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FOREWARD

Tourism, as one of the largest and most fast-growing industries (Kaiwa, 2017; WEF, 2017), was previously classified as a non-productive sector, with little impact on the economy due to the focus on leisure activities (Vanhove, 2011). With a contribution of travel and tourism industry to the world gross domestic product (hereinafter GDP) of over 10%, the perspective changed as the pre-Covid-19 expectations were to get close to 12% of the world GDP by 2028 including direct, indirect and induced contribution.

It must be underlined that tourism plays a very important role (see figure 1) as, apart from its contribution to the GDP, it involves a broad set of production sectors and counts with a vast capacity of creating jobs (almost 10% of the total employment).

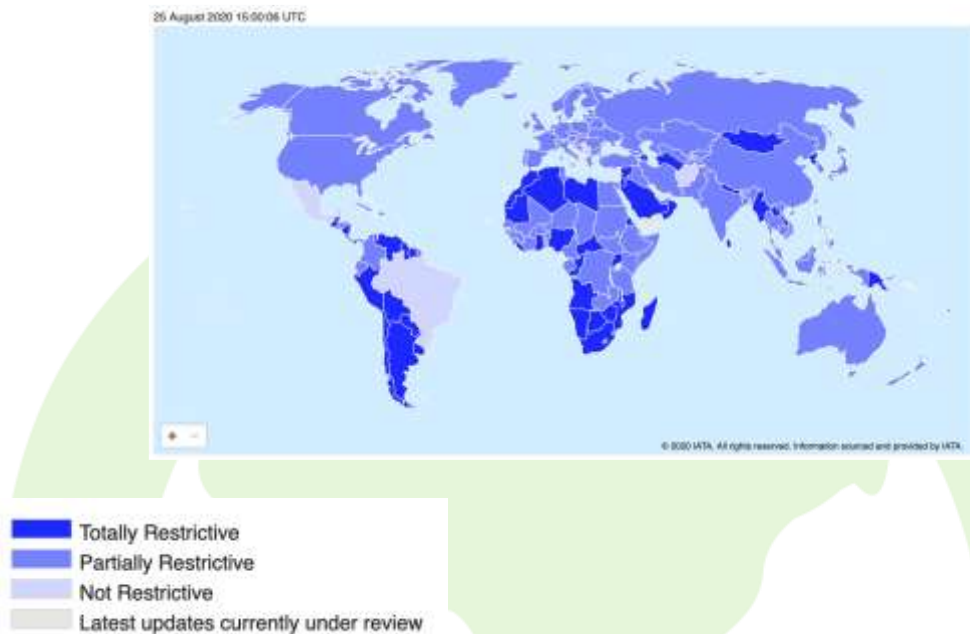
Figure 1. Why tourism matters?



This, under normal circumstances would be considered mainly as an advantage, the fact that travel and tourism industry is among the most relevant ones among services sector. However, under the pandemic context this has become a challenge as the sanitary crisis triggered by the coronavirus (COVID-19) meant a widespread adoption of population confinement measures and disruption of activity in many economic sectors, as well as border closures, first in major Chinese industrial regions and later in virtually all advanced economies and some major emerging economies, have contributed to forecasts that the fall in international trade in 2020 would be much larger than that experienced in 2009. The World Trade Organisation forecast a reduction in world trade in 2020 of between 13% and 32% over the year.

In fact, it is not only the closure of borders during the first wave of the pandemic, but numerous travel restrictions since then (see map 1), as one of the first responses to the pandemic.

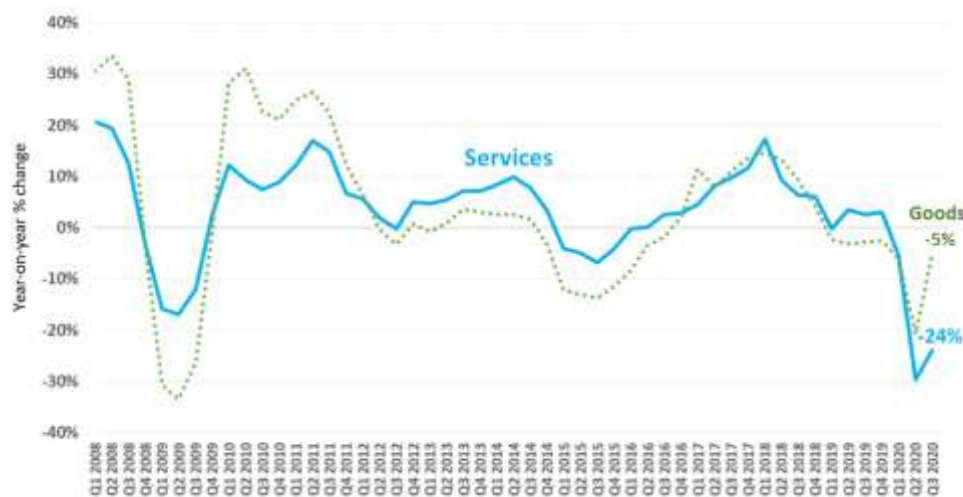
Map 1. Travelling restrictions due to COVID-19



Source: IATA (25th Aug 2020). Available at <https://www.iatatravelcentre.com/world.php>

As a consequence, many sectors were deeply affected, especially trade of goods, but mostly service trade with about 30% reduction during the second quarter of 2020 compared to the same period in 2019 (see figure 5).

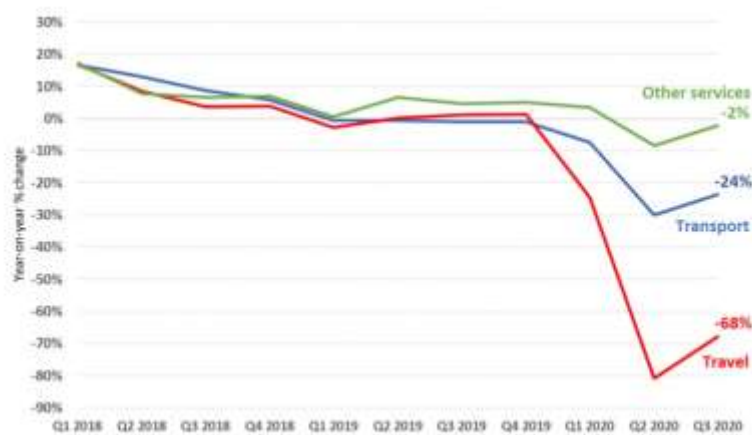
Figure 5. Evolution of global service trade



Source: WTO (https://www.wto.org/english/news_e/news21_e/serv_26jan21_e.htm).

In fact, given the characteristics of services, cannot be stored, the narrowing demand conducted to many revenue losses due to cancelled flights, holidays abroad, restaurant meals, and cultural/recreational activities, a scenario that seems to be a reality for a relatively long period of time. As depicted in figure 6, travel remains the most affected service sector with 68% decrease at global level compared to the same period in 2019. Revenues from international tourism experienced a fall of 88% in Latin America and the Caribbean, 80% in both Asia and Africa, 78% in North America, and 55% in Europe.

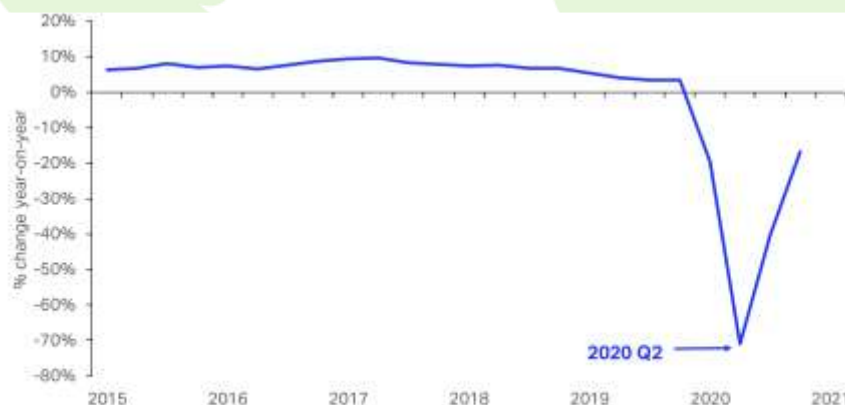
Figure 6. Evolution of service trade



Source: WTO-UNCTAD-ITC estimates.

Regarding transport subsector, the International Air Transport Association (IATA) predicted a 70% drop of revenues in the second quarter of 2020 compared to the same period in 2019.

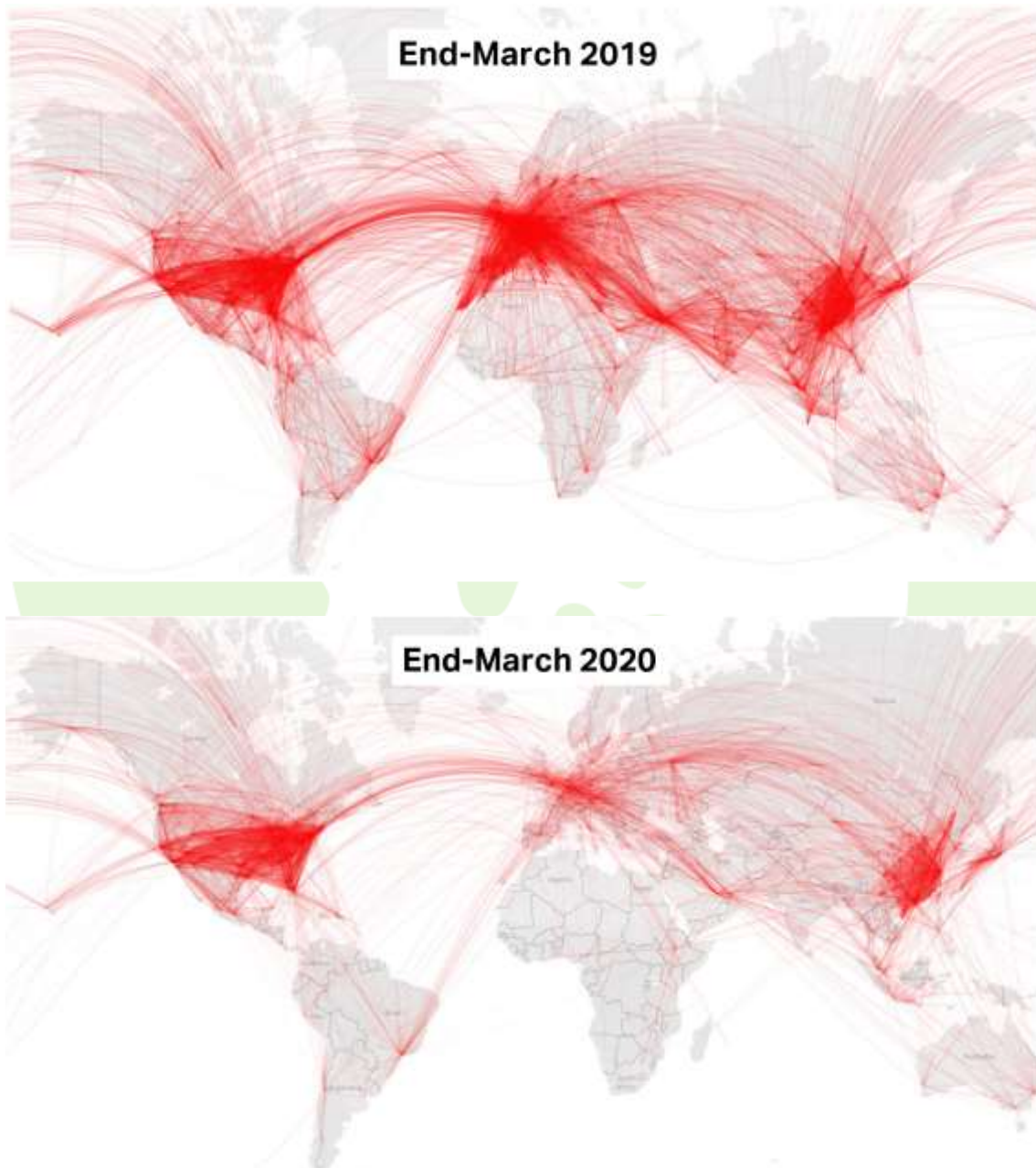
Figure 7. Evolution of transport



Source: IATA Economics <https://www.iata.org/en/iata-repository/publications/economic-reports/covid-19-cash-burn-analysis/>

The huge reduction of air connections between cities in the first quarter of 2020 is visible, but, at the same time, these connections are critical for the recovery of at least international trade, supply chains, investment and tourism.

Map 2. Air connections March 2019 versus March 2020



Source: IATA (2020). <https://www.iata.org/en/iata-repository/publications/economic-reports/covid-19-wider-economic-impact-from-air-transport-collapse/>

Travel and tourism industry is very important in both Thailand and Vietnam. In fact, the incomes and investment driven by international tourism can be critical accounting for about 22% in Thailand and 9% in Vietnam (IATA and World Travel and Tourism Council, 2019). More details regarding Sustainable tourism and innovative financial management strategies especially for the case of Thailand and Vietnam are available in the following pages. Due to the current pandemic context, the perspective of this complication is both pre and post Covid-19.





How are sustainable tourism and innovative financial management strategies practiced in Southeast Asia

1. Islands on the Mekong: toward a community of sustainability

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1.1. Short description

Right in the middle of Co Chien River, an island community lives and works on this stretch of land right on one of the branches of the Mekong River for years. They have their yearly rice crops, shrimp and crab farming when the water turns salty, coconut growing for some extra cash, and a range of other farm products coming from their regular rural activities to save up for holiday expenses. They are surrounded by water and thus know how to use and preserve this natural resource. They are self-sufficient for generations and choose to be sheltered away from the city lights and all the luxuries of the modern urban social setting not too distant away. They follow a simple healthy life that many of us could only read on magazines or dream of. People are helping each other in a close-knit community sharing what is a very special river culture. Along rows of Nipa Palms, they build their houses, raise chicken, and tend the rice fields just across from the dirt pathways. These can get slippery during Monsoon rain when you try to get to the landing for the daily ferry crossing. Life is calm and life is precious.

Figure 1: A bird's-eye view of Con Chim Island on Mekong River Delta



Source: vietnambybike.com

The island is called Con Chim. It is part of the Commune Hoa Minh, Tra Vinh Province. Con Chim is on the other side of the river where you can hear the morning rooster telling that it time to get ready for fieldwork. There were little or no tourists, and most visitors are family members checking on each other during holidays and the annual New Year Tet celebration. But things change when the flow of the river varies so frequently. Then, the Monsoon comes late and the hot season is getting hotter and lasting longer. Sometime, the drought is so severe that families are forced to buy water in order to save their fruit crops. What they thought of getting for the season is much less due to the extra water cost. The news keeps repeating that climate change is here with us. Villagers knew about it and they tried their best to cope with the new demands.

1.2. Environment and tourism impacts

It was quite a special occasion when I got involved in the project. A couple of trips to acquaint myself with the province and then I joined a team of specialists and researchers who are affiliated with the National University of Ho Chi Minh City. We became associates and had been active in the Delta from the very beginning. The Mekong Delta was the new focus of government effort to develop and we responded to this call. With the challenges mentioned above, we are to pay close attention to the entire region where the population is around 20 million. Not only it is the food production center combining agri with aquaculture, but also due to the quality of the soil replenished yearly by river sediments, there is a variety of fruit crops and aqua products coming from the land and water of the estuaries. There is also an ethnic diversity mixing among the water landscapes. This tapestry of colorful sceneries and people attracts domestic and international travelers. The Delta became very attractive as tourist destination for a good number of years.

This Southern region of Viet Nam or the Mekong Delta has a fairly long coastline facing two large bodies of water: Pacific Ocean or East Sea as it is called here and the Gulf of Thailand. The provinces bordering the ocean water line are the hardest hits. They always face with strong natural forces each year coming from both sides of the peninsula while also enjoy the unique geographical location. Another special feature, the Mekong at the point of entering Viet Nam from Cambodia, it splits into several branches where they form over thousands of years a region so flat that a big rain or flood can create climate disasters. Living with such yearly conditions, the characters of the people are built on strong resiliency and they have for over three hundred years made the Delta the rice center for the whole country. Needless to say, the Delta is the center for food security and the annual production is not only for the country but also for the entire region of mainland Southeast Asia if needed.

Another unique aspect of the Delta is the diversity in ethnic history. Many waves of immigrants coming from the central part of Vietnam, China eastern seashore, and the Cham ethnic group coming from the South Seas form an ethnic mosaic living in harmony. They

blended well with a Khmer population who settled quite a long time in this region and thus, the province is far from being a single ethnic community but has indeed a diversified character that has lived and worked together. The northern section of Viet Nam is different in the sense that the ethnics live upland away from the majority lowlanders. The exchanges and contacts have been sporadic until recently. You could detect the difference in terms of collaboration, interdependence, and the mutual support as the saying “Tứ hai giai huynh đệ” (all are brothers coming from four directions) in the thinking of Delta folks.

Living for centuries with the abundance of water and food, they began to see their lives have changed. Warnings from the various branches of the government and accessing local news, they are made aware of why the regular flow becomes irregular and the seasons are not at all normal like they used to be. So community meetings confirmed that among the many reasons for the irregular flow of the river is the sequestration of rain water and snow melting by the many hydroelectricity dams built upstream in China, Vietnam’s neighbor to the north. Also, more new dams are projected in Laos where both countries share a long history of struggle. The main source of livelihood for many communities living along the river is threatened. The basin is home to 60 million and growing. Vietnam as a downstream nation has to react appropriately to secure the food security issue.

Figure 2: Mainstream dams on the Mekong and the location of Con Chim



Source: adapted from mekongdeltaplan.com

If you could for a moment imagine there are currently 11 big cement blocks stopping the mainstream of the Mekong River from flowing freely up in the Southwest province of

Yunnan in China controlling therefore the annual flow of the river for the other five downstream countries? This could threaten the livelihoods of million. I have had several opportunities to visit a few sites of Chinese hydrology projects and what I have seen was many rivers and tributaries that are no longer natural waterways but they have become a series of huge lakes trapping huge volumes of water that was supposed to flow down freely from 4,000 meters. With the sequestering of such amount of rainwater and snowmelt, downstream farmers who are relying on this annual flow will have to face with irregular water conditions. The information and discussions by many water experts about these many projects have raised serious concerns about the future of the Mekong Delta region.

Let us talk about the Province of Tra Vinh and identify this piece of land bordering the East Sea and having such a unique history that was based of the collaboration and contribution of an ethnic diversity. It is only about 2 hours from the huge megalopolis called Saigon City. The natural borders of two main branches of the Mekong, the Co Chien and Song Hau separate Tra Vinh from Ben Tre in the north and Soc Trang province from the south. It has sixty plus kilometers of oceanfront facing the Pacific. This Tra Vinh story begins with the ethnic Khmers establishing a rural community back about a thousand years ago, rich in tradition and religious features. By the 1800s, the arrivals of both the Chinese immigrants and the Vietnamese coming from Central Viet Nam increase the part of the Delta population. Less developed than other parts of the Mekong Delta, Tra Vinh is considered much greener as a city with tall trees providing shades to the boulevards with colonial architecture embellishing the banks of rivers and canals. Tra Vinh city itself is known as the city in the forest that forms a natural umbrella enjoyed by all on hot summer days.

Figure 3: Tourists enjoy the bucolic scenes of the Mekong Delta countryside



Source: vnexpress.net

The rice growing tradition of the Khmer community took advantage of the Mekong River branches to regulate their annual harvest. They engaged in farm work year round, held on to their customs, and prayed in the sanctuary of their beautiful temples. Much of these rituals remain intact. They have a long tradition of Theravada Buddhism with over 140 places of worship concentrating in a few communes. These religious institutions still link with the main sources in neighbouring Cambodia and cater to the spiritual needs of this community which now represents 30% of the total Tra Vinh population. This unique architecture is so special that Tra Vinh is the center for Khmer temples outside of Cambodia and the annual festivals or pilgrimages brought thousands of tourists wanting to learn more about many aspects of the diversity of the Delta. From garden fruit to special coconut brands, the province is attracting domestic visitors as well as international traveller groups.

From the eighteenth century onward, Trà Vinh became a multicultural region with people taking their chance of moving further south from their original settlements. They came to find opportunities alongside with the Khmer ethnic group and soon enough Chinese migrants fleeing wars and famine came to be part of the new settlement. A blend of cultures and traditional values enhances this uniqueness. So, you find temples, churches, pagodas, and Chinese worships places dotted the countryside in a very harmonious way. A marine economy adds to the agriculture network to define a typical Delta Culture that Son Nam, a noted southern writer called it Van Minh Miet Vuon with fertile patches of land built on layers of sediments. This soil morphology along the branches of the Mekong creates a perfect setting for growing tropical fruit trees and planting rice according to the Monsoon cycle. Son Nam wrote volumes to explain the fine details of a region rich in both agriculture and aquaculture.

Over the years, the community grew steady but hampered by the lack of important infrastructures such as new bridges and highways. In the past, it would take almost 4 hours to make it to the city of Tra Vinh from Saigon which is about 110km apart but now thanks to the new Co Chien bridge and the Rach Mieu link in Ben Tre with improvements of the highway, you cut that time in half and the province is ready to receive visitors, friends, and tourists. It was a long stretch of perhaps laying low watching the traffic passing by and wait for the right time. It might be also a blessing as irresponsible development has not found its way to ruin the green landscape and the province is in a much better shape.

Sleeping under the tall shady lanes, Tra Vinh is now waking up to the new challenges of climate change and irregular flows of the Mekong. A group of specialists from the University of Social Sciences took notice of the call for development. They began to work with the office of tourism under the leadership of a dedicated vice director together they formed a team and soon enough there were more members adding to the team. I was among the new associates to join this young group with the goal to expand the tourist projects. We came with the idea of changing what has been used for years to a new model we called Du lịch

Thuận Thiên which combines the elements of climate smart strategies and adaptability to the yearly water fluctuation of the river network.

In addition, we search and study new routes that includes river islands heretofore unexplored. Cồn Chim is our new choice and we set to work with the support of local government. One year plus of dedicated efforts based on a good partnership of province officials, commune residents, tourist operators and specialists, we transform a small piece of river land to become a green stop for visitors wanting to experience true Delta life.

1.3. Key success factors

The work took a bit of time due to the Covid 19 interruption but we have completed all the phases just before the outbreak. Our approach is to make the various constants such as the weather pattern, the water situation, the geographical location and the special demographics of the island as the key elements to build around the concept of climate smart agriculture with the flexibility to adjust to aquaculture when the water supply changes. For example, when there is good supply of rain water for the fields, the community will grow rice and when salinization occurs, shrimp farming is the main activity for many the sections of the island. That is the main source of livelihood for over 60 households living on Cồn Chim.

The team also proposes a new dimension and that is turning the island into a green tourist spot. Along with these main agri-activities we prepared the residents to receive tourists on a schedule that is based on the idea of sustainability. Thus, a plan that involves some government support, investment from the private sector as well as villagers themselves in opening their homes to greet weekenders and to give them a unique experience of regional flavors. We limit the number of tourists in proportion to the facilities and allow time for nature to recuperate on a regular interval.

From the city of Trà Vinh, the ferry of Phuoc Vinh operates on a flexible schedule carrying local residents and visitors across the expand of Cổ Chiên river. The crossing is done from 2 landings on along the waterway. A welcoming gate greets the visitors and the friendly smiles take them to each of the designated stops along a prescribed route. You will taste local dishes, participate in activities such making cakes, fishing for shrimps, crabbing, and sipping the local coconut juice in shady spots while learning from the villagers the history of the island. We organized some exploratory tours with the participation of travel operators, specialists, officials and special guests to get their first impressions and feedback. The overall reactions showed that we are ready to open up the island.

What are now the main activities that promote Cồn Chim. We work on several aspects of this slow tourism (and that is you need to spend time at least the entire day and up to two days) The time will include a number of activities. From river travelling to biking and walking, you are going by boat or ferry to get to the island. This trip is around 20 minutes. You are greeted at the ferry landing by the smiling members of the island community. A short walk

will get you to the welcome gate, then you are provided with a bicycle for the entire time you spend on the island.

A map showing you points of interest along the bike trail starts your new experience. Usually, the first country impression is in the first house to get a taste of the banh canh (a bowl of noodle similar to the Japanese udon with shrimp or crab meat) this could be your breakfast if you so prefer. You continue on with other stops, each featuring a dish, a fruit drink, a lunch, a baking lesson, an activity (fishing) and a light meal before you return your bike and get on the ferry for the return trip.

1.4. Potential recommendations

In the development of Cồn Chim, there are still questions that our group needs to find some answers to the questions of sustainability, effects of tourism, community and social changes. In opening up the island, we have to be concerned with the quality and the quantity of visitors. What is a sustainable average? How much the community can cope? Is there a way to regulate the participation of each household? What are the island products? Those are the concerns that we will maintain close evaluations. For this we form a committee that includes villagers, province officials, and specialists to monitor the development and make adjustments to ensure the sustainability of the island.

Since the success over the pandemic that Vietnam has experienced, small groups began to show up and the on-going evaluation confirm some initial results that both villagers and local officials are quite happy. After the interruption due to the health issue, the island gets back on its feet early enough to upgrade on the facilities. Training of the villagers is being provided and the specialists of the project will continue to support and update at each phase. We expect that along with the spreading of the news when the holiday season comes, Cồn Chim will be on the map among the many stops that the Delta is known for.

Acknowledgements

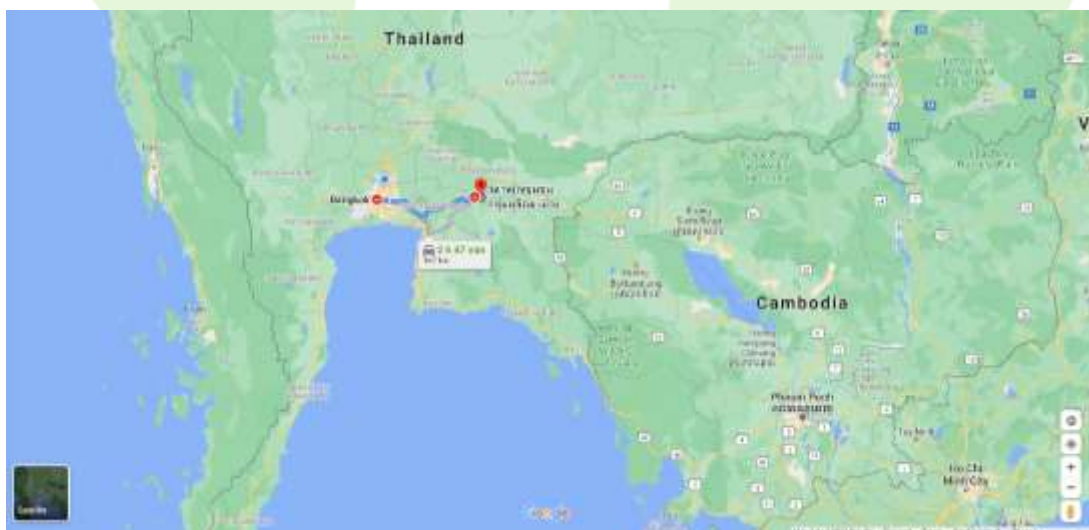
We would like to express our great appreciation to Dr. Tran Dinh Lam and the Center for Vietnamese and Southeast Asian Studies for inviting us to join the TOURIST project which is co-funded by the Erasmus+ Programme of the European Union.

2. Sustainable Integrated Tourism Management: the case of Ban Map Hiang, local destination in Prachinburi Province

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Vorrapob VIVATVANIT
Wannapa U-DOMPON
Burapha University

2.1. Short description

Ban Map Hiang or official named as **“Map Hiang Tourism Learning Center and Off-Season Mango Village”**, an example of an educational community-based tourism, is located on 57 Moo 10, Nong Prong Subdistrict, Si Maha Phot District, Prachinburi Province Thailand, where strategically pin approximately 2.30 hours by drive far from the capital city, Bangkok as well as the similar distance heading to gateway of the North-East, Nakhon Ratchasima Province. In accordance with this *accessibility* is advantage by the tourism logistics, in the other hand for the *amenities* and infrastructure development. In addition to geography of Ban Map Hiang is a plateau with hills and above the sea level with useable land of tentatively 1,600 Rai (2.53 Rai is equivalent to 1 Acre), the community is well-known for agricultural products particularly a plenty species of fresh mango supplies, high productive live-stocks especially being the role model of their own sustainable development concepts which affecting to be a prospect *attraction* and having variety of *activities* in terms of educational community-based tourism. As a result, this community have got awards by the local and regional government agencies are Subdistrict Administration Office (SAO) and Department of Agricultural under Prachinburi Provincial Administration Office (PAO) consecutively. As this consequent, it is illustrated on potential of the tourism destination competitiveness development in the East of Thailand.



Picture-I Distance map between Bangkok-to-Ban Map Hiang, Prachinburi Province.

2.2. Society and tourism impact on the society

Regarding social impact of Ban Map Hiang, local people have a traditional way of life, which means social norms, belief and culture are setting to their social pattern from the ancestors passed to descendent nowadays. The recent generation derived then influenced to following impacts:

- Interdependency among the people and able to create its **“sustainable development model”** of the community.
- To gain knowledge from the above concept which community can manipulate eco-system in a both purposes of make a living and tourism dimension.
- An expansion of the successors those are young generation. Therefore, it is contribution to the inherits and visitors.

Moreover, the community conceptual of a **“sustainable development model”** is such a linkage to the local wisdom is “One Rai One Hundred Thousand” means “a person can continuously generate at least one hundred-thousand-baht (100,000 THB) per year by one (1) rai of land by implementing a theoretically zoning management and visitor management in the landscape”. Evidently it is interconnected to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for example

- **No Poverty; Zero Hunger; Good Health and Well-Being; Clean Water and Sanitation** – Terms of this, community has been adopting the philosophy of Sufficiency Economy of the former His Majesty the King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX) called **“Khok Nong Na Model”** which Khok means elevated land; Nong is reservoir; and Na is elevated rice paddy and others e.g., irrigation system and water softening weir. It such a zero-dollar investment for clean water supply, plants as natural-food and medicine, whereby the offspring is benefits for merchandise and tourism returns.
- **Sustainable Cities and Communities** – Concept of this dimension is developed by the community leader. The strengthening of this cooperation is cause and effect. Community participation comes from the people acceptance due to the reality by good practice contribute to stakeholders.
- **Responsible Consumption and Production** – Ideally, resources can be production input, whereby raw materials and produced product can be consumed in one which way i.e., a mango tree produces mangos for decades, all components are yield to harvest and sell, value added product transform, further to environment use in leftovers.
- **Climate Action** – Being responsible to the environment is a promising option for corrective prevention on climate change. ‘Carbon credit’ declared by the government to encourage the company to buy a clean air in the carbon market called “Thailand Voluntary Emission Reduction Program (T-VER) for the co-benefits (between the

organisation and community) further to evaluate of the firm. Thus, it is supportive program for conservation on natural-and-man made forestation.

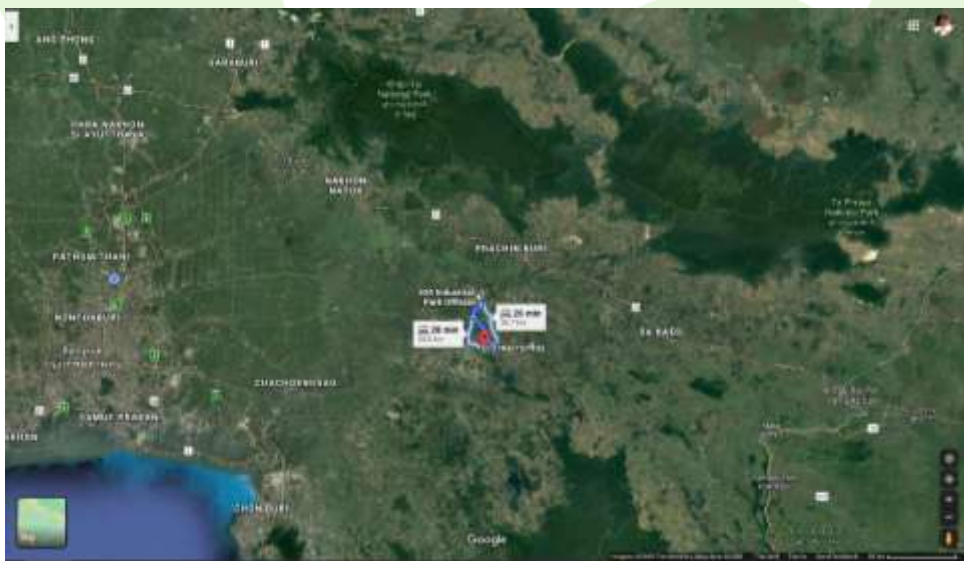
2.3. Economic development and tourism impact

According to the above paragraph which is led to economic impact, Ban Map Hiang is originated farmers and gardeners. Where the problem issue has been arisen by the pandemic across the globe, the Coronavirus (2019) has tremendous effects on the economic and unavoidably to this village suspending for international trade and travel restrictions. Therefore, the leader has planned to minimize the economic downturn as namely:

- Shifting from primeval career to ***“educational community-based tourism destination”*** by adopting the previous-stated model. Furthermore,
- Switching from offline to online-marketing approach (O2O) in order to promoting the attraction and activities by agriculture products and tourism learning center.

From this matter, Ban Map Hiang earned benefits as aforementioned to minimize the negative impact of economic perspective by eliminate the excess inventory, waste management and recover the revenue from international export of mango to supply domestic market. Last but not least, the in-house consumption, transformation and value-added product by the obsolete can supply in tourism as alternative income.

In accordance with this, optimization of the community sustainable development model attracted the late-teenager-adults return to domicile from the industrial to self-employed with family, in spite of Pandemic disruption for example COVID-19 is unmatched as the community already has their immunity.



Picture-II Satellite map illustrate neighboring industrial estate 304 to Ban Map Hiang (Prachinburi Province).

2.4. Environment and tourism impact

Concerning the environment perspective to take into account, a straight impact is the natural-scarce based resource and tourism resources, we can say that the community tries being to all materials utilised in the production process and create completely consumption cycle. However, manufacturing a plenty species of mango partly needs few of chemical substances, therefore; the elimination of the residue in production generally regulated by the export destination country for example Japan. In the other hand, national and in-house compliance by the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and its decentralisation government agencies. Moreover, Ban Map Hiang has several methods to support their production supply chain i.e., self-producing of fermented liquid from excess and waste management to supply in the land field to accelerate chemical reactions as well as fertilizer, and also self-creating of natural-irrigation system by dredging canal according to the landscape. For the aftermaths, they can reduce the cost of manufacturing; clean water saving for agricultural-and-livestock produce and consumption in the household.

By those impacts, the community can increase derived profits and cumulative cooperation savings for community at large e.g., education funds; social welfare of the members.

Therefore, the coverage of environmental concerning stated as; manufacturing focusing; optimising consumption; and minimizing waste. Moreover, it is also called *Bhumi-Sung Khom*, in Thai means “**society immunity**”.

2.5. Sustainable development and tourism

It is a fact that sustainable development factors are something vital to address. In this regard, at Ban Map Hiang, factors addressing into categories as divided:

- **Continuation Gen-to-Gen** – the addressing of the society for late teenager to adults who are looking for the employment in the civilization. In the meantime, the adults are getting old; as a result, the aging society is at hometown, whereas the labours are moving into the city. Consequently, the sustainability is tackled by the succession plan and to continue the local wisdom. Ban Map Hiang is also facing this problem but not so much, as a group of younger people who are cousins, friends, and relatives are already embedded and support the leader and take part in the family-community enterprise. Also, engagement is already addressed to pull local people back to origination as earlier stated.
- **Visitor Management and Carrying Capacity** – according to the economic crises, the latest one (COVID-19 Pandemic) affecting at the global level, Ban Map Hiang also suffers from trade refrained and travelling restrictions; otherwise, the solutions were met by the marketing strategies and strategic alliance which becomes “**educational community-based tourism destination**”.

- **Innovative financial strategies** – according to combination of the local and public policy which are local ideas creating ‘saving cooperative’ and ‘no-interest land rental’, and a ‘tree bank’ offered by the government for capital support on carbon-emission company to buy ‘carbon credit’ from the tree-planting-people in accordance with environmental-friendly policy. The community can be subsidy in a form of carbon credit buying money, and/or mortgage by tree bank for instances.

Most of the local communities in the Eastern region of Thailand are facing the similarity problems despite of abundant of the resources. But, Ban Map Hiang can perform their perfection of **“change management”** in the frame of **“Sustainable Tourism Management and Innovative Financial Strategy”**.

2.6. Key Success Factors and Potential Recommendation

Among the Key Success Factors (KSFs) of Ban Map Hiang, **Public Private Partnership (PPP)** must be underlined as participation of the partnership is a trigger to accomplishment. The conformity acceptance of the community members is subject to strengthens of the sustainable community development. Likewise, external factors unconditionally impact to the community, for instance a case of Coronavirus, government agencies take a key role to support community finding new target market from collaborative networks.

According to the *conceptual of destination competitiveness model* (Crouch and Ritchie, 1999), there is four mandatory elements as follows; core resources and attractors; destination management; destination policy, planning and development; qualifying and amplifying determinants. Researcher founds that Ban Map Hiang has diversity of determinants fit to the model. Moreover, literature review on tourism destination development in the East of Thailand referred that additional nodes should be taken into consideration for the *sustainability integrated tourism for the destination competitiveness* (Sakchai Setarnawat, 2019) are namely; (1) Accessibility and infrastructure; (2) Hospitality information and community support; (3) Physiography-climate and culture; (4) Local business; (5) Attractions; (6) Marketing and visitor management; (7) Budgeting and human resource development; (8) Destination policy and planning; (9) Support for destination competitive advantage.

For further implications, Ban Map Hiang has potential which may use the consequence idea in order to enhance and promote themselves *as a role model for educational community-based tourism in Thailand*. Therewith, Ban Map Hiang shall be an expected good practice by the conceptual of sustainable community development.

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3. Community-Based Tourism Management: the case of Da Bac

3.1. Short description

Da Bac District collaborated with Cavico Eco-Tourism Construction - Investment Company to make the district tourism master plan in the period 2006 - 2020. In 2009, Da Bac attained 15,488 tourist arrivals, but mainly day visited Thac Bo Temple without overnight.

Community Based Tourism has started in Da Bac since 2014 with 4 days - 3 nights walking tour (Hoa Binh City - Pu Canh - Hoa Binh lake and overnight in villages of Muong, Tay, Dao ethnic minorities).

Thanks to technical and financial supports with series of on job training program on CBT, homestay, of The Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific Limited - AFAP Viet Nam (since July, 2014), under the framework of poverty reduction and elimination project of AFAP in Hoa Binh Province, CBT has officially started and gradually developed in the district.

The project consulted to establish Da Bac Community Based Tourism Joint Stock Company with the objective of improving CBT in Da Bac in a more professional and sustainable way. Da Bac Community-Based Tourism is a social enterprise that was set up in 2017 to reinforce business opportunities for ethnic minorities, help create sustainable incomes for families in the area, connect to tourism market, attract tourists to visit Da Bac, build Da Bac CBT image and control CBT service quality. It's grown into a network of three remote ethnic minority villages: Sung Village, Da Bia Village and Ke Village, all located in the Da Bac. Each hamlet has a unique landscape and its own tourism offerings.

Sung Village, home to 73 households belonging to the Dao Tien ethnic group, is the highest village in Da Bac. It has a cool climate and is famous for its Shan Tuyet green tea, which is purchased at a small tea shop in the village.

Da Bia is a Muong Ao Ta village located on the edge of the Da River and offers a range of water activities. Nearby Ke Village, home to people from the Muong group, also has a waterfront location and is a good spot for swimming. A visit to Da Bac usually involves combining two or three villages, or you can just visit one village if you're short on time.

Villagers who are involved in CBT, especially women have self-studied a lot to develop themselves, open many new job opportunities from their own culture and local products. Thanks to the kick-off CBT program of AOP project (The Australian Foundation for the Peoples of Asia and the Pacific Limited), the living in Da Bac has changed in a sustainable way. Villagers from zero, confused to prepare foods, make bed for tourists, shy when

communicating with them, piloted 1-2 homestays to no more than 10 standardised homestays and become a good model for other provinces to learn.

Recently, the Government has invested budget for Da Bac CBT to improve infrastructure, training, promotion and to buy some basic amenities for homestays. There are now 13 homestays in the district, attracting more than 5,000 international tourist arrivals/year with the average income per head is 30 million VND (equal to 1300 USD)/ year (in 2019).

What sets Da Bac apart from other destinations in the Hoa Binh area is the community-based tourism (CBT) model, which aims to maximise the benefits of tourism while mitigating any social and environmental costs. Community-based ventures are becoming increasingly popular in Vietnam, partly as a response to over-tourism in places like Sapa.

To put it simply, community-based tourism puts the interests of the local community first. It's a community decision to start welcoming visitors, and all community members are encouraged to play an active role in the different stages of tourism, including planning and implementation.

3.2. Tourism impact

After 4 years, CBT team in 3 communes (Hien Luong, Tien Phong and Cao Son) is established and operated. The model will continue to attract the participation of other villagers. There are 142 families involved in CBT activities, including:

- Accommodation, food and drink service team: 13 homestays in 4 villages are equipped with enough amenities to serve tourists well (3 homestays in Ke village, 5 in Da Bia village, 2 in Mo Hem village and 3 in Sung village).
- Other service teams are:
 - local reception and tour guide;
 - boat, raft, kayaking, bike, motorbike rentals;
 - traditional performance;
 - local agricultural product providers...

Villagers' CBT income has steadily increased, improving their living condition. In 2018, total revenue from CBT was more than 1.7 billion VND, equal to 75,000 USD, of which 12% accommodation service, 26% cooking, 39% raw foods, 5% tour guiding, 2% kayaking, 3% boating, 4% traditional performance, 9% transportation.

Design good tour programs which are included the community daily life activities (markets, snail catching, potato digging, corn picking, fish catching, making shrimp basket, etc.) and connect to surrounding tourist destination, diverse package tours (2 days - 1 night, 3 days - 2 nights, 4 days - 3 nights, 5 days - 4 nights).

Since CBT established in Da Bac in 2018, there are nearly 10,000 tourist arrivals (36% are domestic tourists, 64% are international tourists). The number of tourists visiting here has been increasing. Specially, after the establishment of Da Bac CBT company, it signed the MOU with other tour companies in Hanoi capital such as Intrepid Viet Nam, EXO Travel, Learning Project, and others, international tourists are remarkably increased.

The villagers' awareness has been changed positively. They are more self-confident, active, always maintain and preserve ethnic culture, tradition, identity and protect the environment.

It is worth mentioning the prizes received:

1. Received the ASEAN Community Tourism award in 2019 - 2021 (one of the three units in Vietnam to receive the ASEAN CBT) award.
2. October 2019: Received “Én Đồng” Award: Honouring businesses with social impact organized by CSIP.
3. Both 2019 and 2020 receive Imap Choice certification - iMap Choice 2020 - The event honouring businesses with social impact 2020 organized by the Centre for Social Entrepreneurship and Innovation (CSIE).
4. Being 1 of 15 units in Hoa Binh receiving certificates of merit from the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Hoa Binh province for the outstanding achievements in tourism service business in Hoa Binh province.
5. November 2020: Da Bia CBT site - one of 04 sites of Da Bac CBT in Da Bac district meeting 4-star OCOP standard

3.3. Sustainable development and tourism

While running business operations, Da Bac CBT always works towards 3 of the goals of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely goals 5, 8 and 12 as depicted below.

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Increased women's income and participation by diversifying and developing tourism products and services:

- Most people working in 36 service groups, providing tourism services in 4 hamlets, are women. Some women in the hamlet who have not joined the service groups, directly providing services to customers are also involved in business and increasing their income indirectly from farming and supplying agricultural products, such as growing Shan Tuyet tea or brocade traditional products to sell to customers.
- Men mainly participating in passenger transport groups or groups that need more health and fitness such as taxi groups, boat services, and fishing groups.
- 4/13 homestays' owners are women who are directly head of the individual business, participating in the management and operating of the homestay. As for 9/13

homestays' owners are men, but the operation and reception of guests are running by all family members.

- Not only in the community, with all the positions of direct management & operation of Da Bac CBT, 100% are female (1 director, 1 administrative - accountant, 1 in charge of sales & marketing consulting & 4 coordinators at 4 specialized agencies).
- Participation in tourism not only breaks the social stereotypes that keep women in the family framework, but also enhances women's self-esteem and at the same time helps local communities to be aware that women are capable of doing more than conventional thinking.

Goal 8. Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all

CBT: Da Bac CBT created jobs and generated income for 184 members in 142 households directly participating and benefiting from the CBT, accounting for 60% of the total number of households in 4 hamlets of 03 communes implementing the CBT. Since 2017, the total income generated by the local community from CBT is more than 5 billion VND. On average, each household earns 5 - 16 million VND per month from providing CBT services (in 2019). Some households have not directly participated in service groups due to a few human factors in the family that are not suitable, but also indirectly participate in the process of supplying agricultural products to the catering for homestays services and benefit from the process of protecting the environment, cultural heritages.

Protecting the environment: In each village, a group of local women was formed to regularly collect rubbish in the surrounding areas. Groups are working on a weekly basis. Code of conduct for tourists and villagers is also displayed publicly to remind everyone about protecting the environment.

Heritage protection: Through training courses and story collection, traditional performances have been restored, local women are actively participating in local performing groups to present for visitors. Folklore and history of the minorities were also collected and recorded. To date, local people have proudly introduced their rich culture to 9,000 tourists from all over the world visiting Da Bac.

Infrastructure improvement: Da Bac CBT has attracted many sources of capital from individuals and organizations to improve local infrastructure. The total attraction budget is nearly 400,000,000 VND allocated to 20 small projects including: road improvement, school and public facilities improvement, and toilets.

Community Development Fund: To ensure equal distribution of benefits to the local community, a community development fund is established at each CBT site. All 13 homestays pledged to contribute 10% of sleeping income to the fund. This fund is owned and managed by the local CBT management board for organizing events and activities of the village.

Goal 12. Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

The CBT develops and brings with it other livelihood models to establish and develop stably to provide products for tourism such as vegetable growing, chicken raising, tofu making, brocade grouping... Village credit savings group was also formed.

Some products of the brocade group, Shan Tuyet tea group of Sung hamlets already have directly sold to tourists as souvenirs. In addition, by selling products directly to tourists in the village, these groups also save travel expenses, and marketing expenses to the market.

Through the monitoring mechanism of the village CBT management board, technical assistance, tourism professional training courses and the standards of the Handbook "Operational Process of the Community Tourism", the products & services of the Da Bac CBT were improved and standardized synchronously.

The CBT model is well managed by local people and Da Bac CBT has achieved certain results.

Sustainability

The main approach of Da Bac CBT is to build capacity for local people to participate in the operation of the local CBT model. CBT members in the villages regularly exchange information and knowledge, skills through capacity building training courses, annual review workshop organized by Da Bac CBT. In the long term, the members of CBT in the villages, the CBT management board of the villages and their networks will maintain the role of supporting households to access and develop markets. By building on the existing strengths of the community, it is more likely to ensure that without the support of Da Bac CBT in the process of operating the CBT model in the villages, local people will continue to manage CBT to develop sustainably.

The CBT products have been meeting the needs of the tourism market in recent years. CBT development is an area that many localities and the state focus on supporting development. These policies are in line with the provincial socio-economic development plans and national tourism plans, thus having a long-term and sustainable impact.

Spillover, model replication

After successfully implementing the CBT model in Da Bac district, Hoa Binh. Da Bac CBT has shared widely the process of establishing the CBT model in Da Bac so that other units and localities can learn to approach and implement the CBT model construction, especially during the operation process.

At the same time, Da Bac CBT wishes to connect partners, and localities in the CBT network to exchange learning, share information, and also to connect markets, businesses, and the

state management agencies to create a positive environment for CBT activities towards building a more professional, sustainable model of CBT.

3.4. Key Success Factors

Da Bac CBT successfully implemented the model because:

It counts with the capacity to guarantee the development of Da Bac CBT

- 7 members directly involved in operations of Da Bac CBT are qualified with the expertise to support the development of Da Bac CBT.
- 1 staff in charge of consulting services & marketing: Do Dong Hung
- 1 accountant cum administrative: Chu Thi Thu Huong has 2 years of working as a commune budget accountant in the Finance - Planning Department of Da Bac district, 04 years as an accountant in turn for Dong Tam Industry Limited Company B3P, Tien Dung 68 Limited Company Thu Luong Limited Company
- 4 coordinators at 04 CBT sites: capable of communication, agility, all of whom are trusted by the villagers, concurrently hold a number of roles in the locality such as: Head/deputy of women union. Particularly, one of the four coordinators has graduated from Hoa Binh College of Education.

Understanding and knowledge of the locality

Experience working with local people: With many years working and living in the community, we have built a close relationship, knowing the customs and habits of local people.

With the community-centric approach, we regularly participate in village meetings, sharing problems in the process of implementing the CBT model in the villages, and at the same time. listen to the difficulties as well as people's wishes to discuss appropriate solutions.

Combining business goals and social goals

DA BAC CBT operates for the purpose of community development and profit optimization (Economic goal is a means to support social goals). Profits from business activities are reinvested to support people to borrow capital for re-invested development and implementation of activities to preserve cultural and environmental values.

We ensure financial transparency, comply with the system of policies and legal documents of the State of Vietnam.

To receive support from the people and authorities

Government

In the process of building and operating Da Bac CBT model, the authorities at all levels are always interested and create all the conditions to support the people to develop CBT because developing CBT is in accordance with policies to support other tourism activities in the area. More specifically:

- Da Bac has issued Resolution No. 09 on district tourism development in the period 2015-2020, orientation to 2020 - 2025 and the Project on developing district tourism to 2020, with a vision to 2030.
- Resolution of developing CBT of the People's Committees of Communes
- At the same time, there is Decision No. 1528/QĐ-TTg of the Prime Minister dated August 1, 2016 approving the master plan for development of Hoa Binh Lake National Tourist Area, Hoa Binh Province by 2030.

Local residents

For the model of Da Bac CBT, 100% of the local people participating in the process of providing services to visitors, directly contact and benefit from tourists. Local people are the main factor determining the sustainable development of the model. However, during this period, the local community does not have enough capacity to operate the self-sustaining CBT model, so it needs the support and companionship of Da Bac CBT.

Trust of visitors and partners

Travel agencies

Through cooperation with existing travel agencies, supporting Da Bac CBT:

- has a stable source of tourists, especially foreign visitors.
- save costs and human resources for image promotion. Therefore, Da Bac CBT can focus resources on designing tourism products and improving the quality of destination services.
- understand world tourism development trends and impacts on tourism in Vietnam.
- organize professional activities and programs for guests, and have a team leader with foreign language ability to introduce the "good and beauty" of tourist spots to tourists.
- in addition, through these tour operators, many international volunteers come and support the local community.

In particular, in the partnership with Intrepid Vietnam Limited Company (PEAK DMC), Intrepid also supports Da Bac CBT to develop products to meet international customers' needs, and to provide capital for the community to build local tourism products.

Tourists

Visitors are external agents to explore the wild natural environment or learn about traditional values, indigenous cultures. At the same time as an agent to bring economic benefits to the community through these experimental activities.

Da Bac CBT visitors not only focus on community experiences, but also participate in volunteer activities such as local projects, work enhancement of educational capacity for the community.

3.5. Potential Recommendation

Building a model

- Before implementing the model, it is necessary to organize a pre-feasibility survey with the participation of community tourism experts, in conjunction with consultation with local authorities.
- Develop plans based on the number of tourists and local supply capacity to avoid massive investment and development. The first phase should be done at 02 points (supporting 2 homestays/points) to conduct activities to connect tour routes.
- Promote the propaganda on the significance of the CBT model so that the local community understands that community plays a very important role, is the core element of the model and a direct agent of value transmission of the CBT model.
- Coordinate implementation between organizations: projects, local authorities, businesses, communities
- Local authorities formulate an overall tourism development scheme to create a basis for effectively managing, attracting investment and exploiting tourism potentials.
- Integrating local activities and investment items on CBT activities
- Careful attention is paid to investing facilities in sites that are implementing the CBT model or planning to implement the model.

Management model

For the model support from organizations and non-government projects, in addition to consulting and technical support, it is necessary to focus on improving capacity in training and fostering knowledge, tourism's skill and gradually empowering the community so that the community has the ability to continue to maintain the sustainable model when the project is no longer available.

Transforming the model of being managed and owned from the community itself in accordance with each stage: From the CBT Management Board to the Da Bac Community Tourism Joint Stock Company (now the Da Bac Social Enterprise CBT) which increases the ability to connect with international travel agencies; improves the quality of CBT services and ensures the community benefit sharing mechanism in Da Bac in a more professional and effective direction.

Regularly exchange the purpose and meaning of the CBT model. Organizing training activities, propagating the meaning and psychological characteristics of tourists so that people can clearly realize the preservation and promotion of the traditional cultural identity of the nation and the living environment of the community which are criteria to attract and maintain visitors.

Establishment of the CBT management board to enhance the community's right to choose and make decisions: develop conventions, regulations and orientations for the development of CBT of each village.

Set up a set of service monitoring tools to ensure uniform service quality, community monitoring and operation mechanisms, and benefit distribution mechanisms for members to participate publicly and transparently.

Designing tourism products

Organize market analysis surveys to design tourism products based on market's demand. It is necessary to design tourism products with unique and different points to give visitors a sense of the "uniqueness" in each destination.

Promote tourism image

- Conducting image promotion activities suitable to those who love to explore and want to experience community tourism.
- Sharing information must be true and accurate to avoid the case where guests feel disappointed compared to expectations before coming.
- Promote the meaning of the CBT model
- Coordinate with travel agencies to conduct promotional activities to reach suitable and stable customers. In addition, it is necessary to exchange regularly to update information on the needs of guests.

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4. The case of Koh Kret

Kasetsart University, Thailand

4.1. Short description

The Koh Kret tourism group aims to promote tourism activities in the Koh Kret area, which is an island located in the Nonthaburi province (north of Bangkok). Koh Kret, the home of 5,800 residents, has been active yet humbly welcoming tourists since 1997. Several attractions and activities are offered in Koh Kret, for example, pottery, food and dessert, and a nostalgic market. Most attractions, traditions and festivals are related to culture and a long history of Koh Kret with the Mon culture impression which is rare in Thailand. Being a small island accessible only by ferries, Koh Kret can consequentially limit the number of tourists by transportation availability and frequency of services.

The presence of Mon culture is very unique since Mon people do not possess or officially exist in any particular area like a country. However, historical evidence shows that Mon people are scattered around Myanmar and Thailand for centuries. They were one of the earliest residents of Southeast Asia and, therefore, their civilization and religious belief (Theravada Buddhism) were imprinted throughout the region. Koh Kret is one of the not many locations where Mon culture is still actively practiced in Thailand, especially the 2-week new year festival in April and authentic Mon food cooking. Not only Koh Kret displays the Mon intangible culture, but it is also an excellent showcase for Mon traditional pottery art, Kwan Aman, which is unglazed terracotta carved with intricate patterns. The products are being sold for their functional household use as well as being souvenirs. The prices of these earthenware potteries range from 5 Baht (20 US cents) to more than a thousand Baht (USD 33).

The community does not have any official tourism working group for planning and controlling tourism activities in the area. However, people acknowledge the roles of community members involving in the tourism industry. The structure is rather informal, yet the members do meet for deciding on tourism-related issues. Moreover, they have set up community/village funds to manage tourism-related issues.

4.2. Society and tourism impact

At the present, tourism activities are highly congregated in certain areas (village 6 & 7) and engage approximately 30% of the Koh Kret population. The main occupation of the

Roughly a decade ago, there are investments in tourism-related businesses from outsiders in response to the evident growth of the tourism industry in Koh Kred. These outsiders have opened mostly food and beverages operations, especially modern restaurants. Local people are employed as kitchen and service staff. Dishes are designed consistent with tourists' taste which both local and imported ingredients are used. Pre-made alcoholic beverages certainly are imported from outside, hence creating leakages. However, these leakages occur at a minimal level.

4.4. Environment and tourism impact

Being an island, the waste management initiatives on Koh Kred unavoidably are more difficult than the inland areas. Every day, 1-2 tons of waste are transported out to the mainland. While the community acknowledges and accepts that the waste amount is reasonable, there are ways to minimize and optimize the cost and impact on the environment in Koh Kred. It is evident that waste problems in Koh Kred area will gradually be significant due to its geographical terrain. Being an island, most wastes would go into the canals or river. The SOA has practiced waste separating procedure and provided waste collecting service with a minimum fee. Nonetheless, for those locals who are suffering from the slow economic situation due to the COVID19, the impacts and reactions are more serious than expected. The exceptionally low charge for waste management is denied by some vendors. Nonetheless, whether they are paying for it or not, the SOA continues maintaining its waste management routine in order to keep the area clean.

Renewable energy has roughly been included in the agricultural development plan but not yet explicitly been used in the area. However, the island has been encouraged and assisted by large corporations and government offices to use various energy conservation measures, for example, installing LED lamps on streetlights. People in Koh Kred aim to follow the 3Rs (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle). Although they only practice the first 2Rs nowadays, recycling activities in Koh Kred mostly have been as a way to collect trashes and export (sell) them to recycling facilities in the mainland.

With regards to the water issue, Koh Kred has been using the community water treatment system, of which the process is considered very simple. Residents had been using the basic water filter system until recently that the Metropolitan Waterworks Authority introduced and expanded its service by installing water pipes to connect the water line from the mainland for better quality and more reliable household and tourism-related business usage.

4.5. Sustainable development and tourism

As Koh Kred is not connected to the mainland by bridges and accessibility is only via water vehicles, automobiles are not allowed on the island. The advantage of being an island is that the main transportation mode in Koh Kred is motorcycles. Having slightly fewer than 6,000 residents with little pollution, consequently, the air quality in the area is quite decent.

However, the prominent problem to develop sustainable tourism in Koh Kred seems to concern the environment aspect. Even though there is only a certain amount of trash and waste every day (approximately 1 ton per day) which would be considered very little when compared to a large city like Bangkok, SAO and the community are eager to tackle this problem. They intend not to have any considerable trash left in the community each day since waste accumulation can cause more harms in the future. Therefore, it is the SAO's responsibility to handle the waste and environment problem whether or not financial or nonfinancial supports are contributed by the locals.

The SAO, together with several residents, have informally discussed practicing activities that follow the circular economy guidelines. Nonetheless, as the size of the island is quite small (4.2 sq.m.), cost-wise, there is not much to do or to invest in. As long as all the trashes can be moved out of the area, people are satisfied with it.

As the residents feel the 3 aspects of sustainable development are under control, consequently no negative effects are openly perceived. Moreover, the social and cultural aspect (the Mon culture) seems to stand out as it is conserved, recreated, and treasured by the younger generations. The potential of developing Koh Kred to be a cultural tourism destination is promising since there are authentic and skilled human resources and tangible heritages in the area.

4.6. Key Success Factors

The key success factors for sustainable tourism development in Koh Kred are the collaboration among various stakeholders: residents, government authority, and business owners. Leadership and trust play an important role in guiding different parties to achieve certain goals. In this case, SAO and some community leaders continuously work on employing tourism as their goal for improving the quality of life of the residents. Their competitive advantages are cost and quality. By offering a quite similar experience compared to other farther destinations, tourists spend less as they travel to a closer destination. Besides, using ingredients and materials by local suppliers to produce local products is cost-effective. This could be difficult to apply to other larger destination where outside vendors can easily

enter the market. The quality of experience is also their strength. Being one of not many Mon cultural inheritors in the world, the community has regenerated the seem-to-be lost culture and been living it. Their culture is not only for show or recreation.

Most tourism practices and activities in Koh Kred align with sustainable development goals even though they are not originally planned to follow SDGs. By incorporating tourism as a tool to increase income in the way they have been doing, one way or another it almost automatically responds to the sustainable development goals: "no poverty", "zero hunger", "good health and well-being", "sustainable cities and communities", and "responsible consumption and production". Involved parties are always included for decision making, especially the crucial ones. Communication normally is through formal or informal meetings since the majority of the residents know each other as family members or friends. Other than that, SAO acts as the coordinator to disseminate the messages or decisions for all stakeholders.

4.7. Potential Recommendation

Koh Kred is an example of a small community of which the residents may not be very well aware of the impact of tourism development, yet tourism development strategies and growth are naturally planned and monitored by both residents and government authorities. The obvious advantage Koh Kred possesses is that the preponderance of people are family members or somehow related and sharing the same root. Therefore, it accommodates building trust amongst them. Additionally, the incredibly unique location, position, and surroundings provide Koh Kred competitive advantages.

For destinations that are quite similar in products and services, what can be taken away is a good collaboration among stakeholders, recognition and realization of their true heritage and using their local-produced raw materials and services. The size of the destination also plays a significant role in shaping and limiting tourism growth which results in manageable tourism activities in the area. Koh Kred enjoys its distinctive characteristics while incorporates King Rama IX's self-sufficient economy concept, promoting sustainability for future generations.



Current Issues on Sustainable Tourism and Innovative Financial Management Strategies in Asia and Europe

1. Developing CBT and Local Product of Muslim community -Ban Bangwan, Kamala

Prince of Songkla University, Thailand

1.1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the key factors to improve Thailand's economy. A few years ago, the income from tourism tended to increase from 2011 to 2015 is about 15.2% (Thailand's Department of Tourism). At the same time, generally when tourism is growing up the environment will be destroyed in the long term. CBT is one of resolutions for natural resource conservation and also improves local community due to the cooperation with community and local people who knew well about natural resources in particular destinations.

Ban Bangwan Community is located at 75/60 M.1 Namtok Rd, Kamala, Kathu, Phuket, which is one of the local communities in Kamala, Phuket, there still keep the original things as a way of life, local food, local career. Firstly, Ban Bangwan was a community enterprise by one of the community members is the leader of enterprise. There are a lot of resources as Waterfall, local community, abundant mountain, Rukha Moradok (the ancient tree which are registered by Government), the history of community and local way of life of muslim. Then after the tourism is growing up, they develop their community to be Community based tourism so there is a slogan about CBT as "Touched by the huging of mountains, Snuggled by Andaman sea, Delighted sufficiency community".



Picture: Ban Bangwan sufficiency community

So, the community could have efficient green practice to preserve or conserve their natural resources for existing to the next generations. This research tries to customize a particular green practice for Ban Bangwan to keep natural resources existing.

1.2. Objective

- To identify environment issues for Community Based Tourism at Ban Bangwhan
- To study green tourism practice with local residence for Community Based Tourism at Ban Bangwhan

1.3. Scope of the study

Kamala area is one of the popular beaches in Phuket. There are several entertainments such as Phuket Fantasea (This is only one and the biggest traditional gathering with animal show in Phuket), restaurants, night life, luxury hotel, beach, and eco-tourism attraction. Ban Bangwhan is located at 75/60 M.1 Namtok Rd, Kamala, Kathu, Phuket which is next to Patong Beach and administered by Kamala sub-district. The famous product of Ban Bangwhan is *Garcinia Cambogia* which is the one of the ingredients to cook Thai food. Kamala Subdistrict has 6 communities. Each community uses the same natural resources but Ban Bangwhan is the main resource for all communities. Ban Bangwhan has (1) the waterfall which is the tourism attraction for local tourists and international tourists, (2) small dams which produce water for consumption for all communities. (3) Rukha Moradok which is the 200 years' ancient tree that is registered by government and etc. (4) Nature trail which is the original route for crossing sub-district within Kamala, Kalim, and Kathu. (5) Knowledge of local dessert, food including of original Muslim's traditional. Community members is almost Muslims and there is the unique way of life and also the product for Muslim. So, the community members of Ban Bangwhan Moo.1 are social solidarity and have the great community leader to principal the community and members in the right way. And also, the local government and sub-district administration organizer has cooperation with the local community by supporting as capital for almost all activities as Phuket Developing plan and strategic positioning. The tourism activities which are operated as National trail to waterfall and Rukha Moradok, making tie-dye cloth by national color, Knowledge exchange center, OTOP (One Tambon One Product) about *Garcinia*. When communities get more income, they also have to be responsible for the environment to preserve them for the long term. Therefore, this research would like to identify the environmental issues in Ban Bangwan M.1 which encourage the effect from the increasing number of tourists from community-based tourism. Meanwhile this research attempt to study and assess the practical green tourism practice for community-based tourism in Ban Bangwan M.1.

1.4. Finding

This research conducted an in-depth interview with all key community members, the key community member gave the many supplement information. This community is listed in the application of NECTEC which is named as "Chue Ban Nam Mueang". This application is a wide-coverage English-Thai dictionary containing all country names, capitals, and geopolitical locations, as well as 1,500 names of all provinces, districts, sub-district, and

special administrative regions in Thailand. You can explore these names via direct search with a part of the name in English or Thai and keep track of your searches with the history log. It perfectly suits the needs of students, teachers, lecturers, and those who need geopolitical name references. This community is rich in many natural resources such as mountain, Nature trail which connect between nearby sub-district as Patong, Kathu area. All of that information is recorded in documents already. In the document, there is some information about traditional food. This community uses this knowledge to apply for tourism activities as cooking classes for local desserts such as A-Pong, Kanom Duan and local food. Including of herbal processing, there are many products as shampoo from Thai herbal, liquid soap from Thai herbal, dish washing liquid from Thai herbal so all of products which are demonstrate for tourist activities” and also mention about “Developing plans were developed since establish for example as zoning of entertainment area as Moo 1,2,4,5 is prohibited for opening entertainments (such as Bar, Pub) because people in this community almost are muslim. And also, convenient stores such as 7-11, Family mart which are prohibited in Moo 1,2,4,5. Including local people and tourist’s costumes, proper costumes are required within Moo 1,2,4,5.

Firstly, community members used the origin path and tourist attraction cannot be accessed and tourism mapping was overall mapping for the whole Kamala area only. After applying for tourism-based communities, all communities had been separated into 4 communities as Nok-Lae, Naka, Bangwan and Huakuan. All of 4 communities separate handling each community and provide their own tourist mapping. But 4 communities are integrated to be named as Kamala tourism based on community with supporting from Kamala Subdistrict Administrative Organization (local government) with community’s representatives as Ms. Supasima and Ms.Wanna from Bangwan community, Ms.Wallaya and Ms. Kingkaew from Naka community, Ms.Ladda and Ms Wanna from Huakuan community, and Ms.Meena and Ms.Massuree from Nok-Lae community” “All community had been developed the scenery and each tourist attraction and had been named as 1) Bangwan community as The field in the mountain(Suan Nai Hub Kao), 2) Huakuan community as 100 years Garcinia Cambogia tree(Ton Som Kay Roi Pee), 3) Nok-Lae community as Tawan Labfa Pa Lai Sai Rae, 4) Naka community as The door to Kamala (Pra Tu Su Kamala Na Naka). Kamala Subdistrict Administration Organization (local government) cooperated with community’s representatives as Ms. Supasima and Ms.Wanna from Bangwan community, Ms.Wallaya and Ms. Kingkaew from Naka community, Ms.Ladda and Ms Wanna from Huakuan community, and Ms.Meena and Ms.Massuree from Nok-Lae community. 4 communities have their own outstanding performance for tourism for Bangwan Community has Eco tourism, Tradition and local dessert. This community has proper attraction (as mountain, water fall, community’s Philosopher, Knowledge, local way of life, and media"

Then, community members had been determined about the carrying Capacity since operating of community-based tourism but the community members have no participation in control carrying capacity. At that time, when all community members and government officers had met and brainstormed about carrying capacity, the meeting resulted in the community having

the representative to take care of each tourist attraction as Nature trail, Kamala waterfall, Learning center and Rukha Moradok.

For nowadays, communities determine carrying capacity into a small group which is not more than 10 persons per time per attraction areas. But the community has arranged the big group of travelers by distributing to each attraction. In the other, communities have informed the tourists as group travelers before they arrive but there are FIT tourists, leisure tourists who just visit tourist attractions without advance reservation booking, will not be aware about the carrying capacity. Although this community has a plan about tourist distribution because this community has to prevent the environmental impact in each attraction, the plan is not properly and has become to have some conflict because of income and responsibility in each attraction.

In terms of reducing negative effects from tourism activities as waste, sewage, noise pollution, taking over something to be own, the community is always aware about to conserve and reduce the impact from receiving tourists. Community has the bin to separate the garbage as separate bottles. And also, activities from tourism, the community is aware about the environment so the community uses almost all detergent, dye, dishwashing liquid and also soap which is made from natural.

Every year, community cooperate with Subdistrict Administrative Organization (local government), government officer and also stakeholders in this area to have activities as seminar for community's representative, big cleaning at Kamala area but there is not government officer who are responsibility to be responsible especially for this community, however, there is the officer who is responsible for Phuket instead. So, the community leader or community's philosopher will take responsibility and cooperate with government officers. On the other hand, this community has presented an annual project or annual maintenance of each tourist attraction by rotation. The community has presented to the Subdistrict Administrative Organization to acquire the support from them. When the project is approved, the Subdistrict Administrative Organization sometimes provides the capital or the equipment or instant material about their project. However, most of the maintenance or project was done by having community member participation, sometimes cooperating with stakeholder nearby communities such as restaurant, hotel, tour operator, etc.

This community has actual practice which concerns natural resource management. This community has many products presenting to tourists as A-Pong -steamed coconut with coconut meat stuff-, Kanom Duan and local desert by using cooking class activities. The herbal processing is the other product which has been presented as shampoo from Thai herbal, liquid soap from Thai herbal, dish washing liquid from Thai herbal so all of products which are demonstrated for tourist activities. In addition, fruit processing is a one kind of community product as preserved durian, dried Garcinia Cambogia (the important ingredient for local food). Without the gastronomy, community also has existed Muslim's traditions as celebrating for twenty-seventh's night for fasting month in Islam, Khitan traditional,

ceremony for welcome to Ramadan (fasting month). Community will recheck it at least every 2 years because all of the attractions in the community are related to their way of life.

Community uses flyers as tools to present information about resource management and some information in advance to tourists. During the tourist activities, the community has arranged community members or tour guides to give them some information such as cooking class, cloth dyeing activities by presenting, participating, and lecturing. In addition, the community has re-check about community information but there is not every year. Community has flyers about the community including mapping for tourist attractions. However, the community has no proper Learning center. Nowadays, when the community has tourist activities, the community will arrange at the house of the community's philosopher.

However, the community has distributed at least 1 channel to distribute activity as a Facebook page and the community has cooperated with their alliances as some hotels in Kamala area, restaurants and tour operators. Community has cooperation with hotels and some restaurants in Kamala area to support the community by using their property to be one of the distribution channels to tourists. Hotels and restaurants put the community's advertising and also flyers. And when a community has a project, the community cooperates with hotels also to support for example as banners for Masjid etc. Sometimes, when hotels would like to organize CSR, they organize with this community. Nevertheless, this community has no tourist center within the community.

Community has arranged tourist activities to distribute the wisdom to tourists by using the participating tourist activities as cooking class for local food, local dessert but it will be prepared for the Group's tourists. Almost all tourist activities are derived from community ways of life which are local gastronomy, local tradition, and plantations.

In addition, the community has annual activities such as Big cleaning day in the community by cooperating with the Subdistrict Administrative Organization, hotels, restaurants, and community members to clean up Kamala area. During the activity, there is a presentation about national resource's information. In the past, there was a Retro local way of life heritage activity to present all community's products. Especially this campaign for developing the community as a developing area nearby Dam in community center to become community park for doing tourist activities, exercise, etc. By the way, community members participate to conserve natural resources in the community. And in each tourist attraction, there are representatives from community members to watch out. Furthermore, most of the annual activities including CSR program are cooperated with organizations Subdistrict Administrative Organization, hotels, restaurant nearby and including community members.

1.5. Summary

This study concluded that the Developing CBT and Local Product of Muslim community, Ban Bangwan, Kamala. The tourist activities are proper for community-based tourism in these elements as tourist activities zoning, carrying capacity, developing and maintaining community area, resource management, and distributing wisdom of natural resources to tourist, natural resources conservation. Conversely, communities have not appropriated the last element as significant awareness of natural resources with tourism.

However, even community members acknowledge and understand about green practice when receiving more tourists. There are immigrants of Thai residence or non-Thai residence come into the community for traveling and working. Sometimes, communities cannot control their behavior and cannot educate all immigrants as littering garbage or waste into others areas of separate bins. It is caused to show that there are some immigrants and walk-in tourists do not follow community regulation because the community has no information tourist's sign about community regulation. And communities have no proper tourist's center, which can give information to tourists and have no community staff to stay and watch out in each attraction in daytime because the distribution of income from tourists is not equal in each area.

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2. Recreational Fishing Tourism on Mae Ngad Somboon Chon Dam, Si Lanna National Park, Chiang Mai

Payap University, Thailand

2.1. Introduction

Sri Lanna National Park was designated as the 60th Thai national park in 1989. The park, which is the 8th largest in Thailand, covers a mountainous area of 1,406 km², and includes 3 districts of Chiang Mai province: Mae Taeng, Prao and Chiang Dao. The national park has an abundance of wildlife and verdant forests, which are the sources of various tributaries of the Mae Ping River.

The Mae Ngad Somboon Chon Dam is situated within Sri Lanna National Park and is Thailand's 6th largest dam. The dam's reservoir is nestled between Mae Ngad and Mae Tang forests and covers an area of 1,281 km². The dam and reservoir were originally conceived to supply irrigation water for agricultural fields as well as providing flood relief to the downstream watershed. Over time, the reservoir has been developed into a tourist destination and fish farming industry. The Mae Ngad Somboon Chon Dam falls under the jurisdiction of several different government and local departments including those of the National Parks, Irrigation, Energy, Fishery as well as the local government and local community representatives.

As part of the TOURIST project, Payap University held a number of consultations with several key stakeholders involved with tourism activities at the dam. These groups included the National Park Office, the houseboat owners, local fisherman and members of the Chiang Mai Boat Club and the Northern Kayak Club. The counselling sessions aimed to identify issues related to tourism and explore ways to address said issues in a sustainable way.

2.2. Development as a Tourism Destination

The Mae Ngad Somboon Chon Dam reservoir offers several natural tourist attractions such as waterfalls, caves, and nature trails. The reservoir also offers traditional floating rafts which provide both basic and luxurious accommodation options and serve as a base for daily expeditions to different parts of the reservoir as well as locally developed activities such as kayaking, hiking, and sightseeing cruises. The floating bungalows are located around the reservoir in groups and have restaurants that serve food and drinks with a culinary focus on serving fish from the local fish farms. In 2019, there were approximately 35,000 - 40,000 visitors to the National Park and reservoir, generating an estimated THB 100,000,000 in revenue of which about 90% was spent at the houseboats on accommodation and services.

In addition, over time, the reservoir has developed into a top recreational fishing destination in Northern Thailand. The dam is attractive to this tourist segment for a number of reasons including its close proximity to large urban areas such as Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, ease of access with a good road infrastructure, a wide variety of trophy-catch fish species and a pristine natural environment.

The recreational fishing tourism sector contributes an important part of the National Parks revenue (approximately THB 10,000,000 per annum) as well as helping to preserve the local environment as the fishing community are generally aware of their environmental impact on the lake and in some cases act in an unofficial capacity as volunteer park rangers. In past years, many fishing competitions were hosted at the reservoir and the generated income was divided between the competition organisers and the national park to develop the area and restock the fish supply.

Recreational fishing tourists can be classified into two distinct groups. The 1st are tourists who rely on local fishing guides to provide transportation on longtail boats as well as guiding services. The 2nd group are recreational fishermen who own their own transportation and are more independent. Both groups generate income for local tourism operators by purchasing services at the houseboats such as food and beverages as well as accommodation on the lake and park entrance fees and licenses.

2.3. Key Challenges

Sri Lanna National Park, and the Mae Ngad Somboon Chon Dam Reservoir in particular, are facing some major challenges, both environmentally, and economically which are affecting the local communities who rely on tourism as a major source of income, and the national park which generates its operating budget from entrance and license fees.

Water Tunnel

The Royal Irrigation Department is building a water tunnel linking the dam to a downstream reservoir (Mae Kuang Udomtara Dam Reservoir) to try and solve expected water shortages in the region. Although the project has been planned for over 10 years, with construction starting in 2015, there has been little public consultation or engagement with affected communities. The 7 villages of Kut Chang Sub-District, Mae Taeng District, Chiang Mai Province, are opposed to construction of the water tunnel project on the grounds that it may affect the local environment and according to the villagers, there has been no Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) conducted or reported. The villagers are concerned about the impact this tunnel will have on the tourism services they provide such as bamboo rafting, bird watching and recreational fishing trips.

Covid 19

Due to the ongoing global pandemic, the closure of Thailand's international borders and the resulting massive impact on tourism destinations in Thailand, the numbers of visitors to the park, dam and reservoir have dropped significantly. As part of the government's strategy to contain the virus, all National Parks were closed at the beginning of March and only started to reopen in July. Sri Lanna National Park was officially partially reopened on the 1st July, and Mae Ngad Somboon Chon Dam only opened on the 1st September. However, with no international tourist arrivals, and a deepening national economic crisis, the overall numbers of visitors to the park and its tourism attractions has not yet rebounded.

| Activity-description | Before Covid-19 | During Lock down (April - Aug) | Current |
|---|---------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Number of recreational fishing tourists hiring longtail boat and fishing tour guide (monthly) | 400-500 | 20 | 300-400 |
| Spend (Group 1) per month (Average THB 750 per person) | THB 300,000-375,000 | THB 15,000 | THB 225,000-300,000 |
| Number of recreational fishing tourists with own speedboat (monthly) | 400-500 | 0 | 0 |
| Spend (Group2) per month (Average THB 1,300 per person) | THB 520,000-650,000 | 0 | 0 |

** data collected through interviews with local tourism stakeholders

Recreational Fishing

As can be seen in the table above, the monthly spend by both groups of recreational fishermen at the dam has dramatically dropped since the start of the pandemic. This is especially so for the independent fisherman who bring their own boats. This drop is the direct result of a ban on the use of private recreational boats on the lake by the National Park in March. The given reason for the ban was a boating accident between an unlicensed private boat driver and a local longtail boat. However, in addition to the accident, tensions have been rising between the local fishing guides and houseboat owners and the independent recreational fisherman for some time. Among the issues are the damage to houseboats from the wake of private speedboats (subsequently proven to be untrue) as well as the perception by local guides that if private recreational fisherman is not allowed to use their own transport, they will, by necessity, have to rent long-tails and guides, thus increasing the local tourism operator's income.

This blanket ban on private recreational boating on the lake has had a significant impact on the local tourism economy. In addition to these issues, given the numerous government agencies with jurisdiction (Department of National Parks, Irrigation, Energy, Fishery as well as the local government and local community representatives), it has been challenging to both find an acceptable solution and negotiate the bureaucratic path to implementation.

2.4. Potential Solutions

With the facilitation of Payap University, the involved stakeholders have begun a process of negotiating a set of guidelines that will enable the ending of the private boating ban and at the same time, address the concerns of the local tourism operators involved. The stakeholder groups included in this process have been the National Park Office, the houseboat owners, local fisherman and members of the Chiang Mai Boat Club and the Northern Kayak Club.

The following measures have been proposed and are currently being negotiated:

- Members of the Chiang Mai Boat Club and the Northern Kayak Club will act as volunteer park rangers to increase enforcement and assist the national park office by reducing the need of salaried national park staff. Training will be provided by the current park rangers and the volunteers will use their own transportation and cover all associated costs (e.g. fuel and maintenance).
- The Chiang Mai Boat Club will assist in promoting the dam as a recreational fishing destination to those fishermen requiring guiding services, thus assisting the local guides with new clientele and income opportunities.
- A proposal has been made for developing the boating facilities at the dam, to be covered by fees charged for ramp access.

In addition to the measure proposed specifically around boating and recreational fishing, the following additional recommendations were made with a view to increasing the attractiveness of the reservoir and national park to other tourist segments:

- Develop mountain biking, hiking, and trail-running routes around the reservoir, that link up the numerous waterfalls and other natural attractions. This is especially timely as the construction of the water tunnel mentioned earlier means easier access to more remote parts of the park.
- Payap University will develop and deliver training to the local tourism stakeholders such as the houseboat owners, fishing guides and fish farmers on way to implement a more sustainable tourism strategy for the reservoir and national park.

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Interview and consulting sessions with local tourism stakeholders:

- 2nd August - Chiang Mai Boat Club and the Northern Kayak Club
- 6th August - Mae Ngad Somboon Chon Dam Houseboat Owners Association
- 29th August - Chiang Mai Boat Club, Northern Kayak Club and Mae Ngad Somboon Chon Dam Houseboat Owners Association
- 31st August - Sri Lanna National Park Director

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3. Potential development of Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe Canal tour in Ho Chi Minh City

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3.1. Short description

Standing by the Nhieu Loc's canal bank, people have a chance to look at the traditional boats leaving the port in order. Each boat is slipping through the water, reflecting itself and many colorful lights that create wonderful scenery in the heart of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC) is the economic and financial center of Vietnam, with a prominent history going back hundreds of years. In the middle of 1861, Saigon - the name of Ho Chi Minh City at that time - was described as surrounded by water drainage: Saigon river in the East, Thi Nghe riverway and Ben Nghe riverway in the North and South.

Up to now, Ho Chi Minh city is a famous destination in Vietnam. When visiting HCMC, people not only focus on economic activities but also keen on tourism. Beside famous attractions such as the Notre-dame Cathedral of Saigon, Saigon Center Post Office, the Independence Palace, the Chinatown and other in-land destinations, waterway tourism activities of the city are still very limited despite the fact that Ho Chi Minh is a river city.

Being one of the most notorious canals in HCMC - the Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe plays both commercial and cultural roles in the area. It is about 9 kilometres long, 27 meters and 90 meters wide upstream and downstream area respectively, and 5 meters deep, stretching through five districts (districts 1, 3, Phu Nhuan, Binh Thanh, Tan Binh). Especially, there are up to 24 bridges spanning the Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe canal.

Before 1975, The Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe Canal was heavily polluted by untreated waste since all the slums on either side of the banks dumped all kinds of waste into the canal. It suffered from strong odours during the dry season, causing adverse impacts on water quality and surrounding inhabitants.

After 1975, in 1985, The People's Committee of HCMC made a plan to renovate the Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe with the aim of changing the lives of 50.000 households in the area and fixing the image of the urban city centre. In 1993, this project was officially launched divided into two- phases thanks to the World Bank's financial assistance and City's fund. After finishing the first phase in nearly ten years, in 2012, the Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe showed its significant changes from the dirtiest canal in HCMC to the most beautiful canal of the city. Later, from 2019 to 2020, the Department of Transport in HCMC has dredged mud from

the bottom of the canal to ventilate the flow, increase drainage efficiency and improve the life quality of people, especially during the rainy season.

Many experienced investors had an idea to exploit the beauty of Thi Nghe canal by launching a canal tour. Later then, they contacted the government to get permission and ultimately succeeded. This step forward shows their great effort to balance the tourist activities: in-land and on-water tours.

In September 2015, Saigon Boat Company officially kicked off tours along 4.5 kilometres in the Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe canal. The boat runs through 4 districts: district 1, 3, Binh Thanh, and Phu Nhuan. They offer many kinds of tours, but there are two famous tours which are a Boat trip on Thi Nghe canal by Phoenix Boat and a Boat trip on Thi Nghe canal by Turtle Boat. Both kinds of tours serve the same service including cakes, drinks (optionally according to the menu available), exchange Don Ca Tai Tu on the channel, enjoy the harmonics of the Harmonica, drop Dang lanterns. With the nearly same routine, tourists will have a chance to observe the beauty of the city when the boat passes through 9 bridges along the city. The only difference is in the number of guests, with a trip on Phoenix Boat, they serve from 1 to 5 guests once a time while the figure for that on Turtle Boat is from 6 to 25 guests once a time.

Picture 1. Part of Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe canal



Source: CVSEAS

3.2. Society and tourism impact on the society

Saigon Boat Tour is trying to raise urban dwellers' awareness of environmental issues in the Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe canal by proving that this canal is priceless in many perspectives. The company expected that if people see the canal are served the tourists and the company can earn money from those activities, it will prevent them from littering and dumping untreated sewage directly to the canal.

One of the local newspapers described their astonishment with the changes of the canal by writing: “This transformation is one of the most significant changes in Vietnam. Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe Canal, which used to be the dirtiest canal in Saigon, is now the most beautiful canal of the city.” - Maze Vietnam. Also, on January, 18th, 2015, Mr. Ted Osius - the former US ambassador in Vietnam rode a bicycle along Hoang Sa street beside Thi Nghe Canal on the special occasion - he took up his duties in Vietnam. Therefore, all of these things show how society changes their look to Nhieu Loc –Thi Nghe Canal to some extent.

According to the United Nation World Tourism Organisation, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) has set the Goals 11, which is sustainable cities and communities. They mentioned “A city that is not good for its citizens is not good for tourists. Sustainable tourism has the potential to advance urban infrastructure and universal accessibility, promote regeneration of areas in decay and preserve cultural and natural heritage, assets on which tourism depends. Greater investment in green infrastructure (more efficient transport facilities, reduced air pollution, conservation of heritage sites and open spaces, etc.) should result in smarter and greener cities from which not only residents but also tourists, can benefit.”

Therefore, it can be seen that Saigon Boat Tour made a great effort to follow Goal 11 in the Sustainable Development Goals. They are trying to improve the life quality of local people and raise their awareness of protecting the green canal. Following that, their activities during the tour also show their responsibility to minimize the bad impact on the environment.

3.3. Economic development and tourism impact

With nearly 1000 kilometres of rivers and canals, Ho Chi Minh city has enormous potential for waterway tourism. Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe is part of the city’s dense network of canals, including Ben Cat, Tham Luong, Ben Nghe, Tan Hoa- Lo Gom and Tau Hu. In 2015, Saigon Boat co., Ltd first launched its boat tours on the canal, the activities then developed until now with different options and prices, ranging from 45 minute to 90 minute tours with different themes: dining on the boat, enjoying traditional folk music, moon sighting, ...

Inland waterways have been proved to have huge potential that could boost economic productivity, bring social development, tourism development and enhance the quality of life. Ho Chi Minh City has started exploiting waterway tourism since 2013, which attracts many investors. Approximately VND 1,200 billion (US\$51 million) has been invested for the construction of waterway transport structures; however, the number is considered to be not enough for tourism demands. The city authorities are keen to boost waterway tourism by setting the target of increasing the number of waterway tourists by 20 percent annually and the revenues from such tourism activities by 30 percent. Although this can positively contribute to the city’s revenue from waterway tourism, there is no clear evidence that the local community can enjoy economic benefit from these tours.

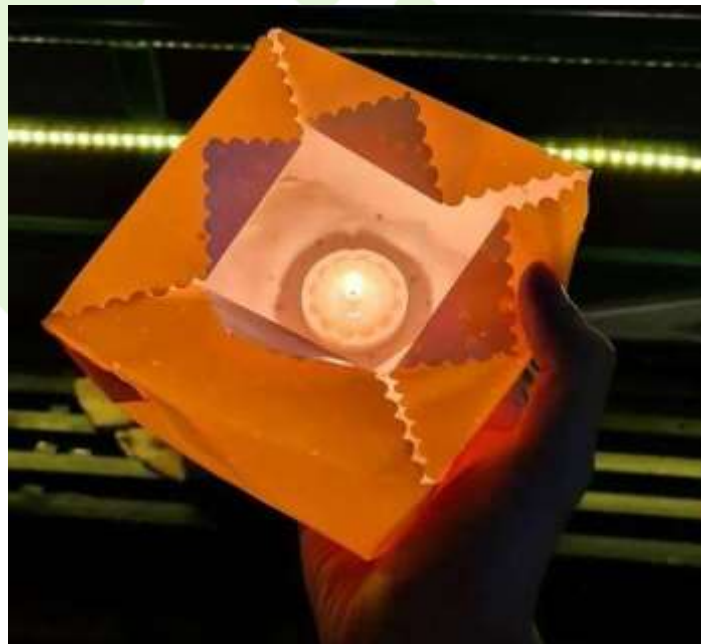
3.4. Environment and tourism impact

Despite receiving positive feedback from foreign tourists, rowboat tours along the Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe canal sometimes were suspended because of pollution and massive fish deaths. Since 2003, the city has taken efforts to improve the conditions of the 9 km Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe canal with the Environmental Sanitation Project. Once polluted, the canal is now the most beautiful canal of the city. However, there remains a need to provide a long-term sustainable solution to the poor conditions of the basin which is still contaminated with waste discharged by surrounding residents.

Along with efforts to protect the canal, Mr. Phan Xuan Anh, chairman of tour operator Saigon Boat, described activities of the company as “go green”, which means to promote green behaviors of visitors and local people. The tours depart from Ben Noi Do wharf in District 1 and arrive at a wharf near Chantaransay Pagoda in District 3, tourists are informed with stories about Saigon as well as the foundation and development of the canal, enjoy the poetic scenes of the city, then be returned to the starting point on Hoang Sa street by electric car.

Recycling materials are also used on tours. Tourists have the opportunity to release flower lanterns made from self-destructing paper, candles made from fat and are edible when decomposed. This is a form of encouragement for both tourists and the travel operator itself to conduct tourism in a responsible way.

Picture 2: Flower lanterns made from self-destructing paper



Source: CVSEAS

3.5. Key Success factors

Tourist services on Nhieu Loc canal have enriched, diversified and complemented the core tourism products of HCMC. Besides, they also contribute to increasing the tourists' experiences when exploring the value of waterways of HCMC. In addition, this kind of tourism model has contributed to transforming the Nhieu Loc canal from a polluted waterway into a tourist destination. At the same time, the government has carried out slum clearance. Thanks to its significant distribution, it can be said that Nhieu Loc canal is an attractive tourism route because it is not only recreational but also shows a new appearance of a developing city.

In the development of tourism services on Nhieu Loc Canal, there have been different types of tours such as moon sighting tours (only in the fifteenth day of the lunar month), farm trip (operating regularly), relaxing tours (including only dinner, enjoying music and sightseeing). Furthermore, product packages are suitably organized for all subjects such as families, retail customers, group guests, etc.

Apart from making different types of tours, tourism companies also brought the opportunity for creating wall paintings on bridges, which increases the aesthetics of the public space in the city. In terms of arranging the itinerary, the schedule is reasonable from the first destination to the last stop. Moreover, the variety of tourism services have been developed for tourists participating in the tour, like singing, playing musical instruments, playing magic tricks, etc. Especially, it also develops the value of Vietnamese culture by creating a space for reconstituting "Don ca tai tu" performances on boats.

It not only concerns developing tourism services but also pays attention to protect the environment simultaneously by using the eco-friendly product in the activity of dropping Dang lanterns before finishing the tour. For instance, the paper which is used to make the Dang lanterns is self-destructing materials. Another thing that relates to the environment protection is the way they take advantage of green patches from the park along the two canals to increase the visitors' attractiveness.

Despite the fact that developing tourism activities on Nhieu Loc canal can cause pollution in this canal, the actual situation of water and sanitation has not been guaranteed. In other aspects, the circumstance of household waste from locals has not been totally improved. For evidence, the awareness of people about the environmental protection and preservation of the core cultural values has not been focused yet. Besides, activities in the wafts are still limited, cafes have been set up at the departure and arrival points, yet still have not met tourists' requirements for recreation.

Picture 3: Dining on board, Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe canal tour



Source: CVSEAS

3.6. Potential Recommendations

Boat tours on Nhieu Loc - Thi Nghe canal is not a new activity of Ho Chi Minh City. However, to attract more people, especially domestic visitors in the post-covid 19 period, there are several recommendations that need to be taken into consideration:

About additional services: the city should develop products that incorporate other on land tourist attractions of the city, build additional stops during the route, diversify the activities at stop points and along the canal such as night markets, souvenir shops. These are indispensable services in a tour itinerary. In addition, the government can also turn the streets on two sides of the canal into walking streets to attract more tourists to the area.

To improve the tour quality, Saigon Boat Tour company can invest in solar-powered transportation to pick up a larger number of guests, decorate boats with the images of the iconic symbol of Vietnam such as a conical hat, Ben Thanh market, etc. to create a unique local image in the eyes of visitors. Besides, the operator can also diversify the activities to attract a wide range of visitors. For example: enjoying chamber music on boats every Saturday, holding talks about city history, poetry and folk music of Vietnam.

To make the tour more popular with tourists, the company should invest more in marketing activities, connect with tourist websites such as Vietnam Tourism, Vietnam Travel, Vietnam Travel Guide, etc. and use social media to promote the beautiful images of the canal. Co-operate with other tour operators to make the tour become a must-try activity in Ho Chi Minh city by connecting it with other destinations in the itineraries.

The initial spirit of Saigon Boat Tour in contributing to creating a new kind of tour would deserve a high degree of consideration. In the context that the recreations of HCM seem to

be more and more familiar with tourists, the Nhieu Loc – Thi Nghe boat tour was conducted as a rising star in the tourism industry. Not only will it diversify the experience of tourists when visiting HCMC, but also contribute to lengthening the tourist trip in Vietnam. There are still two big questions for investors: how to attract domestic tourists in context of the Covid-19 epidemic and the long- term plan to develop tourism in a sustainable way and protect the canal at the same time.

Acknowledgements

We would like to express our special thanks of gratitude to the CEO of Saigon Boat Company Mr. Phan Xuan Anh as well as the CEO of Lua Viet Tours Company Mr. Nguyen Van My who gave us a detailed explanation of how Nhieu Loc - Thi Nghe canal tour conducts and much useful knowledge to do this wonderful research on the topic: “The potential development of Nhieu Loc - Thi Nghe canal tour”.

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Finally, we are grateful to our teammates for giving us the chance to work with and support each other in the necessary resources for the research.

4. APPLYING A TOURISM MICRO CLUSTER MODEL TO RURAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING: A CASE STUDY OF KAENG RUANG VILLAGE IN THAILAND

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4.1. Introduction

Overall economic development in Thailand has been successful in term of economic expansion. Annual economic growth averaged 7.6% between 1950s and 2000s when per capita income grew sevenfold. Even though the country had also experienced growing inequality, Thailand's Gini coefficient increased steadily over the same period and is highest among countries in the southeast Asian region. Although the overall poverty is declining in Thailand, an enormous number of people are still living in poverty. In the year 2016, 5.8 million Thai people were living below the poverty line as reported by Office of the National Economics and Social Development Board. Poverty is mostly concentrated in the rural area in the North, Northeast and the South of the country.

Despite the fact that the level of diversification of activities in rural areas has been promoted in recent years, agriculture remains critical in many areas of the country. The current situation indicates that the agriculture sector is still suffering from very low productivity, lack of resource base, high cost of production factors, and unstable price of agriculture products impacting on rural incomes and, consequently, the quality of life of rural people. Rural tourism can be one of the answers to the question of how to generate supplementary income for people in rural areas. The role of tourism in economic and rural development are discussed in several literatures. In many areas, rural tourism resources are very rich providing different attractions to tourists which can provide a multi-faceted activity. Therefore, promoting and investing in tourism in certain rural areas should be encouraged. However, development of rural tourism should go along with the idea of sustainable development where natural resource exploitation and protection are balanced. Thus, the appropriate approach or model of rural tourism should be examined and justified.

4.2. Theoretical background

The role of the resource-based view model, clustering theory, and the King of Thailand's philosophy of sufficient economy are among the contributions to the development of the proposed tourism micro cluster model for a poor rural village in Thailand.

Resource-based view

Application to rural tourism business development The Resource Based View (RBV) is originally a managerial concept explaining that a firm's performance is determined by the resources it has at its disposal. The way these resources are used and configured enable the firm to perform and can provide a distinct competitive advantage. Firms are dissimilar due to their heterogeneous resources, so firms can have different strategies because they have different resource mixes. Although RBV has deep root dated back to the 1930s, the main ground-breaking for the resource-based view development was the work of Barney in 1991. His article "Firm Resources and Sustained Competitive Advantage" defined the main characteristics of resources, explained the link between resources and sustainable competitive advantage, and distinguished between different types of resources as important potential drivers of the performance of firms. The efficacy and suitability of the resource-based view for tourism development in rural area are recognized in previous literature. Using this RBV concept for a rural village suggests that a single village possesses unique bundle of intangible and intangible resources which can be exploited and configured to create value. Specific value can be created through tourism activities to generate sustainable competitive advantage for each particular village. Therefore, the RBV has contributed to the development of tourism micro cluster model in a specific rural village.

Sufficiency Economy Philosophy

Sufficiency economy philosophy (SEP) or the 'new theory' was developed by the former King of Thailand with more than 60 years of his hands-on experience in Thai rural development. The philosophy is a new paradigm of development, which aims at improving human well-being as a development goal by focusing on a balanced way of living. Three principles—moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity (against the risks which arise from internal or external change) —along with the conditions of morality and knowledge can be applied to any level of society—from an individual, to community, and subsequently to a country. The philosophy of sufficiency economy conveys a new approach in addressing current development challenges, which involve issues for institutions, human capital, environmental sustainability and the role of government. This concept, as drawn from Thailand's Buddhist tradition, emphasizes the "middle way" – the importance of balance. In Buddhism, this middle way, or path, advocates the avoidance of the extremes of sensual pleasure on the one hand, and ascetic denial on the other. The middle, or 'eight-fold' path directs the person towards enlightenment through a World in which everything is in a consistent condition of change and flux. Implemented in a wide range of projects and geographical areas, the "sufficiency economy" methodology has helped hundreds of

thousands of people, especially those in remote areas with few natural advantages. The Thai government incorporated this philosophy into the national development plan, resulting in a positive impact on many areas of development. SEP should be promoted in Thailand's rural villages as it is an effective guide in project development because SEP approaches are contextually appropriate and realistic. There are several rural development projects that have successfully applied SEP as a guide. The impact of SEP on the well-being of Thais is found in several cases. The SEP philosophy has shown to be a path of sustainable development in many contexts. The SEP path of development focuses on a balanced use of material resources, social capital, environmental reserves, and cultural wealth as well as the balanced preservation of these four kinds of resources at all stages and levels of development. Therefore, development of tourism businesses in the studied village can employ SEP principles. To do so means that business activities should be practiced on three principles (moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity) and two conditions (morality and knowledge) as mentioned above. Moderation or modesty means a business should be an appropriate size; that is not too big or small. In other words, a business should have production at a modest level and not take unnecessary risk by borrowing too much money or charging customers excessive prices. Reasonableness means decisions about business must be rational by considering thoroughly the relevant factors and carefully taking into account the expected consequences of proposed activities. Immunity means a business has to prepare itself to respond the environmental changes from by understanding the sensitivities of change by carefully monitoring its environment including customers, market, competitors and other factors. These actions will lead to good and reasonable decisions which will result in good performance and help to avoid any serious problems with the business. Based on these three principles with two conditions, a business will be concerned with sustainable and stable long-term profits, ethical practices, social and environmental responsibility, and balancing benefit sharing ethically among all stakeholders.

Clustering Theory

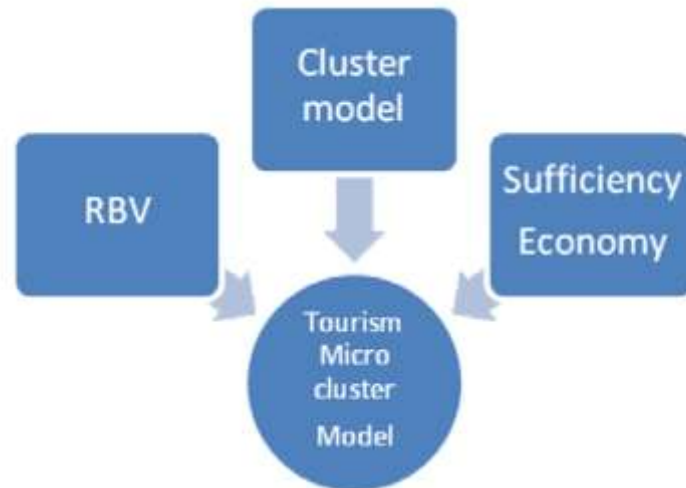
A cluster can be defined in different ways. In more general terms, clusters can be defined as a group of firms, related economic actors, and institutions that are located near each other and have reached a sufficient scale to develop specialised expertise, services, resources, suppliers and skills. A cluster can be defined differently depending on context. A common element of many cluster definitions is the emphasis on networking and collaboration between companies and institutions as 'groups defined by relationship, rather than membership' (European Commission, 2008). Clusters often play an important role in industry development as they can stimulate positive economic and social externalities, strengthening industrial innovation, competitiveness and social factors within regions. The traditional clustering concept was mainly applied in the context of the manufacturing industry.

However, there have been attempts to draw upon similarities with clustering patterns in services industry like tourism. The early work concerning the presence of clustering in tourism-related businesses can be seen in 1990s which highlights the mutual dependence of businesses within a tourism destination. The suitability of cluster theory in tourism development was discussed by several researchers. They all agreed that the cluster approach is an appropriate lens for development of tourist destinations. A study reveals critical role of clustering theory in tourism development especially for communities that intend to build or enhance a tourism function as a component of their economic strategy. A cluster-based approach to destination development expresses an understanding of interdependence among business players within a region as a synergy which means the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Besides the tourism cluster approach is considered to be an appropriate strategy in emerging economies and less developed areas. Micro cluster in tourism is identified as a development mechanism that fosters the ability to build a local level of specialisation and competitive advantages for a small tourism destination". The basic assumption of clustering is in that the co-location of both competing and complementary firms is presumed to produce a range of synergies that enhance the growth of market size, employment and product.

The three forms of clustering – horizontal, vertical and diagonal. Horizontal clustering can simply refer to the colocation of like firms in a given geographical area. These firms are competitors as they sell similar products using similar productive resources, but their co-location pools the potential customer base to increase total sales and generates other advantages in terms of product availability, labour supply, shared information and infrastructure to reduce costs or the effects of externalities. Vertical clustering refers to the relative colocation of an industry's supply chain, where there is an integrated linkage between production stages and consumers that enhances productive specialization. The geographical proximity between firms minimizes logistics and distributional costs and offers other benefits in the form of concentrated labour skills and market information. The last form of proposed clustering is diagonal clustering which is referred to the concentration of complementary (or symbiotic) firms, which each add value to the activities of other firms, even though their products may be quite distinct. In this sense, diagonal clustering brings together firms that supply separate products and services, effectively creating a bundle that will be consumed as though it was one item. In this research, a tourism micro cluster is seen as a group of cooperating businesses involved in complementary activities in small rural communities. The concept of diagonal clustering as mentioned above is the underlying principle for micro clustering in this study as it seems suited to symbiotic tourism development in the studied village. This is because the village as a tourism destination relies upon co-operative community enterprises/businesses to supply complementary activities which add value to the tourism experience. Based on the concept of RBV model, clustering concept, and the

sufficiency economy philosophy, the tourism micro cluster model is proposed as shown in figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Contribution of several concepts to tourism micro cluster model



The tourism micro cluster model proposed here is defined as "the concentration of interconnected businesses or income generating activities related to tourism in a rural village which aims to take advantage from local resources and capabilities and to apply sufficiency economy philosophy which means all businesses or income generating activities in the cluster will be conducted in the way which focuses on a balanced way of doing business based on three principles—moderation, reasonableness, and self-immunity along with the conditions of morality and knowledge".

4.3. Tourism micro cluster development in the village

Based on tourism related resources and SWOT analysis, the micro cluster model in tourism at Kaeng Ruang village was developed to plan development through tourism. The cluster was consisted of four tourism related businesses/activities which are connected and complement one another. These four businesses/ activities include home stay, marked trekking, adventure tours, and processed malva nut as shown in the figure 3. The development of these businesses was undertaken based on the needs of the community members and also resources available in the village. The businesses will be operated and managed by the community with assistance by local government and concerned organizations.

The four main businesses/income generating activities incorporated into tourism micro cluster at Baan Kaeng Ruang are described as followed:

(1) Homestay

The aim of Homestay service is to serve tourists who visit the village and nearby national park. The village is merely self-sufficient. The first idea was to create the village as a tourist destination. In connection with tourism, therefore, it is necessary to provide alternatives to Hotel accommodation which is missing in the village. Some people in the village live in houses that have unused rooms and spaces, thus implementation of Homestay can be solution to accommodate tourists who come to visit the village and seek experiences of local life and culture. Homestay can provide a good opportunity for tourists to learn and experience the villagers' way of life, their customs, and daily chores, and try the local cuisine. In the meantime, the homestay family can gain supplementary income from visitors.

There are initially around 10 households which are ready to participate in the homestay activity at the early phase of the project. To operate this business, a homestay group will be established. There will be 10 members, who all are house owners. Members of the home stay group will be trained to have knowledge of homestay standards and sufficient skills to run the business. The business plan including operation, financial, marketing, and risk management has been prepared by the research team to support the group in managing this business.

(2) Marked Trekking

The marked trekking project is set up to take advantage of potential and current trend towards an increase in the number of tourists visiting national parks. There is a high opportunity for developing a trekking marked system in Phu Chong Na Yoi National Park and to prepare the National Park for a future demand within this market. The point is to take an advantage of the growth of demand of trekking, natural resources, and establish a new marked system for comfortable and easy travelling and trekking. The service of trekking system will set up and provide comfortable and easy way for visitors. This activity will operate through the cooperation between the national park and the community. Therefore, the activity will benefit the villagers because it will complement the homestay business and malva nut processed business. The activity will attract tourists who, consequently, will be accommodated at home stay in the village allowing the sale of malva nut products to tourists after their trip at the national park. Additionally, the local people can gain more income from transfer services from the village to the national park to tourists who want to experience a marked trekking journey?

(3) Adventure Track

This business project is about to provide tourists an adventure tour on local farm tractor into the edge of the national park. The business idea was created on the basis that the rural areas can provide tourists with local authenticity. The project is proposed due to availability of beautiful nature in the area connecting the national park, underutilization of agriculture tractors of some villagers, the willingness of people to manage tasks related to this activity. The adventure tour service is named "the adventure track" in the project. The length of total trip is 15 Km. (including 5 Km. track length) and trip will last about 4,5 hours. Each tractor can accommodate a maximum 6 tourists. The project expects 6 operating farm tractors to participate in this activity. At least 20 people will be part- time employed (drivers, assistants, and cooks). The business will positively affect the people who are involved in form of supplementary income. In addition, the activity will support and complement the home stay and malva nut businesses in the way that these will draw interest from tourists who will stay in the village with home stay families and buy malva nut products at the end of the trip.

To secure this business, a group of tractors owners will be formed and self-managed. Members of the group will attend a short training course to gain knowledge and skill of operation and safety standard. The business plan including operation, financial, marketing, and risk management has been prepared to support the group in managing the business.

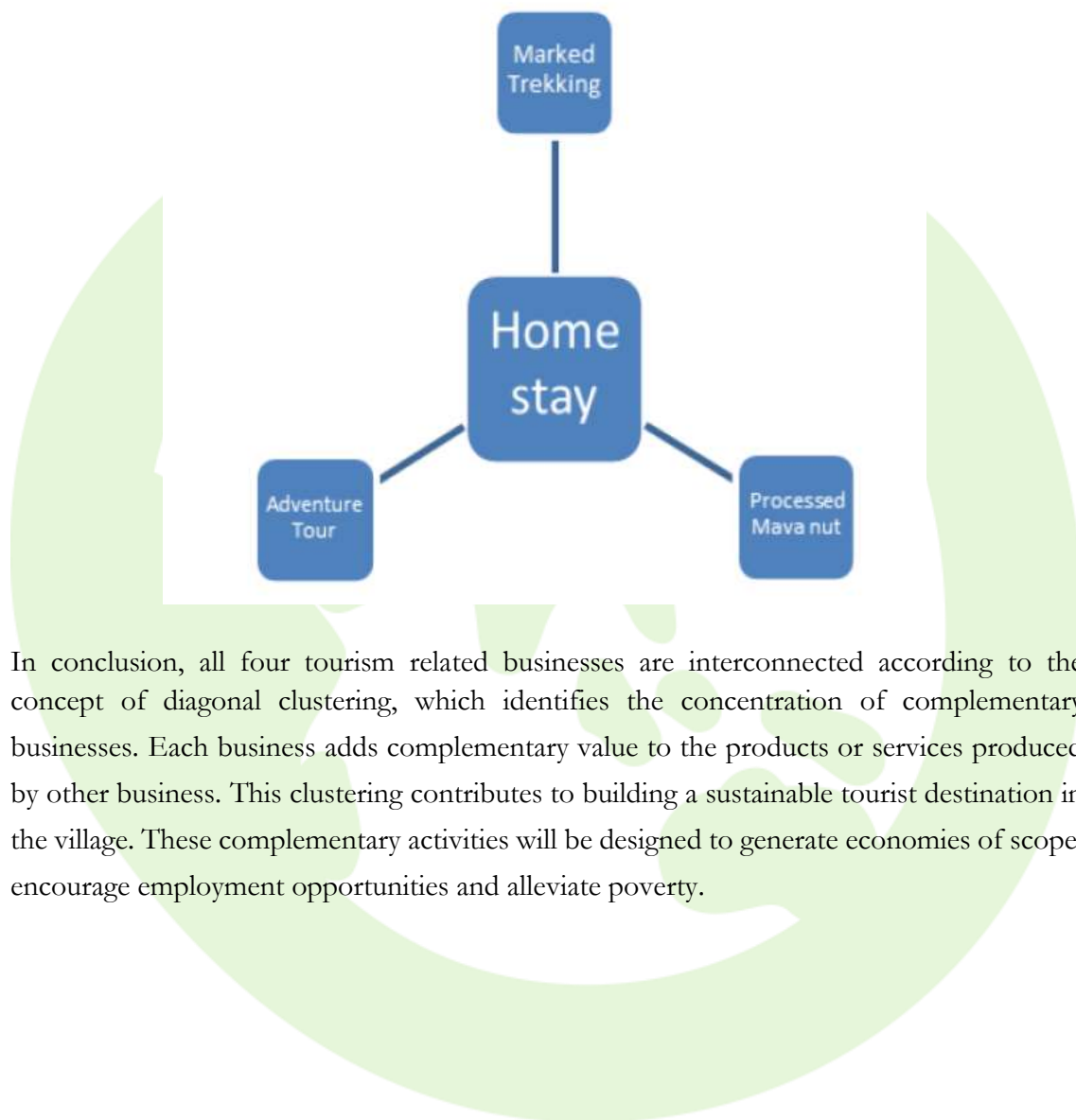
(4) Malva Nut Processed Products

This business is developed to enable the village's women group to process malva nut which is very nutritious food. The malva nut is local crop is cultivated in the village and surrounding areas. It's low in calories but high in natural fibre and attractive for health conscious people, especially those with weight control problems. Previously the women group used to make and sell juice from this malva nut but this didn't have enough demand. This business project, therefore, created two new products – malva nut jelly and pumpkin soup with malva nut. This offers the prospect of adding value in and subsequently can generate extra income to the women's group. This could bring income for local people, create new job opportunities and create something new, sustainable and interesting.

The operation of this business will be coordinated by the village's women group which has 12 members. The group has already facilities and equipment for production. The fund for the project will mainly be from the village fund. A training course on how to process the malva nut fruit will be provided. A Business plan as a guideline on running business has been prepared by the research team.

Although all four business activities are different but complementary. Also all businesses will adopt the new philosophy – sufficiency economy for their operation. The proposed tourism micro-cluster model is illustrated in the figure 2.

Figure 2. Tourism micro cluster model for the selected village



In conclusion, all four tourism related businesses are interconnected according to the concept of diagonal clustering, which identifies the concentration of complementary businesses. Each business adds complementary value to the products or services produced by other business. This clustering contributes to building a sustainable tourist destination in the village. These complementary activities will be designed to generate economies of scope, encourage employment opportunities and alleviate poverty.

5. Are there any alternatives for (sustainable) tourism during a pandemic crisis? Ecotourism as an alternative sustainable tourism in Nepal: the case of Annapurna conservation area's (ACA)

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5.1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the world's largest economic sectors; its importance to the global economy is undeniable. Tourism creates employment, promotes exports and embodies tremendous cultural, environmental and heritage value (Aryal, 2005). WTTC (2017) reports global tourism contributed to 10.2 percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), created 292 million jobs, and accounted for 6.6 percent of total global exports in 2016. Tourism is a driver of wealth and employment creation worldwide, although there are concerns about increasing socio-economic inequities and environmental costs (Alam et. al., 2016).

Nepal is a landlocked country located between 80°, 04' and 88°, 12' east longitudes and between 26°, 22' and 30°, 27' north latitude. It is a small country which lies between two giant countries of Asia, China and India. The Nepal extends along the south of Himalayas in Central and India. It covers the total land area of 147,181km² and its borders is contiguous with India in West, South and the people's Republic of China in the North. Nepal is a popular among the people by the name of Himalayan as well as it has eight of the world's tallest peak, which includes the highest peak of the world Mount Everest ranging 8,848 meter above. The country is however distinguished not only for its high mountains but also for its unique cultural heritage, artistic monuments and exotic wildlife (NTB, 2002).

Nepal is also famous for ecotourism as well as trekking. Different regions are opened for trekking. Among them Annapurna Region is one of the most popular trekking destination, receiving about more than 60% of the visitors who come to Nepal for trekking. The unique biodiversity, the scenic grandeur in combination with the multi-ethnic diversity makes it the world's most popular trekking destinations. Trekking area along the Annapurna is easily

accessible, hotels in the hills are plentiful, treks here offer good scenery of both high mountains and lowland villages and it offers different facilities and less strenuous for trekkers as compared to trekking in other regions of Nepal (The trekking guide book, 2000). Due to all these reasons, trekking in Annapurna has become popular in the world. It is considered to be one among the ten treks of the world (Baral et. al., 2008).

In this situation the development and promotion of tourism sector can play a vital role in Nepal's overall development. Development and promotion of tourism sector contributes to generate employment to male and female and income opportunities. Tourism also increases government revenue through various types of taxation and reduce nation trade deficits (Aryal, 2005). Tourism has also socio- cultural significance. It helps to develop international peace, friendship and understandings. In the context of development of tourism, energy also play vital role. Like other industries tourism industries have been facing a lot of energy related problems. Since the energy problem is getting more and more hazardous in the Nepalese rural areas that further is resulting to the depletion of the precious forest and natural resources (Bhandari, 2004). On the other hand, as Nepalese people has not been such strong to afford the technology of other renewable sources of energies like solar, wind and water, Biogas being cheaper, easy to maintain plus other lots of positive aspects makes it very important in the Nepalese context. In view with the fact that the rapidly growing population needs more amount of energy through the limited resources, over use of conventional source of energy could lead to the exhaustion of those resource in some frame of time, so it has been very much important to search for the alternative source of energy for tourism sector also so that we may not have to face the energy crisis in near future (Li & Lin, 2015).

Statement of the problem

Nepal is a multi-ethnic, multilingual, multi religious country. Every culture possesses its own type of attitude, norms values, perspectives and perceptions of the society. Tourism is an important sector to generate revenue in one hand and employment on the other for the sustainable development in the national economy. Tourism is emerging as the most viable industry of Nepal which has been providing skilled and unskilled jobs to many unemployed people and has helped to reduce rampant poverty in the country. Tourism not only brings foreign currency but also other things such as changes in attitude and behaviour of people. In the present, the basic goals of rural tourism are minimizing negative impacts, and maximizing benefits for the local people and their natural environment, while providing positive experiences to visitors (Nyaupane & Thapa, 2006).

The proper understanding of the interrelationships between tourism, the underlying economy, and the natural environment is critical in formulating effective sustainable tourism policies. Tourism is the backbone-leading sector for the economic development of developing countries like Nepal. Development and scope of tourism depends up on the quality and quantity of products/components. Without adequate planning and tourism development only richer individuals and urban based organizations will benefit from the

economic opportunities of tourism and tourism in fact may increase the economic, environmental and socio-cultural cost of the area visited (Aryal, 2005).

Ecotourism is nature and unique diversity in flora and fauna, topography, climate etc. but rapid growing population deteriorates the forest to fulfil their needs. It causes deforestation, loss of bio-diversity, landslide, flood and soil erosion, such effort ends the panoramic & wonderful scenic beauty of environment or the products of tourism. Nepal has been endowed with diverse fauna and flora and beautiful pristine land escapes. The national park and the conservation area scattered in different parts of the country have become most potential site for tourism. These national parks symbolized natural paradise have diverse land masses containing in it only the unique and rare diversity but also here the religious and spiritual sites of high values of significance (Bhandari, 2004).

Research questions

- What is the potential and importance of ecotourism aspect of Annapurna Conservation Area?
- What are the types of energy used in Annapurna Conservation Area?
- What is the role of renewable energy for sustainable tourism development in Annapurna Conservation Area?

Objectives of the study

The overall objectives of this research on tourist are to analyse the growth, scope, problems and prospects of tourism in Annapurna Conservation Area,

The specific objectives are

- To explore the feasibility of ecotourism in the Annapurna Conservation Area
- To study the sources of energy and implemented in tourism sectors at Annapurna Conservation Area
- To study the role renewable energy for sustainable development of tourism

Significance of the study

Nepal has three major resources built of economy: agriculture, hydropower and tourism. Among them tourism is the key industry which can effortlessly be established, promoted and developed with minimum investment and can be made an important foundation of national income. So, it is one of the chief sectors for economic development. Tourism is an activity that generates economic and social benefits. Tourism has effects on the different sectors of the economy. The importance of tourism in Nepal is not confined to the economic aspects only, but also to environmental and cultural aspects. This study will help the policy makers to develop sustainable tourism policies.

The study is also significant, as findings would allow policymakers in identifying economic strategies that seek to balance economic growth while reducing pollutant emissions and curbing energy usage. The policy implications of this study's findings would be relevant to other mountainous economies where tourism sector plays an important role in fostering economic. The study mainly focuses on the study of the role of ecotourism and renewable energy for sustainable development of tourism in Nepal.

5.2. Context

Diversity of Nepal

Nepal is a small Himalayan Federal Republic; it is situated Nepal situated between two big economic powers: China in the north and India in the east, west and south. Nepal is one of the least developed, land locked nations located in the northern part of Indian subcontinent. It is roughly rectangular in shape with a total area of 1, 47,181 square kilometres. The absolute location of Nepal lies between the degrees of 26022' to 30027' north latitudes and 8004' to 88012' east longitudes. In fact, the whole nation can be considered a country of villages, as there are more than 3,915 villages located in just about all parts of the country distributed from the south to north and from east to west. On the geographical scale, Nepal occupies only 0.03 percent of the world while occupying 0.3 percent of Asia (NTB, 2002).

Nepal is one of the richest countries in terms of geographical and climatic variation thereby having varieties of ethnicity, culture, biodiversity and social customs. The elevation of the country ranges from 60 meters above sea level to the zenith point on earth, Mt. Everest at 8,848 meters. Within the average 192 km width of the country, climatic condition ranges from sub-tropical in the south to arctic in the north. This wide variation has fostered an incredible variety of ecosystem, the greatest mountain range on earth, thick sub-tropical jungles teeming with a wealth of wild life, thundering rivers, forested hills and frozen valleys. Likewise, varieties of ethnic groups found all over the country, especially in local villages, have diverse social structures and their own social customs as well (NTB, 2002).

Based on culture alone, Nepal has tremendous cultural diversity. The feature of Nepali culture is unity in diversity (Shrestha and Gupta, 1993). Diversity in culture can be seen by a diversity of caste, religion, ethnicity, language and culture. Major ethnic groups are the Indo-Aryans and Tibet Mongoloids. The major religion is Hinduism followed by Buddhism and small minorities such as Islam and various others. The religious customs, life styles, festivals, food habits, clothing and languages differ according to geographical and ethnic variation. But social harmony is often taken as a remarkable feature of Nepalese culture (Grenable, 2006).

Tourism in Nepal

Possessing eight of the ten highest mountains in the world, Nepal is known as one of the most visited adventure tourism destinations in the world. The mighty Himalayas, colourful mountains, and cheerful faces always attract the tourist. Nepalese are the ones who can smile

even they are suffering from sorrows. The tourism industry employs 42% of the total working population, which depicts that most of the Nepalese are dependent on the tourism industry for their livelihood. Today, the responsible tourism is practiced by the Government of Nepal to ensure that environmental degradation does not occur as a product of tourism activities (Nepal Tourism Board, 2010).

Nepal is well-known as the main tourist destination in the international arena due to its natural beauty, unique cultures, incomparable heritage and innumerable tourist destinations. Even a small reform in culture and tourism sectors means that the country can earn foreign currency and generate employment and other opportunities contributing to economic growth. Nepal is the birth place of Lord Buddha, Vrikuti and Sita and has incomparable traditions, prosperous culture, unique customs and a rich heritage. Conservation and promotion of history of brevity and warriors and uniqueness of Nepali society in itself are issues of major importance (Chand, 2000).

Impact of tourism

Today tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the world. Vast development of infrastructures and inflows of foreign currency into the host region shows that the tourism has been growing rapidly in recent years. Tourism has a wide economic impact on the host region and it can be classified on two levels. Firstly, the host region can benefit from foreign exchange earnings directly through transportation, lodging, and from food. Secondly, tourism makes a greater contribution to the host region through the taxation and employment created by the tourism industry. In general, we believe that tourism generates foreign exchange earnings and it creates different new jobs directly or indirectly. Tourism consumes lots of goods and services, the man power used to make the foods and other stuffs are also involved indirectly in the tourism industry, whereas the works of restaurant and hotels, transportation and security of the tourist are involving directly in the tourism industry (Mishra et al., 2011). Tourism stimulates the trade, income and entrepreneurship and helps to maintain the regional development. Tourism also generates money from taxation, royalty and visa charges from the foreigners (Bista 2009, 26).

The quality of the environment, both natural and man-made, is essential to tourism, however, the tourism industry's relationship with the environment is complex – many activities can have adverse environmental effects. Many of these impacts are linked with the construction of general infrastructure such as roads, hotels, restaurants, shops, golf courses and marinas. The impacts of tourism are commonly linked with each other; when the mass visitation is occurred, it does not only affect the local culture and tradition at the same time this also has greater negative impacts on the local environment (Pandey et al., 2010).

Mount Everest is the highest peak in the world and located in Nepal. The base camp of this peak is the holy place for climbers, but today the massive environmental problem has arisen, the base camp is littered with oxygen cylinders, debris and the dead bodies of failed climbers

can be seen on the trail which means the Mount Everest needs help and attention. The government of Nepal has placed emphasis on mountaineering tourism and hence receives more and more tourist's day by day for mountaineering purposes, but the most needed thing is; the government should focus on sustaining the environment and tourism has to follow the principle of eco-tourism (Fears 2011).

Sustainable development of tourism

Simply, sustainable development refers to the needs which can be met not only today, but also for the further generations to come. We can say the sustainable development is the way of using the resources in the present, which aims to save the potentiality of the same resources for the future. In 1987, the Brundtland Commission defined sustainable development as "Development that met the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs"; since then the concept is widely accepted where the economic well-being and the environmental quality coexist. According to the Brundtland Commission, the sustainable development must address the maintenance of ecological integrity and diversity, has to meet basic human needs, there has to be open option for the future and increase self-determination and is the most important. (Brundtland Commission for Sustainable Development 2005.)

Basically, sustainable tourism is tourism, while visiting the host region, which attempts to make low impacts on the local environment and the cultures and at the same time generates the employment for the local people and preserves the potential for the future visitors. The tourism industry cannot be completely sustainable but while visiting the visitors and the local community must apply the rules of sustainability while using it (Paramati et al., 2011).

In other words, sustainable tourism is also called a responsible tourism as each and every participant has to take responsibility. Sustainable tourism is the way of respecting the local environment or any destination such as respecting of local cultures and the natural environment, buying local and giving fair local economic returns to the local families, meaning the emphasis has to be given for the locally produced goods, helping to protect the endangered flora and fauna with our own way as we can. As we all know water and energy are a precious natural resource that is why we need to be very careful while using them. The tourists could be more sustainable while visiting the destination region and protect and enhance the favourite destination for the future enjoyment. (Thomas Cook 2010.)

It is necessary to maintain the environmental sustainability not only for a tourism purpose; it is also an essential element for people and other living organisms. Polluted surroundings may cause serious problems in the living organism. The environmental sustainability can be defined in terms of a comprehensive, multi-scale and dynamic hierarchical measure of resilience, vigour and organism. (Munasinghe 2007.) This applies to both human beings and other living organisms like plants, small herbs, microorganisms and other wild animals. All the living organisms are inter-linked somehow, if some of the organisms get destroyed or get

serious problems in surviving, this may affect the other organisms, so it is necessary to maintain the ecosystem to maintain the environmental sustainability (Heinan et al., 2006).

Sustainable tourism is a most important factor today because the communities need to support themselves on the available resources. The increasing population must survive on the limited resources because the resources are limited. Place-based communities have become central to a holistic concept of sustainability, which embraces and integrates environmental, economic, political, cultural and social considerations. In this way there is an implicit recognition which has to be truly sustainable, the preservation of the natural environment must be grounded in the communities and societies, which exploit and depend upon it (Hall & Richards 2000, 1.)

Annapurna Conservation Area

Eco-tourism is a complex and multidisciplinary phenomenon and has a tremendous role to play in the interpretation of nature and natural resources, as well as in the outstanding of human history and its interaction with the rural environment, and the diffusion of environmental knowledge and awareness. Ecotourism can be described by different terms such as nature Based Tourism, Nature Tourism, Environmental Tourism, Specialist Tourism, Green Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Indigenous Tourism, Responsible Tourism, Sensitized Tourism, Cottage Tourism and Sustainable Tourism (Pradhan and Grandon, 2008). A case study at Annapurna conservation area, the central part of Nepal is dominated by the Annapurna Himalaya range and the villages around Pokhara. The Annapurna region is popular for its combination of high peaks, spectacular natural and cultural landscapes, and high cultural diversity. The area surrounding the Annapurna range in western Nepal has long been recognized both nationally and internationally for its rich and varied flora and fauna. The Annapurna Himalaya Region features the world's deepest valley, the Kali Gandaki, between the Dhaulagiri and Annapurna ranges stretching from tropical lowlands lush temperate rhododendron forests in the south to a dry sub-alpine steppe environment on the northern range, the Annapurna Region includes an outstanding variety of wildlife habitat and vegetation (Baral et al., 2008).

5.3. Methodology

Research Design

The study will be conducted under 'Descriptive Research Design' because the study describes systematically the major tourism activities at Annapurna Conservation Area and uses of renewable energy in this area also. The study will be carried out on the basis of explanation and descriptive research designs because the study mainly focuses on to investigate the socio-economic condition of ACA. Moreover, the study will try to find out the socio-economic impact due to tourism and relationship between renewable energy on sustainable tourism development.

Population and sampling

The population of the study is total household of Annapurna Conservation Area. Using the stratified random sampling, 5000 households will be sampled. Then municipality or rural municipality will be selected randomly. Stratified random sampling method will be applied for the rest of the stage of the study and data collection. The total numbers of respondents will be 500 including both male and female of different age groups. The respondents will be chosen by using random sampling method.

Natures and Sources of Data

Primary Sources: - Primary data will be collected by asking direct question to local community people, hotel owners, local forest users' group, tourism experts and tourism entrepreneurs. Primary data of tourist visited in the study area will be collected from daily record book of DDC profile. Secondary Sources: - Secondary data will be collected from government officials. Both primary and secondary information sources will be used for the fulfilment of the objectives of the study. Primary sources provide first-hand documents or direct evidences regarding the topic under investigation. They are created by the witness or recorders who experienced the conditions or events being documented. Those sources are mostly created at the time when the events or conditions are occurring. The study will be basically based on filed work where secondary sources of information will be used from the relevant literatures, previous studies and the different archival sources.

Data Collection Tools and techniques

Various tools and techniques will be used to collect the primary and secondary data for the study. The choices of those tools and techniques will be in accordance with those demanded by the research. a) Interview: The interviews will be taken with selected respondents. The structured, unstructured and open-ended questions will be used for interview schedules. The respondents will be the different representatives of the active members from tourism board, members of mother group and similarly with the members of father group and youth club. b) Observation: In this section, the focus will be more on unstructured type of observation. Daily life, or the natural situation of the informants, their interactions, events, and situation around them will be observed. Participant observation is a strategy of reflexive learning not a single method observing. c) Household Survey: Household survey will be carried out to collect the actual information and data from the study area and also to identify the view of local people about tourism development in study area. Questionnaire will be used to collect primary data.

Presentation and Data analysis

In the process of data analysis, the researcher will be classified and tabulated data, which are collected through the various sources. In this study data will be collected and tabulated manually. For different types of data different table will be prepared. Simple statically tools

will be used such as percentage, average, frequency and table. To fulfil the objectives of the study, data will be analysed descriptively.

5.4. Results

The Annapurna region is indeed endowed and enriched by the varied and cultural attractions. The altitude of Annapurna region varies from less than 1000 m to 8091 m (which is the height of mountain Annapurna, the 10th highest peak in the world). The sharp altitudinal variation has made this region one of the most fragile spectacular and interesting places in the world. This region is rich in biodiversity. There are around 474 species of birds, 102 species of mammals, 39 reptiles, 22 amphibian species and 1226 flowering plants; it is the home of over 122,000 people of various ethnic cultural and linguistic groups. (NTNC 2010)

Annapurna region has the eight highest peaks in the world where the altitude of mountain varies from less than 100m to 8091m. There are six major peaks over 7,200m which are Annapurna I (8,091m), Annapurna II (7,937m), Annapurna III (7,555m), Annapurna IV (7,525m), Gangaputra (7,455m) and Annapurna South (7,219m). It provides many micro-climates supporting subtropical lowlands in the valley, temperate evergreen forests in the south and alpine steppe environments to the North of Annapurna region.

Different species of flora are found in Annapurna region. A wide variety of wild flowers linger in bloom long after the monsoon. Flowers like Luculia (a pink mallow often mistaken for rhododendron), variety of impatient and composites (e.g., Asters, daisies etc.) and the plume orchids that bloom in trees are found. Along the wet rock walls between Ghorepani and Ghandruk near Banthati, the profusion of mauve primrose cannot be missed (Holidaymountaintreks, 7th September, 2012).

Different species of rhododendron are found (both in shrub and tree from) in the temperature and sub alpine zones of Nepal. They are readily recognized when they are burst into magnificent blooms in spring and summer. The national flower (Lanligurans in Nepali) has funnel-shaped flowers clustered at the ends of branches in a wide variety of colors such as white, pink, mauve and red. The main trees like schema and chestnut are the dominant species of the wet subtropical forest (1000m to 2000m) and are easily distinguished from each other. The schema is called chilaune (itchy) in Nepali due to the irritant nature of its bark. It is a medium sized tree of the tea family with evergreen leathery leaves and fragrant white flowers that appear in late spring. Small, round, woody fruit can be found in the fall. The chestnut is the larger tree and is the member of the oak family. The evergreen oaks are found in the temperature zones from 1700m to 3000m.

Different species of birds and mammals found in Annapurna region add to the beauty of the region. Birds in the sky, the raptors, of prey are the birds most likely to catch one's eyes. The main birds of this region are Danphe, Kalij Pheasant, Cheer Pheasant, Chestnut-crowned bush warbler, grey-checked warbler, Brown Parrot bill, Golden-breasted fulvetta and Red

browed finch. The large raptors such as the Himalayan griffon and lammergeyer are of particular note. These huge graceful vultures are often mistaken for eagles. They are larger than eagles with long broad wings and are common. The lammergeyer is striking with wingspan of about two meters. These birds like white capped river chat, plumbeous start (a slate blue bird with a red tail), a little fork tail (larger than long black and white specks). And different kinds of Kingfishers are found which are large pied kingfisher and Eurasian Kingfisher. Brown dipper is a chocolate collared bird; white breasted dipper is also found in the west of the Kaligandaki. The region also provided excellent habitat for various types of spring and autumn birds migrating from India and China as well as from other regions (Annapurna ways brochure, 2nd October, 2012).

The Annapurna region is well known in terms of bio-diversity as well as for diverse ethnic groups. The major ethnic groups of Annapurna region are Gurung, Magar, Thakali, Bahun-Chhetri, newar and ethnic Tibetan. The Gurung are estimated that about 20.4%, of the total population and main profession of Gurung was animal herding; many are now dependent upon farming. But they have worked in British and Indian armies so the pensions and salaries play an important role in the economy of the area. Magar are about 8% of the total population of this region and they live in western part of the trekking areas such as Sikha, Ulleri and Ghodepani. They have been also gone through Nepalese army and Indian army and Arab for labor work for income.

Thakali are less than 10 thousand in Nepal and their original homes are in Thak Khola region of upper Kaligandaki valley between Jomsom and Ghasa (deepest gorge in the world). Bahun and Chhetri are dominant group in the country and their language is Nepali and they are Hindus. Ethnic Tibetans lives in north of Kagbeni and Muktinath where Buddhist is in religion. Newar community is found in market towns along the trail such as Bhote Odar and Beshisahar on the Marshyangdi valley and Baglung in the Kaligandaki valley.

“Trekking in the Annapurna range will open your eyes not only to scenes of great beauty, but will enable you to build relationship with people of another race another culture”- KevReynolds (The Annapurna way brochure, 2011.) Trekking tourism has becoming one of the important activities of Annapurna region. Tourism has been possible in Annapurna Region because of its unique and rich natural resources. Above sixty percentages of the trekking in Nepal visits the Annapurna region. It offers all sorts of trekking possibilities from easy short treks to difficult long treks. Trekking area along this region is easily accessible by road transport. On the other hand, trekkers get great opportunities to see ethnic diversity on the Annapurna trek. Annapurna region offers good facilities for trekkers. Because of this particular reason, trekking tourism in Annapurna region has become more and more popular which can be simply understood by growing numbers of trekkers in Annapurna region every year.

The starting/ending point of major trekking routes of Annapurna Region can be reached easily by several buses and taxis. Amongst some of the most dramatic scenery in the world

there are trekking routes to suit all seasons and levels of fitness. (The Trekking Guide book, 2000). The main routes in the Annapurna region follow the two major river valleys (the Kali Gandaki and the Marshyangdi) and the trail into the Annapurna Sanctuary via Ghandruk and Chomrung. There are many alternative trails and shortcuts routes for trekkers and can find numerous possibilities. The options are even greater for those with camping equipment who can explore some of the rarely-trekked high altitude routes.

New road has been built around the trek route of Annapurna which changes the lives of local people and experiences of travellers. From Mustang 'Marpha' now it can be possible to transfer the apples to other places of country with the newly built road. The construction of road between the towns of Beni and Jomsom was finished in 2009 which is 82 km long, rises from 830m to 2720m high. The road has been constructed through almost a kilometre mined inside the side of the mountain that rises vertically. The government of Nepal is planning to continue the road construction.

5.5. Conclusion

Nepal is one of the least developed countries with more than 80% of its population residing in rural areas. It has no oil, gas, or coal reserves, and its energy sector is dominated by the traditional energy sources like firewood, crop residues, and animal dung mainly for domestic use. The majority of rural populations are meeting their energy needs by burning biomass in traditional stoves, and mostly fossil-derived fuels are imported. Also, the continuous increase of petroleum imports has an adverse impact on its fragile economy.

The major sources of renewable energy are mini and micro hydropower, solar energy, various forms of biomass energy, biogas and wind energy etc. But still around 85% of the total final energy consumption in Nepal is met by traditional biomass energy and around 28% of households in Nepal do not have access to electricity. Nepal aims to achieve universal access to clean, reliable and affordable renewable energy solutions by 2030. It is expected to reduce dependence on traditional and imported energy by increasing access to renewable energy.

The use of solar energy is more reliable than traditional electricity in Nepal. Private installations of solar panels are more frequent in urban areas used as a backup during the power outages. On average, Nepal has 6.8 sunshine hours per day with the intensity of solar radiation ranging from 3.9 to 5.1 kWh per meter square, with a commercial potential of solar power for grid connection estimated to be 2,100 MW (Ghimire & Naeen et al, 2017). In 2015, Nepal and the World Bank signed an agreement to invest USD 130 million to develop a 25 MW solar project that will eventually be connected to the national grid. It is the largest renewable energy plant planned in the country. The wind potential is available in the mountainous region. Solar and Wind Energy Resource Assessment project has an attempt to map the wind resource potential in Nepal and has shown a very good prospect of wind energy with the prediction of about 3,000 MW of wind energy.

Despite its hydro dominant policies, Nepal has established a semi-autonomous agency called the Alternative Energy Promotion Centre in 1996. It claims that more than 1.5 million families have got access to electricity using renewable energy sources, especially in off-grid areas. Meanwhile, rapid urbanization fuelled by stable economic growth has already created a huge energy demand in Bangladesh, where electricity is the widely used form of energy. At present, about 72% of the total population has access to electricity. Bangladesh is starving for energy for the last few decades since its power generation mostly depends on imported fossil fuel and natural gas. The present government has increased electricity generation, yet the grid electricity to the remote areas is difficult because of the lack of longstanding distribution facilities.

5.6. Recommendations

Renewable energy in the development of tourism in Nepal needs the low carbon renewable energy technologies. Low carbon renewable energy technology refers to the utilization of such energy as the solar, wind, hydro, biomass, geothermal energy. The technology can deal with the utilization style of energy in the rural tourism area fundamentally and friendly environment substantial technology in the growth of tourism industry. It is very easy and convenient to use coal and firewood in the rural area which does not need equipment investment, the utilization of coal and firewood in the rural tourism area has taken the large proportion and utilization style of this kinds of energy just limited to the combustion. The first investment in the renewable energy could be higher but in a long run the equipment investment of the renewable energy only needs investment and almost there is a very little investment in the operation. It can be a cost effectiveness, and less harmful the environment. The use of renewable energy in rural and ecotourism activities can open the door of development of rural areas.

Energy tourism is an emerging trend of tourism in world. We can see how the energy is helping to promote the tourism industry. Energy can drive tourism for the economic development of country. Electricity, heating, transportation process of use of power in tourism. In case of Nepal Hydro power dam and its water reserve can be one of the best tourist products for domestic and international tourist.

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6. The Influence of the COVID-19 on Finnish Tourists Holiday Planning and Attitudes

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6.1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic outbreak in March 2020 came as a chock for potential travellers all over the world. During the last decades, tourism has been hit by local, regional or global crises such as SARS pandemic, the tsunami in Asia and terrorism attacks e.g., 9/11 in US (Pennington-Grey & Schroeder, 2013). Compared to these the COVID-19 pandemic is a truly global crisis. All crises have impacts on tourism and the behaviour of travellers to various extent but hardly the tourism industry has been hit as severely by a crisis as with the COVID-19.

During the pandemic, many countries chose to close their borders for foreign tourists whereas for instance Finland's neighbouring country Sweden has been open for international travellers throughout the crises. The aim of this case study is to provide an overview of how the COVID-19 pandemic influenced the holiday planning of Finnish tourists during spring 2020 when the pandemic was in its worst in Finland.

6.2. COVID-19 as a health-related crisis in tourism

Ritchie (2009) highlights that a crisis can be defined in various ways but most definitions acknowledge that crisis comes as a surprise and one can never be fully prepared for it. Tourism crises usually share the same characters with any other crisis. However, some crises can be predicted and they are not necessarily immediate like rising sea levels due to global warming. The World Tourism Organization defines a tourism crisis as:

“Any unexpected event that affects traveller confidence in a destination and interferes with its ability to continue operating normally (World Tourism Organization 1998)”.

Crises can happen on different levels. Defining the cause of a crisis helps to assess the impacts and severity of it. The scale of a crisis usually varies from minor to major depending on the number of people affected, costs and duration (Henderson 2007; Ritchie & Jiang 2019).

According to Page (2009), travellers consider health related risks in tourism during all the phases of a trip from the planning, the actual travel time and the stay at the destination. Research on health risks ranks from health problems with minor seriousness such as

diarrhoea and catching cold (e.g., Huang, Dai & Xu, 2020) to studies about the impacts of SARS and swine flu (Jones, Masfeld, Paz & Potasman, 2011).

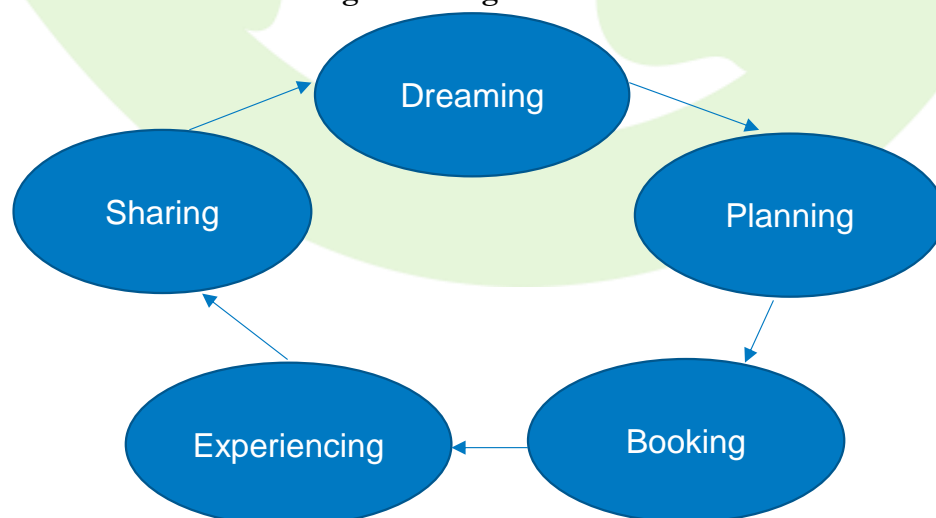
The COVID-19 virus started to spread all over the world from China in the end of 2019, and according to World Health Organization (2020) by 12 October 2020, there had been more than 37 million people infected by the virus and over one million confirmed deaths in 235 countries, areas, and territories.

The pandemics results in new barriers to travel as many countries decided to close their borders. In Finland, the Government already in March 2020 strongly recommended avoiding all travelling abroad and the tour operators had to cancel all the charter trips abroad. In practice has though been possible for Finnish people to travel during the whole pandemics, the main challenge being the requirement of staying for 2 weeks in quarantine when returning home. Thus, to some extent it was possible to plan a holiday abroad also for the summer 2020 even if the virus still was active almost all over the world.

6.3. Holiday planning during the pandemic

Holiday planning is an important field for research related to consumer behaviour in tourism. Most researchers agree on that the holiday planning process rarely is linear or proceeding from phase to phase in figure 1 but rather is highly complex (see e.g., Choi, Lehto, Morrison & Jang 2019). Figure 1 offers as a simple model though support to understanding which phase of holiday planning phase the results presented in this article focus on. The study presented here is related to the Finnish people's considerations related to travel in May 2020, i.e., a couple of months before the main holiday season in Finland which I July and early August. Thus, May 2020 was at a time that most people are likely to be dreaming or planning a holiday despite outbreak of the COVID-19 in March.

Figure 1. Stages of travel

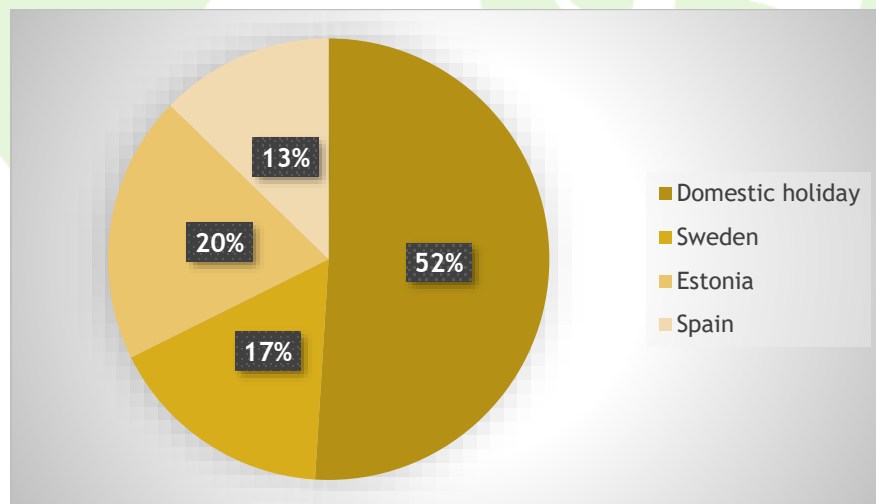


Source: adapted from James (2017).

In May 2020, Haaga-Helia UAS and Research Institute TAK conducted a survey of travel behaviour during the COVID-19 pandemic in Finland. The survey was sent to a Finnish consumer panel ending up with the sample of 1033. The questionnaire was developed by a partner university in Germany, Hochschule Westkuste and the same study was carried out in Germany, Norway and Finland. In this paper, we focus only on the Finnish results. The majority of the questions were related to the holiday planning phase (See Figure 1) with questions related for instance whether holidays were planned for the near future and which countries the respondents could consider to visit during the pandemic.

According to the survey almost two third of the Finnish respondents had to change their holiday plans due to the COVID-10 outbreak. Based on the results 3 out of 5 million Finns were going to taking a holiday during 2020 but of them 2 million had at that point 8th May 2020) no idea where. When it comes to their future holiday plans almost 60 percent stated that the hygiene level of the accommodation and the destination will have a huge impact on the future holiday decision-making. The same number of potential tourists would make sure that there would be no major infectious diseases at the destination they would be travelling to. Half of the respondents also appreciate the possibility to get home quickly in their future travel. Thus, it is not surprising that the most attractive holidays destination mentioned for the near future were domestic destinations (52%) and the neighbouring countries like Sweden and Estonia among the international ones (Figure 2). This is a huge change from previous years, when Finnish tourists travelled in the summertime to destinations like Greece, Turkey and Spain.

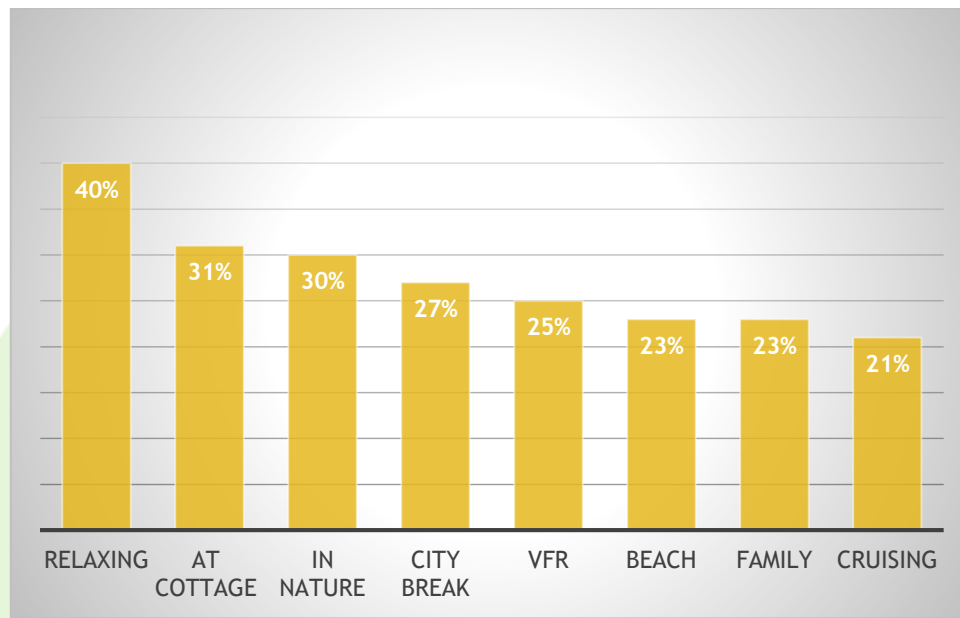
Figure 2. Destinations interesting for a holiday during COVID-19 outbreak summer 2020



The main motives (Figure 3) for travelling during the COVID-19 outbreak mentioned were relaxation (40%), cottage holidays (31%) and nature (30%). Many of the respondents also informed that they still would travel to visit friends and relatives. Somewhat surprising Finns still seemed to have some interest in city holidays during the worst pandemic time: almost

25 percent said that they could consider a city holiday during the end of 2020. However, the planning and the final decision to travel will be left to the last minute instead of planning months ahead.

Figure 3. Travel motives



6.4. Travel after COVID-19

When this paper was written in November 2020, statistics already confirmed that most Finnish people preferred to stay in Finland for the holiday summer season 2020 (Statistics Finland 2020). An interesting discussion is that will the consumer behaviour of Finns change in the short and long term when the COVID-19 pandemic is over? Many tourism experts and researchers have emphasised that the pandemic could also be seen as a possibility to turn tourism more sustainable, and the era of mass tourism maybe approaching to its end.

In Finland as well, experts have different opinions related to the impacts COVID-19 might have on future Finnish travel. The pandemic is, in fact a disruptor in the linear that is steered by megatrends. Megatrends influencing in tourism are digitalisation, sustainable development and climate change. The fact is that Finns need to travel to destinations in sunnier and warmer countries because winters in Finland tend to be dark and rainy. Furthermore, people are also longing for new experiences, food and cultures to escape from the everyday life with its routines.

Even though, Finns cannot travel now (winter 2020-21), the travel demand is still there, but it is suppressed due to a plethora of restrictions both in tourism generating and destination countries. It is likely, that people start to travel again as soon as it is possible. However, the

two other main issues are safety and security as well as trust. Possible increasing prices due to the lack of frequent flights, might limit the number of travellers to some destinations that were popular before the pandemic. Obviously, majority of Finns will emphasize sustainability, responsibility and ethics more than before in their future travel choices. “New tourism” discussed since 1990’s (e.g., Poon, 1994) might finally be here, but the global travel infrastructure is constructed for mass tourism. Thus, the change will not take place in one night when the pandemic will be over. One can, though argue will the change take place at all.

6.5. Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on attitudes of Finns in holiday planning and making. Risks and uncertainty were strongly emphasised. Over half of the respondents understood already in the planning stage that a holiday included some risk. The risk awareness was strong when the question was to travel to Europe or long haul. Finns also experienced that they could live one year without a holiday abroad. During the Covid-19 pandemic, a holiday in Finland would be preferable. However, in May 2020, 45 percent of the respondents thought that no holiday resort or destination abroad or in Finland were safe. Most likely, the leisure travel will be close to the pre-pandemic normal already in 2022, but e.g., in business travel recovery might take a bit longer time.

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The way forward after the COVID-19 crisis

1. How can you promote sustainable processes? Which rules of thumb can help on the way to successful sustainable change?

Harald A. Friedl

FH Joanneum (Austria)

It doesn't look good! COVID-19... that means deserted beaches, empty hotels, unemployed traders. Everyone is longing for the return of the tourists. This would eradicate the consequences of the pandemic, but the next crises are nevertheless approaching us fast: global warming, "plastic plague", overfishing of the oceans, erosion of the soil, pollution... Simply returning to "more of the same" can't be a solution for those problems. That is why we hope for a change towards a "sustainable" future. But how can this big change work when even small changes are so difficult?

We have so many pending tasks. Everywhere something should be improved, while there is always a lack of time, money and energy. At the same time, the challenges are growing, because the world around us is constantly changing. That's why we have to change permanently: CoVid19 aside, tourists' needs are evolving, which forces entrepreneurs to adapt their products. Further necessary adaptations follow. And that's not even responding to the big, sweeping challenges in the world, such as global warming, increasing environmental pressures and growing poverty in consequence of CoVid19. There is so much to do, and it never stops... How can one even talk about "sustainability" under such circumstances, when everything seems so difficult?

Moving requires energy. All life is based on the constant exchange of energy. What we eat can be transformed into valuable activities and enjoyment of life. The prerequisite for being able to derive joy from our work is the belief in a greater goal. We must believe that we can achieve something good with our work. Because the psychological principle of the "sense of coherence" by sociologist Aaron Antonovsky states the following: People must be convinced 1. that they understand the challenges of their own world well (enough), and 2. that they have the necessary skills to overcome these challenges. Only then will those persons also feel the motivation to face these challenges. They won't be deterred by doubts due to impending obstacles, but will start working on conceivable solutions. This activity immediately creates something visible, which in turn strengthens one's own conviction that the project "works".

The Austrian-American philosopher and communication scientist Paul Watzlawick called this phenomenon a "*self-fulfilling prophecy*": Because we believe in something and act according to this belief, we create the conditions for the validity of these assumptions. The French

pilot, philosopher and author of “The Little Prince”, Antoine Saint-Exupéry, found more poetic words for this phenomenon: *"If you want to build a ship, don't drum up men to [...] divide the work, but teach the men to long for the vast, endless sea"*. We need to believe in a vision, in a goal that will "move us forward", that will "enrich" our lives with something good. Only enthusiasm can move people to put their strength and energy into a work, even though they cannot see any immediate material benefit, but very much for a better future. This reflects precisely a fundamental principle of sustainability: we do something for the good life of our children and their children - for a good, still distant future.

1.1. First rule of thumb: No change without enthusiasm!

That sounds wonderful. Inspiring people for a good future for their concrete descendants may still be successful. However, it is much more difficult to inspire people for the highly vague vision of "sustainable tourism". This is already difficult in one's own city, where one knows only very few people personally. It is even more difficult when it comes to "Thailand", "Vietnam", "Europe" or even the whole world. What should that be, a global "culture of sustainability"? What should a sustainable, climate-friendly tourism for the whole world look like? This raises so many questions that even the brightest minds cannot (yet) answer. Under these circumstances, how can some people still demand the big change towards a "sustainable world", even though nobody knows how to do it?

The answer is simple: people can only identify with ideas that have something to do with their own lives. People need to have the "feeling" that they can be part of this vision, that they can somehow "benefit" from it personally. This does not have to be a material gain, on the contrary: from the perspective of motivational psychology, material benefits only produce short-term effects. People get used to what they have achieved too quickly, become dissatisfied and want more. More effective, on the other hand, is the expectation of immaterial benefits, such as recognition in the form of prestige. The idea of standing out better in one's own social environment is an extremely effective motivator for many people. That is why there are so many awards, as given by companies to the "best employees of the month". This creates motivation! The boom of "influencers" in social media is also an expression of the longing for recognition among one's peers.

1.2. Second rule of thumb: If you want to reach people successfully, you have to address their personal needs.

A critical look at the track record of historical revolutions makes it clear that attempts at large-scale forced implementations of social utopias ended in extremism and violence. In 2021, for example, the Chinese Communist Party celebrates its centenary. A lot has changed in China during this long time, which has been paid for with the high price of millions of deaths through hunger and persecution. Prosperity came to China only with the beginning of the political opening from 1979 onwards, i.e., with the abandonment of violent reforms.

Why don't such large-scale, forced changes work? Isn't it also about "improvements" for the people? A vision for a better world?

It is crucial whether people are invited to be enthusiastic about a vision or whether people are forced to submit to this vision. Coercion causes pain and fear. Those who experience coercion react with resistance and withdrawal. Coercion leads to a loss of trust that the promised vision would be connected to "good". In this way, the chance gets lost for people to feel interest or even enthusiasm on their own initiative, which can drive them to commit themselves. The fact that so many people nevertheless follow violent revolutions results from the fear of even greater pain as well as the hope for an end to coercion and violence. Those who don't want to believe this only have to recall their own experiences when they were forced to take an action against their own convictions. How did that feel? Who would want to repeat such an experience voluntarily? So why should coercion inspire confidence and enthusiasm in others?

1.3. Third rule of thumb: coercion and violence destroy sustainability. Enthusiasm grows through appreciation and trust

Changing something always means changing established patterns of behaviour. In the process, some of those affected may also lose personal benefits. If a photovoltaic system is to be installed in a hotel to replace a diesel generator, the diesel dealer loses a source of income as a result. It is such compromised interests that can lead to insurmountable resistance to desired changes.

We know that emissions from air travel contribute significantly to advancing global warming. The CoVid19 pandemic has shown us what it would mean to stop air travel. Many people suffer from the economic consequences, because without air travel there are no international tourists. However, studies could prove that a widespread abandonment of long-haul flights would not have a significant economic impact. This is because without long-haul flights, people would simply travel to their immediate surroundings, as was already the case in the summer of 2020. This would be much more climate-friendly, although there would still be income from tourism. The real losers of this change would be the airline industry, which will continue to persuade its existing customers that long-distance air travel is indispensable for the search for paradise on earth. This misconception is deeply embedded in our minds.

If those affected by disadvantage are ignored in a change project, this generates massive resistance. Those affected will expend all their energy to protect their interests or even for their survival. Overcoming such opposition also requires a lot of energy that is lacking elsewhere. Therefore, it is imperative to find ways to open up alternative opportunities for those who initially experience disadvantages through change. Those affected need a credible perspective that they can live sufficiently well even under changed conditions. Because without respect for personal interests, there is no enthusiasm, and violence prevents any voluntary and thus sustainable change.

1.4. Fourth rule of thumb: If no convincing solutions are found for those who experience short-term disadvantages as a result of change, the endeavour fails.

Planned, well-considered change not only paves the way to desirable solutions to painful problems. Change can also cause many undesirable consequences. The reason is simple: we are a complex society where everything is somehow connected to everything else. If one thing is changed, this entails further changes to the entire system. This also creates new challenges and problems. For example, digitalisation contributes to making many production processes easier and cheaper. At the same time, digitalisation also leads to an enormous increase in the consumption of electricity. Because a lot of electricity is still generated by burning fossil fuels, digitalisation also contributes to global warming. This is very problematic, but there is also hope.

Because with the introduction of new technologies, society is also becoming more complex and dynamic. This creates new challenges, which at the same time open up new development opportunities and thus new job opportunities. For example, without global warming there would be no climate researchers, environmental engineers or sustainable tourism experts, no centres of excellence for sustainable tourism, no ERASMUS+ projects to promote sustainable tourism, and no growing demand for sustainable tourism products. The world is changing, not fast enough for many, but it is moving.

Behind this phenomenon is the age-old recognition that a crisis is first an expression of unexpected and rapid change that undermines old habits. At the same time, however, it also opens up great, far-reaching opportunities for development. The prerequisite for this, however, is that one faces a crisis free of fear, but rather courageously engages with it and is prepared to learn something new. Thus, crisis means the chance for further development. Perhaps something much better will emerge from it in the end: a healthier, happier, safer living environment. It follows, however, that the courage to change and the strength to overcome fear are the decisive prerequisites for turning a crisis into an opportunity.

1.5. Fifth rule of thumb: Promoting courage is the most important measure for strengthening sustainable development.

Courage is no guarantee of success, but fear is a guarantee of failure. Because fear leads to stress in the brain and thus to resistance. All five rules have this principle in common: If they are taken into account, a sustainable development project does not necessarily have to succeed. But if these rules are disregarded, failure is inevitable. Because sustainability means using one's own inner energy of conviction. And that cannot be forced.

2. THE IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON TOURISM IN QUANG NINH PROVINCE

Vietnam

2.1. Short description

Tourism is the leading economic sector of Quang Ninh province. According to Quang Ninh authorities, in 2019, the service sector accounted for 45.88% of Quang Ninh's GDP and was forecasted to be from 48% to 49% in 2020. In 2019, tourism activities and carnival Ha Long attracted 14 million tourist visits, especially 5.749 million international visits, respectively increase by 14% and 15% more than the previous year. The length of tourists' stay has changed remarkably in a good way: It was 2.16 days in 2017, 2.6 days in 2018, and 2.74 days this year. Therefore, the tourist's average amount of money spent also increased by 4.1%, 2.1 million VND per foreign tourist, and 1.86 million VND for domestic tourists, increased by 15,6%. In 2019, total revenue from tourism is 29487 billion VND, which increased by 25% more than the previous year and accounted for 10.7% of Quang Ninh's total revenue.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic broke out and left severe impacts on Quang Ninh's tourism. Being one of the tourism centers of Vietnam and having borders with China – the world's first center of Covid-19, Quang Ninh has an extremely high risk that the pandemic spreads widely.



Figure 1. Vietnam Map

Source: Wikimedia Commons, 2021

Identity card of Quang Ninh province:

- Location: along the northeastern coast of Vietnam
- Square: 6099,0 km²
- Population: 1.320.324 inhabitants.
- Nature: mountains, hills, sea.
- Climate: featuring all four seasons. It is hot, humid, and rainy in the summer. In winter, it is cold, dry, and little rainfall.
- Official language: Vietnamese.

2.2. The effect of Covid-19

Effects of Covid-19 on tourists

Having borders with China – the world's first center of Covid-19, Quang Ninh has an extremely high risk that Covid-19 spreads widely. As a result, in the first 3 months of 2020, the number of tourists visiting Quang Ninh has decreased deeply.

Table 1. Total number of tourists arrived to Quang Ninh (January-March 2020)

| | Jan 2020 (number of tourists) | Growth rate compare to Jan 2019 | Feb 2020 (number of tourists) | Growth rate compare to Feb 2019 | March (15/03) (number of tourists) | Growth rate compare to 15 th March 2019 | Accumulated (15/03) | Growth rate compare to the same period of 2019 |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|--|------------------------|--|
| Total number of tourists | 849.991 | 116% | 555.000 | 26% | 132.000 | 10% | 1.536.991 | 36% |
| Inbound tourism | 287.172 | 70% | 140.140 | 28% | 30.000 | 9% | 457.312 | 37% |
| Internal Tourism | 562.819 | 173% | 414.860 | 26% | 102.000 | 10% | 1.079.679 | 37% |

Source: Quang Ninh Tourism Department (2020).

The total number of tourist visits to Quang Ninh in the first 3 months in 2020 is 1.536.991, decreased by 64%, compared with the same period of 2019. Most tourists, who booked the tour in advance, had to contact with travel agents and hotels to cancels their tours; or delayed them indefinitely until the pandemic is completely under control. At famous tourist destinations:

- Ha Long: 438.330 visits, decreased by 49% compared with the same period of 2019.
- Yen Tu: 206.219 visits, decreased by 64% compared with the same period of 2019.

Tourists, who kept on their tour here, could not enjoy it or even had bad experiences. According to the authors' survey, only 3.8% of tourists estimated Quang Ninh is safe for tourism activities; 11.2% safe; 27.1% medium; 43,9% unsafe, and 14% extremely unsafe. This leads to the conclusion that most of the tourists estimated Quang Ninh is not safe for tourism activities. They concern about their health and the risk of being infected. Besides, Covid-19 also impacts on the length of the tour. 52% of surveyed tourists had decided to shorten their tour in Quang Ninh due to this pandemic.

Effects of Covid-19 on the business of Tourist Accommodations (Accommodation service)

According to Quang Ninh Department of Tourism's statistics, the number of tourists visiting Quang Ninh has decreased deeply, especially in March, when the situation became more serious and complicated, positive cases increased rapidly. Vietnam Government had to bring up new policies and measures to restrict traffic and gathering of people. At the same time, Covid-19 had spread unpreventably through the whole world. The US and Europe became the two biggest centers of this pandemic, transportation between countries had been restricted and many airline companies from all over the world had to stop passenger flights or even went bankrupt. Hotels and other kinds of accommodation received a huge number of requests to cancel reservations when Covid-19 broke out in Vietnam. Not only the groups, business travellers, but the individual tourists also did it. The decrease in customer number has direct impacts on Tourist Accommodations' business. Although it's not tourist season now, tourism has suffered severe losses. Annually, from March to October, the hotels here still welcome Chinese tourists with a lower price, to make up for maintenance costs, because winter is not the season that tourists can enjoy the sea waves. It's this dependence on tourist season made the business of Tourist Accommodations struggle.

Effects of Covid-19 on travel and tourism companies

According to Quang Ninh Department of Tourism statistics, in the first 3 months of 2020, total revenue from the tourism sector of Quang Ninh had decreased by 38%, compared with the same period of 2019. The number of both domestic tourists and international tourists decreased deeply and the companies' revenue is no exception. That made many travel and tourism companies on the edge of bankruptcy.

Effects of Covid-19 on tourism labour force

Being the leading tourism center of Vietnam, Quang Ninh has attracted a lot of people coming to working here. However, in this situation, people, who work in tourism, have been suffering from the pandemic's impacts, especially their health and safety. Besides people who work in health and airline, those who work in tourism had a direct risk of being infected, as they had to contact with people face to face. They are tour guides, drivers, receptionists, waiters, ... Tourists in Quang Ninh are from all over the world so they can be the source of spreading Covid-19.

Another Covid-19 impact on the tourism labour force is their job and salary: Most of them had lost their job or even worked without being paid. Just a few of them could keep their job and had to work overtime, take on more responsibilities, under more pressure (due to the staff cuts), whereas their salary had been cut down from 30% to 40%. That little salary was not enough for them to pay the bills.

2.3. The destination responses

In this situation, Quang Ninh has strategies and plans to restore and improve the province's tourism in a sustainable way. Specifically:

Quang Ninh has actively responded and implemented effectively the domestic stimulus program "Vietnamese traveling to Vietnam"; promote tourism development in parallel with prevention and control of epidemic Covid -19. At the same time, promoting the media campaign, affirming Ha Long, Quang Ninh as the destination "Safe, Attractive, Responsible" with the message "Safe travel, safe play, safe relaxation.

To stimulate tourism demand to attract tourists, departments, branches, localities, agencies, and units in the province have developed plans to organize a series of events and activities on culture, sports, and tourism commercial, to attract visitors to Quang Ninh Specifically: In October 2020, there are 28 events and activities; November 2020 arrange 19 events, activities and December 2020 is 14 events and activities Especially, there are programs: Quang Ninh Seafood Weekly in conjunction with OCOP Fair; Binh Lieu Golden Season Festival; Ethnic Culture and Sports Week in the Northeast; Yen Tu - on the land of Buddhist seasons Autumn; Memorial week of the King - Buddha Emperor Tran Nhan Tong entering Nirvana; Ao Dai Quang Ninh, Ha Long 2020; National Sea Kite Festival - Ha Long 2020 . . .

Shortly, Quang Ninh will continue to deploy the plan to stimulate tourism in the new situation, which focuses on domestic and international tourism promotion; building stimulus packages (high-quality tourism products with reasonable prices); coordinate with key provinces and cities for tourism to connect tourist routes bringing tourists to Quang Ninh and vice versa; encourage Quang Ninh people to travel to Quang Ninh.

Establishing Quang Ninh tourism stimulus coalition with the participation of 62 cruise ships of tourist transport enterprises on Ha Long Bay; 17 hotels from 3 to 5 stars and 2 tourist attractions are Yen Tu and SunWorld Ha Long Complex. These units have been built and offered to sell 6 basic tourism programs and more than 20 detailed programs for destinations in Quang Ninh. Businesses agree on a 30-50% discount while ensuring service quality.

Capturing information and control the business environment of tourism and compliance with regulations on safety against disease Covid-19; the implementation of legal regulations in the peak period to stimulate tourism demand of tourism service establishments in the province; post-checking work for issuing tour guide card.

2.4. For sustainable development

The northern province of Quang Ninh is largely known as the land of coal, with mining being its main economic driver. It has now undergone a spectacular transformation by promoting sustainable tourism development, prioritizing environmental protection, and improving its landscapes.

Quang Ninh's strategy of transforming its growth model from exploiting natural resources to tourism has proven effective. Pioneering green tourism development, it focuses on prioritizing environmental protection, restoring and expanding areas with green trees and vegetation in coastal areas, and encouraging investment in eco-tourism and environmentally-friendly tourism products.

Now, the provincial tourism industry is working hard to recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Choosing to focus on the long term, Quang Ninh has sustainably exploited its resources and developed tourism in association with the marine economy.

Quang Ninh today is home to tourism projects worth trillions of Vietnam dong, stretching from Van Don through Ha Long to Uong Bi. The province is on the way to possessing the top tourism brand in the country, bringing in high and stable revenue. Green tourism is one way Quang Ninh promotes itself as a friendly destination not only for tourists but also for the environment.

Developing green tourism on a sustainable basis is a major goal of Vietnam, and as a leading tourist center, Quang Ninh must be a pioneer and exemplary model of such development. Environmental protection initiatives, especially those for Ha Long Bay, must be encouraged and specific sanctions must be applied to businesses that infract environmental protection regulations.

2.5. Potential recommendation

The authors used the SWOT model to appreciate more about the opportunities, formulas, strengths, and weaknesses of Quang Ninh when the Covid-19 epidemic was broadcast. Thus, some basic recommendations are proposed based on the SWOT analysis presented below.

| THREATS – T | OPPORTUNITIES – O |
|--|---|
| <p>T1: The appearance of Covid - The first 19 in Quang Ninh were tourist customers affected by tourist psychology.</p> <p>T2: Quang Ninh is a province with land and sea borders bordered by China, one of the largest outbreaks - 19 in the world, greatly affecting the entire destination.</p> <p>T3: Tourism business has a serious impact, especially in human resource management, business maintenance, and recovery.</p> | <p>O1: Opportunity to restructure and upgrade the brand of the tourism industry more comprehensively.</p> <p>O2: Opportunity to look back, restructure products, customer fields.</p> <p>O3: is time for Quang Ninh to focus resources to speed up the construction of the project, the tourist server.</p> |

| STRENGTHS - S | WEAKNESS – W |
|---|--|
| <p>S1: Automatic, cultural, and social conditions create strong points in island tourism as well as spiritual tourism, attracting investment.</p> <p>S2: The province's anti-epidemic measures are always not timely, anti-severe, and effective, and obey Directive 16 of the Government.</p> <p>S3: The interest of local agencies and agencies in the development of new projects and tourism development plans; as well as enhancing the bar, examining the effects of behavior on the tourism environment.</p> | <p>W1: Quang Ninh has not identified its strength to conduct tourism.</p> <p>W2: Quang Ninh tourist market is concentrating a large amount on Chinese hotels.</p> <p>W3: The level of specialists and labor force is not high.</p> |

S-O strategy: Perform well the fight against epidemics, build a safe-friendly destination image. Take advantage of the natural resources and society to develop the tourism image of Quang Ninh province, restructure the tourist school and improve the qualifications and capacity of the human resources. On the other hand, the province should take measures to support tourism businesses and workers through the time such as: reducing some taxes, allowing tourism businesses and guides to pay VAT and income tax late. businesses, personal income tax, social insurance, and deploying credit support packages for businesses investing in tourism services (restaurants, hotels, travel agencies, and transport tourism, resorts, ...), reduce the bank.

S-T Strategy: Proper awareness of the dangers of epidemics, prepare plans to cope with variations of the Covid-19 epidemic. Do a good job of fighting epidemics to build confidence in travelers about a safe destination image.

W-O strategy: In the immediate future, when Vietnam has not opened its doors to international visitors, Quang Ninh needs to actively prepare and strongly promote the implementation of domestic and local tourism development plans. Next, when the disease situation stabilizes in the world, Quang Ninh tourism needs to find a new market for tourists, attracting high-end customer market segments from Europe, America, Korea, Japan, ... depends on the Chinese market.

W-T strategy: Strictly take measures to control Covid-19 epidemic diseases, ensure safety for tourists and local people. Besides, businesses improve the qualifications of human resources in terms of knowledge, skills, and modes, renovate business structure.

Acknowledgements

First of all, we would like to send our big thanks to Quang Ninh Tourism Department, who provided us with statistics so indispensable for us to be able to reference the official information about the impact of covid-19 on the local and national tourism. Secondly, we

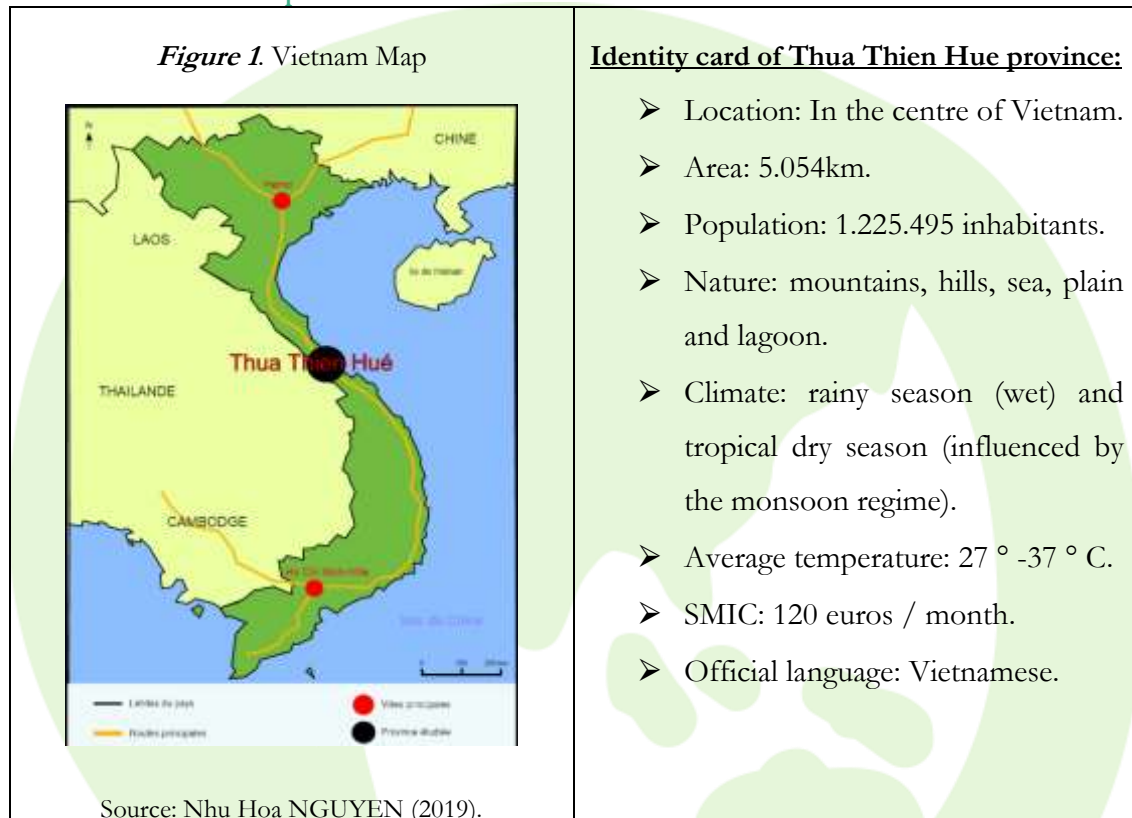
would like to express our thanks to tourists, the representatives of local tourism companies for enthusiastically respond to the survey. Finally, thanks to all these elements that have helped us to strengthen our knowledge on the impacts of covid-19 on tourism in Quang Ninh Province.



3. The impacts of COVID-19 on Thua Thien Hue tourism sector and the destination's responses

Hue University
Vietnam

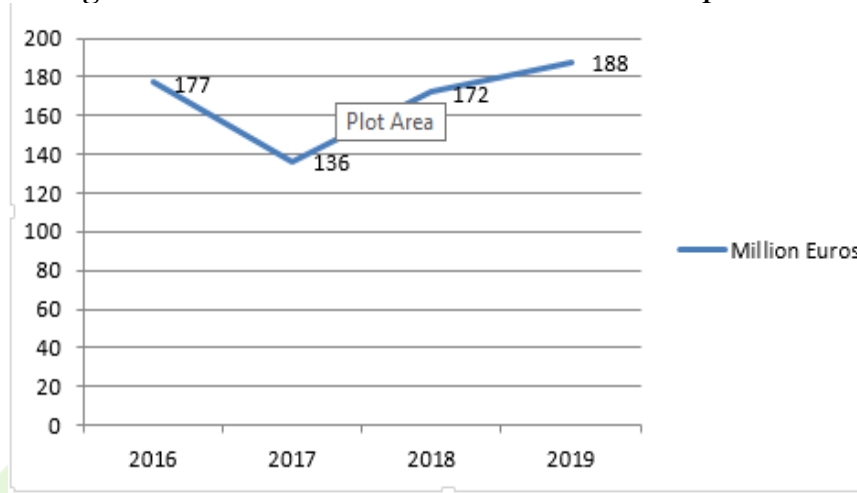
3.1. Short description



With the strengths of natural resources and diverse traditional culture, international festivals and trade village festivals, Thua Thien Hue province strives to become a Festival city from now to 2025 with vision of sustainable tourism development. With those advantages, the provincial tourism industry is planning and solutions to focus on developing types such as green tourism, smart tourism, educational tourism.

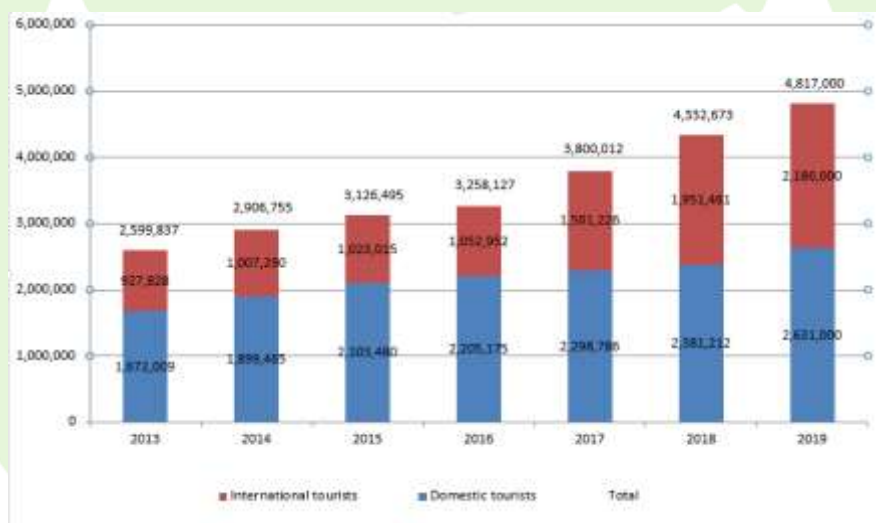
Looking at Figures 2 and 3, in fact, in 2016 the number of tourists amounted to 3,258,127; it increased more than 12% compared to the previous year. Its turnover was 4.583 billion vnd (around 177 million euros). In 2017, the number of tourists was 3,800,012, an increase of 16.63% compared to 2016. The tourism turnover was 3,520 billion vnd (approximately 136 million euros). In 2018, the number of tourists was 4,332,673 tourists, 14% more than in the previous year. Its turnover reached 4.473 billion vnd (approximately 172 million euros). In 2019, tourism income has increased considerably (188 million euros).

Figure 2. Tourism turnover of Thua Thien Hue province



Source: Thua Thien Hue Tourism Department (2020).

Figure 3. The number of tourists from Thua Thien Hue province



Source: Thua Thien Hue Tourism Department (2020).

3.2. The effects of COVID-19

Since February 2020, the epidemic COVID -19 has caused a great impact on economic sectors of Thua Thien Hue province including tourism. Indeed, the service industries are severely affected: transportation services, hotels, restaurants, bars, pubs, souvenirs shops... Accordingly, the companies in turn cut the number of employees, lay off employees on short-term or seasonal contracts. Many hotels, restaurants, and souvenirs shop go bankrupt. In addition, the agriculture, forestry, and fishery sectors were also affected due to lower consumption demand, and lower orders from hotels and restaurants (due to the absence of tourists). Some garment manufacturing companies (such as the scavi company) are also unable to export due to the COVID-19 translation. However, these garment companies

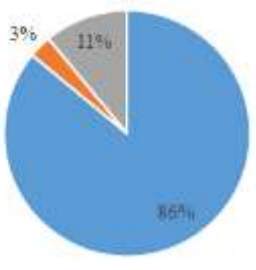
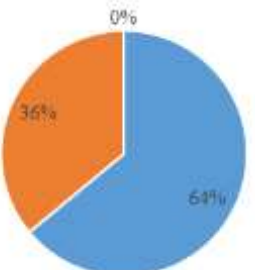
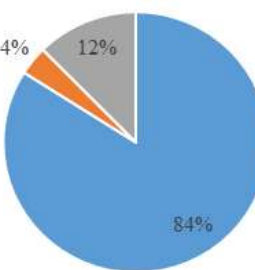
were quick to switch to the production and trading of masks and because of that, the company did not fire employees, on the contrary, employees were assigned to work more. Some resorts and hotels have changed to a different form of welcoming guests: a high-class isolation area for a number of international guests isolated due to COVID-19 positive.

The health sector was also damaged by the covid-19 epidemic. The evidence is that many patients with mild illness are limited to hospital examination and treatment (except for emergency patients or serious illnesses) due to psychological fear of cross-infection in the hospital. The decrease in the number of patients reduces the hospital's turnover, the allowances for the medical team decrease. Other services of the health sector decreased by: medical devices, medical care services ... Closed schools (especially private schools also faced the danger of closing forever).

The suspension of economic activities (industry, crafts, services, commerce) has serious social consequences for companies, such as: layoffs, increased unemployment (without social assistance for the unemployed), lower wages for employees. The tourist sector is no exception to this slump: covid indeed paralyzes travel, hotel activity and catering. This was particularly the case during lockdown, total in Vietnam in April, then limited to Central Vietnam for the second time in July.

In fact, the Covid-19 epidemic broke out widely, the fast and complicated developments of the epidemic in the world and in Vietnam in a negative direction have greatly affected the tourism industry of the whole country in general and of Thua Thien Hue in particular. From Table 1, tourism businesses in Thua Thien Hue province are severely affected by Covid-19, objects including staff as well as management are negatively affected by many levels ranging from salary cuts to job loss.

Table 1. Effects of the Covid-19 epidemic on Thua Thien Hue tourism businesses

| | Accommodation establishments | Travel business unit | Tourist service business establishments |
|--------------------|--|---|---|
| Effected object |  |  |  |
| | ■ employees ■ employers ■ unaffected objects | | |
| Forms of influence | - Reducing wages - Non-paying leave with the support | - Non-paying leave with the support - Resigning | - Non-paying leave with the support |

| | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| | - Resigning - Non-paying leave without support | - Non-paying leave without support | - Non-paying leave without support |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|

Source: Thua Thien Hue Tourism Department (2020).

3.3. The destination's responses

Survey results show that there are nearly 8,000 workers directly affected. The loss of direct revenue in the tourism business is about 700 billion VND (27 million euros).

In this situation, Thua Thien Hue Tourism has strategies and plans to restore and improve the province's tourism in a sustainable way, specifically via:

- Implementing mechanisms and packages to support businesses with the participation of central and local governments.
- Deploying tourism demand stimulus programs: The main stimulus target is the domestic tourist market.
- Developing new tourism products: To cooperate with neighbouring areas to promote tourism activities; to develop new products, safe and healthy products; to prevent epidemics associated with protecting the ecological, safe, and fresh natural environment.
- Deploying promotion activities focused and effective: The top priority and importance are to gather resources to promote Thua Thien Hue tourism - a safe and friendly destination.
- Ensuring safety for visitors to Hue and the community, ensure a green, clean, and friendly environment.

3.4. For sustainable tourism

The tourism restoration measures that Thua Thien Hue is taking are not just about recovering and improving revenue from tourism. Besides, it also aims to ensure the lives of workers in the tourism industry affected by the epidemic. At the same time, ensure the environmental protection goals are also implemented and achieved good results according to the principles of sustainable tourism development.

The tourism industry of Thua Thien-Hue province has implemented many activities and solutions towards sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism development. Hue monuments, which have been recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site, are doing say "no" to nylon bags and gasoline engines. Specifically, at the entrance of the attractions, paper bags are prepared with the message "Hue Heritage Area: Say no to nylon bags." If visitors have a nylon bag, they will be given a paper bag instead. Besides, to implement the plan of saying "no" to the gasoline engine, Hue Monuments Conservation Centre is using electric vehicles as a means to serve visitors in the Citadel. The People's Committee of Thua

Thien-Hue province has allowed the expansion of electric vehicle operations to transport tourists in the area of the southern bank of the Huong River.

Thua Thien Hue wants to be a pioneer locality to say "no" to plastic waste in tourism activities. Tourism development is important and goes hand in hand with environmental protection, landscape protection of monuments, and tourist spots. Currently, the whole of Thua Thien-Hue province has more than 80 agencies, units, and tourism businesses in the area signed a commitment to say "no" to plastic products that cause environmental hazards. Tourist service establishments, tourist resorts, and tourist attractions collect, classify, and treat wastes according to regulations; Every Sunday, organizing environmental sanitation, beautifying the local landscapes...

An environmental initiative that has been adopted and has received support from visitors is to have a trash basket on each cyclo. Coming to Hue, domestic and foreign tourists are very excited to go sightseeing by cyclo. By equipping garbage baskets hanging on cyclo, Hue Tourism Cycloid Association has contributed to limiting the act of littering on the roadside, protecting the environment as well as conveying the image of "Green Tourism " in Thua Thien Hue province to domestic and foreign tourists.

**Picture 1. Distribution of paper bags to tourists and residents
(Thua Thien Hue province).**



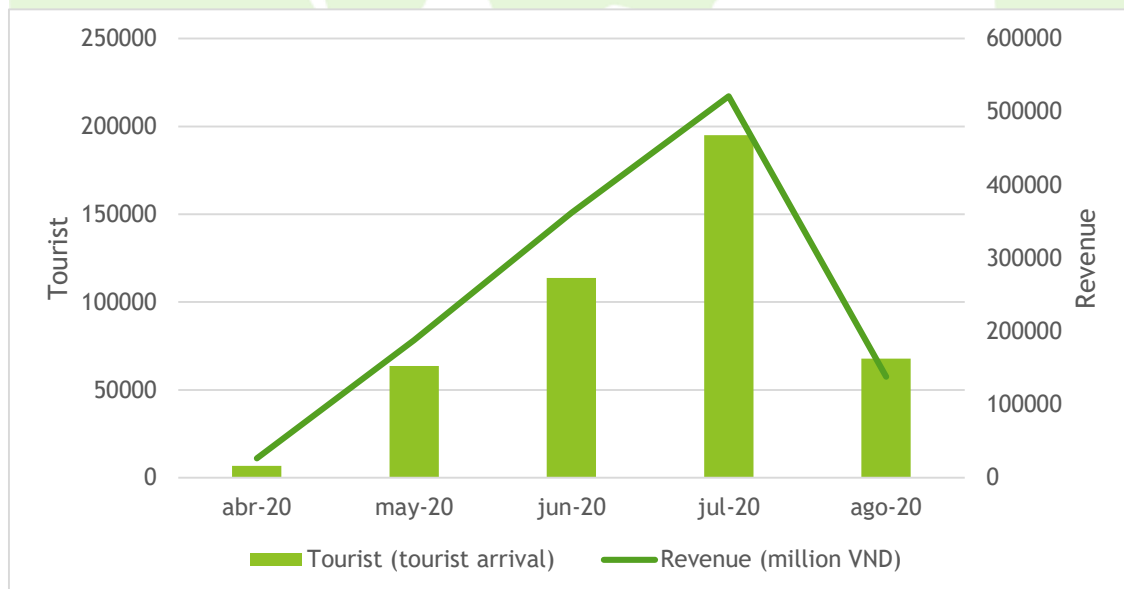
Source: vnexpress.net

Picture 2. Installation of the trash on a cyclo (Thua Thien Hue province).



Source: huetourist.

Figure 4. The recovery of tourism in Thua Thien Hue in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic



Source: Thua Thien Hue Tourism Department (2020).

Covid-19 pandemic broke out and left many serious consequences for the tourism industry of Thua Thien Hue province. However, the Provincial People's Committee as well as the Department of Tourism have taken many measures to restore and drive growth in tourism. Besides the economic and social measures, the environmental-related measures are also

interested in implementing. Specifically, promoting the implementation of the "Green Sunday" program is done by mobilizing the active participation of tourism service businesses and every resident.

The movement "Green Sunday - Take action to make Thua Thien-Hue more green-clean-bright" is the movement that has been implemented since before the Covid-19 pandemic. However, during social isolation, it was interrupted. After the pandemic was controlled, this movement was carried out once again with the participation of a large number of social classes. The Prime Minister sent a letter of merit because Thua Thien Hue province has mobilized the participation of both the political system and all walks of life, not only creating a favorable environment for tourism development but also raising awareness and responsibility of local people in environmental protection. In the period from 2016 - 2019, the tourism industry of Thua Thien Hue has had strong development steps, achieving positive results.

Tourism in Thua Thien Hue that has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic is obvious and inevitable. However, the issue that we are concerned about in this case is the adaptation measures, minimizing damage in tourism that the government and regulators have taken. From the analysis of the suitability and shortcomings of those plans and options which have been implemented, new alternatives and improvements can be drawn. They will make further improve the strategy for sustainable tourism development in the context of Covid-19 appearance. Effective disease control of Vietnam in general and Thua Thien Hue province in particular is a strong point to compete with other provinces or regions. Destination safety becomes a top criteria priority in the travelers' choice of where they are going to travel.

From Figure 2, the number of tourists and revenue from tourism in Thua Thien Hue has increased quite well in the summer of 2020, also the time when Vietnam controlled Covid-19 on a national scale. By August, the decrease in the number of tourists was when Vietnam faced the second "wave" of Covid-19. However, the fact that Thua Thien Hue did not have any cases of coronavirus cases caused the crisis in the local tourism sector has been not as strong as in the past.

The root cause of tourism recovery is the change in tourism as soon as the Covid-19 pandemic appeared. Determined to adapt to the "new" situation, the tourism products in the province were constantly being created and modified, in accordance with the criteria of safety, healthy, towards the natural environment. Family-sized tours are to replace mass tourism; near trips using a home-owned vehicle are an alternative to fuel-costly long flights; joining experimental activities, looking back to nature and indigenous culture have become much more popular. Those products, Thua Thien Hue tourism can fully provide visitors, even, it has the potential to provide more than the current needs of them. It can be said that, in some way, the Covid-19 epidemic is also an opportunity for Thua Thien Hue tourism to transform and become more sustainable.

3.5. Potential recommendations

Lessons learned, in this case, are changes in determining tourism development strategies, starting from identifying potential tourists, as well as changing local tourism activities towards tourism development.

These changes are not difficult to make with Thailand or Vietnam, or any particular locality. These are natural changes, in the changing situation of the world to deal with and adapt to Covid-19 pandemic. In order to respond to modern tourism trends - staycation tourism, localities should figure out their suitable tourism potentials, as well as create new tourism activities to meet the target of domestic tourists, especially local residents. Turning every local people into a potential tourist will ensure tourism can survive and thrive even in the resurgence of the Covid-19 pandemic again or any other external issues in the future. This could also be the key to sustainable tourism development.

Acknowledgements

First of all, we would like to send our best thanks to Mr Van Phuc NGUYEN, vice director of the Tourism Department of Thua Thien Hue province, who provided us with statistics so indispensable for us to be able to reference the official information of the impact of the impact of covid-19 on the local and national economy. Secondly, and also the members of the Tourism project who organized the conference “external workshop” so that we can collect the valuable and interesting information in order to accomplish this work. Finally, we would like to express our thanks to the representatives of local tourism companies for attending the conference, through which we had the opportunity to exchange multidimensional information. It is therefore, thanks to all these elements that have helped us to strengthen our knowledge on the impacts of covid-19 on tourism in the province of Thua Thien Hue.

4. Mitigating the pandemic's impacts in Vietnam: the case of The Grand Hotel Saigon

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4.1. The Grand Hotel Saigon: short description

Built in 1930, the Grand Hotel Saigon is one of the few historically significant hotels of Ho Chi Minh City. Located in No.8 Dong Khoi Street, District 1, the hotel is surrounded with tourist attractions and shopping sites. This hotel is a member of the Saigontourist Holding Company along with well-known hotels such as New World Saigon, Rex and Sheraton Saigon.

The Grand Hotel Saigon offers 251 rooms in total, which are divided into two wings (Ancient wing and Luxury wing). According to the hotel introduction, there are 450-seat ballroom & break-out rooms, recreation area, Sky Lounge, Western & Asian restaurants, Bars & Rooftop Grand Lounge. Furthermore, various facilities are available such as beauty salon, spa, gym, swimming pool and so forth within the establishment

Under the impact of COVID-19 pandemic, Grand Hotel Saigon has made proactive efforts to cope with sharp decline in revenue due to tourism recession

Picture 1. The Grand Hotel Saigon in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam



Source: hotelgrandsaigon.com

4.2. Economic development and tourism impacts

The novelty pandemic COVID-19 has created recession in the tourism industry internationally, and in Vietnam case, the foremost impact is the sudden cut in international tourist arrivals. The Grand Hotel Saigon, which had international tourists accounted for up to 90% of its market segment, was affected heavily. In the meeting with the executives from the hotel, it was expressed that Grand Saigon has the advantage of being a member of Saigontourist hotels group. Owing to this relationship, the hotel received financial aids and managerial support. However, operational issues still need to be addressed and mitigated. Therefore, several practices were developed to manage the crisis. In terms of proactive practices, they can be categorized into three groups: Epidemic prevention practices, marketing and guest relation practices and lastly, human resources practices.

First and foremost, the epidemic prevention practices are the most imperative to be implemented due to requirements from the government and also to protect customer well-being. The practices are developed according to the implementation of WHO and the government epidemic prevention guidelines and are publicly informed on the Grand hotel official website to customers. To be more specific, there are safety regulations for customers staying at the hotel and adjustments in operation of the hotel. Regarding customer requirements, guests have to go through temperature screening at the entrance, oblige to wear face masks at public areas such as lobby, lounge and so forth and maintain safety distance from other guests and employees when necessary. On the operation adjustment, more protocols have been implemented, especially in the Food and Beverage department and Housekeeping department. Moreover, training about epidemic prevention for employees was also organized.

Figure 1. The COVID-19 information page updates safety regulations



Source: Grand Saigon Hotel website

Secondly, marketing and guest relation practices were developed to attract new customers and encourage consumption. Alteration in pricing strategy was proposed to adapt to the sudden shift in market segment from international guests to domestic customers. For example, when booking directly on the hotel website, guests have more favourable pricing options than other affiliated systems (Booking.com, Agoda, etc.), along with that is the flexible cancellation policy to boost the customer satisfaction. Continuing on the topic of market segment, the Grand hotel has been expanding their target customer pool to business travellers, MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, Exhibitions) travellers and so forth.

New products are also launched and advertised to attract consumers, the prime example would be the “Specialties of Vietnamese cuisine” program, which offers fine dining experience of Vietnamese cuisine. Another great marketing tactic is the referral advertising program of the Saigontourist company, of which the Grand hotel is a part. The Saigontourist has been distributing e-voucher online for customers to use in any of their partner hotels. This is said to be beneficial, both for the hotels and the consumers. Using these e-vouchers, customers can receive discounts of many services when they stay at any given hotels of Saigontourist network. The Grand Hotel Saigon have reaped benefits from this collaborative programs.

Human resource management is another issue that hoteliers have to face amidst the crisis, considering the fact that there are too many employees with so little revenue to pay their wages. Some hotels made choices to lay-off their staff, but the Grand Saigon chose to encourage voluntary resignation or unpaid vacation to reduce labour force. The Board explained that laying off employees is not sustainable, due to the fact that it will be difficult to recruit new staff when the pandemic is over, which is costly and time-consuming and can affect overall performance of the hotel.

For outsourcing strategy, there was a cut in hiring seasonal staff and part-timers. Because of this, the workload of official staff increased, but the human resources manager saw this as an opportunity for “cross-training”. Cross-training is a type of training in which employees from different departments are switched and are trained to do the job of other departments, for example, housekeeping attendants are given the chance to work in the front office as guest relation officers or receptionists. Remarkably, workforce deficiency is still an issue for the Grand Hotel Saigon, especially when there are large-scale meetings or banquets. Then, the hotel resolved to workforce rotation with other partner hotels. For example, when Grand hotel need extra employees, the Rex hotel will dispatch their staff to Grand and in the future, Grand hotel will return the favor.

4.3. Key Success Factors

There are many factors that contribute to the success of Grand Hotel Saigon in overcoming the challenges of the pandemic besides the financial support from its parent company. One of those is the proper implementation of disease prevention protocols, which helps the hotel

to maintain operation and moreover, establish trust within the guests when staying at the hotel. Adjustment in pricing strategy is also highly important, because the executive expressed that occupancy rate of the Grand hotel had increased significantly after the adjustment.

Another success in the mitigation strategies against COVID-19 is the promotion of “Specialties of Vietnamese cuisine” program. In the time international tourists are nowhere to be seen, approaches to attract domestic guests are essential, and the culinary program is one successful effort as it has become a distinctive feature of Grand Hotel. Moreover, the referral marketing program with the Saigontourist namely Saigontourist E-voucher has also generated a considerable amount of customers.

In regards to the human resources factor, the Grand Hotel Saigon is a member of the Saigontourist’s Group, which gives them the advantage of interrelatedness over independent hotels. During the interview, Grand Hotel managers expressed that due to the pandemic, the number of staff had dropped significantly. This results in shortage of workforce, especially in the meeting & event and food & beverage departments. However, the issue can be resolved by asking for temporary employees of other hotels inside the group for replenishment or making use of the available staff from different departments.

4.4. Potential Recommendations

Through this time of crisis, it is clear that interrelationship between hotels is necessary. As same as community-based tourism, interrelationship creates an environment in which entities inside the group can offer assistance to others when needed and receive the same treatment. In the case of Grand Hotel Saigon, this is reflected as labour rotation between different hotels of the same group, which helps to effectively distribute workforce. Furthermore, the practice of job rotation between departments in the hotel is also noticeable. Not only does it tackle the issue of human resources deficiency, this practice is also viewed as a training opportunity for employees in which they acquired new skills outside of their job.

These practices have not seen to be implemented by many other hotels in Ho Chi Minh City, however, in international context, workforce rotation had been applied in previous crisis such as SARS. There might be an argument that labour rotation between different hotels can only be applied within hotels of the same chain or company group, not with privately owned hotels. Nevertheless, it is not impossible if hoteliers agree to establish a community where hotel businesses can provide aids for each other.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to the executive staff of the Grand Hotel Saigon for their insightful sharing regarding the operation during COVID-19 pandemic. This information was profoundly valuable. Moreover, we appreciate the warm and enthusiastic welcome of the staff of the hotel.

5. Thailand and Covid-19

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5.1. Background

In January 2020, Thailand was the first country to confirm a Covid-19 case outside of China. The virus spread quickly, peaking in March when the government evoked an emergency decree to give itself the power to impose lockdowns and curfews to stop the spread. The measures, which included strict border controls and a ban on international arrivals, were successful, and Thailand has managed to keep local infection rates close to zero. However, this success has come at a significant cost to the economy, with the tourism industry especially hit hard. In June 2020, the country's central bank, Bank of Thailand, reduced the 2020 GDP outlook to negative 8.1%¹.

Tourism is a key sector for the Thai economy, accounting for 11 - 17% of the country's gross domestic product last year with almost 40 million international tourists (Statista, 2020). However, since the covid-19 pandemic and the ban on international arrivals, the number of tourist arrivals has plummeted to zero in the 2nd and 3rd quarters of 2020 (between January and March 2020, the number of foreign tourists was 6.69 million people, which is 38% less than last year)². The Thailand Tourism Authority (TAT) now predicts an annual drop of between 60-80% (Kasemsuk, 2020). In fact, it was only on 21st October that the first 39 international tourists from China were allowed to enter the kingdom marking the return of foreign tourists to Thailand after a seven-month ban.

In order to try and offset this dramatic drop in international tourists, the Thai government has tried to implement policies to encourage domestic travel. The 'We Travel Together' stimulus package worth THB 20 billion (US\$641 million) was launched to help stimulate domestic travel through subsidizing room rates, flights and other services and facilities². One of the conditions for operators of hotels and eateries to join the program is that they hold a hotel license, which means that many small independent operators, like those in community-based tourism are not eligible to benefit from this stimulus package.

¹ <https://www.aseanbriefing.com/news/thailand-issues-stimulus-packages-boost-domestic-tourism>

² <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1143088/thailand-quarterly-number-of-foreign-tourists-covid-19/>

However, even with the above travel incentives, domestic tourism has so far not been able to compensate for the loss of inbound tourism. In the first five months of 2020, revenue from the tourism industry only reached 520 billion baht (US\$16 billion) – a 57% drop from 2019 (Medin, 2020).

5.2. Community-Based Tourism (CBT) and Covid-19

Community-based tourism as a tourism activity is mainly concerned with supporting the community to earn some income through tourism activities together with local environmental conservation. It can be a tool to strengthen local community organizations in managing resources through enhanced local participation in formulating and implementing plans for local community development and resource management

In Thailand, as of July 2020, there were 840 communities that run Community-Based Tourism services (Daengnoy, 2020), and many of them have been affected by the Corona virus outbreak. The travel restrictions and country-wide lockdowns and curfews caused severe economic distress by shutting down all tourism activities. Visitors could no longer travel to communities because of the fear of spreading the disease. This not only affects local tourism but also the mental state of the community members who increasingly feel insecure about their health and livelihoods. The lack of tourism and income-earning opportunities has made their future uncertain while they wait for government support and the economic recovery post COVID-19.

5.3. Community-based Tourism Adaption Covid-19

Over the years since community-based tourism took hold in Thailand, both private and public sector actors have devoted significant resources in building the capacity of targeted communities to benefit from Thai the tourism industry. However, given that Thailand's international and domestic tourism industry grew by a compound annual rate of 10.6% since 2012 (Nation 2018), many communities didn't really engage proactively in developing innovative value propositions or unique selling points (USPs) as consumer demand generally outstripped their capacity to supply goods and services. In the 'new normal' of a covid-19 world, CBT communities are having to grip with an unprecedented drop in visitors and income and so are now finally being proactive and innovative in developing strategies to promote their offerings through digital marketing.

The Community-based Tourism Institute (CBT-I) has identified a number of strategies that CBT's can use to attract domestic tourists and address their differing needs and concerns. The four key strategies are "Stay Connected", "Online Marketing", "New Product Development" and "Building Trust for Tourists". The common theme among these strategies is the focus on combining a local product or service with the community's cultural identity, thus creating a unique experience for the consumer in both online channels as well as through physical visits to the community.

Stay Connected



CBT Ban Luang Nuea

The first proposed strategy involves CBT communities conducting online activities to promote their communities, culture, and tourism activities to domestic tourists. Virtual Tourism is one way to stay connected with their target customers. Through providing online experiences, the CBT community can follow-up with the customer and entice them to visit in-person once they are able to. For example, the Ban Luang Nuea community, in Chiang Mai province are creating virtual experiences with assistance and support from social enterprise Local Alike.

Online Marketing

Before the pandemic, goods and services produced by the CBT communities were sold locally as part of the experience enabling tourists to feel and taste the real local culture. Given the current travel restrictions and economic environment, CBT products and services will need to migrate online. The local communities have to start thinking about digital marketing while analysing the data of former customers to segment the market for each category of their products.

In addition to generating revenue from online selling, digital marketing should include storytelling as a key tool to promote community-based tourism as a destination for future consideration by attaching the story of community with the products being sold. An example of this strategy at work is the CBT fishing community of Nam Chiao, in Trat Province, who have created a range of new products from sea food and are marketing them through the live channel of the Department of Community development.



CBT Nam Chiao, Trat

Local Alike, a Thai tourism social enterprise, has played an important role in supporting a CBT move to an online market. The company set up an e-commerce platform which has, as of June 2020, generated 2.6 million baht (\$84,000) for locals in 20 communities selling products from snacks to rice. (Thomson Reuters Foundation).

New Product Development

Many CBT communities have tried to create new community products & services that can be tested within the current limitations of domestic tourism, but with a view to adjust and expand the offerings once Thailand's international tourism industry opens for business again. New innovative ideas include “Meet the Chef” in Ban Luang Nuea and the food delivery service of HiveSters, which aims to preserve local disappearing food culture by connecting local communities to urban customers.



CBT Ban Luang Nuea

Building Trust for Tourists

To address the health and hygiene concerns of tourists travelling in the covid-19 era, many CBT communities are adopting the government hygiene safety standards for tourists under the name SHA or Amazing Thailand Safety & Health Administration (Project to Enhance the Thai Tourism Industry and Hygiene Safety Standards). The project, a collaboration between the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), Ministry of Tourism and Sports and the Ministry of Public Health, aims to promote public health safety together with high-quality service standards to assure tourists, both domestic and international, of a happy and safe experience. There are 10 categories of businesses that can obtain SHA standards and Community-Based Tourism services related to any of them have to comply with the SHA strictly to create “Community-Based Tourism: Building trust for tourists”



In order to implement the above strategies, the CBT communities have been divided into three groups based on their potential for implementing the program called “Being Community Entrepreneurs”. Of the 840 CBT communities in the network, 270 (Group A) are classified as high potential, meaning they have the potential to develop and implement all 3 strategies at the same time. A further 296 communities are classified as medium potential (Group B) while the remaining 274 are classified as low potential (Group C). It is thought that while the communities in Group A could develop all 3 main strategies together, groups B&C might start with 1 or 2 strategies (Daengnoy, 2020).

5.4. Recommendations for Government Support

In addition to the strategies outlined above developed by private sector organizations such as CBT-I and LocalAlike, that can help to mitigate the effects of covid-19 on the CBT communities, additional resources and policies are required from the responsible central and local government agencies. Financial assistance could be provided by government agencies for affected community tourism businesses to stimulate employment in the tourism and service industry, and to encourage the community to prepare for the return of tourists after COVID-19. Given that most communities have a saving cooperative already in place, the financial assistance can be provided through the cooperative in a fairly short period of time.

In addition to short-term financial assistance, government agencies can help support the development of new and innovative tourism activities designed by the community by providing training, expert advice, and product development assistance. In tandem with the development of the activities themselves, the capacity for communities to deal with health or other crises caused by external factors needs to be strengthened which will help build the confidence of both community members and tourists to return to CBT locations.

In the long-term, further integration among the community tourism plans and the government's tourism framework is needed. As the tourism industry in Thailand pivots away from mass-inbound tourism towards a more local sustainable model, government agencies can help in promoting cooperation with the private sector in creating marketing plans or designing tourism activities that are consistent with the local ways of life while increasing the value of local resources and knowledge.

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6. Creating & reforming attractions for national customers in spite of Corona

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6.1. Introduction

In past years, Thailand could pass the economic crisis such as Persian Gulf War from 1990 until 1991, Tom Yum Kung Crisis in 1997, SARS in 2003, Bird flu in 2004-2006 and Tsunami in 2006. During this crisis situation, the economy was suddenly down and struck. Therefore, these experiences were the scenario case study for Thai government and Thai citizens to be aware, protect and avoid any unforeseen circumstances. As an example study case, there was a recent crisis which impacted directly to Thailand tourism industry in 2016. In the first half year, the main tourists were from China. Thailand's tourism industry grew rapidly. The industry succeeds with more than 10 million tourists. However, in the 3rd quarter of the same year, the industry faced the problem of Chinese tourist disinflation due to the policy of reforming illegal tours. With this situation, it was the opportunity and challenge for Thai government and private organizations to find the solution to stimulate the tourism industry growth back. And in the last quarter of the year, Thailand made the year-end revenues from foreign tourists at 1.64 trillion THB, plus another 869 billion THB from Thai tourists. Therefore, both the government and Tourism Council of Thailand realized how important it is to develop a sustainable tourism industry.

Coronavirus or Covid-19 infection it was the worst incident affecting the world tourism industry. The World Health Organization (WHO) elevates it to “Pandemic” which is a situation that impacts around the world. The statistic on 7th September 2020 shows that there are more than 180 countries, 27 million patients and 883,339 people were killed by this pandemic. At the same time, because of an effective pandemic control management in Thailand, there were only 3,445 accumulated patients and only 58 deaths. This numbers were constant for 3 months since June 2020. However as this is a world crisis and especially, tourism industry is one of main income of Thailand, therefore, it directly effects to Thailand tourism. The recent report from National Statistical Office or NSO showed that, it affects more than 50,000 tourism operators and related parties in the tourism sector. And also, over 4 million employees in the tourism industry were affected immediately by this serious situation. (National Statistical Office, 2020).

6.2. Opportunity from the crisis

However, in the serious situation, there would be a turning point in order to find the solution immediately. This concept is corresponding with the current situation, Covid-19 that has created the new behavior of people, “New Normal”. This word was first used by Bill Gross,

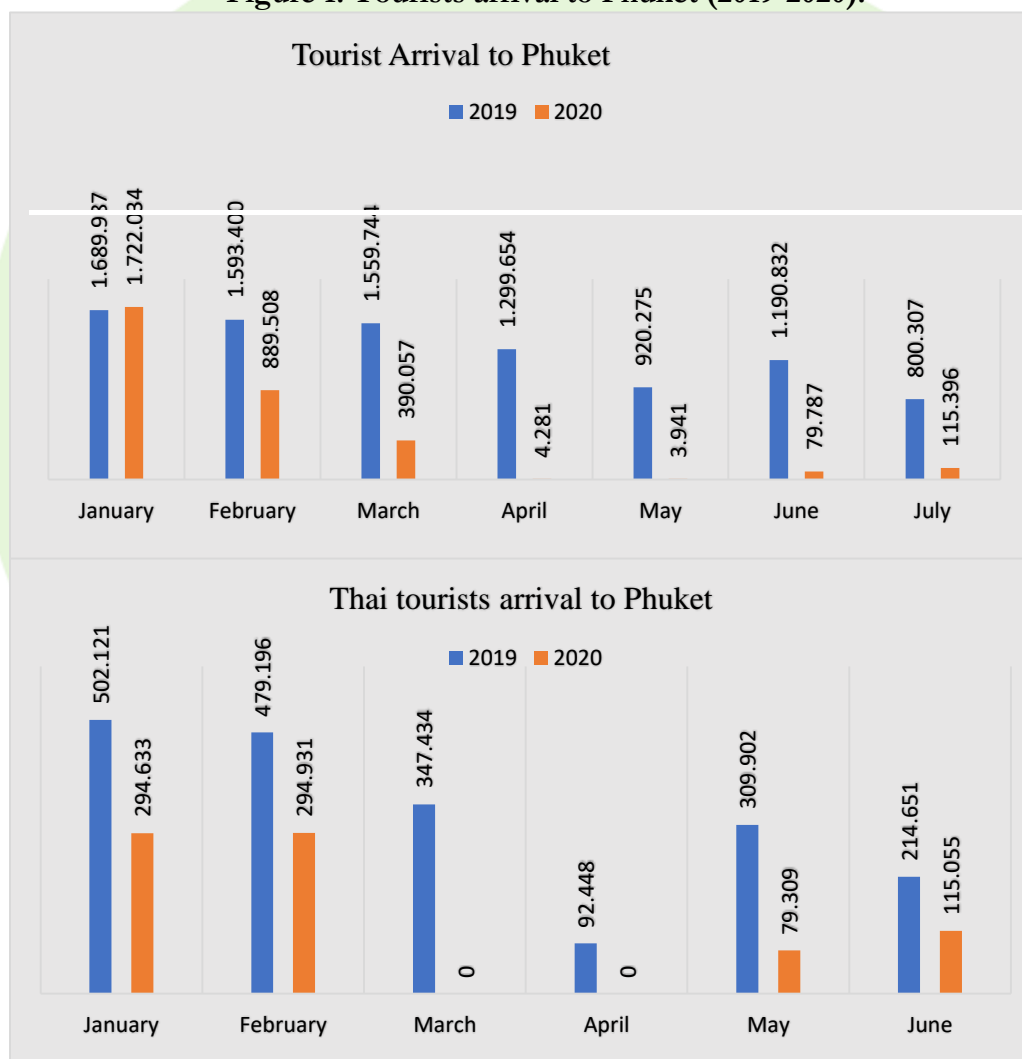
the Economist from USA. That word was used during 2008 when the world economy was suddenly down and slowdown, however finally the economic was return to the same rate. It was only used in economics. At the present, this word is used to remind people to be aware of new behavior to avoid Covid-19. The spread of COVID-19 creates another benefit, it is increasing the self-care behavior (Paitoon Monphanthong, 2020). New Normal creates new behavior such as, “work from home” which is benefit for companies to reduce the office rental costs. Nowadays, the people are more using digital for communication because of “Social Distancing”. By using VDO conference is as a normal action in any office. Even in education sector, during Covid-19, many educational establishments are increasingly turning to online learning models.

Thailand should take advantage of this crisis to review and develop strategies to produce sustainable tourism and high-value tourism by creating value-added tourism products and services in order to encourage high-value tourism and tourism innovations. Including the management for sustainable tourism and in terms of environmental impact. In the midst of the current crisis, Thailand was able to prove its effectiveness in controlling the pandemic, this is recognized as globally. Therefore, after Covid-19, a protagonist of tourism in Thailand would be health tourism because the tourists would be more concerned about the health safety as priority. Another advantage selling point is the beautiful natural resources that have been recovered after covid-19 (Office of national higher education science research and innovation policy council, 2020). It is an opportunity to recover and promote wellness, environment conservation and cultural tourism. Thai tourism industry should use this crisis to create value added and income for the local community (Dr. Yanyong Thaicharoen, 2020).

The COVID-19 has had a huge impact, especially tourism in Thailand where the country's main income comes from tourism. Therefore, when there is a huge impact, it makes Thailand a lack of income. Since the tourism business has been greatly affected, provinces that support foreign tourism are most affected, such as Bangkok, Pattaya, Samui, Chiang Mai, and Phuket etc. because foreign tourists are unable to visit Thailand. Phuket is a province that has its main income from tourism business. At the time of the situation COVID-19 caused Phuket's tourism business to be shut down for a while. Tourists whether they are Thai nationals or foreigners are unable to travel resulting in a temporary loss of income. After the COVID-19 situation in Thailand, tourism is making a comeback, but it is not the same. The impact that Phuket receives is income that comes from both Thai and foreign tourists, which is Phuket's main source of income. The case of COVID 19 this time also affects the occupation of people living in Phuket because most of the occupations in the province are engaged in the business of hotels, restaurants in tourist attractions etc. When there are no tourists, they do not have a career. The tourism business could not be driven due to the lack of tourists. The tourism industry after COVID-19 is unlikely to be the same: for example, travel, airport check-in, have to go through more health screening. Therefore, we have to focus on the so-called New Normal.

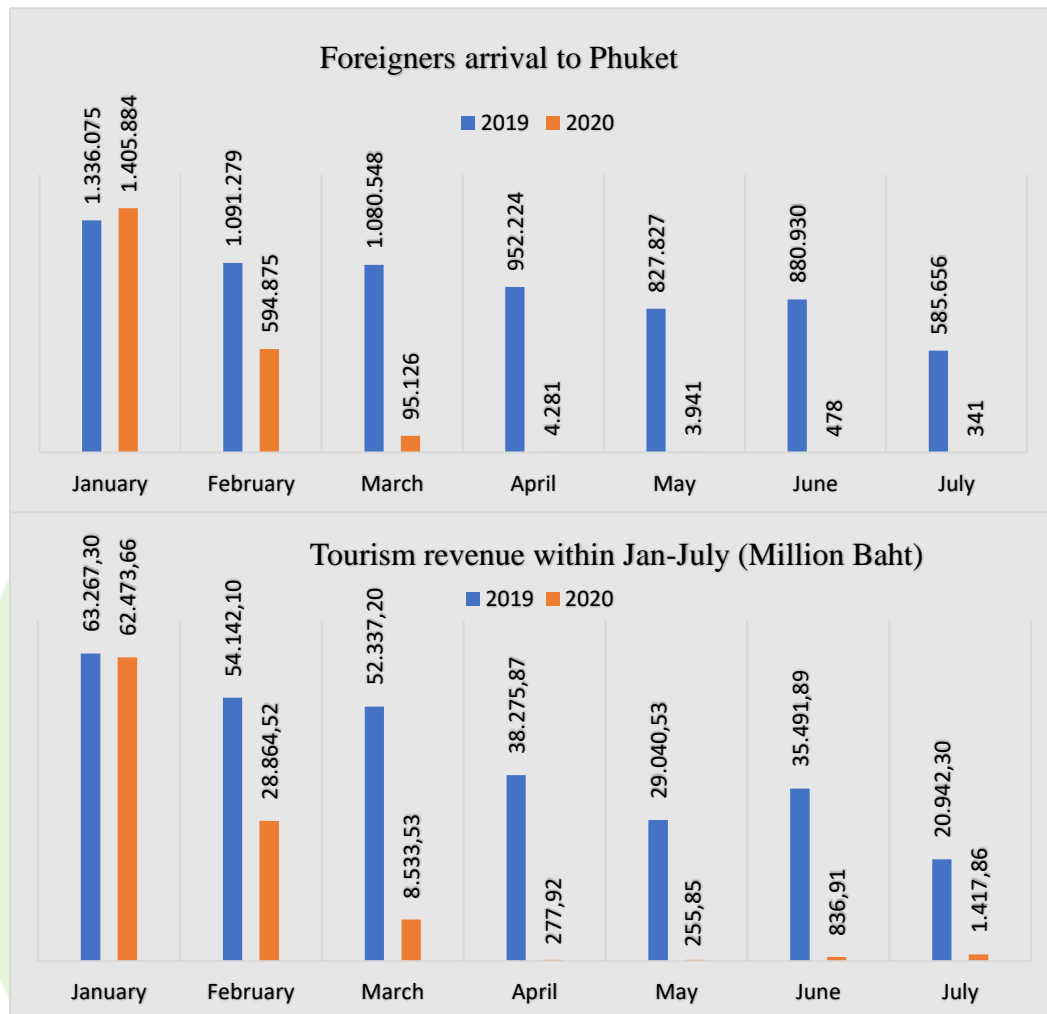
Normal is a practice that tourists and entrepreneurs must adapt, not just to survive in the short term but to increase their ability to compete in the long term. Occupancy rates may be reduced by the limitation of Social distancing is social spacing, while at the same time we should take this opportunity to reimagine the image of Thai tourism. New Normal changes traditional tourism. If it is an international travel, the word "Travel Bubble" will be picked up. This term refers to the tourism matchmaking of countries that have confidence in the safety of COVID-19. There will be an agreement between the governments of each country to grant the privilege of travel to and from each other without detention for 14 days. Is actually free from COVID-19 by means of international.

Figure 1. Tourists arrival to Phuket (2019-2020).



Source: Ministry of Tourism & Sports (2020:9)

Figure 2. Tourism revenue (2019-2020)



Source: Ministry of Tourism & Sports (2020:9)

7. Finnish experience providers going circular, or are they?

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7.1. Introduction

For the time being, less than 9 % of the world is circular (Circle Economy, 2020). It means that over 90 % of the resources we consume go to waste once their lifetime comes to an end. However, it also means that there is a lot of potential for the further growth of the Circular Economy. Also, only by going circular, the global economy can avoid dangerous climate change and achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

Finland was the first country in the world to come up with a Road Map to Circular Economy (Sitra, 2016). It focuses on heavy industry, construction, transport and logistics, but sets the pace for all other industries as well. In Finland, over third of the population is familiar with the term Circular Economy, the highest rate of all Nordic countries, and the population is also more positive towards the idea of reducing their consumption than the other Nordic populations (SB Insight, 2019).

There are megatrends that are pushing us towards the transition to the Circular Economy, e.g. climate change, population growth, globalisation, new consumer cultures and technological development (Manniche, Larsen, Broegaard and Holland, 2017). Circular Economy is seen as inevitable, in fact as the only way the Earth can support its soon 8 billion inhabitants, at a time when the resources are more expensive, scarce, and unequally distributed (Larsson 2018; IISD 2019). Most post-industrial economies have consumption levels exceeding several planets (Circle Economy, 2020). As the tourism industry faces concerns over its big environmental footprint, sustainability and Circular Economy initiatives are much called for. Tourists are more environmentally conscious, and they are increasingly demanding more responsible alternatives. For many companies, Circular Economy initiatives are part of their CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) activities. For many, Circular Economy offers opportunities for cost savings, reputational improvements and competitive advantage (European Commission, 2017; Vargas-Sánchez, 2018). So far, Circular Economy efforts have concentrated on waste, water and energy management. More emphasis needs to be put on purchasing and people management as well as education.

There is rather limited academic research and just a few business cases related to the Circular Economy in tourism and hospitality. The industries are not that resource-intensive, especially when compared with heavy industry which is the focus of the Finnish Road Map of Circular Economy (Sitra, 2016; Herlevi, 2020). However, the tourism sector plays a potentially significant part in making the concept of the Circular Economy better known and spreading

awareness of its benefits. Also, tourism includes some sectors where material flows and purchases pay a big role, e.g. experience providers and the restaurant sector. There is already some research into restaurants and the issue of food waste. However, restaurants form only a part of the food and beverage supply in the travel and tourism industry. Like Gretzel et al (2019) emphasise, the diversity of travel and tourism, from home stays to camping, demands specific Circular Economy solutions. The experience providers offer uncharted territory on the circular front and are thus an interesting area to have a look at.

7.2. Theoretical framework

Our current economic system, with its ever-increasing use of natural resources and overconsumption, is unsustainable. The challenges of our times, such as climate change, food production, plastic waste, transport and emissions, are always mentioned in any current discussion relating to sustainability of tourism destinations and businesses. At a time when the use of resources is happening at almost twice the rate of population growth (OECD, 2019), we must think of solutions to the problems. We can reach climate targets only if we change the way we produce and consume products and services (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2019). Products need to be designed so that they can be used for longer, resold, repaired, recycled and upcycled into new products. In a Circular Economy, there is no waste, all energy is renewable, prices reflect the full costs of production and the economy is focused on collaboration and links between different actors and stakeholders (SB Insight, 2019). Transitioning to a Circular Economy means that we will be using and adding value to materials as long as possible, using less energy and resources, improving economic and environmental outcomes along the way.

Our current economic system, known as linear economy and described as take-make-consume-dispose, relies on cheap and easily accessible resources (Boluk, Cavaliere & Higgins-Desbiolles, 2019; European Commission, 2017; Manniche, Larsen, Broegaard and Holland, 2017; Vargas-Sánchez, 2018). In the future, resources will not be so readily available, and their prices will go up. The current sustainable tourism examples are more cradle-to-grave, whereas the Circular Economy examples should be cradle-to-cradle (Vargas-Sánchez, 2018). In the future, waste from one company will become valuable raw material for another business, resources will be valued instead of wasted, their value even increasing along the way in upcycling, signifying cradle-to-cradle design (Rizos, Tuokko & Behrens, 2017). Circular Economy has opened new business opportunities and markets as well as created new business models (EU, 2019; EC, 2019; Jackowski, 2019; Rizos, Tuokko & Behrens, 2017; Vargas-Sánchez, 2018; Vargas-Sánchez, 2019). Urban mining, i.e. using materials that already exist in cities in the form of electronic and construction waste that can be processed into raw materials, is a Circular Economy related concept that could become a huge business opportunity for cities around the world (Xavier et al., 2019).

Originally, Circular Economy was just about the 3R principles of Reduction, Reuse and Recycle. Later it expanded to the 6Rs of Reuse, Recycle, Redesign, Remanufacture, Reduce

and Recover (Vargas-Sánchez, 2018; Manniche, Larsen, Broegaard and Holland, 2017). The “business action framework” Circular Economy model by Ellen MacArthur Foundation calls for ReSOLVE: Regenerate (shift to renewable energy and materials), Share (share assets, e.g. rooms, cars, appliances), Optimise (increase efficiency, eliminate waste), Loop (remanufacture products, recycle materials), Virtualise (travel, books etc.) and Exchange (replace old non-renewable with advanced materials, apply new technologies etc.) (Ellen MacArthur Foundation & McKinsey Center for Business and Environment 2015). The model is a tool that can help businesses transition to a Circular Economy by increasing the utilisation of physical assets, prolonging their life and shifting to renewable resources. Each action in the model is linked to each other and will accelerate the performance of other actions (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2015). This model could also be adopted in the tourism business, as it is not as manufacturing centered as many of the other Circular Economy models.

The Circular Economy relates to all United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SB Insight, 2019), but particularly to UNSDG #12 “Responsible Consumption and Production”. The tourism industry can play a major role in achieving the SDGs as well as encouraging the transformation of the economic system through promoting Circular Economy practices to its customers and suppliers.

Circular Economy requires a complete change in the way we view resources, develop business models as well as how we consume and produce services and products (Rizos, Tuokko & Behrens, 2017; Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2019; Vargas-Sánchez, 2019). In Circular Economy, the concept of waste is minimised, and resources are maintained in the system with as much value and as long as possible, closing material loops and making the economy less resource dependent (Vargas-Sánchez, 2018). Circular Economy business models shift from product ownership to product usage, leasing, renting, sharing and other collaborative consumption patterns. (Manniche, Larsen, Broegaard and Holland, 2017; Rizos, Tuokko & Behrens, 2017; Vargas-Sánchez, 2018; Vargas-Sánchez, 2019).

The EU has also been an active player on the Circular Economy front. The first EU Circular Economy Action Plan (2015) aimed to increase job creation, boost economic growth and investments as well as to develop a carbon neutral, resource-efficient and competitive economy. The new EU Circular Economy Action Plan (2020) goes even further and includes initiatives for the entire life cycle of products, including product design, promoting circular economy processes, fostering sustainable consumption, and aiming to ensure that the resources used are kept in the EU economy for as long as possible. Circular Economy could potentially be a “4.5 trillion-dollar business opportunity” (van Houten & Ishii, 2020; WBCSD, 2017).

Transition to Circular Economy means that there needs to be multi-stakeholder cooperation, collaboration and synergies across industries (Vargas-Sánchez, 2018), there has to be “circular infrastructure”, i.e. renewable energy sources in the public energy grid, access to

circular water treatment systems, access to suppliers and users that base their business models on sharing platforms, access to suppliers that are able to deliver remanufactured, reused and refurbished goods or downstream businesses that are willing to buy their used products (Manniche, Larsen, Broegaard and Holland, 2017).

So far, many tourism players have focused on sustainability activities such as reducing negative impacts, but that is not enough in a circular system. There needs to be more recycling, enhancing the value of resources to have a positive environmental effect, upcycling, reusing, restoration and using renewable energy sources (Rizos, Tuokko & Behrens, 2017; Ellen MacArthur Foundation, 2013; Manniche, Larsen, Broegaard and Holland, 2017). Circular Economy is an effective way to solve the contradiction between economic development and environmental protection (Vargas-Sánchez 2018). It allows destinations and companies to grow while reducing emissions and resource usage, turning to renewable energy systems and reduced food miles through local purchasing and urban farming, i.e. achieving a profitable low carbon economy. Transformation to a Circular Economy requires cooperation with other companies and industries as well as forming long-term relationships with the supply chain (Vargas-Sánchez, 2018; Manniche, Larsen, Broegaard and Holland, 2017).

7.3. Method

To find out the latest academic articles and industry examples as well as to inspire discussion, a literature review was carried out. Sources included recent articles in academic tourism journals as well as the latest studies by international organisations (e.g., EU, Ellen MacArthur Foundation & McKinsey Center for Business and Environment, Sitra). Just like researchers before us (e.g. Vargas-Sánchez, 2018), we noticed that there is a lack of Circular Economy articles and case studies in the tourism sector. The notable efforts towards that are the literature research by Vargas-Sánchez (2018, 2019) and Julião, Gaspar, Tjahjono & Rocha (2019), and case studies of destinations in the South Baltic Region by Manniche, Larsen, Broegaard and Holland (2017). There is a clear lack of Circular Economy tourism initiatives. Most of Circular Economy studies are from the manufacturing and construction industries (IISD 2019; Vargas-Sánchez 2018; Julião, Gaspar, Tjahjono & Rocha, 2019).

The authors conducted an interview with Circular Economy expert in Sitra, Mr Kari Herlevi (2020) along with six qualitative interviews with experience providers in Finland. The expert interview with Mr Herlevi related to the overall Circular Economy situation in Finland and the contribution of the travel and tourism sector in it. The experience provider interviews consisted of topics derived from the literature review. The main topics were purchases (equipment, ownership, lifecycle), partners (cooperation partners and selection criteria) and communications (incl. responsible marketing communication).

Of the total six companies interviewed, three (A, B, C) focus on outdoor activities, specialising in different customer segments (table 1). The first company targets company

groups, mainly organising events for them. The second (B) used to focus on company groups and school camps, but due to the covid-19 pandemic, now targets FITs as well. Both (A, B) offer accommodation, too. The third company (C) is a rather new start-up with a business idea of taking small groups to nature. Another company (D) combines the accommodation and meetings industry by offering full-service accommodation packages in cottages, including food and activities. Two other companies (E, F) are attractions, one of them (E) a theme park for families, also offering events. The sixth one (F) is an attraction focusing on meetings and events for business groups, including accommodation and activities.

Table 1. Interviewed companies and their line of business

| Companies | Nature activities | MICE | Food | Accommodation | Thematic attraction |
|-----------|-------------------|------|------|---------------|---------------------|
| A | X | | X | X | |
| B | X | X | X | X | |
| C | X | | X | | |
| D | | X | X | X | |
| E | X | X | X | | X |
| F | X | | X | X | X |

The six companies were selected for the study because they were known to be among the most responsible ones in their field. Despite being experience providers, all the companies also use materials to produce their activities, thus being eligible to join the Circular Economy. Many of them also already had or were in the process of getting an audited certificate and the Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) label. The idea was to collect viewpoints from different types and sizes of companies within the activity sector, also geographically located in different parts of the country.

SUSTAINABLE TRAVEL FINLAND

STF is a sustainable development programme for companies and destinations, provided by Visit Finland, the national tourism organization. Companies and destinations that undergo the entire programme are recognised with the STF label and will get visibility on Visit Finland marketing channels. To ensure sustainability in practice, companies and destinations are a set of sustainability criteria to follow, they need to participate in the sustainability trainings and achieve a certificate, which is regularly audited by a third party, and which is accepted under the STF label. It means that the STF label will be renewed only if the company shows continuous development, i.e. passes the regular audits. (Sustainable Travel Finland, 2020)

7.4. Results

There was some awareness of the issues relating to the Circular Economy among the companies interviewed. The most common themes and practices relating to the Circular Economy had to do with reducing waste and recycling (biowaste, textiles), reuse (reuse of

wood), restore (renovating buildings and furniture), renewable energy initiatives (wind, solar, geothermal), replacing single use plastic items with more sustainable ones (wooden forks and knives). Purchasing guidelines and more strategic circular actions come with the process of getting ecolabels or the Sustainable Travel Finland label when work on sustainability issues becomes more focused.

The below table combines the ReSOLVE framework and the examples of the most common Circular Economy actions taken by the companies interviewed for this study:

| CE principles in the ReSOLVE framework | Recommended Circular Economy actions | What CE actions the interviewed activity providers are already doing |
|---|---|---|
| REGENERATE | Shift to renewable energy and materials, reclaiming, retaining and restoring the health of ecosystems | Conserving nature and natural resources; solar, wind and geothermal energy initiatives; electric cars to diminish the carbon footprint; environmentally friendly construction materials |
| SHARE | Sharing assets; prolonging life through maintaining, reusing, redesign, upgrading | Maintaining buildings and equipment; renting equipment; second hand purchases: buying and selling at flea markets and auctions |
| OPTIMISE | Removing waste in production and supply chain, increasing performance and upcycling, leveraging big data and automation | Avoiding (food) waste; sorting (bio)waste; local purchases and production |
| LOOP | Keeping materials in closed loops; remanufacturing and recycling products, recovery and cradle-to-cradle design | Recycling |
| VIRTUALISE | Digitalisation, online shopping and booking, virtual channels, products and services | Responsible marketing communication on the website; online booking options |
| EXCHANGE | Replacing nonrenewable materials with advanced ones, applying new technologies and services, | Electric cars and electric engines for boats; energy-efficient showerheads |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | new ways of doing things, innovations | |
|--|--|--|

None of the companies covered all areas of the ReSOLVE framework. Rather, they were active in two or three areas. That is not seen as a problem for being involved in CE, though. According to studies by Ellen MacArthur Foundation and McKinsey Center for Business and Environment (2015), many companies have become successful by concentrating on one area of the ReSOLVE model. It can be stated that a holistic view of what the Circular Economy could offer is still missing.

Below is a more detailed description of the concrete Circular Economy actions the companies are doing.

Purchases and partners

When purchasing new equipment, quality, purposefulness and durability seem to be the main criteria. These criteria may make the purchases more expensive, but they are seen as a long-term investment and worth the money. Finding eco-friendly clothing was set as an objective in one company, but they could not find any option which would have been proper for professional use. Recycled items are bought as well, but it concerns things like tableware or furniture, which make the decor unique – of course these need to be safe as well, which means repairing things before starting to use them.

Despite durability, the lifecycle of the purchase is not regarded as a criterion. It is very common to donate or sell things after they are not needed any more, but the possibility to reuse the items as such or as raw materials for other products has not been considered when planning purchases.

Waste is at the core of the companies' processes in many ways. Firstly, minimising waste, especially reducing food waste, is in the interest of all. Optimising purchase and advising customers are the key methods. Secondly, waste sorting is essential. In general, it is well organised in Finland and the companies carry out their responsibility. Thirdly, plastic collection is a problem to some degree, especially in the Finnish countryside where it is not always organised. A company must take the initiative and transport plastic waste to the waste treatment plant requiring up to hundreds of kilometres of driving.

Sharing is an essential part of the operations of the experience providers, including equipment rental and purchasing services from partners. The reasons why companies rent equipment from partners are economic rather than based on circular thinking. For example, if more canoes are occasionally needed for a bigger customer group, it makes more economic sense to rent them than to buy them. Building a network with specialised companies is a way to meet the versatile expectations of customers. It would not be profitable for one company to do it all alone.

Local production, especially local food, was emphasised by all interviewees. Favouring locals is regarded as a part of social responsibility: Recruiting local young people as seasonal workers and having local people work on the construction sites as well as promoting local partners' products for customers is a natural way of doing business for the companies interviewed.

The pressure to be able to prove responsibility is growing. The call to destination-based cooperation to create a sustainable brand image and consistent quality may derive from the national Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) development work. STF training sessions bring the small companies of a destination together.

Energy

Due to the Nordic climate, heating is a major cost for all companies operating in Finland. Renewable energy is preferred by all the companies interviewed. They have invested in geothermal, wind and solar energy. Incentives from the government are expected as it is still rather expensive to invest in renewable energy production, although prices have gone down in recent years. Another big energy-related issue is cars, a must in a country with long distances. Fuel-efficient and electric company cars are preferred to reduce emissions and achieve carbon neutrality.

New energy solutions are critical to combat climate change. Climate change is a big concern for all the companies, and they have high expectations for themselves to perform better. It is worth noting that several of the companies interviewed have invested in renewable solutions already over a decade ago and they can be regarded as forerunners.

Communication

The companies do not communicate about their responsibility and circular economy efforts that much in public. The message in the interviews was clear: "We should communicate on the home page and in social media much more!" Bragging about their achievements goes against the natural characteristics of Finns.

Even if the interviewees said that they should communicate more about their responsibility actions, they already guide and educate their customers in many ways. There are written instructions for the customers at the cottages, the nature guides also give clear oral instructions and show customers how to behave in nature. A company representative also mentioned that recycling a soft drink can be also an integral part of the activity. Bottle recycling is a normal way of life in Finland. As a 'live like a local' activity, a guide takes customers to the local supermarket to return the cans. Customers keep getting fascinated about learning how to return cans and they buy something nice with the small amount of money they receive in return.

7.5. Discussion and Conclusion

The most important result of the interviews is that Circular Economy is still not grasped as an entire concept by the experience providers. They do many individual things which are included in the Circular Economy but relate them to being responsible. The concept of Circular Economy is more linked to heavy industry with big material flows.

For a more systemic view of circular thinking among experience providers, there would need to be more successful tourism related company examples for them to follow and take note of. Now there are practically none in the field of tourism. It may be difficult to relate to heavy industry examples. Cross-pollination could also be fruitful, so successful circular actions from other industries can also be inspirational. In our interview with the Circular Economy expert in Sitra, Mr Kari Herlevi (2020) stated that the Netherlands is a country whose circular activities are worth benchmarking.

Recycling and renewable energy are the aspects of the Circular Economy that are most recognised by the companies interviewed for the study. Lifecycle thinking and keeping resources in the loop are not yet leading principles when making purchasing decisions. Partnerships are crucial from several perspectives. It is not only sharing equipment and knowledge, but a more holistic view of the whole supply chain to ensure product life cycle is needed.

Companies can get a competitive advantage of being on the circular path. What is still not being implemented are the circular business models that will disrupt the tourism industry. There is a lot to be done about partnerships across the circular supply chain. We would not wonder if one of these responsible forerunners would embrace them first.

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