

# Assessing the Sustainable Development of Vietnam's Tourism Industry

Nguyen Hoang Phuong

**Abstract**—Sustainable development is one of the world's millennium goals and is also a prime target for Vietnam's development. In our country, the concept of sustainable development has been approached since the 1980s, confirmed in the socio-economic development process of the country from 1991 to 2000, by Directive 36 of the Politburo on strengthening environmental protection during the period of national industrialization and modernization. At the same time, it is also affirmed through the guidelines through the National Party Congress thirteenth, XI, and XII, to become important orientations for industries, including the tourism industry. The article presents the principles of sustainable development and sustainable tourism, which is an important basis for the next steps of Vietnam Tourism. At the same time, the authors make assessments about the current level of development of Vietnam's tourism industry in order to achieve sustainable development of the tourism industry.

**Index Terms**—Sustainable Development, Tourism Industry, Environmental Perspective, Policy

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since the end of World War II, global tourism has grown rapidly with an average passenger speed of 6.93% / year, income is 11.8% / year and becomes the leading important economic sector. According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), despite the prolonged difficult economic situation in some countries and regions, the number of international tourists in 2015 reached more than 1 billion people [1]. It is also the sixth year in a row, achieving an annual growth rate of 4% or more [2].

Tourism in Vietnam plays a very important role in socio-economic development. According to the announcement in March 2016 of the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), tourism in Vietnam contributes 6.6% to GDP, ranking 40 out of 183 countries in terms of direct contribution [3], ranked 55 out of 183 countries in terms of total scale of contribution to national GDP. Specifically, tourism contributed directly, indirectly and public investment was 584,884 billion VND (equivalent to 13.9% of GDP), of which the direct contribution of tourism to GDP was 279.287 billion VND (equivalent to 6, 6% of GDP) [4]. Tourism created more than 6.3 million jobs both directly and indirectly (accounting for 11.2%), the number of direct jobs created was 2.783 million (accounting for 5.2% of total jobs [5]. Vietnam tourism development strategy to 2020, vision to 2030 has set the goal: "By 2020, basic tourism will become a key economic sector with professionalism and a system of similar facilities, synchronous and modern; High

quality, diversified and branded tourism products, deeply imbued with national cultural identity, compete with other countries in the region and the world. Striving to 2030, Vietnam will become a developed tourism industry"[6].

However, in addition to the above positive contributions, there are also many negative things that tourism brings. That is the problem of environmental pollution, security and order, damage to the heritage ... has been mentioned in many of the agenda of countries around the world [8]. That is why it is necessary to develop tourism models that not only operate efficiently but can overcome these limitations and aim at a sustainable goal [9]. Community-based tourism or community tourism (CBD) is a comprehensive tourism development model, one of the forms of sustainable tourism development, with the direct participation of local people in travel activities. Because of the benefits that tourism brings, people also have a sense of self-awareness in building and protecting their local tourist sites. Especially the condition of our country with more than 70% of the terrain is mountainous. It is a place where many tourism resources (caves, landscapes, forests, streams ...), where many ethnic minorities live, still retain cultural identity. These conditions are extremely favorable for developing community ecotourism and community cultural tourism [10].

Since its inception, the term sustainable development has created a new wave in the scientific world. Economic pressure makes the spite of massive growth make unsustainable expressions appear even in the smokeless industry [11]. Studies on assessing sustainable tourism development have received widespread attention from scientists, world government and non-governmental organizations, notably including the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) with the development of a measure of sustainability (Barometer of Sustainability) used as a benchmark for many studies [2]. However, it is not easy to assess the sustainability of one or more tourist destinations, especially when assessing the use of quantitative factors.

## II. OVERVIEW ABOUT SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The term sustainable development was first used in the report "World Conservation Strategy" proposed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1980 [12]. The overall goal of the strategy is to achieve sustainable development by protecting biological resources, emphasizing the sustainability of ecological development, in order to call for conservation of biological resources [13].

Most of the following concepts agree that the inner

---

Published on August 15, 2019.

Nguyen Hoang Phuong is with Regional Political Academy 2, Ho Chi Minh city, Vietnam.

meaning of sustainable development is a development process with a close, reasonable and harmonious combination between the three aspects of development, economically sustainable, environmentally sustainable and culturally sustainable [14]. Tourism is considered the largest "smokeless industry" on a worldwide scale, contributing positively to the economic development of nations, preserving global cultural values as well as working that touches all aspects of natural resources and environment [15].

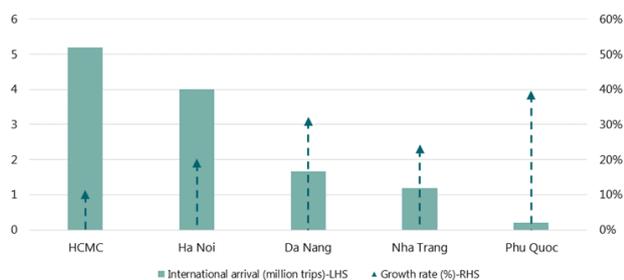


Fig. 1. Tourism growth presents opportunities for hospitality market [7]

The concept of sustainable tourism development: "It is the development of tourism that meets current needs without compromising the ability to meet the travel needs of future generations." [16]. Accordingly, in the development process, it is necessary to ensure the economic sustainability, sustainability of environmental resources and sustainable socio-culture.

In particular, economic sustainability should be understood as a long-term stable development of tourism, creating a significant source of revenue, contributing positively to the growth of the economy and society, bringing benefits to community, especially local people [17]. Local people's living standards are improved from tourism, they will have a reason to protect this source of income by protecting natural resources and environment, protecting traditional cultural values for tourists to continue Next, through which poverty reduction will bring opportunities to improve living standards for local people, economic growth for disadvantaged areas [13].

Issues of sustainable development have been introduced since the 1980s, conducting research on this issue; many scientific studies have been carried out to provide aspects related to sustainable development. Since the 1990s, scientists around the world have mentioned a lot about developing tourism with a purely economic purpose that threatens to destroy the ecological environment, to the local culture [18]. The consequences of these impacts will again affect the long-term development of the tourism industry itself. But defining sustainable tourism development not only focuses on environmental protection but also focuses on maintaining local cultures and ensuring economic development and fair benefits for the group of participants. Sustainable tourism development is considered to be a branch of Sustainable Development, with many definitions already in place and the research team offers a number of concepts given:

According to the World Commission on Development and Environment Conference (or Brundt and Commission)

identified in 1987: "Sustainable tourism development is a development activity in a specific area so that content and images are consciousness and scale are appropriate and sustainable over time, do not degrade the environment, affect the ability to support"[19].

According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO): "Sustainable tourism development is the development of tourism activities to meet the current needs of tourists and indigenous people, while still interested in preserving and embellishing resources for future tourism development"[15]. Sustainable tourism development is the most complete and comfortable meeting the needs of tourists, attracting tourists to regions and tourist spots today and protecting and improving the quality for the future.



Fig. 2. Sustainable Tourism Development [20]

So far, most experts in tourism and other related fields in Vietnam think that: "Sustainable tourism development is a mining activity that manages natural and human values to satisfy the diverse needs of tourists, pay attention to long-term economic benefits while ensuring the contribution to conservation and restoration of resources, maintaining cultural integrity to develop future tourism activities; for environmental protection and contribute to improving the living standards of local communities". This is also the concept that the authors use as a basis for conducting research.

### III. PRINCIPLES FOR SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Tourism is a general economic sector, interdisciplinary, interdisciplinary and highly socialized, in order to develop sustainably, requires the common efforts of the whole society. The goal of sustainable development brings harmony between economy - society and the environment but does not affect the future. To accomplish that goal, it is necessary to identify 10 principles of sustainable tourism development, taking the guideline for the next activities, helping the tourism industry to develop sustainably in the future, specifically:

*A. Firstly, exploit and use resources appropriately*

Resources are the overall geographical location, natural resources, national asset system, human resources, policy guidelines, capital and market ... both at home and abroad can be exploited to serve service for tourism development. The sustainable use and conservation of socio-cultural natural resources is absolutely necessary to ensure long-term development and exploitation for tourism activities based on the calculation of current needs.

Tourism industry should prevent vandalism to natural resources, environment, humanity, develop and enforce reasonable environmental policies in the areas of tourism, install noise reduction equipment air and water sources ... Implementing the principle of preventing and respecting the needs of local people, protecting and supporting the inheritance of national cultural heritage in the world, implementing tourism activities Responsible and ethical calendar, resolutely eliminating tourism activities that are not in the traditional style.

*B. Second, minimize excessive consumption of natural resources*

The consumption of natural resources at a level that is sufficient on the one hand helps restore natural resources. On the other hand, reducing waste to the environment will avoid many costs for environmental recovery, contributing to increasing the quality of tourism.

In order to implement this principle, the tourism industry must encourage the reduction of improper consumption by visitors. Prioritize the use of local resources, reduce waste and ensure safe waste discharged by visitors, support, invest in local infrastructure, waste recycling projects, is responsible for recovering losses through the tourism planning work created.

*C. Third, maintain the diversity of nature, society and humanity*

Need to respect the diversity of nature, society and environment of the destination, ensuring the pace, scale and type of tourism development, to protect the diversity of local culture. Preventing respect for each region's capacity, closely monitoring tourism activities for plants and animals, integrating tourism activities into activities of the community. At the same time, preventing the replacement of long-term traditional industries with modern industries, encouraging specific characteristics of each region and region should be considered. Developing tourism in accordance with indigenous culture, social welfare, the needs of development, ensuring scale, progress of tourism types in order to increase mutual understanding between visitors and local residents may be the suitable solution for Vietnamese situations.

*D. Fourth, tourism development must be placed in the overall socio-economic planning*

The long-term survival of the tourism industry must be within the strategic framework of the nation, region and locality on socio-economy. In order to ensure the development, the tourism industry needs to take into account the immediate needs of both people and tourists, in the planning need to unify the economic - social, environmental aspects, respect the national strategy. Households, regions,

territories, localities, integrated industry development in the general strategy, taking the overall strategy as a development orientation for the whole industry. Development of the tourism industry must be appropriate to the locality, in accordance with the planning assigned by the locality, that development is sustainable and long-term.

*E. Fifthly, tourism development must support the local economy*

With interdisciplinary peculiarity, sustainable development is not only about it but also in many other fields, in the field of tourism. Support for other industries is not only large enterprises but also small and medium enterprises are the ones that are heavily supported, leading to economic support for the locality. In other words, the tourism industry serves as a platform for diversifying by economic activities in many fields. Investment in tourism, not only tourism products, project areas, but also tourism infrastructure, local infrastructure, and bringing benefits to many local economic sectors.

*F. Sixth, attract the participation of local communities in sustainable tourism development*

The participation of local communities is a factor to ensure sustainable tourism development. When the local community is involved in tourism development, it will create many favorable conditions for tourism, because they are responsible for the region's natural resources and environment.

Therefore, the tourism authority must respect the needs and aspirations of the local community. Supporting local community views in their own development encourages them to participate in projects and activities for sustainable tourism development. Support businesses to participate in projects, solve difficulties for local residents, cooperate with local people to provide their own goods and services to visitors, contribute to tourism development in your locality.

*G. Seventh, get opinions of people and related subjects*

The exchange between the tourism industry, the community and the relevant agencies is essential to relieve the conflicts in the process of implementing the steps of tourism development. Consult with stakeholders and the community, domestic and foreign organizations, non-governmental, government with ideas for the project, for sustainable tourism development, integration The interests of the parties aim to harmonize benefits in the process of implementation.

Tourism also brings direct contact between visitors and local people and potential changes due to the impact of tourism activities. Widely consult with people and stakeholders to encourage participation to adjust the next steps, integrate appropriate benefits.

*H. Eighth, focusing on human resource training*

With sustainable tourism development, human resource training and development is an essential task. A skilled workforce training skills, not only brings economic benefits to the industry but also enhances the quality of tourism products.

In the recruitment phase, paying attention to local human resources, focusing on professional training, should

integrate environmental and social issues in training and awareness to rise for officials, students and people. People participate in tourism activities about cultural identity, unique cultural products in their localities. Support for educational institutions by sharing profits from the tourism sector.

#### *I. Ninth, marketing the tourism industry responsibly*

Need marketing, providing adequate information for visitors through the media of newspapers, radio, and internet. Need to take advantage of the great power from the internet, search engines, the explosion of social networks and smart devices. However, broadcast information needs to be screened and censored before being made public to help interact with visitors around the globe more effectively.

#### *J. Tenth, attaching importance to scientific research in Tourism*

In order to become a professional, modern and sustainable economic sector, scientific research plays an important role in building strategies, planning, training and delivering activities, tourism development. The achievements of science and technology on tourism in the fields have recently become important scientific platforms with high practical applications, contributing to the development of the tourism industry.

Research results of some scientific works are valuable references for state management agencies in completing legal documents, planning development policies and strategies. Therefore, in the coming time, to encourage scientific research and supervision of activities related to tourism activities, sustainable development of the tourism industry, encouraging the evaluation of data before conducting a project. At the same time, support the research and investigation of information as well as research results, for related subjects.

### IV. RECOMMENDED TO IMPROVE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TOURISM MODELS IN VIETNAM

#### *A. Solutions to improve sustainability for the group of environmental criteria*

*Firstly*, local communities and local authorities need to immediately calculate the number of families that retain ponds associated with stilted architecture to strictly forbid acts of leveling ponds and lakes for use for other purposes and protecting this traditional landscape from the risk of disappearing. In addition, it is necessary to keep these spaces clean to avoid unsanitary conditions, to separate the areas where livestock and poultry are kept and to ensure that it is used for tourism purposes.

*Secondly*, the issue of awareness of tourists is not one-sided soon, but measures to raise their awareness must always be carried out in parallel with tourism business. Most importantly, it is necessary to actively propagate to tourists that small acts can cause great consequences, while preserving a clean green tourism space and showing beautiful images in the eyes of foreign tourists.

*Third*, the issue should be more concerned about the urgent need to have a professional waste treatment system and centralized landfill.

*Fourth*, when the economic aspect has been ensured, the parties must make a common contribution to money for environmental protection. These contributions may be in the form of waste disposal fees, road sanitation, and construction of public sanitation facilities. In addition, homestay tourism households have to spend enough money on cleaning equipment such as brooms, garbage bins, toilet paper, to invest in building standard toilet renovation.

*Fifth*, scientists, inspectors, and managers must regularly conduct environmental quality assessment for villages. Ensuring good operation of the waste treatment system, environmental indicators at the permitted level and overcoming environmental incidents in a timely manner.

#### *B. Proposal to improve sustainability for the group of criteria for Community & Tourism Development*

*Firstly*, about the attitude of interaction between people and tourists, the natural and unsettling behavior of a part of the community makes them misunderstood as lack of affection for tourists.

*Second*, Ban Lac tourism is cultural tourism, so it is necessary to create easy opportunities for tourists to participate in the cultural activities of the local people. Typically, cultural and cultural exchange sessions. In addition to the pre-scheduled programs of tourist delegations, the locality should have free and public exchange programs within the tourist destinations to facilitate the excuse and families of few tourist groups.

*Thirdly*, in the direction of implementing training and retraining to improve the quality of tourism human resources, it must aim at two basic objectives: education of political qualities and professional ethics. The attitude of communication with organizations and individuals related to tourism activities for the contingent of cadres and civil servants and the professional training and retraining. Business skills for direct tourism workers and local communities in the village to promote professionalism for every citizen are very necessary.

*Fourthly*, the policies on tourism investment must be really clear, should not be extended to allow outsiders to participate in tourism business here, but must cooperate and do business between households. The family makes travel and travel businesses, creating conditions for these businesses to continue to connect with households that do not have much cooperation.

*Fifthly*, regarding the promotion and promotion of tourism, the organization of domestic and foreign tourism programs and events needs to be invested and carefully prepared from the content to the third image. Focusing on the professional direction, contributing to promoting tourism development, increasing the number of visitors to the village is extremely necessary.

### V. CONCLUSION

Currently, the world in general and Vietnam in particular are facing great challenges of the era such as climate change, exhausting natural resources. This requires countries to use their resources responsibly, especially natural and human resources. In that context, developing tourism towards sustainability becomes a common trend and

is also the optimal solution for the development of tourism.

It can be seen that sustainable tourism development is not only a separate issue of Da Nang city but it is always an urgent issue for Vietnam's tourism development process. For the major tourist cities of the country, the tourism industry becomes a key economic sector, the development problem becomes extremely important. Therefore, in order to become a perfect travel destination brand, these cities need to drastically implement solutions for sustainable development, both economically, socially and environmentally, along with bright ideas to create and be more unique to affirm your travel position on the tourist map of Vietnam and the region at present as well as in the future.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Fáilte Ireland, "Tourism Facts 2015," 2016.
- [2] UNWTO, "Sustained growth in international tourism despite challenges," *World Tour. Baom.*, 2017.
- [3] M. L. Tseng, K. J. Wu, C. H. Lee, M. K. Lim, T. D. Bui, and C. C. Chen, "Assessing sustainable tourism in Vietnam: A hierarchical structure approach," *J. Clean. Prod.*, 2018.
- [4] T. Mai and C. Smith, "Scenario-based planning for tourism development using system dynamic modelling: A case study of Cat Ba Island, Vietnam," *Tour. Manag.*, 2018.
- [5] N. H. Phuong, "Solution to develop tourism products in the Mekong Delta," *J. Polit. Sci.*, pp. 75–79, 2018.
- [6] N. H. Phuong, "Investing in developing tourism facilities in the Mekong Delta in the trend of connecting the country and international tourism," *Hum. Resour. Dev. Mag.*, pp. 59–62, 2014.
- [7] L. Tran and P. Walter, "Ecotourism, gender and development in northern Vietnam," *Ann. Tour. Res.*, 2014.
- [8] N. H. Phuong, "Finding a breakthrough for western tourism," *Vietnam Tour. Mag.*, pp. 27–29, 2014.
- [9] V. D. Truong, "Tourism policy development in Vietnam: A pro-poor perspective," *J. Policy Res. Tour. Leis. Events*, 2013.
- [10] T. H. Lee and F. H. Jan, "Can community-based tourism contribute to sustainable development? Evidence from residents' perceptions of the sustainability," *Tour. Manag.*, 2019.
- [11] N. H. Phuong, "Situation and solution of tourism human resources in the Mekong Delta," *Econ. - Tech. Mag.*, pp. 63–69, 2018.
- [12] "World conservation strategy," *Environmental Policy and Law*. 1980.
- [13] A. M. Benur and B. Bramwell, "Tourism product development and product diversification in destinations," *Tour. Manag.*, 2015.
- [14] N. K. Gabdrakhmanov, V. A. Rubtzov, E. E. Baybakov, H. S. Somaeh, and F. Shamil'evich Nugaev, "Tourism and sustainable development," *Acad. Strateg. Manag. J.*, 2016.
- [15] C. Aall, "Sustainable tourism in practice: Promoting or perverting the quest for a sustainable development?," *Sustain.*, 2014.
- [16] A. Farmaki, L. Altinay, D. Botterill, and S. Hilke, "Politics and sustainable tourism: The case of cyprus," *Tour. Manag.*, 2015.
- [17] U. KATTIYAPORNONG, M. Ditta-Apichai, C. Kanjanasilanon, and K. Sirityota, "Sustainable Tourism Development," *Asia Proc. Soc. Sci.*, 2018.
- [18] R. Buckley, "Sustainable tourism: Research and reality," *Annals of Tourism Research*. 2012.
- [19] M. Dibra, "Rogers Theory on Diffusion of Innovation-The Most Appropriate Theoretical Model in the Study of Factors Influencing the Integration of Sustainability in Tourism Businesses," *Procedia - Soc. Behav. Sci.*, 2015.
- [20] A. Torres-Delgado and J. Saarinen, "Using indicators to assess sustainable tourism development: a review," *Tour. Geogr.*, 2014.