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## **Community Awareness and Cultural Tourism Sustainability**

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Community Awareness and Cultural Tourism Sustainability  
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Dr. Somchai Ratanakomut Ph.D.  
Thai APEC Study Center  
Thammasat University.

## 1. Introduction

Tourism growth has been contributing positively for many countries especially developing countries in East Asia. It provides significant amount of foreign exchange needed in financing their economic development. Tourism related industries such as rural handicrafts and other services are basically the important sources of non-agricultural employment and income. Some governments of the developing world use tourism as a reason for attracting foreign direct investment, and an easy way to modernize its basic infrastructure.

Basically, there are many factors that form any one country's attractiveness. Some countries might be fully endowed with historic sites. Others might have beautiful beaches and interesting minorities' way of life. One of the most valuable assets seems to be "culture" and community value. Thailand, in particular, has been using culture as a tourist attraction for several decades.

This paper tries to address what seems to be the most concerned topic in tourism, i.e. the question about sustainability of the cultural tourism and how promotion of community awareness is necessary in cultural tourism sustainability.

## 2. Challenges and Importance of Tourism Sustainability

It is generally noted that together with its positive contributions to the economy, tourism could also be the cause of many negative effects such as public health, pressure on natural resource requirement and environmental degradation.

The past experiences have shown us environmental impacts in many tourist spots such as beaches in Pattaya, Samui, Phuket, Krabi. Some concerned with how we handle development of tourism with national parks, rivers and hill tribes. Many concerned with the way we handle festivals like Loy Krathong and Songkran.

The influx of large number of tourists into one small tourist spot raises concern by the concept of "carrying capacity". Inevitably, many adverse impacts have continuously reduced the degree of attractiveness.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In economics, there is a notion of congestion and rent dissipation for an open access tourism resources like beaches and national parks. For cultural tourism it could be even more sensitive because many of cultural heritage are intangible fragile and diverse.

For natural resource, there are many concepts and definition of sustainability, for example, use of a non-renewable natural resource is sustainable if the value of the resource used up is matched by capital investments of equal value in other natural resources or in productive non-resource capital. If compensating investment can be made sufficient to offset the user cost (present value of future benefit sacrificed as a result of today's extraction) of a nonrenewable resource extraction, sustainability will be attained despite the gradual drawing down of the resource.<sup>2</sup>

### **Sustainability**

Sustainability is a term of great potential for bringing conservation and economic development into a balanced and constructive relationship. The term stems from environmentalists' critiques of development as a short-sighted and socially destructive force. It represents efforts to create a new kind of development that sustains the natural environment instead of depleting it. Instead of battling between conservation and development, sustainability represents the hope of finding different ways to make decisions, measure results, and ascribe value-all in the service of achieving a healthy balance for this and future generations. As a concept-and increasingly as a set of practices and policies-sustainability has gained wide acceptance.

Just as cultural capital is parallel to the accepted notion of natural capital, the concept of sustainability was seen as applicable to the cultural heritage field. But how, exactly? Which principles and analytics from environmental sustainability are appropriate for cultural heritage conservation? Under the rubric of sustainability, a number of specific concerns and questions can be pursued for heritage conservation: intergenerational equity and the stewarding of heritage for future generations, creation of indicators that measure a wider range of factors than just growth and output, better understanding of the processes underpinning conservation as well as the (development) processes that threaten it, and, in general, a clearer understanding of what the heritage conservation field can learn from the experience of the environmental conservation field.

Source: Randall Mason "Economics and Heritage Conservation: Concepts, Values and Agendas for Research" in Randy Mason, ed., Economics and Heritage Conservation, Proceeding of a Meeting Organized by the Getty Conservation Institute, December 1998, Getty Center, Los Angeles. pp.12-13

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<sup>2</sup> Barry C. Field, Natural Resource Economics, An introduction, Natural Resource Economics, McGraw-Hill, 2001. page 84.

Tuija Meisaari-Polsa, "UNCTAD and Sustainable Development-A Case Study of Difficulties in Large International Organisations", in Stockholm Group for Studies on Natural Resources Development, Perspectives on Sustainable Development, Stockholm Group for Studies on Natural Resources Management, Stockholm, 1988.

"Thus we need to nail down the concept of sustainable development. I Propose five increasingly comprehensive definitions. First, we can start at the local level and simply ask whether a region's agricultural and industrial practices can continue indefinitely. Will they destroy the local resource base and environment or, just as bad, the local people and their cultural system? Or will the resource base, environment, technologies and culture evolve over time in a mutually reinforcing manner? This first definition ignores whether there might be subsidies to the region - whether material and energy inputs or social inputs such as the provision of new knowledge, technologies and institutional services are being supplied from outside the region.

Second, we can ask whether the region is dependent upon nonrenewable inputs, both energy and materials, from beyond its boundaries. Or is the region dependent on renewable resources beyond its boundaries which are not being managed in sustainable manner? Third, we can become yet more sophisticated and ponder whether the region is in some sense culturally sustainable, whether it is contributing as much to the knowledge and institutional bases of other regions as it is culturally dependent upon others. Fourth, we can also question the extent to which the region is contributing to global climate change, forcing other regions to change their behavior, as well as whether it has options available to adapt to the climate change and surprises imposed upon it by others. From a global perspective, this fourth definition of sustainable development addresses the difficulties of going from hydrocarbon energy stocks to renewable energy sources while adapting to the complications of global climate change induced by the transitional net oxidation of hydrocarbons. Fifth, and last, we can inquire of the cultural stability of all the regions in combination, are they evolving along mutually compatible paths, or will they destroy each other through war?

These definitions become increasingly encompassing. All, however, address the sustainability of changing interactions between people and their environment over time."

David Pearce, Anil Markandya and Edward B., Blueprint for a Green Economy, Earthscan Publications Ltd, London. pp. 178-179.

### **3. Valuation of Cultural Heritage**

The variety of values ascribed to any particular heritage object-economic value, aesthetic value, cultural value, political value, educational value is matched by the variety of Stakeholders participating in the heritage conservation process.

“Valuation involves the assessment of values that people actually attach to heritage goods, whereas valorization is the (re)appraisal of the heritage goods by means of deliberations, pleas by art historians, debates in public media.

Principally, the value of cultural heritage can be treated in a way similar to natural heritage. That is to say, its value can be assessed in terms of used and non-used value. The used value of cultural heritage is the estimated value of culture when it is used in the day-to-day way of life of an individual member of the society as well as the way of life for the group. The non-used value can be separated into option value, the value generated from alternative use of the culture and the existence value, the value of culture preserved and handed down as a gift to next generations.

Value of Cultural Heritage

If markets fail to determine the value of heritage goods, the value of cultural heritage has to be established in another way. As economists will never tire of pointing out, resources are limited, and choices are inevitable. This certainly is the case when the preservation of heritage goods is at issue. In order to make rational choices, policy makers need to evaluate alternative uses of their scarce resources. Economists have developed various techniques for such an evaluation. As Frey (1997a) points out, the intent is invariably the appraisal of the satisfaction that actual or potential consumers derive from the heritage goods (in accordance with the norm of consumer sovereignty). Thus, these economic techniques are meant to deal with valuation and not valorization—to recall a distinction made earlier. Valuation involves the assessment of values that people actually attach to heritage goods, whereas valorization is the (re) appraisal of the heritage goods by means of deliberations, pleas by art historians, debates in public media, and so forth. In the process of valorization, people may learn the values of the heritage goods (which economic studies may subsequently register in their valuation).

Frey and Pommerehne (1989) distinguish various values that individuals may attach to heritage goods. Option value is the (imaginary) satisfaction some one experiences of heritage. Existence value amounts to the value contained in the enjoyment of the mere existence of a heritage good—not of enjoyment of its presence or actual use of it. The bequest value is the value that future generations derive from a heritage good, and the prestige value is as its says: the prestige that a community or person derives from having a particular heritage goods. Finally, the education value captures all benefits that heritage generates in terms of education.

Source: Randall Mason “Economics and Heritage Conservation: Concepts, Values and Agendas for Research” in Randy Mason, ed., Economics and Heritage Conservation, Proceeding of a Meeting Organized by the Getty Conservation Institute, December 1998, Getty Center, Los Angeles. p.31

“Markets fail when dealing with heritage conservation—that is, markets alone fail

to provide for investment in heritage and this phenomenon is due to public good character of cultural heritage objects. In the absence of workable markets, other arrangements must be found to finance conservation and other heritage investment, and this responsibility has traditionally fallen to governments.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Randall Mason “Economics and Heritage Conservation: Concepts, Values and Agendas for Research” in Randy Mason, ed., *Economics and Heritage Conservation*, Proceeding of a Meeting Organized by the Getty Conservation Institute, December 1998, Getty Center, Los Angeles.

## Classification of Cultural Heritage<sup>4</sup>

### Tangible Heritage

#### Immobile

#### Built Heritage

Monuments: buildings, sculptures,  
inscription, cave dwellings,

Listed buildings: buildings in-use

Groups of buildings: city centers

Sites (also underwater: archaeological, historical,  
ethnological

Cultural landscapes

#### Movable

#### Artifacts

Paintings

Sculptures

Objects

Collections

#### Media

Audiovisual media

Books

Plays

Scores

#### Consumer and industrial goods

### Intangible Heritage

Art expressions; music, dance, literature,  
theater

Martial arts

Language

Living cultures

(Oral) traditions

Narratives

Revolutions

Networks

Folklore

Source: Arjo Klamer and Peter-Wim Zuidhof, "The Values of Cultural Heritage: Merging Economic and Cultural Appraisals", in *Economics and Heritage Conservation, Proceeding of a Meeting Organized by the Getty Conservation Institute, December 1988, Getty Center, Los Angeles.*

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<sup>4</sup> Randy Mason, ed., *Economics and Heritage Conservation, Proceeding of a Meeting Organized by the Getty Conservation Institute, December 1998, Getty Center, Los Angeles.* p.26.

The treatment of value of culture goes beyond what we usually have to do with natural resources since many of cultural heritages are intangible and difficult to assess.

The concept of cultural capital—“material cultural heritage is a subset of cultural capital—heritage as an asset that appreciates overtime, require investment, incur risk and so on”<sup>5</sup>

As noted by Arjo Klamer and Peter-Wim Zuidhof (1998), and Peacock (1994) Heritage is often not produced in response to some consumer demand but comes about as a by-product of other products. It is argued that the heritage was not produced to satisfy existing tastes; instead, in the past, buildings, city centers, plays, and oral traditions were created for their own reasons

#### **4. Community Participation and Community Awareness**

In public policy area, there are many approaches to handle an administrative issue. First, an issue could be solved through “command and control” or imposition of “rules and regulations”. Second, one could use “benefit-cost analysis” to evaluate pros and cons and decide on how public investment is done. Third, believing in the power of the market, one could use “economic incentives” to manipulate demand and supply through the work of market mechanism. Fourth, with justification “externality” to society, an issue could be handled by using the “fiscal strength” of the government. And finally, an issue could be handled by “community participation process”.

The choices among these five approaches are open, at the very least, for economists working on the real world research questions. There are both advantages and disadvantages for each of the approach and no definite conclusion could be made about superiority or inferiority for that matter.

By definition, “community participation” is “a partnership between government and its key stakeholders including the business sector, industry, academia, policy research institutions, and interest groups within the community”. The most fundamental form of participation is “awareness” of the local people.

For example, in many places, there are not enough officials to work with the growing size of tourists. Therefore, the option of using local people participation approach seems to be more practical, not only for the sake of development to a democratic state but also for the purpose of being efficient. Since the local people are normally the ones who receive the strongest impacts, they are naturally the group of people who are more suitable for monitoring as well as evaluation of changes in cultural tourism than anyone else.

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<sup>5</sup> Randall Mason “Economics and Heritage Conservation: Concepts, Values and Agendas for Research” in Randy Mason, ed., Ibid. Page 12

## 5. Goals

Similar to the protection of natural environment that the scientists have to have acceptable environmental standard, in culture, one has to have at least the idea of allowable condition of culture. This is the area in which the intangible factors like feeling, belief and tradition play a vital role. In the past, APEC has recognized and accepted the tourism goals as maintaining social integrity, through respecting the national cultural heritage, local indigenous culture, cultural exchange, to be supported by the development of social safety nets.

## 6. Steps for Promotion of Community Awareness

7.1 Heritage is routinely valued in a number of distinct ways –on economic, aesthetic, religious, political, cultural, and other ground.

7.2 The valuing process consists of two distinct but intertwined parts; valuation and valorization.

## 7. Strategic recommendation

It is therefore recommended that to achieve the above goals, conceptual framework of plan of actions involve:

7Rs elements Social Concept.

Research  
Recognize  
Respect  
Regulate  
Revitalize  
Reserve  
Reward

For the promotion of community awareness effort should include these 7elements.

- a. Research: the initial starting point of cultural heritage preservation could be the effort of the government, academics, and other stakeholders to gather information on various community cultures.
- b. Recognize: the member of the community as well as other stakeholders should be able to identify the nature of culture. Effort in this part covers the attempt to recognize old and existing set of tangible and non-tangible cultures that play a role in the community event.
- c. Respect: After the recognition of culture, the next important sustaining factor would be to really respect the nature of this cultural element including willingness to acknowledge the fact of cultural diversity.
- d. Regulate: Facing with threat from changes of the community socio-economic pressure, the culture might need legal protection in the form of rules and regulations that aim at prevention of an intentional or unintentional damage on the culture itself.
- e. Revitalize: Some of the culture might need higher support from the community to recall and recognize by the way of bringing to attention by reconsideration and practice.

- f. Reserve: The next individual and group effort should center on the act of reservation, preserving the existing culture and protecting from attack as well as abrupt change of culture.
- g. Reward: Community effort should also include the promotion public relation and recognize the successful cases already implemented.

It is to bear in mind that the importance of annual income of tourism is not as important and comparable to the importance of “community value”. That is to say, the terms of analysis should not be evaluated in terms of money. In fact, the development of tourism should have “human aspect” as an analytical unit for the sake of the “well being of mankind”.

Greater engagement between cultural and economic concerns, as well as mutual understanding, is essential for enabling conservation to play a greater role in civil society.<sup>6</sup>

Decision of what to conserve and how to conserve are made in the context of many different valuing systems, not just those of conservators.<sup>7</sup>

## **8. Conclusion**

In this paper, seven important elements of community awareness are identified in connection with cultural tourism sustainability, namely, Research, Recognize, Respect, Regulate, Revitalize, Reserve and Reward. It supports the involvement of psychological elements such as recognition, respect and revitalize as a means to promote community awareness for sustainability.

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<sup>6</sup> Randall Mason “Economics and Heritage Conservation: Concepts, Values and Agendas for Research” in Randy Mason, ed., Economics and Heritage Conservation, Proceeding of a Meeting Organized by the Getty Conservation Institute, December 1998, Getty Center, Los Angeles.

<sup>7</sup> Randall Mason “Economics and Heritage Conservation: Concepts, Values and Agendas for Research” in Randy Mason, ed., Economics and Heritage Conservation, Proceeding of a Meeting Organized by the Getty Conservation Institute, December 1998, Getty Center, Los Angeles.

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