Chapter 5
A Fresh Consideration of Development Strategies for Smaller Island States and Territories

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Introduction

Much of the literature on the development prospects of small, often island, jurisdictions is steeped in pessimism, driven by a serious concern as to the ability of such players to exploit the opportunities of an increasingly globalised world and its emergent liberalised trade rules (e.g. Briguglio 1995: 1615–1620; Encontre 1999: 265; UNCTAD 2004; WTO 1999). It is common to argue that small size, islandness, vulnerability, and a low governance capacity conspire to exacerbate the existing marginalisation of small economies, and is a condition which therefore justifies calls for special treatment. These arguments, however, "… are by no means uncontentious, and are part of an ongoing debate" (Horscroft 2005: 41). This paper aligns itself with a more optimistic view of the prospects for these territories and their citizens, who continue to exploit opportunities and maximise economic gains in a turbulent and dynamic external environment (e.g. Streeten 1993; Easterly and Kraay 2000; Page and Kleen 2004: 82, 89–90). Unable to reap economies of scale, they practise economies of scope. They do so also by keeping alive a portfolio of skills and revenue streams which enables these actors to migrate both inter-sectorally, as well as trans-nationally.

While recognizing the real environmental threats of being a small, open, often islanded economy – hurricanes, droughts, sea level rise, water shortages, waste mountains … some small economies have done well and continue to do so. They are 'developed', or have 'graduated', not so much for having avoided major hazards, but for having risen up to their challenge and prospered, because – and not in spite – of their openness, perhaps becoming more resilient and nimble in the outcome.

In a globalized and interdependent world, all countries today face threats and dependencies. The USA, often referred to as the current 'hyper-power', has had its fair share of recent, psyche-changing disasters, including 9/11/2001, Hurricane Katrina in 2005, the Wall Street Crash of 2008. All oil and gas importing countries have

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rediscovered their dependency on fossil fuels with the recent price hikes in these resources. Autarchy is hardly a policy option, and so some measure of trade dependence is a characteristic of contemporary jurisdictions. It is the responsiveness to threats – not the existence of threats per se – that deserves kudos and analysis. The capacity to get up and move on in the face of various disasters deserves being celebrated and researched. Nor should such successes be simply dismissed as 'special cases' (as the Seychelles, described in Kaplinsky 1983) or 'paradoxes' (as is the 'Singapore Contradiction' in Briguglio 2002) that fly in the face of all-too-obvious vulnerabilities: they deserve critical recognition and serious scrutiny on their own terms.

The time may thus be right for a research exercise that analyses the behaviour of small – or, better, smaller – 'developed' (mainly island) states, and its historical emergence, against a series of hypotheses. A series of patterns and conditions for development may emerge from a scrutiny of what are understood to be smaller developed states and territories today. Some of these characteristics will be peculiar and idiosyncratic to specific jurisdictions, of course; but others may lend themselves to some useful, policy relevant, comparative inquiry.

This exploratory paper proposes to trigger this discussion. It proposes to do so mainly by moving away from the vulnerability-resilience continuum that grips much of the debate on the economic viability of smaller (often island) states and territories today, replacing it with an alternative but similarly bimodal conversation: one between economic (high-density) and ecological (low-density) criteria of development. In so doing, one invites a reconsideration of the impact of physical and social geography on development, as well as the changing relationship between 'nature' and 'human culture'.

Basket Cases of Success

Which smaller countries in the world today are considered 'successful', and not just in orthodox economic terms? At least three sub-sets can be identified here:

1. Many would agree with the choice of the Bahamas, Barbados, Cyprus, Iceland, Malta and Mauritius. One could add New Zealand and Singapore as well – if we go beyond the threshold of a population of 1.5 million, and up to just over 4 million. These are all stable, prosperous, **sovereign and democratic island states**; and all except Iceland are former British colonies.
2. Then there are the **continental European micro-states** (Andorra, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, San Marino, Vatican) – which have fine-tuned beneficial relations with larger European states (Switzerland, Italy, Spain, France) and/or with the European Union.
3. Finally, and raising pertinent questions about the meaning of sovereignty in an increasingly globalised and inter-dependent world, are such **sub-national jurisdictions** as Åland, Bermuda, Guernsey, Jersey, Isle of Man … again, all are islands, and most are associated with the British Crown/United Kingdom.

Note that New Zealand is the single Pacific candidate in the above lists. The inclusion of the Pacific region raises fundamental concerns about the very meaning of 'development' and its western ideological tenets which, among other things, discount the non-monetized and informal economy (and alerts us to the subtle Western bias lurking in our definition of 'success'?). The Pacific is also exceptional in having indigenous populations, and their own customs and cultures, which have survived the ravages of late imperialism. A suitable additional candidate to consider including among the list of successes stories could be Samoa.

One may venture to argue that smaller size, certainly in the case of the territories identified above, has *not* been a crucial handicap to development. Nor has islandness or peripherality. Strong levels of social capital and outward facing cultural attitudes would also contribute to a dynamic economy, able to respond confidently to opportunity (Baldacchino 2005; Pitt 1980; Srebrnik 2000). Meanwhile, for most of these jurisdictions, and certainly for the smallest, high population density per unit land area comes across as a common feature. And all – except the largest identified (New Zealand) – have an insignificant agricultural sector.

Islands that are political units are also geographical enclaves that tend to have higher population densities than mainlands, since offloading people across the sea remains more problematic than offloading them onto a contiguous land mass. Moreover, around half of humankind dwells on or near coastal regions, because continental interiors are disadvantaged locations for settlement. These preferences are evinced from the much higher mean population density for islands than for continents: excluding the large but practically empty mass of Greenland, island units have a mean population density of 144 persons/km^2 – *three times* the mean value of 48 persons/km^2 that obtains for Eurasia, America, Africa and Australia combined[1] (see Table 5.1).

There is however another distinguishing feature of islands: and one that connects us with the inclusion of Iceland and New Zealand in our listings. These two island jurisdictions emerged as 'settlement colonies' in the Modern age, absorbing surplus population from the colonial homeland (King 2009; Warrington and Milne 2007); but they both remain characterized by *very low* population densities: just 3 and 15 persons/km^2 respectively.

If one is looking for extreme cases of population density, examples of *both ends* of the continuum are to be found on islands. In other words, island states and

Table 5.1 Population densities on islands and continents

Land mass	Population (A)	Land area (km^2) (B)	Population density (A/B)
1. Four continents	6,550,435,000	136,071,330	48
2. As (1) above, less Australia	6,530,000,000	128,453,330	51
3. All island states and territories	588,807,050	6,263,612	94
4. As (3) above, less Greenland	588,752,050	4,088,000	144

[1]Idiosyncratic Antarctica is deliberately excluded from this exercise.

territories do not just provide scenarios of very high population density – with places like Bermuda, Malta and Singapore topping the list – but they also provide examples of land areas with very low population density, as well as the *only* examples of completely de/unpopulated, geographically discrete areas on the globe. "'Uninhabited' is a word attached only to islands" (Birkett 1997: 14). These locales are attractive and have their own value, one that exploits their often unique natural qualities and apparent 'underdevelopment', for the purpose of more sustainable living, exclusive retirement locales and/or niche tourism.

Two Distinct Paradigms

Most of what are seen as successful island jurisdictions today have managed to avoid extensive resorts to industrialisation, and the environmental fall-out that such a development trajectory unwittingly implies.[2] Other than Malta, Fiji and Mauritius, no smaller island economies have embarked on any significant industrial programs, thus often managing to 'leap frog' from primary to tertiary sector production in a few decades (e.g. Baldacchino 1998).

Having said that, many of these successful smaller island jurisdictions today find themselves operating within two distinct and quite diametrically opposed development paradigms. In a variant of 'the Triple Bottom Line' – an approach to decision making that considers economic, social and environmental issues in a comprehensive, systematic and integrated way – this paper focuses on just the two 'e' terms in this configuration, relegating the status of the third, social dimension to that of an intervening variable.

The first batch is typified by dynamic, aggressive and competitive export producers who can depend on strong knowledge and finance capital pools. Such locations typically have high population densities, limited land areas, large pools of immigrant labour, considerable foreign direct investment, significant manufacturing sectors and extensive overseas investments, but poor and degraded local natural environments (if any exist) and higher per capita carbon footprints. 'City states' such as Hong Kong, Malta, Monaco and Singapore – as well as larger countries such as Japan – are leading examples (e.g. Debattista 2007). These would have usurped the "slowcoach of agriculture", given the absence or low political clout of a rural hinterland (Streeten 1993: 199). This could be, in turn, an outcome of poor soils or difficult terrain unsuitable for commercial farming. This cluster of features can be labelled as the *economic development* approach.

In contrast, the second batch of examples is typified by island locales that flaunt their clean, serene and pristine natural environments, often accompanied by distinctive cultural practices associated with indigenous communities. Low populations

[2] This is not to exclude the environmental degradation that can result on small islands from excessive dependence on one mineral resource – as in the case of Nauru and its phosphate.

and low population densities, perhaps supported by remittances and transfers from elsewhere, help to maintain this more environmentally sustainable lifestyle, which in turn promotes a potentially more nature friendly, more exclusive, tourism industry (*however*, *for a critical view*, *see* Gössling 2003). Iceland, New Zealand but also Dominica, Greenland, Molokai, Samoa, Seychelles, Tobago and the Faroes are apt examples, and are internationally recognized as such (e.g. National Geographic 2006). Many of these locales are associated with states that have dedicated significant portions of their land and/or sea to nature parks; or have maintained their natural forest, tundra, taiga or permafrost cover. For example, five Micronesian governments (Palau, followed by the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the US Territory of Guam and the US Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands) have pledged a commitment to effectively conserve 30% of their near-shore marine resources and 20% of their terrestrial resources by 2020 (Nature Conservancy 2008). This second cluster of features can be labelled as the *ecological development* approach. The main features of, and differences between, these two approaches are schematically described in Table 5.2.

Interestingly, different parts of the same country can exhibit these sets of features: in archipelagic Japan, for example, metropolitan high density Honshu is contrasted to Yakushima Island (World Heritage Site) and the sacred island of Miyajima. Same can be said for the Bahamas, where two-third of the population lives on the island of New Providence, which has just 3% of the country's total land area; or the Maldives, with almost the whole population living on one atoll. In Indonesia, the Moluccas (or Spice Islands) have a population density of 20 persons/km^2; contrast this to that of 2,070 for Java.

The contrast between these two sets of island features can also be discerned from the same geographical region. In the island rich Mediterranean, for example, population density ranges from a high of over 1,200 per km^2 for the Maltese Islands to 68 for Sardinia and just 32 for Corsica: in the latter two cases, a rugged topography makes settlement more challenging, and this difficulty of access conserves a rather unspoilt interior.

Table 5.2 A comparison of the general characteristics of economic and ecological development

Economic development	Ecological development
High population density	Low population density
Entrepôt Islands	Fortress Islands
Limited, fragmented and strained natural resources	Significant, unadulterated and pristine natural resources
Aggressive exporters (mass markets)	Choosy exporters (niche markets)
Mass tourism appeal	Exclusive tourism appeal
High carbon footprint	Low carbon footprint[a]
High urbanization	Low urbanization

[a] One needs to exercise caution here. While domestic carbon footprints may be low, they may be excessively high in relation to, for example, the tourism industry. Thus, the Seychelles had a very high mean air travel emissions per tourist of 1,873 kg of carbon dioxide in 2005 (Gössling et al. 2008: Table 5.2)

It thus appears that geography and history conspire to render islands differently suited for development strategies. On the basis of the typology suggested by Warrington and Milne (2007), island *entrepôts* have acted as magnets for significant incoming and circulating population movements and diversity; they are well placed to exploit their 'in betweenity' to accumulate fiscal, human and material capital for development. They are challenged to come up with solutions to the pressing problems resulting from an acute lack of space and associated high costs of land (e.g. The Economist 2006b). This would include a brand of tourism that is more appreciative of built environments, socio-cultural townscapes and urban living. They are well honed to take upon themselves an economic approach to their development. Meanwhile, island *fortresses* appear better suited at keeping newcomers away, making access to their shores more difficult, tortuous, time-consuming, challenging or otherwise risky. These conditions suggest that an ecological approach to development may be a more natural option (pun intended). Connell and King (1999: 3), echoing Churchill Semple (1911), observe that islands which find themselves at important crossroads – in a "nodal location" – tend to attract immigrants and may thus be challenged by overpopulation; whereas those which find themselves isolated, on the periphery, may be thus better adept at sending people away and may suffer stagnant or declining populations in the outcome, risking depopulation.

That there should be at least two contrasting 'development paradigms' in the first place may belie a basic misunderstanding about the very nature and expression of development. The leading examples of *economic* development, with their significantly negative environmental impacts, may not be successful over the longer term. Their 'success' may often depend on the ability to lure value added from away, while exporting negative externalities offshore. The examples of '*ecological* development' (if any such term can be used, since the clause comes across as an oxymoron), in contrast, typically maintain much lower environmental footprints. Dahl (1996: 49) reminds us that, in spite of "the 'eco' as a unifying concept … the chasm between economics and ecology is a symptom of the malfunctioning of modern society which threatens our very future". Given the strong sense of place that they engender, islands are ideal spaces to experience the pernicious and dysfunctional chasm between these two separate 'ecos' (Depraetere 2008: 20).

If we are to posit these two sets of island candidates as success stories, then we need to be better able to critically but cogently identify what led them to assume such a status. Are there (other) discernible patterns behind either of these two, apparently diametrically opposed, trajectories of success? Which political episodes (including crisis?) and dynamics (including non-democratic processes?) have galvanized these island societies and economies towards competitive economic or ecological prosperity? What particular set of goods and services have permitted these jurisdictions to occupy and secure export markets? What human resource development policies have they pursued? What beneficial links with their respective diasporas have they fashioned? How have they exploited bilateral and multilateral agreements via shrewd (para)-diplomacy and international relations? Have higher education, tourism, financial services and niche manufacturing been important

contributors to economic growth? Is there an active concern with sustainability and visions of a future that will lower fossil fuel dependency? These are some of the questions that beckon further, island studies research.

A second set of questions is also pertinent. These questions would connect with considerations or opportunities to shift gear from one developmental approach to another. What does one do if a particular island territory wants to be successful on *both* these development fronts? Can one be both economically *and* ecologically successful, and be known globally for both? How have island states such as Ireland, Iceland and New Zealand (e.g. The Economist 2006a) managed to avoid this seeming contradiction by portraying themselves as 'smart' (technologically savvy), without sacrificing their representation as places where nature is bountiful, where – for example – whiskey can coexist with cloning research (as in Scotland), and where quality milk chocolate can coexist with precision watches (as in Switzerland)? Can an island be both green and clever at the same time[3]; or is this 'best of both worlds' scenario only a myth, possible only via a deliberate foray into marketing spin and camouflage? Could especially archipelagic island states – such as the Bahamas, Maldives, Seychelles, Fiji, Tonga, St Vincent and the Grenadines … but also mainland states with outlying island units – such as the USA with Hawai'i; Greece with the Aegean Islands; Portugal with the Azores and Madeira; Malta with Gozo; or South Korea with Jeju – zone their territory in such a way that they can pursue differential development strategies via geographically delineated (that is, enclaved) policies?

Economic Success

The *economic* road to success is the easier to chart, because it follows well-worn, conventional principles and definitions. Standardized economic statistics rank countries according to gross national/domestic product or purchasing power parity standards. Wealth is often defined in such terms as GNI/GNP/GDP per capita, with purchasing power parity. Smaller, often island, territories do exceptionally well on these counts. In their analytic critiques, Armstrong et al. (1998: 644), Easterly and Kraay (2000: 2015), and Armstrong and Read (2002) agree that smaller (and mainly island) jurisdictions actually perform economically *better* than larger (mainly continental) states. Comparative research has shown that, on average, non-sovereign island territories tend to be richer per capita than sovereign ones (Poirine 1998; Bertram 2004). The citizens of French Polynesia, Aruba, Bermuda and Iceland have been counted amongst the world's top ten richest people, in terms of these conventional standards (The Economist 2003). Armstrong and Read (1998: 13) have also argued that many of the smaller states – most of which are island or archipelagic territories – have managed to compensate effectively for their smaller size by a high

[3]The tension between "the modernizers and the traditionalists" is also explored by Grydehøj (2008) in the case of Shetland.

quality of "endogenous policy formulation and implementation". Earlier, Katzenstein (1985) had made similar remarks in relation to smaller European states.

Island-specific literature suggests five policy areas as being critical ingredients in shaping prosperity, economic development-wise (e.g. Milne 2000). Contestation over 'who does what' in these economic policy areas is typically tense, especially in federal political systems, and may in itself lead to demands for more self-rule, its withdrawal or its renegotiation between the parties concerned. These powers are premised on effective governance: however, unlike other models that seek to explain the principles behind revenue flows to island economies,[4] these policy areas depend much more on the proactive nurturing of specific, local, jurisdictional capacities or local powers (Baldacchino 2006a). They comprise the management of external relations "… by means of domestic policies and governing institutions" (Warrington 1998: 101). These five select policy areas are: (1) powers over finance, mainly banking, insurance and taxation; (2) powers over environmental policy, particularly natural resources; (3) powers over access, particularly in relation to air and sea transportation; (4) powers over free movement of persons; and (5) powers over tourism policy (*for details*, *see* Baldacchino 2006b; Baldacchino and Milne 2000). Looking at these policy areas more holistically, Bertram and Poirine (2007: 362) conclude that "… the combination of offshore finance and high-quality tourism stands out as the strategy of the most successful island economies".

Ecological Success

The defining characteristics behind *ecological* success are much more elusive. They typically include low population levels enjoying longevity and healthy low-stress lifestyles, large proportions of undisturbed and pristine land, rich air quality, abundant local fauna and flora, low carbon footprints… but these same features may be (mis) construed as those of a primitive, late-coming, underdeveloped economy. What, for example, is Greenland/Kalaallit Nunaat? On one hand, the world's largest island (2.16 million km^2), with the world's largest national park (Northeast Greenland National Park – 972,000 km^2); a population of just 56,344 (in 2007), of whom 88% are indigenous Inuit or mixed Danish and Inuit; and – thanks to challenging climate conditions, sub-national jurisdictional status, and distance from markets – receiving relatively low but high-paying tourism visitations: around 30,000 annually. Yet, the tourism figures (via both air and cruise ship) are on a steady increase; and the official policy appears to be satisfied with expansion (e.g. Kaae 2006). And so, Greenland may be simply a very late starter on the otherwise conventional route to mass tourism. We could say the same about Madagascar, and other smaller islands. The march to conventional development grips such islands too: their populations – as their tourist

[4] As do the MIRAB and SITE models (both reviewed in Bertram 2006).

visitations – may continue to grow unchecked, and impact progressively more severely on finite and fragile natural assets.[5]

The trajectory from ecologic towards economic development is often a victim of the sheer momentum of democratic politics. Once local residents start buying into the tourism industry, they develop an interest in increasing tourism numbers, hoping to tap into the accruing wealth by landing an additional job or contract, or else offering that one additional bed, meal, tour, or souvenir: a dynamic well explained in the 'development phase' by Butler (1980) in his Tourism Area Life Cycle model, or by the 'Tragedy of the Commons' as outlined by Hardin (1968). But more tourists does not necessarily translate into higher local value added, especially when a locale's exclusive charm is eroded and the local environment becomes irreparably degraded with the impact of tourist invasions – diminishing returns are a real threat, especially on the smallest islands. Politicians in democracies may be loathe, or find it difficult, to adopt unpopular measures that may, or are seen to, thwart the 'trickle down' benefits – such as rents and employment – that may accrue from this industry.

Still, in spite of these real political challenges, there are a few examples which suggest a fairly successful brake on the normal expansion of tourism and its creeping penetration on a smaller island's infrastructure, economy and society. To illustrate, three 'warm water' island cases are presented below[6]: they manifest, to different degrees, how they have been able to buck the trend to a mass tourism market, with its setbacks.

The Seychelles is one such example. This has been one of the most stable, fastest growing economies in Africa over the medium term, having made a successful transition to democracy in the last decade. The arrival of 130,000 tourists generated some €118 million (US$112 million) in 2000, corresponding to 20% of GDP and 60% of foreign exchange earnings (Shah 2002). A similar number of visitors was reported for 2005, but generating a more substantive €222 million (US$246 million) (Gössling et al. 2008). McElroy (2006) assigns it a penetration index of 0.107. Tourism is thus a key pillar of the economy for this 112-island archipelago with a population of around 90,000. The Seychelles has adopted a strong-arm approach to the industry. It has limited the size of hotels (beyond tourism 'villages') to a maximum of 200 rooms; it maintains a selective marketing approach where pricing acts as a filter for the type of tourism that the country desires. It has exploited its archipelagic nature, leading to its tourist destinations most distant from the capital and the country's sole international airport – like Bird Island and Cousin Island – to have higher occupancy rates, even though they are costlier and both more difficult and expensive to get to. Prices per bed night per person reached €40 in 2001, even in the simplest guesthouses (e.g. Rosalie 2002); more recently, €60 is cited as the minimum for a double room (Gössling 2008). There are currently plans to attract a maximum of 250,000 tourists a year.[7]

[5] Although, in sharp contrast to each other, Greenland's population is basically stable; while that of Madagascar is growing at over 3% per annum, and will thus double in around 22 years.

[6] Material in the forthcoming section has been gleaned mainly from Baldacchino (2006c).

[7] Stefan Gössling, private e-mail communication, July 2008.

Environmental legislation in the Seychelles was implemented in a top-down process under the one-party state of President France Albert René in the mid-1970s. This policy continued even after the turn to democracy in the early 1990s. The institutional framework for environmental conservation was established with the implementation of the Department of the Environment in 1989. As early as 1990, this Department resented the first environmental management plan for the Seychelles (RoS 1990), followed by a plan for 2000–2010 which provides guidelines for all activities related to the environment (RoS 2001). In order to ensure environmental conservation, some 50% of the land area of the Seychelles (230 km^2) was turned into protected areas (RoS 2001). These areas are of particular importance in creating the image of an eco-island, and they are part of the Seychelles' successful marketing strategy (Gössling and Wall 2007). Within the archipelago, such an island as Aldabra, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, has no permanent settlement and is only accessible to scientists and special visitors.

Another example of successful containment and high per capita value added could be that of *St Barthélemy* (or *St Barths*), a Caribbean island which is an overseas collectivity of France (and, until 2007, part of the same *department d'outre mer* as Guadeloupe). The island has an area of only about 12 km^2 and a residential population of about 3,500 persons. The island has long been considered a playground of the rich and famous; it is known for its beautiful pristine beaches, gourmet dining in chic bistros and high-end designer shopping. There are only some 25 hotels, most of them with 15 rooms or fewer, and the largest, the Guanahani, has just 70 rooms. Doumenge (1998: 341) describes the island as follows:

> There, the airport has a very small airstrip, accessible only to small planes having not more than 20 seats (including that of the pilot). This drastically limits tourist access, and offers an efficient means of control. In St Barthélemy, you can enjoy a very quiet, traditional way of life, with a very high standard of living, and the islanders control their destiny in a more thorough manner than would otherwise be possible.

For the insatiably curious, the island's "incredibly short runway" (Insiders' Guide 2006) is 2,100 feet (646 m) long. In the Caribbean region, only Saba has as shorter runway. Flying on a scheduled flight into St Barths is only possible with small planes, like the 20-seater Hawker de Havilland Twin Otter. A total of 175,055 passengers arrived in St Barths in 2003, port and airport combined: "passengers" includes both residents and visitors alike. While there is as yet no system that allows the exact number of tourists to be counted, the number of visitors is calculated at around 50,000 (St Barths News 2004). One cannot fly direct into St Barths: the main entry point for commercial flights is via Dutch Sint Maarten, just 10-min' flying time away. Those 10 min, apparently, make a world of a difference. As Doumenge (1998) candidly continues: [AU2]

> Just in front of St Barthélemy lies Sint Maarten, an island with disaster written all over it, with its mafia barons, gambling racket, and crowds in excess of one million tourists a year channeled through a large international airport.

A third example, this time of how a containment policy can run into serious difficulty, even though it may have started off with the best of intentions, concerns

the *Galápagos Islands*. This island archipelago has been identified as "Evolution's Workshop" following the pioneering work of such bio-geographers and zoologists as Charles Darwin, David Lack, and Peter and Rosemary Grant (Larson 2002). One-third of the archipelago's vascular land plants are endemic, as are nearly all the reptiles, half the breeding land birds, and almost 30% of the marine species. This has led to an international movement to preserve the islands' unique ecosystem, and the support of the Ecuadorian Government, to which the islands belong. The plan was for controlled tourism to help safeguard the rich flora and fauna, while sustaining livelihoods for the locals. The Charles Darwin Research Station, run by the Charles Darwin Foundation, was set up in 1959 (www.darwinfoundation.org/); UNESCO declared the Galápagos one of its first four World Heritage Sites in 1978; a Biological Marine Resources Reserve was set up in 1986, with a zoning plan in place by 1992; and a 1998 'Special Law' restricted movement of mainland Ecuadorians to the islands. It looked like the environmentalists had secured the upper hand in the context of a positive-sum game (UNEP/WCMC 2006).

But the experience has proved exasperating. Hoping to find work, and lured by the prospects of a better life, people from mainland Ecuador have literally invaded the Islands. The 1949 population was just 800. The 1990 Census reported an island population of 9,735. In 2005, the resident population was 28,000, and is growing at 6.5% per annum. Tourism has been too successful: despite high prices – the National Park charges a US$100 entrance fee on foreign tourists – the stream of visitors has never wavered: Not surprising, considering that the average cost of a US package to the Galápagos was already around US$3,000 in 2001 (Kerr 2006). In the 1960s, there were around 1,000 tourists annually; some 140,000 visitors turned up in 2006. A third airport has been built; and cruise ship visitations started in 2007. Tourists visiting the park are expected to total about 180,000 in 2008 (Kraul 2008).

Tensions at Work

The Galápagos case is illustrative of the many interesting tensions at work in these island contexts: reminding us that 'development' is always contested since it begets both winners and losers. Although a UNESCO World Heritage Site, this archipelago is witnessing "the mixed blessings of greenery": finding it hard to prevent invasions of mainland Ecuadoreans to settle on its territory, threatening its unique environment and species (e.g. Larson 2002; The Economist 2008). Some specific islands try to move away from the economic to the ecologic model of development, with industrial and other stakeholders doggedly defending their way of life. Tasmania, for example, continues to struggle to define itself, with a considerable lobby intent on commercially exploiting its old growth forests, while other interests, differently considerable, are just as determined to protect and preserve them (e.g. Chen and Hay 2006). In contrast, other

island jurisdictions are making an opposite move, from the ecologic to the economic logic, promoting some industrialisation especially to stave off massive regional depopulation. The job opportunities, but environmental cost, associated with building an aluminum smelter in Eastern Iceland has divided that island's public (e.g. Hollingham 2007). Similarly, the Government of Dominica – said to be the only island that navigator Christopher Columbus would recognize were he to revisit the Caribbean today – has decided to accept an offer from its Venezuelan counterpart to build an oil refinery, sparking keen debates on how this decision would compromise the country's 'sustainable development' and its credentials as the 'nature island' of the Caribbean (e.g. TheDominican.net 2007; Shillingford 2007).

Carving Out Islands for Ecological Sustainability

It is much easier for sub-national, island territories and jurisdictions to adopt and maintain an ecological approach to their development than an independent state. This is because they can be zoned for such a purpose, while other economic development related activities can take place elsewhere, presumably in the metropole. Islands, especially smaller ones, can become beacons, or what Turner (2007) calls "geographies of hope". Turner is keen to present us with a scattering of islands that are making impressive advances in energy sustainability, and serve as beacons of optimism in otherwise dark and gloomy times. The trouble is that Turner uses the word 'island' as metaphor; only two of the examples from his 'archipelago' of cases are real physical islands. Nevertheless, these two islands – Samsø (a 100% renewable energy site) and Aerø – both in Denmark, are clear examples of islands boasting energy sustainability. Other 'real island' examples can be added, for good measure: Iceland, with its hydrogen powered bus fleet and the commitment to be (except for its air planes) fossil free by 2050; Islands like Mackinac (USA); Hiddensee (Germany); Sark (Channel Islands), Cheung Chau and Lama (Hong Kong, China) remain today without automobiles. The only two vehicles on Heligoland (Germany) are the fire truck and – since 2007 – a police car. Bermuda, which for some time banned the motorcar, has a strict 'one car per household' policy plus no rentable vehicles. On La Digue, the third largest island in The Seychelles, the local authority restricts the issuing of licenses for trucks, cars/taxis and buses. On Mosquito Island, British Virgin Islands, recently purchased by Sir Richard Branson, everything is designed to reduce, or eliminate dependence on fossil fuels.

There are three general ways in which islands have been thus carved out and enclaved.

The first is via *the crafting of parks or nature/culture reserves*. Park status prevents finite, prized but public resources from falling victim to the 'tragedy of the commons'. The world's largest protected marine area, until recently, has been Australia's Great Barrier Reef (which includes many islands). Since 2006, the

Papahānaumokuākea (originally Northwestern) Hawaiian Islands Marine National Monument (USA) is even larger, with an area of some 362,000 km^2, more than the total area of all current U.S. national parkland (e.g. Eilperin 2006). In the Orkney Islands of Scotland, the largest land owner today is the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Perhaps the most prestigious list of all is UNESCO's list of World Heritage Sites. Some national parks (like Dominica's Morne Trois Pitons) get inscribed onto this list in due course. Inscription on this high-status list identifies a locale as having cultural and/or natural features that are recognized as deservedly common heritage of humankind and therefore meriting being preserved for all, beyond the actual political borders where they may happen to be situated. Islands, singly or in groups, are the only places in the world that can find themselves *totally ensconced* as World Heritage Sites. Thus, at the latest round of additions to the list, announced on 7 July 2008, there were sites *in* Mauritius, *in* New Caledonia, *in* Vanuatu and *in* Cuba announced; but the whole island of Surtsey (Iceland) and the whole Socotra archipelago (Yemen) were also included. (They thus join such wholly endorsed islands as the Aeolian Islands, Aldabra, Baja de California Islands, Fraser Island, Galápagos, Gorée, Henderson, Isla de Cocos, Lord Howe, Mozambique Island, New Zealand Sub-Antarctic Islands, Rapa Nui/Easter Island, Robben Island, Saint-Louis, St Kilda, and Venice.) Some of these islands, especially those listed for their natural features, are totally depopulated (as is Surtsey); some are accessible to scientists (Macquarie Island, Australia); others to tourists but only after obtaining special permission (Aldabra atoll, Seychelles); some even inaccessible, in name as much as in deed: Gough and Inaccessible Islands (United Kingdom) were inscribed to the list in 1995.

The second route to ecological development is via *non-democratic control and non-pluralist governance*. (The designation of land or sea as parks, reserves or world heritage sites is in itself a form of wresting such spaces from the non-regulatory and *laissez faire* tendencies of democracy.) The 'political geography' of cold water islands might partly explain why there are typically less pressures to expand tourism on these locations. Extreme island regions of larger states tend to lie on the political periphery, especially when they have small populations: un/under-represented in the corridors of power; largely forgotten by centralized policy makers suffering from 'the urban bias'; dismissed as insignificant backwaters other than, perhaps, in strategic (military and resource) terms (Butler 1993; Wilkinson 1994). A weak local political influence and a lackadaisical interest from the centre do, in turn, suggest that local elites assume significant politico-economic power. These elites also tend to be narrower, less fragmented and more concentrated in island jurisdictions with small populations (e.g. Buker 2005; May and Tupouniua 1980; Richards 1982). Moreover, in non-sovereign island territories, the concentration of local politico-economic power is more likely to rest in the hands of a small identifiable group: a religious congregation (Solovetsky), a team of scientists (Macquarie); an indigenously controlled corporation (Baffin; Nunivak); an arms-length enterprise trust (Chatham); or a municipality (Luleå)

(*for individual case studies*, *see*: Baldacchino 2006d).[8] Such skewed influence creates a situation where there is hardly a plurality of interest groups clamouring to benefit, and benefit fast, from the tourism bandwagon. The oligopolies in power are champions of tradition; they effuse caution and harbour a suspicion of change. They are fully aware of the environmental and economic risks of mass tourism and are immune to populist pressures that may oblige them to consider such investments in that industry. And so, there is limited discussion (at best) on whether to take the tourism industry forward. Most of those in power have no stake in tourism – which is not a key industry anyway – and so are more likely to view its intrusion with some grave, even legitimate, concerns. This is well captured in the following statement, uttered by none other than Archimandrite Josef, the head of the Monastery on the Solovetsky Islands, Russia. It leaves no room for discussion:

> [O]vergrowth of tourism flows and preservation of divine spirit of the island are incompatible. Nobody even thinks of converting Solovetsky into a trendy resort where the White Sea shore is full of restaurants and … the sky above the Monastery's towers is crossed by paragliders (International symposium, *Solovetsky: Future Insights*, 2003; quoted in Nevmerzhitskaya 2006: 162).

There is thus an uncanny similarity to the situation in the Seychelles, which developed the foundations of its tourism strategies in a top-down fashion, and during a period of one-party rule. Meanwhile, both the Seychelles and St Barths have transformed what might at first glance appear to be a brace of awesome physical obstacles (remoteness and archipelagicity on one hand; a short airport runway on the other) into tools which help to filter and control access, increasing the distinctiveness of – and maintaining a relatively high price for – the tourism experience.

A third variant, and extreme rendition of this 'governance for exclusivity', is that found on *totally private islands* – again, one island condition that cannot be found on continents. Private islands exist all round the world, and many can be bought – with potential for commercial development or private recreational use.[9] While even private islands operate within the purview of sovereign states, their status as the objects of lease or purchase allows the buyer considerable discretion (which varies from state to state) as to how to manage the island – but commonly with the intent to *restrict access* to a select few, typically some of the owners' relatives, the rich and the famous. They operate as gated communities where geography does much of the gating. Ironically, it is the cash and value added created in the *economically* successful 'hot spots' of the world that is often behind the financing needed to purchase, craft and conserve *ecological* island enclaves. This is another way of tapping 'the hinterland beyond' (Baldacchino 2006b). And so, the two sides of the 'eco principle' connect in a rather perverse but symbiotic relationship.

[8] Antarctica has its own, unique, multi-lateral governance regime, which transcends national territorial sovereignty, and is primarily driven by scientific interests.

[9] For a web-site dealing in private islands, visit: http://www.privateislandsonline.com/.

The State of Natural Capital

Perhaps one can modify a proposition made by Funk (2008) and schematize a relationship between economic development and ecological development based on the state of 'natural capital'. In such a model, there are two broad, ideal-type, development trajectories. In the first, countries which have significant 'natural assets', would allow their natural resource endowments – sugar, banana, copra, timber, bauxite, phosphate … – to be mined or harvested and exported, and particularly in a raw state which means that most of the value added is reaped in other economies; thus, these countries are not likely to 'develop' beyond 'plantation economy' status. They transform their land into a mono-crop economy, remain dependent on world prices, and forego the processing and technological impetus that this involves; and so, they are not necessarily much richer for what they do (in short: *Rich Land, Poor Economy*). In contrast, those countries that had no natural capital worth exploiting to start off with – because of poor soils and fishing grounds, as well as limited fresh water, exacerbated by high population densities, or because of early deforestation – would basically have no choice but to promote innovative development policies. These may include high levels of out-migration (and then remittances), attracting foreign investment, or otherwise tapping 'rents' from elsewhere, specializing in such services as tourism and finance; these have typically done well economically, driven by the need to tap hinterlands and markets beyond their shores (e.g. Kakazu 1994). Such success attracts immigrants and exacerbates population densities. Bar some isolated 'pockets' of nature – themselves the subject of intense conflict – these territories would have ruined any natural capital which they may have originally enjoyed (in short: *Poor Land, Rich Economy*).

Is there, and can there be, a middle road between these two routes? Can there be a place which enjoys development but where any 'natural capital' is prized and conserved, and not adulterated? Can we conceive of an island (and rather than the much heralded city) as a fully self-supporting 'economy of place' (e.g. Logan and Molotch 2007)? The question then becomes: how does one make such natural capital 'pay' for itself and its maintenance? How does one avoid "picturesque poverty"?[10] Low populations, apart from low population densities, may help (though this also means that there is less opportunity to reap economies of scale); sustainable management practices by indigenous people might help too. The integration of ecological principles into mainstream development practices is also commendable: for example, applications related to restoration, rehabilitation, conservation, sustainability, reconstruction and remediation of ecosystems using ecological engineering techniques are now numerous. Yet: are there other options for revenue generation, other than niche/eco-tourism, park use and access fees, international aid, and/or outright sale to private interests? (*Rich Land: but, what Economy?*) The Biosphere Reserve Management Concept, traced to the early 1970s with UNESCO and its *Man and the Biosphere* (MAB) program, has evolved to appreciate that the

[10] As the Isle of Wight has been described by Councilor Harry Rees. See Arnold (2003).

conservation of sites only becomes sustainable in the longer term if a range of economically viable and sustainable options are afforded to communities contiguous to those sites (e.g. Batisse 1990). A clearer link between resource management and economic development needs to be established; this link however often remains elusive without external financial inputs. Indeed, the preservation of pristine environments often depends on the transfer of rentier income generated elsewhere.

Moreover, many of these touted 'solutions' themselves imply negative externalities: for example, both international eco-tourism and wind turbine construction projects generate high carbon emissions. Ensuring ecological integrity or ecosystemic health in one place may still imply degradation someplace else.

Clearly, it becomes very difficult for any jurisdiction to maintain itself on exclusively ecological principles. We have no choice but to interpret sustainability in fairly loose ways. Although *whole islands and archipelagos* have been ensconced on the UNESCO World Heritage or Biosphere Reserve Lists, no *whole country* has been, and is not likely to be.

Conclusion

This exploratory paper has proposed to move away from the 'vulnerability-resilience' continuum that grips much of the debate on the economic viability of smaller (often island) jurisdictions today, replacing it with an alternative but similarly bimodal conversation: one between economic (high-density) and ecological (low-density) criteria of development. In so doing, one invites a reconsideration of the impact of physical geography on development, as well as the changing relationship between 'nature' and 'human culture'.

There are various, possibly significant, policy lessons and implications lurking in this text. One of these concerns the appropriateness of a development policy predicated on population growth. The notion that population growth is good 'in principle' needs to be critiqued, and the Malthusian concerns with population growth re-proposed for serious discussion. Meanwhile, the export of human resources for long term sustainability is a policy more easily practised by sub-national island territories and jurisdictions, since these are locked into political relationships with larger, continental states countries willing to receive – or unable to legally thwart – this 'surplus', and which are themselves beyond entertaining holistic ecological development routes.

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Author Queries

Chapter No.: 5

Queries	Details Required	Author's Response
AU1	Please check the insertion of city and state name in affiliation.	
AU2	The citation "Doumenge (ibid.)" (original) has been changed to "Doumenge (1998)". Please check if appropriate.	
AU3	Please update reference "Gössling (2008)".	
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