

Doctoral Thesis

Sustainable Development in Tourism through the Capabilities Approach:
A Comparative Study of Thailand and Japan

(ケイパビリティ・アプローチを通じたツーリズムにおける持続可能な開発：
タイと日本の比較研究)

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AEC	ASEAN Economic Community
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
DASTA	Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization of Thailand)
HR	Human Resources
NESDB	National Economic and Social Development Board of Thailand
TAT	Tourism Authority of Thailand

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become one of the fastest-growing economic activities worldwide (UNEP, 2013) as well as making a key contribution to the global economy. Its total GDP contribution comprised 9.5% of global GDP in 2013 and its total employment contribution comprised 8.9% of total employment globally (WTTC, 2014.) As tourism is increasingly important to communities worldwide, the related need to develop sustainable tourism is becoming more and more acute (Hall & Richards, 2003.) Tourism is often regarded as a tool for development as it can improve the economy, create jobs and impact on social customs and lifestyles. Sustainable tourism can have a longer-lasting effect and potentially spawn sustainable development.

The United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development took place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 20-22 June, 2012, 20 years after the 1992 Earth Summit at the same venue, hence its alternative title Rio+20. Rio+20 gathered world leaders, alongside many participants from governments, the private sector, NGOs and other groups to discuss poverty reduction, boosting social equity and environmental protection; collectively known as “Sustainable Development.” The conference issued its outcome document “The Future We Want”, which outlined the role of sustainable tourism in sustainable development and poverty eradication settings. The resolution adopted on July 27, 2012 emphasized that well-designed and well-managed tourism can have a substantial impact on the economic, social and environmental facets of sustainable development, is closely linked to other sectors and can generate jobs and trade opportunities (UN General Assembly, 2012.)

Rio+20 recognizes the need to support sustainable tourism activities and encourages enhanced support for the same to achieve sustainable development. It also promotes and supports investment in sustainable tourism, including ecotourism and cultural tourism.

Amidst this growing awareness, Thailand, which is considered one of the world's most popular destinations and attracts more and more tourists each year, must also determine how best to manage its tourism resources sustainably and prevent them from being harmed. Against this background, the concept of Sustainable Tourism has emerged in the country. It seeks to balance environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects. Consequently, Thailand introduced a sustainable tourism policy in 2008 to tackle this issue, called the "7 Greens" concept.

This dissertation studies the effectiveness of the 7 Greens project that was launched in Nan City, northern Thailand. It analyzes the tourism situation in the city with an aim to encourage the shift toward a more sustainable form of tourism modeled on Hanno City, a model city designated for sustainable tourism in central Japan.

SUMMARY

Sustainable tourism is attracting attention, not only in Thailand but also globally, as a means of easing the pressure on natural and cultural resources, as well as boosting the livelihoods of local communities. As the Thai government became increasingly aware of the adverse impact of conventional tourism, the “Thai Tourism against Global Warming” Environment Conservation Declaration was launched by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) in 2008 to alert the relevant parties more closely to environmental issues. In this context, the 7 Greens concept has been defined as a guideline underpinning elements of tourism and encouraging efforts toward conservation and greenhouse-gas reductions by all parties involved.

The 7 Greens concept includes behavioral implications and an operational framework or guidelines toward environment preservation and greenhouse-gas reduction in 2009; later encompassing terms such as ecotourism, green tourism, sustainable tourism and community-based tourism. In general, it encourages an alternative form of tourism, less harmful than conventional mass tourism¹ and encourages tourism-related governmental bodies and private entities, including associations and media, environmental and educational institutions and visitors, to participate in the 7 Greens concept.

This dissertation focuses on two case studies; Nan City in Thailand and Hanno City in Japan; one of the Japanese Government’s designated model cities for ecotourism management. It examines and compares the tourist behavior and circumstances in Nan

¹ Mass Tourism is a notion commonly used to refer to numerous people participating in tourism and/or in standardized holidays.

City and Hanno City and aims to highlight the most effective way to achieve sustainable development in tourism for both cities.

Between March 2011 and March 2013, the author examined the effectiveness of the 7 Greens policy for Nan Province of Thailand; one of TAT's pilot areas. The author hypothesized that ecotourism in Nan City was unsustainable based on continuing extreme fluctuations in year-round tourist numbers and that the "7 Greens" message, the government's tourism promotion and advisories could have been conveyed more effectively and with greater impact.

The field survey conducted by the author shows that more than half the visitors who responded said they were unaware of the 7 Greens concept and a very few were unsure what it was. Conversely, more than half the local tourism service providers said they were aware of the 7 Greens concept but that their activities had not been assessed or followed up. Two restaurant owners said they felt that the project had already been stopped, which implies a lack of regular assessment measuring its effectiveness and feasibility.

Visitor numbers generally decline outside the winter season, but soar during the latter, which indicates that the city is reliant on seasonality and efforts to promote tourism during off-peak seasons are pending.

Subsequently, there was a tendency to recommend only one route to visitors traveling in Nan; suggested when the 7 Greens project was first launched. However, many other tourist attractions outside the recommended route are independently shown on tourism websites for visitors to handpick and customize their own trips. Visitors then proceed via car or hired van to those tourist attractions, enjoy the scenery and leave. All

this is done without obtaining sufficient guidance from local people, or contributing much to the areas they visit, which reflects and is a factor behind the lack of community participation.

Another problem is the inadequate training of human resources, which is again, an area that must be improved in the process toward sustainable tourism in Nan. According to an interview with a Nan City government officer, local guide-training courses were only held when the budget allowed and not every year. The training budgets also tended to cover English language and no incentives to encourage more active contributions from the local community are currently planned. The lack of appropriate training means a failure to establish the environment for community participation required to sustain the tourism industry.

In response, this research compares Thailand's 7 Greens project with a similar effort in Japan and evaluates the current status of ecotourism as a function for sustainable development in Hanno City of Saitama Prefecture. This was designated by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan as one of five model cities² for tourism management; based on nature, community and culture. Hanno City developed its own "Ecotourism" project, based on carefully managing natural, cultural and human resources and actively encouraging the social participation of local residents. One key point is the fact that the program is collaboratively designed and promoted by the local government and people. The Hanno City government has a dedicated Ecotourism Promotion Office, which works on designing tour programs, marketing to and attracting

² The other four model cities for tourism management based on nature, community and culture, as designated by the Ministry of the Environment are Tajiri in Miyagi prefecture, Iida in Nagano prefecture, Kosei in Shiga prefecture, and Nanki in Wakayama prefecture.

visitors, training local tour guides and encouraging local residents to participate by operating tours and funding them to facilitate the tour operations.

Moreover, Hanno City motivates and encourages its residents to establish relationships with visitors by harnessing the skills they have mastered via unique tour programs, which only they can offer. For example, one such program involves a local resident planning to introduce part of the city behind his house not shown on the map. Another local resident plans to take tourists to a pine forest that he owns to explain about the city's lumber industry. A group of home-makers plans to teach tourists how to cook a local dish and dessert. This strategy helps optimize every inch of the city and render its entire area a tourist attraction, whether or not any landmark is present. It also nurtures pride in local residents, reminding them that the city and the environment in which they grew up - something they have always taken for granted - are actually valuable assets from a visitor perspective and worth protecting. Tourists also benefit from this as they receive first-hand guidance and information from local guides, which helps them appreciate and remember the places. The people who are involved with ecotourism in Hanno do not aim for just economic benefits but they also work to protect the environment, give back to the society, and live the life that they value. People's quality of life is not only about material wealth but it is highly linked to the roles people have in their society as well as the ability to live in a comfortable environment. Therefore, the main focus should be on how the well-being of local people can be improved so that tourism can be sustainable.

Hanno City offers tour programs that are not only unique and informative for tourists, but also give something back to the city. They involve tourists participating in activities such as fishing "black bass", which are said to harm the ecosystem of the lake

in the city, helping locals collect yuzu fruit, which proliferate in good years and helping locals restore abandoned paddy fields. The tour programs benefit local residents, tourists and the environment. Tourists are happy to be participating in socially and environmentally-friendly activities while local residents, most of whom retirees, get to spend time outdoors and interact with new people. As a bonus, the program forges a lively community in the aging city.

Thanks to strong and active community participation, Hanno City has various year-round tour programs, offering diverse activities and itineraries in every season. Each tour is managed by a group of local residents, the city office, or both in tandem. Each is also always accompanied by a group of local residents that “own” the tour and at least one local government officer, who hands out surveys at the end of the tour for feedback and comments from tourists.

To economically sustain its tourism, Hanno City tries to attract more environmentally-friendly tourists by capturing four main groups of visitors, namely repeaters, the young generation, corporate visitors and event-joiners. The city is also trying to introduce late-night and early-morning programs such as deer watching, or night hiking, to boost hotel occupancy.

Last but not least, Hanno also puts extra effort into training its own tourism industry staff. Hanno City regularly holds a local guide-training course called “Hanno City Ecotourism Open College.” This is a three-day course, inculcating would-be local guides with the required knowledge, communication skills and techniques and insights into the appeal of their hometown, to deepen their understanding and prepare them to be effective local guides. There is also the “Hanno City Guide Step-up Course”, which is a

one-day course aimed at promoting guidance ability and the “Ecotourism Demae Course”, where government officials reach out to groups of local people, associations, or local governments, villages and universities elsewhere in Japan and abroad, to give lectures and presentations on their current activities.

Four significant implications are discussed in this dissertation. Firstly, the objective of Thailand’s 7 Greens policy needs to be clearly redefined and shifted from “focusing on reducing greenhouse gases and the impact of global warming” to “focusing on overall sustainable development by developing people. Rather than focusing on reducing greenhouse gases and the adverse impact on the environment, other resources associated with culture, society, history and the happiness and well-being of the community are equally important and could help spawn a more effective mechanism to protect the environment long-term. Secondly, there is a need for creative tourism to motivate community creativity and help nurture the environment and culture as well as maintain the flow of tourists. Thirdly, active involvement and participation at community- and municipal levels are more effective than work at central government level. Nan Province must not completely rely on central government support to execute its ecotourism plans but must also initiate its own ecotourism promotion plans to ensure it can handle intensifying tourism activities in time. Finally and most importantly, the factor that can best sustain and develop tourism has proven to be “the people” rather than just nature or culture. Thailand should note this emerging trend in Japan and prepare its people accordingly. It is envisaged from this research that ensuring tourism contributes to the sustainable development of Thailand will involve motivating community participation, carefully managing human capital, maximizing their

capabilities and effectively training local people to become ambassadors of positive experiences.

In addition to the environmental, social-cultural, and economic aspects, the “people” aspect has been added in this dissertation. When we look at Human Development, we cannot only look at economic growth and environment protection but we have to start thinking about the impact of economic growth, environment protection and people’s well-being. Investing to develop people’s capabilities in communities is crucial to achieving sustainable development in tourism. Not only will it improve the quality of life and working conditions for local people, it will also enhance awareness of the need to conserve the natural and cultural heritage of their towns and ultimately catalyze efforts to revitalize their communities. The key to sustainable development lies in the community’s value and the “personal contribution” of its people. Communities are a basic impetus for tourists to travel and experience ways of life, like the natural landscapes which tourists consume. Communities can also be considered as sources of tourism (Hall & Richards, 2003), which underlines the need to strengthen human capabilities along the way to a sustainable community and city. As “people” constitute the basic reason for visitors to travel and experience ways of life, we must focus on developing people’s capabilities.

The most crucial contribution of this dissertation lies in the application of Amartya Sen’s “Capability” in the context of “Sustainability” and the focus on leveraging “People” as the key to sustainable development.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Creative Tourism, Social well-being, Community Participation, Human Capabilities

CHAPTER 1: The Transition to Sustainable Tourism in Thailand

It is generally agreed that sustainability is one of the contemporary key issues faced by the tourism industry (Hall & Richards, 2003.) The tourism industry has been a major driver of Thailand's economy and a key income resource since the 1980s. As tourism is one of Thailand's major industries³ in terms of foreign currency earnings, there is growing concern at issues which may arise as the country tries to handle soaring tourist numbers and worry that the tourism industry may be unsustainable.

In 1998, the "Amazing Thailand" campaign was launched by the Tourism Authority of Thailand to promote general tourism in Thailand. A year later, the country saw international tourist arrivals reach 8,580,332, representing a 10.4% rise on the previous year. This exceeded the target set in the 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001), which set the target tourist increase rate at a minimum 7% per year (Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 1997.)

Thailand has enjoyed steady and remarkable progress in the tourism industry from 2009 onwards with tourist numbers increasing every year. According to a report presented by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports to the Cabinet in 2011, tourist arrivals increased steadily from 2005 to 2010, at an average rate of 7.5% per year; from 11.5 million arrivals in 2005 to 15.8 million in 2010.

However, while the tourism industry bent over backwards for visitors and focused on meeting demands to maximize their numbers, the country's tourism assets,

³ Other major industries of Thailand include automobiles and parts, financial services, electric appliances and components.

including natural and cultural resources, were being unwittingly burdened, and likewise the livelihood of local communities.

Following a shift in the tourism industry after the Rio Earth Summit in 1992⁴, mass tourism⁵ was replaced with alternative tourism, and the focus turned toward preserving the environment. Since then, tourism-related organizations in Thailand, including the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), have been trying to promote a new era of tourism, known as “Sustainable Tourism.” Tourism in Thailand has since become more responsible, focusing on sustainability.

Following global efforts to encourage sustainable development and environmental sustainability such as the United Nations’ Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Thai government has become increasingly aware of the adverse impact of tourism on its cultures and natural resources (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010). This has spawned many currently active initiatives⁶, sponsored by government and private entities and supporting efforts to enhance and further develop green tourism in Thailand. In 2008, TAT launched the “Thai Tourism against Global Warming” Environment Conservation Declaration Project (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010) to alert the relevant parties more closely to environmental issues and encourage all parties, as key tourism industry stakeholders, to cooperate in

⁴ The Earth Summit was a major United Nations conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Rio Summit and held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 3-14 June, 1992. (UNEP, 2014)

⁵ Mass Tourism is a notion which refers to numerous people participating in tourism and/or standardized holidays.

⁶ Green tourism initiatives supported by government include the Green Leaf Foundation (established in 2000 by the Committee of Environmental Activity Promotion for Tourism), Agro-tourism (established in 2000 Department of Agriculture Studies, Ministry of Agriculture), the Environmental Quality Index for Tourist Beach Assessment (Started in 2002 by the Pollution Control Department, Ministry of Natural resource and Environment), Thailand Tourism Awards for the preservation of the environment (Started in 2002 by TAT), and the 7 Greens Concept (Started in 2008 by TAT), (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2008)

environmental protection by showing Thailand's tourism stance to the international community. The aim was also for Thailand to earn a reputation among global tourists as a quality tourist destination. Under the Environmental Conservation Declaration, the 7 Greens concept has been determined as a guideline for conservation efforts and greenhouse-gas reductions for all relevant parties (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010.)

Samui Island in Surathani Province and Nan City in Nan Province were designated in 2009 as the initial two pilot cities for the 7 Greens initiative (Lawsuwan, 2011; Krayewski & Fritschy, 2012), although their regional characteristics and cultures differ. Samui Island, a well-known tourist destination, had been damaged by uncontrolled tourism and poor tourism management. Samui's natural resources have already deteriorated due to increasing tourist numbers (Krayewski & Fritschy, 2012.) Meanwhile, Nan City is considered a relatively "untouched" city that has recently gained popularity. It is relatively unknown, located in the North of Thailand, where most natural resources remain fragile and need preservation (Krayewski & Fritschy, 2012.) In other words, the aim of the project was to "cure" Samui Island and "protect and prevent" Nan City from declining (Lawsuwan, 2011.)

For the characteristics outlined above, Nan City was selected as the case study for Thailand's sustainable tourism in this dissertation. This is also because Nan City is well placed to represent many other small towns in Thailand that are rich in natural and socio-cultural resources and which need to be revitalized under the sustainable development objective. Since the pilot city is in Nan Province, the other districts within Nan Province are also often included in TAT's sustainable tourism development programs. Since certain 7 Greens activities are held in other districts of Nan Province,

this dissertation will analyze Nan Province as a whole but refer to Nan City at some specific points. The dissertation examines local tourism service providers and visitors' behavior, their environmental awareness, their knowledge of TAT's 7 Greens concept and their contribution under the 7 Greens concept to developing sustainable tourism in Nan Province. It also tries to answer the question of how this concept could be developed and applied to other cities in Thailand.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Tourism as a Strong Income Source

The number of global visitors is increasing every year. UNWTO forecasts up to 1.17 billion international visitors in 2015 and 1.60 billion in 2020 (Subcommittee on Content Development for the World Economic Forum on East Asia 2012, 2012.) For Thailand, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) ranking in 2014, the country entered the world top 10 ranking by international tourist arrivals⁷, climbing to number 10, from number 15 in the previous year. Thailand also moved up 2 positions to become global number 7 in terms of tourism revenue receipts⁸ (UNWTO, 2014). In 2013, The Bank of Thailand cited the tourism sector as an important growth engine for the economy (Bank of Thailand, 2014) and regarded tourism as one of the largest industries and an important source of foreign currency earnings and employment for Thailand. Due to the current economic slowdown in Thailand, particularly the contracting exports sector, tourism is being monitored as a

⁷ UNWTO's 2014 Top 10 ranking by International Tourist Arrivals: 1) France, 2) United States, 3) Spain, 4) China, 5) Italy, 6) Turkey, 7) Germany, 8) United Kingdom, 9) Russian Federation, 10) Thailand

⁸ UNWTO's 2014 Top 10 ranking by Tourism Receipts: 1) United States, 2) Spain, 3) France, 4) China, 5) Macau (China), 6) Italy, 7) Thailand, 8) Germany, 9) United Kingdom, 10) Hong Kong (China)

key contributor for Thailand’s economy (Bank of Thailand, 2014), currently accounting for about 8.5% of Thailand’s GDP in 2012 as shown in Figure 1.

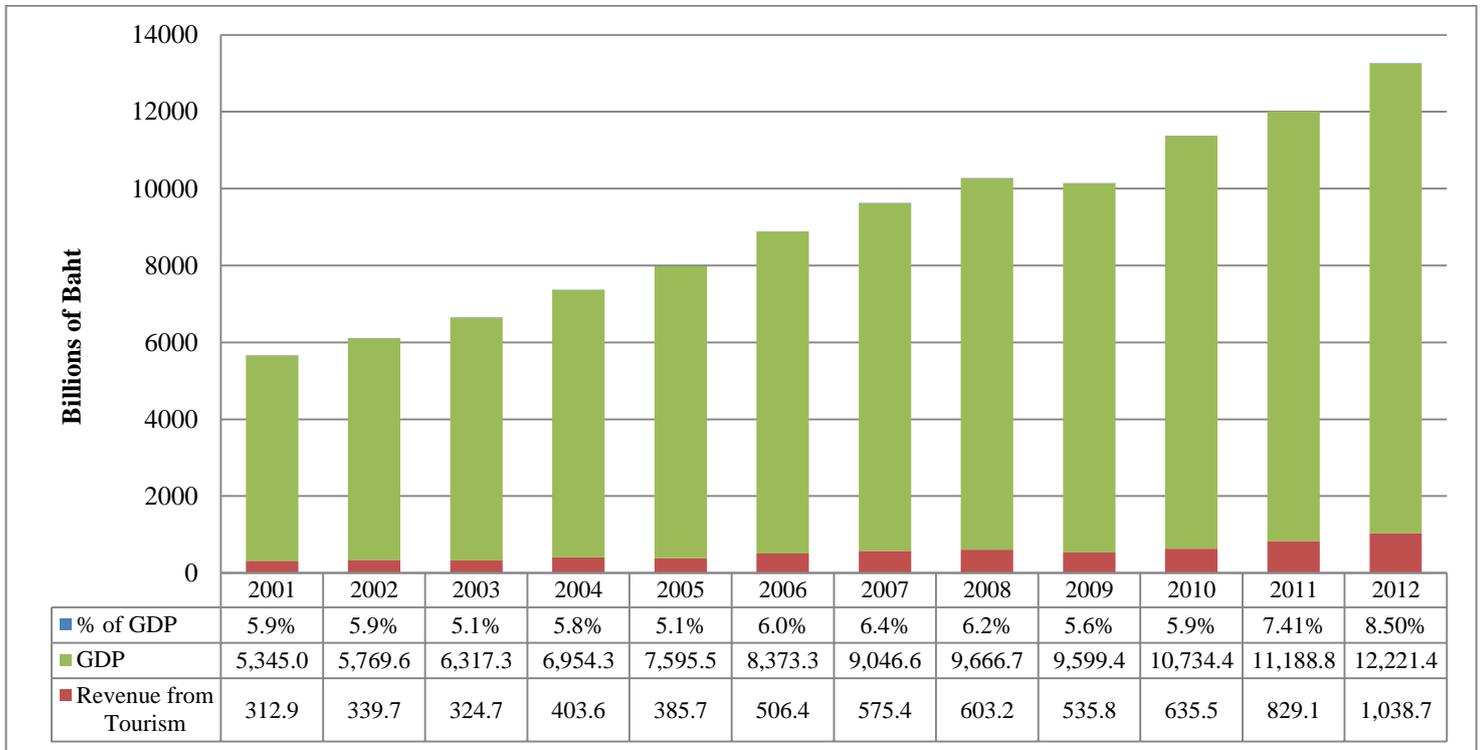


Figure 1: Ratio between Revenue from Tourism and GDP of Thailand (Compiled by Author, Sources: Bank of Thailand, 2001-2012)

Revenue from tourism has been increasing steadily, except for 2009, when the global economic crisis temporarily affected Thailand’s tourism industry. The major source of revenue⁹ from tourism comes from Primary Core¹⁰ and Secondary Activities¹², while hotels and tour operators have a particularly large share of tourism revenue.

⁹ Thailand’s revenue from tourism came mainly from Europe, followed by East Asia, ASEAN, the Americas, Oceania, South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa. (The Government Public Relations Department, 2011)

¹⁰ Primary Core Activities refer to international business travel and direct tourism services, including tour operators and accommodation providers (Subcommittee on Content Development for the World Economic Forum on East Asia 2012, 2012)

¹² Secondary Activities center on catering business, product sales, entertainment and local transport fields (Subcommittee on Content Development for the World Economic Forum on East Asia 2012, 2012)

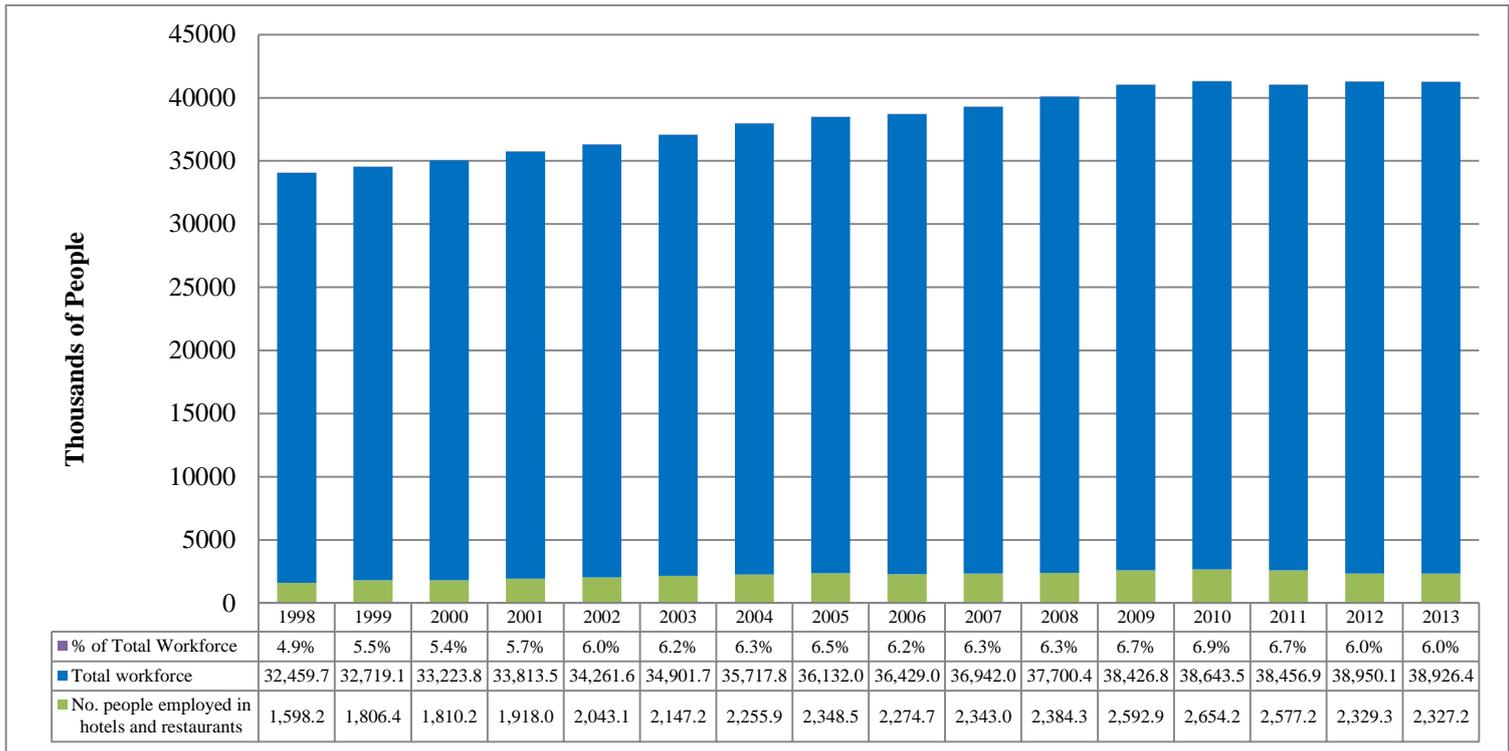


Figure 2: Ratio between the numbers of hotel and restaurant employees and the total workforce in Thailand (Compiled by Author, Sources: Bank of Thailand, 1998-2010 and Thailand's National Statistics Office, 2011-2013)

Figure 2 shows the number of people employed in the hotels and restaurants sector. As the tourism industry is broad and also encompasses other industries, such as transportation, hotels, food and beverages, the hotel and restaurant sector is used in this research to gauge the employment growth of the tourism industry. The percentage of employment in the hotels and restaurants sector comprised an average 6.1% proportion of the nationwide workforce during the period 1998 to 2013 (Bank of Thailand, 1998-2010; Thailand's National Statistics Office, 2011-2013), as illustrated in Figure 2.

This chart shows the steady climb in employment in the hotels and restaurants sector and the promising aspect of tourism as an industry that may continue to create more jobs for the people of Thailand.

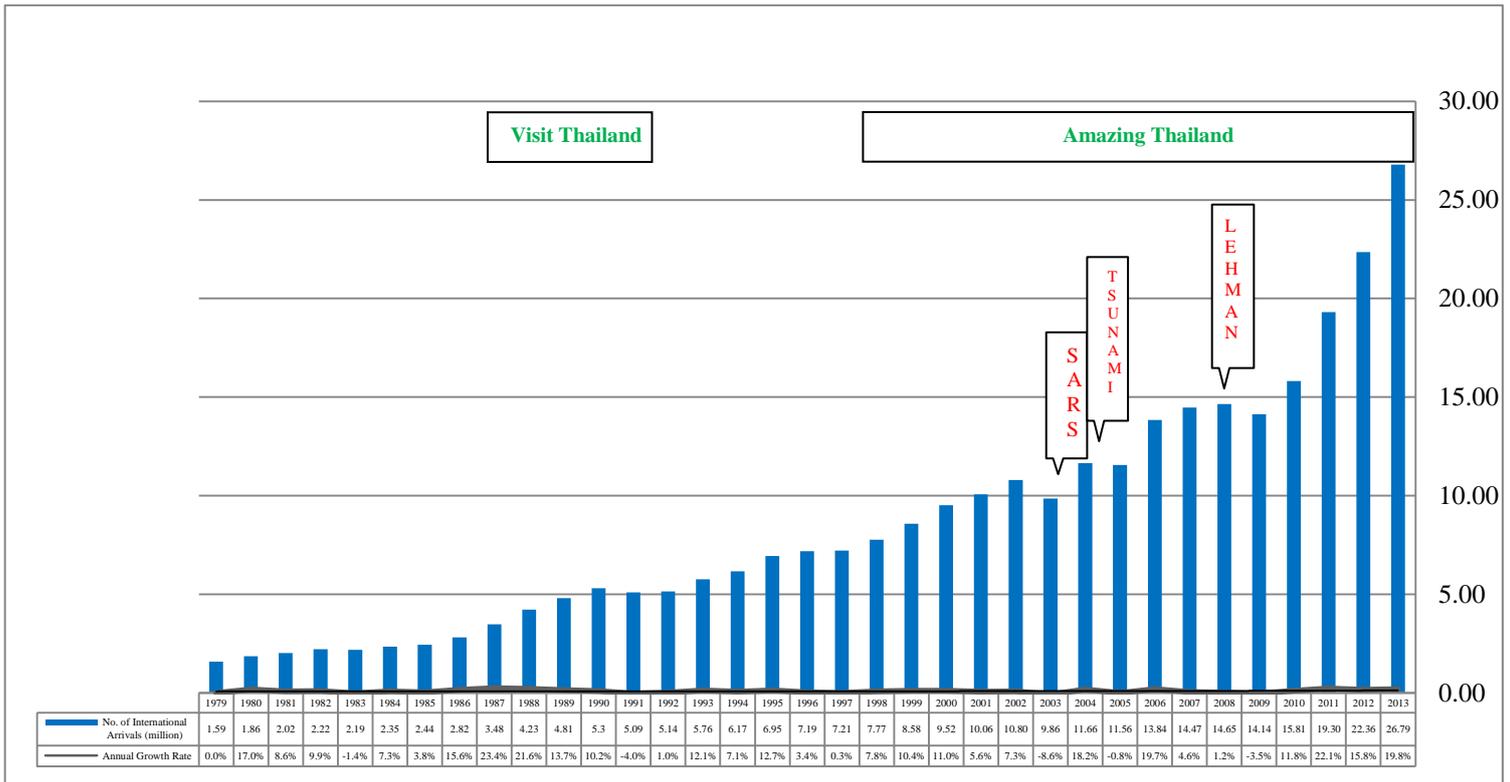


Figure 3: Number of International Arrivals in Thailand, compiled and illustrated by author (Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 1979-1992, Department of Tourism, 1993-2000 and Bank of Thailand, 2001-2013)

Similarly, Thailand has been experiencing a steady increase in international tourists¹³ between 1993 and 2013. Following the “Amazing Thailand” promotion in 1998, Thailand saw a steady increase in the number of international arrivals. In the first half of 2003, uncertainties surrounding the US-Iraq war and the outbreak of SARS (Bank of Thailand, 2004) affected the tourism industry, but in the third quarter the same year, the situation rebounded. Subsequently, again in 2005, a major tsunami near the six provinces in the south of Thailand adversely affected the tourism industry. However, the impact subsided and Thailand’s tourism recovered steadily until the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers Holdings in September 2008, which prompted another decline in the number of global tourists the following year. Nevertheless, the country has since

¹³ Thailand receives most international tourist arrivals from Malaysia, followed by China, Japan, the United Kingdom, the Republic of Korea, India, Australia, Laos, the United States, Germany, Russia, Singapore, France, Vietnam, and Taiwan. (The Government Public Relations Department, 2011)

experienced a continuous increase in tourist numbers year-on-year. As shown in Figure 3, the number of international tourist arrivals peaked at a record high of 26.79 million in 2013, a 19.8% increase over the previous year, despite the global economic slowdown and the domestic political standoff¹⁴. This increase was attributed to a number of factors. These are thought to include the increased number of middle-class travelers, the popularity and value of Thailand as a travel destination from the perspective of international tourists (Subcommittee on Content Development for World Economic Forum on East Asia 2012, 2012) and the increased supply of low cost carriers in the Asia-Pacific region.

Moreover, tourism is becoming a significant industry for Thailand as the country must seek a competitive advantage in “Thainess” and “Thai Hospitality” to compete in the global market¹⁵ (Suehiro, 2013.)

1.1.2 Adverse impacts of Conventional Tourism

Although tourism offers many positive impacts in terms of the socio-cultural, economic, environmental and political development of destinations, it can also have downsides depending on how activities are managed. Three main types of impacts made by the tourism sector are Environmental impacts, Socio-cultural impacts and Economic impacts (UNEP, 2014.) Environmentally, tourism is considered a significant cause of

¹⁴ The political standoff in Thailand has been ongoing since the 2006 coup d'état, which ousted former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra and has involved a series of political demonstrations and unrest in the main cities of Thailand to date (2014).

¹⁵ As Thailand is losing competitiveness in industries such as electronics, it should refocus efforts on its resource-based industries such as food and tourism, instead of attempting to compete with large manufacturing countries such as China, Thailand should focus on promoting its competitive resources and local value, such as its “Thainess” and “Thai Hospitality”, to gain competitiveness in the global arena (Suehiro, 2013)

natural resource depletion, pollution and physical impacts, as detailed in the following table:

Table 1: Environmental Impacts of Conventional Tourism

Environmental Impacts of Tourism	Explanation
Depletion of natural resources	Natural resources are depleted when consumption increases in areas with scarce resources e.g. water and local resources like food, minerals, fuel, forests, and wildlife (UNEP, 2014.)
Pollution	Pollution derived from tourism activities often includes air and noise pollution, sewage, solid waste and littering (UNEP, 2014), particularly in areas with poor waste management systems (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010.)
Physical impacts	Physical impacts include the degradation of ecosystems such as beaches, lakes, riversides, mountain tops and slopes, all living organisms and other physical surroundings (UNEP, 2014) (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011.)

As Thailand lacks expertise in efficient waste management, its tourism cities are experiencing issues in managing their solid waste and sewage. Thailand also experiences pollution issues in mountainous areas, around beach areas and on the seabed, due to irresponsible tourism activities.

Socio-culturally, tourism can result in a change or loss of indigenous identity and values, culture clashes, social stresses, ethical issues and increased conflicts with local communities. In some northern parts of Thailand such as Chiang Mai and Chiang Rai, staged authenticity can be found. Many parts of Thailand are losing their integrity as they too feel the impact of tourism. The socio-cultural impacts are explained in the following table:

Table 2: Socio-cultural Impacts of Conventional Tourism

Socio-cultural Impacts of Tourism	Explanation
Change or loss of identity and values	Tourism can cause a change or loss of local identity and values, due to influences as the commodification of local cultures, standardization to meet tourists' demands and expectations, staged authenticity, and loss of integrity (Pattaratorn, 2013)
Culture clashes	Cultural clashes can occur due to differences in cultures, ethnic and religious groups, values and lifestyles, languages, and affluence. Cultural clashes may also be caused by economic inequality and irritation due to tourist behavior (UNEP, 2014.)
Social stresses	Increasing tourism flow and its consequent developments e.g. resource use conflicts, cultural deterioration, conflicts with land uses, etc. can cause severe social stresses as they impact on the local community (UNEP, 2014.)
Ethical issues	Tourism can cause serious situations involving ethical and criminal issues, such as crime and child labor (UNEP, 2014.)
Conflicts with local communities	Conflicts with local communities may arise from possible resource-sharing, investment and benefit-sharing disputes (UNEP, 2014.)

Economically, the downsides of tourism can also affect the host community if not managed well. Potential issues include monetary leakage¹⁶, enclave tourism¹⁷ and other impacts such as increasing cost of infrastructure and living, deepening economic dependence of the local community on tourism and seasonal employment insecurity. Regarding the issue of income inequality, in many cases in Thailand, workers in local hotels who earn \$3,500 annually spend most of their working hours in the proximity of tourists whose annual income may exceed \$70,000. This income inequality may expose the local workers to a different perspective toward money and result in improper spending, dissatisfaction with life and a lack of understanding of the value of money.

¹⁶ A study of tourism 'leakage' in Thailand estimated that 70% of all money spent by tourists ended up leaving Thailand via foreign-owned tour operators, airlines, hotels, imported drinks and food, etc. (Sustainable Living, 2014, cited in UNEP, 2014)

¹⁷ Enclave tourism refers to all-inclusive tour packages, where tourists are provided with everything they need during their vacation, often by a single service provider, limiting the opportunity for local people to profit from tourism (UNEP, 2014).

To tackle these issues as the tourism industry has been consolidating, it has been identified as one of the priority sectors for development in Thailand according to the National Economic and Social Development Plans, which are underlined in 1.1.3

Development Plans Targeting Sustainable Tourism.

1.1.3 Development Plans Targeting Sustainable Tourism

In 1987, Thailand's cabinet meeting adopted a resolution citing 1987 as the year for Thailand tourism, whereupon various special tourism-related events were set up. TAT, alongside public and private sectors, also stepped up to support the "Visit Thailand Year." Many local cities, towns and villages held their own tourism events, which were both successful and unsuccessful, and revenue between 1987 and 1992 rose to a record high (Naresuan University, 2014.) However, this came at the cost of the environment and declining socio-cultural circumstances nationwide. Consequently, a close study on Ecotourism started in 1993 (Naresuan University, 2014.) At the time, Ecotourism was considered the only solution toward sustainable tourism. To support this, the Foundation for the Protection of Environment and Tourism was established in 1992 to promote related activities. A private sector body called "Thai Ecotourism and Adventure Travel Association" (TEATA) was also set up in December 1997, to complement the efforts of tour operators to provide sustainable tour activities and create environmentally-friendly travel programs, adventurous travel programs, and ecotourism programs. Through these joint efforts, ecotourism is regarded in Thailand as the most widely promoted form of sustainable tourism (Naresuan University, 2014.)

Sustainable tourism is attracting attention; not only globally but also in Thailand (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2008) as a means of reducing pressure on natural and cultural resources, as well as on the livelihoods of local communities. The Thai

government has therefore devised several development plans in recent years to promote sustainable tourism nationally. Policies for sustainable tourism in this dissertation primarily refer to the following two main governmental plans:

1. The National Economic and Social Development Plans
2. TAT Ecotourism Policies Development in Thailand

This pair of development plans was selected for this research to investigate the national agenda for the sustainable development of tourism in more detail. The author refers to these plans because they were compiled by the Government of Thailand.

(1) The National Economic and Social Development Plans

Policies for Thailand's ecotourism were compiled as part of the 8th and 9th National Economic and Social Development Plans (1997-2001) and (2002-2006) respectively. During this period, Thailand started actively adhering to these ecotourism development plans, based on the following principles:

**The 8th and 9th National Economic and Social Development Plans
(1997-2001) and (2002-2006)**

1. Humans are at the heart of development objectives. Development must establish wealth and well-being for all.
2. Tourism is recognized as the country's main income source, particularly foreign-currency income.
3. The government will promote cooperation among tourism stakeholders, including individuals, local administrative organizations, other government agencies, private sectors and other relevant parties. They should also jointly establish a plan to rehabilitate damaged tourist attractions and preserve natural resources, which are crucial for a sustainable tourism industry.
4. The government will upgrade standards and services in both public and private sectors, while focusing efforts on the entrepreneurial capacity of SMEs to reinforce and develop human capital at all levels to meet changing needs, missions and innovations.
5. The government will prepare local administrations for delegating authority to jointly manage, revive and develop tourist attractions to local administrative organizations; aiming to foster sustainable tourism.
6. The government and related private organizations will cooperate in running public relations campaigns to present Thailand's image overseas as a "Quality Destination."
7. The government will join forces with the private sector to develop a complete E-tourism system comprising 5Es, namely: e-tour info, e-trust, e-commerce capacity, e-tourism mail and e-marketplace.
8. The government will revise tourism laws to support and benefit tourism management now and in future.

Figure 4: Tourism-related objectives in the 8th and 9th National Economic and Social Development Plans
(Source: TAT, 2011)

The 8th and 9th National Economic and Social Development Plans stressed people-centered development and recognized tourism as Thailand's main income source; particularly in terms of foreign currency. The plans also prioritize establishing well-being among people to facilitate the participation of all in society. The plans aim to strike a balance between the economy, society and environment to pave the way for sustainable development. The government also pledged to promote cooperation among

tourism stakeholders for a sustainable tourism industry by developing human resources at all levels as well as developing tourist attractions. In other words, the plans paved the way for sustainable development but the implementation was not conducted until the 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan.

The 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2007-2011) saw the implementation of sustainable development. It set out a further five main development strategies as follows:

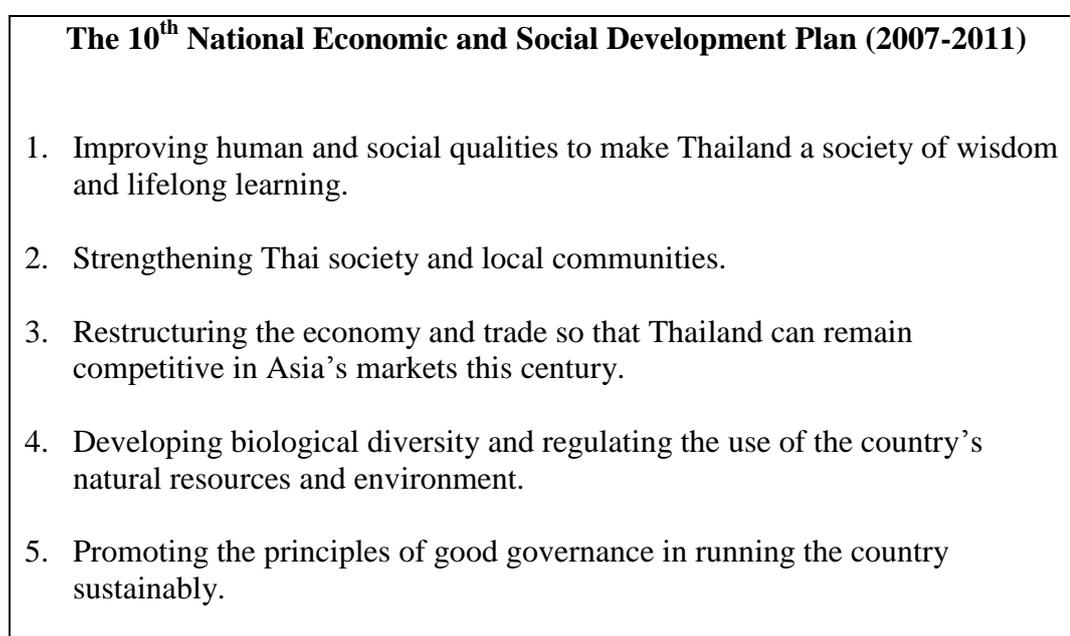


Figure 5: Tourism-related objectives in the 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan (Source: Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2011)

The 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan was under the direction of the Sufficiency Economy philosophy¹⁸, stressing efforts to improve human and social conditions, people's knowledge, self-reliance and strong communities to strengthen society. While aiming to enhance and stabilize the economy, it also aimed to develop and regulate the use of Thailand's natural and environmental resources sustainably.

¹⁸ The Sufficiency Economy was proposed in 1974 by King Rama the Ninth of Thailand as a way of creating an economic system that helps lessen the risk of economic instability (The Chaipattana Foundation, 2014).

Regarding tourism, under the 10th plan, the industry was expected to expand and become more diverse. This plan envisages tourism as an industry with potential economic capacity for Thailand to remain competitive in the global market.

The plan defines tourism as a main national income source and recommends establishing Thailand as a regional center for natural and cultural tourism by utilizing its outstanding and diverse natural resources, cultures and lifestyles to boost industry competitiveness; by differentiating and emphasizing the unique expertise of main service areas such as education, health and spas, wholesale and retail, finance, information technology, construction and the film business, etc. Some guidelines for restructuring the tourism industry were stated in the 10th plan as follows:

Guidelines for restructuring the tourism industry in the 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2007-2011)

1. Restoring and developing natural and historical sites in local areas, as well as strengthening the Thai concept, while conserving local cultures, lifestyles and knowledge to create new tourism products for Thai tourism businesses and becoming a tourism resource for the global tourism market.
2. Promoting tourism-related investment to support visitors with certain interests and add value to the business. This includes health businesses, convention centers and exhibitions, long stays, One Tambon, One-Product (OTOP) shopping, artificial tourist sites, etc.
3. Developing the quality and standards of potential businesses and services with credibility in mind and supporting global demand as well as a free zone for services, particularly those provided by businesses that can attract customers from abroad such as tourism, education, health and film, etc.
4. Continually promoting the tourism market and customers of business services to maintain the current market and expand to new quality markets such as the Russian market and those from former Soviet Union countries, the middle-east market, etc.
5. Developing factors that support tourism businesses, including setting up a telecommunications network to improve accessibility and linkage among tourist attractions. Enhancing safety standards and improving law and order. The development of human capital to match the needs of businesses is also key here as well as building capacity among businesspeople and local government officials.
6. Building cooperation between public and private sectors and local communities to conserve and develop natural, historical and cultural tourism resources as well as supporting the networking activities of local people and linking the same to tourism activities to create jobs and income for communities.

Figure 6: Tourism-related guidelines for restructuring the tourism industry as stated in the 10th National Economic and Social Development Plan (Source: Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2011)

The 10th plan encouraged the conservation of “Thainess” as a new idea for the Thai tourism business to compete in the global market. It also called for the development of a transportation network to improve accessibility between tourist attractions. Similar to the 8th and 9th plans, the 10th plan urged the development of

human resources to support the needs of tourism businesses. Last but not least, the plan sought improved cooperation from local communities to conserve tourism resources and support the activities of local people; targeting jobs and income for the communities.

In summary, the plans to develop sustainable tourism are crucial and significant as they help remind people and authorities to continue conserving tourism resources. Not only will this help protect their areas against deterioration, it will also shield their communities against downsides such as job losses or impaired quality of life.

At present, the country is officially pursuing the 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2012-2016), with the motto “A happy society with equality, fairness and resilience”, under which well-balanced development and a happy society are emphasized. This plan is derived from the principles of the 8th, 9th and 10th plans and prioritizes bottom-up development, namely from individuals, family and community all the way up to national level. The scope also includes an emphasis on restructuring the service sector, particularly the tourism industry; focusing on creating individual and social value and self-identity and promoting the uniqueness of Thailand and Thai communities. This people-centered development and the concept of cultural and environmental conservation have been comprehensively transferred into the tourism industry, step by step and also constitute management that considers the tolerable limits of nature, community and culture. The Thai government sees this as an opportunity to establish branding of this style of tourism while advertising Thailand’s culture and nature to the global market. Consequently, tourism-related strategies are outlined as follows:

The 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan (2012-2016)

1. Build competitive advantages of businesses to make them more creative by supporting research and development. Promote the application of knowledge and new technologies and invest in high potential businesses. Competitive advantages should be sought in geographical locations, biodiversity, culture and other uniquely Thai elements. Moreover, competitive advantages should be fully exploited in international markets such as tourism, healthcare services, logistics, the film industry and meeting, incentive, convention and exhibition (MICE) industry.
2. Expand the production and marketing of high-potential businesses to overseas buyers by developing the competitive advantages of Thai firms throughout the supply chain. Provide financial support and tax measures as enjoyed by competitors overseas. New markets should be explored and networks of business partnerships strengthened to expand overseas business in services. The skills and talents of personnel should be expanded and businesses and professionals should meet international standards.
3. Develop enabling factors to encourage national and international inward investment in the service sector. The efficiency of services should be improved. Create databases that focus on high potential businesses. Laws and regulations should be revised and incentives to facilitate investment should be improved. Research and development as well as knowledge transfer should be supported. The application of information technology by businesses should be encouraged. Environmentally responsible operations should be promoted in service businesses and human resource development should reflect current needs.
4. Rehabilitate and increase the quality of tourist attractions to boost market demand. Major attractions that have deteriorated should be revived. Tourism clusters in high potential areas should be created. Activities for tourists that fit the potential of each area should be promoted. Trends in global demand such as health tourism, ecotourism and historical and cultural tourism can provide opportunities. Fresh marketing strategies should attract new customers in new markets.
5. Manage tourism to achieve balanced and sustainable growth by focusing on activities that are creative and environmentally-friendly. Take into account the capacity of tourist attractions to elevate the standards of service businesses. The quality and sufficiency of infrastructure should be increased. Tourism should reflect Thai lifestyle, culture and natural resources.
6. Strengthen local communities, small enterprises and public personnel so they can link the production and service sectors at an area level via the cluster-development approach. Develop the skills and knowledge of human capital in the public sector, local governments and communities as well as small and medium enterprises so they can cope with impacts that arise from changing global economic conditions.”

Figure 7: Tourism-related objectives in the 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan (Source: Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board, 2011)

The 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan aims to leverage Thailand's competitive advantage by utilizing the country's uniqueness and selling it to the global market. It also urges service businesses to operate in an environmentally responsible manner. Under this plan, human resources are to be developed to meet strategic needs as well as international standards. The 11th plan seeks to boost tourist demand by improving and reviving major tourist attractions, creating activities that meet local needs and promoting alternative and responsible tourism. It looks to achieve sustainable development in tourism by focusing on activities that are creative and environmentally-friendly and which also reflect the "Thainess" of the people and the communities. Concurrently, the 11th plan also aims to strengthen and develop the human capital in the public sector, local governments, private sector and the local communities to prepare them from any risks and instabilities.

(2) TAT Policies for Sustainable Tourism in Thailand

This section highlights two main sets of policies for sustainable tourism that have been formulated by TAT. The first is the ecotourism policy which was stipulated in 1997 and has remained in use to date. The second is TAT's sustainable tourism guideline called the 7 Greens concept, which was set out in 2008. As TAT regards ecotourism as one form of sustainable tourism that contributes to the sustainable development of the country, it is important to develop ecotourism and manage it properly. Nowadays, given increasing awareness of the fragility of the world's most diverse cultures and pristine environments, the market for ecotourism is soaring and is the fastest-growing sector of global tourism to date (UNEP, 2013.) Likewise,

ecotourism is one of the most widely promoted sub-sectors¹⁹ of sustainable tourism in Thailand (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2001.)

The development of ecotourism in Thailand actively started from 1993²⁰, before which tourism development generally aimed to maximize national income, focusing on increasing the total of visitors but causing tourist attractions and the environment to deteriorate, affecting the quality of life of the local community. This was a reason for establishing sustainable tourism in the form of ecotourism, which could be regarded as the best known form of sustainable tourism. Ecotourism involves managing natural resources, local community participation, social development and local people's lifestyles and is directly linked to the interest of the international community in conserving the environment.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) called for Policies and Guidelines for Ecotourism Development (1995-1996) to be studied in depth. The final report was submitted in 1997, which included policies and strategies as guidelines for implementing ecotourism.

¹⁹ Sub-sectors of Sustainable Tourism include but are not limited to: ecotourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, rural tourism, cultural tourism, responsible tourism, geotourism, pro-poor tourism, green tourism, and agro-tourism (Center for Responsible Travel Stanford University & Washington, DC , 2014)

²⁰ Following excessive exposure to the increasing number of tourists following the "Visit Thailand" year in 1992, a close study on Ecotourism was launched and attracted attention. At the time, Ecotourism was believed to be the only solution toward sustainable tourism (Naresuan University, 2014).

TAT's Main Ecotourism Policies

1. Ecotourism Development must manage resources to retain their original condition as far as possible and avoid or refrain from using sensitive areas which are prone to being adversely affected and difficult to rehabilitate.
2. Ecotourism management must take the character and potential of existing resources into consideration when determining appropriate activities to be performed there (including striving to avoid serious conflict with other forms of tourism.)
3. The benefits of ecotourism should be channeled to the wider tourism industry.
4. Development must include promoting educational development and promoting awareness within the community and industry to jointly maintain the local ecosystem, rather than focusing solely on economic growth and income generation.
5. Ecotourism management must facilitate the involvement of local people and organizations in the development process, particularly in managing the resources, services and programs designed to transfer knowledge and community culture (which should include their participation in formulating development plans) and opportunities should be created for their representatives to become members of joint-committees at every level.
6. In developing sustainable tourism, it is essential to prioritize ecotourism and assign clear roles to appropriate organizations in promoting the same, which can be done through a sufficient budget, personnel provisions and management system design.
7. An ecotourism development plan should be incorporated into general development plans at all levels, namely plans for district development, provincial development and regional development, alongside budget allocation and distribution to facilitate implementation.
8. The development objectives should be supported by research which analyzes and assesses all aspects of tourism to determine or adjust the management guidelines, solve any problems arising and improve the plans step by step.
9. The law should be used strictly to maintain the environmental condition of tourism resources by focusing on providing advice and warnings, as well as cultivating discipline among visitors.
10. Operating guidelines, or a code of conduct, should be provided for the relevant persons to facilitate proper involvement in ecotourism development.

Figure 8: TAT's Main Ecotourism Policies (Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011)

TAT's ecotourism policy urged conservative treatment of delicate areas and requested compliance with an ecotourism development plan from people at all levels to achieve sustainable tourism. The policy also requested that local people and relevant

organizations get involved, particularly at managerial level. Moreover, TAT also saw the importance of sharing the benefits of ecotourism within tourism-related communities to ensure fairness and well-being. This policy was clearly targeted at the public sector and decision-makers in tourism-related organizations. As it was set out prior to introducing the 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan, it is clear that this policy did not yet cite people-centered development or the active participation of local communities. However, the general contents were being directed to the same principle as that of the 8th and 9th National Economic and Social Development Plans.

Another set of sustainable tourism policies and guidelines stipulated in recent years is the 7 Greens concept, which is expected to play an important role in developing sustainable tourism in Thailand and on which this dissertation is based. The effectiveness of the 7 Greens initiative and the potential to expand the scope beyond the environment alone to also encompass the current concept and achieve more balanced sustainability will be discussed in chapter 2.

According to a study in 2010 by the University of Adelaide's Environmental Institute, Thailand ranks among the world's bottom ten²¹ in terms of environmental impact against total resource availability (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010.)

With environmental literacy as a prime goal and given Thailand's competitive advantage in ecotourism, thanks to its greenery, beaches, unique cultural experiences and many opportunities for adventurous activities, alongside increasing awareness by the Thai government (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2008) of the adverse impacts of unmanaged tourism, the "Thai Tourism against Global Warming" Environment

²¹ The world's bottom 10 environmental performers according to the proportional environmental impact index (relative to resource availability) were: Singapore, Korea, Qatar, Kuwait, Japan, Thailand, Bahrain, Malaysia, Philippines and the Netherlands. The indicators used to form the ranking were natural forest loss, habitat conversion, fisheries and other marine captures, fertilizer use, water pollution, carbon emissions from land use and species threat. (Source: The University of Adelaide, 2010)

Conservation Declaration was launched by TAT in 2008 (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011) to alert the relevant parties more closely to environmental issues. It was a project that expressed the intention of TAT in campaigning and encouraging tourism-related organizations, businesses and individuals to be aware and cooperate to minimize the negative impact on the environment and uphold the image of tourism. Alongside this project, TAT established a guideline called “7 Greens”, with concepts based on tourism factors. 7 Greens is a framework for sustainable tourism that focuses on environmental sustainability.

Simultaneously, in accordance with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) launching its global partnership calling for worldwide sustainable tourism, Thailand stepped up to contribute to this partnership (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010) by responding to the UNEP initiative on sustainable tourism. Consequently, the 7 Greens Concept was determined and launched in 2009; calling for a conservation effort and greenhouse-gas reductions from all relevant parties (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011.) The 7 Greens concept encourages alternative tourism that is more benign than conventional mass tourism and cooperation from tourism-related governmental bodies, private sectors, including associations and media, environmental and educational institutions and visitors, to promote the 7 Greens. The 7 Greens comprise Green Heart, Green Logistics, Green Attractions, Green Communities, Green Activities, Green Service and Green Plus (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010.) A marketing poster of 7 Greens is illustrated in Figure 9:

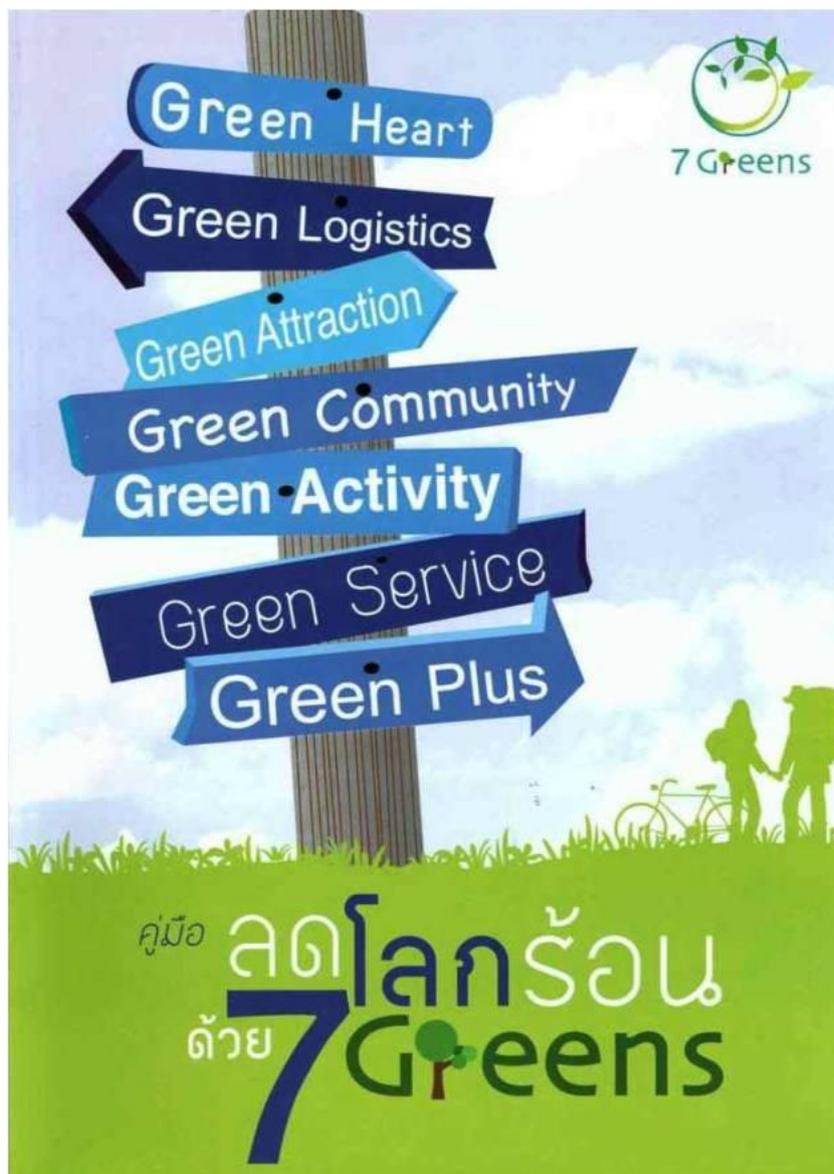


Figure 9: Poster concerning the 7 Greens Initiative from the Thai Government (Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2012) (English Translation: Global Warming Reduction by 7 Greens)

Elements of the “7 Greens”

7 Greens is a concept targeting all tourism stakeholders, such as tourism operators, local authorities, organizations, local residents and tourists, to cooperate by conserving the environment and reducing greenhouse gases while engaging in tourism activities. The 7 Greens concept comprises the seven elements illustrated in Figure 10.



Figure 10: Poster concerning the 7 Greens Initiative (Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011) English translation of the motto at the center of the poster: “Enjoy Traveling, Care for the Environment”

The 7 Greens elements require the participation of all tourism-related stakeholders to engage in their tourism activities in a responsible and environmentally-friendly way. The seven elements are detailed below:

i. Green Heart - To urge people to be socially responsible and environmentally aware

Those involved in every sector of the tourism industry must have appropriate attitudes, feelings, thoughts, perception and awareness concerning the value of the environment. They should also act to preserve and restore the environment as well as reducing greenhouse gases with proper knowledge, understanding and methods.

ii. Green Logistics - To encourage more environmentally-friendly tourism-related modes of transport

Public transport used between people's homes and tourist venues must be either energy-saving or involve using alternative energy to reduce greenhouse gases and preserve the environment.

iii. Green Attractions - To promote responsibly managed tourist sites that respect the environment

Tourist attractions must also be managed according to the sustainable development policy framework and implementation and must be clearly committed to environmental preservation as well as reducing greenhouse gases via appropriate means.

iv. Green Community - To support community-based tourism in both urban and rural areas that promotes conservation of the environment, local traditions and ways of life

Community tourist attractions must have integrated and sustainable tourism management in both urban and rural areas. They must include implementation that focuses on environmental conservation; particularly the preservation of communities' unique culture and ways of life. It encourages local tourism communities to be aware of the need to retain a balance between tourism-generated benefits and the uniqueness of their communities.

v. Green Activity - To promote tourism activities well-suited to local communities

Tourism activities must be aligned and in harmony with the value of tourist destinations' resources and environment. They must be entertaining or fun, while also giving visitors the opportunity to learn new experiences in a way that minimizes any adverse impact on natural resources and the environment.

vi. Green Service - To urge all tourism-related service providers to win hearts and minds by demonstrating respect, care and concern for the environment

Tourism service providers should cater to visitors by impressing them with consistent quality alongside a determination to preserve the environment and reduce greenhouse gases in their sectors. It urges tourism services to select natural materials and recycle their treated waste back to nature.

vii. Green Plus - To encourage contributions from everyone

Individuals, groups and organizations must agree to cooperate in contributing their physical energy, ideas and funds to conserve and restore tourist attractions' environments, or mitigate the threat of global warming. It focuses on giving back to society by assuming greater responsibility for the environment through their choices of activities.

Table 3 outlines the required stakeholder(s) for each green element and how they should act in accordance with each green requirement.

Table 3: Stakeholders for each green element and how they can contribute to the 7 Greens (Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2013)

Green Element	Who	How
i. Green Heart	Everyone	To be aware and handle the impact that could be caused by every tourism activity
ii. Green Logistics	Tourism transportation operators	To create options for patterns and modes of travel focused on energy-saving and using renewable energy as well as reducing greenhouse gases
iii. Green Attractions	Owners of tourist attractions, organizations responsible for tourist attractions	To manage tourist attractions while primarily targeting sustainability of tourism resources
iv. Green Community	Organizations, groups and people in the community, both in urban and rural tourist destinations	To be aware, understand and participate in showing the great power of the community in tourism-resource protection and management in harmony with local lifestyles
v. Green Activity	Visitors and operators providing tourism activities	To operate tourism activities happily and carefully and simultaneously forge an opportunity to learn and experience about the environment and resource conservation
vi. Green Service	All tourism business operators	To provide quality standard services and take the environment into account at every stage of tourism services
vii. Green Plus	Everyone	Do not await the opportunity to save the world from the changing situation but ceaseless strive to create nurturing opportunities

From Table 3, it can be seen that the 7 Greens initiative requires all related parties to act responsibly. Parties are encouraged to contribute to the prosperity of sustainable development in the cities in which they reside or visit. The concept puts great focus on achieving environmental sustainability in tourism areas, encouraging relevant stakeholders to conserve environmental and tourism resources while conducting their tourism activities. However, since sustainable development requires a

balance between economic, environment and social sustainability, as stipulated in the 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan and by UNWTO, the author sees the 7 Greens concept as leaning heavily toward the environmental facet and not balancing the people and the cultural dimensions of sustainability.

Today, five years after the initial launch and two years after the completion of pilot projects in Nan and Samui, the 7 Greens concept has been widely implemented in more than 50 major cities of Thailand. PR campaigns can be seen nationwide, particularly in tourism promotion events at large malls and exhibition centers. The marketing campaigns for the 7 Greens are also conducted via many media such as Internet, billboards, tourism fairs, conferences, newspapers, travel magazines and TV.

The author sees the 7 Greens concept, a central topic of this dissertation, as a potentially useful tool which may spawn a process of sustainable development and help sustain tourism. Various efforts can be built on the 7 Greens concept to enhance sustainable tourism in Thailand, given its status as one of the most visible and tangible national tools related to sustainable tourism.

1.2 Literature Review

1.2.1 Definitions

(1) Definition of Sustainable Development

The term “Sustainable Development” means different things to different people. The sustainable development concept was popularized in 1987 with the publication of “Our Common Future”, also known as the Brundtland Report, which defines sustainable development as follows:

World Commission on Environment and Development’s Definition of Sustainable Development

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

Figure 11: Definition of Sustainable Development (Source: World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987)

The concept has since evolved, notably when Agenda 21 emerged from the UN Conference on the Environment in Rio in 1992 and the Development and the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg in 2002. Three dimensions of sustainable development are recognized and underlined; namely Economic Sustainability, Social Sustainability and Environmental Sustainability (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005.) UNEP stresses that these three dimensions are interdependent, can be both mutually reinforcing or competing and that striking a balance among them would foster sustainable development.

While this definition is the most quoted and simply means development that meets the needs of the present generation without damaging resources that will be needed in future, another similar definition was also made by ICOMOS:

ICOMOS's Definition of Sustainable Development

“Use of an area within its capacity to sustain its cultural or natural significance and ensure that the benefits of the use to present generations do not diminish the potential to meet the needs and aspirations of future generations.”

Figure 12: Definition of Sustainable Development (Source: Conservation Management Planning: Putting Theory into Practice. The Case of Joya de Cerén, El Salvador - Getty Conservation Institute 2009, Cited in: ICOMOS Definition of Terms from Various Sources, 2014)

ICOMOS's definition of Sustainability resembles that of the World Commission on Environment and Development but adds aspects of cultural and natural significance and their benefits. Given the importance and complexity of sustainable development issues, various interpretations currently exist for sustainable development and its meaning in the tourism context, hence the widely known term “Sustainable Tourism.”

(2) Definition of Sustainable Tourism

Tourism is uniquely placed in terms of how it can contribute to sustainable development, due to the dynamism and growth of the tourism sector and its major contribution to the economies of numerous countries (UNEP, 2014.) This is also because tourism underpins links among visitors, industry, environment and local communities (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005.) The term “Sustainable Tourism” applies broadly to a set of alternative forms of tourism, which are collectively deemed a tool for sustainable development (UNEP, 2014.) There are many definitions of sustainable tourism; some of the most frequently quoted of which are defined by the United Nations' related

organizations and external researchers. For example, UNWTO defined sustainable tourism as:

UNWTO Definition of Sustainable Tourism

“Tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and the host regions while protecting and promoting opportunities for the future. It is conceived as a way to manage all resources so that they can meet economic, social and environmental needs while respecting the cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life-support systems.”

Figure 13: Definition of Sustainable Tourism (Source: UNWTO’s Sustainable Tourism Programme, 1995)

In 1995, UNWTO defined sustainable tourism as a way to manage resources to meet economic, social and environmental needs. This matches the definition of sustainable development where the three dimensions are necessary. UNWTO stresses the importance of respecting culture, life-support systems and ecological processes, without which tourism would flounder.

UNEP/UNWTO Definition of Sustainable Tourism

“Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities.”

Conceptual Definition

Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices apply to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and various niche tourism segments. Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability.

Thus, sustainable tourism should:

- 1) Optimally exploit environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.
- 2) Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values and contribute to intercultural understanding and tolerance.
- 3) Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic and fairly distributed benefits to all stakeholders, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities and helping alleviate poverty.

Sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus-building. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process and requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.

Sustainable tourism should also maintain a high level of tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience for all visitors; raising their awareness of sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices among them”

Figure 14: Definition of Sustainable Tourism (Source: Making Tourism More Sustainable - A Guide for Policy Makers, UNEP and UNWTO, 2005)

Figure 14 outlines the definition of Sustainable Tourism set out by UNEP and UNWTO in 2005, which resembles that of UNWTO set out in 1995. As illustrated in Figure 15, the environment, economic and social dimensions are still respected but the cultural aspect has been prioritized and added to the social aspect to become socio-

cultural. This UNEP and UNWTO concept of Sustainable Tourism also stresses the importance of maintaining the level of tourist satisfaction and ensures a meaningful experience and increased environmental awareness and sustainable behavior by visitors. Moreover, the need to boost aspects of tourism transcends host communities alone and has seen tourist quality improvement included on the agenda in the process of sustainable tourism development.

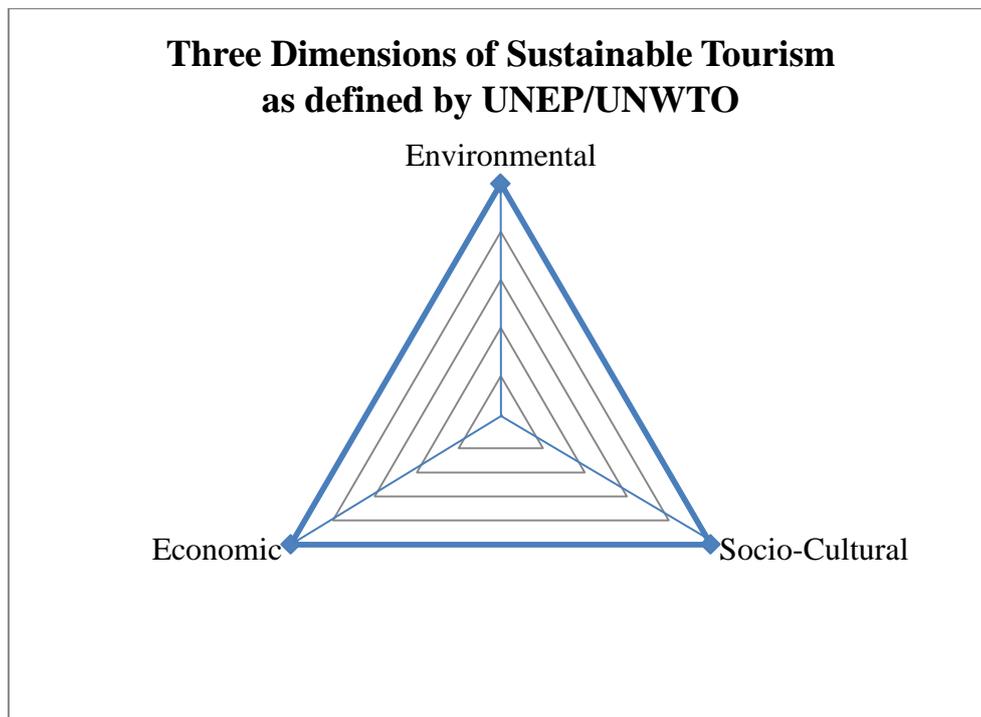


Figure 15: Three Dimensions of Sustainable Tourism, as defined by UNEP/UNWTO 2005. Conceptual Definition: Tourism that optimally exploits environmental resources, respects the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities and ensures viable, long-term economic operations. (Illustration by Author)

UNESCO Definition of Sustainable Tourism

“Tourism that respects both local people and the traveler, cultural heritage and the environment.”

Figure 16: Definition of Sustainable Tourism (Source: Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future, UNESCO 2010)

UNESCO's definition of sustainable tourism involves local people, travelers, the culture and the environment. UNESCO separates local people, travelers and culture into three separate dimensions rather than combining them in a single socio-cultural aspect. Moreover, UNESCO does not stress the economic aspect to achieve sustainability.

ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites) Definition of Sustainable Tourism

“Sustainable Tourism refers to a level of tourism activity that can be maintained over the long term because it results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place.”

Figure 17: Definition of Sustainable Tourism (Source: ICOMOS, ICTC, 2012)

ICOMOS is a non-governmental international organization dedicated to conserving the world's monuments and sites. The definition set out by ICOMOS involves social, economic, natural and cultural aspects to sustain tourism activities. This definition also encompasses social and cultural aspects separated as two standalone dimensions while retaining environmental and economic aspects, as in the definitions of UNEP and UNWTO.

After examining the various definitions of sustainable tourism, the author sees that an all-inclusive approach to sustainable development in the tourism context requires the continuing/improved social, cultural and economic and well-being of human communities to be an integral component of sustainable development. People's well-being is vital in Sustainable Tourism because if people can live the life worth living, they will be the protector and the sustainer of all tourism resources. Sustainable tourism therefore essentially requires the well-balanced development of resources in four areas; environmental, economic and people and culture as shown in .

Author's Definition of Sustainable Tourism

“Sustainable Tourism refers to tourism that is based on a well-balanced use and development of people’s well-being, environmental, cultural, and economic resources within its capacity.”

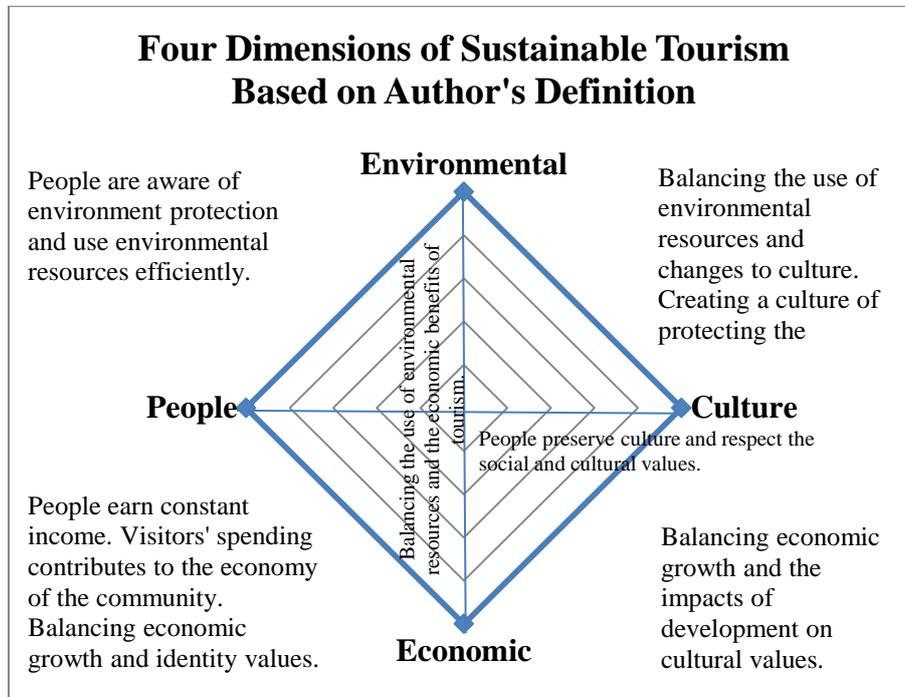


Figure 18: Four Dimensions of Sustainable Tourism, a new definition of Sustainable Tourism based on author's definition (Illustration by Author)

Based on the four definitions of Sustainable Tourism highlighted here, this dissertation sees Sustainable Tourism as tourism requiring a balanced use and development in four dimensions, environmental, economic, and people and culture. The author has separated the socio-cultural aspect of UNEP/UNWTO into “people” and “culture” because the author sees people as the center of development, meaning people and culture should not be grouped as a single category. It would be more effective if people and culture were developed independently. In the case of Nan and Hanno, which will be discussed later in Chapters 2 and 3, while both are rich in culture, they also face

depopulation and require certain improvements in terms of enhancing people’s well-being and people’s capabilities.

To clarify similar situations in tourism destinations elsewhere, this dissertation cites the concept of sustainable tourism with people and culture as two separate components. Figure 18 illustrates this view, showing sustainable tourism as a tourism activity established by balancing environmental, economic, people and culture aspects.

To illustrate why the well-being of people should be developed independently, examples of tourism situations are shown in Figure 19 to highlight conditions where people and culture development sometimes do not functionally go hand in hand.

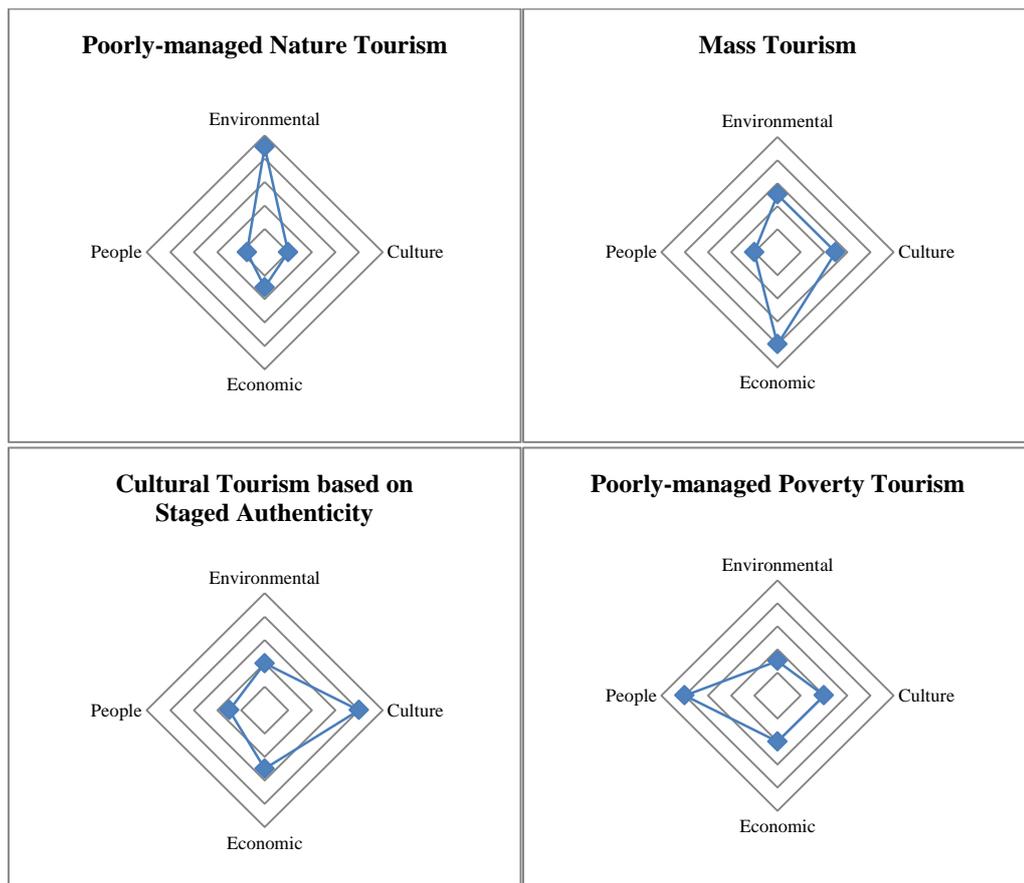


Figure 19: Examples of tourism situations where the four components of Sustainable Tourism are not well balanced and where the people and culture components do not go in the same direction based on author’s view (Illustration by Author)

Sustainable tourism is not a type of tourism. Rather, it is an all-encompassing label for any type of tourism that contributes to the sustainable development of a tourist destination. The umbrella of Sustainable Tourism encompasses alternative tourism such as Ecotourism, Cultural Tourism, Green Tourism, Blue Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Nature Tourism, Rural tourism, Geotourism, Pro-poor or poverty tourism, Agro-tourism (Center for Responsible Travel Stanford University & Washington, DC, 2014) and many more. When any so-called alternative tourism becomes fails to maintain its balance, the progress toward sustainability delays. Figure 19 shows examples of situations where the four components of Sustainable Tourism are not well balanced. Poorly managed nature tourism often focuses on sustaining the environment aspect only while mass tourism usually focuses on income generation. Figure 19 also highlights cases where the people and culture components do not go in the same direction. It can be seen in this figure that in the case of cultural tourism that is based on staged authenticity, the culture is often preserved and could also be exaggerated and presented at the expense of true identity and well-being of the local people. In such cases, culture and people go in opposite directions. In the case of Poverty Tourism, the local lifestyle is the center of attraction rather than the culture or the natural environments. In this case, the well-being of the people is more focused than cultural or environmental preservation.

Sustainable Tourism represents diverse sustainability principles that can be applied across the tourism board, including using renewable energy, saving water, creating less waste, generating local income, integrating local communities to improve livelihoods and reduce poverty, supporting intercultural understanding and conserving cultural heritage (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005.) One fast-growing and popular sector of

sustainable tourism is ecotourism (UNEP, 2014), as exemplified in this dissertation to explain the process toward sustainable development.

(3) Definition of Ecotourism

UNEP indicated that Ecotourism, which focuses on nature-based activities and is the most promoted sub-sector of sustainable tourism, is a rapidly growing area of tourism (UNEP, 2014.) Ecotourism offers economic benefits as well as being an essential income source for many countries. Many developing countries are considered to have a competitive advantage in ecotourism over developed countries, given their unique and natural environments, cultures and opportunities for adventure holidays (UNEP, 2013.)

The Quebec Declaration on Ecotourism described Ecotourism as tourism that embraces the principles of sustainable tourism and follows principles which distinguish it from the wider concept of sustainable tourism (UNEP, 2014.) Ecotourism is a term often thought to be akin to sustainable tourism. UNEP (UNEP, 2014) states that Ecotourism is sustainable tourism, which follows clear processes that *“ensure the prior informed participation of all stakeholders; ensure equal, effective and active participation of all stakeholders; acknowledge indigenous communities’ rights to say “no” to tourism development and to be fully informed, effective and active participants in developing tourism activities within communities, lands and territories, and; promotes processes for indigenous peoples and local communities to control and maintain their resources.”* Ecotourism, as defined in Figure 20, is considered a crucial source of sustainable growth. Many authorities define Ecotourism differently. Some categorize it as green tourism, while other organizations include it in categories of culture and/or agro-tourism. Regardless of the various ecotourism definitions, it

generally comprises nature-based tourism activities and operations that preserve natural ecosystems, while generating employment for unskilled workers in rural communities.

Ecotourism as defined by UNWTO

Ecotourism is used to define forms of tourism with the following characteristics:

1. All nature-based forms of tourism in which the main motivation of tourists is observing and appreciating nature as well as traditional cultures prevailing in natural areas.
2. It contains educational and interpretation features.
3. It is generally, but not exclusively, organized by specialized tour operators for small groups. Partner service providers at the destinations tend to be small locally-owned businesses.
4. It minimizes negative impacts on the natural and socio-cultural environment.
5. It supports the maintenance of natural areas used as ecotourism attractions, by:
 - Generating economic benefits for host communities, organizations and authorities managing natural areas for conservation;
 - Providing alternative employment and income opportunities for local communities; and
 - Increasing awareness of the need to conserve natural and cultural assets, both among locals and tourists.

Figure 20: Ecotourism as defined by UNWTO (Source: UNWTO, 2002)

The definition of Ecotourism by UNWTO involves nature-based forms of tourism which are educational, generally organized by local businesses, minimize the impacts on the environment and generate economic benefits for stakeholders.

As for Thailand, TAT recognizes that ecotourism is an important and most frequently mentioned style of tourism in Thailand. Ecotourism has been popular in Thailand because of its abundant natural resources, hence the wealth of available activities to enjoy, such as hiking, nature, wildlife-/bird watching, horse riding, mountain biking, bamboo rafting, rock climbing, etc. (Tourism Authority of Thailand,

2011.) There are also cultural exploration activities such as the famous and popular Thai boxing, Thai Massage courses, Thai cooking classes, and local lifestyles that tourists can try and learn. The Tourism Authority of Thailand has defined Ecotourism as follows:

Ecotourism as defined by the Tourism Authority of Thailand

“การเดินทางไปยังสถานที่ท่องเที่ยวแห่งใดแห่งหนึ่ง โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อการศึกษา ชื่นชม และเพลิดเพลินไปกับทัศนียภาพธรรมชาติ สภาพสังคม วัฒนธรรม และชีวิตของคนในท้องถิ่น บนพื้นฐานความรู้และความรับผิดชอบต่อระบบนิเวศ”

English Translation: “*Traveling to any tourism destination for the purpose of education, pleasure and enjoying the natural scenery, social conditions, culture and local lifestyle, based on knowledge and responsibility to the ecosystem.*”

Figure 21: Ecotourism as defined by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 1996 cited in The Golden Jubilee Network Thailand, 2014)

Ecotourism as defined by the Tourism Authority of Thailand involves education, pleasure, nature, society, culture and responsibility to the ecosystem. This reflects the fact that ecotourism is defined by TAT from the perspective of a traveler and not the host, as it only cites actions controlled by tourists. Moreover, unlike the definition of UNWTO, TAT’s definition does not necessarily encompass economic aspects, local businesses or tour operators.

Ecotourism as defined by Hanno City, Saitama Prefecture, Japan

「自然環境や歴史・文化を対象とし、それらを楽しみながら体験、学ぶとともに、その保全にも責任を持つ観光の在り方」

English Translation: “*Conservational and responsible travel, while experiencing, learning and enjoying the natural environments, history and culture.*”

Figure 22: Ecotourism as defined by Hanno City (Source: Hanno Ecotourism Promotion Office, 2013)

The definition of Ecotourism set out by Hanno City, Japan refers to conservation and responsibility while learning and enjoying nature, history and culture. Hanno mentions education in its definition but not social aspects. Like that of TAT, Hanno only focuses on the tourist side and not the host side. Like the UNWTO definition, this also excludes economic aspects, local businesses or tour operators.

Ecotourism as defined by The International Ecotourism Society

“Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people.”

Figure 23: Ecotourism as defined by The International Ecotourism Society (Source: TIES, 2014)

The definition of Ecotourism as set out by the International Ecotourism Society is concise and involves both supply and demand sides (host community and tourists.) The definition involves travelers, their responsibilities, nature conservation and the benefits for local people. However, it does not mention any aspects of economic, education or culture, or the presence of local tour operators.

It is worth noting that ecotourism in all the given definitions, apart from that of UNWTO, excludes the economic aspect and mainly involves nature, culture and society. Having studied the four relevant definitions of Ecotourism as well as some cases of Ecotourism in Thailand and Japan, the author would like to define Ecotourism as follows:

Ecotourism as defined by Author

“Responsible tourism based on efficient use of the environment, culture and people, which creates mutual benefits for tourists and the host communities”

Figure 24: Ecotourism as defined by Author

The definition of Ecotourism as set out by the author implies optimization of all available resources at the tourist destination to facilitate mutual and sustainable benefits for both tourists and host communities. Both supply and demand sides should benefit from ecotourism experiences, which would naturally also be educational and earn income for society. Although ecotourism does not focus on economic aspects by definition, the economic aspect should not be eliminated from the ecotourism framework as it remains a significant factor for the development of ecotourism as a form of sustainable tourism.

This dissertation, however, does not focus on the economic aspect. In this dissertation, enhancing individual capabilities, preserving culture and protecting the environment are considered important keys to successful ecotourism as a form of sustainable tourism, which would ultimately spawn sustainable development. Increasing income need not necessarily be the main focus, particularly in small aging towns where well-being is more critical and provided the local communities are happy with their sustainable way of life, under a well-protected environment and culture.

1.2.2 Impacts of Tourism Activities

Tourism creates a special relationship between visitors, the tourism industry, the environment and local communities. This relationship differs from other sectors because here, the tourism consumer travels directly to the producer and consumes the product, which exposes unique aspects of the relationship between tourism and sustainable development. This relationship involves considerable interaction between visitors, host communities and their local environments. Plus, as tourism makes people increasingly aware, it also tends to guide their attitudes and concerns over sustainability issues. This close and direct relationship creates a sensitive situation whereby tourism can affect

host communities both positively and negatively (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005; Jittangwattana, 2005.) It is widely known that tourism development will have great economic benefits. However, most tourism developments are seen to create positive economic impacts, while socio-cultural, legal and environmental impacts are often perceived as negative or neutral (Tosun, 2001.)

Regarding positive impacts, tourism development helps improve people's lives. Apart from tourism bringing in more income (Foster, 1985) and monetizing natural and cultural resources, it also increases support for conservation among local communities (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005.) Tourism development policies also usually involve improvements to infrastructure and activities designed to enhance convenience for local residents (King, 1993.) Facilities developed for tourism can also benefit residents as tourism supports the use of such facilities and services such as health and transportation infrastructure, restaurants and recreational facilities, which improves the local quality of life (UNEP, 2014.)

Tourism also provides opportunities to develop enterprise, stimulate employment and investment for local services and catalyze intercultural understanding and peace (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005.)

Furthermore, tourism also strengthens and can revitalize communities via, for instance, events and festivals featuring local residents as the primary participants and spectators. Revitalizing cultures in response to tourism helps community members interact and develop their mutual relationships (UNEP, 2014.) The strength of a community can be measured by its volunteer activities and people's participation. The

local networks used to develop the community and local governance will also be stronger because local people cooperate with their leaders (Evans, 2005.)

Apart from this, tourism also instils a sense of pride in local culture and community (Lee, Li, & Kim, 2007.) When there is an outstanding cultural facet, such as a feature of language, dress, or food, which makes the community a well-known tourist destination, the local people take pride in their own culture and community.

Conversely, unmanaged tourism activities may spawn significant problems. Tourism activities place direct pressure on fragile ecosystems, causing degradation of the physical environment and disruption of wildlife (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005.) Moreover, tourism may also exert pressure on host communities and lead to dislocation of traditional societies (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005) as well as negative changes, increasing ubiquity and reducing cultural values. Local people tend to alter themselves and their cultures in response to the various needs of different tourists, unaware that they are actually undermining their own cultural values (Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration, 2013.) Awareness among local communities should be raised to help them sustain their own cultures and traditions. Tourism can also be an unstable income source as it is sensitive to changes in local environmental and social conditions (UNEP and UNWTO, 2005.)

Tourism is also seen as a cause of crimes, drugs and prostitution (UNEP, 2014.) Some studies point that tourism only constitutes part of other factors, such as media or social changes (Sermsri, 1986.) Another study suggests tourism is a catalyst that triggers those social problems (Ostrom, 1999.) Accordingly, to prevent such issues from

arising, the local community, particularly teenagers, must show that they can withstand enticements such as money, media or external influences.

With reference to the social impacts of tourism on Nan, Thonghor et al. (2002) stated that Nan has transformed their economic development strategy by leveraging the region's rich tourism potential as the main development engine. Their study covered tourism issues including waste management and environmentally harmful activities, as well as the lack of transportation, particularly within the province. Another issue was the failure to market the province's tourism more widely. However, Thonghor suggested that tourism overall appeared to be having little impact on the economy, society and culture of Nan, even to the extent that social and cultural changes were deemed unaffected. The most obvious change, albeit modest, was in the economy, whereby local people felt that tourism was urging them to develop themselves, affording them the opportunity to work in tourism-related jobs and not only in agriculture. 67% of Thonghor's respondents felt that tourism had provided them with more income (Thonghor et al., 2002.)

1.2.3 People-Centered Sustainable Society

Sustainable Society is the ultimate goal of sustainable development, which is an integrated form of development connecting all related elements in a balanced manner. Moreover, to achieve sustainability, development must proceed hand-in-hand with Human Development (Sithiamorn et al., 2005.)

Literature on sustainable development and human development have long been separate, despite the fundamental basis that human development is what sustainability proponents want to sustain (Neumayer, Human Development and Sustainability, 2012.)

They are two broad concepts. The theoretical framework in the people-centered development and policy realm has spawned the “Capabilities Approach” which poses the question: What real opportunities are available to the people? (Nussbaum, 2011) and requires further study. Despite this conceptual difference, Neumayer argued that there is no real difference between human and sustainable development. Both can be linked and must go hand-in-hand to achieve sustainability.

(1) People-Centered Development Concept by David C. Korten

A people-centered development strategy as a means of enhancing sustainability development was proposed by David C. Korten, former regional advisor to USAID, in 1984. This sustainability framework incorporated values of justice, sustainability and inclusiveness. Korten claimed that the conventional development strategy focusing on economic growth was neither sustainable nor equitable and called for transformations of institutions, technology, values and behavior (Korten, 1990.)

The people-centered development concept focuses more on people and community participation rather than economic growth and was first embodied in the Human Development Report published by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990, which showed the degrees of development of countries, as measured by the human development index. The concept then was supported at the Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) held in Cairo in 1994 and the World Summit for Social Development in 1995 respectively (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1996.) The framework was also incorporated by Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its 1996 ODA White paper (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, 1996.) In the report, Japan stated that “people-centered development” aims to “help humankind lead an affluent

and happy life.” Moreover, with a view to addressing the same issue, the DAC High-level Meeting in May 1996 adopted the New Development Strategy: “Shaping the 21st Century: The Contribution of Development Cooperation”, in which “people-centered development” was made a target policy for all OECD member countries. The concept stressed the importance of local ownership, participation and capacity-building while attaining economic growth. Through building capacity of local communities, they have the ability to reclaim their economic space and gain control of local institutions that give them a voice in processes deeply affecting their lives (Korten, 2010.) The concept of “people-centered development” prominently corresponds to Sen’s “Capabilities Approach”, which is discussed next. Both stress the importance of achieving not economic growth but human development as the ultimate goal of maximizing quality of life.

The Manila Declaration stated that people-centered development is the only way to achieve sustainable communities and emphasized the need for local ownership so that communities retain responsibility, mechanism and control over their own resources to benefit themselves (Asian NGO Coalition, 1989.) It transcends the environmental aspect of sustainability and promotes small-scale community actions to boost economic self-reliance and establish a reliable income source. Likewise, Korten cited people-centered development as the only way to develop sustainable communities (Korten, 1990), while criticizing the common practice of increasing economic output through natural resource depletion. Korten also called on external development partners to support objectives chosen by the people, building communities’ capacity to manage resources and meet local needs independently (Korten, 1984.) As a local community grows and has more controlling power, they adopt socially responsible values and practices (Korten, 2010.)

As people are socialized, the social order is the source of their values and mental models that influence how they view experiences and how they feel about self-enrichment.

(2) The Capabilities Approach by Amartya Sen

The Capabilities Approach, also known as the “Capability Approach”, or “Human Development Approach”, was developed by Amartya Sen, who was awarded the Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel, 1998. The Capabilities Approach is considered a new theoretical paradigm in the development world and has been discussed in dense articles and books for specialists and university courses (Nussbaum, 2011.) The Capabilities Approach is also becoming influential on international stages and in global discussions. It poses the simple question “What are people able to do and be?” to prove their quality of life and determine their well-being. The question, although apparently simple, is actually a complex and one which people ponder every day of their daily lives (Nussbaum, 2011.) As people become aware of their own capabilities, they gain freedom to choose how to live their lives. The sense of self-reliance, self-enrichment and self-fulfillment will spawn happiness in people and communities, improving their quality of life to a level where they can feel satisfied. This, in turn, will help enhance development toward sustainability.

This dissertation attempts to integrate “Human Capabilities” and “People-Centered Development” into sustainable development, in the tourism context. It goes without saying that people are at the core of development. Accordingly, for tourism to develop sustainably in any community, collective efforts are needed, which requires community participation and individual collaboration. For an effective and well-functioning host community, each member must be capable of doing something or being somebody, whereupon we will have a group of functioning people as a center for

development. Human development is therefore expected to be an essential element at the core of sustainable development.

1.3 Objectives and Framework

1.3.1 Objectives

The objectives of this study are:

1. To measure how effective the government's "7 Greens" Initiative is from visitors and tourism service providers' perspectives; based on their self-assessment in terms of awareness of the 7 Greens concept and contribution to each 7 Green element.
2. To analyze the tourism situation in Nan Province and identify any factor hampering or slowing the process of sustainable tourism development.
3. To encourage a shift toward a more sustainable form of tourism that is environmentally, economically and socio-culturally beneficial to Nan province, modeled on a city designated for sustainable tourism in a developed country such as Japan.

1.3.2 Proposed Conceptual Framework of Sustainable Development in Tourism through the Capabilities Approach

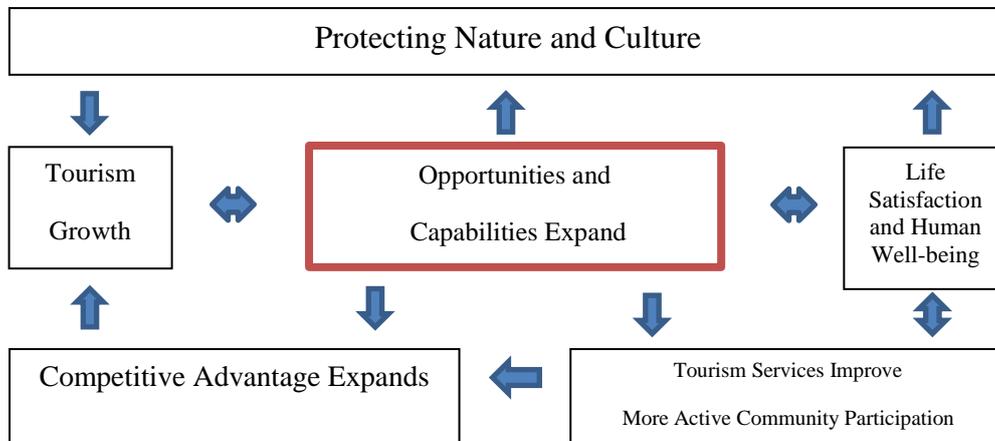


Figure 25: Proposed Conceptual Framework for Sustainable Tourism Through the Capabilities Approach (Illustration by Author)

Figure 25 presents the author’s proposed concept for sustainable development in tourism through the Capabilities Approach. It centers on expanded opportunities and capabilities while also suggesting the significance of protecting nature and culture. When a place is rich in nature and culture, tourism flourishes, whereupon the opportunities and capabilities of people will emerge and expand. Empowering individuals in this way gives them a sense of self-reliance and self-fulfillment, as well as satisfaction and well-being. When people in the tourism community are satisfied with their lives, their services will improve as well as their participation in community activities and environmental protection. Once tourism services and community participation improve, this will also breathe new life into the city and enhance competition, spawning further growth in tourism and more opportunities for people to develop. It is important to note that protecting nature and culture underpins this process as they are considered two key tourism resources, while “capabilities” are also at the center of this sustainable tourism development, which is a people-centered initiative.

Without people exploiting their abilities, the mechanism will cease to function. This model differs from traditional tourism and conventional sustainable tourism in the sense that people's opportunities and capabilities are an essential factor for the process towards sustainable development through tourism. Moreover, the process also involves life satisfaction and well-being of the people as tools toward improvement in the tourism service.

Since the model has been developed based on a combination of recent field surveys, Sen's Capabilities Approach and a recent Japanese model city's approach, it reflects a relatively new mindset. However, the model remains untested and its relevance must be explored as well as identifying any necessary modification.

1.4 Methodology

Supporting this research, primary data was gathered in May 2011, August 2012 and March 2013 in Nan City via surveys and interviews (approximately 10 minutes per tourist and 30-60 minutes per tourism service provider.) A field survey was also conducted in Hanno City in September, October and November 2013 through interviews (approximately two hours each with two officers from the Hanno Ecotourism Promotion Office.) Supplementary data were also gathered by interviewing government officials from Nan City Office (August 2012 and subsequently by telephone, Nan Statistics Office (August 2012 and subsequently by e-mail), Tourism Authority of Thailand offices in Tokyo, Japan (by e-mail in November 2013) and Bangkok, Thailand (two hours in January 2014), Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (2.5 hours in January 2014) and other relevant individuals and organizations either by e-mail or face to face.

For the field survey in Nan City, surveys were responded to by 401 visitors, 97 local residents and 66 tourism service providers. Visitors were randomly selected at venues like airports, bus terminals, temples, hotels, museums, tourist information centers and restaurants. Local residents were randomly found in restaurants, colleges, temples and markets. Tourism service providers included tour companies, hotel owners, restaurant owners, shop owners, temple staff, airline staff and stall keepers.

Moreover, supporting information has been supplemented from academic publications, a collection of research-specific data, official reports and publications of the United Nations, the Thai Government and the Japanese Government.

The research process involved both qualitative and quantitative research. The aim was to clearly understand the tourism situation in Thailand and in Nan City by studying the data provided by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (2009, 2013) and Nan Statistics Bureau (2011) to determine the following:

- i. The main problems hampering tourism in Nan City, Thailand
- ii. The overall tourism situation in Nan City
- iii. The tourist accommodation trend in Nan City
- iv. General information about visitors
- v. Means of transportation
- vi. Key factors when deciding to travel to Nan City

The qualitative research included interviews with officials from the market research and tourism promotion departments of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, as well as with tourism service providers in Nan to evaluate the effectiveness of the 7-Greens initiative. The main aim of these interviews was to gain an in-depth understanding of

the project progress and the real needs and opinions of the tourism operators in Nan, covering the following topics:

- i. Progress of the pilot project for the “7 Greens” Initiative
- ii. Training activities on sustainable tourism in Nan City
- iii. Problems/hindrances in managing tourism businesses in Nan City
- iv. Their efforts toward sustainability

The qualitative research also included interviews with officials from Hanno City Office, Saitama Prefecture and Hanno Ecotourism Promotion Office and supplementary interviews with local tourism authority officers from Hokkaido, Kitakyushu City and Tottori prefecture. The main aim of these interviews was to gain an in-depth understanding of the tourism status, Japanese expertise in people management and how they overcame hindrances to develop and sustain their local tourism industries. The author also requested opinions from some members of Japanese local tourism communities about their motives and participation style. Study items included:

- i. General information on tourism
- ii. Visitors’ travel behavior: gender, age groups, purpose of travel, type of accommodation, length of stay, problems encountered, possible solutions etc.
- iii. Opinions, views of their city as a tourist destination, their satisfaction as a local tourism authority, promotional initiatives, sustainability management and other suggestions, etc.

The quantitative research is conducted based on the results of surveys handed out to visitors, local residents and tourism service providers in Nan to measure their satisfaction with Nan, travel behavior and selection factors. This is to gauge the

effectiveness of the sustainable tourism campaign promoted by the Thai government.

The survey focuses on demographic data, attitudes, awareness and travel behavior. The surveys were responded to in Nan where the eco-tour route was followed. Study items included:

- iv. General demographic data
- v. Travel behavior: logistics, type of activities, services, individual contributions, media reception, purpose of travel, tour planning, type of accommodation, length of stay, problems encountered, etc.
- vi. Opinions, views of Nan as a tourist destination: level of visitor satisfaction, impression of Nan, quality assessment, likelihood of returning, suggestions, etc.

The data gathered from this quantitative research reveals the behavior and views of visitors and the local community, which helps assess the effectiveness of the Thai government's efforts to promote tourism in Nan as well as identifying the problems encountered in the tourism industry from individual perspectives. Moreover, the author also listened to the "feedback" of those involved in developing sustainable tourism.

1.5 Structure of Dissertation

This dissertation comprises five chapters. In addition to the introductory section here, Chapter 1 explains the background and transition to sustainable tourism in Thailand. Chapter 2 looks closely at a sustainable tourism policy implemented by the Tourism Authority of Thailand called the 7 Greens initiative, focusing on Nan City of Thailand which was a pilot city for implementation. In this chapter, data collected from field surveys are analyzed to reveal the situation, trends and improvement points in sustainable tourism development in Nan City. Chapter three outlines a case study of sustainable tourism management in Hanno City, Japan. Hanno City shares similar geographical and social characteristics to Nan City and is a model city selected by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan to manage ecotourism. The aim is to learn from Hanno's successful example. Chapter four presents the idea of the Capabilities Approach and its integration into Sustainable tourism. Chapter five concludes the overall findings and addresses policy implications.

CHAPTER 2: Case Study - Nan City, Nan Province, Thailand

Nan Province (henceforth referred to as Nan in this dissertation), is known for its rich nature, unique culture, tranquility and its nice local people. It also includes numerous tourist attractions, including temples, caves, national parks, mountains, villages, waterfalls, natural formations, fairs, festivals and the famous annual boat race. Despite its richness in tourism resources, the city's tourism infrastructure and policies remain under-developed (Lawsuwan, 2011.) Interviews conducted with local people in Nan highlight their concerns that it would soon face the challenge of carrying capacity as visitor numbers increase. Consequently, provincial and municipal authorities are working to establish appropriate measures and controls to protect the province from the downsides of uncontrolled tourism. Despite these efforts, some local people are still unwilling to see more visitors to Nan as they are concerned about these impacts and possible management failure by the local government.

As an effort toward sustainable tourism in Thailand, the country selected Nan as a pilot city in which to implement the 7 Greens project. Nan was selected because of its richness in natural and cultural resources and was quoted by TAT as a “perfect illustration of TAT’s ecotourism strategy taking roots” (Krayewski & Fritschy, 2012.)

2.1 Overview of Nan Province

Nan is a remote town in the Nan river valley, which was once a separate, autonomous state (Krayewski & Fritschy, 2012) but eventually became part of Siam, now known as Thailand. It is an old city, rich in natural and cultural resources and located in the North of Thailand. Nan was originally known as “Nanthaburi”, an ancient country state governed by 64 kings and considered as old as Sukhothai, with more than

800 years of history (Tourist Information Division, 2009.) It is a valley city surrounded by mountains, forests and rivers. There is growing interest in Nan as it is regarded as an ancient but living city (under its motto “Nan, Living Old City”). As Nan people are known for their kindness and simple lifestyles, the city is considered a very safe tourist destination and ideal for visitors from all places. Based on an interview with Nan Tourist Police in August 2012, the tourist police had not yet experienced any cases of crimes against visitors since commencing operations in Nan in 2004.



Figure 26: Location of Nan on the map of Thailand (Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011)



Figure 27: Nan Province Map (Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011)

Nan Province covers 11,472.07 square kilometers and is located 668 kilometers from the capital Bangkok. It takes approximately 10 hours by bus from Bangkok or approximately 1.5 hours by plane²². Nan Province's population is 452,814 people, 81,481 of whom reside in the city area (National Statistics Office Thailand, 2010.) Nan is a province with an abundant mixture of cultures and topography ranging from high mountains to plains. The mountain ranges are 600-1,200 meters above sea level and cover up to 40% or so of Nan Province (TAT Phrae, 2014.) The forests comprise approximately 47.18% of the province, leaving agricultural and residential areas with 12.22 and 0.6% respectively (TAT Phrae, 2014.) The northern and eastern boundaries are shared with the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

Nan Province comprises 15 districts, Nan City, Wiangsa district, Santisuk district, Maejarim district, Thawangpha district, Banluang district, Nanoi district, Pua district, Songkwae district, Chianglang district, Na muen district, Tungchang district, Boklua district, Chalermphrakiat district and Phupiang district (TAT Phrae, 2014.) The main city of Nan Province is Nan City, which is the core area for the 7 Greens pilot project. The total area of Nan City is 813.126 square kilometers, containing 81,327 residents in 11 towns and 106 villages. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)

Nan has a small population and a strong family and relative system (Thadaniti & Phrajuabmor, 2007.) Local people help each other like family. Moreover, there is also strong unity in ethnics, religion, language and culture, which has spawned a strong and moral community. The local Lainan community, for instance, cooperate with local authorities in tackling any communal issues (Thadaniti & Phrajuabmor, 2007.) Given

²² The Bangkok-Nan route is operated daily by Nok Air airlines, the low-cost subsidiary of national carrier Thai Airways International Co., Ltd, with 64- and 33-seater planes. The Chiang Mai-Nan route is operated by Kan Air with one flight per week on Thursday, with 12 seats.

this tendency to help each other and sense of unity, people-centered development through community participation²³ can be easily promoted and implemented in Nan.

There are approximately 150 hotels (hotels, guesthouses, resorts, apartments, homestays and national park accommodation) and 23 registered tour operators. Moreover, approximately 1,737 food operators have been certified according to the standard “Clean food and good taste” by the Ministry of Public Health (TAT Phrae, 2014.)

Visitor numbers have steadily risen since Nan established itself as a tourist attraction (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2012.) An interview conducted by the author in 2012 with The Transport Co., Ltd (known in Thai as “bor kor sor”) indicated that the company planned to add approximately 20 buses in 2012 to welcome the increasing tourist numbers to Nan. Likewise, interviews conducted with officers at Nan Airport indicated that Nok Air had increased flights from two to three per day in 2012 to meet increasing demand. Nan Airport officers also indicated that visitor numbers had been increasing over the years and that more full flights were seen coming in and out compared to a year ago.

²³ Community Participation, also known as “People Participation” or “Community Involvement”, is a process whereby people enhance their awareness of a situation or problem they are facing, recognize the root cause, and collectively act to change that situation or problem (Sithiamorn et al., 2005). It encourages local people to collaborate toward a common goal that would help improve their own quality of life.

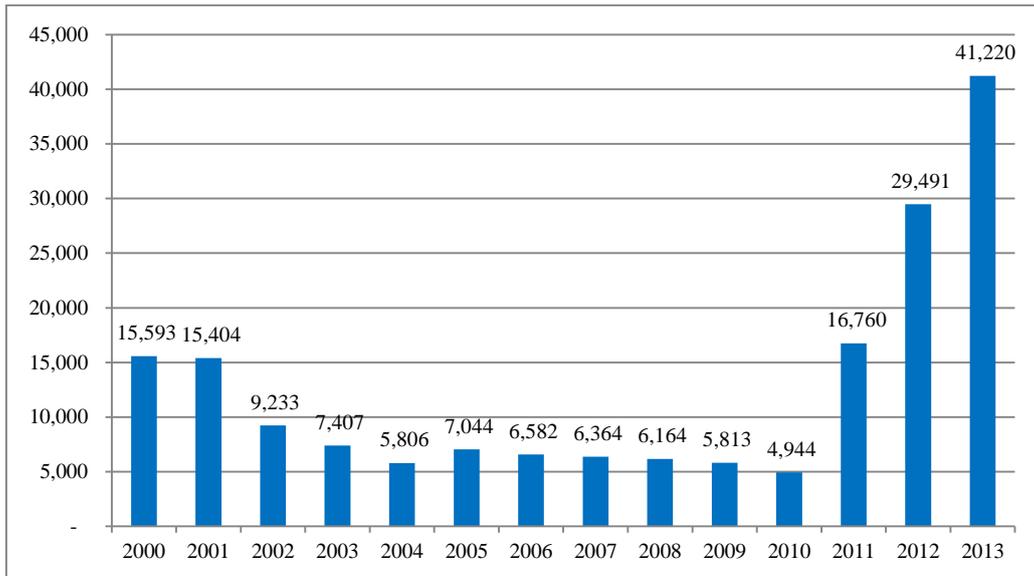


Figure 28: Nan Airport Yearly Domestic Traffic by Passenger Arrivals from 2000-2013 (Compiled by Author, Source: Department of Civil Aviation, 2014)

Figure 28 shows the rising trend in passenger arrivals to Nan. From 1988 to 2002, Thai Airways had been operating flights between Phrae, Chiang Mai, Phitsanulok and Bangkok. From 2002 to 2010 other domestic airlines²⁴ operated flights to and from Bangkok. In 2010, Nok Air launched its daily operations and Nan Airport started to see passenger arrivals increase. 2011 saw visitor numbers soar, partly due to 2011 being the year of the rabbit. Since Wat Phra That Chae Hang is considered the temple for people born in the year of the rabbit, a stream of visitors traveled to Nan to worship there in 2011. (TAT Phrae, 2014)

²⁴ Air Andaman in 2002-2004, PB Air in 2004-2009, Solar Air and Happy Air in 2010 were operating an average of three flights per week (Nan Airport, 2013)

Table 4: Nan Airport Monthly Domestic Traffic by Passenger Arrivals from 2004 to 2013 (Compiled and illustrated by Author, Source: Department of Civil Aviation, 2004-2014)

Month-Year	Nan Airport Passenger Arrivals								
January-04	549	January-06	650	January-08	572	January-10	193	January-12	1,937
February-04	No Data	February-06	522	February-08	596	February-10	364	February-12	1,981
March-04	89	March-06	583	March-08	577	March-10	348	March-12	1,902
April-04	650	April-06	708	April-08	658	April-10	305	April-12	2,151
May-04	541	May-06	442	May-08	483	May-10	232	May-12	2,096
June-04	486	June-06	455	June-08	492	June-10	269	June-12	2,155
July-04	538	July-06	531	July-08	556	July-10	254	July-12	2,270
August-04	499	August-06	575	August-08	490	August-10	257	August-12	2,408
September-04	541	September-06	485	September-08	454	September-10	243	September-12	2,654
October-04	622	October-06	550	October-08	466	October-10	469	October-12	3,546
November-04	590	November-06	488	November-08	350	November-10	578	November-12	3,429
December-04	701	December-06	593	December-08	470	December-10	1,432	December-12	2,962
January-05	583	January-07	657	January-09	597	January-11	996	January-13	3,460
February-05	596	February-07	571	February-09	534	February-11	741	February-13	3,450
March-05	611	March-07	460	March-09	636	March-11	979	March-13	2,952
April-05	702	April-07	552	April-09	591	April-11	1,673	April-13	2,995
May-05	584	May-07	481	May-09	588	May-11	1,296	May-13	3,152
June-05	572	June-07	463	June-09	545	June-11	1,252	June-13	3,682
July-05	645	July-07	525	July-09	484	July-11	1,564	July-13	3,788
August-05	523	August-07	512	August-09	486	August-11	1,584	August-13	3,536
September-05	441	September-07	446	September-09	617	September-11	1,669	September-13	3,234
October-05	495	October-07	487	October-09	544	October-11	1,609	October-13	3,453
November-05	585	November-07	554	November-09	7	November-11	1,393	November-13	3,600
December-05	707	December-07	656	December-09	184	December-11	2,004	December-13	3,938

This table shows the months that attract most visitors. Tourist numbers are clearly on the rise, particularly in months with many national holidays, i.e. the Thai New Year holiday in April, school holidays in October and the King’s Birthday, Constitution Day, Christmas holidays in December and New Year holidays in January. From the author’s field survey in August 2012, some local tourism service providers attribute the many arrivals in December and January to the cold weather in Nan, which may have given visitors the feeling of traveling to a winter resort destination.

90% of visitors are Thai nationals, most of whom travel alone. The average stay is 3 days. There are two main styles of tourism, namely within and outside the city respectively. For city tours, visitors travel to Nan to enjoy its arts and culture and most come to visit temples and ancient arts. The average stay is no more than one day before they leave to explore the outer parts of the city. For tours outside the city, visitors travel

to enjoy nature, for instance, national parks and adventurous activities. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)

2.2 Visitor Data Compiled by Local Authorities

Nan Statistics Bureau conducted a tourist survey over a 10-month period. Based on their survey, the average monthly number of visitors from December 2010 to September 2011 was 57,920, 99% of whom were Thais and 1% foreigners.

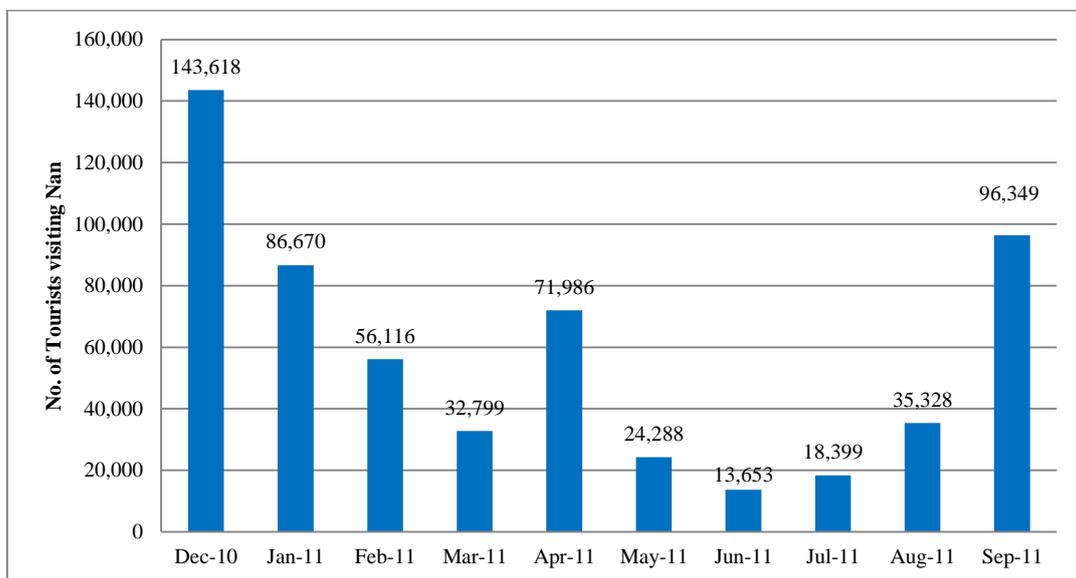


Figure 29: The Number of Visitors to Nan between December 2010 and September 2011 (Nan Provincial Statistical Office, 2012)

The number of visitors fluctuated each month, partly due to year-round political unrest as well as a major flood in Nan in June 2011. Subsequently, visitor numbers recovered and are expected to peak every December, the year-end holiday season, when the temperature is cooler and the offices and schools close. However, it is clear that visitor numbers generally decline in non-winter and non-holiday seasons, which indicates that the city relies on seasons and that the economic sustainability of tourism in this city has yet to reach its optimum level.

Table 5: Monthly visitor totals in Nan between December 2010 and September 2011²⁵ (Nan Provincial Statistical Office, 2012)

Month - Year	All Visitors			Thais	Foreigners
	Total	Stayed overnight	One day trip/stayed with relatives		
Dec-10	143,618	106,700	36,918	142,187	1,431
Jan-11	86,670	64,391	22,279	85,942	728
Feb-11	56,116	41,691	14,425	55,361	755
Mar-11	32,799	31,238	1,561	32,578	221
Apr-11	71,986	69,929	2,057	71,645	341
May-11	24,288	22,824	1,464	24,174	114
Jun-11	13,653	12,850	803	13,516	137
Jul-11	18,399	17,601	798	18,282	116
Aug-11	35,328	31,784	3,544	34,619	708
Sep-11	96,349	92,404	3,945	95,258	1,091
Total	579,206	491,412	87,794	573,562	5,642

In Table 5, it is clear that only 1% of visitors were foreigners. Interestingly, 13.3% and 12.5% of foreigners were seen in February and August respectively, during which the percentage of Thai visitors declined. This indicates that marketing campaigns could be targeted at the foreign tourists, where their holidays coincide with Nan's low season.

Moreover, many visitors came to Nan for a single day trip or to stay with their relatives, meaning few tourism activities could attract visitors to stay overnight. Nan could promote its night programs more to encourage hotel usage and general spending in Nan.

²⁵ Nan Statistics Bureau started to collect tourist data from December 2010 and stopped doing so after September 2011.

Table 6: Number of visits made to Nan (Nan Provincial Statistical Office, 2012)

How many visits to Nan	Percentage
First time in Nan	51.5%
1-3 time(s)	35.6%
4-5 times	8.4%
5-10 times	4.3%
10 times or more	0.2%

Table 6 shows that 51.5% of visitors were first-timers while 48.5% - nearly half - were repeaters, which means Nan City has much to offer visitors. The survey also showed that 79.0% wanted to return to Nan the following year, 19.2% intended to return soon and 1.8% said they would not return. The reasons for returning included the beautiful nature, nice people, unique culture and nice weather. The reasons for dissatisfaction included services such as restaurants and cafes that exploited the holiday season, while other downsides included insufficient hotel services, hotel conditions that differed from those specified when booking and insufficient public toilets for ladies in national parks.

Table 7: Tourist attractions visited, multiple answers allowed (Nan Provincial Statistical Office, 2012)

Tourist Attractions Visited	Percentage
Historical sites	88.0%
Natural sites	66.2%
Health and Spa	5.2%

The survey also suggested that most visitors came to visit historical attractions such as old temples, museums and other historical sites, followed by nature-based attractions. 5.2% of visitors also came to Nan for health and spa treatments.

The tourist data by Nan Provincial Statistical Office are only available until September 2011, after which the office stopped collecting data.

Next is the data collected by the TAT Phrae Office, which oversees tourism administration in Nan, Phrae and Utaradit provinces. According to TAT Phrae’s data on revenue from tourism in Nan, as shown in Figure 30, Nan enjoyed a two-fold increase in revenue during the 1st-3rd quarters of 2012 and almost double in the 4th quarter. This sharp rise in year-on-year revenue is attributable to the heavy PR campaigns on Nan and the end of the major flood at the end of 2011.

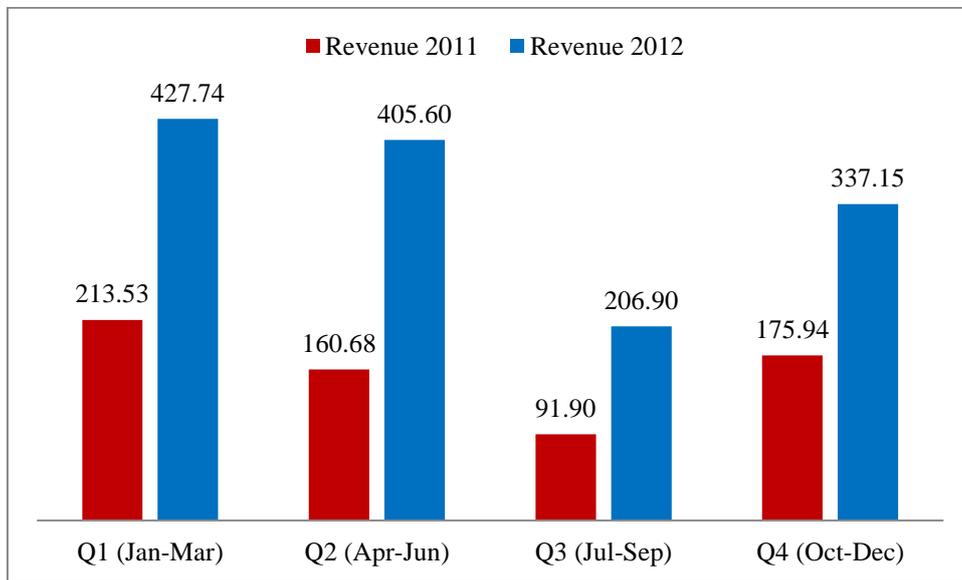


Figure 30: Quarterly tourism revenue (million baht) in Nan compared between 2011 and 2012, Illustrated by Author (TAT Phrae, 2014)

Tourism revenues are presented in Table 8. Significant revenues in the 1st and 2nd quarters of 2012 were due to the Nan’s Chompu Phuka flower blossoms in February and many national holidays in December, January and March and April. A similar trend followed for foreign visitors.

Table 8: Quarterly tourism revenue in Nan and tourist origin, 2011-2012, Illustrated by Author (TAT Phrae, 2014)

Quarter/Year	Total Revenue (million baht)	Thais	Foreigners
Q1, Jan-Mar 2011	213.53	202.86	10.67
Q2, Apr-Jun 2011	160.68	156.16	4.52
Q3, Jul-Sep 2011	91.90	89.99	1.91
Q4, Oct-Dec 2011	175.94	173.09	2.85
Q1, Jan-Mar 2012	427.74	399.03	28.71
Q2, Apr-Jun 2012	405.60	393.43	12.17
Q3, Jul-Sep 2012	206.90	198.84	8.06
Q4, Oct-Dec 2012	337.15	312.00	25.15

2.3 Visitor Data Compiled by Author

Between May 2011 and August 2012, the author conducted field surveys on locals and visitors, in which 401 visitors and 97 local residents responded to the surveys and interviews. The data shows a consistent distribution in terms of gender, age and occupation, which was representative of the general population.

2.3.1 Visitor Demographic Data

(1) Gender

Table 9: Gender of visitors to Nan (Field Survey, 2012)

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	178	44.4%
Female	223	55.6%
Total	401	100.0%

(2) **Age**

Table 10: Age of visitors to Nan (Field Survey, 2012)

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage
Below 15	2	0.5%
15-24	53	13.2%
25-34	134	33.4%
35-44	92	22.9%
45-54	70	17.5%
55-64	37	9.2%
Above 65	7	1.7%
No Answer	6	1.5%
Total	401	100.0%

Table 9 shows a slightly higher proportion of female travelers, while Table 10 shows that most visitors were in the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups; generally working people wishing to spend their holidays resting and relaxing. Some came to attend a meeting or seminar and spend the rest of the trip relaxing.

(3) **Occupation**

Table 11: Occupation of visitors to Nan (Field Survey, 2012)

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Company Employee	149	37.2%
Government officer	94	23.4%
Student	57	14.2%
Business Owner	49	12.2%
State Enterprise officer	12	3.0%
Home-maker	11	2.7%
Unemployed	8	2.0%
Others	8	2.0%
Retiree	7	1.7%
No Answer	6	1.5%
Total	401	100.0%

Table 11 indicates that most visitors are employees and government officers, followed by students; hence the dependence on seasonality as these groups of visitors

can only travel when their employers or schools are off. To bring these groups of visitors to Nan during non-holiday seasons, Nan needs to devise more activities that appeal or target other tourist groups with more flexible schedules, like business owners, home-makers and retirees. If the employee groups continue to dominate the tourist population in Nan, Nan will continue to face seasonality issues unless it can develop an innovative strategy in response.

(4) Region of origin

Table 12: Region of origin of visitors to Nan (Field Survey, 2012)

Region of Origin	Frequency	Percentage
Bangkok	188	46.9%
Central	45	11.2%
North	100	24.9%
Northeast	7	1.7%
East	1	0.2%
South	19	4.7%
Abroad	41	10.2%
Total	401	100.0%

Table 12 shows that most visitors come from Bangkok or the northern provinces of Thailand. However, marketing opportunities remain for foreigners and Thai people from the northeast and southern regions of Thailand, since their differing climate and topography in relation to Nan would encourage those living there to come and experience Nan. It is understandable that one major reason for those from Bangkok and the North dominating tourism demand in Nan is transport accessibility. It is difficult to access Nan from the northeast, south, or from overseas as the bus ride would take more than 20 hours, or a connecting flight is necessary by plane.

Table 13: Breakdown of individual survey respondents (including local people) conducted in Nan Province between May 2011 and August 2012, distributed by region and age group, in descending order (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Age Group/Region	Bangkok	North (Excl. Nan)	Central (Excl. BKK)	Abroad	South	North-east	East	Nan Province (Local)	Total	Percentage
Below 15	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	4	6	1.2%
15-24	23	19	5	4	2	0	0	29	82	16.5%
25-34	57	37	13	21	2	3	1	23	157	31.5%
35-44	47	23	11	5	3	3	0	13	105	21.1%
45-54	31	12	10	8	8	1	0	11	81	16.3%
55-64	23	7	3	2	2	0	0	11	48	9.6%
Above 65	4	0	0	1	2	0	0	4	11	2.2%
No Answer	3	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	8	1.6%
Total	188	100	45	41	19	7	1	97	498	100.0%
Percentage	37.8%	20.1%	9.0%	8.2%	3.8%	1.4%	0.2%	19.5%	100.0%	

The largest age group was 25-34 years old (31.5%), followed by 35-44 years old (21.1%). 37.8% of visitors were from Bangkok, followed by the northern region of Thailand (20.1%). Most visitors from Bangkok were also from the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups, which indicates that the largest group of travelers comprised young adults from Bangkok. This is potentially an ideal tourist group at which to target promotional activities on the Internet and market ecotourism tourism activities in Nan.

2.3.2 Visitor Characteristics and Behavior

Tourist behavior is important when designing and implementing measures for sustainable tourism. Based on field survey data collected, the characteristics of visitors are illustrated in the following tables:

(1) **Number of Days Spent in Nan**

Table 14: Number of days spent by visitors to Nan (Field Survey, 2012)

Number of Days Spent	Frequency	Percentage
1 Day	57	14.2%
2 Days	96	23.9%
3 Days	96	23.9%
4 Days	40	10.0%
5 Days	27	6.7%
6 Days	2	0.5%
7 Days	6	1.5%
8 Days	1	0.2%
10 Days	1	0.2%
14 Days	2	0.5%
21 Days	2	0.5%
30 Days	2	0.5%
180 Days	1	0.2%
No Answer	68	17.0%
Total	401	100.0%

Table 14 shows the number of days spent by visitors during their stay in Nan. Almost half planned to stay for 2-3 days, followed by 14.2% of visitors coming for one-day trips. Clearly, visitors spend a relatively short time in Nan. This could be due to their limited holidays, or the fact that Nan is offering few activities that can be finished in 1-3 days. What the author observed in Nan during the field surveys was that the activities did not involve close interaction with the local community. Visitors did not engage in close contact with local people and therefore only enjoyed tourist attractions superficially. The experience was not deep-rooted and no significant relationships were nurtured between visitors and locals. Consequently, 1-3 days suffice for a trip to Nan. Economically, Nan gains little benefit because visitors do not get to spend much during that time. In general, longer trips may earn more revenue for host communities and be more economically sustainable. Socially, the local community does not get to

consolidate and develop their pride in their hometown and their self-enrichment and self-fulfillment as hosts, because they see visitors as nothing but short-term customers.

(2) Type of Accommodation

Table 15: Type of accommodation utilized by visitors to Nan (Field Survey, 2012)

Type of Accommodation	Frequency	Percentage
Hotel	198	49.4%
Friend's House	75	18.7%
Resort	35	8.7%
Guesthouse	28	7.0%
Others	26	6.5%
No Answer	20	5.0%
Serviced Apartment	10	2.5%
Did not stay overnight	9	2.2%
Total	401	100.0%

Table 15 shows that more visitors are staying in hotels, resorts and guesthouses. This table also implies that the visitors spending one day in Nan had to spend a night in Nan before or after their one day trip. The proportion of people who stayed at a friend's place was 18.7%, hinting that this group of visitors came to Nan by word-of-mouth and not media influence.

(3) Means of Transport (To and within Nan)

Table 16: Means of transport used by visitors to access Nan, multiple answers allowed (Field Survey, 2012)

Means of Transport to Nan	Frequency (Multiple Answers)	Percentage (of 401 visitors)
Car	144	35.9%
Bus	112	27.9%
Plane	111	27.7%
Van	47	11.7%
Train	17	4.2%
Motorbike	7	1.7%
Others	1	0.2%
Total	439	N/A

Table 16 suggests many visitors came by car, followed by bus and plane. The 7 Greens campaign had little impact and did not change their logistics options. Many visitors to Nan still opted for convenience over environmental preservation. It is interesting to see that buses and planes were used almost equally. The author observed that the cost of traveling by plane during sales was almost as low as a VIP seat ticket for an express bus. It can be noted here also that the use of trains, which is the transportation recommended by the 7 Greens initiative, comprises only 4.2%. The data suggests 7 Greens' recommendation, although seemingly environmentally-friendly, may actually prove unfeasible, simply because Nan lacks a train station, meaning that train passengers need to transfer to a chartered van or bus at Phrae Province to reach Nan. To avoid this hassle, visitors find direct buses more convenient and faster.

Table 17: Means of transport used by visitors to travel within Nan, multiple answers allowed (Field Survey, 2012)

Means of Transport within Nan	Frequency (Multiple Answers)	Percentage (of 401 visitors)
Car	209	52.1%
Van	66	16.5%
Tour bus	48	12.0%
Bike	47	11.7%
Motorbike	42	10.5%
On foot	30	7.5%
Tricycle	15	3.7%
Tram	8	2.0%
Total	465	N/A

Table 17 shows the means of transport used by visitors to travel within Nan. Visitors prefer using their own cars or those of their local friends to travel around Nan. The use of public transport to Nan must be further promoted because Nan City lacks sufficient capacity to handle excessive cars. Issues faced by the local community include for example, visitors' cars parked in front of their houses or on bicycle lanes, insufficient fuel at gas stations during high season, etc.

Nan City itself is small and can be explored by bicycle, but if visitors want to explore other parts of Nan Province outside Nan City, they would need something faster. Toward the end of 2011, Nan introduced three gas-powered taxis, to which visitors responded quite positively and the total of metered taxis was further increased to five by the end of 2012. After talking to all five taxi drivers on different occasions during the field survey, it emerged that they were operated by a single company and the drivers were not only local residents. Some were also from outside Nan Province. The meter rate was cheaper than Bangkok's standard rate. The taxi drivers were friendly and informative but could not speak much English. Two said they had difficulties communicating with foreign passengers and wanted to have English maps in the taxi.

While these taxis help create jobs in the area, some local people said that they changed the scenic image of Nan City as the taxis would see the traditional lifestyles alter and came in bright and unnatural colors. Conversely, some college students interviewed by the author thought that the taxis resembled luxury. They said that if any local person were spotted riding one, they would be considered rich.

(4) Motivation for visit

Table 18: What motivated the visit to Nan, multiple answers allowed (Field Survey, 2012)

Visit Influenced By	Frequency (Multiple Answers)	Percentage (of 401 visitors)
Relatives	95	23.7%
Friend Recommendation	79	19.7%
Internet	76	19.0%
Work	47	11.7%
Publication media	42	10.5%
Tour Company	35	8.7%
Others	34	8.5%
Tourism Exhibitions	30	7.5%
7 Greens program	28	7.0%
TV media	26	6.5%
University/School	14	3.5%
Sale Promotion	1	0.2%
Total	507	N/A

Table 18 shows how the visitors were motivated to visit Nan. The top reasons were relatives and friends, followed by the Internet at 19.0%. 11.7% came to Nan partially to work, while 10.5% were influenced by media. It is interesting to note that the 7 Greens concept had little influence on people’s visit to Nan, which may imply that it was not sufficiently conveyed to visitors. Alternately, assuming relatives and friends are the biggest influence encouraging visitors to come to Nan, the 7 Greens could be conveyed to such visitors via these local relatives and friends as an effective channel.

(5) Purpose of visit

Table 19: Purpose of visiting Nan, multiple answers allowed (Field Survey, 2012)

Purpose of Visit	Frequency (Multiple Answers)	Percentage (of 401 visitors)
Rest	274	68.3%
Temples	178	44.4%
City View	142	35.4%
Famous Tourist Attractions	111	27.7%
Work	109	27.2%
View Natural Scenery	94	23.4%
Visit Relatives	85	21.2%
Food	58	14.5%
Shopping	38	9.5%
Study	35	8.7%
Bush Walking	34	8.5%
Water Rafting	25	6.2%
Entertainment	11	2.7%
Agriculture	9	2.2%
Others	8	2.0%
Health and Spa	5	1.2%
Sports	3	0.7%
Total	1,219	N/A

Table 19 reveals that visitors visit Nan to rest, visit old temples and Nan's famous attractions. Less than a quarter visited Nan to participate in nature-based activities. Although Nan is also famous for its beautiful nature, most visitors travel there for temples, which implies that the 7 Greens focus on environmental preservation in natural areas does not resonate among visitors. Nan may introduce more nature-based activities and more interactive activities at historical sites to strengthen the participation of people in the community. This data is also useful for the Thai government to review its sustainable tourism strategy for Nan, given the implied need to further promote social, cultural and economic aspects, rather than focusing excessively on environmental sustainability.

Table 20: Purpose of visiting Nan by Age Group, multiple answers allowed (Field Survey, 2012)

Purpose/Age	<15	15-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	>65	No Answer	Total
Rest	1	32	92	72	50	18	6	3	274
Temples		19	68	40	33	11	5	2	178
City View	1	11	54	38	27	8	3		142
Famous Tourist Attractions		9	40	30	22	8	2		111
Work		11	34	25	19	18	1	1	109
View Natural Scenery		10	36	22	17	7	2		94
Visit Relatives		19	26	20	11	7		2	85
Food		4	17	18	15	3	1		58
Shopping		5	17	10	5	1			38
Study	1	6	8	4	10	3	1	2	35
Bush Walking		7	20	2	2	2		1	34
Water Rafting		3	17	3	1			1	25
Entertainment		3	4	3		1			11
Agriculture		1	2	2	3	1			9
Others		1	2	3	2				8
Health and Spa		1	1	1		2			5
Sports				2		1			3
Total	3	142	438	295	217	91	21	12	1,219

Table 20 represents a cross analysis between the purpose of visit and the age of visitors. It is also interesting to see that the 25-34 age group dominates for most of the stated purposes, followed by people in the 35-44 age group. They are the working group of people who want to relax and/or visit temples. No elderly people above the age of 65 take part in bush walking or water rafting. The elderly people also came to Nan to relax and visit temples.

Table 21: Purpose of visiting Nan by Region of Origin, multiple answers allowed (Field Survey, 2012)

Purpose/Region	Bangkok	North (Excl. Nan)	Central (Excl. BKK)	East	South	North- east	Abroad	Total
Rest	117	77	30		16	5	29	274
Temples	81	37	19		14	3	24	178
City View	56	36	16		11	3	20	142
Famous Tourist Attractions	48	38	14		8		3	111
Work	76	14	9		3	1	6	109
View Natural Scenery	51	23	12		4		4	94
Visit Relatives	44	24	7	1	1	2	6	85
Food	29	15	9		2	1	2	58
Shopping	18	14	4		1	1		38
Study	12	3	16			1	3	35
Bush Walking	15	2	1				16	34
Water Rafting	7	4	1				13	25
Entertainment	4	4	2				1	11
Agriculture	5	2	2					9
Others	4	1	1				2	8
Health and Spa	4						1	5
Sports	1	2						3
Total	572	296	143	1	60	17	130	1,219

Table 21 represents a cross analysis between the purpose of visit and where the visitors came from. It is revealed here that all visitors came to Nan mainly to relax and to visit temples. In addition to relaxation and temples, many visitors from Bangkok also came for the city view. Also noted is the fact that a larger percentage of foreign visitors tended to participate in nature and adventure-based activities than domestic visitors. It is also interesting to note that foreign visitors do not plan to do shopping in Nan. For Nan to benefit economically from foreign visitors, the city will have to focus on delivering activity plans other than shopping to better suit foreign tourists.

(6) **Tourism Style**

Table 22: Tourism style of visitors to Nan (Field Survey, 2012)

Tourism Style	Frequency	Percentage
Traveling independently	250	62.3%
Someone guiding me	64	16.0%
Came with a tour group	55	13.7%
Bought a packaged tour	19	4.7%
No Answer	13	3.2%
Total	401	100.0%

(7) **Itinerary Planning Style**

Table 23: Itinerary planning style of visitors to Nan, multiple answers allowed (Field Survey, 2012)

Itinerary Planning	Frequency (Multiple Answers)	Percentage (of 401 visitors)
Planned all by myself	167	41.6%
Planned partially	105	26.2%
Tour company designed	57	14.2%
Saw on Internet	56	14.0%
Recommended by TAT	23	5.7%
Saw other people here	10	2.5%
Total	418	N/A

Table 22 and Table 23 show that most visitors plan their own trips and travel independently, which is most convenient for people, given the ease of obtaining travel information online. Nan is no exception here. However, as visitors travel alone, which generally means occupying one car and one hotel room, the carbon footprint per person surges, consuming unnecessarily high energy and resources. Strategies to encourage group travel must be established to ease the burden on Nan’s tourism resources. It is also interesting to see in Table 23 that only 5.7% of visitors plan their tours under the influence of TAT, which suggests relatives and friends may be a stronger influence than advertisements.

Based on data collected, the following tourist profile has been constructed for Nan City:

Gender: There is an almost equal number of males and females, with slightly more females at 55%

Age: 25-44 years old, which shows that most visitors are working adults.

Occupation: Company employees or government officers.

Region of origin: Bangkok, or the northern region, due to convenient public transport to Nan.

Number of days spent in Nan: The largest groups of visitors prefer 2-3 day trips. If Nan wants more visitors to stay longer, they should introduce more nature-based and interactive activities at historical sites.

Type of Accommodation: Many visitors tend to stay at hotels or friends' houses.

Means of Transport (To and within Nan): Many visitors prefer to travel to and within Nan by car, followed by bus or plane.

Visit influenced by: Numerous visitors were in Nan to visit their relatives, while the second-largest group came based on friends' recommendations and the third-largest saw information about Nan on the Internet.

Purpose of visit: Most visitors came to rest and/or to visit temples, which suggests Nan is famous for temples rather than as a nature-based destination. There may be scope to promote educational media on sustainable tourism near the temple areas.

Tourism Style: Most visitors traveled independently.

Itinerary Planning Style: 41.6% of visitors planned their trips independently.

2.3.2 Visitor Trends

Visitor trends clearly emerge when comparing data between 2007 and 2012. The data from 2007 were gathered by TAT and the data for 2012 represent information collected by the author during the field survey. TAT collected the tourist data through accommodation providers and recorded it in percentage form, so the number of samples for TAT's data could not be specified. Conversely, the author collected data through surveys handed out to 401 visitors. Despite a different method used to collect data, the author believes that these two sets of data can help illustrate general tourism trends in Nan. Comparisons between the two periods are illustrated in the following charts:

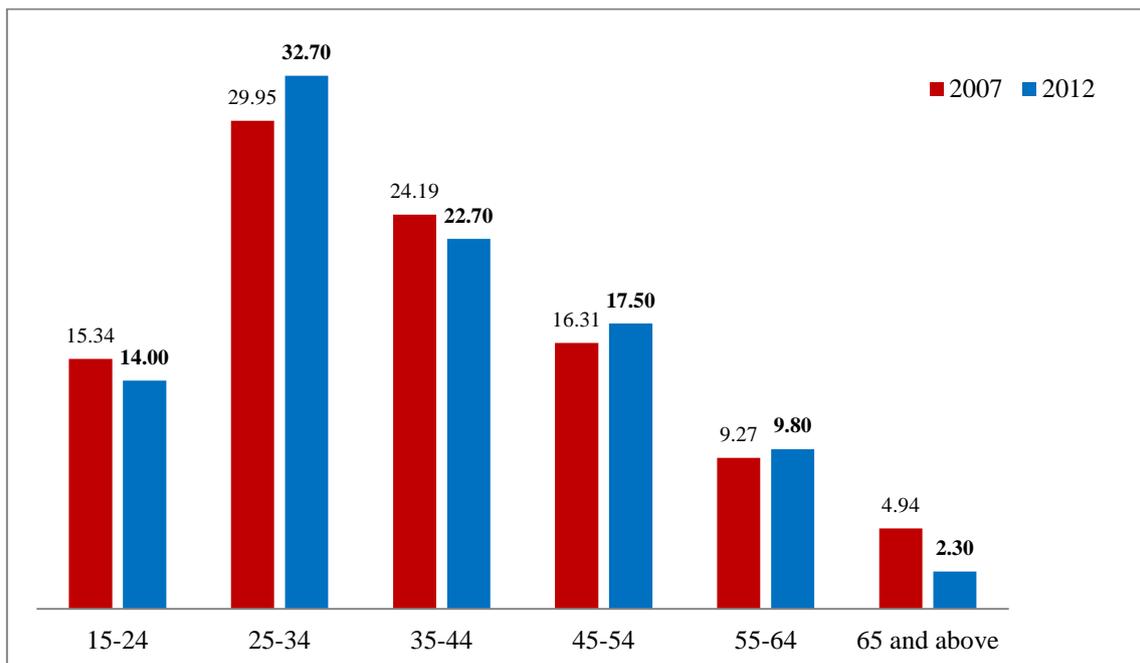


Figure 31: Percentage of Nan Visitors by Age Group (Source: TAT, 2007 and Field Survey, 2012)

The age groups of visitors show similar basic trends, with 25-34 year old visitors comprising the majority and those 65 and above representing the smallest group. The lack of any dramatic changes means strategies such as marketing plans and educational materials on sustainable tourism can be produced and promoted with 25-34 year old

visitors as the main target. Also, more cultural activities can be stimulated to encourage the elderly population to access Nan.

Table 24: Percentage of Nan visitors by gender in 2007 and 2012 (Source: TAT, 2007 and Field Survey, 2012)

Gender	2007	2012
Male	53.9%	44.4%
Female	46.1%	55.6%

It can be seen from Table 24 that the percentage of males and females remained slightly similar with no dramatic change.

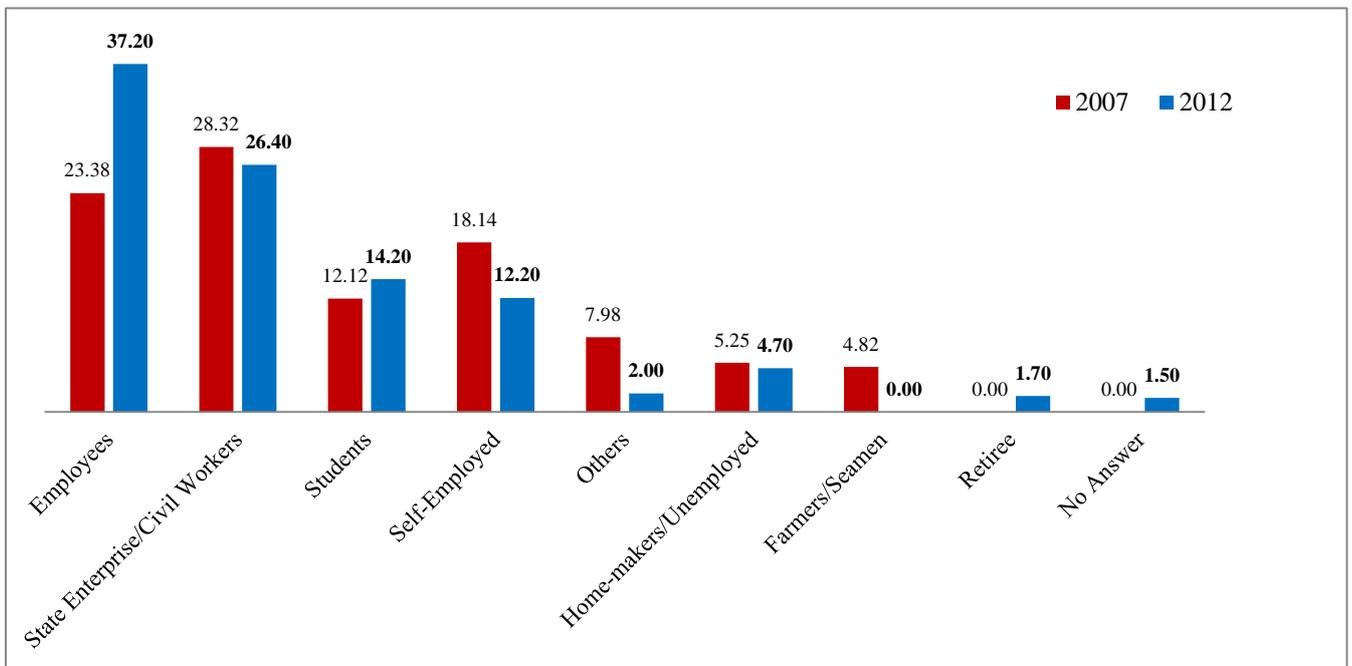


Figure 32: Percentage of Nan Visitors by Occupation in 2007 and 2012, multiple answers allowed (Source: TAT, 2007 and Field Survey, 2012)

It is clear from Figure 32 that numerous visitors are employees, state enterprise workers or government officers, followed by students and self-employed businesspeople. The busy seasons for Nan tourism are shaped by its visitors being able to travel when their offices or schools close on national holidays. As Nan depends on such visitors, it will be influenced by seasonal fluctuations due to the nature of this group's vacation

timing. Nan must look to attract other groups of visitors available at different times to ensure economic sustainability. Another approach involves devising activities that could attract company and school trips, for example, team-building activities and ecotourism excursions.

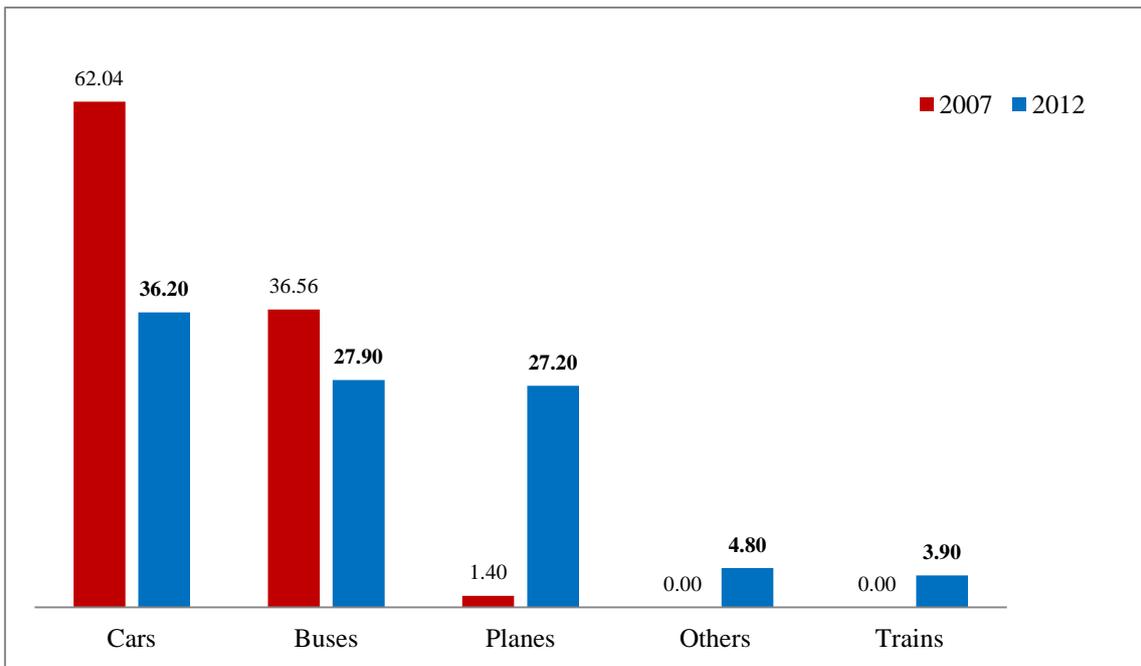


Figure 33: Percentage of Vehicle Usage by Visitors to Nan in 2007 and 2012, multiple answers allowed (Source: TAT, 2007 and Field Survey, 2012)

Figure 33 shows that many used to travel by car back in 2007 but car users were declining in 2012. At the same time, due to the widespread penetration of Low-Cost Carriers (LCC) such as Nok Air, which started operating daily flights between Bangkok and Nan in 2011, airline passengers in 2012 outnumbered the 2007 total and rose to the same level as bus users. There is concern whether the use of planes, which conflicts with the 7 Greens concept and moves to encourage more eco-friendly transportation such as trains and buses, could affect the environmental sustainability of Nan. This is because increased air travel is linked to a greater environmental impact compared to other forms of transportation (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010.)

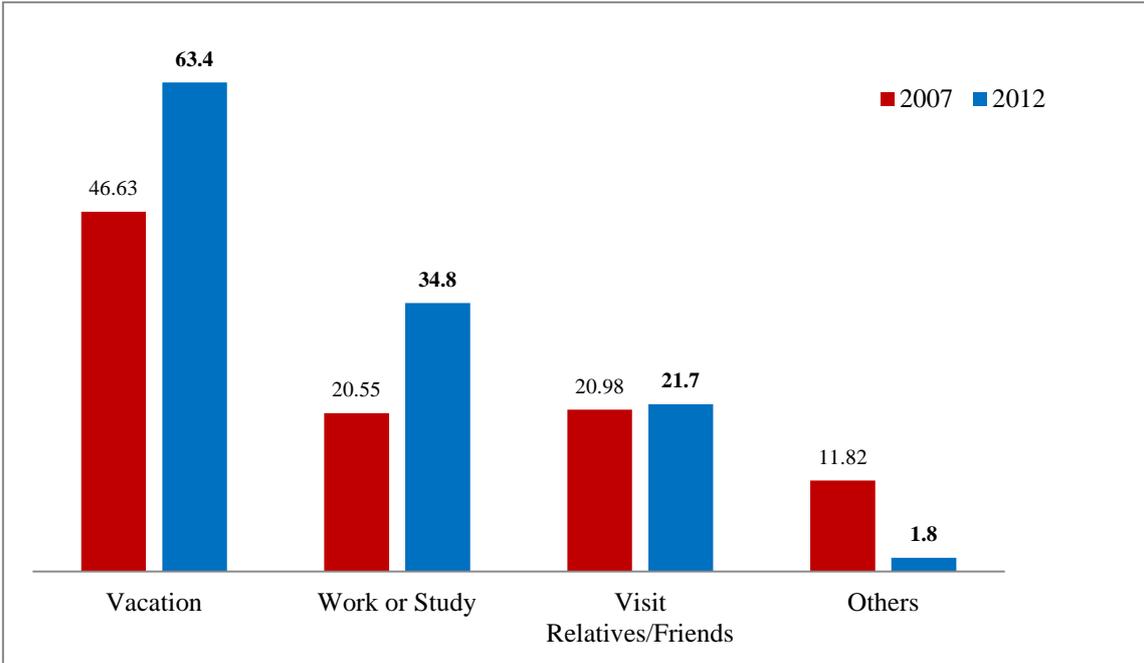


Figure 34: Nan Visitors Purposes of Visit as Percentages in 2007 and 2012, multiple answers allowed (Source: TAT, 2007 and Field Survey, 2012)

Figure 34 suggests the main purpose of traveling to Nan for most visitors is for vacation. Others visitors travel within Nan on the sidelines of their work, study or family visits. The trend remained almost unchanged for those who came to visit relatives and friends. However, more people were traveling to Nan for vacation, reflecting its increasing popularity as a tourist destination.

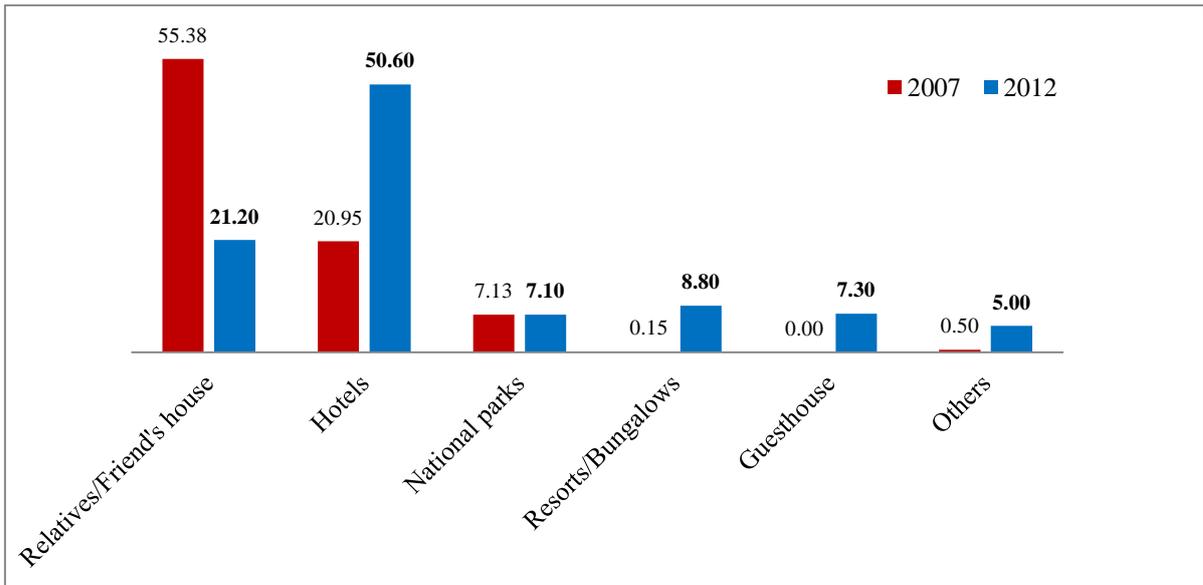


Figure 35: Percentage of Accommodation Usage by Visitors to Nan in 2007 and 2012, multiple answers allowed (Source: TAT, 2007 and Field Survey, 2012)

Figure 35 reveals that more visitors are selecting hotel accommodation over their relatives' and friends' houses. However, the low usage of national park accommodation at just 7% means national parks need to find ways to attract more customers. The chart also shows a lack of hotels, resorts and guesthouses back in 2007, which meant a corresponding lack of data on people using such services. However, the number of accommodation providers, including homestays, had risen to 150 as of February 2013 (TAT Phrae, 2014) so there are more opportunities for increased revenue in the accommodation sector as well as more interaction between visitors and the local community, particularly during homestays.

2.4 Tourism Service Providers Data Compiled by Author

Between May 2011 and August 2012, the author conducted field surveys in Nan, during which a total of 66 tourism service providers responded.

Table 25: Breakdown of tourism service providers who responded to the survey conducted in Nan City between May 2011 and August 2012, distributed by Service Type (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Service Type	Number of Tourism Service Providers	Percentage of Tourism Service Providers
Tour Business	8	12.1%
Hotel	6	9.1%
Restaurant	22	33.3%
Shop	19	28.8%
Tourist Attraction	4	6.1%
Transport (including airlines)	5	7.6%
Nan Statistics Bureau	1	1.5%
Nan Tourist Information Center	1	1.5%
Total	66	100.0

The tourism service providers comprised tour businesses, hotels, restaurants, shops, temples, national parks, bus companies, airlines, Nan Statistics Bureau and Nan Tourist Information Center. The author spent 30-60 minutes with each tourism service provider. They were asked about their knowledge of the 7 Greens, their contribution to the community in accordance with the 7 Greens, their views of their own business performance, any assistance they required to improve their businesses and their contribution to developing human capabilities, if any. Details of these findings are discussed in 2.5.3.

Table 26: Tourism service providers who responded to the survey conducted in Nan City between May 2011 and August 2012, distributed by average years of service (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Service Type	Average Years of Service
Tour Business	9.8 years
Hotel	19.4 years
Restaurant	11.3 years
Shop	3.4 years
Tourist Attraction (National Parks And Ancient Temples)	N/A
Transport (Including Airlines)	26.5 years
Nan Statistics Bureau	20 years
Nan Tourist Information Center	2 years

Tourism service providers in Nan are a mixture of old businesses and newcomers. There were two large tour companies, Nanfa Tour (20 years in business) and Nan Pin Chom (30 years in business.) The other six tour companies had been around for fewer than five years and most souvenir shops were relatively new. The number of new hotels has been increasing while Dhevaraj hotel has been in business for 30 years. Many tourist attractions include ancient temples like Wat Phumin (thought to be constructed in 1596), Wat Suan Tan (thought to be constructed in 1227) and Wat Phrathat Chae Haeng (thought to be constructed between 1326 and 1359), but the average age of tourist attractions in Nan cannot be accurately confirmed.

2.5 Applying the 7 Greens Concept in Nan City

2.5.1 Implementing the 7 Greens Pilot Project in Nan

Nan was selected as a pilot city for the 7 Greens project in 2010 and the 7 Greens pilot project continued until the end of 2012. TAT's internal and external organizations collaborated at the project launch as many expected to see Nan become another popular tourist destination. An MOU entitled "7 Greens Pilot Network Cooperation Agreement: Nan City - an environmentally aware and a culturally rich tourism resource" was signed on September 10, 2010 between TAT and 23 organizations as shown in Figure 36.

- 1) Thai Environment Institute
- 2) Nan Province Office
- 3) Nan Provincial Administration Organization
- 4) Nan Municipality
- 5) National Park, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department
- 6) The Association of Domestic Travel, Nan Province
- 7) Mass Media Federation - Utaradit, Phrae, Nan
- 8) The Association of Northern Tourism Federation
- 9) Restaurant Association, Nan Province
- 10) Tricycle Association, Nan Province
- 11) Wa River Rafting Association
- 12) Hug Muang Nan Foundation
- 13) Hug Muang Wiangsa Group
- 14) Nong Bua Village Community
- 15) Had Pha Khon Village Community
- 16) Rong Nage Village Community
- 17) Don Moon Village Community
- 18) Pa tong Village Community
- 19) 7 Greens Pilot Network, Nan City, Tourist Attraction Group
- 20) 7 Greens Pilot Network, Nan City, Tourism Community Group
- 21) 7 Greens Pilot Network, Nan City, Tourism Services Business
- 22) 7 Greens Pilot Network, Nan City, Tourist Attraction (Spa) Group
- 23) 7 Greens Pilot Network, Nan City, Tourist Attraction (Tour Operator) Group

Figure 36: List of organizations that signed the "7 Greens Pilot Network Cooperation Agreement" (Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2013)

The cooperation was not limited to within Nan City, but also came from other cities in the province, such as Nong Bua Village, Wa River Rafting Association and outside the province such as the Mass Media Federation from Phrae and Utaradit.

Since the project launch in 2010, TAT has implemented various other sub-projects as outlined below; aiming to promote sustainable tourism management throughout Nan province. These sub-projects have included promotional events, operational training and waste management workshops. The training involved at least 30 people per pilot area and was held for at least one day on each occasion. The sub-projects are as follows:

- 1) Sustainable tourism promotion guideline project under the 7 Greens “Enjoy Traveling, Care for the Environment, Nan Province” campaign. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)
- 2) Operational Training “Community-based tourism management: Educational and Environmental Tourism” during April 20-21, 2012. The targeted audience included managers from the public and private sectors and tourism communities in Wiangsa City and Nan City. The aim was to enhance knowledge of community-based tourism management for sustainable learning, upskilling and suitable tourism management. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)
- 3) Operational Training “Environmentally-friendly accommodation management” on April 23, 2012. The targeted audience was hotel enterprises in Nan province and the aim was to consolidate and standardize the knowledge and skills of hotel operators and encourage them to realize the importance of mitigating and preventing environmental issues. Efforts were also made to boost quality, add value to the accommodation and establish a quality and standardized tourism service network. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)

4) Environmentally-friendly activity promotion under the 7 Greens concept in September 2012. The targeted audience included tourism attraction operators, tourism communities and accommodation operators. The aim was to organize activities and training to encourage awareness and knowledge of sustainable tourism. Efforts were also made to promote Nan province as a locally protected tourist attraction e.g. setting up bicycle lanes in Wiangsa City of Nan province. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)

5) Waste Management Training

Considering the increasing amount of waste requiring management, Nan Municipal City anticipated that the current landfill facility would only be able to accommodate waste for a few more years. While Nan City is constructing a new landfill facility, efforts are being made to generate energy from waste, or recycle it. Such projects include:

- a) Recycle Bazaar - educates the community on how to separate waste and sell recycled waste to merchants.
- b) Garbage Donation - encourages people to donate unused items which are seemingly garbage but still usable by the poor and elderly to the local authority.
- c) Waste Separation Training - provides training to local businesses such as hotels, shops and market sellers.
- d) Measures by local authorities – these include separating twigs and leaves, increasing garbage collection fees and increasing the number of trash cans during the peak tourism season.

During the project implementation, TAT acknowledged a number of challenges. According to the author's interview with a 7 Greens manager in TAT headquarters in Bangkok in January 2014, the following challenges were seen as obstructing the project development:

- 1) *“Not many understood the 7 Greens project initially so it was not easy to expand the implementation.”*

The author interprets this comment as indicating that although people understood the 7 Greens concept, they were unsure whether it would be feasible. Although the local communities were mentally ready to accept the idea of environmental sustainability proposed by the 7 Greens concept, they did not yet feel the urgent need to protect the environment.

- 2) *“The percentage of people involved in the project was low compared to the number of stakeholders in Nan province.”*

This means that not all stakeholders participated in the 7 Greens project. Since only a few people took part, the concept could not penetrate and the project would likely be short-term.

- 3) *“Nan is not a stop-off city. Nan is located next to the border of Thailand and Laos. Visitors who travel to Nan must be keen to do so right from the start.”*

The author sees Nan's relatively concealed location as one reason explaining why it has retained its rich natural and cultural resources to date. Since tourist numbers are now increasing and the main aim of the 7 Greens is to protect the environment, the author does not see the location of Nan as a hindrance.

- 4) *“Local tourism businesses and local communities were cooperative but relatively passive.”*

Nan is peaceful and laid back by nature, so it is unsurprising that local businesses and communities take things slowly. However, they must be informed that numerous visitors are visiting their homeland, with more coming every year. If little is done to tackle this wildfire growth, they may suffer environmental and social impacts down the line.

5) *“After the pilot project ended in 2012, the city was left with few successors who would proceed implementing the 7 Greens concept.”*

If the 7 Greens project is considered successful, it is worth delegating a local group or entity to continue the project, even after the pilot phase has finished. Developing sustainable tourism must be an ongoing process to ensure long-term stability.

Despite these challenges, TAT considered the project to be successful during its starting phase. TAT believes that 7 Greens involved effective collaboration from every sector in Nan City at the start. Associated stakeholders were described as having “the mental readiness” required to conserve the tourism industry as well as the drive to make Nan a successful sustainable tourism destination. However, the author thinks that the 7 Greens project in Nan was placed on the back burner once the pilot project was over, due to a lack of drive and momentum.

The author asked TAT about how the 7 Greens project was assessed. TAT did so by assessing the cooperation of tourism service providers to determine its success or otherwise. Their target was to have at least 25% of tourism service providers help preserve tourism resources in Nan. The result of TAT’s assessment in their 2010 report on the 7 Greens project (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010) indicated that 56.47% of the participants were engaged in preserving and conserving Nan’s

tourism resources, which exceeded their 25% target. Accordingly, TAT declared that their project participants were able to successfully consolidate their knowledge, understanding and awareness of environment and tourism conservation in Nan.

2.5.2 Report on the 7 Greens Pilot Project in Nan (Based on TAT)

TAT issued a report on the 7 Greens pilot project in Nan in 2010, which included the results of their environmental awareness survey, their training activities, the issues they faced and their efforts to overcome them. The details are outlined as follows:

(1) Environmental Awareness Survey under the 7 Greens Concept

The advisory team of TAT conducted an environmental awareness survey. They collected information on the activities of people involved in product development and tourism services in Nan Province. 167 tourism service providers responded to the questionnaire surveys, while the remaining 22 tourism service providers responded by interview. It emerged that of a total 189 tourism service providers, 14 or 7.41% were conducting their activities and businesses according to the 7 Greens concept. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)

The number of 7 Greens practitioners comprised less than 10% of the total in 2010 at the time of this survey, which may mean the survey was conducted prematurely.

The author conducted a similar survey of 66 tourism service providers between 2011 and 2012 and the results showed improvement. 60.6% of tourism service providers said they were following the 7 Greens concept (Table 29, p. 127)

(2) “Small Group Activity” Training for Tourism Service Providers

The tourism industry of Nan province has been receiving a considerable response from visitors and rapidly expanding, leveraging the uniqueness of its cultures, natural abundance and strong community lifestyles (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010) (Also see Table 39, p. 151). Conversely, potential issues such as waste management due to increased consumers and traffic jams due to the lack of available public transport will emerge if Nan is not well prepared for the imminent tourism boom. The impact on its natural resources and the environment may bring catastrophes to Nan like those faced by other tourism cities²⁶.

In response and to sustain its cultural beauty, original lifestyles and rich resources, along with the tourism industry, there is an urgent need to prepare the tourism service providers in Nan following the influx of tourism in the city. One initiative by a TAT advisory team involved operational training, in the form of so-called “Small Group Activities or SGAs” to make Nan’s tourism services more sustainable. The tourism service providers were advised on how to analyze problems and apply the 7 Greens concept to their business activities. The training was attended by tourist attraction providers such as national park officers, tour companies, hotel/spa/restaurant owners and the local communities.

²⁶ Cases of excessive population of deer in Phu kra dueng and wild monkeys in Khao Yai in tourist areas, and cases where tourists have been attacked by these wild animals when not feeding them are examples showing the consequences of a failure to educate tourists from the start about respecting the natural habitats of wild animals (Chatsiriworakul, 2012).

(3) 7 Greens-related Issues identified by TAT

Through TAT's "Small Group Activity" Training held on June 12, 2010 and attended by 37 people from 27 organizations and enterprises, issues related to the 7 Greens were identified and illustrated in the following table:

Table 27: Summary of issues identified by TAT's training groups under the 7 Greens Concept (Source: TAT, 2010)

7 Greens Concept	Identified Issues	Measures/Recommended Activities
Green Heart	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workers and villagers lack knowledge and understanding and ignore service standards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish environmental awareness among workers and villagers Establish awareness in the community of ecotourism and the environment
Green Logistics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pollution generated in tourism service facilities Cars parked on nature pathways and obstructing the ecosystem Road conditions in community areas unsuitable for commuting by car 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish nature walking routes Establish a time schedule for shuttle buses and improve punctuality Provide appropriate car parks Encourage the use of bicycles and walking
Green Attraction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No regulations on materials used to construct and decorate buildings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impose regulations on building design that would help them blend in with nature
Green Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community Participation remains low Most villagers are not ready to participate in activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Build a model for environmentally-friendly facilities Encourage villagers to grow local herbs Promote the use of local food and other products
Green Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excessive usage of electricity and water An increased amount of non-biodegradable waste 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage water and electricity conservation Encourage the use of refillable containers
Green Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lack of healthy raw materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish an agricultural zone in the service facility to secure raw materials Provide healthy food made from green materials Encourage the use of local materials and products
Green Plus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Villagers lack knowledge and still cannot adjust their lifestyle to become good hosts²⁷ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage villagers to sell to visitors to increase their income

²⁷ This identified issue and measure contradicts the idea of creative tourism as proposed by DASTA, which does not encourage the local community to adjust their lifestyles to the tourists as this will not lead to sustainability.

Following the training, a random follow-up assessment was reportedly conducted by TAT on five tourism service facilities, namely: Doi Phu Kha National Park, Nan Touring, Bo Klua View Resort, Rilasinee Spa and Resort and Baan Sri Na Paan. TAT found that these enterprises had applied the 7 Greens concept into their business activities as follows:

- 1) Baan Sri Na Paan - introduced a homestay program that is environmentally aware and uses community resources effectively. For example, the homestay encouraged locals and visitors to use bicycles or walk around the community. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)
- 2) Doi Phu Kha National Park - Natural pathways were set up; encouraging travelers to walk around in and learn about the ecosystem. The national park also arranged appropriate car-parking during festival seasons, as well as encouraging visitors to reduce the use of plastic bags and separate waste. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)
- 3) Bo Klua View Resort - The resort focused on organic farming and using raw materials from the local environment. They were also aware of using plastic bags and refillable containers. Their restaurant also offered healthy menus for customers. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)
- 4) Rilasinee Spa and Resort - The resort promoted and supported the community in growing herbal plants, which they procured as raw materials for their business. Apart from this, they also replaced old air-conditioners with new energy-efficient models. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)
- 5) Nan Touring - The tour operator altered the tour schedules to make them more transparent and punctual. They also changed from a chartered service to a scheduled

shuttle service, setting rules for visitors to contribute toward environmental protection. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)

It is clear that cooperation from various sectors could help make Nan City a sustainable tourist destination, where both culture and the environment can be protected at the same time. However, to improve such cooperation and ensure a long-term and effective result, more training must be conducted and on a wider scale. If cooperation from the local communities, comprising a population of more than 450,000, is to be encouraged, training the local communities must be a priority. Moreover, training to date has reportedly been on a one-off basis; conducted for one day only and to only 30-40 service providers at a time. There is a need for more regular training or activities where local people can also participate and show long-term commitment. It would also be effective to follow-up on such activities to ensure the 7 Greens concept is consistently applied.

(4) TAT's Efforts to Cultivate 7 Greens in Nan

As another effort to cultivate the 7 Greens concept in the sustainable tourism development of Nan, TAT engaged in activities to improve awareness of the 7 Greens concept in 2011 and 2012. The activities for 7 Greens conducted in Nan are presented in Table 28.

Table 28: Additional activities conducted by TAT from 2011-2012 (Source: TAT, 2013)

Activity Date/ Assessment Date	Activity Details	Corresponding elements of 7 Greens	Targeted Audience
October 23, 2011/No Assessment	<p>“Travel to Nan with a new heart and an eco-heart”</p> <p>Summary: Promoted ecotourism in Nan.</p>	Green Heart	Public Sector (1) Tourist Attractions (5) Accommodation (13) Souvenir shops (7) Restaurants (11) Tourist Info Center (1)
January 31, 2012/ September 2012	<p>“Bicycle Track - Wiangsa District”</p> <p>Summary: Establish a bicycle track for a model bicycle route as an attempt to save energy and promote ecotourism.</p>	Green Heart Green Activity Green Attraction Green Service	Public Sector (1) Tourist Attractions (7) Accommodation (1) Souvenir shops (1)
January 31, 2012/ August-September 2012	<p>“Environmentally-friendly accommodation management”</p> <p>Summary: Educated and built awareness among accommodation providers to conduct environmentally-friendly activities.</p>	Green Heart Green Service Green Activity Green Attraction	Tourist Attraction (1) Accommodations (29)
September 11, 2012/ September 2012	<p>“Making eco-friendly products from local materials”</p> <p>Summary: Taught them how to produce shampoo and detergents from local materials. Taught how to make filter fats from wastewater.</p>	Green Heart Green Community Green Service Green Logistics	Tourist Attractions (25) Accommodation (14) Restaurants (3) Mass Media (1)
August 2012/ September 2012	<p>“Green Cultural Route”</p> <p>Summary: Establish a green route for eco-friendly vehicles such as trams and tricycles.</p>	Green Heart Green Activity Green Community Green Attraction	Public/Private Sector (6) Tourist Attractions (10) Associations (4) Tour Operators (2) Mass Media (3)

It can be seen from Table 28 the activities targeted energy-saving and improving the environment, but did not engage local communities and visitors. They were mainly geared toward tourism service providers. Furthermore, almost all the 7 Green elements were met in the above activities except for Green Plus, which encourages personal contributions. It can be seen that efforts to improve Green Plus were insufficient throughout this awareness training.

2.5.3 Findings from the 7 Greens Pilot Project

Between March 2011 and March 2013, the 7 Greens concept promoted in Nan City was examined by the author to measure its effectiveness and identify issues that could hamper efforts to develop sustainable tourism in Nan.

The survey included a list of questions to measure the publicity and marketing effectiveness of the 7 Greens Initiative and observe any development, two years after the project launch. The responses are summarized in Table 29 and Table 30.

Table 29: Percentage of responses to questions related to the 7 Greens concept (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Questions	Tourism Service Providers (66 respondents)				Local Residents (97 respondents)				Visitors (401 respondents)			
	Yes	No	Maybe	N/A	Yes	No	Maybe	N/A	Yes	No	Maybe	N/A
1. Have you heard of the 7-Greens initiative?	62.1%	36.4%	0%	1.5%	30.9%	46.4%	18.6%	4.1%	27.7%	61.1%	6.7%	4.5%
2. Are you following the 7 Greens concept or already practicing something similar?	60.6%	1.5%	24.2%	13.7%	61.9%	5.2%	0%	33%	45.4%	4.5%	1.5%	48.6%
3. Is the 7-Greens initiative easy to comply with?	53.0%	16.7%	19.7%	10.6%	37.1%	13.4%	11.3%	38.1%	34.9%	9.2%	12.7%	43.1%
4. Do you consider the 7 Greens initiative effective?	59.1%	7.6%	21.2%	12.2%	37.1%	13.4%	11.3%	38.1%	34.9%	9.2%	12.7%	43.1%
5. Are you aware of the importance of protecting the environment while conducting tourism activities in Nan?	89.4%	0%	3.0%	7.6%	86.6%	1.0%	4.1%	8.2%	83.8%	1.2%	2.7%	12.2%
6. Are you determined to protect Nan while conducting your activities?	90.9%	0%	1.5%	7.6%	82.5%	2.1%	4.1%	11.3%	82.3%	0%	4.7%	13%
7. Do you consider yourself a “green” operator?	39.4%	0%	6.1%	54.6%								

Table 30: Percentage of responses by respondent type in a detailed breakdown (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Respondent Type	Aware of the 7 Greens Concept	<u>Unaware</u> of the 7 Greens Concept	Already following the 7 Greens concept or something similar	Not following the 7 Greens concept
Visitors (401)	27.7%	61.1%	45.4%	4.5%
Local Residents (97)	30.9%	46.4%	61.9%	5.2%
Tour Businesses (8)	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Hotels (6)	50.0%	50.0%	66.7%	0.0%
Restaurants (22)	72.7%	27.3%	63.6%	0.0%
Shops (19)	36.8%	57.9%	42.1%	0.0%
Tourist Attractions (4)	50.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%
Transport (5)	80.0%	20.0%	80.0%	0.0%
Other Businesses (2)	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	50.0%

Table 29 is a comprehensive summary of the environmental awareness survey, resembling the survey conducted by TAT in 2010 on page 120 but including responses from visitors and local residents. A total of 66 tourism service providers, 401 visitors and 97 local residents responded to the surveys. Table 30 further breaks down the tourism service provider type to analyze which businesses require more attention in terms of awareness-building.

The overall response is summarized in Table 29, which shows high awareness of environmental protection among both tourism service providers and individuals. The table also shows that a greater percentage of tourism service providers were aware of the 7 Greens project than visitors and locals. Another interesting point is that despite people's lack of awareness of the 7 Greens, almost half were already following a similar concept. The analyses are detailed below:

(1) Publicity and Marketing Effectiveness

During the survey, respondents were given brief explanations about each element of the 7 Greens concept. Although 61.1% of the tourist respondents were unaware of the 7 Greens concept and only 27.7% knew of it, 45.4% of the tourist respondents' activities were more or less aligned with it already. The situation was similar for local residents, 46.4% of whom were unaware of the 7 Greens but 61.9% of whom were engaging in activities corresponding to the 7 Greens. This shows how at least 31.0% of local residents and 17.7% of visitors did not have to understand the 7 Greens concept to be eco-friendly. Regardless, it is clear that the 7 Greens concept has not been sufficiently conveyed to visitors and the local community, as shown in Table 30, whereby only 27.7% of visitors were aware of the initiative as opposed to 30.9% of local people.

Conversely, 62.1% of the tourism service providers were aware and 60.6% were conducting their businesses in line with the 7 Greens concept. This data confirms that the marketing campaigns were more geared toward service providers and were only effective to a certain level. However, interviews conducted by the author with local restaurants and tour companies show that no follow-up activities and assessments after the launch of the 7 Greens project were in place, which shows how regular assessments measuring the effectiveness and feasibility of the launched initiative may not have been performed.

It is also interesting to note the lack of awareness of the 7 Greens concept among local shops who responded to the survey, whereas all tour operating companies knew about it. More effective marketing and training strategies at the community level may be necessary in this case to ensure all the relevant providers are well-informed.

(2) Environmental Awareness

Conversely, when the author asked respondents whether or not they were aware of the importance of protecting the environment while traveling in Nan, both visitors (83.8%) and tourism service provider respondents (89.4%) responded affirmatively. This suggests high awareness among tourism stakeholders, regardless of the 7 Greens initiative. The result also shows the high potential among Nan residents and the scope for further training, to improve their contributions to the city's sustainable tourism.

Moreover, there is a clear lack of knowledge of the 7 Greens concept among locals and visitors, given their inability to confirm easy compliance with the same. The result reflects the lack of governmental planning and support via relevant legal and social frameworks. Ensuring such frameworks may facilitate implementation and encourage compliance among visitors and local businesses, as well as force businesses to incorporate sustainability into their business models rather than viewing it as an additional cost.

(3) Performance of Each 7 Greens Element

The overall performance of the 7 Greens initiative in Nan is measured based on the survey responses. Respondents were asked to select as many "Greens" of the 7 Greens that they are conducting as they wanted. The frequency for each Green element was then tallied and the respective percentages were then calculated as proportions of all respondents (66 tourism service providers, 97 local people and 401 visitors.) Note that visitors were not evaluated on "Green Community", "Green Attractions" and "Green Service" and the local people were not evaluated on "Green Attractions" and "Green Service" as they were not required to comply with these three elements.

Table 31: Percentage contribution to each 7 Greens element, distributed by respondent type, taken from 66 tourism service providers, 401 visitors and 97 local people (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

7 Green Elements	Tourism Service Providers	Locals	Visitors
Green Heart	51.5	52.6	37.7
Green Logistics	25.8	12.4	12.7
Green Attraction	18.2		
Green Activity	31.8	16.5	22.4
Green Community	33.3	29.9	
Green Service	51.5		
Green Plus	10.6	26.8	14.7

Table 32: Summary of the least contributed Green elements for each respondent type (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Respondent type	The Least Contributed Green Elements
Tourism service providers	Green Logistics, Green Attraction and Green Plus
Visitors	Green Logistics, Green Activity and Green Plus
Local people	Green Logistics, Green Activity and Green Plus

Table 31 and Table 32 show that the least successful Green elements for visitors were Green Logistics and Green Plus. The lack of public transport between tourist attractions in Nan and no motivation encouraging personal contributions may explain the lack of Green logistics and Green Plus. The least contributed Green elements for local people were Green Logistics and Green Activity; due to the lack of public transport as well as the lack of opportunities for local people to participate in green activities. Some local residents highlighted that apart from annual festivals, such green activities were usually unavailable. Conversely, the tourism service providers found it difficult to meet the expectations of the Green Logistics, Green Attraction and Green Plus initiatives. Besides the public transport issues, tourism service providers felt that their attractions were not eco-friendly enough to meet the 7 Greens standard. Tourism

service providers also felt that they did not contribute much personally, due to the lack of opportunities to do so. This data shows the crucial need for transportation and mobility for sustainable development, not to mention the fact that sustainable transportation can also boost economic growth and expand accessibility. Green Logistics cannot be ignored, given its ability to facilitate integration of the economy while respecting the environment. A green transport system using clean and energy-efficient fuels can breathe new life into sustainable tourism in Nan. If transportation were clean and convenient, many more green activities could be conducted, which would help consolidate awareness among visitors and locals. It is therefore clear that additional support for Green Logistics, efforts to encourage the provision of Green Activities, and improve personal contributions and awareness of the importance of sustainability are necessary for Nan to become a fully sustainable tourist destination.

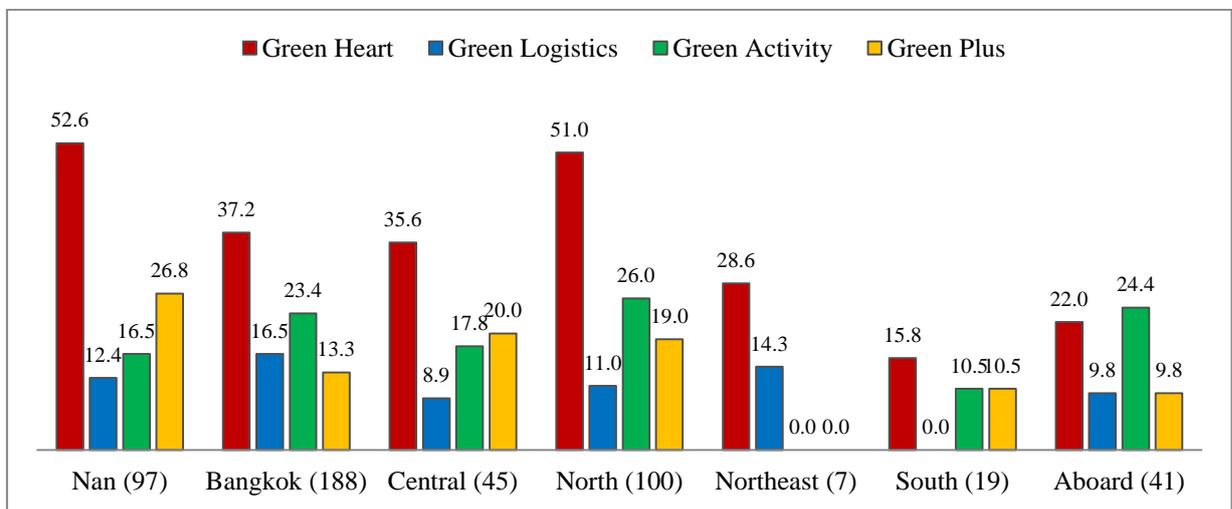


Figure 37: Percentage of people engaging in four of the 7 Greens elements, taken from 498 individual respondents (both visitors and locals), distributed by the region of origin (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

As shown in Figure 37, the respondents' behavior according to the 7 Greens concept is distributed by each element and by the individuals' regions. The figures represent the percentages of people in each region engaging in four of the 7 Greens elements. The data suggest that those who practice Green Heart the most are the local people in Nan, followed by people from the North. The latter are considered more aware of nature and the environment than those from other regions, possibly because they consider this region home and feel the urge to protect it accordingly. Visitors from the North, overseas and Bangkok are engaging more in Green Activities. It was clear that people from the north and Bangkok came to Nan to visit temples, while visitors from overseas came to Nan for adventure activities and bush walking. In logistics terms, this stood out once again as the aspect least engaged in by people, regardless of region. Added support to improve the logistics system is thus crucial. Another interesting point is that awareness of Green Plus was lowest among visitors from the Northeast, followed by foreigners and visitors from the South of Thailand. This indicates that these groups of visitors are not contributing sufficiently or as expected to the environment and the communities they visit and that the concept of personal contribution has not been effectively inculcated to visitors from these areas.

Next, Table 33 presents the answers of respondents who were tourism service providers, broken down by service type. The total number of Green elements contributed by each service type was then used to form an analysis as illustrated below.

Table 33: Percentage of each Green element contributed by each service type (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

7 Greens Element	Overall	Tour Operators	Hotels	Restaurants	Shops	Tourist Attractions	Transport	Tourism Info Center and Stats Office
Green Heart	51.5	62.5	66.7	27.3	57.9	50.0	80.0	100.0
Green Activity	31.8	37.5	33.3	22.7	36.8	25.0	40.0	50.0
Green Attraction	18.2	25.0	16.7	18.2	10.5	25.0	40.0	0.0
Green Plus	10.6	25.0	0.0	9.1	5.3	25.0	20.0	0.0
Green Service	51.5	62.5	66.7	59.1	36.8	50.0	40.0	50.0
Green Community	33.3	37.5	33.3	36.4	31.6	0.0	40.0	50.0
Green Logistics	25.8	37.5	66.7	13.6	15.8	0.0	60.0	50.0

The table shows the percentage of tourism service providers contributing to each Green element. It shows that only 10.6% of the tourism service providers felt that they contributed to Green Plus. Further examining each service type shows that hotels contributed the least to Green Plus, followed by restaurants and shops. Consequently, personal contribution is an aspect requiring improvement for local hotels, restaurants and shops. Also, Green Logistics contributions from restaurants and shops were low, due to heavy use of motorcycles and cars by restaurant and shop owners.

Based on the author's interviews, some tour operators still encourage their customers to use planes and chartered vans as a means of transport to and within Nan. One reason is the lack of direct rail connections to Nan and convenient public transport for visitors, hence the need for governmental support to establish a more effective logistics system. Otherwise the continued use of planes and chartered van would go against TAT's recommendation to use more energy-efficient public transport such as trains and buses. Tourism service providers could be encouraged to contribute to the

environment by using more energy-efficient logistics and devising new and greener services for the environment and community, to add value to the latter.

In terms of Green Community, tourism service providers seem to be lagging behind when it comes to extending the concept of sustainability to the local community. The table shows an even contribution in Green Community among each service type, at over 30%. This shows that the tourism service providers focus on creating a green community in the areas where they operate, positively reflecting the close relationship between tourism service providers and the community in this area. However, the percentage remains low, which means that there is still room for improvement in the Green Community aspect as well. Since local tourism service providers are in a position which can help leverage the community's capability in sustaining Nan's tourism, they have the ability to directly share information with the local community.

(4) Sustainability-related training given by tourism service providers to their employees

The purpose of this survey was to verify the views of local tourism service providers on the importance of training their employees on sustainability. Tour operators and local business owners were asked whether or not they provided consistent training to their staff and in what area. Their responses are presented in the table below.

Table 34: Training given by tourism service providers to their employees by business type and training category
(Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Service Type	Service Training	Hygiene Training	Waste Management Training	Environment Conservation Training	Culture Preservation Training	Value of local Community Training
Tour business	1	1		1	1	2
Hotel	3	2	2	1	2	1
Restaurant	2	3	1	3	1	4
Shop						2
Tourist Attraction	2	2	1	2	1	1
Transport	3	2	1		1	1
Total	11	10	5	7	6	11

This table above shows the commitments of tourism service providers in developing their people to meet the needs of their businesses and the community. Each tourism service provider (other than Nan Statistics Bureau and Nan Tourist Information Center) was asked by the author about the training they gave to their employees if any. Of 64 tourism service providers, 24 or about 37.5% provided training on the environment, culture, or community to their employees. Namely, 11 or about 17% provided training on service and the value of the local community, 7 or about 11% provided training on cultural preservation, 6 or about 9% said they were providing training on environment conservation and 5 or about 7% were providing training on waste management. This is a relatively low number and shows that tourism service providers did not consider it their responsibility to train their staff to achieve

sustainability. Moreover, less than 20% of those providing training focused on the environment and culture, which suggests the environment is not prioritized from their business perspective. Tourism service providers in Nan were asked why they did not give such training to their workers and most said they did not feel that knowledge of matters such as environmental and cultural preservation would contribute to business performance. Local tourism service providers must realize the importance of enhancing sustainability literacy and awareness in their workers to make their business more effective in the long run.

2.6 Voice of Stakeholders

The author interviewed tourism stakeholders to determine their satisfaction with their tourism activities. It emerged that visitors were overall satisfied with their tourism experience in Nan and almost all visitors wanted to revisit Nan.

Conversely, the tourism service providers felt that their business performances were substandard. They also voiced their concerns about the 7 Greens, saying that they were aware of it once from the 7 Greens officers who visited them and guided them in conducting their activities accordingly. However, they did not receive regular assessments or follow-ups from the authorities and were thus unsure whether or not the project was ongoing.

Simultaneously, local authority officials from Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (Public Organization), also known as DASTA, commented on Nan's low carrying and waste capacities and cited the lack of activities in the low season. Meanwhile, DASTA's managing director in charge of Nan highlighted the importance of creating more balanced marketing campaigns, that did not focus

excessively on environmental aspects alone, given the important need to stimulate other aspects e.g. people and culture.

The local people of Nan have varying views on the tourism situation in their hometown. As tourism is expanding, some local people do not want Nan to be developed too fast and lose its uniqueness. They felt that their hometown should be preserved as it is as they are already very satisfied with their current lifestyles. Another group of local people showed excitement to see Nan grow. They wanted to see young and lively people return to the city to stay and work there rather than seeing the brain drain due to the lack of jobs. Knowing their concerns, it is essential to ensure developmental activities are performed carefully and in a manner which preserves the traditional culture and current way of life.

Details of the Feedback from the tourism stakeholders are illustrated below.

2.6.1 Voice of Local Tourism Service Providers

The tourism service providers were asked to self-assess their satisfaction in terms of business performance. The aim was to check their satisfaction in operating a business in Nan.

Table 35: Breakdown of business satisfaction from 66 local businesses' perspectives by business type (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Business Type	Business Performance				
	Well below expectations	Below expectations	Met expectations	Above expectations	Well above expectations
Tour Business		4	4		
Hotel		4	2		
Restaurant		11	8	2	1
Shop		10	7	1	1
Tourist Attraction	1	2	1		
Transport			5		
Others			2		
Total	1	31	29	3	2
Total (%)	1.5%	46.9%	43.9%	4.5%	3.0%

Table 35 shows how each tourism service provider rated their own business performance. The table shows that 46.9% of businesses said that their business performances were below expectations and 43.9% of them that their expectations had been met. Most hotels, restaurants and local shops said that their business performances were below expectations and only 7.5% said their business performance had exceeded them. Only three restaurants and two shops were satisfied with their business. The three restaurants have been operating for more than 20 years and are already well-established. The other two shops sold unique souvenirs like herbal scrubs and skincare salt and woven fabrics and had few or no business rivals. Most others felt that their businesses had not exceeded expectations, which could be attributed to the fluctuations in tourist numbers due to the limited tourism season in Nan. Visitor numbers peak in winter when there are many national holidays, the weather is cool and the famous “Chompu Phuka” flowers blossom and generally decline in non-winter seasons (Nan Statistics Bureau, 2011), leading to economic unsustainability, given Nan’s apparent reliance on

seasonality. To overcome this dependency, small businesses need continuous governmental support and advice. It is also important to ensure small businesses are continuously supported by local authorities if needing to realign their operations in accordance with the sustainability agenda. Nevertheless, tourism service providers are not encouraged to rely solely on government assistance, but should seek to improve their own performance and actions and collaborate with this in mind.

During the field survey, the author asked the tourism service providers about areas of assistance in which they needed to improve their business performance. The answers were as follows:

Table 36: Breakdown of hindrances from 66 local businesses' perspectives by business type (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Business Type	Climate	Natural Disaster	Labor	Financial Condition	Logistics	Low Consumer Demand	Market Competition	Own Capability	Ineffective Marketing	Others
Tour Business	3	2	3	1						
Hotel		8			1	2	3	1	1	
Restaurant	7	4	8	2		2		2		
Shop	6		1	4	1		1	1	1	1
Tourist Attraction	1	2			1					
Transport	3	3		1	2	1	1		2	
Total	20	19	12	8	5	5	5	4	4	1
Total (%)	57.10%	54.30%	34.30%	22.90%	14.30%	14.30%	14.30%	11.40%	11.40%	2.90%

Table 36 shows each factor cited by the tourism service provider as a hindrance to delivering good business performance. The table shows how Nan's economic sustainability is heavily reliant on climate conditions and natural disasters, followed by labor supply and labor cost issues. This is interesting data because as discussed earlier, the tourism service providers did not see any urgent need to protect the environment because it would not directly impact on their business. Here, however, more than half raised concerns about climate and natural disasters as their top hindrances, underlining

the need to also focus on environmental protection. Nevertheless, given the lack of rapid deliverables from environmental protection, their focus must sometimes shift to more tangible aspects, like service improvements.

Regarding labor, interviews conducted with local businesses revealed that a new policy introducing a minimum daily wage of THB 300 by central government was virtually forcing employers to downsize. This, in turn, would be likely to increase the workload of existing, hard-working workers, who would soon be dissatisfied with their working conditions and resign.

Moreover, the author asked tourism service providers about areas in which they needed assistance to improve their business performance and thus enhance the sustainability of Nan's tourism industry. Seven areas of assistance were suggested, namely: language training (17 responses), marketing (9 responses), business management (9 responses), financial assistance (7 responses), technology (4 responses), environmental training (3 responses), labor (2 responses) and cross-cultural training (1 response.) The demand for language training was highest among all forms of training.

Language training was considered a top priority for local tourism service providers. According to interviews with seventeen local businesses, it was widely agreed that tourism service providers should prepare themselves in terms of communication skills as the country plans to enter the ASEAN Economic Community in 2015 and Nan Province is one of the gateways to Thailand. Elsewhere, it is interesting to note that only three tourism service providers prioritized Environmental Training, whereas the rest did not need assistance in those areas. The service providers had low evaluation on environmental training. The author discovered via interviews that

the tourism service providers felt environmental training was not yet an area in which assistance was considered imperative, for the following reasons:

- (1) High costs associated with conservational activities
- (2) Visitors' demand for luxury required during tours
- (3) No clear governmental guidelines on how to comply with environment-related initiatives

Moreover, when the author asked the tourism service providers how they wanted to see Nan developed, the tourist attraction providers mentioned that they wanted to see Nan as a leading ecotourism destination while maintaining rich cultures. They would like to be able to provide all kinds of services to visitors, impress them and attract them back.

In contrast, the hotel group wanted to promote Nan's current way of life. They raised concern that excessive visitors would mean over-consumption of natural resources and impact on the environment. There would also be risks of external investors entering the local market, resulting in a loss of identity and disadvantaging local businesses. They wanted to see regulations that would limit such harmful activities that may impact on the environment and people's lifestyles.

Furthermore, the tour operators wanted information about Nan tourism to be widely promoted and more convenient facilities to be added, such as more Nan-Bangkok flights because traveling to Nan is not as convenient compared to other tourist cities in Thailand.

Most importantly, the tourism service providers have a key role to play in pressuring governments to take more action and work with them more. Tourism will be

unsustainable without their active commitment and response to policies for sustainable tourism.

2.6.2 Voice of Local People

The author asked the local people of Nan how they wanted Nan to evolve. They were very clear that they wanted to retain its original culture, lifestyle and environment. The local people affirmed their willingness to prepare themselves to receive visitors in a managed way. They also voiced the desire to see environmentally and culturally aware visitors in their towns.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
% of Respondents	0%	0%	0%	0%	1.33%	5.33%	12.00%	29.33%	26.67%	25.33%

Figure 38: Percentage of local residents responding to the question “How would you rate your satisfaction with your life in Nan from a score of 1-10, 10 being the highest?” (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

The survey also examined how the tourism environment in Nan influences and impacts on local people’s satisfaction with their current way of life there, by asking them to rate their overall satisfaction from 1-10 (10 being the highest satisfaction.) Figure 38 shows the percentage of local people responding to each satisfaction score. Most were evidently satisfied with their current way of life in Nan, which reflects how local people are proud of their homeland.

The average satisfaction among local people was 8.50, almost equivalent to that of visitors at 8.47 (Figure 39, page 148.) This data show that Nan is a city that is loved and respected by its own residents and clearly worth protecting and maintaining. However, as the local residents here prefer their laid-back lifestyles and can currently be

considered a passive host community, they should be reminded of the need for proactive commitment to keep their ancient city alive.

2.6.3 Voice of Local Authorities

Interviews were conducted with officers from the local authorities, namely: Nan Tourist Information Center, Nan Police Tourist, Nan City Office, TAT (Tourism Authority of Thailand and DASTA (Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration Public Organization.) The main points are summarized in Table 37.

Table 37: Summary of the main points raised by authorities related to Nan tourism (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Authority Name	Current Status	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Nan Tourist Information Center	Information about 7 Greens was unavailable at Nan Tourist Information Center.	As visitors approach them initially and during the trip, the tourist information center has direct access to the visitors.	Many local authorities are trying to promote their own projects, reducing the impact of each project. Visitors get confused at the lack of consistent messages. The information center had no information about 7 Greens.	Nan Tourist Information Center has opportunities to promote and advertise 7 Greens to the visitors more actively.	Different instructions and projects hamper efforts to promote all projects at the same time.
Nan Tourist Police	Operation as usual	Zero criminal reports received as of the time of interview	None	Developing a better and more responsive hotline for tourists, as well as ensuring awareness of the hotline number among tourists	None
Nan City Office	Actively promoting the “Whispering Love” project.	Nan has a famous painting called “Whispering Love” so they started a project called “Whispering love in Nan” from 2011 but failed. In 2012 they promoted it again and it was able to draw considerable attention from local people.	Lack of budget and supporters. Political issues are hindering development. No proper risk management. No countermeasures.	English Training for HR such as tricycle drivers, restaurant workers and student tour guides.	None

Authority Name	Current Status	Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
TAT (Tourism Authority of Thailand)	TAT ended the 7 Greens pilot project in Nan at the end of 2012.	Nan has many tourism attractions. There are only a few 7-11 branches in Nan (the fewer, the more original its identity.)	Few knew about 7 Greens and few participated in the program.	Delegated responsibility to its branch office in Phrae. A few follow-ups may be conducted occasionally.	Lack of successors.
DASTA (Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration Public Organization.)	The focus should not only be on the environment. To be sustainable, there should be a balanced structure of environment, economic and social dimensions. HRD should be enhanced. Creative tourism should be promoted.	Staffs have close contact with the community. There are nice landmarks. The number of visitors is increasing.	No tourist activities during low season. Such activities should be created and promoted. Visitors do not contribute back to Nan. Lack of tourism community groups. Difficult to obtain approval from Business Association. Political issues are obstructing development progress.	Introducing an Eco-vehicle for visitors. Promoting Bucha drums globally. Creating activities that can involve tourist contributions. Training for monks, elderly, children and tricyclers. Co-creation concept.	Low carrying capacity (insufficient waste landfills, insufficient gas and hotel vacancies during high season.) Lack of employment and opportunities. Entertainment facilities so young people are leaving the city.

As seen in Table 37, Nan City Office and DASTA are currently actively engaged in supporting tourism through marketing, training, education services, information services and in many other ways. It is important that these actions remain more closely aligned with sustainability objectives and applicable at central, municipal and local levels. At the same time, there are also many weaknesses, mostly due to the

differing stages of sustainable tourism development from each authority's perspective and the lack of consensus on what to prioritize. Developing focusing on a more systematic mechanism toward sustainability would be smoother and more consistent if the progress of sustainable tourism were understood among these authorities.

DASTA voiced concern at the low carrying capacity in Nan. The number of visitors is increasing every year and the issue is now whether Nan will be able to accommodate them while preserving both the environment and visitors' satisfaction. DASTA raised the point about the declining socio-cultural and psychological capacity in Nan, given obvious human resource limitations, particularly during high season. The infrastructural capacity is also a concern in high season, when there is insufficient accommodation, car rental service and gas while considerable waste is also generated in a city with limited waste management expertise and resources.

It is interesting to see that Nan Tourism Information Center did not have information about the 7 Greens available to the visitors. Nan tourist information center is located very conveniently, in the middle of many tourist attractions such as Wat Phumin, the museum and the center for tourist trams so it would be an opportunity if guidelines on how to be a responsible tourist were promoted there.

Another important point worth stressing concerns the continuation of the 7 Greens past the end of the pilot project. One concern that the author gathered from interviews with TAT Headquarters in Bangkok and a telephone interview with TAT Phrae was that the body in charge of development activities in Nan after 2012 was unclear. TAT Headquarters said that further development responsibility in Nan had been handed down to TAT Phrae office, but TAT Phrae office said that further activities

would be conducted directly by TAT Headquarters. Clarifying the appropriate hierarchy here would facilitate the process of further developing Nan.

2.6.4 Voice of Visitors

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction with their travel experience in Nan by giving a score between 1 and 10. Figure 39 shows that the average satisfaction levels for each age group and each region of origin all exceeded 8.0 with an overall average of 8.47. It shows the percentage of visitors responding to each satisfaction score. Most were evidently satisfied with their experience in Nan. This shows how despite some improvement points, Nan was enjoyed by visitors and is worth working hard to sustain.

Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
% of respondents	0%	0.30%	0%	0.61%	1.82%	5.17%	11.25%	35.56%	29.18%	16.11%

Figure 39: Percentage of visitors responding to the question “How would you rate your satisfaction with travel experience in Nan from a score of 1-10, 10 being the highest?” (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

In addition to the general satisfaction scoring method, respondents were asked about their satisfaction in specific areas while traveling in Nan. The results in Table 38 show they were satisfied with Nan in general and 91.7% wanted to return there. The results also show that people were satisfied with almost all areas except some with slightly diverging opinions, including sufficiency of human resources in the hotel, sufficiency of human resources in tourist attractions, sufficiency of transport within Nan, accessibility of public toilets and satisfaction with the infrastructure in Nan.

Table 38: Percentage of visitors voicing their experience in Nan at each satisfaction (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

Satisfaction / Areas of Improvement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't know
You are satisfied with safety in Nan	31.6%	55.7%	9.6%	0.8%	0.3%	2.0%
You are satisfied with the service quality in Nan	24.2%	61.6%	11.5%	0.8%	0.3%	1.8%
You are satisfied with Nan's uniqueness	36.7%	51.5%	8.5%	1.5%	0.0%	1.8%
You are satisfied with Nan's diversity	33.9%	52.6%	9.7%	1.8%	0.3%	1.8%
You are satisfied with Nan's cleanliness	28.5%	57.2%	10.5%	2.3%	0.3%	1.3%
You are satisfied with the price of goods and services in Nan	22.5%	58.6%	14.1%	2.6%	0.0%	2.3%
You are satisfied with Nan people	37.6%	54.2%	5.6%	1.0%	0.0%	1.5%
You are satisfied with the pollution level	35.7%	51.5%	8.7%	2.6%	0.3%	1.3%
You are satisfied with your accommodation	23.3%	56.8%	14.1%	1.0%	0.5%	4.3%
You are satisfied with the restaurants you visited	15.5%	59.9%	18.6%	2.6%	0.3%	3.1%
You are satisfied with the shops and merchants	19.6%	57.4%	16.6%	3.1%	0.3%	3.1%
You are satisfied with Nan's transportation	16.7%	53.9%	18.5%	7.0%	1.6%	2.3%
You are satisfied with the quality of Nan's tourism human capital	18.2%	55.5%	19.2%	2.0%	0.3%	4.9%
You feel that Nan's services are aimed at protecting the environment	27.3%	51.3%	14.3%	3.1%	0.5%	3.4%
There is sufficient human capital in the tourist attractions	21.3%	46.7%	19.5%	8.7%	0.5%	3.3%
There is sufficient human capital in the hotel	17.1%	44.3%	26.7%	5.7%	0.5%	5.7%
Your travel to Nan was hassle-free	21.4%	55.4%	15.7%	3.9%	0.8%	2.8%
There is sufficient transportation in Nan	14.2%	42.6%	21.2%	11.4%	2.8%	7.8%
You were fascinated by Nan's natural resources	41.8%	46.7%	7.2%	2.3%	0.0%	2.1%
You were fascinated by Nan's cultural resources	46.3%	45.5%	5.2%	1.0%	0.3%	1.8%
You feel that Nan's attractions are unique and new	35.7%	48.8%	10.5%	3.1%	0.0%	1.8%

Satisfaction / Areas of Improvement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
You have had clean food	21.8%	58.2%	15.9%	2.1%	0.3%	1.8%
Local food is easy to find	27.2%	51.0%	13.8%	4.9%	0.3%	2.8%
You feel that Nan's attractions are developing in a controlled manner	22.9%	54.0%	14.9%	3.3%	0.3%	4.6%
You feel that Nan is not deteriorating	19.7%	54.0%	16.4%	6.4%	0.8%	2.8%
You were not chased by sellers	20.5%	59.5%	13.6%	2.6%	0.0%	3.8%
You were not cheated by sellers	24.1%	58.9%	11.7%	2.3%	0.3%	2.8%
There were no garbage on the streets	27.1%	54.7%	11.9%	4.1%	0.3%	2.0%
You were able to find a lot of information on Nan's services and places on the Internet	19.7%	56.9%	15.1%	4.1%	0.3%	3.8%
Goods and services were reasonably priced	16.8%	61.8%	15.8%	3.1%	0.3%	2.3%
Nan has good infrastructure e.g. public transport, water, sewerage, street signs, waste management	14.2%	50.6%	21.4%	7.1%	1.0%	5.6%
You feel that the Nan people are kind and welcoming	26.9%	59.9%	8.9%	2.0%	0.3%	2.0%
The tourist information center was informative	23.5%	49.7%	16.1%	3.3%	0.5%	6.9%
Many shops accepted credit cards	10.8%	38.0%	31.4%	8.0%	0.8%	11.1%
Public toilets were easy to find	12.4%	43.6%	27.8%	9.8%	1.0%	5.4%
You would like to return to Nan	42.5%	49.2%	5.6%	1.1%	0.0%	1.6%

It is evident that overall, visitors were satisfied with their experience in Nan. However, the results also show some room for improvement in the field of human capital development. Efforts to strengthen the capabilities of people and their personal awareness and persuade more visitors to adopt these concepts are still needed, particularly in areas of logistics, activities and personal contribution. This could spawn positive tourism development and tourism-led growth.

Table 39: What visitors liked about Nan and the percentage of the 130 visitors who specified the reason (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

What visitors liked about Nan	No. of visitors responding	Percentage of 130 visitors that specified the reason
Culture	60	46.2%
Peaceful	54	41.5%
Nature	53	40.8%
Kind people	45	34.6%
Clean city	28	21.5%
Good climate	24	18.5%
Easy to live	23	17.7%
Clean air	19	14.6%
Beautiful	16	12.3%
Tourist Attractions	16	12.3%
Temples	14	10.8%
Safe	4	3.1%
Convenient	4	3.1%
Good food	3	2.3%
Low Cost of Living	1	0.8%

In the surveys, the author asked visitors to name some of the factors that they liked and found attractive about Nan. Table 39 shows their answers sorted from the most popular reasons in descending order. 130 of the 401 visitors responding provided reasons why they liked Nan, based on which the percentages were calculated. The top reasons were culture, followed by peacefulness, nature and people. Undoubtedly, these are Nan's main tourism assets that must be retained and preserved.

In contrast, Table 40 shows what the visitors disliked about Nan. The answers are presented in the table.

Table 40: What visitors disliked about Nan and the percentage of the 130 visitors who specified the reason (Source: Field Survey, 2012)

What visitors <u>disliked</u> about Nan	No. of visitors responding	Percentage of 130 visitors that specified the reason
Inconvenient Transportation	26	20.0%
Traffic Jams	5	3.8%
Food problems (lack of variety, food poisoning, taste)	5	3.8%
Pollution	4	3.1%
Too quiet	4	3.1%
Flight delay	3	2.3%
Lack of car parks	2	1.5%
Not many tourist activities	1	0.8%
Deforestation	1	0.8%

Visitors raised dissatisfaction about the transport. The lack of public transport in Nan makes it difficult for visitors to travel to each tourist attraction, preventing local communities outside Nan municipal areas from benefiting from tourist activities. There were also concerns about traffic jams. Due to poor public transport, most visitors are forced to travel by car or van, meaning Nan's once quiet streets have become congested. These not only cause traffic jams, but they also create issues with car parking, invading personal car parks and pedestrian lanes that were designed for eco-travelers and cyclists. Poor transport also causes pollution, which was another issue raised by visitors. Many problems that visitors raised here could be solved by improving the public transport system.

2.7 Conclusion and Discussion

This chapter has analyzed the tourism situation in Nan from the green tourism perspective and discussed stakeholders' perspectives, their environmental awareness and the marketing effectiveness of TAT's 7 Greens concept.

Nan is becoming increasingly popular among both domestic and overseas visitors as a new "unseen" tourist destination which is gradually being explored. As more visitors are arriving, on top of more than 90% who expressed their desire to revisit, many are concerned about the city's capacity management and how to create a balanced and sustainable tourism industry while preserving the culture and heritage of the old living city.

It emerged that tourism in Nan City was unsustainable from environmental and economic aspects. Green logistics are not well established and Nan still lacks any effective means of transport. Moreover, Nan still experiences fluctuations in visitor numbers year-round. Meanwhile, the message of the "7 Greens" and the government's tourism promotion and advisories were not conveyed as effectively and impactfully as they could have been. To sum up, it could be observed that:

- 1) The number of visitors was generally low in non-winter seasons and very high in winter, which indicates that the city is reliant on seasonality and that efforts to promote tourism during off-peak seasons remain pending.
- 2) There was originally one recommended route for visitors traveling in Nan that was advertised under the 7 Greens project. Other tourist attractions not included in the recommended route are independently shown on tourism websites for visitors to select individually. Visitors would then have to travel by car or hire a van to reach those tourist attractions, enjoy the scenery and leave. All this is done without

obtaining sufficient guidance from a tour guide or local people, or contributing much to the areas they visit.

- 3) Knowledge and awareness among visitors of the 7 Greens concept were also low. 61.1% of the 401 visitors responding to the survey said they were unaware of the 7 Greens concept and 6.7% had no idea what it was. Conversely, 62.1% of 66 local tourism service providers said they were aware of the 7 Greens concept but that their activities had not been assessed or followed up, which shows a lack of regular assessments measuring the effectiveness and feasibility of the launched initiative.
- 4) Inadequate training of human capital and lack of community participation were cited as areas needing improvement in the process toward sustainable tourism in Nan. According to an interview with a Nan City government official, there are few irregular local guide-training courses and no incentives to encourage the local community to participate more actively.
- 5) The 7 Greens concept aims to create sustainable tourism in Thailand. However, it can be seen that the 7 Greens concept in Nan focused only on the environmental aspect, despite the simultaneous need to emphasize the economic and social/community aspects.

In other words, logistics infrastructure, people training and personal contributions are the three areas with room for improvement in Nan.

The author's view is that the advantage of the 7 Greens concept lies in its directness and simplicity, despite the considerable voluntary actions required. Accordingly, efforts to strengthen community and personal awareness and persuade more people to adopt such sustainable concepts are important steps toward making Nan's tourism sustainable.

Despite research studies showing the genuine interest of the Thai government in promoting sustainable tourism among visitors, the local community and tourism service providers, its initiative was seemingly designed for tourism service providers and less so for local communities and visitors.

Furthermore, an emphasis on knowledge and implementation among locals and visitors is essential to encourage concrete actions and physical contributions to sustain tourism. Currently, although individuals are well aware of the significance of sustainability, sufficient governmental support or social guidelines are needed to fully transform these intangible concepts into action and incorporate them into their daily lifestyles.

The key is to ensure a policy to promote and manage sustainable tourism is further improved and reinforced. The following were identified as hindrances to developing sustainable tourism in Nan Province:

- (1) The lack of an effective system for monitoring and implementing sustainable tourism
- (2) The lack of an adequate legal framework to support the implementation of sustainable tourism
- (3) The lack of investment in infrastructure projects that can reduce environmental impacts associated with tourism-related activities (for example, transportation infrastructure)
- (4) The lack of assistance from related parties to elements of sustainable tourism and how each of them contributes to the overall performance of sustainable tourism

(5) The lack of trained tourism professionals in tourist areas, including hotels and attractions

To enhance human capabilities in Nan, assistance to acquire knowledge and skills is required; particularly in areas of environmental management, customer care, guiding services, business skills, basic language training and monitoring impacts and performance.

A well-systemized monitoring and implementing tool, alongside adequate and meaningful collaboration among all tourism-related stakeholders, particularly from the public sector and individuals, are required to propel Nan toward sustainable development. Efforts should be made to meet AEC demands prior to establishing the ASEAN Economic Community²⁸ by 2015, at which time the free movement of goods, services, investment, skilled labor and capital would be expected across the ASEAN region. Nan also expects significant influxes of visitors to the city as it lies next to the border with the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

²⁸ The ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is referred to by ASEAN as the goal of the regional economic integration by 2015, based on the ASEAN Economic Blueprint adopted by ASEAN leaders at the 13th ASEAN Summit on 20 November, 2007 in Singapore. ASEAN expects AEC to create a single market that is highly competitive, equitable and fully integrated into the global economy. (Source: ASEAN Secretariat, 2014)

CHAPTER 3: Case Study - Hanno City, Saitama Prefecture, Japan

Recent research, trends and forecasts suggest that visitors are leaning toward nature-based tourism activities in places that are culturally and socially unique. As people become more environmentally and socially aware, they start seeking more aware and responsible options when they travel (Blue and Green Tomorrow, 2014.) At the same time, local communities are bound to value their natural and cultural surroundings, authenticity, folkways and everyday life more than before (Pattaratorn, 2013.)

Hanno City, in Saitama Prefecture, Japan, is known for its ecotourism practices involving creative tourism and community participation as functions enabling sustainable community development. Indeed, in 2004, it was designated by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan as one of five model cities for tourism management based on nature, community and culture. Three years later, in 2008, Hanno City was awarded the “Ecotourism Grand Prize” from the Ministry of the Environment of Japan for being Japan’s top-class ecotourism city, delivering an excellent system to maintain the quality of eco-tours, local guide training and overall promotion of regional ecotourism (Ecotourism Promotion Office, Hanno City, 2013.)

This chapter aims to gain some useful lessons from the experience of Hanno City in terms of how local tourism activities are being managed, how local participation is being encouraged and what they are prioritizing.

3.1 Overview of Hanno City

Hanno City covers an area of 193.18 km² (Hanno City, 2012) and is situated in the hilly, southern part of Saitama Prefecture. It is a commercial town; active in lumber, furniture and textile industries. The Naguri River, originating in the Chichibu mountain chain further northwest, flows through Hanno, lending a special beauty to the city and later joins the Iruma River (Hanno City, 2012.)

The topography is divided between mountainous districts, hills and plateaus. The northwestern part is a mountainous district and the forest occupies approximately 76% of the city. In the southeastern part meanwhile, the urban area is developed on the plateaus between the north Korai hill and south Kaji hill, while the Iruma River, a tributary of the Koma River, flows down from a western mountainous district to the eastern plateau.

It has a typical Pacific-side climate, although the mountains experience extreme seasonal temperature changes. It merged with Kurimura town in 2005 to become the third-largest city by area in the prefecture.

Hanno is located approximately 50 km from Saitama City, with convenient traffic access and a relaxing environment. On the Seibu Ikebukuro line, the journey from Ikebukuro station in Tokyo takes approximately 50 minutes. Hanno City has many types of scenery, offering a comfortable atmosphere with clear streams, refreshing forests, great living and rich culture. There is also abundant fauna such as giant flying squirrels, forest green tree frogs, Japanese serows and flora such as beech trees, *Machilus thunbergii* (Avocado family) and Katakuri flowers (Lily family.) Hanno also

boasts a number of historical ancient shrines and temples and some of its local food won the B-Grade gourmet national contest.

Urban development work is being pursued to make this “city of forest and culture” more livable (Hanno City, 2012.)



Figure 40: The Location of Saitama Prefecture on the Map of the Kanto Region, Japan. (Source: Wikitravel, 2014)



Figure 41: Map of Hanno City in Saitama Prefecture (Source: Hanno City Government Office, 2013)

The population as of January 1, 2012 was 82,422, comprising 33,099 households (Hanno City, 2012.) and has been in decline for the third year in a row. Hanno, like many other cities in Japan, is an aging city, with the ratio of people over 65 years old increasing since 1985. If the population continues to decline at this rate, it is estimated that the population in 2015 would be approximately 81,400. To prevent depopulation, Hanno City is promoting the area based on a concept of revitalization (Hanno City Government Office, 2013), which includes:

- i. Conserving and utilizing the natural environment
- ii. Reinforcing the charm and vitality of the city
- iii. Promoting citizen participation and collaboration
- iv. Developing the city through independence

As part of the city's efforts to conserve nature, revitalize itself, promote people's participation and enhance its self-reliance, ecotourism is seen as a suitable tool to meet all these aims, since it aims to conserve and utilize the natural environment responsibly. Tourism will enliven the city as more people visit and will engage local people to be part of the tourism activities.

3.2 Hanno City's Sustainable Tourism Policies

To tackle depopulation, Hanno City is following a set of policies to revitalize the city, some of which involve promoting ecotourism as an acknowledged booster of revitalization and sustainability. Hanno's top priority is to create an environmentally-friendly city where prosperity co-exists with nature. The city wants to conserve and utilize its natural environment and become a center of forest culture. It is also striving to optimally exploit multiple facets of the environmental preservation effort and increase its contact with nature. To achieve the latter, the city plans to enhance harmony between urban functions and nature by improving community life; developing regional information networks, public transport, roads and urban areas and promoting clean energy, such as solar power.

Moreover, Hanno City wants to create a city boosting individual affluence and creativity, by creating a lifelong learning environment for its people and giving them reasons for living. This includes promoting tourism, which Hanno City considers a crucial source of enjoyment. The city is actively engaged in promoting alternative tourism experiences by utilizing the natural environment and food culture attractions, such as local food, agriculture and forestry. This centers on ecotourism and Hanno is

devising eco-tour plans touching on lifestyle, culture, history and nature, to connect its local people with visitors, businesses and organizations.

Hanno City can be considered relatively successful in managing its ecotourism, having been designated by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan as one of the five model cities for tourism management based on nature, community and culture as well as winning the “Ecotourism Grand Prize” from the Ministry of the Environment of Japan in 2008. The author selected Hanno City as a successful case study in Japan, not only because it shares similar geographic characteristics to Nan City, being located in the “satoyama” area at the foot of the mountains, but also because of these achievements.

3.3 Hanno City's Ecotourism Promotion

The author interviewed an ecotourism officer from Hanno Ecotourism Promotion, Hanno City in October 2013. According to the interview, many visitors used to visit and leave Hanno City without engaging with the people or region, while many also harmed the environment. Moreover, the foresting industry also led to a decline in its forests. Consequently, Hanno City saw the need for a method to link the effective use of natural, historical and cultural resources with those to revitalize the region and develop the economy. Hanno City believed that ecotourism would solve this problem as a tool to bring the community closer together.

However, the scope of ecotourism transcends nature and tourism sites alone. Hanno's ecotourism also encompasses nature, culture, history and tradition-based tourism that stimulates and enlivens the region. Two important points of Hanno's ecotours are 1) the need for guidance. Tourists are expected to learn or receive guidance regarding knowledge and experience of the region and culture from tour guides or other media. 2) Rules to protect and maintain the regional nature and culture must be established and followed by tour guides and tourists.

3.3.1 Strategies of Hanno City

As a part of Hanno's strategy to revitalize the city, ecotourism activities have been introduced as a tool to increase activity, revive jobs and draw young and working people to the city. Hanno City tries to attract four main groups of visitors: repeaters, the younger generation, corporate visitors (company and business trips) and event-joiners to participate in festivals such as Hanno festival, Hinamatsuri festival, etc.

The objectives of Hanno City are clearly stated by the Ecotourism Promotion Office as follows:

- (1) To preserve regional resources - Preserve and maintain natural and cultural resources and its people etc.
- (2) To promote tourism - Create tourism that can be enjoyed by understanding natural and cultural resources.
- (3) To promote the region - To boost the economy and regional society.

Tourism is one of the revitalization objectives promoted by Hanno City, for which the tool of ecotourism was selected thanks to the rich natural and cultural resources on offer via its people. Hanno City tries to strike a balance between the environment, the economy and socio-cultural aspects, which corresponds to the concept of sustainable development as set by UNWTO. The city developed its own “Ecotourism” project, which prioritizes the development of people and the active participation of local residents. One key point is that their tour programs are collaboratively designed and promoted by the local government and people. The local Hanno City government has a dedicated “Ecotourism Promotion Office”, which works to design tour programs, engage in marketing and attract visitors, training local tour guides, encouraging local residents to participate in operating tours and funding them to facilitate their tour operations.

3.3.2 Creating Capabilities in Hanno’s Community

(1) People Development

Hanno puts extra effort into training its people and enhancing their capabilities for the tourism industry by encouraging them to propose new ideas and promoting the

use of their unused resources, such as barren fields, unharvested crops and free time. Hanno City regularly holds a local guide-training course called the “Hanno City Ecotourism Open College.” This is a three-day course, equipping any local person interested in becoming a local guide with the necessary knowledge, communication skills, techniques and ability to promote their own hometown; deepen their understanding and prepare them to be efficient local guides. Hanno also emphasizes a high level of hospitality, as this has proven important in Japan to attract repeat visitors. Alongside these efforts is the “Hanno City Guide Step-up Course”; a one-day initiative aimed at advancing the tour guide’s guidance ability and the “Ecotourism Demae Course”, where government officials reach out to groups of local people, associations, or local governments, villages and universities in other cities of Japan and abroad, to give lectures and presentations on its current activities.

One hindrance faced by Human Capital and Capabilities Development projects in Hanno City is its aging population. Local tour guides and tourists are mostly in their 50s or above. At this rate, an extra effort will always be necessary to maintain the ever-declining supply of local tour guides and keep its local people participating in community activities. Hanno is aware of this problem and is striving to encourage more young people to participate in the training programs but the community groups that actually run the tours remain overly dependent on elderly people.

(2) Creative Tourism in Hanno

Creative tourism refers to tourism giving visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in learning experiences, which are synonymous with their local setting. The new tourism trend would “bring humans back” (Pattaratorn, 2013) as people connect with each other during travel. Creative tourism

engages tourists in the community, allowing cross-cultural experiences and deeper mutual understanding as well as opportunities for participation and interaction, paving the way to explore the true identity of the community. It is a natural way to demonstrate personal lifestyles and intellectual heritage. Richards and Raymond defined creative tourism as follows (Richards & Wilson, 2006):

Definition of Creative Tourism

“Tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken.”

Figure 42: Definition of Creative Tourism as defined by Richards and Raymond (Source: Richards & Wilson, 2006)

Hanno City engages in creative tourism as it looks to create an environment for active participation, from both local communities and tourists. Through creative tourism activities in Hanno, not only is a new learning experience created in each tourist, but the interaction and bond between the natural environment, host community and tourists is also strengthened. Unlike one-sided ecotourism activities in Nan, Hanno’s ecotourism activities involve both the community and tourists by engaging local residents in the tour as storytellers. Moreover, the activities in Hanno not only provide tourists with new experiences, but also benefit the community in return. The author would like to refer to these as “Mutually Beneficial Activities.”

Hanno City offers tour programs that are not only unique and informative for visitors, but also give something back to the city. The tour programs involve visitors participating in activities such as: fishing “black bass” said to harm the ecosystem of the lake in the city, helping locals collect unharvested yuzu and persimmon fruits that

proliferate in bumper crop years, helping locals restore abandoned paddy fields, or learning to cook Hanno's food by buying local ingredients. The tour programs benefit local residents, visitors and the environment. Visitors feel good to be participating in contributive activities while local residents, most of whom retirees, get to spend time outdoors and interact with new people. Through this social participation²⁹, the tour programs are expected to create a healthy community within the aging city, since the process allows local people to think actively and spend time with other members to design a tour route. Subsequently, local people have the opportunity to interact with tourists from outside the city, whereby they meet new people and can share different ideas. At the end of the tour, when tourists show their appreciation, they have a feeling of accomplishment and self-fulfillment, which boosts their well-being, mental health and quality of life (Inoue, Kitamura, & Nishida, 2013.) The next section explains community participation and well-being in detail as well as some positive results that tourism can expect from the same.

(3) Community Participation and Well-being

Compared to Nan, Hanno City motivates and encourages its local residents to devise unique tour programs. For example, in one such program, a local resident plans to introduce part of the city behind his house that is not on the map. Another local resident plans to take tourists to a pine forest that he owns to explain about the city's lumber industry. A group of home-makers plans to teach tourists how to cook a local dish and dessert. This strategy helps optimize every inch of the city and render its entire area a tourist attraction, whether or not any landmark is present. It also nurtures pride in

²⁹ Social Participation refers to involvement in daily activities and social roles in communities (World Health Organization, 2001). It is key to maintaining health and contributes to an excellent quality of life in the elderly. (Inoue, Kitamura, & Nishida, 2013)

local residents, reminding them that the city and the environment in which they grew up - something they have always taken for granted - are actually valuable assets from a visitor perspective and worth protecting. Tourists also benefit from this as they receive first-hand guidance and information from local guides, which makes the place more appreciated and memorable.

Capabilities should not be promoted solely on the supply side, since those in visitors could also help accelerate the development of sustainable tourism. Visitors are encouraged to adopt the mindset of local people. The experience is expected to be more authentic and revealing and would also allow for a more sustainable tourist economy for the city. It is highlighted that one of the easiest ways to travel like a local is to travel with them, as it exposes facets that tourists who travel alone would not have experienced (Pattaratorn, 2013.) Visitors will get a unique perspective on a city, which would not appear in typical guidebooks. More importantly, a local tour guide is more than just a guide, they will be a friend, a person with whom the visitor can connect and from whom they can learn to enjoy the place more meaningfully.

As community participation is reinforced, numerous innovations can be expected. Thanks to strong city-wide community participation, various tour programs are run year-round, offering diverse activities and itineraries. Each tour is managed by a group of local residents, the city office, or a combination of both. Moreover, each tour is always accompanied by the same group of local residents who promote the tour program and at least one local government official, who hands out surveys at the end of the tour to receive visitors' feedback and comments to ensure that the contents of the tour are delivered correctly to tourists.

i. All-Year-Round Events

The following is an example of Hanno's event calendar for the period between April 2013 and March 2014:

Month Year	Date	Event Title in Japanese
April 2013	Beginning of April	飯能さくらまつり (中央公園)
	10 th (Wed)	子ノ権現 音のまつり
	13 th (Sat)	大光寺虚空蔵尊縁日 (川寺)
	14 th (Sun)	心応寺弁天祭 (原町)
	17 th (Wed)	白雲山鳥居観音 春祭り
	21 st (Sun)	上名栗諏訪神社獅子舞
May 2013	3 rd (Fri)	名栗地区花祭り
	25 th (Sat)-26 th (Sun)	飯能新緑ツーデーマーチ
July 2013	6 th (Sat)	名栗ほたる鑑賞の集い
	7 th (Sun)	名郷味市
	15 th (Mon)	竹寺 例大祭
	13 th (Sat)-14 th (Sun)	飯能夏祭り (八坂神社)
	27 th (Sat)	我野神社獅子舞 (三社)
August 2013	3 rd (Sat)	飯能納涼大会 (飯能河原)
	16 th (Fri)	鳥居観音灯籠流し・花火大会
	17 th (Sat)	花桐諏訪神社ささら獅子舞
	Mid-August	喜多川神社獅子舞 (北川)
	18 th (Sun)	桧淵諏訪神社獅子舞 (人見)
	Late August	吾野宿まつり・吾野宿市
September 2013	24 th (Sat)-25 th (Sun)	下名栗諏訪神社獅子舞
	15 th (Sun)	飯能八幡神社大祭
October 2013	29 th (Sun)	星宮神社獅子舞 (上名栗)
	6 th (Sun)	阿寺諏訪神社獅子舞
November 2013	12 th (Sat)	大光寺虚空蔵尊縁日 (川寺)
	12 th (Sat)	玉宝寺虚空蔵尊例大祭
	13 th (Sun)	埼玉ご当地 B 級グルメ大会 (市役所)
	Mid-October	小瀬戸浅間神社獅子舞
	19 th (Sat)	上名栗八坂神社大祭
	20 th (Sun)	名栗ふるさとまつり (下名栗)
December 2013	2 nd (Sat)-3 rd (Sun)	第 43 回 飯能まつり
	10 th (Sun)	なぐり紅葉まつり (鳥居観音)
	16 th (Sat)	西川材フェア&生活祭
	23 rd (Sat)-24 th (Sun)	東郷公園もみじまつり (芳延)
December 2013	31 st (Mon)	除夜の鐘
January 2014	7 th (Tue)	浄心寺毘沙門天だるま市 (矢嵐)
February 2014	Mid-February to Beginning of March	雛祭り
March 2014	25 th (Sat)	加治神社大祭 (中山)

Figure 43: Example of Hanno City's Annual Event Calendar (Hanno Tourist Association, 2014)

ii. **Multiple Travel Routes and Tour Plans**

Another benefit of strong community participation is the more than 65 tour plans and routes in Hanno City, categorized by climate / season and covering the majority of the city. Each is designed and coordinated by different groups of residents, including individuals, NGOs, NPOs and local groups. The tour programs are updated and viewable on its ecotourism website. Tour applications can be made directly to the resident or group in charge, via phone, fax, or e-mail.

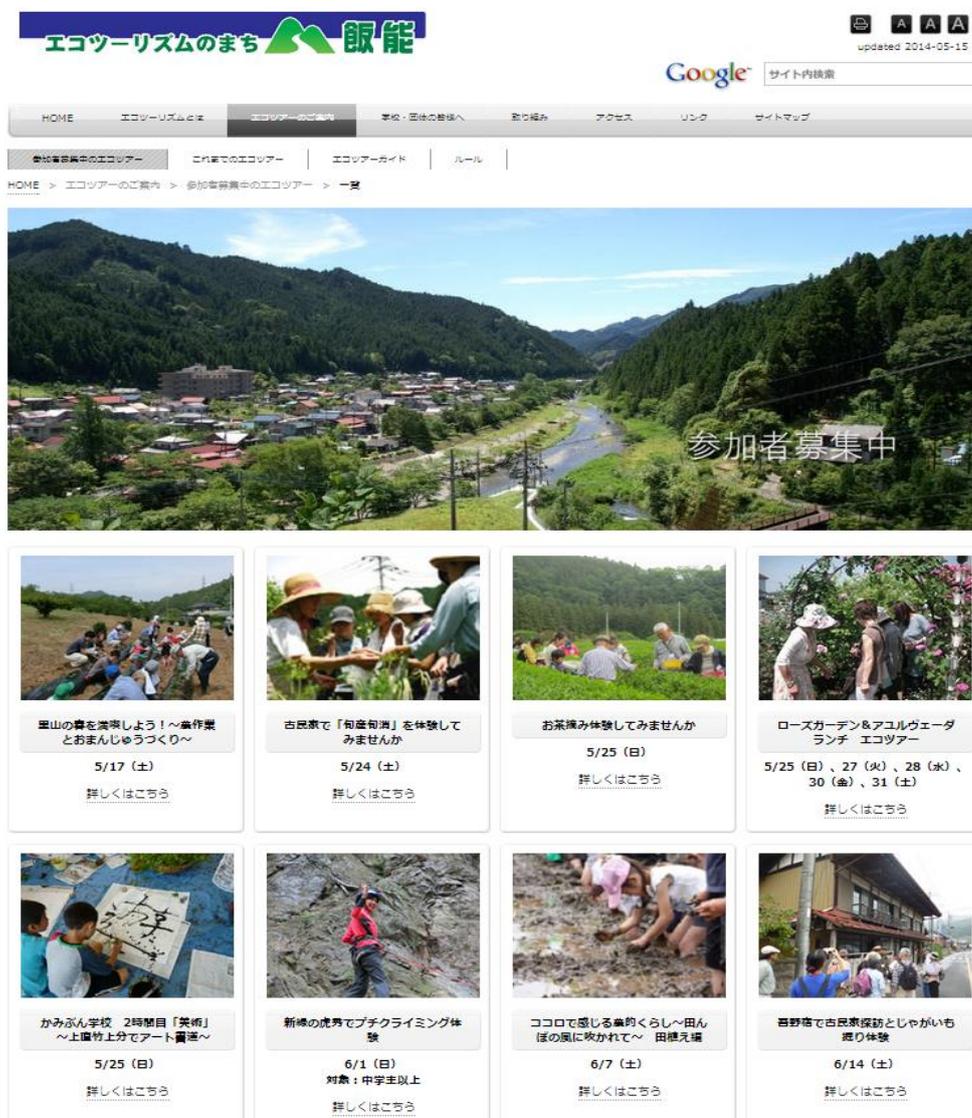


Figure 44: Example of Hanno City's Ecotourism Tour Programs advertised on its ecotourism website (Source: Hanno City, URL: http://hanno-eco.com/ecotour_no_goannai/sankabosyutyu_no_ecotour/tiran.html, retrieved on May 18, 2014)

Figure 44 shows an example of Hanno City's ecotourism programs advertised on its website (information in Japanese only). Potential tourists can click to see the details of each tour and contact the local resident tour planner for more details. Participation fees range from JPY 300-3,000 depending on the length and type of activity. Moreover, the city plans to introduce late-night and early-morning programs such as deer watching, or night hiking, to boost its hotel occupancy rates. This is because Hanno City is located close to Tokyo, namely less than one hour away. Because visitors from Tokyo can travel there for day trips, the economic activity stagnates. To keep visitors in Hanno for longer than a day, it is important to find ways to attract them to spend some nights in local hotels.

The local Hanno community has also introduced "Series" tours to increase repeaters. These include "yamamusume" to encourage continuous mountain hiking for ladies and "satokatsu" to maximize the use of unharvested fruit, such as persimmons and yuzu at the foot of the mountains.

Thanks to active community involvement, visitors to Hanno are free to select from many tour plans and travel ideas proposed by local residents. At the same time, locals benefit from their participation because ecotourism activities enhance their pride at helping revitalize the city using their own talents.

3.4 Comparison between Nan City and Hanno City

Table 41 presents a comparison on general characteristics between Nan City and Hanno City. The similarities include both cities sharing similar geographic characteristics, both situated at the foot of mountains and both with similar populations. Both cities are also facing depopulation issues. However, the objective of each city's

ecotourism promotion differs. Nan aims to preserve the environment to sustain tourism, while Hanno seeks to revitalize the city by promoting ecotourism. Another difference is that Nan is located 668 km from the national capital, and Hanno just 50km or so. From a location perspective, Hanno is more accessible than Nan.

Table 41: Comparison of general characteristics between Nan City and Hanno City (Compiled by author, Field Surveys, 2012 and 2013)

Comparison	Nan City	Hanno City
Purpose of the city's ecotourism promotion	To preserve the environment to sustain tourism	To revitalize the city through local people participation in creative tourism
Focus	Focuses on tourists	Focuses on local people, particularly the elderly
Social issues	Depopulation, Aging Society	Depopulation, Aging Society
Geographic Type	Satoyama Area, Pilot city promoted by the Thailand Tourism Authority	Satoyama area, Model city promoted by the Ministry of the Environment
Population	81,481 (2010)	82,422 (2012)
Dominant Group of Visitors	Females in 30s	Females in 50s
Access	10 hours by bus from Bangkok 1.5 hours by plane from Bangkok	50 minutes by train from Ikebukuro
Tourism community groups	Elderly groups (5 groups in major temples)	Citizen groups (at least 25 groups around Hanno)

The numbers of tourism community groups in each city also differ. While Nan lacks a clear tourism community group, it does have elderly groups who usually gather

at five major temples of the city and get involved in providing information to visitors as required. In Hanno, the tourism community groups comprise citizens who have formed groups, applied to the local government to become local tour leaders and who conduct tours for visitors. Looking at the number of tourism community groups, Hanno can be considered more active in terms of community participation. The same goes in practice. Table 42 compares the tourism situation in Nan City and Hanno City. Thanks to the active participation of the community, Hanno City has managed to promote as many as 65 travel plans and routes compared to four recommended routes for Nan, which were solely designed by the Tourism Authority of Thailand. Support on municipal- and community levels is stronger in Hanno as opposed to Nan, where most comes from the central authority. To develop more effectively, Nan Province need not completely rely on the support of the central authority to execute sustainable tourism plans but can initiate its own sustainable tourism promotion plans to handle the intensifying tourism activities now underway.

Table 42: Comparison between Nan City and Hanno City on Tourism Situation
(Compiled by author, Field Surveys, 2012 and 2013)

Comparison	Nan City's Tourism Development Situation	Hanno City's Tourism Development Situation	Examples of Hanno's Implementation
Human Capital	<p>Focus on human capital development is not visibly evident.</p> <p>(Training only held when budget allows and mainly in English language)</p>	<p>Human capital is referred to as “treasure” for the tourism development of the city</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local guide Open College, • Step-up course, • Demae programs, • Lectures for students, government officers outside Hanno
Community Participation	<p>Passive Community Participation:</p> <p>Community groups limited to temples to give information to visitors of that temple.</p> <p>(Approx. 5 community groups; one in each of the five major temples)</p>	<p>Active Community Participation:</p> <p>More active and dispersed city-wide among different tourist attractions</p> <p>(Approx. 25 community groups city-wide)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocates a start-up budget for each group • Community groups create more than 65 tour plans and routes • Community groups created all-year-round events calendar (not sensitive to seasonality)
Community-tourist interaction	<p>Limited interaction between tourists and the community. Visitors mainly come for sightseeing and enjoying scenery only</p>	<p>Creative Tourism; stressing authenticity, everyday life, folkways and human interaction</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tour programs feature local nature, daily lifestyles, interaction with local people • Mutually beneficial tours
Policy focus on:	<p>TAT's 7 Greens policy focuses on environment preservation</p>	<p>Local government policy focuses on development based on nature, culture and people</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hanno's basic principles state that its regional development is based on the linkage between nature, culture and people

Table 42 also shows that the focus on people training is not as evident in Nan as in Hanno. Nan City officer said at the end of 2013 that there was annual training for local guides but not every year. English language training is also provided when the budget allows. In Hanno, professional tourism training is held more regularly. Furthermore, interaction between the community and visitors is limited in Nan due to the nature of tourist activities that do not allow sufficient interaction with local people. Given scarce local tour guides and the fact they are not volunteers, visitors find it easier to travel solo, which means rapid tours and little insight into the places they visit. This also triggers a corresponding lack of appreciation of such places and usually no repeat trip. For Hanno, not only is interaction encouraged, but also activities that benefit both the host community and visitors, keeping both parties happy.

Regarding policy, while the 7 Greens project in Nan focuses heavily on environmental sustainability, which is undeniably important, focusing on economic and socio-cultural aspects will benefit the sustainable development of tourism in Nan. In Hanno, it states that the city focuses on development based on nature, culture and people. As discussed in this dissertation, the author expects this linkage to significantly underpin the sustainable development of tourism.

It can be said that ecotourism as a form of sustainable tourism is successful in Hanno in the environmental, people and culture aspects, which are the key aspects of ecotourism as defined in this dissertation. However, if we examine the economic aspect which is an optional criterion for ecotourism, Hanno shows weakness. According to the Hanno Ecotourism Promotion Office, the city does not receive much revenue from its tourism activities, despite its active community participation. This is partly because the local people of Hanno are already content with their current standard of living and only

conducting activities as volunteers to satisfy their social and personal values. However, this concept would not work in developing countries where local people are not financially stable enough to conduct tourism activities without financial incentives. A day tour in Hanno costs between JPY 300 and 3,000 and includes lunch. The price is considered low compared to commercial tours in Japan which cost around JPY 9,000 and obviously not profitable. Moreover, there are roughly 65 tour plans in Hanno but almost all are 1-day tours which practically do not encourage visitors to stay overnight. Each tour is independently planned and conducted by each community group so they are rarely coordinated or combined to become 2- or 3-day plans, thus they are not designed to encourage visitors to stay longer in the city and spend more. Some activities also resemble each other in terms of content so activities should be filtered more carefully to reduce costs. Because the local community members are not tourism professionals and because their continuous efforts cannot be fully maintained unaided, the local government can play a vital role in repackaging the tour plans to increase its tourism revenues. However, it is important for the local government to be mindful not to provide excessive financial assistance to and/or monitoring of the community because doing so would undermine the ability of the local people to create and develop their own capabilities in the long run.

Moreover, although visitors and the tourism industry are becoming increasingly responsive to sustainability issues, the government at the municipal level at the minimum has a critical role in promoting and stimulating actions to ensure sustainable tourism. Tourism policies that address all four dimensions, namely economic, people, culture and environmental issues developed with comprehensive awareness, can guide tourism positively and sustainably.

The challenge for Thai people involves identifying their own capabilities and competencies required to deliver a sustainable tourism strategy, as well as coping with changing competitive circumstances. Success will mean identifying the most effective means of crafting and identifying those capabilities, whether through formal training programs, mentoring, peer-to-peer learning, or involvement in community activities.

Most importantly, achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process, which requires constant monitoring of impacts, introducing the necessary preventive and/or corrective measures whenever necessary.

3.5 Conclusion and Discussion

In this chapter, it was emphasized that the participation and collaboration of local community representatives, conservationists, tourism service providers and local authorities is necessary to achieve sustainable tourism. In the case of Hanno City, actions on the ground are taken by the local government and community. This research shows that behind successful community participation, support from the local government or any level above is needed to develop and implement policies that pave the way to an enabling environment and encourage active participation and actions toward sustainability.

Having studied a successful case of sustainable tourism management in Hanno City, Japan, three significant implications that would benefit the development of Thailand's sustainable tourism can be concluded.

Firstly, the objective of Thailand's 7 Greens policy should be clearly redefined and shifted from "focusing on reducing greenhouse gases and the impact of global

warming” to “focusing on overall sustainable development via capabilities-based sustainable tourism.” Rather than focusing on reducing greenhouse gases and minimizing adverse impacts on the environment, resources associated with culture, society, history and the happiness and well-being of the community are equally important and could help spawn a more effective mechanism to protect the ecosystem in the long run.

Secondly, participation and collaboration can also be initiated at community and municipal levels rather than just central government. Nan Province need not completely rely on central government support to execute the sustainable tourism plans but could instead initiate its own sustainable tourism promotion plans to handle intensifying tourism activities on a timely basis.

Thirdly, one factor that attracts more visitors and “repeaters” to a place has proven to be local people rather than just nature or culture alone. Interaction between locals and visitors helps forge a longer-lasting experience than nature or culture alone. It is worthwhile for Thailand to consider this new trend and prepare their people for this purpose to create a further competitive advantage in sustainable tourism. Moreover, based on this research, it is envisaged that for sustainable tourism to boost the sustainable development of Thailand, there will be a need to carefully manage local people, maximize their capabilities and provide effective training and encouragement to participate in their communities.

From the field survey, it can be concluded that ecotourism works in Hanno from environmental, culture and people perspectives. However, the case of Hanno suggests that there is room for improvement in increasing revenues from tourism activities so

that the city could support itself sustainably without relying solely on the government's financial support. The issue of economic unsustainability can be solved by repackaging and redesigning its ecotourism programs through local creativity and joint efforts. Nevertheless, since economic sustainability is an optional criterion for ecotourism, economic growth is considered a supplementary factor for an ideal ecotourism condition; provided the local people are happy with their way of life and content with who they are, what they do, and what they value. Sustainable tourism development requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong municipal and local leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus-building. Apart from the more nature-based and greener tourism, it is equally important to encourage local villages and communities to take pride in their authentic way of life and create strong awareness in the communities to minimize the environmental, socio-cultural, and economic impact on their own region. It is important to create an understanding of sustainability among people in the communities and also travelers, to develop their capabilities in sustainable development through tourism.

CHAPTER 4: The Capabilities Approach in Sustainable

Tourism

This chapter discusses ways to incorporate the Capabilities Approach into the sustainable development of Nan's tourism by examining similar efforts in Japan. It also confirms the significance of enhancing human capabilities in tourism as tourism provides opportunities to develop capabilities.

The discussions in this chapter suggest that tourism can become sustainable and create a nurturing environment for human well-being through capabilities enhancement, active community participation and creative tourism.

4.1 Integrating the Capabilities Approach into Sustainable Tourism

We have seen efforts to promote tourism aiming to stimulate the economic growth of the region or country. However, many have failed to examine the impact on the quality of life of those in the areas visited and instead focused excessively on meeting visitors' expectations and demands. Sen (Sen, 1985) confirmed that the ultimate goal of economic life was not the command of resources but how people could function with such resources at their disposal. In the sustainable tourism context, such "resources" would constitute the environment, nature, culture, human and so forth. This means that in the tourism context, the ultimate goal is not about trying to satisfy visitors' increased demand for tourism resources, but how those involved in tourism can function with the available tourism resources, to enhance their self-reliance and well-being. As the role of people combined with the quality of people would affect their choice and determine the opportunities available for them through these resources (Sen,

Development as Freedom, 1999), capability is thus defined as the scope of opportunities present for an individual to pursue his/her choice of lifestyle and determine his/her functional scope. In other words, it is the ability to function, seize opportunities, make choices and act (Croes, 2012.) In the tourism context, this would mean each person has the ability to seek an opportunity to contribute their energy, knowledge, ideas, assets, or any other talent, participate in consensus-building and decision-making; either for themselves or as a group and act within their own capability as a community member.

Previous studies demonstrate how the natural environment, regulations governing the environment and cultural services derived from the ecosystem such as leisure, recreation and scenery; collectively referred to as Ecosystem Services, are essential resources that offer instrumental value in creating capabilities. The Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005) has defined ecosystem services as *“the benefits that people may obtain from the ecosystem that perform economic and social functions that contribute to well-being.”* As ecosystem services are considered to contribute to the functioning of humans, they are also considered necessary and essential for creating capabilities. If such ecosystems are jeopardized by human activity, it may spawn a net loss of capabilities for the present generation and possibly future generations as well (Pelenc, Lompo, Ballet, & Dubois, 2013.)

Since ecosystem services are a cornerstone of tourism, humans can play an important role in restoring and protecting them through eco-friendly practices. One example is sustainable tourism. Creating capabilities in sustainable tourism may help expand people’s opportunities and freedom to live the life they value. The community can earn a living from sustainable tourism, underlining the significance of their work by providing each other with good products and services and contributing to the sustainable

development of their own regions. Conversely, visitors could obtain healthy food, buy authentic local products and enjoy tourism services and hospitality, while giving meaning to their activity choices. The visitors exercise their functioning by giving the community opportunities to earn a living from their labor and supporting local services and products. They add value to present and future generations by supporting the sustainable use of these ecosystem services.

Capabilities can be created in many ways, depending on the ability, experience, resources and constraints of each individual. In the case of Hanno City, Japan, capabilities are created through creative tourism, community participation and people-development programs. The following sections discuss ways to develop capabilities through creative tourism and community participation, as a tool for sustainable tourism.

4.2 Creating Capabilities through Creative Tourism

In January 2014, the author interviewed the managing director of the Designated Area Office for Nan Old City, under a public organization called the Designated Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration or DASTA³⁰. During the interview, DASTA constantly stressed the importance of “creative tourism³¹”, not only in Nan City, but nationwide.

³⁰ DASTA is a public organization established in October 2003 and separate from TAT. As of 2013, DASTA looks after six designated areas in Thailand where it believes the concept of sustainable tourism could be cultivated. These include Koh Chang Islands and related areas, Pattaya City and related areas, Sukhothai-Kamphaengphet Historical parks, Loei Province, Nan Old City, and U-Thong Ancient City. Nan Old City was designated by the Cabinet Office on May 1, 2012.

³¹ Creative tourism is defined as “*Tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken.*” (Richards & Wilson, 2006) (Also see Figure 42, p. 166.)

Creative tourism allows tourists to develop their potential by participating in the places they visit. It is arguably more suited to a society that values sustainability because it can forge close bonds between visitors and the local community, leaving behind memorable experiences that mere photographs cannot describe. Because Nan is a city of rich historical, cultural and environmental diversity and has some characteristics that are special to visitors, engaging visitors in the activities of the local community and allowing them to experience people's daily lifestyle involves strong human development potential because it allows visitors to interact directly with local communities in Nan. This environment would allow them to learn about local cultural heritage and the special characteristics of the area through the eyes of the host. When visitors participate in creative activities, upskilling and/or creative challenges can underpin active tourist experiences (Richards & Wilson, 2006.) Because creative tourism encourages the preservation of authenticity, local people can proceed with their way of life and need not adjust their values and authenticity to meet the needs and wants of visitors from different backgrounds. They continue to work in accordance with their value system and their own capabilities, which will boost the value of their self-reliant and self-fulfilling lifestyle; a mental asset that should be preserved to maintain their identity and well-being.

However, since preserving values and identities cannot directly generate economic value, various income-generating services are needed to support visitors, such as homestays, hotels, restaurants, tour guides, souvenirs, etc. DASTA collectively refers to these services that enable the community to earn a living as "Creative Products" (Pattaratorn, DASTA, 2013.) Designing travel routes near the community and allowing visitors to conduct activities alongside the community is defined by DASTA as

“Creative Route” (Pattaratorn, DASTA, 2013.) Creative Products and Creative Routes are two tools that DASTA believes would help boost community income. If visitors visit such places constantly, the community will earn constant income, strengthening the economy. However, if visitors disappear one day and income declines, the community will suffer a loss of well-being unless self-reliant. This will not happen if the community is aware of its own “value” and remains aware in maintaining their “identity.” Communities are encouraged to value themselves accordingly so that even when visitors stop coming, those in the community would still be able to sustain themselves and live their everyday lives as normal.

Moreover, there are examples of creative movements in Japan. Hiromi Tagawa, President and CEO of Japan Travel Bureau, gave some examples of creative tourism in Japan during his lecture at an International Ecotourism Conference 2013 in Tottori, Japan. He highlighted that for tourism to be creative and sustainable, the tourism industry must be developed into a sixth-order industry³². In other words, primary, secondary and tertiary industries should be combined to create a new tourism experience that revolves around the five human senses³³ to magnify the experience of tourists and make them want to return. Tourism must not involve only “sight” but also “sound”, “smell”, “taste” and “touch.” Tourism should include all important aspects such as history, nature, culture, food, experience, climate, art and the feeling of being

³² Sixth-order industry is a Japanese term used to describe a combination of primary industries with secondary and tertiary industries. Nowadays, a combination of these industries should be applied and utilized to develop a unique product that would serve as a “brand” for the region. When it comes to “Regional Branding”, the concepts of “five senses” and “the power of tourism” cannot be ignored (Tagawa, 2013.)

³³ It is necessary to create a “story” for the tourist destination out of the five human senses; sound, sight, touch, taste, and smell for a whole new tourism experience. Sight should no longer be the only experience a tourist can obtain (Tagawa, 2013.)

treated as an important person³⁴. Sustainable tourism should establish a link between the protection of the environment and this new demand (Tagawa, 2013.)

Thematization can be another strategy to create “Regional Branding” for a tourist attraction. By developing a specific theme or story, the location can position itself as a “city of something.” Themes can also be combined to link a series of events (Richards & Wilson, 2006.) In Hanno City, themes like “the mountain ladies”, or “Reviving the unharvested fruits” are taking root. For Nan, the linkage of its old history, rich natural resources, cultural assets and friendly people can be thematic materials. The culture of Nan, which is unique and new to foreign visitors, can be explained as an “experience” and part of a tour program. Nan’s peaceful lifestyle, history and natural features can be explained as a “story” and may be included in the tourism planning structure. However, despite numerous ways to apply creative tourism to create a sustainable tourism community, this should be carefully planned so that it does not affect the true identity or overshadow the original cultural heritage.

4.3 Creating Capabilities through Community Participation and Volunteering Promotion in Japan

Promoting community participation is easier said than done. It is not easy to urge community participation and expect people to come out and participate. Strategies are required to motivate local people to be involved and this section studies how Japan does it. As the volunteering culture becomes prevalent in Japan, this section examines

³⁴ During the President Forum of Japan Policy Council held on November 25, 2013, The CEO of Japan Travel Bureau highlighted that nowadays famous attractions such as hot springs and popular “ryokans” in tourist destinations are no longer what attracts tourists to a place. Instead it is the environment of the warm welcome that local residents create and which makes tourists feel “important people” is essential (Source: Japan Policy Council (日本創造会議), 2013).

how the Japanese government motivates its people to participate in its community events.

In the wake of family nuclearization, a declining birthrate, technological progress, urbanization and the weakening connections between individuals and communities, the Japanese government realizes the importance of fostering socialization by enhancing local people's opportunities to participate in volunteer and experiential activities suited to their stage of development (MEXT Japan, 2004.) The Japanese government also believes that in today's rapidly changing society, the practical skills needed by self-sufficient individuals to socialize and cooperate with others must be fostered from childhood in a balanced manner. The importance of volunteer activities was also emphasized in the December 2000 Report of the National Conference on Educational Reform. It noted the importance of cultivating awareness of and willingness to participate in volunteer and experiential activities. According to the White Paper on Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology 2004, the Japanese government introduced a number of measures to promote volunteer and experiential activities by establishing and enhancing systems to promote the same, setting up local councils to seek cooperation with organizations and groups and providing information on groups offering volunteer activities. Japan has also established "support centers" for this purpose (MEXT Japan, 2004.)

MEXT also arranged talks and panel discussions on expanding volunteer activities in communities and at workplaces and schools to foster people's spirit and encourage greater participation in their communities. Japan also studied the possibility of using volunteer passports and other tools to encourage and support volunteer activities.

4.3.1 Survey on Japanese Volunteers Compiled by MEXT Japan

In February 2004, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan conducted an Internet survey covering 2,000 males and females aged between 18 and 70 nationwide to study their community participation experience, continuation status, interest, reasons for volunteering, hindrances and how they obtained information, etc. The characteristics of the Japanese people were summarized.

More than 80% of respondents said that they were interested in participating in volunteer activities in future but were unsure exactly what they wanted to do. They wanted to volunteer within their capacity and not do anything too difficult. Many people preferred volunteer activities related to nature, environmental protection and welfare.

Most respondents (55.6%) said that they were worried what the person who requested help would think of them. 51.8% said that it was hard for them to offer help to someone they were meeting for the first time.

Conditions that could boost the appeal of a volunteer activity were specified by the respondents. Most mentioned that the activity would have to be easily slotted into their daily lifestyles; activities should not hinder human relationships; activities should be easy to do without special knowledge or skills and be simple for individuals to take part in.

To motivate community participation, the respondents felt the need to promote social activities at workplaces and schools. People should also be educated about daily helping and volunteering more actively through school and social education.

Another point raised was the fact that people wanted smooth access to information on community activities and many also wanted to see such information at

training centers. Of the people who had not done volunteer activities before, 23.6% wanted to be introduced to the leader of the volunteer group of their interest. 21.7% of the new participants wanted to meet somebody who could advise about what activities would best match them.

This data represents the general perception of people in Japan toward community participation and volunteering. It shows that while many want to participate in community activities, they either lack the courage to do so, are unsure whom to contact, or simply lack relevant information about the activity. This problem may be solved by providing information on community activities at popular venues for local residents and also by word of mouth from leaders and members of community groups.

4.3.2 Survey on Japanese Volunteer Promotion Centers Compiled by MEXT Japan

In March 2004, the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology of Japan conducted a questionnaire survey with 1,162 local volunteer promotion centers nationwide, 544 of which responded. The aim was to examine what centers were doing to promote and raise awareness of community activities. The characteristics of the activity promotion centers were summarized.

40.6% of the centers said that they issued newsletters related to volunteering, while 40.3% offered trial activities and 25.9% offered educational courses that promoted the understanding of volunteering. This percentage shows that a common means to provide information on volunteering is via newsletters and trial courses.

49.4% of the promotion centers said that the key to establishing an environment for high social awareness was to promote more about the appeal and fun of activities.

About half the promotion centers agreed that they had to make the volunteer activities more attractive and fun. This idea can be applied in the tourism context by encouraging local communities to participate in fun events or activities, to strengthen their own bonds and also attract visitors.

56.4% of the promotion centers said that to increase the appeal of activities, it was important that the volunteer had a friend with whom they could participate. Conversely, 51.5% said that it would be preferable if the person could participate alone without having to join a group. About half want to participate with someone they know while the other half prefer to participate in community activities alone. From this data, it can be understood that there should be an equal number of both kinds of activities available for the communities.

Moreover, 54% said that activities should not require special knowledge or skills. 50.6% suggested an activity arena where people could utilize their abilities was important. This data suggests that activities should allow people to perform at least within their capacity and ability.

Following this survey, to encourage community participation and volunteer activities to create a helpful and lively society, one approach would include having an information medium allowing people to seek what matches their interests and needs, to promote the appeal and fun of activities to schoolchildren and working adults and evaluate and recognize their activity and community participation appropriately.

4.3.3 Japanese Community Participation in Action (Author's Survey)

This section examines an example strategy used by an ecotourism promotion office in Hokkaido Prefecture, Japan to revitalize its tourism and encourage its local

people to participate in their community activities. The author uses the example of Hokkaido because of its remote location and distance from Tokyo. Similar to Nan City, Hokkaido is located very far north of the capital, approximately 1.5 hours by plane, similar to traveling from Bangkok to Nan.

In March 2014, the author interviewed the Chief for the Ecotourism Project, Commerce, Industry, Labor and Tourism Division, Department of Industrial Promotion, Kushiro General Sub-prefectural Bureau, Hokkaido Prefecture, to discuss the efforts made by Hokkaido towns to promote their ecotourism activities. Like Nan, the Kushiro area is considered remote and relatively inaccessible. Accordingly, towns in these areas (Shibeche, Tashikaga and Tsuruimura) have collaborated to develop a few tourism “products” unique to their areas, which they are utilizing technology to advertise. The Kushiro area also features visitor centers and ecotourism museums in every town to establish a network of volunteers and an improved system to sustain tourism there. The central Kushiro visitor center has three permanent staff and the rest are volunteers from the so-called “group active rangers”. Their jobs include introducing ecotourism to local people unfamiliar with local tourism and encouraging them to become ambassadors of their own towns. This helps boost local ecotourism, enliven the towns and enhance the enjoyment of visitors visiting them.

Cooperation with other local towns is one way to bring visitors to a remote location, because visitors can explore many places in a single journey and the tourism activities will benefit multiple cities and communities at the same time.

4.4 Conclusion and Discussion

Capabilities can be created in each and every individual and via numerous methods. In the case of Hanno City, Japan, this is done via close interaction between visitors and local residents, as well as community participation and training offered by the local government.

From the discussion of this section, it is fair to say that under normal circumstances, people generally want to participate in community activities. However, the urge to participate can be hindered simply by the surrounding environment, which may not encourage them to step out. To encourage community participation and volunteer activities, another approach would be to provide sufficient information to people while promoting the appeal and fun of such activities to children at schools, adults at workplaces and evaluating and recognizing their activity and community participation appropriately.

The following figure illustrates and summarizes the main ideas discussed in this chapter:

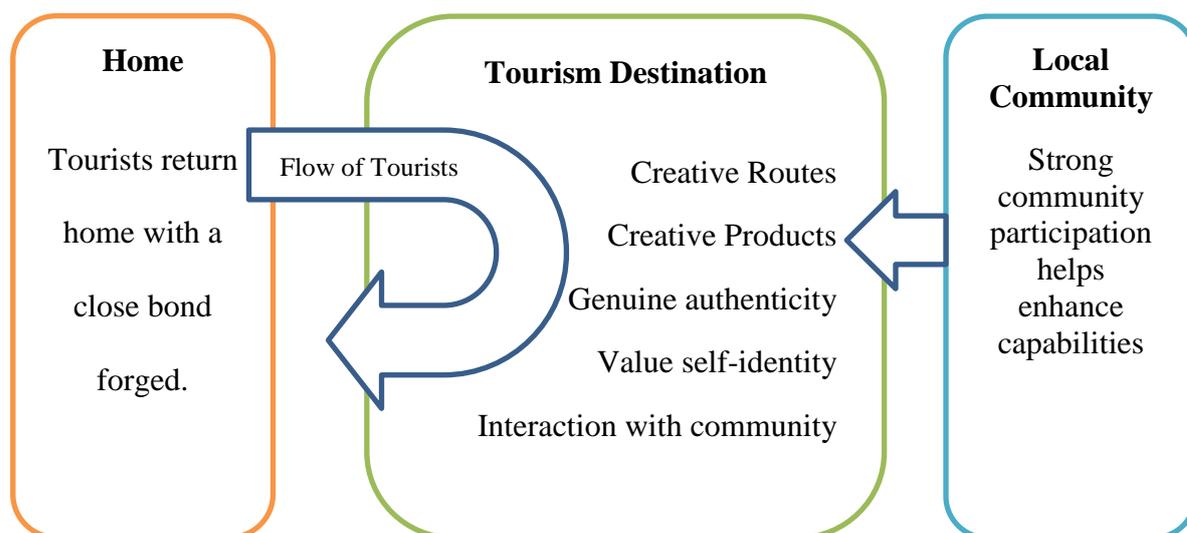


Figure 45: Creating Capabilities through Creative Tourism and Community Participation (Illustration by Author)

For a successful path toward sustainable development in tourism, competencies and capabilities must be incorporated into tourism planning. By utilizing and improving each member's capabilities, the community will thrive thanks to abundant resources that can be used to develop its tourism industry. Through community participation, tourists can forge close bonds with the local community and gain memorable experiences that could benefit them in future. Most importantly, through community participation, the local people will be able to forge their own bonds within the community. This will serve as a strong immune system if tourists stop visiting their cities one day. They will be able to continue with their current lifestyles without being affected by any reduced tourism activity.

To encourage active community participation, an environment encouraging people to join activities freely is also important, particularly for those with no previous experience of participating in community activities. Communities must continually provide opportunities for people to enhance their skills in response to various demands of their

society. If communities find it difficult to do so alone, partnering other cities can be another solution to establish sustainable development in the region.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion and Policy Implications

This chapter concludes the overall findings and proposes policy implications for the sustainable development in tourism, based on the comparative study of Nan Province, Thailand and Hanno City, Japan. It also discusses the current status of the 7 Greens Project, comparing the characteristics, status and policies between Nan Province and Hanno City on the path to sustainable tourism and the integration of the people's capabilities into sustainable development in tourism.

5.1 The 7 Greens Now

The continuation of the 7 Greens project in Nan after 2012 is said by TAT to be underway but on a far smaller scale, given the lack of successors to proceed with the 7 Greens project in Nan. The Tourism Promotion Department of TAT continues to work on educational projects to integrate the relevant parties and educate them on tourism management and tourism products for further marketing and public relations (TAT, 2014.) Nevertheless, another organization called DASTA is now actively devising sustainable tourism development projects in Nan City, working closely with local communities to conduct training and arrange workshops to promote the local products and way of life.

Regarding another pilot project in Samui, TAT considers it relatively successful, given the continued effort based on the 7 Greens concept to establish the Green Island Foundation to promote environment preservation in Samui Island. However, TAT recognizes the need for an arena where local people and businesses collaborate and design ecotourism routes that have “stories” to tell and sell. TAT believes that this

would lead to many benefits for the local communities and ultimately to the “Green” image of Samui Island.

Following official completion of the 7 Greens pilot projects in Nan and Samui in 2012, TAT has expanded its 7 Greens promotion campaigns to other cities of Thailand. The most notable cities other than Nan and Samui are Pai and Chiang Khan, both of which in northern Thailand. Campaigns on other cities are featured in TAT’s 50 Great Green Escapes, which introduces the country’s natural attractions in 50 areas of Thailand, categorized into districts; namely the North, South, Northeast and Central Plains. Other than the 50 Great Green Escapes, TAT has also started to introduce new adventure destinations under the “100 Unforgettable Adventure Experiences in Thailand” covering 33 provinces and more than 10 activities to experience nature and adventurous activities (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2011.) TAT also offers other tourism products such as Health and Wellness tourism, and Agro-tourism. TAT recognizes the importance of advocating more sustainability as tourism now comprises approximately 8.5% of GDP. According to Suraphon Svetasreni, TAT governor, the authority remains determined to fight global warming as stated in his remarks and aims to form “green hubs” that are empowered by the renewed responsibility of the Thai people (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010.)

From the findings of this dissertation, however, TAT should not only focus on improving the environmental situation. As results underline the considerable potential of the 7 Greens project in terms of marketing and communicating with people, TAT is encouraged to harness this power to convince people to value their own resources more and enhance their capabilities, in turn, of protecting their own community, culture, environment and economy. This is because people are considered the catalyst for the

sustainable development of any place, including Nan. The author believes that the 7 Greens policy should be shifted from “focusing on the aspect of the environment” to “focusing on overall sustainable development via capabilities enhancement in the local community” and boosting well-being in the community, which the author believes would be more effective. This would, in turn, also protect the environment in the long run.

In the short term, each party should cooperate in setting standards for visitors and local communities to realize what they can and cannot do. If there is any misconduct, disciplinary measures should be imposed. Conversely, there should be a rewards system in place for those who make active contributions and cooperate.

In the long run, the power of the community must be strengthened to manage and administer tourism destinations, since ongoing issues still require structural change, which depend on momentum and resources, e.g. efficient and energy-saving local public transport capable of handling increasing visitor numbers. Such mission needs a certain amount of budget, authority, political momentum and municipal or provincial support.

5.2 Transition to Sustainable Tourism in Nan City and Hanno City

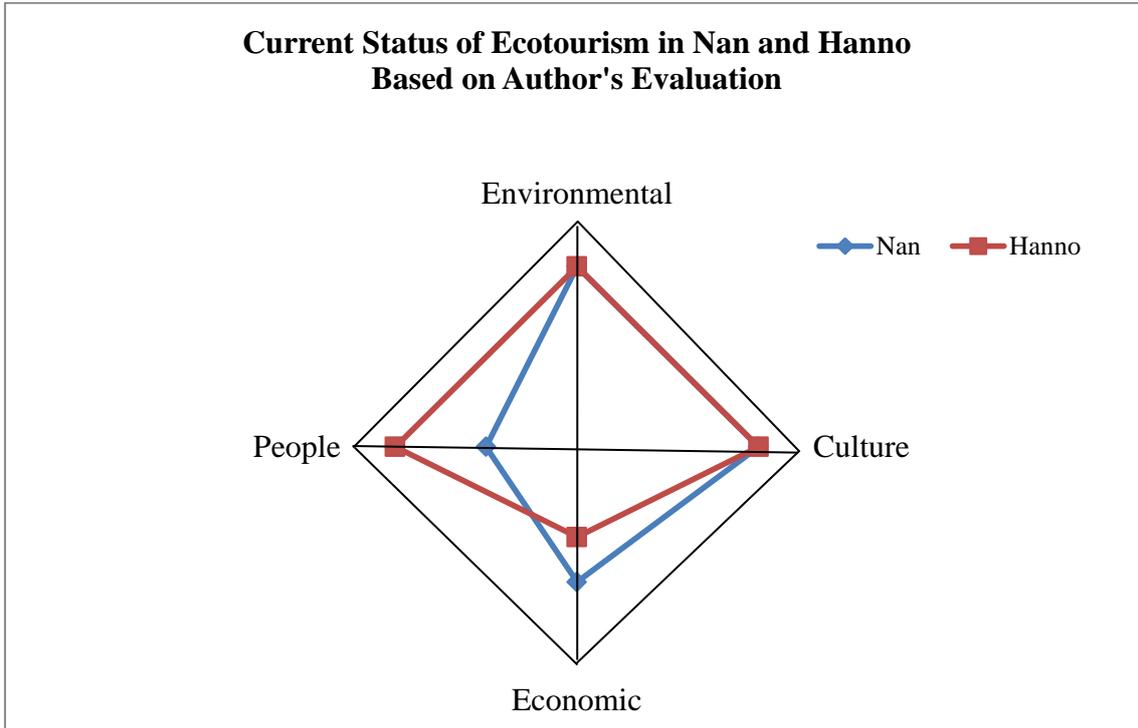


Figure 46: Current Tourism Status in Nan Province and Hanno City based on Author's Evaluation and discussion in this dissertation (Illustration by Author)

Figure 46 represents the current status of tourism in Nan Province and Hanno City based on the evaluation of the author. This figure summarizes that although the local people of Nan are satisfied with their current way of living, the city is lacking in terms of people's readiness to personally contribute to preserving its environment and the culture. Nan needs to prepare its people in readiness for soaring tourism. However, there is still insufficient contribution from people, low community participation and a lack of available HR training. In terms of economic sustainability, Nan still experiences year-round fluctuations due to promoting tourism only in winter. Nan must promote more tour plans for other seasons to attract visitors at those times as well. In environmental terms, Nan is experiencing deforestation, related pollution and an increased number of cars. The author considers the 7 Greens concept to be direct and

simple but leaning heavily toward an environmental dimension and less focused on culture and people. Sustainable tourism relies greatly on voluntary actions. With this in mind, efforts to reinforce community and personal awareness and encourage more people to take on these sustainable concepts are key toward making Nan's tourism sustainable. Furthermore, the emphasis on interaction and cooperation among locals and visitors is necessary to boost concrete actions and physical contributions to sustain tourism.

Hanno, conversely, also has abundant natural and cultural resources. Hanno is also very well established and developed in terms of people training, community participation and creative tourism. The city has year-round events and multiple tour plans and travel routes. Most of its activities not only benefit visitors but also the local community. Conversely, like Nan, Hanno also lacks economic sustainability. The tours are cheap and most tourism activities start and finish the same day, with few overnight visitors. From a people aspect, Hanno still has room to improve. Despite healthy community participation, volunteer activities and HR training, participants are mostly aged. Consequently, a call for participation will have to be promoted frequently and training will have to be conducted more regularly to maintain a consistent number of tourism professionals in the city. This is because some local guides, tour leaders, or community members are always close to retirement. Nevertheless, it is clear from the case of Hanno that "people" are truly the center of development. A happy society with people active and willing to participate is an important asset to its tourism industry.

5.3 Integrating Capabilities Approach into Sustainable Tourism

Capabilities can be created in many ways, depending on individuals' background, environment, ability, experience and resources. In the case of Hanno City, capabilities are created through active local government support, community participation, creative tourism and people-development programs.

Through the bond between visitors and the local community, both parties develop their potential through participation, as well as a long-lasting experience. Moreover, community participation and creative tourism can forge close bonds between visitors and the local community, creating memorable experiences that mere photographs cannot describe, while preserving values and the communities' true identities.

Capabilities can also be developed by honing marketing skills. For Nan, the linkage of its old history, rich natural resources, cultural resources and its welcoming people can be marketing resources. The culture of Nan, which is unique and new to foreign visitors, can be marketed and used for branding. Nan's peaceful lifestyle, history and natural features can be explained as a "story" and may be used to set the scene for its tourism environment.

From the Japanese government's surveys on community participation and factors behind Japanese people volunteering, it emerged that many who want to participate in community activities lack the courage to do so, are unsure who to contact, or lack information about the activity. This problem could be solved by ensuring sufficient information on community activities at venues popular with local residents as well as word of mouth within the community. An environment for a person to join

activities freely is important, particularly if the person has no previous experience of participating in community activities.

To encourage community participation and volunteering, information media where people can search for activities that match their interests and needs can be a strategy to promote the appeal and fun of the activities. More importantly, people who have participated should be evaluated and recognized for their activity and community participation appropriately.

Moreover, for remote towns where few tourists visit, cooperation with other local towns is one way to bring tourists to the remote city, as tourists would be able to explore various places in a single journey. Accordingly, the tourism activities will benefit multiple cities and communities at the same time.

A well-systemized monitoring and implementing tool alongside adequate and meaningful collaboration among all tourism-related participants, particularly at the municipal and community level, are also required to bring Nan closer to sustainability. Participation and collaboration can be initiated at community- and municipal levels rather than awaiting central government initiatives. Nan Province need not rely on central government solely to execute sustainable tourism strategies. Rather, they can initiate their own sustainable tourism promotion plans to promptly handle growing tourism activities.

Last but not least, the author believes that there is no such thing as sustainability without capability. The author strongly recommends that to ensure sustainable tourism contributes to the sustainable development of Nan Province, competencies and capabilities must be incorporated into tourism planning. Carefully managing local

people, maximizing their capabilities, providing active and regular training and encouraging local people to be able to step out and participate in their communities should be reinforced for sustainable development in tourism to be realized.

By optimally exploiting individual capabilities, a tourism city like Nan will thrive thanks to abundant resources that can be used to develop its tourism industry.

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APPENDIX I: Annual Tourism Growth in Nan Province

Table 43: Annual Growth of Tourism in Nan Province (TAT Phrae, 2014)

Type of Data	Jan.-Dec.		
	2012	2011	Δ%
Visitors	520,835	293,976	+ 77.17
Thai	503,468	288,080	+ 74.77
Foreigners	17,367	5,896	+ 194.56
Tourists	406,586	240,267	+ 69.22
Thai	391,878	235,220	+ 66.60
Foreigners	14,708	5,047	+ 191.42
Excursionists	114,249	53,709	+ 112.72
Thai	111,590	52,860	+ 111.10
Foreigners	2,659	849	+ 213.19
Average Length of Stay (Days)	2.61	2.41	+ 0.20
Thai	2.60	2.41	+ 0.19
Foreigners	2.98	2.37	+ 0.61
Average Expenditure (Baht/Person/Day)			
Visitors	1,169.81	1,014.90	+ 15.26
Thai	1,152.33	1,003.67	+ 14.81
Foreigners	1,595.31	1,559.47	+ 2.30
Tourists	1,203.81	1,035.59	+ 16.24
Thai	1,185.58	1,023.70	+ 15.81
Foreigners	1,628.69	1,600.69	+ 1.75
Excursionists	853.31	791.89	+ 7.76
Thai	848.73	788.87	+ 7.59
Foreigners	1,045.51	979.86	+ 6.70
Revenue (Million Baht)			
Visitors	1,377.39	642.05	+ 114.53
Thai	1,303.30	622.10	+ 109.50
Foreigners	74.09	19.95	+ 271.38
ACCOMMODATION ESTABLISHMENTS			
Rooms	1,125	1,120	+ 0.45
Occupancy Rate (%)	43.18	29.50	+ 13.68
Number of Guest Arrivals	263,182	168,308	+ 56.37
Thai	254,433	163,277	+ 55.83
Foreigners	8,749	5,031	+ 73.90

APPENDIX II: Resource Usage in Nan Municipality in 2010

Electricity Usage

Nan Provincial Electricity Authority categorizes electricity users into nine groups according to usage, namely large houses, residential houses, small enterprises, large enterprises, specialized enterprises, public sector, agricultural pumps and temporary users. The number of users is increasing every year. In 2009, the average stood at approximately 458,628 people per year and the average electricity usage was 86,531,955 kWh per year.

Water Usage

The source of raw water for consumption is Nan River, which is the main river of the city. The water is treated and serviced by Nan Provincial Water Authority to those in Nan Municipality. Residents outside this area need to treat the water by themselves. The provincial water authority has a production capacity of 3.55 million m³, servicing a total of 11,867 users in 2010, an increase of 358 users from 2009.

Wastewater Treatment

Nan Municipality is responsible for wastewater collection and treatment systems, which are only available within the Nan municipality, with no clear system for wastewater treatment outside. The wastewater treatment system used by Nan Municipality is the “Oxidation Pond” with an average receiving capacity of 8,259 m³ per day. The sewerage system is a “combined system”, which can collect both rainwater and other types of wastewater in a single pipe. There are two ponds. The area of the first is 58,000 m² and 5.17 meters deep, while the second pond has an area of 41,074 m² and is 3.85 meters deep. They are located in Naiwiang town, inside Nan City and were first operated in 2001. Currently, the systems receive an average of 2,000-4,000 m³ of wastewater per day; mainly from the communities.

Waste Management

Nan City uses the “Landfill” method to manage its residents’ waste. The current landfill capacity is 280,000 tons and the amount of garbage has been increasing since 2000. In 2008, the average was 14,531 tons per year, which had more than doubled by 2013. A breakdown of waste in Nan is shown in the following chart. (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2010)

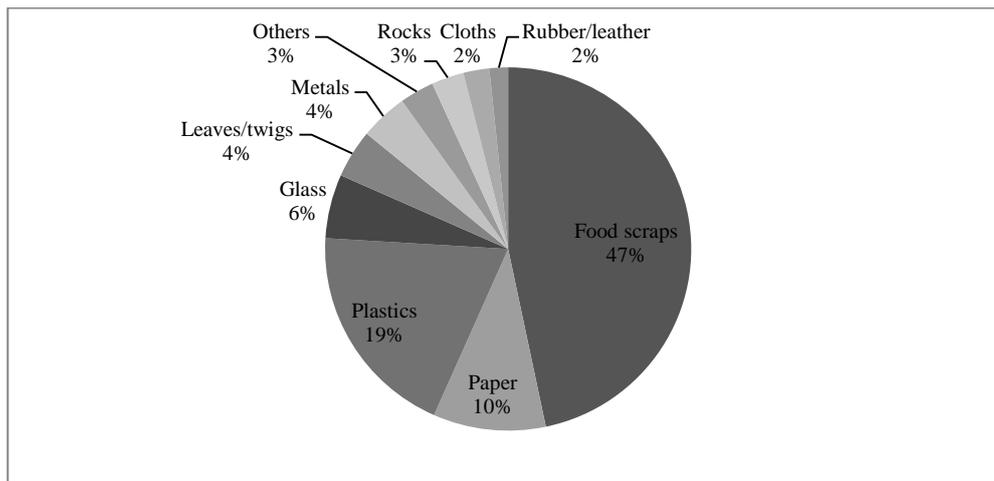


Figure 47: Waste composition of Nan Municipality before landfill (Source: TAT, 2008)

Figure 48: TAT’s report on resource usage in Nan Municipality, 2010 (Translated by Author, Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand)

APPENDIX III: Tourism Service Provider Questionnaire

Translated into English

You can tick multiple answers

Business Name: _____

Type of Service: Tour Business / Tour guide / Hotel / Restaurant / Shop / Tourist Attraction / Others: _____

Length of Service: _____

Type of visitor using your service:

- Local Visitor
- Regional Visitor
- Domestic Visitor
- International Visitor

How have your business results been:

- Well below expectations
- Below expectations
- In line with expectations
- Above expectations
- Well above expectations

Identifying Factors and Obstacles:

What are the hindrances to your tourism business?

- Demand Finance Epidemic Diseases
- Competition/Discounting Political Issues Crime
- Weather Conditions Capacity Others: _____
- Natural Disasters Labor
- Transport System Ineffective Marketing

What help would you need to increase your productivity and profitability?

- Language Training Cultural Training Business Training Environmental Training
- Technology Marketing Assistance Workforce Assistance Financial Assistance

Attitude and Awareness

1. Have you heard about the 7 Greens initiative promoted by TAT?

- Yes, from: _____
 No

2. Are you following the 7 Greens concept or already practicing something similar?

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

3. Which of the 7 Green concepts are you following?

- Green Heart
 Green Logistics
 Green Service
 Green Attractions
 Green Community
 Green Activity
 Green Plus

4. Do you consider the 7 Greens initiative effective or not?

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

5. Do you think the 7 Greens initiative is easy to follow or not?

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

6. Do you think you are on track toward becoming a green service provider?

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

7. Are you aware of the importance of protecting the environment while providing tourism services in Nan?

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

8. Are you determined to preserve or protect Nan while providing the services there?

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

9. Do you think it is necessary to train and urge employees to achieve sustainable tourism?

- Yes
 No
 Maybe

10. Business programs or network in which you currently participate:

11. What would you like to see the government do to develop Nan's tourism sustainably?

12. What would you like to see the community do so that Nan's tourism would develop sustainably?

Your current approach (You can tick multiple boxes)

Hotels:

- Encouraging guests to save towels
- Encouraging guests to save utilities
- Saving paper e.g. e-ticketing, e-booking, e-docs to save paper
- Reducing the use of non-recyclable products
- Promoting 25C+ AC setting
- Not destroying nature for luxury
- Regularly assessing tourists' satisfaction
- Others: _____

Tours:

- Designing walking/bicycle tours
- Eliminating busy schedules to save unnecessary energy
- Designing tours while taking seasons/No. of tourists into consideration
- Extending the number of days so that you can manage energy usage more efficiently
- Saving paper e.g. e-ticketing, e-booking, e-docs to save paper
- Promoting nature-oriented activities

Restaurants:

- Designing menus that use food from the local community
- Designing menus that use food from the local community
- Emphasizing healthy food
- Reducing the use of plastic bags
- Including a mechanism to filter and manage fats
- Having a plan to manage used oil
- Having a sewerage management system
- Having a water circulating system
- Having a good water filtering system
- Using fresh and clean raw materials
- Selecting raw materials from the local community

Souvenirs:

- Promoting simple souvenirs produced by the local community
- Always seeking ways to produce souvenirs from used materials
- Considering packaging that will not become garbage, or eliminating packaging

Logistics:

- Using vehicles that cause low air pollution
- Using vehicles that do not cause air pollution e.g. bicycles, tricycles
- Communicating via e-mail instead of paper
- Planning to procure, material assessment and sources that do not affect the environment
- Others: _____

Training:

- Conducting training and emphasizing services
- Conducting training and emphasizing cleanliness
- Conducting training and emphasizing sorted garbage
- Conducting training and emphasizing the importance of conserving the environment
- Conducting training and emphasizing the importance of preserving the culture
- Conducting training and emphasizing the value of the local community
- Others: _____

Views and Values:

- Expanding ideas toward sustainability within the local community
- Helping increase the potential of the local community by conducting various training
- Respecting community rights
- Compromising with tourists

Waste Management:

- Separating combustible/non-combustible waste
- Ensuring garbage bins are firmly closed
- Turning fresh garbage into organic fertilizer
- Reducing amount of garbage

APPENDIX IV: Visitor and Local People Questionnaire

Translated into English

Gender: Male / Female

Origin of Visitor: _____

You are staying in Nan for _____ **days**

Age:

- Below 15 years old
- 15-24 years old
- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55-64 years old
- 65 + years old

Travel Style:

- Tour Group
- Package Traveler
- Fully Independent
- Semi Independent

Did you plan the itinerary in Nan by yourself?

- Yes, all by myself/ourselves
- Yes, partially
- No, the tour company planned it
- I heard about this from someone
- I found this on the Internet
- I found out through TAT
- Others: _____

Attitude and Awareness

1. Have you heard about the 7 Greens initiative promoted by TAT?

- Yes, from: _____
- No

2. Are you following the 7 Greens concept or already practicing something similar?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Occupation:

- student
- employee
- civil servant
- business owner
- home-maker
- unemployed
- Others: _____

Purpose of Visit:

- Visit friends/relatives
- Visit temples
- Business
- Education
- Holiday (Please tick)
 - Walking and Trekking
 - Dining
 - Shopping
 - Scenic/Natural Attractions
 - Heritage Attractions
 - Sightseeing
 - Entertainment
 - Temples
 - Rafting
 - Other adventure
 - Health and spa
 - Agriculture
- Others: _____

3. Which of the 7 Green concepts are you following?

- Green Heart
- Green Logistics
- Green Service
- Green Attractions
- Green Community
- Green Activity
- Green Plus

How did you find out about Nan?

- Word of Mouth / Recommendation
- Guidebook / Other Travel Book
- Internet
- TAT's 7 Greens advertisement
- School
- Family Connections
- Travel Agent
- Tourism exhibition
- Newspaper / Magazines
- Other Media: _____

Travel Method to Nan:

- Air plane Train
- Car Bus
- Van Motorbike

Travel Method within Nan:

- Tram Bicycle
- Car Bus
- Van Motorbike
- Foot

4. Do you consider the 7 Greens initiative effective or not?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

5. Do you think the 7 Greens initiative is easy to follow or not?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

6. Are you aware of the importance of protecting the environment while traveling in Nan?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

7. Are you determined to preserve or protect Nan while traveling in Nan?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe

Satisfaction / Areas of Improvement	<i>Rate your experience in Nan</i>					
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
You are satisfied with safety in Nan						
You are satisfied with the service quality in Nan						
You are satisfied with Nan's uniqueness						
You are satisfied with Nan's diversity						
You are satisfied with Nan's cleanliness						
You are satisfied with the price of goods and services in Nan						
You are satisfied with Nan people						
You are satisfied with the pollution level						
You are satisfied with your accommodation						
You are satisfied with the restaurants you went						
You are satisfied with the shops and merchants						
You are satisfied with Nan's transportation						
You are satisfied with the quality of Nan's tourism human resources						
You feel that Nan's services are aimed at protecting the environment						
There are sufficient human resources in the tourist attractions						
There are sufficient human resources in the hotel						
Your traveled to Nan without any inconvenience						
There is sufficient transportation in Nan						
You were fascinated by Nan's natural resources						
You were fascinated by Nan's cultural resources						
You feel that Nan's attractions are unique and new						
You have had clean food						

Satisfaction / Areas of Improvement	Rate your experience in Nan									
	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know				
Local food is easy to find										
You feel that Nan's attractions are developing in a controlled manner										
You feel that Nan is not being deteriorated										
You have not been chased by sellers										
You have not been cheated by sellers										
There was no garbage on the streets										
You were able to find a lot of information on Nan's services and places on the Internet										
Goods and services are inexpensive										
Nan has good infrastructure e.g. public transport, water, sewerage, street signs, waste management										
You feel that Nan people are kind and welcoming										
The tourist information center was informative										
Many shops accept credit cards										
Public toilets are easy to find										
You would like to return to Nan										
You would like to recommend Nan to your friends										
How would you rate your satisfaction in Nan (please circle one number, out of 1-10, 10 being the highest)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Overall, you are impressed with Nan because:										
Overall, you are <u>unimpressed</u> with Nan because:										