Abstract
This paper presents the evaluation of the eco-tourism potential of 27 places located in the natural protected areas of the municipality of Santa Maria Huatulco, Southern Mexico. In the first part of this study, we examine the contents of the Statesponsored project «Community eco-tourism corridor Huatulco» (CECH) and the geographical features of the areas where it is being implemented: Huatulco National Park and the Communal System of Protected Areas. In the second section, we present the evaluation of 88 variables pertaining to the natural, social and economic ambiance of the study area; this is done in order to reveal the territorial differentiation within the CECH. Among the research findings, worth mentioning is the territorial differentiation of places where tourism is now part of the local economy and those where the tourism economy is yet to be introduced.

Keywords
Eco-tourism, natural protected areas, Huatulco, Mexico