

14 Amenity Migration in the Patagonian Mountain Community of San Martín de los Andes, Neuquén, Argentina

Adriana Otero, Lía Nakayama, Susana Marioni,
Elisa Gallego, Alicia Lonac, Andrés Dimitriu,
Rodrigo González and Claudia Hosid

Planning and Management Research Group, Faculty of Tourism, Universidad Nacional del Comahue, Neuquén, Argentina

Introduction

‘Conspicuous consumption’ of land, borrowing Thorstein Veblen’s classical expression, may well describe key elements of land use in the Andean Lake District since its colonization by the Argentine State in the early 20th century. At first this took place at a slow pace, attributable to an inappropriate and inequitable colonization policy, inadequate infrastructure, the vastness of the region, prohibitive building costs, distance from industrial or administrative centres and a restricted real estate market in and around a few large *estancias* (cattle ranches). Touring the region, *per se* an adventure appreciated in early travel literature, and the quality of consumed services or the social connections gained during a summer or ski season were the common yardsticks for measuring social status and success. However, lasting access to this region’s amenities was typically only affordable by a wealthy minority until the 1950s, and then increasingly this became mixed with, and surpassed by, waves of settlers which included political or economic émigrés. These migrations also included the less wealthy, who came because of economic opportunities, and urban middle classes,

who were principally drawn by the environmental and cultural amenities of the region.

In the past two decades, however, a dual process of harsh contrast took place: social impoverishment and a gentrifying ‘rediscovery’ of the Argentine Patagonia. This change was influenced by a variety of factors, including a burgeoning political-economic crisis, deficient public policies, urban violence in the large cities of Argentina and, not surprisingly, a rising international interest in ‘green’ investment in high-quality landscapes. These conditions converged with the popularization of outdoor sports in general, but more specifically mountaineering, skiing, rafting, trekking, cycling, the use of all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and a rising ecological awareness.

One of the main objectives of this chapter is to identify the characteristics and consequences of amenity migration in a specific location within this region, San Martín de los Andes, and to assess the importance and historical continuities of its development. These historical conditions, beyond contextual characteristics, are also shown to be closely interconnected to larger institutional configurations and concepts about land use, ‘the frontier’, access to resources and

property claims. In analysing the impacts of this migration, key aspects closely related to the process of local development are also described. In addition, information is developed that can help understand the underlying factors: reason for migration, perceptions of the migratory phenomenon, evaluation of migrants' experiences, analysis of causes and consequences and also, possibly, remedial action.

San Martín de los Andes (San Martín) is the main mountain resort of Neuquén Province, Argentina (see Fig. 14.1). The town sits at 640 m, at the head of Lake Lacar and is surrounded by the Andes. Its premier ski resort is on 1980-m-high Mt Chapelco, but the most important scenic attraction is towering Lanin Volcano, 3776 m in height. The city is also the main gateway community to Lanin National Park. According to an updated public-funded marketing survey and campaign, San Martín is an 'ecological mountain village', and one of the favourite places in Argentina of amenity migrants and tourists.

Methodology

This case study is based on a previous research project about environmental management of mountain tourist centres in Argentina (Otero *et al.*, 2001). The methodological approach used to revise this research done in San Martín to address amenity migration was a diachronic approach based on primary and secondary data. Interviews were undertaken with people who were amenity migrants from different periods in recent years to learn about their migration and their perception of the migration process. Key variables analysed were: time of migration, reasons for migration, familial composition, their evaluation of the experience of being an amenity migrant and the relationship between their activities and tourism. Some native or locally born residents of San Martín were also interviewed for their views on amenity migration and these migrants. An additional criterion in selecting interviewees was their belonging to varying economic sectors of society. In total, 25 interviews

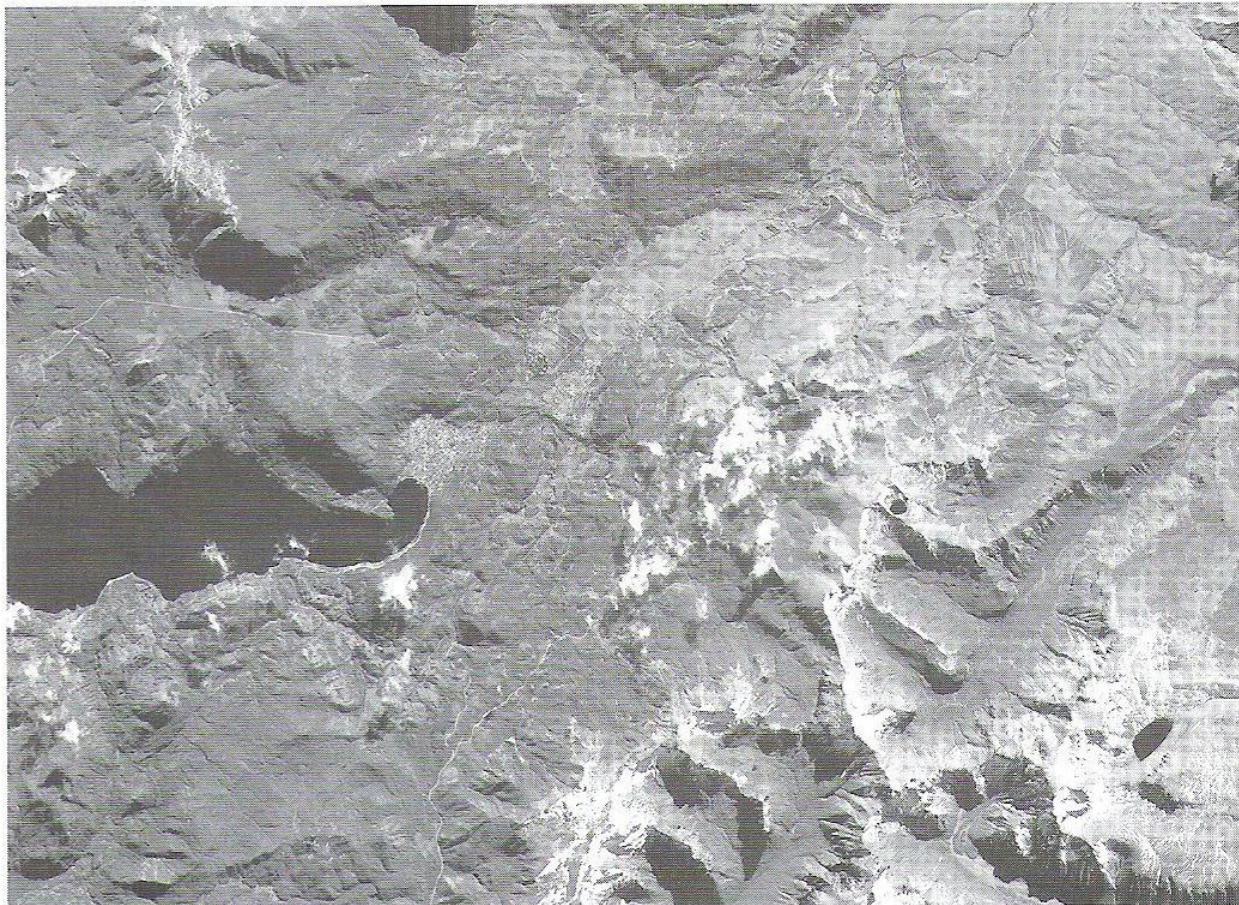


Fig. 14.1. Satellite imagery of San Martín de los Andes and surrounding landscape, Neuquén, Argentina (Landsat image, May 2003; courtesy of M. Abrams, US Jet Propulsion Laboratory).

were concluded. Statistics and other information closely related to our subject were also identified and utilized in our analysis.

'Argentine Switzerland'— a Long-standing Attraction

This Andean lake region was imagined, idealized and defined as the 'Argentine Switzerland' (see Fig. 14.2) many years before its effective incorporation into the nation state at the end of the 19th century. De Moussy, a French geographer, used this rubric in 1865 based on traveller accounts and maps (Navarro, 1999). And it is interesting to note that this happened roughly at the same time the expression 'ice box' was being commonly used in the USA to refer to unknown and wild Alaska. This Europeanized ideal preceded the region's colonization and shaped change and development policies, design of settlements, the dimensions of their streets and real properties and omnipresent real estate interests in both the public and private spheres.

One of the significant and early contributions to understanding this convergence of factors and forces in our study region is a book published in 1970 by a German geographer,

Wolfgang Eriksen, who belonged to a University of Bonn-based tradition of inquiry that strongly relied on empirical information and personal observation (Eriksen, 1970). Although he would now be portrayed as a positivist regional geographer, his data are valuable in framing the phenomenon being analysed here. The subtitle of his work, *A contribution on the cultural-geographic processes on the margins of the 'oikoumené' (inhabited world)*, indicates the rather eclectic but informative line of argument to be found in his text. For Eriksen there was a shift in the mentality of key local actors from that of 'pioneer' to 'speculator'. Although the author does not explain the origin, the incidence or ramifications of this speculative characteristic he claims to have discovered, he does provide evidence of how the process of early migration for amenity took place. Although he does not use the term 'amenity migrant', he identifies among the first such migrants returning tourists, owners of summer houses who chose to stay permanently, pensioned people (especially middle- and high-ranking state personnel, who retired at age 55 until 1965) and people of European origin whose motivation was to settle in a recognizable or at least reminiscent mountainous landscape (Eriksen, 1970). But this condition, he recognizes, had an earlier, related



Fig. 14.2. Town of San Martín de los Andes, Neuquén, Argentina in wintertime (photograph: G. Tosi, courtesy of Secretaria de Turismo, San Martín de los Andes, July 2004).

expression in the disputes over public land and colonization that followed the retreat of military personnel from San Martín after definite border arrangements were reached with Chile in 1911. This involved mostly Swiss, Italian and Lebanese settlers who wanted to make a living from agriculture, cattle and forestry-related activities.

These first examples of productivity and economic self-reliance in San Martín, however, were soon ruined by governmental centralist regulations and the establishment of trade restrictions with nearby Chile. Instead a dependence on subsidized services and commodities produced in the distant capital city, Buenos Aires, was favoured. This destroying of the local economic base was one of the warnings and reasons for a shift from productivity to speculation that favoured attractive landscape, spectacle and closeness to services and lake shores over soil quality. The general atmosphere changed, according to Eriksen, from bucolic villages to a new sort of 'gold rush cities' (Eriksen, 1970: 132) governed by real estate interests. Most of the documentary evidence confirms his ascertations, including a very long and open letter, a kind of manifesto, to the country's President Irigoyen from the residents of the town of Bariloche (Archive, 1916), asking to correct these measures and to rely more on diversifying the regional economy, including tourism.

However, Buenos Aires, as the rest of Argentina, was going through a process of deep political change. Everyone could vote now and the central government had more important issues to deal with than paying attention to this perhaps romantically attractive but distant, marginal and politically unimportant part of the Republic. It was after the conservative military coup of 1930 that Argentina's national parks became valuable and almost private objects of consumption by the ruling class. The most important rules of the game, and the key conditions that still organize space and place in the whole region, were established during that period. The region had been identified as an exclusive place, especially after the well-publicized visits of US President Theodore Roosevelt in 1913 and Edward, Prince of Wales in 1931, and came under the effective control of the ruling nationalist-conservative elite after the *putsch* that overthrew President Yrigoyen in 1930. Within

the next 10 years railroads were completed, the law creating the National Parks was approved, most of the fashionable hotels and resorts were constructed (and licensed to private companies) and most of the land was parcelled in ways that still affect the structure of prices and limit public use of natural attractions, such as lake shores, rivers, fields and mountains. This development can be characterized as contextualizing the first wave of amenity migration. Most of the subsequent waves, five in total up to the present, are also principally the result of a combination of political, economic and broader social and psychological factors, especially escape from urban violence and insecurity, relocating internal political refugees, search for new values and deeper and qualitatively better family relationships and a growing ecological awareness and appreciation.

Demographic Growth and Urbanization of San Martín de los Andes

The growth and urbanization of San Martín de los Andes may be better understood from the following summary of its relevant historical stages.

Stage 1: the first settlement

San Martín de los Andes was founded in 1888 as a border military establishment along with spontaneous development of large lots next to Lake Lacar. In 1914, the first plotting and subdivision of land was carried out with a layout of 45 blocks of 100 m × 100 m, 20-m-wide streets, land allotments of 50 m × 50 m, along with basic public services infrastructure. The settlement was located next to the military barracks and focused on supplying goods and services necessary for its operation. In this stage the economic base was agriculture, livestock and forestry.

Stage 2: development of Lanín National Park

Lanín National Park was created in 1937, with a total area of 379,000 ha. Its headquarters was

established in adjacent San Martín and so the town's population was expanded with the park's administrative and managerial employees. A significant result of this, and other national areas transformed into parks, was a change in local land use planning and the economic base. While associated forests management gradually, over time, restricted forest activity, agriculture and livestock raising remained stable and important.

Stage 3: major public land management and development change

In 1957, when the national territory was subdivided into provinces, the ownership of public lands was given to the Neuquén provincial government and then in 1960, to the municipality of San Martín de los Andes. The geometric matrix of the urban area (square grid pattern) was expanded, but without being accompanied by a proportional increase in public infrastructure to service this growth. However, the value of land, after the division of the previous large allotments, became more affordable for local residents. In 1964, the creation of the Provincial Council of Planning and Action for Development resulted in considerable changes in the provincial landscape. In our study area, the first achievements were evident from 1966 with the installation of electric power, water and telephone systems. Land use in the first years (commercial, residential, tourism, etc.) located spontaneously before the first urban growth regulations were promulgated in 1974. Incipient tourist activity caused San Martín to become known in the nation's large urban centres, and in parallel, improvement in hotel capacity was financed. As a consequence, by the mid 1980s there was a considerable increase in hotel accommodation and significant population growth took place. Then, beginning in 1983 the existence of diverse land uses, sometimes incompatible, forced the enabling of specific urban land use classification regulations.

Stage 4: commercialization and promotion

In the late 1980s, San Martín's economic growth policy defined tourism 'as a high-priority activ-

ity' for the city, and at the same time, policy was put in place to consolidate the local identity – as a mountain town in harmony with its natural environment. In comparison with tourism, amenity migration has not been identified specifically in public policy, although the flow of these and other migrants into San Martín is having major positive and negative impacts on the town and its surrounding natural environment.

Population Growth Profiles

Absolute growth

The first census of San Martín de los Andes was published in 1912 (Comisión del Centenario y Fundación de San Martín de los Andes, 1999), and it was accompanied by a prediction for swift growth of this town, principally because of its location at the only pass through the mountains that remains open year round, and adjacent to extensive and fertile prairies. Through time, the province of Neuquén and its town of San Martín characteristically maintained high migration rates, in spite of having less than their share of the larger region's socio-economic infrastructure (Toutoundjian and de Holubrica, 1990) (see Fig. 14.3).

Although it is not possible to obtain specific data on amenity migrants from available census data, from our San Martín research we found that they are a major component of the town's immigrants. However, the more aggregate migration data for the town and surrounding province does offer some insights about our target population.

The town's total population growth has always been higher than the national averages (INDEC, 1964, 1973), and in some periods, natural growth, in spite of being high, does not adequately explain this total. This is due to in-migration, which although variable through time, reached its highest percentage of the total population in the decade 1980–1991 (COPADE, 1977, 1997). However, a quite noticeable decrease in the rates of in-migration can be observed during the next period between censuses, which is explained by the deep, socio-economic crisis experienced in the country in that decade. This began to be reversed from the year 2002, and in fact after 2001 a new migration flow to San Martín is observed (Table 14.1).

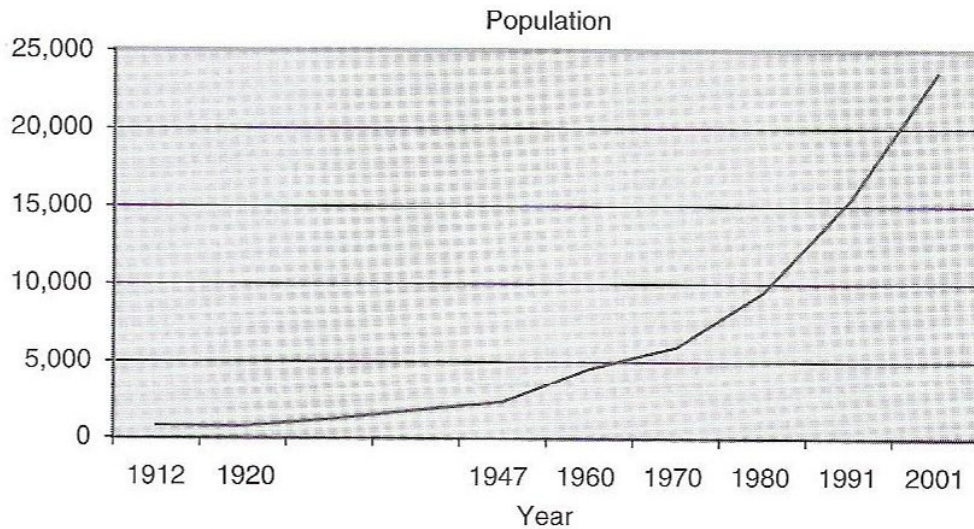


Fig. 14.3. Population growth of San Martín de los Andes, Neuquén Province, Argentina: 1912–2001. Source: Comisión del Centenario y Fundación de San Martín de los Andes (1999).

Population growth by age cohort

According to the study mentioned earlier (Toutoundjian and de Holubrica, 1990), the town's population increase from in-migration between 1975 and 1990 was responding mainly to push factors, particularly the lack of public security and a reduction in manufacturing employment, especially in the surroundings of Buenos Aires city. This is reflected in the population data of San Martín and Neuquén Province. It is most notable for social growth (see Table 14.1), and particularly in the middle and older age cohorts of 30–39, 40–49 and 50–59. If we compare the census data from 1960 to 2001, different age compositions are observed; a reduction of the youngest age cohorts and an amplification of those of older ones are noticeable. This is almost exclusively the result of in-migration.

In addition to issues of public security and employment, from our research the quality of natural and cultural amenities of San Martín and its surroundings were also important attractions for this migration, but such motivational information is not yet available from Argentine census data. In comparison, some is available from the US census and is now being used with informative results in amenity migration research (see, for example, Nelson, Chapter 4, this volume).

The Migratory Phenomenon in San Martín de los Andes

Key explanatory factors

The following section of this essay summarizes the main causes for and characteristics of San Martín's amenity migrants during the past

Table 14.1. Natural and social growth of San Martín de los Andes, Neuquén Province, Argentina: 1960–2001.

Population type	1960–1970	1970–1980	1980–1991	1991–2001
Natural growth	25.9	32.9	24.1	24.2
Social growth	–15.4	2.9	14.2	8.8
Total San Martín growth	10.5	35.8	38.3	15.5
National growth	16.8	18.0	15.8	11.2

Source: Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos (INDEC, 1964, 1973, 1981, 2001); Consejo Provincial de Administración para el Desarrollo (COPADEV, 1977, 1997).

30 years. These findings come from general agreement of the San Martín interviewees and other research components of this study.

- 1937 to 1970s period: creation of Lanín National Park, development of road and rail-road infrastructure in Patagonia, the Argentinean Automobile Club, in agreement with the National Oil Company, promotion of gas stations along Patagonian roads, creation of cartography, guides and camping to promote long-distance domestic tourism.
- 1975 to 1982 period: a time of convergence of the principal push factor of urban terrorism in Argentina's large cities, and the pull factors of local public security and tranquillity, along with the launching of a regional Tourism Development Plan by the Provincial Council of Planning and Action for Development (COPADE) and other public institutions.
- 1983 to 1990 period: recovery of democracy in the nation induced certain people to look for new forms of family life (characterized by increased time together), quietude and a more harmonious relationship with nature, while at the same time many young professionals arrived in San Martín seeking socio-economic integration into the local community.
- 1990 to 2000 period: new residents continued arriving in San Martín with similar characteristics to those of the previous period, but fewer in number.
- 2001 to 2004 period: a new wave of migrants came due to the same local pull factors as in the above two periods, and with two main external or push factors: search for better personal security than characterized the country's large cities and the need for employment. Each of the push factors launches different dominant migrant characteristics; the former has purchasing power above the national average and the latter, in general, low income.

Key external factors

In the last decades of the 20th century, in Argentina the dream of 'living in cities' was translated into a tendency that favoured the small cities with environments where nature prevails, and this is reflected in corresponding migratory flows. Migration is not just a geographical change, but

also a socio-cultural change with psycho-social consequences. Strongly motivating out-migration from Argentina's large cities, such as Buenos Aires, Rosario, Bahía Blanca, Córdoba and Mendoza were the following key factors:

- flight from urban and military terrorism and a pervasive atmosphere of insecurity;
- search for a better quality of life, especially higher environmental quality and social cohesion;
- election of a lifestyle focused on family, which is perceived as more attainable in small towns;
- lack of employment opportunities.

Key internal factors

San Martín de los Andes, located by a beautiful lake at the gateway to a major national park, is surrounded by a comparatively pristine natural patrimony of natural forests and waterscapes with high scenic and recreational value. Here the urban environment has evolved, maintaining from its beginnings a small scale that harmonizes the built environment with the natural environment. In addition, San Martín has maintained a comparatively small-town ambience. The natural and cultural amenities that make the town a premier attractor of both amenity migrants and visitors has been reinforced in the last few decades by the following attributes:

- new paradigms of the quality of life, substantially reliant on natural and cultural amenities within a functional human-scale social environment;
- an orderly and attractive urban place with basic public services;
- white- and blue-collar employment opportunities;
- local investment opportunities;
- the new look of Patagonia symbolized by consumption of Patagonian places associated with adventure, prestige and a wish to discover foreigners' motivations to know it.

Perception of Amenity Migration in San Martín de los Andes: 'NyC' and 'VyQ'

In the interviews carried out with residents of San Martín de los Andes, two interesting self-images could be identified: those who were born and raised in San Martín, the 'NyC' or *native*

residents; and those who had migrated and stayed in the town, the 'VyQ' or *migrant residents*. The key characteristics of the town's amenity migration as perceived by these two groups are outlined below in Table 14.2. This information in particular offers some insight into issues of social cohesion and conflict that the town is experiencing.

Principal social-cultural and economic impacts

Socio-cultural impacts

From the interviews and other sources it appears that the social conditions that produce amenity migration generate a part of the social problems facing San Martín de los Andes. The process of social integration of the new families who arrived in the 1980s with the native inhabitants was very complex and slow, and the resulting relationship weak. Local inhabitants generally, through time, exhibited little permeability *vis-a-vis* social contact with newcomers. And today the town shows greater heterogeneity, as receptivity towards the new immigrants, both amenity migrants and others, seems even less accommodating. Social grouping distinguished by place of origin and income remains in the main preserved, and there exists a heightened sense of differentiation, exemplified in the expression 'we no longer know each other at all'. This condition is also due to the new amenity migrants manifesting little socio-cultural adaptability. For even though they have chosen San Martín de los Andes as their place to live, their behaviour indicates that their attachment to the town is weak and perhaps fleeting, as if they are just passing through. This hinders their sense of identity with the city and, probably, San Martín's social cohesiveness.

The development of this mountain town as a tourist and amenity migration destination is also accompanied by an increase in poverty. And over the last few years, it is thought by some that this has precipitated an increase in crime, notably robbery and drug addiction. However, to date this has not been studied. In addition, the considerable magnitude and rate of population growth from in-migration is exhausting the town's low public services capability, especially for basics such as water, gas and electrical power. For the first time in this centre, during last summer's tourist high season

(January–February, 2004) this led to cases of illegal appropriation of other people's land.

Notorious asymmetries exist in land values because of the high rate of growth in the construction sector of the local economy. Currently, in this urban area floor space costs between US\$300 and 550 per m² in the downtown, and US\$10 per m² 10 km away. One result is that residents who have been living in the city for years are not able to purchase or build their own houses. Because of this high cost, San Martín's housing deficit is already over 1200 units, which translates into about 4800 people, or 19% of the town's population (according to the last census). While concern for this is a condition exceeding financial market terms, the social consequences are still to be defined.

The municipal government considers this matter a state problem. And so a housing emergency declaration that would authorize the municipality to fix the price of housing and building lots is expected. However, it is unlikely that this measure would remedy the situation and it is also probably illegal. At the provincial level, government is preparing to create an Agency for Sustainable Urban Development. This initiative foresees the provincial government, through its provincial bank, developing a mortgage programme for all housing market segments.

On the other hand, in-migration, for both amenity and otherwise, is bringing about an increase in education facilities, new ideas and approaches and significantly more job opportunities of certain types. Yet, the considerable numbers of professionals arriving in the 1990s resulted in severe competition among them for the scarce more-qualified positions. At the same time, young people, especially those belonging to the upper-middle social class, migrate to Argentina's big cities for educational options associated with ambitions they believe cannot be met in their small town and environs.

Economic impacts

The in-migrants, especially amenity migrants to San Martín, invest principally in residential property and tourist enterprises and they mainly become tourist services providers, including hotels and pensions, restaurants, souvenir and clothing boutiques, vehicle rental agencies, tour companies

Table 14.2. Summary of amenity migration perceptions of San Martín de los Andes native and migrant residents.

Amenity migration (AM) characteristics	Native Residents (NyCs) of San Martín (SM)	Migrant Residents (VyQs) of San Martín (SM)
1. Historical identification of the phenomenon	AM phenomenon began with creation of Lanín National Park in 1937 and occurred in four waves	Two AM waves: first at the beginning of the 1980s linked to Chapelco ski resort development; second during the 2000s, with the search for tranquil and attractive dwelling place
2. Internal factors	Improvement of regional road infrastructure and communications with Chile; SM offers AMs appropriate context for their preferred family lifestyle	SM offers professionals development centre's opportunities in 1980s; improved public services; increased land supply; possibility for preferred lifestyle: family style, preferred occupation, with nature
3. External factors	Large cities' insecurity and lack of job opportunities	Recent economic crisis and public insecurity pushed people with purchasing power to SM; search for ambience with natural amenities and good job opportunities for professionals
4. Fiscal incentives	Tax exemptions for increasing lodging capacity	Most AMs did not recognize government incentives to attract them
5. Social integration of AMs into the host society	Difficult and complex in the short term; mentioned problems of population growth: traffic congestion, housing shortage among others	Very weak relationships; NyC not very open while VyQ, especially their children, relate easily; for first-wave migrants integration was slow and difficult, but now are improved; the most recent AMs participate more in social organizations; those with considerable purchasing power live in closed neighbourhoods
6. Economic impact	SM's tourism growth produces new job opportunities every year; seasonal retractions need to be overcome	Positive because AMs come with their own capital and invest in real estate; unbalanced economic growth
7. Social impacts	In the 1990s large numbers of professionals struggled for positions of social value like teaching and government; causes shortage of health and education services; AMs have a 'passing through' mentality and tend to return to their place of origin when positive conditions cease	Previous migration wave people speak of the problems as if they have lived a lifetime in SM
8. Impacts on tourism	Private appropriation for AMs' use restricts availability of recreational amenities	Quality of construction by AMs improved the city image in some districts; investment is considerable, but externally dependent; expressed concern for risk of future instability
9. Proposals to mitigate negative impacts	Most did not answer this question	Policies to guide and limit city development should be applied; national, provincial and municipal governments should regulate resulting activities in both SM and the national park

AM = amenity migration; AMs = amenity migrants.

and the like. Typically, they bring the related capital and skills from Buenos Aires city and surroundings. Only 5% of these newcomers are foreigners. Generally the pace of economic growth of the town's service sector is intense, although this does not guarantee either balanced growth or equitable distribution of income. During the last few decades migrants generally could join the formal labour market; however, these days newcomers not finding employment become part of a growing informal market. In the 2004 summer season some 3000 people sought jobs without success. What percentage of these were amenity migrants is unknown, but it would seem to be a minority because most amenity migrants bring capital to purchase their houses, and often to start in the tourism industry. Also, some leave their family in San Martín and fly to Buenos Aires to work (about a 2 h flight).

Impacts on tourist activity

From the general outsider's point of view tourism is always thought to be capable of improving local employment conditions. However, this is not generally so and is not the case today in San Martín. Moreover, there is no plan to guide economic investment in this mountain community, and in its absence there will likely be an over production of products and services directly or indirectly related to tourist activity in the town and its environs. Here, the amenity migrants enter the picture. As noted earlier, most of the amenity migrants choose to invest in tourist or related enterprises. Within the wide spectrum of tourism enterprises and its linked activities, the prevailing investment is small scale, with an absence of medium and large investments that could diversify the products of this tourist destination. This condition can be seen in tourist accommodation during the 1980s and 1990s:

- prior to 1985: ten hotels were established of one to three star class;
- 1986 to 1993: little development and additional accommodation;
- 1994 to 1997: cabin construction prevailed;
- 1998 to 2000: socio-economic crisis, therefore no investments;
- 2001 to 2004: peak period for cabin construction.

In the development of San Martín de los Andes and its area of influence, connections among the entities and activities that make up the local tourist supply are now consolidating. In this context the trend in tourist accommodation is a move to small villages near glacial lakes and rivers, like Meliquina, Lolog and Quilquihuc. At the same time, while San Martín's tourist season remains about the same as in past decades, the decision to expand the Chapelco ski facility into a four seasons resort would be an economic asset for the town. But, in addition, a quite significant, still to be seriously assessed factor in the town's future is the role of amenity migration and its management, especially in relation to tourism.

Conclusions

Amenity migration in the Andean Lake District of Argentina is neither marginal nor simply the result of the 'free will' of settlers. It is the conjunction of multiple factors, which include societal structural conditions as well as ideological and cultural predispositions. Early geographic imagination about mountain places, especially that of the dominant elite in Buenos Aires, and later of European immigrants, is relevant to this condition as it is one of the forces that explains current trends.

Our research confirms that the city of San Martín de los Andes is being significantly affected by amenity-seeking residents, due mainly to its strong attraction as a mountain tourist centre and its amenity attributes *per se*. Immigrants, both those attracted primarily by the local amenities, and others are over extending urban services and housing, creating employment problems and negatively impacting social relationships, including the long-term residents' feeling of being 'invaded' and causing latent conflicts among social sectors. Yet, the amenity migrants also have positive influences, particularly generating some types of income, investment capital and positive social values and behaviour, such as a heightened awareness of nature and the need to sustain it.

Many of the resulting problems and benefits are quite complex and difficult to approach and solve, which makes the intervention of local and

provincial government necessary. However, the deeper nature of this phenomenon and its importance is not yet known. Is amenity migration a societal driving force changing in a fundamental way the socio-cultural, economic and physical nature of San Martín? What are the related needs and risks for public policy and action? How to address the potential for amenity migration to turn San Martín into a 'big city', and with what outcomes for this community, its tourism base, etc.? And are there significant trade-offs to be made between amenity migration and tourism for an ecologically sound San Martín future?

Recommendations

The following are a set of seemingly strategic proposals for addressing San Martín de los Andes' amenity migration issues. However, considerable further attention needs be given to the systemic cross-influences and prioritizing of these proposals, especially in relation to the limited available resources for analysis and follow through.

1. Undertake a study to deepen and broaden knowledge about amenity migration in San Martín and its eco-region. In addition to significantly informing the opportunities and issues discussed in this essay, the analysis needs in particular to focus on understanding the systemic relationship of amenity migrants, other migrants, earlier local inhabitants and tourists.
2. Formulate and implement a plan for urban environmental management for San Martín within an eco-regional framework, using strategic analysis (Moss *et al.*, 1999; Moss, 2004; Glorioso, Chapter 18; Glorioso and Moss, Chapter 5, this volume), and based on achieving for the city an effective balance of economic and social necessities with ecological integrity.
3. Define political parameters and policy that promote, at municipal and provincial levels, the formation of an integrated network of mountain settlements. This system will connect, on one hand, the inter-neighbourhood structure of San Martín, and also link the town with other mountain settlements in the larger Andean Lake District.

4. Formulate a list of causal priorities for sustaining and rehabilitating San Martín's quality of life, with a focus on consideration of the different needs of stakeholders in San Martín as a community.

5. Promote a balance between demographic growth and the productive socio-economic processes to sustain it, especially defining the limits of the physical aspects of the city, necessary tourism facilities and amenities for the local population.

6. Sustain the benefits and the quality of the town's urban services, especially the water, gas and electric power networks, in a way that satisfies demand generated by the population growth of San Martín de los Andes. In formulating this part of the larger environmental management plan, particular attention should be given to urban growth management.

7. It is essential to improve incentives policy and programmes for national internal migration. Important in this is responsible communication that will carefully advise potential in-migrants of all kinds of both the potential and constraints of a locale. In particular, this will need collaboration among the levels of government.

8. San Martín and its eco-region, as with all mountain communities and regions wishing to attract tourists and amenity migrants, needs to better understand the expectations of these people, both before and after arrival at their destinations, and be sure these fit the community's own vision, ecological capacities and plans (Price *et al.*, 1997; Moss and Glorioso, 1999).

Amenity migration is both an opportunity and a threat to sustaining the natural and cultural amenities of San Martín de los Andes and its environs. It, along with more primarily economically motivated in-migration, appears to be evolving into a problem, as well as benefit, to this special mountain place. If we can proceed with a sense of urgency to implementing the recommendations outlined here, its threats may be managed. While there is no template to use for this critical undertaking (see Chipeniuk, Chapter 11, this volume), there are appropriate skills in San Martín, and in Argentina more generally, to successfully harness the best potential of the amenity migrants.

References

- Archive (1916) *Bariloche, Document 116, Caja 1 'E. Frey'*. National Parks Museum, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Comisión del Centenario y Fundación de San Martín de los Andes (1999) *Libro del Centenario de San Martín de los Andes*. Publisher Sociedad Anónima, San Martín de los Andes, Neuquén, Argentina, pp. 241.
- COPADE (Consejo Provincial de Administración para el Desarrollo) (1977) *La Provincia del Neuquén y la política demográfica*. COPADE, Neuquén, Argentina.
- COPADE (Consejo Provincial de Administración para el Desarrollo) (1997) *Censo Nacional de Población vivienda, 1991. Ejido Municipal de San Martín de los Andes*. COPADE, Neuquén, Argentina.
- Eriksen, W. (1970) *Kolonisation und Tourismus in Ostpatagonien. Ein Beitrag zum Problem der kulturgeographischer Entwicklungsprozesse am Rande der Ökumene*. Ferd, Dümmler Verlag, Bonn.
- INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos) (1964) *Censo Nacional de Población 1960*. INDEC, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos) (1973) *Censo Nacional de Población, familias y viviendas, 1970. Resultados provisionales*. INDEC, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos) (1981) *Censo Nacional de Población y vivienda, 1980. Serie B. Características generales. Provincia del Neuquén*. INDEC, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos) (2001) *Censo Nacional de Población y vivienda, 2000*. INDEC, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Moss, L.A.G. (2004) Amenity migration: global phenomenon and strategic paradigm for sustaining mountain environmental quality. In: Taylor, L. and Ryall, A. (eds) *Sustainable Mountain Communities: Environmental Sustainability for Mountain Areas Impacted by Tourism and Amenity Migration*. The Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta, pp. 19–24.
- Moss, L.A.G. and Glorioso, R.S. (1999) Baguio bioregion, Philippines: formulating a strategy for tourism, amenity migration, and urban growth. In: Mountain Agenda (eds) *Tourism and Sustainable Mountain Development*. Centre for Development and Environment. Institute of Geography, University of Berne, Berne, Switzerland, pp. 32–33.
- Moss, L.A.G., Tešitel, J., Zemek, F., Bartoš, M., Kušová, D. and Hěrmán, M. (1999) Tourism in bioregional context: approaching ecosystemic practise in the Šumava, Czech Republic. In: Godde, P.M., Price, M.F. and Zimmermann, F.M. (eds) *Tourism and Development in Mountain Regions*. CAB International, Wallingford, UK, pp. 85–113.
- Navarro, F.P. (1999) Un país sin indios. La imagen de la Pampa y la Patagonia en la geografía del naciente estado Argentino, in Scripta Nova. *Revista Electrónica de Geografía y Ciencias Sociales*, Universidad de Barcelona No. 51, November 1999. Available at: www.ub.es/geocrit/sn51.htm (accessed 5 February 2005).
- Otero, A., Boullón, R., Gallego, E., González, R., Lonac, A., Marioni, S., Dimitriu A., Hosid C., Williams, P. and Méndez, A. (2001) *Manejo Ambiental de Centros Turísticos de Montaña*. Secretaría de Investigación, Facultad de Turismo, Universidad Nacional del Comahue, Neuquén, Argentina.
- Price, M.F., Moss, L.A.G. and Williams, P.W. (1997) Tourism and amenity migration. In: Messerli, B. and Ives, J.D. (eds) *Mountains of the World: a Global Priority*. Parthenon Publishing, London and New York, pp. 249–281.
- Toutoundjian, B. and de Holubrica, S.V. (1990) *Estudio de la inmigración interna y externa de Provincia del Neuquén*. Consejo Federal de Inversiones, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

References

- Archive (1916) *Bariloche, Document 116, Caja 1 'E. Frey'*. National Parks Museum, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Comisión del Centenario y Fundación de San Martín de los Andes (1999) *Libro del Centenario de San Martín de los Andes*. Publisher Sociedad Anónima, San Martín de los Andes, Neuquén, Argentina, pp. 241.
- COPADE (Consejo Provincial de Administración para el Desarrollo) (1977) *La Provincia del Neuquén y la política demográfica*. COPADE, Neuquén, Argentina.
- COPADE (Consejo Provincial de Administración para el Desarrollo) (1997) *Censo Nacional de Población vivienda, 1991. Ejido Municipal de San Martín de los Andes*. COPADE, Neuquén, Argentina.
- Eriksen, W. (1970) *Kolonisation und Tourismus in Ostpatagonien. Ein Beitrag zum Problem der kulturgeographischer Entwicklungsprozesse am Rande der Ökumene*. Ferd, Dümmler Verlag, Bonn.
- INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos) (1964) *Censo Nacional de Población 1960*. INDEC, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos) (1973) *Censo Nacional de Población, familias y viviendas, 1970. Resultados provisionales*. INDEC, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos) (1981) *Censo Nacional de Población y vivienda, 1980. Serie B. Características generales. Provincia del Neuquén*. INDEC, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- INDEC (Instituto Nacional de Estadísticas y Censos) (2001) *Censo Nacional de Población y vivienda, 2000*. INDEC, Buenos Aires, Argentina.
- Moss, L.A.G. (2004) Amenity migration: global phenomenon and strategic paradigm for sustaining mountain environmental quality. In: Taylor, L. and Ryall, A. (eds) *Sustainable Mountain Communities: Environmental Sustainability for Mountain Areas Impacted by Tourism and Amenity Migration*. The Banff Centre, Banff, Alberta, pp. 19–24.
- Moss, L.A.G. and Glorioso, R.S. (1999) Baguio bioregion, Philippines: formulating a strategy for tourism, amenity migration, and urban growth. In: Mountain Agenda (eds) *Tourism and Sustainable Mountain Development*. Centre for Development and Environment. Institute of Geography, University of Berne, Berne, Switzerland, pp. 32–33.
- Moss, L.A.G., Tešitel, J., Zemek, F., Bartoš, M., Kušová, D. and Hěrman, M. (1999) Tourism in bioregional context: approaching ecosystemic practise in the Šumava, Czech Republic. In: Godde, P.M., Price, M.F. and Zimmermann, F.M. (eds) *Tourism and Development in Mountain Regions*. CAB International, Wallingford, UK, pp. 85–113.
- Navarro, F.P. (1999) Un país sin indios. La imagen de la Pampa y la Patagonia en la geografía del naciente estado Argentino, in Scripta Nova. *Revista Electrónica de Geografía y Ciencias Sociales*, Universidad de Barcelona No. 51, November 1999. Available at: www.ub.es/geocrit/sn51.htm (accessed 5 February 2005).
- Otero, A., Boullón, R., Gallego, E., González, R., Lonac, A., Marioni, S., Dimitriu A., Hosid C., Williams, P. and Méndez, A. (2001) *Manejo Ambiental de Centros Turísticos de Montaña*. Secretaría de Investigación, Facultad de Turismo, Universidad Nacional del Comahue, Neuquén, Argentina.
- Price, M.F., Moss, L.A.G. and Williams, P.W. (1997) Tourism and amenity migration. In: Messerli, B. and Ives, J.D. (eds) *Mountains of the World: a Global Priority*. Parthenon Publishing, London and New York, pp. 249–281.
- Toutoundjian, B. and de Holubrica, S.V. (1990) *Estudio de la inmigración interna y externa de Provincia del Neuquén*. Consejo Federal de Inversiones, Buenos Aires, Argentina.