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Clashes and Compromises: Investment Policies in Tourism Destinations

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Abstract The authors solve a linear problem where a potential conflict between two agents (Destination manager and Firm) arises in a tourism destination. The Destination manager has to choose how to allocate limited resources (capital and land) between either second homes or hotels. This conflict stems from the assumption of agents who have different linear preferences with respect to the allocation of limited resources. As a solution to this policy problem the authors consider three different policies: no intervention (*laissez faire*), taxation and temporary de-taxation policy. Comparing these different policies, they show that a compromise solution (internal solution), which results from the de-taxation policy, may be preferred by both agents over the clash of interests outcomes (corner solutions). Thus, the authors show that in a framework of “conflict” between agents a compromise solution may be preferable to both the absence of public intervention and the imposition of a tax by a public policy maker who has the discretionary “power to regulate” conflicts.

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Keywords Conflict resolution; investment decisions; tourism and land use

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1 Introduction

A potential policy dilemma related to tourism investments arises in tourism destinations where there is unutilized land, unemployment and limited financial resources:¹ how to allocate the land, by definition a limited resource, between two possible utilizations, either to hotels or to private holiday accommodations (second homes).² In spite of its importance, the phenomenon of second homes has rarely been the focus of studies in the tourism economics literature.³

In this paper, we propose a theoretical model to analyze the optimal development strategies for attracting tourism investments. Firstly, we are interested in those destinations where policy makers (public agents) do not have sufficient financial resources or know-how to initiate tourism investments in second homes and/or hotels, while firms (private agents) do not have sufficient financial resources (which is equivalent to the usual “credit rationing” hypothesis). Secondly, we want to solve a specific policy problem in which the two agents want to choose the optimal tourism investment between second homes or hotels when they have clashing interests for the allocation of the limited resources of land and capital. The introduction of incentives to investments, in order to attract financial resources, is a common policy for both developed and developing tourism destinations (Jenkins, 1982; Wanhill, 1986; Ward, 1989).

A case history on Sardinia inspired this research.⁴ In 2006 in order to promote the development of the tourism sector, Sardinia earmarked 30 million Euros to

¹ These conditions may arise in many tourism destinations, both developed and developing ones, but more frequently in Lesser Developed tourism Destinations (LDDs) where policy makers attempt to support economic growth by adopting policies designed to attract Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) and encouraging Technological Transfers (TT) (Kumi, 2006; Barrowclough, 2007).

² “Second homes” are private holiday accommodations which are left unoccupied for most of the year and are mainly used during periods of peak demand for tourism accommodation.

³ See, for examples, Jaakson (1986), Deller et al. (1997), Hjalager et al. (2011), Saló and Garriga (2011).

⁴ Sardinia is located in Italy and is the second-largest island in the Mediterranean Sea. Per capita income is the highest of Southern Italy and the tourism represents the main industry of the island, given its natural-resource endowment. For its territorial location and economic features can be regarded as a peripheral region, but it is also one of the most developed regions of Southern Italy. Sardinia is one of the Italian regions having wide autonomy of government. In particular, these regions have the legislative power to adopt their own “special statute”, which is a constitutional law. Sardinia statute gives the region the exclusive power to make laws in several fields, like tourism, land use, transport, urban, regional, and environmental planning. In particular, since over the past decades many coastal areas suffered the impact of new buildings (like second homes and hotels), the

finance private investments in renovation of hotels and building of second homes. As a consequence, the Firm “Chia Invest S.p.a.” presented a local development project for the South of Sardinia. The target of the investment project was to create a network of luxury resorts, and the project also included a large investment in second homes.⁵ Thus “Chia Invest S.p.a.” requested a building permit from the Sardinian government but this request created a policy conflict, given the preference of Sardinian government for hotels over second homes.

The general idea of our contribution is that political economy is a political science regulating and limiting the potential conflicts between different agents or aims.⁶ We analyze situations where the policy maker has economic or institutional discretionary “power to regulate” conflicts, in order to determine when a compromise solution is preferable to a clash solution and under what conditions such a solution is preferable to the other. To answer these questions, we analyze a conflict resolution model, where a public agent and a private agent have clashing interests: the public agent wants to entice the private agent to make a specific choice using a given set of available policies. Our model shows that in cases of extreme conflict, a solution only exists if the agents have at least some common interests.

We define “conflict” and “common interest” within the framework of non-cooperative games, where there are two agents having objective functions characterized by the same variables, $F(x, y)$ and $f(x, y)$. Within this framework, we have: i) a “conflict” variable, if $\text{sign}\left(\frac{\partial F}{\partial y}\right) = -\text{sign}\left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial y}\right)$ and $\frac{\partial F}{\partial y}; \frac{\partial f}{\partial y} \neq 0$; ii) a “common interest” variable, if $\text{sign}\left(\frac{\partial F}{\partial x}\right) = \text{sign}\left(\frac{\partial f}{\partial x}\right)$ and $\frac{\partial F}{\partial x} \neq 0$ or $\frac{\partial f}{\partial x} \neq 0$. In

Sardinian Regional Landscape Plan (see regional law no. 8 of November 25, 2004) bans new building located along the coastlines, and closed to environmental or cultural sites.

⁵ Chia Invest S.p.a. invested 60million Euros in the development of the “Chia area” and 70million Euros in the “Arbus area” (“Chia area” extended from the City of Pula to the City of Teulada, while “Arbus area” was the area of the municipality of Arbus). In particular, the investments in the “Chia area” included the construction of two golf courses with one club house, one indoor pool, the expansion of the Hotel Laguna (50 rooms) with swimming pool and spa. Finally, Chia Invest S.p.a. planned the Hotel Baia Chia renovation, the creation of a nature park and the transformation of 81 rooms into second homes to be sold on the market.

⁶ “As in political science, we study collective choice political institutions. We want to understand how policy decisions are made, what shapes the incentives and constraints of the policymakers taking those decisions, and how conflicts over policy are resolved” (see Persson and Tabellini, 2000, p. 1–2).

this last case, it is necessary that at least one of the agents is interested in the “common interest” variable, provided that the other agent neglects that variable (benign neglect). If there is a conflict but not a common interest, i.e. $\frac{\partial F}{\partial x} = \frac{\partial f}{\partial x} = 0$, the only possible solution comes from the “technology of threat” (as developed by conflict economics), otherwise it is necessary to include a structural change to the game (e.g. a cooperative game). On the other hand, if the two agents are characterized by both a conflict and a common interest, it is also possible to find a compromise equilibrium. From a theoretical point of view, this economic policy problem can be analyzed as a conflict resolution model and/or a principal-agent model.⁷ As detailed above, in this paper we apply a conflict resolution model.

Economic literature on conflicts can be traced back to seminal studies of Hirshleifer (1989) who developed the first model of conflicts among rival groups. The economics of conflicts analyzes the allocation of resources among different productive utilizations and the distribution of the corresponding products. The economics of conflicts defines these problems as distributive conflicts among groups, usually dealing with countries that have to take investment decisions in armaments (guns), while under the threat of war. Conflict resolution models develop several hypotheses and analyze the conditions for solving conflicts in a rational and effective way.⁸

The paper is structured as follows. In Section 2 the main stylized facts and the theoretical framework of the model are presented. In Section 3 the model is set up. In Section 4 three different economic policies are analyzed and compared in terms of political consensus for the policy maker and of profits for the Firm: *laissez faire* (no intervention), taxation (indirect control) and a contractual solution that we define as de-taxation policy (de-taxation of reinvested profits). The conclusions summarize the main results of the paper and some future lines of research.

⁷ Jensen and Meckling (1976) define the agency relationship between two agents (a principal and an agent) as a contract where the agent acts on behalf of the principal. The problem of clashing interests arises when the principal needs to convince the agent to pursue the principal’s interests. Principal-agent theory only provides solutions when potential conflicts in contractual relationships include at least a minimum common interest between the agents. In the principal-agent model, the conflict variable is the agent’s effort, while the common interest variable is the outcome (which positively affects both the agent’s and the principal’s objective functions). For a microeconomics foundation of tourism supply, which is based on transactions cost and principal-agency theory, see Stabler et al. (2010).

⁸ For a review on conflict economics, see Garfinkel and Skaperdas (2007) and for an application of conflict economics within the framework of game theory see Acocella et al. (2011).

2 Stylized Facts and Theoretical Framework

To study this policy dilemma, we take into consideration two agents in the same tourism destination, who usually interact in the real world in the following way: (i) a Destination manager (public agent) who sets up the tourism destination-planning scheme, and (ii) a Firm (private agent) which builds second homes and/or hotels, according to the planning scheme, and then sells them on the market. In particular, second homes are sold to individual buyers, while hotels are sold in bulk to buyers who then rent them out a room at a time on a nightly basis.

To emphasize the conflict between agents (arising when the Destination manager chooses to grant building permits for second homes or hotels), we represent the optimization problem as a linear model, where a potential conflict stems from the assumption of the two agents who have different (linear) preferences regarding the allocation of limited resources and thus clashing interests. The linear optimization problem allows for a comparison of two extreme solutions: a corner solution (clash) and an internal solution (compromise).⁹ In addition, if one agent has the “power to regulate” the conflict, she can enforce different policies to reach a given aim. Three different policies are considered: *laissez faire* (no intervention), taxation (indirect control) and de-taxation policy (de-taxation of reinvested profits) which is a temporary tax exemption on a share of reinvested profits. An example of implementation of the de-taxation policy is the partial de-taxation of reinvested profits introduced in Italy by the Law 383/2001. More recently, a similar policy has also been recommended by the European Economic and Social Committee.¹⁰

Laissez faire represents a conflict solution in which the Firm wins, taxation policy is a conflict solution in which the policy maker wins, while de-taxation policy is a compromise solution based on a mutual agreement between agents

⁹ If the agents are characterized by (different) non-linear preferences the problem does not change substantially, even though the clash and the compromise solutions are both internal solutions. Therefore the distance between the two clashing individual optimal choices is smaller, but it is possible to show, as suggested by an anonymous reviewer, that a compromise solution may still be preferable for both agents, and consists of a linear combination of their optimal choices as it is the case of linear preferences.

¹⁰ On 2008, September 11th the European Economic and Social Committee in the “Proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the voluntary participation by organisations in a Community Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS)” has recommended to better promote and give more support at the national and Community levels, by drawing on the Competitiveness and Innovation Framework Programme (CIP), European Investment Bank (EIB) and Structural Funds resources, as regards public procurement, tax relief, keeping registration and renewal fees down, and de-taxation of reinvested profits.

(*synallagmatic contract*).¹¹ Accordingly, given that the policy maker prefers to implement an “authoritative policy” (taxation policy), while the Firm prefers no intervention (*laissez faire*), we want to discover when a “contractual policy” (de-taxation policy) is preferred by both agents.

Two main stylized facts emerge in this policy issue: (i) the average market price (market value per square meter) of new second homes is often higher than new hotels market price;¹² (ii) the economic impact effect, in terms of costs and employment, and the environmental impact effect of the two alternative investments is analogous, but the tourism multiplier effect on local economic development is higher for hotels. In fact, hotel guests tend to have higher average daily per capita expenses, in terms of indirect tourism expenses, with respect to second home occupants (Piga, 2003b).¹³ Because of the first stylized fact (different average market prices) the Firm would prefer the investment in second homes, while according to the second stylized fact (different impact effects) the Destination manager would prefer the investment in hotels.¹⁴

Regarding the first stylized fact, the characteristics of hotels and second homes which can justify their different market prices are: (i) second homes may represent a final durable consumption good while hotels are an instrumental good, thus hotels represent a riskier investment; (ii) the Firm’s production function yields, *ceteris paribus*, a higher number of marketable square meters (output) for second homes than for hotels; (iii) second homes last longer than hotels and therefore

¹¹ In civil law systems, a “synallagmatic contract” is a contract in which each party is bound to provide something to the other party. In common law jurisdictions, it is the equivalent of a bilateral contract in which each party makes an enforceable promise.

¹² Mazzuchelli (2007) estimates that in the Italian tourism destinations’ real-estate market the average market price of hotels is equal to 2,824.64 Euros per square meter, while the second homes average market price is equal to 3,708.82 Euros per square meter. Furthermore, Kim et al. (2002) analyze the performance of Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs) over the 1993–1999 period, and specifically they compare the performance of hotel REITs with six other REITs sectors and with the overall market. They find that hotel REITs carried the highest market risk and underperformed the other REITs sectors (office, industrial, etc.).

¹³ “Moreover, self-catering accommodations, such as second homes, do not generate as high multiplier effects as hotels” (Piga, 2003b, p. 900).

¹⁴ Since multinational firms, including hotels, frequently implement technological transfers (Kumi, 2006), tourism destinations may benefit from technological spillovers (Rodriguez-Clare, 1996; Blomstrom and Kokko, 1998). Even considering the different impact effects of second homes and hotels, this is another reason why the Destination manager might prefer hotel investments to support economic growth.

have a lower depreciation rate;¹⁵ (iv) hotels have higher management and maintenance costs since their occupation rate is higher than for second homes. Because of these reasons, for a firm the profit margin of investments in second homes can be considerably higher than those of investments in hotels (Kim et al., 2002).

According to the second stylized fact, investments in second homes yield immediate employment growth but, at the same time, lead to a type of tourism with lower development rates. Moreover, tourism investments, both in second homes and hotels, may generate environmental negative externalities (Piga, 2003a), though investment in hotels may also bring about positive externalities (tourism multiplier effect) which can offset, at least partially, the negative ones. On the contrary, investments in second homes may induce a net negative externality because the positive effects (tourism multiplier effect) do not necessarily offset the negative ones (environmental effects).

Within the historical and theoretical framework that inspired this research, the Destination manager: (i) has a limited financial budget (liquidity constraint) and cannot finance the investment choices alone;¹⁶ (ii) does not have sufficient know-how to make investments herself. The Destination manager aims at maximizing her political consensus, so that her objective function can be interpreted as a measurement of the gain or loss of her political consensus, like gained or lost votes. For example, a zero value means no gained votes, a positive value signals a certain amount of gained votes, etc. (Girard and Gartner, 1993). Moreover, the Firm: (i) has a limited financial budget (liquidity constraint) to invest in tourism destination; (ii) is a “price taker”, since it acts in a small tourism destination, where market prices are fixed by the rest of the world.

The Firm’s financial resources and the second homes/hotels market prices are therefore taken as constant (exogenous variables), as well as building costs and thus profit margins, while the control variables are the square meters of area chosen for building second homes and/or hotels, given the disposable land (physical constraint) and capital (budget constraint). The Firm, as usual, is profit maximizing.

As in the real world, the Firm also has the opportunity to exercise a third “outside option”, if it is preferable, consisting of building a third type of buildings

¹⁵ Corgel (2007) estimates that the long-run obsolescence rate of hotels is equal to 1.93% per year, while Smith (2004) estimates that the average depreciation rate of real estates is included in the range 0.9–1.3% per year. Moreover, Colwell and Ramsland (2003) estimated that the long-run rate of obsolescence of retail real estates is equal to 0.9% per year.

¹⁶ For the same reason the policy maker cannot provide subsidies to firms.

in a different location. For example, the Firm could prefer to build homes in a different location, i.e. private accommodations which are occupied throughout the year by local residents and workers.

Finally, coherently with the above stylized facts we assume the following parameters affect the Destination manager's objective function: (i) a high positive effect (gain of consensus) for hotels built by the Firm; (ii) a low positive effect (at the limit null effect) for second homes built by the Firm; (iii) a negative effect (loss of consensus) for unutilized land, i.e. the square meters of the building area (planned in the planning scheme) not actually utilized. The utilized land can be regarded as a proxy variable of the employment in the tourism destination: in other words, if the square meters of actually built area are less than those planned in the tourism destination-planning scheme, land, labour and capital in the tourism destination may be underemployed.¹⁷

3 The Model

We assume there are two agents, agent X and agent Y . Agent X is a policy maker (Destination manager) having an economic or institutional "power to regulate", while agent Y is a private agent (Firm) having to choose how much to invest in two distinct investments x and y . Investments x are the Square Meters (SM) built as hotels; y are the SM built as second homes; $s = x + y$ are the SM of total area actually built up by the Firm in the tourism destination S . Furthermore, we suppose $0 \leq s \leq S$ and $0 \leq (x; y) \leq S$, where S is the entire building area in the tourism destination, defined in the tourism destination-planning scheme. The allocation of variable s is the cause of a conflict between the agents, since we assume they have different preferences on the division of s between their choice variables x and y .

The Firm also has the opportunity to exercise an "outside option", which consists of choosing a third type of investment z in a different location Z , with $0 \leq z \leq Z$. Investments z are the SM built by the Firm as alternative and different building investments. The physical constraint $z \leq Z$ is a constraint in the alternative location.

For simplicity and without losing generality of results, we assume the general condition that the Firm's investments costs $c > 0$ (building costs per SM) are the same for each investment x , y or z (hotels, second homes and homes), while

¹⁷ In the real world the Destination manager may have a lot of other preferences or issues, e.g. if there are enough local workers to staff the hotels, housing for hotel workers, etc.

building market prices are not equal according to the above stylized facts. This assumption implies that the Firm has a budget constraint,¹⁸ because it cannot spend more than the total available financial resources $F > 0$, such that:

$$c(x + y + z) = c(s + z) \leq F \quad [1]$$

therefore $s \leq F/c$; x , y and $z \leq F/c$.

Additionally, the Firm can reinvest the net profits made on investment s , such that the value of its financial resources F increases. In that case, the budget constraint [1] is no longer binding, such that x , y or $z > F/c$, but costs increase to a higher level $c' > c$, according to the law of diminishing returns (piecewise function).

3.1 Clashing Interests

The Firm's preference function is linear¹⁹ and is characterized by different coefficients when the Firm invests within the limits of the budget constraint [1] or in the case of reinvested profits. Defining p as hotels market price, v as second homes market price and q as homes market price per SM, given c (the building cost per SM), we can define profit margin per SM: $m = p - c$ for hotels, $n = v - c$ for second homes and $r = q - c$ for homes.

If the Firm invests within the limits of the budget constraint [1], according to the above stylized facts we can assume that $q < p < v$ or, alternatively, the following profit condition:

$$n > m \geq 0 \quad [2]$$

such that the Firm strictly prefers y to x as far as the investment in S is concerned. If the Firm reinvests the profits made out of investments s , the value of its financial resources F and its costs will increase (from c to c'). So, the Firm's profits of investments in S will decrease to lower levels $m' < m$ for investment x , and $n' < n$ for investment y . Even in this case, the Firm continues to strictly prefer y to x , that is $n' > m' \geq 0$.

¹⁸ Taking into consideration a budget constraint is equivalent to introducing in the model a "credit rationing" hypothesis.

¹⁹ In order to emphasize the clash of interests between the agents, we specify their preferences as linear functions, such that their corresponding optimal solutions yield opposite results, $x > 0$ and $y = 0$ or vice versa, since the linear preference functions do not allow for internal solutions. As mentioned above, we define "compromise" a solution characterized by equilibrium values of x and y where x and $y > 0$.

Let us now take into consideration the alternative investments z in the different location Z . For the Firm we assume that r is the profits of investment z , where $m > r > n'$ if $z \leq F/c$, while if $z > F/c$, according to the law of diminishing returns, the profit decreases to the level $r' < r$. This means that if the Firm is investing within the budget constraint [1] it is convenient to invest only in S , but in the case of reinvested profits it will be convenient to invest the extra budget coming from the profits made out of investments in S only in Z . Therefore, Firm profits conditions can be summarized as follows:

$$n > m > r > 0 \quad \text{if } x, y \text{ and } z \leq F/c \quad [3]$$

$$r > n' > m' > 0 \quad \text{if } x \text{ or } y > F/c \text{ and } z \leq F/c \quad [4]$$

such that within the limits of budget constraint [1] the best option for the Firm is investment y , while in the case of reinvested profits, the Firm strictly prefers to choose the alternative investment in homes z .

For the Destination manager we assume that $d > 0$ is the political consensus gained for x (the SM actually built as hotels), while $b \geq 0$ is the political consensus gained for y (the SM actually built as second homes). According to the above stylized facts, we can suppose that:

$$d > b \geq 0 \quad [5]$$

such that the Destination manager prefers that the Firm chooses to build hotels.²⁰ Therefore, from [2] and [5] we can see that agents have clashing interests by construction: the Firm strictly prefers y to x , while the Destination manager strictly prefers x to y . Moreover, the assumption of limited financial resources implies that the budget constraint [1] is binding:

$$F/c < S \quad [6]$$

which means that the Firm's financial resources are limited and not sufficient to use the entire building area. In other words, both agents will be negatively affected by this lack of financial resources. This assumption also implies that the Destination manager herself does not have sufficient financial resources to finance construction in order to utilize the whole building area and fill the gap ($S - s$), or to give incentives to the Firm.

²⁰ Since voters always prefer full employment of all inputs (labor, capital and land), the Destination manager always prefers hotels to second homes.

3.2 Common Interests

As we mentioned in the Introduction, the “compromise” solution is a possible solution only if agents have common interests. Thus we assume that both the Firm and the Destination manager are also interested in the gap $(S - s) \geq 0$, that is the difference between the SM of the building area and the SM of the area actually built up. The agents common interest is therefore to minimize the unutilized land. Weighting the gap by the coefficient $a_Y \leq 0$ for the Firm, and $a_X < 0$ for the Destination manager, agents preferences are negatively affected by the gap $(S - s)$.

According to these assumptions, agents preference functions become as follows:

$$P_Y(x, y, z) = \begin{cases} a_Y(S - s) + mx + ny + rz & \text{with } n > m > r \text{ if } x, y \text{ and } z \leq F/c \\ a_Y(S - s) + m'x + n'y + rz & \text{with } r > n' > m' \text{ if } x \text{ or } y > F/c \text{ and } z \leq F/c \end{cases} \quad [7]$$

$$P_X(x, y) = a_X(S - s) + dx + by \quad \text{with } d > b \quad [8]$$

In order to prove that a compromise solution does exist, it is sufficient to include a common interest at least in one of agents preferences. Therefore, it is necessary that only the Destination manager is actually affected by the gap $(S - s)$, while the Firm is just indifferent, such that $a_Y = 0$. In this way, the Destination manager strictly prefers hotels to second homes but also prefers the lowest unutilized land, while the Firm prefers second homes to hotels and neglects the loss for the unutilized land (benign neglect).

4 The Policies

Given agents objective functions [7] and [8], Firm’s optimal choice is not equal to Destination manager’s optimal choice and this situation generates a policy problem. To face this policy problem, we compare three different possible policies: (i) *laissez faire* policy, where the Destination manager allows the Firm to freely choose; (ii) taxation of investment in second homes by levying a tax on second homes, which needs to be high enough to reverse the profitability for the

Firm to build hotels instead of second homes;²¹ (iii) de-taxation policy, consisting of taxation of investment in second homes together with a temporary tax exemption on a share of reinvested profits.

Through the third policy (temporary tax exemption regime), the Destination manager levies a limited tax on second homes and gives the Firm the freedom to build either second homes or hotels, in exchange for its commitment to reinvest (into the tourism destination) the profits from building and selling second homes. We shall show that this de-taxation policy represents a compromise solution between agents, since it yields an equilibrium with $x, y > 0$. However, before analyzing the compromise solution, to better show the clash of interests between agents we define the conflict solutions as benchmark against which to compare other solutions.

The Destination manager makes her optimal choice according to the following maximization problem:

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{x,y} P_x(x, y) &= a_x(S - s) + dx + by \\ \text{s.t. } s = x + y &\leq S; \quad x, y, s \geq 0 \end{aligned} \quad [9]$$

Given previous assumptions on parameters $d > b$ and $a_x < 0$, problem [9] has the following straightforward solution:

$$x^* = s = S; \quad y^* = 0 \quad [10]$$

according to which the Destination manager prefers that the Firm invests only in hotels, for an amount equal to the maximum value of $s = S$. This solution yields the following value for Destination manager preference:

$$P_x(x^*, 0) = dS \quad [11]$$

Before checking if a compromise solution between agents is feasible, and under what conditions an equilibrium based on a compromise (with $x, y > 0$ and $s \rightarrow S$) is an optimal solution, we define as *laissez faire* policy the suboptimal solution for the policy maker, which instead corresponds to the optimal solution for the private agent.

²¹ According to Poole (1970) and Weitzman (1974), an equivalent policy would be a direct control regulation, that is introducing within the planning scheme some quantitative constraints on second homes. One example would be denying planning permission to build second homes (that is setting $y \equiv 0$) enforced by a penalty. This direct control policy would yield exactly the same solution as taxation ($y = 0$), but in the case of taxation the solution is the outcome of a firm's choice, while in the case of regulation it is the consequence of conformity with the law.

4.1 Laissez Faire Policy

Without any intervention by the Destination manager, the Firm has the possibility to choose its optimal investment. In order to simplify the computations, we shall logically split this optimization problem into two separate stages: (i) maximization of $P_Y(x, y) = mx + ny$, and (ii) maximization of $P'_Y(z) = rz$. Therefore, given conditions [3] and [4] the two problems can be solved sequentially stage by stage. This procedure gives the same results of solving the problem in one stage, because it is a separable optimization problem (since we assumed agents linear preference functions).

In the first stage the Firm makes its optimal choice, by solving the following maximization problem:

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{x,y} P_Y(x, y) &= mx + ny \\ \text{s.t. } s &\leq F/c; x, y \leq F/c; s = x + y \leq S; x, y, s \geq 0 \end{aligned} \quad [12]$$

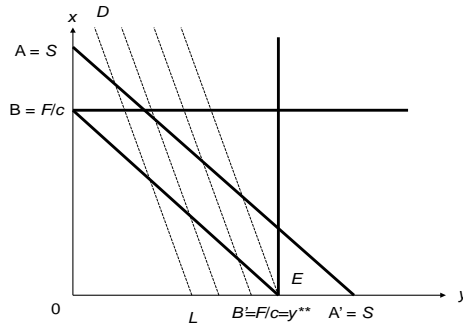
Given conditions [3] and [4], and taking into consideration only the solution which respects the binding budget constraint [6], problem [12] has the following straightforward solution:

$$x^{**} = 0; y^{**} = F/c = s < S \quad [13]$$

which is consistent with coefficients n and m in condition [3]. Therefore, the Firm chooses to invest F only in the variable y , but for a lower value than the maximum S . The solution [13] is drawn in Figure 1 (see point E).

In Figure 1, the two bold vertical and horizontal lines represent the compatibility constraints x and $y \leq F/c$; line AA' represents the physical constraint $s = x + y \leq S$; line BB' represents the financial constraint $c(x + y) \leq F$; dotted lines DL represent Firm's iso-profit curves: $\forall P_Y, x = P_Y/m - ny/m$.

Figure 1. Laissez Faire Policy



In the second stage, the Firm reinvests the extra budget coming from the profits made on investment y^{**} , and therefore the budget constraint [1] is no longer binding. Since the Firm's profits decrease to n' and m' , condition [4] represents the new margin profits. Therefore, the Firm reinvests in Z all the profit made out of investment y^{**} , and its profit becomes $P_Y(0, y^{**}) = n(F/c)$, by solving the following maximization problem:

$$\begin{aligned} \max_z P'_Y(z) &= rz \\ \text{s.t. } z &\leq P_Y(0, y^{**})/c; \quad z \leq F/c; \quad z \leq Z; \quad z \geq 0 \end{aligned} \quad [14]$$

Given condition [4], problem [14] has the following straightforward solution:

$$z^{**} = P_Y(0, y^{**})/c = n(F/c^2) \quad [15a]$$

$$P'_Y(z^{**}) = rn(F/c^2) \quad [15b]$$

which is consistent with the coefficient r in the objective function [14] if and only if $z^{**} \leq F/c$, that is $n \leq c$. Therefore, *laissez faire* solution yields the following preferences values:

$$P_Y^{tot}(0, y^{**}, z^{**}) = P_Y(0, y^{**}) + P'_Y(z^{**}) = n(F/c)(1 + r/c) \quad [16a]$$

$$P_X(0, y^{**}) = -a_X(S - F/c) + b(F/c) \quad [16b]$$

Comparing the preferences of Destination manager [11] and [16b], it is easy to verify that $P_X(x^*, 0) > P_X(0, y^{**})$, given that $d > b$ by definition. Moreover, solutions [10] and [13] yield opposite results for both agents ($x > 0$ and $y = 0$ or

vice versa), such that they have extreme clashing interests as a result of our assumption of linear preferences.

Given these results, it is clear that the Destination manager prefers to enforce some policies instead of choosing no intervention at all. Since the policy maker can use always its “power to regulate” to set conflict rules, the Destination manager can enforce a policy by imposing restrictions and/or constraints to the Firm’s behaviour in order to win the conflict.

4.2 Taxation Policy

To pursue her strict preference for investment in hotels with respect to investment in second homes, the Destination manager can enforce an indirect control consisting of levying a tax $0 < t \leq 1$ on n (profits of the investment y). In this sense, tax t represents an instrument of indirect control like an “environmental tax” or “Pigouvian tax” in tourism, because it is only directed at stimulating the investment in hotels, and not at collecting tax yields. For this reason, tax t does not explicitly enter in the Destination manager’s objective function.²²

Moreover, from now on we assume that if the Firm is indifferent about its investment choices, then it has an *epsilon* preference for Destination manager’s optimal solution, that is for investment in hotels. Therefore, the Destination manager needs to levy a tax t such to modify the Firm’s profits so that $n(1 - t) \leq m$.

Given this condition, the optimal tax t° needs to be included in the following threshold:

$$0 < \frac{n - m}{n} \leq t^\circ < 1 \quad [17]$$

which means that the Destination manager needs to set a minimum limit for the tax. In this case, in the first stage Firm maximization problem becomes:

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{x,y} P_y(x, y) &= mx + n(1 - t^\circ)y \\ \text{s.t. } s &\leq F/c; \quad x, y \leq F/c; \quad s = x + y \leq S; \quad x, y, s \geq 0 \end{aligned} \quad [18]$$

which solution is:

²² Since the goal of a “Pigouvian tax” is the environmental control (or internalizing the externalities), equilibrium investments in second homes will not be profitable any more, such that the corresponding tax yields would be null. For this reason within the framework of our model it is reasonable to exclude the tax from the policy maker objective function.

$$x_1 = F/c = s < S; y_1 = 0 \quad [19]$$

According to solution [19], the Firm chooses only investment in hotels, but for a lower value than the maximum S . Once again, solution [19] is consistent with coefficients n and m in objective function [18]. The solution [19] is drawn in Figure 2 (see point E), where the two bold vertical and horizontal lines represent the compatibility constraints, line AA' represents the physical constraint, line BB' represents the financial constraint, and dotted lines DL represent the Firm's iso-profit curves: $\forall P_Y, x = P_Y/m - n(1 - t^\circ)y/m$.

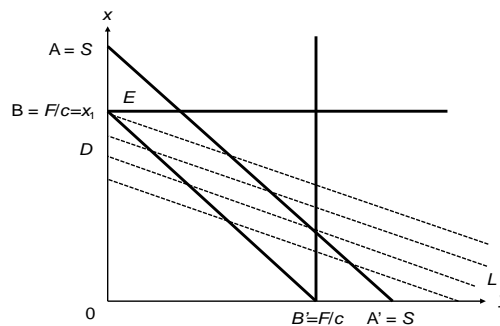
Then, in the second stage, given condition [4], the Firm reinvests in Z the extra budget coming from the profits made out of investment x_1 , and its profit becomes $P_Y(x_1, 0) = m(F/c)$. By following the same procedure used in problem [14], the solution is given by $z_1 = P_Y(x_1, 0)/c = m(F/c^2)$, under the condition that $z_1 \leq F/c$, that is $m \leq c$, which is already implied by the more binding condition $n \leq c$. Therefore, taxation policy yields the following agents preferences:

$$P_Y^{tot}(x_1, 0, z_1) = P_Y(x_1, 0) + P_Y'(z_1) = m(F/c)(1 + r/c) \quad [20a]$$

$$P_X(x_1, 0) = -a_X(S - F/c) + d(F/c) \quad [20b]$$

Comparing Destination manager preferences [16b] and [20b], it is easy to verify that $P_X(x_1, 0) > P_X(0, y^{**})$, given condition [5]. In other words, the policy maker strictly prefers taxation policy to *laissez faire*.

Figure 2: Taxation Policy



4.3 De-Taxation Policy

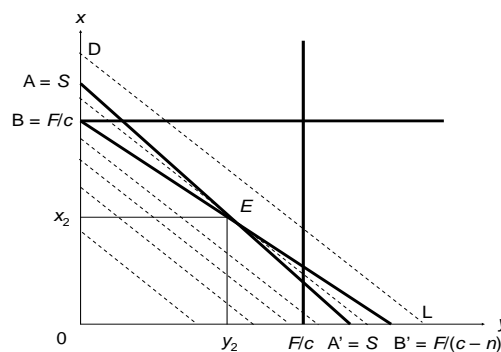
The Destination manager can implement another policy in order to pursue her strict preference for investment in hotels with respect to investment in second homes, besides the aim of decreasing the gap $(S - s)$. In fact, through de-taxation policy the Destination manager aims to avoid the drawback of taxation, that is the exclusion of profitability of investment in second homes. At the same time she wants to provide an effective incentive for the Firm to use the whole building area, reinvesting the profits made out of investment in second homes. If a compromise solution based on a mutual agreement between agents exists and if this policy is preferred by both agents, a contractual agreement between them can be realized. We check now under which conditions this agreement can be made.

The Destination manager levies a tax $0 < t < 1$ on n and in addition grants a temporary tax exemption on a share of reinvested profits. Due to this tax exemption, the Firm's financial resources F increase, so that it may invest enough to fill the gap $(S - s)$. The value of the Firm's financial resources F increases by the amount $\Delta F = ny$. Under this condition, the Firm's financial resources become equal to $F + \Delta F = F + ny$. Accordingly, in the first stage the new maximization problem becomes:

$$\begin{aligned} \max_{x,y} P_Y(x,y) &= mx + n(1-t)y \\ \text{s.t. } s &\leq (F + ny)/c; \quad x, y \leq F/c; \quad s = x + y \leq S; \quad x, y, s \geq 0 \end{aligned} \quad [21]$$

The solution of problem [21] is not straightforward, so it is helpful to use Figure 3.

Figure 3: The De-Taxation Policy



In Figure 3, the two bold vertical and horizontal lines represent the compatibility constraints x and $y \leq F/c$, while the other lines represent the implicit functions of maximization problem [21]: line AA' represents (as in Figures 1 and 2) the physical constraint $s = x + y \leq S$ (or $x = S - y$); line BB' represents the financial constraint $c(x + y) \leq F + ny$ (or $x = F/c - (c - n)y/c$), where we assume the condition $n \leq c$; dotted lines DL represent the Firm's profits (iso-profit curves): $\forall P_Y, x = P_Y/m - n(1 - t)y/m$.

The necessary condition to solve problem [21] in point E , and therefore make compromise a feasible solution, is that $\text{grad}(\text{AA}') < \text{grad}(\text{DL}) < \text{grad}(\text{BB}')$, which is solved by:

$$-1 < -\frac{n(1-t)}{m} < -\frac{c-n}{c} \quad [22]$$

Condition [22] implies that the Destination manager needs to impose a tax which is included between a minimum and a maximum limit, in order to have a contractual solution preferred by both agents. If the Destination manager levies the optimal tax t^* at the minimum value, we obtain:

$$0 < t^\circ - t^* \leq \frac{m}{c} \quad [23]$$

which is always true if $n \leq c$.

Given conditions [3], [4] and [22], in Figure 3 it is easy to verify that at the equilibrium point E the Firm maximizes its profit function $P_Y(x, y)$ subject to all the constraints in [21], i.e. the possibilities frontier.²³ Therefore, point E represents a compromise solution between the clashing interests of agents, with $x, y > 0$.

The equilibrium values of x and y can be computed through the constraints intersection:

$$y_2 = \frac{Sc - F}{n} \quad [24a]$$

$$x_2 = \frac{F - S(c - n)}{n} \quad [24b]$$

²³ From the "simplex method" we know that the maximum of a linear function coincides with the "peak" of the possibilities frontier.

$$x_2 + y_2 = s = S \quad [24c]$$

According to solutions [24], the Firm chooses both investments in hotels and in second homes, which represent a compromise solution, and thanks to the additional financial resources stemming from the tax exemption on reinvested profits, the Firm's optimal choice is exactly equal to the total building area, so that there is no unutilized limited resource: $(S - s) = 0$.²⁴

Overall, being $P_Y(x_2, y_2) = \frac{m[(F - S(c - n)] + n(1 - t)(Sc - F)}{n}$ the profit in destination S and $P'_Y(z_2) = \frac{rP_Y(x_2, y_2)}{c}$ the profit in location Z , the de-taxation policy yields the following agents preferences:

$$P_Y^{tot}(x_2, y_2, z_2) = P_Y(x_2, y_2) + P'_Y(z_2) = \left\{ \frac{m[(F - S(c - n)] + n(1 - t)(Sc - F)}{n} \right\} \left(1 + \frac{r}{c} \right) \quad [25a]$$

$$P_X(x_2, y_2) = \frac{d[(F - S(c - n)] + b(Sc - F)}{n} \quad [25b]$$

In order to implement the compromise solution as a *synallagmatic contract*, it must be preferred by both agents: the Destination manager gives the permission to build second homes and the Firm agrees to reinvest de-taxed profits. Therefore, it is necessary to verify if this solution dominates, or at least is indifferent to, the other solutions in terms of preferences. This is true when specific conditions are verified (see Appendix). Under these conditions, the Destination manager proposes a contract to the Firm, and the Firm accepts the compromise solution proposed by the Destination manager, because both strictly prefer the de-taxation policy to taxation.

In summary, with our model we prove that the policy maker needs to set a minimum tax (but not a maximum one) in order to implement an "authoritative policy" (taxation policy). On the contrary, a "contractual policy" (de-taxation policy) is preferred by both agents only if there is also a maximum limit for the tax. Obviously, this policy can be implemented only if specific conditions are met (see Appendix).

²⁴ See Appendix for the sufficient conditions for the existence of a solution.

5 Conclusions

Both well-developed and still-developing tourism destinations often are interested in undertaking tourism investments in second homes and/or hotels. When the Destination managers want to support economic growth, they need to adopt policies designed to attract tourism investments. However, a potential policy dilemma arises when the Destination manager and the Firm have clashing interests in the allocation of limited resources of land and capital, and they have to choose the optimal tourism investment between second homes or hotels. When financial resources are not sufficient to fully utilize all the land earmarked for tourism investments, we analyzed three different policies which could provide a solution to this policy problem: no intervention (*laissez faire*), taxation and de-taxation policy. The idea of our contribution is that it may be preferable, for both agents, to regulate their potential conflicts by enforcing a compromise solution, which consists in a de-taxation policy, rather than by implementing a taxation policy (indirect control).

Our model shows that some parameter values do exist where the de-taxation policy dominates, or at least is indifferent to, the taxation. Specifically, the de-taxation policy is preferable when the financial resources of the Firm are not sufficient to utilize the entire building area. In this case, the Destination manager prefers to grant the building permit for second homes, but in exchange for a commitment from the Firm to reinvest (into the tourism destination) its profits from building and selling second homes. Under certain parametric conditions, this compromise solution may be preferred by both the Destination manager and the Firm, since they reach a higher optimal solution.

Regarding the Destination manager, the de-taxation policy dominates the other policy if: (i) the Firm decides to reinvest the profits from second homes, such that its financial resources are high enough to utilize the whole building area; (ii) the Destination manager is primarily interested in the full utilization of the entire building area (as planned in the tourism destination-planning scheme) rather than the lower positive externality on tourism economy (and thus lower gain of political consensus) brought about by building second homes instead of hotels.

Regarding the Firm, thanks to the de-taxation policy, its profit function achieves a higher value with respect to taxation if there is a maximum limit for the tax. In this case, the Firm prefers the policy of partial de-taxation of the reinvested profits instead of being subject to simple taxation (or to a direct regulation policy). In particular, we found that while the policy maker only needs to set a minimum limit for the tax (but not a maximum one) to implement a taxation policy, a de-taxation policy of reinvested profits is preferred by both agents only if there is also

a maximum limit for the tax. An example of possible application of this de-taxation policy within this economic framework, is given by the Italian Law 383/2001, although it has yet to be applied to this type of issue.²⁵

In general, our application proves that if there are clashing interests between agents and the agents have at least some common interests, a compromise solution for the conflict may exist.

Finally, a potential future line of research could consist in finding alternative policies, like relaxing the liquidity constraint of the Firm, and thus the credit rationing hypothesis. All the possible public interventions that facilitate borrowing for the Firm (like credit facilities) represent possible examples of such policies (public-private partnerships, project financing, subsidized credits, no-interest bearing credits, public credits, etc.).²⁶

Furthermore, since investments in hotels or second houses may induce a net negative externality, because of the related negative environmental effects, a further extensions of this research could consist in taking explicitly into account the potential sustainable development issues.²⁷ To do that, in our model the tourism destination-planning scheme (and the corresponding amount of building area) may be considered as an endogenous variable, and the sustainable (economic and environmental) issues could be included in the objective function of the Destination manager. In this way, the allocation of the total available land between building and non-building area, could be considered as the first stage of the game between the Destination manager and the Firm.

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²⁵ The Italian Law 383/2001, so called “Tremonti-bis”, introduced the de-taxation of reinvested profits to support new investments by firms. More precisely, the law established that business income is exempt from taxation for an amount equal to 50% of the difference between the total amount of capital investment made in the current fiscal period and the average level of investment made in the previous five fiscal periods, excluding the highest of these five values from the calculation.

²⁶ Nevertheless, since we do not take into consideration the implementation costs of the economic policies, we can not define the most efficient one (second best analysis). For this same reason, we do not implement any non-neutral taxation. For example, as suggested by an anonymous reviewer, if we include the tax in the Destination manager’s objective function and if the Destination manager can use tax revenues to relax her financial constraint and undertake the tourism investments on her own, the indirect and direct control policies may not be equivalent.

²⁷ For example, nowadays the Sardinian government faces problems related to the economic and environmental sustainability of past tourism development.

Appendix

A) Condition for the existence of a compromise solution

Solution [24a] is consistent with coefficients n and m in [21] under the condition that $0 < y_2 \leq F/c$, where $y_2 > 0$ by assumption [6] and $y_2 \leq F/c$ if and only if $Sc \leq F[(c+n)/c]$, which entails the parametric condition $F < Sc \leq F[(c+n)/c]$. Accordingly, solution [24b] is consistent with coefficients n and m in [21] under the condition that $0 < x_2 \leq F/c$, where $x_2 > 0$ if and only if $S(c-n) < F$ and $x_2 \leq F/c$ by assumption [6]. Overall, solutions [24] are consistent with coefficients n and m under the parametric condition $S(c-n) < F < Sc \leq F[(c+n)/c]$.

Then, in the second stage the Firm reinvests the extra budget coming from the profits gained by investing in S , $P_Y(x_2, y_2)$, only in Z , given that through this policy the whole land S is utilized in equilibrium (see [24c]). By following the same procedure, the solution is given by $z_2 = P_Y(x_2, y_2)/c$, under the condition that $z_2 \leq F/c$, that is $P_Y(x_2, y_2) \leq F$, which is true if and only if:

$$\frac{m[(F - S(c - n)) + n(1 - t)(Sc - F)]}{n} \leq F$$

This last condition is always verified for any parameter values.

B) Condition for Destination manager's proposal

We have to compare Destination manager preferences with de-taxation policy [25b] and with taxation [20b], in order to verify that $P_X(x_2, y_2) \geq P_X(x_1, 0)$, that is:

$$\frac{d[(F - S(c - n)) + b(Sc - F)]}{n} \geq a_x \left(S - \frac{F}{c} \right) + d \left(\frac{F}{c} \right)$$

After some simple steps we obtain:

$$d \leq \frac{-a_x n + bcn}{c - n} \quad [26]$$

C) Condition for Firm's acceptance

We have to compare the Firm's profits under de-taxation policy [25a] and under taxation [20a], in order to verify that $P_Y^{tot}(x_2, y_2, z_2) \geq P_Y^{tot}(x_1, 0, z_1)$, that is:

$$\frac{m[(F - S(c - n)] + n(1 - t)(Sc - F)}{n} \left(1 + \frac{r}{c}\right) \geq m \left(\frac{F}{c}\right) \left(1 + \frac{r}{c}\right)$$

After some simple steps, we obtain:

$$t \leq 1 - \frac{m(c - n)}{nc} = t^{\circ} + \frac{m}{c} \quad [27]$$

which is the same upper limit we found in [23].

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