is possible to choose a research study depending on the purpose of the study. They argue that the purpose may be explanatory, descriptive or prescriptive, pursuant to the question one formulates and the research strategy and methods used. In this case, the research presented in this thesis would be explanatory and descriptive according to them because there are characteristic for both purposes. Explanatory because it investigates a little-understood phenomenon and explains the forces causing it, but also descriptive cause it documents a phenomenon of interest. The research strategies that fit with the research purpose according to these authors are for instance case study, field study, history, ethnography, etc. which may be supported by observation, interviewing, document analysis...The main object of this study is to analyze briefly the status of the Spanish Mediterranean tourist destinations and concretely Mallorca's case, and to make some suggestions about the strategies and approaches in order to improve the current situation of these destinations which are facing deep changes and transformations.

The methodology is articulated in the discussion of theories and theoretical concepts and models with the aim of describing the state of maturity of Spanish coastal tourist destinations and the strategies carried out in order to transform that situation.



Source: Own elaboration

The research study follows a marked path. First of all, after introducing the research and giving an overview about the Spanish tourism background, it is essential to develop a theoretical framework in order to provide a conceptual basis to underpin the study. Different concepts will be introduced to support the research.

Thus, the literature review in this study is carried out to provide information about the topic and as a general background and context of the research. The literature review focuses on international literature and specifically on Spanish academic literature.

The second step is to analyze the evolution of the phenomenon particularly in a specific space. In this case, the Spanish Mediterranean coast paying special attention to a particular place which would be the object of a study case.

With regard to the data collection this study is lightly supported with statistical data acquired from official statistic institutions and fundamentally based on an exhaustive literature review research. It is important to point out that in the study there is not a statistical analysis, but the use of statistical data is duly used to explain the dynamics and trends in the evolution of the phenomenon.

Consequently, the master thesis approach is made through the identification and analysis of the diverse stages occurred during the last decades using the Tourist Area Life Cycle developed by Butler (1980). Once done a generalist analysis or diagnostic of the Spanish Mediterranean coastline with regard to its evolution along the last sixty years, and after exploring the various strategies carried out to reorient tourist destinations. The research is focused on the study case which deals with the processes of renovation of one of the foremost destinations in the Mediterranean littoral, Mallorca. The concept of transitions will be put on the table with the aim of conceptualizing as a transition (or not) those new developments and strategies carried out to date in that specific destination.

#### The Research Methods:

The research methods followed to gather information and which support the study include:

- Literature Review

The existing literature represents an important element in all research (Bryman, 2012). The literature review is '*a systematic search of published work to find out what is already known about the intended research topic*' (Robinson and Reed, 1998). The review followed in this research focuses on international literature and specifically on Spanish academic literature and comes from different scopes inside the social sciences such as economy, tourism, history, urbanism, spatial planning, sociology... This research method is used for several reasons such as establishing the need for research, gaining insight from the topic, underpin the theoretical framework and be acquainted with the development of the topic through time. It is not only identifying and deal with all the knowledge and information written about a topic but also to understand the problem, and together with the other research methods, to reach some conclusions.

- Case of study

Case studies are used broadly across a sort of social sciences such as political sciences, geography, sociology, planning, psychology, history, economics, etc. Yin (2009) states 'the distinctive need for case studies arise out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena'. This approach is useful to understand social phenomena in both their complexity and natural context. As a part of the study case there is also a document analysis.

## **8. APPENDIX 2**

### **8.1 List of tables and Figures**

#### **List of Tables**

- Instruments of the Spanish tourist policy for the renovation of mature destinations
- Evolution of Passenger arrivals and inbound tourism 1971-2011
- Actors of the Platja de Palma Project

#### **List of Figures**

- The Tourist Area Life Cycle (Butler 1980)
- The Sustainable development diagram
- The multiphase o s-curve model
- The multi-level perspective
- The transition management model
- The integration of Tourism Area Life Cycle and Transition management
- Evolution of the Artificial lands between 1956 and 2000
- The Consorci de Platja de Palma organization chart

**Additional tables and figures:**

Figure: Inbound tourism Spain 2001-2012

	Absolute value											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 (1)
Spain	48565344	50330623	50853815	52429832	55913778	58004462	58665504	57192013	52177640	52677187	56694298	57700713

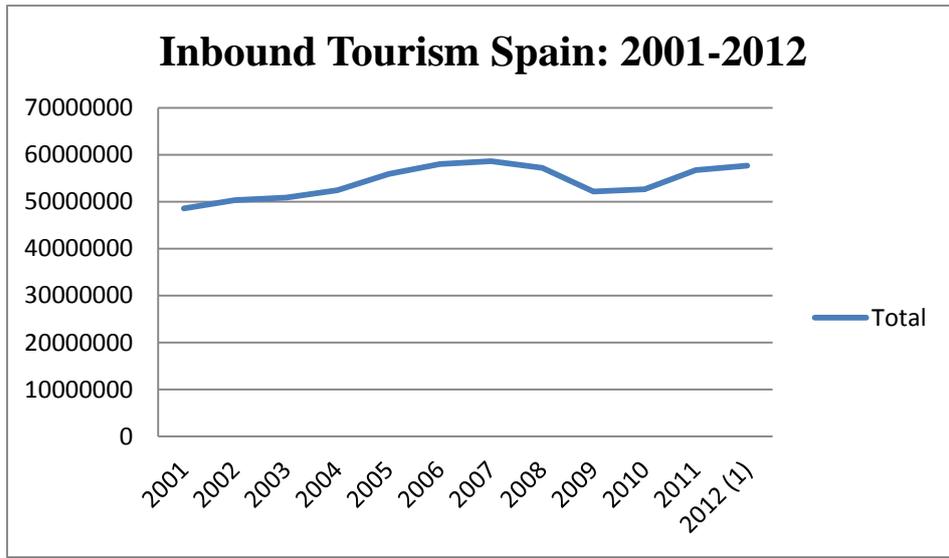


Figure: Inbound Tourism Spain. Interannual variation



Figure: Inbound Tourism. Spain and Isles Balears comparison

	Valor absoluto											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 (1)
Total (Spain)	48565344	50330623	50853815	52429832	55913778	58004462	58665504	57192013	52177640	52677187	56694298	57700713
Illes Balears	9961947	9273817	9329218	9546218	9657516	9922447	9956426	10020782	9024439	9177781	10099465	10442837
Illes Balears/ Total	20,51246	18,425794	18,345168	18,207607	17,272158	17,106351	16,971517	17,521296	17,295606	17,422686	17,813899	18,098281

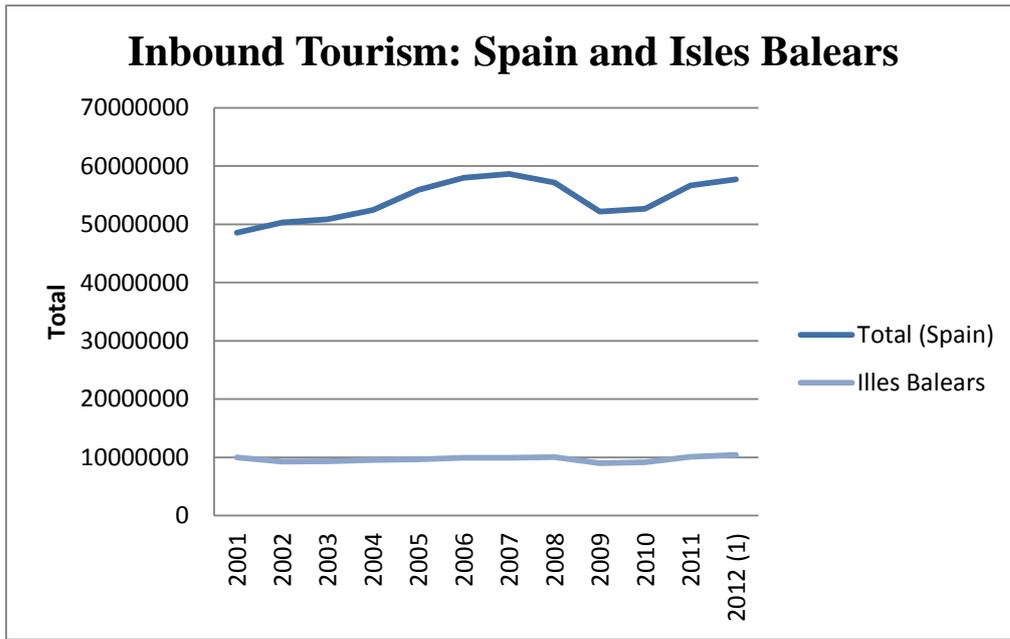


Figure: Inbound Tourism, interannual variation. Spain and Illes Balears comparison

	interannual variation											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 (1)
Total (Spain)	..	3,6	1	3,1	6,6	3,7	1,1	-2,5	-8,8	1	7,6	2,7
Balears, Illes	..	-6,9	0,6	2,3	1,2	2,7	0,3	0,6	-9,9	1,7	9,8	3,3

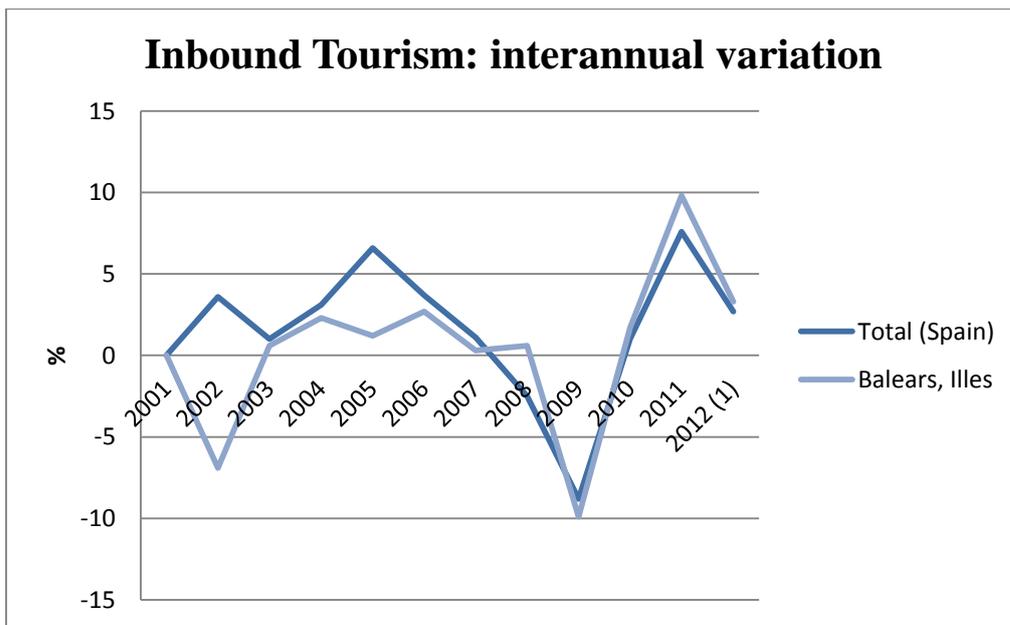


Figure: Inbound Tourism, Illes Balears 2001-2012

Inbound Tourism, Illes Balears 2001-2012												
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012 (1)
Absolute Value	9961947	9273817	9329218	9546218	9657516	9922447	9956426	10020782	9024439	9177781	10099465	10442837
Inter-annual variation	..	-6,9	0,6	2,3	1,2	2,7	0,3	0,6	-9,9	1,7	9,8	3,3

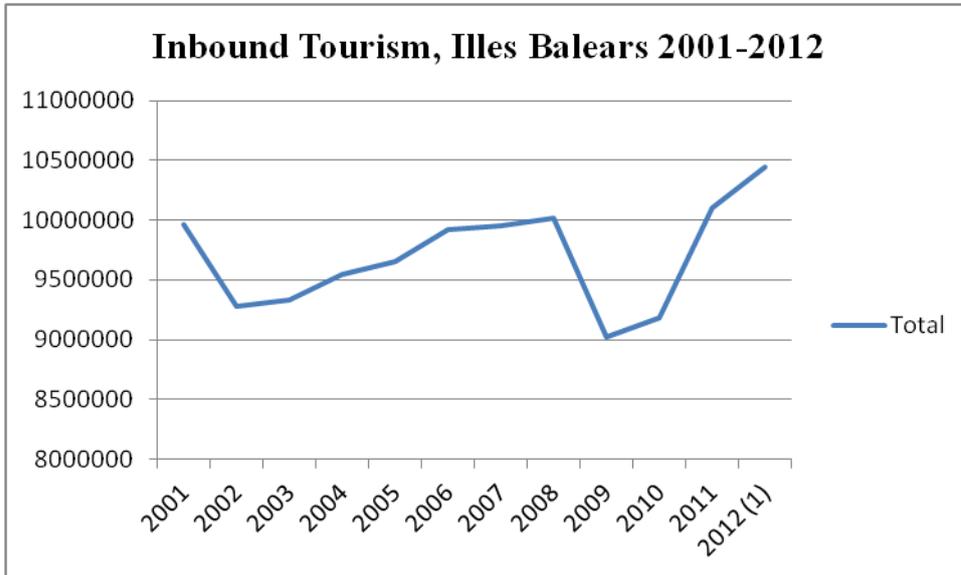
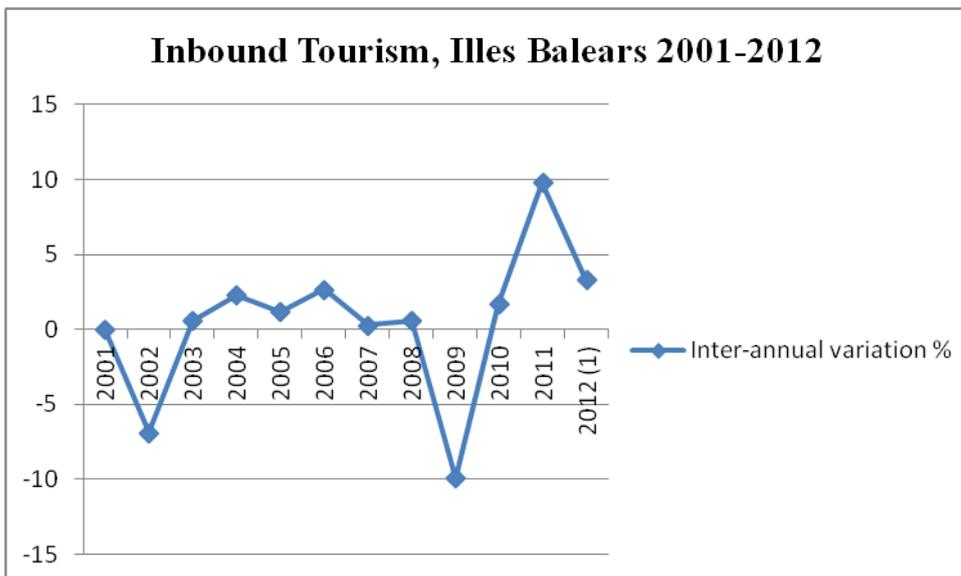


Figure 8: Inbound Tourism, Illes Balears 2001-2012. Interannual variation.



## **8.2 Strategies and objectives of the Comprehensive Action Plan**

### **1. Commitment to an innovative, competitive, and sustainable tourism positioning**

This strategy puts forwards the repositioning of the underlying logics of a strategically exhausted coastal destination. The objectives marked for this strategy are:

1. Implementing an innovative, sustainable and successful tourism project.
2. Revalorizing/restoring completely the space and the tourist installations in the Mediterranean way
3. Attracting a demand for greater value and long tourism season that is less dependent on cheap mass transport.
4. Creating a new value added offer that is unique because of its own profile and of its privileged relationship with the bay, the town of Palma and the island of Mallorca.
5. Implementing the key resources and processes to be able to carry out an innovative and very ambitious tourism project.

### **2. Facing Climate Change and preserving land and marine natural system**

This strategy puts the focus on the challenge of getting to know and adapting to Climate Change and at the same time establishing the guidelines in order to recover and preserve coastal ecosystems in the medium and long term. The objectives are:

6. Establishing the general strategic recommendations of the adaptation and resilience of the Platja de Palma system in relation to climate change.
7. Conserving biodiversity and recovering the function of coastal, land and marine ecosystems
8. Managing the natural and anthropic dynamics of the beach in a sustainable way
9. Improving the overall quality and foreseeing the future validation of the natural system of underground, surface and sea water.
10. Establishing and implementing measures for the sustainability of urban ecosystems.

### **3. Improving living and employment conditions of residents and workers**

This strategy contemplates the possibility of increasing the employment rates and of improving the productivity, quality of life and payment for those who live or work there. The objectives are:

11. Improving the offer and quality of employment.
12. Strengthening social cohesion and awareness regarding change strategies
13. Renewing the productive fabric of small and medium-sized enterprises.

4. Comprehensive revitalization of the urban territory system in a Mediterranean and sustainable way

Within this strategy is provided different actions such as the construction of a promenade in the first line of coast and a linked boulevard in the second line, the creation of several green areas, the modification of buildings aiming to fulfill the sustainability requirements, the improvement of the quality and structure of the hotel plant, the creation of museums and parks, the enhance of sustainable mobility... The objectives sought in this strategy are the following:

14. Restoring without any further growth, the urban system and the landscape in a sustainable way.
15. Increasing urban attractiveness by diversifying urban and tourism experiences.
16. Creating a powerful network of symbolic parts that increase the value of the urban system.

5. Establishing ambitious commitments to reduce the local and 'glocal' ecological burden

With this strategy, it is aimed to reach a sustainable Platja de Palma in 2020 in terms of energy, water, waste, noise pollution and mobility. The objectives related are:

17. Proposing a final 'neutral carbon' scenario based on renewable energies
18. Improving the quality of the water cycle, reducing its consumption, guaranteeing its quality, and returning it to the environment in the same condition it was in at the beginning.
19. Reducing the generation of urban waste, maximizing its revaluation, and proposing '0 waste to the rubbish tip'.
20. Reducing local noise and the sound impact of the airport at legally established limits.
21. Tackling the restoration of all tourist and resident buildings to revalue them and reduce their environmental burden and the number of tourist beds
22. Improving mobility, guaranteeing accessibility, substantially reducing traffic, and designing a '0 balance in CO2 emission' final scenario in local travel.

6. Creating an advanced digital space for everyone and for all activities.

This strategy aims to use technological advances available today in order to offer the maximum access to TIC, improve the quality of life of residents and tourist, increase the productivity and competitive capacities of the business fabric...

Therefore, there would be needed several infrastructure and telecommunication services which will act as a change facilitator for the rest of the strategies. The objectives are:

23. Giving the service of a comprehensive revitalization of the area a technological and communications infrastructure.
  24. Providing advanced services to aid the competitiveness and productivity of companies.
  25. Building a powerful network of tourism-orientated services.
  26. Giving citizens full access to 'The Net' and public services.
  27. Optimizing management and taking full advantage of available resources.
7. Implementing an institutional and social agreement and a new 'governance' for change:

The comprehensive revitalization of the Platja de Palma needs the stable and strategic support of a great number of participants through a solid institutional, business, political and social agreement and with a strong leadership within the Consorcio. In the document efficiency, transparency and participative governance are highlighted. To summarize, this strategy shows that the project is a collective effort made by diverse stakeholders or agents involved to face the issues and challenges in a long-term and complex context. In order to achieve it, an evaluation process is proposed including objectives, procedures, information collection methods to improve decision making, feedback, analysis of results and impacts ... Thus the objectives in this strategy are:

28. Implementing an institutional and social agreement to provide stability and strength to the Project.
29. Implementing a complete and transparent management and assessment system
30. Promoting a wide participative process with the various private and public players involved.