

Balancing growth in tourism and environmental protection in an emerging destination

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New Caledonia: a new destination far from mass tourism

A vast archipelago in the Pacific:

18 575 Km² land surface with an exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of **1 422 543 km²**.

A multicultural population:

270 000 inhabitants of various ethnic groups (Oceanians, Europeans and Asians), with a majority of kanaks, who are governed by traditional melanesian law and possess tribal land.

A French territory with a large degree of autonomy:

3 Provinces (South, North and Islands) managing independently their economy... practically like the states of a federate country including tourism



An economy historically based on the mining and metallurgy industry:

Nickel remains the principal export, despite the current crisis

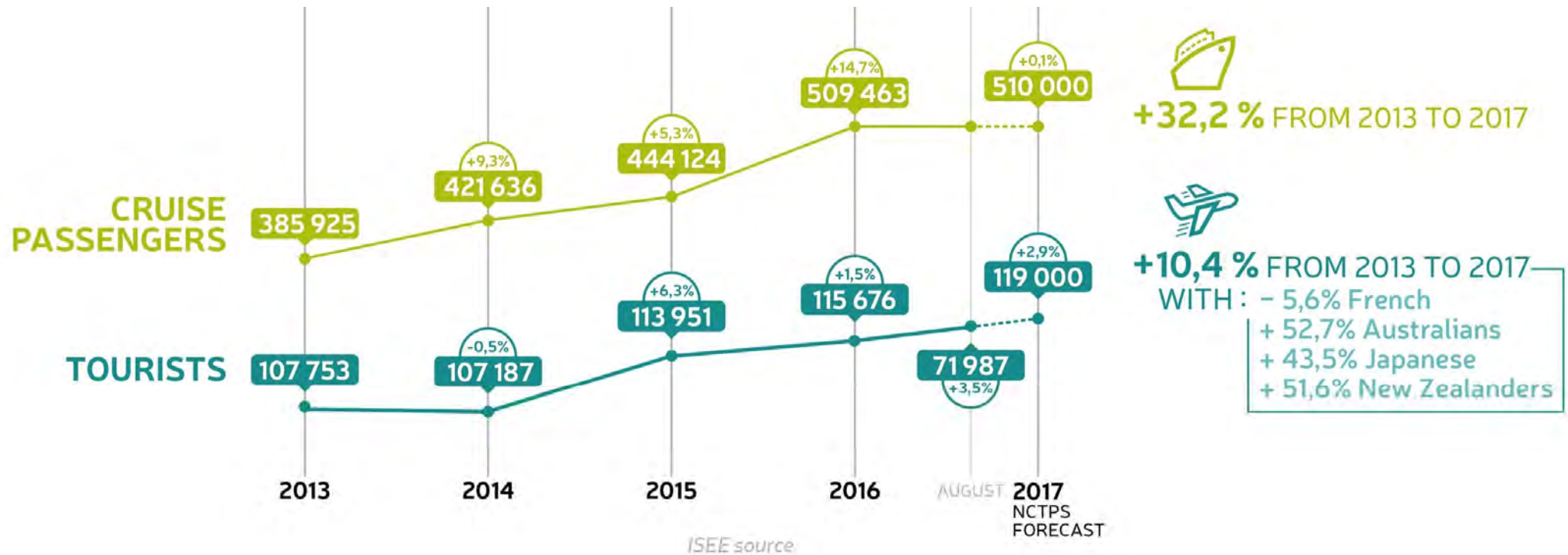


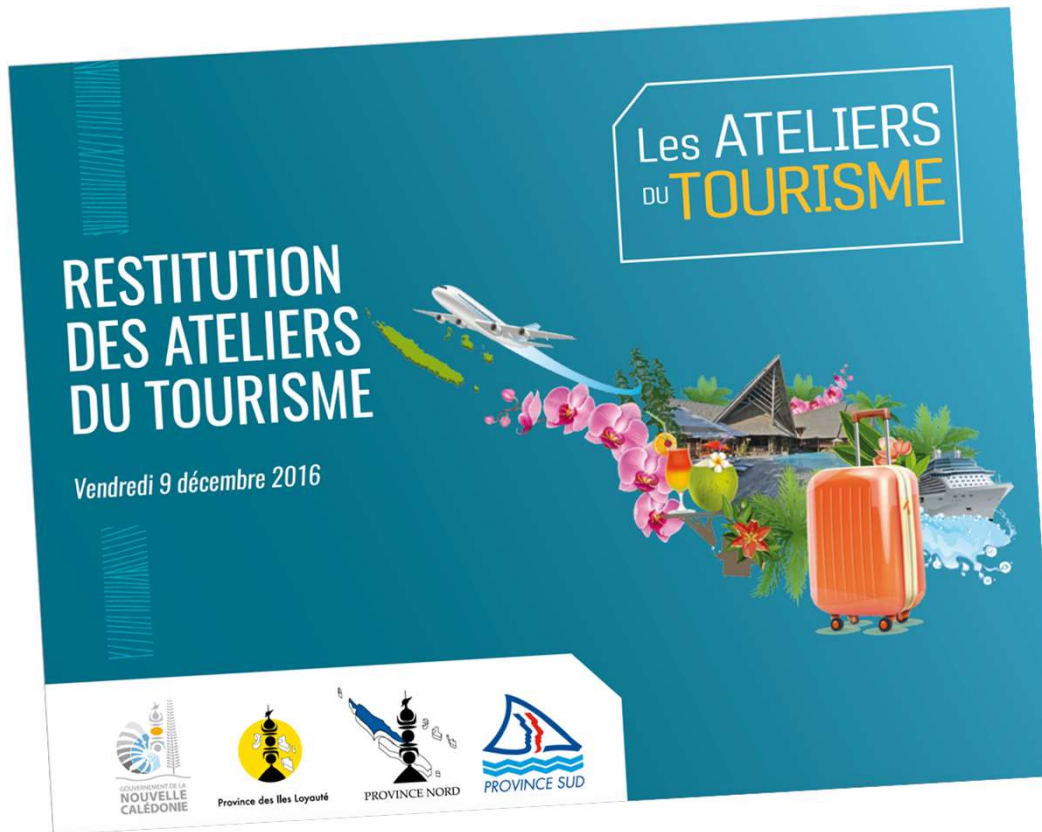
Tourism: A secondary activity with positive trends

No Ministry of Tourism (Provincial responsibility)

Historically, there are around 100,000 visitors to New Caledonia per year.

Since 2014, the growth is quite significant





New strategy to develop tourism :

In 2016, more than 200 interviews of 500 public and private actors in the tourism sector were carried out as part of the 'Tourism workshops'.

- Reasons for the tourism sector stagnation
- Recommendations to turn NC into a tourism destination
- What kind of tourism for NC ?

A tourism development strategy has been adopted by the country making tourism a priority sector to develop and providing a road map to attain some ambitious targets.

Objective : Diversify NC's economy

The stake

After having been 'preserved' by mass tourism, the country is now engaged to develop this sector.

The objective is to develop a sustainable tourism respecting the environment and the culture of its inhabitants, taking lessons from other destinations experiences ...

A strong desire to preserve natural and social environment



Strong desire to preserve the natural and social environments



A traditional lifestyle in harmony with the natural environment...

Outside of the capital Nouméa where half the population lives, the inhabitants live in a rural environment.

Kanaks, live in tribes and cultivate their vegetables. The land has sacred meaning tied to the history of their ancestors and to their clans.

Bushmen (broussard), french descendents who settled mostly on the west coast for many generations, are mostly cattle-breeder living in ranches in vast wilderness

A rich and strong culture

Both **culture** remain very authentic, resisting ‘**folklorisation**’.



A country affected by nickel mining

Caledonians in general have seen the impact of the **mining industry** and are particularly sensitive to the **risks of pollution** and each new large project is closely monitored by the local population

...**Developing an ecological and cultural consciousness.**

Tourism development involving populations and cultures



Development respecting local populations and cultures



The tribe, a community where land cannot be divisible nor commercialised

Almost 1/3 of Caledonian land (and 100 % in the Loyalty Islands) is composed of 'traditional custom land' belonging to each tribes. In the Kanak culture, land is not personal property, which can be sold or used for economic gain without the agreement of the rest of the community.

Development on custom land thanks to an original legal act

In 1981, a **Special Legal structure** (Groupement de Droit Particulier Local **GDPL**), was created in order **to group individuals of a tribe connected by custom law into a *legal entity* which permitted them to exploit property collectively.**

By this mean, Kanaks can make use of their land for tourism projects against remuneration, keeping collective oversight rights. The tribe community become shareholders in property development companies with the same involvement and same rights in projects as the other shareholders.



The Deva Estate and its 5 star resort

A successful tourist development totally integrated into its natural and social environment.

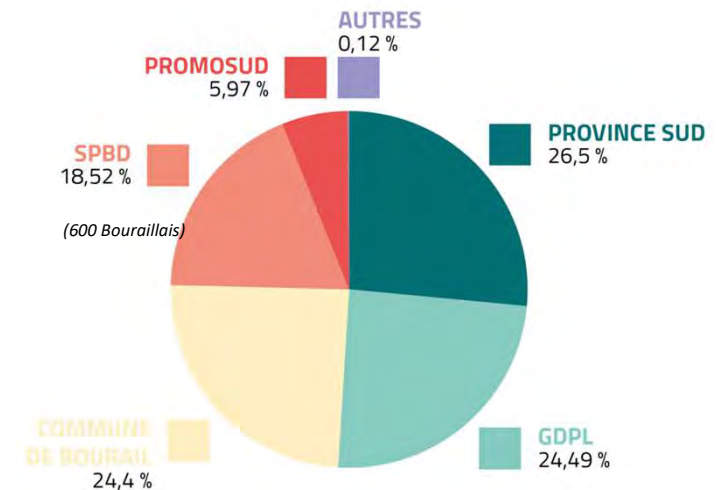
A veritable strategy for land development, wealth redistribution and sustainable development

Association of **all the local actors**: public institutions, local populations, private companies — in a semi-public company, la SEM MWE ARA

Objectives: economic development, cultural promotion and the showcasing of an exceptional natural site.

Of the **8000 ha (20000 acres)** of **nature reserve** site, **only 10 %** is **used** for tourism or cultural purposes, for :

Structure of the SEM MWE ARA :



- A 5* Sheraton hotel with 180 rooms
- An 18-hole golf course
- Trails (hiking, horse-riding, biking)
- Bird-watching lookout...



Cruise management by the island populations

As all of the **Loyalty Islands Province is composed of customary land, tourism can only be fair and ethical**, with an equitable distribution of the benefits and in full respect of the inhabitants' traditional way of life.

Any tourist project must have the approval of the customary authorities **which then involves the populations.**

In 1995, the Great Chief of Lifou :

- Identified and established a restricted and limited area on the lagoon designed to welcome cruises where the effects on the anchoring is minimal, as well as choose a specific beach with the agreement of the tribe population where cruise passengers can enjoy the beach
- Then he organised a collective management whereby **each of the island's tribes would take turns to guide, feed and entertain the visitors during the arrival of each ship.** In this way, the whole island benefits from this cruise industry.

Since then, Lifou welcomes **220 000 cruise ship passengers** per year. The same applies to the islands of Maré which has seen cruise ship passengers quadruple in only 5 years.



Expansion of homestayd lodging options in tribes and ranches

One of the characteristics of Caledonian tourism is its authenticity, which comes from the wish to preserve the cultural and social environment which, in turn, has resulted in the development of homestays.

Homestays in the tribe, made possible by the GDPL, are multiplying and the Loyalty Islands Province has set up an elaborate classification system of homestays in tribes. They also increased the number of traditional cultural festivals to attract tourists.

The bushmen, just as proud of their culture, provide lodging on their farms through networks such as **Welcome to the farm...**

These small lodges are scattered throughout the territory, and attract many clients keen to experience the rural and authentic way of living of **Kanaks and Bushmen**.

Tourism development preserving natural resources



Development in the preservation of natural wealth



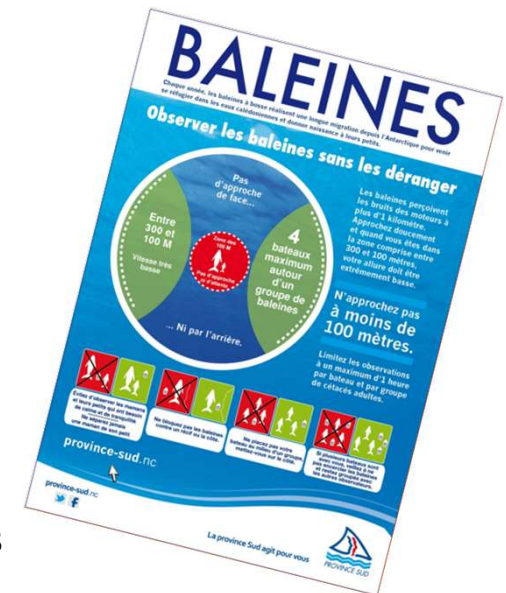
Exceptional biodiversity...

With the **world's largest closed lagoon**, New Caledonia is considered to have one of **the most diverse ecosystems on the planet**.

The island has an exceptional high number of endemic species, with more than **3000 species of endemic flora** and **1500 species of endemic animals**.

Organised environmental protection plan taking tourism activities into consideration

At the request of the populations, in order to protect these unique ecosystems while developing sustainable tourism, the Provinces and the Government have **increased the number of public awareness campaigns initiative promoting ecology, nature protection with brochures, guides, school presentations etc. and created different types of natural reserves and parks**





‘Sustainable resource managed Zones’

Identification of sites dedicated to **high tourist activity**, often in and around the capital city

Charter of good conduct for the respect of the environment

E.g.: Île aux canards,

Amédée island,

Bois du sud...

Controlled by coastal guards





Provincial parks

Parks where preservation is **a priority**

Tourist activity is authorised to showcase the beauty, **but much more limited** for environmental control.

Ei: limited number of visitors, entry fee, opening hours, no vehicles, creation of dedicated picnic areas with wooden tables, BBQ, toilets, code of conducts etc.

Park rangers are controlling the park etc.

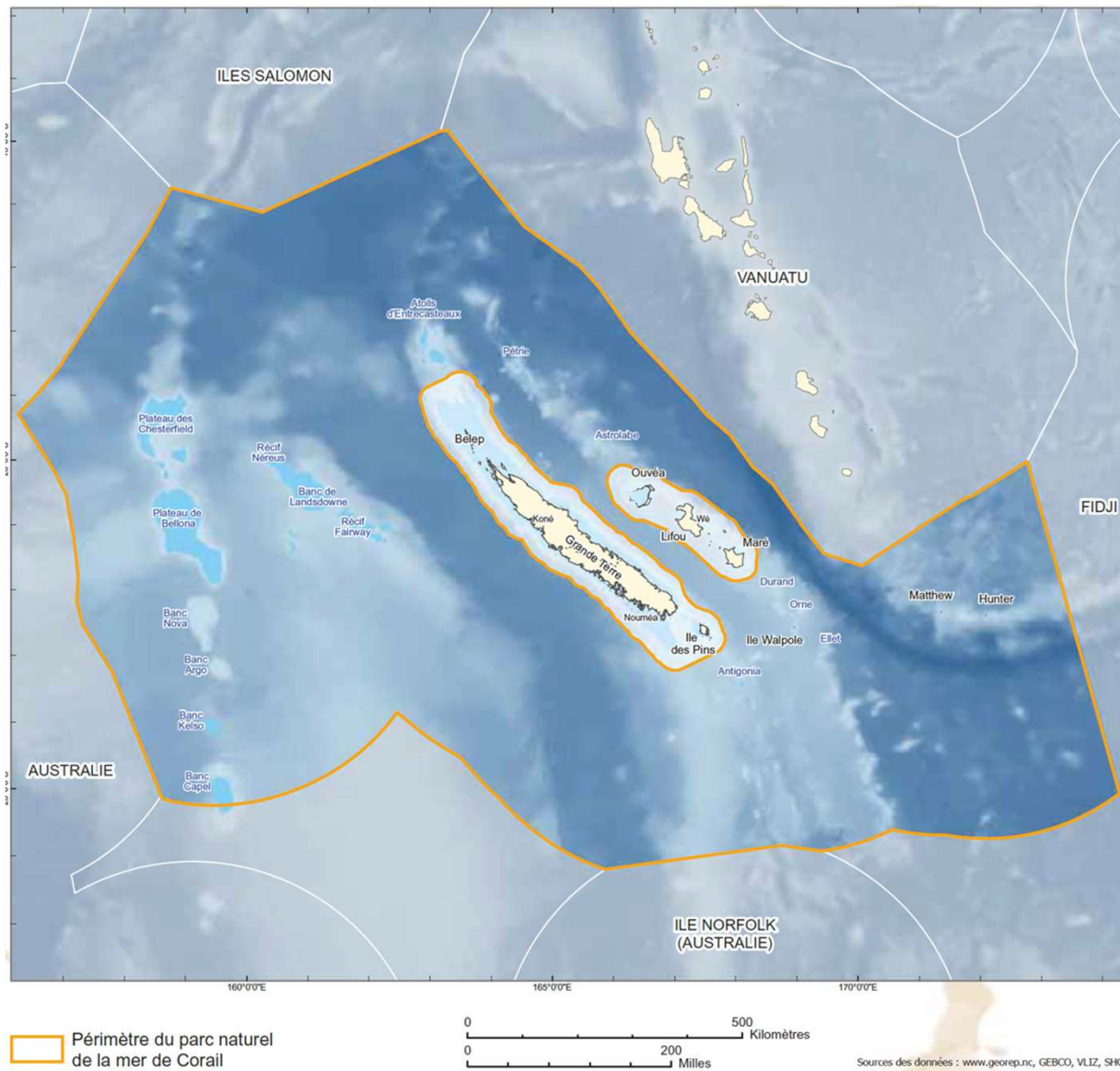
E.g.: the Blue River park (9 000 ha)
the Great Ferns park,





Since 2018 UNESCO has Registered 6 vast marine and terrestrial zones of NC as world heritage sites.

Presented in our international tourist communication as a **key feature to represent New Caledonia's international image of a protected and respectful tourists destination.**



**The Coral Sea natural reserve of
1 291 000 km²**

One of the largest maritime natural reserves in the world where all economic activity is controlled by the government.

Joint management of tourism development



Joint management of tourism development

19



The various entities that have been managing Caledonian tourism:

- **3 Provinces** in charge of economic development,
- **3 Destination marketing organisation (GIE)** promoting destination
- **3 Semi-public companies** in charge of investments
- **16 Tourism information bureau** in charge of welcoming tourists
- **1 Government** (taxes, aviation regulations, etc.),
- **Private sector (+ 800 service providers)**
- ... no ministry of tourism

Towards an integrated system accross all stakes with a *Tourism developent management agency* to pilot the strategy more efficiently



In terms of marketing : CLOSER TIES BETWEEN THE PROMOTING ENTITIES

Implementation of « Destination contracts »

... an original joint management engagement to promote the destination on a specific market

Adoption of the same brand by the 3 promotional agencies used for international promotion :

New Caledonia, Pacific heart

Coordinated by the Government, the 3 agencies, hoteliers, international and domestic airline companies, and ground operator agencies meet to coordinate the promotion and commercialisation of the destination on a specific market, each actor making commitments related to its activity.

This joint management approach has been quite fruitful and has been a driving force helping to increase tourist numbers since 2014

NEW CALEDONIA TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (TDA)

A Board of Directors representing all the actors in tourism

Missions

INT'L PROMOTION

- International promotion
- Destination marketing
- New market research
- Destination contracts
- ...

INVESTMENT

- Entry point of investors
- Prospect potential investors
- Identification of sites and tourist initiatives (hotels, activities, air transport...)
- Input and advise on projects
- Check if projects are in compliance with development strategy
- ...

CRUISES & YACHTING

- Monitor and control of the cruise industry according to the country tourism development strategy
- Monitor the impact on the environment and the populations
- Organise and coordinated « cruise club »
- Encourage the development of new tailor-made smaller cruises based in NC, yachting products,
- ...

STRATEGY

- Coordinate the implementation of the tourism strategy and update it according to the trends
- Implement a tourism observatory (statistics) to better pilot the strategy
- Jointly coordinate training courses and adapt public educational programmes to include tourism in scholarship
- Develop awareness on sustainable tourism benefits amongst the population
- ...



2016 tourism workshops have set the road map of a tourism development strategy until 2025.

All the actors in tourism and managing entities have made a **clear choice** to develop a **sustainable and responsible tourism**

The implementation of this country ambitious strategy will soon be driven by this new agency (ADT) controlled by all actors in the private and public tourism sectors.

... and the population has obviously been involved in the decision-making process.

With this collective participative approach, our goal is
to develop an environmental and people-friendly sustainable tourism sector
contributing to wealth redistribution and helping all ethnic groups living together
In New-Caledonia

