Cruise Tourism in Arctic Canada

Summary Report of Potential Adaptation Strategies | 2013
Potential adaptation strategies to manage and support the growing Canadian Arctic cruise sector were identified and evaluated by a panel of regional stakeholders and experts. The research was conducted as part the Cruise Tourism in Arctic Canada (CTAC) project (2009–2012), which aimed to identify strategies that mitigate risks and maximize opportunities associated with the Arctic cruise sector in Canada. Through the project, over 400 community residents (from Ulukhaktok, Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, Pond Inlet, Kujuuaq, and Nain), cruise operators, stakeholders, and policy makers were engaged in research activities, resulting in a series of documents about resident perceptions, community adaptation strategies, and operator challenges. This document represents the final report of the project. It brings together all policy findings and focuses on evaluating options for cruise industry management.

All of the identified strategies were ranked by experts in terms of desirability and feasibility. Desirability means that the strategy is recommended and considered to be of high importance. Feasibility means that the strategy is both affordable and can be implemented.
Which strategies were ranked the highest?

The top recommended strategies are listed here. These strategies were ranked highest in terms of their desirability and feasibility. All of the listed strategies garnered a high degree of consensus among the respondent group, meaning all or most of the panel agreed. Strategies that did not receive consensus or were not considered desirable or feasible are not outlined in this report.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Feasibility</th>
<th>Consensus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Inform visitors about import laws and wildlife products before tours begin (to allow time for permitting process)</td>
<td>Definitely Feasible</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Develop a code of conduct for cruise tourists that guides visitor behaviour when in communities (for example, request permission to take photographs of people, etc.)</td>
<td>Definitely Feasible</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Require up-to-date technology and navigation systems on ships</td>
<td>Probably Feasible</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Create specific disaster management plans related to the cruise tourism industry (for example, fuel spill, ship grounding, etc.)</td>
<td>Probably Feasible</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Enforce fines for non-compliance of environmental regulations (for example, sewage, grey water, ballast discharge)</td>
<td>Probably Feasible</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Appoint a cruise liaison officer at the territorial/provincial scale (to provide a single point of contact)</td>
<td>Probably Feasible</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Require better soundings and marine mapping resources</td>
<td>Might or might not be Feasible</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Recommended strategies by category**

Further detail on the top ranked adaptation strategies and other recommended strategies is provided by category:

1) policy and regulation,
2) infrastructure and technology,
3) services, economic development and planning,
4) communication, coordination and outreach, and
5) environmental and cultural sustainability.

**The strategies in the following lists are displayed in order of priority. Top ranked strategies are listed first.**

**Policy and Regulation**

Consensus was reached providing high support for these strategies. All were rated as probably feasible and all were of high importance (desirability).

- Require all vessels regardless of size to report to NORDREG (northern Canada’s vessel traffic services) (i.e., versus only those more than 300 gross tonnes)
- Streamline cruise vessel permitting process via a single body/institution (i.e., one-window approach)
- Streamline permitting process for on-shore visits (parks, historic sites, archaeological sites, etc.)
- Allow local RCMP to act as customs officers for large ships (for example, check passports and clear ships for entering Canadian waters)
- Expand AECO’s (Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators – www.aeco.no) geographical range to Canada
- Ban the use of heavy fuel oil in Arctic waters

* probable feasibility (barriers to overcome) rating due to concerns regarding ease of implementation
Infrastructure and Technology

Consensus was reached providing high support for these strategies. All were rated as probably feasible or had neutral feasibility and all were of high importance (desirability).

- Require up-to-date technology and navigation systems on ships
- Require better soundings and marine mapping resources
- Provide additional resources for SAR (search and rescue)
  * neutral feasibility rating due to concerns regarding affordability

Services, Economic Development and Planning

Consensus was reached providing high support for these strategies. All were rated as probably feasible and all were of high importance (desirability).

- Improve interpretive capacity within protected areas and culturally significant sites (signs, information booklets, etc.)
- Plan ways to support and encourage consistently good customer service among host communities and relevant stakeholders (for example, permitting offices, etc.)
- Improve accessibility to funding opportunities (for example, streamline process) for local business development
- Improve and maintain support for local business start-ups
- Provide tourism-training programs for host communities

Communication, Coordination and Outreach

Consensus was reached providing high support for these strategies. All were rated as definitely or probably feasible or had neutral feasibility and all were of high importance (desirability).

- Inform visitors about import laws and wildlife products before tours begin (to allow time for permitting process)
- Provide summarized information on regulations and community codes of conduct to the cruise sector
- Provide cruise operators with an information package about the various community destinations, local culture, and performance/show offerings for the purpose of trip planning
- Establish an informal, multi-agency Arctic cruise ship committee (government, NGOs, community leaders, others)
- Provide more community-based guided tours for cruise visitors
Enhance opportunities to educate cruise visitors about traditional Inuit lifestyle (history, culture, traditions)
Enhance opportunities to educate cruise visitors about contemporary Inuit lifestyles (hip hop, mixed economy, house construction, etc.)
Establish an annual cruise tourism conference/meeting before each cruise season (allow for virtual communications)

Environmental and Cultural Sustainability
Consensus was reached providing high support for these strategies. All were rated as definitely or probably feasible or had neutral feasibility and all were of high importance (desirability).

Develop a code of conduct for cruise tourists that guides visitor behaviour when in communities (for example, request permission to take photographs of people, etc.)
Create specific disaster management plans related to the cruise tourism industry (for example, fuel spill, ship grounding, etc.)
Enforce fines for non-compliance of environmental regulations (for example, sewage, grey water, ballast discharge)
Provide additional search and rescue training for local communities
Establish “special hunting areas” where ships are not permitted
Establish more protected areas/Marine Protected Areas (MPAs)
Assess and monitor visitor impacts at key sites (for example, heritage sites, environmentally sensitive areas).
Improve monitoring capacity in Arctic waters (for example, additional support for coast guard)*

* neutral feasibility rating due to concerns regarding affordability
Research Methods

Using an adaptation framework developed by the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) and others, the CTAC project involved four iterative steps:

1) engaging stakeholders;
2) assessing risks and opportunities;
3) identifying adaptation strategies; and,
4) evaluating adaptation and policy options.

Adaptation strategy identification and evaluation was completed using an expert policy Delphi approach. Over 400 people were consulted including local residents, cruise operators (expedition leaders, CEOs, managers), and regional decision-makers, regulators, and other stakeholders to identify concerns, opportunities, and adaptive solutions for the Arctic cruise sector (Delphi round 1). A total of 500 adaptation strategies were suggested.

These were distilled down to just over 200 after similar ideas were synthesized and results analyzed. Regional communities then evaluated identified strategies. This was conducted through a series of resident workshops held in, Ulukhaktok, NWT, Gjoa Haven, NU, and Pond Inlet, NU (Delphi round 2).

From these workshops the 16 most important adaptation strategies from the perspective of local residents were established. The full list strategies from round 1 was further analyzed, including consideration of the community rankings from round 2, and was synthesized to 62 distinct strategies. For simplicity and ease of analysis, the 62 adaptation strategies were divided into 5 thematic categories.

A key-informant or ‘expert’ panel of senior decision-makers, key operators, and expert stakeholders (including highly informed local residents) was then established to further evaluate identified adaptive strategies based on desirability and feasibility (affordability, ease of implementation) via an on-line survey (Delphi round 3).
Acknowledgements

Funding

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