Tour guides are one of the most visible players in tourism but little scholarly attention has been given to the links that tour guides may have with sustainable development. This study addresses the gap by promoting an understanding of how tour guides can assist in moving tourism in a sustainable direction. Sustainable development is expected to improve the quality of life for all people without causing undesirable ecological and socio-cultural outcomes. As a central agent in the entire tourism system, tour guides have a variety of roles to play in response to the expectations of the various tourism stakeholders. A literature review suggests that tour guides can contribute to destinations' sustainable development by exerting their functions on experience management, resources management and local economic promotion. Interpretative guiding is the means by which tour guides can realize these above potentials. A case study was conducted in Hainan, China.
Hainan, literally "South of the Sea," separated from the mainland and south of Qiongzhou Strait, is the smallest province and the largest island in China. Once a backwater and wild remote area, with years' rapid development Hainan has become an international tourist destination largely owing to its balmy subtropical and tropical weather with fabulous sugar-white beaches. Often billed as "Chinese Hawaii," Hainan attracts a consistent flow tourists both home and abroad. Its convenient network of transportation allows people to get in and get around the island like a breeze. China's Contributions to Sustainable Development: Practice, Experience and Global Challenge. In the past two decades, China's practice in sustainable development has been enriching the idea of sustainable development and contributed to the global sustainable development, which can be shared by others. China had engaged in the discussion and drafting. To its credit, China is focusing on sustainable development at a point when its per capita output is barely more than one-third the level in the so-called advanced economies. A relatively poor country has made a conscious choice to shift its focus from the quantity of economic growth to its quality. China, the world's biggest emitter of greenhouse gases, is a case in point. By changing its economic model, shifting its sources of fuel, developing new transportation systems, and embracing eco-friendly urbanization, China's sustainability strategy is an example of global leadership that the rest of the world should consider very carefully. In the rush to demonize China over trade, the West has missed this point altogether.