What exactly is meant by the terms leisure, recreation and tourism and how are they related? Leisure is often seen as a measure of time and usually means the time left over after work, sleep and personal and household chores have been completed (Figure 1). In other words, leisure time is free time for individuals to spend as they please. This does, however, introduce the problem of whether all free time is leisure. A good example of this dilemma is whether the unemployed feet that their free time is in fact “enforced” leisure, or whether volunteers at a sporting event see their activity as “serious leisure”. This has led to the view that leisure is as much an attitude of mind as a measure of time, and that an element of “choice” has to be involved. Of course, these relationships have changed over time – the Industrial Revolution for example brought about a sharp contrast between the workplace and the leisure environment, whereas in pre-industrial societies the pace of life is attuned to the rhythm of the seasons rather than ‘clock time’.

Recreation is normally taken to mean the variety of activities undertaken during leisure time (Figure 1). Basically, recreation refreshes a person’s strength and spirit and can include activities as diverse as watching television to holidaying abroad. We can make a useful distinction between physical recreation including sport, and other leisure pursuits that include the arts, cultural activities and entertainment (Boniface, B., C. Cooper, 2005).

If we accept that leisure is a measure of time and that recreation embraces the activities undertaken during that time, that tourism is simply one type of recreation activity. It is, however, more difficult to disentangle the meanings of the terms recreation and tourism in practice. Perhaps the most helpful way to think about the difference is to envisage a spectrum with, at one end, recreation based either at home or close to home, and the opposite end recreational travel where some distance is involved and overnight accommodation may be needed. This is based on the time required for the activity and the distance traveled, and it places tourism firmly at one extreme of the recreation activity continuum (Figure 1). The idea of a spectrum is helpful as, for example, it allows us to consider the role of same-day visitors or excursionists. These travelers are increasingly a consideration in the geography of tourism-they visit for less than 24 hours and do not stay overnight. In other words, they utilize all tourism facilities except accommodation, and put pressure on the host community and the environment (Stankova, 2003).

Clearly, tourism is a distinctive from of recreation and demands separate consideration. In particular, from the geographical point of view, tourism is just one form of ‘temporary of leisure mobility’, and in defining tourism it is therefore important to distinguish it from other types of travel. International debate as to the definition of tourism still continues, and there are many different interpretations (Leiper, 1979). There are two ways to approach the problem:

We can define tourism from the demand side, i.e. the person who is the tourist. This approach is well developed and pointed in the following definition of tourism: ‘The activities of person traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes’. The definition raises a
Leisure time

Leisure - The time available to an individual when work, sleep and other basic needs have been met

Recreation – pursuit engaged upon during leisure time

The recreation activity continuum

Home based recreation – reading, gardening, watching tv, socializing, etc.
Daily leisure – visiting theatres or restaurants, sports, etc.
Day trips – visiting attractions, picnicking, etc.
Tourism – temporary movement to destinations outside normal home and work place, the activities undertaken during the stay, and the facilities created to cater for their needs

Geographical range

home    local    regional    national    international

Work time

Business travel

Geography and tourism

When we study the geography of travel and tourism, three key concepts need to be considered:

- spatial scale
- the geographical components of the tourism system
- spatial interaction between the components of the tourism system.

Geographers study the spatial expression of tourism as a human activity, focusing on both tourist-generating and tourist-receiving areas as well as the links between them (Mill, R.C. and Morrison, A., 1992). This study can be undertaken at a variety of scales, ranging from the world distribution or climatic zones, through the regional assessment of tourism resources, to the local landscapes of resorts. The issue of scale has become important in the global versus local debate. As the tourism sector embraces the tools of globalization – such as the forging of a global airline alliances – we must never forget that the tourism product is delivered at the local scale, often by local people and within a local cultural context.

The idea of scale has been used to organize the material presented in this book because at each different scale a distinctive perspective upon, and insight into, tourism is gained. Simply, as a more detailed explanation is required, attention is drawn to increasingly smaller parts of the problem. This idea

number of issues:
- What is a person’s usual environment?
- The inclusion of ‘business’ and ‘other purposes of visit’ demands that we conceive of tourism more widely than simply as a recreation pursuit.
- Certain types of traveler are excluded from the definition. Of course, tourism itself is only one part of the spectrum of travel, which ranges from daily travel to work or for shopping to migration, where the traveler intends to take up permanent or long-term residence in another area.

We can also define the tourism sector from a supply side point of view. Here the difficulty lies in disentangling tourism businesses and jobs from the rest of the economy. After 20 years of debate, the accepted approach is the Tourism Satellite Account (TSA), adopted by United Nations in 2000. The TSA measures the demand for goods and services generated by visitors to a destination. It allows tourism to be compared with other economics sectors by calculating its contribution to investment, consumption, employment, the gross domestic product (GDP) and taxation.
of scale, or geographical magnitude, keeps in focus the area being dealt with, and can be likened to increasing or decreasing the magnification on a microscope or the scale of a map. Flows of leisure tourism in Europe provide a good example of the importance of scale. At the international scale the dominant flow of tourists is north to south, but at the regional scale a variety of other patterns emerge, such as travel between cities, or out of cities to the coast and countryside, whilst at the local scale we can consider day-trip patterns, with people traveling relatively short distances from their accommodation to attractions in the holiday area.

From a geographical point of view tourism consists of three major components which are: first, the places of origin of tourists, or generating areas; second, the tourists destinations themselves, or receiving areas, and finally, the routes traveled between these two sets of locations, or transit routes (Leiper, 1979). These components are set within differing economics, environmental and social contexts (Figure 2):

- **Tourist-generating areas** represent the homes of tourists, where journeys begin and end. The key issues to examine in tourist generating areas are the features that stimulate demand for tourism and will include the geographical location an area as well as its socioeconomic and demographic characteristics. These areas represent the main tourist markets in the world and, naturally enough, the major marketing functions of the tourist industry are found here (such as tour operation, travel retailing).
- **Tourist-receiving areas** attract tourists to stay temporarily and will have features and attractions that may not be found in the generating areas. The tourist industry located in this area will comprise the attractions, accommodations, retailing and service functions, entertainment and recreation facilities. Tourist destination areas are the most important part of the tourism system, not only attracting the tourist and thus energizing the system, but also where the impacts of tourism occur and therefore where the sustainable planning and management of tourism is so important.
- **Transit routes** link these two types of areas and are a key element in the system as their effectiveness and characteristics shape the volume and direction of tourist flows. Such routes represent the transport component of the tourist industry.

The differing contexts within which the tourism is set pervade the characteristics of each component. For example, a tourism system in a developing country is likely to have a generating component more dominated by domestic travel than would be the case in a developed country. The external environment also affects the tourism system in terms of a range of issues – such as terrorism and security, and the need for all components to develop crisis and risk management plans. It is this connection with the real world that makes the geography of travel and tourism such an exciting and vibrant area to study.

While the study of geography of tourism should include the three components identified above, there...
is a danger that, in conveniently dissecting tourism into its component parts, the all-important interrelationships are lost. The consideration of tourist flows between regions is therefore fundamental to the geography of tourism and allows the components of tourism to be viewed as a total system rather than a series of disconnected parts. An understanding of tourist flows is critical for managing the environmental and social impacts of tourism, securing the commercial viability of the tourism industry and for planning new developments.

Tourist flows are a form of spatial interaction between two areas, with the destination being contained a surplus of a commodity (tourist attractions, for example) and the generating area having a deficit, or demand, for that commodity. In fact, it is possible to detect regular patterns of tourist flows. They do not occur randomly but follow certain rules and are influenced by a variety of push and pull factors.

The push factors are mainly concerned with the stage of economic development in the generating area and will include such factors as levels of affluence, mobility and holiday entitlement. Often, an advanced stage of economic development will not only give the population the means to engage in tourism but the pressures of life will provide the ‘push’ to do so. An unfavorable climate will also provide a strong impetus to travel. Pull factors include accessibility, and the attractions and amenities of the destination area. The relative cost of the visit is also important, as is the effectiveness of marketing and promotion.

The flows, or interaction, between places are highly complex and are influenced by a wide variety of interrelated variables. A number of attempts have been made to explain the factors that affect tourist flows and to provide rules governing the magnitude of flows between regions. An early attempt was by Williams and Zelinsky (1970), who selected 14 countries that had relatively stable tourist flows over a few years and which accounted for the bulk of the world’s tourist traffic. They identified a number of factors that helped to explain these flows. These included:

- distances between countries (the greater the distance, the smaller the volume of flow)
- international connectivity (shared business or cultural ties between countries)
- the general attractiveness of a country for another

A second means of explaining the tourist flows is offered by the gravity model, based on two main factors that influence flows. The first of these are the push and pull factor which generate flows, and the gravity model states that the larger the ‘mass’ (population) of country ‘A’ or country ‘B’, the greater the flow between them (Matley, I.M., 1976). The second factor, known as the friction of distance, refers to the cost (in time and money) of longer journeys, and this acts to restrain flows between the country of origin and more distant destinations.

Other, more complex, multivariate models based on travel itineraries can also be used to explain tourist flows. Four common types can be identified:

- point to point – ‘there and back’ trips
- point to point with an added touring circuit focused on one point
- a circular tour
- hub and spoke itineraries

As tourism has become more prominent, national governments and international organizations have introduced the measurement of both international and domestic flows. There are three main reasons why tourism statistics are important - statistics are required to evaluate the magnitude of tourist flows and to monitor any change (this allows projections of future flows to be made and the identification of market trends), statistics act as a base of hard fact to allow tourism planners and developers to operate effectively and plan for the future of tourism, both the public and private sectors use the statistics as a basis for their marketing. There are three main categories of tourism statistics (www.wto.sat.org):

- **Statistics of volume** give the number of tourists leaving an area or visiting a destination in a given period of time and provide a basic count of the volume of tourist traffic. Volume statistics also include the length of stay of visitors at their destinations. A variety of methods are available to measure tourist flows. For volume statistics, tourists can be counted as they enter or leave a country and immigration control will often provide this information. Obviously this is relatively straightforward for international flows, but much more problematical for domestic tourism. For destination areas, an alternative method is to enumerate tourists at their accommodation by the use of registration cards. This method is only effective with legal enforcement and normally omits visitors staying in private houses of ‘VFR’ tourists – those visiting (and staying with) friends or relatives. Statistics of domestic tourism volume may be obtained by national travel surveys or destination survey. National travel surveys involve interviewing a representative sample of the population in their own homes. Questions are asked on the nature and extent of travel over a past period and the results not only provide statistics on the volume of domestic tourism but also may include expenditure and the character
of the flows. Examples of national travel surveys include the UK Tourism Survey (UKTS) and the German Reisenanalyse. In destination surveys, visitors to a tourist area, specific site, or attraction are questioned to establish the volume, value and characteristics of traffic to the area or site.

- The second category of statistics is that of tourist characteristics. While statistics of volume are a measure of the quantity of tourist flows, this second category measure the quantity of the flow and will include information on types of tourist (such as gender, age, socioeconomic group) and their behavior (such a structure of the trip, attitudes to the destination). It is not uncommon for statistics of tourist characteristics and volume to be collected together. Surveys of tourist characteristics have evolved from straightforward questioning, which gives basic factual information (for example, the age profile of visitors), to surveys that now concentrate on questions designed to assist the marketing and management of a destination, or to solve a particular problem. Statistics of tourist characteristics are obtained in a variety of ways. Additional questions can be added to accommodation registration cards, or border checks, but more commonly a sample of travelers is asked a series of questions about themselves, their trip, opinions of the destination, etc. (An example of this approach is the UK International Passenger Survey (IPS) which measures the volume and value as well as the characteristics of UK inbound and outbound tourism.)

- The third type is expenditure statistics. Tourist flows are not simply movements of people, but they also have an important economic significance for the tourist system. Quite simply, tourism represents a flow of money that is earned in one place and spent in another. To make comparisons easier, expenditure is usually expressed in SUS rather than national currency. Measurement of tourist expenditure can be obtained by asking tourists directly how much they have spent on their holiday, or indirectly by asking the hoteliers and other suppliers of tourist services for estimates of tourist spending. For international expenditure statistics, bank records of foreign currency exchange may be used as another indirect method.

Despite the variety of methods available to measure tourist flows, it is not easy to produce accurate tourist statistics. In the first place, the tourist has to be distinguished from other travelers (e.g. returning residents) and, while internationally agreed definitions of tourists do exists, they are not yet consistently applied throughout the world. At the same time, until recently there has been no real attempt to coordinate international surveys. To add to these problems, survey methods change over the years, ever within single countries, and comparisons of result from year to year are difficult. A further problem is that surveys count ‘events’, not ‘people’ so that a tourist, who visits a country twice in a year, will be counted as two arrivals. Those on touring holidays may be counted as separate arrivals in various destinations and will inflate the overall visitor arrival figures. The relaxation of border controls, especially within groups of trading countries – such as the European Union (EU) – compounds the tourist statistician’s problem and makes it difficult to enumerate tourists.

**Forms of tourism**

The geographical components of tourism, allied to the idea of scale and tourist flows, combine to create a wide variety of different forms of tourism, which we can categorize according to:

- type of destination
- the characteristics of the tourism system
- the market
- the distance traveled

Tourism can be classified according to the type of destination visited. Here, from a geographical point view, an important distinction is that between international (comprises those who travel to a country other than that in which they normally live) and domestic tourism (embrace those traveling within their own country). International tourism can be thought of as **inbound tourism** – non-residents traveling in a given country or **outbound tourism** – involving residents traveling of a particular country traveling abroad to other countries.

International tourist have to cross national borders and way well have to use another currency and encounter a different language. Clearly, the size of a country is important here. Larger countries are more likely to have a variety of tourist attractions and resorts and, quite simply, the greater physical distances may deter international tourism. This is exemplified by the volumes of domestic tourism in the USA (almost 90 per cent of all tourism) compared to the Netherlands (around 50 per cent). Increasingly, too, the distinction between these two forms of tourism is diminishing as movement between countries becomes less restricted.

Concern for the environmental impact of tourism has focused attention on ways of classifying tourists along a continuum ranging from explorers, with virtually no impact, to mass tourists where the impact may be considerable.

**The characteristics of the tourism system**

Here, we can consider forms of tourism based largely on the destination visited, but also where the
destination visited will influence the other components of the tourism system – the market with its motivations to travel, and the means of transport used. In other words, the tourism product determines the nature of the tourism system. For example: rural tourism, urban tourism, spa tourism, heritage tourism, cultural tourism, sport tourism, ecotourism.

A further basis for classifying forms of tourism relates to the market itself. This can be in terms of the purpose of visit of the tourist:

- **Holiday tourism** is perhaps the most commonly understood form, where the purpose of the visit is leisure and recreation. Holiday tourism can be divided into the “sun sea and sand” type, where good weather and beach-related activities are important, or the “touring, sightseeing and culture” type where new destinations and different lifestyles are sought. Short breaks lasting up to three nights are usually distinguished from longer holidays for marketing purposes.

- **Common-interest tourism** comprises those traveling with a purpose common to those visited at the destination (such as visiting friends and relatives, religion, health or education reasons). Common interest tourist – especially – may make little or no demand upon accommodation or other tourist facilities at the destination.

- **Business and professional tourism** makes up the final purpose of visit category. Included among business tourists are those attending trade fairs and conferences or participating in incentive travel schemes. The inclusion of business travel complicates the simple idea of tourism being just another recreational activity. Clearly, business travel is not regarded as part a person’s leisure time and cannot be thought as recreation. Yet, because business travelers do use the same facilities as those traveling for pleasure and they are not permanent employees or residents of the host destination, they must be included in any definition of tourists. The business traveler, unlike the holidaymaker, is highly constrained in terms of where and when to travel.

A further market-based approach is to consider segments. Here there are two aspects:

- The **nature of the tourists** themselves, such as - youth tourism, grey or “third age” tourism – geared specifically to older travelers, gay tourism
- The **type of travel arrangement** purchased, such as - an inclusive tour, where two or more components of the trip are purchased together and one price is paid, independent travel arrangements, where the traveler purchases the various elements of the trip separately, tailor-made travel, which is a combination of the two and increasingly common due to the use of the Internet to purchase travel.

- **Distance traveled** - here there are distinctions that are important in terms of aircraft operations and for marketing:
  - **long-haul tourism** is generally taken to mean journeys of over 3000 kilometres
  - **medium-haul tourism** means journeys of between 1000 and 3000 kilometres
  - **short-haul tourism** comprises journeys of less than 1000 kilometres.

Finally, in categorizing tourism it is important not to lose sight of the geographical components of the system. The areas generating demand, the destinations chosen and the transit routes used will be influenced in different ways by particular forms of tourism.

**Summary**

Leisure has come to be accepted as a measure of free time, while recreation is seen as the activities undertaken during that time. Tourism is a distinctive form of recreation, including a stay away from home, often involving long distance travel and encompassing travel for business of other purposes.

The geography of travel and tourism focuses on three key concepts. First, tourism consist consists of three main geographical components; the tourist-generating areas, the tourist-receiving areas and transit routes. Second, from a geographical point of view, tourism can be considered from a number of scales, from the world scale, to the regional and local scales, depending upon the level of detail required. Finally, the spatial interaction that is generated between the components of the tourism system, and at different scales, is conceived of as tourist flows. Understanding of these flows is fundamental to the geography of tourism and can be achieved by considering the push and pull factors that give rise to these flows, and how they can be measured.

Different forms of tourism can be distinguished, based upon the destination chosen, components of the tourism system, the market, purpose of visit, the distance traveled and, not least, the nature of the tourists themselves.

**Bibliography**

Leisure has come to be accepted as a measure of free time, while recreation is seen as the activities undertaken during that time. Tourism is a distinctive form recreation, including a stay away of home, often involving long distance travel and encompassing travel for business or other purposes.

The geography of travel and tourism focuses on three key concepts. Understanding the interaction that is generated between the components of the tourist system is fundamental to the geography of tourism and can be achieved by considering the push and pull factors that give rise to the tourist flows and how they can be measured.

Different forms of tourism can be distinguished, based upon the destination chosen, components of the tourism system, the market, purpose of visit, the distance traveled and, not least, the nature of the tourists themselves.