

INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND THE LESSONS FOR VIET NAM

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Abstract. This writing aims to give the notion, roles and principles of sustainable tourism development; analyzing the experience of some other countries on this issue such as: Thailand, Japan, Germany, United States... From those, the writer would like to bring out some on tourism sustainable development in Viet Nam.

Keywords: Tourism, sustainable tourism development.

1. Introduction

As a “smokeless industry”, tourism is one of the vital motivations for the development of society and economy in many countries, it is also given priority to develop in most of poor countries because it is an effective ways for those nations to take part in Global Economy as well as reduce poverty.

Unlike other economies, tourism exploits resources including natural tourism resources and human civilization tourism resources; therefore, it has profound and comprehensive impact on Economy, Society, Environment and Polictics. So, to have a long development as well as to promote its roles, tourism needs to obey the requirements of sustainable development, consider sustainable tourism as a vital part of sustainable development. This experience is affirmed by many other countries and Viet Nam is following target.

Each country has different experience to develop sustainable tourism and Viet Nam needs to learn and adapt to the condition as well as the level of development of the country.

Relating to experience of sustainable development of some countries suggestions and the lessons for developing tourism in Viet Nam, some articles and scientific researches mentioned, the most noticeable ones [[1],[5],[7]]. In general, the ways to develop sustainable tourism are different among countries; however, all of them obey the common rules. On the scale of this article, the writer has consulted some announced works as well as observed the facts from other countries to summarize several valuable lessons which can be adapted with the background of Viet Nam.

Received July 17, 2019. Revised September 5, 2019. Accepted October 2, 2019.

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2. Content

2.1. Notion, roles and principles of sustainable tourism development

2.1.1. Notion

Sustainable development is the development which can meet the current demand, but it does not challenge future generation (UNCED-1987). This notion is the target which many other countries are following.

Tourism is a quite new Economy; however, it enables to exploit resources completely to develop including natural resources and social economy resources. Thus, it has profound impact on all aspects of society, economy and environment. From that fact, developing sustainable tourism is indispensable. That is “Mode of tourism which considers completely current and future impacts on economy, society and environment, as well as, meets the demand of tourists, tourism industry, local environment and community” (UNWTO, 2005). There are three aspects which sustainable tourism development aims at: With economy aspect, it ensures stable development which contributes local economy... With society aspect, it encourages the understanding of society and culture, respects local culture and tradition... With environment aspect, tourism is environmental friendly: exploiting suitably and using economically natural resources and also reducing its impacts as well as protecting environment...

In Viet Nam “sustainable tourism development is the development which can meet the demand of economy – society and environment, ensuring the benefits of individuals, however, it does not harm its ability of meeting the requirement in the future” (following clause 3, tourism law 2017 [[6]]).

Specifically, developing tourism must ensure: protecting, embellishing and developing tourism environment toward green, clean, beautiful, secured, safe, overall and civilized; The Ministry as well as other equivalent Organizations in the scale of authority should promulgate rules in order to protect, embellish and develop tourism environment which is suitable with local reality; Tourism Organizations as well as Individuals have the responsibility to collect and treat rubbish left from this activity; To remedy its negative impacts on environment then have method to prevent and against social evils which related to tourism activities. Tourists, local community, organizations and individuals also have the responsibility to protect and conserve landscape, environment, and cultural identity, national; having polite attitude and behavior to enhance the image of the nation, people and local tourism. This is a vital basis which helps to develop tourism in term of breadth and depth [[5]].

2.1.2. The roles of sustainable tourism development

Sustainable tourism is different from massive tourism, therefore, it has a wide range of roles and they are being focused to develop. Massive tourism mainly focuses on economic benefit, it does not pay attention on local community benefits, as a result, it can change or even damage nature and culture. While, sustainable tourism initially takes care of local community benefits, respects culture, conserves natural resources, has particular plans to reduce its negative impacts by guiding tourists and training local people.

Developing sustainable tourism simultaneously increasing budget and foreign income, as well as attracting the investment to promote other economies to develop which contribute in solving employment, improving life standard and reducing poverty; prevent recession and pollution. Besides, developing sustainable tourism is also a way of marketing our country, people and production to international friends, which is an important factor to strengthen our friendship with other nations – it is considered as “Peace passport”

2.1.3. Principles to ensure sustainable tourism development

To ensure for the developing sustainable tourism and promoting the its roles, Agenda 21 about tourism proposed main principles including [[7]] (In 1996, responding Earth Summit (A summit conference about Earth, 1992), Global tourism represented by three international organizations including World Tourism and Travel Council (WTTC), World Tourism Organization (WTO) and Earth Council (EC), applied the rules of Agenda 21 to tourism, combining to build a programme named “*Agenda 21 about Tourism: Towards Environmentally Sustainable Development*” (*Agenda 21 for the Travel & Tourism Industry: Towards Environmentally Sustainable Development*):

- Tourism needs to support local people to have healthy and helpful life which is in concord with nature.

- Tourism needs to contribute to reserve, protect and restore eco-system of the earth.

- Tourism needs to base on stable production and consumption.

- Tourism needs to reject and limit the protection of trading tourism services.

- Protecting can not be apart from developing tourism.

- It is necessary to have the participation as well as the special attention of community toward reserving and promoting cultural identity and local tradition when giving decisions relating to developing tourism.

- Developing tourism needs to be associated with the demands of local community; creating opportunity for local people, especially women to take part in tourism activities.

- It is necessary to respect international laws of protecting environment in developing tourism.

- Countries need to inform each other the dander of natural disasters which can harm tourists’ safety as well as tourist destinations.

Making use of the rules from international developing sustainable tourism to apply to the reality of the country, Viet Nam needs to carry out 10 following principles [[4]]:

- Exploiting and using resources appropriately

- Limiting excessive use of resources and minimize waste

- Tourism development must be associated with conservation of diversity

(Ecology, culture....)

- Development must be consistent with overall Socio – Economic

- Benefits sharing with local community

- Encouraging the participation of local community in sustainable developing tourism.

- Regularly exchange and consult with the local community and related subjects
- Training and raising the awareness of natural resources and environment.
- Promoting the promotion of tourism marketing in responsible way.
- Paying attention to scientific researches of tourism regularly.

2.2. Sustainable tourism development in some countries

2.2.1. Thailand

Tourism plays an important part in Thai's economy, which is considered unseparable part of people's lives, it ensures their living standard and prosperity in the future, it also creates more employments as well as protects and maintain environment. [[7], p.213].

In 2018, Thailand welcomed 38,1 millions visitors [[9]], 5 times increased in compared with 20 years ago, as a results, it was ranged in the top five developed-tourism countries on over the world. Especially, Tourism was considered as "A salvage" which helped Thai's economy overcome area Great Depression during 1997 – 1998. It did not only bring in economic value, but it was also the most important motivation to protect and maintain natural tourism resources of the country which ensured to develop sustainably.

To achieve it, in the plan to develop socio-economy during the period of 1997-2003, Thailand determined "*Promoting the conservation as well as rehabilitation resources of tourism, culture, art and environment by turning to give priority to quality of sustainable tourism development in order to increase the number of tourists in a long period, simultaneously, to maintain cultural identity and national heritage*". Then, Thailand focused on two main priorities are protecting and maintaining tourism resources and heritage in order to help long-term and sustainable development, so that, it is admitted being a famous destination which can still keep its identity of Thai's culture.

In the first priority, *Thai's people are considered the basic factor for all developing plan or promoting tourism*. Each native person is enlightened in term of civil awareness, responsibility to nature and the pride of national culture, since then, it will help to pervade awareness and responsibility as well as determination to protect and maintain national resources.

In the second direction of priority, the long-term aim is that *developing specific and unique image*, by developing quality of destinations, landscape, improving the quality of services and environment.

2.2.2. Japan [[1]]

In the early 1960s, Japan became a famous tourist destination which attracted many countries all over the world. In the recent years, Japan continuously has been on the top of Asia in term of developing sustainable tourism. The experiences getting from this "Sunrise Country" is that:

Developing the name of tourist destination and marketing local speciality, with 3 basic principles: "Local action/ local products; global thought/ global quality; creative/ standing on their own feet/ improving the quality of workforce". Its result is that, Japan has had a great development in clean food products with famous brands which are

popular all over the world such as: dried mushroom, tuna, Shochu wheat wine, Kabosu lime... Those products are as valuable as a geographical guideline about each area. The position of local speciality is enhanced thanks to the combination with other areas and marketing local speciality base on the cooperation between trading promotion centres in order to strengthen the production and consumption area.

Apply Internet marketing in developing tourism to increase the effectiveness for trading activity of Tourism companies. Paying attention on the website named Nippon Quest with the objects to exploit are means of material culture and immaterial culture to serve tourism such as cuisine, products, festivals, landscape of each region in Japan, all are set up by softwares which automatically translate into English, Korean and Chinese.

Improve community role in developing tourism by early paying attention to “Branding” historical heritage, local attractions. Many tourism centres develop by changing historic buildings into museums, restaurants, hotels to welcome domestic and foreign tourists. For examples, in Nagahama - Shiga, an old storehouse was transformed into a big exhibition. Simultaneously, Japanese Government really pay attention to improve community awareness in developing tourism. In some tourism cities in Japan, local people and even children are trained and guided to take part in tourism. Tourism contributes in developing a better scio - cultural workforce network.

Improve cohesion in developing tourism – this is specially cared by Japanese Government due to the close relation among each type of cultural heritage and all sectors such as: hotels, cuisine, airline, transport, Property, agriculture, forestry, manufacturing products ...Simultaneously, there is always a tightness between government and local, among locals, between local authority and community, among laws system, people’s awareness and action.

Take culture factor as the foundation in developing tourism in order to build up national brand. A specific example for this policy is the approach of “Cool Japan” with the combination of a variety of tourism aspects, from anime (Japanese cartoon), manga (Japanese comics) to movies, designs, fashion, food and tourism. “Cool Japan” is considered as a strategy to build up images of tourist destination effectively.

2.2.3. United States [[8]]

United States is one of the nations which attract most of foreign tourists all over the world. Experiences which this top international economy carries out to ensure developing sustainable tourism are:

Reducing the effect on environment, buiding up the relationship with native community and creating sustainable employment.

United States carried out programmes to develop sustainable tourism to everyone who takes part in tourism activity as well as each local person. Especially, improving hotel management by training and enhancing eco-awareness of tourism employees; Encouraging accommodation area to use system of biological sorting machine to treat waste water, increase the number of solar panels, sorting out waste (separating plastic waste and organic waste)....

The results of carrying out sustainable hotel management are: employees have more positive attitude, they are guided what to do to become a responsible tourist: taking care of local fauna and flora, having right bargain for the items they want to purchase,

respecting local people and following guides to be safe and stable, local people also have benefits from sustainable tourism, and tourists are also pleased with the high quality of service as well as the ecosystem conservation.

At the same time, guiding how to become a responsible tourist is also carried out: caring of local fauna and flora, having right bargain for the items they want to purchase, respecting local people and following guides to be safe.

In addition, ethical regulation including guides for tourism companies how to behave with local people is also built. Government encourages tourism enterprises cooperate with other companies, schools, developing associations and native community representatives in a wide range of projects such as ecological green Flag – which helps to judge the environment of beaches and tourism area – and also do voluntary work in the local school which helps to develop the programmes that can provide cultural exchange for children.

By creating tours, Government offers local people some loans which they can use to invest in developing tourism, training and using local workforce, having tourism fund to support the poor, building a supplying chain at the same place.... United States tourism can create stable jobs and complete belief for workforce. This is a long term developing approach which need following.

It is better to have good management than good trading.

The companies, hotels are encouraged and supported documents for legal formalities, sustainable policies are also developed to set a foundation for business, social policy and cultural environment....Those policies will be used to control as well as determine the strength, goals, the value, mission and the vision of tourism enterprise. By carrying out sustainable frame, it can bring in the improvement in policy enforcement, including stabilizing jobs, trading decision and the choice of suppliers.

2.2.4. Germany [[3]]

Federal republic of Germany is famous for its diversity in artistic setting, especially Berlin with hundreds of exhibitions, museums, tourist attractions such as Berlin Opera house, Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra and Island of museum - one of world heritage which is recognized by UNESCO. To have a sustainable tourism development, Government brought in an announcement of “Tourism change” with the engagement of meeting the version of Agenda 2030 about sustainable development for an equal and comprehensive world, it is a recognition about the importance of this area. Developing tourism needs to contribute in raising welfare for local people, workforce dignity, protecting environment completely and reject the inequality, exploiting and poverty. Developing tourism is not the last target but all efforts need to be focused on tourism changing in a sustainable way.

Besides, the impacts of climate change directly influences on the poor. As a result, tourism is both motivation and the “victim” of climate change. Germany focuses on changing activity and developing technical solutions to reducing green house gas.

Also in this area, Human right defenders particularly pay attention to narrow living space. The right of land use and the right of workforce, children’s right and the benefits of local people have strong relationship with the challenge of developing sustainable tourism.

2.3. The lessons for Viet Nam in sustainable tourism developing

Viet Nam is one of the countries which have various and attractive tourism resources, including natural resources as well as human civilization with 22 ranges of heritages which is recognized by UNESCO [[4]]. There are many heritages which have special attraction to domestic and foreign visitors such as: Ha Long Bay, Phong Nha-Ke Bang national park, Historical Relics Hue Citadel, Hoi An ancient Town, My Son Holly land, Hue Cremmonial music and songs, Cultural space of Central Highlands gongs, Trang An community of landscape.....

Tourism is considered one of the main economies of the country which has a great contribution in all aspects of national economy; this helps Viet Nam to intergrate more widely and deeply in area and international. In 2017, Viet Nam had a noticable progress, raising 8 levels in the Global Ranging List to stand at the 67th position [[10]]; tourism export was continuously ranged at group of 5 products which have the biggest export turn-over, contributing 5-6% in all GDP of our country.

However, it's vital to develop tourism which can bring into play the nation's resources, ensure a long term development.

Base on the analysis of sustainable tourism development in some countries in the world, several lessons are recommended for Viet Nam including:

Firsly, *Policy and strategy to develop tourism*: all the mentioned countries determined a long term policy and strategy for the tourism development which are concretized by long-term plan and national action program.

Tourism policy and national tourism agencies' actions need to emphasize on the dependence among issues related to sustainable tourism development such as: developing work-force, tourism's economic influence, environment management, infrastructure, material and technical facilities and the ability of cooperation in the region or small area.

The co-ordinaion needs the combination among people who take part in tourism activities from central Government to local in order to give the order of priority and create the unanimity in actions. The management, including establishing structures, rules, must ensure the interdisciplinary coordination in the Government system; it also needs to motivate the participation widely as well as favorable division to develop tourism sustainably.

It is a right way to access sustainable tourism developing by building an overall plan about economy and combine it with tourism, as every issue needs to be considered comprehensively including social element, culture, economy and environment. The process of doing project will create good conditions for carrying out.

Next, *making local brand* bases on available cultural foundation, Thailand and Japan take it as an important strategy to form the long-term difference – the specificity to attract tourists. Which local has their famous name will attract the investors, tourists, thus, they will fulfill the achievements as well as benefits such as: the weathiness of economy (stable increasing), raising the variety of culture. Local brand can be attached with traditional products such as: cuisine, costumes, and performances...; It's also a symbol created by themselves in the process of reconstructing in order to transform a new message. Therefore, a local brand can help the visitors to recognize the local easily.

Promoting the role of community, supporting local people to develop tourism is a successful lesson of all countries which has sustainable tourism development. First of all, local people's awareness and roles need improving. In addition, the model of handing over the authority in developing tourism is applied by the government. The roles of relevant departments is observing, supervising and advising but not doing instead. To make the model into the practice we need a particular plan with the real steps which are suitable with local specific features.

Reducing the impacts of ecological environment on climate change.

Tourism is an aggregate consumption, as a result, its waste to the environment is huge. From the fact of tourism in some countries, some possible suggestions may be applied to Viet Nam to reduce ecological environment: installing biological sorting machine to treat waste water and reuse it; sorting rubbish from the origin to recycle; using solar energy instead of fossil fuels which release much carbon dioxide (coal, oil,...); using ecological bags instead of nylon bags; building local supplying chain with clean production... All those methods not only can reduce waste in to the environment but also limit green house effect – the main source of climate change.

Developing human resources includes quantity and quality as well as ecological awareness. United States and Japan are very successful in improving ecological awareness of tourism workforce and tourists which ensures serving and using responsibly. Simultaneously, ensuring employments and income for people will create belief and responsibility for them, it is very important for a long development.

Strengthen the association in developing tourism, including association among branches for supplying products and services in order to make the tourists the most comfortable and convenient; cooperating between government and local, local authorities – community, among locals, regions, tourism enterprises together, then promote the maximum value and share the benefits from tourism; the synchronism between law system with awareness and actions from local people create civilized, safe and friendly society.

Applying information technology into tourism activities is very necessary in the globalization time. It is considered the most optimal equipment in marketing, connecting, managing as well as associating to develop tourism from individuals, enterprises to organizations or government. This equipment helps to shorten time, narrow space and reduce the impacts on the environment and fee, increasing profit...

3. Conclusion

Base on the fact of analyzing experience of sustainable tourism development in some countries in the world, we can see that they have different ways of developing; however, all of them obey common rules of development.

With the examples of those successes in sustainable tourism developing, we hope that Viet Nam can learn and promote the strategy of sustainable tourism in order to attract more tourists, especially abroad tourists which can help to create jobs for citizens in the future. This will be more meaningful in the background of globalization and international intergration.

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