



# 3rd Global Summit on Peace through Tourism – Education Forum



One Earth One Family:  
Travel & Tourism - Serving a Higher Purpose

Pattaya, Thailand • October 2-5, 2005

## FORUM PROCEEDINGS

*Forum Proceedings Editor:*

Professor Kaye Chon  
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**3<sup>RD</sup> GLOBAL SUMMIT ON PEACE THROUGH TOURISM -  
EDUCATION FORUM**

**“ONE EARTH ONE FAMILY: TRAVEL & TOURISM – SERVING A HIGHER  
PURPOSE”**

*Preface*

This is the proceedings for the **Education Forum** at the **3<sup>rd</sup> Global Summit on Peace through Tourism - “One Earth One Family: Travel & Tourism – Serving a Higher Purpose”**, which was held in Pattaya, Thailand in October 2-5, 2005. The Forum was organized by International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT) with the support and collaboration of the Thailand Convention and Exhibition Bureau (TCEB) and World Tourism Organization (WTO).

This Forum was aimed to develop a 21<sup>st</sup> Century Agenda for Peace through Tourism. The Forum was intended to address key global issues of our time and fostered an open dialogue and exchange of ideas for leading government, industry, donor agency, and NGO decision makers, as well as leading educators, researchers, professionals and practitioners, to debate and reach consensus on the contribution of the world’s largest industry to the global issues. This year’s Forum featured close to 30 papers and panel presentations by researchers and practitioners from more than 10 countries. All papers and abstracts were selected based on a double-blind review by a panel of experts, which primarily consisted of 6 academic staff internationally.

Organizing an international Forum with published proceedings takes collective team efforts by many people. I wish to take this opportunity to thank a number of individuals who have contributed to the success of this forum. First, I would like to thank the paper and panel presenters as well as paper session chairs and paper reviewers for their contribution of expertise, time and efforts. Second, a hard work by the Forum Secretariat Miss Antonia Wong at The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, and the contributions and support by Mr. Louis D’Amore and staff at the International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT) are noted with a deep appreciation. Finally, I wish to thank both industry and institutional sponsors of the Forum for their support that have made the Forum a success.



Professor Kaye Chon  
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3rd Global Summit on Peace through Tourism – Education Forum  
“One Earth One Family: Travel & Tourism – Serving a Higher Purpose”  
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## Table of Contents

| <b>Section 1: Full Papers</b> <i>(In alphabetical order using titles of the papers)</i>  | <i>Page</i> |
|--|-------------|
| Challenges and Issues in Incorporating Pro Poor Tourism Approach into Hotel Business: Viewpoints of Hotel Executives in Thailand<br><i>Jutamas Wisansing, Assumption University</i>                                | 1           |
| Community-based Ecotourism Development and Local Community Participation<br><i>Awangku Hassanal Bahar Pengiran Bagul, Victoria University of Wellington</i>  | 6           |
| Experiencing Cultural Tourism through the Identification of Cultural Routes within the IMT-GT<br><i>Alip Rahim, Rahmat Azam Mustafa, Badaruddin Mohamed &amp; Rosalind Sia Juo Ling, Universiti Sains Malaysia</i> | 17          |
| Facilitating Sustainable Community Development by Empowering Local Members: Social Network Analysis of Informal Structure of Community<br><i>Sunny Jeong, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign</i>           | 27          |
| Involve me and I will Learn: A Study of Volunteer Tourism Originating from Singapore<br><i>Harnng Luh Sin, National University of Singapore</i>  | 34          |
| Low Cost Carriers Building Bridges in the Asia Pacific<br><i>Suhaini Ibrahim, Sunway University College</i>  | 46          |
| Peace in Tourism Education: A Guide for Course Coordinators<br><i>Ian Kelly, University of South Australia</i>   | 56          |
| Sustainability of Worldwide Connections by and for Travel: Applying Social Capital in Virtual Travel Community<br><i>Sunny Jeong, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign</i>                                   | 67          |
| Tourism as a Subject of Higher Education in the Philippines: Stakeholders' Views and Perspectives<br><i>Carmela A. Bosangit &amp; Miguela M. Mena, University of the Philippines Asian Institute of Tourism</i>    | 73          |
| Tourism Development after Political Turmoil: Current Issues on Bosnia and Herzegovina<br><i>Senija Causevic &amp; Jithendran Kokkrankal, University of Strathclyde</i>   | 82          |

## Table of Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Understanding Package and Non-package Tourists' Choices of Attraction Attributes within Selected Asean Destinations<br><i>Shaharuddin Tahir, Norhaslinda Zainal Abidin &amp; Suzzaini Abdullah, Universiti Utara Malaysia</i> | 96 |
|---|----|

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Understanding Perceived Travel Risk Differences between First Time and Repeat Travelers<br><i>Bongkosh Nagamsom Rittichainuwat, Siam University</i> | 108 |
|---|-----|

### **Section 2: Poster Papers** *(In alphabetical order using titles of the papers)*

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Community-based Tourism Initiatives: Prospects for Sustainable Tourism on an Outlying Island in Hong Kong<br><i>Lawal M. Marafa, The Chinese University of Hong Kong</i> | 118 |
|--|-----|

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Ecotourism Best Practice Initiatives in a Resort: A Case Study in Summerset at Rompin, Pahang, Malaysia<br><i>Vikneswaran Nair, Taylor's College, School of Hospitality &amp; Tourism</i> | 130 |
|---|-----|

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Heritage Tourism in a Multicultural Society: The Case of Malaysia<br><i>Badaruddin Mohamed &amp; Rahmat Azam Mustafa, Universiti Sains Malaysia</i> | 141 |
|---|-----|

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Hotel Management and Harmonious Society: A Case Study of Best Western Premier Xiamen Central Hotel<br><i>Chen Jiang (Chester), Macao University of Science and Technology &amp; Xu Mu-han (Jeremy), Hong Kong Metropole Hotel</i> | 148 |
|---|-----|

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Meeting the Challenges of Peace via Tourism – A Northern Ireland Perspective<br><i>Caroline Breakey, Northern Ireland Rural Development Council</i> | 158 |
|---|-----|

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Peace and Panorama in the Landscape of Tourism<br><i>Shoichiro Sendai &amp; Hisa Yokoyama, Hiroshima University</i> | 168 |
|---|-----|

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Seven Selfish Reasons to Become a GeoTraveler<br><i>Sally Brown McKinney, Society of American Travel Writers, Travel Journalists Guild</i> | 177 |
|--|-----|

|              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| Author Index | 182 |
|--------------|-----|

Note: All papers were selected based on blind review of abstracts.

# **Section 1**

## **Full Papers**

CHALLENGES AND ISSUES  
IN INCORPORATING PRO POOR TOURISM APPROACH INTO HOTEL BUSINESS:  
VIEWPOINTS OF HOTEL EXECUTIVES IN THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

It is now widely acknowledged that if tourism development is planned and implemented properly, it could be used as an effective tool for poverty reduction. An argument put forward in this paper is that while the significance of the ideological dimension of new Pro Poor Tourism (PPT) approach must be recognised, the current emphasis placed on abstract ideals need to be put into more pragmatic perspectives and linked with a very real development or challenges. The focus of this paper is placed upon the proposition that the adoption of the PPT approach is particularly challenging for private enterprises. It is arguable that it is less clear why private-sector tourism companies might be motivated to incorporate pro poor objectives and approaches into their profit-driven business agenda. In-depth interviews with hotel executives in Thailand helped identify issues and impediments confronting hotel business in incorporating the PPT approach into its current hotel management strategies.

Key Words: Pro Poor Tourism, Hotel Management, Challenges

INTRODUCTION

The international development community (e.g. The United Nations, World Bank, and WTO) has addressed poverty eradication as one of the most compelling challenges of the 21st century. The commitment to combat global poverty and hunger has given rise to an emergence of a new pro poor tourism approach. It has been recognised that the potential impact of tourism in reducing poverty is significant. This realisation is based on the fact that eighty per cent of the world's poor, those surviving on less than a dollar (US) per day, live in 12 countries and in 11 of these countries, tourism is significant, growing and emerging as an important development opportunity (World Bank, 2002). Therefore it is now widely acknowledged that if tourism development is planned and implemented properly, it could be used as an effective tool for poverty reduction. This concept has been well marked with an advent of the Sustainable Tourism - Eliminating Poverty (ST-EP) framework of the World Tourism Organization which clearly links tourism development with poverty elimination.

New 'pro poor' tourism (PPT) strategies seek to increase net benefits for poor people (Ashley, Roe and Goodwin, 2001). According to Ashley et. al. (2001), PPT is not a specific product or niche sector but an approach to tourism development and management. It enhances the linkages between tourism businesses and poor people; so that tourism's contribution to poverty reduction is increased and poor people are able to participate more effectively in product development. There are many types of pro poor tourism strategies, ranging from increasing local employment to building mechanisms for consultation (Cattarinich, 2001). Any type of company can be involved in pro-poor tourism - a small lodge, an urban hotel, a tour operator, an infrastructure developer.

An argument put forward in this paper is that while the significance of the ideological dimension of new PPT approach must be recognized, the current emphasis placed on abstract ideals need to be put into more pragmatic perspectives and linked with a very real development or challenges. There is a need for much more attention to how specific initiatives could be implemented by different actors (governments, donors, NGOs, private companies, and community groups) to make tourism more 'pro-poor'. The focus of this paper will be placed upon the proposition that the

adoption of the pro poor approach is particularly challenging for private enterprises. It is arguable that it is less clear why private-sector tourism companies might be motivated to incorporate pro poor objectives and approaches into their profit-driven business agenda.

In-depth interviews conducted with five hotel executives in Thailand help identify issues and impediments confronting the selected Thai hotel chain in incorporating the PPT approach into its current hotel management strategies. This paper should be considered as an important preliminary effort to assess the challenges and potential practical issues from a Thai hotel management context. Understanding hotel managers’ perspectives about the issue will provide critical commentaries to assist tourism planners improve their initiatives particularly on how to engage businesses, and to ensure those proposed initiatives are commercially realistic and integrated into mainstream operations. Thus, the significant contribution of this study is to recommend pathways towards a more ‘pro poor hotel approach’.

### WHAT IS PRO POOR TOURISM?

Tourism has been an integral component of economic development strategies in developing nations since the 1960s. Uneven distribution of benefits generated from tourism development has been well documented. Tourism scholars have counteracted these challenges with an attempt to find ways for ‘better’ tourism (Hall and Butler 1995). The last two decades have witnessed an upsurge in remedial forms of tourism (e.g. de Kadt 1979, WCED, 1990). Common suggestions were raised from the same ground and accompanied by a directive for sustainability, wherein benefits permeate into the grass roots level. New Pro Poor tourism (PPT) is no exception. Pro Poor tourism (PPT) is defined as ‘...tourism that generates net benefits to the poor. Economic benefits are only one (though a very important) component of this, as social, environment and cultural costs and benefits also need to be taken into account’ (DFID, 1999:6). Research on pro-poor tourism (Ashley et al., 2001) demonstrates that pro poor tourism can be divided into those that generated three different types of local benefit: economic benefits, other livelihood benefits (such as physical, social or cultural improvements), and less tangible benefits of participation and involvement. Table 1 provides a summary of these factors.

Table 1  
Types of PPT strategies

| <b>Increase economic benefits</b>   | <b>Enhance non-financial livelihood impacts</b>  | <b>Enhance participation and partnership</b>   |
|---|--|--|
| 1. Boost local employment, wages<br><br>2. Boost local enterprise opportunities: inputs such as food, fuel, or building materials to hotel operations<br><br>3. Create collective income sources – fees, revenue shares | 1. Capacity building, training<br>2. Mitigate environmental impacts<br>3. Address competing use of natural resources<br>4. Improve social, cultural impacts<br>5. Increase local access to infrastructure and services | 1. Create more supportive policy/planning framework<br>2. Increase participation of the poor in decision-making<br>3. Build pro-poor partnerships with private sector<br>4. Increase flows of information, communication |

Source: adapted from Ashley et al., 2001 and Roe, Goodwin and Ashley (2004)

## HOTEL BUSINESS AND PRO POOR APPROACH

The accommodation sector within the tourism sphere has been proven to be a key player in the overall tourism development. Based on the benefits summarised in table 1, hotel operators could theoretically incorporate PPT approach by focusing on different types of benefits whereby their operations could benefit the poor. To gauge key practical issues of the approach, it is deemed necessary to set a manageable domain of the study. Therefore, this paper will focus mainly on two key areas, which are:

- Human Resource Management: expansion of employment and local wages: via commitments to local jobs, training up locals for employment
- Hotel Procurement: expansion of business opportunities for the poor. These may be businesses/entrepreneurs that sell inputs such as food, fuel, or building materials to hotel operations. Or they may be businesses that offer products directly to tourists, such as guiding, crafts, tea shops etc. Support can vary from marketing and technical support (e.g. by nearby mainstream operators), to shifts in procurement strategy, or direct financial and training inputs.

### SELECTING HOTEL STAFF: CAN IT BE 'PRO POOR'?

Hotel executives commented that the effectiveness of hotel operations is often linked with the individual qualities of their employees. Customer's perception of hotel's service quality is more directly linked to the morale, motivation, knowledge, and skills of their staff, specifically who are in direct contact with customers. Important skills in hotel business include language and an understanding of guest/tourist expectations. Executives consulted in this study agreed that regardless of their economic status, employees must possess several personality characteristics useful for service work, such as courtesy, consideration, tact, perceptiveness, and good communication skills, qualities which are thought to be critical in the hospitality industry. Nevertheless, executives consistently revealed that the most commonly used selection methods have low reliability and validity for predicting future job performance. They rely on unstructured application forms, and the general consensus is that selection in the hotel industry tends to be informal, simplistic, and reactive.

Conventionally, hotel staffing problems are explained in terms of long and unsocial hours; the unpredictable and often seasonal demand against high fixed costs; low pay; high turnover; and poor personnel professionalism. These problems have been found to be more acute for hotels relative to other industries. Executives pointed out that employing the poor could be beneficial in dealing with the high turnover rate, specifically when 'bonded' training and educational programmes are provided or sponsored for the poor. Executives suggested that size and type of hotel ownership will influence the selection techniques by the fact that large companies' managers tend to be "outsiders" in the local community, and, in contrast, independent or local owners could make more effective use of the "grapevine". A related point was the relatively higher level of turnover of managers in chains. Selection decision makers who hold short tenure in their hotel may not have the same degree of knowledge, experience, contacts and influence within the hotel or the local community to understand the local labour market and make use of informal networks.

### HOTEL PROCUREMENT STRATEGIES: A CASE OF OTOP IN THAILAND

Formal sector tourism enterprises can provide a market for the labour and products of the poor. But often labour and luxury goods are imported from outside the locality. There are a number of compelling reasons why linking hotel and local producer holds significant potential for achieving pro poor tourism objectives – that is reducing tourism's negative impacts and maximising benefits for the poor. In the case of Thailand, the majority of potential pro poor tourism beneficiaries subsist from agriculture in a remote village. According to Torres and Momsen (2004), stimulating agricultural

production for tourism represents an opportunity to build on the existing skills of the poor without requiring a major shift in economic livelihood strategy, lifestyle and tradition. It has been suggested that tourism, particularly private enterprises should open up the supply chain to local producers. These may include buying the following products from locally owned and produced:

- Soft furnishings
- hotel supplies: bed linen, uniforms, mats and table-cloths
- art and craft, candles, internal decoration, flowers
- hand-made paper, packaging, tourist mementos, furniture
- local services: beach cleaning, flower arranging, maintenance

In accord with the above concept, the Thai government has introduced “The One Tambon One Product” (OTOP) movement which was originally started in Oita Prefecture in Japan. The purpose of the Thai OTOp campaign was to, improve upon/refine the locally available resources and produce goods that are acceptable internationally. Inspired by this idea, the Thai government has been promoting the local industry through the manufacturing of attractive specialty products based on the abundant native culture, tradition and nature. This campaign is called, One Tambon One Product (OTOP) in Thailand because the target area is the administrative unit called ,Tambon, which is the equivalent of village or town in English. OTOp seeks to encourage growth of cottage industries through the production of quality products utilising indigenously developed skills and give them international recognition. Every tambon or district is encouraged to develop products that reflect an expertise that's unique to the district or that part of the country. OTOp is one of the success stories of this administration because it has helped create new jobs and distribute income to the rural masses and, at the same time, raised new awareness about Thai products overseas. The range of products includes textiles, hand-made papers, basketry made of bamboo and other plants, ceramics and wood products. The collected product samples totalled 600 items including: agricultural products, fruits, vegetables, flowers, beverages, food additives, snack foods, sweets/desserts, chemicals, cosmetics, toiletries, medical supplies, hygiene cleaning/washing, fertilisers, shampoo, textile, garment fashion accessories, office equipments and stationary, to list but a few.

Developing linkages between OTOp producers and hotel procurement strategies could potentially create an important mechanism through which to achieve pro poor tourism objectives. However, when asked hotel executives, despite the campaign’s high potential in linking the two sectors, they revealed that this campaign has not been targeted hotel operators effectively and efficiently. Factors, influencing the level of local OTOp procurement, include commercial issues such as insufficient ability to ‘tailored made’ their products. Lack of understanding and information regarding the operational needs of hotel business were also found to be a key issue. Hotels are expecting cost saving benefits from utilising these producers. However, executives commented that that may not be the case since most village producers are small, individual producers, hence lack adequate transport and distribution skills. They tend to sell their products to intermediaries who come to them and dictate lowest prices in order to gain a high mark-up from the hotels. Buying directly from the producers may offset this challenge but local producers must improve their marketing and publicity skills. Executives suggested that local skills and products may not be suitably publicised to enterprises – and therefore formal sector operations may be unaware of their availability. Executives also explained that due to their shortage of capital, they cannot manage any 30 or 60 day credit term. These factors make these producers less competitive in the market, when all suppliers and producers (local and international) must compete on the same ground.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS AND WAYS FORWARD

It is important to demonstrate how the hotel sector can implement PPT management approach. As for any private-driven enterprise, it is necessary to show that incorporating PPT approach brings a profit. Irrective of the size of the operation of a hotel, the purchasing functions and

human resource management appear to be a critical area that has significant impact on the operational efficiency, quality of services, customer satisfaction and profits. A key question is that is there any clear link between using or buying local inputs and profitability. What involved in the good practice elements is that it must be a management decision. A formal appointment of a senior champion (i.e Local Procurement Director) could be an important first step whereby information on current local products could be gathered and new local suppliers could also be sought out. Setting up contracts with new suppliers and communicating with those potential producers could lead to long term successful partnership where production costs could be reduced. If the challenges in incorporating PPT approach to private enterprise business agenda rest on how to create a win-win approach which profitability is naturally the focus of both parties.

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# COMMUNITY-BASED ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

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## ABSTRACT

The focus of this paper is on the ecotourism development and its local community participation. The methodology selected is comparative case studies method. The data gathered are from various stakeholders. They are 1) Local community; 2) Government and its related agencies and Non-Governmental Agencies; 3) Business; and 4) Tourists. Four ecotourism sites in Sabah were selected, which are Kampung Bavanggazo, Batu Puteh, Kampung Rantai and Sukau. The comparative analysis suggested more similarities rather than dissimilarities between and among four sites. The similarities are consistent with the general ecotourism characteristics, and that is a small-scale operation; the products offered are nature-based with some level of involvement from the local community where benefits channelled to the local environment and economies. Even with a lot of similarities, the nature of operation individualises each site.

Key Words: Ecotourism, Community, Development, Participation

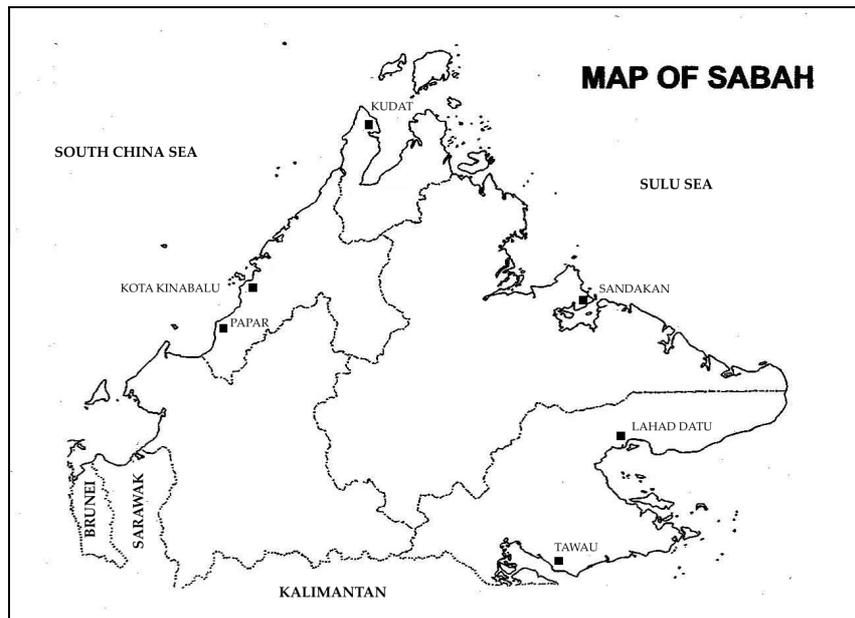
## INTRODUCTION

Sabah (Figure 1), as part of Borneo, is romantically associated with impenetrable jungles and is considered a mystical, mysterious land. The tourism industry in Sabah is considered relatively young (Chan & Yeoh, 2001). Tourism in Sabah began as a small-scale industry in the year 1986. It was started by visits to some of the natural features found abundantly in some protected or undisturbed areas. Few sites were developed as mass tourist attractions such as Tunku Abdul Rahman Parks, Mount Kinabalu (the highest mountain in South East Asia) and the Orang Utan Rehabilitation Centre at Sepilok, Sandakan. Sabah is popular from both domestic and international market. The figures are almost evenly distributed. The arrivals of tourists for 2002 and 2003 are over 1 million (Sabah Tourism Board, 2004). There is a trend of increasing visitor arrivals and it is expected to continue in the future.

Sabah has evolved from a 'value for money' destination to a 'nature adventure' destination. The year 2000 was declared as the *Visit Sabah Year*, where the marketing catchphrase was '**Sabah Natur(e)ally**' which emphasised nature and culture. The Sabah Tourism Board (1999/2000) chose 10 brand images for Sabah, namely Kinabalu Nature, Wildlife, Exploring the Borneo Rainforest, Soft adventure activities, Tough wild adventure activities, Cultural experience, Diving and snorkeling, Islands and beaches for relaxation, Meetings, Incentives, Courses and Exhibitions (MICE), and golfing, targeting their respective markets. The focus on nature and culture clearly puts Sabah natural resources under the spotlight and at the same time, elevating the nature-based tourism products such as ecotourism into prominence.

Ecotourism is now the main focus of the tourism industry in Sabah (Sabah Tourism Board, 2002). The main attraction is the diverse wildlife consisting of almost 200 species of mammals and over 500 species of birds with Orang Utan as the flagship wildlife and Rafflesia, Slipper Orchid and Pitcher Plant as the flagship plants. The State government agencies such as Forest Department, Wildlife Department and Sabah Parks are entrusted with the conservation and management of the state's natural resources - forest and wildlife (Chan & Yeoh, 2001). The various ethnic groups, more than 30 of them, provide the rich and diverse cultural heritage. The stable Federal and State governments provide an environment that is conducive for successful tourism industry in Sabah.

Figure 1  
Map of Sabah and It's Major Cities



## ECOTOURISM AND LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN SABAH

Ecotourism industry in Sabah is mainly private sector-led. These are mainly urban-based tour operators and there are also a handful of local-run sites. The government and NGOs are supportive with the industry. The government and NGOs encourage private enterprises to get involved, develop and promote ecotourism destinations in the country based on the guidelines prepared by the relevant authorities. The private sector is mainly involved in developing ecolodges, organising tours and marketing products and conducting training programs for their members through their various business associations. Although the development of the tourism industry is mainly private sector-led, the Malaysian Government is also doing its share to support ecotourism development. In addition to the planning and coordinating functions, both the federal and the state governments have been providing funds to develop infrastructure facilities at various ecotourism destinations, as stimulus to the private sector.

There has been a lot of government encouragement for entrepreneurs especially in the rural community to set up small and medium scale tourism enterprises in the rural area. The Sabah Tourism Master Plan (1996) states that an important goal of tourism development, including ecotourism, in the rural areas is to maximise community participation and distribution of socio-economic benefits to the rural communities. One of the main strategies to improve the living standard of the rural population in Sabah, in the context of tourism development, is the promotion of community enterprise. It is a collective activity initiated by the community themselves to raise socio-economic standards, improve their environment and subsequently uplift their quality of life. Based on the concept of self-help, mutual help and common ownership, the community enterprise encourages the participation of the local community in conceptualising their development needs and in the decision making over control of scarce economic resources.

## ECOTOURISM SITES

Among many ecotourism sites in Sabah, four were selected based on the set of their ecotourism criteria. They offer ecotourism products, practice ecotourism concepts and involve the local community at various levels. Each section explores the sites as separate case studies and

comparative analysis is used to analyse the case studies. Each case studies give essential background to the area and details on its ecotourism operation and local community participation. It also highlights the attractions and activities that are available at the site. All of the research sites can be referred to Figure 2.

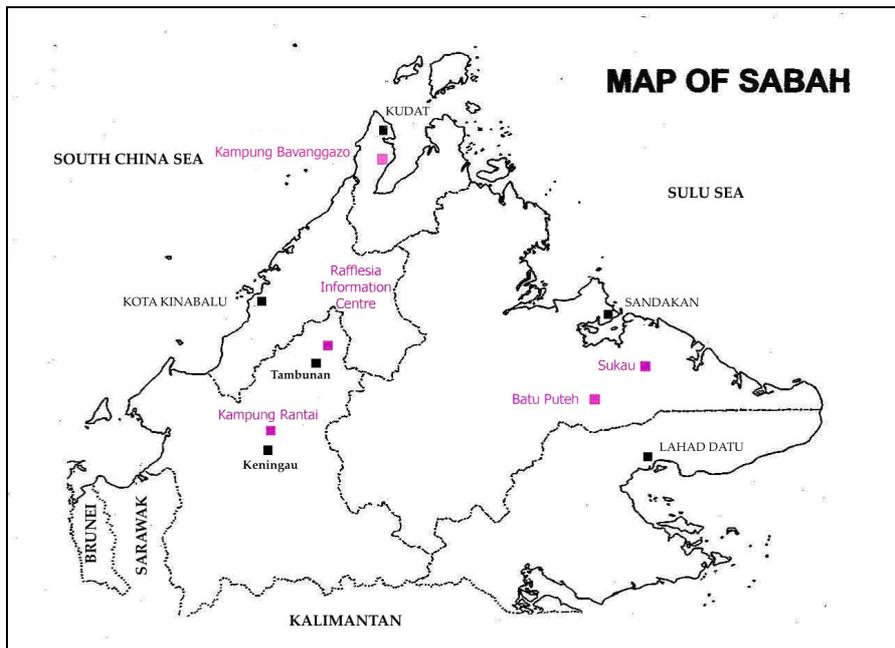
### Kampung Bavanggazo

Kampung Bavanggazo is situated on the northern tip of Sabah in the Kudat district approximately 130 km north of Kota Kinabalu, the capital city of Sabah, which is a 3-hour drive. The Rungus people, who are a sub-tribe of the Kadazandusun indigenous ethnic group, inhabit the village. The Rungus people can only be found at the Kudat and Bengkoka Peninsula. The villagers are mainly farmers and many of its women are quite renowned in their handicraft making skills originating from the adjacent Tinangol Village. Bavanggazo (*lit. big river*) got its name from a river that runs past through the area.

In early August 1992, the construction of the first long house with nine rooms was started. It was built using local materials. Water supply came from two natural water reservoirs on the top of Gomantong Hill. There are only six families involved in the operation. The Bavanggazo Rungus Longhouse offered homestay products to visitors and it has become a living museum with a showcase of Rungus custom and culture. It was gazetted as a village reserve for five acres. Next to it is another reserve for water catchments on Gomantong Hill. The surrounding villages managed to specialise in one industry such as Sumangkap Village on gong making and Gambizou Village on honeybee farming. Bavanggazo decided on tourism as their sole industry. There was support from the state government in form of seed funding and consultation. The Sabah Tourism Board was consistently giving consultation to the Bavanggazo Rungus Longhouse committee.

The tourism operation has revived some of their traditional festivals and customs. Many recent weddings are done in a traditional manner and visitors are invited to attend this rare and unique occasion. There is also a revival of an important festival, which is called the *Magahan* Festival. This traditional festival is to celebrate the spirits of the dead. It is held every 31st April after the harvesting season. The spirits of the dead are celebrated so that *they* can bless the harvest. One activity that the tourists usually do is jungle trekking around the village. Guided by a local guide, trekking up to the highest point at Gomantong Hill, visitors can see the scenic Mount Kinabalu, a World Heritage site, and the South China Sea. Visitors are also brought to the Torongkungan Beach. Besides enjoying nature, visitors also have the chance to see some interesting sights such as the beehives where the villagers get their honey supply. They are also treated to a demonstration of traditional animal traps, while visits to corn and paddy field and doing the rubber tapping at the rubber estate provide the local livelihood experience.

Figure 2  
Map of Research Sites



Every villager is involved in every level of Bavanggazo Rungus Longhouse operations. At the operational level, there are men and women who work full time and part time for the longhouse and the children help out in any odd jobs in the spirit of *gotong royong*<sup>1</sup> and perform dances to the visitors. There is a weekly *gotong royong* for the whole village every Saturday. The operation has created a system where each family is delegated one job including landscaping, facility cleanliness, facility maintenance, lighting and bathroom cleanliness and maintenance. Each family has its own leader and committee. In the decision-making level, Bavanggazo Rungus Longhouse has its own committee. The committee consists of the chairman, deputy chairman, secretary, treasurer, committee member for cleanliness, *gotong-royong*, facility maintenance and maintenance (non-facility). Bavanggazo Rungus Longhouse operations have provided the villagers with employment opportunities. However, villagers still derive their main income from their main occupation, which is farming, while the longhouse work provides them with supplementary income. The average income from Bavanggazo Rungus Longhouse is around RM200 to RM500 per month depending on the season. A fund was created from the longhouse operations so that the villagers can get free-interest loan. Two percent of the profits from the operations are allocated for the welfare of the villagers.

The tourists that visit Bavanggazo Rungus Longhouse are from both domestic and international segment. Most of them are 'walk-in' tourists. Many international tourists come with tour operator or independent tourist guides. Foreign tourists usually stay overnight. Based on the survey conducted from 2002-2003, the tourists were mainly youths (less than 20 years old) and adult (31-40 years old). Most of them were educated, at least having secondary level qualifications (Pengiran Bagul, 2005).

#### Batu Puteh

Batu Puteh is situated along the main highway between the eastern Sabah cities of Sandakan and Lahad Datu. It is a 6-hour drive from the capital city and 2 hours from the east coast city of Sandakan. It has 1200-1400 people living there and generally there are more women than men. The

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<sup>1</sup> *Gotong-royong* is a concept exclusive to the Malay world (Malaysia and Indonesia). It includes the whole of the village working together on a task voluntarily without expecting any monetary rewards.

exact population is hard to estimate since there are immigrants working at the palm oil plantation. The Orang Sungai ethnic group dominates the population and more than 90% of the population is Muslim. They speak the Sungai Language with more than 10 dialects. The Orang Sungai is popular with their unique stories and folklore and arts, especially the performing arts. The locals are involved in a number of economic activities such as working at the palm oil plantation. While some are working with the private and government sector, only a handful still work as a subsistence farmer/fishermen. The villagers' houses are mostly situated along the main road or the river. Most houses are wooden and simple. Most of the areas surrounding Batu Puteh are gazetted as wildlife sanctuary. Visitors to Batu Puteh can explore the Mengaris Trail. It joins the Mengaris and Batu Puteh villages, forms a loop starting at the Kinabatangan Bridge and wends along the riverbank back to the main road near the Batu Tulug Museum. Visitors can see wild plants among the cultivated orchard trees, animals and birds, as well as sites of historical and cultural interest along the way. Interesting flora such as edible medicinal plants including ferns and flowers and fruit trees can be seen along the fauna such as butterflies, birds and monkeys. There are also three age-old burial sites of families that settled in the area generations ago.

The coordinator for ecotourism and local community participation activity in Batu Puteh is MESCOT (Model of Ecologically Sustainable Community Tourism). It has supports from WWF Malaysia (Sabah), the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment of Sabah and Sabah Forestry Department. WWF Malaysia' role is to act as a facilitator for the local villagers in developing ecotourism products through training, awareness activities and initial networking with relevant organisations. MESCOT organises its activities within the sub-district of Batu Puteh. This includes four villages, which are Batu Puteh (village of the same name), Mengaris, Perpaduan and Paris. Under MESCOT, the Miso Walai Homestay project was started in 1997 and fully running from June 2000. Miso Walai Homestay is a registered association comprising the coordination committee and regular members who open up their homes to visitors, who stay and experience the local rural way of life. The locals can earn side income somewhere between RM1,500 to RM3,000 annually. Houses belonging to the locals are improved as they were renovated from the income received from the homestay.

MESCOT also coordinates the transport services including boat, handicraft and recreational ecotourism activities. It focuses on encouraging more ecotourists and responsible visitors. It hopes to reduce tourism pressures further downstream of Kinabatangan River while providing alternative and supplementary livelihoods to the local community (*pers. comm.* with MESCOT chairman, 2003). It encourages local people and the tourists to get involved in the conservation effort to the surrounding areas. The conservation-based activities include forest restoration, ecotourism, Phenological trails (a special trip to a site with outstanding beauty for education and awareness), nursery propagation, tree planting and silviculture. MESCOT is also making efforts in forest conservation and rehabilitation in the Lower Kinabatangan with the support of major multinational companies and international organisation from time to time such as RICOH, Shell and Discovery Channel. Shell, the oil company, contributes funding for building ecolodges and the maintenance of its surrounding forest reserve. RICOH, the camera company, is sponsoring the forest rehabilitation project.

On average, tourists come to Batu Puteh once a week. There has been a steady increase in the tourist arrivals over the years. Almost half of the tourists are 'repeat customers'. In its first year of operations, they had 1,200 bed nights and 2,600 visitors went for wildlife watching trips. They received walk-in tourists but there are more tourists in groups from the Fulcrum Challenge, Operations Wallacea, World Challenge, Intrepid Travel, Sabah Holiday and Pan Borneo. The marketing for Batu Puteh is targeted to groups rather than FIT. This explains the high number of group visitors compared to FIT (Free Independent Traveller) market. In 2001, they started the annual Kinabatangan River Expedition where participants stayed overnight with Miso Walai. Based on the survey conducted from 2002-2003, the tourists were mainly adults (21-40 years old) and educated at least from the secondary level (Pengiran Bagul, 2005).

## Kampung Rantai

Three families who open paddy plantation at the area established Kampung Rantai in the 1950's. The village area is 11 acres including 3 acres that have been gazetted as a cemetery. There are three nearby villages: Kampung Dongiluang, Kampung Tiga and Kampung Bundu. The people are all from the Dusun ethnic group. Most of the villagers are self-sufficient farmers who plant paddy and ginger. While visitors can have a smooth drive from Kota Kinabalu on the highway to the town of Bundu Apin-Apin, the 12km road onwards to Kampung Rantai is rough gravel road. At present, there are 30 families living in Kampung Rantai. Kampung Rantai has a clean river running through it, the Apin-Apin River. However, a clean water supply is provided through the gravity pipe provided by the Health Department.

Ecotourism in Kampung Rantai was started in 1998. This is the youngest of ecotourism project among others. It was one of the community development projects in the village and it is also an effort to diversify from the dominant ginger farming. The villagers, with the help of a local NGO, Partners for Community Organisation (PACOS) and Sabah Foundation did a field study of ecotourism potential by assessing the resources around the village Kampung Rantai that is rich with natural attractions, including the waterfall and Rafflesia flower. Visitors are locals and the only overseas visitors that they receive are from Indonesia. Visitors are able to stay at the village through the homestay programme. In addition to staying with the villagers, the visitors can also experience the livelihood of the village. They are able to learn how to cook the local dishes and participate in the villager's activities. Cultural performances are shown on request. The homestay package, which includes accommodation and food, costs RM15 per night per person. The homestay fees go directly to the villagers. Among other sites in this research, this is the cheapest homestay by comparison. The villagers created and maintained traditional medicinal plant gardens as one of attraction in the village. Other attractions near the village are the agro-farm nearby where the deer farm is the highlight. The ecotourism in Kampung Rantai is focused on education and awareness, hence the adoption of homestay programme and the creation of traditional medicinal plant.

The ecotourism activity is also trying to conserve the water catchments at the surrounding area, which was threatened by the logging industry, causing the water to be turbid and less healthy for the people at the surrounding area especially for paddy field. The surrounding area of the water catchments was finally gazetted as Virgin Forest Reserve Class I. Before 2004, the ecotourism activity was interrupted for a while with the logging dispute that threatened the water catchments at the whole Bundu Apin-Apin area. The legal battle has dire consequences to the ecotourism activity in Kampung Rantai. It was virtually stopped while the legal battle was on as time and resources were devoted from ecotourism to the court.

In 2002, faced with a prospect of ecotourism growth, the villagers formed a society called MAMAKAT (Koisaan Misompuru Manampasi Koburuon om Koubasanan Tulun Toku/Rural Community Conservation, Development and Culture Cooperative Society). It was modeled after MESCOT in Batu Puteh. The society allows villagers to automatically become members of MAMAKAT led by a duly elected committee. One of the major activities that the MAMAKAT did was to organise an ecotourism workshop for the villagers with the participation of PACOS and the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Environment. During the workshop, they discuss the direction of ecotourism that they would like to have, the opportunities that the villagers can have and discussion on the involvement and roles of the stakeholders in the industry. MAMAKAT also organised FAM (Familiarisation) trip to its members to educate them on the tourism operations. The villagers built MAMAKAT building, which has a community hall and an office. However, in the early part of year 2004, the villagers were locked in a legal dispute again when they found out that illegal logging are still in practice at the Virgin Forest Reserve.

There is no statistics compiled that shows the profile and number of tourists to Kampung Rantai by any authority. Therefore the only data of tourists are based on the data collected during the fieldwork, through survey and interviews. According to the fieldwork survey conducted in 2002 and

2003, the tourists were adults from 21-50 years old and educated. Most of the tourists were locals. The tourist normally visited the village either for recreation, business or VFR. Since the site is new and the marketing of the ecotourism is non-consistent with few interruptions with the legal battle, Kampung Rantai struggles to get tourists to the village. The village location, which is situated off the main road, also contributes to no 'walk-in' tourists.

### Sukau

Sukau is located 70km up the Kinabatangan River from the east coast city of Sandakan. It is a small village surrounded by the Wildlife Sanctuary Area and palm oil plantations. It has a population of 2000 and most of the villagers are self-sufficient farmers and low ranking government servants. A number of youths are working at the eight ecolodges scattered around Sukau Village. The Sungai People inhabit the village and almost all of them are Muslim. Sukau is connected to the highway with a gravel road. Private transportation is infrequent. Another main transportation mode is by boat, which the villagers use to go to the Sandakan city or the neighbouring villages. Tourists started visiting the lower Kinabatangan, mainly the villages of Sukau, Abai and Batu Puteh, in the late 1980s. The number of visitors was small and infrequent. Sukau evolved into the main tourist attraction because of its proximity to the scenic Menanggal tributary where proboscis monkey can be easily spotted from a boat, and the historical Gomantong Caves where edible bird nests are collected.

The popularity of Sukau, where five tour companies currently operate lodges and river tours, is a good example of the ecotourism potential appropriately tapped. A number of ecolodges in Sukau employed the practice of ecotourism. Solar technology is used for generating electricity and hot water. Boats are operated by electric motor during cruises into the tributaries. Raw food materials are bought mainly from the locals and local boat builders and carpenters are hired. Voluntary activities are also organised such as clearing of weeds from oxbow lakes and supplying 49 units of water tanks to the local villagers. Sixty-four acres of degraded riverine forest were adopted for a reforestation project in collaboration with Sabah Wildlife Department, Forestry Department, the Rainforest Interpretation Centre, Drainage and Irrigation Department, Land and Survey Department, Rotary Club of Kota Kinabalu, Kinabatangan District Office and Partners for Wetlands Programme under WWF Malaysia. The pioneering lodge in Sukau won awards such as British Airways 'Tourism for Tomorrow' Award, International Hotel and Restaurant Association 'Environment Award', 'Green Hotelier' Award and Green Globe Achievement Awards.

However, there is a general agreement that the local community does not have a high level of involvement in the ecotourism industry, hence gaining low level of benefits. Despite the efforts that some ecolodges had initiated to involve the local community in their operations, the extent of the participation is limited. While a number of local youths are hired to work at the ecolodges, others employ non-locals. A meeting with the villagers in 2002 showed discontentment at the exclusion of the locals while the industry was visibly prospering.

Most of the tourists that go to Sukau are using the tour operators' services. They usually buy a tour package that has an add-on tour to Sandakan City and the nearby Gomantong Cave. Most of them choose the popular 3 Days 2 Nights package which consists of accommodation and food, a trip to Gomantong Cave, river cruises in the morning, evening and at night, and a lecture on ecotourism in the Kinabatangan Wetlands. Sukau enjoyed patronage mainly from foreign tourists (Fig. 5.9). They came usually through an outbound tour operator from their country of origin. There are also a segment of foreign tourists who are expatriate in Malaysia and its neighbouring country and considered as foreign tourists in the statistics. Tourists who have participated in ecotours at Sukau were mostly affluent Europeans, usually older couples (Yamashita, 1998). Domestic tourists that come to Sukau are not big in number compared to the foreign market. There are few local tourists who think a specialised nature-based tourism package such as ecotourism is interesting and worth paying (*pers. comm.* with STB, 2005).

## COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

The comparative analysis started with analysing the similarities of each sites. This is where the commonalities are found. The strengths (and weakness too) are found in these commonalities as well. A detailed description elaborates each point. Next, the dissimilarities are analysed and this is when each sites distinguished themselves through various features. This is where a clear distinction between sites is made, and it can be seen what features are an advantage to what sites.

### Similarities

Based on the case studies, the location of the sites is far from the nearest city, at least one hour away by road or more than 50km away. Each site is located at rural area with outstanding nature environment with at least one outstanding geographical or natural feature such as river, mountain and flower. This is a strong point for all sites where they have the natural resources in the area, which is the main product of ecotourism. All sites are accessible by road and public transportation is available. However sites such as Sukau and Kampung Rantai has no direct public transportation services. So far, this does not hinder tourists from coming to Sukau, but it also does nothing to the frequencies of visitor to Kampung Rantai.

The ethnic groups residing at the sites are the ones that are generally known as the 'rural' folks or indigenous groups. All of the sites have a dominant ethnic group residing in the area. The ethnic groups that are found in the research sites are the Rungus people in Kampung Bavanggazo, the Sungai people in Batu Puteh and Sukau, and the Dusun people in Kampung Rantai. This is clearly an advantage to each site as all ethnic groups have distinctive cultures that are an attraction to the site. These cultures are still imbedded this culture in their identity and in their lifestyle.

The community at all sites is composed of mainly farmers and labourers. Some are government servants. The similarities are that they are all low-income earner. Looking at case studies, the ecotourism and local community participation advocates have a hand in the sites. It is a good reason to establish ecotourism and get the support from the local community. The local community accepted ecotourism and participate in its activities where the obvious benefits are secondary income. All of the job opportunities are small and mainly for secondary income.

All of the sites have their own infrastructures. These infrastructures exist from the product of *gotong-royong*, funding, or reinvestment of profit. These infrastructures are essential in the operations of ecotourism. Accommodation and shops are important in each site as they generate income. The size of these infrastructures is small to medium, suitable for the nature of ecotourism. Sites that have been operating for some time have better infrastructures than the new sites. Kampung Rantai has the least developed infrastructures among all sites.

All of the sites have their own natural attractions and site protection status. However each site has different types of products. The offer of natural attractions is the main element in the ecotourism operations. Some sites have the advantages over the others in terms of the quality of the natural environment. The sites in Kinabatangan Wetlands have high quality of product, as it is a high biodiversity area. Kampung Rantai has an iconic flora attraction that is the Rafflesia flower. Batu Puteh and Sukau have an iconic fauna attraction that is the Proboscis Monkey. These are important to give the marketing edge to the sites. In addition to that all sites offer ecotourism activity, which involves nature and culture, and the opportunity to learn and to enjoy them. The activity that involved the nature is mainly passive but the activity that involved the culture is mainly active.

All of the sites have their own cultural attractions. The cultures are based on the dominant ethnic group that lives there. Kampung Bavanggazo, Batu Puteh, Sukau and Kampung Rantai have more interactive/participative cultural attractions. These sites offer the experience of living together with the locals and have cultural showcases. Kampung Bavanggazo has the most distinct cultural

attraction in terms of its details. Tourists that came to Kampung Bavanggazo can experience the *actual* traditional culture and lifestyle of the Rungus people.

All of the sites have complementary/supporting attractions nearby. These are the add-ons attractions to the sites and it is important to add more pull factor for the tourists to the site and entice the tourists to stay longer. Kampung Bavanggazo, Batu Puteh and Sukau are a well-known ecotourism destination where most tourists will stay at least over night at the sites. They also have surrounding attractions, where it is complementary to the ecotourism products. Kampung Rantai also has few attractions nearby.

All sites have a major festival/event. Kampung Bavanggazo has its Magahan Festival, Batu Puteh has its Kinabatangan River Expedition, Sukau has its Kinabatangan Regatta and Kampung Rantai has its Harvest Festival. Most of the festivals are culturally based and has been celebrated even before the ecotourism started with the exception of Kinabatangan River Expedition and Kinabatangan Regatta. Both of this events are created and conducted for the tourism activity in both sites. The creation of events shows business savvy to the sites that are conducting them, as it becomes a pull attraction to the tourists.

All sites have policies and initiatives to contribute to the environment. First of all, some of the sites have an immediate stake in conservation. Kampung Bavanggazo and Kampung Rantai need conservation to safeguard their water catchments, which is the sole water supply to the villages. Batu Puteh pursued the reforestation programme to rejuvenate the forests that are lost to illegal loggings. All sites have some form of conservation efforts and projects going on in the area and the areas surrounding it.

### Dissimilarities

The case study analysis also highlighted the dissimilarities of each sites. This is where the distinctive features of each site can be distinguished and advantages and disadvantages of each sites to the others can be interpret.

The cost to enjoy the site varies depending on the site. Kampung Bavanggazo, Batu Puteh and Sukau have the most comprehensive tourist package among all the sites. This is attributed to the fact that they have been operating for quite a while (Kampung Bavanggazo and Sukau started ecotourism in the early 90s when ecotourism was just starting) and Batu Puteh has professional consultation from WWF (Sabah). Kampung Rantai's ecotourism was slow to develop due to legal battle interruption with timber companies. The most expensive place to visit among all the sites is Sukau where the industry is monopolised by urban-based tour operator.

The level of community involvement varies from site to site. The highest involvement of community found in Kampung Bavanggazo and Kampung Rantai, where everybody in the community is involved in the operations of the ecotourism. Batu Puteh involved some part of its population with the MESCOT activities, where ecotourism is the main business. The lowest involvement is Sukau where the ecotourism industry is monopolised by the urban-based tour operator.

The average income per person gained from the ecotourism activity varies from site to site. There are usually not high as it is an income from secondary employment. The nature of the employment also the reason it is structured to be paid when there is a job, not on fixed monthly basis, with the exception of the very few full-time job in Sukau.

Only Kampung Bavanggazo, Batu Puteh and Kampung Rantai have a welfare fund specific for their community and their members. Sukau, on the other hand, has community development initiatives for the villagers. Welfare fund are used to assist members of the community that involved in the ecotourism operation when they need it. The funds sometimes are given as a soft loan for reinvestment, such as fixing houses to be certified as a homestay house. It is important to note that

Kampung Bavanggazo, Batu Puteh and Kampung Rantai have high level of community participation. A community development initiative is where the tour operator initiate social programme as part of their business activity, or as they like to say '*giving back to the community*'.

The type of tourists came varies by sites. Kampung Bavanggazo has a lot of FIT walk-in and group overnight tourists. This is attributed to its popularity as the renowned tourism site in Sabah and the channel that the tourist came with. Batu Puteh has many tourists in groups from links with certain travel groups and volunteers groups. Tourists that go to Sukau are usually in a tour group using a tour package from tour operator both inbound and outbound. Locals are the main type of tourists that go to Kampung Rantai, usually for business and VFR.

Decision-making varies from site to site, depending on the form/nature of organisation in each site. Committee-run sites are Bavanggazo Rungus, Miso Walai Homestay and Kampung Rantai. The similarities of these sites are, the community mainly runs them. Sukau ecotourism industry is dominated by business operations and the industry direction influenced greatly by the business community.

## CONCLUSION

The case study analysis shows more similarities rather than dissimilarities between and among four sites. The most obvious are the nature and characteristics of the sites (location, environment, communities, infrastructure, conservation efforts and site protection status), funding and assistance received and job opportunities. This is consistent with the general ecotourism characteristics, and that is a small-scale operation; the products offered are nature-based with some level of involvement from the local community where benefits channelled to the local environment and economies (Lash, 1998; Honey, 1999; Wearing, 1999; Wood, 2001). It is important to note that all sites with the exception of Sukau received some form of funding and assistance. This raises the question on the viability of the ecotourism operation in these sites. It is not known whether without funding and assistance from outside agencies, these ecotourism sites would attain the same degree of success in terms of management, use of resources, profit, logistics and the like. The dissimilarities are on the type of packages offered by each site hence the type of tourists that come to each of the sites, level of community involvement, creation and dispersion of benefits and previous community participation project involvement differ. Even with a lot of similarities, the nature of operation individualises each site.

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# EXPERIENCING CULTURAL TOURISM THROUGH THE IDENTIFICATION OF CULTURAL ROUTES WITHIN THE IMT-GT

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## ABSTRACT

Cultural tourism in the Southeast Asia has attracted great publicities with the increase in the number of incoming tourists annually. Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand show significant potential in developing cultural tourism throughout the IMT-GT (Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand Growth Triangle) region. The three countries have marvelous cultural tourism resources that are readily available to be explored such as the existence of multi-cultural, historical buildings, colorful lifestyles and friendly atmosphere. This paper tries to explore the identification of the routes within the IMT-GT in order to promote cultural tourism between the countries and examine the impacts of such identification towards the region, economically and socially. As a result, a number of routes have been identified throughout the region based on potential resources available there. Such routes can be employed as one of the marketing strategies in promoting cultural tourism development throughout the IMT-GT.

Although the IMT-GT, since its official inception in 1993, has been actively involved in promoting tourism between countries, its implication on the development of tourism as a whole has been substantially slow. Nonetheless, tourism has also been the utmost revenue generated activity. With the population of nearly 21 million (Gandataruna, 1996) and an area of 180,000 km<sup>2</sup>, the region has a vast potential of engulfing tourism as its main endeavor. By the year 2000, a more developed tourism planning has been identified among others:

- Promoting researches on the norms and lifestyles, concentrating on the similarities and differences within the region
- Promoting tourism in border towns within the region
- Examining impacts of tourism within the region

In short, the importance of cultural values within the region is emphasized and identified as one of the resources to be reckoned with.

The core of this study is to identify and examine the cultural linkages within the region and to see how cultural tourism could be promoted through these linkages. The study area includes major

tourist destinations within the countries<sup>1</sup> such as the Langkawi Island and Pulau Pinang, Malaysia as well as the Songkhla District, Thailand.

Data collection was completed through the use of secondary and primary data. The secondary data was collected by referring to published documents, reports and books provided by the IMT-GT study Centre, development authorities such the city councils, the Langkawi Development Authority (LADA), the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) as well as Tourism Development Corporation (TDC), Malaysia. The primary data, on the other hand, was treated as a base for inventory purposes. As for this study, two methods were used namely, on-site observation and interviews via structured forms with officers in charge of the tourism destinations. All data was analyzed qualitatively with the use of a comparison matrix.

Consequently, cultural tourism within the region has shown its potential to expand further into the future since the findings indicate that its cultural values are unique in terms of its architecture, religious affiliations, cultural events and handicrafts to name a few. The building of a Buddhist temple for instance, shows the creativity and skills of local values. It is suffice to note that the creation of cultural routes is important to diversify tourist activities. The Mahsuri Mausoleum in Langkawi, Kek Lok Si in Pulau Pinang and Samila Beach in Songkhla are examples of potential locations for this diversification. These routes are also crucial as a marketing strategy or tool to be employed by various governmental and private agencies. Cultural interactions within the region mark a novel attraction to potential tourists to learn and experience cultural tourism.

The objective of this paper is to explore the role of cultural tourism in economic development amongst border regions. The formation of regional linkages amongst bordering countries is part of the strategy of economic development pursued by countries in the face of globalization. The IMT-GT is the case in point comprising of the southern provinces of Thailand, northern states of Malaysia, and the Indonesian provinces of north Sumatra. However, due to some traveling difficulties, the Indonesian location; Medan in Sumatra was replaced by Pulau Pinang in Malaysia. This, however, has not affected the outcome of the studies so greatly since the study could still achieve its objectives.

## GLOBALIZATION AND REGIONAL GROWTH

Regionalism was thought to be the way forward in the face of globalization. The fostering of relationships across border regions enables the established regional center to become important node to tap into the global economy. The regional linkages can take the form of flow of capital and investment, movement of labor, goods and services as well as technological link. Regional cooperation becomes an important model to attract investment and technology. Hall (2001:23) describes this regional framework as

*“ the growth of “ local internationalization”, “virtual region”, through the development of economic ties between contiguous, e.g. ` border regions`, or non-contiguous local and regional state authorities, e.g. growth regions and triangles, in different national economies which often bypass the level of the nation-state but which still retain support at the national level”.*

Within this regional framework tourism is thought to be another important regional linked that would bring growth and development within the region. Tourism is also said to be important in “ fostering regional understanding and cooperation”. Hall (2001:42 ) stress the importance of tourism quote,

*“the development of regional economic and trading blocs and the growth of local internationalization are intimately related to tourism in that tourism and associated*

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<sup>1</sup> Data on Indonesian counterpart (Medan, Sumatra) was incomplete and therefore ignored in the discussion

*accessibility and mobility concerns are usually a key component of the creation of vertical and horizontal linkages with regional growth networks”*

The paper proceeds to look at one aspect of tourism i.e. Cultural Tourism in the regional framework of IMT-GT within this setting.

## CULTURAL TOURISM

Culture in tourism is an important issue. The relationship between tourism and culture can take many forms and the outcome can be viewed as negative and positive when meeting of hosts and visitors occurs and possibly leads to the transformation of the hosts' culture. The destruction of local culture as a result of tourism is well documented. However, studies by researchers' consider this as a lopsided view of the impact of tourism. Studies have shown that tourism have lead to the strengthening of local culture ( Yamashita, Kadir and Eades : 1997).

Culture is defined broadly as Quoted in Meethan (2001:117),

*“.....as a set of practices, based on forms of knowledge, which encapsulate common values and act as general guiding principles . It is through these forms of knowledge that distinctions are created and maintained, so that, for example, one culture is marked off as different from another”*

Meethan (2001:128) rightly observed that there are array of tourist activities that come under the heading of cultural tourism. However, he argues for a distinct demarcation of cultural tourism and hence a distinct profile of cultural tourists Quote,

*“.....the cultural tourists are those who go about their leisure in a more serious frame of mind. To be a cultural tourist.....is to go beyond idle leisure and to return enriched with knowledge of other places and other people even if this involves `gazing` at or collecting in some way, the commodified essences of otherness”*

In search for culture routes in IMT-GT, the study hope to identify distinct forms of cultural tourism based on the definition established earlier and also in order to meet the distinct needs of cultural tourist. For example studies of western culture by Richard (1996) as sited in Meethan (2001) described the cultural tourists were *‘a high socio-economic status, high level of educational attainment, adequate leisure time, and often having occupations related to the culture industries’*.

It must be borne in mind that culture is not static but one that is dynamic and evolving. Meethan (2001: 127 ) draw attention to globalization of culture and also the mobilization of culture for internal and external purposes. Yamashita et al (1997: 29-30) further illustrates the processes that transform culture.

## IMT-GT

The three regions forming the growth triangle is a complex entity with diverse economic and social organization. The emergence of the regional triangle is a reaction to the changing global economic scenario. Governments ( Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia) through ASEAN framework create regional economic zones across borders to tap production and consumption inter-linkages established through flows and movement of capital, labor, raw materials, and services of various types and supported by technology.

The regional economic zone (IMT-GT) was conceived to create regional growth center encompassing the north western states of Kedah, Perlis and Pulau Pinang, a major economic player with global linked, supported by Medan in Sumatra and HatYai/Songkhla in southern Thailand providing the labor, and raw materials as well as cheap location for economic production zones. It is also envisaged that Pulau Pinang will be the center for intra-trade for the export and import of goods and services from the predominantly agricultural regions of Medan and southern Thailand. At the same time investment in production and consumption from the more developed metropolitan

areas to the less developed areas of Medan and Southern Thailand is an important strategy for economic growth of the regional zone. This is consistent with ASEAN commitment to increasing trade and investment between member countries with different levels of economic development.

There have been major changes in the policy of developing the triangle due to internal governmental pressure and policy changes have affected the overall development of the region (Southern Thailand regional problem, Indonesia Aceh problem and to some extent the northern Malaysian states in competition to attract investment hence economic development problem). Some parts of the region received substantial investment while other remains stagnant and the focus of development have been uneven and skewed. In spatial terms the regional triangle have shrunk and clearly, the IMT-GT region described above represents a smaller regional entity compared to entity as first envisaged by the three nations. King (2005:101) alluded to the formation of a corridor rather than a triangle and this is the Seamless Songkhla-Pulau Pinang-Medan corridor (SSPM).

Despite of the above changes, the trans border regional economic zone is still drawn together in part because of long historical and cultural ties. Undeniably, this historical and cultural linked is crucial and the basis for the formation of the IMT-GT conceived earlier (King 2005:99). This cultural factor could be the basis for establishing the regional economy that could foster trans-border economic linkages both in the sphere of production and consumption.

Trans-border movement of people between the three border region is increasing whether as labor movement or as tourists. Clearly, besides the recent creation of production zones through private and government investment, the movement of people across borders has been going on for a long time and is an important economic linkage. Towns in the border region of Thailand and Malaysia are dependent on trans-border tourists (Rahmat and Alip 2004). Similarly, travel links between Pulau Pinang and Medan is important for the local economy of the two regions. The tourist movement between regions is an important phenomena and the tourists linkages could be further enhanced through the strengthening the cultural linkages.

At this present juncture cultural linkages have not been clearly established maybe due to lacked of understanding of its important role in economic development. The emphasis in the triangle is on industrialization and trade linkages between regions as well as attracting global investment into the region. The cultural development approach is thought to have overall negative implication for it would broach into the sensitive issue of ethnicity and religion. For example the region's population is predominantly Malay (southern Thailand provinces of Yala, Narathiwat, Pattani , and Songkhla, northern states Kedah, Perlis and Pulau Pinang of Malaysia and Aceh and northern Sumatra centered in Medan). Identifying Malay cultural routes in the IMT-GT region would be in direct conflict with the aspiration of Thailand's approach to cultural development. In addition to the Malay cultural routes, the Chinese ethnic cultural linkages are also dominant (Maud 2005: 153-179; Wongsuphap 2005:275-295). The Thai cultural route is also evident through Pulau Pinang, Kedah, Perlis and Kelantan through pockets of Thai community in the northern states and it eventually merged in southern Thailand. One can envisage the cultural plurality of the cultural routes in the IMT-GT.

In order to be able to benefit from cultural linkages through movement of people and tourism activities the actual cultural tourism routes must be nurtured and strengthened. It is significant to trace these cultural tourism routes and then harness the cultural linkages to benefit the region.

## METHODOLOGY

As mentioned, the study concentrates on the cultural destinations within the IMT-GT. Due to some traveling difficulties, the Indonesian destination (Medan) was excluded from the study while Pulau Pinang, Malaysia was selected as a replacement. In the final stage, Langkawi, Malaysia, the Songkhla/Pattani, Thailand district as well as Pulau Pinang were selected as cultural tourism destinations in the study. These destinations were generally analyzed at first, based on their historical and cultural backgrounds. The next step of analysis was based on on-site observations and structured

interviews with the relevant officials at the destinations. Some informal interviews with the tourists at the destinations were also completed to strengthen the findings.

The inclusion of the destinations in the study was largely based on two major characteristics namely: the current physical characteristics of the location (building conditions and level of community participation) as well as its current tourism characteristics (image and tourism development potentials, linkages with other destinations) and finally some recommendations for the destination future development.

Before the identification of the cultural routes, the destinations were analyzed using a comparison matrix that was scaled as follows:

Table 1.0  
Explanation on Scale and Evaluation of Destinations

| Scale | Evaluation  | Remarks  |
|-------|---|--|
| 1     | Poor conditions, need to be developed/No linkages | The destination is not fully developed<br>Single destination, without any linkages with other destinations         |
| 2     | Unattractive, need to be repaired/Weak linkages   | The destination is partially developed, but still in need of repair<br>One or two linkages with other destinations |
| 3     | Satisfactory/Some linkages                        | The destination has basic tourism facilities<br>It has linkages with several other destinations                    |
| 4     | Good, need to be maintained /Strong linkages      | The destination has sufficient tourism facilities<br>Linked through historical or cultural backgrounds             |
| 5     | Attractive/Direct linkages                        | The destination is fully developed<br>Naturally linked to other destinations                                       |

The evaluation was based on selected characteristics of the tourism destinations that would be strongly linked to the locations. A total of 10 characteristics were selected for this study:

Table 2.0  
Characteristics of Tourism Destinations

|    | Characteristic          | Evaluation   |
|----|-------------------------|--|
| 1  | Physical appearance     | Architecture and landscape appearances, building conditions                                  |
| 2  | Cultural presentation   | Presentation of cultural events and activities   |
| 3  | Tourism facilities      | Nearby accommodation, accessibilities and basic tourism facilities (toilets, souvenirs etc.) |
| 4  | Tourism activities      | Number of tourism activities   |
| 5  | Historical strength     | Existence or establishment of the destination  |
| 6  | Community participation | People who are directly affected by the destination  |
| 7  | Image                   | Current image of destination   |
| 8  | Route potential         | Determined by the matrix calculation   |
| 9  | Linkages                | Current linkages with other destinations   |
| 10 | Overall status          | Collective matrix score  |

The overall status of the destinations obtained from the matrix was used to propose the recommended cultural routes within the IMT-GT.

## FINDINGS

The findings of this study were divided according to different tourism destinations. Although there are countless tourism destinations within the study area, the selected destinations were chosen based on the stated criteria and characteristics within the limitations of the study. These “chosen” destinations were then be evaluated.

### Langkawi

A total of 5 tourism destinations were selected for this location. These destinations satisfied the criteria and characteristics especially in relation to its cultural activities.

- a. Mahsuri Mausoleum
- b. Langkawi Craft Complex
- c. Galeri Perdana
- d. Kampong Batik Atma Alam
- e. ‘Anna and The King’ Summer Palace

The study reveals that the Mahsuri Mausoleum with its rich cultural and historical legends and the Craft Complex were the top 2 cultural destinations in the study with 37 matrix points and 36 points respectively as compared to other destinations like Galeri Perdana with 26 points. Nevertheless, there are some potential locations that can be further developed for future tourism purposes. The ‘Anna and The King’ (made famous by the Hollywood movie production) palace, for example, collected 30 points and fast becoming one of the most popular destinations in Langkawi.

### Songkhla

In the Songkhla district, a total of 12 destinations were selected based on a variety of cultural and historical characteristics.

- a. Wat Hat Yai Nai
- b. Khao Seng
- c. Samila Beach
- d. Songkhla Museum
- e. Institute of Southern Studies, Thaksin University
- f. Wat Matchimawat
- g. Phra Pom Sina
- h. Kuan Yin
- i. Wat Kuat
- j. Chao Mea Lin Ko Niau
- k. Lim Ko Niau Cemetery
- l. Muzapasah Mosque

In terms of its cultural tourism, Songkhla district is not yet fully developed to date. Tourism is heavily dependent on the beach and seafront development as shown in the Samila Beach area, for instance. Furthermore, current insurgencies within the eastern board of the Southern Thailand have worsened the tourism sector. Nonetheless, other parts of the district are still enjoying the tourism boosts that have been one of the most important revenue generated sectors to the country. The matrix calculation revealed that the district is principally visited for its religion linkages. Wat Hat Yai Nai (40 points), Wat Matchimawat (36 points) as well as Chao Mae Lim Ko Niau (40 points) were the top 3 destinations in Songkhla.

### Pulau Pinang

In comparison to Songkhla and Langkawi, Pulau Pinang has more developed cultural destinations. Many of the selected destinations had significant historical backgrounds dated from the

British era in 1786. The destinations also have strong cultural linkages amongst the multi-races community. The 11 selected destinations include:

- a. Pulau Pinang State Museum
- b. Kuan Yin Temple
- c. Kapitan Keling Mosque
- d. Sun Yat sen Gallery
- e. Lebuah Aceh Mosque
- f. Khoo Kongsi
- g. Kek Lok Si
- h. Wat Thai Bupparam
- i. Wat Chaiyamangkalaran
- j. Wat Burma Dhamikarama

The Pulau Pinang State Museum with 37 points, Khoo Kongsi with 44 points and Kuan Yin Temple with 35 points were amongst the top tourist destinations based on the selected criteria.

### THE CULTURAL ROUTES

Consequently, four types of routes were formed based on the evaluation. These routes were formed by tracing the cultural commonalities found within the study area. The routes are as follows:

1. Relevant routes in which the routes are linked via similar functions of the destinations.
2. Intra-state routes are routes that are linked within the particular state boundaries.
3. Inter-state routes are linkages between countries within the IMT-GT
4. Thematic routes are routes that are based on certain popular themes

Table 3.0  
The Cultural Routes within IMT-GT

| Routes          | Linkages   | Destination                    |
|-----------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Relevant Routes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mahsuri-Langkawi Craft</li> </ul>   | Langkawi-Langkawi              |
|                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Galeri Perdana-Sun Yat Sen Gallery</li> </ul>                             | Langkawi-Pulau Pinang          |
|                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pulau Pinang Museum-Songkhla Museum-Institute Southern Studies</li> </ul> | Pulau Pinang-Songkhla-Songkhla |
|                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Khoo Kongsi-Cheah Kongsi</li> </ul>                                       | Pulau Pinang-Pulau Pinang      |
|                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Kek Lok Si-Kuan Yin</li> </ul>  | Pulau Pinang-Songkhla          |
|                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wat Hat Yai Nai-Wat Buddha Chaiyamangkaran</li> </ul>                     | Songkhla-Pulau Pinang          |
|                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chao Mea Lim Ko Niau-Lim Ko Niau Cemetery-Muzapasah Mosque</li> </ul>     | Songkhla-Songkhla              |
|                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Khao Seng-Samila Beach</li> </ul>   | Songkhla-Songkhla              |

|                    |  |                                |
|--------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Intra-state Routes | • Mahsuri-Langkawi Craft   | Langkawi-Langkawi              |
|                    | • Galeri Perdana-Sun Yat Sen Gallery                             | Langkawi-Pulau Pinang          |
|                    | • Khoo Kongsi-Cheah Kongsi                                       | Pulau Pinang-Pulau Pinang      |
|                    | • Chao Mea Lim Ko Niau-Lim Ko Niau Cemetery-Muzapasah Mosque     | Songkhla-Songkhla              |
| Inter-state Routes | • Pulau Pinang Museum-Songkhla Museum-Institute Southern Studies | Pulau Pinang-Songkhla-Songkhla |
|                    | • Kek Lok Si-Kuan Yin  | Pulau Pinang-Songkhla          |
|                    | • Wat Hat Yai Nai-Wat Buddha Chaiyamangkarang                    | Songkhla-Pulau Pinang          |
| Thematic Routes    | • Anna and The King Summer Place                                 | Pulau Pinang-Langkawi          |
|                    | • Buddhist Wat   | Pulau Pinang-Songkhla          |
|                    | • Mosque   | Pulau Pinang-Songkhla          |

All the destinations in this study are unique with their own cultural and historical characteristics in which are proven to be useful in the formation of the tourism routes. Particularly, if the routes are then applied to daily tourism activities to create for instance, an attractive tour package based on certain themes. Such efforts would be fruitful to promote the learning of various cultures embedded within a region. It is certain that the linkages between cities or districts or states would be strengthened along with the promotion of these routes. However, it should also be noted that the formation is flexible enough to allow infinitive linkages within the region. This is a grand opportunity for the tourists, in particular to expand their quest for knowledge through tourism in a more structured manner. The cities within the region would benefit almost directly through the influx of tourists following these routes.

## ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings suggest that there are various levels of cultural routes which are distinct from each other. The distinctiveness is based on ethnic characteristics. For example the ethnic Malay cultural routes represented by the Langkawi-Mashuri-Satun tracing the Malay feudal cultural linkages. Also the example from the Chinese cultural routes traced through Pulau Pinang and Hatyai is a representation of Chinese belief system. Another significant example of Chinese cultural routes is the Chinese Peranakan culture from Pulau Pinang to Southern Thailand. The religion linkages through the construction of Wats or temples throughout the region are another perfect example of such connections.

The cultural routes are also community based. Each community is distinct located in a different societal environment. The cultural routes traverse come into contact with pockets of ethnic communities across region. The community is distinct for example the cultural routes of ethnic Malays, through Malay community in Langkawi and pockets of Malay community in Satun. Drawing

community into the world of tourism would have positive and negative outcome and would transform the community to adapt to the new process and new dynamic.

The importance of cultural routes is characterized by elaborate religious rituals and is part of complex life cycle and is undertaken at particular time of the year based on community's religious knowledge. The religious rituals are scarred and opening it up while commercializing the cultural rituals would have implications on the sociological and psychological dimension of the community.

Hence, the need to be aware that cultural routes must be seen in a context of differing relationship to tourism. Tourism is a global phenomenon that transforms cultures in the dynamic process of convergence and divergence and at the same time there is local reaction to this process which would determine the final outcome of the tourism and culture relationships.

Nevertheless this study is hardly the ending of the issue on hand. Many more enquiries should open up to learn about the cultural relations between different countries. Studies pertaining to this subject matter should be continued to answer a handful of questions. How to market these ethnic based products? Who are the cultural tourists? What are the characteristics of the cultural tourists? Are the cross border tourists corresponds to the type of cultural tourist define earlier? What percentage of cross border tourists are cultural tourists? What is the impact of commercialization of the cultural routes? Are the cultural routes sustainable? How do the cultural routes fared with linkages to global tourism. Who are the global cultural tourists and their characteristics? How do government react to the outcome of commercialization-commoditization? How are different actors – planners, policy makers, agents, and other stake holders involved in the culture tourism relationship? What are national policies with regards to the relationship between culture and tourism?

It is hoped that whatever policies might be drawn out should be beneficial to all parties. These routes are purposely created to diversify tourism activities within the region in which destinations that are already well-known like the Mahsuri Mausoleum, the Samila Beach and Wat Hatyai Nai could be diversified while destinations which are still in the infancy stage such as Khao Seng could be developed for its future needs. The routes could also function as a marketing tool to tourist authorities everywhere. It would definitely promote more productive cultural interactions between different ethnics within a region.

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# FACILITATING SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BY EMPOWERING LOCAL MEMBERS: SOCIAL NETWORK ANALYSIS OF INFORMAL STRUCTURE OF COMMUNITY

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## ABSTRACT

This paper attempted to define a theoretical framework for accomplishing community empowerment drawing attention to assessing informal social structures by looking at the process of utilizing tourism development opportunity when it first comes to the attention of community members. By analyzing informal social structure of having an access toward such an opportunity, we can gain perspective on access to decision-making processes and articulate the power structure of a community. This framework of empowerment with social network analysis suggests to: 1) identify current and past community tourism opportunities which benefit certain community members and may or may not be balanced toward benefits of whole community; 2) obtain full lists of community members who play(ed) key roles in participating actively in the opportunity of tourism development. 3) analyze the informal social networks among those identified community members, using social network analysis. The result of analysis will help to understand community structure of information flow and power relations and ultimately guide toward sustainable community development.

Key Words: sustainable development, community empowerment, social network, informal structure of community

## INTRODUCTION

The concept of community based economic development and sustainable tourism development are introduced as an alternative concept for development by addressing negative consequences of classical economic development. Scholars studying community development have typically engaged the concepts of public involvement, collaboration theory, and stakeholder analysis in their research (e.g. Freeman, 1984; Jamal & Getz, 1995; Sautter & Leisen, 1999; Selins & Beason, 1991). However, these approaches have three significant deficiencies for assessing social structure. First, widespread participation in community decision-making processes does not ensure equal involvement of participants in these processes and, hence, does not justify that the voice of the community is heard by having representative of its members. Each community member does not have equal access to economic and political resources. Second, when collaboration fails, causation tends to be sought solely “in individual processes rather than considering broader structural features within which the processes are embedded” (Reed, 1997; p. 568), such as prevailing power structures.

Finally, it is difficult to determine which individuals are legitimate key stakeholders, as stakeholder status and community representation are often contested and vexatious issues (Sofield, 2003). More often than not, stakeholders are identified based on their positions in community institutions, such as local governments (e.g. mayor), dominant industries (e.g. President of Chamber of Commerce) and social institutions (e.g. church and school district leaders). Although stakeholders may be qualified as those who are affected by tourism plan, it is hard to make distinctions between those who will possibly be affected and those who will not be affected before development occurs. The idea of drawing line itself is absurd since indirectly and directly all community members will be impacted by the development. Also, who should represent “the community” is often vexatious (Sofield, 2003).

Taking these critiques into account, future conceptualizations of community empowerment must focus on: 1) ensuring equal access to decision-making and power; 2) gaining critical awareness of prevailing power structures; and 3) identifying and visualizing latent/informal social structures.

Restructuring unbalanced power structure is the main theme of community empowerment and social structure analysis assess those unbalanced structure.

## EMPOWERMENT

This paper recasts the concept of community empowerment and creates new theoretical framework for future research in sustainable community development. This comprehensive framework will be used to investigate how to start community empowerment in terms of selective member identification and equal power structure. In doing so, this study provide a valid framework to approach community empowerment which essentially aims to build 'responsive community' (Etzioni, 1988) where members make decisions based on normative commitments and affective involvements.

To understand the context of community empowerment introduced in academia and in actual planning of community development, it is necessary to look back to 1987 when the Brundtland Commission and its report, "Our Common Future" proclaimed worldwide guidelines of sustainable development. Many nations, noted planners, government authorities, financial interests, and researchers have strenuously advocated the concept of sustainable development around that time. World Commission on Environment and Development (known as the "Brundtland Commission") in its report provided sets of principles of sustainable development including the concepts of carrying capacity, pollution laws, local and indigenous empowerment, and empowered citizenry. Although it was initiated to ensure an ecologically sustainable environment to global village, it notes socially, culturally, and economically sustainable development since without accomplishing other dimensions of development, environmental sustainability cannot be achieved. To implement sustainability, the issue of community participation was emphasized as a strategy (D'Amore 1983; McIntosh & Goeldner 1986; Marien & Pizam, 1997; Gunn, 1993; Inskeep, 1991; Murphy, 1985). At the same time community involvement has been largely paid attention to by organizations and agencies including the World Bank and the United Nations Development Program in response to the failure of structural adjustment programs which are characterized as the market-led and export-oriented development in Third World countries.

The main critique of community development was laid on its emphasis of utilizing existing systems of control and economic, political and social structures that have resulted in a further concentration of wealth and power in the hands of political and economic elites. Because community development starts with hands of those local elites, the benefit structure becomes conspicuously narrower (see D'Amore, 1983; Gunn, 1988; Murphy, 1985 in tourism). In response to criticism about the failure of structural adjustment programs, community participation is recognized as a means for ensuring that Third World projects reach the poorest in the most efficient and cost-effective way, sharing costs as well as benefits, through the promotion of self-help (Craig & Mayo, 1995). UNDP defines participation as "access to decision-making and power" as well as in terms of economic participation.

However, community participation is often seen as doing little more than reacting to plans, proposals, and developments that will be implemented (Macbeth, 1996) or public involvement is often no more than 'a form of tokenism' (Joppe, 1996). In a sense, passive response from community members is anticipated since there is no rational for communities to accept and acknowledge the benefits of development decided by agendas formulated from "outside." Taken further, the notion of involvement is criticized by the fact that it precludes implementation of community decisions if they wish to not proceed with a designed development or a set of involvement formats in it because involvement of community members is taken for granted by various community development projects designed by outsiders. Therefore, community members do not have an authority to drop the project if they wish. In case of tourism, Brass (1994) pointed out that tourism is not necessarily good, and that communities should have the right to reject and thus effectively prevent tourism as part of their development strategy if they wish. The model proposed by Sofield and Birtles (1996) for indigenous people's consideration of their cultural resources for tourism underpins the right of local communities to reject any involvement and supports empowerment at the grass roots level. In addition to the

problematic decision process, institutional support for community participation lacks explicit recognition of the need for power redistribution and how power holder can release their power to the 'have-not'.

With this criticism in mind, the concept of community empowerment address two limitations of community participation presented in previous research, that is meaningful degree of participation and having critical consciousness of power structure.

Empowerment as the strategy for achieving a meaningful degree of participation rather than mere involvement has been found in only a few literatures (see Brass 1994; Macbeth 1996; Sofield & Birtles 1996; Sofield, 2003). Sofield (2003, p. 80) and it is defined as a social process that is designed to facilitate people controlling their own lives. Sofield (2001) argued that without empowerment, sustainable tourism development by communities is difficult to attain. Simmons and Parsons (1983) defined empowerment as the process of enabling persons to master their environment and achieve self-determination and it occurs through individual change, interpersonal or interactional change, or change of social structures that have an impact on the individual. This notion of structural change is parallel with the concept named as another development or alternative development which emphasize structural transformation so as to realize the conditions of self-management and participation in decision-making by all those affected by it (Nerfin, 1977). Community empowerment is a long process needed to recognize, promote, and enhance people's abilities to meet their own needs, solve their own problems, and mobilize the necessary resources.

When it comes to strategies to achieve community empowerment, Murrell and Vogt (1990) proposed Murrell-Armstrong empowerment matrix, in which six categories of empowering methods are described: educating (the sharing of information as well as helping others to learn, use and create new information); leading (involving others in the decision-making process); mentoring/supporting (the provision of support and guidance to others to help them achieve their goals); providing (resources are found and supplied); structuring (includes promoting organizational arrangements that allow or limit activities); and actualizing (builds upon the previous methods and involves the individual and the organization as the individual performs what he or she is best prepared to do at the highest level). However, this matrix is deficient in a sense that it assumes someone in or outside of community takes the role of empowering process leaving community members followers. Questions about who empower whom and who is empowered are not addressed in this matrix.

Scanning literature of community empowerment research albeit there appears to be few studies, two methods appear to address this question of identification. First, active community organizations during past community development process over two decades were identified by describing how self-established community could be attained by those actors (Pavlovich, 2003). Although this strategy may provide insights how community members successfully responded to unexpected social events in order to obtain autonomy of their fate decision, without long term past experience of community development, it is hard to be used let alone it is case specific. There is more broad and general suggestions from "finding as many participants as possible" for evaluating community empowerment (Fetterman, 2002, p.91) to working with stakeholders according to collaboration theory (Freeman, 1984; Sautter & Leisen, 1999).

Collaboration theory is weak in the aspect how power structure can be challenged or released from one to the other and its relational pattern of structure and representation. In addition, implementing sentiments expressed by those people identified in development process remains problematic although there is supposedly a way to identify who needs to be the representative (Haywood, 1988). Obviously this notion of selectivity needs considerable scrutiny to ensure open channels of all processes during development through this selected person to other members.

Empowerment aims to enable community members to master their environment and achieve self-determination and it occurs through change of social structures. During the long term of sustainable development process, it is essential to secure collaboration, cooperation, and partnerships

among community members including stakeholders, local, regional, and national agencies and authorities, tourism planners, and non profit organizers or others involved in developments or community. If we can choose community members who are trustworthy representatives and if we know how those people are mutually engaged each other or to other community members and/or organizations, it is legitimate to claim that working with those people will ensure community empowerment and sustainable development.

## INFORMAL NETWORK STRUCTURE

Reviewing planning literatures and academic articles, which cover community participation and involvement, most studies focused on formal network structures for identifying community representatives. Two approaches are found to buttress their justification of selections. First, the positional approach explains power-holders as those who occupy formal positions of leadership and management (Jacobson & Cohen, 1986, p. 107). Second, collaboration theory assumes stakeholders most of whom are market driven are those who need collaboration (see Freeman, 1984; Sautter & Leisen, 1999; Jamal & Getz, 1995). Those who fit into two approaches may be religious leaders, members of the chamber of commerce, and local authorities (some define stakeholders broadly as those who are affected by tourism plan. However, the religious leaders often appear to be the least receptive among the locals to tourism development since tourism has for long been associated with certain immoral behavior, both among the locals as well as the tourist (Din, 1993). Reed (1997) points out that resistance to building a community tourism product may come from political leaders, a dominant industry, the Chamber of Commerce which are all leaders drawn from formal community structures.

The major deficiency in these two approaches is the neglect of covert power brokers who have neither a reputation for power nor a position of leadership. Communities can contain highly trusted and respected individuals, whose advice is often sought regarding community issues and conflicts, but who are not necessarily publicly recognized through formal social institutions as being community leaders. Structural analysis of community informal network as the theoretical framework for sustainable community development is therefore focusing on informal network to identify those who might be covert power brokers or those who are influential individuals with much trust and diverse of channels to reach community members without knowing their network positions of power. As such, this paper argues that by analyzing informal social structure of tourism development, we can reduce the risks of skewed representatives of community opinions and help reach agreements more efficiently without harming the notion of diversity.

In regard to the formality of social structure, if the formal social structure serves as the skeleton of a community, the informal networks are the central nervous system, driving the collective thought processes, actions, and reactions of its cooperative work units (Krackhardt & Hanson, 1993). In this research, a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods are used to investigate those informal or latent structures of a community, in contrast to the positional approach and conventional stakeholder analysis, which examine formal structures. The methods will be implemented sequentially, in order to allow earlier methods to inform the development of later methods, and in order to triangulate findings (Greene, Caracelli, & Graham, 1989).

Social network analysis methods have been developed by sociologists and anthropologists since the 1960s (Brass, 1995; Scott, 2000). Typically, degree, range, closeness, betweenness, centrality, and prestige are measured for individual actors, and size, inclusiveness, components, connectedness, density, centralization, symmetry, and transitivity are considered in assessing the networks. Ethnographic work with in-depth interviews is first used for sampling purposes. Inquiries are made at this stage, regarding past and current tourism development projects or programs which were introduced to the community as an economic opportunity. While conducting in-depth interviews with key informants, a social network analysis questionnaire is designed and refined to collect network data. The community network structure is analyzed to address such questions as, "Who is taking which network roles?", "Which individuals are in the center of information flow?", and "Who

are the community power brokers?" through the use of UCINET (a network analysis program) which are freely available in academia.

## FRAMEWORK OF ANALYZING INFORMAL SOCIAL STRUCTURE

This framework of empowerment with social network analysis follows four steps: 1) identify current and past community tourism opportunities which involves certain community members who initiate to move this opportunity forward ; 2) obtain full lists of community members who play(ed) key roles in participating actively in the opportunity of tourism development. 3) conducts socio-centric network survey by approaching each individuals with those names all on one sheet with questionnaire. Questions include who worked with whom for what matters, who trusted whom, who helped whom, who advised whom, where other useful interaction occurred to whom and from whom, and their cognition of community member's information source when they need to know what's going on their community; and 4) analyze the informal social networks among those identified community members, using socio-centric network analysis. Qualitative methods help to investigate, interpret, and describe current/past social structure of specific community member's involvement in tourism development and network analysis can be done by utilizing various network analysis programs such as UCINET.

Structural analysis of informal networks can help to identify individuals who might be covert power brokers, as well as trusted, influential individuals who have the ability to reach community members through diverse channels. Learning how to map latent social links and knowing network roles in various community events can help to promote smooth and quick information flow to ensure equal access of members toward new economic opportunities and build community capacity.

To increase the awareness of community members about their social structure in order to ensure equal access to resources, it is worthwhile to consider the format of presentations of findings as a way to present in community meeting in the community of study. The engagement in community under research, relationship with research subject, and its impact on new findings will be the direction this study will lead to after this one based on the constructivist approach of ground theory (Charmaz, 2003).

## CONCLUSION

Investigating on relational ties in tourism development in the community allows power broker, isolates and network hub (stars) to be emerged to the surface of community structure. By so doing, we can gain perspective on access to decision-making processes and articulate the power structure of a community in order to empower local communities and consequently pursue the sustainable community development.

By creating visual representations of latent social structures and making research findings available to community members, this research takes two important steps toward accomplishing community empowerment: 1) providing a baseline from which future progress for community empowerment can be measured and 2) providing direction for future community action researchers or community planners, by specifying individuals with whom they can start to work. Most importantly, this research seeks to empower community members by promoting a real understanding of their own social structure and providing them with information and guidance, so that they can develop their own strategies to face future issues or conflicts within their community. Thus, this research does not hastily suggest general professional planning strategies or public policies to improve a specific community, rather, it gives community members autonomy to decide their path of development and planning and results in implications that will be applicable to other communities, regardless of the specific issues or conflicts they face.

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‘INVOLVE ME AND I WILL LEARN’:  
A STUDY OF VOLUNTEER TOURISM ORIGINATING FROM SINGAPORE

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ABSTRACT

Volunteer Tourism, a form of overseas travel that includes volunteering in the community visited as a significant part of the tourism experience, is a new and increasingly popular option for travelers to less developed parts of the world. In Singapore, volunteer tourism is gaining rapid popularity, especially among the youths. This paper explores the potentials of volunteer tourism in building a global culture of peace, choosing to elaborate on the more intangible benefits of volunteer tourism beyond physical aid provided in volunteer projects. Despite its potentials however, volunteer tourism also bring about a series of concerns and criticism that will also be discussed. It is hoped that this study would highlight some aspects of the broad dynamics in volunteer tourism and aid its development in sustainable manners.

Key Words: Volunteer Tourism, International Service Learning, International Volunteering, Singapore, Cambodia.

1. INTRODUCTION

In 1995 world leaders stood up together at the World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen, Denmark, and committed themselves to eradicating poverty. In 2000 the United National Millennium Declaration set out ‘to halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of the world’s people whose income is less than one dollar a day and the proportion of people who suffer from hunger and, by the same date, to halve the proportion of people who are unable to reach or to afford safe drinking water’ (United Nations, 2000). Yet today, with only ten years left towards reaching the target set by the Millennium Declaration, the situation of poverty in the world has not been eased. Beyond committing governments and world leaders to fighting the issue of poverty, there has been an increasing call to fight poverty from the ground, and to start from below.

Given that tourism is prevalent as one of the major industries in many developing countries where most of the poor reside (c.f. Ashley, Boyd and Goodwin, 2000), it can be and should be reformulated to bring about positive impacts to the poor. The UN Commission for Sustainable Development brought forward the need to ‘maximize the potential of tourism for eradicating poverty by developing appropriate strategies in cooperation with all major groups, indigenous and local communities’ (1999). One potential way to do this, albeit on a smaller scale and less popularly discussed, is through volunteer tourism.

This paper explores volunteer tourism’s potential to increase awareness, reduce poverty and build a global culture of peace. While the nature of volunteer tourism makes it likely to remain small in numbers as compared to world tourism statistics, what this paper argues is its potential to build a global culture of peace beyond the physical, tangible aid provided in volunteer projects. Beyond simply applauding short-term international volunteering for its good intentions, some concerns about how it is organized and its development will also be presented.

2. WHAT IS VOLUNTEER TOURISM?

According to Wearing (2001:1), volunteer tourism encompasses ‘those tourist who, for various reasons, volunteer in an organized way to undertake holidays that might involve aiding or alleviating the material poverty of some groups in society, the restoration of certain environments or research into aspects of society and environment’. While this broad definition allows certain

flexibilities for the development of volunteer tourism as a general category of tourism activity, it also makes it vague towards defining who is or isn't a volunteer tourism. It is essential therefore, to first unpack the term volunteer tourism before we can embark on a deeper discussion of the potentials and impacts of volunteer tourism. The questions of who is a volunteer tourist, and what are the various activities volunteer tourism can include are addressed, with further explanation towards the specifics of the type of volunteer tourism studied in this paper.

Breaking volunteer tourism into the separate words, volunteer and tourism, allows us to form a clearer picture of what volunteer tourism refers to. Both have many varying definitions, but it is generally agreed that tourists are 'persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes' (World Tourism Organization, 1994). As for volunteering, one of the key characteristics is that

'[v]olunteering means conducting work for no pay. It is, however acceptable for volunteers to have their out-of-pocket expenses, such as travel and meals, paid while doing this work. Paying for such expenses allow people with limited financial resources to participate' (Hodgekinson, 2003:38).

Additional to the main characteristic of 'conducting work for no pay', the American Red Cross (1989) also uses the definition where

'[v]olunteers are individuals who reach out beyond the confines of their paid employment and of their normal responsibilities to contribute time and service to a non-for-profit cause *in the belief that their activity is beneficial to others as well as satisfying to themselves*' (quoted in Butcher, 2003:111, emphasis in original).

Thus, volunteer tourism has obvious tangents of goodwill or 'justice tourism' (c.f. Scheyvens 2002), and can be considered as a response towards inequality and underdevelopment of poor communities outside of their 'usual environment'. Volunteer tourism is also related to 'new tourism' (Mowforth and Munt, 1998) or 'alternative tourism' (Weaver, 1991), and is a clear response towards criticism of mass tourism that has often been blamed for creating negative impacts in many tourist destinations. Existing literature suggests that many volunteer tourists have stated their desire to pursue something different and 'more meaningful than a pleasure-filled, self-indulgent holiday' (Stoddart and Rogerson, 2004:312). This urge to 'do good' gives volunteer tourism a great potential to become a main area in which tourism can be utilized to promote peace and cooperation, and more will be discussed in the later sections.

The flows of volunteer tourism has traditionally been identified to originate from wealthier, Western countries, and directed towards the third world, where volunteer tourists assist with development or conservation work. This paper however, studies a more unique case of international volunteer tourists from Singapore working in its nearby regions of Southeast Asia, China and India.

The type of volunteer services provided can differ greatly from one volunteer tourist to another. Most projects are involved in infrastructural development, where volunteer tourists build or refurbish physical infrastructure like school buildings, roads or irrigation systems. Research or conservation based projects such as animal rights and conservation projects, marine coral reef research projects and rainforest rehabilitation projects are also commonplace in volunteer tourism. Volunteer tourism is also involved in capacity building projects, including teaching languages and vocational skills.

The period spent volunteering overseas also varies greatly. Many volunteer tourists from western countries tend to volunteer over the span of six to twelve months, at times extending as long as two years, on an individual basis. Volunteer tourists from Singapore on the other hand usually commit to shorter term projects, ranging from two to three weeks, and work in teams of twenty to thirty volunteers. This will be further elaborated in the next section. Even shorter term projects are

increasingly available, and this is especially noted in areas affected by the Indian Ocean tsunami in December 2004. A rising trend has been observed for example in Phi Phi Island, Thailand, whereby tourists, especially backpackers, take a few days off their planned itineraries and engage in simple construction work to help out in the rebuilding of infrastructure damaged by the tsunami.

Thus, volunteer tourism encompasses a variety of volunteer activities undertaken by tourists overseas, and for the purpose of this paper, we are looking specifically at those commonly conducted from Singapore, whereby groups of youths participate in an overseas volunteering project for two to three weeks. Many Christian organizations also conduct missionary trips overseas, some including aspects of community service or development-oriented activities on top of evangelizing work. Although generally missionary trips can also be considered as volunteer tourism, the dynamics of organization and the resulting effects can be significantly different from volunteer tourism projects that do not have a specific religious orientation. Thus, for the simplicity of analysis and to maintain a sharper focus on one subject area, this paper would focus primarily on secular projects, while also considering missionary-type volunteer tourism that organizes its program structure to have minimal evangelizing activities.

### 3. VOLUNTEER TOURISM FROM SINGAPORE

Many Singaporeans, especially youths, are actively involved in overseas expedition for the purpose of volunteer work or community service. Such participants usually work in a team, sometimes under the auspices of their school or student organization, and spend a significant time period, usually not exceeding a month, away from home in their host communities. In line with a compulsory community involvement program implemented by the Ministry of Education in Singapore for all pre-tertiary schools in 1997, many Junior Colleges (students aged 17 to 18) are participating in overseas community involvement projects. The overwhelming majority of these overseas volunteer expeditions from Singapore fall under the arm of ‘international service-learning’ and are supported by the non-government organization, Singapore International Foundation (SIF), under its Youth Expedition Project (YEP) wing.

In the five years of its operation, the YEP program ‘has sent close to 10,000 youth between 17 and 25 years old to participate in over 400 projects in 10 Asian countries<sup>1</sup>’ (Yin, 2005). The community service segment of YEP also includes a number of activities<sup>2</sup>, and actual service each team provides depends on the team leader’s choice, made in consultation with YEP’s project managers. YEP also provides substantial funding subsidies for its youth participants, having disbursed in 5 years some S\$22.27 million (approximately US\$13.31 million) (c.f. Yin, 2005). The source of this funding comes primarily from the National Youth Council of Singapore.

However, YEP is similar to other ‘international volunteering [that] has a long history and is relatively well-documented, [but] there has been only limited attention accorded by tourism scholars to the phenomenon of volunteer tourism’ (Stoddart and Rogerson, 2004:312). In fact, YEP’s core focus is on service-learning, defined as

‘A method under which students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs, and which are coordinated with a formal educational institution to address and support an academic curriculum’<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Namely Cambodia, China, India, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam.

<sup>2</sup> Community service projects include building projects, conservation projects, documentation, and education (c.f. Farid, 2003).

<sup>3</sup> University of Colorado, Chancellor’s Leadership, Residential Academic Program Service Initiative and the Ethnic Living and Learning Community, retrieved on 24/01/05 from <http://www.colorado.edu/chancellorsrap/lcglossary.html>

The difference observed between the two are mainly the agenda and imagination of each form, with service learning emphasizing on the learning process, meaning, one goes overseas to volunteer such that he or she may learn from the experience. Volunteer tourism on the other hand seems to be more about attracting tourists to volunteer as on top of doing usual sight-seeing. However, the end result is similar with a person traveling overseas and spending a significant amount of time volunteering. Given the similar contexts and consequently the impacts of volunteer tourism and international service-learning from Singapore, this paper reflects on volunteer tourism even though most key participants generally associate their work as international service-learning and are not as familiar with the field volunteer tourism. Despite this seeming paradox, this is a conscious choice on the part of the author as studying this area under the term volunteer tourism actually aids in giving a critical analysis of overseas community service expeditions. Such expeditions can now be seen as a form of tourism, and thus become open to criticisms and scrutiny that any other tourism sector has to face. One can put away altruistic and positive imagery linked to terms like international service-learning and the unquestioning nature about positive impacts of volunteer work, and treats volunteer tourism with less preconceived positive imagery.

#### 4. METHODOLOGY

This paper reflects the opinions and comments collected by the researcher through a series of informal interviews conducted with youths who have participated in YEP, a number of contact persons in Cambodia for international volunteering groups originating from Singapore, and local Khmers who were aided by volunteer projects from Singapore. Fieldwork in Cambodia was conducted over May to June 2005. Some sections of the paper also bring in the views of youth participants and the author's observations during a four week community service and cultural exploration expedition to South Africa that was conducted independent of YEP. The author joined the expedition as a full member to carry out participant observation and informal interviews with its members, but as most existing work on volunteer tourism already emphasizes the views of volunteer tourists, this area and subsequently the data collected during the South Africa expedition will only be mentioned briefly.

#### 5. BUILDING A CULTURE OF PEACE THROUGH VOLUNTEER TOURISM

Many studies in volunteer tourism have suggested that it brings about positive impacts to the volunteer tourists and hosts. Wearing (2001:12) for example thinks that 'volunteer tourism can be viewed as a development strategy leading to sustainable development and centering the convergence of natural resource qualities, locals and the visitors that all benefit from tourism activity'. Beyond the physical aid given, especially in infrastructural project, this paper will highlight some less tangible benefits that have not been discussed extensively in other works.

##### 5.1. BUILDING NEW RELATIONSHIPS

One significant difference in volunteer tourism, is the deeper level of engagement the volunteer tourists achieve with the locals as compared generally to other types of tourism. The longer period (around two weeks) where the volunteer tourists live with the community gives them a chance to build trust and relationships over time. Also, most locals in contact with the volunteer tourists would be aware of their service-oriented objectives. This sets a positive base for interaction, as locals tend not to judge volunteer tourists as harshly as how some communities reject foreigners and mass tourists. Thus volunteer tourism is a suitable platform in realizing 'the role of international travel in promoting understanding and trust among people of different cultures... a foundation on which to build improved relationships towards the goal of world peace and prosperity' (D'Amore, 1988:152).

In Singapore's case, even though many volunteer tourists encounter locals who speak limited English, other means of communications such as body language come in handy. This illustrates the will and sincerity of both locals and volunteer tourists to overcome differing backgrounds. Simple

gestures from both sides during the volunteer tourism experience serves to bring locals and volunteer tourists together. Sister Ched, director of Don Bosco Vocational School for Girls in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, for example, related her students' feelings towards the YEP participants who worked in her school in December 2004,

'Some of the students, they were touched at how they [the YEP participants] worked hard without thinking of themselves. And when Ram [one of the YEP participants] lost his bag. The students really admired him, because they told me, he worked hard in the horror booth<sup>4</sup> without thinking about himself. It's so hot and tiresome inside the horror booth. And they feel so hungry and now he lost his bag! ... When he lost his bag, the students went around the streets to look for it. They looked around but still couldn't find it... They were touched really, by their service. Being one with them. It's not only like giving donations, but they really involved themselves. They entered into the lives of the people here. And that is something beautiful' (Sister Ched, 27/05/05, personal communication, Phnom Penh, Cambodia).

Thus, volunteer tourism brings about the formation of new relationships, similar to the 'volunteer-recipient relationship [that] is a result of the one-on-one interaction of two individuals that become involved in a chosen activity or from working together towards a common purpose' (Butcher, 2003:115).

Socka<sup>5</sup>, a local Khmer also shared her experience with a YEP team from Singapore Girls Brigade, saying that she was 'very very happy with them', and that she finds that she can communicate well with the Singaporean youths and have similar aspirations and interests (24/05/05, personal communication, Baray, Cambodia). Although Socka does not have access to email and is unable to write in English, she keeps in contact with the Singaporean youth volunteers through another Khmer working in Villageworks at Phnom Penh. Socka's experience is reiterated by many local respondents. Many times, the researcher received overwhelming hospitality and enthusiasm from many local Khmers once they know that she is a Singaporean<sup>6</sup>, and the locals welcome her as a friend because of their good experiences and continued friendships with many Singaporean volunteer tourists.

Thus, volunteer tourism has the capacity to forge in-depth and good relationships between most unlikely people in disparate geographic locales, often belonging to different ends of the social and wealth spectrum. These new relationships allow a network of understanding between the commonly polar ends of the developed and developing world. For the volunteer tourists, placing a face, an experience and most importantly, a personal relationship with those plagued by problems of poverty makes one more aware of social injustices in the world. On the other hand, for many locals who do not have the financial means to move outside of their village or city, volunteer tourism gives them a chance to interact with foreigners and also see the commonalities between themselves and foreigners. Therefore, volunteer tourism has the potential of increasing understanding in the world today, something essential in a world fraught with increasing suspicion in the aftermath of major terrorist attacks.

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<sup>4</sup> One of the booths in a Christmas charity bazaar at Don Bosco Vocational School for Girls in December 2004, where the YEP participants from the team Venture Kampuchea helped do up and man.

<sup>5</sup> Socka works as a supervisor at Villageworks, Songkheam, a weaving factory that aims to provide employment to women in rural Baray, Cambodia.

<sup>6</sup> Although this did bring up concerns in terms of methodology that the researcher cannot dwell too much in here.

## 5.2. GAINING NEW PERSPECTIVES

Beyond simply forming friendship, volunteer tourism is similar to ‘volunteering, [where] close personal contact and the creation of volunteer-recipient relationships seem to be important to obtain results of well-being and personal growth for both parties as they interact with each other’ (Butcher, 2003:123). There is a possibility that some volunteer tourists will become more socially aware and thus bring about greater changes through questioning social justices after their experiences. Through SIF for instance, the National Youth Council hope to nurture ‘World-Ready Youth’ in Singapore, ‘young people with the values, mindset and skills to succeed in a global environment and yet maintain strong ties to family, community and country’ (Ho and Yip, 2003:23). Similarly Canada and Speck (2001:1) sees that the ‘primary goal of service-learning [in volunteer tourism] is to foster responsible citizenship and, consequently, to promote student’s lifelong involvement in helping to solve social issues’ and it is found that ‘volunteers appear to be consistently more active members of society’. This reflects the embodiment of tourism experiences that affects how an individual behaves and perceives the world (c.f. Crouch, 1999). Both Farid, Director of SIF YEP, and Professor Stanton, lecturer of service learning courses in Stanford University, points out the intensive experience of volunteer tourism and the embodiment of new beliefs after such activities. Some remarks are observed,

‘Such an extended and intensive volunteer experience within a wrenchingly unfamiliar social and physical environment forces YEP volunteers to *re-evaluate their beliefs, shakes them out of complacency, makes them appreciate their home and stimulates their sense of compassion*’ (Farid, 2003, author’s emphasis).

‘Their new knowledge is connected directly to their *intense, ambiguous experience...* because of that connection... service learning has a positive effect on *reducing stereotypes and facilitating cultural and racial understanding*’ (Stanton, 2003, author’s emphasis).

There are multiply lessons to be learnt through volunteer tourism, where volunteer tourists are exposed to new cultures and ways of doing things. Marie Cammal, director of Sok Sabay<sup>7</sup> feels that through the

‘cultural exchange, and Singaporeans can understand a bit more about Cambodian culture. What is missing, what we can do, what we can add to make their life better. And on contrary, Cambodians can show them what it is to struggle in a very difficult country...’ (26/05/05, personal communication, Phnom Penh, Cambodia).

Chua Bee Ngoh<sup>8</sup>, coordinator of Prey Veng Christian Center, also thinks that volunteer tourists can take in values from the local community, discussing that Singaporeans

‘were not trained to be more people-oriented. If they can build a relationship [with the locals], that will be very good. Cambodia is very community-based. It’ll be very useful if Singaporeans can really understand the mindset of being in a community’ (30/05/05, personal communication, Prey Veng, Cambodia).

Through volunteer tourism, participants and locals are often exposed to the each others’ different living conditions, outlooks in life or ways of doing things. The concentrated immersion in each other’s lives gives an intense experience that will often develop or change many perspectives of both volunteer and recipients. While it is cannot be ascertained if such change is beneficial or detrimental, volunteer tourism does have the potential of ‘enhanc[ing volunteer tourists’] own

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<sup>7</sup> Sok Sabay is a orphanage based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia, and received a YEP team in December 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Chua Bee Ngoh is a Singaporean missionary who has worked in Cambodia for 11 years.

understanding of what it means to be responsible world citizens by learning about social, cultural and political situations that exist around the planet' (Coldwell, 2003:342).

### 5.3. SHARING RENEWED FAITH

The award-winning movie, *Hotel Rwanda* touched many viewer's hearts in its realistic portrayal of the genocide in Rwanda. But one line resonated soundly with the reality of being abandoned by the world, when the reporter, Jack, told Paul Rusesabagina, 'they think you're dirt. They think you're dumb, you're worthless. You could own this freaking hotel, except for one thing. You're black. You're not even a nigger, you're an African... After they see this [video footage of the genocide], people are gonna say 'my God that's terrible' and then go on eating their dinners' (*Hotel Rwanda*, 2004). Extreme as this may sound, many people battling poverty everyday do feel a certain sense of being abandoned by the world. Thus, while the actual infrastructural aid provided by volunteer tourists who are only able to commit to small-scale projects that can be completed in the short time span of two to three weeks, the more valuable service they provide to the local community can sometimes simply be done with their presence and their willingness to do something for the community.

Some South African locals greatly appreciated a Singaporean team of volunteer tourists, saying that they 'cannot imagine how you [referring to the volunteer tourism from Singapore] managed to find us from so far away, and why you would give up your university vacations to toil in our houses' (14/12/04, personal communication, Melkhoutfontein, South Africa). Beyond helping in refurbishment projects, these volunteer tourists, along with other individual volunteer tourists who have worked in Melkhoutfontein previously, shared with the locals something intangible yet essential – hope and faith in humanity. That there are people who wants to know more about their culture and livelihoods gave many locals a very positive self-image, and renews their faith in their future (16/12/04, personal communication with South African locals, Melkhoutfontein, South Africa).

## 6. AND DOES IT WORK?

Despite all the above mentioned benefits and other studies that suggest that volunteer tourism brings about benefits, sustainable development and is an effective form of pro-poor tourism, international volunteering projects have received a slew of criticisms on various aspects. As much as the researcher wish to highlight the great potentials of volunteer tourism to build a culture of global peace, it is also necessary to scrutinize this area to avoid it becoming another tag label just as how it is criticized that 'responsible tourism seems to be being adopted more as a marketing tool than as a sensitive planning mechanism' (Wheeler, 1991:94). This section therefore briefly examines some potential pitfalls in volunteer tourism, hoping that by laying out these concerns up front, those involved in volunteer tourism are able to preempt these problems or at least take them in serious consideration while planning for volunteer tourism. Given the dynamics of volunteer tourism however, this section can only discuss some concerns among many that may arise in the vastly different contexts.

### 6.1. EFFECTIVENESS AND SUSTAINABILITY?

In volunteer tourism, especially group-based volunteer tourism projects like those conducted from Singapore, it is often difficult to coordinate between the groups and the local community to ensure that the volunteer project matches the skill set of the volunteer tourists with the needs of the community. Oftentimes, volunteer tourists who tend to be young professionals or youths at tertiary education level, would be tasked with infrastructural development projects that require high levels of menial labor and construction work. Volunteer tourists and locals alike have responded with a similar plea that the volunteer projects do not offer any specialized skills from the volunteer tourists.

Investment executive Yeo Hwee Pey, who volunteered in two projects to Vietnam and India expresses her dismay, saying that 'at some point, you feel ridiculous that you are paying money to

have the locals supervise you ... while you slog clumsily. The work can probably be done faster if the locals do it themselves, provided they have the funds to do so' (quoted from Yin, 2005). Similarly, a local Khmer who wishes to remain anonymous tells the researcher that 'for the construction contractor, they [the volunteer tourists] are more problem than help!' (30/05/05, personal communication, Cambodia). This respondent also reveals that while the villagers are generally not too particular about whether the volunteer tourists actually do the work themselves or not, he thinks that sending a smaller team of five to eight members to supervise the projects instead of the current groups of twenty to thirty volunteer tourists would be more effective.

Other than the inability to deliver on tasks that the volunteer tourists are not adept at, some also criticize volunteer tourism to be a waste of money since the costs of flight tickets for volunteer tourists would easily exceed the cost of the volunteer project itself. If one aim is to achieve development in the most efficient manner, volunteer tourism might not be the best way to utilize foreign aid.

However, instead of viewing volunteer tourism as an inefficient way of spending available funds, it must be stressed that volunteer tourism should instead be developed as a new field that attracts more resources into aiding the poor. Volunteer tourism should not compete to gain access with existing foreign aid funds, instead, it has to build itself on attracting existing tourist dollars. This way, the less efficient manner of work will not compromise development plans, and could be more tolerable since it adds on greatly to the existing resources available for development. Having said that however, it would also be prudent for the agencies involved in volunteer tourism to be more sensitive to each volunteer tourist's strengths and build projects where each volunteer tourist's unique input would bring about greater benefits to the community he or she serves.

## 6.2. INCREASED DEPENDENCY?

Volunteer tourism, like other forms of international aid also has the risks of increasing dependency of the locals towards aid. On an individual level, many volunteer tourists may not be aware of impact of their actions in host locations and subconsciously create dependency. Similar to trekking holidays in rural areas, there is a tendency for volunteer tourists to give 'misplaced generosity in bestowing gifts of money, sweets and pens on children [that] has encouraged begging and unwittingly undermined the natural dignity of indigenous people' (Tallantire, 1993:282). A simple act of goodwill on the part of the volunteer tourist may have greater social consequences that he or she not intended or even be aware of.

This overrated virtue of giving on a larger scale can also translate into increased dependency of the locals, where locals become less willing to work hard to improve their livelihoods and prefer to depend on foreign aid. Many locals are able and more skilled than volunteer tourists in providing the labor to complete infrastructural projects. Yet some volunteer tourists (23/07/05, personal communication, Singapore) have reflected on occasions where they had worked under the watchful eyes of curious locals, who did not lend a helping hand in the construction even though this was done to benefit their community. At times, there is a sense that locals are not willing to toil for their own livelihoods, and instead wish to depend on foreign aid and labor<sup>9</sup>. This sentiment among volunteer tourists could also damage the potential of building healthy relationships between the volunteer tourist and the service-recipient, since the volunteer tourist assumes the role of a superior giver rather than the role of a friend on equal standing.

Increased dependency could also prove to be highly detrimental for the community aided, as it is well-known that 'there is often much more funding from official donors for short-term emergency relief and far less support for longer-term work on hunger, homelessness and poverty' (Lindenberg and Bryant, 2001:102). For communities depending on foreign aid or volunteer tourism, the imminent

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<sup>9</sup> Although this point is highly contestable and the scope of this research does not allow a more conclusive answer to this.

arrival of the day when a more destructive disaster hits another region, or when the area receiving volunteer tourism grow to be less poor than an alternative poorer region, is often too near for comfort. For some of the volunteer tourism recipients of Singaporean originating teams, this day seems to have come. Post-tsunami, YEP has redirected most of its available resources towards tsunami rehabilitation work in Aceh, Indonesia and Sri Lanka (c.f. Yap, 2005). This leaves many projects throughout Southeast Asia, China and India, abandoned and vacant amid discussions. This seeming lack of commitment towards development of areas with existing projects is rather disconcerting, and more questions need to be posed on this area by all involved in volunteer tourism.

Volunteer tourism must thus be developed alongside with other means of capacity building, where volunteer tourism is not only about tourists who volunteer in a one-off project in any locale. On the contrary, agencies involved must coordinate volunteer tourism projects into a comprehensive development project across the region and also enable locals to be actively involved in volunteer tourism. Instead of being passive subjects in need of volunteer services, it is essential for locals to become part of the volunteer tourism process. One example could be for locals to earn their keep through providing services like cooking for the volunteer tourists.

### 6.3. CULTURAL SENSITIVITY?

Volunteer tourism entails 'more intense contact between host and guest over a longer duration [and can] result in greater damage to the fragile host culture than was readily apparent in the "good" versus "bad" tables' (Clarke, 1997:227). If the volunteer tourist are insensitive towards local cultures or have inappropriate attitudes, the long term effects towards the community receiving aid could be sustain more damage than good. A respondent who wishes to remain anonymous relates her experience with a group of international volunteer tourists, describing them as

'rich kids who have nothing better to do. They don't know anything about the developing world and they are just big guys who think they can develop things in one month's time. I don't like that. They are too spoilt. They are not meant for Cambodia... They don't learn anything because they think they want to change this world. You cannot have this kind of thinking. If you go to another culture, you have to learn from the other culture. You cannot say that this culture is rubbish. If you want to think so, then why do they come? You have to learn from each other, and not think that your culture is better than their culture' (27/05/05, personal communication, Cambodia).

In Singapore, volunteer tourism is mostly organized under YEP and heavily subsidized by funds from the government through the National Youth Council. This has led some to criticize YEP as a 'government appendage that organizes "guilt trips" for Singaporean youth to live among less developed regional communities - a creative "soft-sell" on how good life is back home' (Yin, 2005). If this was true, and volunteer tourists only gain an unbearable hardship experience that makes them crave for material comforts of home, the suggested benefits in this paper would all come to naught.

Sister Ched from Don Bosco Vocational School for Girls also cautions about the need to recruit volunteer tourists with emotional maturity, and to be prepare the volunteer tourists in terms of handling the relationship and interaction with the girls in the school. She explains that

'it is OK to be close and have good friendships with the girls, in fact, we encourage them to make friends and be warm to each other, but the volunteers should know what are the limits. They should not be so close to the extent that the girls break rules to stay with the volunteers, or not stay together with the group during group activities' (31/05/05, personal communication, Phnom Penh, Cambodia).

Here, the different standards and accepted levels of freedom becomes a problem for the sisters who manage the school. Strict rules are enforced in the school to protect the students from straying in

a society with many threats and temptations. The volunteer tourists' perception of the sisters' unfair treatment towards the students could be a misinformed one, but their endorsement of the students' complaints could lead the students to question the authority of the sisters who manage the school.

Cultural sensitivity, awareness and the ability to take responsibility for his or her actions, whether conscious or subconscious, all need to be deeply ingrained in the volunteer tourists' minds before he or she can embark on a meaningful volunteer tourism experience that does not create more problems than aid. Volunteer tourism thus needs to be developed in manners that allow the volunteer tourists to first become familiarized and aware of all the relevant concerns. It also needs to be structured in a manner that encourages the volunteer tourists to engage themselves in thought and action with the above-mentioned concerns.

## 7. CONCLUDING REMARKS

By providing an introductory discussion of volunteer tourism, using examples of volunteer tourism originating from Singapore, it is hoped that this paper highlighted the great potentials volunteer tourism has in building a culture of peace, while at the same time constantly evaluating volunteer tourism and its possible negative consequences. Further research needs to be done in this new field, and this paper only provides few among many potentials and concerns of volunteer tourism. Further research could aim at achieving a better understanding of the dynamics of volunteer tourism, thus helping it develop in ways that will benefit both participants and the communities they work in. What is considered as volunteer tourism also needs to be broadened, as the case from Singapore shows that many volunteer tourists may not necessarily perceive themselves to be part of volunteer tourism. It is therefore essential for more work to be done to propound the value of volunteer tourism to a larger audience, and to research in methods that enable successful implementation of volunteer tourism.

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# LOW COST CARRIERS BUILDING BRIDGES IN THE ASIA PACIFIC

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## ABSTRACT

Tourism provides many jobs and brings with it benefits through employment, cultural exchange and opportunities for travel. They make a significant contribution to national GDP, as well as facilitating growth in other industries. The paper attempts to examine the role of low-cost carriers [LCCs] as a major contributor to one of the fastest growing tourism region in the world, the Asia-Pacific. Performance of major players across the region is studied with special reference to China, India and Malaysia. There is an awareness that the air travel business, will not be dominated by legacy airlines alone, but already have another significant player, the low-cost carriers [LCCs]. Foreign travel and holidays are now within reach of a broad cross-section of the population for education, business, leisure and visiting friends and families.

First, a description of the airline industry across the globe is offered to show the size of the competition. The second part of the paper will show some characteristics of the LCC industry, highlighting some of Asia-Pacific's LCC success stories. Attempts to evidence the economic impact LCCs have helped to bring in, can only be addressed an observation of tourist arrivals the friendly skies have been flying in, particularly across the Asia-Pacific. The paper also suggests a need for tourism authorities to work together, within their capacities as policy-makers as regard to aviation and air-traffic, and managers of passenger terminals, to do justice to both full-service and LCC operators. Their business interest is not just to land fly within their states, but also to bring the world closer, crossing boundaries with a hope to induce world peace through tourism.

Key Words: Low-cost carriers; business models; tourism impact, world peace.

## INTRODUCTION

By definition, a *low-cost carrier* [also known as a *no-frills* or *discount carrier*] is an airline that offers low fares but eliminates most traditional passenger services. Typical LCC business model practices include:

1. A single passenger class
2. A single type of airplane, usually Boeing 737 [reducing training and servicing costs]
3. A simple fare scheme [typically fares increase as the plane fills up, which rewards early reservations, known as *yield management*]
4. Unreserved seating [encouraging passengers to board early and quickly]
5. Flying to cheaper and less congested secondary airports [avoiding air traffic delays and taking advantage of lower landing fees]
6. Short flights and fast turnaround times [allowing maximum utilization of planes]
7. Simplified routes, emphasizing point-to-point transit instead of transfers at hubs [again enhancing aircraft utilization]
8. Emphasis on direct sale of tickets, especially over the internet [avoiding fees and commissions paid out to travel agents and corporate booking constraints]
9. Multi-tasking employees [limiting HRM costs]
10. In-flight “*freebies*” are eliminated and replaced by optional *paid-for* in-flight food and beverages

Once upon a time, *Pacific Southwest Airlines*, born in the US became the first successful LCC. It pioneered the concept when its first flight took off on May 6, 1949. Much later the credit was incorrectly given to *Southwest Airlines*, which began service only in 1971 but yet had stayed profitable since 1973. It started with only three planes. Today it has 417. Its recent stock-price gains; making it the industry's longest track record of rising revenues and profits have risen 68%, reflecting investors' belief in the carrier's ability to lure significant market share from larger "network" carriers, which cannot match their point-to-point efficiency. 80% of *Southwest Airlines* passengers, now the world's leading LCC and North America's most successful airline, are on non-stop flights, which makes it a lot cheaper to fly than with connections. It has seen its average passenger trip length rise from 521 million in 1994 to 753 million as of April this year, remains committed to short-haul markets. [Air Transport World, APR 2005, p.26]. And it still serves 68 points in the U.S.

With the advent of aviation deregulation, the model spread to Europe. Ireland's *Ryanair* began low-fares operation in 1991, followed by *easyjet* 4 years later. Already a 10-year old LCC, it started with a single 15-seater turbo-prop, flew from Watford to Gatwick in the 1990s, now handles nearly two million passengers a year through Prestwick. Low-cost carriers now account for 12% of all scheduled flight operations and 15% of all available seats. This represents *one in eighth* of the world's scheduled flights being provided by low-cost operators. (OAG, 11 Apr 2005). But NOT every airline selling low cost airfares is a *Low-Cost Carrier*. An airline is recognized by ETN as *Low Cost Airline* if at least 75 percent of their seats are - sold at their lowest published fares.

As of 2004, LCCs are now flying into Australasia, [refer to Table 1], led by Malaysia's *Air Asia* and Australia's *Virgin Blue*. According to Fallon and O'Conner, authors of the 2005 CLSA Report, LCCs hold 25% of the market in the US, 40% in Australia, Europe 10%, and in Asia, only 5% of the intra-regional market as measured by their share of capacity. They also believed that the low-cost carrier industry will stay and its impact on the airline industry and related tourism business is going to be very significant. OAG reported last May that over two-thirds of the year on year growth in Europe's airline capacity has been fuelled by the LCC sector. Last July, Europe had an increase of 6% in seat capacity by more than 3.8 million to 63.5 million seats. Flights between Western Europe and Asia Pacific were up by more than 1000.

Table 1  
Low cost carriers in the Asia Pacific, by comparison

| <b>LOW COST CARRIERS</b>    | <b>ROUTE</b>                        | <b>Start YEAR</b> | <b>FLEET</b>       | <b>NET PROFIT /LOSS OR REVENUE</b> | <b>LOWEST FARE/ DISCOUNT RECORDED % Over LEGACY AIRFARES</b> |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|------------------------------------|--|
| Aero Asia                   | Pakistan to Gulf Area & India       | May 1993          | NA                 | NA                                 | NA   |
| Air Asia                    | Malaysia to/within Southeast Asia   | 2002              | Eighteen B737-300s | +\$ 14.4 Million/ \$ 79.7 Million  | \$0.021  |
| Air Asia Thailand/Shin Corp | Thailand to Cambodia, China, India, | 2005              | Six B737-300s      | NA                                 | -do-   |

|                     |                                    |           |                                  |                                    |                                     |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                     | Vietnam                            |           |                                  |                                    |                                     |
| Air Deccan          | India within India                 | 2003      | Fifteen ATR-42-320<br>Nine A320s | \$120 million                      | \$15/ 30% lower                     |
| Air India Express   | India to Gulf & Southeast Asia     | Apr 2005  | Three B737-800s                  | NA                                 | 25-50% lower                        |
| Air One             | Bangalore to Domestic destinations | Aug 2005  | Two ERJ-145 jets                 | * \$ 16.4 million targeted revenue | 20-30% lower                        |
| AWAIR International | Indonesia to Indonesia             | Sep 1999  | Three A310-300s                  | NA                                 | NA                                  |
| Cebu Pacific        | Philippines                        | 1996      | Twelve DC9s                      | \$ 0.01 billion revenue            | NA                                  |
| Kingfisher Airlines | India to                           | May 2005  | Eight A320s<br>Three A319        | NA                                 | NA                                  |
| Lion Air            |                                    | Oct 1999  | 24 MD80s & Five DC8s             | NA                                 | NA                                  |
| Nok Air             | Thailand to China                  | Jul 2004  | Three B737-300s                  | NA                                 | NA                                  |
| Okay Airways        | China to China                     | Mar 2005  | One B737-900                     | NA                                 | US\$82) after a 40% discount        |
| One-to-go           | Thailand                           | Dec 2003  | Four B757s                       | NA                                 | NA                                  |
| OzJet               | Australia to Australia             | 2005      |                                  | NA                                 | \$150                               |
| Polynesian Blue     | New Zealand to                     | 2005      | Three B737-800                   | NA                                 | NA                                  |
| Spice Jet           | India                              | *May 2005 | NA                               | NA                                 | \$68/ 40-60% lower [domestic fares] |
| Tiger Airways       | Singapore to Thailand              | Sep 2004  | Two A320s                        | NA                                 | \$7.20                              |

|                             |  |             |                    |                   |           |
|-----------------------------|--|-------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------|
| Valuair Ltd.<br>(Singapore) | Australia,<br>China,<br>Hong Kong,<br>Indonesia<br>Malaysia,<br>Thailand | May<br>2004 | Three<br>A320s     | NA                | 15% lower |
| Virgin Blue                 | Australia to<br>Australia,<br>Fiji,<br>Vanuatu                           | 2000        | Fifty<br>aircrafts | +\$150<br>million | NA        |

Note: 1. Airfare rates in US \$  
2. NA – Not applicable

## LCC AND TOURISM IN THE ASIA PACIFIC

This region has the highest population of any region- 3.6 billion-and most of the people are in just 2 countries. With the exception of Brunei, ASEAN member countries Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand all are home to a number of 16 LCCs. Last year's agreement among ASEAN countries dubbed as "Roadmap for ASEAN Competitive Air Services Policy"; anticipated limited open skies between member countries by 2015. The common denominator for each of these nations is that, the tourist numbers have definitely shown significant growth. Much better growth has evidently been shown now than ever before low-cost carriers was conceptualized. The first 6 months of 2005, the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines reported about 62 million international passengers traveled on legacy airlines in the region. The tourism business boomed not only in the three nations discussed in this paper, but also passenger traffic flow between them has been also encouraging. Although, it has been predicted that their survival, which has been totally dependent on their low-cost model factor, might not face a continuous success as that of legacy carriers due to the common-sense theory of cost versus net yield. LCCs will strive to endure a much longer era driving more affordable travel within the Asia-Pacific.

Some governments still may not realize that air transport is a mass transport system that is vital to the global economy. The bilateral system that started in the 1940s must change. Airlines need access to global markets and the freedom to merge and consolidate across borders. Gratefully, the momentum in Asia is driven not by liberalization per se but by the support of government investment agencies and major airports that believed LCCs as tools to combat the ongoing battle for hub domination and the economic benefits of tourism. Peter Harbison, MD for the Center for Asia Pacific Aviation, asserted that as demand for new, low-priced air travel spreads like wildfire; governments are quickly acting to remove restrictions on new airline entry. The move meant minimizing barriers to competition, domestically and internationally. The battle for hub dominance also stretches to Dubai, where government is focused on boosting tourism as a way to offset dwindling oil revenues. Tourism rose 30% in 2002. Malaysia and China emerged as winners. The catalyst of the LCC revolution in Asia started with Malaysia's Air Asia, thanks to the support of its government. It is committed to both enabling low fares for the public to meet social agendas and assisting government-owned Malaysia Airlines [*Air Transport World, Aug 2004*].

2004 witnessed the beginning of LCCs era across Southeast Asia, rapidly spreading to tap great numbers of potential passengers in China and India. It also marked a strong rebound of Asia and the Pacific after SARS of 2003 as the region achieved tourism growth of 28% receiving an estimated volume of 154 million tourist arrivals. 2004 was also a year of further consolidation of trends previously identified with respect to the consumer's profile: dynamic packaging induced by purchase over the Internet and the continued expansion of LCCs; independent travel; shorter stays and more holiday breaks; special interest travel, late booking and high price sensitivity, etc. LCCs keep dynamiting the sector. [WTO Tourism Barometer, Vol.3.1 Jan 2005]. Back then, many industry

observers said the model used by Ryanair that realized some LCCs to follow suit in Europe and the USA would not work in Asia. The population is too poor, they argued, and the routes were strictly guarded. They were wrong. 2004 also enabled LCCs to experience their definitive breakthrough in the region. China has overtaken Japan as the largest air travel market in Asia and could be the next big market for LCCs-if the government permits it. [Air Transport World, May 2005, p.36]. China's regulators had begun to allow any company with at least 3 aircrafts to operate an airline. According to PATA, it is expecting to receive 15.5 million "foreign" arrivals this year. In the first quarter its airline industry handled 29.22 million passengers with an increase of 9.1% and revenue rose to RMB 27.89 billion from last year. India, another massive market to be tapped by LCCs, last June alone, announced the birth of three LCCs and opened its aviation sector to competition. Malaysia's Air Asia won this year's *Airline Market Leadership Award*, for not only affording air travel to hundreds of thousands of people, but had also spawned a number of imitators that has spread the revolution even farther. [Air Transport World, Feb 2005, p.34].

Domestic tourism in India is already disadvantaged due to high airfares is of late, seriously challenged with the launch of low international airfares. A Delhi-Trivandrum roundtrip costs over Rs 34,000, which is more expensive than flying to Delhi-London and back. Domestic tourists now prefer to go for low cost international destinations like Malaysia, Singapore and the Middle East instead of domestic destinations. India today, is the 3<sup>rd</sup> fastest growing domestic aviation market in the world at 23% growth in last year's financial. Although international tourists only account for about 8% of the total tourists in India, the low-cost travel is fast penetrating into India. For the very same potential to boost its growth as with China whose domestic travelers stand at 140 million each year, compared to India's 14 million. A large part of this growth is going to be in the LCC segment within these two vast nations.

15 million Indians travel by rail everyday. It is only a matter of time before a part of these rail users opt for the speedier mode. For decades, air travel in India had been expensive and largely dominated by state-owned legacy airlines. As of last March 2005, some 16 million-air tickets were sold in India. Budget carriers offer at least 30% lower fares compared to legacy airlines. In spite of the popular concern that "service and good hot food are extremely important to Indians," India already has 3 LCC operating since 2003 and another half a dozen more in a matter of time.

In 2004 India achieved a healthy tourism growth rate of +24%. The government can step in to encourage LCCs to increase connectivity as well as to support tourism. Incentives proposed could range from lower fuel tax to a 2-year subsidized ground handling charges. The improved relations between India and Pakistan, the economic development in India and the open-sky agreement signed at the beginning of 2005 between India and the US, will contribute to the further positive performance of tourism in the nation. A liberalized airline industry may be seen as the first step for states to leverage the potential of the aviation sector in India. According to Dinesh Keskar, VP for sales at Boeing, India's aviation will have to purchase 490 aircraft over the next 20 years. This is due to falling air ticket price and an increase in passenger traffic estimated at 20% annually, will cause an increase in demand for civilian aircraft to at least double. Government and private sector investments estimated at US\$20 billion over the next 5 years.

A small and yet successful nation, Malaysia too shares the same LCC phenomenon since the birth of *Air Asia* 3 years ago. It is, the leading low fare, no frills, home grown airline that has revolutionaries the air travel industry and paved the way for growth of other low-cost carriers in the region, has clinched the honor of being named *Asia Pacific Low Cost Airline of the Year 2004* by the Center for Asia Pacific Aviation (CAPA). Its success story began with its new and innovative cost optimizing techniques used such as quicker turnaround times and maximizing of flight utilization for their aircrafts. All fares are quoted one way to allow passengers the flexibility to choose where and when they would like to fly. The airline does not stipulate any restrictions to qualify for their cheapest fares. However their fares are based on supply and demand. Fares are raised as seats are sold on every flight. The same principle used as the business model trademark of the world's LCCs. 2004 marked an exceptional tourism growth rate achieved of +56% in Malaysia according to WTO [Tourism

## THE DYNAMICS OF LCCs IN THE ASIA-PACIFIC REGION

The business model of low-cost carriers gives them enormous advantages over full service carriers enabling them to maintain fares that entice lower income travelers to fly. The point-to-point system of the low-cost carriers, for example, gives them huge cost advantage over full service carriers' hub-and-spoke model. It eliminates the need for a ground transfer system and a virtual computer reservations system to provide connections. Low-cost carriers also opt to have greater use of the Internet and restricted distribution channels such as their on sales outlets, or one or two selected distributors. This sales channel and the single class model effectively reduce the need for complicated inventory management. Perhaps the real advantage that low-cost carriers have is their focus on short-range operations. In Asia, this means flights of less than three hours. This allows them to rely on a single aisle common aircraft fleet. While common airframes ensure that cockpits are the same and flight deck crew can effectively operate on any sector. The fleet has the added advantage of having common engineers, which ensure less spare part holdings of different types. Significantly, low-cost carriers have often opted to outsource engine and airframe services so that internal cost burdens are further reduced. The results of a simplified fleet structure, point-to-point operations, outsourcing of the technical functions and, because of the newness of the phenomenon, staff members who are younger. All these culminate to lower staffing costs. The fundamental core of low-cost carriers is to maintain a low cost base on which is grafted high load factors achieved through low prices. In doing so, they have changed the operation structure of the airline business by using three variable, *pricing*, *load factor*, and *operating cost*, instead of the traditional two factors, pricing and load factor that full service carriers have traditionally engaged in (Wong, MasterCard International Asia-Pacific, Jan 2005).

Asia has some of the largest and fastest growing urban concentrations in the world, with 130 cities having a population of more than one million. The population, geographic and income characteristics of the region are ideally suited to the development of low-cost carriers (Dixon, Oct 2004). In South-East Asia, as in other parts of the world, Stirland (2003) insisted that low-cost carriers are not snatching business away from established carriers. Believed to be a myth, because most Asian carriers are making profits in the hundreds of millions. Arguably, the impact of these fast growing low-cost segments of air travel market would be an understatement to say that it is, *not a threat* to incumbent airlines simply because of their limitation of network & frequency. Before the success of Air Asia, the Malaysian low-cost carrier, budget airlines were generally considered as being unviable because of high charges levied at major airports as well as lack of alternatives at regional centers. Now led by Air Asia, many of the up and coming low-cost carriers helped to expand the destination choices in Asia for many travelers, all at a fraction of the price. Tourism & travel educators must realize that there is bound to be a shake out among this new crop of airlines, as there are still plenty of potential routes and market niches to explore for those who can adapt (Koldowski, 2004).

The real driver of change in the low-cost carrier industry is China. When China starts to take the lead, the region will follow. About 70 percent of China's 780 domestic routes are suitable for low-cost carriers. As many as 100 million Chinese could be flying abroad every year by 2020, a fivefold growth from the 20 million in 2003, according to estimates by the World Tourism Organization.

## SALE OF LCCs' SEATS

*Fare.Net*, the latest travel search engine, offers the lowest airfares and options available which is dedicated to the Asian marketplace. Travel engines have proven to be the main distributing channel for LCCs although there is still a strong opportunity for travel agents to offer low-cost travel options combined with the expertise and service that only travel agencies can provide. Direct online bookings allow LCCs who often do not display their seat inventory on GDS but only on their own websites a firm channel to penetrate the market. Airlines want to sell tickets to customers through their websites because that's the cheapest way to service them. Southwest, garnered 59% of its passenger revenue through online sales last year, increased by 63% in the first quarter this year. Ryanair.com generates

20 million unique visitors and 700 million hits every month to purchase everything from flights to hotels.

Malaysia's Air Asia has launched *mobile.airasia.com* service, allowing mobile phone and PDA users with any GPRS, 3G, EDGE or wireless facilities, to view the web pages directly. The airline claimed to be the first airline in the world to offer a total and comprehensive booking system targeting mobile phones and wireless devices. This will enable them to reach out to even more consumers, cut down operating costs and expand their services to markets with low computer/internet penetration. This will effectively grow their consumer base in countries like China, the Philippines and Indonesia. Reduced operating costs would also mean they would be able to offer even lower fares to their customers.

Air Deccan, India's LCC is also gearing up to launch an option of booking, payment and re-scheduling of flights through *sms*. Earlier last August, the airline tied up with Reliance Web World to offer an option of booking air tickets through a nationwide retail chain of 241 real broadband centers across 104 cities in India.

Most of the low-cost carriers have an advantage over the traditional airline companies, as they do not have legacy systems to worry about and are, therefore, able to adopt the latest technologies ore easily (CNET Asia, Apr 2005). Sabre Airline Passenger Solutions serves more than 25 low-cost carriers worldwide, including Virgin Blue, Jet Airways, Frontier, WestJet and Valuair. More low-cost carriers will adopt Global Distribution Systems, particularly in markets where direct distribution is limited by the availability of the internet (The Business Times, Feb 2005). However, should they decide to adopt the old style GDS model with its resulting high costs, the value will be lost for at least a three-to-four year cycle possibly longer (O'Neil-Dunne, 2004).

The IATA estimates of 2004 passenger traffic increased by 15% in terms of RPK [Revenue per kilometer]. One of the factors that explain this recovery, is the increased competition led to greater demand and, at the same time, slimmer profit margins for airlines. Europe, aside from competition from LCCs, there was also increase in seating capacity, leading to a decline their load factor. Asian airlines showed an impressive increase of 21%. The rise of LCCs in the South-East Asia continues to give a new dimension to the competitive forces acting on the regional air transport market.

#### LCCs' NICHE

For the cost-conscious traveler, LCCs are creating a network of cheap international connections that make flying around Asia less costly than ever. Kuala Lumpur and Singapore are already building terminals to handle LCCs. Hong Kong and Macau are competing to become the budget hub into China New research released by Cendant Travel Distribution Services, an independent research firm *Marketshare* revealed that, with the option of LCCs, travelers in Malaysia intend to travel more often by 53%. Bloomberg reported on 08AUG 2005, that if there is a place those LCCs must exist, it is in Latin America because it's a poor continent where people cannot afford expensive tickets. Reduced airfares have already led a massive growth in the number of air travelers in India, with nearly 40% being first-time air passengers.

#### CASE STUDY: LCCs ROLE TO CHINA'S TOURISM

The World Travel & Tourism Council estimates that travel and tourism spending in China will grow almost 3.5 times between 2004 and 2014, from US\$67 billion to more than US\$300 billion. This may be largely due to new routes and open skies agreements: China has had negotiations with EU countries, ASEAN countries, Australia, New Zealand, the US and many other nations to expand bilateral traffic rights. Although China's travel industry, historically been dominated by the state, making civil aviation regulations too stringent to support LCC business model. The Chinese government has since; gradually relaxed its control over the civil aviation industry, but it still has the final say in aircraft introduction, route distribution, aviation oil supplies, ticket pricing and allocation

of airport resources. In the cost structure of Chinese airlines, nearly 70% are uncontrollable costs, which leave little room for LCC operations of privately-owned airlines and greatly restrict the growth of low-price, LCCs in China. Chinese airlines are also faced with severe challenges with competitive pressures from LCCs throughout Asia. All countries' civil aviation regulations are stringent, and the rise of LCCs has been fueled by regulatory changes that allow for higher aircraft utilization. LCCs may still be able to play their cards right by choosing the right flight routes and service differentiation. China's LCC Spring Airlines business model would work in the packaged tour market; it may have more opportunities to develop a charter-type operation than a Western-style LCC [O'Rourke, J. CEO, Ink Publishing 8AUG 2005]. In the first half of 2005, there has been significant growth in the inbound travel industry of China through key cities like Shanghai and Beijing benefiting the most. New budget airlines like Singapore's Valuair have started flying to Xiamen and Chengdu making it more affordable and convenient for travelers to these regions. The Chinese outbound travel market is predominantly a landscape of packaged tours and group travel on an itinerary that covers 3 countries in 5 days, e.g. Singapore + Malaysia + Thailand. During Q2 2005, Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing were all 'Top 20' destination cities for ZUJI bookers across Asia Pacific. According to China National Tourism Administration's chairman, He Guangwei, tourism is becoming a new industry as a result of China's open and reform policy and becoming a friendship bridge, which strengthens ties between people of different races in the world [19 JUL 2005]. WTO forecasted that China would become the largest tourist destination and the 4<sup>th</sup> tourist generating country in the world by the year 2020. From 1998 to 2004, the average annual rate of outbound tourists soared 23.36%. Travel to China was up 27% in 2004, with 42 million tourist arrivals, surpassing Italy with 37.1 million arrivals to slip to 5<sup>th</sup> place. After the SARS period Chinese outbound tourism had a big increase last year of 28.85 million, with annual increase rate of 42.68% recovered and has since remained at the level of 10-15 % increase in the next 10 years. Within the same period, Chinese civil aviation industry will be faced with extraordinary opportunities and challenges. These include rapid growth of the national economy; due to its entry into the World Trade Organization; hosting the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing; the 2010 World Expo in Shanghai and the Asian Games in Guangzhou. The CAAC says that profits in the Chinese aviation industry grew to US\$1 billion last year. The consistent growth of their economy has also boosted business travel to the country as well as encouraged an outbound travel boom. The Chinese outbound market increased by 43%, helped by the continuing relaxation of travel regulations. The number of countries that have signed Approved Destination Status [ADS] agreements permitting them to receive leisure tourist groups from China is now increased to 90 [over 60 already in force]. The government is also eager to promote the overall domestic tourism market, and believes a LCC network will stimulate tourist numbers. So the same travel regulation relaxation also has expanded the number of cities in Mainland China from which it is allowed to make private trips to Hong Kong and Macao during 2004 to a total of 32 cities in 6 provinces.

The LCCs' revolution in China was daringly led by Okay Airways, China's first private airline in 50 years. In spite of new LCC entrants will be facing stringent regulations, the government is still moving slowly and cautiously on the issue of LCCs. How LCCs can and will beat the odds, will be made possible through these factors:

a. The lack of a fully liberalized air ticket pricing mechanism

Some progress had actually been made in relaxing the ticket pricing system. Airlines no longer have to follow a revenue-pooling approach, where operators were allocated a share of total industry revenues made on each route, according to the number of seats available on that route. Price on short, local routes now fluctuates freely after a new regulation came into effect last 20APR 2004. The Domestic Air Transportation Price Reform Plan allows price on other routes to float 25% above or 45% below the per passenger-kilometer base price set by the government.

b. An insufficient number of suitable secondary airports

Although Asian LCCs are disadvantaged compared with their peers operating in Western

Europe, China analysts say that the existing airport infrastructure can support a vibrant no-frills airline sector. According to P. Harbison, MD at the Center for Asia Pacific Aviation, China's east coast has the greatest potential, initially, for LCC market development. The CAAC's east regional administration is planning to build 8 new feeder airports and expand some trunk-line airports by 2020.

#### c. Airport costs

Currently, airports in China tend to follow pricing guidelines set by the CAAC, but market commentators believe LCCs would benefit from a degree of flexibility in pricing. Airports have offered discounts on airport charges in the past, especially to new entrants and foreign airlines. The government is also planning to create a more formal set of regulations governing fees and charges set by domestic airports.

#### d. Foreign LCCs

China's legacy carriers are likely to face a greater competitive threat from overseas LCCs. Air Asia, the South-East Asian LCC, is one of the airlines to have benefited from CAAC's new competition-driven policy for international traffic rights. That gave Air Asia the right to fly to Xiamen last April, and has also been granted two other Chinese destinations, Chengdu and Kunming.

Industry experts do not expect a flood of foreign rivals because CAAC is only likely to open the market to foreign LCCs slowly, in order to protect homegrown carriers. Experience elsewhere has shown that LCCs help to expand the tourism market and should not be seen simply a competitive threat for the legacy carrier operators. Alan Lam, Airline Industry Analyst from Guotai Junan Securities commented that the LCCs would, at least, have the support of the local travel agency business. Driven by the belief that the budget market will lead to even faster growth in China's tourism market, tourism operators have been the ones trying to drive a new budget industry in China. [].

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# PEACE IN TOURISM EDUCATION: A GUIDE FOR COURSE COORDINATORS

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## ABSTRACT

This paper offers guidelines for the development of a Peace through Tourism unit in tourism degree courses at university level. It provides a rationale for the inclusion of such a unit, noting its timeliness and value in encouraging critical thinking. The proposed unit also addresses the concepts associated with Peace through Tourism; the ability of tourism to make the desired contributions; and current and potential initiatives at international, industry and individual levels. There are suggestions for additional topic inclusions and resource identification.

Key Words: peace, SWOT analysis, globalization, responsible tourism, attitude change.

## INTRODUCTION

*Twenty years ago, hardly anyone outside Asia had been to Sri Lanka or Thailand; the fate of these countries was not personal to them. It is now. One waiter at a smashed up beach hotel proudly showed me the dozens of text messages he had got from his former guests, asking whether he was safe (Andrew Gilligan, The Australian, 11 January 2005, p.13).*

The quotation above, published in the aftermath of the December 2004 tsunami which caused so much destruction and loss of life, demonstrates not only that tourism can contribute to a more caring world, but also that technology has made it easier to communicate and act on our concern for the welfare of others. We are reminded of the hope that technological advancement would lead to 'the global village' (McLuhan and Powers, 1989) marked by peace, harmony and interdependence.

Recognition of the Peace through Tourism proposition can be largely attributed to the foundation of the International Institute for Peace Through Tourism (IIPT) in 1986 and D'Amore's 1988 article, 'Tourism: The World's Peace Industry'. D'Amore argued for a vision based on *mir*, a Russian concept involving a state of tranquillity within individuals, among people and between people and nature.

It has been submitted elsewhere (Kelly, 2004) that peace-related issues should be incorporated into tourism education, preferably by inclusion of relevant material in each unit of a course. However, it is recognized here that there may be a preference for development of a single subject on Peace through Tourism which can be taken as an elective by students enrolled in other disciplines. This paper addresses the following questions:

- What is the rationale for inclusion of a Peace through Tourism unit in a degree course?
- What is the conceptual framework on which Peace through Tourism is based?
- Does tourism have the ability to contribute to a more harmonious world?
- What initiatives have occurred or could be implemented at the international level?
- What initiatives have occurred or could be implemented at the industry level?
- What initiatives have occurred or could be implemented at the individual level?
- What limitations must be recognised and addressed?

It is noted that these questions are convenience-based, that there is considerable overlap among them and that the suggested content material is not exhaustive and should be regarded as merely illustrative of approaches which may be used.

## THE RATIONALE

Course developers must persuade boards and students that their proposals are worthwhile. The proposer can expect a barrage of questions. Is it the role of tourism educators to 'change the world'? Are they crossing the boundary between academic work and partisan advocacy? Are questions of morality relevant to the business of tourism? Should the focus be on cultivation of the intellect, the search for truth and the practice of business?

Those who believe that tourism can contribute to a more harmonious world may subscribe to the functionalist theory which argues that socioeconomic cooperation contributes to community building, that global efforts to reduce poverty can help reduce the tensions which foster conflict, and that global networking encourages international understanding and reduces intercultural misperceptions (Amstutz, 1999). It is clear that these are fields of human interaction in which well-informed and appropriately managed tourism can make a positive difference.

The relevance of the proposal is supported by Ellyard (2004) who submits that the major industries of the 21<sup>st</sup> century will be concerned with human wellbeing, earth repair and intercultural communication, and that tourism can play a central role in these. The objectives and practices of these industries would be consistent with those of the current proposition, an educational approach which seeks to prepare those involved in tourism for the future.

It should also be emphasized that the inclusion of the peace issue in tourism education is not a radical innovation. It is a reflection of what may be seen as a paradigmatic shift in international relations - from an acceptance of war as a legitimate means of pursuing national interests to a perception that peace is preferable and achievable. This change has been driven partly by fear over the emergence of weapons of mass destruction but it has also been driven by exposure through the media to the horrors of war from which the majority of people were insulated in the past. Despite the perseverance of violent conflict, there has never been a time when anti-war sentiment has been so strong or so widespread (Black, 1998; Bobbit, 2002, Schell, 2003) and it is not inappropriate to recognize this in tourism education.

Further support may be gained through reference to Hultsman (1995) who argues that the claim that tourism is a discipline (with its own body of theory and research methods) will be strengthened if it is imbued with an ethic which distinguishes its practitioners from those in other professions. A precedent may be seen in the now-ready acceptance into tourism courses of the ecotourism ethic and associated environmental responsibilities.

It is also submitted that the content of such a unit can encourage critical thinking and questioning of attitudes. For example, there are opportunities to involve students in what has been termed 'transperceptual learning' - learning which comes from efforts to perceive reality from the perspectives of others (Crews, 1989:37). As is demonstrated below, students can be challenged to develop relevant case studies, analyze policies and practices for the extent to which they have the desired impacts, and propose more effective alternatives.

### Additional Topic 1: Tourism and Globalization

Examine the extent to which tourism is influenced by and/or contributes to the processes of globalization and the emergence of the market state (Kelly and Nankervis, 1999; Bobbitt, 2002). Can tourism act as a counter to globalization?

## THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Students may be challenged to debate the meaning of the term 'peace.' Difficulties relate to the range of contexts in which the term is used - world peace, peacemaking, peace of mind, peace offering, disturbing the peace, peace and quiet and so on (Cox, 1986). For many, it is simply the

absence of war or violence. However, this view disregards the central role of conflict in human affairs.

Galtung (1996) compares peace to a state of health, incorporating not only the absence of illness but also a physical and mental condition conducive to the avoidance of illness. By this analogy, a state of peace exists where conflict is unlikely to occur, or where conflict can be resolved without recourse to violence. Galtung also accepts that a completely peaceful world will not be achieved, but that there can be progress towards a more positive balance between peace and conflict and less suffering from violence. It is submitted that tourism can do much to counter poverty, injustice, inequity, intolerance, ignorance, prejudice, marginalization and chauvinism. To continue the analogy with health, if these are contributors to conflict (illness) then tourism offers a range of therapies through which they may be treated.

What, then, is 'Peace through Tourism'? It is not another form of tourism such as sport tourism, nor is it a special interest (although it may appeal to special interest travellers) and it does not recommend subordination of sound business objectives. The aim of Peace through Tourism is to reduce, if not eliminate, the circumstances which lead to a perception that violence is desirable or unavoidable. Like ecotourism, it recognizes that there are long-term obligations to travellers, destination and wider communities and succeeding generations and discourages practices marked by insensitivity, inequity and short-term maximization.

#### Additional Topic 2: Ethical and Responsible Tourism

Is there a difference between 'ethical' and 'responsible' tourism (Jenkins, 2002)? How effectively are they reflected in the codes of practice developed for tourism? How would adherence to these impact on travellers and tourism suppliers? Are the objectives achievable? What contribution can ethical and responsible tourism make to Peace through Tourism?

### THE POWER OF TOURISM

A review of relevant literature suggests that tourism can contribute to the peace objective primarily by:

- helping to raise living standards in less developed economies and deprived communities;
- respecting and helping to protect community biophysical and sociocultural environments; and
- encouraging the development of favorable attitudes among visitors and destination residents.

It would be appropriate to consider the ability of tourism to bring about these desirable objectives. One approach, proposed by Kelly (1999), is the conduct of a SWOT analysis, a procedure generally carried out before the development of a business plan. The 'business' to be examined in this instance is the power of tourism to contribute to 'a harmonious relationship' (Var et al, 1994:30) among the peoples of the world. The elements of the analysis are listed in Table 1.

Table 1  
A SWOT Analysis of Tourism

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>STRENGTHS:</b><br/><i>Attributes which help bring people together in non-adversarial circumstances</i><br/>Scope - pervasiveness, 'universalism'<br/>Depth - linkages, networks<br/>Influence - a 'culture industry'</p>  | <p><b>OPPORTUNITIES:</b><br/><i>Developments which can contribute to the ability of tourism to make the desired contribution</i><br/>Globalisation and the 'market state'<br/>Economic potential<br/>Growing sophistication of tourists<br/>Sustainability concerns<br/>Tourism education</p> |
| <p><b>WEAKNESSES:</b><br/><i>Attributes which hinder tourism's ability to achieve the desired outcomes</i><br/>Image<br/>Insulation - (eg, tourist enclaves, group tours, 'othering')<br/>Ownership imbalances<br/>Inequitable benefit distribution<br/>Lack of political influence</p> | <p><b>THREATS:</b><br/><i>Developments likely to increase hostility or contribute to a decline in tourist activity</i><br/>Terrorism<br/>Tourist demands - volume and nature<br/>Perception of Western 'imperialism'<br/>Extreme preservationism</p>  |

Scope refers to the extent to which tourism has been adopted by individuals as a leisure activity, while depth refers to the network of relationships seen in the growing global reach of some elements of the tourism industry. Influence is, of course, closely related to reach. However, it must be noted that scope, depth and influence can be deemed strengths only insofar as they contribute to the goal of a more harmonious world. Unfortunately, they do not always work in the desired direction. The imbalances pertaining to tourism cause resentment and it is argued that these weaknesses are unlikely to be eliminated while tourism operations remain primarily concerned with profitability based on attracting ever-increasing numbers of visitors.

With respect to opportunities, it is important to identify elements of the globalization process which managers of tourism can use in contributing to a genuinely global world characterized by both diversity and harmony. Even where peaceful conditions prevail, it is apparent that a major threat to tourism as an instrument of peace is the volume and nature of the demand it generates (Muller, 1997), and this is not confined to numbers of visitors.

It is clear that, at the very least, there are major difficulties to be overcome if the peace objective is to be achieved. However, it is submitted that the following conclusions will be widely accepted:

- That there are few, if any, alternatives to match tourism as a generator of intercultural contact.
- That tourism can make a positive contribution in addressing the causes of conflict.
- That peace-related objectives can be achieved by purposeful management of tourism.
- That responsibilities for purposeful management lie at all levels, from individual traveller to international bodies.

**Additional Topic 3: Tourism as a Political Force**

The controversy over tourism to Myanmar suggests that tourism can have political influence. Consider the extent to which the activities of governments can be influenced by tourism through, for example, direct lobbying, boycotting, recognition of the value of peaceful conditions and the presence of tourists as witnesses. How might this influence be enhanced?

## INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

The relevance of a Peace through tourism unit may be underlined by reference to the recognition the concept is given at global and regional levels. For example, the objectives and operations of the International Institute for Peace through Tourism (IIPT) may be assessed for their relevance in a globalizing world.

Another example is the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, endorsed by the United Nations Commission for Sustainable Development (1999). Although the primary focus is on sustainability, there are elements distributed throughout the ten Articles which relate to the ability of tourism to bring about improved relationships among the world's people through:

- mutual understanding and respect between peoples and societies;
- individual and collective fulfillment; and
- equitable distribution of benefits.

The Code identifies 20 elements to be addressed in the pursuit of these objectives, including values and respect for diversity, host community traditions, information exchange and mutual understanding, employment generation, exploitative practices, traveller safety, travel as a learning experience, provision for travellers with disabilities, reinvestment in destination regions and conservation.

With respect to cooperation among national governments, there is a view that the focus is on the economic value of tourism to the exclusion of other, perhaps more significant, contributions. However, it should be noted that the pursuit of economic objectives may, even inadvertently, contribute to the beneficial outcomes sought by proponents of Peace through Tourism.

For example, a number of commentators (Henderson, 2002; Kim and Prideaux, 2003; Young-Sun, 2003) have noted that political, economic and peace objectives are combined in efforts to encourage movements of tourists between North and South Korea. These developments have involved government and industry representation, the most notable example being the Mount Gungang project north of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ). Bilateral cooperation is tentative, and hindered by mutual suspicion, restrictive legislation (especially in North Korea), disparities in living and technological levels, and low visitation. Nonetheless, there appears to be hope that tourism can help break down the barrier between the two political entities and that the Korean experience can provide a model for divided states such as Cyprus.

### Additional Topic 4: Tourism and Poverty Alleviation

Tourism is commonly seen as a potential contributor to the enhancement of depressed economies. Examine the ability of tourism to help raise standards of living in, for example, sub-Saharan Africa.

### Additional Topic 5: International Cooperation

To what extent can tourism function as a 'bridge-builder' between nations? Critically examine the structures and operations of multi-nation tourism agreements and alliances such as El Mundo Maya in Central America, and identify additional opportunities for tourism initiatives involving transnational cooperation.

## INDUSTRY INITIATIVES

It is at the industry level that the negative impacts of violence are most severe, and hence where most may be gained by management strategies which discourage conflict. Although it is not yet widespread, there are encouraging signs that a commitment is emerging and studies of certain industry activities can demonstrate Peace through Tourism in action. For example, the adoption by tourism businesses of triple bottom line (TBL) accounting is a major shift in practice. Returns on investment

are expressed in financial, social and environmental terms, a development reflected, for example, in the 'greening' policies of some hotel chains.

The UK Federation of Tour Operators has a Responsible Tourism Committee dedicated to encouraging sustainable practices and improving the livelihood of destination communities. Another British industry body, Tourism Concern, campaigns for and provides resource material on ethical tourism and the reduction of poverty in developing countries. The International Council of Tourism Partners is calling for the industry to join its global campaign to eradicate poverty, with a major focus on Africa.

Some operators provide valuable links between sources of charitable donations and carefully selected beneficiaries. Adventure travel companies have established foundations to help with projects in remote areas where the mainstream tourist dollar does not reach. For example, Relief Riders International (RRI) combines horseback journeys for tourists with delivery of medical and educational supplies (and, where appropriate, goats) to communities in need.

There are tourism operations devoted to the provision of labour and funding for schools, clinics and solar-powered generators in remote areas of Nepal; First-Nation tourism developments designed to assist in the reconciliation process; an international network of peace (as opposed to war) museums; and study tours which provide meaningful contact with host communities. Airlines have cooperated with individuals and organizations in the delivery of needed items to schools, orphanages and hospitals in developing countries. The International Youth Hostels Federation (IYHF) has a stated philosophy of 'youth hostelling for peace and understanding' and 'building bridges,' Blanchard (2004) describes the activities of the Peace Boat, a Japanese cruise liner whose visits and on-board activities are designed to encourage travellers wishing to acquire a clearer understanding of the world's problems and possible solutions. Such initiatives can be evaluated for the effectiveness of their contribution.

Among operations with clear implications for Peace through Tourism are those devoted to reconciliation, defined by one author as 'a journey of healing.' (Peisley, 2005). First Nation operations, in addition to informing visitors on the cultures of indigenous peoples, encourage the healing process by revealing the injustices of the past, their reflection in current problems and the desire to move on to a better future. Another category of operations is concerned with healing the wounds of war and associated atrocities. Students might discuss the extent to which such reminders of our potential for inhumanity are necessary in the pursuit of peace.

It may be argued that the hospitality sector has a special responsibility. Tomljenovic and Faulkner (2001:31), in a review of tourism as contributor to world peace, note that 'one of the core conditions for ensuring positive outcomes is the quality of services provided at the destination.' Phillips (2005, forthcoming) argues that the transnational nature of the industry affords it the opportunity to be an unofficial 'congress of peace' with agencies throughout the world. A useful exercise could involve a SWOT analysis of the hospitality sector's ability to perform this central role.

There are numerous industry practices which could be evaluated by students for their impacts (positive and negative) on the Peace through Tourism objectives. These include:

- the use of sex to promote a destination;
- the development of tourist enclaves;
- group tours;
- sporting competitions;
- sex tourism;
- visits to religious festivals, sacred sites and places of worship;
- accommodation classes on trains and ships and in hotels;
- mass production of souvenirs;
- use of indigenous motifs in advertising.

#### Additional Topic 6: Festivals and Events

Conduct a SWOT analysis which assesses the ability of festivals and events to contribute to the Peace through Tourism objectives. For example, what is the role of anniversaries commemorating battles, events such as the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and the ending of particular wars? What measures can be incorporated to ensure that these do not have a negative impact?

#### Additional Topic 7: Sacred Sites

Consider the contribution of sacred sites to tourism. Explain the appeal of these to tourists (domestic and international). Are there particular responsibilities associated with the management of sacred sites? Should there be controls on visitor behaviour? If so, how should these be implemented?

#### Additional Topic 8: Peace Museums

Review the development of peace museums in various countries. To what extent do these differ from the more common war museums in their subject matter, display materials, interpretation and visitor appeal? What is the value of visitor attractions commemorating atrocities associated with The Holocaust and apartheid in South Africa?

### INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVES

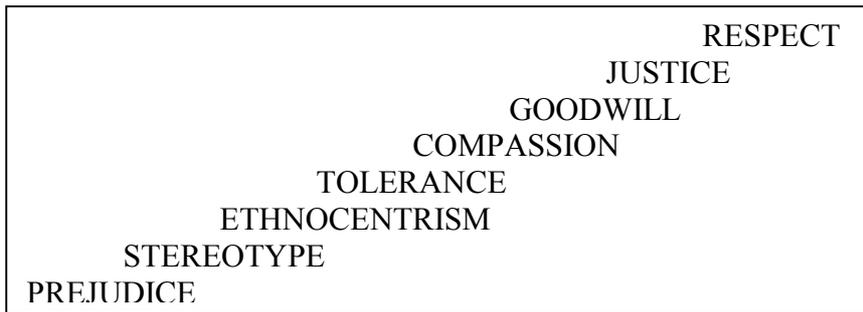
The introductory quotation indicates that the experience of travel has an impact on the individual, at least by extending awareness of the humanity and vulnerability of people from other societies. There are examples of individuals stimulated by travel experiences to initiate ongoing assistance projects such as funding for orphanages, schools and clinics. An educational unit on Peace through Tourism could examine ways in which tourism experiences may be structured to encourage even more positive changes.

Examples of relevant empirical research are rare. Tomljenovic and Faulkner (2000) report that two tours involving students had little or no positive impact. Kelly (1998) found that study tours conducted by an aid organization were useful in raising awareness, a sense of responsibility and a willingness to provide material assistance, but noted that participants were already predisposed towards these objectives. Askjellerud (2005, forthcoming) describes the enlightenment of exchange students forced to question their attitudes as they adjusted to a new environment.

An examination of attitudes and attitude formation (Kelly, 2003) helps to explain the existence of dispositions such as ethnocentrism, stereotypes and prejudice which hinder intercultural understanding and which have provided justification for discriminatory behavior by individuals and institutions. There are also personal dispositions which can be regarded as generally positive in the present context. These include tolerance, compassion, goodwill, a sense of justice and respect.

Figure 1 illustrates a continuum of relevant dispositions on which individuals could be placed according to the views held in general or at any given time. Students may be invited to consider how tourist experiences can be designed to encourage an upward movement on the ladder by development in individuals of positive attitudes and associated behavior, and discouragement or modification of attitudes which are negative.

FIGURE 1  
THE PEACE THROUGH TOURISM DISPOSITION LADDER



*(Source: Kelly, 2003)*

A review of the literature suggests that attitude change, while difficult to bring about, is achievable through purposeful efforts to overcome the barriers to change which exist in individuals. These efforts may include:

- incorporating an educational element into experiences;
- a focus on persons more amenable to adoption of positive attitudes;
- effective communication using appropriate sources and meaningful messages;
- placing people in situations where they are likely to question their attitudes;
- placing people in settings where expressions of negative attitudes are ‘out of place’.

It is submitted, therefore, that positive attitude change can be encouraged through enhanced performance in communication and hospitality. Gunn (1998) argues for pre-travel educational programs covering weather conditions, customs, social contact, privacy concerns, foods, religious beliefs, history and politics of, and ways of communication with the destination community. It is clear that the greater the knowledge people have of each other the less they will suffer from anxieties attached to dealing with the unfamiliar.

With respect to communication, the leadership function of the tour guide is of central concern. As a ‘culture broker’, the guide may select visitor experiences; disseminate information with accuracy and precision; provide interpretation which explains the exotic in familiar terms; and distinguish authentic elements, even in a staged presentation.

Among the individual tourist practices which students may be invited to consider are tipping, response to beggars, haggling over the price of merchandise, taking photographs of people and acceptance of host community dress standards.

**Additional Topic 9: Tourism as a Social Force**

Tourism is not just an industry - it is now a major human activity with implications for social wellbeing. Review relevant sociological, psychological and anthropological perspectives on tourism and examine the value of social tourism - measures to encourage participation in tourism by people who are disadvantaged through such factors as poverty, age or disability.

**Additional Topic 10: Spiritualism in Tourism**

Some writers have emphasized the importance of pilgrimage in tourism. Consider the influence of religion in travel and the extent to which the incorporation of religious principles in tourism planning may contribute to a more harmonious world.

**Additional Topic 11: Volunteer Tourism**

Individuals can make a personal contribution by participating in volunteer projects in areas of need. Examine the principles underlying management of these projects, the motivations of participants and their effectiveness in promoting Peace through Tourism.

#### Additional Topic 12: Travel Writing

Do travel writers have a responsibility to do more than merely entertain their readers? It may be argued that they are in a position to provide meaningful insights and encourage travellers to look beyond the superficial. Consider the extent to which travel writers contribute to understanding and respect for the cultures about which they write.

#### Additional Topic 13: The IIPT Credo of the Peaceful Traveller

*Grateful for the opportunity to travel and experience the world and because peace begins with the individual, I affirm my personal responsibility and commitment to:*

- *Journey with an open mind and gentle heart;*
- *Accept with grace and gratitude the diversity I encounter;*
- *Revere and protect the natural environment which sustains all life;*
- *Appreciate all cultures I discover;*
- *Respect and thank my host for their welcome;*
- *Offer my hand in friendship to everyone I meet;*
- *Support travel services that share these views and act upon them; and*
- *By my spirit, word and actions, encourage others to travel the world in peace.*

Evaluate the Credo with respect to its relevance, effectiveness and practicality. What changes, if any, would you recommend? Offer suggestions on how individuals may be persuaded to adopt it.

#### LIMITATIONS

It is recognized that the majority of people employed in tourism and hospitality throughout the world are not products of formal education in the field and may not be exposed to the objectives of Peace through Tourism. Nonetheless, as the industry becomes more sophisticated there is an increasing expectation of qualifications at management level, where there are opportunities for influencing strategic decision-making.

It is also apparent that the topics in a Peace through Tourism unit must not be treated in isolation from each other. They must be presented in ways which demonstrate the interrelationships among them in the pursuit of such objectives as respect, equitability and intercultural understanding.

There are difficulties in measuring the extent to which the recommended educational approach can achieve its objectives. Some indications will emerge in tutorial discussions and examination answers, but the most meaningful measure of success will be the extent to which the peace objective becomes reflected in the practices of tourism operations and the behavior of travelers.

It may be argued that Peace through Tourism is already recognized in references to the need for community consultation and equitability in the distribution of benefits, justified as essential in the pursuit of sustainability. However, it is clear that incorporation of the peace objectives will not diminish but will, rather, emphasize and extend these commitments.

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Federation of Tour Operators (UK) - [www.fto.co.uk](http://www.fto.co.uk)

International Council of Tourism Partners (ICTP) - [www.tourismpartners.org](http://www.tourismpartners.org)

International Institute for Peace Through Tourism (IITP) - [www.iitp.org](http://www.iitp.org)

Intrepid Travel Foundation - [www.intrepidtravel.com](http://www.intrepidtravel.com)

Peace Museum, Bradford - [www.peacemuseum.co.uk](http://www.peacemuseum.co.uk)

Relief Riders International (RRI) - [www.reliefridersinternational.com](http://www.reliefridersinternational.com)

Tourism Concern - [www.tourismconcern.org.uk](http://www.tourismconcern.org.uk)

World Tourism Organisation (WTO) - [www.world-tourism.org](http://www.world-tourism.org)

# SUSTAINABILITY OF WORLDWIDE CONNECTIONS BY AND FOR TRAVEL: APPLYING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN VIRTUAL TRAVEL COMMUNITY

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## ABSTRACT

This research notes that the dramatic growth of virtual communities carry social capital in a new way in terms of accumulating, cultivating, sharing, and exchanging information, knowledge and local resources in virtual setting. With the emphasis on utilizing information communication technology (ICT) in the phenomenon of participating travel virtual community to connect the world, this paper argues that travel virtual community strengthen the notion of travel as a crucial means to promote mutual understanding and appreciate different cultures in our global community. CouchSurfing tourism virtual community for example is examined as an open space to promote peace through tourism while enjoying maximized benefits of social capital mediated by ICTs. Motivation in virtual setting to share resources and strategies adopted in Couchsurfing network to help increase social capital are analyzed under various social science theories and the three dimensions of social capital (structural, cognitive and relational dimension).

Key Words: virtual community, Information Communication Technology, social capital, motivation

## INTRODUCTION

The universal accessibility of internet nowadays seems to characterize internet as a democratic, liberating tool that can stimulate the creation of virtual communities with no regard for nation, gender, class, race or ethnicity. It has been recognized that virtual community is a new social institution where people are involved in accumulating and sharing diverse forms of information and resources. However, very little is known about this new form of virtual community space (Blanchard & Horan, 1998) and even less research has been conducted in tourism field (Wang et al, 2002).

Virtual community has lately become a fashionable term which is still a problematic scientific concept (Jones, 1995; McLaughlin et al, 1995) without a commonly accepted definition of what a community really is. Some researchers argue that virtual communities actually are pseudo-communities (Harasim, 1993), or simply a community based on computer-supported social networks (Wellman et al, 1996). Some studies used virtual community as a useful metaphor to 'indicate the articulated pattern of relationships, roles, norms, institutions, and languages developed on line' (Paccagnella, 1997, p.2; McLaughlin, Osborne, & Smith, 1995). The most often cited definition of a virtual community is first given by Rheingold (1993). His definition emerged from his seven-year involvement in the WELL (Whole Earth 'Electronic Link) and it is still relevant today. He defined virtual community as 'social aggregations that emerge from the Net when enough people carry on those public discussions long enough, with sufficient human feeling, to form webs of personal relationships in cyberspace' (Rheingold, p.5). Further discussion of its definition is beyond the purpose of this paper but it is worthy of mention that several common characteristics of virtual community given by Preece (2000) will be introduced in the following section in order to provide insights to describe CouchSurfing travel virtual community, which this research examines.

Although there are most likely differences between virtual and face to face (FtF) communities, in this paper, we assume that virtual communities are "real" communities because the participants believe that they are communities (Rheingold, 1993). A virtual community is defined as cybernetworks that are a major source of social capital in cyberspace. Virtual communities may increase social capital, since they foster equality of status; and participation among members facilitates network ties, and encourages multiple partial relationships. The definition of social capital will be given in the section of social capital.

According to Blanchard & Horan (1998), there are two different types of communities. One is physically based community that adds electronic resources for its citizens' use, and the other is a virtual community of interest that has a geographically dispersed membership. In this paper, the geographically dispersed community is only examined, since participation is due to their shared interests in a topic which is traveling, and not their shared location. Some members of the community might never meet each other, and their interactions might be limited to just that topic or community of interest.

Travel virtual community has been dramatically increased in a recent decade and Jeong (2004) classified travel virtual community into three categorizations in terms of sharing information (i.e. [virtualltourist.com](http://virtualltourist.com)), finding travel companions (i.e. [travelchom.com](http://travelchom.com)) and utilizing local resources among members (i.e. [couchsurfing.com](http://couchsurfing.com) to provide travelers a free place to stay). In particular, virtual communities of interest in this research lies under the third category of sharing local resources among members and often mission statement in this category is found as providing public good and promoting cultural understanding and peace through tourism such as "I believe in the phenomenon of travel as a critical and effective means to break down the barriers that divide our global community," "we internationally network people and places, create educational exchanges, raise collective consciousness, spread tolerance, and facilitate cultural understanding," "in this hustle and bustle modern society, we promote mutual respect and consideration among people based on common interest of travel in the world we explore together" or "travel is a way of finding your path of life interwoven by communication between nature, people and culture...if there is enough communication through tourism, racial discrimination and regional conflict will be automatically resolved." The biggest challenge to share trustworthy and honest information and resources in virtual travel community is mainly caused by the anonymity which places givers and takers of networked resources as both stakeholders. In this regard, how to verify correct information and handle increased vulnerability and mistrust in the virtual world are core question to be addressed.

Trust is the key to the success of networked society and is essential for broadening access to shared resources. Trust is the expectation that others will act in a favorable way to one's interests, even if they have an opportunity to do otherwise. If the people in one's environment are trustworthy, then trust is productive, because it enables risk-taking in resource exchange and in overcoming dilemmas of collective action, such as free riding or other self-centered behaviors of members. However, it is hard for individuals to determine who to trust and hard for groups, as a whole, to encourage trustworthy behavior.

This research tackles the problem of building trust in sharing travel resources among members in virtual setting by investigating the following two important questions: (1) Why are people willing to share resources in the travel community? and (2) What dynamics beyond users' psychological motivations foster the sharing of resources and sustain resource sharing networks?

## TRAVEL VIRTUAL COMMUNITY

Most travel virtual community aims to share their travel experiences and users are seeking for embedded knowledge such as local travel information on destination by using virtual community. According to three categories of virtual travel community mentioned above (Jeong, 2004), utilizing local resources among members to help international travel is seen new phenomenon in the practice of travel planning using ICT in a way to empower anyone to become potential service provider and consumer at the same time. By uploading their travel experience, more resource is accumulated in virtual space to be shared by anyone and providers of those travel experiences are also consumers of information on new destination given by other members. However, providing free local resources and local knowledge for other members such as providing local knowledge, accommodation and transportation among members for free involves taking more risks with intimate level of interaction than providing only information. CouchSurfing ([www.couchsurfing.com](http://www.couchsurfing.com)) is one of those unique examples of kind using Information Communication Technologies not only to share information of

travel but also to support mutual help. This aspect is examined further in this study in order to investigate the motivations and factors of making information available in internet.

Preece (2000) operationalized elements of virtual community as people, a shared purpose, policies, and computer systems and it is used as a frame to describe CouchSurfing travel virtual community of research. This community was originally founded by Casey Larkin Fenton who “wanted a way to get right to the heart of our culture, to seek out knowledge and to locate the most interesting people and situations this world has to offer” and is run by 3 other core agents who have technology or design background to work voluntarily. The idea of creating CouchSurfing was born when Casey back in April, 1998 traveled to Iceland. “With his ticket in hand, he had no place to stay and no desire to rot in a hotel all weekend and play Mr. Tourist. So, he came up with the 'brilliant' idea of spamming over 1500 Icelandic students in Reykjavik and asking them if he could crash on one of their couches. After exchanging emails with many of the students, he had several groups of friends offer to show him 'their' Reykjavik. So, after spending an amazing, crazy weekend just south of the Arctic Circle, never again would Casey get trapped into a hotel and tourist marathon while traveling.” After the trip, he registered the domain name in 1999 and launched the site on Jan of 2004 with the help of several key people.

Numbers of users reaches 30,000 in August, 2005 after one and half year since it started. It represents 154 countries and 529 unique languages in the world although 84% of users are accessing from North America and Europe. User groups of CouchSurfing are around mid 20s and 56% of users are male. Shared purpose of this community is seen at its formal mission statement which claims that this community aims “to internationally network people and places, create educational exchanges, raise collective consciousness, spread tolerance, and facilitate cultural understanding” and one of core founders shared his belief in travel as “a critical and effective means to break down the barriers that divide our global community.”

When it comes to policy to direct people’s behavior, only requirements for joining the community is providing their personal information such as country and address while optional items are their willingness to provide ‘couch’ for other members and personal information about age, gender, and language. Privacy and security policy are important in this virtual community since it encourages members to open and share houses with strangers.

This community addresses safety issue in two ways. First, all new prospective members can only become vouched for if they are referred by an existing already vouched for CouchSurfing.com member (or if they meet a member and get vouched for after signing up). Every user is linked to the other users he/she knows in the system through a network of References and Friend Links. These features help other users determine how trustworthy new members are based on the quantity and quality of the people they know. Secondly, verification system is offered. By verifying new member, community operator checks to make sure their name and address are correct via the verification system. Once verified, member’s profile will show that if one is verified. Members may feel safer about communicating with and meeting each other because of those. As a final element, computer system is provided and operated by mutual responsibility of 4 moderators. Members who major in web design, computer programming, and information science in this community or have special skills provide help if needed.

## MODEL OF MOTIVATIONS

This question of why people use travel virtual community was scrutinized under the model of three motivations of virtual community members proposed in a previous segment of this project that focused on users’ perspectives. The model delineates psychological motives (e.g. being recognized, belonging to a social circle, etc.), functional motives (e.g. convenience of sharing, financial exchange of contributions, etc.), and social motives (e.g. sustaining relationships, following social norms, etc.). Psychological motives explain members behavior to upload their travel experiences and pictures in a community site to fulfill wants to be recognized and seen as a part of members in the community

while people with functional motives are using the community as a source of information to meet their practical purpose such as looking for local tips to travel, finding place to stay for free and information about to do things at the travel destination where they have never been. Finally social motive includes relationship and interactivities among members through traveling together or meeting and making friends in travel destination among members.

Although three motives are conceptualized separately to explain why people are using virtual community in general, it is intertwined in practices specifically if the emphasis is given on sharing information and resources in virtual setting. Social exchange theory is applied to explain those interactions among different motives to share resources. Unlike theories of self interest where actors seek to maximize their individual investments independent of its exchange value, exchange theory explains human behavior to share resources based on resource dependence. Users in CouchSurfing provide some sort of accommodation, a penthouse apartment or a back yard to pitch the tent in because they know they would get benefits from other members in the world in future when they travel based on functional motive or generalized exchange theory or they are simply nice to others to feel good after helping other people following psychological motive, or they can make friends with them as an exchange of giving other members a favor according to social motive.

While persons who provide their resources to other members may not get benefit directly, there is a sense in which a balance might occur within a group as a whole which means who get helped will help others anyway in a whole community. Ekeh (1974) calls this kind of network-wide accounting system generalized exchange. Ulrich (1998) elaborates on this phenomenon but terms serial reciprocity which may be derived over time, not at any one point in time.

## SOCIAL CAPITAL

To understand dynamics beyond users' psychological motivations which foster the sharing of resources and sustain resource sharing networks, the concept of social capital is applied. This research defines social capital as the ability to exploit support and resources in favor of social relationships and categorizes it into three dimensions, expanding Nahapiet & Ghoshal's (2000) operationalization of social capital in organizational study. The first dimension of social capital is the structural dimension, which refers to the overall pattern of connections between actors. It contends the presence or absence of network ties, network configuration (density, connectivity, and hierarchy), and quantity of appropriable relationships; that is, how relations that exist for one purpose can be used for another. The second cognitive dimension explains socio-cultural resources providing shared representations, interpretations, and systems of meaning among parties. It considers shared language and codes and shared narratives. The third dimension refers to relational assets created and leveraged through relationships. Key facets in this cluster are norms and sanctions, obligations and expectations, and identity and identification. Unlike the model of motivation described above, the three dimensions of social capital are exogenous social conditions that configure the practice of resource sharing and production, however intertwined they may be with participants' intrinsic motivations.

In a case of CouchSurfing, advantages of ICTs embedded in a virtual community such as email, instant messaging, rich personal information board, and etc. were considered as a great asset to increase social capital partly due to the anonymity given and network ties (structural dimension). Interestingly, members of electronic groups inflate their perceptions of their partners, and group members even report that their partners are more attractive over Computer Mediated Communications than they are in FtF or telephone interactions (Blanchard & Horan, 1998). In CouchSurfing, the lack of physical cues of interactions induce people to agree to be a travel partner imagining he or she might be the right one to travel with. In other aspects of structural dimension is that members improve their trust and subsequent impressions by thoughtfully composing and editing their comments under the various web boards (Rheingold, 1993). Chatting room and availability to write an email to the person who post in web-boards in CouchSurfing also contribute to strong ties. Functions to foster high interactions in a virtual community reinforce norms of reciprocity. However, because of anonymity and lack of physical interactions of CMC, it is still limited to building trust, which is a critical

component of exchanging information. To resolve this issue of trust, several aspects and strategies to enhance intimacies and personal interactions out of virtual communities are examined in CouchSurfing (relational dimension). To prevent deceptions, CouchSurfing community adopts two strategies explained above: become vouched or verified. CouchSurfing expanded in nature its virtual form to physical forms of communities by way of actual travels to meet members and members always can give a feedback to others after actual meetings. CouchSurfing community exists online, and offline back and forth, which may cause a general increase in trusting and norms of reciprocity than do communities existing just on line (Blanchard and Horan, 1998). Deceptions are less likely because of probability of being 'caught' through information passed in FtF networks.

At the same time, small acts of helping in CouchSurfing create perception of strong norms of reciprocity and result in the sense of community (cognitive dimension). Thus, a few group members' helpful actions which are promoted at the first page of community will reinforce the group's concept of itself as being helpful to its members. Further, by virtue of visibility of contributions made by one member to everybody, knowledge of obligations and expectations developed through multiple relations CouchSurfing allows people to build are transferable to others and other relations. Social capital in this sense is both cumulative and transferable. The more social capital a person possesses in one role, relation, or structure, the more social capital is available in others (Hemingway, 1999). As such, what conditions facilitate and increase capacity of social capital will no doubt develop richer and more subtle understandings of how virtual world works.

## CONCLUSION

In summary, this research argues that this analytic framework permits better understanding of the mechanisms of open resource access and sharing culturally embedded resources through which social capital has its effects. It should, thus, enable more refined empirical research about how social capital generates sustainable virtual setting to share knowledge conducted at the level of members in the virtual environment and consequently to promote mutual understanding cultural differences by utilizing virtual communities and traveling.

As of three important contributions of this paper to research regarding socio-cultural behaviors in resource sharing and access extension in networked society, the paper anticipates (1) the development of a more robust model and framework for understanding the motivations of those who take the risks associated with resource sharing with anonymous others, (2) categorization of the wide variety of theoretical and empirical mechanisms that explain the influence of various Information Communication Technologies on different network configurations and levels of trust, and (3) advancement of the conceptualization of social capital in social science research of tourism. Irrespective of the research perspective, it is essential that we gain a greater understanding of the role human relations play in accumulating and sharing local resources via virtual travel community in order to make understanding and experiencing the different cultures of the world possible. Perhaps in addition to questions about marketing, promotion and development in tourism, we need to ask about the formation of social capital, cooperation, and social connectedness as well. Doing so could reduce the isolation of tourism research in social science and at the same time contribute to practical action in tourism field enhancing the formation of peace through tourism.

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# TOURISM AS A SUBJECT OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES: STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS AND PERSPECTIVES

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## ABSTRACT

Tourism education in the Philippines has been in existence for almost 30 decades now. However, it is characterized by a proliferation of bachelor degree programs instead of its growth to a higher level of education. Stakeholders' perception on the existing tourism curricula provides insights as to the reason why tourism as a subject of higher education in the Philippines did not evolve over the years. In-depth interviews with people from different sectors of the tourism industry showed how they perceive the effectiveness of tourism education, the quality of tourism graduates and areas of improvement were also identified.

Key Words: tourism education, perception of stakeholders, tourism curricula

## INTRODUCTION

The Philippines embarked on tourism development and promotion as a major economic thrust in the early years of 1970. As a result, the volume of international visitor arrivals to the Philippines has grown almost 20 times since 1973. In 1990, the comprehensive 20-year Philippine Tourism Master Plan 1990-2010 was drawn up with the assistance from the United Nations Development Programme and the World Tourism Organization (Department of Tourism, 1990). The Philippine Tourism Master Plan Medium Term Development Program provides two specific plans designed to address the manpower needs of the industry, namely, (1) the development of training programs through the formation and development of technical skills programs, the development of a two-year postgraduate program which will produce trainers for the different training institutions and human resource development managers, and the fielding of mobile training units in three identified Philippine cities; and (2) the development of training standards and certification process through the development of skill standards and standard testing procedures, negotiations and accreditation of in-house training programs of tourism establishments, and accreditation of existing tourism and educational training institutions. In its mid-term assessment of the Philippine Tourism Master Plan, the Department of Tourism (DOT) lists the following accomplishments and unaccomplished targets with regards to Philippine tourism human resources development:

- Development of training programs – Technical skills programs were developed and implemented and the Dual Training System was adopted. The two-year postgraduate course did not materialize and mobile training units were fielded from 1994 to 1996 but were short-lived due to lack of funding from the local chapters.
- Development of standards and certification process – The 1988 skills standard and test processes have continuously been enhanced and upgraded from 1994. Accreditation of hotels, resorts, tour and travel agencies and the conduct of in-house training programs are exclusively conducted by the DOT. Since 1993 the continuous updating on tourism operations and management is being conducted with the participation of labor and management sectors in cooperation with the government and non-government agencies. Accreditation of existing tourism educational and training institutions offering certificate, diploma and degree courses in tourism and hotel operations and management is a function of the Commission on Higher

Education (CHED). The development of the necessary skill standards and standard testing procedures have not taken place, the recommended negotiation and accreditation of in-house training programs of tourism establishments has not been undertaken, and the recommended accreditation of existing tourism and educational and training institutions in the Philippines has proceeded without regard to a common set of standards.

- Tourism regional centers – The Philippines negotiated with internationally recognized tourism schools for the training of two tourism regional center administrators. Singapore Hotel Association/Educational Institute of Singapore Hotel Association (SHATEC) assisted the Philippines in the creation of regional training centers that led to the establishment of the Hotel and Tourism Institute of the Philippines (HTIP). HTIP serves as the pilot training center in the country. Despite the creation of HTIP, the development and implementation of training programs for administrators of the regional training centers was not accomplished due to the delayed creation of the pilot center in Manila.

Various forms of tourism development have spread all over the country (e.g. integrated resorts, theme parks, nature camps, entertainment centers) and the rapid expansion of the country's tourism industry resulted in increased employment opportunities. Along with the increase in employment opportunities, came the challenge of ensuring that the quality of service provided by the country's workforce meets the service standard expectations of its travel markets. The growth of tourism activity in subsequent years propelled the offering of tourism programs by more schools. Despite the fact that a university level tourism education in the Philippines is an important source of educating and training managers in the industry, tourism as a subject in higher education did not progress beyond the offering of a four-year college course. After more than two decades since the creation of the first four-year bachelor course on tourism, there was still no graduate program on tourism education created by any of the hundred schools offering tourism courses within the country. However, it is to be observed that this has not raised much concern from the other stakeholders in the tourism industry. The various sectors in the industry are more concerned on the creation or enhancement of tourism curriculum that would address their respective sector's human resource requirements.

This paper aims to explore the views and perceptions of the different tourism stakeholders on the current status of Philippine tourism education. It further aims to identify possible changes and improvements in the provision of tourism education in the Philippines based on the insights provided by the stakeholders' views and perspectives. Specifically, the following question is addressed in this paper: What is the current situation of tourism as a subject of higher education in the Philippines from the eyes of the different stakeholders of the industry? To accomplish the objectives of this paper, a qualitative research methodology was conducted using the in-depth interview method.

This paper is organized as follows: First, a brief overview of the Philippine tourism industry and the historical development of tourism education in the Philippines are presented. Next, the research methodology is described and the research findings are discussed. Finally, the conclusion and recommendations are identified.

## OVERVIEW OF THE PHILIPPINE TOURISM INDUSTRY

In the past decade, the Philippines experienced an alternation of increase and decrease growth rates in terms of the volume of international visitor arrivals and the amount of international tourism receipts (refer to Table 1).

Table 1  
International Visitor Arrivals and Tourism Receipts, Philippines, 1996 - 2004

| Year | International Visitor Arrivals (in Million) | Growth Rate (in %) | International Tourism Receipts (in US\$ Billion) | Growth Rate (in %) |
|------|---|--------------------|--|--------------------|
| 1996 | 2.05  | 16.4               | 2.70   | 10.1               |
| 1997 | 2.22  | 8.5                | 2.83   | 4.8                |
| 1998 | 2.15  | (3.3)              | 2.41   | (14.8)             |
| 1999 | 2.17  | 1.0                | 2.55   | 5.8                |
| 2000 | 1.99  | (8.2)              | 2.13   | (16.4)             |
| 2001 | 1.80  | (9.8)              | 1.72   | (19.3)             |
| 2002 | 1.93  | 7.6                | 1.74   | 1.0                |
| 2003 | 1.90  | (1.3)              | 1.52   | (12.5)             |
| 2004 | 2.29  | 20.1               | 1.99   | 30.7               |

Source: Department of Tourism, 2004

The Philippines experienced negative growth rates in terms of international visitor arrivals and tourism receipts in 1998, 2000, 2001 and 2003. In 2003, a dynamic marketing campaign, with the theme “WOW Philippines”, was launched to promote tourism. Although the government’s marketing and promotion efforts gained attention, factors such as security problems limited the growth and progress of Philippine international tourism. Finally, in 2004, a 20% increase in visitor numbers was recorded.

The United States of America and Japan are the leading sources of international visitors, each accounting for around one-fifth of total arrivals in recent years. South Korea, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Australia, Singapore and Canada are other leading sources of international visitors. Mainland Chinese arrivals are increasing rapidly, albeit from a low base, and reached 39,581 in 2004, making China the 11th largest market for Philippine tourism.

Over 40% of the international visitor arrivals are for holidays, around 14% for business, and the visit friends and relatives segment making up more than 27% of the balance. The average length of stay of foreign visitors is high, at 8.9 nights in 2004, but overseas Filipinos stayed on average for 17.7 nights in the same year. The primary destinations are the capital, Manila, and Cebu. The main mode of transportation for international arrivals to the Philippines is air travel.

To achieve a turnaround in 2005-2006, a determined and creative program was envisioned to reinvigorate the tourism industry, the Department of Tourism (DOT) devised a strategy aimed at (DOT, 2005): (1) attracting primary and secondary tourism markets by building awareness about the Philippines, targeting key, high value and accessible tourism segments with distinct and compelling image and value propositions, developing access, accommodation, and activities to tourist-ready levels, and attracting investors; (2) assuring peace and order, delivering consistent product quality and value, and providing good, honest service; and (3) getting the key stakeholders (especially the local government units and the barangays) at the destination level to be accountable for taking full responsibility for their destination and their tourist’s experience, taking the initiative to make things happen, and enforcing standards and good governance. In addition, to ensure the growth in the industry, it was recognized that focus, execution, and coordinated leadership against priority tourist markets and destinations are required.

#### TOURISM EDUCATION IN THE PHILIPPINES

Librando and Nartea (1980) identified the initial stages of tourism education and training in the Philippines to be from the period of 1973 to 1979. Its formalization was called for by the tourism situation in the country in that period which was considered to be the turning point for the industry.

The period has witnessed the growth not only in tourist arrivals but also rapid constructions and upgrading of tourist facilities and set up of businesses such as tour and travel agencies, handicraft stores and transport services that required large skilled labor force. A survey of tourism manpower had reported an oversupply of tourism-oriented enterprises unmatched by the labor force.

Tourism education and training in the 1970s was comprised of one educational institution, the University of the Philippines offering a 4-year degree course of BS in Hotel and Restaurant Administration; twelve (12) private institutions that offered certificate courses for a duration of six month or less; top hotels that offered in-house and on-the-job and development training programs; Ministry of Tourism's short-term courses and the MOT and National Manpower and Youth Council's (NMYC) manpower training seminars and workshops for tourism held in selected cities within the country (Librando and Nartea, 1980). This was found to be inadequate for the labor force demand in the industry, thus, the Philippine government, conceptualized the Asian Institute of Tourism (AIT) in 1975, as a direct response to the multiple challenges of the tourism growth in those period and also to address the gap between accelerated infrastructure construction and manpower development. It was a joint venture of the University of the Philippines (UP), the Ministry of Tourism (MOT, now the Department of Tourism) and the Philippine Tourism Authority (PTA). By 1977, the AIT offered the first four-year bachelor degree in Tourism with the objectives of developing young people to become the industry's future entrepreneurs, managers and staff personnel.

More than two decades later, Ortiz (1999) had reported in a World Tourism Congress on Human Capital, that there are 120 other schools nationwide offering tourism degrees nationwide. In 2003, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has listed 114 schools offering tourism courses. This is in addition to the numerous vocational and technical schools offering tourism-oriented certificates and non-degree programs under the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), formerly known as National Manpower and Youth Council (NMYC). Rodolfo (1997) described the tourism education "as way ahead in manpower development" as it includes entry-level and skills upgrading trainings, baccalaureate degrees, associate degrees and certificate courses. Bosangit and Gapido-Muro (2002), however, described tourism education as characterized more by proliferation of educational institutions offering undergraduate tourism courses with varied curricular offerings instead of the development of tourism graduate programs.

Rieder (2003) reviewed the current situation of formal tourism education (educational institutions offering a minimum 4-year college course) in the Philippines and provided the following observations:

- The formal education of the different tertiary level studies in the hospitality industry has yet to be standardized. Students do not get credited for subjects taken and passes in one institution when transferring to another, due to difference in course description. Academic freedom among the different colleges and universities is usually the reason given to cover and justify this poor and exploitative practice;
- With few exceptions, most formal tourism education degree programs do not focus on any specialized field of studies;
- There is difference of opinion among the various educational institutions as to which field of studies has a broader scope – the hospitality industry which is involved in the hotel and restaurant management and application, or the tourism industry which is seen to involve the management of travel operations and related fields;
- A good number of tertiary levels teaching staff do not have actual experience of or have had no actual immersions in the tourism industry. As a result they parrot theoretical problems and solutions as per examples in the textbooks, which do not have any practical application in real life situations;
- There are limited number of books written by local authors for students to uses as text books, while books authored by foreign writers are too expensive for certain institutions to purchase, and most of the materials used by students are reproduced printouts handed out by the faculty as they go through their lessons;

- There is a tendency among private tertiary level educational institutions to view education as a money making venture rather than an equal obligation to the students and a commitment to the academe for the betterment of the country;
- There is no monitoring system in place that measures the employability and actual employment of graduates from educational institutions in the tourism industry;
- There is no regulatory function from the national government agencies – CHED and DOT- which requires educational institutions to follow defined standards in preparing graduates for the tourism industry. Under the guise of academic freedom the different educational institutions offer tourism courses with different titles and standards for the same or similar degrees, such as BS Tourism, BS Travel and Tourism, BS Hotel and Restaurant Management, BS Hotel, Restaurant and Institutional Management and many others; and
- The Local Government Units that own formal educational institutions and conduct non-formal training programs seldom offer Tourism courses as a livelihood alternative even where tourism is a major center activity in their areas.

A Curriculum Task Force for Tourism was created by CHED in 2003 to revise the minimum curriculum standard for tourism and hotel and restaurant management courses in the country (Bosangit, 2005:52). This task force is composed of industry experts, academe and representatives from DOT. The main output of this taskforce was a competency-based curriculum envisioned to produce globally competitive labor force for the industry. The curriculum, developed through a series of surveys and consultations among the different tourism stakeholders, was to be implemented in June 2005. However, disagreements still prevail with regards to the nature of this proposed competency-based curriculum and the guidelines for its implementation have still to be developed.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To accomplish the objectives of this paper, a qualitative research methodology was conducted using the in-depth interview method. This research was a component of a larger study that aimed to describe tourism education in the Philippines by gathering stakeholders' views on tourism education and sustainable tourism development including an assessment of the tourism curriculum of selected tourism schools. Twelve (12) in-depth interviews with different stakeholders of the tourism industry were conducted. The interviewees were purposely selected based on their involvement and extensive experience in the industry and their knowledge about the Philippine tourism education environment. Tribe's (1999) list of stakeholders was used in identifying the different stakeholders to be covered in the study. The interviewees were comprised of three tourism educators, a national tourism organization officer, a non-government organization (NGO) tourism consultant, a restaurant consultant, a travel agency/tour operator manager, two local government tourism officers, an airline training manager, a hotel manager and a tourism-oriented labor union officer.

Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured questionnaire guide. A preliminary set of questions was sent out to the interviewees prior to the interview. The interviews were divided into the following topics: perception of the interviewees about the effectiveness of tourism education, quality of tourism graduates, advantages of tourism graduates over non-tourism graduates and areas of improvement in tourism education. The transcripts of the interviews were analyzed using the NUDIST software, a qualitative research tool that manages documents, creates ideas, manages categories and asks questions as well as build and test theories about data. Categories or themes for the analysis of the interviews were based on the interview questions.

It should be noted that the interviewees were mostly from the private sector, the government and the academe. In addition, the interviewees were all residing in the national capital region of the country, Metropolitan Manila. It is recognized that the residents of tourism destination and tourists are stakeholders of the tourism industry, however, no interviews was conducted for these stakeholders and this becomes an inherent limitation of the study.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Interviewees were asked about the effectiveness of tourism education in terms of addressing their requirements for human resources. There was a dichotomy in the responses of the interviewees to the question. Five out of the 12 respondents have stated that tourism education in the country is effective. These interviewees included respondents from the national tourism organization, the restaurant and hotel sectors. The national tourism organization officer has stated that the presence of more or less standardized tourism curricula contributes to the effectiveness of tourism education. The standards had lessened the gap among graduates from different schools. She said the “students from different school somehow now learn the same things.” The restaurant consultant, although agreeing that generally tourism education is effective, stated that the schools where the students graduated from really matters a lot, implying that some school is of better quality. The hotel manager, on the other hand, observed that the “students have improved a bit. The students are more able to converse in English, more competitive.” He also emphasized that students have more awareness and described this awareness as the students knowing the culture they are moving within and the culture they will be serving.

Seven interviewees, on the other hand, stated that tourism education is not effective. These interviewees included representatives from the academe, local government unit and travel agency/tour operator. The absence of graduate program in tourism was cited by an educator, saying, “the fact that we lack schools which offer higher studies in tourism manifests the lack of effectiveness in teaching tourism.” Another educator viewed the existing tourism education as inadequate in meeting the human resources requirements of the industry. The travel agency/tour operator manager had said that there is a need for improvement in the curriculum. The local government unit tourism officer cited the lack of labor force addressing the needs of the local government units, thus he believed that the tourism education in the country as ineffective. The other local government unit tourism officer, on the other hand, believed that tourism education is ineffective because some educators do not possess adequate knowledge on tourism. He mentioned a school headed by an educator who according to him does not know what tourism is.

More than half of the interviewees had indicated that tourism graduates have advantage over non-tourism graduates in entering the tourism industry. Interviewees from the national tourism office, academe, local government unit, non-government organization and hotel sector believe that tourism graduates have several advantages. Basic knowledge in the industry, according to the national tourism organization officer, is a great advantage for the tourism graduates. The local government unit tourism officer believed that the on-the-job training of tourism graduates had provided them with experiences about tourism actual operation and considered this as another advantage of tourism graduates. In addition, the hotel manager stated that tourism graduates would have acquired skills needed by the industry and cited the inclusion of foreign language in tourism curriculum of some schools. The NGO consultant, on the other hand, said that tourism graduates who acquired management skills have an advantage. He described it as “having deeper knowledge of the tourism industry, we can understand more the needs, requirements of the industry.” Lastly, the educator mentioned that being a tourism graduate, it is easier to link tourism to other fields such as transportation.

Interviewees who stated tourism graduates as having no advantage over non-tourism graduates provided specifically three reasons which include: (1) tourism graduates, specially those with managerial skills, are practically useless at entry level; (2) non-tourism graduates are also welcomed by the industry; and (3) tourism background is not needed. The airline representative, labor union officer and travel agency manager had emphasized that they also hire non-tourism graduates, as long as they have good communication skills, pleasing personality and the ability to sell their product. An educator strongly pointed out “our curriculum is for managers yet when they enter the industry they are not manager.”

Regardless of the interviewees' opinion on the effectiveness of tourism education and the advantages of tourism graduates over non-tourism graduates, they were all asked to identify areas of improvement in tourism education. The responses given can be grouped into five themes: educators' qualification; research accomplishment, curriculum, quality of graduates and Commission on Higher Education policies.

An educator and the restaurant consultant have raised the qualification of educators as one of the areas that needs improvement. The educator asked for more faculty members with tourism background. The restaurant consultant, pointed out that educators should have industry involvement or at least should be allowed to team teach with industry practitioner to be able to prepare the students properly for their entry in the industry. She added also, that "teacher's qualification is important, standardizing the curriculum is not enough". Ortiz (1999) and Rieder (2003) had indeed stated that the tourism educators' qualification as one of the challenges in Philippine tourism education.

The educators have identified that research focused on the Philippine setting will also enhance the quality of tourism education in the industry. Locally published books may be an indicator of a deeper understanding of the industry of the educators. It will also allow the students to relate easily to the concerns of tourism. One educator even suggested that the opening of a masters program could lead to proficiency and orientation towards research. He saw it as a way to advance the theoretical foundations of tourism and understand the real nature of tourism.

In terms of the existing tourism curriculum, two interviewees, the NGO consultant and the restaurant consultant, commented on its contents. The restaurant consultant, stated: "you cannot have a competency based curriculum all the time, there has to be a theory and managerial based" which was supported by the NGO consultant saying, "there has to be two levels: competency and managerial, together". An educator suggested that the design of the curriculum could be ladderized, where students can get diploma with basic skills and applications and then move on to a degree for more skills enhancement. Another educator had pointed out that mission of tourism courses may be redefined, by moving to other tracks of tourism education. He suggested a strand of tourism education in the Philippines, one that is not only for the private sector but more of a development and planning for destination level tourism kind.

The airline and hotel sectors interviewees focused on the qualities that tourism graduates should have. Good communication skills, ability to sell and people-oriented individuals are what the airline representative looks for in hiring people for his company. The hotel manager, on the other hand, looks for individuals who can adapt easily to the environment, has awareness of different culture and ability for self-discernment. An educator also expressed his belief that tourism graduates should have good critical thinking and decision-making skills.

Finally, an educator has strongly pointed out that CHED has to be stricter in the enforcement of policies regarding the creation of tourism courses. He believed that the current standards set by CHED are rather low such as the number of book titles required for each subject, qualifications of tourism faculty and facilities of the schools.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The interviews had presented the differences in the stakeholders' views and perspectives about the current situation of tourism education in the Philippines. The interviews also verified most of the observations given by Rieder (2003). The dichotomy in responses in all questions proves that even though tourism education in the Philippines is said to be industry driven, there are still some sectors within the industry that remains unsatisfied. It can be noted that the existing tourism curricula respond more to the needs of the hotels, airlines, restaurant and national tourism organization. The academe, non-local government and local government unit representatives are more critical of the existing tourism education. The Philippine tourism educational institutions recognize the importance of developing an industry-responsive curriculum. However, due to the complexity of the tourism

industry, the wide variety of stakeholders in the industry put pressures on educators to come up with a curriculum that can address all the different stakeholders' needs. The tourism industry is composed of various sectors and stakeholders and they all have respective expectations and requirements with regards to human resources. A more in-depth assessment of the human resources requirements for each sector will provide the educational institutions a clearer idea of the quality of tourism graduates needed by each sector. Educational institutions can develop their curriculum based on the requirements of the selected sector or stakeholder they would like to address. Thus, it is important that research on tourism industry's needs as well as their perception of tourism education and its graduates are continuously done. Keiser (cited by Dale and Robinson, 2001) had stated that programs for the hospitality and tourism industry should seek greater legitimacy by making educators very specific about what they teach and research and to which constituent they serve. Stakeholders' indeed play influential role in curricula development of tourism programs (see work of Chaisawat, 2002; Chen and Wu, 2002; Tan and Morgan, 2001; and Taylor and Shortland-Webb, 2002).

It is also important for the tourism educational institutions in the Philippines to bear in mind that tourism is a very dynamic industry. Correspondingly, the qualities and skills that tourism graduates should possess is also dynamic, educators should monitor these changes in expected qualities and skills of the sector/s or stakeholders they are catering to and make appropriate changes in their curriculum.

CHED should recognize their vital role in the development of tourism education and perform its regulatory function that will require educational institutions to follow defined standards in preparing graduates for the tourism industry. It should review the set of standards being required of tourism educational institutions to ensure that the quality of tourism education is competitive against the standards of other countries. Filipino tourism graduates should be of world-class quality if they are to be employed by world-class establishments or they are to develop their own globally competitive enterprises.

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# TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AFTER POLITICAL TURMOIL: CURRENT ISSUES ON BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

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## ABSTRACT

The paper reviews the origin of tourism development in Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) before the war and links it to the circumstances under which tourism in B&H is developing after political turmoil in the country. From that position, it indicates main potentials and detriments towards the country's tourism development, with the primary consideration of the potential of tourism to act as a catalyst for peace in the region. Research tries to explain current issues in tourism development in B&H, explaining the obstacles of its development. The aim of this research is to find out under which circumstances tourism has the potential to initiate the process of better political understanding in B&H between the entities and between B&H and its neighbours, former Yugoslavian countries.

Key Words: Bosnia and Herzegovina, political instability, tourism, peace, economic recovery

## INTRODUCTION

Although there is a lack of research indicating the circumstances under which tourism can bring reconciliation among the nations, there is a widespread assumption that it does normalise relations and provide an opportunity for building the culture of peace between the nations or groups which were in conflict and remain hostile to each other (Hall 1994, Richter 1999, Kim and Crompton 1990, etc). Richter (1983) argued that the government could use tourism as a diplomatic barometer of their affinity to each other. There is also evidence that a relaxation of travel barriers might improve the understanding among the nations. According to Davidson and Montville 1982 (in Kim and Crompton 1990), there are two diplomacy channels. *Track one diplomacy* is the official government channel. *Track two diplomacy* is the unofficial channel with people-to-people relations. Tourism is perceived as a tool for establishing *track two diplomacy* strategies in order to ease political tensions between the nations.

On the other hand, there are many cases where tourism was not able to address the change and could not act as a peace catalyst. Main reasons for that failure was that it was not taken in broader economic, social and political prospective.

After political turmoil, Bosnia & Herzegovina (B&H) retained its international borders and remains divided into two entities, Republika Srpska (mostly Serb populated) and B&H Federation (mostly populated by Croats and Bosnian Muslims). The research attempts to uncover if tourism development in B&H can provide an opportunity for better understanding between entities in B&H. As many of B&H tourism development issues have not been revealed yet, an interview with the B&H Tourism Association deputy director was conducted.

The objectives of this paper are to explore the implications of tourism in pre-independent B&H on current tourism development, to identify the main issues of tourism development in B&H

and to consider the role of tourism in creating a peace dividend and better understanding between the entities.

The aim of this research is to find out if tourism has a potential to initiate the process of better political understanding in B&H between the entities and between B&H and its neighbours, former Yugoslavian countries, taking a geopolitical, economic and social environment into a context.

## TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN FORMER YUGOSLAVIA and BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA BEFORE POLITICAL TURMOIL

In 1963, the central government decided that ex-Yugoslav borders should be opened to all countries that had diplomatic relations with former Yugoslavia. As a direct result, international tourist arrivals rose by some 45%, compared to 1962 and former Yugoslavia gradually became a mass tourist destination (Pirjavec 1998). Although a communist country, tourism in former Yugoslavia differed from other European communist countries. Amongst them, Yugoslavia possessed the highest profile as a tourist destination (Buckley, Witt 1987). As each Eastern European communist country developed a different system under which its economy operated, Yugoslavia developed a model of workers self-management under which a semi-market oriented economy was initiated and some of the central planning organs partly eliminated (Henderson, Robinson 1997). However, its system permitted international tourism to develop and tourism to become one of the most important economic activities (Allcock 2000). In Eastern European communist countries, tourism was directed by the central government and in order to be affordable, governments subsidized the entire tourism industry. Travel was greatly encouraged between former Eastern European communist countries as visiting another communist country was thought to be a symbol of support and solidarity towards international communism (Hall 1991). On the other side, in former Yugoslavia, according to Allcock (1986), tourism had a very commercial role. Its profits grew fast and between the 60's and the 80's the sector grew from being 10<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> as a foreign exchange earner (Cicvaric 1980). Car (1984) estimated that import content of tourism was 11% in 1972. Compared to other industries in Yugoslavia at that time it was considered as very favourable, as the average import content for manufacturing industries was 31% in 1972.

Despite the positive aspects tourism brought to the economy, tourism in former Yugoslavia was experiencing some serious problems. A persistent problem was, according to Allcock (1986), an uneven regional development, with only coastal areas benefiting largely from tourism. B&H, situated in the continental part, could not capitalise on its attractions because Yugoslavia was oriented only towards summer sun market segment and did not attempt to shift its tourism demand to continental part. More than 75% of all accommodation capacities in former Yugoslavia were situated in the coastal areas (Croatia and Montenegro) (Pirjavec 1987).

This orientation still has an impact on tourism development in B&H now. B&H tourist attractions offer natural environment and a rich variety of heritage, history and culture. However, the market segment which was attracted to former Yugoslavia was not motivated to explore attractions other than sun and sea (Pirjavec 1998).

Former Yugoslavia used the policy of industrial terms to address the development strategies and make regional development more even. This approach was used to narrow the gap between poor and well off Yugoslav regions. Unfortunately, it could not properly address problems of regional development. The return of investment had not been taken into account in industrial planning. When tourist arrivals in B&H and Slovenia's lake and mountain resorts are compared, it can be observed that in Slovenia, the number of tourist arrivals was much higher than in B&H in the 1970s (table 1). The reason behind this is that heavy industries were located in poorer regions of former Yugoslavia and light industries, like tourism and other commercial industries (trade), were located in better off regions, due to industrial planning system. Instead of narrowing the gap between poor and well off former Yugoslav republics, the gap became wider. In 1952, GDP for B&H was 95.5% of the average Yugoslav GDP. In 1960s it declined to 76% (Allcock 2000).

As in many highland areas in former Yugoslavia, in the 1970s while tourism in a coastal area was booming, the tourism in the B&H highlands it was still in its infancy. Until the beginning of the eighties, tourism was not regarded as an important economy activity for B&H (Pirjavec, 1987). The average tourist growth rate in former Yugoslavia was 10.80% and in B&H 5.50% (table 2), (Tourism Association of B&H 2005). Ex-Social Federal Republic Yugoslavia (SFRY) government planned for B&H to be a region where heavy industries dominated the economy. B&H highlands were ideal for guerrilla war tactics, which freed former Yugoslavia from fascist occupation in the World War II. Therefore B&H witnessed five out of seven key battles in the World War II. The military and other strategic heavy industries were deliberately located in the towns of B&H to minimize their vulnerability to foreign attacks (Gomez 2005). B&H military industries did not compete for a market share. Its military industry had a secure buyer; the Yugoslav Peoples Army and the armies of the states which were in a group of non aligned states during the era of cold war. (Allcock 2000). Therefore, B&H was not planned to be a tourist region in former Yugoslavia.

Table 1  
Tourism arrivals to B&H and Slovenian lake and mountain resorts

| B&H                        | INTERNATIONAL<br>TOURIST<br>ARRIVALS | <b>TOURIST<br/>ARRIVALS<br/>-B&amp;H TOTAL</b> | SLOVENIA                         | INTERNATIONAL<br>TOURIST<br>ARRIVALS | <b>TOURIST<br/>ARRIVALS<br/>-SLOVENIA<br/>TOTAL</b> |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Jahorina –<br>mountain B&H | 200                                  | <b>7 400</b>                                   | Kranjska<br>Gora -<br>mountain   | 23 700                               | <b>57 800</b>                                       |
| Trebevic –<br>mountain B&H | /                                    | <b>10 900</b>                                  | Bohinj –<br>lake and<br>mountain | 68 800                               | <b>115 000</b>                                      |
| Jezero<br>(lake – B&H)     | 19 600                               | <b>44 400</b>                                  | Bled -<br>lake                   | 18 700                               | <b>57 200</b>                                       |

Source: Statisticki godisnjak Jugoslavije, Savezni zavod za statistiku (1980)

Table 2  
Average growth rate of tourist nights in ex – Yugoslav republics (1960 – 1973)

| <b>B&amp;H</b>   | CROATIA | MONTENEGRO | MACEDONIA | SERBIA | SLOVENIA | <b>YUGOSLAVIA -<br/>AVERAGE</b> |
|------------------|---------|------------|-----------|--------|----------|---------------------------------|
| <b>5.5<br/>%</b> | 11.8%   | 14.8%      | 8.9%      | 8.6%   | 7.7%     | <b>10.8%</b>                    |

Source: derived from Yugoslav tourist association statistics, 1980

Another problem which emerged regarding tourism development in former Yugoslavia is, according to Pirjavec (1998), that economy plans in former Yugoslavia did not coordinate tourism and other industries directly linked to tourism plans (agriculture, trade, manufacture). Allcock (1986) gives an example of agriculture. He suggested that it would have been more favourable investing the capital in modernising agriculture, instead of building vast hotel capacities on the seacoast. In that way the country would not have needed to import large quantities of food that forced tourism leakage. In order to prevent leakage growth, former Yugoslavia needed to restructure its economy as it indicated its first great tourism losses in the beginning of 1980s (OECD 1984). The decline of the quality of services and tourism profits was also caused by the trend in the mid 1970s when tourism demand outstripped the capabilities of tourist infrastructure and superstructure (Travis 1980). Staff training, employers' education, and tourism planning in general could not keep pace with this rapid tourism growth (Kobasic 1981 Buckley, Wit 1987) and the quality of tourism began to decline.

## TOURISM COMMERCIALISATION IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

In the beginning of 1980s, tourism in former Yugoslavia's coastal areas stagnated. Tourism growth in B&H was 1, 5% higher than average tourism growth in former Yugoslavia (Tourism Association of B&H 2005). Although various types of tourism could have been developed in Bosnia and Herzegovina (canoeing, rafting, climbing, hiking, trekking, fishing) the phenomenon of Virgin Mary visitation in small Herzegovina village Medjugorje in 1981 and later on Winter Olympics in Sarajevo in 1984, highlighted its tourism development. Taking religion on one side, Medjugorje started to expand in the beginning of 1980s when there was an economic crisis in former Yugoslavia and practically no investment (Vukonic 1982).

Hall and O'Sullivan (1996) points to the cases of Seoul Olympic Games in 1988 and Beijing Asian Games in 1990 as events which neutralised a response to the bad image of those countries (Korean war and Tiananmen Massacre). The Olympic Games in Sarajevo were used in order to repair the tourism image former Yugoslavia had (Allcock 1986) and an attempt to draw attention on tourism development in B&H (Allcock 2000). The earnings from the Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo 1984 provided a major stimulus to tourism in the whole of former Yugoslavia. It had begun with its recovery from the years of constant decline. It is estimated that Winter Olympic Games in Sarajevo 1984 accounted about \$30 million from tourism (Buckley, Wit 1987). The case of Medjugorje is according to Allcock (2000) controversial. Although in a communist country where religion was not regarded as a very favourable activity, Medjugorje developed as one of the most important religious sites in Europe. Despite the regime, tourism and religion in Medjugorje was allowed to happen, as it was perceived as an opportunity to earn more. On the other side, official plan for tourism development in Medjugorje and official statistics for Medjugorje did not exist. Despite that, Medjugorje had gradually become a real tourist destination. New hotels have been built and tourism had become the most important activity (Jurkovich, Gesler 1997). By the end of 1980's the most favourable package holidays were those who combined Medjugorje and its religious purpose with some other coastal destinations in Croatia (Dubrovnik or Makarska Riviera).

Former Yugoslav tourism could bring profits and its destinations could survive only if it was mass tourism. Both Medjugorje and Olympic Mountains quickly developed into real mass tourism destinations. Among the tour operators, which started selling ski holidays to the Olympic Mountains near Sarajevo, were TUI, Yugotours and FRAM, all mainstream tour operators (Brckalovic 2003). The same market segment, which was attracted to Yugoslav coastal resorts during the summer, was attracted to Bosnian ski resorts during the winter. No niche markets have ever been targeted. Tourism growth in B&H towards the 1990's was disrupted by political turmoil in former Yugoslavia.

The eighties brought up economic crises and tourism stagnation in most of the Mediterranean destinations. New tourism trends emerged. Tourists were looking for a more dynamic holiday (Poon 1993), where they could experience the destination. With the beginning of the nineties, most of the Mediterranean destinations succeeded in their tourism rejuvenation, while Yugoslavia was in a political crisis and had lost touch with the trends in tourism development (Cavlek 2002).

## BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA AFTER POLITICAL TURMOIL

There are various problems which initiated the break up of former Yugoslavia. Political instability and ethnic tensions are both an extension of the economic crises (Kokkranikal 2002). In former Yugoslavia, end of 1980 was highlighted by the economic downturn and high inflation rates (Turnock 1997). Memories from the Second World War, which helped keep former Yugoslav republics together, faded away. Former Yugoslavia was a non – aligned state during the cold war era, which made it different compared to other East European communist countries. With the end of cold war era, all those issues which made former Yugoslavia specific, had gone. Out of former Yugoslavia, five new states emerged. B&H gained its independence in 1991, after a referendum boycotted by the majority of ethnic Serbs. It resulted with political instability and aggression. The inter-ethnic strife among Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims), Croatians and Serbians in B&H lasted from spring 1992 until

November 1995, when the Dayton peace agreement was signed. In March 1994, Bosniaks and Croats joined a Bosniak/Croat federation, by signing an agreement creating a joint Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Dayton peace agreement brought end to three years of inter-ethnic civil strife. Compared to the hostilities in the other former Yugoslav republics, the aggression in B&H was the most extreme. Casualties in Croatian – Serb war amounted to 6.651 killed and 12.706 missing persons. In B&H, these figures stood much higher. 215.000 people died and more than 2 million were displaced (Remet 1999). The Dayton Agreement retained Bosnia and Herzegovina's international boundaries and created a joint multi-ethnic and democratic government. A second level of government comprised of two entities roughly equal in size: the Bosniak/Croat Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Bosnian Serb-led Republika Srpska (RS) was recognised as well. The UN established the Office of the High Representative (OHR) to oversee the implementation of the agreement (World Bank Country Report 2005). Bosnia and Herzegovina (B&H) is one of the youngest and smallest (51 129 km<sup>2</sup> and approximately 3.8 million inhabitants) European states. 42% of the population in B&H are Bosniaks, followed by 37% Serbs and 15% Croats. There is a small Jewish community still present in Sarajevo. All the peoples living now in B&H are from the same stock and are physically indistinguishable. They speak the same language (Gomez 2005). B&H ranked next to The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia as the poorest republic in the old Yugoslav federation (table 3) (World Bank Report 2005). Secondary industries have been greatly overstaffed during the communist period, as B&H hosted a number of heavy industry plants and military industries. As a result of overstaffed industry in the past, restructuring and the process of de-industrialisation, unemployment soared to some 40% (Bosnian Chamber of Commerce 2002). The former Socialist Federal Republic Yugoslavia (SFRY) government planned B&H to be a region where heavy industries dominated the economy. The aggression in B&H caused production to decline by 80% from 1992 to 1995. B&H still receives substantial amounts of reconstruction assistance from the international community but needs to prepare for an era of declining assistance (Stojanov 2004). One of the strategies for preparing for it is to enhance tourism development in the country.

Tourism development in B&H may address two issues, economic recovery and contribution to peace and better understanding between the entities in B&H. Literature mostly concerns tourism development after political turmoil in the countries, which used to have strong tourism industry before the crisis (Cyprus, Turkey, Croatia, etc). B&H here is in a specific position. B&H has never had a tourism image before the political conflict. Sarajevo with its ski Mountains after Winter Olympic Games and Medjugorje emerged in the beginning and mid 1980s as Yugoslav tourist destinations. B&H tourism, which had just started developing when the war broke out, is now about to be repositioned in order to enhance niche tourism development in the country, which requires a completely different approach (Interview with the Tourism Association of B&H 2005). The stage of tourism development and how tourism was treated in B&H before the war, gives a starting point for tourism business in B&H now after turmoil.

Table 3  
BiH economic data

|                                   | <b>2001</b>   | <b>2002</b>   | <b>2003</b>   |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Imports (\$ billion)</b>       | 3,116         | 3,933         | 4,776         |
| <b>Exports (\$ billion)</b>       | 1,073         | 1,011         | 1,373         |
| <b>Trade deficit (\$ billion)</b> | <b>-2,043</b> | <b>-2,922</b> | <b>-3,403</b> |
| <b>Import/export coverage</b>     | 34,45%        | 25,70%        | 28,74%        |
| <b>GDP per capita (\$)</b>        | 1.263         | 1.466         | 1.845         |
| <b>Unemployment rate</b>          | 39,20%        | 40,90%        | 42,50%        |

Source: BiH Chamber of Commerce (2005)

## ECONOMIC RECOVERY THROUGH TOURISM DEVELOPMENT: CURRENT ISSUES OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN B&H AFTER POLITICAL TURMOIL

According to Hall (1994) political instability devastates tourism in two ways. First, it damages the country's image as a tourist destination and secondly, it destroys tourist infrastructure. This assumption can be illustrated taking the case of B&H tourism. After the war, there were less accommodation units in B&H than in 1960 (Table 4). According to the deputy director of B&H Tourism Association Board (2005), most of B&H tourism resorts are now building sites, as intensively new accommodation and other tourist facilities have been built or re-built. Tourists' overnights in B&H in 2004 were only around 38% of its share in 1990, although increased comparing to 1997 from some 23% (Table 5).

Table 4  
Number of tourist beds in B&H (1960, 1975, 1990, 1999, 2000 and 2001)

|                        | BEFORE POLITICAL OUTBREAK |       |       | AFTER POLITICAL OUTBREAK |      |      |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|--------------------------|------|------|
| Year                   | 1960                      | 1975  | 1990  | 1999                     | 2000 | 2001 |
| Number of tourist beds | 3182                      | 25498 | 39223 | 7582                     | 9147 | 9373 |

Source: 2005 World Travel Organisation Fact Book Report, 2005

Table 5  
Number of Tourist nights in B&H (1985 – 2004)

|                | BEFORE  |         | AFTER POLITICAL OUTBREAK |        |        |        |        |         |
|----------------|---------|---------|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|
| Year           | 1985    | 1990    | 1999                     | 2000   | 2001   | 2002   | 2003   | 2004    |
| Tourist nights | 2209650 | 2604930 | 948032                   | 951808 | 775474 | 899959 | 901535 | 1009410 |

Source: Tourism Association of Bosnia and Herzegovina, 2005, World Travel Organisation Fact Book Report, 2005

As already said, tourism was not perceived as an important economic activity for B&H before the war. Now, tourism is perceived as an activity which is on the verge of having a leading role in economic recovery. B&H is perceived as a destination for niche tourism development because B&H does not have facilities and resources for mass tourism development, according to Clancy (2004). The abundance of natural resources and cultural heritage put B&H as a destination for niche markets. Again, it is a difference to pre war tourism in ex Yugoslavia. It is perceived now that in order to make a use of tourism development in the country, current issues in tourism development should be addressed. Again, it differs from pre war tourism in ex-Yugoslavia. It is perceived now that in order to make a use of tourism development in the country, current issues in tourism development should be addressed. There are a number of weaknesses which deter tourism development in B&H. Statistics and data gathering, tourism legislation, tourism taxes and image development are identified as the most important challenges tourism development in B&H needs to address. According to B&H Tourism Association deputy director (2005), the biggest challenge to overcome in order to gain access to the world tourism market is the perception of B&H as a war torn country. Also, the emerging problem is that tourists are staying in B&H to an average of 2.4 days; what is estimated as being very low. He points out that there are three objectives which need to be taken into account while planning tourism in B&H: 1) to change the image of the country (still perceived as a war torn area), 2) the development of human resources and 3) to bring laws which would regulate tourism development. According to Buckley and Klemm (1993), it is not only an issue that potential tourists perceive it dangerous to travel to the destinations which were in political turmoil; it is more that this place does not look attractive anymore. All studies which are looking in the development of the country after political turmoil, Hall (1994), Wall (1996), Wahab (1996), Pizam and Mansfeld (1996), Hall and

O'Sullivan (1996), Beirman (2001), Goodrich (2002), etc. conclude that a favourable image is a *prerequisite* for any tourism development.

There is much evidence that joining market efforts with the states in the region which have a tourist appeal may become crucial in marketing efforts and creating more favourable image after political turmoil. According to Biernman (2002), Israel promotes its tourism resorts together with Jordan in order to overcome the problems of its perception among the potential visitors. The vicinity of Croatia may become strength in tourism planning in B&H as it seems to be affordable and attractive tourist destination. Also, there is a potential for combining attractions in these two countries in tourist packages. But there is also another problem which countries which rely on border tourism are facing. Taking the case of Israel and Jordan, Kelly (1998) explains that these are only a day trips from Israel to Jordan and that solely Israeli tourism companies are making profit out of it, as usually tourists are not staying overnight and generally do not consume local products. Bosnia and Herzegovina Federation and Republic Croatia signed an agreement of particular relations and collaboration regarding tourism cooperation (Sluzbene novine Federacije B&H", broj 13/97). According to this agreement, both B&H Federation and Republic Croatia arranged that they would be, according to their possibilities, developing the cooperation between both private and public sector; tourist offices, associations and organisations, so as well as companies and other institutions and taking the actions in helping its collaboration and better understanding. They agreed on tourism exchange policy and that they would do promotion and marketing together. So, they would exchange important information regarding tourism development and regarding privatisation and problems of foreign investments. Also, a statistical data exchange was agreed. However, according to Bosnian Chamber of Commerce (2005), this agreement between Croatia and B&H has never been fully implemented. Its potentials have never been fully utilised. In the vicinity of B&H, both Croatia and Montenegro are planning their economy with tourism as a strategic activity. It can serve as an example for B&H tourism development and possibility for regional cooperation (Softic 2005). The only way for B&H to become an equal partner in regional tourism is to develop its tourism by tackling the problems it is facing.

One of the most important issues in B&H tourism development concerns statistical data collection. At the moment, it is fractured and does not encompass all the tourism activity. WTO and WTTC needed to correct their study on tourism development in B&H. According to the first study, the rate of annual tourism increase in B&H was supposed to be 10% on average, until the year 2015. WTO predicted that by the end of 2015, B&H could be the third country in the world by tourism development. This study needed to be corrected by taking into an account the position tourism development has in government plans. The study was corrected and the new figures are much lower, the annual increase is calculated to be 5.8%. Therefore, according to Dreiski (2004), tourism policies are based on guesswork not on empirical evidence. According to Humo (2005), it is estimated that in B&H only one guest out of four is legally registered. Other guests are a black market activity. In addition to losing indispensable economic data, the authorities are losing desperately needed earnings, as tourism taxes are not collected. This problem is illustrated in the case of Mostar Old Bridge reopening. Informal data suggested that it was as many as 150.000 people in the city of Mostar in July 2004. Despite the tens of thousands of tourists who flocked to Mostar in summer 2004 for the reopening of Mostar Old bridge, the tourism authorities were only able to record an extra 6 000 visitors in summer 2004 comparing it to the summer 2003 (B&H Federation Statistical Institute 2004). The same patterns are happening in the pilgrimage Medjugorje every year. Accurate statistical data are indispensable as in order to plan tourism industry, it is important to know the current status of tourism industry in B&H (Dreiski 2004). The other identified problem is that tourism law on the state level still does not exist thus, the state has effectively legalised black market. It is slowing B&H tourism development.

## CONDITIONS FOR GENERATING PEACE THROUGH TOURISM

Another important matter of tourism development in B&H is that it can provide an opportunity for better understanding between entities in B&H. Progress towards peace through

tourism is not an isolated process. It is a part of a larger social change that begins with the recognition that the fundamental social and political order is changing (Kim and Crompton 1990). The potential for tourism to bring a culture of peace should not be taken for granted (Anastasopoulos 1992). According to Hall (1994), tourism and politics are greatly interlinked and tourism needs to be taken in a broad consideration of the political context.

The following chapter identifies some examples when tourism was not able to bring reconciliation after political atrocities between the divided nations.

Anastasopoulos (1992) examined the role of travel in Greek tourists' attitude change towards the Turkish host community. The study showed that travel to Turkey had a negative impact upon Greek travellers especially regarding the perceived quality of life, government institutions and the cultural aspects of the people. Additionally, according to Kim and Prideaux (2003), there is no evidence that tourism has helped better understanding between two Koreas.

Tourism is usually perceived as a force to bring reconciliation among the nations. But in former Yugoslavia it was, according to Allcock (1995) used in promoting political ideas. Tourism and the interpretation of the heritage in former Yugoslav republics was largely politicised in order to promote its national identity. There is a Serbian example of the manipulation of tourism branding and ethnic identity for ruthless political ends. The Serbian promotion slogan was "*Serbia: Landscape painted from the heart*". During Milosevic's regime, images of Serbia concentrated only upon Orthodox heritage and exclusively Serbian / Orthodox traditions. Although one third of the whole Serbian population is not Orthodox and more than forty different nationalities live in Serbia today, it was undermined by the attempts to promote Serbia itself as purely Christian Orthodox nation. After the fall of the Milosevic regime, tourism was again used to picture another Serbia, again as reformist Serbian politicians wanted to be seen now. Former Yugoslav republics used tourism branding in in differentiating themselves from their neighbours and enhancing national identity (Allcock 1995).

Amir (1969) in Anastasopolous (1992) concluded that the direction of the change of attitudes between the members of the different ethnic groups depends largely on the conditions under which contact takes place. Favourable conditions tend to reduce prejudices, unfavourable once tend to increase the tension and prejudice. Generally considered as favourable are the following conditions:

- Equal status contact between the host and guest communities
- A favourable social climate
- Personal instead of superficial contact
- Pleasant and mutually rewarding interaction, rather than stressful contact
- Interaction in functionally important activities leading to common goals of higher importance to the group rather than to the individuals in each group

Tourism is rarely a top government activity (Hall 1994). It is usually that tourism is perceived as an accelerator of national growth, rarely it is conceptualised as a part of international relations (Richter 1989).

## TOURISM POTENTIAL FOR THE PEACE DIVIDEND IN B&H

Following chapter reviews tourism as a part of the international relations concept and a catalyst for better understanding between different ethnic groups in a country, with attention given to the current issues in B&H.

In the case of B&H, for instance, Republika Srpska is opposing a single economy, but in the case of tourism, they are willing to cooperate in all the tourism activities on a national level. The funding of tourism association on the level of the whole state of B&H had an important role in assessing the possibility for better understanding between the entities. The tourism association of Bosnia and Herzegovina was founded in September 2003. According to the interview conducted with the Tourism Association of B&H executive, B&H Tourist association is an independent, non-

governmental organization. Its main tasks are the promotion, improvement and development of tourism, and B&H tourism image formation. The Tourism Association of B&H carries out tasks of B&H tourism affirmation and initiates development of new travel products; in which the local population also participates. Through these activities, the entities work together and it can produce a synergy effect between them. Before the national level of the Tourism Association was founded, there were only tourism associations on the level of entities; Tourism Association of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Federation and Ministry of Trade and Tourism in The Republic Srpska. Both Tourism associations of the Bosnia and Herzegovina Federation and Ministry of Trade and Tourism in the Republic Srpska supported the founding of new tourism association on the national level. Even before Tourism Association of B&H was founded, the entities' associations launched together a new project "Putting Bosnia on tourism map" in 2001 and this project introduced B&H as one destination. There is a kind of natural synergy in tourism cooperation between the entities. Van Eaklen (2001) said that it would be harder and more expensive to "put Bosnia on a tourist map" if those two entities would go separately in presenting themselves.

Altinay et al (2002) proved similar hypothesis taking the case of Cyprus. Their study concluded that tourism in Northern Cyprus, which is under Turkey supervision, would benefit more if it would be promoted with the south Cyprus, administrated by Cypriot government. The study opposes economic integration with Turkey and suggests a federation with South Cyprus instead. In this case, tourism is very dependent on political decisions. It is estimated that federation with the south part will also provide more political stability. Tourism is estimated to be able to provide more interaction between the Cypriot residents from both South and North part, as it would provide domestic tourism to take place as well. The political case of B&H is reminiscent of the Cyprus case, where North Cyprus is in a similar position as Republic Srpska, which is unofficially partitioned by Serbia and Montenegro. It is not only tourism which is helping international relations.

Domestic tourism has a potential of integrating different communities within the country, especially when there is a danger of political conflict. Kokkranikal (2002) gives the case of India, where domestic tourism played an important role in the integration of different ethnical groups in such a diversified country. In the framework of the current B&H circumstances, tourism here acts as a potential to bring better political dialogue and act as an intermediate to create better understanding between the entities. The governance of the Republic Srpska is opposing the single economic establishment on the level of the state of B&H, which creates new political problems. In an interview given to the newspapers, president of the B&H federation Mr Hadzipasic (2005) said that it was problematic for the Republika Srpska to accept the same tax rates for the mineral water, not to mention any other single economy transaction. But Republic Srpska governance has agreed on tourism promotion and new tourism development plans and strategies to be on the state level (OHR report 2004). It attaches the responsibility to tourism to be a pioneer in generating better understanding of those two entities.

It is then not just tourism and economic recovery, but also a possibility for better understanding between the entities. The biggest problem for the development of B&H tourism is that the law on the national level that would regulate tourism activities in the country still does not exist. It is a detriment as it is not possible to regulate tourism activities properly. But if tourism is purported to be a catalyst for better understanding and reconciliation between the entities, it needs a law which would regulate tourism industry activities on the state level. Tourism provides the opportunity for better understanding and a contact between the nations to occur, but it does not guarantee the positive outcome of it (Anastasopoulos 1992). The outcome relies on the conditions proposed by Amir (1969). Careful consideration of the factors influencing social and cultural relationships between host and guest population can lead to a properly designed tourist experience; one which will promote cultural understanding and the process of peace. This process does not follow automatically. Without *track one diplomacy*, it is not possible to make more informal *track two diplomacy*, people-to-people relations to work. It is now a possibility to include the conditions proposed by Amir (1969) into the B&H tourism legislation.

## TOURISM POTENTIALS IN NORMALISING INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Pizam and Mansfeld (1996) suggest that distance and information availability have a strong impact on travel to the regions where there was a conflict or political clash, pointing out that the countries situated geographically closer have more accurate information, better knowledge and are less reluctant to travel to the country after the crises. They suggested targeting the markets, which had gone through similar political turmoil as well. Mansfeld and Kliot (1996) give the example of the Cypriot tourism industry in the period of its political instability (1960 – 1974), noting that it was just marginally affected as its main market, the tourists from the UK, had a significant knowledge about the country and its political circumstances. They did not rely on media sources.

Currently, the main tourist markets coming to B&H are tourists from Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia and Montenegro, all former Yugoslavian republics who had better understanding of B&H's current political position (table 5). Although there have been a lot of atrocities, B&H is emerging as a popular holiday destination for the tourists from former Yugoslav republics. In order to estimate the real “feelings” and potentials for tourism cooperation with the neighbouring markets, it is a task for a further research. It would be valuable for tourism development to explore the main motives for coming to B&H.

Both Croatia and Montenegro have based their development strategy upon tourism. It is a chance for B&H to be a partner to both countries as it is possible to combine tours. However, B&H is lagging behind those two countries. In order to become an equal partner, it needs to restructure its tourism and officially declare it as an important industry for its development. In that way, tourism acts as economic accelerator and peace catalyst. If correctly managed, it is a way forward for future tourism development in B&H to reach other European tourists who are spending their holidays in Croatia and Montenegro.

Table 5  
Arrivals of international tourists to B&H

| YEAR                                  | 1999          | 2000          | 2001          | 2002          | 2003          |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| REGION                                |               |               |               |               |               |
| Australia and Asia                    | 2250          | 2928          | 2078          | 2990          | 3740          |
| Americas                              | 8355          | 10155         | 8365          | 8286          | 7339          |
| Western-North Europe                  | 28314         | 29014         | 25957         | 28786         | 35094         |
| South Europe                          | 11107         | 13989         | 12362         | 14458         | 13508         |
| East-Central Europe                   | 8355          | 10155         | 8365          | 8286          | 7339          |
| <b>Total - world</b>                  | <b>58381</b>  | <b>66241</b>  | <b>57127</b>  | <b>62806</b>  | <b>67020</b>  |
| Slovenia                              | 8535          | 10838         | 10209         | 15280         | 17840         |
| Serbia and Montenegro                 | 49006         | 51330         | 41503         | 45495         | 40267         |
| Croatia                               | 24321         | 29800         | 21930         | 15280         | 17840         |
| <b>Total - neighbouring countries</b> | <b>81862</b>  | <b>91968</b>  | <b>73642</b>  | <b>76055</b>  | <b>75947</b>  |
| <b>Total all</b>                      | <b>140243</b> | <b>158209</b> | <b>130769</b> | <b>138861</b> | <b>142967</b> |

Source: World Tourism Organisation 2005

## CONCLUSION

While part of Yugoslavia, B&H was a region where heavy industries dominated its economy. Tourism was not an important part of B&H economy. Today, tourism is seen as an industry which can bring economic recovery to B&H. The difference from before the war is that tourism in former Yugoslavia was mass tourism and former Yugoslav tourism was structured in a way that only mass tourism could bring a profit. B&H does not have the facilities and the resources to promote mass tourism. It is agreed that B&H should promote niche tourism.

There are various issues which need to be taken into account if tourism is to be developed. The law, which would regulate tourism development, still does not exist. Statistical gathering is still fractured and does not encompass all tourist arrivals. It is estimated that only 25% of the guests arriving to B&H are registered. The problem which is emerging is that if statistics are not collected, tourism plans are based on guesswork and cannot be successful. It has confused WTTC and WTO as well. First, they predicted that tourism growth in B&H would amount 10.5% per year, until 2015. This put B&H tourism development on the third place in the world. Later on, corrections have been made due to the non-adequate treatment of tourism activities in the country, now estimating the annual tourism growth at 5.8%.

The prerequisite for any tourism development is tourism image. B&H is here in a specific position. It did not have an image of a tourist country before the war and now it is perceived as politically instable and a war torn country. In the case of B&H it could be fatal to use tourism in order to promote different political ideas. In Serbia for instance, only Serbian Orthodox heritage was promoted, although more than forty nations live in Serbia. Tourism in B&H should be value free, as it is still politically very unstable and could easily lose the concept.

Tourism development in B&H has a potential to bring a culture of peace to the country. It is the only economic activity in B&H where both entities agreed on cooperating and promoting B&H as one country. The entity borders are still visible in many segments and the willingness of both entities to work together in the promotion of B&H on the state level is a chance to increase the dialogue and mutual understanding. Countries situated closer have better knowledge of a destination, generally are more familiar with the conditions and more eager to travel to the country after the crises (Pizam and Mansfeld 1996). According to the same authors, countries after the political turmoil should target markets which have experienced similar problems. In line with this, the main tourist markets coming to B&H are tourists from Croatia, Slovenia and Serbia and Montenegro, all former Yugoslavian republics, which recently experienced political turmoil and are located close to B&H.

In the case of B&H, tourism has the chance to act as an initiator of better understanding in the country. There are instances where tourism succeeded and where tourism failed in bringing the peace among the divided nations. Having a broader sociological, political and economical picture of the country is necessary. Evidence showed that tourism activities are substantially helping in this case, as tourism was the only economic activity where Republika Srpska is not imposing a single economy. As Richter (1999) said, tourism, if planned carefully, can bring peace reconciliation among the divided nations and can be an important part of country's recovery, but need to be taken holistically; taking geopolitical, social and economic environment into an account.

Main tourism missions in B&H are to accelerate tourism recovery and to bring a culture of peace to the divided entities. It requires a careful planning, patience and consensus among the divided nations. According to Hall (1994), tourism and politics are greatly interlinked and tourism needs to be taken in a broad consideration of the political context. The borders of these two entities (B&H Federation and Republic Srpska) are easily visible in most of its segments; it is a good start to try to re-unite them through tourism, as tourism creates natural synergies.

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Interview conducted with B&H Tourism association deputy deputy director on February 24<sup>th</sup> and March 10<sup>th</sup> 2005 (telephone and e-mail)

UNDERSTANDING PACKAGE AND NON-PACKAGE TOURISTS' CHOICES OF  
ATTRACTION ATTRIBUTES WITHIN SELECTED  
ASEAN DESTINATIONS

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## ABSTRACT

It is important to know why people travel, where and which factors play important role in their selection of vacation destination(s). For a destination to be successful the tourists must have a clear concept of what it is about, the activities and the attractions offered. Within ASEAN, three destinations (Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia) were found to have common attractions. Based on a survey conducted on 150 foreign tourists visiting Malaysia, the tourists were grouped into package and non-package tourists. A multi-criteria decision-making tool called Analytic Hierarchy Process is used to develop a destination evaluation hierarchy based on the six common attraction attributes or criteria, namely "beautiful beaches and sea-sports", "historical and cultural attractions", "night-life and entertainment", "value for money", "safety", and "adventure and wilderness". This paper ranks the six criteria from the most important to the least important according to both groups of tourists.

Key Words: Analytical Hierarchy Process, travel decision, package and non-package tourists, ASEAN

## INTRODUCTION

A profound understanding of the travel decision choice process - why people travel, which destinations they choose and which factors play an important role in the process of selecting vacation destination, had long been acknowledged by tourism scholars (Jeng & Fesenmaier 2002; Shih, 1986). Travel decision making study has been investigated comprehensively over the decade (see Mayo and Davis 1981 on one of the earliest text). Even though many conceptual approaches to understanding travel decision making had been proposed, they could be grouped into; (i) choice set models (Crompton & Ankomah, 1993; Um and Crompton, 1990), (ii) general travel model (Woodside & Lysonski, 1989), (iii) decision net models (Fesenmaier & Jeng, 2000), and (iv) multi-destination travel models (Lue, Crompton & Fesenmaier, 1993). Amongst the earliest reviews on the components of an attraction were provided by MacCannell (1976), Gunn (1988) and Leiper (1990), while Canter's (1975) sense of place model suggested that an attraction will be more successful when the visitors have a clear concept of what it is about, the activities offered are clearly understood, and the physical attributes are distinctive and aesthetically pleasing. Meanwhile Pearce (1991), used both an inductive and deductive methods to arrive at the six principals for successful tourist attractions.

Demand measures are often used to determine the magnitude of the appeal of a given destination and to show that one region is more attractive than others. Even though the number of visitor arrivals, tourism expenditure or receipts and length of stay are among the most popular demand

measures used in expressing the attractiveness of a region or destination, tourist preferences appears more accurate than those measures mentioned earlier. Witt and Moutinho (1995) in their article on determinants of the attractiveness of a region mentioned two techniques in evaluating a region. The techniques were; attractiveness index (Gearing et al. (1974) used this method in their study on tourism regions in Turkey), and the expectancy-value model formulated by Fishbein (1963). Pearce (1989) listed three steps necessary in evaluating the attractiveness of a region:

1. Selection of criteria and weights for measuring the attractiveness of the resources.
2. Evaluation of areas/sites by ranking them from most to least attractive.
3. Derivation of a relative measure of overall attractiveness, to make certain that the prime tourism areas are readily identified.

The criteria being subjective lead to one of the difficulties that usually arise when using the above techniques is “the difficult problem of finding the right weights” (Witt & Moutinho, 1995: 33). This could be overcome by applying a technique called the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP), one of the tools in multi-criteria analysis (MCA) or multi-criteria decision making (MCDM). AHP allows decision makers to use both the objective (quantitative) and subjective (qualitative) criteria simultaneously. Objective criteria can be numerically defined while subjective criteria are qualitative in nature. This study defines six subjective criteria in choosing tourism destinations.

## METHODOLOGY

This study develops an approach to position three destinations within South East Asia based on six attraction attributes which influence the tourists’ choices of holiday destination. The three destinations selected for this study are; Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand. These destinations are selected for, besides being neighbours, they have common attractions. Other destinations within ASEAN such as Singapore (known for its shopping and city attractions), Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Burma (being new destinations), Philippines (main attraction is its small islands) and Brunei (tourism is not its main product) are not selected. Within South East Asia, Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia received almost 66% of the total arrivals of 43.90 million in 2002. The breakdown of international tourists by region to the three countries in 2002 is shown in Table 1 below. Even though Thailand and Indonesia received lower number of international tourists (10.80 million and 4.91 million respectively) compared to Malaysia’s 13.29 million, but they attracted more long-haul tourists (ASEAN Secretariat website).

Table 1  
International Visitors to Malaysia, Indonesia and Thailand (2002)

| Region               | Malaysia          | Indonesia        | Thailand          |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| ASEAN                | 9,878,233         | 1,954,213        | 2,614,627         |
| Asia (Excl: ASEAN)   | 1,537,455         | 1,371,480        | 4,304,519         |
| Middle East          | 73,212            | 39,004           | 208,183           |
| America              | 227,800           | 220,824          | 635,088           |
| Europe               | 530,593           | 868,918          | 2,301,754         |
| Australasia/Pacific  | 218,951           | 432,314          | 421,144           |
| Africa               | 13,720            | n/a              | 39,671            |
| Others & unspecified | 812,046           | 27,082           | 274,081           |
| <b>Total</b>         | <b>13,292,010</b> | <b>4,913,835</b> | <b>10,799,067</b> |

Source: ASEAN Secretariat - Tourism Statistics [online] <http://www.aseansec.org>

A survey was conducted on 150 foreign tourists (excluding those from South East Asia) at several selected popular destinations in Malaysia during the months of October until December of 2003. Only those who had prior knowledge about Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia either through

their personal experience, communications or discussion with others about this part of the world and/or knowledge gained from past readings or correspondence were selected as respondents. Of these, 86 respondents had visited the three destinations at least once between 2000 and 2003. One of the advantages of AHP is that it is able to detect inconsistencies in the answers given. Of the 86 respondents, only 60 were consistent with their answers.

*Socio-Demographics of Respondents*

Analysis of the demographic responses of 60 respondents revealed a descriptive profile of the tourists to be British (30%), Australian (25%), Japanese (18.0%), Americans (15.0%) and Taiwanese (12.0%) with more male (68.3%) than female (31.7%). The mode age segment is the 31-40 years which is 25 or 41.7% of the respondents. The second largest age group was the 20-30 years old group (35.0%), followed by 41-50 (16.7%) while the smallest percentage comes from the less than 20 years old group. Almost 55 percent of the respondents surveyed were married and 38.3% are still single. Half of respondents (50.0%) were university graduate and 33.3% were college graduate or vocational/technical college graduate (refer to Table 2).

*Trip Characteristics*

One in every three respondents was package travellers. The duration taken by the respondents before deciding on the trip are as follows; less than 7 days (30.0%), 7 to 14 days (23.3%), 15-30 days (18.3%), 31 to 60 days (11.7%), 61 to 90 days (5.0%) and more than 91 days (11.7%). The main point of entry (83.3%) and departure (65.2%) that was used by most of the respondents is Kuala Lumpur. The main mode of travelling used during entry (90.0%) and also during departure (86.2%) was by air. 61.6% of the tourists came to Malaysia for the holiday followed by business (20.0%), visiting friends (6.7%), education (5.0%), attending convention (3.3%) and others (3.3%) (refer to Table 3).

Table 2  
Socio-demographic Characteristics of Tourists (n = 60)

|                    |      |  |      |
|--------------------|------|--|------|
| Gender (%)         |      | Education Level (%)                        |      |
| Male               | 68.3 | At least secondary/high school graduate    | 16.7 |
| Female             | 31.7 | Some college/vocational-technical graduate | 33.3 |
| Age (%)            |      | University graduate                        | 50.0 |
| 20 and below       | 3.3  |  |      |
| 21 - 30            | 35.0 |  |      |
| 31 - 40            | 41.7 |  |      |
| 41 - 50            | 16.7 |  |      |
| Above 51           | 5.0  |  |      |
| Marital Status (%) |      |  |      |
| Single             | 38.3 |  |      |
| Married            | 55.0 |  |      |
| Widowed/Divorced   | 1.7  |  |      |
| Living Together    | 5.0  |  |      |

Table 3  
Trip Characteristics of Tourists (n = 60)

|                      |      |                        |      |
|----------------------|------|------------------------|------|
| Travel type (%)      |      | Point of entry (%)     |      |
| Package              | 65.7 | Kuala Lumpur           | 83.3 |
| Non-Package          | 34.3 | Pulau Pinang           | 6.6  |
|                      |      | Pulau Langkawi         | 1.6  |
| Visit Objectives (%) |      | Kota Baharu            | 1.6  |
| Business             |      | Johore Bahru           | 1.6  |
| Visiting friends     |      | Padang Besar           | 3.3  |
| Attending convention |      | Bukit Kayu Hitam       | 1.6  |
| Holiday              |      |                        |      |
| Education            | 20.0 | Entry mode (%)         |      |
| Others               | 6.7  | Air                    | 90.0 |
|                      | 3.3  | Road                   | 6.7  |
| Days decision made   | 61.6 | Sea                    | 3.3  |
| before trip (%)      | 5.0  |                        |      |
| Less than 7 days     | 3.3  | Point of departure (%) |      |
| 7 - 14 days          |      | Kuala Lumpur           | 65.2 |
| 15 – 30 days         |      | Pulau Pinang           | 13.3 |
| 31 – 60 days         |      | Pulau Langkawi         | 3.3  |
| 61 – 90 days         | 30.0 | Kota Baharu            | 1.6  |
| More than 91 days    | 23.3 | Johore Bahru           | 10.0 |
|                      | 18.3 | Padang Besar           | 3.3  |
|                      | 11.7 | Bukit Kayu Hitam       | 3.3  |
|                      | 5.0  |                        |      |
|                      | 11.7 | Departure mode (%)     |      |
|                      |      | Air                    | 86.2 |
|                      |      | Road                   | 11.6 |
|                      |      | Sea                    | 1.6  |

## THE MODEL: ANALYTICAL HIERARCHY PROCESS

Analytical Hierarchy Process (popularly known as AHP), developed by Thomas Saaty in the early of 1970's, is a general theory of measurement (Saaty, 1980). It is used to derive ratio scales from both discrete and continuous paired comparisons in multilevel hierarchic structures. These comparisons may be taken from actual measurements or from a fundamental scale that reflects the relative strength of preferences feelings. It has found its widest applications in multi-criteria decision making, in planning and resource allocation, and in conflict resolution (Saaty, 1983).

AHP has been successfully and widely applied in many decision situations and areas such as operations research (Chow and Kwon, 2004; Sugihara et al., 2004), information technology (Shee et al., 2003), marketing (Bhutta and Huq, 2002; Gerrand and Cunningham, 2001; Lin and Hsu, 2003), transportation (Gercek et al., 2004; Lim et al., 2004; Modarres and Zarei, 2002), business/finance (Chan, 2004; Cheng et al., 2002; Yurdakul and Tansel, 2004), health (Dijkstra and Bij, 2002; Mullen, 2004), Decision Support System (Kablan, 2004; Phillips-Wren et al., 2004; Sundarraj, 2004) and tourism/hospitality (Curry and Moutinho, 1992; Kahraman et al., 2004; Mazanec, 1998; Min and Min, 1996; Min et al., 2000; Sheng and Gwo, 1995).

### *Application of the AHP Model*

The AHP model for selecting tourism destinations involves the following five steps:

Step 1: Define the evaluation criteria for selecting tourism destinations.

It is essential that the attraction attributes that is common in a tourist region, in this study is the South East Asia region, be identified first. The instrument of the study was partly adopted from one already tested, and, therefore a valid questionnaire from a study done by Shaharuddin (1996). Changes were made to make it appropriate for all the destinations using secondary sources of information; (a) articles from tourism related text (Go and Jenkins, 1997) (b) travel brochures produced by tourism board of the three countries, and (c) brochures from travel companies promoting the region. The researchers finally identified the following six attraction attributes identical within the three countries:

- Beautiful beaches and sea-sports (sun bathing, swimming, scuba diving, water skiing, sailing)
- Historical and cultural attractions (historical buildings and sites, museums, monuments, mosques and temples, local people and their traditions, local food, music, games)
- Night-life and entertainment (night clubs, discos, pubs, casinos and amusement parks)
- Good value for money (inexpensive total vacation cost, included here are favorable exchange rate, and availability of cheap accommodation, food, and local transportation)
- Safety (social aspects, friendliness of local population, political climate of country).
- Adventure and wilderness (jungle tracking, mountain climbing and camping)

Step 2: Establish a hierarchical structure by breaking the tourism destinations into a hierarchy of interrelated decision elements, including ultimate goal, criteria and alternative.

Based on the problem, the hierarchy structure for the problem is as in Figure 1 below. It involves three hierarchies. The first hierarchy is the objective (choice of destination), the second is six attraction attributes (criteria) and the third hierarchy is the three countries in South East Asia identified for this study (alternatives).

Step 3: Establish the pair-wise comparison matrix. Every respondent makes a pair-wise comparison of the decision elements and by giving the relative scores.

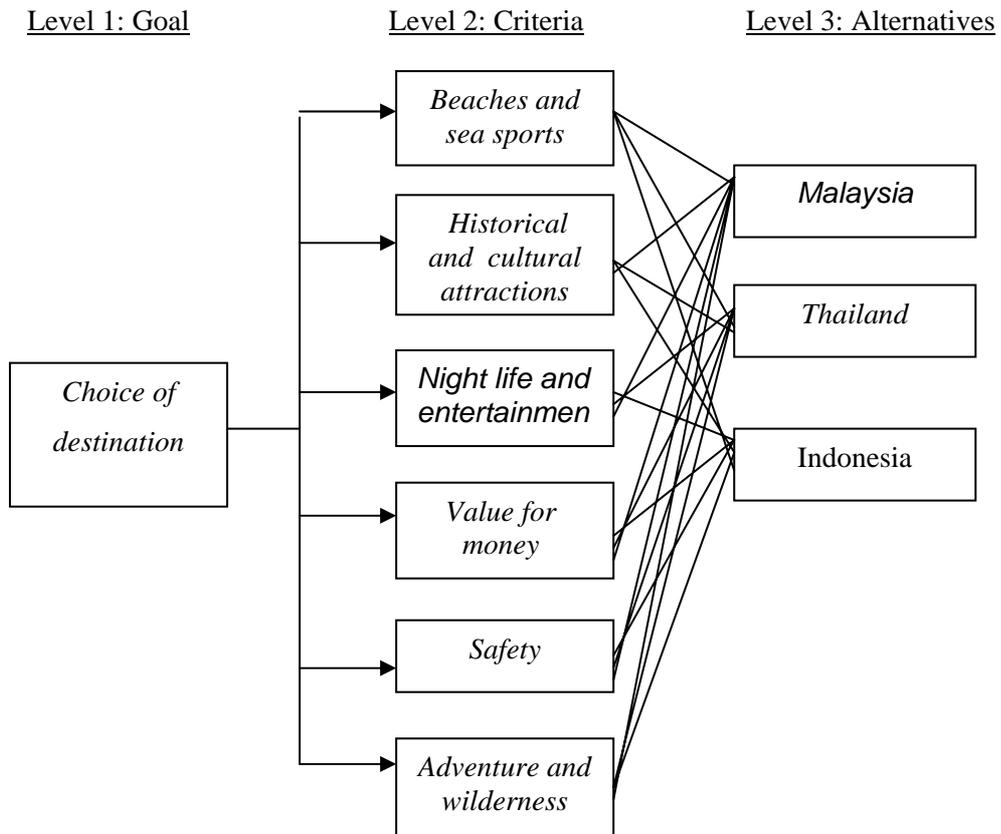
Making pair-wise comparison means making abstraction of the overall state of things, to concentrate only on two elements of a given level of hierarchy. For each group of tourists that is the package and non-package tourists, we can compare for example two criteria; *Beaches and sea sports* and *Historical and cultural attractions*. The respondent must omit any bias concerning other criteria in this pair-wise comparison process. This level of abstraction can be difficult to some people and it is a task of the researchers to extract sincere and bias-free answers from the respondents. Examples of questions put up in every pair-wise comparison are:

- Is the criteria *Beaches and sea sports* more important than the criteria *Historical and cultural attractions*, concerning the *overall objective* we want to achieve?

If yes: How much more important is the criterion *Beaches and sea sports* compared to the criteria *Historical and cultural attractions*, concerning the *overall objective* we want to achieve?

If no: How much more important is the criterion *Beaches and sea sports* compared to the criteria *Historical and cultural attractions*, concerning the *overall objective* we want to achieve?

Figure 1  
The Decision Hierarchy in choosing Tourism Destination



To answer questions relating to the degree of preference, importance or likelihood, the following comparison scale must be used:

Table 4  
AHP Comparison Scale

| Intensity of importance | Explanation                                       |   |
|-------------------------|---|---|
| 1                       | Equal importance                                  | Two objectives contribute equally to the objective  |
| 3                       | Weak importance of one over another               | Experience and judgment slightly favor one activity over another.                             |
| 5                       | Essential or strong importance                    | Experience and judgment strongly favor one activity over another.                             |
| 7                       | Very strong importance                            | An activity is favored very strongly over another is of highest possible order of affirmation |
| 9                       | Absolute importance                               | The evidence favoring one activity over another is of highest possible order of affirmation   |
| 2,4,6,8                 | Intermediate values between adjacent scale values | When compromise is needed   |

Source: Saaty (1980)

#### Step 4: Computing

Once all pair-wise comparison matrices are built, there are three computation steps that are to be performed:

- a) Checking consistency of every comparison matrix.
- b) Applying the eigenvector method to compute the weights.
- c) Aggregating the weights to determine a ranking of alternatives.

##### a. Checking consistency

Consider a comparison case in which a respondent states that criteria 1 is thrice as important as criteria 2 and criteria 2 is twice as important as criteria 3. If the same respondent states that criteria 1 is three times as important as criteria 3, then the comparison is not perfectly consistent because criteria 1 should be six times as important as criteria 3 in view of two comparisons made earlier.

Table 5  
Pair-wise matrix comparison of 6 criteria

| Criteria                     | Beaches and sea sports | Cultural and historical | Night life and entertainment | Value for money | Safety | Adventure and wilderness |
|------------------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------|-----------------|--------|--------------------------|
| Beaches and sea sports       | 1                      | 1/8                     | 2                            | 1/2             | 1/9    | 1/7                      |
| Cultural and historical      | 8                      | 1                       | 8                            | 6               | 1/2    | 6                        |
| Night life and entertainment | 1/2                    | 1/8                     | 1                            | 1/2             | 1/9    | 1/5                      |
| Value for money              | 2                      | 1/6                     | 2                            | 1               | 1/7    | 1/4                      |
| Safety                       | 9                      | 2                       | 9                            | 7               | 1      | 9                        |
| Adventure and wilderness     | 7                      | 1/6                     | 5                            | 4               | 1/9    | 1                        |

In general, what we mean by being consistent is that when we have a basic amount of raw data, all other data can be logically deduced from it. For example, in the above matrix in Table 5, by filling the first row, all the other positions on the matrix can be deduced. This matrix is said to be perfectly consistent.

Table 6  
Random Index Value

| Order | Random Index (R.I) |
|-------|--------------------|
| 1     | 0.00               |
| 2     | 0.00               |
| 3     | 0.58               |
| 4     | 0.90               |
| 5     | 1.12               |
| 6     | 1.24               |
| 7     | 1.32               |
| 8     | 1.41               |
| 9     | 1.45               |
| 10    | 1.49               |
| 11    | 1.51               |
| 12    | 1.48               |
| 13    | 1.56               |
| 14    | 1.57               |
| 15    | 1.59               |

Source: Saaty (1980)

Saaty (1980) takes the value  $(\lambda_{\max}-n)/(n-1)$  as a measure of consistency, which he calls consistency index (C.I). How bad our consistency is in a given problem may be estimated by comparing our C.I with a C.I of a matrix of the same size which entries and reciprocals in the reverse positions have been randomly, chosen. This consistency index is called random index (R.I). A table with R.I for matrices of several orders is presented in Table 6 above.

The ratio of C.I to the average R.I for the same order matrix is called the consistency ratio (C.R.). If the consistency ratio surpasses 0.1, a new input matrix must be generated because of inconsistency. If the consistency ratio is in the neighborhood of 0.1, we can be satisfied with our judgment. Referring back to Table 6, the C.R is 0.09 (consistent). Of the 86 respondents who had visited the three destinations at least once between 2000 and 2003, only 60 respondents were consistent with their answers.

#### *b. Applying the eigenvector method to compute the weights*

Let us considered the elements  $C_1, \dots, C_n$  of some level in the hierarchy. We wish to find their weights of influence,  $w_1, \dots, w_n$  on some elements in the next level. As described earlier, our basic tool is a matrix of numbers, representing our judgment of pair-wise comparisons. We calculate the weights by calculating the eigenvector of the pair-wise comparison matrix. Once we have the pair-wise comparisons matrices, the next step is to find the eigenvector of each matrix, which represents the relative weights of the alternatives over the given criteria. The eigenvector with the largest eigenvalue is chosen to provide the priorities (Saaty, 1980).

#### *c. The additive aggregation procedure to obtain a final result*

In this stage we already have the relative weights of all alternatives over all the criteria in all levels of the hierarchy. So, what we now need to calculate is the importance of alternatives (Malaysia, Thailand, Indonesia) with respect to the overall objective (choosing a holiday destination).

#### Step 5: Getting results from Expert Choice

Expert Choice software is a multi-criteria decision support tool, which is based on the Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP), a mathematically based theory developed at the Wharton Business School of the University of Pennsylvania by Thomas L. Saaty (Expert Choice Inc., 1986). The advantages of AHP to the user include its reliance on easily obtained managerial judgment data, its ability to reconcile differences (inconsistencies) in managerial judgments and perceptions and the existence of easy-to-use commercial software (i.e. "Expert Choice") that implements the AHP (Calantone *et al.*, 1999).

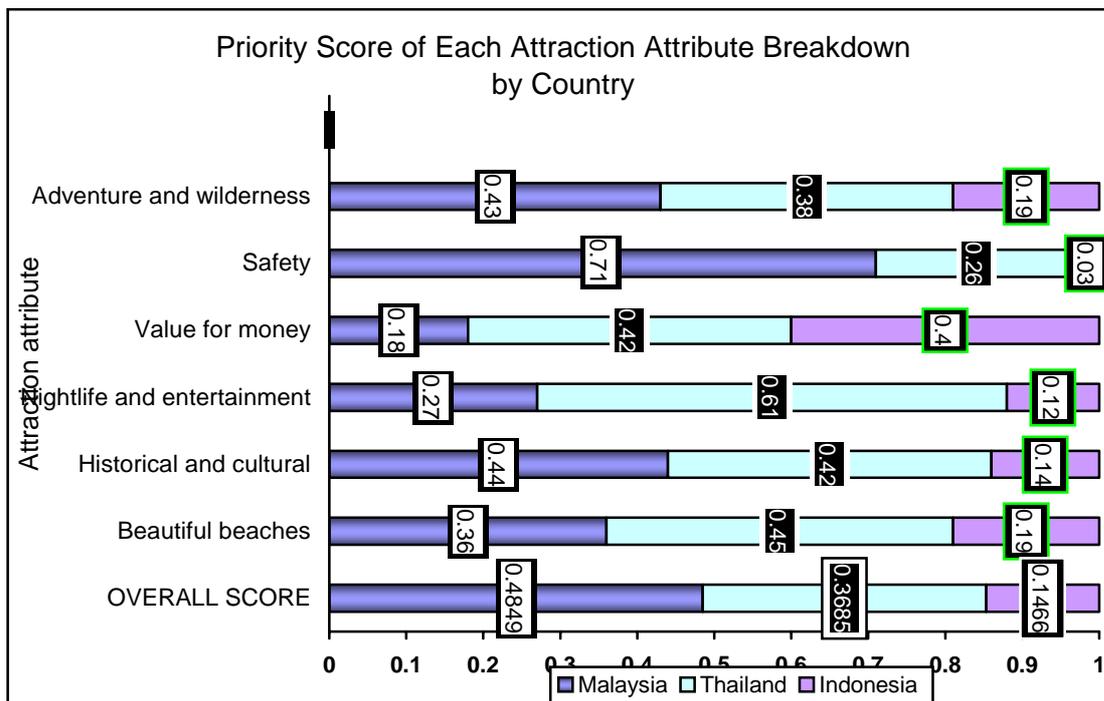
## RESULTS

This study shows that the most important attribute in determining a holiday destination by both groups of package and non-package tourists is "safety" (0.41 vs. 0.43). In other words, for the package tourists, 41% of the decision is influence by "safety" while the remaining five factors influence 59% of the decisions. The least important attribute is "adventure and wilderness" for the package tourists and "night life and entertainment" for the non-package tourists (refer to Table 7).

Applying AHP based on responses by all the 60 respondents, the performances of the three South East Asia countries were measured. It was found that Malaysia out-performed Thailand and Indonesia on three attributes namely "safety", "historical and cultural attractions" and "adventure and wilderness". Meanwhile Thailand performed better than Malaysia and Indonesia in the three attributes of "beautiful beaches and sea sports", "nightlife and entertainment", and "value for money". Indonesia was always ranked second or third in every attraction attribute used in this study (refer to chart below). The AHP analysis indicates that Thailand is a close competitor to Malaysia compared to Indonesia, which is found to be far behind. Malaysia is ranked first with its overall priority score of 0.4849, followed by Thailand (0.3685) and Indonesia (0.1466).

Table 7  
 Ranking of Priority Score by Package and Non-Package Tourists

| Attraction Attributes               | Package        |      | Non-Package    |      |
|-------------------------------------|----------------|------|----------------|------|
|                                     | Priority Score | Rank | Priority Score | Rank |
| Safety                              | 0.41           | 1    | 0.43           | 1    |
| Value of money                      | 0.15           | 2    | 0.17           | 2    |
| Beautiful beaches and sea sports    | 0.13           | 3    | 0.13           | 3    |
| Historical and cultural attractions | 0.11           | 4    | 0.10           | 4    |
| Night life and entertainment        | 0.10           | 5    | 0.08           | 6    |
| Adventure and wilderness            | 0.08           | 6    | 0.09           | 5    |



## CONCLUSION

This study shows that AHP could be used as a tool in understanding the destination attraction attribute choices. When most tools could only be used on objective criteria, AHP could be employed on both the objective and subjective criteria separately or simultaneously. However, it should be stated here that the findings of this study can be strictly generalized to the population surveyed. To obtain a much broader insights it is necessary to replicate this study in Thailand and Indonesia.

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# UNDERSTANDING PERCEIVED TRAVEL RISK DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FIRST TIME AND REPEAT TRAVELERS

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## ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to determine the perceived travel risk differences between first time and repeat travelers. This study shows that as the number of visits increase, repeat travelers have fewer perceived risks of terrorism and travel inconvenience. Since repeat travelers know the destination better than first time travelers, their perception about the extent of risks at the destination rely more on their cognitive judgement of their past experience rather than on exposures to news reports.

Key Words: terrorism, perceived travel risks, past experience, first time and repeat travelers, destination image, and media

## INTRODUCTION

### Travel Risks

Travelers' confidence has decreased significantly after a series of terrorist attacks, infectious disease warnings, and natural disasters. Several countries report a decline in tourist arrivals after the September 11 terrorist attack, bomb explosions in Bali and London, the outbreaks of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS), bird flu, foot and mouth disease, and tsunami disaster. Also, concerns that travelers are transmitters of diseases such as SARS have challenged the travel and tourism industry. For instance, inter- and intra-regional tourism fell by 50-70%, and many businesses associated with travel and tourism collapsed due to the SARS outbreak in 2003 (World Health Organization, 2005 cited in De Sausmarez, 2005).

Moreover, the Asian financial crisis and the increase in oil prices have had negative impacts on the travel industry. The economic and oil crises became social and political crises when people lost their jobs and prices of fundamental goods and transportation increased. Consequently, people have been more prudent in spending money on leisure travel.

Also, the frequency of natural and man-made disasters in recent years has drawn public attention to increased concerns about risks while traveling. Gross tourism demand fell precipitously following the terror attacks as people chose not to travel until some measure of safety and security was assured (Floyd, Gibson, Pennington-Gray, and Thapa, 2003).

Terrorism is now a major consideration when traveling. The severity of the terrorism attacks was unprecedented in terms of lives lost and physical destruction. The terrorism threat level was certainly high, given the lack of specific information initially available about the possibility of additional threats and the series of warnings that emanated from local government officials (Floyd, et al, 2003).

Floyd, Gibson, Pennington-Gray, and Thapa (2003) did a study to examine the effects of perceived risk on travel intentions of households from the New York City area in the aftermath of the September 11 event. They found that the weeks following September 11, about two-thirds of US leisure travelers indicated reluctance to fly, while 55% of business travelers planned to drive when feasible as opposed to flying to their respective destinations. Corporate and convention travel experienced more than a 40% decrease in attendance (Floyd, et al, 2003). Similarly, while a majority

of the sample indicated plans to travel, those with safety concerns were less likely to express intentions to travel in the 12 months following the World Trade attack (Floyd, et al, 2003).

Sonmez, Apostolopoulos, and Tarlow (1999) noted that travel statistics from around the world clearly suggest that tourism demand decreases as the perception of risks associated with a destination increases.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Travelers' Reaction to Terrorism

Major risks to tourism are 1) war and political instability, 2) health concerns such as SARS and bird flu, 3) crime, 4) terrorism, 5) natural disasters and 6) financial crisis (Sonmez and Graefe, 1998a). Among these factors, risks associated with potential terrorism attacks and political instability have been identified as particularly influential in changing travel intentions, even among experienced travelers (Sonmez and Graefe, 1998b).

According to Rogers's (1975) Protection Motivation Theory (PMT), individuals engage in protective behavior when 1) potential and magnitude for danger is high, 2) probability of occurrence is high, 3) action to mitigate threat are effective (e.g. choosing alternative destinations or staying home), and 4) an individual can control consequences (e.g., money to go elsewhere or time to postpone for safe conditions).

Sonmez (1998) suggests that when faced with the threat of terrorism, tourists tend to engage in a number of behaviors, including substituting risky destinations with safer alternatives and generalizing potential risks to other countries in the region affected. She also notes that tourists exhibit cultural variations in their reactions, with US tourists most likely to perceived higher levels of risk in foreign destinations.

### Media and Safety and Security

The media is clearly critical in influencing both tourist and political reactions to political and international security issues (Hall, Timothy, and Duval, 2003). The media creates negative images that exacerbate risk. Ritcher (1983) explains that when tourists are victimized worldwide, the media broadcast exacerbate the perceptions of risk associated with the destination.

As a result of media coverage, perceived risks associated with the destination could actually outweigh actual conditions in the travel destination and affect the decision-making process, causing whole regions to be perceived as risky (Sonmez, 1998). For example, negative media coverage of the tsunami tarnished the destination image of Sri Lanka, the Maldives and Thailand (De Sausmarez, 2005). As media coverage lessens, the visual images of the bewilderment and grief on the faces of the survivors and the utter devastation of their surroundings remain (De Sausmarez, 2005). Although many of the tourist developments, infrastructure and facilities in those areas have been restored, the destinations are still perceived as unsafe to visit (De Sausmarez, 2005). It is hard for potential tourists to believe that the area damaged by the tsunami was in fact quite limited and that many locations untouched by the tragedy are now available for tourists (De Sausmarez, 2005).

### Past Travel Experience Alters Perceived Travel Risks

Sonmez and Graefe (1998a) found that perceptions of risk or safety concerns are of paramount importance in the decision making process of tourists because they can alter rational decision-making as it pertains to travel modes and choice of a destination.

While the severity of a terrorist attack will depress tourism demand in the short term (six to nine months), the frequency of terrorist attacks is more important in determining whether tourists will

travel to a particular destination in the long term, as tourists perceive a destination frequently subjected to attack as being risky and so they tend to avoid it (Sonmez and Graefe, 1998a, Pizam and Fleischer, 2002, Floyd et al, 2003).

Matzursky (1989) also suggested that future travel behavior may be influenced not just by the extent of past travel experience but by the nature of previous travel as well (Floyd et al, 2003). Roehl and Fesenmeier (1992) stated that it was possible to identify differences among tourists in their perceptions of risk, with some tourists more risk averse than others (Floyd et al, 2003).

According to Pearce's (1983) Travel Career Ladder, the more experienced travelers tend to focus on higher order needs, such as self-actualization and education, rather than on lower level needs like food and safety. Therefore, more experienced travelers may be less focused on safety than less experienced travelers (Floyd et al, 2003).

### First Time & Repeat Travelers

According to Gitelson and Crompton (1984), people undertake repeat visits because of 1) emotional attachment to a place, 2) desire for further exploration of a destination, 3) desire to show the destination to other people, 4) risk reduction/contentment with a particular destination, and 5) risk reduction/find the people at the destination unchanged.

First time visitors may choose to visit or avoid destinations for a variety of reasons that have little to do with the actual quality of experience available (Lau and Mckercher, 2004). In contrast, repeat travelers who are satisfied with the travel experience at the destinations return to their home country and recommend the destination to their friends and relatives. Hence, they help provide the destinations with a stable tourism income. It is also more cost effective in terms of marketing promotion to retain repeat travelers than to attract new ones.

However, there are relatively few studies that have examined the phenomenon of perceived risks associated with the destinations and repeat visitation. Oppermann (1998) commented that "repeat visitation, particularly the multiple-repeat visitation pattern, has largely escaped attention in the tourism literature" (p.132). Most of the empirical studies on perceived travel risks have focused on North American, European, Australian, and East Asian countries. Nevertheless, there are a few empirical research studies about perceived travel risks in Indo-China, specifically, Thailand.

The objective of this study is to determine the differences in perceived travel risks between first time and repeat travelers. Thailand is used as the research setting because it attracts about an equal number first time and repeat travelers. However, recent threats, such as the tsunami, SARS, and bird flu, and the political turmoil in the South of Thailand have led to varying degrees of negative impact on tourist arrivals and receipts.

### METHODOLOGY

The instrument for this study was a self-administered questionnaire used to determine the perceived travel risks while embarking on international trips. The perceived travel risk measurement was modified from the studies by Um and Crompton (1992) on perceived inhibitors and facilitators in pleasure travel destination decisions and by Sonmez and Graefe (1998) on future travel behavior from past travel experience and perceptions of risk and safety. The perceived travel risk attributes were also derived from in-depth interviews with 80 tourists who visited Thailand in December 2003. Moreover, news reports about perceived travel risks to the global tourism industry were also used to construct the questionnaire items. The questionnaire contained four sections, including travel behaviors, perceived travel risks, travelers' intention towards taking international trips, and demographic profiles. The respondents were asked to indicate the level of agreement of perceived travel risk attributes on a 5 point Likert scale, that ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). A panel of experts in the field of travel and tourism checked the content validity of the

instrument. A pilot test was given to 60 tourists who visited Thailand in January 2004. The results of the pilot test provided valuable information for the questionnaire design, wording, and measuring scales. The target population was first time and repeat international travelers. A Cluster sampling was used to randomly select departure flights. Then 1,000 passengers who were checking in for the selected departure flights at Bangkok International Airport from February to April 2004 were asked to participate in the survey. Univariate and Multivariate statistical procedures were used to analyze the data. First, a descriptive statistics analysis was run to determine frequency distribution. Second, an exploratory factor analysis was used to identify the underlying dimensions of the perceived travel risks. It was also used to construct summated scale scores for subsequent analysis. Finally, Multiple Discriminant Analysis was employed to determine the differences in perceived risk among the three groups of first time and repeat travelers.

## RESULT

One thousand questionnaires were distributed and six hundred and sixty questionnaires were returned, yielding a 66% response rate. About 72% of the respondents were vacationers, followed by those who were combining vacation and business trips (10%), and business travelers (7%). Most respondents (81.5%) said that they would visit Thailand again. About 47 % were first time travelers, followed by 2-3 time travelers (31.2%) and 4-5 time travelers (20.7%). More than half of the respondents were males (54.9%) and between the age of 20 and 39 years old (65.5%). About 33.6% of the respondents held professional and managerial positions, followed by students (23.8%). Most of the respondents were highly educated, (50.5%) had attended college and (35%) had graduate or postgraduate degrees. Most of them came from Europe, Australia, and North America.

Table 1  
Concerns on Travel Safety

| (N=658)        | Would you overlook personal safety if travel costs are low? | Do you think that Thailand is a safe travel destination? | Would you stop traveling completely during terrorism? | Would you choose travel to a less dangerous destination rather than stop traveling during terrorism? |
|----------------|---|--|---|--|
| Mean           | 2.2948  | 3.8024   | 2.92  | 3.5729   |
| Median         | 2.0000  | 4.0000   | 3.00  | 4.0000   |
| Mode           | 2.00  | 4.00   | 2   | 4.00   |
| Std. Deviation | 1.09988   | .82236   | 1.178   | .97846   |

The respondents were asked whether or not they would overlook personal safety if travel costs were low. About 62% responded that they would not overlook personal safety even if travel costs were low. However, 16% of the respondents said that they would. Instead of forgoing traveling completely if there was a perceived risk of terrorism, more than half (60%) of the respondents said they would choose to travel to a less dangerous destination. About 32% would forgo traveling completely, whereas 42% said they would still travel on international trips. About 74% thought that Thailand is a safe travel destination.

### Underlying Dimensions of Perceived Travel Risks

The Principal Component Analysis was used to determine the underlying dimensions of perceived travel risks. The Bartlett test of Sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin of Measure of Sampling Adequacy indicated the appropriateness of using an exploratory factor analysis for the set of perceived travel risk variables. The Bartlett test of Sphericity shows a value of 4715.468 at a significance level of 0.000, indicating that a nonzero correlation exists among variables. The Measure of Sampling Adequacy of .818 exceeds the necessary threshold of sampling adequacy with the

minimum of 0.50 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, and Black, 1998). This indicates that the set of the perceived travel risk variables meets the fundamental requirements for an exploratory factor analysis (Hair et al., 1998).

Table 2  
Underlying Dimensions of Perceived Travel Risks

| Attributes   | Factor Loadings |       |       |       |       |       | CM*  |
|--|-----------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|
| <b>Factor 1: Disease</b>                                 | <b>F1</b>       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| SARS   | 0.83            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.77 |
| Bird flu   | 0.77            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.70 |
| Anthrax  | 0.72            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.67 |
| <b>Factor 2: Terrorism</b>                               | <b>F2</b>       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| Bali Bomb  | 0.85            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.79 |
| The September 11, 2001 (911 event)                       | 0.82            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.74 |
| War in Iraq  | 0.81            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.68 |
| Political turmoil in the South of Thailand               | 0.60            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.42 |
| <b>Factor 3: Increase of Travel Costs</b>                | <b>F3</b>       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| Increase of Hotel Room rate                              | 0.90            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.75 |
| Increase of Tour Package                                 | 0.87            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.79 |
| Increase of Air fare                                     | 0.82            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.75 |
| <b>Factor 4: Lack Of Novelty Seeking</b>                 | <b>F4</b>       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| Lack of New Travel Experience                            | 0.85            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.75 |
| Lack of New Attractions                                  | 0.80            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.75 |
| Boredom of Traveling to the same places                  | 0.71            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.67 |
| <b>Factor 5: Deterioration of Tourist Destination</b>    | <b>F5</b>       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| Polluted and Crowded Travel Attractions                  | 0.76            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.63 |
| Hostile Attitude of local people towards tourists        | 0.67            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.47 |
| Cheating when shopping                                   | 0.67            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.59 |
| Dissatisfaction of previous trip                         | 0.44            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.47 |
| <b>Factor 6: Travel Inconvenience</b>                    | <b>F6</b>       |       |       |       |       |       |      |
| Language Barriers  | 0.77            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.60 |
| Long Travel time (too many hours and connecting flights) | 0.62            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.48 |
| Traffic jams   | 0.61            |       |       |       |       |       | 0.57 |
| <b>Eigenvalue</b>  | 4.89            | 2.92  | 1.74  | 1.35  | 1.21  | 1.06  |      |
| <b>Variance (%)</b>                                      | 24.43           | 14.61 | 8.72  | 6.73  | 6.06  | 5.31  |      |
| <b>Cumulative Variance (%)</b>                           | 24.43           | 39.04 | 47.76 | 54.49 | 60.55 | 65.86 |      |
| <b>Number of Items (E=20)</b>                            | 3               | 4     | 3     | 3     | 4     | 3     |      |

Note: \*Communality, Bartlett test of Sphericity = 4715.47 (sig. =0.000), Measure of Sampling Adequacy = .818.

The Principal Component Analysis with the Latent Root Criterion and the orthogonal (VARIMAX) rotation reduced 20 perceived travel risk attributes into 6 factors. The six factors represented 65.86% of the total variance explained. These six factors are 1) Disease, 2) Terrorism, 3) Increase of Travel Costs, 4) Lack of Novelty Seeking, 5) Deterioration of Tourist Attractions, and 6) Travel Inconvenience. The six factors are reported in Table 2. These six perceived risk dimensions were used to construct summated scale scores as independent variables in the Multiple Discriminant Analysis (MDA).

#### Perceived Risks among Three Groups of Travelers

The objective of this study is to identify differences in perceived travel risks between first time and repeat travelers. Multiple Discriminant Analysis (MDA) was used to assess the differences in the perceived risks among three categories of travelers: 1) first time travelers, 2) 2-3 time repeat-

travelers, and 3) 4-5 time-repeat travelers. The dependent variable is a nonmetric variable of the three categories of travelers. The independent variables are the six summated scale-scores derived from the exploratory factor analysis. The six factors are 1) Diseases, 2) Terrorism, 3) Increase of Travel Costs, 4) Lack of Novelty Seeking, 5) Deterioration of Tourist Attractions, and 6) Travel Inconvenience. The enter procedure was used to determine the discriminating capabilities. The sample size of 660 was split into analysis and holdout samples to establish internal validity of the Discriminant result.

Table 3  
Tests of Equality of Group Means

|                                       | Wilks' Lambda | F            | df1      | df2        | Sig.         |
|---------------------------------------|---------------|--------------|----------|------------|--------------|
| Disease                               | .997          | 1.109        | 2        | 642        | .330         |
| <b>Terrorism</b>                      | <b>.990</b>   | <b>3.108</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>642</b> | <b>.045*</b> |
| Increase of Travel Costs              | .992          | 2.609        | 2        | 642        | .074         |
| Lack of Novelty Seeking               | .994          | 2.028        | 2        | 642        | .132         |
| Deterioration of Tourist Destinations | .998          | .582         | 2        | 642        | .559         |
| <b>Travel Inconvenience</b>           | <b>.988</b>   | <b>3.844</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>642</b> | <b>.022*</b> |

\*Significant differences at  $p \leq 0.005$

Table 3 shows the Wilks' lambda and Univariate ANOVA used to assess the significance between means of the independent variables for the three groups. These tests indicate that two of the six independent variables (Terrorism and Travel Inconvenience) show significant differences at  $p \leq 0.045$  and  $p \leq 0.022$  respectively.

Table 4  
Group Descriptive Statistics

| Number of visits | Attributes                  | Mean           | Std. Deviation |
|------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|----------------|
| first time       | Disease                     | 2.92100        | 1.045767       |
|                  | <b>Terrorism</b>            | <b>2.68425</b> | .954982        |
|                  | Increase of Travel Costs    | 2.96023        | .981009        |
|                  | Lack of Novelty Seeking     | 3.04113        | .935741        |
|                  | Deteriorated Destination    | 3.38312        | .838881        |
|                  | <b>Travel Inconvenience</b> | <b>2.60823</b> | <b>.808598</b> |
| 2-3 times        | Disease                     | 2.84488        | 1.040437       |
|                  | <b>Terrorism</b>            | <b>2.64728</b> | .967265        |
|                  | Increase of Travel Costs    | 3.13861        | 1.068532       |
|                  | Lack of Novelty Seeking     | 3.04785        | .965072        |
|                  | Deteriorated Destination    | 3.39356        | .832597        |
|                  | <b>Travel Inconvenience</b> | <b>2.80033</b> | <b>.820050</b> |
| 4-5 times        | Disease                     | 2.76296        | 1.080405       |
|                  | <b>Terrorism</b>            | <b>2.43889</b> | 1.007651       |
|                  | Increase of Travel Costs    | 3.14444        | .953913        |
|                  | Lack of Novelty Seeking     | 2.85679        | 1.006233       |
|                  | Deteriorated Destination    | 3.30000        | .864840        |
|                  | <b>Travel Inconvenience</b> | <b>2.77037</b> | <b>.889842</b> |

Table 4 shows the group means and standard deviations for each of the independent variables. The result perhaps indicates that as the number of visits increases, repeat travelers become more experienced in taking international trips. Hence, they were less concerned about terrorism than the

first time travelers. Furthermore, travel inconvenience, such as language barrier, long travel time, and traffic jams, would deter more first time travelers than repeat travelers.

## CONCLUSION

This study found that travelers were concerned about their safety. More than half would not overlook personal safety even if travel costs were low. The demographic profile shows that most respondents were highly educated with college or graduate degree. According to Sonmez and Graefe (1998b), while individuals with higher education and income levels held more favorable attitudes towards international travel, demographic variables alone were not accurate predictors of risk perception related to travel. Instead, favorable attitudes to international travel and risk seeking, along with higher income levels, best predicted the likelihood that a person would travel when faced with the potential of terrorism and political instability (Floyd et al, 2003).

Furthermore, the finding reveals that half of the respondents were repeat travelers who went to the destination several times. This may enable them to know more about the place and have a better picture of the safety and security level of the destination. The finding also reveals that instead of forgoing traveling completely if there was a perceived risk of terrorism, they would choose to travel to a less dangerous destination. This may suggest that personal experience may exert even more influence on travel decisions than information acquired from external sources (Mazursky, 1989, Sonmez and Graefe, 1998).

This study also shows that as the number of visits increase, repeat travelers have less perceived risks regarding terrorism and travel inconvenience such as language barriers, discomfort of taking long haul trips, and traffic jams. Since repeat travelers know the destination better than first time travelers, their perception about the extent of risks at the destination rely more on their cognitive judgement of their past experience rather than their exposure to news reports. Consequently, they perceive less risk than first time travelers. However, this study is not a causal relationship design. This notion is not empirically confirmed. Additional research is needed to further the results of this study.

It also found that the frequency of visits to a destination decreases traveler's perceived travel risks. This result is consistent with previous research, which suggests that past experience might override one's perception of risk. Pinhey and Inverson (1994) found that previous travel experience might enhance feelings of safety. While previous travel experience did not seem to impact the decision-making process in this regard, individuals who had previously visited a destination tended to report that they would not avoid that destination in the future (Floyd, et al, 2003).

The finding also supports Fakeye and Crompton's (1991) study indicating that people who had not visited the destination before had different perceptions toward the place from those who had been there. They noted that the more frequently tourists visited, the more social opportunities and attractions were recognized and appreciated. As repeat travelers have had opportunities to participate in a number of activities at the destinations, they are destination-aware tourists who are knowledgeable of the range of activities available (Lau and Mckercher, 2004). This enables them to make judgements about the perceived risks based on their past experience. However, first-time visitors are destination-naïve tourists who may not be aware of what is available (Lau and Mckercher, 2004). Therefore, they perceive more risks associated with the destination than repeat travelers.

Pizam and Fleischer (2002) stated that tourist destinations can recover from severe acts of terrorism, as long as the terrorist acts are not repeated. However, if terrorist acts occur frequently and regularly, tourism demand will constantly decrease. Therefore, local government has to increase safety and security standards to assure travelers' safety concerns. In addition, tourism recovery depends on the efficiency of tourism partners to bring their facilities back to pre-disaster level, and an effective marketing message that clearly confirms that the destination is once again open and ready for business (Durocher, 1994).

Hence, it is necessary to provide the media and the public with consistent and up-to-date information about the recovery. Then media coverage would soon carry positive headlines (Durocher, 1994). Furthermore, bringing travel agents, meeting planners, news reporters, and travel writers to the destination after disaster recovery is one of the best ways of overcoming reluctance to book business (Durocher, 1994). Finally, a critical factor in recovery rests with the hotels, airlines, and tourism suppliers to offer affordable tour packages to allow potential travelers to experience the recovered destinations.

This study also found that travel inconvenience, such as long distance and long travel time, would deter travelers from traveling abroad. Although it may be difficult to eliminate long distance inconvenience, it is possible to reduce travel time by increasing nonstop flights to destinations (Rittichainuwat, Qu, and Mongkhonvanit, 2004).

The study also found that respondents were concerned about language barriers. Language barriers create separation between tourists and local residents. Due to the inability to communicate in a vernacular language, there is a barrier between the two groups which diminishes cultural exchange (Aziz, 1995). Such barriers create tension and leads to violence against tourists. Aziz (1995) provided an interesting perspective on the terrorist attacks by Muslim activists toward tourism. According to him, Islam itself is not against tourism (Aziz, 1995). The Muslim activists who use violence against tourists perceive tourism as a threat toward their religion and culture (Aziz, 1995). According to them, tourism represents unequal socio-economic development, and which violates Islamic cultural values and traditions such as the consumption of alcohol and pork, gambling, prostitution, disrespect towards dress and codes of behavior (Aziz, 1995). This leads to a feeling of xenophobia and violence (Aziz, 1995). Moreover, tourists are perceived as tangible representatives of the rich and comfortable, “have” societies, clustered together in luxurious ghettos challenging all moral, religious and social values of the “want” society (Aziz, 1995). This is against the belief that tourism represents a powerful force for improved relations among people and nations; such relations emphasize a sharing and appreciation of cultures rather than a lack of trust and isolation (D’Amore, 1988).

Tourism by the definition of D’Amore (1988) seems to be sustainable tourism. It asks for collaboration of government, local residents, and tourism investors to maximize tourism development into local economies. Moreover, education of local people is an effective way to minimize such socioeconomic barrier. With careful planning, sustainable tourism may diminish the cause of terrorism. This in turn reduces perceived travel risks at destination.

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# **Section 2**

## **Poster Papers**

# COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM INITIATIVES: PROSPECTS FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ON AN OUTLYING ISLAND IN HONG KONG

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## ABSTRACT

Community-based tourism (CBT) is fast becoming a segment of sustainable tourism development that operates on the premise that the local community takes charge of initiatives that concern economic, social and environmental issues. Where and when a community decides to develop its tourism potential, activities like product development, marketing and resources management are sought. In Hong Kong, there is growing evidence that additional and alternative tourism attractions are increasingly being sought. The question is how can such special interest tourism themes complement the already booming tourism industry in Hong Kong? This paper attempts to study the advent of community-based tourism on an outlying Island by investigating and seeking to answer questions regarding the availability of appropriate resources, types and nature of businesses and community involvement in order to continue to be viable for tourist consumption. The methodology employed included tourist resource evaluation and questionnaire survey put together in the context of Tourism Rapid Assessment (TRA). The study investigates and reports the extent to which local initiatives and government work on partnerships to attract visitors for the sustainability of the tourism product. It discusses the extent to which tourism-related activities are provided. A framework for action is finally articulated which can be able to be replicated and applicable elsewhere.

Key Words: Community-based Tourism; Peng Chau Island; NGO;

## INTRODUCTION

Tourism is arguably the biggest industry today in the world and it is environment dependent, a place-based phenomenon that can present and market a nation, region or a local area. Tourism contributes over 10% of the total world GDP underlying its significance as one of the leading industries (Inskeep, 1991; Swarbrooke 1999; Goeldner *et al.* 2000 and WTO, 2003). As a result of its growing significance, tourism and its other derivatives influence the economic, social and environmental aspects of wherever it flourishes (Horochowski and Moisey, 2001).

In Hong Kong and the Mainland China, tourism has emerged as one of the foremost socio-economic sectors (Marafa 2003). The World Tourism Organization (WTO) (2003) reported that China received about 36 million tourists in 2002, making it the 5<sup>th</sup> largest destination in the world, while Hong Kong received 16.5 million making it the 2<sup>nd</sup> most important destination in the region. In 2002, the WTO declared Hong Kong as the 9<sup>th</sup> tourism receipts earner in the world. Recently, tourists spent over US\$10 billion dollars, thus, Hong Kong emerged as the highest tourism receipts and arrivals in East Asia (Tourism Commission 2003). Hong Kong, being part of China, is therefore a major global tourism player. As tourism flourishes globally, innovative marketing and promotional activities are being created to diversify attractions and enhance competitiveness with a view to attract more tourists.

In order to maintain this growth, there is the need for innovative programmes that could be created along the auspices of sustainable tourism. When adequately planned and executed, sustainable tourism development can be used as a tool not only to accelerate economic development but also to enhance the social and environmental aspects of the community where it is practiced.

Globally, alternative tourism is taking center stage in a number of derivatives like sustainable tourism, ecotourism, cultural tourism, rural tourism, heritage tourism, etc. Although dining, shopping and sight seeing have been the mainstay of the Hong Kong tourism industry, recent statistics from the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB) showed that in 2000, 24% of visitors to Hong Kong are

interested in green tourism, while 15% are interested in activities such as hiking and other outdoor recreation activities. Heritage and cultural tourism accounted for 13.5% and 31.4% respectively (HKTB 2001). As a result, there is therefore a wide scope for the growth of alternative tourists.

In line with the need to develop and promote additional destinations to boost tourism in Hong Kong, the government recently examined the potential of the New Territories as a viable destination. With the abundance of resources in many bucolic and rustic areas as well as the outlying islands, there is great potential for Hong Kong to develop community tourism, heritage tourism, ecotourism as well as green tourism.

While Hong Kong stands out as a modern megalopolis, it similarly has the necessary resource that can develop alternative tourism. Hong Kong has about 70% countryside environment and about 41% of the land area falls under the protected area system. In addition, there are about four marine parks and one marine reserve. Furthermore, there is a plethora of cultural relics that can still be found at many locations across the territory. The total area of Hong Kong is about 1100 sq Km and it accommodates over 260 Islands. Some of these islands, particularly where there is evidence of human habitation, can provide a wide array of attractions that can be based on their characteristic history and scenic coastal environments. For quite sometime, the government has not been explicitly forthcoming in identifying the tourism potentials of such islands. On the other hand, indigenous communities and NGOs are recently in the vanguard of unraveling the potentials of alternative tourism within their local jurisdictions. This trend, if appropriately supported by government and institutional bodies, can be a framework of community-based tourism that is being promoted under the ambit of sustainable tourism.

From the foregoing therefore, the overall objective of this paper is to (a) investigate how communities could exploit and package their potentials for attracting alternative tourism patronage; (b) study the trend of visitation to the Island; (c) characterize the attractions and impacts of visitors on the Island. Specifically, the paper will examine the scope and activities of the Green Peng Chau Association (GPCA) as it strives to develop market and manage tourist products as the demand increases. As an example of a case study, this paper reports an ongoing study by chronicling the efforts and activities of community NGO (GPCA) as they strive to establish and promote Peng Chau as a destination for ecotourism and heritage tourism. The paper will also attempt to postulate a framework for sustainable community based tourism that can be an example for emulation and application elsewhere.

#### The prospects of community-based tourism (CBT) initiatives

In many instances, government (national or local) provides the impetus for sustainable tourism development, while in other places communities and NGOs tend to embrace such themes to uplift their quality of life, to conserve their resources or to expose their heritage for appreciation. Scholars have earlier indicated that when rural areas promote their distinctiveness and embrace rural tourism, it plays an important role in the economic restructuring of such areas (MacDonald and Jolliffe 2003). Community tourism is a form of tourism, which aims to include and benefit local communities. Where and when a community decides to develop its tourism potential, activities like product development, marketing and resources management is sought. Due to the notion that tourism is a “clean” industry, if well developed and managed by communities, it may help communities to maintain their natural environment, their unique culture and uphold the quality of life that they have traditionally enjoyed, which will also eventually attract more visitors.

Worldwide, community-based tourism is developing at a fast pace and is continuously being diversified in multifaceted ways (Joppe, 1996; Dyer *et al.*, 2003; Fallon and Kriwoken, 2003; McIntosh, 2004). It constitutes not only the base for the booming ecotourism (Kiss, 2004) but also acts as an instrument for fostering tourism in rural areas and less-advantaged marginal communities (Murphy, 1983; Vincent and Thompson, 2002). The main objectives of this kind of tourism are to maintain or improve the quality of life of the local people and also to induce an economic motivation

to conserve the local ecological and historical heritage (Dyer *et al.*, 2003; Fallon and Kriwoken, 2003). If the hosting community is ready to implement tourism projects, then it becomes the destination, in which individual, business and government goals become the tangible tourist products and images of the industry (Murphy, 1983). This is so because the hosting community provides the community assets (products) and is involved in hospitality and promotion.

In order to unravel the whole potential of the tourism industry and be able to inculcate the principles of sustainable tourism, innovative ideas are needed for revitalizing the tourism industry and integrating tourism development with wider context of environmental management as well as other derivatives of sustainable tourism including community, ecological and heritage conservation among others. In Hong Kong, although the government support for community-based tourism development is not explicit, the policies currently being pursued to support tourism development have recognized the critical importance of the environment to the tourism industry (Marafa, 2003).

For communities on the outlying islands and in the rural areas of Hong Kong, developing sustainable tourism can help create more sustainable modes of livelihood for the local people. In addition to creating more attractions, it can offer job and investment opportunities (Mitchell and Reid 2001), as well as creating economic incentives in improving and protecting the environment, which is a vital force for conserving the cultural and natural heritage. Although most rural activities are non-consumptive, they take pride however in the fact that the resources that abound can be the source of quality livelihood. Furthermore, the premise of this initiative is that the community strives to maintain attractive natural landscapes, and a rich cultural heritage, enhancing a unique destination image.

#### Peng Chau Island History

Within the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR), there are about 260 islands creating almost 800 Km of complex coastline. Yet, only four islands: Hong Kong Island, Lantau, Lamma and Peng Chau, have resident population. Peng Chau (literally means “Flat Island”) is approximately 1sq. Km and lies on the eastern bank of the Pearl River Estuary about 7 Km east and 4 Km west of the Hong Kong Island. Because of its distance from the business hub of Hong Kong and with lack of vehicles on the island, it provide its residence and visitors a sense of tranquility, which represents a great contrast to the bustling urban life across the harbour on Hong Kong Island and the Kowloon Peninsula.

Other attractive features of Peng Chau include its high biodiversity and 360-degree sea view at the peak of Peng Chau. Furthermore, seventy percent of its land and sixty percent of its coastline are unspoiled and undeveloped. Holding to its traditional fishing village lifestyle, Peng Chau people enjoy a simple laid-back life and still maintain the celebration of many traditional Chinese festivals.

Peng Chau continued to develop and became a prosperous trading centre for neighbouring islands and an important fishing port at the time of Ching Dynasty (AD 1644 to 1911). In the nineteenth century, Peng Chau further developed into a vibrant island with lots of different businesses, particularly light-industry like match factory, woodwork, leather, rattan handicraft, boat building, etc. The Island enjoyed self-sufficiency for a long time until the 1970s. In order to revitalize Peng Chau and make it a thriving and sustainable community, a local NGO, “Green Peng Chau Association” was established with the mission to steer the island towards a sustainable development path. Green Peng Chau Association (GPCA) is a non-profit organization found in 1991 by a group of indigenous people, who are committed to educating the public and raising awareness on conserving the natural and cultural heritage of Peng Chau. One of the founders of GPCA, Ms Sannie Chan, said in an interview:

“The long term goal of GPCA is to foster a sustainable social and economic growth for Peng Chau through our Green Cultural Island Project--- a sustainable community

development project---that launches (rural) tourism initiatives like ecotourism, organic farming and green market.”

#### Methodology:

In order to unravel the extent to which Peng Chau can promote, implement and market the Island as an alternative tourism destination, there is the need to provide a comprehensive evaluation and assessment of the resources that will form the bane of such attractions. As there is no standardized methodology for such investigations particularly as it involves community-based tourism, and an Island destination, a three-stage assessment and investigation is done as follows: firstly, an inventory of the resources is done providing comprehensive information of what can be utilized as an attraction. Second, the members of the local community were interviewed and questionnaires were used to survey visitors. The information collected in both two tiers were then used to draw conclusions using a modified version of the tourism rapid assessment (TRA).

The study samples for the questionnaire interviews were systematically selected among the visitors to the Island. A total of 91 visitors were interviewed to identify their preferences, what they want to see and whether or not they are satisfied with the attraction. Most of the respondents have participated in the ecotour organized by the GPCA.

#### *Tourism Rapid Assessment*

The Tourism Rapid Assessment (TRA) tool is designed for a multi-disciplinary team and local participants to perform a rapid assessment and analysis of a tourism destination (Dunn and Hurdus, 2004). The assessment is used to gauge the area and the need for developing the destination as an attraction and determine areas needing further planning and implementation of tourism development. The TRA is used for a comprehensive assessment that provided information on the following: spatial scale for assessment; type of tourism to assess; time necessary for the assessment; tourism data needed for assessment and source of information. Although the TRA is primarily designed to assess tourism such as ecotourism, nature-based tourism (in rural communities) and cultural heritage tourism (in urban communities), it is similarly capable of assessing CBT as in this case on an Island destination. These assessments include primary data collection on tourism place, history, profile and attractions namely natural, cultural, amusement and recreation and special events.

#### Results:

#### *Demographic characteristics of visitors*

A total of 91 responses were obtained from the on-site interview. Table 1 summarizes the demographic characteristics of the respondents interviewed on the Peng Chau Island. Majority of the respondents were male (59%) and 45% of the respondents fall below the 25 - year age group. Only 11% of the respondents are above 50 years, while 43% of visitors have tertiary education.

Table 1  
Demographic characteristics of the respondents

| <b>Demographic variables</b> | <b>Percentage %</b> |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| Male                         | 59                  |
| Female                       | 41                  |
| Age                          |                     |
| >50                          | 11                  |
| 36-49                        | 23                  |
| 26-35                        | 21                  |
| <25                          | 45                  |

|                 |    |
|-----------------|----|
| Education level |    |
| Tertiary        | 43 |
| High School     | 8  |
| Secondary       | 44 |
| Primary         | 5  |

#### *Availability of cultural and natural heritage resources*

Despite the relatively small size of the island and its remoteness from the city centre, Peng Chau has an interesting history and is rich in both cultural and natural heritage. Sites of the old lime-kiln production and various historical artifacts can be found on Peng Chau. Besides, there are more than ten old temples on the Island and some have more than 400 years of history. Furthermore, the Island still has a culturally thriving community as people uphold many traditions and celebrate many Chinese festivals unique to the island.

Although Peng Chau is a small island and has once been an industrial island, it has high biodiversity as there are more than 100 kinds of fauna and over 1000 kinds of flora. More than 100 species of birds have been observed while at least 48 species of corals and two kinds of resident cetaceans are believed to be in Peng Chau waters. More details on the sites of ecological and historical interests of Peng Chau are shown in Table 2.

Table 2  
Inventories of Natural and Cultural Resources of Peng Chau

| Natural | Name of feature  | Remarks  |
|---------|--|--|
| Flora   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Medicinal Plants</li> <li>1. <i>Europhorbia antiquorum</i></li> <li>2. <i>Agave angustifolia</i></li> <li>3. <i>Thevetia peruviana</i></li> <li>4. <i>Lobelia chinensis</i></li> <li>5. <i>Clerodendrum fragrans</i></li> <li>6. <i>Alocasia macrorrhiza</i></li> <li>7. <i>Zanthoxylum nitidum</i></li> <li>8. <i>Rhodomyrtus tomentosa</i></li> <li>9. <i>Hylocereus undatus</i></li> <li>10. <i>Strophanthus divaricatus</i></li> <li>• Bamboo</li> <li>• Feng Shui Woods</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Usual height for <i>Europhorbia</i> is 1 to 3 meters, but the one on Peng Chau is rare as it is 5 meters high.</li> <li>For no. 1 and 2, both species of plant are endangered specie and classified by China as a Grade II National Key Protected Species.</li> </ul> |
| Fauna   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Birds</li> <li>1. Chinese Bulbul<br/>(<i>Pycnonotus sinensis</i>)</li> <li>2. Spotted Dove<br/>(<i>Streptopelia chinensis</i>)</li> <li>3. Magpie<br/>(<i>Pica pica</i>)</li> <li>4. Black Drongo<br/>(<i>Dicrurus macrocerus</i>)</li> <li>5. Black-necked Starling<br/>(<i>Sturnus nigricollis</i>)</li> <li>6. White-breasted Kingfisher<br/>(<i>Halcyon symrnensis</i>)</li> <li>• Lungan Tree Bug</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hong Kong Bird Watching Society listed more than 450 species of birds in Hong Kong, and of which about 100 species have been sighted on Peng Chau.</li> </ul>   |

|                     |   |   |
|---------------------|---|---|
|                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Butterfly and Damselfly</li> <li>• Tiger Beetle</li> <li>• Transparent Ladybug</li> </ul>  |   |
| Water               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cetaceans <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Indo-Pacific Hump-backed Dolphin or otherwise known as Chinese White Dolphin (<i>Sousa Chinensis</i>)</li> <li>2. Finless Porpoise (<i>Neophocaena phocaenoides</i>)</li> </ol> </li> <li>• Corals <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Echinogorgia sp.</i></li> <li>2. <i>Stereonephthya sp.</i></li> <li>3. <i>Echinogorgia lama</i></li> <li>4. <i>Dendronephthya sp.</i></li> <li>5. <i>Sinularia brassica</i></li> <li>6. <i>Menella sp.</i></li> </ol> </li> <li>• Chiton (<i>Liolophura japopnica</i>)</li> <li>• Limpet (<i>Cellana grata</i>)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- These two resident cetacean species are both listed in the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Nature Resources (IUCN) Red Data book (1996) as “data deficient” and <i>Sousa Chinensis</i> is classified by China as a Grade I National Key Protected Species.</li> </ul>                             |
| Landscape & Scenery | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Finger Hill</li> <li>• Man and Nature made Limestone Caves</li> <li>• Sandy Beach</li> <li>• Rocky Shore</li> <li>• Fishman Rock</li> <li>• Tung Wan Promenade for Viewing Sunrise</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- From the peak of Finger Hill, visitors can have a 360° panorama of the island and the vicinity.</li> <li>- The limestone cave is of a unique feature being formed by both man and nature. The combination of limekiln factories and costal erosion have transformed this cave into a worthy site of interest.</li> </ul> |

| Cultural | Name of feature   | Remarks  |
|----------|---|--|
| Tangible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Old Chinese Temples <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Tin Hau Temple</li> <li>2. Kam Fa (Golden Flower) Mother Shrine</li> <li>3. Lung Mo Temple</li> <li>4. Seventh Sister Temple</li> <li>5. Kwan Ying Temple</li> <li>6. La Ja Temple</li> <li>7. Tao Dak (Taoist) Temple</li> <li>8. Yuen Tong (Buddhist) Temple</li> </ol> </li> <li>• A Shard of Monument from Ching Dynasty</li> <li>• Ching Dynasty Tile Roof at Wing On Street</li> <li>• Chung’s Family Ancestral Hall (Over 500 years)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Peng Chau inhabitants consider Tin Hau as their guardian angel.</li> <li>- The history of the Tin Hau (Goddess of heaven) Temple is a mystery, but it is known that the current temple was rebuilt in 1798. Yet, whalebones within the temple revealed that it is over 400 hundred years old.</li> <li>- Lung Mo (Mother of Dragon) Temple attracts a large number of pilgrims every year. Most of the worshippers like to touch the "Dragon Bed" inside the temple since they believe that this will bring them good luck.</li> <li>-</li> </ul> |

|            |  |  |
|------------|--|--|
|            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lime-kiln Production Site</li> <li>• Old well at Wai Chai Tsuen</li> <li>• Bamboo Garden in the Rural Committee Headquarter</li> <li>• Cultural landscaping – <i>Feng Shui</i> Woods<br/>(i.e. patches of native forests in traditional Chinese settlement)</li> </ul>  |  |
| Intangible | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional Festival</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The birthday of Hung Shing</li> <li>2. The birthday of Tin Hau</li> <li>3. The birthday of Kam Fa</li> <li>4. Dragon Boat Festival</li> <li>5. The birthday of Lung Mo</li> <li>6. The birthday of Seventh Sister</li> <li>7. Ghost Festival</li> <li>8. Peace Blessing Ceremony</li> <li>9. Tin Hau Blessing Parade</li> <li>10. The Birthday of Kam Fa<br/>Mother's Safe-guard General</li> </ol> | Lunar Calendar: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Feb 13</li> <li>2. March 23</li> <li>3. April 17</li> <li>4. May 5</li> <li>5. May 8</li> <li>6. July 7</li> <li>7. July 12 –14</li> <li>8. July 19 –21</li> <li>9. July 21</li> <li>10. Aug 27</li> </ol> |

#### Ecotourism product development and marketing (by GPCA)

The community-based tourism initiatives under the aegis of sustainable tourism development started in 2001 by the GPCA. Since then they have received over 4,300 people for their ecotours, with an average of 40 trips a year. As GPCA is a 'not-for-profit' organisation, their objectives of conducting the ecotours are to promote Peng Chau tourism business using the model of ecotourism, heritage tourism and other aspects of sustainable tourism that will provide jobs and a sustainable source of income to the residents, making this a model of community based tourism and sustainable tourism. From the onset, the GPCA believed that there could be economic gains from conducting ecotourism and that this can improve the economy of Peng Chau, hence inducing the government and the local people in better protecting and conserving the natural and historical resources of Peng Chau.

Using the unique geography, history and culture of Peng Chau, GPCA designed two routes for their ecotours – northeast/southeast ecology and culture trails– of which each route takes one day to complete. The level of difficulties of both routes range from easy to mild, so that the ecotours are suitable for people of all ages. In the beginning, target customers for the island tours are mostly local residents, youngsters from youth centres or people from tourism training institutions destined to explore alternative destinations. Although, GPCA organises ecotours mainly for students, teachers and local families, occasionally they do receive in-bound tourists and a small number of foreign tourists. As a special package targeting youth and schools, the GPCA organises activities under an outreach program related to green education. Table 3 shows the outreach programmes conducted by GPCA.

Table 3  
Outreach work of Green Peng Chau Association

| Green Education   | Remarks   |
|---|---|
| Student Environmental Protection Ambassadors Scheme (from 2001, six times per year) | - Collaborated with the Environmental Campaign Committee (ECC) and trained 300 students |
| Green Pioneers Training Programme (2002)  | Parties involved: Secondary schools   |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Exhibition and Puppet Show “Tourism and Poverty” (2003)     | - Parties involved: General public and Oxfam   |
| Beach Cleanup Campaign (Annually)                           | Parties involved: General public, schools and Civil Exchange   |
| Seminar on “Peng Chau Festivals and Livelihood of Islander” | - Parties involved: General public and Hong Kong Museum of History   |
| Study Tour for the YMCA Asia Executives                     | - Parties involved: YMCA Asia  |
| Ecotour Guide Training                                      | - Collaborated with Hong Kong Tour Guide Training Centre and trained over 500 local tour guides  |
| The 6R Island Waste Reduction Programme                     | - Conduct workshops, exhibition and carnival to educate people on Peng Chau regarding the GPCA’s 6R principle (i.e. Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Replace, Revalue and Rescue) |

### Components of the ecotour

The ecotour begins at around 10:00 a.m. In order to engage the visitors mentally and emotionally for the journey in exploring the nature and culture of Peng Chau, each visitor will be asked to give themselves a name-code, choosing the name of their favourite tree, flower, animal or indeed anything they can find in nature. As an icebreaker at such activities, identifying with nature by groups of people is considered a major component of promoting conservation ethics.

A tour guide then gives a brief introduction to the visitors on the history of Peng Chau and how the past 50 years of development has affected the people and the local environment. The tour guides provide a Peng Chau ecotour map, which not only shows the routes of the walking trails but also contain the written code of conduct and other useful information on the Island.

During the trip, a teaching kit comprising of games, photos and signage developed by the GPCA, is used to facilitate the tour guides in delivering information on ecology and culture. At the end of trip, a quiz is held for evaluating how much the visitors have learnt about Peng Chau, so as to ascertain their awareness on environmental protection and conservation issues covered in the tour. Visitors have much to gain from this type of experiential learning, as compared to the conventional style of teaching. Through experiencing ecotourism, the visitors are not only learning environmental and conservation issues at the cognitive level but also the ecotours can induce behavioural changes in the visitors’ psyche.

### Development of other community – based tourism initiatives

Apart from activities that are related to ecotourism, there are other activities being carried out by GPCA for promoting community-based tourism on Peng Chau Island as seen in Table 3.

#### *The Ecology Day-Camp*

In order to nurture the young generation to become future custodians of the local environment, GPCA designed the Ecology Day-camp. It is a tailor-made package tour offering interesting activities and opportunities for secondary and primary school students to learn in nature about the relationship between development and environment.

#### *Ecotourism Tour Guide Training Course*

Professionalism and quality of tour guides are vital to the success of ecotourism and the overall concept of community-based tourism (Shephard and Royston-Airey, 2000). GPCA provides ecotour guide training, offering both theoretical and practical training such as introducing the concept

of eco-tours and sustainable development; providing hands on guiding techniques through seminars, workshops and outdoor practices. The entire programme consists of ten sections held on Sundays.

Upon successful completion of the programme through examination and coursework, participants are awarded an in-house certificate enabling them to become qualified GPCA eco-tourguides. Priority is given to Peng Chau residents in GPCA's recruitment of eco-tourguides, so as to encourage local community to get involved in ecotourism and other programmes related to the Green Island Project of GPCA.

#### *Community Organic Farming*

Up to the 1960's, Peng Chau was a self-sufficient agricultural community which declined due to the opening up of Mainland China. With the aim of creating job opportunities for ex-farmers, organic food distributors and Peng Chau residents set up community based organic farms under the coordination of GPCA. Furthermore, as one of the tourism initiatives and to attract more visitors to Peng Chau, "Sunday Farmers", have been introduced, in which micro-plots are leased to city-dwellers to provide a source of entertainment and green education and nature based tourism and recreation.

#### *Green Marketplace*

In order to raise the profile of tourism on Peng Chau, hence, provide a further source of income and employment opportunity, the idea for a "Green Marketplace" was conceived. GPCA is urging the Hong Kong Government to assign a meeting point for community members on Saturdays and Sundays, for the sale of organic farm products as well as locally made handicrafts, souvenirs, small foodstalls and for street performances like Chinese folk dance, Chinese Kung Fu, Wushu, Tai Chi, etc.

### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This paper has highlighted the issue of community-based tourism as a component of sustainable tourism and presented the efforts of an Island community that is involved in making ecotourism, cultural and heritage tourism work in concert for the benefits of the local population. Investigation and results have also shown that the notion of community-based tourism is enshrined in the efforts to develop and maintain a sustainable community livelihood.

Sustainable tourism in its purest sense is an industry which attempts to impart a low impact on the environment and culture of the host community, while helping them to generate income, employment, and conserve the local ecosystems and cultural heritage (Wall, 1997; Swarbrooke, 1999; UNEP, 2003). When carefully planned and well implemented under the notion of sustainable tourism, ecotourism and heritage tourism has the capability to support the integrity of the host destination, as tours and themes will emphasize the characteristics of the local environment and culture. Hence, visitors will be well informed and be culturally and ecologically sensitive about the destination.

Where responsible ecotourism and heritage tourism are in the core of a community based tourism project, it inculcates environmental awareness not only to the visitors but also the local residents. By this token, it helps the conservation of the resources that will continue to attract the tourists (Kiss, 2004).

As part of a global trend, ecotourism is a niche market of significant value that appears to have good potential for growth and expansion (Page and Dowling, 2002). Eco-tourism has recently become an important topic in the Hong Kong tourism discourse even without an understandable and adaptable framework for its implementation.

If Hong Kong is to continue to remain as one of the most popular tourist destinations in Asia and enjoy the international status of being a "world class city", there is the need for tourism

authorities and promoters to consolidate the achievements made on mass tourism and initiate action plans to achieve sustainable tourism by facilitating the practice of responsible ecotourism and community-based tourism. In particular at the time of economic uncertainties, combined with fear of terrorism and epidemic outbreaks like SARS, it presents an urgent call upon the tourism sector to upgrade the existing tour products, as well as to work on identifying and developing alternative tourism products that are consistent with sustainable tourism principles.

Sustainable tourism is a process and in this case a work in progress. As has been indicated above, GPCA has demonstrated through collaboration with government and community members, that much can be accomplished when goals are set (as seen in Table 4). This has enabled Peng Chau residents to improve on their standard of living, and at the same time preserve the cultural and environmental heritage of the community. With little optimism but much passion and determination, local NGO like GPCA uses the concept of “community-based tourism” as a means to develop and diversify the Island’s economies by creating new job opportunities, additional income and bringing in new resources to the local community. Indeed, GPCA holds the concept of sustainable tourism as the anchor for the blueprint of their community tourism project.

Table 4  
Positive impacts of the GPCA initiatives

| <i>Impacts</i>   | <i>Remarks</i>   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased public awareness on heritage</li> </ul> | They promote protection and conservation of natural and cultural heritage via education  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Raised the profile of Peng Chau</li> </ul>        | The number of inbound tourist to Peng Chau is increasing, so is the income from tourism for the local community  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased government’s commitment</li> </ul>      | The government to build a sewage treatment plant on Peng Chau, so that untreated sewage will not be discharged directly into the open sea.   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Safeguard the nature</li> </ul>                   | They have successfully saved a giant <i>Europhorbia antiquorum</i> (China’s Grade II National Key Protected Species) from being destroyed in one of the government public work projects. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote environmental awareness</li> </ul>        |  |

#### *A Framework for action*

Although traditionally tourism development has been depended on initiatives from governments and private sector, local communities and NGOs are beginning to get involved as is the case of GPCA. Examples elsewhere have also shown that local participation and initiatives can be vital for establishing sustainable approach to tourism development at destinations (Fallon and Kriwoken, 2003; UNEP, 2003). This can be achieved by setting up a development strategy, implementation and action plans. Even though in many instances the process is commenced by government authorities, its success hinges on the close cooperation between the local population, NGOs and other stakeholders. For sustainable tourism to be accomplished and be community oriented, this will need to have a fundamental shift in the planning process, from the currently conventional top-down approach to a bottom-up approach. Policies will have to be empowering, informing and engaging rather than neglecting the local stakeholders and grass-root NGOs and other interest groups. With adequate government and institutional support, a framework for sustainable community based tourism can be derived that will have mutual benefit for all the parties involved. The framework will be based on, but not limited to, the following:

- There has to be a vision and commitment to the notion of sustainable development as have been demonstrated in the case of Peng Chau by creating a destination that is economically viable, environmentally friendly and a community in harmony.
- Trust and partnership amongst all three sectors – government, civic and business – is needed to work towards goals of sustainable tourism.
- More support is needed from the tourism authorities and those responsible for economic development if sustainable tourism and or community tourism is to grow and be part of the overall tourism market.
- Where such support is available, it has to be operated based on accountability and transparency regarding the tourism strategies and plans and allow for more public consultation and participation at the beginning stage of planning and decision making process.
- There is also the need for support for conducting research on such issues like carrying capacity and viability of destinations; establishing guidelines for managing the impact of tourism in culturally and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Other important requirements for sustainable tourism include an integrated monitoring programme, appropriate resource management mechanisms, more effective marketing and promotion, and training and skills development of the tour guides.

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## ECOTOURISM BEST PRACTICE INITIATIVES IN A RESORT: A CASE STUDY IN SUMMERSSET AT ROMPIN, PAHANG, MALAYSIA

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### ABSTRACT

Ecotourism industry in Malaysia has vast potential for further development. The importance of sustainable management and efficient enforcement mechanism is critical if an ecotourism site is to sustain in generations to come. Summerset Colonial Hotel and Villas is nestled within the Menchali Forest Reserve and flanked by the Endau Rompin State Park. Its unique location has evolved into an international standard eco-friendly resort with emphasis on nature and environment presentation. Summerset Hotel is an environmental conscious hotel. It fits to the definition of ecotourism by respecting the surrounding nature as well as reaping economical benefits from its operation as a hotel. The main objective of this paper is to analyse the application of the ecotourism concept and study the best practice in ecotourism management in an eco-resort in Peninsular Malaysia.

Key Words: ecotourism, sustainable management, environmental management, rating, accreditation, enforcement

### INTRODUCTION

Summerset Colonial Hotel and Villas is the first international standard resort facility at Rompin. The hotel soft opened in December 2000. Located near Kuala Rompin, on the Southern tip of Pahang, Malaysia, Summerset is being marketed as the newest preferred destination in Malaysia (Nair, 2004a).

Sprawling over 834 acres of prime beachfront land, Summerset is nestled within the Menchali Forest Reserve and flanked by the Endau Rompin State Park which has a history dating back 130 million years and on a 5 kilometres unpolluted beach fronting the South China Sea on the east-coast of West Malaysia. Its unique location has evolved into an international standard eco-friendly resort with emphasis on nature and environment presentation. The hotel is enhanced by its British Colonial architecture, with an alluring combination of nature and the lingering romance of history.

The hotel offers 137 elegantly designed hotel rooms (North Wing) and 61 vacation villas to guests. An additional 132 hotel rooms (South Wing) was completed recently. Plans are also in place to open 22 units of eco-villas and 70 units of eco-homes (tree house-like) by the end of this year. With over 50 recreational activities and facilities to choose from, people of all ages would be able to fulfil their time to their hearts desire. Refer to Plate 1 for images of the resort. Great entertainment featuring local and international shows performed by the hotel staff would leave guests relaxed and contented (Nair, 2004a).

Nature based tourism mainly concentrates on experiencing nature areas and a walk in the jungle is considered as nature based tourism. Ecotourism on the other hand, extracts the concept of nature based tourism and boosts it by fostering the environment, culture, and conserving nature (Cater and Lowman, 1994). Ecotourism, a form of sustainable tourism for preservation, is the key concept adopted by Summerset. The concept of sustainable tourism is wider than just ecotourism. All tourism should aim to be sustainable (WWF, 1996). This approach is then related to responsible tourism so as to provide a more holistic approach to the development of ecotourism, as well as instilling a sense of user responsibility. Summerset firmly believes in sustainable tourism and is actively promoting the environment and culture of its surroundings.



Plate 1  
Images of Summerset Resort

Therefore, the objective of this paper is to analyse the application of the ecotourism concept and study the best practice in ecotourism management in an eco-resort in Peninsular Malaysia. Summerset is selected as the case study for this analysis.

## METHODOLOGY

Preliminary interviews were conducted with Mr. Camille Thiery, General Manager of the hotel and Mr. Alvin Chew, Director of Department for Recreational and Entertainment. Interviews were also held with cross-section of staff that worked as guides and handled the hotel maintenance. A general observation via questionnaire was conducted by 90 researchers who were grouped into 9 groups of 10 researchers each. The questionnaire was developed by Nair *et al.* (2003) which were used for the eco-rating system developed to rate ecotourism sites in Peninsular Malaysia.

The National Ecotourism Plan which was developed by World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF, 1996) for The Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism, was used as a guide to analyse the existing environment.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Compliance of Ecotourism Definition

An accepted definition of ecotourism was provided by Hector Ceballos Lascurain (IUCN ecotourism, consultancy program in Mexico), stating that ecotourism is environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features, both past and present) that promote conservation has low negative visitor impact and provides for beneficially active socio economic involvement of local population (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1993)

The issues concerning ecotourism start with its definition. The term ecotourism has been misused previously for little understanding coupled with limited information provided the public distorted the image of this sector (Walderback, 1995). However with the effort of the government and non governmental organizations such as the Summerset hotel itself, ecotourism is promoted as being a beneficial sustainable form of nature. Furthermore, ecotourism is the fastest growing form of tourism

in Malaysia and a global trend in the international market. 10 percent of Malaysians tourism receipts are from ecotourism associated activities (Tourism Malaysia, 2005).

Thus, Summerset hotel is ideal as an ecotourism site that maximizes economic, social-cultural and environmentally conscious benefits. Matching the widely accepted definition of Cebollos Lascurain, to the existing condition in Summerset shows the following result:

a. Environmentally Responsible

Generally, Summerset hotel itself does not pose any major harmful threats to the surrounding environment. All activities managed by the hotel especially those intensively involving nature, namely jungle trekking, wetlands experience, nature walk, etc., are well taken care so as not to damage the environment.

b. Respecting and Appreciating Nature

Summerset plays a strong role in respecting its surrounding nature by not destroying it through the minimum use of chemicals and waste and also controlled development. All trails into forest reserves are kept to a minimal to prevent the loss of flora and fauna. Exotic plants are not introduced in the ecosystem and endemic plants and wildlife are not removed from their natural habitat.

c. Promoting Conservation

The hotel is constantly promoting conservation of the environment by either educating guests or undertaking nature projects. Guests that participate in hotel activities are taught to care and conserve nature and given detailed explanation on what consists of nature around the hotel. Project such as the turtle hatchery (refer Plate 2), which was the first project undertaken by the hotel, promotes the conservation of turtle eggs with hopes of increasing the turtle population and to avoid extinction (Nair, 2004b). Another conservation project that the resort is currently undertaking is the construction of coral reefs to protect the shoreline of Summerset.

Subsequently, Summerset's wetlands project serves as an active international tool to visitors about the surrounding peat swamp as well as promoting Summerset to be a unique resort with abundance in undisturbed natural resources.

d. Low Visitor Impact

Summerset Hotel management controls the number of visitors for activities involving nature. Such activities (e.g. swamp exploration, canoeing, etc.) are guided by experts and the size of the visitor groups are controlled for monitoring purpose and thus, reducing damage to nature. Carrying capacity for all its attractions is strictly adhered.

e. Involvement of Local Communities

The hotel involves the local community by employing them as the bulk of work force. Guides for activities on exploring nature are provided by the local people as they have the better understanding of the environment, its customs and its culture. Being a major source of employment, the hotel also provides revenue for the local community by employing them since the closest job opportunity in the city is quite a distance.



Plate 2  
Successful Turtle Hatchery Project at Summerset

f. Cultural Based

Many activities provided by Summerset management are cultural based. The building of an Art and Cultural Centre further promotes cultural works of the locals. Furthermore, cultural shows are performed by the staff during peak season (refer Plate 3). Ever so often, the local inhabitants or the “*orang asli*” provide visitors with a glimpse of the aborigines by wondering into the hotel premises and providing an opportunity for first hand observation.



Plate 3  
Cultural Show Performed by the Local Staff at Summerset

g. Sustainable Development

In line with the resort’s belief in conserving nature, all development is controlled by the management. Intrusive and destructive development that destroys the nature and prevents re-growth is a taboo. Development is only done to compliment its surrounding nature of swamp forest and beach as the management wants its nature to remain undisturbed and valuables for future generations.

Existing Environment

The most serious ecological problems facing mankind today are the pollution (air, water and soil), the destruction of ecosystem, disappearance of many species of animals and plants, the weather changes, acid rains, the warming up of the earth’s surface, the destruction of tropical rain forests and the thinning of the ozone layer, just to name a few. It is of utmost importance that such destruction is

not present at Summerset for it would contradict to its concept of being eco-friendly. The rich flora and fauna at Summerset will be severely depleted if the environment is not taken care (refer Plate 4). Being eco-friendly means that care is taken to ensure that the nature and environment is not harmed in any way.



Plate 4  
The Rich Flora and Fauna of Summerset

Summerset is serious in ensuring the sustainable development and management of the resort has taken the responsibility. Currently, Summerset has Mr. Alvin Chew, the Director of Recreation and Entertainment, who is an experienced ecologist. Experts in the field of safety and health are brought in from time to time, on a temporary basis to evaluate and structure the safety and health policies and standard operating procedures. The ground staffs that manage the activities are well trained and informed. On going training is conducted for all staffs in dealing directly on issues of safety, health and environment.

A potential issue to consider would be sustainable management practice of the ecotourism site. The hotel management has planned to introduce water sports (sea-based) and the construction of a spa. Although the sea is not under the jurisdiction of the Forestry Department, care must be taken to avoid destruction of all form of marine life. The construction at the spa has to be carefully designed in order to prevent felling of trees and destruction of nature. All products used have to be biodegradable. Plans are also underway to construct a coral reef at the sea front of Summerset. Coral reefs play a major role as a wave-breaker to protect the shoreline from erosion. The management of the hotel is currently working to stimulate the growth of artificial reefs off the coast of Summerset.

#### Items that Affect the Environment

All items that adversely affect the environment are considered to be pollutants. It is impossible to be totally free from pollutants as it comes from any form of development and Summerset is not entirely free from them. Nonetheless, what is important is an efficient system must be in place to manage these waste and pollutants.

a. Solid Waste

Solid waste, the most visible form of pollution, is the most common form of pollution in Summerset. Solid waste comprises mostly of paper, plastic, can, food, etc. It was observed that the premises of the resort are free from visible solid waste except that some rubbish is found at the beginning at the jungle track. Other solid wastes are dealt by the government disposal sector. Summerset hotel merely plays the role of bagging moist waste and stacking dry waste that needs to be collected by the garbage truck. This form of disposal was efficient enough and there is no open dumpsite or land fills present that can destroy the natural surroundings.

b. Liquid Waste

Liquid waste if not disposed properly causes water pollution. This happens when liquid waste is directed into natural water system such as lakes and the sea. If so much of liquid waste is discharged, the water systems natural process to clean itself is affected. Liquid waste includes sewage, industrial chemicals, agricultural chemical and livestock waste. Another form of water pollution is known as thermal pollution. This occurs when clean but heated water is released by plants into natural waterways. This heated water, besides being of extreme temperature reduces the oxygen level in the water causing destruction of aquatic life. Other forms of liquid waste that cause pollutant are chemical and oil spills.

It was observed that liquid waste is disposed of efficiently by the management of Summerset hotel. All liquid waste is directed to a filtering plant that processes it before being released as clean water. No thermal pollution was observed. It is noted that Summerset hotel is using the vacuum lavatory system that saves water and reduce liquid waste in its north wing. This idea is to be implemented in all the wings at the resort gradually as cost of implementation is high.

c. Discharge Air

Discharge air, is said to be pollution when large amount of gas and particles are released into the air and the natural process can no longer filter the air to keep the atmosphere balance.

It was observed that very minimal air pollution was present due to the fact that very few vehicles surround the premises of the hotel. Chlorine in the pool is also maintained at a minimum level by the management in effort to reduce the release of chlorine evaporation. However, air pollution was present at the construction site near the hotel. This could not be avoided due to the machinery used for building emits smoke. It was also noted that indoor ventilation of the resort was functioning well and no pollution were present.

d. Noise Pollution

Noise pollution comes from mechanical sources such as motor vehicles, aero planes and machinery and also from human. Noise pollution may cause stress, irritation and hearing loss in human being and animal. Noise pollution was minimal in Summerset resort. Blasting karaoke music was contained within the hotel premises. Noise pollution however increases during the peak season due to the activities of tourist.

e. Soil Degradation

Soil degradation or pollution happens when the healthy layer of productive soil is destroyed due to development. This causes poor drainage and pollution of soil with chemicals. It was observed that there were element of soil degradation present namely due to inadequate landscaping. Soil has been left uncovered with only patches of grass. Nonetheless, soil degradation is minimal at the surrounding area.

f. Flora and Fauna Present

An extensive survey conducted by Malaysia Nature Society (MNS) in 1997 in Summerset found that 162 species of plants and 3 truly aquatic plants were sampled from three habitats, of which 59 species have ornamental value. Out of this list, 2 endemic (found in this coastal area only) tree species are found, the Glaucous Holly (*Ilex maingayi*) and the Kelat Nenasi (*Syzygium politum*).

The Malaysia Nature Society's (MNS) survey also found that, birds are fairly rich here, and 44 birds were identified by sightings and identification of calls. More species is expected especially during the migrating season in March-April and August-October. The birds found were Flower Peckers, Bulbuls, Sunbirds, White-eyes and Magpie Robins. Babblers such as the Striped Tit-Babblers and Fluffy-backed Tit-babbler. The Oriental Pied Hornbill, Pink-necked Pigeons and groups of red-eyed Bulbuls are some of common residents found on the property. Among Kingfishers, the White-throated and Stork-billed Kingfisher, Collared Kingfisher and the migrant Black-capped Kingfisher can be found along the lagoon and peat swamp.

### Ecology Friendly Measures

#### Attractions

It was observed that attractions such as forest reserves, wetlands, waterfall, seaside, rivers and lakes are present. The Summerset forest called Menchali Forest Reserve is a special habitat with its own unique vegetation (refer Plate 5). The flora found in Menchali Forest Reserve is extremely valuable. Beach vegetation, sandy beach forest, and seasonally flooded freshwater peat swamp forest are the 3 types of habitat generally present (refer Plate 6).



Plate 5

A Lake at the Menchali Forest Reserve



Plate 6

The Sandy Beach and its Vegetation

There is also a waterfall named Seri Mahkota that is portrayed in a beautiful landscape and formation of water bodies. Additionally, there is Chematok River which is surrounded with beautiful plants, where you can enjoy the serenity of the flora. The Merchong River found in Summerset supports life by supplying them with freshwater. Lake Chini is a group of 12 freshwater lakes. During certain months of the year, the lake is dotted by thousands of white and pink lotus flowers.

Fireflies, which are found on the banks of rivers and canals, are not only a sight to see, but are also an important part of the food chain. The Lake Bera located in Southwest Pahang is a natural freshwater swamp. It is an ecosystem that not only supports a diversity of plant life and animals, but also sustains the livelihood of the *Semelai* the aboriginal people of the wetlands.

Ecologically friendly measures are taken by the management of Summerset to ensure little destruction to the environment. Tourists visiting the site are told not to bring along food and water bottles that may be littered and further adding solid waste to the forest. Tourists visiting the sites are guided through trails that have been made in order to protect the plant life. Tourists are also told not to pluck flowers, wild fruits or edible plants while in the forests, unless it has fallen naturally. It is advised that deodorants and pesticides should be used only to a minimal, and loud noise should not be made in order to allow the wildlife to live in their natural untouched habitat.

## Activities

An array of activities is present in Summerset (refer Table 1). All activities are environmentally friendly (refer Plate 7). Activities intrusive to nature are closely monitored to ensure no harm to the surroundings. Activities contained within the premises do not produce damaging effects to the environment.

Table 1  
Land and Water Activities at Summerset

| Land Activities                | Water Activities                      |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| All Terrain Vehicle (ATV)      | 12-foot Dive Pool                     |
| Archery                        | Canoeing                              |
| American Pool                  | Swimming Pool                         |
| Badminton                      | Scuba Diving                          |
| Baseball                       | Kayaking                              |
| Basketball                     | Sailing                               |
| Batik Painting                 | Water Aerobics                        |
| Beach Soccer                   | Water Basketball                      |
| Beach Walk                     | Water polo                            |
| Beach Volleyball               | Wetland Experience                    |
| Cycling                        | <b>Optional Tours &amp; Excursion</b> |
| Board Games                    | Endau Rompin Tour                     |
| Gymnasium                      | Firefly Watching                      |
| Jungle Trekking                | Lake Chini Tour                       |
| Lawn Bowling                   | Marine Park Tour                      |
| Nature Walk                    | Ostrich Farm Tour                     |
| Table Tennis                   | Pekan Royal Town Tour                 |
| Teambuilding Programmes        | Rompin Sunday Market                  |
| Tele-match                     | Tioman Island Getaway                 |
| Tennis                         |                                       |
| Turtle Hatchery & Conservation |                                       |
| Variety Show                   |                                       |
| Yoga                           |                                       |



Plate 7  
Activities at Summerset

The hotel also has an outdoor gym by the pool and hosts various outdoor games by the beach. Tele-matches are popular amongst corporate groups in fostering closer relationships between departments. The jungle trekking activity enables individuals or groups to appreciate nature. In addition, guided nature walks into the forest are provided. On the cultural aspect of the hotel, batik drawing classes are provided at its Arts and Culture Centre. There is also an archery field, as well as tennis and badminton courts. Activities such as catamaran, wind surfing and yoga provides visitors with ample activities to choose from.

### Management

The management of the hotel do take into account the coordination of industrial and environmental policies as well as the hotels own code of practice and procedures. The hotel already adheres itself to the Environment Management System (EMS). The Environment Management System indirectly ensures that the attractions and activities of the hotel remain eco-friendly. In addition, the hotel is also following the guidelines of the Environment Quality Act 1974 (EQA 1974). This policy clearly defines the regulations that the hotel should follow in being environmentally friendly. Eco-friendly measures are also ingrained in the code of practice of the staff of the hotel.

### Compliance to Main Strategies of National Ecotourism Plan

Summerset has successfully adopted or closely adhered to the strategies of the National Ecotourism Plan (WWF, 1996). Ecotourism is a way to promote conservation and sustainable development, and vice versa. Strategies within the National Ecotourism Plan which has been adopted in Summerset are as follow:

- a. Preset mechanism are in place for inter-sectoral participation - building on existing institutions and strengths;
- b. Establishment of additional natural areas for ecotourism (which contributes to conservation of natural resources on a self-interest basis);
- c. There is regionalisation, compatible with the tourism regions;

- d. Imaginative and innovative funding mechanism is developed which encourage ecotourism, including methods of self-financing as to apply tourism revenue directly to protect areas as well as fostering local development;
- e. The main ecotourism activities and circuits at national level have been identified;
- f. The concepts of carrying capacity and limits of acceptable change is elaborated for each site;
- g. Appropriate design and construction of physical facilities have been implemented for ecotourism;
- h. Marketing and promotional strategies have been developed at local, national and international level;
- i. There are mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation of progress in development of ecotourism;
- j. Environmental and socio-cultural negative impacts is minimised - there are active involvement of local communities;
- k. Manpower training is a major aspect of the management;
- l. Ecotourism is used as a tool for environmental education and ecological awareness;
- m. All activities are sustainable and environmentally responsible.

## CONCLUSION

Owing to the vague understanding of the concept of ecotourism, many nature-based and some mass tourism products are claimed as ecotourism products. As ecotourism becomes increasingly popular, a need has emerged for monitoring the compliance of an ecotourism site with pre-set requirements. Such standards and monitoring procedures can distinguish valid ecotourism projects from other enterprises that have appropriated the ecotourism label without commitment to its principles. Such measurements are also necessary to help honest ecotourism projects critique their performance and move closer to the ideal of sustainability.

Ecotourism is clearly an ideal to be aimed for, within the overall field of nature-based tourism. Not every tourist should be an ecotourist, but everyone should carry out tourism in a more sustainable way. Developers of every tourism product, whether based on nature, culture, or other attractions, should strive to minimise negative impacts and maximise positive impact upon the natural and social environment. The ecotourism ideal may seldom or never be achieved, but striving toward it by tourism operators using nature-based tourism products should be continuous and unremitting effort. Summerset, although not perfect, has successfully adopted to the ecotourism or close to ecotourism principles.

The management of sensitive ecosystems in the ecotourism context can be one way to protect a country's heritage and make it available for local education and tourism. The investment in such facilities is usually repaid through tourists who come in bigger numbers and stay longer because there are more things to see and do and at the same time be satisfied that the sustainability of the site has been achieved. Ecotourism is the leading edge of a change in tourism. With the new phenomena towards sustainable management, the business of ecotourism will be more important that ever.

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# HERITAGE TOURISM IN A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: THE CASE OF MALAYSIA

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## ABSTRACT

Heritage tourism involves visitations to natural sites such as valued gardens, wilderness areas of scenic beauty, and landscapes. It is about cultural traditions, places and values that people proudly preserve. It includes family patterns, religious practices, folklore traditions and social customs, as well as museums, monuments, battlefields, artifacts, historic buildings and landmarks that reminds us the memory of war and peace, struggles and successes. Like its Asean neighbors, Malaysia too regards tourism as a very important sector that brings the much-needed foreign exchange, new jobs and businesses. Heritage tourism, classified as a subclass of cultural tourism by the World Tourism Organization, has been identified and spelt out in the new Tourism Policy by the Tourism Ministry as one of the new niche products to be developed extensively for the next ten years. Paralleled with the growing interest in heritage tourism and the global influx of the alternative tourists, tourist arrivals in the Malaysian heritage cities, especially Penang and Malacca, have improved over the years. Both Penang and Malacca have been submitted to be listed as Unesco's heritage sites. This paper discusses the how Malaysian heritage and multiculturalism are packaged as apart of tourism products that attract both curious regional tourists as well as ex-colonialists. This paper, however, discusses several important issues faced by the tourism authority in promoting heritage and cultural tourism in Malaysia.

Key Words: heritage tourism, multicultural society, Penang, Malacca

## INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry has grown phenomenally in the past few decades. Greater numbers of people worldwide are traveling nationally and internationally and, concomitantly, global spending on travel and tourism has more than doubled (Travel Industry Association, 1999). Coupled with the growth in tourism is a booming interest in the 'new tourism', cultural tourism have emerged as a potential form of alternative tourism among both international tourists as well as Malaysian domestic travelers.

Until the 1960s, Malaysia was poor and firmly typecast as a developing nation. Economic growth has averaged around 6.5% a year, more than double that of most Western countries. Malaysia's well-developed social and economic structure and buoyant economy have attracted, and seem likely to continue, a strong flow of investment from all over the world. Tourism was virtually unknown until the late 1960s. In the mid 1980s the Malaysian government woke up to the tourism potential of the country's natural resources and set about trying to exploit this by developing a strategic plan for growth. The government's promotional efforts to develop the services sector were aimed at reducing the deficit in the services account of the balance of payment, overcoming infrastructure constraints and in preparation for the global competition following the imminent further liberalization of the sector. Tourism was earmarked because of its potential as a foreign exchange earner. The combined receipts from tourists and excursionists totaled RM29.6 million in the year 2004, ranking tourism as second top income generators for Malaysian economy after manufacturing.

## HERITAGE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN MALAYSIA

Heritage tourism is a growing segment of the tourism marketplace. Heritage tourists appear to be motivated for different reasons than do traditional tourists. Some tourism destinations see heritage tourism as a promotion for tourism products, and this has been lamented. Millar (1989) and others (Hardy, 1988; Tighe, 1986) suggest that heritage tourism is "about the cultural traditions, places and values that ... groups throughout the world are proud to conserve." Cultural traditions such as family patterns, religious practices, folklore traditions, and social customs attract individuals interested in heritage (Collins, 1983; Weiler & Hall, 1992) as do monuments, museums, battlefields, historic structures, and landmarks (Konrad, 1982; McNulty, 1991). According to Tassell and Tassell (1990), heritage tourism also includes natural heritage sites; gardens, wilderness areas of scenic beauty, and valued cultural landscapes. Regardless of the heritage attraction, Prentice (1993) argue that heritage tourism is about searching for something that links the past and the present. It is integrally tied to nostalgia. For example, a family makes a weekend vacation of traveling to and visiting their ancestral homestead.

Heritage tourism can be classified as a subclass of cultural tourism, defined by the World Tourism Organization (1985) as the movements of persons for essentially cultural motivations such as study tours, performing arts and cultural tours; travel to festivals and other related events. Essentially, in tourism, the term heritage has come to mean landscapes, natural history, buildings, artifacts, and cultural traditions that are "either literally or metaphorically passed on from one generation to the other, but those among these things which can be portrayed for promotion as tourism products" (Prentice, 1993). In Malaysia, heritage has also been identified as one of the new niche products to be developed extensively in tourism development. Malaysia has taken the initiatives to expand the tourism market to include heritage tourism. Malaysia has distinctive multicultural architectural heritage with strong Islamic, Chinese and Western influences; all of which have been portrayed in the heritage building including the use of Islamic and Chinese motifs, Indian tiles, overhanging roofs, wide window openings, Dutch gables and classical columns and arches. Paralleled with the growing interest of heritage tourism and the global influx of the alternative tourists, tourist arrivals in the heritage cities have improved over the years.

The major heritage elements; historic building, historical sites and unique local cultures are commonly found in many heritage cities throughout Malaysia. An inventory has revealed that 30,000 heritage buildings are located in 162 cities throughout Malaysia (Idid, 1996). From this figure, 69.6% are shop houses and dwellings built before World War II (Table 1). The unique colonial architectural styles of buildings have played major role in the creation of heritage cities such as George Town, Ipoh, Malacca, Taiping, Kuala Lumpur and Kuching. Historic buildings usually portray significant physical characteristics to a city. They build a lucid image and distinct identity of heritage city which differentiates it from other regular cities elsewhere.

Table 1  
Distribution of Pre-War Buildings in Selected States in Malaysia

| States in Malaysia | Number of Pre-War Buildings | Percentage (%) |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| Penang             | 5057                        | 24.3           |
| Perak              | 3351                        | 16.1           |
| Johor              | 2323                        | 11.2           |
| Malacca            | 2177                        | 10.5           |
| Kuala Lumpur       | 1763                        | 8.4            |

## HERITAGE TOURISM IN MALAYSIAN HISTORIC CITIES

In effort to preserve cultural heritage of the country, Malaysia has taken a big step of submitting the inner city of Penang and Malacca to be nominated as joint world heritage sites. The inscription of Penang and Malacca into the World Heritage list definitely marks a new era in the sense

of both historic cities becoming world tourism products. The inscription will locate both cities among top priority destinations not only for the so-called heritage tourists, but among the mass travelers as well. The listing is expected to benefit Malaysia in general in term of promoting the good image of the country, and certainly will increase tourist revenues, generating mostly from taxes and foreign exchange.

*The Case of George Town, Penang*

Penang continues to be one of the top destinations in Malaysia; and to date, the state receives over 3 million tourists both domestic and international (Table 2). The number of tourist arrivals grows at an average of 6-7% annually and today, the tourism sector generates around RM3 billion of income annually to the state (Badaruddin, 2001). Penang enjoys an increasing number of tourists from Middle Eastern countries, ASEAN counterparts (especially from Thailand and Singapore); other major sources of international markets like United Kingdom, Australia, and Japan as well as Malaysian inbound market.

Table 2  
Penang Tourism Facts

| <b>No. of visitors</b> | <b>1990</b>  | <b>1996</b>  | <b>2000</b>  | <b>2003</b>  |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Total of tourists      | 1.8 million  | 3.44 million | 3.75 million | 3.03 million |
| Foreign visitors       | 1.28 million | 1.93 million | 2.0 million  | N.A          |
| No. of hotel rooms     | 7714         | 10891        | N.A          | 11998        |

*Source: Tourism Malaysia*

Heritage culture and buildings in Penang have become among the most valued assets in Malaysia, consisting of jumble of old temples, churches and mosques, white stucco colonial mansions, rows of tiled, Chinese and Muslim Indian shop houses, and ornate clan houses guarded by stone dragons. Walking through Penang’s narrow old streets within the George Town’s inner City carries anyone through the relics of time. George Town itself has more than 12,000 old buildings comprising of shop and terrace houses, churches, mosques, bungalows, villas, government offices and monuments. Many heritage buildings in Georgetown have been protected under a Rent Control Act, introduced in 1948 as well as the Antiquities Act of 1976. In a further effort to conserve the historic buildings of George Town, the State Government and the local authority have designated six conservation areas in the inner city and these zones have been forwarded to the UNESCO to be nominated as heritage sites. The zones are:

- ❑ **Seven streets**
- ❑ **Cultural precinct:** Chulia-Love-Muntri Street
- ❑ **Historic commercial centre:** Little India and traditional business communities
- ❑ **Waterfront business-financial district:** Banking, shipping and corporate business
- ❑ **Mosque and clan house enclave:** Religious buildings, clan houses, and small businesses
- ❑ **Market and shopping precinct:** Traditional retail and neighboring markets

Penang’s heritage assets can be classified into both tangible and intangible ones. As discussed above, George Town inner-city, where most its treasured architectures are located can be divided and drawn several zones, along various ethnic lines. Its culture has been molded by the successions of civilizations that arrived and shaped its urban growth. A closer look on these zones and the locations of some heritage buildings that dot the inner city exposes strong sense of compromise between the pioneers, earlier settlers and the later immigrants. The street names could give us some indications of the history and the significance of an area. Bishop Street, Church Street and Buckingham Street indicate the influence of Christianity on that part of the city, proved by the existence of several churches along the streets. Acheh Street and Farquhar Street mark the arrival of Muslim Achenese and Arabs, in the early days of Penang. While China Street, as the name clearly states, denotes the congregation of Chinese early community in Penang. At Little India, there is a line of shops owned by

Indian shopkeepers originated from South India selling necessities such as fabrics like the *sari*, accessories, statues and music instruments.

The dates on the building walls denote the succession of settlers that fought their way to this 'Pearl of the Orient'. The Kapitan Kling mosque (Figure 1), the oldest in the Island, was built by the East Indian Company at the end of 18<sup>th</sup> century, marking the growing number of Indian Muslims in Penang. The mosque has been the focus of both social and economic activities, which can still be seen around the mosque. Another symbol of Islamic community is the Lebuah Aceh Mosque, reflecting an area once richly populated by the People of Aceh, Indonesia, confirmed by the existence of graveyards with stones resembling those of Sumatra's and Riau's. This area was a service center for those going to make the pilgrimage to holy land of Mecca via sea where Penang was one of the departing points. Pilgrimages by sea however, became less popular due to the improvement in the modern aircraft.

Figure 1  
Kapitan Kling Mosque



The evidence of Chinese civilization can be trace to some of most beautiful religious structures in the island - the Kong San Tong Khoo, best known as the Khoo's *Kongsi* (or clan association) (Figure 2), the Cheah's *Kongsi*, and Yap's *Kongsi*. Khoo's *Kongsi* is located at Cannon Square, the clan members who later built a great temple in 1901 formally established the *Kongsi* in 1884. The temple however, was burned down soon afterward. It was later rebuild in 1906 by a group of 102 members of the Khoo clan from Hokkien, China to serve as the centre for their members and those just arrived from China. It has pillars and walls with beautiful designs that depict some Chinese myths. Inside the temple are altars to the God of Prosperity and for honoring the Khoo ancestors. For the past 100 years, the temple has been used for worship and for special Khoo clan celebrations. Today, it becomes one of the most visited sites in Georgetown, receiving some 800 visitors a day all year round.

Figure 2  
The Khoo Kongsi



For Hindus, the Sri Maha Mariamman temple, located at Queen Street, is a showcase of temple architecture of East India. Built in 1883, it is the oldest temple in Penang and is currently the host of various religious celebrations and ceremonies related to Hinduism. “Little India” on Market Street with its Indian Shops and restaurants attracts many visitors and it is the focal point of the Indian Community for Penang and the surrounding states. Most of Penang’s Indian textile retail trade is concentrated in Little India, Bishop Street and Chulia Street. Ethnic sub-sets have arisen, including the remarkable evolution of *peranakan* Chinese or *baba-nyonya* (a people of Chinese descent who speak Malay and whose culture is a unique blend of both Malay and Chinese); and the *peranakan Jawi* (Indians of Islamic faith), each with their signature styles of dressing, dining and traditions.

### *The Case of Malacca*

Malacca history began in 1400 when Parameswara, the Indian prince from Sumatra, Indonesia founded the city. During the 16-18<sup>th</sup> centuries, Malacca was a prominent trading port and administrative center in the region. Malacca’s high position was much contested by Portuguese, Dutch and British powers, which later lead to its downfall. Today, old Melaka town retains much of its 17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> century Dutch architecture, mosques, temples and 19<sup>th</sup> century Chinese townhouses. The rich tapestry of its multi-ethnic, multi-cultural and multi-religious population is still evident. The Malays, Peranakan Chinese, Portuguese Eurasians and Chitty Indians continue to practice their age-old traditions in colorful religious rituals and festivals. Malacca was declared as the “Historical City” in 1989 in lieu of its rich history. The declaration has intensified conservation efforts within the city, particularly in the gazetted Old Malacca Zone. Important historical sites in the city of Malacca include the Dutch Plaza which houses of Stadhuys Building, Christ Church, St. Paul’s Church, A Famosa Fort, St. Francis Xavier Church, Independence Memorial Building, museums and the traditional mosques of Kampung Kling and Kampung Hulu.

Tourism plays an important part of the state economy. Malacca is exploiting its rich history for tourism and has invested in a number of tourism projects. The most notable of these is the “light and sound” show at the St. Paul’s Hill area. Significant events in Malacca history are re-enacted by means of lights, narrative dialogue, music and sound effects. However the construction of structures housing the spotlights, sound speakers and terraced seating on the *padang* have created visual intrusions to the historical landscape of this area which includes the ruins of St. Paul’s Church, Christ Church, Stadhuys, A Famosa, a reconstruction of Malacca Sultanate palace and Merdeka (Independence) Memorial.

In 1995, the Malacca State government proposed a plan to convert this area of the town into a city of 101 museums. To date, a number of museums have been established. In addition, there are also private museums and galleries set up by house owners on Heeren Street and Jonkers Street. Private initiated tourism projects in the form of boutique hotels, inns, restaurants, pubs, antique shops and art galleries also have been developed in the conservation areas in the old town. However, these streets are still residential in nature with mixed commercial use. The case of Malacca tourism development of its historic sites demonstrates a clear vision and strategy on the part of the government but it also shows a need for greater local community participation. Without the community living in the old town, Malacca may become just and merely a museum city.

### CHALLENGES FACING HERITAGE TOURISM IN MALAYSIA

Given the complicated and unique background of preservation efforts in both Penang and Malacca, promoting both cities as cultural tourism products can be quite challenging. The first and foremost issue is the fact that while Malaysia is searching for a distinctive international image under the umbrella of ‘Malaysia Truly Asia’, the drive to promote multiculturalism is in fact hinders the whole idea of having a strong image! The question remains on whose culture should be put forefront. While Malays are the majority in the country, Chinese and Indians make up a significant percentages in both Penang and Malacca (and in many major cities in Malaysia!). Due to the fact that the majority of the buildings to be listed as the world heritage belonged to non-Malays, the nomination has

received lukewarm reception from the Malays, and other native groups who do not see the nomination to be beneficial to them. In addition to this, it is difficult not only to ensure equal representatives of all ethnic groups in the nomination exercise, the way the history of was drawn (about both cities) received criticism as each ethnic groups have their own versions of history. The question remains: When should the history start?

The second issue involves the preservation intangible products. As described above, the listing involves both tangible and intangible asets like local traditions and customs. While is is rather straightforward to draw the management scheme for tangible asets, the challenge remains on how to preserve the dance, the festivals and the lifestyle of the people. The dynamics of urban development have been associated with problems of urban sprawl and inner city decline, increased socio-economic polarization between and within cities, and changing lifestyle. The younger population, especially, are no longer interested in staying at old shop houses but prefer staying in modern condominiums outside the innercity. The trends are further intensified with the impact of globalization and internationalization on the internal structure and performance of cities and regions. With an influx of foreign capital and personnel, development pressures for more profitable urban functions in central cities have expanded at the expense of the less economically viable uses such as heritage sites and social housing which in turn put pressure of the authenticity of the innercity culture.

The third issue is also related to the Unesco's listing, which requires detailed and continuing management of the heritage assets. Echoing similar sentiments discussed above, a certain quarters of the city populace go againts the nomination, arguing it is another form of colonial glorification. This is due to the fact that many of the listed buildings relate to colonial powers. It is made worst by the fact that heritage building of the Malays were made of wood and did not last as long as the concrete colonial buildings.

Today, the Federal government has stepped us effort to promote a united Malaysian race. The multifaceted of the Malaysian society has been extensively manipulated and promoted internationally the 'Malaysia Truly Asia' promotional blitz. Various new cultural products are introduced to the market which include the Open House Celebrations in conjunction with various cultural celebrations, the Warna-Warna Malaysia celebration and various ethnic routes created within Penang and Malacca heritage enclaves that showcase the harmonious Malaysian society.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Heritage tourism has a great potential to attract more foreign visitors to Malaysia. The listing of Penang and Malacca as joint world heritage sites will certainly bring positive impact in term of the number of tourists to both cities especially, and to the country in general. However, the future and the growth of heritage tourism in Malaysia not only depend on the conservation efforts to preserve the historic buildings like in the case of George Town and Malacca city but also requires strong involvement of the local people who make up the bulk of 'living' and 'moving' culture of the sites. It requires full understanding and strong involvement of the local people who form the equally important intangible assets that are also a part of the package submitted to Unesco. It also depends on continued support from the tourists who should not only be exposed to the classic beauty of the buildings, but also should be exposed to the reality of the life of the people. Most tourists only come to Penang and Malacca without wanting to know too much about the physical and social realities behind those 'interesting' facades and they only interested at the ambience of the place rather than the actual history of one place, however, they should be made to become acquainted by the urban reality - a product of history - than a soft focus, sanitized heritage alone. In other word, heritage tourism must have educational role. At the same time, the formula of compromise, famously associated and promoted by Tourism Malaysia, must also be reflected in the preservation of heritage assets in the country. Heritage sites of Penang and Malacca should be viewed as a comprehensive agglomeration of Malaysians as one, a united Malaysia, a truly Asia!

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HOTEL MANAGEMENT AND HARMONIOUS SOCIETY  
A CASE STUDY OF BEST WESTERN PREMIER XIAMEN CENTRAL HOTEL

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate that a hotel's people-oriented management could play a positive role in enhancing social harmony and contributing to the sustainable development of its host country. Focusing on a medium-sized hotel in the Mainland China as a representative case, it sought to establish a logical relationship between the people-oriented managerial philosophy of a hotel on the one hand and both the success of such a hotel and the harmony of the overall society on the other. The study showed that a hotel was better seen as a molecule of the society as an organic entity. A hotel and a society depended and impacted on each other, and promoted each other for their harmonious and sustainable development.

Key Words: People-oriented, harmonious development, hotel, society

INTRODUCTION

Since 1993 the hotel industry in the Mainland China has entered a period of rapid expansion and development, and has achieved widely known accomplishments (Lu Jianzhong, 2004). The industry has been so preoccupied with its own growth that for over a decade, development has been its catchword, and those in this business hardly pay attention to anything else. Last year, however, Chinese President Hu Jintao's call (2005) for the Chinese to turn their nation into a harmonious society confronted the industry as a whole with a long neglected issue: How the hotel should build up its own corporate culture so that its development would be in line with the demand of a harmonious society. In the western countries, harmony in society and with nature has for quite some time been a received cultural value. Former CEO of Hewlett-Packard Carly Fiorina has for example rendered this abundantly clear when, in a speech given in 2003, she maintains that "In 21<sup>st</sup> century, the organization would be like an organism, not be mechanic any longer." Yet in China, it is only recently that people started to realize that "Enterprises' development is closely associated with social environment. Society is the source of the enterprise's interest. The enterprise should repay the society with the actions in accordance with social ethics and moralities while enjoying the freedom and opportunities given by the society." (Cao Xishen and Zhang Guohua, 2004). As an ancient country, which boasts one of the longest civilizations, China is in fact where the concept of a "harmonious society" and the philosophy of sustainable development originated. As early as over 2000 years ago, Lao Tzu, a sage, already defined the ideal of governing in terms of "doing nothing that goes against nature" (Lao Tzu,

1998). To pass on and develop this time-honored tradition, this paper offers an account of the way a medium-size hotel –Best Western Premier Xiamen Central Hotel (BWPXMCH) -- has attached great importance to a people-oriented managerial philosophy in its pursuit of harmony as an ideal of corporate culture. Using this as a typical case, the paper argues that the hotel industry could contribute to the harmonization and even the sustained growth of its host country if only it made proper adjustment to its philosophy of management.

## CASE STUDY DESCRIPTION

Best Western Premier Xiamen Central Hotel, a state-owned hotel, had 500 guest rooms with full services including all range of facilities, located in Xiamen, Fujian, China. In 2004, GOP of the hotel reached 37% of its revenue of 110 million RMB (13.6 million USD), 3% higher than the average of the international and independent management hotels and 7% higher than the average of the state-owned hotels according to China Hotel Industry Study 2005 (Lu Haiyan, 2005). The hotel was No.1 profit earner and No.1 tax contributor among hotel industry in the province. It was awarded as Xiamen A-grade Taxation Credit Enterprise and A-grade Banking Credit Enterprise. The provincial government awarded it a 2001-2003 Outstanding Tourist Hotel in 2004.

During its eight-year management, the hotel formed a unique people-oriented management, which focused on hotel's sustainable development in forming a harmonious society, different from others', which focused on a single isolated group's interest, either employees or guests. The hotel regarded "people" as an integrated concept that included the guests, shareholders, employees and society. They were related with one another, impacted one another and promoted one another. The integrated concept was described in details as guests' orientation, shareholders' orientation, employees' orientation and society orientation.

Guests' orientation was that only through satisfying the guests to the greatest extent the hotel could maximize profitability for the hotel as well as society. This was the soul of people-oriented management.

Shareholders' orientation referred to that the shareholders' interest was the prerequisite of the employees' basic interest. Without making profitability for the shareholders, employees would not be able to retain their career, and hotel could not make any sustainable development. This was, also, the prerequisite of the hotel people-oriented management.

Employee orientation indicated that the employees were the main body to realize the shareholders' interest. They should be strictly managed with care and love. The hotel embraced the concept of "never ignore employees' suggestions and criticism" And, it was advocated, "to have a harmonious work environment while incorporating differences". This was the base of guest orientation and shareholder orientation.

Society Orientation meant that a hotel was a component of the society. Only could a harmonious society lead to the harmony of the hotel. Hotel should create wealth for society, promote social stability and development and help create the friendly environment where people and nature

co-existed harmoniously.

The people-oriented management brought the hotel into its success and had a positive impact on social harmony. On the other hand, as a sample of a harmonious society, Xiamen acted as a good environment for hotel management and offered many advantages for the hotel management.

## METHODOLOGY

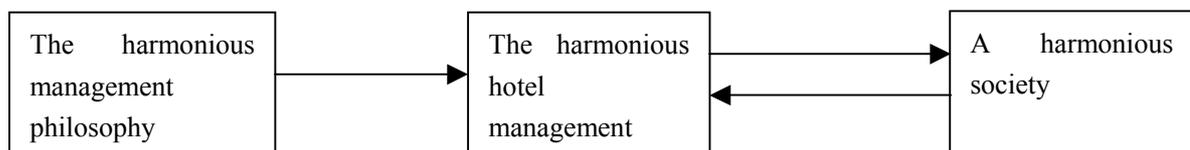
The authors of the paper were the former general manager and deputy general manager of BWPXMCH. They built up the people-oriented management based on their hotel management practices in international and domestic hotels.

To conduct the paper, a focused group was organized and a series of discussions were made between them and other members of the management team to generate the perceptions towards the people-oriented management. The assumptions involved in that a harmonious hotel management and a harmonious society impacted each other and enhanced each other were raised after the discussion.

Assumption 1: Harmonious management philosophy had positive impact on a hotel management and its performance.

Assumption 2: A harmonious hotel management had positive impact on society development.

Assumption 3: A harmonious society had positive impact on hotel management.



The hotel investigated provided the data (1997-2004) for the analysis: annual working reports, financial performance reports and board meeting minutes; General Manager's Confidential Letters filled out by the guests; the reports, features and TV clips on the hotel made by the media; hotel anniversary celebration commemorative books; certificates for the prizes and awards the hotel had won. An in-depth discussion and analysis on the data were made after a careful data studies.

The authors made the interviews by calls or face to face with the samples categorized as a municipal government official in charge of the city tourism, community neighbors, hotel long-staying guests and hotel employees.

All the data gathered were studied carefully and went into processing: grouping, theming, interpreting and analyzing.

## FINDINGS

### Guest orientation

The hotel regarded the guest orientation as the soul of people-oriented management philosophy, and continuously innovated and strictly implemented the personalized services. It was the hotel that firstly called for the idea of no tipping for the services in any post of the hotel in the industry in China to avoid differential services because of the tips. This calling aroused the debate in the industry but “no tipping” was welcome and acclaimed by the guests. Another unique service was “Zip In” service. “Zip In” service didn’t mean to cancel the registration procedure. What the hotel did was that the receptionist picked up the guest at the airport and made the registration in the shuttle bus on the way to the hotel. VIP of the hotel were assigned a butler, who was responsible for the services at his request for 24 hours a day with her mobile phone turned on until VIP departed. The hotel made great efforts to create a sanitary and safe environment. During the period of SARS in 2003, the hotel was the only one praised by the municipal government for the outstanding prevention efforts and sanitary environment. The hotel was ranked the top sanitary in the routine or sudden sanitary inspections by the government concerned bureaus. The hotel’s safety was focused on a sound security system to make fire prevention and public security through raising the staff and guests’ awareness of security and taking effective measures including the use of advanced scientific and technological equipments. All the detail services and environment created comfortable experiences. Martin (personal communication, July 28,2005) said, “I feel comfortable, staying at the hotel but I can’t exactly tell what has made me feel so.”

### Shareholders’ orientation

The hotel tried to maximize the shareholders’ interest. Without making profitability for the shareholders, employees were not able to retain their career, and hotel could not make any sustainable development. The hotel regarded the shareholders’ interest not only as the prerequisite of the employees’ basic interest but also as the prerequisite of the hotel people-oriented management. To realize the sustainable development, the hotel tried to make personalized facilities, position high-end market, organize study teamwork, focus on detail services and management, make a group operation, and improve personalized services. All those increased the value of the shareholders’ assets. Till the end of 2004, the hotel made the profits and depreciation of 180 million RMB (22.2 million USD), equal to 78% of the investment, excluding the increase of the real estate value of the property and intangible property. At the same time, the hotel won a high reputation through the hotel’s management for the shareholders, who raised their images in China as well as foreign countries.

### Employees’ orientation

The hotel considered the employees as the main body to realize the shareholders’ interest. This was the base of guest orientation and shareholder orientation. The employees should be strictly managed with care and love because the experiences that the hotel created for the guests were demonstrated by the employees. The hotel embraced the concept of “never ignore employees suggestions and criticism” And, it was advocated, “to have a harmonious work environment while

incorporating differences” in the hotel against any kind of individual heroism and group-focus. Any employee’s idea for innovation and reform were encouraged and welcome.

The hotel also regarded its employees as social people. The strategies of the human resources development didn’t limit in the realization of the hotel goals. The hotel tried to help cultivate the comprehensive qualities of the employees to become the people with great ideal, professional skills and professional ethics for the society. “Being an upright person before doing a job” prevailed in the hotel. Transferring from standardization of the employees’ behaviors to development of the employees’ potential, the hotel forged the enterprise and employees’ common vision. The hotel guided each employee in the design of his career plan to realize his life value as soon as he was recruited and strived to provide a fair and ethical working environment for all its employees. The hotel paved the career path for the employees’ personal development, adopting job competition and assessment-based promotion.

The hotel paid great attention to improving the employees’ living standard. The hotel increased nearly 30% of the employees’ salary each year, based on the revenue increase. There was only about 10% of turnover each year. So the hotel retained and attracted excellent, innovative and guest-driven employees.

#### Society orientation

As a component of the society, the hotel did a lot to create wealth for the society, promote social stability and development and help create the friendly environment where people and nature co-existed harmoniously.

Jeremy Xu, the former general manager, said,” The hotel should not be anxious to achieve quick success and get instant benefits, ignoring the social interest.” In the first year of Golden Weeks (week-long national holidays), the hotel kept its promise not to raise the prices in order to create the attractive environment for the tourists to Xiamen although it could have earned more. Later, the hotel proposed that all the hotels in Xiamen not raise the prices during Golden Weeks and the proposal was adopted by Xiamen Hotel Association.

However, The hotel must make money to increase the society’s wealth, strengthen the state’s power and improve people’s life. The hotel made profits in the first year operation, increasing them year-by-year and became the largest hotel taxation contributor in the province. The total taxations for the city and the state and the profits for the shareholders reached 104 million RMB (12.8 million USD).

The hotel tried to build up itself as China’s reform and opening-up showcase to embrace all businessmen from home and abroad with its hospitality and new look. Every employee in the hotel regarded himself as a representative of the beautiful city. Since 1996, “9.8” China International Fair for Investment and Trade was held in Xiamen, one of the largest fairs in China. In 2002, the hotel received Arabian delegations. Most of them were Muslim. The reception was involved with Arabian religion, culture, etiquette, food and living habits. The delegations were pleased with the reception

and Dr M. Hakuja, Jordan's Vice-President and head of Jordan's delegation wrote, " I enjoy staying at Central Hotel. It's cozy and the management is excellent..."The hotel established International Children's Club and China's Cuisine Training Class for foreign families in the city and organized a series of activities for them without earning profits so that the foreign businessmen who worked in the city didn't need taking too much time to take care of their families.

The hotel actively participated in social activities. In 1999, the hotel was the first donator in the Mainland for Taiwanese who suffered loss at a sudden strong earthquake in the island. In 2004, the tsunami hit the countries along the Indian Ocean. The hotel became the first once more to make donation for the people in the disaster areas and the amount was the largest among the BWP hotels in the Mainland China. Through Best Western International, the donation arrived in time at the destroyed areas, including the three BW hotels in Phuket, Thailand.

The hotel melted itself into its community and promoted its development, adhering to the idea of "customers are silver, but neighbors are gold". Once, a neighbor called hotel AM to say that he was disturbed by the little noise of the hotel's ventilation at midnight. The hotel spent more than 200,000 RMB (24.700 USD) in replacing it after the failure of the reducing the noise. The hotel also checked all the facilities to make sure that no sound could be heard outside the hotel at night. The hotel's security guards were initiatively involved in the community's security, making training for the public security assistants, patrolling with them at deep nights and even participating in distinguishing the fire in a house before the arrive of fire department. The hotel allowed the neighbors to park their cars free of charge whenever the parking lot was available.

China had the largest population in the world. The government was always concerned with employment, especially those who had laid off from the state-owned enterprises and migrated from the countryside. The hotel kept employing over 700 persons to help lessen the state's employment pressure. Through the management, the hotel cultivated many hotel professionals for the other hotels and able people for the society. The hotel made its promise of never lay off employees and add the burdens to the society. Even at SARS period, the hotel kept its promise and lay off non-employee.

As an environment-friendly hotel, it took a lead in the environment protection programs. The hotel pushed forward the idea that the social whole interest should be put above the hotel's economic interest and advocated that every employee should be responsible for society and history. The hotel regarded building up an environment-friendly hotel as a system and implemented the environmental protection program according to 6Rs.

Research: The hotel regularly made a SWOT analysis on the environmental protection, focused on the weakness and threats based on the analysis and made the solutions to the problems. The hotel made several important strategies to lead the environmental protection. In 1998, the hotel was the first one in Xiamen to replace non-phosphorus washing powder in the laundry for the phosphorus one although the hotel had to pay more for it. In the end of 2003, the hotel found out reused cook oil was purchased with good price and sold after processing as qualified cook oil in the market. The hotel not only made sure all the used cook oil went to the industry use but also set up an asking-for-certificate system. All suppliers of the fresh and alive food, including cook oil suppliers,

should provide the hotel with the certificates of production units and places, purchasing channels and sanitary and safety checks. The average purchasing prices were higher, however, food safety and safety were guaranteed.

Reserve: The hotel didn't blindly follow the renovation trend. In 1999, the hotel applied for a four star hotel. Some star assessor asked hotel to renovate the lobby to look more luxurious. The hotel braved the pressure to insist on the none-renovation plan, considering the reservation of the lobby cultural style that had formed the hotel identity in the customers' minds and the reduction of the unnecessary resuming of the nature recourses.

Reducing: Reducing didn't simply mean to reduce the washing times of the towels and sheets or cancel the amenities in rooms. The hotel reduced the appropriate amount of goods to reduce inventory, prevented the waste in the processing of food to save the raw material, established OA systems to save papers, maintained and repaired the equipments scientifically and timely to prolong their life, and installed energy-saving lights and water-saving equipments to reduce the electricity and water, etc.

Reusing: The hotel had regulations to make the best of everything. The successful project was the collection of the residual heat of the central air-conditioning. With one million RMB (0.81million USD) investments, the hotel could supply itself with the hot water in spring, summer and autumn without burning the boilers. Reusing didn't mean that everything was to be reused. The used cook oil in the hotel was sent out for industry rather than being reused for cooking.

Replacing: The hotel replaced plastic shopping bags for the paper ones and plastic clothing laundry bags for the cloth ones under the guidance of the environmental protection program. The plastic products were gradually withdrawn from the hotel and replaced by degradable products. In the kitchens, the burning oil was replaced for the gas to produce the air pollution.

Recycling: In the hotel, the used soaps in the rooms were not allowed to throw away. They were collected and placed in the public toilets. Even received printings couldn't be wasted and were turned down for the writing.

The hotel advocated the whole society to set up the awareness of the environmental protection. On the first day of millennium of year 2000, the hotel organized its employees to collect rubbish on the beach. Before Christmas, the hotel sent the cards made of recycled paper and later electronic cards instead to set an example of being environment friendly.

The harmonious hotel made contributions to the society

The hotel investment and development changed the community where the hotel stood. The community used to be the difficult households area with many laid-offs. The hotel brought the community commercial opportunities. Shops, restaurants, groceries and bars were set up like spring bamboo shoots after rain. More and more laid-offs got their jobs. Even the prices of the real estate went double. The economic volume in the community increased greatly.

The hotel brought the community the civilized common practice, too. The hotel made an assistance campaign before Spring Festival every year not only for solving the problems for the difficult households but also for calling for more people to pay attention to those people. The hotel invited the elderly persons of no families to the hotel for the holidays with the employees. With the help of the hotel, the families lived a happy life and the criminal rate decreased. The neighborhood committee was awarded an outstanding one by the municipal government.

The hotel also made contributions to Xiamen. The hotel became one of the city showcases to attract the investment and trade from home and abroad by supplying excellent services and having high reputation and a good image. The hotel was proud of being appointed to receive the most important delegations during 9.8 China International Fair. The hotel building, 118 meters high, became the city landmark and consisted of modern city with other high skyscrapers.

The harmonious society repaid the hotel

Since the hotel made contribution to the society, the society paid back with the good environment for the hotel growth. Xiamen became one of most attractive cities in China for the investors and tourists. In 2004, the GDP of Xiamen ranked the first in the province. The overseas travelers to Xiamen increased by 21.54 %, compared with the year of 2003. The hotel benefited from it with the 23.5% of the occupancy rate increase. The municipal government, also, gave the enterprises a strong assistance, especially those of hospitality industry. During the period of SARS, the government reduced the hospitality industry's taxations and delivered the allowances to the employees. In 2004, there was short of electricity in southeast of China because of the long time draught. The enterprises in Xiamen were forced to operate only three days a week under the government strict regulation of "limiting the electricity use by pulling switches". However, the government gave the hotel a special approval for freedom of the regulation. When the water pipes needed removing under the city construction, the government would consider the water might be cut off to influence the hotel operation, it instructed the construction units to link the hotel pipe with the other water source. During the important receptions and great events, the local police station would enforce the security in the hotel area and even sent policemen to be on duty in the hotel room at the hotel request to prevent the accidents. The police often patrolled outside the hotel to clear of the beggars and prostitutes. The neighbors in the community, also, regarded the hotel as their own. One night, a neighbor from his building noticed a thief was trying to steal in the hotel. He called the hotel at once and the thief was caught, red-handed.

The society fully recognized the hotel contribution and gave the hotel a lot of honors. The hotel successively won the organization prize in Red Cross 10 Thousand People Donation Campaign (1999), the first prize in Xiamen Hotel Knowledge Contest (2000), and was awarded National Environmental Protection Enterprise (1999), Provincial Outstanding Security Enterprise (2000), Provincial Youth Civilization Title (2001), National “ Excellent Quality and Credit” Well Known Enterprise (2001), Fujian 300 Largest Profit and Taxation Contributors (2002, 2003 and 2004), China Tourism Well Known Brand (2003) and Fujian 2001-2003 Outstanding Tourist Hotel (2004) and Xiamen A-grade Taxation Credit Enterprise and A-grade Banking Credit Enterprise (2004), etc.. 10.8 % of the hotel employees were awarded variety of the national, provincial and municipal individual honors and titles. The honors brought the hotel reputation and opportunities as well. The hotel was always chosen as the venues for the great events and the appointed hotel for the reception of VIPs. Even Vice Mayor would like to take GM of the hotel on the business promotion trips.

When the city was under the plan, construction or renovation, the government always paid close attention to the harmony between people and nature. The construction projects always became new scenic spots for the tourists. The city became more and more beautiful and attractive. In 2004 the city was awarded the “UN Habitat Honor”.

## CONCLUSION

The result of the case study indicated that three assumptions were all true. A hotel’s philosophy was both a life-thread that influenced the way the hotel treated guests, shareholders, employees and society and a culture that linked with the hotel past, present and future. A harmonious management philosophy stressed on people-orientation, focused on the comprehensive understanding of all the people groups involved, the priority orders of the group interests and positive inter-impact among the groups. The philosophy of BWPXMCH reflected a harmonious management one and correctly guided the hotel in dealing with the relations between the hotel and the interest groups for its healthy development.

A hotel, as a component of society, impacted on the social and natural environment and vice versa. The people-oriented management was compatible with social harmonious and sustainable development. The four groups of the people-oriented management as an inseparable organic integrity supplemented one another. Guests were the hotel’s source of incoming. Adhering to the guest first, guests would be satisfied and often arrived. The hotel, the shareholders and society would benefit from it, which would create a better environment for the hotel construction and development. When hotel developed, the employees would receive better welfare and growth opportunities. When the employees were satisfied, they would be more enthusiastic to serve the guests and more loyal to the hotel and the hotel could make greater contributions to the society. It was a healthy cycle. The hotel actively repaid the society. Apart from the taxation generator, the hotel boomed the community economy, brought the community the civilized common practice, protected the natural environment, and became the showcase of the city development, the venue of the great events and the landmark of the city beautiful scenery.

The hotel strived for the organic integrations with society and nature and pursued the

far-reaching, sustainable, stable and coordinated development. So it acquired a good social environment and space for its further growth. The society repaid the harmonious hotel with the preferable government policies, higher social honors, the faster economic prosperity and better natural environment.

#### LIMITATION

The paper only focused on one hotel for a case study although the researched hotel was very successful. The authors looked at the hotel more from inside than from outside. So it might bear the risk of the bias and the little basis of broader generalization.

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## MEETING THE CHALLENGES OF PEACE VIA TOURISM – A NORTHERN IRELAND PERSPECTIVE

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### ABSTRACT

Whilst community relations issues may be less visible, they do still exist in rural areas. They can often be heightened by geographical isolation, lack of transport or by lack of opportunities which in turn can lead to further polarisation and segregation.

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Council as an implementing body for the EU Peace Programme has facilitated through local community groups to develop peace building projects in Northern Ireland. Local community involvement is essential in addressing the legacy of the conflict and in helping Northern Ireland move towards a more stable and inclusive society.

The breath and variety of work being undertaken across the rural community is encouraging by a wide variety of groups, including women, young people, the long term unemployed, farmers and their families as well as many others. This bears testament to the desire of communities right across the board to address issues of peace and reconciliation and to work for the social, economic and tourist benefits that peace can bring.

Key Words: Rural, Peace, Community, Projects, Reconciliation.

The night-sky red, crackle and roar of flame,  
the barricades across the ruined street,  
the thump of stones, the shots, the thudding feet,  
as mob greets mob with claim and counterclaim,  
each blames the other, none accepts the blame,  
for fears entrenched will not permit retreat,  
when creed and creed inhospitably meet,  
and each child's fate foreshadowed in its name.  
*(John Hewitt: "In This Year of Grace")*

Like most, we were sure that the "troubles" would not last very long. No one was prepared for the new reality: explosions and gunfire, arson and destruction, gas and rubber bullets, injury and murder. After 30 years, 3466 lives were lost by the "troubles" in Northern Ireland, 35,000 injuries, not counting the number of buildings destroyed and the emotional scares left behind.

The Northern Ireland Rural Development Council (RDC) was established in the midst of the "troubles" in 1991 as an independent organisation under the Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Programme operating at a regional level across rural Northern Ireland. The RDC is presently managed by a 15 member Council comprised of rural community representatives drawn from the private sector, local government, ministerial environmental interests, community banking, agriculture industry and ministerial appointees. This broad based rural representation brings a wealth of experience and illustrates the partnership approach that underpins the work of the RDC. This voluntary input provides strong corporate governance to a staff team of over 30.

As a Council RDC wants to encourage a flourishing and sustainable rural Northern Ireland and believes that rural communities play a vital and significant role in achieving this. Activities are based on the principle that local people are best placed to identify their needs and propose solutions.

RDC is involved in the delivery of support services, both financial and practical, to organisations involving people locally in planning regeneration projects that meet the real needs of

rural communities. In addition, RDC are also involved in gathering and analysing data, research and information from a range of sources, sharing of information and building effective partnerships.

This unique combination to delivery and research by a broad partnership based organisation makes a significant contribution to rural policy development and delivery in Northern Ireland.

The RDC has defined its vision and strategic objectives based on the following values and principles:

- Spatial Equity
- Social Inclusion
- Respecting Difference
- Targeting Social Need
- Valuing the Social Resource
- Valuing the Environment
- Valuing People
- Innovation
- Partnership
- Public Service

The above principles and values were applied in the development of the Council’s core corporate objective which is:

*“To enable rural Northern Ireland to realise its potential through influencing policy, developing and delivering practical programmes, sharing information and building effective partnerships”.*

However, at an operational level, this core objective has been distilled into a number of strategic priorities and sub-objectives:

Table 1  
Strategic Priorities and Sub-Objectives

| A Centre for Rural Expertise  | A Diverse & Prosperous Countryside  | An Efficient & Effective Organisation  |
|---|---|--|
| <p><b>To increase the RDC’s influence in integrating rural development principles and values into regional policy and decision making through a process of Rural Proofing.</b></p> <p><b>To consider and promote strategies for sustainable rural development through the establishment of a rural baseline initiative.</b></p> <p><b>To strengthen rural development partnerships by the provision of strategic support.</b></p> | <p><b>To contribute towards the development of a vibrant rural economy.</b></p> <p><b>To increase the capacity of local organisations to implement rural regeneration projects and programmes.</b></p> <p><b>To enhance the employability of disadvantaged groups.</b></p> <p><b>To sustain and develop rural environmental resources.</b></p> <p><b>To promote peace and reconciliation in rural areas.</b></p> <p><b>To contribute to the</b></p> | <p><b>To integrate the principles of quality, best value, equality and TSN into the planning and delivery of all activities.</b></p> <p><b>To ensure a sustainable financial base for the organisation.</b></p> <p><b>To manage and develop staff as a key organisational resource.</b></p> <p><b>To ensure the highest standards of corporate governance and public accountability.</b></p> <p><b>To communicate with all our</b></p> |

|  |                                      |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|
|  | <b>enhancement of rural tourism.</b> | <b>stakeholders on the principles, plans and performance of the RDC.</b><br><br><b>To develop and implement an appropriate corporate ICT strategy.</b> |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|

Just as the rural community is key to the shape of life in Northern Ireland, so to is its contribution when it comes to peace building and reconciliation. The tranquil rural landscape often masks the reality of a divided society that is just as acute as in our cities.

The RDC was appointed as an Intermediary Funding Body for the rural areas of Northern Ireland to administer the unique European Union Special Support Programme for Peace & Reconciliation (EUSSPR) in Northern Ireland and the Border Counties of Ireland 1995-1999 (Peace I) and the EU Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and the Border Region 2000-2004 (Peace II). This appointment facilitated the RDC in meeting its strategic priority “A diverse and prosperous countryside” and associated objectives:

- To contribute towards the development of a vibrant rural economy.
- To increase the capacity of local organisations to implement rural regeneration projects and programmes.
- To enhance the employability of disadvantaged groups.
- To sustain and develop rural environmental resources.
- To promote peace and reconciliation in rural areas
- To contribute to the enhancement of rural tourism

The key features of both Programmes are detailed below:

Table 2  
Key Features of Peace I and Peace II

| Feature                              | Peace I  | Peace II  |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|
| Programme Period                     | 1995 – 1999  | <b>2000 – 2004</b>  |
| Overall Aim                          | “To reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation”. | <b>“To reinforce progress towards a peaceful and stable society and to promote reconciliation”.</b> |
| Value of Programme (EU Contribution) | €500m  | <b>€531m</b>  |
| Delivery Structure                   | 64 Implementing Bodies   | <b>56 Implementing Bodies plus consortia members</b>  |
| Programme Structure                  | 7 Sub-Programmes, 32 Measures  | <b>6 Priorities, 34 Measures, 22 Sub Measures</b>   |
| Geographical Area                    | Northern Ireland & Border Region   | <b>Northern Ireland &amp; Border Region</b>   |
| <b>Managing Authority</b>            | <b>DFP/DoF</b>   | <b>SEUPB</b>  |

The EU Programmes for Peace & Reconciliation are unique EU Structural Fund Programmes aiming to “reinforce progress towards a peaceful society and promote reconciliation”. In contributing towards this overall strategic aim, Peace II has two specific objectives which seek to make the Programme distinctive from other Structural Fund interventions operating in Northern Ireland. The objectives include:

*Address the Legacy of the Conflict*, the Programme is intended to address specific problems generated by the conflict in order to assist the return to a normal, peaceful and stable society.

***Take opportunities arising from Peace***, to encourage actions which have a stake in peace and which actively help promote a stable and normal society where opportunities can be grasped.

Through the implementation of this Programme, the RDC recognises that community development and its processes are vital ingredients to the development of peace and reconciliation. Being able to access the Programme is important to us. So too is transparency. In order to ensure that communities were made aware that EU Structural Funds were available for rural peace building projects and to facilitate easy access to the Programme, the RDC undertook the following actions:

- Equality Impact Assessment of Project Assessment Criteria
- Development of a comprehensive application pack and detailed guidance notes
- Mailshot to groups using the extensive RDC database
- Participated in 56 information roadshows
- Advertisements in 32 regional newspapers; 3 national newspapers and a number of professional journals
- Targeted press releases to low uptake areas
- Information available as both hardcopy or web based
- Project examples and best practice case studies available on web site

As a result of the above marketing and communication techniques 302 applications were received requesting a total of £8m to which £2.6m was available for distribution. Understanding the application/project and how it fits with the Peace Programme and the contribution it can make towards the creation of a more peaceful, prosperous stable rural society forms the main components of the assessment process. The assessment process within the RDC is as follows:

- Applications are desk assessed for eligibility
- Non-eligible applications are refused with reasons stated
- Assessment visits carried out on each eligible application
- Key local advice sought from various organisations on the content of the application
- Applications are judged against specific Peace Programme and Measure Criteria
- Decisions taken by Panel representative of rural sectors and regions across Northern Ireland
- Formal Appeal process in operation

Through the judging of applications, there are a number of criteria in relation to peace distinctiveness. The applicant should identify through the criteria how they are helping to address the legacy of the conflict and/or taking opportunities from peace. The applicant will be asked to identify specifically which of the areas, sectors and groups that their project will assist. A full list of these is noted in the table below:

Table 3  
Areas, Sectors & Groups a Project can Assist

| Areas |   |
|-------|---|
|       | <b>Disadvantaged area(s) experiencing or which have experienced relatively high levels of violence.</b>   |
|       | <b>Area(s) such as sectarian interfaces where inter-community conflict and dispute is high and community relations are correspondingly poor.</b>          |
|       | <b>Disadvantaged area(s) whose image and attractiveness as an investment location has been adversely affected by local violence or community tension.</b> |
|       | <b>Area(s) suffering the effects of physical dereliction (including damaged infrastructure) as a consequence of the conflict.</b>                         |

|                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
|                    | <b>Area(s) isolated by border closures.</b>   |
|                    | <b>Area(s) with high concentrations of displaced persons as a result of the Troubles.</b>   |
|                    | <b>Area(s) where social and economic development has been inhibited by the conflict, illustrated by demographic and labour market patterns/structures, and low levels of income, skills and qualifications, and consequently displays relatively high levels of multiple deprivation.</b> |
|                    | <b>Other area(s) not included above but which are clearly relevant to the framework for the application of the Peace Programme.</b>   |
| Sectors            | <b>Tourism relating to actions to address the negative image of the region by appropriate marketing activities, facilitating the development of the tourism product and by complementary skills enhancement.</b>  |
|                    | <b>Entrepreneurship including ICT and business services particularly in the context of those areas, groups/communities also targeted in the programme.</b>  |
|                    | <b>The Arts and Sport particularly in the context of those areas, groups/communities also targeted in the programme.</b>  |
|                    | <b>Other sector(s) not included above but which are clearly relevant to the framework for the application of the Peace Programme.</b>   |
| Groups/Communities | <b>Victims of conflict, i.e. surviving, injured and/or disabled – either physically or psychologically – of violent, conflict-related incidents and those who care for or are related to them, along with close relatives who mourn their dead.</b>                                       |
|                    | <b>Ex-prisoners and their families.</b>   |
|                    | <b>Displaced persons, i.e. those who have involuntarily moved from areas of violence or form interface areas, or communities in which there is a concentration of such displaced persons.</b>   |
|                    | <b>Young people, women and older workers insofar as they have been prevented from fulfilling their potential in society or in the labour market.</b>  |
|                    | <b>Former members of the security and ancillary services facing additional employability needs.</b>   |
|                    | <b>Other groups/communities not included above but which are clearly relevant to the framework for the application of the Peace Programme.</b>  |

The RDC also asks through the assessment process how a project will pave the way to reconciliation. Reconciliation as defined by the Peace Programme has 5 interwoven and related strands:

1. Building positive relationships.
2. Acknowledging and dealing with the past.
3. Developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society.
4. Significant cultural and attitudinal change.
5. Substantial social and economic and political change.

To qualify for the awarding of a score under reconciliation, projects must address the first strand “Building Positive Relationships” and at least two of the other strands. More detail on each of the strands is included in the table below:

Table 4  
Definition of Reconciliation

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Building positive relationships                                  | <b>Relationship building or renewal following violent conflict addressing issues of trust, prejudice, intolerance in this process resulting in accepting commonalities and differences, and embracing and engaging with those who are different to us.</b>   |
| Acknowledging and dealing with the past                          | <b>Acknowledging the hurt, losses, truths and suffering of the past. Providing the mechanisms for justice, healing, restitution or reparation, and restoration (including apologies if necessary and steps aimed at redress). Individuals and institutions acknowledge their own role in the conflicts of the past, accepting and learning from it in a constructive way so as to guarantee non-repetition.</b>            |
| Developing a shared vision of an interdependent and fair society | <b>The articulation of a common vision of an interdependent, just, equitable, open and diverse society. The development of a vision of a shared future requiring the involvement of the whole society, at all levels.</b>  |
| Significant cultural and attitudinal change                      | <b>Changes in how people relate to, and their attitudes towards, one another. The culture of suspicion, fear, mistrust and violence is broken down and opportunities and space opened up in which people can hear and be heard. A culture of respect for human rights and human difference is developed creating a context where each citizen becomes an active participant in society and feels a sense of belonging.</b> |
| <b>Substantial social, economic and political change</b>         | <b>The social, economic and political structures which gave rise to the conflict and estrangement are identified, reconstructed or addressed, and transformed.</b>   |

The RDC through the assessment process awards scores to each applicant. The points are awarded on the following basis:

Table 5  
Scoring Weighting

| Element                          | Weighting  |
|----------------------------------|------------|
| Distinctiveness                  | <b>20%</b> |
| Reconciliation                   | <b>20%</b> |
| Horizontal Principles            | <b>10%</b> |
| <b>Measure Specific Criteria</b> | <b>50%</b> |

An application must score at least 13% on distinctiveness criteria and 13% on reconciliation, and receive at least 65% overall to be eligible for funding. All projects over 65% may not necessarily receive funding if there are more peace projects than there is funding. This was the case in the RDC – out of the 302 applications received funding was only available to 78 groups.

The journey from project idea, through planning, to securing a project grant can be challenging. Making the project become a reality from receipt of the contract to completion can be equally as demanding. Receiving a contract is not the end of the process but the beginning of a programme of support facilitating the implementation process. The RDC assisted projects through the following:

- A suite of workbooks and online web based training materials were designed for groups free of charge
- Contract for Funding induction sessions including information on monitoring, evaluation and publicity
- Training on “Promoting Good Relations”
- Development of best practice & training materials on organising and running festivals, management of ICT projects and promoting good relations
- Development of a community intranet networking facility

Through the implementation of this Programme, the RDC recognises that community development and its processes are vital ingredients to the development of peace and reconciliation. Contributing to its success is the active involvement of local people which helps to foster a sense of ownership and empowerment. Rural communities have met the challenge of contributing to a more peaceful and prosperous society and there are now many projects across Northern Ireland, involving thousands of people – all working towards peace and reconciliation. RDC are pleased to see the breath and variety of work being undertaken across the rural community by a wide range of groups, including women, young people, the long term unemployed, farmers and their families as well as many others. This bears testament to the desire of communities right across the board to address issues of peace and reconciliation to work for the social and economic benefits that peace can bring.

It is often said that the environment in which we live contributes to who we are as a person, where we work and socialise and the friends and relationships we develop. By taking time to study our environment and the opportunities it presents, communities can find ways of contributing to their own quality of life, improving local community spirit and making an agreed and positive contribution towards a peaceful and sustainable society. Together, rural communities are demonstrating how working collectively on environmental projects can help to shape new relationships and new ways of working, not only in addressing the negative images of the conflict but also looking forward to the future and the opportunities the environment has to offer.

***Cullaville & District Community Association*** – Cullaville, in South Armagh, sits right on the border astride a main east-west arterial route. The village and the local community carry many scars of the “troubles”, leaving with them a legacy of the conflict. Relationships have been affected not only within the local community, but also with people from other neighbouring areas.

The project, “Pathway through Time”, seeks to address some of the issues of the legacy of the conflict by seeking to create a sense of community pride in the area and a desire to enhance and maintain the village. It focuses on creating visual images of the rich industrial and cultural history of the area.

The long since defunct Kinghams scutch mill, the popular blacksmith and his forge, the importance of agriculture by horse-power and the lifeline of the once Great Northern Railway and Cullaville Halt were identified as important elements of the local history of the area. These can now be seen depicted in symbolic images as you pass through the village.

Locals, visitors, young and old can now pause for a moment to reflect or learn from a rich past and feel proud that Cullaville has a culture and history that goes way beyond current affairs and one that the local community can be proud of.

**Ballylaw Farmers’ Group** – represents a group of farmers mainly from the Protestant community with a geographic catchment from Strabane to the outskirts of Derry City – an area interspersed with built up rural commuter communities. Sectarian conflict in this border area resulted in loss of life and fears about crossing the border.

The Ballylaw Farmers' "Twinning Project" seeks to encourage and identify new opportunities, helping the group to move from their protestant single-identity image to working with their catholic neighbours and making cross-border contact.

Focusing on their main concern of pollution, the group was able to make contact with European and Republic of Ireland counterparts in an attempt to learn from others. Visits to Wales, the Republic of Ireland and other European Countries were a first for most group members, resulting in wider contact, increased confidence and improved relationships. Such visits would not have occurred during the conflict.

The group has been successful in encouraging new membership on a cross-community, cross border basis. The group continues to address shared issues that affect the farming community and in doing so are taking steps towards a more integrated and inclusive society.

The rich mosaic of cultures in rural Northern Ireland, has often been a source of tension and conflict, with culture often seen as a constraint to local development rather than a positive asset, which can be used and developed. Supporting communities to celebrate and share in their local identity can lead to better awareness of local culture in a way that not only assists in building relationships, trust and understanding but also as a catalyst for local development and new tourism economic opportunities. By promoting local culture and encouraging respect for diversity communities can make a positive contribution towards reconciliation.

**Flavour of Tyrone** – was established in 1997 to promote tourism in the South Tyrone area with a particular emphasis on showcasing the region's food, entertainment, culture and 'craic'.

Political tensions and community divisions prevented people from engaging in joint promotional activities. Participation particularly in shared cultural activities was difficult, if not impossible for some.

The project "A Cultural Crossroads" seeks to increase appreciation and enjoyment of musical, literary and cultural heritage within and between communities in a social and economic way. Like a crossroads itself, the events are a place where people and customs meet, and also attracts visitors into the areas.

Working at village level the project in its first year of operation attracted over 3000 participants and 1200 dancers in its attempt to record the largest street ceili. Both Irish and Scottish ceili dancers joined together in a bid to set this new record.

Contributing to the success of this project is the active involvement of local people in the organisation of events that celebrate an aspect of local culture important to them. It is through this focus on celebrating culture that enables communities to share and understand in each other's identity.

**Youth Action NI** – is a voluntary organisation providing opportunities for young people to take part in programmes, which explore issues relating to their own lives, and communicate these to adults and organisations with whom they interact.

Isolation and marginalisation are part of the legacy of the "troubles". Over the years people have been particularly affected by this, many growing up, attending school and socialising, only within their own communities. These affects very often become heightened within rural areas, where geographical isolation, lack of transport and lack of opportunities, contribute to young people becoming even more excluded from actively participating and contributing to community life.

The project "Kaleidoscope" is designed to empower young people, to give them a voice within their community. The programme involves processes and artistic techniques to enable young people to explore issues which impact on their lives, such as cultural identity, community tensions,

peace building, relationships and victimisation. The aim is to involve young people in a planned programme of cross-community activity resulting in drama and festival performances.

To date this project operating in 4 villages across Northern Ireland has led to increased contact across traditional divides with more positive and supportive relationships developing into meaningful and genuine friendships, and bringing visitors/tourists into the areas.

**County Down Fishing Villages Network** – is made up of four active community based organisations – Kilkeel Development Association, Annalong Community Development Association, Portavogie and District Development Association and Phennick Cove Developments Ltd.

The Network was established in 1998 to promote community led economic, social and tourism regeneration and co-operation among Northern Ireland's main fishing dependent villages of Portavogie, Ardglass, Annalong and Kilkeel. Towns and villages within the network have had a history of political conflict and division.

The Nautical Festival of Fish used the common theme of the local fishing heritage as a basis for developing and promoting improved tourist interaction and relations. By working together this project recognises the added value which a partnership can bring to the regeneration and reconciliation process.

As you will note from the above funded projects the necessity to incorporate Peace Distinctiveness and Reconciliation objectives into all projects has ensured that rural community groups across the board have planned developed and managed projects in accordance with this criteria. This is significant particularly for small projects who in general have been managed by voluntary low capacity committees with very little experience managing such projects and it therefore demonstrates that the Peace Distinctiveness and Reconciliation criteria have remained at the heart of the Programme.

Some groups have found some innovative methods to maintain a focus on the Peace Distinctiveness criteria, for instance a group who has received funding to organise and co-ordinate computer training for two neighbouring and polarised communities have developed a community relations programme alongside the computer training to ensure that the Peace Distinctiveness objectives are being addressed throughout the life of the project. The attractiveness of the computer training has helped to reduce the fear and weariness of participating in a community relations training programme.

Groups are actively working together to address issues that are 'real' for their communities but which have never been focused on due to other overriding influences. For instance with a Community Safety action local communities are looking at providing local solutions to crime and fear of crime in rural areas which would not have been addressed due to fear for personal safety during the "troubles" in Northern Ireland.

Rural communities are encountering new experiences and learning more about their local areas and neighbours than ever before. This can be exemplified in the joint community festivals that have been organised, the craft classes which have incorporated discussions about Protestant and Catholic backgrounds and traditions and joint participation of people from both traditions on various training courses.

It should be noted that many rural communities are still finding it difficult to admit that there are real sectarian problems in their communities. This might relate to local people never really knowing what a non sectarian society is like to live in so their projects are just scratching the surface of some more serious issues.

For some communities addressing the legacy of the conflict or taking opportunities arising from peace can be a very slow and sensitive process therefore small steps forward for these groups can involve a lot of work and risk taking.

**Magheramason Community Development Association** – were funded to participate on a training programme looking at local involvement in World War 1 and to organise a study visit to the Battle of the Somme. In terms of peace building and addressing the Peace II distinctiveness objectives the group is increasing awareness about not just the 36<sup>th</sup> Ulster Division who were part of the war but are also learning about Irish/Catholic involvement. The group who are all protestant have stated that they are learning history from a different perspective. *One member of the group stated: “I thought that it was a bit bizarre that a group of Protestants from Mageramason came to Derry for history classes taught by Catholics.....It’s been good”.*

**Tempo Historical Society** – who received funding to develop history talks, music nights and Irish language classes stated *“the project is bringing people from both sides of the community together – some nights’ events attract more people sometimes from a particular tradition but the project is bringing both together and making local people realise that the centre is not just for one tradition”.* One of the committee members went on to say *“I’m a different person now than when I started out with this group. I think we’re less labelled than we used to be known, which is good”.*

The RDC has embraced the many challenges and opportunities presented by the special nature of the Peace Programme. The two objectives “Addressing the Legacy of the Conflict” and “Taking the Opportunities arising out of Peace” rest at the very heart of the Programme delivery.

The approach offered by RDC in promoting small-scale capacity building projects together with social, environment, tourist and economic regeneration opportunities enables many communities to access funding for the first time and others to take the next step towards building a more sustainable and economic rural environment. These actions contribute towards the creation of a more peaceful, inclusive and stable rural society.

By reinforcing social inclusion and reconciliation as specific conditions of funding offers, the RDC through its Development Support Programme is able to offer groups “Promoting Good Relations” training. This training is designed to encourage groups to formulate appropriate policies and action plans for promoting good relations not only within their projects but also in their ongoing work within the community. This process of good relations is very much embedded within the RDC itself with Council and staff embracing the notion of a “Shared Vision”.

Undoubtedly the Programme is making a major contribution to tackling the legacy of the conflict and providing opportunities for regeneration, renewal and inclusion. The RDC are confident that the outputs of community effort will take us all one step further along the road to sustained peace and prosperity. It is also recognised that the process of embedding peace takes time and that there is more to be done but a very good start has been made.

I know where I’m going  
And I know who’s going with me  
*(“I know Where I’m Going” – traditional)*

# PEACE AND PANORAMA IN THE LANDSCAPE OF TOURISM

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to clarify one part of the historic change of the landscape of tourism provided through the periodical sightseeing bus tours in Hiroshima City to contribute the realization of the global peace by the well understanding of the local and historic environment. By focusing on the historic change of the panoramic view, we make clear the difference between the historic fact and the historic environment, and the importance of the panoramic view to provide the historic continuity of the city.

Key Words: landscape, historic environment, atomic bomb, Hiroshima, sightseeing bus tours

## INTRODUCTION

### The Theme and the Purpose

The purpose of this study is to clarify one part of the historic change of the landscape of tourism provided through the periodical sightseeing bus tours to contribute the realization of the global peace by the well understanding of the local and historic environment.

At present, natural disaster and global environmental problem as well as nucleus, war, terrorism, area dispute, etc. cause the menace to the place where we survive, and the method of realization of the global peace is groped for variously. On the other hand, it is thought that the understanding of the place where we survived, namely historic environment, is effective means to realize the harmony. The true understanding of historic environment is not confined to the protection of war-heritage, and it must be considered in wider perspective.

Therefore we pick up Hiroshima City broken off the history by the atomic bomb. Because it was going to hand down the history of the prewar Hiroshima to the tourist in the postwar revival through the periodical sightseeing bus of Hiroshima City at least. What is the historic landscape of Hiroshima City where the municipal facilities have been instantly destroyed and the historic traces have been almost lost? What kind of thing was the transmission technique? They are the subjects that we take up.

Of course, there are various sightseeing forms, that is the postwar "peaceful sightseeing" to Hiroshima as well as the periodical sightseeing bus tours. The school excursion for the learning of the peace is the most representative sightseeing form, and also the personal trip to Atomic Bomb Dome and Miyajima as the world heritage is remarkable as well as the group trip today. The periodical sightseeing bus tours begun in 1954 by Hiroshima bus Co., Ltd. is not always major, but it is the characteristic sightseeing form to guide a whole image of Hiroshima City.

## The Method

The particular constitution of the landscape of the periodical sightseeing bus tours contains the problem of sequence in the route. In this paper, we pay our attention to the panoramic view that is often landmark as the most fundamental element of the landscape of tourism. In fact, the panoramic view to overlook a city all directions has been discovered by modern times (Nagai 2000) (Oda 2004), it contains the problem of modernity of sightseeing.

At first, we grasp the tendency of view point / view object to offer the panoramic view in today's periodical sightseeing bus tours all over the country in Japan, using the sightseeing brochures and the sightseeing magazines, and clarify the characteristic of Hiroshima City

Then, we clarify the historic change of the view objects of the landscape of tourism in the periodical sightseeing bus tours in Hiroshima City, using the guide texts, the interview to the person who experienced the guide of the periodical sightseeing bus tours in Hiroshima City beginning in 1954 as well as the aerial maps, the scene photographs and the building drawings.

Furthermore, we analyze the change of the contents of guidance about the important panoramic landscape (the change of the landscape form Hijiyama Mountain), concerning the formation of peace. Because the landscape is a cultural landscape essentially, and it is thought that the landscape is a reflection of the historic social value system (Nakamura 1982).

For the studies concerning the theme of this paper, it is the typical study by Ashihara (Ashihara 2001) to analyze the visual side of the bird's-eye view in the city. In contrast, we pay attention to the semantic side with the visual side of the panoramic view and its historic change.

### THE TENDENCY OF THE VIEW POINT FOR PANORAMA IN THE MAIN CITIES

In particular, we take up the facilities for panorama in the most typical course operated in 10 cities designated by ordinance (Sapporo, Sendai, Tokyo, Yokohama, Nagoya, Kyoto, Osaka, Kobe, Hiroshima, Fukuoka) in 2003. As a result of classified them by neighboring environment of view point and view object, the tendency about them is following (table 1-1). The types of the facilities for panorama are following (table 1-2).

Table 1-1  
The View Points for Panorama and the View Objects of the Sightseeing Bus Tours in main cities

|             |                         | view point  |   |  |
|-------------|-------------------------|---|---|--|
|             |                         | surrounding of the city   | boundary of the city  | inside of the city   |
| view object | surrounding of the city | Ropeway in Moiwa Mountain<br>Umihotaru Roadway Terminal   | Yamashita Park<br><i>The Cost of Seto Inland Sea</i>  |  |
|             | boundary of the city    | Hitsujigaoka Observatory<br>Ropeway in Tengu Mountain<br>Grave for foreigners<br>Hotel on Rokko Mountain<br>Observatory on Rokko Mountain<br><i>Hijiyama Mountain</i> | Kiyomizu Temple<br>Awaji Highway Oasis Park<br>Park on the Hill with fine view to the Port<br>Odaiba Seashore Park<br>Restaurant of Hotel Grand Pacific Tokyo<br>Meridian<br>Restaurant of Observatory in Fuji TV<br>Building<br>Hilton Tokyo Bay Hotel<br>Osaka Aquarium Kaiyukan<br>Osaka WTC Building (Cosmo Tower)<br>Kobe Port Observation Tower<br>Kobe Bay Sheraton Hotel & Towers | Tokyo Observation Tower<br>the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Office Building<br>Roppongi Hills Building<br>Tokyo Dome Hotel<br>Sapporo TV Tower<br>Nagoya TV Tower<br>Fukuoka Observation Tower<br><i>Hiroshima Castle</i><br><i>Rehga Royal Hotel Hiroshima</i> |
|             | inside of the city      | Jump Stadium in Okura Mountain<br>Tenryu Temple<br>Shohoji Temple   | the Ruin of Sendai Castle<br>Tokyo World Trade Center Building<br>Observatory of Yokohama Bay Bridge<br>Akashi Strait Bridge<br>Kobe Portopia Hotel   | Restaurant with fine view in Shinjyuku High Building<br>Nagoya Castle<br>Tutenkaku Observation Tower<br><i>Memorial Cathedral for World Peace</i>  |

Note: *the view points of Hiroshima City: lost at present*

Table 1-2  
The Type of the Facilities for Panorama

| type                       | Shrine and Temple   | Castle  | Observatory   | Ropeway  | Hotel   |
|----------------------------|---|---|---|--|---|
| example                    | Kiyomizu Temple   | Nagoya Castle   | Kobe Port Tower   | Ropeway in Moiwa Mountain  | Rehga Royal Hotel Hiroshima   |
| city                       | Kyoto   | Nagoya  | Kobe  | Sapporo  | Hiroshima   |
| facility                   |  |  |  |  |  |
| panorama from the facility |  |  |  |  |  |

Because the facilities are located in the cities designated by ordinance, the view points are mostly in the urban areas (but, many shrines and temples are in the boundary of the city), and most of them are high-rise buildings (the observatory or the hotel). On the other hand, the view objects are mostly in the boundary of the city, and the tourists tend to view the edge of the city. It is thought that it is concerned with the characteristic of Japanese city formed next to the mountains, the rivers and the sea.

There are the facilities for panorama in the bus tour route in the cities designated by ordinance except Hiroshima City. On the other hand, in the case of Hiroshima City, there is no facility for the fine view to offer the panorama at present. However, as showed in the following chapter, there were various types of the facilities for the fine view which gave panorama, reflecting the geographic characteristic of Hiroshima City that faces Seto Inland Sea, and spread on the delta. It was the peculiarity of Hiroshima City.

#### THE MAIN VIEW POINTS FOR PANORAMA AND THE CHANGE OF THE VIEW OBJECTS IN HIROSHIMA CITY

In this chapter, we arrange the main view points for panorama in the sightseeing bus tours in Hiroshima City from 1954 to now. The main view points for panorama in Hiroshima City are following (Figure 1) (Table 2).

From Memorial Cathedral for World Peace (1962)

In 1962, the bus tour guide explained from the bus running on the bridge nearby that people could look around the city at a glance if they go up the tower. The guidance made the tourists imagine the panoramic view from the tower. Because the tower was especially high and the houses around the tower were low, the tower was one of the landmarks of the city.

However, though the tourists could see the tower after this term, such an explanation cannot be given. The reason is that the neighboring buildings have become high-rise and the tourists were hard to image that the town could be look around from the tower, and that the bus tour guide avoided guidance because the tourists generally are interested in visible things.

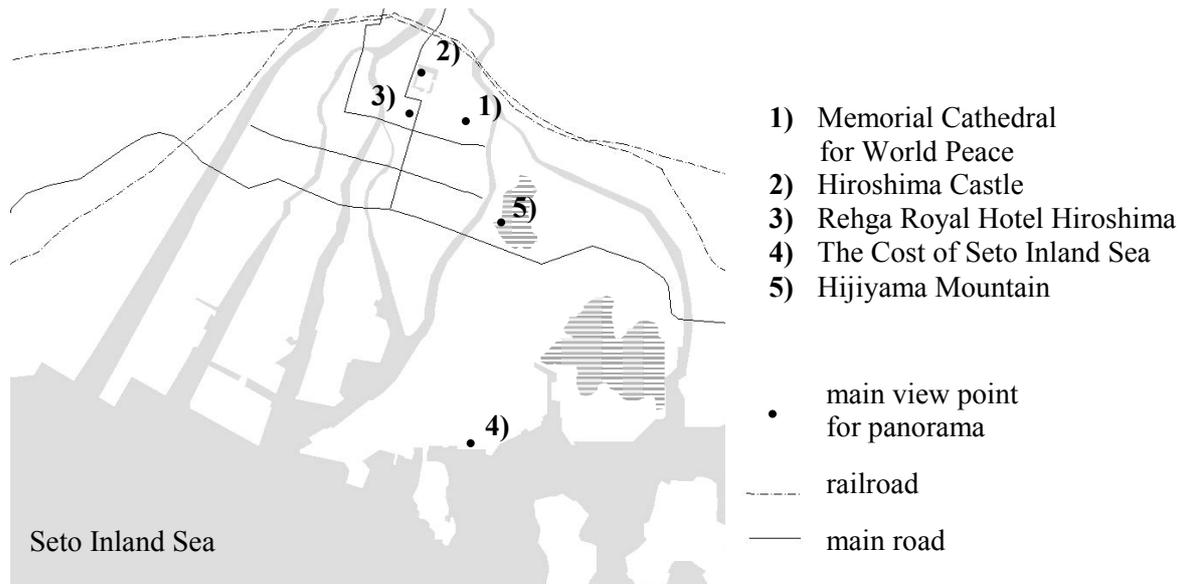


Figure 1  
The Main View Points for Panorama in Hiroshima City

Table 2  
The Main View Points for Panorama in Hiroshima City

| name of the facility for panorama | Memorial Cathedral for World Peace  | Hiroshima Castle  | Rehga Royal Hotel Hiroshima   | The Cost of Seto Inland Sea   | Hijiya Mountain       |   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|-----------------------|---|---|
|                                   |   |   |   |   | The Ruins of Gobenden | Fujimi Observatory  | Moore Plaza   |
| year of the guide                 | 1962  | 1954-1961   | 1994-1998   | 1954-1961, 1973-1990  | 1954-1961             | 1962-1990   | 1991-1998   |
| facility                          |  |  |  |  | no photo              |  |  |
| panorama from the facility        |  |  |  |  | no photo              |  |  |

#### From Hiroshima Castle (from 1954 to 1961)

The tourists could visit the castle tower after the beginning of the service in 1954. The bus tour guide explained the view objects (Atomic Bomb Dome, the military installations and the atom-bombed areas) which could be seen if people went up the castle tower (from 1954 to 1961). At that time, the tourists could see the delta and the islands of Seto Inland Sea widely from the castle tower. The reason is that there were not high-rise buildings around the castle tower and in the city area. We suppose that the tourists could understand the difference of the reconstructed area and the non-devastated area from the top of the castle tower without the guidance by the bus tour guide, because the city area was in the middle of the reconstruction after the war.

However, it was changed to the free visit for the senior citizens which includes the historic institutions and the castle tower, because the internal going up and down in the tower was only by stairs (from 1962 to 1972). However, it was stopped by the long required time for the visit of the castle tower afterwards and the guidance point has shifted to the bus outside of the castle tower (from 1973 to 1999).

From Rehga Royal Hotel Hiroshima (from 1994.11 to 1998.2)

Rehga Royal Hotel Hiroshima built in 1992 was adopted as the sightseeing spot from 1994, and the program to make lunch at the restaurant of the top floor was worked out. There was no explanation of the bus tour guide, but it is supposed that the tourist could view the urban area and Seto Inland Sea southward. The tourists were able to get a whole panoramic view of the urban area and Seto Inland Sea because the view point was more highly than others. Because the hotel located the center of the city area, the tourists could see the buildings, the main streets and the historic place under eyes.

However, it has been stopped by the demand of the tourists for the large amount of charges including the cost of lunch. After that, the hotel was explained from the bus running near the hotel. This guidance makes the tourists imagine the panorama from the hotel: "We can see Seto Inland Sea and the islands of Shikoku district in the south direction, and Chugoku Mountains in the north direction from the top of the hotel."

From the Coast of Seto Inland Sea (from 1954 to 1961, from 1973 to 1990)

The bus tour guide explained the history of the islands and the beauty of Seto Inland Sea while let the bus stop at the military piers, and the tourists viewed the islands of Seto Inland Sea with wide range (from 1954 to 1961). In this term, the tourists could see the natural landscape of the islands of Seto Inland Sea, because the bus stopped on the coast of the sea and there were no high-rise building near the coast.

However, the bus route was changed and it spread to the east and the west. The bus did not go to the south area (Seto Inland Sea coastal place with the military pier) afterwards, because the route to the new Hiroshima Airport built in the western part of the coast was given priority to (1962). The bus crossed some bridges until arriving at the airport, but the tourists couldn't view Seto Inland Sea. We suppose that the tourists could view the sea when they looked around the airport freely, but the bus tour guide did not explain the view objects before and after getting off the bus. However, in the bus after the departure from the airport, the bus tour guide guided tourists about the view of Seto Inland Sea from an airplane to make the tourists imagine the view.

Afterwards, the bus route was changed to the south coastal place again when the bus did not go to Hiroshima Airport, and the bus tour guide explained the wartime uses of Miyajima Island, Itsukushima Shrine and the islands seen from the crevice in the buildings during the run on the road of Seto Inland Sea coastal place (from 1963 to 1990). At the same time, the tourists viewed the Ujina Plant of Toyo-kogyo.

However, in 1991, Seto Inland Sea could not be seen by the high dense and high-rise buildings of the coast of Seto Inland Sea. The bus route was changed and the bus did not go by way of the coast of Seto Inland Sea far from the center of the urban area.

From Hijiyama Mountain (from 1954 to 1998)

The tourists viewed the west and north direction from the ruins of Gobenden in the middle of Hijiyama Mountain from 1954 to 1961. They viewed Hiroshima Station and Atomic Bomb Dome from this point.

However, the north and south-west direction (Seto Inland Sea, the center of the urban area) got possible to be viewed, because the new observatory was founded and the tourists got off the bus there (from 1962 to 1990). When the tourists began to get off there, they could view the wide area because the observatory was scenic and the view was not obstructed by something. The tourists reconfirmed the bus route including the institutions of the urban area where they already went, and in addition, the bus tour guide gave the explanations about Seto Inland Sea and the topography around

the urban area of Hiroshima City. However, as other Japanese many cities, the buildings of the urban area of Hiroshima City were getting high dense and high-rise in the period of the reconstruction after the war and in the period of the high growth of economy. In addition, the sightseeing object of the center of the urban area (Peace Memorial Park, Atomic Bomb Dome and Hiroshima Castle) got impossible to confirm under the influence of the change of the condition of Hijiya Mountain. Because the view objects themselves of the urban area have been intercepted from 1991 by the trees around the observatory of Hijiya Mountain having grown thick. According to the interview to the bus tour guide, the good view to the urban area and Seto Inland Sea was given from the observatory when Hiroshima City cut the trees around the mountain road so that the bus could run easily the mountain.

Afterwards, by the beginning of the visit of Modern Hiroshima City Museum built newly on the top of Hijiya Mountain, the view point was changed to the another observatory, "Moore Plaza" where the position was slightly low, and the view was limited to the west direction (one part of the center of the urban area) (from 1991 to 1998). The contents of the guidance changed to be compact, but the view objects were almost the same as the view objects of the former term and the guidance about the topography around Hiroshima City and Seto Inland Sea were given to the tourists. The bus tour guide made the tourists imagine the landscape of them.

And the bus didn't go by way of Hijiya Mountain in 1999, and it continues to the present. In this term, Hijiya Mountain was guided when the bus was running on the road near the mountain. The guidance about the view from the top of the mountain was only the simple contents "the city area of Hiroshima City and Seto Inland Sea are viewed from the observatory, and we will be able to understand that Hiroshima City is the plain.

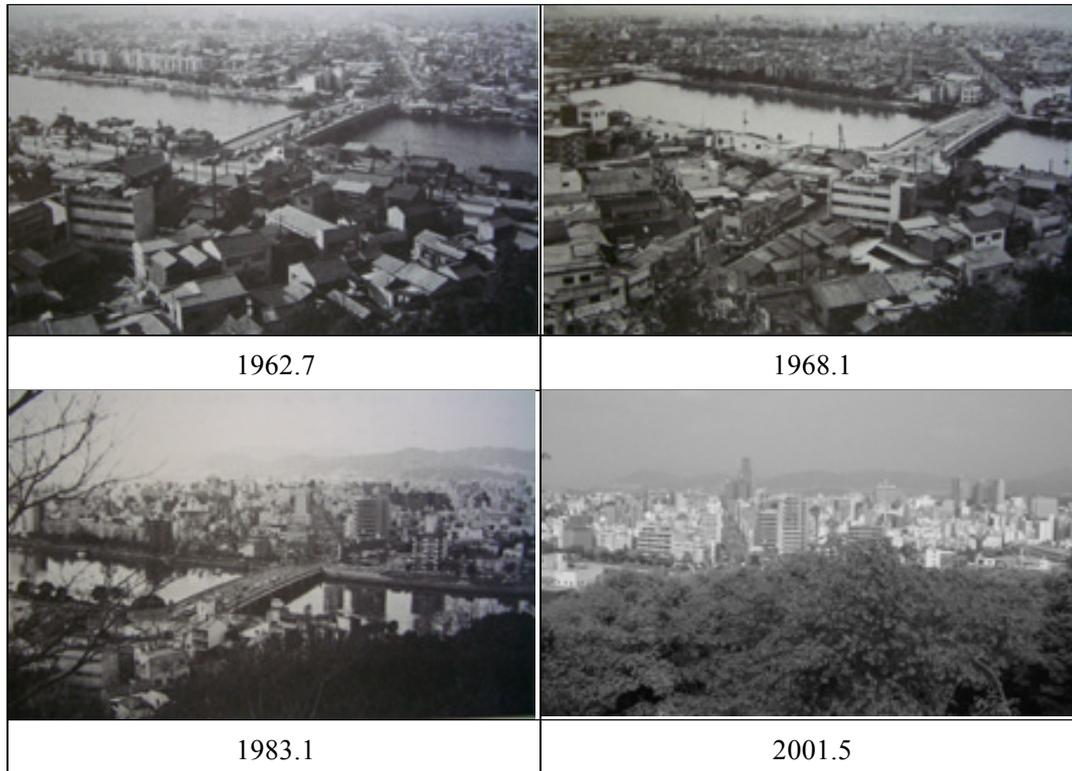
#### THE CHANGE OF PANORAMA FROM HIJIYAMA MOUNTAIN

In the view points for panorama of the sightseeing bus tours in Hiroshima City showed in the former chapter, in this chapter we take up Hijiya Mountain in particular as place where the tourists viewed the panoramic view for a long time continuously though the form of view and the view objects changed. The history of the change of the visual panoramic view was the process of the close of landscape by the trees (Table 3). In this chapter, we analyze the process of the change of the contents of the guidance concerning the peace.

The photos in table 3 are the landscapes showed the view of the center of the urban area from the Fujimi Observatory which is a view point for panorama.

Hijiya Mountain was the place where the important panoramic view was given with the narration of the history of Hiroshima by the bus tour guide. The reason is that the tourists can confirm the condition of the reconstruction, compare between the bombed area and the non-bombed area, and understand the topography (Seto Inland Sea, rivers and mountains) around the urban area of Hiroshima City: "The reconstruction of Hiroshima, some old part of Hiroshima City was seen here, I guided because I was still seen. We stood on the edge of the observatory, and I guided the topography, and the tourists looked again the whole city of Hiroshima which was tested the effect of the atomic bomb. Then, they looked Chugoku Mountainous, the bus route in the urban area and the large buildings. The tourists reconfirmed that Hiroshima was the city of water once there." (the interview to the retired bus tour guide)

Table 3  
The Panorama from Hijiyama Mountain



To analyze the importance of the panoramic view from Hijiyama Mountain, we classified the historic contents of the guidance about Hiroshima City guided from the mountain as three themes; ‘the tradition of Hiroshima City which doesn’t relate to the war directly’, ‘the history which relates to the war’ and ‘the history which relates to the reconstruction after the war’ (Table 4).

According to Table 4, in 1962, the history of Seto Inland Sea before the war was guided. But, after 1973 such guidance was given slightly. In 1962, many contents of the guidance about Hiroshima City and Seto Inland Sea which relate to the war were given to the tourists.

Most of the contents were the prosperity of Hiroshima as military city during the war with the pride. However, after 1973, the amount of the guidance decreased, although the anger as the victim of the atomic bombed city and the pleasure of the reconstruction after the war were guided by the bus tour guide. In 1991, the view from Hijiyama Mountain became bad, but the same contents of the guidance were given to the tourists. However, in 1999 such a guidance was not given to them.

That is to say, the turning point is the time of around 1973. In this period, though the view point did not change, the contents of the guidance had an important change. The contents of the prewar (the tradition and the history of the military city) were not guided and they were limited to the contents of the reconstruction after the war from this time. It means the negation of the war and the oblivion of being the war assailant as military city.

At all events, the panorama from Hijiyama Mountain continued having always an important meaning, in spite of the decrease of the other facilities for panorama to visit and the invisibility from this point.

Table 4  
The Change of the Contents of the Guidance from Hijiyama Mountain  
about the Tradition and the History of Hiroshima City

| year of the issue of the guide text | tradition of Hiroshima City which doesn't relate to the war directly               | history which relates to the war  | history which relates to the reconstruction after the war   |
|-------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| 1962                                | the tradition of the islands of Seto Inland Sea and the construction of Ujina Port | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the atomic bombed area and the then situation</li> <li>the military use during the war of the islands of Seto Inland Sea, Ujina Port and Kure City</li> <li>the song of the anger for the citizen about the atomic bomb</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the geography around Hiroshima City (mountains and Seto Inland Sea)</li> <li>the situation of the urban area after the reconstruction after the war</li> <li>the guidance about the bus route</li> <li>the present use of the islands of Seto Inland Sea and Kure City (the place of sea bathing, the factory, the field, the school of the Self-Defence Forces and the festival)</li> <li>the haiku about the reconstruction after the war</li> </ul> |
| 1973                                | no guidance  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the song about the atomic bomb</li> <li>the haiku of the haiku poet of the time of the Sino-Japanese</li> </ul>  | no guidance   |
| 1982                                | no guidance  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the song about the atomic bomb</li> <li>the haiku of the haiku poet of the time of the Sino-Japanese</li> </ul>  | no guidance   |
| 1985                                | no guidance  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the atomic bombed area</li> <li>the military use during the war of the islands of Seto Inland Sea</li> <li>the haiku of the haiku poet(the war correspondent) of the time of the Sino-Japanese War</li> </ul>                      | no guidance   |
| 1991                                | no guidance  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the Atomic Bombed area</li> <li>the military use during the war of the islands of Seto Inland Sea</li> <li>the haiku of the haiku poet(the war correspondent) of the time of the Sino-Japanese War</li> </ul>                      | the situation of the city after the reconstruction after the war  |
| 1999                                | no guidance  | no guidance   | no guidance   |

## CONCLUSION

Through the study of this paper, we could make clear that the panorama does not depend on only the visibility of perspective view.

When the bus tour guide explains about the peace, the postwar revival is important by sightseeing (Peace Memorial Park, the Atomic Bomb Dome). In addition, in the place for the panoramic view, the bus tour guide explains about the prewar scene too (the topography such as Seto

Inland Sea and the divers historic events). The place where the panorama which symbolized such multiple and multistoried peace was provided was Hijiyama Mountain. We have to say that the explanation is limited to the postwar revival, and the meaning of peace became a flat board by having lost panorama from Hijiyama Mountain.

Of course, the importance of visit to the institutions on the peaceful site does not need to say. However, the panoramic view offered a thing more than the fragmentary historic fact at least in Hiroshima as having become clear by this paper. It is thought that the understanding of historic environment of a city (that is, the creative understanding of peace) depends on the composition of the complex landscapes including the panoramic view (closed / panoramic, or prewar / after the war).

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Some photos in Table 2 are inserted by the cooperation of Chugoku Newspaper Company.

## SEVEN SELFISH REASONS TO BECOME A GEOTRAVELER

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### ABSTRACT

Based on selected case studies describing travel experiences, this paper reveals personal and professional benefits travelers will likely acquire from geotourism. Tourism professionals who consider the strategy suggested in the paper will acquire a better understanding of geotourism while learning fresh ways to motivate travelers to sustain the environment, appreciate traditional cultures, and participate in a fair economic exchange wherever they go.

Key Words: geotourism, ecotourism, sustainable travel, geotourism marketing

### INTRODUCTION

Twenty years ago, one of the Maori owners of an adventure travel company explained his motivation for guiding people of many nationalities through New Zealand's temperate rainforest. We, the people in the world, "really need to get to know each other," he said (McKinney, 1991). Unfortunately, the mass tourism of the last twenty years has generated unforeseen negative consequences along with positive benefits. The author of *Rethinking Tourism and Ecotravel* examines the darker consequences of mass travel (McLaren, 1998):

The tourism industry can be merciless. When increased economic growth is the leading factor for development, conflicts and competition develop between people, between communities, and even between nations . . . Market forces are determining the shape of world economic activity in general and tourism in particular. . . . Tourism has become the new form of colonization over the poor of the world.

Perhaps less well-known--and an area open to further research--are the negative effects of the mass tourism on individual travelers. On a large tour bus, for example, the air-conditioned interior environment separates passengers from the sights, sounds, and smells that make the travel experience vivid and memorable. The passive role played by mass travelers involves a lack of physical exercise, limited mental challenges, and surprisingly little contact with people who reside in the host country. For example, one American woman who had taken a group tour around Australia admitted she had not actually met and talked to any Australians (McKinney, personal communication, 1985). This lack of engagement while traveling around the destination can easily lead to boredom and malaise.

### BACKGROUND

In 1985, I began traveling extensively while working as a freelance journalist, initially focused on up-scale resorts and dining rooms designed to attract American tourists. I made journeys around North, Central and South America, South-East Asia, and the South Pacific, along with trips to Europe and Africa. Gradually, I became aware that my interest had shifted from mass group tours to eco-sensitive adventures; from large cruise ships to small, traditional vessels; from generic dining venues to restaurants serving authentic, regional cuisines. Instead of speeding past New Zealand's Hauraki Gulf Islands on a sleek, modern boat, I explored the gulf under sail on a renovated cargo vessel. While in Caracas, rather than dine in a formal Swiss restaurant, I found more satisfaction taking meals in a nearby café serving Venezuelan dishes. Instead of gazing at the landscapes of Viti Levu through the window of a tour bus, I hired Fijian villagers to build a bamboo raft.

Eventually, I wrote six travel guidebooks and numerous consumer articles. My audience became travelers living in the United States, Canada, and in countries around the Pacific Rim, and my focus became geotourism. A National Geographic/Travel Industry of America study defined geotourism as “tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of the place being visited—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.” Their research has shown that travelers perceive their experience to be better “when the destination preserves its natural, historic, and cultural sites and attractions” (National Geographic, 2005).

## DISCUSSION

This paper suggests that a shift from mass tourism to geotourism will benefit other travelers as well. From experience, I have become aware that there are surprisingly selfish reasons to become a geotraveler:

*Reason One. Travel to learn, as well as to share what you know.  
Benefits can be personal – as well as professional—when you gain inside knowledge of other cultures.*

Before traveling to New Zealand in 1986, I had originally scheduled a two-week stay. However, my fascination with the natural and cultural history of the archipelago led me to stay for a year. As a travel writer, this extensive visit yielded many benefits. After placing many articles about the country in magazines and newspapers, I signed a contract to write a travel guidebook called “Adventures in Nature: New Zealand” (McKinney, 2000). Another, more personal benefit was learning to enjoy a simple, more sustainable lifestyle—when combined with a complex career.

In a chapter titled “Conservation and Responsible Tourism” I anticipated geotourism by suggesting that readers ask certain questions before choosing a tour company, lodging, or restaurant (McKinney, 2000):

1. Does the business employ local people, treat them with respect, and pay them an appropriate wage?
2. Does the business feature traditional materials in its building, use heritage themes in its décor, or somehow showcase traditional culture? Will you enjoy a New Zealand experience here?
3. Does the business use a portion of its income for wildlife or conservation projects? Which projects? Have the results been effective?
4. Does the business purchase local or regional foods? Has food such as shellfish been harvested in season, according to quotas that sustain the population?
5. What sort of wood does the business burn in its fireplace? Does the business use eco-sensitive cleaning materials? How are sewage and other waste discharged?
6. Is the owner of the business also the manager? Does he or she live in the local community? Is the owner enthusiastic about nature—or about increasing his or her own wealth because of your enthusiasm?

*Reason Two. Strive for a fair exchange in financial transactions. This not only helps sustain the local economy, but also gives good value for money.*

There are important issues involved for travelers who shop for arts and crafts in remote regions. For example, in Papua New Guinea the Sepik River wanders for hundreds of miles past forest-covered hills, mirror lakes, and swampy flatlands. In Mindimbit Village, I watched shoppers who arrived by river boat buy seed and shell collars for US\$5 and carved ancestral masks for US\$8. Back on the boat, one woman crowed about her new magenta-and-blue hand-made string carryall.

Although she had paid several thousand dollars for the cruise and airfare, she had given the artist only US\$4 for a bag that she planned to frame. A bilum of this quality--which may have taken the artist hours or even days to create--would have cost ten times as much in Port Moresby (McKinney, 1993).

In the larger Sepik River towns, villagers wearing traditional clothing played instruments and danced for tourists' entertainment. To its credit, the tour company contributed a portion of their profits to communities along the way, in a fair exchange of value for money. This money was given to the village leaders, for use in health-care and education. However, the craftspeople selling high-quality work at bargain-sale prices seemed distressed, perhaps because the money they received in exchange for their hand-made work was often not enough for their families' needs (McKinney, 1993).

*Reason Three. Choose sustainable lodging and an overnight stay could well become a live-in learning experience involving the destination's history, culture, or environment.*

In a travel guidebook titled "Adventures in Nature: Panama", William Friar describes a special place named Canopy Tower. The old U.S. military radar tower has been cleverly transformed into a six-room hotel and wildlife observation platform within Parque Nacional Soberania (Soberania National Park). Friar claims, "You're likely to see more wildlife while lounging in the tower than you would on many long hikes in remote areas. . . At last count, bird-watchers had identified 255 species of birds just from the tower and the road into the park" (Friar, 2001).

When I stayed overnight at Canopy Tower, the eerie cry of distant howler monkeys awoke me at dawn. I climbed an interior ladder to reach the outside deck where the staff served hot coffee. From a lounge chair, it was easy to spot toucans and tanagers, while my companions identified a blue-crowned manakin, a dusky-capped flycatcher, and an unusual puff bird. The monkeys continued to howl, but never appeared. A juvenile sloth was especially amusing as we observed the animal lifting a small fruit to its mouth, and slowly--ever so slowly--taking that first bite.

*Reason Four. Nourish body and soul while dining with old friends--or new ones--in sustainable ways. Ordering cuisine of the region made from fresh ingredients helps sustain the environment while providing excellent nutrition.*

At the Arctic Adventure Resort near Kirkenes, entrepreneur Lars Petter Oie and a diver took a group out in a wooden boat to observe specimens of Red King Crab, an invasive species brought into the Berents Sea. We returned to the resort for a lecture on ecology of the region, and enjoyed a meal of king crab harvested earlier that day. At times, the resort also serves northern crab--or seal or reindeer, which are culled by hunting in the region. An estimated 170,000 reindeer live in the wild between the towns of Trondheim and Kirkenes. In this bio-region, the reindeer meat has traditionally been an important diet staple for the Sami people.

However, it is not necessary to consume meat to be able to appreciate another culture. For a traveler on the island of Cyprus, the popularity mez'es meal made it easy for vegetarians to select appropriate foods from among the small dishes passed around the table. Although I had tasted spinach pies and houmus at a Cypriot restaurant back home, the mez'es was a new experience. Baskets of bread and bowls of olives and dips and spreads appeared on the table. We tasted tzatziki, a yogurt flavored with garlic, cucumber, and mint. Then came a dense, salty haloumi cheese, and a salad bowl overflowing with fresh vegetables. During this "feast of little delicacies" it was easy to bypass the meat dishes, and have room for dessert.

*Reason Five. Learn more about traditional cultures--music, architecture, drama, dance, arts and crafts --and you'll enrich your life immensely.*

On New Zealand's North Island, a five-day trek into the Urewera Mountains gave me a chance to learn about Maori culture. Our group of trekkers experienced a traditional ritual outside on the marae, and then received a warm welcome inside a carved Maori meeting house. For five days, the

Maori guide drew on the knowledge of his ancestors, while guiding us through the mountains. Without canned fire starter, the guide made the wood fire glow, despite the rain. Manuka, a native New Zealand tree, burns even when wet, the guide explained. For a midday meal the guide broke off long branches from a ponga tree, and spread them on the ground as a tablecloth. While we walked, he also broke off a green branch to demonstrate another custom. "Traditionally, Maoris have taken such a branch into new territory . . . to show they came in peace," the guide explained (McKinney, 1991).

To me, the Maori culture at first seemed to be strange and different. But after five days spent hiking in rainforest and learning about Maori customs, I realized that we all had much more in common.

*Reason Six. Active travel enhances a person's fitness level while generating priceless memories.*

When I hiked around Indiana before writing a guidebook (McKinney, 1999):

Finding interesting routes was never a problem. The trails I chose ran behind sand dunes, curved through shady forests, passed marshes bordered with emergent plants, skirted ponds where frogs croaked, descended into rock-filled canyons and traversed meadows where butterflies flitted among wildflowers. . . . Across the state, the advancing-receding action of massive glaciers eroded various land forms, creating unique features, even leaving some rugged areas unglaciated. In the northwest, the earlier, larger Lake Chicago helped form the distinctive Duneland topography. Evidence of early marine creatures can be found, if you know where to look . . . Turtles, squirrels, chipmunks and deer can be seen on many trails. Early one morning, in Harmonie State Park, I watched a doe and a pair of young fawns arise from a grassy resting place.

Yet, visitors who merely cross Indiana on an Interstate highway may have only vague memories of rest-stops and corn fields.

*Reason Seven. Whenever possible choose renewable energy sources. Respect the natural world and the earth will sustain you, your family, and future generations.*

The concept of sustainable development is now featured on 8,720,000 Web pages, and enmeshed in the aspirations of countless programs, places, and institutions. The most widely accepted definition is "Humanity has the ability to make development sustainable--to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations" (Environment, 2005).

Yet, leaders in tourism continue to wrestle with these issues everywhere, including New Zealand, where the success of the Lord of the Rings films--in which filmmakers used the country's lovely, natural locations as well as computer-generated graphics--has brought a greater influx of travelers to these islands.

Clearly, people need to experience wild places so they can become motivated to conserve them. Taste a wild strawberry, listen to a cooing pigeon, admire a tiny green orchid. . .you can't get these experiences inside a tour bus. Awkwardly, mass transport insulates travelers from the very environment they wish to experience. . . (McKinney, 2003)

Because of the success of The Lord of the Rings, Air New Zealand encourages people to view Middle-earth by air, the fastest way. Yet, it takes time, effort, and an open mind to experience New Zealand's natural beauty by walking to hidden, mirror lakes; paddling through mangrove estuaries; or exploring moving glaciers.

## CONCLUSION

The concept of geotourism offers travelers surprising personal and professional benefits when they choose travel that sustains or enhances the geographic character of the place they visit--its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.

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## AUTHOR INDEX

### AUTHOR INDEX

- BOSANGIT, Carmela A. : pp. 73  
CAUSEVIC, Senija : pp. 82  
IBRAHIM, Suhaini : pp. 46  
KELLY, Ian : pp. 56  
MARAFA, Lawal M. : pp. 118  
MENA, Miguela M. : pp. 73  
MUSTAFA, Rahmat Azam : pp. 17, 141  
Norhaslinda Zainal Abidin : pp. 96  
RAHIM, Alip : pp. 17  
SENDAI, Shoichiro : pp. 168  
SIA, Rosalind Juo Ling : pp. 17  
Suzzaini Abdullah : pp. 96  
XU, Mu-han (Jeremy) : pp. 148  
BREAKEY, Caroline : pp. 158  
CHEN, Jiang (Chester) : pp. 148  
JEONG, Sunny : pp. 27, 67  
KOKKRANIKAL, Jithendran : pp. 82  
MCKINNEY, Sally Brown : pp. 177  
MOHAMED, Badaruddin : pp. 17, 141  
NAIR, Vikneswaran : pp. 130  
PENGIRAN BAGUL, Awangku Hassanal Bahar : pp. 6  
RITTICHAINUWAT NGAMSOM, Bongkosh : pp. 108  
Shaharuddin Tahir : pp. 96  
SIN, Harngh Luh : pp. 34  
WISANSING, Jutamas : pp. 1  
YOKOYAMA, Hisa : pp. 168