

Public Policy Formation for Tourism in a Natural World Heritage Site with Community Network Participation: A Case Study of Khao Yai National Park, Thailand

Oranoot Kosol^a, Somsak Amornsiriphong^b, ^{a,b}Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Mahidol University, Thailand, E-mail: nkorn469@gmail.com, somsak.amo@mahidol.ac.th

The objective of this research is to study the operation of local network participation and process of public policy formation for a Natural World Heritage Site. The target group for the research was ten of Khao Yai's National Park community organizations. The used research method is Participatory Action Research (PAR). Data was collected by methods; focus group discussion, in-depth interviews, and the A-I-C (Appreciation-Influence-Control) process. The data was then analyzed by induction analysis and through the processes of triangulation, the research maintains its reliability. The findings were as follows; (1) the local network participation is a collaboration of local volunteers within the community. Formation of local network derives from two approaches: the public initiative as a supporter and the natural process. (2) Public policy implementation through the announcement of Khao Yai becoming Khao Yai National Park as well as the announcement of Khao Yai National Park becoming a Natural World Heritage Site, which resulted in changes in various areas of the community including social and regulatory policy governing natural resources. In addition, the announcement will result in changes in both the economic and tourism sectors. (3) Public policy regarding tourism in Natural World Heritage Sites that are developed from within the community network proposed in a strategic plan for sustainable tourism growth which includes: 1) strategic plan concerning resources and environment, 2) strategic plan concerning education/law, 3) strategic plan concerning economic and tourism, 4) strategic plan concerning the network development for World Heritage Site.

Key words: *Public Policy, World Heritage Site, Tourism Management, Community Participation.*

Introduction

Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex is a Natural World Heritage Site in Thailand. In 2005 UNESCO described the area as a forest with an ecosystem that is fertile, consisting of forest, wildlife and various biodiversity. Dong Phayayen is one of the protected areas of Khao Yai National Park, Thap Lan, Pang Sida, Ta Phraya National Parks, and Dong Yai Wildlife Sanctuary. According to tourism statistics, there is a high concentration in usage of services, especially in Khao Yai National Park (National Park Innovation Institute, 2014). Additionally, the management of Khao Yai National Park is under the supervision of the public sector which manages Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex; however, it did not offer details relating to awareness of building or appreciation for the Natural World Heritage Site. These sites are recognized for their natural values and heritages respectively and the places described on the list are judged to be internationally significant and hold outstanding value to humanity.

A key issue linked to the success in terms of utilizing the World Heritage Site status effectively in these areas is the development of local support and involvement, (Heinen & Shrivastava, 2009) which has increasingly been emphasized as crucial for obtaining sustainable development in a protected area (Lask & Herold, 2005). Buildings on natural heritage, and special places to form a sustainable future, often require a rural community commitment and display considerable innovation in developing tourism products and restructuring the local economy (Ashworth, Graham, & Tunbridge, 2007). Unfortunately, there were no specific details regarding actions that could be harmful to the World Heritage Site provided. In addition, it did not provide a distinct preventive measure for the implementation (Asawakanchanakij, 2010). Thus, if Khao Yai National Park lacks proper management, which may affect the environment, it could lead to the deterioration of the existing natural resources and unabated commercial tourism which lacks proper understanding of the value of the area and the need for preservation and conservation. If ignored, it could result in the destruction of the natural world heritage of Dong Phayayen-Khao Yai Forest Complex.

The creation of policy through participation of the general population is promoting a good quality of life for the people and ensures development is also environmentally friendly. Thus, all sectors will play roles and take responsibilities together to preserve the natural and environmental resources of the country (Natural Resources and Environmental Planning Policy, 2012). This is especially with the formation of public policy concerning tourism, which should take into consideration sustainable tourism. Sustainability has become the goal of the majority of policies relating to tourism (Weaver, 2006; Moscardo, 2008; Lane, 2009;

Bramwell, 2015; Jermsittiparsert, Joemsittiprasert, & Phonwattana, 2019). This means that the local community should benefit from tourism. Sustainable tourism management should prioritize local cultural engagement and the use of local knowledge through stakeholders, maintaining the identity and cooperation of the community (Lane, 2009; Bramwell & Lane, 2014). Enhanced conservation of natural resources naturally creates increased satisfaction for the tourists through improved quality of the experience.

The policy formation concerning the Natural World Heritage Site also corresponds to the criteria for sustainable management in the World Heritage Site based on the World Heritage Convention (UNESCO, 2012). It uses sustainable tourism principles as well as development planning in regards to tourism and activity of visitors, related to world heritage, through participation that will not cause harm to the environment. Additionally, it also promotes prevention and conservation through the use and understanding of community culture and values. Well managed tourism should create sustainability for the economy and the society to ensure the most concrete benefits for local stakeholders, the environment and tourists alike. Therefore, the formation of the public policy concerning tourism in the Natural World Heritage Site through the people participation is an approach to develop tourism through the participation of people in the community (Pastras & Bramwell, 2013). This will help in seeking an appropriate approach to the management of tourism. Thus, the local community will be able to benefit from the natural resources, yet, still able to maintain the quality of the environment provided by sustainable tourism management, thereby promoting ongoing cooperation and shared benefit.

Literature Review

The policy formulation and implementation, including public services, supplying public goods, legislation for country development, and planning for economic and social development are the direct duty of the government. Policy formation needs to take into consideration the participation of the people. The participation of the public sector is significant in policy formulation because the goods and correct processes will lead to efficient and sufficient operation. This study is the policy determination of Anderson (1994) that is developed from policy formation by having public problems as the basic structure. It uses imagination in public problem solving leading to creativity by making new alternatives available for mutually beneficial use.

A successful solution realizes alternatives through political implementation. This process involves mutual learning from the actual operation. So, in the public policy formulation process, it is characterized as a deliberative process of people in the community and the local affairs, which is a dynamic learning process in public area more than defining policy condition by policy analysts or the government. This concept is the brainstorming of the people to drive

the government to declare and bring the policy to implementation for overall social benefits. Dunn (2012) referred to this policy process stating it needs a suitable process and regulation to be able to acquire trusted information. This should be used as a database for decision making and the selection of the most suitable approach for policy formation. The increasing importance of community participation in heritage site planning is well recognized (Aas et al., 2005) especially at World Heritage Sites, where local interests and international authorities are both involved in preservation and development.

This is in a large part, according to Benur and Bramwell (2015), down to the growing interest of sustainability in tourism witnessed over the years. The above definitions are consistent with current theoretical thinking on the need to balance development and sustainability in all three sustainability dimensions, economic, environmental and socio-cultural (Ruhanen, Weiler, Moyle, & McLennan, 2015). Recognizing the positive aspect towards sustainability in tourism, Cohen (2012) suggests that it has become a practical concept that is deemed beneficial to the progress of tourism development, with Mason, P. and Leberman, S. (2000) explaining that the concept of sustainable planning for tourism has continued to change over the last decade.

For sustainable tourism development, Aronsson (2000) summarized that it must consist of the main characters as follows; 1) tourism development may occur if it does not destroy the environment, and is valid in eco issues, 2) it mostly consists of development in a small frame by the basis from the local communities, 3) it has an obvious point to describe that the people who get the benefits from the tourism must not exploit other local people, and 4) it emphasizes the importance of cultural sustainability by keeping the identity. Even though, there are complex definitions of sustainable tourism management it basically promotes tourism since the act of safeguarding natural resources in itself results in a higher satisfaction for tourists. It also includes three main focus areas for inclusion in planning and tourism management strategy; 1) environmental factors, 2) economic factors, 3) social equality factors in tourism management for sustainability (Swarbrooke, 1999). To this end, it is reasonable to think that the sustainable approach to tourism planning has become widely accepted.

Tourism management by the community is the community development mechanism (Sinn Slobol, 2001) which directs the proper research issue and believes that participatory action research is the answer to make results achievable. Moreover, the importance of sustainable development in tourism has been highlighted further with the UNWTO (2015c) designating 2017 the international year of sustainable tourism for development. Finally, it is reasonable to think that the sustainable approach to tourism planning has become widely accepted. Public sector networks are the assembly of the public sector in an area, especially the rural area. It is an assembly of individuals, groups of people and networks by using communal culture and participating processes with other sections and technological systems as support. It occurs from a necessity for participation to solve problems and provide mutual learning and transfer of

experience naturally. It also occurs from promotion of government agencies or other organizations that want to empower communities with the potential to self-develop due to the determined objectives or achievements.

Research Methodology

The target area for this research are ten groups and purposeful sampling methods from the volunteers who are members of the Local Network Organization and live in the area of Khao Yai National Park. The research seeks for the members of the network to collaborate in the research process from the start to the end of the process. The research members will become partners in the research through fieldwork and collaboration with the local community organization showing evidence of their strengths, and operation over a long period, highlighting different related perspectives that cover the research topics about how public policy relates to tourism in the Natural World Heritage Site. The research uses the Participatory Action Research (PAR) method, and the data collection is completed through the observation, in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, an Appreciation-Influence-Control (AIC) process, Induction analysis, as well as a Dialectic method.

The research consists of the participation of people in all steps starting from the problem analysis, which is the selection of the method for problem-solving that correlates with the philosophy of Participatory Action Research (PAR). Peter Reason (2008) stated that the aim of Participatory Action Research is to generate knowledge from operations with a broader target, which will result in an in-depth understanding of the actions of the human. Thus, this will result in the liberation of freedom, progress, and the creation of new knowledge for future guidelines. Therefore, the research of the Participatory Action Research will assist the people to begin learning and generating new knowledge from participation through every operational process. This will generate new knowledge that can apply to real-life situations and promotes people to learn and develop their conscious minds. Their feelings will be liberating, and they will begin to learn how to manage their problems effectively which is a part of the method of human resource development. Furthermore, it also helps to strengthen the local community to acquire a higher potential as they begin to understand and possess an increased capacity to solve their own problems. All this will result in the community to be able to become self-sufficient which leads to sustainable development.

Research Results

The research found that management of natural and environmental resources for the resources conservation and preservation to maintain its richness, understanding in law and related regulations, creating the regulation within the local community, and the development of tourism in the Natural World Heritage Site should be derived from the participation process of

the community. This should be based on the existing resources for sustainable development. Additionally, the development of the community organization network will help to strengthen the network and help with the target achievement of the specific policy. The strategic plan should be formatted as follows:

1. Strategic plan concerning resources and environment aspects which consist of the strategic plan in restoration and conservation of the natural resources, the creation of the network for the natural resource's conservation, the creation of the renewable resources to reduce the intrusion and deforestation as well as the management of the environment in the area surrounding the park.

2. Strategic plan concerning education, regulation/law that consist of a focus towards building knowledge and understanding in related law and regulation, create consciousness in natural preservation for youth and create agreement in the management of the Natural World Heritage Site through a participation process.

3. Strategic plan concerning economic and tourism development aspects consist of actions related to tourist attraction management for the Natural World Heritage Site for sustainable learning, the development for the participatory tourism activity, the development of tourism quality of the resource in a creative manner, and the creation for the value added for the tourism in the Natural World Heritage Site.

4. Strategic plan concerning the network development for the area surrounding the Natural World Heritage Site uses tactics to promote the development of a co-vision for the network, knowledge sharing, and the network formation to strengthen the network participation.

Discussion

The research is participatory action research to achieve the knowledge base for the change in society. The research aims to develop stakeholders so they can act accordingly regarding the needs of the community. The participatory action research is a tactic that reflects the journey of development with the changes from the current situation to the possibilities, both as an individual and in the society. The main significant changes are the research method that uses the Collaborative Approach between stakeholders. Nithiya Ngenprasertsri (2001) considers, thus the participatory action research will consist of the participation from the researcher, as the status of the researcher and participants are equal in the intellection and operation. The participation method is one of the solutions to promote the strength of the local community and the main component of the local community that will affect sustainable development (Cole, S., 2014). In addition, this participatory action research is one of the tools in creating the process for learning in the area. It will create the process of change for society by building awareness in searching for an independent approach to solve problems using people participation principles.

The research will embrace the needs and problems of the people. Thus, the operation in the form of the community organization will help create power in the responsibility together, which will take into consideration the capability of the people. The process will also help the people to play a role as a decision maker for their needs. It will promote the local power in the resource management as well as decision-making and control over different activities, which will benefit way of life, economic development, and education as well as the society. Thus, the making of the participation process will result in the people take pride in their abilities, which results in the community helping one another. The process will also help the community to solve problems and further develop into a strong and sustainable community.

Part 1: The result of the operation from the People Participation Network found that the People Network was the result of the collaboration of the local organization. Khao Yai National Park was at the center of coordinating community in the form of a network. The local network formation derived from two approaches which are from the public sector and was a pioneer and major support in the natural formation process.

The approaches in the network development, from the research, found that a successful network would result in the suitability from the factors: 1) shared vision of network members, 2) exchange in learning, 3) the participants to enhance the power of the network, 4) the participation with other networks. This corresponds to Pisit Chansa-no (2006) which stated the development of public policy for network and community organizations through the building of a body of knowledge about the usability of benefits from resources. The study also focuses on the management system of the community resources, which comprised of the movement by locals to create the resource management system. This will then create rules and regulations that help the local's access and benefit from the resources. The process will be through knowledge sharing to seek to find the solution of problems together. This will drive forward the Local Administration Organization and other related governmental sectors to specify into the plan the management of resources for a sustainable benefit in the community.

After it is established as a world heritage site, participation of the local people is needs to continue (Day, J.C., Wren, L. & Vohland K., 2012). This also corresponds to Phra Maha Suthith Apakaro (2004) who stated that the network creates the learning and continuous development process. It creates the learning process, and the process will help the personnel and organization to adjust and seek for new knowledge, a new method and a new ally, which results in an increase in the effectiveness in several aspects of work. It will help in increasing the opportunity in problem-solving as the coordination and collaboration with related partners will increase the chance of problem-solving because it consists of brainstorming with different sectors, and it also creates self-sufficiency. Thus, when the network has a strong work operation and ability to solve problems, the network and network members will be able to depend on themselves. This will result in local resource management for the Thai society; a main local

network created by the people that foresee the importance in problem-solving at the local level especially in regard to resource management. This includes land, water, forests and rivers. Thus, the network for local resource management has the power to drive public policy formation. In addition, it could also result in the power or hidden power from the integration of the organization and network. The power of negotiation will not occur without the integration of different organizations.

Part 2: The study for the process in the policy formation concerning the tourism in the Natural World Heritage Site found that the operation public policy announcement of the Khao Yai National Park as the first national park and a Natural World Heritage Site also affects the local community in several aspects as follows:

Issue 1: Regarding the social aspect, regulation, and law, it found that the announcement of public policy by dividing the natural resources area and the area for the local community creates overlapping issues in the National Park as well as the community. This affects the farmlands of the villagers who live in the preserved area. After the announcement of the National Park, the government sector also specified rules, regulations, and laws, which resulted in the adjustment of the way of life for people in the community. This is corresponding to Noppakun Thanaruengsakulthai (2007) study in the participation of the people in creating the network. He said that the factors that affect the success and appropriate participation approach is the law and consciousness. In regard to limitations, they will be mainly about the lack of awareness in the deterioration issue of the natural resources, the researcher sees that if the people still lack the understanding of the rules and regulations the success of the announcement of the policy will be difficult.

Issue 2: Regarding natural and environmental resources, it found that the announcement of the establishment of Khao Yai as a National Park affects the way that the local community benefits from the resources. Additionally, the forest intrusion also results from several factors such as the forest smuggling of Siamese rosewood for trade, the area intrusion, as the need to use the land for residential and farming for people in the area. It also has an intrusion of the outside investors for business in tourism sectors. This is especially true after the announcement as a World Heritage Site as the popularity of the area increased to tourists. However, understanding in eco-tourism is important and helps in the finding of a balance between environmental preservation and economic development through the promotion of relationships among local populations, tourism and natural areas (Weaver & Lawton, 2007). According to the study by Sangsan Phumistan and company (2015), she found that the tourism management for the World Heritage Site should be operated under the cooperation of different sectors. It also comprises of the understanding and agreeance in the objective of the management of the area, which results in the most effective for tourism management to promote sustainable tourism in the world heritage site. It also will help reduce and control other threatening factors and

consequences of tourism in other aspects. Thus, related sectors should try to understand and specify the objectives in the management of the World Heritage Site for the acceptance of the integration management. The collaboration from all sectors will result in the success of the management of the site (Vincent & Thompson, 2002).

Issue 3: In regard to economic and tourism aspects, it found that Khao Yai National Park possesses several tourist attractions that attract and impress tourists. It has several unique attractions and sources of knowledge for the Natural World Heritage Site. This result in an increasing number of tourists every year and thus, result in the overall changes in the local economy. In addition, the occupation of the people has been previously shifting from farming to tourism service providers. Moreover, private business sectors surrounding the area of Khao Yai National park also began to develop a large number of tourist attractions and accommodations. This corresponds to Somchai Techaphrompan. (2002) who studied regarding the tourism management of the national park and found that the majority of tourist has a demand to experience tourist attraction. In regard to attractions, it means fertile forest, which the majority of tourists will know about the prominent point of the National Park. However, they will lack the understanding of the way to preserve natural resources, ecosystem, and environment of the national park. He also found that the local community needs to play a role in the management, cleanliness of the tourist attractions as well as the preservation and conservation of the natural resources, ecosystem, and environment.

From the study, it found that the changes in all three aspects correspond to the study of Sangsan Phumisatan, et al. (2015) which studied the consequences of tourism toward the Natural World Heritage Site. The research found that in regard to tourism management for the world heritage site should be operated under all sectors so everyone will have the same understanding concerning the goal in the management for the most efficient in tourism management. This will promote the sustainability of the world heritage site. It also reduces and controls threat factors and effects from tourism in several areas. Thus, the related sectors should coordinate with all parties to understand and specify the goal in the management of the world heritage site (Okazaki, 2008). This will result in the acceptance as well as the integration of the management that results from the cooperation of all parties and result in the success of the site management.

Part 3: The public policy concerning tourism for the Natural World Heritage Site at Khao Yai National Park developed from the People Participation Network is an approach in the development of sustainable tourism. The principle in the formation of policy and tourism plan by David L. Edgell, Sr, and company (2008) stated that the strategic and tourism plan should focus on the sustainable tourism as the main factor. This should be analyzed as well as taking into consideration resources and environment. It should also consider the society, culture, and community rights as well as long-term economic aspects (Newsome & Dowling, 2006). Thus, the creation of the strategic plan should analyze the internal and external environment and

should derive from the people participating and local stakeholders (Wiesmann et al., 2005). The private sectors also develops several accommodations which correspond to the study by Susanne Becken, Cassandra Wardle (2017) which studied the tourism plan of the Natural World Heritage Site for the evaluation of the Natural World Heritage Site Tourism Plan. She also combined it with issues that result in the consequences toward the economy for tourism within the protected area. This also related to sustainable tourism and found that tourism has grown considerably and the visitors to the World Heritage Site will continue to increase. Thus, there is a necessity in tourism management. From the analysis, it also shows that the World Heritage Site in the World Heritage Lists is endangered. The sites that are at risk from the removal of the World Heritage Status usually lack a tourism tactic or management plan.

Table 1: The tourism policy in Natural World Heritage Sites, Khao Yai National Park

Strategic plan concerning resources and environment	Strategic plan concerning education, regulation/law	Strategic plan concerning economic and tourism development	Strategic plan concerning the network development
tactics 1. Restoration and maintenance of natural resources. 2. Network formation for natural resources conservation. 3. Creation of the substitute resources to reduce the trespass and destruction of the environment. 4. Environmental management of the area of the national park.	tactics 1. Building of knowledge and understanding in law and related regulations. 2. Promotion of the consciousness for nature conservation for youth. 3. Agreement in the management of the Natural World Heritage Site through participation.	tactics 1. Development of the Natural World Heritage Site for a sustainable learning. 2. Development of the participated tourism activities. 3. Development of the tourism quality with creativity based on the resource principles. 4. Creation of the added value for the natural site.	Tactics 1. Development of shared vision of the network. 2. Learning exchange of the network. 3. Network formation for the participation to enhance power.

The policy concerning the Natural World Heritage Site in the area of Khao Yai National park is an approach to develop a sustainable travel system. This will help to respond to the trend of conservation of natural and environmental resources and help promote learning and the development of people and networking in the area. It will be completed through a participatory process to create a sense of belonging of the resources as well as enhance the ability in managing these resources. Thus, it will result in a sense of pride and help upgrade the

community way of life for sustainable development. This will be based on the principle and supervision management of the World Heritage Site combining with other resource components. Thus, the people and the local stakeholders should participate from the beginning, which begins at the basic evaluation and names preparation for the description (Jessica Brown and Terence Hay-Edie, 2012). In addition, community involvement in decision making may cause problems in achieving delivery, creating or aggravating internal conflicts and giving rise to unrealistic expectations (Simpson, 2008). Thus, Simpson (2008) introduced the concept of the Community Benefit Tourism Initiative that emphasized the transfer of benefits to local people in contrast to the traditional emphasis on participation in decision making. This also corresponds to Suwanno, Tongsanoer, Suwanno, and Phongchiewboon (2017) who studied the potential of ecological resources and ecotourism destination management. The Researchers found that the consistency of willingness of local community engagement in ventures is a vital key of sustainable tourism development in the long-term.

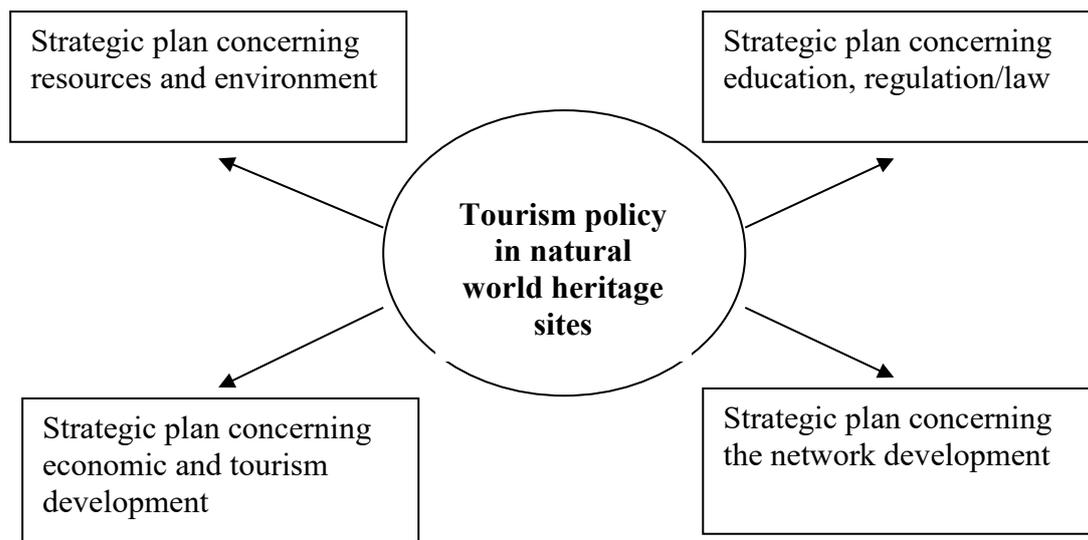
The research is the decentralization that focuses on the people participating in all process of the research. It starts from the problem analysis, selection of the method for problem solving and development, the method implementation, the evaluation, as well as the acceptance of consequences based on the problems and context of the community. This will correspond to the philosophy of Participatory Action Research: PAR. Reason, P., & Bradbury, H. (Eds.) (2008) stated that the aim of Participatory Action Research is to generate knowledge from operations with a broader target, which will result in an in-depth understanding of the actions of the human. Thus, this will result in the liberation of freedom, progress, and the creation of new knowledge for future guidelines. Therefore, the research of the Participatory Action Research will assist the people to begin learning and generating new knowledge from participation through every operational process. Then, this will generate new knowledge that can be applied to real-life situations and promote learning. Stakeholders will be empowered and able to manage their problems more effectively which is a part of the method of human resource development. Furthermore, it also helps strengthen the local community to acquire a higher potential as they begin to understand and possess an increased ability to solve their own problems. All of this will result in the community becoming more self-sufficient and sustainable.

Conclusions

Based on the results, the public policy, concerning the tourism for the Natural World Heritage Site at Khao Yai National Park, that is developed from the People Participation Network is an approach in the development of sustainable tourism. The principle in the formation of the policy and tourism plan stated, regarding the strategic and tourism plan, that it should focus on the sustainable tourism as the main factor. This should be analyzed as well as take into consideration resources and the environment. It should also consider the society, culture, and

community rights as well as long-term economic aspects. Thus, the creation of the strategic plan should analyze the internal and external environment and should be derived from the people participating and local stakeholders. This is based on the principle and supervision management of the World Heritage combining with other resources components. Thus, the people and the local stakeholders should participate from the beginning, which begins at the basic evaluation and names preparation for the description. The policy formation concerning the Natural World Heritage Site also corresponds to the criteria for the sustainable management in the World Heritage Site based on the World Heritage Convention. It uses a sustainable tourism principle as well as the development of tourism and the activity of the visitors to the World Heritage through participation that will not harm the environment. Additionally, it also comprises of the prevention and conservation that will correspond to the community culture and values. Moreover, the tourism should create sustainability for the economy and society for the most concrete benefit and provide the most benefits to the local community.

Figure 1. A model for tourism policy in Natural World Heritage Sites.



Recommendations

1. The policy concerning tourism by the government sector should not only focus on the economic benefits of tourism within the Natural Heritage Site as this could result in the degraded condition of the World Heritage Site.

2. The policy implementation and all problem solutions should be a cooperative effort and include all relevant agencies in various government sector such as Ministry of Tourism, and Sports and Department of National Parks, and Wildlife and Plant Conservation. The management of forest resources and solving issues relating to land ownership should be managed both by the Department of National Parks, Wildlife and Plant Conservation as well as the Department of Lands.



3. The related government sectors should take into consideration community rights to manage resources such as the rights to specify a unique area as a special area for resource management. The government sector could engage through the process of establishment for the government sectors to supervise the area. There should also be a public hearing to create confidence within the community by delegating responsibilities in site management to the community. In addition, the government sector can upgrade the status of the community as a buffer zone and use them to help support operations in the area of the World Heritage Site.

In addition, there is also another operational suggestion, which found that the community organization in the surrounding area of Khao Yai National Park is strong and has always operated in the form of network, and they are ready and have a volunteer spirit in solving different issues within the community. Thus, the government sector should promote and increase the potential of the People Participation Network. This will be an important base for the sustainable development of the local community.

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