

TOURISM CARRYING CAPACITY ASSESSMENT
The Case of Tamandaré Beach (Pernambuco, Brazil)

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The studies for determining the carrying capacity can be used as useful tools for a planning of sustainable tourism destinations. However, many tourism destinations don't use this tool in their planning frameworks. Tamandaré, city located on the South coast of Pernambuco, Brazil, isn't an exception. Assuming that the establishment of a maximum number of a people can help tourist planning, this study used the carrying capacity method developed by Cifuentes et al (1992) to estimate the carrying capacity of one of the most important beaches in Pernambuco: Tamandaré. To this purpose, it has defined two zones: i) beach strip zone and; ii) natural pools inside beach zone. The results suggest that 1,828 visitors/day is a maximum for the beach strip zone, and 4,833 visitors/day is a maximum for the natural pools inside the beach zone. When the findings are compared with the current visitor rates it is observed that the carrying capacity is being respected in both of zones.

KEY WORDS: *tourism, carrying capacity, Cifuentes Method, Tamandaré Beach.*