

## **THE GOOD (AND NOT SO GOOD) CONFLICTS**

### **Social Relationships of Micro and Small Businesses in Brazilian Tourist Destinations**

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*This article examines the conflictive component of social relations involving micro and small tourism enterprises. The paper aims to analyze the conflicts that involve these tourism businesses in terms of the social actors involved, reasons for their occurrence, consequences and results for the enterprises and the destinations. The empirical research explores the northern Brazilian coastal area, which includes three main destinations: Jericoacoara (Ceara), Delta do Parnaíba (Piauí) and Lençóis Maranhenses (Maranhão), also known as the North Coast. The methodology was designed in two steps. The first was a qualitative observation followed by interviews. The second was a survey of 213 firms. The results show that the main conflicts are similar in the three analyzed destinations. The most evident conflicts occur between the mentioned tourist companies and the local governments, followed by conflicts between the firms and the informal tourism operators. Only in third place arise the conflicts among the local tourism businesses themselves. The most cited reasons for conflicts are the lack of governmental action and regulations, which leads to the second reason that is excessive competition among local tourism firms and the informal tourism operators in the tourism destinations. Moreover, conflicts resulted in missed opportunities for destination development and for their own businesses. However, positive results have also been identified. They are related to the consolidation of local governance expressed by the broader dialogue among social actors of the tourism industry, the inclusion of representatives from previously excluded sectors, and the improvements in some conditions of the population life.*

**KEY WORDS:** *conflicts, micro and small enterprises, tourism, Brazil.*