

Sustainable Tourism Development : Challenges for the Active Beach Tourism Cluster, Thailand

การพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวอย่างยั่งยืน : ความท้าทายสำหรับคลัสเตอร์ท่องเที่ยว Active Beach ประเทศไทย

Praedau Foopanichpruk*

แพรดาว ฟุพานิชย์พฤษ์

University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce

มหาวิทยาลัยหอการค้าไทย

Pairote Pathranarakul

ไพโรจน์ ภัทรนรากุล

National Institute of Development Administration

สถาบันบัณฑิตพัฒนบริหารศาสตร์

*praedau@hotmail.com

Abstract

The main objective of this paper is to evaluate the past performance and the perspective progress of policy implementation under the National Tourism Development Plan (2012–2016) focusing on active beach tourism cluster in Thailand. This tourism development plan aims to promote and develop a tourism sector to be an incoming generating source, distribute social and environmental benefits in a balanced and sustainable manner. The researchers employed the qualitative research method by taking documentary reviews, performing in-depth interviews with key policy stakeholders, conducting participant and non-participant observations.

The study results were found that the benefits and income distribution from tourism development to local people remain low. Moreover, tourism activities lead to social changes in the communities, especially in the way of life and traditional culture of the local people, as well as deteriorates natural resources and the environment. The participation of local communities and the private sector in tourism development and management is relatively low. These are the future challenges for active beach and specific policies measures need to be addressed in order to achieve sustainable tourism development.

Keywords : tourism policy, sustainable tourism development, active beach

บทคัดย่อ

บทความนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อประเมินผลการดำเนินงานที่ผ่านมาและแนวโน้มความก้าวหน้าของการดำเนินนโยบายท่องเที่ยวตามแผนพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวแห่งชาติ พ.ศ. 2555–2559 ของคลัสเตอร์ท่องเที่ยว Active Beach ซึ่งแผนพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวแห่งชาติ พ.ศ. 2555–2559 มีเป้าหมายคือการส่งเสริมและพัฒนาภาคการท่องเที่ยวให้เป็นแหล่งสร้างและกระจายรายได้อย่างสมดุลและยั่งยืน การศึกษาครั้งนี้ใช้วิธีการวิจัยเชิงคุณภาพ ด้วยการศึกษาเอกสารที่เกี่ยวข้อง การสัมภาษณ์เชิงลึกผู้มีส่วนได้ส่วนเสียในนโยบายท่องเที่ยว และการสำรวจแบบมีส่วนร่วมและไม่มีส่วนร่วม

การศึกษาพบว่า การกระจายรายได้และผลประโยชน์จากการท่องเที่ยวสู่คนในชุมชนท้องถิ่นยังคงน้อย กิจกรรมการท่องเที่ยวได้เปลี่ยนแปลงวิถีชีวิตและวัฒนธรรมของคนในชุมชนท้องถิ่น การท่องเที่ยวทำลายทรัพยากรธรรมชาติและสิ่งแวดล้อม และการมีส่วนร่วมในการพัฒนาและจัดการการท่องเที่ยวของคนในชุมชนท้องถิ่นและภาคเอกชนยังคงน้อย ซึ่งข้อค้นพบดังกล่าวเป็นความท้าทายของผู้ที่เกี่ยวข้องในการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวของคลัสเตอร์ท่องเที่ยว Active Beach สู่ความยั่งยืน

คำสำคัญ : นโยบายท่องเที่ยว การพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวอย่างยั่งยืน active beach

Introduction

There has been an increasing concern regionally and globally on sustainable tourism, ecotourism, and creative tourism which focuses on environmental conservation and community-based tourism that emphasizes community participation.

Thailand is Southeast Asia's leading country with great potential for sustainable tourism. The tourism industry sector is a major driver of the Thai economy. In the initial stage of Thailand's tourism, the government set a priority to boost the economy by using the concepts of marketing and advertising in order to attract tourists (Phayakvichien, 2006; Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2011). According to the tourist statistics of the Department of Tourism (2018) in 2005–2016, it was found that the number of international tourists traveling to Thailand increased gradually by 10.33% annually, from 11,516,936 people in 2005 to 32,529,588 people in 2016 and the tourism revenue increased gradually by 15.33% annually, from 367,380.36 million baht in 2005 to 1,633,154.68 million baht in 2016. Though tourism generated a large amount of money, it brought about the degradation of natural resources, and the degradation of the environment and tourist attractions. Regarding the above impacts, the government began promoting sustainable tourism development.

The Ministry of Tourism and Sports analyzed the situation and environment of Thailand's tourism and has launched the National Tourism Development Plan (2012–2016) in 2011. The goal to drive the strategies in the National Tourism Development Plan (2012–2016) is to develop a tourism sector to be an income-generating source with inclusive and sustainable distribution for society.

To achieve the goals of the National Tourism Development Plan (2012–2016), an evaluation of the past performance and the prospective progress is essential. It is expected that the study results could provide a knowledge base with policy recommendations for the government for ensuring sustainable tourism for the active beach tourism cluster.

Research Objective

The objective of this paper is to evaluate the performance and the prospective progress of policy implementation under the National Tourism Development Plan (2012–2016) focuses on the active beach tourism cluster, Thailand in the following issues : economic impacts, social and cultural impacts, natural resources and environmental impacts, participation and performance of the private sector, and participation of local communities and civil societies.

Literature Review

Sustainable Development Concepts and Sustainable Tourism

United Nations Environment Programme and World Tourism Organization (2005) defines sustainable development which is given in the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (1987) as “*Sustainable development is a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*”. Sustainable development is based on two principles that are 1) the concept of needs of all people, especially for the poor, to have a better life and 2) the concept of limited resources used to create maximum benefits. Sustainable development has three salient components, namely, economic, social, cultural, and natural resources and environment. These three components need to be fostered and developed in a systematic way.

For tourism, the World Tourism Organization (2004) proposes that sustainable tourism development and management apply to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and the various niche tourism segments. Principles of sustainability refer to the environmental, economic, social, and 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 :

Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes, and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity.

1. Respect the social and cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their buildings and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance.

2. Ensure viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation.

Essentially, sustainable tourism development requires the participation of all relevant stakeholders. Community participation is a vital component in sustainable tourism development (Tosun, 2000; Lee, 2013). Community participation incubates and strengthens community-based tourism development (Aref et al., 2010). Lack of local community participation is an obstacle to the success in implementing sustainable tourism policy (Dodds & Butler, 2010). Public involvement in tourism planning and management is an important factor which leads to the success of the tourism policy implementation (Kennett-Hensel et al., 2010). Simmons (1994) argues that local people in a community can actively participate in tourism management by offering products and culture to tourists. For the World Tourism Organization (2004), community participation is one of the key indicators of sustainable tourism development.

Participation and collaboration with the private sector is another important factor in sustainable tourism development (Dwyer et al., 2009; Dodds & Butler, 2010; Devine & Devine, 2011). In the view of Waligo et al. (2013), collaboration is a strategy that leads the performance to succeed. The World Tourism Organization (2004) also determines private sector participation as an indicator of sustainable tourism development. Furthermore, it identifies that the transactions of the private sector should comply with environmentally-friendly standards.

Thus, encouraging participation and raising public awareness is essential for achieving sustainable tourism development. (Tosun, 2000; Dwyer et al., 2009; Aref et al., 2010; Dodds & Butler, 2010; Sebele, 2010; Lee, 2013; Waligo et al., 2013). Measuring the participation level, the International Association for Public Participation (2014) has developed a public participation spectrum which has five consecutive degrees of participation i.e. the higher the degree of public participation the higher the effect from the public, and in the same manner as that of the strength of community. The public participation spectrum can be

ranged from the lowest degree of public participation to the highest degree of public participation as follows : 1) informing 2) consultation 3) involvement 4) collaboration and 5) empowerment. For tourism development, Aref et al. (2010) propose six types of community participation in tourism development ranging from non-participation level to full participation level which are 1) manipulation 2) informing 3) consultation 4) interaction 5) partnership, and 6) empowerment.

The other essential variable is the sense of community (DeNeui, 2003; Aref et al., 2010; Aref, 2011). A sense of community is a feeling of belonging (Bowen et al., 2003; Buckner, 1988). The feeling of belonging to the community entails interaction with other members of the community (Buckner, 1988). Sense of community is the feeling of obligation and commitment of an individual towards other members in the community, which develops over time through an understanding of collective values, beliefs, and interests among community members (Bowen et al., 2011). Developing a sense of community contributes to community capacity building by enabling people to feel connected and motivated to live in harmony and work together towards common community goals (Aref et al., 2010). The lack of a sense of community has been reported as one of the reasons why people do not participate in development activities (DeNeui, 2003).

The Development of Tourism and Tourism Policy in Thailand

Tourism development, at first, was included in the 4th National Economic and Social Development Plan 1977–1981. The government emphasized tourism because it ranked third in revenue for Thailand after natural rubber and rice. Moreover, tourism also reduced the burden on the trade deficit. It can be deemed that the government gave priority to the economic aspect, supporting publicity, expanding markets, and attractin tourists to come. Without any concern for the capacity of tourist attractions, it also stimulated private sector investment in order to generate tourism revenue and add value to the economy of the country (Phayakvichien, 2006; Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2011).

Being a part of the national economic and social development, even though tourism generated a large amount of money and raised the average national income higher, it brought the degradation of natural resources, damage to the environment, and it widened the gap between the rich and the poor. Later on, the government began to focus on the impacts of tourism and the plan to develop ecotourism or sustainable tourism appeared in the 8th National Economic and Social Development Plan 1997–2001 (Phayakvichien, 2006).

The Ministry of Tourism and Sports analyzed the situation and environment of Thailand's tourism and found that tourist attractions had deteriorated due to the expansion of tourism that focused only on the number of tourists and income while tourist attractions were not able to accommodate the tourist inflow. The Council of Ministers approved the issue of tourism to be placed on the national agenda on 17th April 2009 and the Ministry of Tourism and Sports has launched the National Tourism Development Plan 2012–2016 in 2011 to use as main plan to develop tourism (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2015). The purpose of the plan is to bring about recovery and encourage tourism, distribute income, increase competitiveness, develop the quality of tourism together with sustainable development in accordance with the 11th National Economic and Social Development Plan 2012–2016. Moreover, the National Tourism Development Plan 2012–2016 regards the importance of all stakeholders' participation in tourism development covering from the public sector, private sector, and local community.

Tourism development under the National Tourism Development Plan (2012–2016) has adopted the concept of strategic management for provincial clusters which is the integrated administration that groups any provinces in a similar relationship to be classified as a provincial cluster. A tourism cluster is a homogenous group of provinces within a similar geographical area, shared local culture, and potential tourist attractions (Cholpraves, 2014). The grouping of a provincial tourism clusters is useful in managing each group. It helps create the long-term direction and integrated development framework uses resources systematically and solves facing problems across provincial boundaries more effectively. The Ministry of Tourism and Sports brought this concept from the research and book titled "The Strategy-Focused Organization" written by Kaplan & Norton (1996). The authors explain the importance of strategy and how to apply it to management and operation in order to avoid a failure of administration. Organizational fragmentation structure in which each entity has its procedure and reports only to its supervisor may lead to problems of converting strategies into practice and suffer from a lack of a systematic link.

Tourism Context of the Active Beach Tourism Cluster

Active beach tourism cluster is one of eight tourism clusters in the National Tourism Development Plan 2012–2016. The active beach tourism cluster consists of four coastal provinces in the eastern region of Thailand, namely, Chonburi, Rayong, Chanthaburi, and Trat. The provinces in the active beach tourism cluster are located near Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand, and not far from Suvarnabhumi International Airport. It is convenient for Thai tourists and foreigners traveling to these places in a short time.

Traveling to the provinces in the active beach tourism cluster is mainly done by land transportation wherewith Chonburi province is the gateway to the active beach tourism cluster.



Figure 1 Map of the Active Beach Tourism Cluster

Source: Adapted from the Northeast Province Cluster Office of Strategy Management

The active beach tourism cluster is an agricultural area with fruits and local products, and a fishing area with marine fishery resources. Since its areas share a border with Cambodia, therefore, it is a gateway linking trade, tourism, and investment to neighboring countries. In addition, this tourism cluster is also the industrial hub and center for export-oriented industries through marine transport at Laem Chabang. For tourism, it has plenty of natural resources including forests, waterfalls, white sands and islands, historical areas, and man-made tourist attractions. Due to the abundance of natural resources, tourism plays a significant role in boosting the economy of the eastern region and the country as well.

Tourism in the active beach tourism cluster is outstanding for seas, beaches, and islands which associates with the name of its cluster that was given to it by the Ministry of Tourism and Sports. Its name represents the potential to attract and reflect the tourism of the cluster. Cholpraves (2014), Director of the International Tourism Cooperation, Department of Tourism, revealed that the name “Active Beach” refers to the lively and colorful beaches with fun tourist activities”.

Analyzing the tourism revenue from the four-year provincial development plan 2014–2017 of the provinces in the active beach tourism cluster, revealed that Chonburi province has the highest tourism potential of the cluster. There is Pattaya which creates a large income and it has been a world-renowned tourist city for more than 30 years (Rattanapani, 2014). Apart from Pattaya, there are Larn, Krok, and Sak islands serving as natural tourist resources, active nightlife, and man-made tourist attractions. For Trat province, there are Chang, Kood and Mak islands that have become well-known ecotourism spots for both Thai and foreign tourists. For Rayong province, there is the most famous tourist attraction of the province, Samed Island. For Chanthaburi province, there are Chao Lao and Laem Sadet beaches as well as Kung Krabaen bay which are well-known among Thai tourists.

Research Methodology

The researchers employed a qualitative research method by studying the National Tourism Development Plan 2012–2016, reviewing documents from reliable sources, conducting in-depth interviews, and taking participation and non-participation observations to explore the tourism context and tourism development. Four study areas were selected comprising four provinces of the active beach tourism cluster : 1) Pattaya in Chonburi province; 2) Samed Island in Rayong province; 3) Chao Lao beach, Laem Sadet beach, and Kung Krabaen bay in Chanthaburi province; and 4) Chang Island in Trat province. The data collection process started in March and ended in November 2014.

For the in-depth interviews, the researchers selected particular key informants who have significant roles in driving the successful operation of the National Tourism Development Plan 2012–2016. For the policy implementation, it is associated with organizations ranging from macro-level policymakers to local level authorities that acknowledge policy and convert the policy to practice. The primary key informants, therefore, are administrative officers or senior officers in the organizations along the line of policy conveyance from the macro to local level organizations, including the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, the Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports, the Provincial Governor's Offices, and the Local Administrative Organizations which is responsible for tourist attractions. In addition, the researchers also interviewed senior officers in other related organizations involved in promoting and developing tourism. Those organizations are the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), the Designed Areas for Sustainable Tourism Administration (DASTA), the National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation Department as well as representatives from the private sector and local communities.

The research tool used in this study is a semi-structured in-depth interview questionnaire consisting of open-ended questions which cover the objectives of the research. The questions are constructed specifically to ask the role of the person and are consistent with the roles and responsibilities of the interviewees.

Past Performance and Prospective Progress of the Active Beach Tourism Cluster

Economic Impacts

The tourism development policy of the active beach tourism cluster aims to promote tourism by concentrating primarily on the economic aspect as tourism is a leading industry that generates revenue for the country. Increasing revenue and tourist numbers are the key performance indicators for measuring the success of the tourism development strategy that every province in the active beach tourism cluster needs to recognize importance. Though the tourism sector has induced investment and has brought prosperity to the areas through the development of infrastructure and public facilities, only little benefits and income from tourism reach the local people. Most of them are merely employees of the enterprises relating to tourism or run their small businesses on the beaches such as cooked food vendors, costume vendors, masseurs, tattoo artists, or body painters. Very few of them participate in tourist activities, including the presentation of value-added products produced from the communities' capital.

Social and Cultural Impacts

Tourism causes changes in the people's way of life and traditional culture of the local communities. Formerly, before the arrival of the current tourism popularity, tourism was run by local people. They constructed bungalows and guest houses for tourists and served them with their agricultural products and fresh seafood from their fishery resource. So it was clear that the benefits from tourism activities in the past period truly came to the communities. When the communities became well-known places as tourist attractions, new emerging hotels, resorts, and guest houses were constructed to cope with the increasing tourists' influx, including restaurants, food shops and stalls, and enterprises relating to tourism. Local people who had run their small enterprises could not compete with wealthy investors or businessmen from outside the area. Finally, they had to sell their lands to investors. The former community-based tourism owned by local people, therefore, turned to be modern tourism enterprises managed by businessmen. The local people had to immigrate to other places, abandoning their ways of life and cultures. In this vein, the benefits from tourism hardly reach the local people. Moreover, tourism also dilutes some traditions – Buddhist

temples that used to be the center of communities have become less important because local people are used to joining the activities of welcoming tourists. Pattaya, which has been popular for its tourist attractions for quite a long time, longer than other place, has completely changed into a cosmopolitan city with almost no the local cultures and ways of life remaining from the previous period.

Most areas in the active beach tourism cluster are quite serene and safe for all tourists. Only a few crimes were committed like the snatch and run thefts, petty thefts, and robberies from resorts, minimarts convenience stores and some thefts of tourists' belongings left on the shore while they were swimming nearby. An exception is in Pattaya – a well-known tourist city for over 30 years. Pattaya's tourism development at the beginning was growing fast without good planning and lacked proper management. It was ruined with more and more social problems. Nowadays various problems are quite difficult to solve, such as traffic congestion, dense population, crimes, snatch and run stealing and pickpocketing, gambling, prostitution, and drug addictions. Tourism in Pattaya creates materialistic prosperity and in the meantime, it brings along the wrong mindset to people like selfishness and the dominance of personal benefit without moral and ethical conscience. Some influence groups or interest groups doing benefit from poor quality and running illegal businesses.

Natural Resources and Environmental Impacts

Tourism has caused impacts on natural resources and the environment. The most alarming problems are waste, wastewater, traffic congestion, and air pollution, especially on the long weekends and high tourist season. Moreover, the construction of hotels, resorts and accommodation, food stores, and enterprises causes deforestation and sea reclamation. Corals were damaged by anchorage to facilitate tourist divers. In addition, tourism without awareness and responsibility of the natural resources and environment will result in further degradation as well.

Participation and Performance of the Private Sector

The private sector still has low participation in tourism development. From the analysis, the participation level ranges from the consultation level to the involvement level, according to the public participation classification of the International Association for Public Participation (2014), or at the level of consultation, based on the characteristics of community participation in tourism development by Aref et al. (2010). Representatives from the private sector participate in the meetings to prepare a plan and strategic issues for tourism development and attend the Provincial Tourism Development Committee

meetings. Though, the government sector usually acts as a supreme authority in planning, judgment, and executing tourism development projects. However, the private sector holds its activities concerned with public areas' development such as cleaning beaches and waste disposal.

For the environmentally-friendly operation, most of the members of the tourism association in the active beach tourism cluster are small and medium enterprises (SMEs) that have not yet prepared for the environmental standards and international standards like ISO9000, Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), or even the standard of the Green Leaf foundation – a high standard certification of Thailand, because the goal of the private enterprise is primarily profit-oriented. Thus the cooperation in environmentally-friendly operations, like waste segregation, wastewater treatment, is different from one to another. It depends on the awareness and the investment potential of the entrepreneur.

Participation of Local Communities and Civil Societies

The participation of the local communities and civil societies in tourism development and management is still poor. From the analysis, most of them are only at the consultation level, according to Aref (2010) and the classification of public participation of the International Association for Public Participation (2014). The communities have chances to propose their needs or opinions through the village forum or the public hearings in the local development planning process organized by the local administrative organizations. However, the strategic issue for tourism development is just a strategic issue that the communities give less importance than the development of public utilities, infrastructure, and quality of life.

Problems and Constraints

Problems and constraints in the implementation of tourism development under the National Tourism Development Plan 2012–2016 are found as follows :

1. The National Tourism Development Plan 2012–2016 is rarely applied to the strategic planning process. By not applying the National Tourism Development Plan into the strategic planning process for tourism development, the related organizations may not comprehend the direction and the essential content of the plan, especially the local administrative organizations which are directly in charge of the tourist attraction areas.

2. The operations among government organizations are not in unity. The integration of projects, coordination, and collaboration among organizations are still ineffective. Basically, the tourism development must follow the concept of integration among various organizations which have the Provincial Governor's Office and the Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports

as primary organizations. Even though the provincial administration allows the governor which is under the control of the Ministry of Interior who has the highest authority to administer within the province, the administration of the Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports, the representative of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports does not only work for the governor in accordance with the provincial administrative structure but also work directly for the Ministry of Tourism and Sports in accordance with the central administration. Therefore, the Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports must respond to both the provincial development strategy and the central development strategy of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports. In addition, in order to achieve the goal of sustainability, it all depends on the cooperation with various organizations which have to respond to both the provincial development strategy and the development strategy of their ministries.

3. The administrative structure of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports causes tourism development of the active beach tourism cluster to lack unity and is not consistent with the changes in circumstance. The Office of the Public Sector Development Commission has set up a new model for provincial administrations since 2008 and has separated provinces to be provincial clusters which are not consistent with the tourism cluster grouping as designed by the National Tourism Development Plan (2012-2016). Furthermore, such administrative structure causes structural problems which lead to the complexity of the implementation, the delays in the approval process, and budget disbursement.

4. Other main problems relating to tourism development include : rules and regulations of government organizations become a constraint on tourism development, personnel shortage in both quantity and quality, the officers of the Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports not having specialized skills in sustainable tourism development, and the problem of budget shortages which cause the organizations at both provincial and local levels to be unable to execute tourism development projects as they planned because the budgets have to be spent on urgent projects in other strategic issues such as the project for improving infrastructure, public utilities and the quality of life.

Challenges for Sustaining the Active Beach Tourism Cluster

From the performance, problems and constraints as mentioned above, there are challenges for developing sustainable tourism in the active beach tourism cluster as follows :

1. Educating the concepts of sustainable tourism to all involved stakeholders. Providing sustainable tourism training and information to personnel in government organizations, the private sector, local communities, and all stakeholders is the first challenge that the government must address to develop tourism and implement projects in the same direction.

In addition, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports should increase the dissemination and convey the essential content of the National Tourism Development Plan 2012–2016 to related organizations for understanding and applying to the strategic planning for tourism development.

2. Building collaboration among government organizations as well as the private sector. Since sustainable tourism development requires the integration and linking of all related projects and strategies at both national and local levels to achieve holistic sustainability. Project integration will reduce budget spending, the number of staff required, and project duplication. These will entail the use of resources to the maximum efficiency and effectiveness.

3. Reorganizing the administrative structure of grouping provinces of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports. The government should terminate the administrative structure of grouping provinces of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports initiated by the Office of the Public Sector Development Commission and reorganize the structure or appoint a committee to be consistent with the cluster grouping in accordance with the National Tourism Development Plan 2012–2016 for developing cooperation within the tourism cluster and have an aim of consistent development.

4. Encouraging the participation process of the local communities and private sector. This process begins from reviewing opinions or public hearings, strategy and project preparation, evaluation, and monitoring the implementation of the government organizations to be transparent. Increasing the role of the local administrative organization is a way to develop tourism and build the participation process of the local communities and the private sector. Since the local administrative organization takes care of tourist attractions and works closely with the local communities and the private sector in the area.

5. Improving government regulations to facilitate tourism development. Regulations relating to facilitating tourism development should be improved to be flexible, create a security system for tourists, and provide equality to those elders and disabled affected. In addition, if there is any project that cannot be implemented because of conflict or regulation constraints, the government should conduct a feasibility study and analyze the advantages and disadvantages of the project in all aspects, including economic, society and culture, and natural resources and the environment from the involvement of all stakeholders.

6. Providing balanced sustainable tourism development in all three aspects : economic, social and cultural, and natural resources and environment.

- Challenges for policy implementation in the economical aspect. The implementation should aim to distribute benefits and income to local people thoroughly. It should increase and develop tourism activities so that the tourists stay longer and spend more money at tourist attractions. It should develop the potential of local people in tourism careers and local wisdom and link value-added products from the local communities to tourism. In addition, it should allow local people to participate in tourist activities in order to create jobs and income.

- Challenges for policy implementation in the social and cultural aspect. The implementation should allow local people to be involved in tourism activities, take pride in Thainess, conserve traditions and culture along with presenting its identity, local traditions and culture, and the Thainess to tourists. Furthermore, it should increase security measures, control and organize tourism areas, and allow local people to work as surveillance network agents to notify the causes and problems arising from tourism to tourist police or related organizations in order to reduce social problems.

- Challenges for policy implementation in the natural resources and environmental aspect. The implementation should regard the importance of conserving the natural resources and environment, cultivating a sense of local community, participation of local people in the development and management of tourism. This will engender pride and the willingness to cherish the tourist attractions, encourage a sense of belonging to the communities, and a wish to protect proprietary resources. Additionally, it should raise awareness and promote the operation of environmentally-friendly to the entrepreneurs.

In this researchers' view, the urgent challenges for the Active Beach Tourism Cluster that the government sector must take immediate action include : organizing tourist attractions and controlling zoning areas to keep the degraded areas not to spread out, controlling the growth of tourism not to grow too fast more than the local communities can handle and be able to involve in development and management. However, it includes challenges that the enforcement of relevant laws and regulations should be strict and seriously punish offenders.

Conclusion

In the Active Beach Tourism Cluster, the tourism development policy continues to promote and give priority to tourism by concentrating primarily on the economic aspect as tourism is an industry that generates revenue for the country. However, the development of tourist activities that create value-added and the distribution of income to the local

communities remain low. Tourism has caused a change of lifestyle and culture of local people and consequently, its traditional culture is seen to fade. Tourism still brings along social problems and causes the destruction of natural resources and the environment.

The government should put more emphasis on benefits and income distribution by distributing benefits and income from tourism to local people thoroughly together with tourism development implementation in social and cultural attributes, and the natural resources and environmental aspects.

Promoting the participation of the local communities and the private sector in tourism development and management is another issue which the government needs to push to make it happen. Negative impacts from tourism on tourist attractions should be controlled at an acceptable level, regulations relating to facilitating tourism development should be improved as well as the enforcement of relevant laws and regulations should be strict and seriously punish offenders.

Most of all, it should cultivate the sense of community, pride and awareness in local people together with cultivating awareness and promoting an environmentally-friendly approach in entrepreneurs.

References

- Aref, F. (2011). Sense of Community and Participation for Tourism Development. *Life Science Journal*, 8(1), 20–25.
- Aref, F., Ma'rof, R. & Sarjit, S. G. (2010). Dimensions of Community Capacity Building : A Review of Its Implications in Tourism Development. *Journal of American Science*, 6(1), 172–180.
- Bowen, G. L., Mancini, J. A., Martin, J. A., Ware, W. B. & Nelson, J. P. (2003). Promoting the Adaptation of Military Families: An Empirical Test of A Community Practice Model. *Family Relations : An Interdisciplinary Journal of Applied Family Studies*, 52(1), 33–44.
- Buckner, J. C. (1988). The Development of an Instrument to Measure Neighbourhood Cohesion. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 16(9), 771–791.
- Cholpraves, W. (2014). **Thailand Tourism Cluster**. Bangkok : Department of Tourism.
- DeNeui, D. L. (2003). An Investigation of First-Year College Students' Psychological Sense of Community on Campus. *College Student Journal*, 37, 224–234.
- Department of Tourism. (2018). **Tourist Statistics**. Retrieved from https://www.mots.go.th/more_news.php?cid=411
- Devine, A. & Devine, F. (2011). Planning and Developing Tourism within A Public Sector Quagmire : Lessons from and for Small Countries. *Tourism Management*, 32(6), 1253–1261.

- Dodds, R. & Butler, R. (2010). Barriers to Implementing Sustainable Tourism Policy in Mass Tourism Destinations. *Tourismos : An International Multidisciplinary Journal of Tourism*, 5(1), 35–53.
- Dwyer, L., Edwards, D., Mistilis, N., Roman, C. & Scott, N. (2009). Destination and Enterprise Management for a Tourism Future. *Tourism Management*, 30, 63–74.
- International Association for Public Participation. (2014). **IAP2's Public Participation Spectrum**. Retrieved from <https://sustainingcommunity.wordpress.com/2017/02/14/spectrum-of-public-participation>
- Kaplan, R. S. & Norton, D. P. (1996). Using the Balanced Scorecard as a Strategic Management System. *Harvard Business Review*, 74, 75–85.
- Kennett–Hensel, P. A., Sneath, J. Z. & Hensel, P. J. (2010). Developing Sustainable Tourism : Managers' Assessment of Jamaica's Ten-year Master Plan. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 4(2), 143–155.
- Lee, T. H. (2013). Influence Analysis of Community Resident Support for Sustainable Tourism Development. *Tourism Management*, 34, 37–46.
- Ministry of Tourism and Sports. (2011). **The National Tourism Development Plan 2012–2016**. Retrieved from http://www.mots.go.th/ewt_dl_link.php?nid=4147
- Ministry of Tourism and Sports. (2015). **Thai Tourism Strategy 2015–2017**. Retrieved from http://www.mots.go.th/ewt_dl_link.php?nid=7114
- Northeast Province Cluster Office of Strategy Management. (n.d.). **The Classification of Provincial Cluster under the Integrated Strategic Administration of the Provincial Cluster**. Retrieved from <http://www.osmnortheast-c.moi.go.th/image/map18.jpg>
- Phayakvichien, P. (2006). Thailand's Tourism Development Past, Present and Future. *eTAT Journal*, 2, 1–16.
- Rattanapani, P. (2014). **Four Year Provincial Development Plan 2014– 017 in Chonburi**. Chonburi : Office of Pattaya City.
- Sebele, L. S. (2010). Community-based Tourism Ventures, Benefits and Challenges : Khama Rhino Sanctuary Trust, Central District, Botswana. *Tourism Management*, 31, 136–146.
- Simmons, D. G. (1994). Community Participation in Tourism Planning. *Tourism Management*, 15(2), 98–108.
- Tosun, C. (2000). Limits to Community Participation in the Tourism Development Process in Developing Countries. *Tourism Management*, 21(6), 613–633.
- United Nations Environment Programme and World Tourism Organization. (2005). **Making Tourism More Sustainable : A Guide for Policy Makers**. Retrieved from <http://www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/dtix0592xpa-tourismpolicyen.pdf>

Waligo, V. M., Clarke, J. & Hawkins, R. (2013). Implementing Sustainable Tourism : A Multi-Stakeholder Involvement Management Framework. *Tourism Management*, 36, 342–353.

World Commission on Environment and Development. (1987). **Our Common Future : World Commission on Environment and Development**. New York : Oxford University Press.

World Tourism Organization. (2004). **Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destination : A Guidebook**. Retrieved from <http://www.adriaticgreenet.org/icarefor/europe/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/Indicators-of-Sustainable-Development-for-Tourism-Destination-A-Guide-Book-by-UNWTO.pdf>