

Guidelines for the Management and Sustainability Development of Forest Tourism Kamchanoad Baan Dung, Udon Thani

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Abstract—This study aimed to examine the management and development of forest tourism Kamchanoad. Ban Dung, Udon Thani sustainability. Data were collected by means of qualitative research including in-depth interviews, semi-structured, and then the data were summarized and discussed in accordance with the objectives. And make a presentation in the form of lectures. The target population for the study consisted of 16 people, including representatives from government agencies, community leaders and the community. The results showed that Guidelines for the Management and Development of Forest Tourism Kamchanoad include management of buildings and infrastructure such as roads, water, electricity, toilets. Other developments are the establishment of a service center that provides information and resources to facilitate tourists.; nature trails and informative signage to educate visitors on the path to the jungle Kamchanoad; forest activities for tourists who are interested only in occasional educational activities such as vegetation, etc.; disseminating information on various aspects of tourism through various channels in both Thailand and English, as well as a web site to encourage community involvement in the planning and management of tourism together with the care and preservation of natural resources and preserving the local cultural tourist area of Kamchanoad.

Keywords—Management and Development Guidelines, Tourist site, Sustainability.

I. INTRODUCTION

TOURISM industry plays an important role in Thailand's economic system. Besides generating income by being the highest valued commercial service of the country, this industry gives rise to a multitude of related businesses which in turn draw in investments in employment, distributing income to the local regions. However, negative socio-cultural Impacts from tourism can cause change or loss of local identity and values; tourism can turn local cultures into commodities when religious rituals, traditional ethnic rites and festivals are reduced and sanitized to conform to tourist expectations, resulting in what has been called "reconstructed ethnicity." Once a destination is sold as a tourism product, and the tourism demand for souvenirs, arts, entertainment and other commodities begins to exert influence, basic changes in human values may occur. Sacred sites and objects may not be respected when they are perceived as goods to trade.

Destinations risk standardization in the process of satisfying tourists' desires for familiar facilities. While landscape,

accommodation, food and drinks, etc., must meet the tourists' desire for the new and unfamiliar, they must at the same time not be too new or strange because few tourists are actually looking for completely new things. Tourists often look for recognizable facilities in an unfamiliar environment, like well-known fast-food restaurants and hotel chains.

Adaptation to tourist demands – tourists want souvenirs, arts, crafts, and cultural manifestations, and in many tourist destinations, craftsmen have responded to the growing demand by making changes in design of their products to bring them more in line with the new customers' tastes. While the interest shown by tourists also contributes to the sense of self-worth of the artists, and helps conserve a cultural tradition, cultural erosion may occur due to the commodification of cultural goods.

Udon Thani, a northeastern province covering an area of 11,730 square kilometers, is a prime business center of I-San. It's 564 kilometers far from Bangkok. At present, Udon Thani is the transportation and communications hub of the upper Northeast with several tourist destinations and facilities. Udon Thani has many Attractions, such as Ban Phue, Phra Phutthabat Bua Bok, PhuPhra Bat Historical Park, Tham Erawan, Wat Ban Tat, Pa Kham Chanode etc.

"Pa Kham Chanode" located at Baan Nonmuang Sub-District, Baan Doong District approximately 93 kilometres from Udon Thani's town is an area called Wang Nakhin (Naga Palace) a place believed and regarded by the locals as a mystical and holy place where the door to the underworld of Naga is located. Covering an area of over 20 rai (a measurement unit equal to 1,600 square meters) of land, Wang Nakhin (locally dubbed as Dong Chanot) is nothing but an islet surrounded by water. It is teeming with dense palm trees called Chanoad. Pa Kham Chanode is easy to access by following the Udon Thani - Sakon Nakhon route then when arrives at Ban Nong Mek, turn left and keep going ahead about 84 kilometers to Ban Dung. After that drive more 9 kilometers it will be approached to Ban Kham Chanot.

"Pa Kamchanoad" (Taraw Palm Forest) is a sacred tourist destination important to Udonthani Province. People from many different areas hold this Taraw Palm Forest in reverence, traveling to the site in droves. Therefore, government agencies and local administrative organizations and the local citizens consider this matter to be of great importance and cooperate to develop and rehabilitate Pa Kamchanoad to be a tourist site, with the goal of firmly establishing Pa Kamchanoad (Taraw Palm Forest) as a sacred destination and a well-known tourist site of Udonthani Province [1].

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II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

To study how to manage and develop Pa Kamchanoad, Baan Dung District, UdonThani in order to be a sustainable tourism destination.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study used the qualitative research method. The researcher collected data by conducting in-depth interviews with a semi-structured interview format. The target group of the study consisted of 16 persons: representatives from government agencies, community leaders, and members of the community committee. The data was then summarised and discussed according to the research objectives. Finally, the data was presented in narrative format.

IV. RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Pa Kamchanoad (Taraw Palm Forest) is a greatly important tourist destination considered sacred by the citizens of Udon Thani Province and other areas. It is highly revered by people who travel to visit the site continually. Pa Kamchanoad is located at Baan Muang Sub-District, Baan Doong District, Udon Thani Province, covering approximately 20 rai and surrounded by water, similar to an island. A certain type of palm tree with mixed characteristics of Toddy Palm and Coconut grows there, called Taraw Palm or "Chanode". The site is considered sacred and held in reverence by the locals. Former generations called this area "Wang Nakhairindra Kamchanoad" or, "Palace of the Naga Serpent" and believed that the holy well in the center of the forest was the gate to the underworld, and home of Naga serpent named "Sri Sutto Naga Serpent".

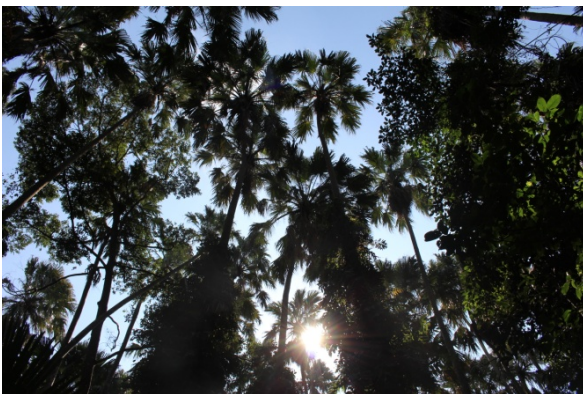


Fig. 1 Pa Kamchanoad (Taraw Palm Forest)

Later, changes occurred in the eco system of Pa Kamchanoad with the effect that many Taraw Palm trees withered and died. The resultant scarcity of trees within Pa Kamchanoad allowed sunlight to reach the ground, causing plants such as ferns to decrease in density due to the lack of moisture in the ground along with global warming. Because of this problem, brainstorming took place between the Provincial, District, and Local Administration Organizations in Udon

Thani Province. A working team was appointed to study and find ways to solve the problem of the deterioration of Pa Kamchanoad with the intention to restore the eco system of Pa Kamchanoad to its former abundance, establish a sacred tourism site in Udon Thani, and also to help create jobs and income for the locals [2].



Fig. 2 Pa Kamchanoad



Fig. 3 Centre Shrine in Pa Kamchanoad



Fig. 4 Small Shrine in Pa Kamchanoad

The guidelines for the development of Pa Kamchanoad as a tourism site grew from the cooperation of many sectors; government agencies, local administrative organizations and the general public in the vicinity. The management and

development is divided into 2 phases: 1) Management and development in the current phase consists of trying to rehabilitate the eco system around Pa Kamchanoad to become viable as soon as possible. For example, canvassing all sectors to help plant Taraw Palm trees to replace the trees that have withered and died; raising awareness for villagers living in the vicinity of Pa Kamchanoad to refrain from burning trash or lumber scraps in order to keep the eco system from being damaged by excessive heat. This is in conjunction with developing construction projects and public utilities such as roads, waterworks, electricity, and restrooms for the convenience of tourists who come to Pa Kamchanoad. 2) Management and development in the next (future) phase consists of establishing service centres to dispense information for the convenience of tourists; nature study trails with explanatory signs to provide information to tourists who come to Pa Kamchanoad; occasional nature study activities in Pa Kamchanoad for tourists with specific interests such as studying the species of trees; disseminating information about various aspects of Pa Kamchanoad through a variety of mediums in both Thai and English, such as websites; encouraging the community to fully participate, such as joint planning or joint management of Pa Kamchanoad as a tourist destination; care and preservation of natural resources in Pa Kamchanoad; preservation of the local culture of Pa Kamchanoad area, evaluation of management of Pa Kamchanoad as a tourist site as well as benefitting from supplemental income generated by various tourism activities in Pa Kamchanoad, among others [3].



Fig. 5 Taraw Palm Trees Planting Ceremony

V. DISCUSSION

The goal of management and development of Pa Kamchanoad as a tourist site is to rehabilitate the eco system of Pa Kamchanoad (Taraw Palm Forest) to be a flourishing eco system, a sacred site and a tourist destination firmly rooted in Udon Thani Province, as well as to create jobs and income for the locals. This has resulted from cooperation between government agencies, local administrative organizations and the local people, who have brainstormed to solve various problems related to the sustainable development and management of Pa Kamchanoad as a tourist site strongly

linked to the local community. This is congruent with sustainable tourism management principles; specifically simultaneous tourism development and environmental development by correctly and appropriately utilizing natural benefits through education and creative planning for the longest-lasting and greatest common benefit. At the same time, the environment must be preserved or ensured the least possible damage [4]. The management and development of Pa Kamchanoad as a tourist site has been planned in two phases: the current management and development and future management and development. This is consistent with the issue raised by [5] regarding the immediate need for development of basic infrastructure for tourism, namely restrooms and shower rooms, parking lots and tourist information centres. This also agrees with [6] in the matter of eco-tourism urgently needing signage at tourist sites, as well as public relations brochures and periodicals to introduce tourist sites. Full community participation should be genuinely encouraged and supported, corresponding to [7], [8] who found that the majority of citizens have mid-level overall participation in tourism management. Accordingly, in the development of sustainable tourism, it is imperative to hasten support for the community to fully participate.



Fig. 6 Blessing Ceremony before Taraw Palm Trees Planting in Pa Kamchanoad



Fig. 7 People participated Taraw Palm Trees Planting in Pa Kamchanoad

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- A) Relevant government agencies, community leaders and the community board should hasten support for the local citizens who are stakeholders to take a role in full participation in the process of developing Pa Kamchanoad (Taraw Palm Forest), so that all involved can work together to develop the resources of Pa Kamchanoad to achieve sustainability.
- B) Relevant government agencies, community leaders and the community board should raise awareness amongst the local people regarding the value and importance of preserving and developing Pa Kamchanoad (Taraw Palm Forest) to achieve sustainability as a tourism site.

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