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Development of Cooperation in Improving Ecotourism Connecting Loci and Lao PDR Banks of the Mekong River



100

A hand-drawn mind map titled "OUR BUSINESS" in the top left corner. The map branches out into several key areas:

- TEAM**: Represented by an icon of a cake and a bar chart.
- SUCCESS**: Represented by a line graph showing an upward trend.
- QUALITY**: Represented by a pie chart.
- STRATEGY**: Represented by a lightbulb icon.
- VISION**: Represented by a lightbulb icon.
- INNOVATION**: Represented by a lightbulb icon.
- RESEARCH**: Represented by a lightbulb icon.
- MARKETING**: Represented by a lightbulb icon and a bar chart.
- internet**: Represented by a car icon and a pie chart.
- Cloud**: Represented by a cloud icon and a pie chart.
- Recycling**: Represented by a recycling symbol and a house icon.
- Money**: Represented by a dollar sign icon and a pie chart.
- Marketing**: Represented by a box labeled "Marketing" and a bar chart.

The mind map also includes various other icons and symbols, such as a sun, clouds, a lightbulb, a pie chart, a bar chart, a line graph, a car, a house, a recycling symbol, a dollar sign, and a box labeled "Marketing".

Human resource development
and event organization

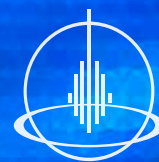
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For Thailand, tourism is a key economic driver, generating several hundred billion baht each year. There remains considerable potential for growth, due to the wide diversity of tourist attractions, including the bountiful natural beauty of its mountains, islands and beaches, forests, waterfalls and wildlife, as well as its many cultural attractions. Thailand's fascinating social and its unique customs and cultural heritage are also major factors that differentiate Thailand and attract an ever-growing number of tourists from around the world. Such assets should be regarded as part of Thailand's 'tourism capital'. But what if we continue to squander our natural resources and neglect to manage this capital for the long-term? Without effective and integrated tourism development planning, unfettered tourism will soon overwhelm their often fragile environments and erode that capital forever. Beyond its sectoral impacts, poorly managed tourism focusing primarily on short-term monetary gain will lead to far-reaching and irreversible social and economic consequences, including environmental degradation, loss of identity, culture, livelihoods and way of life.

Sustainable tourism is therefore Thailand's only rational approach to tourism development, and will require commitment at every level to succeed if we are to maintain our precious tourism resources, develop economically, enhance income distribution to local communities and improve the quality of life for all of us, while conserving our unique cultural diversity, natural capital and way of life.

Travel technology (traveltech) is classified within the group of cultural/creative industries and high-value services, and is defined as an economic driver to propel the country towards the 'Thailand 4.0' model for national development. As a key service industry and provider of employment, tourism is classed as a high value service, offering unique opportunities to boost national revenues and local livelihoods, while conserving our natural environment, unique cultural traditions and way of life in a sustainable way. However, for this to be realized in practice, a foundation of knowledge and contextual understanding will be essential in areas such as landscape management and resource conservation, upgrading the quality and standard of professional services, brand building, and integrated tourism planning. By defining tourist development plans that are appropriate to local economic, environmental and social contexts, we can create a robust and sustainable tourism sector that can compete on the world stage and bring stability, wealth and sustainable development to Thailand for our future generations.

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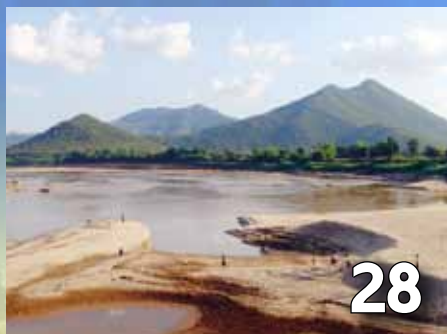
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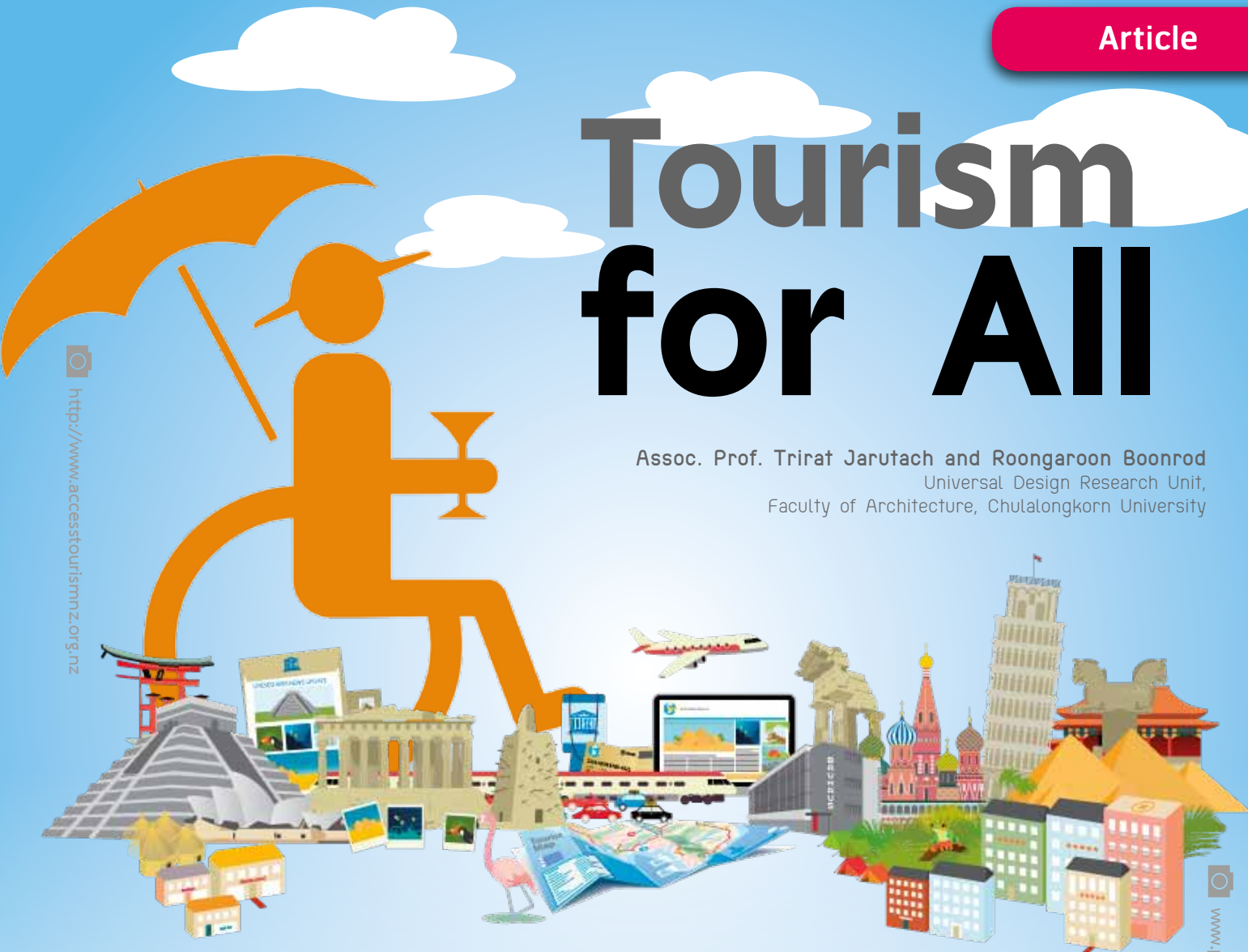


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Tourism for All

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People with disabilities and the elderly fall into the category of 'quality tourists.' The two groups share a significant growth trend within the tourism industry, according to numbers of trips and hotel occupancy rates. For example, in the USA, 21 million persons with disabilities traveled for pleasure and business each year, spending around US\$ 13.6 billion (Open Doors Organization, 2005). In the European Union, the two groups of tourists amounted to approximately 134-267.9 million, together generating Euro 83-166 billion, or Baht 3,910-7,820 billion (Buhalis et al., 2006).

Thailand has approximately 1.6 million people with disabilities registered, representing 2.43% of

the country's population (Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, 2016), and 10 million senior citizens, or 14.9% of total population (National Statistical Office, 2014). Tourists from both groups are categorized as having high spending power. Many wish to avoid being a social burden, and seek the usual travel experiences when facilities are available to accommodate their needs and ensure convenience, safety and accessibility. Therefore, the Department of Tourism, whose mission is to develop tourist services and attractions, initiated the 'Tourism for All' campaign to promote development of goods and services to better accommodate the needs of tourists with disabilities and elderly tourists.

The objective of this study was to develop guidelines to assist facility management for business owners and tourism location administrators to meet the standard and accommodate requirements of tourists with disabilities and elderly tourists. The guidelines are also aimed at helping business owners promote sustainability and quality of tourism for all.

Information was collected in relation to relevant concepts, theories, laws, and academic research, choosing 6 provinces for study via purposive selection: Nan, Loei, Samut Songkhram, Ratchaburi, Chanthaburi, and Trang. 14 types of tourist attractions were selected as targets (Table 1). The methodology included literature review, classifying tourist attractions, data collection, setting evaluation criteria, selecting locations, and analysis of findings.

The data collection tool employed in this study was a tourist service standard evaluation form for the people with disabilities, the elderly, families with small children, and pregnant women (Standard No. TTS 310: 2012) developed by Thailand's Department of Tourism. The evaluation form assessed the site according to three criteria: Management, Service, and Building Environment. A total of 87 tourist attractions were sampled: 23 sites from Trang, 12 from Ratchaburi, 10 from Chanthaburi, 7 from Samut Songkram, 22 from Nan, and 13 from Loei. The 87 sites were classified into the following categories and assessed according to the three criteria, according to Table 1.

Table 1 Data collection and evaluation result of targeted tourist attractions by category

No.	Category	Number (sites)	Evaluation result (sites)		
			Management	Service	Building environment
1	Natural attraction	7	0	0	0
2	Landform attraction	2	0	0	0
3	Cavern attraction	4	0	0	0
4	Waterfall attraction	3	0	0	0
5	Health tourism of hot spring attraction	2	0	0	0
6	Islet attraction	2	0	0	0
7	Island attraction	4	0	0	0
8	Beach attraction	4	0	0	0
9	Agro-tourism location	3	0	0	0
10	Eco-tourism location	4	0	0	0
11	Arts & science attraction	2	0	0	0
12	Historical attraction	4	0	0	1
13	Cultural attraction	33	0	0	1
14	Recreational attraction	13	0	0	0
Total		87	0	0	2

Source: Jarutach (2016)

Result of tourist service standard evaluation form for the people with disabilities, elderly, families with small children, and pregnant women

The overall result showed that none of the tourist attractions met all evaluation criteria. None of the sites met the management and service criteria, while only two sites met the building environment criterion (Ratchaburi National Museum rated 10 points, and Pra Sri Arn Temple of Ratchaburi rated 10 points).



Figure 2 Ratchaburi National Museum in Ratchaburi
Photographed by: Jarutach, April 2015



Figure 1 Siam Cultural Park of Wax Models in Ratchaburi
Photographed by: Jarutach, July 2015

The attractions with the highest rating (all scoring 18.5 of a potential maximum 52 points) were the Siam Cultural Park of Wax Models in Ratchaburi (Figure 1), Ratchaburi National Museum (Figure 2), and Kung Kraben Bay Royal Development Study Center in Chanthaburi (Figure 3). 22 sites provided no services for the people with disabilities, the elderly or families with small children, equivalent to 25% of total surveyed sites.



Figure 3 Kung Kraben Bay Royal Development Study Center in Chanthaburi
Photographed by: Jarutach, May 2015



To evaluate the appropriateness of facilities provided for the people with disabilities and the elderly, tourist attractions were categorized into 2 groups: (a) natural attractions; and (b) developed attractions, as shown in Table 2.

1. Natural attractions

For this category, their natural conditions and

landscapes were maintained entirely or almost entirely. The locations were typically difficult to access, with minimal impacts of human activities. Such attractions had no evident control, management, or construction development in the vicinity of the site.

To consider appropriateness of facilities provided for the people with disabilities and the elderly, 4 components were evaluated as follows: (Table 3):

Table 2 Categories of attractions by availability of facilities for the people with disabilities and elderly

No.	Natural attraction	Developed attraction
1	Natural attraction	Arts & science attraction
2	Island attraction	Cultural attraction
3	Islet attraction	Recreational attraction
4	Cavern attraction	Historical attraction
5	Beach attraction	
6	Landform attraction	
7	Agro-tourism location	
8	Eco-tourism location	
9	Health tourism of hot spring attraction	
10	Waterfall attraction	

Source: Jarutach (2016)

1) Accessibility

- Long distance from parking space to other facilities and attraction points and no resting spot in between

- No ramp in the area of multi-level ground, the ramps were too steep and without handrails

- Walkway surfaces were not smooth e.g. sandy, paved with gravel or loose sand, or slippery surfaces, causing inconvenience and possibly accidents to the wheel-chaired and those using walking-support equipment.

- Lack of necessary information for people with disabilities and elderly tourists, e.g. direction signs to facilities, information on the attractions available to those with sight, hearing, communication disabilities. Signs on the map and direction signs were too small or unclear.

2) Limitations due to physical conditions of the area

- For certain sites, there were steep slopes as the area was located in a mountainous region.

- Some areas were prone to erosion and landslides.

- Some areas were highly sensitive in term of impacts on wildlife or water sources.

3) Designs of facilities provided for the people with disabilities and the elderly should ensure accessibility and linkage between routes to different areas of the attraction. Details are as follows:

- The design should be in harmony and align with natural condition of environment

- The design does not oppose the principle of the owner or authority of the attraction.

4) Facilities for the people with disabilities and the elderly should include parking spaces, ramps, toilets, information center, clear signage, safe pathways into the woods, walkways, resting areas, stairways, water closets, trams, docks, seats on the ship, picnic area, camping ground, beach walkways, and warning tactile surfaces.

2. Developed attractions

The term referred to attraction sites with their natural condition changed or developed in response to visitor needs. The areas were easy to access and development was apparent. Visitors could enjoy the attraction with convenience.

Study of facilities provision for the people with disabilities and the elderly were made to 4 areas as follows: (Table 3)

1) Accessibility

- No ramps for multi-level grounds
- Steep ramps without handrails
- Rough-surface walkways e.g. edges of tiles, grass, slippery ground surfaces, inconvenient and unsafe for pedestrian, especially those using wheelchairs or walking support equipment.



Table 3 Proper facilities provision for the people with disabilities and the elderly

Categories	Parking space for the people with disabilities	Ramps	Toilet for the people with disabilities	Information center	Signs	Routes and walkways	Resting seats	Stairways	Water closet	Tramps	Dock and onboard seats	Picnic and camping ground	Beach walkways	Warning tactile surface	Elevators	Escalators	Tactile surfaces	Stadium	Restaurants
1. Natural attraction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓					
2. Landscape attraction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓					
3. Cavern attraction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓						✓					
4. Waterfall	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓					
5. Health attraction of hot spring	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓				✓		✓					
6. Islet attraction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓					
7. Island attraction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					
8. Beach attraction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓					
9. Agro-tourism location	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓			✓		✓
10. Eco-tourism location	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓			✓		✓
11. Arts & Science attraction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
12. Historical attraction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
13. Cultural attraction	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
14. Recreational tourism location	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Source: Jarutach (2015)

- Lack of necessary information for people with disabilities and elderly tourists e.g. direction signs to facilities, information of the attraction available to those with sight, hearing or communication difficulties.

- Signs on the map/ direction signs were too small or unclear.

- Not enough spaces for wheel chairs in the exhibition hall

2) Limitations due to physical condition of the area

- Some sites were highly sensitive in term of impacts on the architectural landscape.

- For certain sites, especially ancient remains, additional construction of facilities might affect the building's structure.

3) Planning

- Designs of facilities provided for the people with disabilities and the elderly should ensure accessibility and linkages between routes to different areas of the attraction.

- The design should be in harmony and align with the natural condition of the local environment.

- The design does not oppose the principle of the owner or authority of the attraction.

4) Facilities for the people with disabilities and the elderly should include parking spaces, ramps, toilets for the people with disabilities, information center, signs, routes into forested areas, walkways, resting points, elevators, escalators, tactile surfaces, stadium, and restaurants.

In 2008 Thailand signed and ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD). When the treaty came into force on 28 August 2008, Thailand was entrusted with an obligation to promote, protect, and assure the fundamental human rights of persons with disabilities. Section 9 (Accessibilities) establishes the principle that promotes the independence and participation in society of all persons with disabilities, in part through mandated provision of access to physical environments, transportation, technology, information and communication systems. The concepts of managing

physical environments consisted of 3 components; Universal design (UD), Assistive Technology (AT), and Reasonable Accommodation (RA).

By classifying tourist attractions into 2 categories, other components could be used to promote accessibility and convenience. For example, for the natural attraction, the category of which natural conditions of the locations were preserved entirely or almost entirely, improving facilities to accommodate the people with disabilities would be difficult as it would alter the natural environment. Thus, accessibility for the people with disabilities, the elderly, children, and pregnant women could be provided only to a limited extent. With reference to the design concept for the people with disabilities and the elderly, the component of Reasonable Accommodation (RA) was applicable to the case considering human assistance. Therefore, training on





provision of services to the people with disabilities and the elderly should be promoted to ensure proper assistance. For the developed attractions, components of Universal Design (UD) and Assistive Technology (AT) are relevant to enhance accessibility for children, the people with disabilities and elderly, and pregnant women.

Conclusion

Tourism plays a key role in the country's economic and social development as the tourism industry is a service sector comprising numerous inter-dependent chains of businesses. Considering the rising trend in the numbers of people with disabilities and elderly tourists and to enhance Thailand's capability to accommodate demands, and in keeping with its international treaty obligations, it was recommended that the concept of 'Tourism for All' be promoted by means of initiating new projects e.g. trips for the people with disabilities and the elderly, public relations activities, training and learning sessions on facilities for the people with disabilities and the elderly, and promoting tourism

locations and business owners with proper facilities provided for the groups by giving awards.

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The Integration of Tourist Protection Laws

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Introduce

As a service industry, tourism is one of Thailand's most important economic drivers. Moreover, it also contributes to furthering and distributing incomes to other businesses and industry sectors such as logistics, transportation, hotel business, and restaurants, leading to more employment and business growth. For these reasons, the development of Thailand's tourist industry is crucial, especially in the dominating presence of free trade and the single market of the ASEAN Economic Community.

Safety and security is of course a high priority for tourists everywhere. Apprehension over accidents or theft during the trip has a direct impact on the country's image and actual tourist numbers, while predatory scams targeting vulnerable tourists further influence tourist destination choices. This is where legislative measures are needed to offer greater protection for tourists and order to support the development of a safe and sustainable tourist industry.

The current legislative and regulatory framework does not cater specifically for protection of overseas tourists, and is in need of major reform. The urgency of this need is evident in light of expected growth in business and tourist visitor numbers leading from economic integration under the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC).

This study evaluated the regulatory framework relating to protection of visiting foreigners travelling as individual tourists (rather than as part of a tour group), a category known as Foreign Individual Tourism (FIT). Tourists travelling with tour packages benefit from tour agents who can assist with information and support, while FIT tourists are more likely to encounter problems in the absence of such guidance. With the rising trend in FIT tourism, the need for regulatory reform to offer greater protection to this group is especially urgent.

Reasons why FIT tourists get into trouble

Studies have shown that FIT tourists frequently fall victim to deception during their stay for two main reasons:

1) Linguistic problem: the language barrier impedes efficient communication between tourists, vendors and state officials who are supposed to provide protection. This limitation could come from either end of the communication where English proficiency is poor, delaying processes such as negotiation, settlement or legal action.

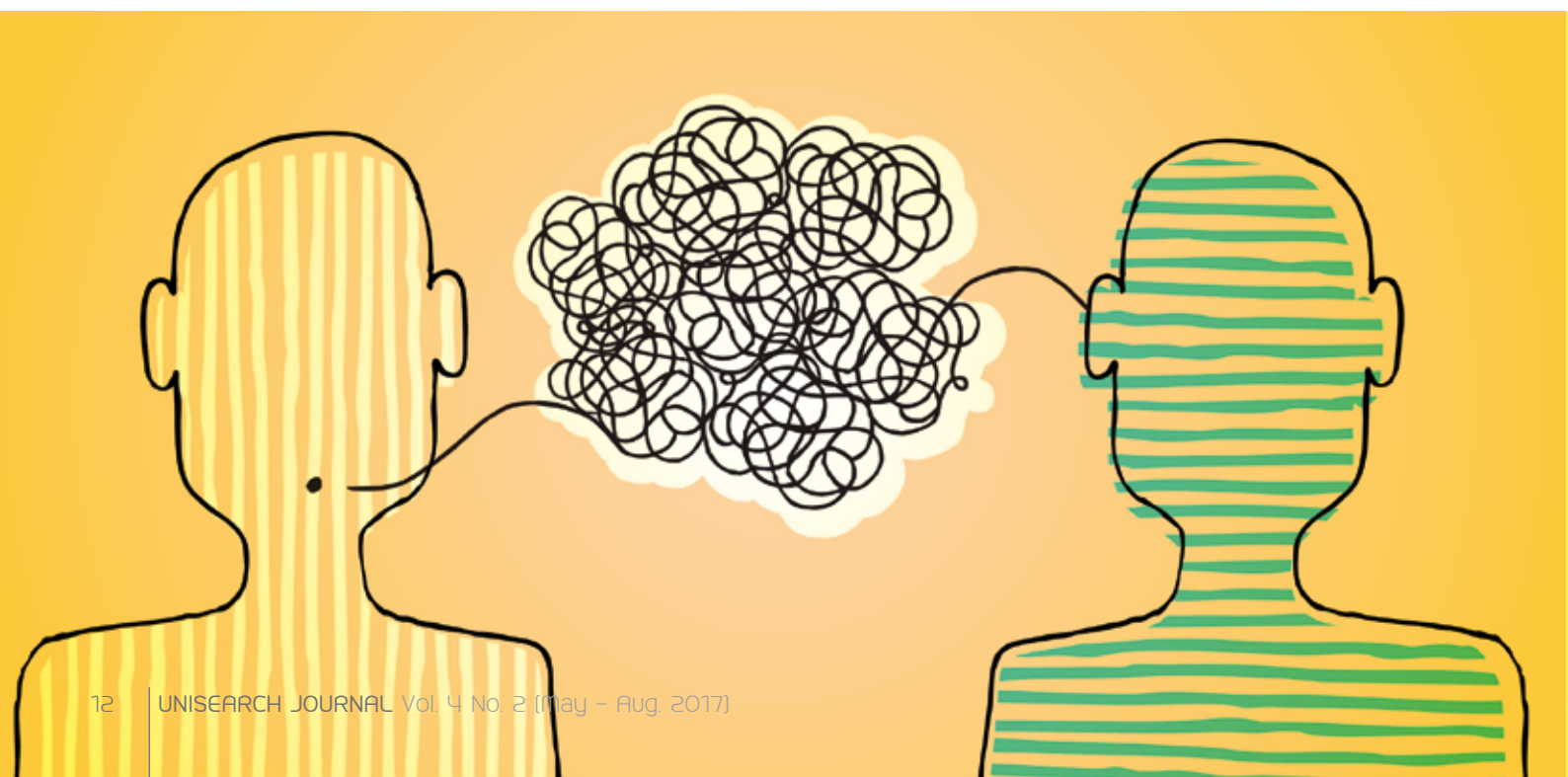
2) Limitation of Time: Since foreign tourists often travel on a fixed itinerary, this limits their flexibility to deal with any problems in the event of any unexpected issue such as robbery or physical harm; legal action is generally out of the question, particularly when compounded with communication challenges.

Therefore, wrongdoers exploit this loophole in committing crimes against foreigners with impunity, as their victims are in general unable to remain in-country to pursue legal or financial redress.

There are four main categories of damage suffered by foreign tourists: 1) Damage from

consumption of products and services 2) Damage from transportation 3) Damage from residence and 4) Damage to health and properties.

Thailand has not enforced an Act or Code to specifically protect against or compensate for damage inflicted on foreign tourists. Thus, in the event of any incident, officials will follow the legal process according to the relevant regulation dealing with consumption, transportation, residence, or health and properties. These regulations focus mainly on punishment but not on compensation for damages caused. Typically, the law only offers financial compensation in specific cases of transportation such as accidents occurring via air, water or land transport (excluding trains, MRT, BTS). Nevertheless, legally mandated compensation rates are unrealistically low, and securing a verdict of criminal responsibility is a notoriously difficult and protracted process. Generally, victims seeking full compensation are well-advised to litigate under civil law, rather than rely on criminal persecution by the police. Whatever path is taken, the legal proceedings are tedious, complicated, and time-consuming, and are all but impossible for tourists to access.





Legislative measures for tourism support

In recent years, the government has implemented several measures to improve protection of foreign tourists as follows:

- Foreign Tourists Assistance Fund: The Government issued a measure to boost confidence among foreign tourists, in 2014, and issued a guideline “*Rules, Conditions, and Rates of Foreigner Compensation*” aiming to help foreign tourists who suffer loss or injury from natural disasters, terrorism, physical attacks, rapes, accidents, etc., with the exception of damage caused by imprudence or illegal acts.
- The Court of Justice has also established “*Tourist Section*” in many key tourism destinations, with the aim of securing rapid settlement.

When tourists attempt to navigate the legal complexities associated with claiming compensation, they typically must deal with many State agencies, who must cooperate with each other efficiently.

It is therefore vital that an experienced mediator is needed to contact and keep track of the progress of such cases for foreign tourists. Surprisingly, no such position has ever been designated.

One more critical problem to foreign tourist protection is language barrier. Since the number of state officials who could communicate effectively is limited and the training required is time-consuming, with the urgency to solve the problem, a center for tourism interpreters and translators should be established to facilitate tourists in their dealings with State agencies. Some State institutions hire interpreters and translators, who may often work unofficially as a personal favour, resulting in unreliable quality of service.

Finally, reports indicate that many tourists are unaware of the options available to them; the government should advertise this campaign publicly to ensure tourists are fully informed of their rights and options.

International legislative measures for compensation

It is of interest to understand how other countries in the region address the challenge of protecting foreign tourists; some examples from our study are shown below.

Japan has introduced some measures to protect and compensate for losses or damage incurred in incidents involving transportation. As in Thailand, Japan's legislation does not specifically distinguish foreign tourists. However, unlike Thailand, Japan has established the National Agency for Automotive Safety and Victim's Aid (NASVA) to offer help and advice for tourists injured during transportation incidents. NASVA is responsible for providing information and guidance to tourists needing help, including support in contacting the relevant State agencies. Japan has not enacted any regulation to support tourists who suffer from residential loss during their stay in the country;

nevertheless, they are aware of the language barrier and the Act on Development of Hotels for Inbound Tourists has been enacted. The Act requires that every hotel in Japan has employees who can communicate in foreign languages or has manuals for foreign tourists. Hotels having such resources will be incentivized through tax privileges.

In regard to damage resulting from consumption of products and services, foreign tourists are handled in the same manner as citizens, without any protection. However, complaints and dispute resolution in case of cross-border damage are administered by the Cross-border Consumer Center Japan (CCJ). For damage to health and assets, foreign tourists have no difficulty gaining access to the police due to the decentralized power in each municipality in Japan. Additionally, officials who can communicate in English are deployed at police booths near tourist attractions.

 <https://photos.adventureinyou.com>





<https://timedotcom.files.wordpress.com>

In **Australia**, there are no specific regulations in place for foreign tourists concerning protection from damage resulting from transportation, residence, consumption of products and services, or damage to health or assets. Nevertheless, foreign tourists tend to be favored when new technologies of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and judicial administration are introduced into the country, facilitating foreign tourists with a limited stay. Consequently, they are able to complete the compensation process using technologies such as online video calls.

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<http://blog.suvisiatur.com>

Research on Promoting Tourism in **Lower Northern Thailand: the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2**

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Introduction

Travel and tourism (T&T) play an important role as a driver of economic development (Blanke and Chiesa, 2013), and is a main strategy for the Northern Provincial Cluster 2 provinces including Nakhon Sawan, Kamphaeng Phet, Phichit, and Uthai Thani. The strategy focuses primarily on tourism development and management by creating integrated stakeholder linkages that contribute to sustainable tourism. The project stemmed from a research project to develop know-how, involving several workshops including cluster staff training, promoting integrated tourism, and inter-cluster networking. After the trainings, in order to build on the project, a campaign was launched to promote tourism and provincial goods in the four provinces. The aim of the campaign was to expand the tourism market in the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2 and create a vibrant, sustainable tourism sector in the provinces.

Research question of the target area

Tourism is a fast growing industry that is rapidly expanding throughout the world. The tourism industry is different from other industries that tourists must travel to the destinations in order to use the services, to feel, experience, and appreciate the aesthetic values of the destinations. However, the tourism industry shares many characteristics with other industries such as production of goods and services (Dangrojana, 2001). The Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2 aims to promote tourism through the development of knowhow that leads to implementation by creating a collaborative research between the cluster with researchers from Chula Unisearch, Chulalongkorn University. Therefore, the project entitled ***“Project on Public Relations and Marketing Promotion for Tourism in Southern North Area 2”*** (Wattana, 2014) was launched, with three main activities:

- 1) Implement flagship projects to promote tourism by surveying high potential areas in the four provinces that have sufficient capacity to develop and integrate tourism activities, followed by a major tourism program for 2004;

- 2) Launch a tourism promotion campaign for the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2, targeting 200 participants to promote the products, services and tourism highlights of each province;

- 3) Conduct a workshop for 40 network leaders to raise public awareness and pave the way towards an agreement for tourism in the four provinces. This was followed by a survey of potential areas following special 4 days/ 3 nights tourism programs developed for each province. This led to a final meeting to reach an agreement on market penetration and tourism agreement in the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2.

From research to implementation

The tourism development strategy for the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2 aimed to establish

tourism connections between the north-central provinces and the lower north. World Heritage Sites and nationally famous ecotourism and cultural tourism attractions were highlighted as key tourist attractions in the development plan. These key attractions included: 1) Huai Kha Khaeng Wildlife Sanctuary, Uthai Thani (World Heritage Site) 2) Kamphaeng Phet Historical Park, Kamphaeng Phet 3) Bueng Boraphet, Nakhon Sawan 4) Cultural heritage sites, Phichit.

With the aim to establish a connection between each area, it was crucial to create a strong working network for tourism development and began a publicity campaign to the existing tourism market within the four provinces. The tourism network aimed to elevate tourism purposes into the seeking of happiness and aesthetic values from new experience in several aspects such as nature, culture, society, and ways of life (Dangrojana, 2001). The tourism industry is comprised of 7 sectors including accommodation, travel agency and guide, shopping and souvenir, food and beverage, communication and transportation, entertainment and recreation, and other services related to tourist activities.

The study of the development of tourism in the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2 was carried out by studying and surveying the four provinces with the highest tourism development potential. Primary data were obtained from surveying and interviewing a network of stakeholders. Secondary data were obtained from tourism reports. These data were combined, analysed, and synthesized to create an in-depth tourism plan, which was then discussed by the stakeholders and studied further, focusing on ***“provincial goods and highlights of tourism”*** of each province in the cluster to develop a publicity plan. The study results served as the basis for a seminar for 200 participants to promote and create a working network among provinces in the cluster. Moreover, a field survey was carried out by taking 40 network leaders on an in-depth tour and surveying the four

highest potential provinces. The tourism program travelled to the four provinces for 4 days and 3 nights to obtain in-depth information on their tourism potential. The data collected were used to develop a tourism agreement among participants from the four provinces. In the final stage of the study, a workshop was conducted to synthesize the study results, open the tourism market, and draft a tourism agreement among the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2 provinces.

Creating knowledge

This study employed qualitative research methods including secondary data analysis together with literature review, in-depth interviews, survey, tourist observation, SWOT analysis, in-depth brainstorming, and discussion of ideas from the participants via workshops. These data were obtained from the integrated tourism campaign that was carried out in the four provinces. The results were analysed and used as the basis for drafting Terms of Reference for developing a tourism plan for the four provinces. The tourism plans/projects were also used to align and integrate tourism plans among the provinces in the cluster.

Target participants at the workshop were staff members from the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2 tourism network including provincial staff, local staff, and tourism business entrepreneurs in the provincial cluster. The participants were selected using the following criteria:

- 1) Staff members from the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2 tourism network at 50 participants/province, making a total 200 participants to participate in a seminar regarding development of a publicity campaign regarding tourism in the cluster;

- 2) 40 participants (10 each from 4 provinces), to carry out an in-depth tourism activity and develop a tourism agreement among the four provinces.

The seminar on the tourism publicity of the provincial cluster to develop a network of knowledge within the cluster was held on 3-4 July 2014 at Theptida Room, Pimarn Hotel, Nakhon Sawan, with a total of 204 participants from the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2 tourism network. Among the participants, 174 gave consent to data collection. The participants were characterized as follows:

- 1) General data showed that 31% were male and 69% were female; average age was 49.96 years old (25-72 age range); average work experience was 15.5 years (longest work experience 40 years; shortest 1 year);

- 2) Among the participants, 93 were government officers; 38 were provincial government officers and 35 were government officers from local administrations;

- 3) There were 75 business entrepreneurs of which 28% were shop owners, 24% were hotel owners, 24% owned restaurants, and 12% owned other businesses.

The seminar reached an agreement on an integrated tourism plan among the 4-province cluster, and developed four distinct tourism plans (Table 1).



Table 1 The four tourism plans of the provincial cluster

Orders	Plan 1	Plan 2	Plan 3	Plan 4
Day 1	<i>Uthai Thani</i>			
1	Wat Sangkat Rattana Khiri			
2	Sakae Krang River Cruise			
3	Tham Hup Pa Tat	Ban Emad - Esai Hill Tribe Cultural Center		Wat Uposatharam (Wat Bot Manorom)
4	Samor Thong Hot Spring/ Pha Thang Traditional Textile Centre	Huay Pa Pok Resort		Ban Emad - Esai Hill Tribe Cultural Center/ Ban Pha Thang
5	Spend a night at Huay Pa Pok Resort			
Day 2	<i>Kamphaeng Phet</i>			
1	Mae Wong National Park and Khlong Lan Waterfall			
2	Chong Yen Campsite in Mae Wong National Park			
3	Spend a night at Chong Yen Campsite			
Day 3	<i>Phichit and Nakhon Sawan</i>			
1	Wat Bang Khlan, Phichit			Khlong Lan Waterfall
2	Wat Khiriwong, Nakhon Sawan	Chai Pattana Foundation, Phichit		Hill Tribe Silverwear Handicraft Centre
3		Wat Khiriwong, Nakhon Sawan		Wat Bang Khlan
4			Wat Khiriwong, Nakhon Sawan	The start of Chao Phraya River at Nakhon Sawan and the sign “Nakhon Sawan Ngae”
			Bueng Boraphet Boat trips for birdwatching or lotus sightseeing	Bueng Boraphet

Source: Wattana (2014)

From the tourism planning seminar, researchers divided the 200 participants into four groups to further discuss possibility and feasibility of the tourism plans. This resulted in an in-depth integrated tourism plan that inter-connected the Lower Northern Provincial Cluster 2 together. The in-depth tourism plan was carried out over a 4-day period, traveling from Uthai Thani, Uthai Thani to Kamphaeng Phet, Kamphaeng Phet to Phichit, and from Phichit to Nakhon Sawan.

The creation of knowledge and the planning of the main tourism program led to creation of a pilot tourism project for the cluster, following the tourism route shown in Figure 1. Each participant was asked to keep a travel journal throughout the tourism route. These journals provide secondary data to develop a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) within the cluster. The tourism study trip was held from 21-24 July 2014. The MOU developed was used as a plan for tourism publicity and will be further developed to promote tourism within the cluster.

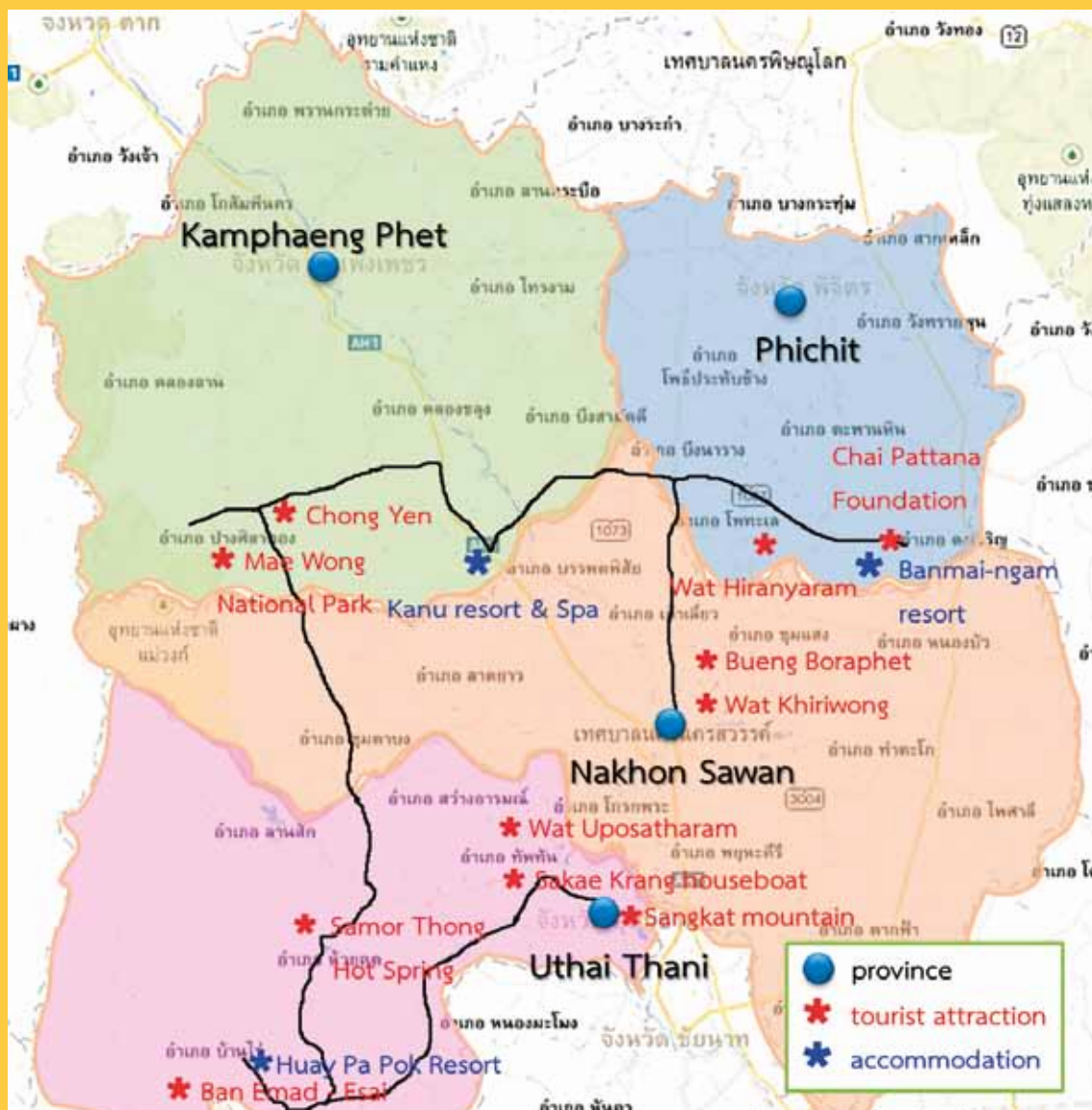


Figure 1 The proposed tourism plans for the Northern Provincial Cluster 2
Source: Wattana (2014)

Results from adapting the knowledge

The study results were highly satisfactory to the stakeholders. This was due to the inclusive nature of the study which involved a broad network of stakeholders to build consensus. The tourism agreement was also eco- and environmentally friendly in its focus, ensuring a balance between economic tourism and conservation of the natural environment. The agreement therefor contributed to sustainable tourism development and long-term risk management ability among network participants. The results were taken from evaluation of income from the tourism

network including food, accommodation, employment, and souvenir purchases (Figure 2).

The cluster's in-depth tourism network has continued to promote tourism activities until today. Members of the cluster created an online communication group using the Line application and has been strongly collaborating to plan, promote, and operate in-depth tourism programs for three years already, and its income increase in each area has been approximately 1 million baht per year since the project launch.



Figure 2 Activities from the tourism study trip held by the cluster
Source: Wattana (2014)

Conclusions

The success of tourism campaigns in the Northern Provincial Cluster 2 provinces was due to action research that involved a broad range of stakeholders. This participatory research allowed researchers to use their well-rounded expertise to create and harvest profits from tourism campaigns. Moreover, by involving all stakeholders in creating the campaigns, all stakeholder benefits were taken into account, strengthening confidence and collaboration among cluster participants. The collaboration ensures economic development from tourism growth which led to sustainability. The tourism campaign was closely aligned with a 20-year national strategy to drive stability, wealth and sustainability, towards a goal of becoming a developed country under the principles of the self-sufficient economy. Moreover, the public and private sectors are able to adopt the method used in this study to create knowledge that contributes

to sustainable development using balanced participatory involvement and non-exploitative measures by following the Philosophy of Sufficient Economy.

Acknowledgements

This article is part of the research entitled “*Project on Public Relations and Marketing Promotion for Tourism in Southern North Area 2*” funded by the Southern North Area 2 Cluster, Mr. Chairote Meedaeng, Nakorn Sawan Province’s Governor was the representative of the cluster.

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Tourism Development Plan to Maximising Tourism Development Competency in

Introduction

Chiang Khan district in Loei province is a high capacity area with potential as a primary tourist attraction, establishing a tourism network between Loei's secondary tourist attractions such as Phu Pa Po, Na Haeo, Phu Hua Hom and its primary tourism attractions such as Phu Kradueng. The tourism network aims to establish a connection between various tourism places and activities, boosting income for local communities, and distributing prosperity to the area. The tourism network will increase the attractiveness of Loei province as a tourism destination, especially for tourists from Lao PDR and other countries. These tourists are mainly quality tourists that chose Lao PDR as a tourist destination. In 1994, 146,155 tourists traveled to Lao PDR while the number rose to 4,158,719 in 2014 which boosted the tourism income in Lao PDR from 6,280,000 USD to 641,636,543 USD (Tourism Development Department, 2015). In 2017, Luang Prabang had 400,000 visits from foreign tourists, with an average length of stay of 5.5 days and maximum expenditure of USD 75 per day. However,

in Loei province, the majority of tourists (98%) were Thai. Expenditure of foreign tourists in Loei was half the daily amount spent in Luang Prabang. Therefore, a concrete tourism development plan between Thailand and Lao PDR should be implemented to attract quality tourists visiting Lao PDR to cross the border and travel in Loei and Chiang Khan in Thailand as well.

Loei has a wealth of tourism attractions including natural tourist attractions, historical tourist attractions, cultural and traditional activities, and festivals that are held throughout the year. These attractions and activities make Loei a high tourism potential destination. Moreover, the similarities between Thailand and Lao PDR and their historical connections could be developed as a main attraction point on an agreed tourism development plan. Therefore, creating a tourism routes in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) between Thailand and Lao PDR will catalyse tourism opportunities and bridge the ways of life and cultures between the two countries together with tourism activities,

Connect Chiang Khan–Lao PDR: Preparation for the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC)

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facilities and accommodation bring quality tourists to Chiang Khan. The plan will have a positive impact on tourism development including the continuous development of the Chiang Khan area, ensuring sustainable income distribution and prosperity for the city.

Thailand is committed to liberalising hospitality promotion, especially at the ASEAN level, since tourism and travel-related services fall under the terms of the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC), which aims for ASEAN countries to collaborate in developing the regional tourism economy among ASEAN Member States. This collaboration will contribute to an ASEAN tourism agreement that will expand the tourism market and boost the industry's competitiveness. To support this process, an agreement on a tourism development plan connecting Chiang Khan, Loei, and Lao PDR will be important. The Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization) (DASTA), therefore assigned Chula Unisearch,

Chulalongkorn University to research, study and develop a tourism development plan for the designated area to prepare and build competency for tourism investment in preparation for the creation of the AEC in 2015. This study included capacity analysis of tourism attractions the area, development of tourism market, the plan on connected tourism between Chiang Khan–Luang Prabang, tourism routes that connect tourist attractions in the two areas, and guidelines for tourism investment between Loei and Lao PDR. This article focuses specifically on development of the tourism route between Chiang Khan and Luang Prabang and the tourism development plan for the designated areas.



Capacity of tourist attractions in Chiang Khan, nearby areas, and Lao PDR

Studies on types of tourism, accommodation, and tourist behaviour life cycle study led to market segmentation analysis in Chiang Khan and Lao PDR. The findings indicate two main categories of tourism:

1. One Day Trip: tourists visit and rest in Chiang Khan, travel in Chiang Khan and nearby areas then return and stay overnight at accommodation in Chiang Khan,

2. One-Way Trip: tourists travel to, and stay overnight in Chiang Khan, then leave Chiang Khan for other destinations without returning to Chiang Khan.

Assessment of tourist attractions in Chiang Khan, surrounding areas and Lao PDR were conducted by weighting two parameters: capacity for tourism development and tourism management. The score was a total of 141. The analysis was as follows (Figure 1).

The One Day Trip (O1) tourism type is a connection among a series of high capacity tourism areas within 70 kilometres, or 3 hours' drive, from Chiang Khan. These areas include 17 tourist attractions: 5 in Chiang Khan, 6 in Loei, 3 in Pak Chom, and 3 in Tha Li. Overall, 11 tourist attractions passed the standard assessment, with an average score of 89.6. The highest scoring attraction for the tourism capacity assessment was "100-year Old Chiang Khan Ancient Community" (120.5 points) followed by Phu Thok (115.5 points), and Kang Kud Khu (112.5 points).

The One Way Trip (O2) tourism type in Lao PDR includes Sainyabuli, Vientiane, Vang Vieng, and Luang Prabang, located more than 200 kilometres from Chiang Khan. The assessment revealed that the average tourism capacity score was 104 points. The highest scoring attraction was Xieng Thong Temple (128.5 points) followed by That Luang (122.5 points), and the Royal Palace, Luang Prabang (120.5 points), respectively.

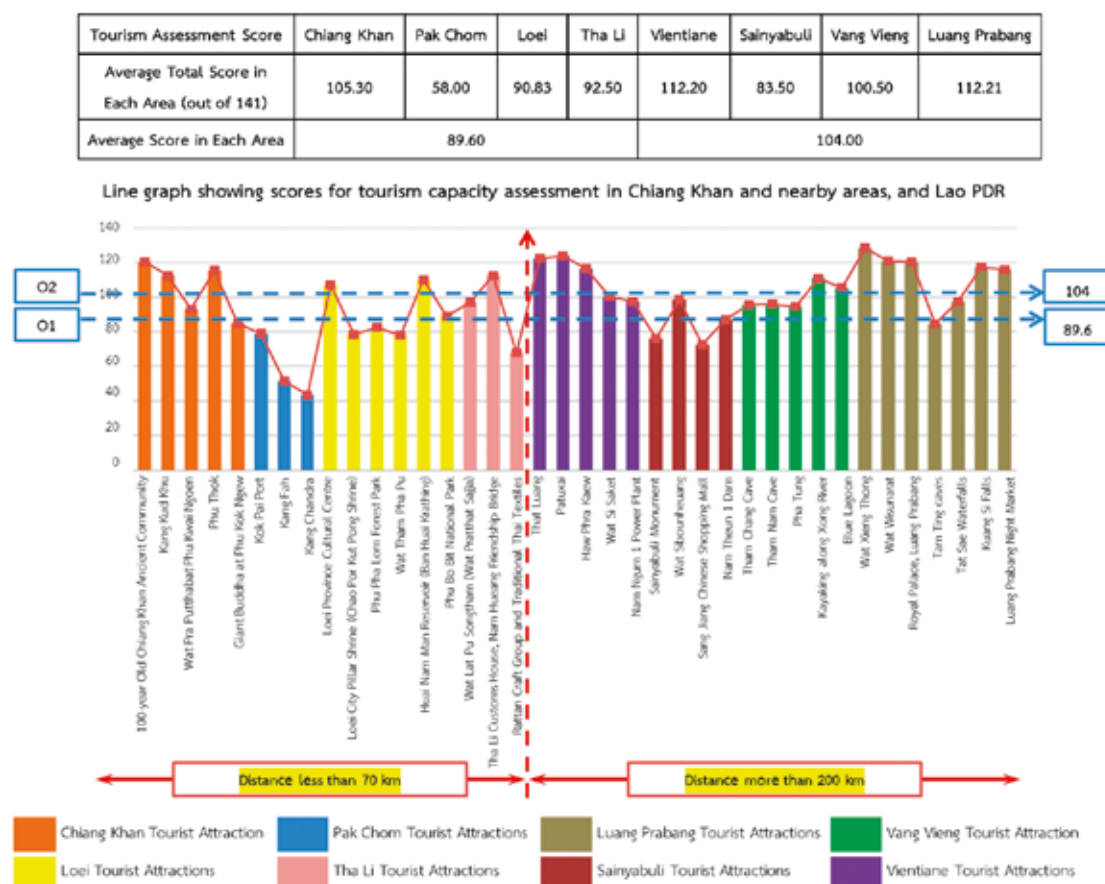


Figure 1 Tourism assessment results of tourist attractions in Chiang Khan, nearby areas, and Lao PDR

Source: Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization) (2015)

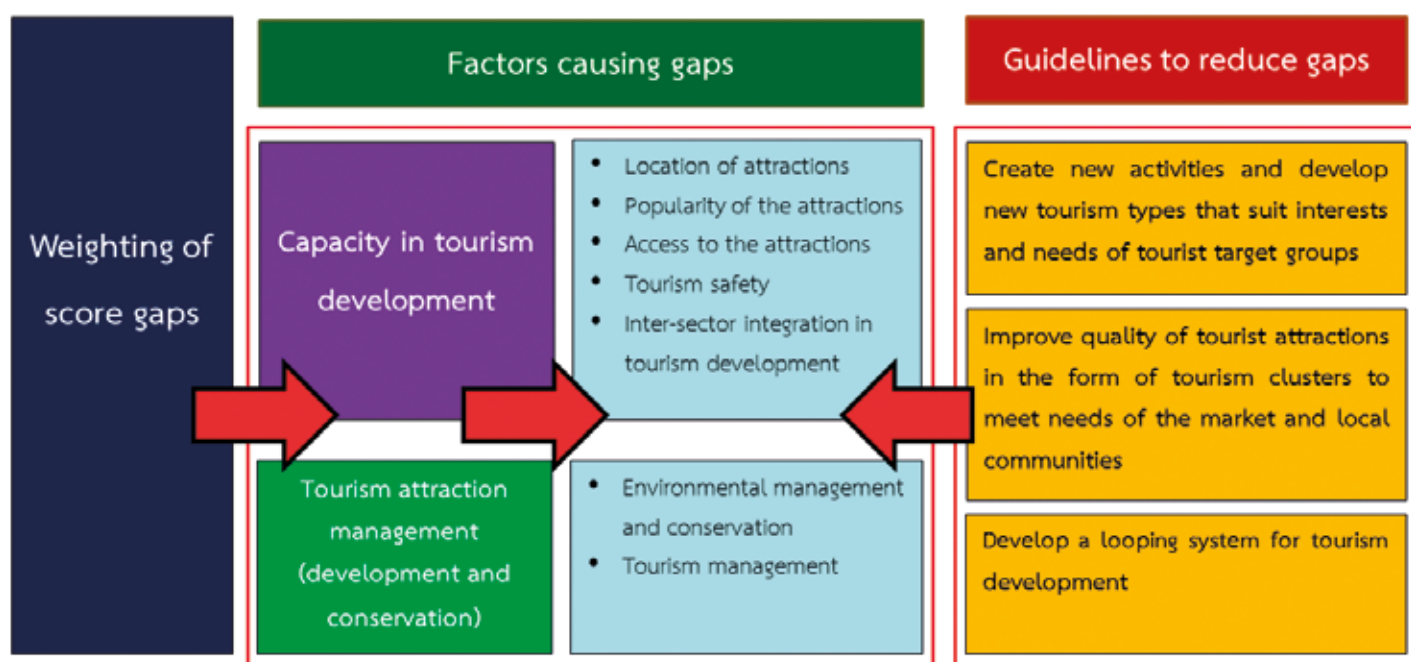


Figure 2 Gap analysis for tourism development and possibilities to reduce gaps according to capacity of the tourist attraction and the market

Source: Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization) (2015)

The results point to gaps between the two tourism types and opportunities for further development to create more market segments from Luang Prabang to Chiang Khan. However, to accomplish this goal, major efforts will be needed to upgrade tourism infrastructure and services along the route including improvements to the state of the tourist attractions and facilities themselves (Figure 2).

There are three possible guidelines to reduce the gap in weighted scores between tourist attractions in Chiang Khan and connected areas:

Guideline 1: Create new activities and develop new tourism types that match with interests and needs of tourists in target groups

Guideline 2: Focus on development and improve quality of tourist attractions in the form of a tourism cluster to meet needs of both the tourism market and local communities

Guideline 3: Develop a looping system for tourism development by improving local checkpoints to international points of entry.

Development plan for a looping system connecting tourist attractions in Chiang Khan and Lao PDR

The traveling route connecting Chiang Khan and Lao PDR is a looping system comprising two connected routes.

Route 1: Chiang Khan–Tha Li–Sainyabuli–Luang Prabang

Route 2: Chiang Khan–Pak Chom–Vientiane–Vang Vieng–Luang Prabang

The looping system aimed to promote tourism at destinations where tourist attractions are separate and not yet joined as a tourism cluster. The initial tourism plan to develop a tourism network proposed the looping system to introduce minor tourist attractions to the tourism market by using major tourist attractions as magnets and nodes to attract tourists. However, in order to develop the minor tourist attractions, it is crucial to improve traditional customs points and turn them to immigration points of entry. These traditional customs points, such as

Sanakham Customs Checkpoint in Vientiane (opposite Chiang Khan district) and Vang Muang Meun Checkpoint (opposite Ban Khok Phai, Pak Chom district), should be developed into permanent immigration checkpoints enabling passport checks, and providing convenience with quick-services issue of tourist visas. Moreover, there are other areas that need to be improved including surrounding environment, tourist facility, and tourism services throughout the entire route. Tourism services on the route include stops and accommodation, signs, tourist information centres, maps and other tourism media, a safety and security system including first aid, landscape improvement, and environmental management.

Researchers proposed five looping systems to connect tourism areas between Chiang Khan-Lao PDR including:

Looping Route Segment 1: Chiang Khan–Tha Li–Pak Lay–Sanakham

Looping Route Segment 2: Chiang Khan–Sanakham–Pak Chom

Looping Route Segment 3: Chiang Khan–Sanakham–Vientiane–Pak Chom

Looping Route Segment 4: Chiang Khan–Sanakham–Vang Vieng–Vientiane–Pak Chom

Looping Route Segment 5: Luang Prabang–Sainyabuli–Sanakham–Vang Vieng

The tourism looping system will be crucial for the development of tourism along a non-repeating tourism route. The loop can be developed by integrating different travel modalities such as car followed by bicycling (through natural scenic route or community routes for way of life or architecture sightseeing), rafting or traveling by boat on scenic routes along the river. These travel modalities should be selected according to suitability and local tourism capacity. Moreover, the development of a tourism looping system could also broaden tourism possibilities beyond immediate targets. The looping system will also contribute to income distribution within local communities and allow these communities to share ideas and thoughts and participate in decision-making on tourism management that may affect their communities. Tourism can follow different themes according to the interests of tourists, local tourism capacity and historical values.

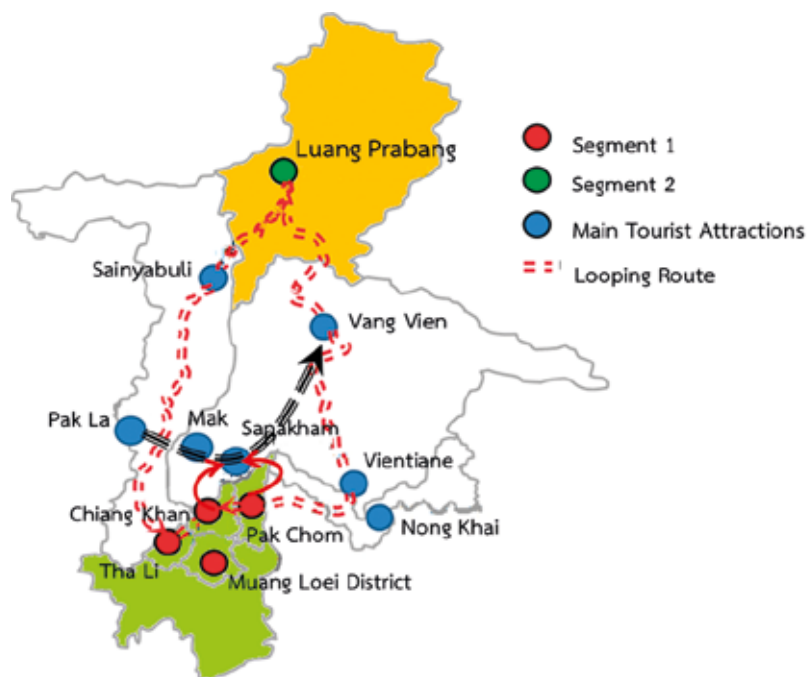


Figure 3 Development of a looping system to connect Chiang Khan–Lao PDR

Source: Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization) (2015)

Tourism development plan in designated areas to build readiness and tourism competency in preparation for AEC

Tourism development requires readiness in different aspects to support the tourism industry itself and increase its competency to compete at regional and global levels on the basis of sustainable tourism management. Researchers, therefore, proposed a vision, objectives and strategies to develop sustainable tourism linking Chiang Khan and Lao PDR as follows:

Vision: Loei tourism development “*Loei-the Liveable City: City of Tourism and Investment under Sustainable Development,*” and set Chiang Khan as the centre and hub to link with other tourist attractions in the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) and as a main tourism gate to Lao PDR.

Objectives:

- Collaboration in tourism development between Loei and Lao PDR
- Development of tourist distribution, longer average length of stay, and higher daily tourist expenditure in Loei
- Increase competitiveness of Loei in tourism services
- Promote tourism connectivity through the tourism looping route and tourism activities between Loei and Lao PDR.

Strategies:

1. Improve tourism services and quality products and create marketing strategies and creative investment
2. Improve facilities and basic infrastructure to support tourism development
3. Improve tourism routes and activities to connect tourism areas between Loei and Lao PDR by integrating both social and environmental aspects of the areas
4. Strengthen tourism resource management following sustainability principles by taking into account the natural resources of the area to handle tourism activities in that area
5. Start publicity and create tourism image
6. Develop a framework and system for tourism management to promote clarity in terms of policy and practice from policy makers to local levels
7. Strengthen the ability and participation of local communities in tourism development.

Acknowledgements

This article is part of the research project entitled “*Study on Development of Tourism Plan in Designated Areas to Prepare and Increase Competency in Tourism Service Investment in Preparation for the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015*” funded by Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization).

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Development of Cooperation in Improving Ecotourism Connecting Loei and Lao PDR Banks of the Mekong River

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Background and rationale

On 16 March 2015 the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) approved a set of principles for designating tourism development in the Mekong area, covering 5 provinces: Loei, Nong Khai, Bueng Kan, Nakhon Phanom, and Mukdahan. The major emphases lie upon improvement of infrastructure, renovation and restoration of tourist attraction, maintenance and advancement of service standards, boosting cooperation among organizations, as well as tourism market support regarding activities, marketing campaigns, and public relations to ensure that tourism development in the region is aligned with the Twelfth National Economic and Social Development Plan.

Tourism development plan in the Mekong Basin Area

The revision of the National Tourism Development Plan, the respective strategies defined by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports and the Tourism Authority of Thailand's Strategy have all focused on the supply side (development of tourist attractions, merchandise, and services), the demand side (marketing support), and tourism conduct which would result in sustainable and efficient tourism.

From the studies of the policies and strategies of local and provincial tourism plans from 5 provinces in the Mekong basin area, it is clear that the tourism strategies of these provinces have already been established in their provincial plan in accordance with the plans for provincial improvement. To illustrate, the concept for Loei's tourism strategy is stated as *"Development of tourism resource up to the standard"*; the equivalent for Nakhon Phanom is *"Tourism development to Become the Tourism Center in Sub-region of Mekong"*. Mukdahan's concept is defined as *"Tourism Development to Financially Support the Locals"*; for Nong Khai, the equivalent is *"Tourism and Service Standard Elevation to ASEAN Community"*. Finally, Bueng Kan's concept is defined as *"Development of Tourism and the Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and Environment"*.

Performance appraisal of the Mekong sub-region

The result of a performance appraisal of the 5 provinces by strategic analysis using the Diamond

Model indicates that the performance of each province covered both positive and negative issues of 5 factors, as seen in Figure 1.

Analysis of environmental factors using SWOT matrix

From field surveys and interviews of involved persons in the area along with relevant personnel concerning tourism from past to present, a SWOT analysis was conducted to assess tourism development according to 5 dimensions using the Diamond Model. The conclusions are as follow:

Geographical Positioning The aim is to become a destination for community tourism, to promote lifestyles and cultures bonded with the Mekong River, to become an important tourism resource for the cluster, to elevate Nong Khai to become a tourism distributor, to connect the neighboring CLMV countries (Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, and Vietnam), and to serve domestically and internationally as a seminar location.

Tactical Positioning Tourism is viewed as a common mission among both public and private

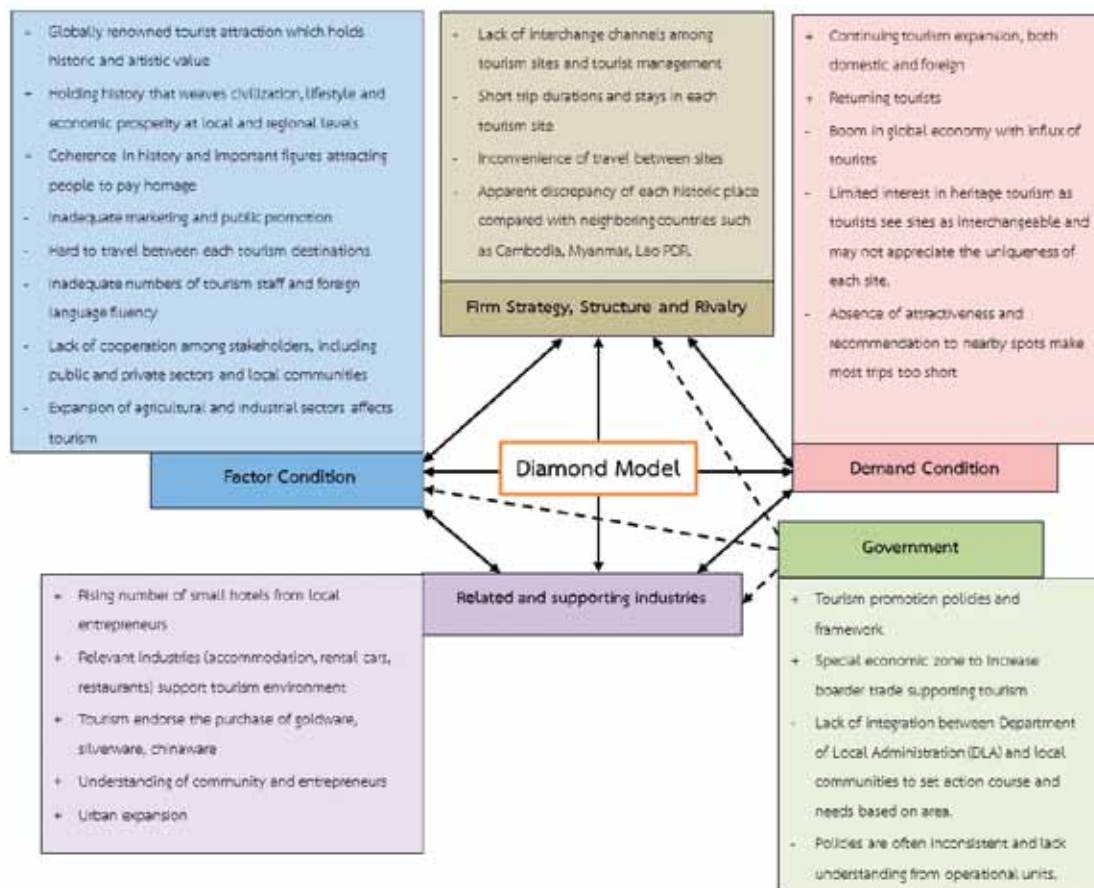


Figure 1 Performance Appraisal of Topics in the Diamond Model

Source: Fiscal Policy Research Institute Foundation (2016) cited by the Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS)

sectors, as well as local communities. It also merges economic community with tourism value chain and serves as a tool to mitigate economic inequity while improving living standards for local residents.

A guideline for tourism development

A tourism development guideline which reconciles performance and responsibilities of stakeholders within the area has been developed as follows:

- Use Mekong tourism to create tourism value by increasing stay duration and tourists' expenditure.
- Improve the tourism experience using the connections between Mekong and Lao PDR, especially through activities related to creative tourism.
- Develop tourism into cluster form so that

the area becomes a multi-destination tourism cluster for domestic and CLMV tourists.

- Boost participation, co-operation, and synergies among public and private sectors and local communities, to improve tourism management.
- Elevate the area from a tourism destination to a distributor, acting as a bridge to CLMV tourists.

Strategy of Mekong tourism development

The relationship with the Mekong community is to be reinforced to strengthen traditional lifestyles and culture which contribute to authentic quality tourist attractions and connections with neighboring countries. The vision is elaborated as follows:

Vision: Lifestyle and Culture Tourism, a bridge connecting two sides of Mekong

Strategy 1

Value Creation Immerse in the lifestyle and culture of Mekong

Objectives:

Create tourism activities based on lifestyle and culture of Mekong with the scale that could support target groups. Expand the range of activities of both sides of Mekong with mutual cultural identities. Increased numbers among target group accommodating in the area.

Strategy:

1. Support and connect tourism with CLMV tourists.
2. Elevate sightseeing tours and appreciation of the Mekong culture.
3. Support development of tourism through lifestyles, culture, and prominent nature of the Mekong area.

Strategy 2

Product Development under the lifestyle of Mekong in accordance with target group to expand market

Objectives:

Expand target group to neighboring countries with similar culture and lifestyle. Develop tourist spots and products that support all-year-round activities. Businesses expand due to tourism market expansion.

Strategy:

1. Upgrade products with application of lifestyle, culture, and nature of Mekong for sustainable development.
2. Improve products and services that agree with popular articles in the Mekong area.
3. Develop human resources for the tourism sector in accordance with popular articles in Mekong area.
4. Support marketing using identity of Mekong lifestyle and interconnecting culture.

Strategy 3

Tactical Integration for Tourism Management

Objectives:

Integrate tourism management to join tourism in Mekong and develop administrative system connecting each spot to gain access to the ideal target group.

Strategy:

1. Establish cooperation among public sector, private sector, and the community to integrate the development of tourism within the area and between regions.
2. Strengthen administrative performance in tourism and gain access to different new tourism sites.
3. Inspect, monitor, and evaluate working progress based on tourism development plan, major and minor city tourism development plan, and tourism development action plan.

Major and minor city development plan for tourism in Mekong Area and Tourism Zoning

• Concept for Tourism Zoning in Mekong's Tourism Development Area

Zoning for tourism in Mekong's tourism development area is determined by physical attributes, country planning, land use, economy, social,

culture, environment, and tourist spots in the 5 provinces of the Mekong sub-region, supported by SWOT analysis among involved individuals and sectors as shown in Figure 2.

• Categorization of Major and Minor Cities in Mekong Tourism Zone

From tourism mapping comes the categorization of major and minor cities in Mekong tourism zone

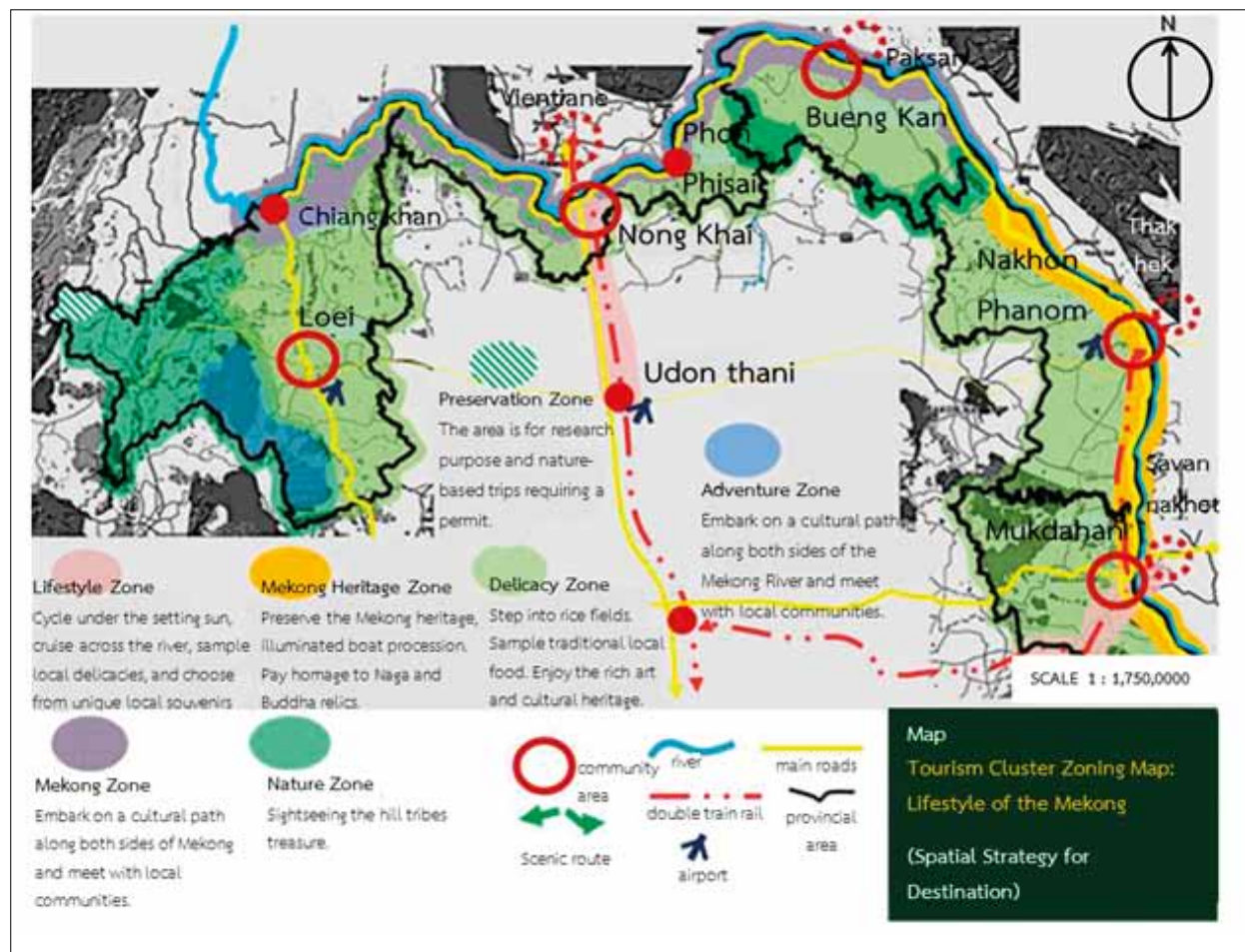


Figure 2 Zoning Strategy of Mekong Sub-region

Source: Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS)

(Figure 3) to set the course of developing an action plan for the tourism zone of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports and to develop and implement a concrete strategic plan. Additionally, by having a zoning strategy as a benchmark, the major cities, or in this case the main provinces, are strategically positioned due to their unique cultural and geographical attractions, while the minor cities support the dynamic force developing relevant strategies. Major and minor cities in the zone complement one another for sustainable and balanced tourism development.

Acknowledgements

This article is part of the research project entitled *“Development of Cooperation in*

Improving Ecology Tourism Connecting Loei and Lao PDR Banks of Mekong River,” funded by the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization)

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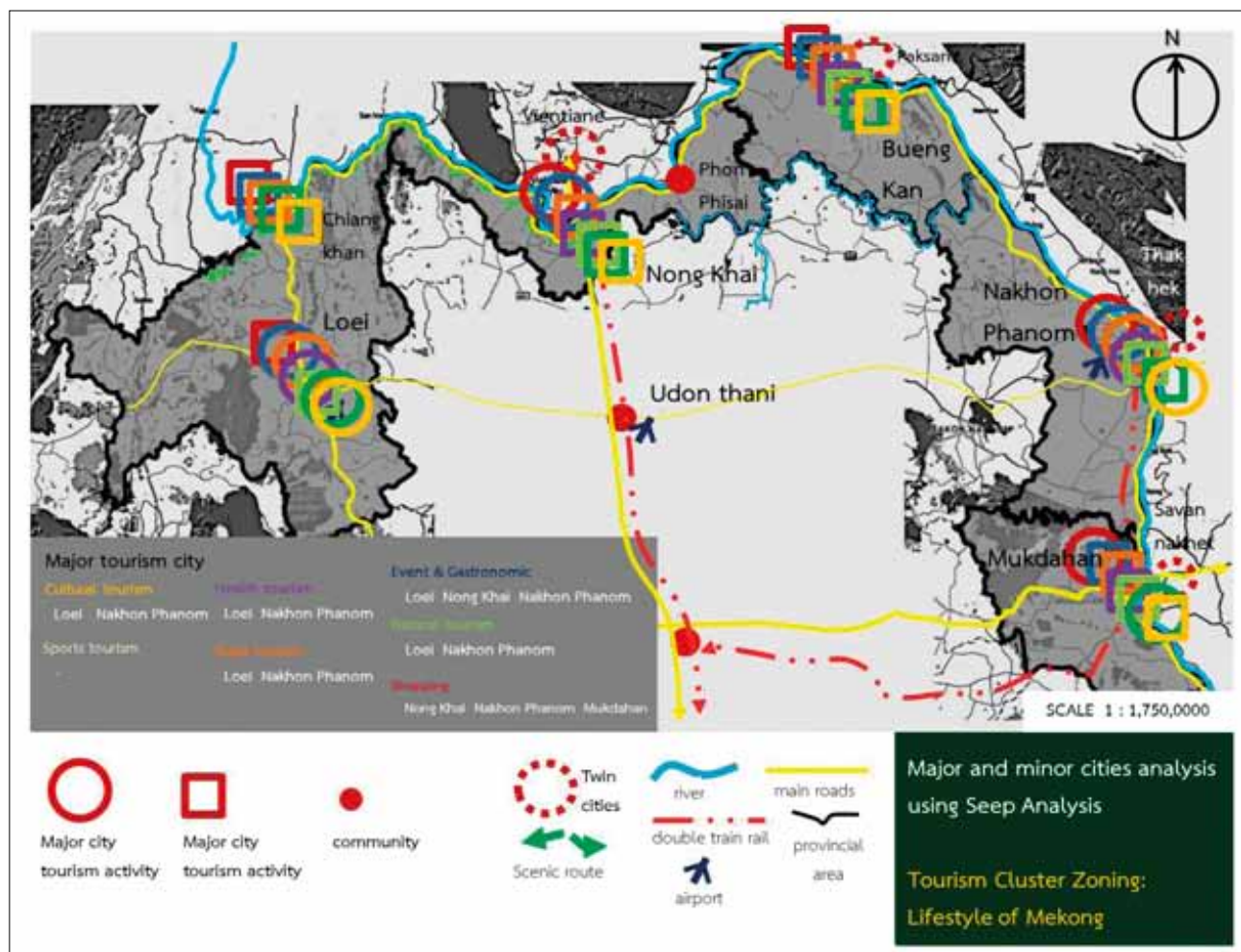


Figure 3 Major and Minor Cities in Mekong Tourism Zone

Source: Office of the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism and Sports (MOTS)

Assoc. Prof. Pongsak Vadhanasindhu, Ph.D.

Landscape Development Design for Sustainable Tourism

Assoc. Prof. Pongsak Vadhanasindhu, Ph.D. is an architect with profound experience in landscape planning and design for tourism. In this article he discusses the trajectory of Thailand's tourism development, and his personal approach to design, planning and developing landscapes to support sustainable tourism.



Tourism development in Thailand

“...Sustainable development plays many roles such as in tourism management which requires consideration of multiple drivers, including social and environmental factors. Through such a holistic approach, development can be optimized while minimizing negative impacts of tourism and conserving our unique environment and cultural heritage for future generations...”

Tourism development in Thailand has historically taken a traditional approach, focusing purely on promotion and public relations to maximize tourist numbers and revenues. To serve this purpose, the Tourism Organization of Thailand was established in 1960, and later renamed the Tourism Authority of Thailand. Later, tourism development took a more economy-oriented approach, emphasizing income and employment generation, using business marketing strategies and utilities development e.g. roads and accommodations, to support tourism. The pioneer tourism plan in Thailand was

launched in 1977, emphasizing the cities of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya, Chiang Mai, and Chon Buri. Subsequently, tourism development employed a physical/ spatial approach using land use planning and physical planning to satisfy the needs of tourists. Under this approach, telecommunication, accommodation, facilities, architecture, and landscapes were developed to improve access and facilities at key tourist attractions, for example in Koh Samui in Surat Thani and other famous beach destinations.



Thailand is blessed with abundant natural attractions. However, the focus on economic and physical aspects led to degradation of attractions when they could not cope with the sheer volume of daily visitors. This led to the idea of conservation tourism, with the aim of upgrading the carrying capacity of the attractions and applying environmental impact assessment (EIA) in order to identify and mitigate environmental impacts of tourism. This marked the emergence of ecotourism, which has since become a very popular segment of the tourism market. Ecotourism focuses on educating tourists on environmental conservation and local cultures, arts and crafts. This approach

encompasses a broad range of activity-based tours e.g. trekking, rowing, nature trails, biking to beautiful remote locations, or cultural tourism. Two examples of this type of tourism development are provided by Khao Sok National Park in Surat Thani and Tarutao National Park in Satun. Although many tourists visit Khao Sok National Park, nature is still well-conserved. In the meantime, Tarutao National Park offers beautiful nature and island culture.

It is undeniable that a flourishing tourism industry will inevitably impact on local cultures and the environment, leading to the emergence in the early 1980's of the concept of sustainable tourism development. Since then, tourism planning has increasingly taken into account environmental issues to minimize the impacts of tourism on the environment, biodiversity and culture.

Today, tourism development takes place through a more inclusive, community-oriented approach, which has become known as community-based tourism (CBT). Moreover, local communities can participate in planning and managing tourism resources and the local environment, as well as participate in decisions relating to income distribution within the area. An additional tourism approach – known as holistic tourism- has also been practiced in some areas in Thailand. Based on the sustainable tourism development approach, holistic tourism focuses on efficient resource consumption. As such, this approach integrates aspects of many disciplines, including economic, environmental, and social dimensions. The collaboration among stakeholders, communities, authorities, tourists and local businesses, aims to develop tourism that benefits all concerned parties, particularly local residents.

DESTINATION MANAGEMENT AND QUALITY CYCLE



Impact of tourism development on landscapes

*“...landscape is a key element of tourism.
If the beauty of the landscape is degraded,
the value of the attraction is also degraded...”*

As mentioned earlier, early approaches to tourism development focused on income and economic growth, while ignoring the need to conserve the natural environment, especially the visual environment. This remains an ongoing problem that will need strong collaborative planning and action at all levels. All relevant parties need to prepare preventive measures to address environmental and cultural conservation, rather than rehabilitation after the event.

Some impacts of tourism on landscapes are inevitable. For example, beaches attract businesses to serve tourists, such as water sports, beach umbrellas, food sellers and construction of facilities. All these activities require good planning to avoid over-exploitation of the natural resource, manage waste effectively and maintain the attraction's aesthetic value to visitors. Design and construction of buildings should reflect the local aesthetic and architectural context. In particular, sensitive or valuable areas should require environmental impact assessment (EIA) since landscape is a key element of tourism. If the beauty of the landscape is degraded, the value of the attraction will also be degraded accordingly. Therefore, to develop tourist attraction, the design should ensure the original landscape aesthetics are conserved. This responsibility lies with the landscape architect.



The importance of landscape design for sustainable tourism development

“...To develop or transform an area into a tourist attraction, the developer should understand and respect the existing environment. A design that suits the original landscape will contribute to sustainability and attract visitors...”

It is crucially important that developers of tourist attractions should understand and respect the existing environment, since that is the primary attraction and experience for tourists; a design that suits the original landscape will contribute to sustainability and to quality of life for local residents and communities (recognizing both tangible and intangible determinants of sustainability).

The design approach for tourism development

“...The goal needs to be clearly determined...what type of tourism do we want? All types of tourism need to conserve what we already have, and integrate all aspects and the needs of all stakeholders...”

For the design for tourism development, the goal needs to be clearly determined e.g. what the development is leading to, and what type of tourism do we want? A study by Chulalongkorn University categorized tourism into 5 types: 1) nature, 2) culture and folkway, 3) history, 4) art and science, and 5) recreation and sport. Each type of tourism has a unique manner of operation and its own approach, and setting clear goals for each type will ensure that all stakeholders understand and agree on the development direction. However, it is worth noting that one tourist attraction can be developed into more than one type. Among the goals for each type of tourism, environmental conservation and community integration must be prioritized in all five types in order to ensure continuing cooperation in managing the resource sustainably.





Problems and obstacles of tourism development

“Even though there are government agencies with designated responsibilities, they are not well integrated. This will only succeed if the Prime Minister can oversee implementation of overall policies...”

Recognizing that tourism is the country’s largest earner of foreign exchange, the government has designated a number of agencies. Although this represents significant progress compared with the past, this is limited by a lack of integration among these agencies, both among the key central agencies and with/ among provincial and local authorities. If inter-agency integration and cooperation can be effectively addressed under close oversight of the Prime Minister, tourism in Thailand will receive a strong boost as was achieved in Malaysia under the oversight of Prime Minister Mahathir bin Mohamad.

In Thailand, there are also excellent examples of the benefits of effective integration for tourism development. Tourism in Phuket has been improved tremendously through effective cooperation among many relevant agencies. Although Phuket has seen many changes and a massive increase in tourist numbers, its beaches remain clean and attractive. Nevertheless, it is crucial to control and restrict development and construction so that Phuket tourism remains sustainable in the long run.

The direction of tourism development in Thailand

*“...should be an integration with participation of local communities.
It should be unique and able to satisfy specific needs of tourists...”*

In general, tourism development in Thailand should be more integrated, with more collaboration among the responsible government agencies and affected local communities. Tourism should be developed according to a community-based approach, to match the needs of different visitor categories anticipated. In order to offer unique tourist experiences, local customs, traditions, arts and crafts should also be highlighted and promoted, especially those that may not be widely known, such as local rowing competitions and singing bird contests. Furthermore, tourists can participate in many local events such as Bai Si Su Khwan ceremony and traditional processions. Most importantly, the perception of Thais as a kind and friendly people is another factor that attracts more and more tourists to the country.

The government’s policy to allow private sector actors and communities to participate in tourism development planning and decision-making is regarded as an example of integrated policy-making. For example, the development of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya promotes its success to the participation of private sector partners in cooperation with the Fine Arts Department, the provincial administration, municipality, and local communities. In this community-based development, the communities play a role in helping the local culture and environment and culture, as well as conserving our national heritage. This could serve as a model for tourism development in Thailand where community development and conservation of environment are the main focus. When development is balanced, it will be successful. When the community is happy, tourist attractions will be better preserved and communities will benefit economically from sustainable community-based tourism.

Assoc. Prof. Pongsak Vadhanasindhu, Ph.D.



is former Dean of the Faculty of Architecture and Director of the Institute of Environmental Research, Chulalongkorn University. He has served as Chair of the ASEAN Architect Council. Assoc. Prof. Pongsak, Ph.D. presently is the first Vice President of the Architect Council of Thailand. He graduated with a Bachelor’s degree from the Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University, a Master’s degree in Landscape Architecture from the University of Michigan, USA, and a Ph.D. in Community & Regional Planning from the University of British Columbia, Canada.

Sustainable Tourism Industry

<http://www.thaiembassy.org>



<http://static.asiawebedirect.com>



<http://www.khonkaenretirement.com>



<https://www.policyforum.net>

Thailand's focus on developing its tourism industry began more than 25 years ago with the first tourism development plan for the provinces of Rayong, Chanthaburi and Trat in 1979. These were followed by a Master Plan for tourism development in 1980. Subsequently most other key tourist destinations developed their own plans. In 1985, a major tourism development and promotion effort was launched to boost the country's income from tourism.

Tourism can higher potential than other types of economic activity to attract foreign currency and distribute income more equitably to rural areas. The priority at that time was therefore to boost tourist numbers and their duration of stay, to exploit Thailand's full potential in terms of its natural beauty and wide range of tourist attractions. However, these destinations have not been protected or developed appropriately and efficiently, and visitor numbers typically exceed the physical carrying

capacity. Considerations such as infrastructure, transportation, communication, visitor centres, facility maintenance, waste and sanitation are typically under-resourced and under-invested.

Tourism data from 1985 indicates foreign tourists spent an average Baht 2,400 baht per person per day, and not many 1 million tourists per year. In order to promote tourism and extend the period of stay, a feasibility study was conducted for an open circuit (loop) in tourism areas focus, taking in both well-known

and unknown attractions for tourists, and broadening income distribution to more local communities along the routes. On the basis of the study's findings, the government declared 1987 as the '*Thailand Tourism Year*'. The policy was highly successful, and the strategy was successfully replicated by other Asian countries such as Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR). Currently, Lao PDR has prioritized tourism development as a key national development policy, and has introduced many new tourist attractions. The tourism development strategy of Lao PDR learned lessons from Thailand's successes and failures to inform its own policy processes and resource allocation priorities.

After 1987, Thailand enjoyed a boom in tourism of all categories, including tourism areas across the country. However, this led to unfettered development around key tourism attractions, that was not matched by appropriate regulatory control and planning, and without any assessment or monitoring of potential environmental impacts of such developments. In many cases, buildings were unsuitable for the area,

or destroyed the natural beauty, or otherwise caused environmental damage during their construction or operation. The large numbers of tourists incentivize entrepreneurs to accelerate construction and focus on revenue extraction rather than on any other consideration such as environment, sanitation, convenience or aesthetics. Today, responsible authorities must address the challenge of restoring many attractions whose beauty and charm has been destroyed by greed, reducing tourist interest in the attractions. A long-term development plan for these localities will be essential to ensure sustainable tourism development according to the physical carrying capacity of each locality. Without such intervention, uncontrolled development will exacerbate social and economic problems in the area, damage the environment and reduce the quality of life for residents.

Therefore, it is imperative to consider and analyze the needs of target domestic and overseas tourist groups, and for the latter, to differentiate needs and interests by country, tourist category and



budget, which differ widely. This means that tourism development plans and local facilities must be well matched to local carrying capacity for the specific target groups for each attraction, and can achieve long-term sustainability. However, for all groups, safety, security and accessibility are uppermost in the minds of tourists in choosing their destinations.

For groups of Thai tourists, needs can be determined fairly readily, based on age and average income. Thai tourists typically travel with families and groups of friends and prefer to travel during long holidays or public holidays; use of the services of tour companies and guides is relatively low. Popular destinations for Thai tourists are predominantly decided based either on media advertisements, personal recommendations from friends, or else influenced by information via social media.

Although responsible agencies for each local attraction make efforts to manage the area e.g. by limiting daily tourist numbers in sensitive sites, Thai tourist behaviour is unpredictable, complicating planning to ensure adequate services are available, e.g. for an unexpected large influx. Moreover, few organizers at each tourist site have developed tourism support plans e.g. to manage local carrying capacity by preparing secondary attractions to accommodate overspill of tourists when the carrying capacity of the main attraction is exceeded. Nowadays, most officers find it impossible to control

tourist behaviour and cannot order tourists to comply with local rules and regulations. Many tourists themselves exhibit unruly and irresponsible behaviour, which may result in damage to the attraction itself as well as long-term environmental impacts; crowded tourism sites further exacerbate the negative experience. Information on the poor state of tourism sites (especially e.g. with regard to crowded conditions, sanitation and waste) quickly spreads via social media, and can damage Thailand's image more broadly as well as reducing visitor numbers. The finger cannot be pointed only at foreign tourists, who are often well educated and responsible in their behaviour; Thai tourists are often observed to be thoughtless in their conduct e.g. in disposing of litter and other waste at local beauty spots.

The Department of Tourism has drafted a standard to develop several categories of attractions according to their status, cultural significance, fragility of the site, carrying capacity, target tourist groups and environmental sensitivity. The standard suggests various forms of management to accommodate the needs of different tourists categories, while conserving the local environment and minimizing social impacts too. It is important to provide visitors with adequate information on the sites.

Since tourist sites typically come under the responsibility of several agencies, both central and

local, it will also be important to educate local administrative officials since conflicts of interest may occur between broader social/ environmental objectives, and the prioritization at local level of local economic growth and revenue generation for local businesses. Investment in local tourism attractions must also be more effectively managed to ensure restaurants, hotels or





tourism-related activities contribute to long-term sustainability rather than simply exploit the location to maximize short-term earnings.

Such investment inevitably erodes the unique qualities of the tourism site and, sooner or later, to its demise. It is therefore vitally important that the Department of Tourism and all other responsible agencies must work together to address the sustainable management of Thailand's tourism attractions, considering the needs of all types of tourists, both Thai and foreign, and upgrade their management to meet international standards, e.g. to facilitate equal access for children, the elderly and disabled people. With elderly tourists forming an increasingly important demographic, tourist destinations need to urgently improve their facilities, pathways and other infrastructure to meet their needs and allow them to enjoy Thailand's wonders in a convenient, safe and relaxed way.

Although successive governments have prioritized tourism development around the country,

there has been little or no progress in addressing underlying sustainability challenges. Feasibility studies have been conducted and recommendations made for many popular but fragile sites, but implementation has proven impossible due to the government's own unworkable policy to increase minimum levels of carrying capacity and sometimes to levy access fees.

To succeed and protect our vital heritage while supporting economic growth through tourism, it will be vital to establish an integrated system to coordinate activities of the public sector authorities at central, provincial, district and local levels, and align the interests of all stakeholders to ensure a workable, long-term plan for sustainable rehabilitation and responsible management of Thailand's irreplaceable tourism sites, traditional heritage, and environment.

Unless this is tackled urgently and with full commitment from all concerned, all that will be left will be memories.



Master Planning for Conservation and Development of Krung Rattanakosin

Prof. Wannasilpa Peerapun, Ph.D.

Department of Urban and Regional Planning, Faculty of Architecture,
Chulalongkorn University



The area of Krung Rattanakosin in Bangkok is imbued with deep cultural, historical and architectural significance. However, several planned mass transit projects including the MRT Purple, Orange Blue Lines will pass through the area, which will inevitably affect land use pattern, traffic, culture and the environment of Krung Rattanakosin. Conservation and development frameworks proposed in the Master Plans for Krung Rattanakosin and related area since 1997 may

no longer suitable for the new development context. In addition, urban conservation concept and approaches have also changed dramatically since then. Thus, it is necessary to revise and replace those Plans with a new, unified Master Plan which lays out suitable conservation and development framework and conceptual plans to guide all related agencies in developing efficient action plans in the future.

The Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP) entrusts **Chula Unisearch** to develop the new conservation and development Master Plan for Krung Rattanakosin. The objectives of the plan are to improve parks and recreational areas and to conserve buildings and sites which have significant architectural, cultural and historical values. The plan also requires new land use classification and land use plan relating to new road, transportation, and infrastructure systems. The Master Plan covers the following areas: 1) Inner Rattanakosin area which covers Phra Borom Maha Ratchawang sub-district of Phra Nakhon district; 2) Outer Rattanakosin area which covers Chana Songkhram, Talat Yot San, Chaopho Suea, Bowon Niwet, Sao Chingcha, Wat Ratchabophit, Samran Rat and Wang Burapha Phirom sub-districts of Phra Nakhon district area; 3) Thon Buri area opposite to Inner Rattanakosin area which covers Bang Yi Khan sub-district of Bang Phlat district area, Arun Amarin, Sirirat, Bangkok Noi, Wat Arun, Bangkok Yai and Wat Kanlaya sub-districts of Thon Buri district, and Somdet Chao Phraya sub-district of Khlong San district; and 4) the area next to Outer Rattanakosin area from Khlong Banglamphu - Khlong Ong Ang to Khlong Phadung Krung Kasem.

In operation, the planning process begin with the analysis of the contexts, the issues, the problems and conservation and development potentials of the study area as well as the surveys and assessments of the values of significant buildings which should be conserved. Existing and future plans and projects are reviewed while tourism development potentials are analyzed. The new Conservation and Development

Master Plan for Krung Rattanakosin comprises strategies and plans for landscape development, traffic management, land use zoning and controls, infrastructure development, tourism development and cultural and community development. The surveys and assessments of significant buildings in the study area are also prepared.

In general, the preparation of Krung Rattanakosin Master Plan looks similar to other master planning procedure. In details, however, each step is unique because the primary goal of the plan is urban conservation not urban development as usual. Community involvements and full public participations as well as building surveys and assessments are emphasized in the planning process.

The important planning stages are as follows:

1) Data collection and analysis. This stage starts from reviewing secondary data and collecting primary data from field surveys, reviewing the existing Master Plans and related policies and consulting with local communities and stakeholders. The outputs from this stage are issues and preliminary concepts for conservation and development of Krung Rattanakosin which provide the basis for vision and strategy development.

2) Cultural Heritage survey and assessment. This stage requires experienced survey team and experts in the field of heritage conservation. An inventory form is developed and used for the survey by a trained survey team. Workshops of experts are held to assess conservation values of surveyed buildings and sites. The results of this stage are used in combination with the results from the first stage to create vision and strategies for conservation and development and to lay out the master plan. The report on the values of significant buildings is also created from the result of this stage.

3) Developing vision, strategies and the Master Plan. This stage requires experts' knowledge and feedbacks from public participations. Several meetings and workshops are held between the experts and related stakeholders at city and community levels. The results of the combination of the experts' opinions and stakeholders' feedbacks lead to the development of a draft Master Plan. The process is done again in the second round to get the best result. The final Master Plan for conservation and development of Krung Rattanakosin is then developed.



2017 funding for R&D in energy technology, conservation and renewable energy

On 11 January 2017, **Chula Unisearch** and the Energy Policy and Planning Office, Ministry of Energy (EPPO) met to clarify details of funding projects to support R&D in the fields of technology of energy conservation and renewable energy for the 2017 budget year. The meeting, held at Chulalongkorn University Research Building, was led by Prof. Yingyos Avihingsanon, M.D., Assistant to the President for Research, Development and Innovation (Health Sciences and Technology) and Assoc. Prof. Thavivongse Sriburi, Ph.D., Managing Director of Chula Unisearch. Representatives from higher education institutions in Bangkok presented details of their funding proposals, and Assoc. Prof. Kulyos Audomvongseeree, Ph.D., Director of the Energy Research Institute (ERI) presented a statement.

Chulalongkorn University has been selected by EPPO to administer its project to support development of renewable energy technologies via a research network among Bangkok's higher education institutions. As part of this role, the university will be responsible for reviewing and selecting proposals, as well as monitoring progress including reporting of



results within the framework of the objectives and targets set for each project.

The project, supported financially via the energy conservation promotion fund for the 2017 budget year, will support research to develop renewable energy, prioritizing joint interdisciplinary research with the goal of bringing practical benefits for the public and the nation. Participating higher education institutions include Chulalongkorn University (Bangkok), Chiang Mai University (Northern region), Kasetsart University (Central), King Mongkut's University of Technology Thonburi (Central and Western), Khon Kaen University (Upper Northeast), Suranaree University of Technology (Northeast Lower and Eastern) and Prince of Songkla University (Southern region).

HIGHWAY 4.0: A Seminar on the Strategic Plan for the Department of Highways



On 10 February 2017, the Department of Highways together with **Chula Unisearch** held a seminar: *"Strategic Plan for Department of Highways to HIGHWAY 4.0"* at the Sukosol Bangkok. At the seminar, the Department of Highways launched its Strategic Plan and Risk Management Plan 2017-2021. Following the opening ceremony presided over by Mr. Tawee Gasisam-ang, Deputy Director General for Administration, Mr. Surachai Srlenawat (Director of the Bureau of Planning, Department of Highways) reported the background and context for the seminar. The event was attended by Assoc. Prof. Supot Teachavorasinskun, Ph.D., Dean of the Faculty of

Engineering as well as over 200 representatives from the Department of Highways and other organizations.

The seminar aimed to create a common understanding on the overarching aim and approach to the Strategic Plan. Mr. Teerapong Rodprasert (Vice Minister for Transport), Lt. Sutthinan Hatthawong, R.T.N. (Director General of the Port Authority of Thailand), Assoc. Prof. Jittichai Rudjanakanoknad, Ph.D. (Transportation Institute, Chulalongkorn University), Mr. Sompong Khumkong (President of Laemchabang Chonburi Transport Association) and Mr. Chumpol Saichuea (Secretary of The Land Transport Federation of Thailand) shared their knowledge of strategic plans with officials of the Department of Highways, as well as representatives from public and private sector agencies and other stakeholders. The seminar offered an opportunity for all parties to exchange views and ideas and contribute towards development of the Department of Highways HIGHWAY 4.0 project plan.

CU TALENT MOBILITY

On Wednesday 22 February 2017, the Industry and International Collaboration Section of **Chula Unisearch** launched the **“CU TALENT MOBILITY”**. The event, held on the 2nd Floor of the Chulalongkorn University Research Building, aimed to clarify the details and criteria for projects to promote science, technology and innovation professionals among public sector universities and research institutions aiming to collaborate with the industrial sector. The seminar encouraged academic researchers to study



actual industrial processes in order to facilitate mutual exchange and learning between universities and industry as well as gain greater insight into real-world needs and challenges facing industry today. The aim for researchers should be to support industry in enhancing the competitiveness of Thailand's industrial sector. The opening ceremony was presided over by Prof. Kiat Ruxrungham, M.D. (Vice President for Research and Innovation, Chulalongkorn University), Assist. Prof. Poolsak Koseeyaporn, Ph.D. (Consultant of the Talent Mobility project, National Science Technology and Innovation Policy Office) and Mr. Permsak Arunee (Director of the Bureau of Higher Education Human Resources, Office of the Higher Education Commission). A joint statement was issued, setting out rules, criteria and requested budgets provided to faculty, researchers and companies interested in participating in the project. This event provided an opportunity for researchers and participating companies to exchange information and experiences.

Workshop “Needs assessment for disaster victims”

Chula Unisearch together with the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation, Ministry of the Interior, Thailand, recently held a workshop on the topic: **“Development of needs assessment for disaster victims”** in four pilot provinces: Pathum Thani, Nakhon Ratchasima, Chiang Mai and Nakhon Si Thammarat. The objective was to develop and improve the current needs assessment model to in keeping with the Thai social context. Participants included officials from the Department of Disaster Prevention and Mitigation from the central and regional levels, as well as officials from the provincial governments and local authorities in the four pilot provinces. The opening ceremony was graciously presided over by Assist. Prof. Tavida Kamolvej, Ph.D.

(Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University). Kanokphan U-sha, Ph.D. (Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University) delivered a lecture on the importance of preparation to cope with potential disasters, needs assessment to help victims, and an effective process for evaluation and assessment to help victims during each post-disaster period. Participants brainstormed, discussed and exchanged views and ideas to enhance the needs assessment process. This process served as an excellent guide to allocating and mobilizing scarce resources and implementing corrective actions, as well as in developing information systems to support needs assessment processes.





Chula Unisearch chief mourner to His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej

Chula Unisearch was granted royal permission by His Majesty King Maha Vajiralongkorn Bodindradebayavarangkun to host chanting ceremonies in dedication and pay respects to the His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej at the Dusit Maha Prasat Throne Hall, on Wednesday 1 February 2017, at 7 p.m.

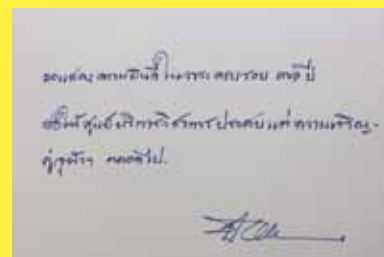
Rajamangala University of Technology Isan visit Chula Unisearch



Assoc. Prof. Thavivongse Sriburi, Ph.D. (Managing Director of Chula Unisearch) welcomed executives from the Institute of Academic Service of Rajamangala University of Technology Isan, led by Assoc. Prof. Prayut Wongpang (Acting Director of the Institute), who recently paid a visit to **Chula Unisearch**. The purpose of the group's visit was to study the operational model for academic services and research, in order to serve as a guideline for Rajamangala University of Technology Isan to follow.

31st Anniversary of the Establishment of Chula Unisearch

On Tuesday 14 February 2017, **Chula Unisearch** celebrated the 31st anniversary of its establishment in a ceremony held at the Chulalongkorn University Research Building. On this occasion Prof. Bundhit Eua-arporn, Ph.D. (President of Chulalongkorn University), together with the Vice President, Deans and directors of the University's Institutes, Centres and Offices joined the celebration and together donated funds to the Thai Red Cross Children's Foundation, as a tribute to His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej. A special morning merit-making ceremony was also held, to give alms and make food offerings.





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