

A reader wrote that the tourists are themselves partly to blame for not only the prostitution on island, but also the pollution. After all, if there weren't customers for the prostitutes, the prostitutes wouldn't be here. This reader personally witnessed tourists burning their trash on a beach [use conference program.....]

of women at 2-day women's conference vs # of working women in CNMI - Trib, p. 5, 7/13 - 100 participants at Women's conference; OPM says that there are 1,463 working women in gov't; PI Labor Office says there are 8,000 Filipino women working in the CNMI

What the CNMI needs is not a conference titled "Whose Business is the Environment?" - as Guam's recently held EPA conference was, and to which the obvious answer is "it's everyone's business," but one titled "Why the Environment is Everyone's Business." Most of the people who attended the Guam conference, and, of course, all of the presenters, were already aware that the environment was important to their livelihood.

There were some semi-comic exceptions, like the representative from the Guam Hotel Association, who claimed that his members offered "air-conditioned eco-tourism." And the U.S. Army Corps spokesman who described the massive erosion-prone habitat destruction incurred in the building of the road in Babeldaup in Palau in the same room in which, two days prior, the President of Palau had spelled out his strong pro-environment stance toward development. (As was pointed out by another government official in the audience, it would have cost more, but done far less damage, to clear road sections as they were being worked on, rather than clearing the entire road at one time.)

In the CNMI, however, it would seem that even fewer people agree that the environment is everyone's business. Maybe it's the business of the Division of Environmental Quality, or of the Coastal Resource Management Office, or the Fish and Wildlife Division, but everyone's? Not hardly, seems to be the prevailing point of view. Two of the most recent examples are the poaching of turtle eggs on Managaha just last week, and the protest by some of the marine sports business people over CRM efforts to tighten control of use of the lagoon.

There aren't that many turtles in our waters, which makes the sight of one floating on the surface to catch its breath, or gliding beneath the surface in search of food or rest, an unusual and exciting event. For tourists, who come here only occasionally, it's often a very rare and thrilling experience. Destroying turtle eggs - in effect, destroying turtles - degrades the environment, and hurts the tourism industry as well. That's one less attraction to entice tourists to come to Saipan - hope of seeing a turtle.

Much the same argument applies to the use of jet skis, banana boats, etc. in the Saipan lagoon. It may please the speed enthusiasts, but it creates considerable harm as well, not only due to the threat of fuel spills and exhaust fumes, but also due to the disturbance of the underwater habitat, which shelters corals and juvenile fish. Harming the environment - i.e., the destruction of the corals - causes decline in the fish population, which means less fish for snorkelers and scuba divers to see - again creating a negative impact on the tourism industry, which in turn will have a negative effect even on the jet ski operators themselves.

Tourism is the CNMI's biggest industry. Here, where the main thing that the CNMI has to offer is the beauty of the beach, the lagoon, the swaying palms and blossoming flame trees - a beautiful environment, in other words - it is everyone's business to see to it that the environment remains healthy, vibrant, productive, that it is not destroyed by

And with the CNMI's economy so dependent on tourism, anything that hurts tourism, hurts the economy as a whole,

Tourism - at least in the CNMI - is dependent on the quality of the environment, particularly the lagoon and its inhabitants. The sight of turtles

biggest business in NMI is education - need to see how it (can) generate(s) revenue
tin recycling - trib. 6/19 p5

Agnes as head of consulting firm to define requirements for new higher education institutions -
5/29 trib, page 3

moratorium on new bills during election period

point of 30 day liberation day celebration; point of closing on July 4?

Guam conference findings!