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Editorial

This first issue of the Journal of Viet Nam Studies contains a stimulating and original collection of research articles and viewpoints. The common theme is the study of the rapidly emerging tourism and hospitality industry in Vietnam. Each article adds a new dimension to our understanding of the contemporary tourism scene in Viet Nam and its antecedents. While the underlying preoccupation of this collection is one of sustainable development of tourism resources; all the authors have considerable experience of Viet Nam and its attempts to implement '*doi moi*', and are therefore able to bring critical understanding of the situation Viet Nam presently finds itself in economically and socially. This provides a very good contextual base for the discussion.

Russell Arthur Smith and Martin Oppermann discuss developments in Viet Nam from a strategic perspective. Martin looks at how Vietnam and the other newly emerging tourism destinations in the region, Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, can learn from neighboring countries and their experiences, and Russell provides us with an excellent framework for the strategic planning of sustainable tourism, utilising case studies of Singapore and Hue to illustrate the concepts outlined.

Lee Gilbert, Nguyen Hoa and Vu The Binh, in the lead paper, demonstrate that each of the underlying tenets of sustainable development is dependent on information flows. Their central contribution is a strategic information gap analysis, comparing information provided by current systems in Viet Nam with that required to manage development while preserving the value of the cultural and physical environment. Usha and George Haley take this analysis of systems further by elaborating on the governmental policies necessary to develop a sustainable, socially and ecologically desirable tourism industry through appropriate monitoring, control and regulation of key stakeholders.

Bill Logan makes the key point that the policy connections between Vietnamese tourism development and urban planning need to be strengthened in order to protect cultural heritage. This is critical to the sustainability of Vietnamese tourism given that most international visitors visit Vietnam once only and focus on a few key cities and towns. While the literature on sustainable tourism is usually concerned with the negative impacts of tourism itself on cultural heritage resources, there is also a need to consider other processes and agencies of change that threaten these resources and, hence, Vietnamese tourism generally.

The final paper, that by Trankiem Luu and Mai Dinh shows how the achievement of sustainable tourism and the successful industrialisation of Vietnam requires well-defined targets to facilitate investments in both physical and in human capital. Their contribution seeks to identify those targets within the tourism education sphere through investigating the potential of Vietnam as a mass market tourism destination in Asia, and analysing how education and training systems can respond to the qualification requirements for sustainable tourism development based on the experience of ASEAN countries.

Given the contents of this issue and the continuing response to our call for papers in 1997, we should all be encouraged by the progress made in establishing this important Journal of Viet Nam Studies.

Malcolm Cooper
Guest Editor

A Note from the Managing Editors

This first issue of the *Journal of Viet Nam Studies* was sponsored by the Faculty of Business at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia. The opportunity is taken to publicly thank the University through the Dean of the Faculty of Business, Professor Anthony Barnett. Two Faculty staff members involved in the early establishment work have moved to other employment. They are Ms Rae Wear and Ms Patricia Rooney and they are recognised here and thanked for their substantial contributions.

The decision to produce a journal emerged out of cooperative work amongst the Institute for Economic and Development Studies within the National Economics University, Hanoi, Vietnam, the University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba, Australia, and the Southbank Institute of TAFE, Brisbane, Australia. Inter alia, the journal was established in celebration of the 40th birthday of the National Economics University. Patronage for the project was given by the Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Southern Queensland, Professor Ken Goodwin, AM and the Director of the Institute of Economic and Development Studies, Professor Le Du Phong.

The Managing Editors intend that the Journal will have a long and useful life and that it will become a leading forum for the expression of fact and opinion about Viet Nam and its relationships with the rest of the world. Researchers, writers, commentators, creative artists and other interested persons are invited to share in the development of this journal by choosing to publish their quality work in it. The *Notes for Intending Authors* section provides information about policy and about format, layout and referencing.

Some forthcoming themes include sustainable development, theatre, literature and the creative arts, education and training, environmental management, occupational health and safety, religious studies, resources management, town planning, business ethics and philosophy. Contributions outside these areas are also very welcome.

Ian Eddington
On Behalf of the Managing Editors

A Strategic Model for Using Information Technology in Developing Sustainable Tourism¹

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Abstract

This paper integrates field experience and systems theory to show how IT can play several important roles in developing a national tourism industry based on the sustainable development model. The paper first identifies common uses of IT in tourism, such as systems designed to distribute information about supply, reservations systems which match supply and demand, the back office systems which provide administrative support, and the monitoring systems which provide public agencies with the information required to govern tourism activity. After inventorying current and planned systems in Vietnam, the authors examine the principles of sustainable development, and demonstrate that each of the underlying tenets of sustainable development is dependent on information flows. The next section of the paper is a strategic information gap analysis, comparing information provided by current systems, with that required to manage development while preserving the value of the cultural and physical environment. The paper closes with a proposal for a national agenda for the strategic use of IT to enable the management of tourism resources and activities on a sustainable basis in emerging economies such as Vietnam.

Introduction: the Role of IT in Tourism Today

Sustainable development is inherently strategic. From a business perspective, it requires meeting the current needs of each enterprise and its stakeholders while protecting, sustaining and enhancing all human and natural resources that will be needed in the future (IISD, 1996). In the strategic context of today's tourism industry, many small players surround the few large ones. Each of many sectors and segments has its unique interests and competencies. Many of the assets that are critical to industry performance are publicly owned. These factors, plus the sheer size and diversity of the industry, make

¹ Adapted from a conference paper entitled "Information Technology's Strategic Role in Developing Sustainable Tourism Development in Vietnam" presented to the 1st International Conference on Sustainable Tourism Development in Vietnam, Hue, Vietnam.

a single "tourism" perspective on the role of information technology (IT) in the industry rather difficult to formulate. Instead, we shall explore the role of IT in various industry segments, through the lens of the use of information in the enterprises and agencies engaged in managing those activities. Private sector tourism activity includes hotel, resort and various logistics services, and depends on government-backed agencies to oversee the industry and supervise its interaction with and use of public assets, which are essential to the industry. In the hospitality industry, information technology (IT) largely plays a support role (Cash, 1995, p40). In most hotels, restaurants, and local tour agencies the primary use of computers is as a tool for various types of infrastructure, such as accounting. The economics of the air transport industry generates a different pattern (Table 1).

Table 1: Heterogeneous and Progressive Nature of IT use in the Tourism Industry

| Industry Segment | Role Of Information Technology | Core Applications |
|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Attractions, Tours and Ground Transport | Infrastructure | Operational Control |
| Hospitality: <i>Hotels, Resorts, Restaurants</i> | Tactical Coordination | Scheduling, Accounting |
| Channel: <i>Travel Agent, Consolidator</i> | Market Access | Reservations, Ticketing |
| Logistics: <i>Air Transport and Car Rentals</i> | Strategic Coordination | Yield Management |

Ground transport and tour operators (as well as most other attractions below the huge scale of international theme parks) are normally small enterprises that have focused their use of IT on operational control issues. The use of IT in hotels (especially in larger ones managed by chains) has moved beyond operational control to include scheduling and management accounting. The need to efficiently utilise incredibly expensive capital assets (aircraft), combined with the difficulty of coordinating a global network to operate the fleet and allocate seats to passengers, led to the use of IT in a strategic role by airlines (Gilbert, 1988). This pattern is not static: the use of IT as a source of sustainable competitive advantage diffused from airlines to international car rental firms and is being adopted by travel agencies (Feeney, 1986). Hotels in advanced markets are also exploring the concept of using IT to maximise the strategic value of privately owned assets available to the enterprise.

In contrast, government is responsible to ensure that tourism enhances environmental and social assets as well as provides economic benefits. Many ministerial portfolios and public sector agencies as well as the private sector must work together to ensure that the

benefits of tourism growth are achieved, and are sustainable. The government roles include promoting tourism, providing resources such as infrastructure and manpower, protecting the environment, and preserving the public assets that form the foundation for tourism. Government regulation and enforcement procedures preventing overuse or misuse of resources are the most obvious (but often least effective) way to deal with real or potential environmental costs. Here IT acts as a feedback loop to channel data from the environment back to the policymaker.

Command-and-control regulations are more advanced mechanisms that can be used by both central and local government to encourage business and other users to limit damage to the environment, internalise environmental costs, or pay for the costs of adverse effects (pollution). Command and control involves setting performance standards, effluent and emission standards, and other resource management requirements, which developers and resource users are free to meet by whatever means they prefer. Traditionally, all levels of government have used command-and-control regulations to achieve environmental objectives. They are not always the most cost-effective method of achieving change, and tend to inhibit innovation and improvement. However, there will obviously continue to be a need for a basic regulatory framework that sets and monitors performance standards rather than prescribes or prohibits specific uses or practices. This activity is of course very information-intensive.

Government agencies use IT as a tool to acquire, store, and deliver information to support the management of activities that affect tourism in the above roles (Table 2). From this, we can derive a number of underlying principles of the role of IT in tourism. These are:

1. Information is an essential element in the management process;
2. As tourism activity is (to an unusual extent) managed jointly by the private and public sector, such information must often be shared across a diverse set of actors and stakeholders; and
3. Information technology can be designed and deployed to enable the cooperative management of public assets supporting the industry. However, there are presently few real-world examples of fully integrated IT systems, which would be an especially valuable tool for managing eco-tourism on a sustainable basis.

Table 2: Government Uses of Information in Managing Tourism Activity

| Role | Typical Example | Information Required | Core IT Application |
|----------|--|--|---|
| Promote | Generate demand for tourism product | Features of supply, potential markets | TV, video, or CD-Rom tailored to market |
| Provide | Allocate resources to develop tourism | Available resources, potential demand | Budget document, funding proposal |
| Protect | Command & control of fragile natural ecology | Prior status, threats, use/misuse patterns | Satellite surveillance, chemical analyses |
| Preserve | Restore natural or cultural assets | Original state, means to restore or preserve | Drawing, photo, or video/sound records |

Information Technology and Tourism in Vietnam

As a result of Vietnam's open-door policy (*doi moi*), the Vietnamese tourism industry has developed rapidly and is beginning to play an important social-economic role. International visitors to Vietnam have increased by 20-30% annually (1990: 250,000 international visitors; 1993: 670,000, and 1996: 1,607,000). The tourism industry contributes heavily to the country's GDP - from 3.5% in 1994, to 5.3 % in 1996. Vietnam has 78 international travel agents, hundreds of domestic travel agents, and more than 3000 hotels. Of the latter 230 companies are either joint ventures or 100% owned foreign companies. Their registered capital totals more than US \$5 billion.

The use of IT in Vietnam tourism industry is just beginning. From 1987 the open-door *doi moi* policy has attracted overseas investors, who have brought with them not only capital, but also management tools and techniques including computers (Tan, 1997). In 1990, the Saigon Floating Hotel (which has now floated back to Singapore for renovation and redeployment) marked the first use of a computerised hotel package that integrated back room and front-of-house operations. This innovation diffused rapidly throughout the hospitality industry, and by 1995, the use of PC-based hotel accounting and reservations packages was standard in virtually all medium-to-large hotels, and becoming more common in smaller hotels and even some modern guest houses. In the travel industry, while Vietnam Airlines outsourced much of its reservations and flight scheduling activity, ticketing is still manual. Vietnam travel agencies and the rail, bus, and local tour segments continue to use largely manual techniques for scheduling and even accounting. By 1995, the sector represented about one-third of the total overseas investment in Vietnam (Eramalli, Trankiem, Gilbert, & Hooi 1997).

IT Diffusion in the Industry

The number of computers in use in the tourism industry increased tenfold in two years, from 222 in November 1994 to more than 2000 computers by the end of 1996. About 90

percent of these are installed either in Ho Chi Minh City or Hanoi. A few companies and hotels have set up internal networks, while many joint-venture companies have installed wide-area networks to connect with parent companies overseas. However, the industry as a whole lacks IT facilities. Thousands of tourism companies and hotels are not yet equipped with computers.

The industry has however experienced rapid growth in IT manpower. In November 1994, the tourism industry had only 29 engineers with a computer science background and 352 technicians. By December 1996, the number of engineers had increased to 150, and more than 4000 staff now use computers. Generally, the tourism industry has applied IT to serve its business needs. Ten percent of all hotels use IT to manage hotel infrastructure activities such as: accounting, calculating and issuing bills. Vietnamese engineers developed hotel accounting software with a local interface in 1992 - 1993, although these programs are now out of date. Some software companies have developed new software but tourism companies have yet to use these. Larger travel agents use computers for accounting, financial activities and human resources management, but IT is not used in tour promotion or tour management. VNAT and the Provincial tourism departments use computers mostly to carry out accounting and office activities.

Public Sector Initiatives in IT Use for Tourism

The Vietnam National Administration for Tourism (VNAT) recently initiated a project to capture key features of main destinations on CD-ROM, mainly for use by travel and tour agents to plan and promote their travel products. These disks can be read by any multimedia equipped PC running under Windows. They contain general data on the history, country, and people, plus site-specific data on areas of interest, in a geographic information systems (GIS) format which provides the user with an easy-to-use map interface to the information contained on the disk. Hanoi served as the prototype for the series, and Hue and Da Nang editions are in the pipeline.

Major Technological Trends in Developing IT in the Vietnam Tourism Industry

VNAT recognised the important role of information technology in managing and developing the tourism industry and established its IT Department in October 1994. This unit had developed a general IT development plan for the tourism industry by 1995 for the 1995-2000 period. In Decree 53/CP, the Prime Minister allowed VNAT to establish a Tourism Information Technology Centre (TITC). The TITC is responsible for the application of IT in the tourism industry, by:

1. Establishing a tourism industry information system based on the country's computer network. This is connected to all tourism business and the authorities governing businesses in the tourism industry. The system will help to collect data, analyse company performance and so on, and will be connected to the Internet to assist the business activities of these companies;

2. By encouraging IT use in tourism advertisement and promotion through the use of multimedia such as CD-ROM, video-CD, tourism guidebooks and others, VNAT will introduce the Vietnam tourism potential to foreign countries through these means. In doing so, it will increase the number of international visitors coming to Vietnam and encourage foreign investment. Also, tourism companies can connect to and use the Internet as a channel for international promotion of products;
3. Applying IT in central and local authorities to improve governing tourism business activities, and supporting tourism companies to install and use IT, especially to arrange computer-training courses for tourism staff.

In only eighteen months of implementation, VNAT has achieved the following results:

1. People working for VNAT and tourism companies have acquired basic knowledge needed to use computers. VNAT and its associated tourism companies are equipped with computers, and two-thirds of the staff working for these organisations are now able to use computers in their work;
2. A VNAT internal computer network will be set up in the near future;
3. The CNTT centre of Tourism is setting up an Internet-connected Web Database and server;
4. TITC has provided a new program for tourism enterprises and smaller hotels and travel management. Some tourism firms have used those programs;
5. CD-ROMs have been developed to serve VNAT promotion activities (Hanoi'97, Quang Nam-Da Nang, Khanh Hoa, and Vung Tau). These contain thousands of text pages plus pictures, maps, videotape and folk music. CD-ROMs are a unique tool for promoting the Vietnam tourism industry.

The Demand for Cultural and Ecological Sustainability in Vietnam

A recent survey of 200 travel agents revealed their perception that a rich cultural heritage (82%) and beautiful countryside (58%) are the main source of Vietnam's appeal to tourists (Trankiem 1997). As these unique assets are virtually impossible to duplicate, they form an effective basis for a focus strategy which would position Vietnam as a leading regional source of cultural and eco-tourism. However, the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment has only a limited ability to oversee the impact of tourism and other activities on natural resources, especially along its long coastline and in the river deltas. Generally, such monitoring systems are relatively expensive to develop, and a long time is needed to gather data and link this information to support decision processes.

Travel agents feel Vietnam has the potential to succeed as a mass tourism destination. However, both travel agents and a sample of 600 international tourists perceived that the present pattern of red tape, weak promotion, poor infrastructure, a lack of well-developed attractions, and high costs are major obstacles to the success of this type of focus strategy (Trankiem, 1997). Unfortunately, the pattern of IT deployment and use by the government is consistent with its current level of development, and thus few of its many administrative resource allocation and control processes are automated and able to support such a strategy.

The Principles of Sustainable Management

Any industry depends for its long-term viability on sustaining its assets, and tourism depends on the contextual qualities that provide a unique tourism experience. For tourism in Vietnam, asset management on a sustainable basis requires achieving growth without depleting resources, cheating visitors, or exploiting the local population. This implies the use of natural, physical, and human resources only on a sustainable basis, which in turn demands the detection and prevention of the build-up of negative effects and irreversible damage to these essential assets, plus reinvestment to create new assets needed to match increases in demand.

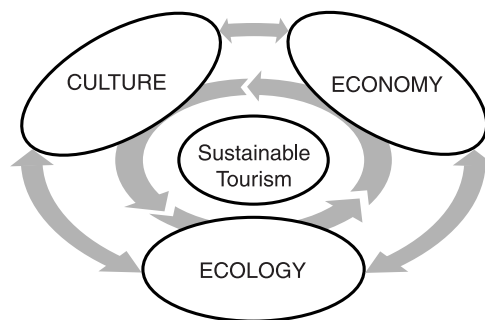
The concept of sustainability as the underlying philosophy of resource management and development has evolved over this century. The modern roots of sustainability begin in the theory of renewable resource management, for example in sustainable agriculture and forestry, and applied as techniques for "sustained yield". However, the real power of the concept of sustainability lies in its integration of economic, social, and ecological systems, previously viewed as separate domains. The related term sustainable management stems from the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development (Brundtland) Report, *Our Common Future*, which promoted the wider concept of sustainable development, as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". It contains within it two key concepts:

- (b) the concept of "needs", in particular the essential needs of the world's poor, to which overriding priority should be given; and
- (c) the idea of limitations imposed by the state of technology and social organisation on the environment's ability to meet present and future needs."

A more recent shift in the paradigm reflects the perspective of the business enterprise engaged in creating, distributing, or delivering the tourism product. In this domain, sustainable development means adopting business strategies and activities that "meet the needs of the enterprise and its stakeholders today while protecting, sustaining and enhancing the human and natural resources that will be needed for success in the future (IISD, 1996).

No single definition of sustainable management is accepted by all. At the broadest level it involves three interrelated factors - resource use, ecological systems which determine the quality of environmental assets, and a social ecology which determines the value of unique cultural assets in the context of an economy which supports the society in which these processes take place. Sustainable resource use requires maintaining economic assets, which of course include natural resources, for the future. Resource use needs to maximise efficiency and the recycling of resources to the extent necessary to meet the needs of future generations. Over the long term, a commitment to shift from non-renewable to alternative, renewable resources will be necessary. Sustaining ecological systems requires safeguarding the basic life supporting capacity of air, water, soil and biological systems. Development must meet the costs involved in ensuring that ecosystems continue to function and flourish. Sustaining cultural quality requires integrating two somewhat conflicting demands - protecting the intrinsic value of cultural resources, while maintaining and sharing the unique features that contribute to the pleasantness and appeal of the tourism experience. Thus, the process of sustainable management seeks to meet social, cultural, health and safety objectives without sacrificing biophysical, ecological, or social objectives. Some of the important relationships among these domains are portrayed in Figure 1 below:

Figure 1: A Systems Model of Sustainable Tourism



The broad lesson derived from this simple diagram is that the three activity domains are linked through multiple paths, some of which generate information not found in the context of the sustainable management model. These themes are explored in the sections that follow.

Tourism as an Activity within the Sustainability Paradigm

Sustainable tourism activity requires meeting the needs and expectations of present visitors, while meeting the needs of the host community, and protecting and enhancing attractions for the future. The interaction among the visitor, the host community and the attraction illuminates the relationship between tourism and the environment (New Zealand Ministry of Tourism, 1992). Each element is in an equilibrium relationship with the others. A change in the needs of present visitors (for example, a shift in the target

market from young European backpackers toward middle-class Asians) will have implications for the attractions and the host community. A change in the host community (for example, the impact of MTV on the young people in your favourite mountain village) will alter the attraction. Such linkages can be either positive or negative and are usually susceptible to exogenous forces, such as fashion, marketing, weather, political shifts or exchange rates. Sustainable tourism management is possible only by dynamically adjusting to fluctuations in these forces from site to site. When the three elements are in balance, they will be mutually supportive.

In Vietnam, it is unfortunately rather likely that these three elements will move out of balance due to the rapid increase in tourism and a failure to develop and implement management practices to prevent the misuse and consequent deterioration of natural and cultural assets. For the visitor, it is important that the attractions and experience meet their expectations of value for money. The attractions that exist today, which are primarily related either to the natural physical environment or the unique culture, must hold their appeal for future visitors. The sustainability of the visitor experience is vital to the survival of tourism. For the host community, the economic benefits flowing from tourism must continue to match the costs (eg. there must be local jobs). The positive social relationships between visitor and host must continue, and tourism must not be perceived by Vietnamese to threaten the local environment or debasing their own cultural identities. Tourism must be socially sustainable.

For the nation, it is essential that tourism contributes to economic development, and positively affects the balance of payments and domestic employment. These benefits flow directly to the regional and district level, with visitors using local goods and services, both directly through the industry (eg. staying in a guest house) and indirectly (e.g. purchasing goods in a shop). Sustainable tourism is an economic necessity. For the industry, it is important that substantial capital investments generate returns sufficient to attract more capital, and that growth occurs at a level which justifies additional investment. The intention is obviously to stay in business and continue to retain or increase market share indefinitely into the future. However, wise management of visitor attractions will ensure commercial sustainability. But because any specific visitor activity (trekking, visiting the Citadel at Hue) cannot be done without the visitor interacting with local people and calling on a wide range of infrastructural activities - e.g., transport, accommodation, food, shopping, parking, - there is more to sustainable tourism than simply protecting the natural attractions.

Sustainability as an Element in Tourism Policy

At present visitor levels there is no obvious or imminent general "threat" to future visitors' enjoyment of their experiences, to the ability of host communities to cater for tourism, or to the natural resources that make up much of the tourism product in Vietnam. At projected growth rates, this soon may change. As environmental damage occurs, the product loses its attraction very rapidly. If tourism earnings are weakened, then a positive force for sustaining and developing the community and the environment is lost. It is in the interest of all sectors - the visitor, the attraction, the host community, the nation and

the industry - to develop a mutually beneficial, positive relationship. This relationship includes:

1. bringing satisfaction and enrichment to visitors, strengthening a respect for Vietnam's natural areas and historic places, and promoting greater cultural appreciation and understanding;
2. supporting the maintenance and improvement of Vietnam's environment and heritage and ensuring its preservation for future generations;
3. generating jobs and wealth, diversifying regional economies, widening economic opportunities and stimulating appropriate investment;
4. improving the quality of community life by widening choice, supporting local services and infrastructure, and bringing social contact.

Recognition of Environmental Sensitivity

Given this delicate balance, it is important for the industry to pinpoint those visitor attractions that are sensitive to population pressures. Features such as the Phong Nha and Ha Long Caves, hiking trails in areas of high scenic or habitat value, and wildlife breeding colonies, where visitors can either damage the physical environment (caves), disturb the attraction (famous colonies of bird and fish) or reduce the visitor experience (wilderness trekking), need priority attention. Having targeted key attractions, the industry can then work with control authorities to develop management practices and funding formulae. The key aspect is to recognise the potential for problems before they occur, and also to recognise that problems may involve physical damage, or excessive numbers of visitors spoiling an experience, or both. The important issues that need to be addressed include:

1. how much use the resource can sustain;
2. what management solutions would improve its sustainability; and
3. how benefits can be equitably shared by competing interests.

The New Zealand Ministry of Tourism points out a popular misconception about tourism - the greater the number of people wanting a particular tourism experience, the more local people see that experience as threatened. This contradiction is based on the belief that tourism causes over use of scarce natural resources. The reality is that with improved management and appropriate facilities an individual resource may sustain considerably more use. For example, the geyser known as Old Faithful in Yellowstone National Park, USA is seen by most of the park's 2.9 million visitors each year - this is twice the annual visitor arrival figure for all of Vietnam in 1996.

The current trend is to adapt a site to accommodate visitor demand, rather than barring

access. Again, for example, in New Zealand a simple way of protecting the environment while allowing access to greater numbers of people is to use elevated timber viewing decks and walkways. This concept could be applied to the Cuc Phuong, Cat Ba and Con Dao Forests (Lonely Planet, 1995).

Cultural Sensitivity

Along with its natural attractions, the most significant factor in Vietnam's tourism resource base is the indigenous traditional culture. To much of the world, Indochinese culture is recognised as unique, and Vietnam traditional culture has long played an important part in promoting Vietnam tourism. However, the revitalisation of traditional language and culture requires the approval and participation of the local community and provides an opportunity to develop a far richer appreciation of traditional culture by visitors. There is a choice between "party performances" and a more substantial expression of traditional culture. For example, interpretative experiences of customs and of myths and legends, traditional arts and crafts (wood carving, embroidery, lacquer ware making, folk painting, bronze casting, and silk weaving), use of natural resources for medicinal purposes, water puppetry, cheo recital, classic drama performance, ornamental tree planting, and methods of food preparation, may well be the pathway from culturally non-sustainable to culturally sustainable tourism. Here the role of information technology may be to capture and archive unique features of indigenous culture. These may be edited and presented to tourists or researchers who wish only awareness of deeper aspects of the culture, and would also serve as an important channel for cultural transmission to future generations.

Cultural Stewardship

However, the promotion of tourism through Vietnamese culture has tended to occur at a fairly superficial level. The current danger is that irreplaceable cultural information will be lost as Vietnam swings into a phase of modernisation (Lo, 1997). Other ASEAN countries have experienced this transition, during which the young tend to temporarily discard their local culture in favour of a version of the international youth culture. Although many young people from these countries are now in search of their cultural roots, many of the languages, songs, traditional practices, and other artefacts of their original culture are forever lost to them.

Multimedia technology, rapidly declining in price while increasing in its capability, portability, and ease-of-use, is an excellent means of capturing remote cultures before they disappear under the powerful onslaught of foreign ideas and culture that electronic media will carry to the villages. Here the government should seek out culturally sensitive foreign donors to provide technology and anthropological training to Vietnamese who would be willing to travel to the remote areas to record their cultures for posterity. Later, these records will be an invaluable source of authentic information as specific segments of the industry begin to differentiate around a cultural model.

The effect of visitors on Vietnamese life is also relevant to tourism sustainability. In

many other markets, mass tourism leads to alienation between hosts and visitors - either through the scale of tourism impacts on society, or through excessive disparity between the incomes and lifestyles of the visitors and the visited. The Vietnamese pride themselves on being friendly, helpful and approachable, and these attributes are real and appreciated by visitors. The local tourism industry should go to great lengths to nurture and sustain this behavior. Without adequate management however, these qualities would be threatened by a rapid increase in the volume of visitors.

Tourism offers other opportunities for environmental enhancement and sustainability. Empty buildings that might otherwise remain unwanted or decay can be revived through tourism. The Royal Citadel of Hue, the Hon Chong buildings in Nha Trang, and even Hoi An and the ancient city of Da Nang are examples of old buildings being given a new lease of life, with appeal to visitors being a prime factor in this process. Here the potential role of information technology is to provide a record of the original state of a building and to model or simulate plans for their eventual restoration. The national schools of architecture might find such a project an interesting challenge that would also introduce new concepts of urban renewal into their curriculum.

Adventure, Special Interest, and Eco-tourism

In Vietnam there is an increasing range of niche market tourism activity, eg., adventure tours (rafting, hunting, mountain bike riding, canoeing, wilderness fishing, boating festival, etc.), or specialist tours (nature watching, heritage tours, gardens, diving, etc.). In addition, a significant trend over the past decade has been the growth in independent travel. One consequence is a broader flow of visitors moving well beyond the trunk route (Hanoi, Hue, Da Nang, Nha Trang, Ho Chi Minh) into areas like the Ha Long Bay-Northland, Da Lat-highland, Ha Tien-Westland, and the Vung Tau Coast. Their interests are often focused on specific activities, such as golfing (West, 1994) or bicycle touring (Rolls, 1995). The majority of such free independent travellers stay at motel, bed and breakfast, backpackers, and camping ground accommodation. The significance of this trend is that it is very much in keeping with the philosophy of sustainability and the sustainable management of resources. Its scale, relative lack of physical impact, use of existing local goods and services, and spread (dispersed rather than being focused on a few visitor attractions) all amount to a tourism pattern that is easier on the natural and social environment, at least at foreseeable levels of demand.

Linked to the development of specialist tourism markets, is the concept of "eco-tourism" - tourism that is especially concerned with the appreciation of nature. The market for visitors wishing to experience contact with the natural environment is a growing one. This has already been felt in Vietnam with visitors attracted to the Song Cuu Long basin, the primeval forests of Cuc Phuong, Cat Ba, and Con Dao, and the Sa Pa, Tam Dao, Bach Ma, and Da Lat mountain ranges. In practice, eco-tourism is in itself a major contributor in promoting sustainable management - there are social and economic reasons to look after natural attractions like the Cat Ba National Park, Ha Long Bay, Hue ancient city, and the Nha Trang, Vung Tau Coasts. They promise employment and income to local communities and foreign exchange to the nation. But perhaps more importantly from a

view point of sustainability, eco-tourism cannot survive unless the resources on which it is based are sustained. The industry therefore needs to recognise this potential, identify additional ecological resources that are likely to be of interest to visitors, and develop these and their markets in a sustainable manner. Monitoring and reporting resource use and damage is perhaps the main opportunity for IT uses in this domain.

Corporate Environmental Responsibility

As with other global industries, tourism must respond to the global trend toward environmental sensitivity. The environment, and environmental consciousness, are becoming important marketing components. Sound environmental practices can improve revenues and profits, and provide new sources of competitive advantage. The Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) recently published environmental codes of good practice and is encouraging its members to become more environmentally aware.

Vietnam tourism is only beginning to grasp this concept. Although as recently as 1993 the Prime Minister's Office required that all foreign investment feasibility studies include an environmental impact assessment, this was recently relaxed for service sector projects (Tan, 1997). This policy shift, which was no doubt intended to avoid driving nervous foreign investors away, is perhaps more likely to have the opposite effect for those whose projects depend on environmental quality as a key feature to attract tourism.

Policy Guidelines: a Starting Point

The New Zealand Ministry of Tourism recently compiled a draft set of principles consistent with that Country's Resource Management Act and with international interpretations of sustainable tourism, such as that of the World Tourism Organization (New Zealand Ministry of Tourism, 1992) (see <http://www.moc.govt.nz/tpg/> for more materials on tourism). These provide a context for understanding the full range of potential applications of information technology.

1. The environment has an intrinsic value beyond its value as a tourism asset. The process of tourism development should respect this intrinsic quality.
 - *IT Opportunities: IT is a useful tool for monitoring and analysing environmental data.*
2. Sustainable tourism management involves protecting and enhancing natural (and cultural) attractions for future generations, which means short term considerations must not threaten its long term survival.
 - *IT Opportunities: As noted earlier, IT is an ideal tool for capturing the current state-of-the-environment to facilitate future conservation efforts.*
3. Tourism sustainability also involves meeting both the needs of present visitors and of host communities including the interests of traditional cultures, a rural community, a

fishing village, or the nation in general. Tourism should encourage a positive relationship between the attraction, the visitor and the host community.

- *IT Opportunities: IT, and especially wireless communications, is a powerful tool for coordination. Vietnam recently developed a national cellular telephone network that provides an ideal means to coordinate among competing demands on limited facilities.*
4. Tourism activities and developments should respect the scale, nature and character of the place in which they are sited.
- **IT Opportunities:** IT can be used to monitor activity levels in sites with limited carrying capacity, to communicate use levels to central authorities, and as an analysis tool to help establish the relationships among types of user, use levels, and damage.

Sustainable tourism cannot be divorced from its broader social and political context. The tourism industry, central and local government, environmental control agencies and the community all have an obligation to respect the above principles and to work together for the common benefit. Information technology is simply a tool that can help them move together in the same direction.

Based on these principles, Table 3 models opportunities to apply information technology to the tourism industry. Here strategy is seen as a purposeful pattern of behavior which alters the relationships between entities and the forces which govern them, in this case the tourism industry and the physical, economic, and cultural environment in which it operates (Mintzberg 1995). Information technology use is strategic when it supports decision or action that alters these relationships. In this sense, the pattern of action outlined above represents a step toward the responsible use of information technology in support of the development of sustainable tourism, and the general model applies to any developing country.

Table 3: Strategic Model for the Use of IT in Developing Sustainable Tourism

| Proposed Action Elements | Promote | Provide | Preserve | Protect |
|---|----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|
| Expand role of VNAT IT unit to include packaging and disseminating cultural information | X | X | X | |
| Provide multimedia tools/training to architectural and art colleges with research grants to encourage capture and preservation of cultural data: songs, languages, clothing | | X | X | |
| Build up the capacity of environmental engineering colleges to use IT for monitoring | | | | X |
| Require IT vendors to actively support enhanced environmental management, for example by providing satellite imagery of sensitive SITES. | | X | X | X |
| Require tour operators to use wireless technology (pagers/mobile phones) for coordination and monitoring | | X | X | X |
| Gradually implement automated monitoring of the use and status of sensitive sites, using telemetry | | | | X |
| Develop multimedia tools to promote environmental awareness within the industry | X | X | | |
| Develop easy-to-use multimedia kits to raise awareness of sustainability issues in communities that are affected by tourism | X | X | | |
| Promote internet access to disseminate information to support sustainable management practices for the industry | X | X | X | X |

Conclusions

If projected tourism growth and the promised benefits are to be realized, then the basis for Vietnam tourism - its natural attractions and cultural heritage- must also be maintained and enhanced over time. Adopting the principles of sustainable management will move the industry to positive forms of development - working with nature to meet the needs of tourists, businesses, and the community - without destroying the resource base on which it depends. Information technology can play many roles in this positive form of development, ranging from the "command-and-control" model that would provide rapid monitoring of sensitive marshland and waterways to the long-term

archiving of cultural and architectural data for future generations who wish to celebrate or restore Vietnam's rich history. Information is a management tool, in which context information technology is a strategic channel for the flow of command and control information. But technology is also culture, and IT is thus both an element in the high-technology culture of today and a tool to open pathways to yesterday.

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Investing in Sustainable Tourism in Vietnam: Implications for Governmental Policy²

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Abstract

The Vietnamese government has targeted tourism for strategic foreign direct investment (FDI). In this paper, we elaborate on governmental policies necessary to develop a sustainable, socially and ecologically desirable tourism industry through appropriate monitoring, control and regulation of key stakeholders. First, we define sustainable development in the context of tourism and indicate its relevance for Vietnam. Next, we analyze the tourism industry's balance sheet indicating economic and socio-cultural issues impacting tourism and its development. Finally, we provide policy recommendations for the future of sustainable and economically viable national tourism development in Vietnam.

The Vietnamese government has targeted the tourism sector for strategic foreign direct investment (FDI); through this strategic focus, it hopes to encourage economic growth and minimise economic and social degradation. Yet, traditional policies of growth have proven unable to curtail the concurrent growth of socially undesirable industries and environmental degradation in most high-tourist destinations around the world. This paper provides some suggestions on how a centrally directed economy can maintain sustainable tourism; and, what kinds of FDI it should try to attract to do so. First, we define sustainable development in the context of tourism and indicate its relevance to Vietnam. Next, we analyse tourism's balance sheet by itemising economic and socio-cultural costs and benefits generated by tourism; we also interpret recent governmental policy's influence in Vietnam. Finally, we provide policy recommendations for the future of sustainable and economically viable national tourism development in Vietnam.

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Sustainable Development and Tourism in Vietnam

As Butler (1993) indicated, sustainable development in the context of tourism is tourism “which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well-being of other activities and processes” (Butler 1993). This definition explicitly acknowledges tourism as an integral component of national development and therefore as a focus for governmental policy.

Table 1. Vietnam’s Economic Indicators

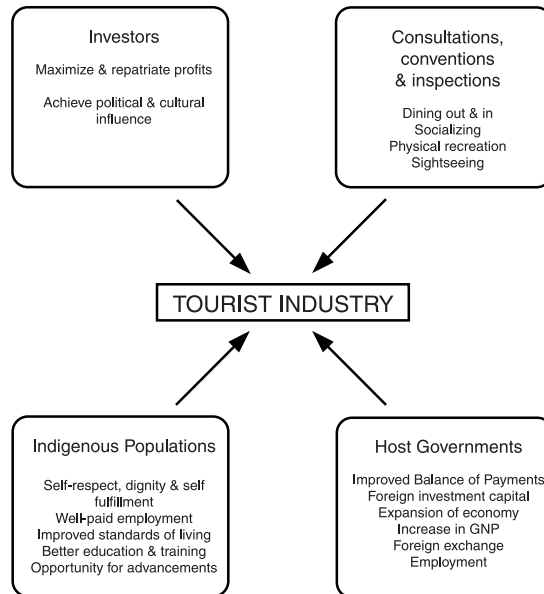
| Measure | 1996 | 1995 | 1994 |
|--|-------|-------|------|
| GDP (USD billions) | 22.3 | 20.3 | 15.5 |
| Per capita GDP (USD) | 301 | 275 | 214 |
| Per capita GDP (USD) (Hanoi & Saigon) | 900 | 778 | 4 91 |
| Inflation (% Year) | 4.5 | 12.7 | 14.4 |
| Current Account Deficit (%) | -12.0 | -10.0 | -8.6 |
| Gross Domestic Investment as a % of GDP | 29.5 | 27.1 | 25.5 |
| Gross Domestic Savings as a % of GDP | 17.7 | 17.1 | 16.9 |
| Real Growth in Key Sectors* | | | |
| GDP (%) | 9.3 | 9.5 | 8.8 |
| Agriculture (%) | 4.8 | 4.7 | 3.9 |
| Industry (%) | 15.6 | 13.9 | 12.9 |
| Services (%) | 8.9 | 10.9 | 10.2 |

Note: * Percentages based on 1989 prices.

Source: World Bank, UNDP, and General Statistics Office, Vietnam Ministry of Planning and Investment.

Although researchers and policy makers comprehend particular aspects of tourism, they often misperceive how the variables interact within economic and political systems (Hall and Jenkins 1995). These variables, and their effects on strategic decision making, become even more murky in rapidly developing and changing environments such as Vietnam (Haley, 1996; Haley and Tan, 1996; Haley and Haley, 1997a,b). From 1988 to 1995, real growth rates have hovered around 10 percent per annum in the Vietnamese economy (Asia Pacific Profiles, 1996). Table 1 sketches economic indicators for Vietnam and highlights how key economic sectors have contributed to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Figure 1. Major Stakeholders' Goals in Tourism



We argue that tourism has multiple facets that involve providing a range of interrelated goods and services by public and private sectors. Tourism also constitutes a dynamic, changing industry that requires medium and long-range planning (Rajotte, 1978); it involves many levels of inter-relationships and coordination -- at the local, state, national, regional and international levels (Shaw and Williams, 1994). Unfortunately, tourism has too often concentrated on the *what* (what markets are to be tapped, what resources are to be developed) and has ignored the *who* and the *how* (Richter, 1989). As Figure 1 indicates, the tourist industry includes several stakeholders -- investors (private and governmental), tourists (business and social), indigenous populations and host governments -- all with diverse, sometimes conflicting goals. A full understanding of development and policy instruments, including those in the context of tourism (Aislabie, 1988; Pearce, 1995; Rajotte, 1978), must include some understanding of these diverse stakeholders' goals (Haley, 1991; Haley, Low and Toh, 1996; Haley and Haley, 1997a,b). Allied industries run the gamut from airlines to infrastructure development and from accommodation to shopping and entertainment. For example, the growing tourism sector in Vietnam supports many allied industries in neighbouring countries such as Thailand and Singapore; consequently, these countries have interests in sustaining tourism in Vietnam.

In the early 1990's, tourism expanded dramatically in Vietnam after the government opened its command economy to market forces and invited Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). In 1990, about 25,000 tourists visited Vietnam; in 1995, about 1.35 million tourists (an increase of 5400 percent over the six years) brought in around USD818 million (Ihlwan, 1996). The Vietnamese government aims to attract 3.5 million tourists by the turn of this century. In 1996, committed FDI into Vietnam totalled USD8.5 billion (Vietnam's Ministry of Planning and Investment). In 1997, because of the Asian

economic crisis, committed FDI into Vietnam fell to USD 5 billion (Houghton, 1998). From 1991-1995, about 24 percent of the FDI into Vietnam poured into Tourism and Hotels; the rest flowed into Industry and Construction which attracted 47 percent, Services which got 11.2 percent, and other sectors which received 17.8 percent (Asia Pacific Profiles, 1996). However, these statistics under-represent the FDI in the tourism industry which includes Tourism and Hotels, as well as Construction and Services.

Table 2. Sources of Foreign Direct Investment in Vietnam*

| Country | No. of Projects | Total Capital (USD millions) |
|--------------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| 1 Singapore | 166 | 5,199 |
| 2 Taiwan | 299 | 4,043 |
| 3 Hong Kong | 195 | 3,643 |
| 4 Japan | 210 | 3,170 |
| 5 South Korea | 193 | 2,590 |
| 6 United States | 70 | 1,185 |
| 7 Malaysia | 57 | 1,164 |
| 8 Thailand | 78 | 1,077 |
| 9 British Virgin Islands | 49 | 969 |
| 10 France | 87 | 829 |
| 11 Switzerland | 18 | 707 |
| 12 Australia | 52 | 677 |
| 13 Great Britain | 19 | 493 |
| 14 Germany | 18 | 406 |
| 15 Netherlands | 27 | 403 |

Note: * Cumulative from Jan. 1, 1988 through July 22, 1997

Source: Vietnam's Ministry of Planning and Investment

In 1996, the Vietnamese government attracted USD8.8 billion of FDI, of which USD0.9 billion was to be targeted for the tourism sector (Houghton, 1998). As Table 2 shows, Singapore, Taiwan and Hong Kong are the biggest investors in Vietnam.

The Vietnamese government has recognised the importance of planning for and understanding tourism (Haley and Haley, 1997b). In the next section, we will examine some of the drivers behind the Vietnamese tourism industry and their positive and negative effects on development.

Tourism's Balance Sheet

As the previous section suggested, the Vietnamese government plans to develop the tourism sector as part of a balanced economy, as a renewable resource, and in a manner

that strengthens Vietnamese society (Publishing House TRE, 1991; Thanh, 1992). Consequently, the tourism industry must generate more employment than it destroys, complement local and domestic industries, and maintain the integrity of the physical and cultural environments.

Economic Issues

Vietnam's exports in the 1990's, and by implication its relative competitive strengths, emphasise primary and agricultural products -- crude oil, coal, rice, coffee, marine products, tin, peanuts and rubber (Vietnam's Ministry of Trade). Vietnam's imports in the 1990's emphasise commodities used to develop hotels and infrastructure associated with tourism: petroleum products, steel and cement (Vietnam's Ministry of Trade). Table 3 highlights that Vietnam, as it strives to develop, has incurred an increasingly deteriorating trade balance. And neighbouring, more-dynamic Asian economies, such as Thailand and Malaysia, illustrate through their recent economic woes, that persistent trade deficits do detrimentally affect economic viability, growth and development.

Table 3. Vietnam's Merchandise Trade Balance (USD Billions)

| | 1997 (Through July) | 1996 | 1995 | 1994 |
|---------------|------------------------|------|------|------|
| Exports | 4.86 | 7.1 | 5.2 | 4.1 |
| Imports | 6.63 | 11.1 | 7.5 | 5.3 |
| Trade Deficit | 1.77 | 4.0 | 2.3 | 1.2 |

Source: World Bank, Vietnam's Ministry of Trade

The tourism industry constitutes a double-edged sword when used as a basis for economic development. Tourism can provide economic benefits to Vietnam (Aislabie, Stanton and Tisdell, 1988; Harris and Nelson, 1993) such as:

- earning foreign exchange;
- extending existing infrastructure;
- developing other inter-related local products and resources;
- spreading development geographically and across industrial sectors;
- complementing products of other economic activities; and
- increasing full-time, part-time and seasonal employment.

thereby helping Vietnam to achieve its goal of 5 percent unemployment in cities and not more than 20 percent underemployment in rural areas (Asia Pacific Profiles, 1996).

But when wielded improperly, the double-edged sword can cut deeply and unkindly. Through dynamic ripple effects, tourism can:

- increase inflation (which, as Table 1 shows, the Vietnamese government has increasingly controlled);
- increase unemployment;
- increase susceptibility to political changes, rumours, spread of diseases and economic fluctuations as it becomes a more central part of the economy;
- increase unbalanced economic development; and
- increase visual pollution and destruction of resources.

Astute policy measures need to acknowledge these dangers and to shape tourism's relationships, especially with employment, renewability of resources and foreign exchange.

Employment

The tourism industry creates jobs in two ways (Aislabie, Stanton and Tisdell, 1988; Forsyth and Dwyer, 1994). First, tourism immediately creates jobs through employing local citizens in hotels, restaurants, and entertainment and tourist services that cater directly to tourists. Second, tourism creates jobs through multiplier effects. For example, by creating demand for local products supplied to establishments that would not have existed without tourists, tourism creates employment in related, service industries; tourism also creates jobs to serve the additional demand from otherwise-unemployed local citizens working in the industry.

The tourism industry, however, also can destroy jobs, or reduce job creation, and to the extent it does, policy makers have to adjust the multiplier effects (Cohen, 1995). First, tourists rarely visit a destination to observe industry and labour; they usually prefer entertainment and relaxation through human-devised activities, historical and cultural achievements, or natural beauty. Tourists prefer visiting casinos to factories, historical monuments to run-of-the-mill office buildings, and old forests to logged forests. To the extent that tourism displaces or prevents the creation of jobs for factory workers, office workers, farmers, or other productively employed individuals, it destroys these individuals' jobs and those of individuals in related services.

Second, and especially detrimental to developing economies such as Vietnam, underemployment often dampens tourism's multiplier effects (Ecologically Sustainable Development Working Groups, 1991). To the extent the underemployed extend their efforts and increase their productivity within their jobs, the tourism industry's growth will fail to employ additional people in related, service industries, or in those industries and businesses indirectly affected by tourism.

Third, tourism can destroy jobs through currency-exchange value effects. If tourism increases demand sufficiently for the local currency to drive up its value in foreign-

exchange markets, it will raise the price of the country's exports. The now more-expensive exports will encounter decreased demand in foreign markets, thereby reducing employment in the country's export industries.

Recently, the Vietnamese Central Bank loosened restrictions on trading of the Vietnamese Dong, indicating a possible, planned move to a managed-float system. A floating Dong may help Vietnam's trade balances, and by expanding money supply, stimulate local demand and increase employment; however, it may also adversely affect employment. The new policy calls for the Dong to trade for as much as 5 percent above or below the government's guideline rate (Asian Business Review, 1997). Tourists purchasing the Dong can drive up its price, thus making Vietnamese exports more expensive in foreign markets and imports cheaper in Vietnam. Fewer exports could reduce employment in traditional, export industries thereby offsetting employment gains created by tourism. So long as the government can maintain its desired currency value, the fixed-currency system restricts the Dong's appreciation; consequently, Vietnamese exports would not become more expensive in foreign markets and foreign imports would not become cheaper. In February 1998, the Government devalued the Dong by 5.29 percent. However, given Vietnam's large trade deficits, a successful tourism industry will probably not result in the Dong's appreciation but may moderate its fall. Even if the government allows the currency to float, an oversupply of the Dong in international currency markets (caused by persistent trade deficits) will exert downward pressure on its value.

Resource Renewability

In Vietnam, with some of the most verdant natural spots in the region, the tourism boom is fuelling fears of ecological damage. For example, environmentalists have protested the proliferation of water and chemical-intensive golf courses in the sub-region (Gill, 1996). However, managing environmentally oriented tourism facilities as renewable rather than finite resources poses unique challenges (Hunter and Green, 1995).

Some of these challenges revolve around coordinating the industry's profits with the industry's seasonality and cycles. Seasonality makes imperative a situation where tourist facilities must earn crucial portions of revenues and profits during limited periods in the year. During peak seasons, seasonal tourist facilities may frequently operate at or near full capacities even though they raise prices. However, during the balance of the year, seasonal tourist facilities must continue to cover fixed costs, such as maintenance of facilities and grounds, while revenues significantly fall through reduced volume, reduced prices, or both. Consequently, managers must build seasonal tourism facilities that can generate sufficient revenues during peak seasons to carry the facilities' debt burdens through slack seasons.

Additionally, as tourism areas achieve success, property values rise. More-expensive land has to attain greater returns per square meter to achieve profitability; hence, usually, the facilities' carrying capacities become denser. The resulting difficulties appear readily visible in such popular beach resorts as Pattaya in Thailand, Rio de Janeiro in Brazil, and

on Hawaii's Big Island. In these tourist areas emerge large, glossy hotels and heavily-degraded environments; relative slums also arise as inflated, land prices force local residents from old neighbourhoods, within reasonable distances of tourist areas where they work, into densely-packed residential ghettos.

In 1996, Vietnam had 51,000 hotel rooms with more than half of them up to international standards; the number of hotel rooms should rise to 76,000 by the year 2000 (Xinhua News Agency, 1996). Vietnam has begun to limit FDI in the hotel sector. The government encourages FDI in the construction of entertainment sites, large tourist villages and ecological resorts, but not large hotels. The Vietnam Tourism Administration announced that the country needs 10 or 15 large tourist areas, each with an investment of USD200 to 300 million. The government still invites construction of hotels in targeted areas such as Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, Hai Phong and some others (Xinhua News Agency, 1996). Policy lessons from Bali indicate that by limiting hotels and tourists resorts' size (though not their quality), Vietnam should expend fewer scarce resources, increase beneficial multiplier effects and retain greater control of development: small guest houses need less capital, create greater backward linkages, increase multiplier effects, and increase informal employment more than large, five-star hotels (Wall, 1993).

The government also needs to maintain well-used infrastructure, such as roads and telephone lines, as tourism develops. In early 1997, The Prime Minister of Vietnam, Mr. Vo Van Kiet, called for mass mobilisation of the country's work force to modernise crumbling infrastructure. In an interview with the official Vietnam News Agency, the Prime Minister gave few details but analysts believe that all citizens of working age will work for a fixed number of days each year (Asian Business Review, 1997). Failing, inadequate infrastructure can prove a major impediment to the tourism industry's expansion in Vietnam. However, a non-specialised, mobilised, work force may not have the ability to expand and to renovate to acceptable international standards rail lines, ports, airport terminals, runways, and other infrastructure important to tourism.

Foreign Exchange

Tourism can either bring foreign exchange into Vietnam or leak it out of the Vietnamese economy. Ultimately, governmental policy should encourage foreigners to spend more in Vietnam than Vietnamese spend in the foreign countries (either as tourists or to purchase essential resources and skills or to augment infrastructure). One driver behind the tourist explosion in the Association of South East Asian Nations' (ASEAN) member countries seems to revolve around the vast amounts of surplus capital generated every year from illegal activities such as prostitution and drug trafficking. For many illegal activities, laundering cash in real estate, hotels, casinos and golf courses seems to offer lucrative and safe solutions; although these illegal activities create an underground economy, they do not generate foreign exchange for Vietnam and must be adequately regulated.

Socio-cultural Issues

At its most sublime, tourism has the potential to broaden education; increase international

peace and understanding; dissolve language, social, class, religious and racial barriers; and, increase appreciation of one's own and extraneous socio-cultural elements (Cohen, 1995; Harris and Nelson, 1993). However, tourism may equally increase misunderstanding, stereotyping, xenophobia, demonstration effects and social pollution; fuel the commercialisation of culture and religion; and, contribute to prostitution, conflicts and crime (Pearce, 1995). Astute policy measures need to acknowledge and to shape tourism's relationships, especially with cultural values. Indeed, alarmed by the growth of the sex industry along with growing tourism, the government has launched a campaign to eradicate "social evils" (Gill, 1996).

Some socio-cultural issues involve policies emphasising different types of tourism developments. As we indicated earlier, the Vietnamese government is encouraging the development of large tourist areas (Xinhua News Agency, 1996) that often include large, resort-style, hotel complexes. Large, resort complexes offer differentiated quality and price levels to accommodate several budgets and frequently include their own commercial complexes. Their hotels' high business volumes, and tendencies to collect in close proximity, ensure that the large resorts will generate a significant amount of solid and liquid wastes, as well as social and cultural pollution. Alternatively, the Vietnamese government could emphasise building smaller resorts, aimed at niche markets: at the lower end, these smaller resorts will generally have local ownership and management; and at the higher end, will tend to emphasise smaller hotels at the super-premium level (such as the Banyan Tree). In Bali, small guest houses decreased migration stimuli, increased host-guest interactions, increased local control, and had fewer land, water, energy and waste-disposal needs than five-star hotels, thereby providing a more harmonious socio-cultural alternative (Wall, 1993).

Policy Recommendations and Conclusion

To conclude it is appropriate to make some observations on the type of policy recommendations that would most benefit Vietnam's tourism industry and therefore its people. Vietnam has some assets that encourage the development of its tourism sector: these include a fascinating history, beautiful beaches and scenic interior areas, as well as a complex allure due to recent wars for independence. While 80 percent of its population lives in rural areas, about 93 percent of Vietnamese males and 83 percent of Vietnamese females are literate - one of the highest literacy rates in Asia (The Vietnam Business Journal, 1997). A significant proportion of Vietnam's population has technical skills, education and training. With the Viet people forming the majority, Vietnam also includes many minority peoples and cultures that offer diverse cultural events to attract tourists. Economically, however, Vietnam lacks the infrastructure and industrial development to generate the greatest possible returns on its assets (Haley and Haley, 1997b). As the previous sections indicated, the tourism industry's growth will bring many economic and social changes: the government has to monitor routinely and to evaluate these changes to prevent and to cure economic and socio-cultural dysfunction (Harris and Nelson, 1993; Marsh, 1993; Nelson, 1993).

For effective policies, some economic questions that need routine answers include:

- Which stakeholders receive income from tourists?
- Which stakeholders pay costs from tourism?
- How have indigenous populations benefited from the industry?
- What patterns of business initiation, bankruptcies and profits permeate the Vietnamese tourism industry?

Some social questions also need routine answers:

- What kinds of jobs (quantity and quality) is tourism creating?
- Who is migrating in and out of the communities?
- What complaints do major stakeholders voice about tourism?
- Who are the tourists (numbers, proportions of repeat visitors, lengths of stay)?

While promoting tourism, to aid effective policy formulation, reformulation and amendment, the Vietnamese Government should:

- Monitor changes in the ownership of land (specifically, changes in non-resident/resident and private/community ownership ratios);
- Monitor changes in the ownership of tourism operations (specifically, changes in ownership among groups including the government, private non-residential groups, franchises, and residents);
- Monitor changes in employment and job characteristics (specifically, changes in male/female and resident/non-resident ratios, as well as formal/informal types of employment for available tourism jobs);
- Undertake area and sector-specific research on tourism's overall effects;
- Support the development of economic and stakeholder models of tourism;
- Evaluate routinely the balance of trade impacts of tourism on regions and communities; and
- Monitor changes in rates of socially transmitted diseases, unwed pregnancies, drug use, and other social ills frequently associated with tourism.

For sustainable and economically viable tourism development in Vietnam, the Vietnamese Government should:

- Develop and implement new economic and social indicators that define national well-being in the sustainable-development sense;
- Identify support industries for tourism where Vietnam can have a conceivable advantage and encourage their development to ensure increased employment;
- Include tourism in land-use planning;
- Develop standards and regulations for economic and social-impact assessments, and monitoring and auditing of existing and proposed tourism developments;
- Design and implement public-consultation techniques and processes to involve all major stakeholders in making tourism-related decisions;

- Create tourism advisory boards that involve all stakeholders;
- Continue to design and to implement educational and awareness programs that sensitise people to the issues of sustainable development in the context of tourism;
- Provide and maintain local access to training and other forms of support for tourism;
- Provide and maintain backward and forward linkages between tourism activities and other formal and informal community activities;
- Develop adequate tools and techniques to analyse tourism-development projects' effects on heritage sites and ancient monuments as an integral part of cultural and environmental-impact assessment;
- Ensure that tourism destinations' carrying capacities reflect sustainable levels of development and are monitored and adjusted appropriately;
- Enforce regulation for illegal trade in historic objects and craft, unofficial archaeological research and the desecration of sacred sites;
- Assist and support lower levels of government to develop their own tourism-development strategies in conjunction with conservation strategies;
- Apply sectoral and regional accounting systems for tourism;
- Develop design and construction standards to ensure that tourism development projects harmonise with local culture and national environments;
- Regulate and control tourism in environmentally and culturally-sensitive areas;
- Brief regularly all governmental departments involved in tourism on the concepts of sustainable development;
- Represent adequately tourism interests at major caucus-planning meetings that affect the environment and economy;
- Ensure that national and local tourism-development agreements emphasise policies of sustainable, tourism development;
- Propose measures to maintain health and wellbeing and to minimise social ills.

Should the Country be able to implement these recommendations, the economic and social future of the Vietnamese tourism industry will be assured.

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Sustainable Cultural Heritage Tourism in Vietnamese Cities: The Case of Hanoi

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Abstract

The policy connections between Vietnamese tourism development and urban planning need to be strengthened in order to protect the cultural heritage. This is critical to the sustainability of Vietnamese tourism because of Vietnam's heavy reliance on 'cultural tourism'. Since most international visitors visit Vietnam once only and focus on a few key cities and towns, the argument for protecting the cultural heritage of urban Vietnam is compelling. However, the urban heritage is threatened by the economic forces set loose by the 1986 doi moi policies. In Hanoi modern urban redevelopment is rapidly undercutting the imagery that attracts foreign tourists. Hanoi's planners are aware of this but the political resolve and planning tools have been insufficient for the task of balancing development and heritage protection. Signs of hope are seen in the recent public protests forcing the redesign of several high-rise developments in the vicinity of Hoan Kiem lake. While the literature on sustainable tourism is usually concerned with the negative impacts of tourism itself on cultural heritage resources, there is also a need to consider other processes and agencies of change that threaten these resources and, hence, the sustainability of Vietnamese tourism generally.

Introduction

The policy connections between Vietnamese tourism development and urban planning need to be strengthened and the urban development and the tourism development sectors brought together. This paper argues that the managers of Vietnam's tourism industry must play a bigger part in determining the kind of cities Vietnam should have in the future and, especially, the kinds of heritage assets that should be protected. They should do this, not only for the sake of tourists, but especially for present and future generations of Vietnamese themselves. Unless this happens, foreign investors (including those from the South East and East Asian regions) will determine the urban environment, and their principal interests are in making profits for foreign shareholders, not in local cultural needs. Vietnamese cities will become like Bangkok and Pattaya (Smith, 1997). Lessons can be learned from 'Old World' cities, especially in Europe, where development in heritage areas has been controlled. Cities like Paris, Berlin and London remain major destinations for international tourism partly because they have directed new growth, especially high-rise growth, to areas outside the historic cores.

Contemporary Prominence of Cultural Tourism

'Cultural tourism' as an important form of international tourist activity has been in

existence at least since upper class northern Europeans began making their 'Grand Tours' of artistic centres and archaeological sites around the Mediterranean in the eighteenth century. The importance of culture as a major factor in determining the attractiveness of tourist regions has been subject of scholarly research since at least the 1970s, with the pioneering study by Ritchie and Zins (1978). However, in much of the recent discourse of tourism research, definitions of cultural tourism have continued to take their lead from the Grand Tour fascination with classical monuments and have adopted a narrow view of what constitutes 'culture'. The activities of major world heritage bodies, such as UNESCO and ICOMOS, are also based on this narrow, perhaps elitist view of culture (Drost, 1996).

It is because such a definition is adopted that Peleggi (1996), for example, in his admirable study of national and international tourism trends in Thailand, is able to assert that cultural tourism is not extensive. But heritage studies and tourism studies appear to have fallen behind the debates about the nature of culture that have raged in the humanities and social sciences over the past two decades. These debates led to the emergence of 'cultural studies' as a distinctive field of inquiry based on a conception of 'culture' as comprising the full range of material artefacts (including places of residence, work, worship, government, recreation, works of art, tools), of mental and spiritual 'artefacts' (systems of ideas and beliefs, aesthetic perceptions, values) and of distinctive forms of behaviours (modes of organisation, rituals) created by people regardless of rank and education and transmitted from generation to generation (Bullock et al, 1988:195). Taking this wider definition, interest in different cultures assumes, therefore, far greater significance as a factor motivating tourists. Moreover, we are forced to recognise cultural tourism as a major, perhaps the predominant, form of international tourist activity.

Culture defined in this broad way is the main attraction to international tourists coming to Vietnam, and this involves the various Vietnamese ways of life, past and present, and the physical settings in which they have been or are still enacted. International tourists are not drawn by individual monuments of great scale and antiquity; indeed, apart perhaps from the Hue citadel and mausolea, Vietnam has few individual drawcards to compete with Borobudur or the Taj Mahal. Nor do natural features appear to be the main attractions, although Ha Long Bay and the beaches of Nha Trang and Da Nang may be important and the Tonkin Alps have considerable potential. The hill-tribe people are a source of fascination to the more intrepid travellers, but there is limited scope for tourist development here without destroying the fabric of hill-tribe life and the touristic interest with it.

This is important for Vietnam if one considers the types of tourists Vietnam is attracting (and is likely to continue to attract in the foreseeable future) and the reasons why tourists are coming to Vietnam. In order to develop a sustainable tourism strategy for Hanoi, it is equally important to identify the types of tourists visiting Hanoi and the reasons for their visits. We need to distinguish clearly between domestic and international tourists - and, further, between regional international and long-distance international tourists - because what each type of tourist wants from a visit to Vietnam, or to Hanoi, varies considerably.

Vietnam appears to suffer from a low return rate for international visitors. Very few come back a second time. This does not necessarily mean that the Vietnamese tourism industry has failed; rather, it reflects the fact that international tourists are 'collecting' places (Butler 1997:30). They will come to Vietnam once and then move on to other places. This is especially true of long-distance international visitors - from Europe, North America, perhaps even Australia and New Zealand. International visitors from the East/South East Asian region are more likely to return, because of proximity and price factors. In this way, they are more like domestic tourists. For these types of tourists, the Vietnamese tourism industry needs to develop a wide range of attractions so that these visitors can do something different each time they come. But, with the long-distance international tourists, it is necessary to recognise that they come only once - probably for 10 days to three weeks - and that their itineraries will be restricted. In fact, their itineraries are likely to be two cities (Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh), or perhaps three (if Hue and Da Nang/Hoi An can market themselves more effectively), with one or two side-trips to the countryside - in the North, to Ha Long Bay, Sa Pa, Dien Bien, Hoa Lu or the Perfumed Pagoda; in the South, to Cu Chi/Tay Ninh or Da Lat.

In other words, for most international tourists, the two biggest cities in Vietnam are the main tourist locations. It is therefore essential that these cities are kept attractive, not like Jakarta, Bangkok or Taipei which are increasingly shunned by tourists. What do international tourists find attractive in these cities? What needs to be protected? In the case of Hanoi, this appears to be the multi-layered nature of the cities - Sino-Vietnamese, French, Revolutionary, Soviet, post-doi moi - and the rich Vietnamese way of life that takes place in these urban settings.

Recent research by Biles, Lloyd and Logan (in press) into the images that are used by the tourism industries in the United States, France and Australia to 'sell' Vietnam as a destination suggests that the main markets have been very different in these three source countries so far. The French, currently the largest tourist component, mainly come in highly organised, middle-to-top of the price range tours; the Americans have not come in large numbers yet and have tended to come in small tour groups; the Australians, on the other hand, tend to be budget travellers and much less interested in group travel, especially the young backpackers who pioneered Australian travel to this country. It emerges clearly from an analysis of the tourist marketing literature that the dominant images - and therefore, one supposes, the dominant attractions - relate to cultural traditions and cultural history, with a good dose of colonial nostalgia and fascination with war-time events thrown in. Vietnam is portrayed as one of the modern world's few remaining 'untouched' countries - a paradox indeed in view of the impact the West has had on it through colonisation, war and socialism - and tourists are urged to visit before global economic forces internationalise Vietnam's culture.

In fact, the relics of French colonial life in the towns and cities dominate the publicity brochures: tree-lined streetscapes of villas, town halls, government palaces, opera houses and art deco. These give Vietnamese cultural townscapes a distinctiveness compared with competing Asian destinations, whereas the shop-house districts and the rural landscapes of paddy fields are seen as repeating to a large extent what may be found in Thailand,

China or Indonesia. But other images of buildings, precincts and streetscapes are also important in the tourist literature: pagodas, temples and shrines conjure up the earlier Sino-Vietnamese era. Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum represents the later revolutionary period while, less frequently featuring in advertisements, socialist monuments recall the post-colonial years when Vietnam came within the Soviet Union's orbit. In short, the built environment of towns and cities is a major tourist attraction because it reflects Vietnamese cultural and political history and because it provides the frame for cultural life today. It is this cultural heritage of Vietnam's urban centres that has been the main basis of the strong development of local and foreign tourism markets during the 1990s - not individual historic monuments, rural scenery, beaches or bays.

These conclusions are supported by Tran Kiem Luu and Mai Kim Dinh (1997:78). When they asked international travellers how Vietnam could market itself better, 78 per cent said 'by using its historical cultural heritage'. Forty-nine per cent said 'countryside scenery' and less than 15 per cent said 'beaches'. Only about 12 per cent said 'leisure and entertainment offerings'. It is the 'authentic' character of Vietnam's culture, seen by tourists most frequently in the cities, that tops the list. Visitors to Hanoi almost invariably come away fascinated by the juxtaposition of Ancient and French Quarters, the contrasting architecture and streetscapes, and the busy social life that they contain. If international tourism in Hanoi is to be sustained, this is what must be protected. There is no need to 'create' cultural shows or tourist precincts; tourists are impressed by the 'authenticity' of the experiences they enjoy in Hanoi, a living city - not a museum or a theme park.

Lord (1997:198-9) seeks to explain this interest in understanding other cultures as a paradigm shift related to levels of education, affluence and leisure time, but also to higher levels of ultra-violet rays leading to a shift away from beach-based tourism. The economic significance of this tourist traffic to Vietnam is immense. Foreign tourists rose from 250,000 in 1990 to 1 million in 1994 (to which need to be added local tourists who increased from 1 million in 1990 to 3.5 million). In 1994, tourist activities had generated employment for 15,000 persons directly involved in tourist services, and tens of thousands of others in related services (Thuan Hai, 1995). The numbers of foreign tourists have continued to increase, reaching 1.6 million in 1995, and are projected to reach 1.9 million in 1997 and 3.8 million by the year 2000 (Xinhua News, 4/1/1997; Tran Dinh Thao, 1996). Cultural heritage has already helped produce a thriving cultural tourism industry; clearly the protection of Vietnam's cultural landscapes must be seen as a policy priority if the international tourism industry is to continue to grow into the twenty-first century.

To repeat, then, the built environment of towns and cities is a major tourist attraction because it reflects Vietnamese cultural and political history and because it provides the frame for cultural life today. However, in many Vietnamese towns and cities, the cultural heritage embodied in the physical townscapes is under threat. I have argued elsewhere (Logan, 1997) that, while Asian cities are increasing in number and size, they are becoming more like Western cities, as result of the globalisation of development capital and the electronic media. In Vietnam, Hanoi and other cities are being re-shaped by

economic forces set loose by the *doi moi* policies introduced in 1986. But, it is also apparent that, in many Asian societies, this is being partly countered by a growing recognition of traditional urban forms. The outcome of this clash between the forces of globalisation and localism has major implications for the Vietnamese tourism industry which has been developing, over the last decade, a strong local and foreign tourism market based on the cultural heritage of Vietnam's cities.

Cultural Tourism in Hanoi

Defining a sustainable basis for Hanoi's international tourism presents difficulties. Hanoi probably has no major historic monument by international standards, unless the Van Mieu or Ho Chi Minh's mausoleum are counted. Nor does the city and its surrounding area have physical features of international note, although the river and lake system is not without significance and, in many parts (such as around the Hoan Kiem, Tay, Thien Quang and Bay Mau lakes), lends very considerable charm to the city. Not even its busy street life is, in itself, unique: shop-house quarters exist in many other Asian cities. Hanoi's uniqueness lies in the combination of these environmental assets - the still relatively high degree of integrity in its multi-layered cultural townscapes which elicit memories and myths from Vietnamese history and which act as settings for contemporary social activities (Logan, 1994, 1996).

But this cultural heritage is rapidly being re-shaped as a result of the *doi moi* policies introduced in 1986. Hanoi's precincts and streetscapes are becoming more like those in Western cities as result of economic and cultural globalisation. In terms of tourist potential, it is modern urban redevelopment which is of most concern because it is rapidly undercutting the imagery that our research shows are highly attractive to foreign tourists. The capacity of Hanoi's townscape to continue to enchant tourists is under threat, and, since Hanoi's main tourist attraction is its urban environment, the economic benefits tourism might bring to the city are also threatened.

Hanoi's planners are aware of this and it is heartening to read Prof Dr Nguyen Manh Kiem, Vice Minister of Construction, in a recent issue of the journal *Ambio* (1996:109), describing the current Hanoi master plan as intent upon maintaining the traditional beauty of Hanoi:

"Tourist villages, historic relics, and flower villages will remain side by side with large commercial centres and modern buildings. This is the future Hanoi".

The carrying capacity of the Ancient and French Quarters has been the subject of much attention and an effort is being made to curb the wave of uncoordinated redevelopment of sites for mini-hotels and other multi-storey buildings (Logan, 1996). But the political resolve and planning tools have been insufficient to date for the task of balancing development and heritage protection. On the other hand, there are some distinct signs of hope. Recent high-rise developments in the vicinity of Hoan Kiem lake have

demonstrated the need for town planning tighter controls to protect the quality and amenity of key heritage areas. Twin business towers are about to be constructed on the site of the now-demolished Godard department store site on Hoan Kiem's south-eastern corner; the ugly Daiwoo building mars the northern end; and the blank rear wall of a high-rise now juts into the skyline beyond the People's Committee Building to the east. These new constructions are eroding the quality of this symbolic heart of the central Hanoi.

The recent controversy in the Hanoi media surrounding the Golden Hanoi Hotel on Hoan Kiem's western edge has demonstrated the high importance that Hanoi residents place on protecting the lake from inappropriate redevelopment (Logan 1997). The realisation that the hotel would intrude upon key vistas of the lake, its two islands, the 1843 Ngoc Son temple and the nearby French colonial floating restaurant, led to a general public outcry. According to Xua Vang Nay (February 1997:18), this was one of the ten most controversial issues of 1996 in Hanoi. Official protests by a number of professional associations - notably the Vietnamese Association of Architects and the Vietnamese Association of Historical Science - captured the public outrage and finally led to high level government intervention to renegotiate the construction permit.

Conclusion

There are already some signs of a slump in international tourism in Hanoi. Statistics for the nine months from January-September 1996, as reported in *Viet Nam News* (12 October 1996:2), indicate that hotel occupancy rates had fallen to a low 40-45 per cent in State-owned accommodation and 25-30 per cent in private accommodation. The cause is thought to be a lack of attractions in the city for foreigners. It also appears to be true that few international tourists return for a second visit - General Tourist Department reports, however, that less than 10% of visitors return but the reasons seem more to do with complications in entry and exit visa procedures and poor transport (Tran Dinh Thao, 1996).

This apparent slump should not be exaggerated: Hanoi's tourism still brought in 192,592 foreign tourists in that nine-month period and the estimated turnover was estimated to be 608,333 million dong (US\$55.3 million), ten per cent higher than the first nine months of the preceding year, while the number of domestic tourists to Hanoi rose to 40,704, 80 per cent more than predicted. Nevertheless, a decline in international tourism would be extremely serious for the local economy and, while the potential for decline remains, countervailing steps need to be taken. This is especially serious for those engaged in the tourism sector - and the Hanoi tourism industry needs to take action. The cause is thought to be a lack of attractions in the city for foreigners. Tran Kiem Luu & Mai Kim Dinh (1997:69) also refer to a perception among international travellers that Vietnam lacks tourist attractions. If international tourists regard 'culture' as the key asset for Hanoi and other cities, this perhaps means that the Vietnamese tourism industry needs to spend much more effort interpreting the culture for visitors. This does not mean 'creating' new cultural displays and events so much as protecting the real thing and explaining its

significance better. It involves the training of linguistically competent and historically versed guides, improved printed and electronic commentaries in museums and galleries, and considering new ways of getting the cultural message across to international tourists. Already business and airline magazines are including a more sophisticated coverage of Vietnamese cultural heritage items. In Hanoi's case, one new possibility might be the establishment of a Hanoi Visitors' Centre as the key point of introduction to the city's cultural heritage. More successful interpretation will also impact upon business people who may be potential property developers and help them to appreciate Vietnam's cultural heritage. In this important way, efforts to improve interpretation skills and widen the opportunities for interpretation to occur will help to ensure the sustainability of cultural tourism in Hanoi and other Vietnamese cities.

It is perhaps likely that heritage protection through town planning regulation will be more successful in Hanoi than in most other Vietnamese cities and towns. This is because Hanoi is regarded as the heart of the traditional heart of the Vietnamese nation as well as being Vietnam's current capital city. It is evident from the media, from scholarly writings and from conversations with local residents that there is a great pride in the city and an awareness of the need to maintain its integrity. It is regrettable that this attitude does not appear to apply in all cities and towns with a high level of cultural significance. For instance, current urban development at Dien Bien Phu, a town of immense national significance and well known internationally, is cutting into the very hills upon which Vietnamese forces brought the colonial era to an end. Inappropriate town planning is undermining the potential to build up tourism, an economic activity that could outperform others in Dien Bien Phu and that would help ensure that future generations of Vietnamese can continue to benefit from physical links with a great moment in the nation's history.

What is apparent in many societies around the world in these final years of the millennium is that globalisation is, as previously noted, leading paradoxically to localism; that is, creating more intense feelings of attachment to local cultural forms and values. This appears in the nationalist movements emergent in, for instance, the peripheral regions of the former USSR, movements that appear out of step in an age of world financial markets, satellite television and the internet. In many East and South East Asian countries undergoing rapid economic growth, there are assertions of special 'Asian values' and a growing recognition of the significance of traditional urban forms. Indeed some scholars, such as eminent British sociologist Anthony Giddens (1990), argue that localism is a necessary response to globalisation because it counters the 'dis-embedding', or alienation from one's spatial and temporal setting, caused by increasingly remote forms of economic and social control (Giddens, 1990; see also Logan 1997). The recent Golden Hanoi Hotel controversy seems to indicate that Vietnam will follow this trend and offer some resistance to the bland architectural constructions that put financial rewards for international investors ahead of the local citizens and their cultural heritage and aspirations.

How this clash between the forces of globalisation and localism is resolved will have enormous implications for the Vietnamese tourism industry: if the push towards localism

is strengthened, cultural heritage and cultural tourism will survive; if not, both will be killed, and Vietnam and the world will be the poorer for it. In attempting to define current and future challenges and opportunities in tourism in Vietnam, the key messages are two-fold. Firstly, the importance of cultural tourism to Hanoi's local economy is such that it needs to become a principal consideration in all decision-making that affects the heritage assets and aesthetic appearance of the city.

The second, and final, point is this. Most of the literature on sustainable tourism is concerned with the negative impacts of tourism itself on cultural heritage resources; that is, of tourism growth. As a result, the literature is concerned with identifying solutions in terms of facility design, determining safe tourist carrying capacities, and so on. But my message is that we need to protect the cultural heritage of Hanoi and other cities from other processes of urban change. This is not about freezing the old sector of Hanoi. Butler (1997:33) is correct in commenting that cultures and environments change over time. But the changes should reflect local needs, including those of future generations. Vietnamese planners should look to the best examples of cities that have had the courage to control developers and to push high-rise development into areas without heritage and tourism value. Protecting cultural townscapes must become a much more fundamental consideration in urban planning and management. Tourism policy makers need to be much more vocal when planning decisions are going to have a distractive effect on the historic and other environments that attract tourists.

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Education and Training for Sustainable Tourism Development: ASEAN Experience - Implications for Vietnam

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Abstract

The Vietnam 1995 Master Plan for Tourism Development outlines the expected main features (diagnosis and strategies) of the Vietnamese tourism industry to the year 2010 (VNAT, April 1995). This plan shows that Vietnam has significant potential for tourism development over the next 15 years. The report also shows that both hard and soft infrastructural support for tourism, as well as the tourist attractions themselves, is undeveloped. Roads, bridges, transport facilities, lodging and accommodation, travel services, hospitality management, communications, and services staff, are of low quality.

The achievement of sustainable tourism and the successful industrialisation of Vietnam require well-defined targets to facilitate investments in both physical and in human capital. This paper seeks to identify those targets within the tourism education sphere through investigating the potential of Vietnam as a mass market tourism destination in Asia, and analysing how education and training systems can respond to the qualification requirements for sustainable tourism development based on the experience of ASEAN countries.

Introduction

The travel and tourism industry has been recognised as the world's most dynamic and profitable business. Based on research conducted by the World Travel and Tourism Council, today's tourism industry is:

- a major contributor to economic growth as it contributes 10.9% to the World's Gross Domestic Product. It will also generate directly and indirectly an estimated US\$650 billion in exports and US\$800 billion in investments by the year 2000;
- an important job generator as it employs 10.7% of the world's working population;
- an industry with strong growth potential based on a gross output forecast of US\$7.2 trillion and increase of current output by 55% in real terms from 1996 to 2005.

The Vietnam 1995 Master Plan for Tourism Development outlines the expected main features (diagnosis and strategies) of the Vietnamese tourism industry to the year 2010 (VNAT, April 1995). This plan shows that Vietnam has significant potential for tourism development over the next 15 years. The report also shows that both hard and soft infrastructural support for tourism, as well as the tourist attractions themselves, is undeveloped. Roads, bridges, transport facilities, lodging and accommodation, travel services, hospitality management, communications, and services staff, are of low quality.

The achievement of sustainable tourism and the successful industrialisation of Vietnam require well-defined targets to facilitate investments in both physical and in human capital. This paper seeks to identify those targets within the tourism education sphere through:

- investigating the potential of Vietnam as a mass market tourism destination in Asia; and
- analysing how education and training systems can respond to the qualification requirements for sustainable tourism development based on the experience of ASEAN countries.

The Potential for Vietnam to Become a Mass Market Tourism Destination in Asia

To investigate this question two surveys were conducted in late 1996 in Singapore. The first set of questionnaires was targeted at 200 international travel agents operating within ASEAN. The second set of questionnaires was targeted at 600 international tourist travellers chosen at random from visitors to Changi International Airport.

International Travel Agents Survey

The survey of international travel agents revealed that the five most commonly offered tour packages were trips to Thailand (95%), Malaysia (93%), Indonesia (90%), China (65%), and the Philippines (45%). Vietnam (20%) was ranked sixth most popular Asian tour destination. Among the travel agents that offer tour packages to Vietnam, 58% offered free and easy as well as 3 - 6 days tour packages to Vietnam. Customised tour packages were the most popular choice as all the agencies that offer packages to Vietnam provided them.

According to the survey respondents, the general response towards Vietnam tour packages has been mixed. These appeal to business travellers and adventure-seeking tourists, as well as to tourists who would like to explore Vietnam's historical and cultural heritage, but not to the general run of Singaporean or international group travel visitors to other ASEAN countries. The reasons for this pattern may be found in the survey results, which showed that the 5 most often cited obstacles to Vietnam in becoming a popular tourist destination were:

- a lack of promotion of Vietnam as a tourist destination;
- the high level of government regulations and red tape faced;
- the high cost of tour packages to Vietnam, high visa fees; and
- the lack of tourist attractions, facilities, infrastructure and safety measures throughout the Country.

These are all obstacles related to and affecting marketing, planning, product development and hospitality management.

The surveyed travel agents however forecast Vietnam as second only to China as the most important destination for Singaporeans in the future, and 43% suggested that in five years time Vietnam would be "one of the most visited countries in South East Asia. The fact that the same majority (55%) of travel agents had forecast Vietnam to be "a rarely visited destination" or only "visited as part of a business trip" in one year's time shows the great confidence travel agents have in Vietnam's future tourism industry. In addition, 60% of the travel agents who presently do not offer tour packages to Vietnam have expressed their interest in doing so in the near future. Travel agents also feel that Vietnam's main appeal lies in its beautiful scenery (58%) and its rich cultural heritage (82%) .

Travel agents therefore feel that Vietnam is 'still an unpopular destination at present due to its high costs, lack of marketing/promotion and lack of awareness of it as a tourist destination. 33% of travel agents believed that the most effective way of promoting Vietnam tour packages is through special price promotions and an aggressive marketing campaign. Other ways of promoting Vietnam tours include advertising in newspaper and magazines (30%) and organising travel fairs.

The overall view of the travel agents surveyed was that Vietnam has a high potential to succeed as a mass tourist destination, if it can overcome these obstacles as well as provide the 'software' and promotional strategies and funds required to establish itself in the forefront of international tourist destinations.

International Traveller Survey

To confirm the potential of Vietnam in becoming a mass market tourism destination in Asia, a second survey was conducted in late 1996, targeted at 600 potential international tourist travellers (30% were Singaporeans and 70% were foreign visitors). Among the various countries in Asia, the most visited destination is Malaysia (92%), followed by Indonesia (70%) and Thailand (64%). Based on this survey, Vietnam was ranked seventh most visited Asian country. 67% of the surveyed visitors to Vietnam had travelled there for business purposes. The respondents to this survey ranked the obstacles that Vietnam faces in promoting itself as a mass tourist destination as follows:

- a lack of knowledge of Vietnam as a tourist destination;
- poor transportation and communication links in Vietnam;

- the red tape involved in visiting Vietnam (like the long visa application period required, problems encountered at Immigration and Customs); and
- the lack of aggressive marketing of Vietnam tours in both Singapore and in other foreign countries like the United States, United Kingdom, Thailand, Korea, etc.

Other obstacles faced by the respondents surveyed included the lack of safety measures, the lack of tourist attractions, the higher cost of tour packages to Vietnam and lastly a lack of amenities that are of an international standard.

Of the 85% of respondents who had not been to Vietnam, thirty-one (36%) of them felt that poor infrastructure in Vietnam was the main deterrent to their deciding to travel. Other common reasons cited regarding the obstacles Vietnam faced included lack of promotion and information and also a deep-rooted impression among tourists that Vietnam is still not a safe place to visit. In particular, 47% of foreign respondents felt that there was a lack of documentation and representation on Vietnam as a tourist destination, especially in European countries. Furthermore, the respondents also felt that Vietnam has to compete with its more established neighbours like Malaysia, Thailand and Indonesia, who can offer a competitive edge by providing value for greater value-for-money packages.

Vietnam has managed to attract the adventure-seeking group of tourists. However, it has not yet penetrated the huge market of mass tourists. The main cause of this could be the dearth of proper amenities in Vietnam that international tourists are accustomed to. Basic infrastructure and accommodation must be upgraded before the Country can attract a large influx of international tourists.

While the lack of aggressive promotion and publicity about Vietnam as a tourist destination has been cited as a leading obstacle, private hotel operators and foreign travel agents could be a major source of support in overcoming this. Even though the tourism authorities may have difficulties in obtaining the large amount of funds needed for a full scale promotions campaign, they could tie up with established private investors to promote Vietnam, as well as their individual resorts there. Information about Vietnam's current open-door policy (*doi moi*) could be used in this way to attract tourists as well as investors.

Opportunities

The results of the visitor survey show that Vietnam is perceived as having great potential as a successful tourist destination. A significant proportion of visitors forecast that in five years time Vietnam would be the most visited country in South East Asia. This optimism exists despite the fact that 71% of the same group of respondents forecast that in 1 year's time Vietnam will still only mainly be a business trip destination. In addition, 47% of the Singaporean respondents and 58% of the foreign respondents expressed their interest in visiting Vietnam in the near future. They also indicated their preference by choosing Vietnam as a more popular emerging tourist destination than other Indo-Chinese countries.

Foreign visitors (47%) surveyed indicated their interest in joining a Singapore plus Indo-China package compared with 16% for Singapore only and 8% for Vietnam only. This suggests that travellers would prefer to see as much as possible for the limited amount of time and money able to be spent. Furthermore, respondents also indicated their belief that Vietnam is more likely to succeed as a tourist destination if it could cooperate with Laos and Cambodia and achieve the effects of synergy.

With respect to Vietnam in particular, 78% of respondents suggested that the Country could make use of its historical and cultural heritage, and 49% also its countryside scenery to promote itself to potential tourists Vietnam tour packages should also be promoted in countries like Europe and America where awareness of Vietnam as a tourist destination is still minimal.

The majority of the respondents forecast that Vietnam could become a popular mass-market tourist destination, if it could develop and implement an education and training programme to take advantage of the opportunity. Development of expertise in Marketing, Management, Hospitality Planning and Design, Resort Development, Service Quality Management is an essential factor in ensuring Vietnam's success as a popular tourist destination in the 21st century. Vietnam's next step forward should be to determine its competitive advantage over its tourism destination counterparts. It should seek to establish a blend between attracting the large cohort of mass tourists and preserving its cultural heritage and natural environment. Vietnam has the added advantage of being able to learn from its neighbouring countries in analysing tourism market prospects and the ASEAN region's response to manpower's challenge.

Education and Training in Tourism: ASEAN's Experience

Market Growth

Over 130 million people now work worldwide in the travel and tourism industry, or one in every 15 of all employees. As the world's largest employer, the industry faces a myriad of problems, not least of which is the attraction of new entrants to this labour-intensive industry. In the period 1995-2000, the World Travel Tourism Council has estimated that 25 million new jobs in the industry will be created worldwide, of which over four-fifths will be in Asia and the Pacific.

No other region in the world has matched and sustained the growth level of the ASEAN region of Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand (ASEAN-6), which has seen visitor arrivals increase by over 115% in the past ten years. ASEAN-6 has been booming by any yardstick over the past ten years with GDP growth rates ranging from 5 to 10% annually. It has diversified away from traditional commodity based economies to manufacturing, services and tourism. Since the fall in real value of petroleum and commodity exports, governments have identified tourism as a viable and sustainable foreign exchange earner. Tourism now is a major priority area for

development in the region and ranks amongst the top earning sectors.

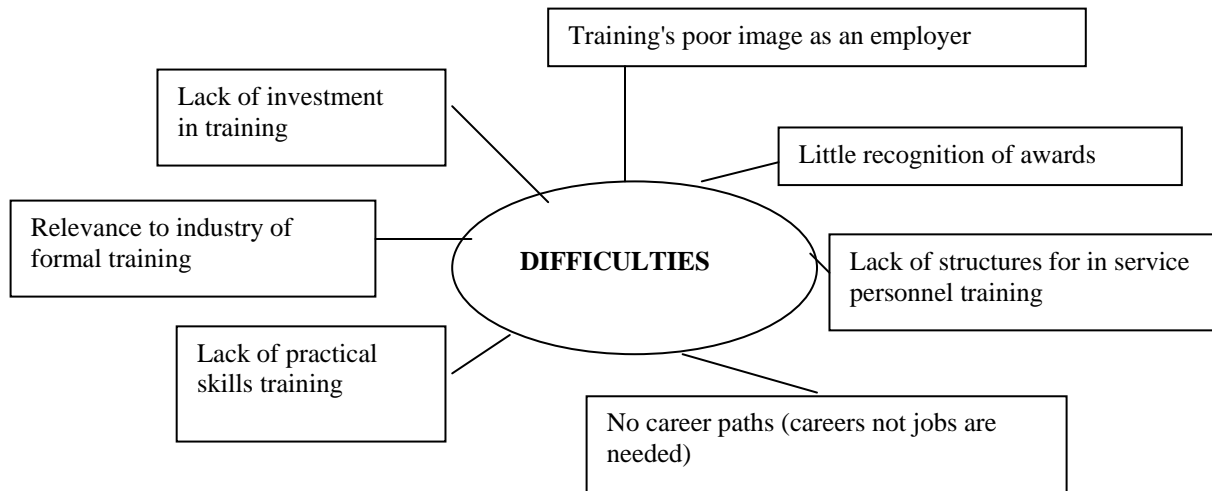
ASEAN is now a well-established destination. 75% of all arrivals (28 million in 1995) to the region are from the ASEAN/Asia Pacific region and this is the main strength of the market. The strong performance of the Asia/Pacific economies has produced a large middle class, more conscious of leisure time, holidays and travel generally. While visitors from the established EU/US markets were preferred in the past, due to long lengths of stay and higher spending patterns, the market has now changed. Visitors from Asia/Pacific spend more on a daily per capita basis, but still lag behind in terms of length of stay.

Education and Training in ASEAN-6

ASEAN-6 has identified a number of key areas that will challenge the further growth of tourism in the region unless managed carefully: (1) Education and Training - a key policy area; (2) Environmentally attuned development - sustainable tourism; (3) Product fatigue - the need to upgrade and reinvest; (4) Socio-cultural impacts - the need to protect local culture/heritage, (5) Changing market patterns - different/new/emerging markets and segments.

In common with other areas of the world, ASEAN has identified the following main difficulties with tourism training and education:

Figure 1: Difficulties in Education and Training in ASEAN



To illustrate the importance of manpower and training policy, we should ask ourselves: what makes a hotel restaurant/destination in ASEAN different? If we compare hotels in ASEAN countries, Europe, Japan or the USA, we cannot find major differences in room

size, décor and physical features. Service levels are what makes a difference, with a feeling of being "pampered" and attended to in ASEAN. It is the tourism industry's "software" - the human element - that marks this region apart.

This requires continuous attention to be given to human resources, with special emphasis on the need to preserve quality. Training could be a private sector activity but planning, educating to ensure a quality product are national concerns. The ASEAN countries have realised that increased arrivals, investment and market opportunities will be constrained by a trained manpower shortage. Table 1 shows the gross manpower needs of ASEAN countries for the 1995 - 97 triennium. Given that a total of 152,496 new staff will be required for hotels in the period 1995-97, and that the current output of regional hotel schools is 6500 per annum, it then becomes obvious that trained manpower will continue to be in severe shortage in this region.

Table 1: ASEAN - Hotel Gross Labour Needs 1995 - 97

| Hotel Sector | New Staff 1995 - 97 | Total Requirement (including attrition) |
|---|---------------------|--|
| Management, Marketing, Finance (17%) | 11063 | 25924 |
| Housekeeping (21%) | 13666 | 32024 |
| Front Office, Porters, etc (11%) | 7158 | 16775 |
| Food & Beverage Preparation (16%) | 10412 | 24400 |
| Food & Beverage Service (18%) | 11713 | 27450 |
| Maintenance, Security, Drivers (17%) | 11064 | 25923 |
| Total Labour Needs | 65076 | 152496 |

Labour Force Development and Requirements in Vietnam

Vietnam is a country with a high population density. With a current 2.1% population growth rate, and a high ratio of young people aged under 30, Vietnam is estimated to have annually 1.1million new entrants into the labour force. According to the General Statistical Office, 20% of the active population has been unemployed and 40% are underemployed. This labour surplus can benefit those investments with a labour

intensive character such as the tourism and hospitality industry.

In 1995, Vietnam's total active labour force counted 33 million workers, of which 72% were in the agricultural sector. Servicing tourism and other related sectors involved 320000, or roughly 1% of the total labour force. The number of workers directly employed in the hospitality and tourism industry in 1995 was reported by VNAT to be 120000, whereas 92000 workers were employed in the hotel industry and the total number of jobs created in the hospitality and tourism industry was estimated at 212000. Compared to the projections of WTO (VIE/98/003), the projected number of jobs created in tourism and related sectors has been far below the actual number of workers employed (by a factor of 6). The main reason for this difference lies in an underestimation of supply side pressures and strong market pressures. At the same time, Vietnam shows a far higher employment ratio of roughly 3.50 employees per room in the international standard category as compared to the rest of the world (Table 2).

The current state of employment in tourism in 1995 as seen in Table 2 shows a ratio of staff to tourist of 0.089 and 3.50 staff per room.³ That is a very high ratio of employment in terms of capital investment in such establishments as compared to WTO's ratio of only 1.66 staff per room. This clearly demonstrates the underemployment situation in Vietnam's tourism industry and the low levels of labour productivity at the present time. Table 3 shows that even those staff employed in hotels (92000) are less than adequately trained, with less than one-third having any form of higher level or vocational training outside the workplace. Indeed, much of Vietnam's trained workforce in this industry is in fact trained in-house by other hotel staff.

Table 2: Labour Force in Tourism in 1995

| Tourist arrivals | Total number of rooms | Total number of staff | Number of staff employed in hotels | Staff per tourist | Staff per room |
|------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1350000 | 26000 | 120000 | 92000 | 0.089 | 3.50 |

Source: VNAT 1995.

³ Calculation of 92,000 workers employed in the hotel industry based on 26,000 rooms with international standards, whereas WTO calculated an employment ration of 1.66 employees per room in 1995.

Table 3: Training of Tourism employees

| VNAT Distribution 1995 (Actual) | VNAT Level of Training | MOET Schooling Level | ILO Recommendations |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|
| 2000 (or 2.2%) | University or high school degree | I | 15% or 13800 Management positions (supply shortage) |
| 25000 | Vocational Training | II | Supply shortage |
| 20000 | Secondary School | III | |
| 45000 (or 49%) | No qualifications | | Over supply |

Source: VNAT 1995.

It is estimated that by 2010 there will be 560,000 workers involved in the tourism and hospitality industry. Of these, 33,000 will be in management, 56,000 will be supervisors, 168,000 will be professional skilled workers, and over 300,000 will be semi-skilled workers. Comparison of employment/qualifications indicates that there is a lack of training and staff in management position and an over supply of low level labour (no training) (Table 3). This situation leads to the following consequences:

- poor quality of services, communication;
- low wages, underemployment;
- low labour productivity;
- barriers to the implementation of modern technology;
- inability to position new tourism products and services;
- inability to attract international tourists and compete with regional competitors;
- inability to motivate repeat customers.

Conclusions

As the Ministry responsible for tourism, the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism has been given a role of ensuring standards and quality. This is an essential development if quality outcomes are to be achieved. In fact the development of a common approach to qualifications and curriculum is central to meeting the aims of the Tourism Master Plan. The development of a national training system in conjunction with a national qualifications system will provide the foundation for achieving the Master Plan's targets.

The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) has overall responsibility for the standard and quality of education and training in Vietnam. Overall responsibility for both public and private education in Vietnam also rests with the Ministry of Education and Training. However the Ministry itself does not have direct oversight of many of the

sectors of the education system, including those involved in tourism education.

A range of steps need to be taken by MOET and VNAT to further the development of this coordinated approach to the provision of tourism and hospitality training, for all levels of personnel within the industry, which would include:

- Provision of tourism education, at supervisory and management level, designed to meet the identified skills needs of all sectors of the industry at local, national and international levels;
- Development of an overall national qualifications and standards system, with clear curriculum and quality assurance guidelines;
- Incorporating private sector industry and education providers into an integrated system;
- Co-ordination and execution of national assessment and moderation of practical and course work within tourism education;
- Development of procedures for standards based and practical assessment;
- Approval of internal assessment standards;
- Granting of appropriate awards to graduates of programmes at all levels;
- Specific vocational education and training programmes, carrying recognised certification.

The implementation of these will provide a blue print for tourism and hospitality education in ASEAN and properly support the development of the burgeoning tourism industry in Vietnam.

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Tourism Development in Vietnam: Lessons from South East Asia

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Abstract

South East Asia is one of the world's most important and fastest growing tourism regions. It consists of a number of diverse countries with respect to their tourism development path. This paper provides some ideas of how Vietnam, but also the other newly emerging tourism destinations in the region Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar, can learn from neighbouring countries and their experiences.

Introduction

South East Asia is one of the world's fastest growing tourism regions and several of its countries are among the world's leading inbound destinations. While the proximity of rapidly growing economies, such as Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan, has had a major impact on the overall growth in tourist arrivals, a large proportion of the tourism demand is intraregional in nature as was pointed out by several authors (e.g., Chon and Oppermann 1996; Oppermann and Chon 1997). In fact, intraregional demand today is as important as it was in the last decade, which indicates that the intraregional demand has kept up with the pace of other inbound demand. This was greatly facilitated by the rapid economic expansion of several South East Asian economies, which in turn resulted in an expansion of the middle-class and the number of residents with the necessary disposable income to travel.

That South East Asia is one of the world's major tourism destinations should not come as a surprise; traditionally it has been at the crossroads of trade and travel between Europe/Africa/South Asia and the vast Asia-Pacific region. The cultural diversity in several countries is living proof of the rich history and the many interests in this part of the world. The concentration of cultural heritage sites such as Borobodur (Indonesia) and Angkor Wat (Cambodia) in the region are another manifesto, and by themselves, are a major tourist attractions to today's travellers. Yet, in the past, by far not all South East Asian countries have participated and/or benefited to the same degree from tourism. Until the early 1990s, the focus of tourism development had been largely on Singapore, Thailand and Malaysia and, to a lesser extent, the Philippines and Indonesia, whereas Vietnam, Cambodia, Myanmar and Laos remained largely outside the main tourism

stream. Obviously, political and safety reasons were the major hindrances to tourism growth. This all seems to have changed in the early 1990s and tourist arrivals in these countries have picked up in momentum. However, this lagging in tourism development can also be a blessing in disguise as these countries are able to learn from the development that occurred in their neighbouring countries in order to avoid the same mistakes and/or to identify the most appropriate form of development.

This article will provide an overview of tourism development in South East Asia and identify specific issues that have been an impediment and/or assistance to tourism development. In this context South East Asia is defined as encompassing the countries Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Tourism Development

For more than 40 years tourism has been considered as an economic panacea for developing countries. Often dubbed the 'white' industry, it is thought to be a vital development agent and an ideal economic alternative to more traditional primary and secondary sectors. Especially international tourism from the developed to the developing countries is seen as generating crucially needed foreign exchange earnings, infusing badly needed capital into the economy of developing countries. The successful example of Spain, which managed to use tourism in its development process as an income generator, reinforced the notion that countries with "sand, sun, and sea" resources, which most developing countries incidentally have, can overcome other infrastructural, locational, and economic disadvantages and sell the tourist product. Stagnating and highly unreliable commodity prices as well as import barriers for manufactured goods in many developed nations only served to focus the economic options on tertiary activities with tourism undoubtedly being the most important one. For a lack of alternative development options and in view of the ever-growing number of outbound tourists, most developing countries have opted for participation in the international tourism industry. Especially for small developing countries with few primary resources and a small industrial base, and particularly for small microstates, tourism often constitutes the only viable economic activity within their economic means and their resource base.

Rapid population growth, high unemployment, increasing social and regional disparities, high trade deficits, monostructured economies, and a generally high dependency on the industrialised countries force developing countries to utilise all of their available resources to survive. Among these resources are their climate which promises a lot of sun for the sun-seekers from the developed countries, exotic landscapes, people and cultures, and a usually very favourable exchange rate. In addition, the major attractions for mass tourism, sand, sun and sea, are available to all but a few of the developing countries. While some countries like Tunisia, Morocco, Mexico, and many Caribbean countries have gambled early on tourism, others like Vietnam, Laos, and Bhutan have only recently joined the ranks of developing countries that are trying to benefit from international tourism. Employment and income generation, increase in foreign exchange and tax

earnings, reduction of rural-urban migration, and balancing the trade account are the most often conceived goals of tourism development. Yet to date, tourism often has not endowed developing countries with the envisaged economic benefits. Furthermore, a considerable number of socio-cultural and physical impacts have emerged that seriously deflect from the potential benefits that tourism can bring to developing countries when planned and managed appropriately.

Tourism Growth

Tourism is one of the world's largest and fastest growing economic sectors. According to the World Tourism Organisation, almost 600 million international tourist arrivals were registered worldwide and direct expenditure of more than US\$ 400 billion (Table 1) this only counts international demand. Domestic tourism demand constituted about 70 per cent of the total, international and domestic, demand in terms of tourist nights in commercial accommodation. This percentage also seems to be fairly stable (WTO 1996b). In addition, one also needs to realise that a large portion of domestic demand is not incurred in commercial tourism establishments but rather in the residences of friends and relatives. Hence, the absolute number as well as relative share of domestic tourism can be expected to be even higher.

The World Tourism Organisation (WTO, 1997b) has estimated that, over the next 25 years, there will be a strong growth in international travel of around 4 per cent annually, resulting in more than 700 million by the year 2000, topping one billion by 2010 and reaching 1.6 billion tourist arrivals by 2020. Especially long haul travel is expected to increase its market share, which is likely to benefit countries in South East Asia.

Table 1. Growth of World Tourist Arrivals, 1950-1994

| Year | World Tourist Arrivals (in thousands) | World tourism Receipts (in Million US\$) |
|------|--|---|
| 1950 | 25,282 | 2,100 |
| 1960 | 69,320 | 6,867 |
| 1965 | 112,863 | 11,604 |
| 1970 | 165,787 | 17,900 |
| 1975 | 222,290 | 40,702 |
| 1980 | 286,249 | 105,198 |
| 1985 | 329,539 | 117,374 |
| 1990 | 459,212 | 264,714 |
| 1991 | 465,844 | 271,880 |
| 1992 | 503,258 | 308,745 |
| 1993 | 517,607 | 314,249 |
| 1994 | 545,878 | 345,540 |
| 1995 | 566,384 | 398,278 |
| 1996 | 591,864 | 423,022 |

Source: extracted from WTO 1996a; 1997a, 1997b.

Table 2 indicates that tourism is far from equally distributed across the world regions. In 1996, Europe still accounted for the vast majority (59%) of all tourist arrivals; however, this percentage has been slowly but consistently decreasing from the 1960s when it was almost 80%. Quite obvious is the growing importance of the East Asia-Pacific region which, in 1996, attracted some 15% of the world's tourist arrivals; up from less than 1% in the 1960s. Very notable is the small share of Africa in the international tourism arena.

Table 2. Tourist Arrivals by World Region, 1950-1996 (in thousands)

| Region | 1950 | 1960 | 1970 | 1980 | 1990 | 1995 | 1996 |
|---------------------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Africa | 524 | 750 | 2,407 | 7,337 | 14,975 | 19,045 | 19,593 |
| Americas | 7,485 | 16,705 | 42,273 | 61,387 | 93,845 | 110,768 | 115,572 |
| East Asia/Pacific | 190 | 704 | 5,331 | 20,961 | 52,263 | 83,189 | 89,774 |
| Europe ¹ | 16,839 | 60,351 | 113,000 | 189,830 | 286,651 | 335,378 | 347,329 |
| Middle East | 197 | 630 | 1,864 | 5,992 | 7,444 | 13,703 | 15,121 |
| South Asia | 47 | 180 | 912 | 2,280 | 3,179 | 4,301 | 4,475 |

Note: ¹ Europe includes Cyprus, Israel and Turkey.

Source: derived from WTO 1996, 1997a

Table 3. Interregional Tourist Flows, 1994

| Origin Region | Destination Region | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------------------|----------|---------|---------|-------|--------|
| | Africa | Americas | EA/P | Europe | ME | S.Asia |
| Africa | 8,202 | 257 | 380 | 4,242 | 1,982 | 92 |
| Americas | 546 | 79,248 | 5,616 | 21,783 | 482 | 377 |
| East Asia/ Pacific | 300 | 7,493 | 102,079 | 10,139 | 2,990 | 625 |
| Europe | 6,091 | 15,293 | 9,261 | 283,045 | 2,810 | 1,813 |
| Middle East | 867 | 192 | 280 | 2,148 | 7,980 | 194 |
| South Asia | 47 | 210 | 1,186 | 1,215 | 706 | 964 |

Source: based on outbound data by destination region, WTO 1996a

The interregional tourist flow patterns are provided in Table 3. It indicates that, in most instances, the largest share of arrivals are intraregional tourists rather than from other regions. However, a note of caution is needed in using the data in this table as the total number of arrivals seem to deviate from the figures provided by the same organisations

for inbound travel (Table 2). For example, according to the data in Table 3 there were more than 100 million intra-East Asia-Pacific travellers, exceeding the total number of arrivals in that region (Table 2).

Table 4. Tourist Arrivals to South East Asia, 1975-96

| Country | growth in % | | | | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 1975 | 1980 | 1985 | 1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996 | 75-90 | 90-96 |
| Brunei | n/a | n/a | 411 | 377 | 344 | 412 | 489 | n/a | 695 | 762 | n/a | 102 |
| Cambodia | n/a | n/a | n/a | 17 | 25 | 88 | 118 | 132 | 220 | 195 | n/a | 1047 |
| Indonesia | 366 | 561 | 749 | 2,178 | 2,570 | 3,064 | 3,403 | 4,006 | 4,323 | 4,475 | 495 | 105 |
| Laos | n/a | n/a | n/a | 14 | 38 | 88 | 102 | 145 | 344 | 399 | n/a | 2750 |
| Malaysia | 1,138 | 2,251 | 3,109 | 7,449 | 5,847 | 6,016 | 6,504 | 7,197 | 7,469 | 7,742 | 555 | 4 |
| Myanmar | n/a | n/a | n/a | 19 | 20 | 23 | 39 | 56 | 67 | 101 | n/a | 432 |
| Philippine | 502 | 1,008 | 773 | 1,025 | 951 | 1,153 | 1,372 | 1,574 | 1,760 | 2,054 | 104 | 100 |
| Singapore | 1,324 | 2,562 | 3,031 | 5,323 | 5,415 | 5,990 | 6,426 | 6,899 | 7,008 | 7,032 | 302 | 32 |
| Thailand | 1,180 | 1,858 | 2,438 | 5,299 | 5,087 | 5,136 | 5,761 | 6,166 | 6,450 | 7201 | 349 | 36 |
| Vietnam ^a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | n/a | 157 | 345 | 618 | 679 | 863 | n/a | n/a |
| Vietnam ^b | n/a | n/a | n/a | 250 | 300 | 440 | 602 | 941 | 1018 | 1,395 | n/a | 458 |

(a) based on WTO database query, 5.August 1997

(b) based on WTO 1996a, 1996b, 1997b

Sources: Oppermann 1996; WTO 1996a, 1996b, 1997a, 1997b, 1997c.

Table 4 provides an overview of tourist arrivals to South East Asian countries between 1975 and 1996. It illustrates the wide divergence in the number of tourists that each country received in 1996 and also the varying growth rates. The data problem is also highlighted in Table 4 as two different sets of tourist arrival data are given for Vietnam, originating from the same source, namely the World Tourism Organisation (WTO). The problem of which data set to use generally becomes worse when one consults different sources. For example, the statistics by the Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) for Malaysia are a lot less than those provided by either the Malaysian Tourism Promotion Board (MTPB) or the WTO. The PATA data excludes Singaporean land arrivals to Malaysia; however, since these constitute the vast majority of all tourist arrivals to

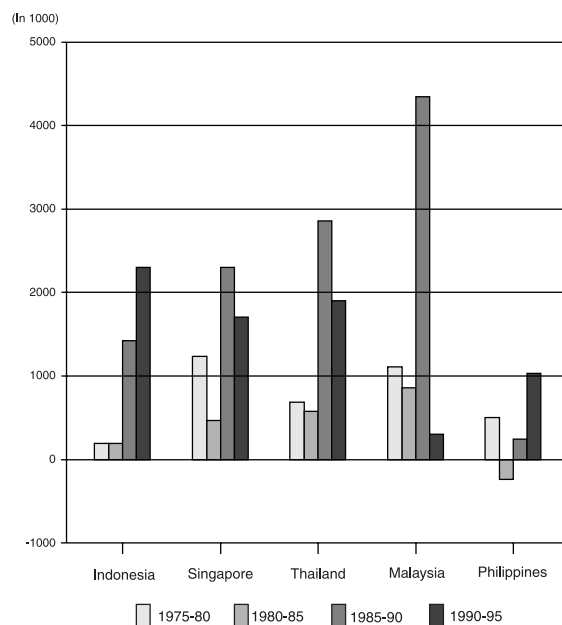
Malaysia the difference between PATA and WTO or MTPB data sets is one of some magnitude.

Nonetheless, the data in Table 4 indicates that Vietnam’s tourist arrivals in 1995/96 approximately correspond to the ones of several leading regional tourist destinations in 1975. Tourist arrivals to Cambodia, Laos and Myanmar (CLM) in 1996, on the other hand, were still lagging considerably behind.

Development Types

Figure 1 portrays the absolute growth in tourist arrivals for some South East Asian countries using five (six)-year intervals between 1975-1996. The reason for using absolute growth rather than relative growth is that absolute numbers eliminate the bias towards higher growth rates among “low-volume” destinations. In addition, it generally is the physical number of people (rooms, seats, etc.) that needs to be considered when expanding facilities and services rather than the percentage increase. At least three types of growth pattern can be identified: consistent growth, turbulent growth and chaotic growth.

Figure 1. Absolute for Growth in Tourist Arrivals for Selected Countries, 1975-96



Consistent growth

Countries such as Indonesia and Singapore (and to a lesser extent Thailand) have seen a consistent growth in tourist arrivals for the last twenty years. While the growth rates by themselves were in most years not extremely high (ie not exceeding 400,000 per year), these countries managed to experience a steady inbound growth. Such a consistent growth allows for better planning and management of tourism, both with respect to the

economic benefits as well as the associated economic, socio-cultural and environmental costs.

Turbulent growth

Malaysia is an example of a country that has undergone turbulent growth. The period 1985-1990 brought an extreme expansion of tourist arrivals in excess of 4 million visitors, whereas the periods before saw a much more moderate development and the last period an almost stagnant growth. The rapid growth in tourist arrivals in the late 1980s and 1990 placed an extreme strain on the existing capacity. As a consequence, many developers decided to enter the market and unveiled plans to develop, for example, hotels. Consequently, hotel development in the capital Kuala Lumpur was overheating in the early 1990s (Oppermann, Din and Amri 1996) and the lack of consistent growth since 1990 means that expected occupancy rates may not be forthcoming with an oversupply of accommodation capacity. Thus, turbulent growth generally results in a mismatching of supply and demand with either one outstripping the other at different points of the development cycle to the detriment of the operators and the tourism industry as a whole.

Chaotic growth

The Philippines is a classic example of a country that has experienced a chaotic growth, characterised by changes between positive and negative growth. Only over the last few years it has managed to regain the momentum it started to build in the 1970s. Political instability and natural disasters were at the root of this chaotic growth (Chon and Oppermann 1996; Oppermann 1994/95). It is also something experienced by a number of South American countries (Oppermann 1995; Oppermann and Chon 1997).

What can be learned by the newly emerging tourism destination in South East Asia (eg. Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, Vietnam) from the “veterans” in the region? Most of these newly emerging destinations are currently on a consistent growth path scenario and are well advised to remain that way. Cambodia, according to the most recent data from the World Tourism Organisation (WTO 1997) and not too surprising given the media attention to it (Oppermann, 1996) appears to be potentially sliding into a chaotic growth scenario due to political instability. Safety problems for tourists is one of the major deterrent to tourist travel (Oppermann and Chon 1997). While “war sites” can constitute major tourist attractions, they tend to take on that significance only after the war is over.

Regional Development

Other lessons to be learned are in the area of regional and tourism resource development. Apart from Singapore which constitutes a different case due to its small size, all countries adopted a “concentration” scenario in tourism development in the early stages and only later on progressively opened up the country beyond the capital and other major tourist attractions. To some extent this was also reinforced by the existence of a national airline which adopted the hub and spoke system and did not allow foreign carriers to directly

access airports elsewhere in the country. There are advantages and disadvantages associated with such a development policy. The advantages are obviously that financial resources can be concentrated in the development of one area rather than several simultaneously. Thus, it reduces the need for capital investment. Such concentration of development was notable in Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand. The disadvantage of a concentration policy is that the existing tourism resources are not fully utilised and that tourist arrivals may be fewer because there is insufficient access to places and attractions those tourists might want to see. Also, the concentration may lead to over-concentration and congestion with a resulting loss in satisfaction on the side of the tourists and fewer tourists. All of these disadvantages are also present, to some extent, in the aforementioned countries.

In Malaysia, while Kuala Lumpur and other selected west coast cities/destinations of the Peninsula were also developed and promoted as tourist destinations in the 1970s and 1980s, the peripheral areas such as the east coast of the Peninsula and East Malaysia largely remained outside mainstream tourism development. Only the 1990s saw an increase in tourism activity in those areas and with the liberalisation of the airline policy a further boost for tourism development can be expected in these areas. The negligence of the vast tourism resource potential in the East Malaysian states of Sabah and Sarawak, especially with their high attractiveness for ecotourists, may have resulted in a reduced number of tourists.

In Indonesia, tourism traditionally was focussed on Bali, Java, and to a lesser extent northern Sumatra. The limited number of official entry points for foreign visitors to Indonesia (for a long time only three airports; Denpasar, Jakarta and Medan) resulted in a concentration of international tourism. This has changed recently and the push by the Indonesian government towards integrating other regions into the tourism system has resulted in the opening of additional “gateways” to Indonesia. The opening of the Riau Islands, for example, has resulted in an influx of tourists from the proximate Singapore.

In Thailand, early congestion and capacity problems in Bangkok and proximate Pattaya led the government to purposely develop other destinations for tourism. Phuket was designated as an international tourism resort and the international airport ensured fast growth of tourist arrivals in that particular destination region.

Tourism Planning in Vietnam

As was shown in Table 4, Vietnam is the leading destination among the newly emerging tourism destinations in South East Asia. It has already overtaken Brunei in terms of tourist arrivals and counted in 1996 as many tourists as the Philippines only three years earlier. Hence, Vietnam is already a serious competitor for the other South East Asian countries. Its history and culture are a major attraction besides its natural attractions. It has the advantage of being a neighbour to some of the richest Chinese provinces from where one might expect an increasing cross-border demand. On the other hand, this is balanced by otherwise only featuring common land border with Cambodia and Laos, both

not very likely to generate substantial tourism demand in the near-medium future. Hence, unlike Malaysia, Thailand, Singapore and to a lesser extent Indonesia, Vietnam cannot rely to a great extent to have a large of tourism demand generated by its directly neighbouring countries. Thus, airports for tourists from more distant origin countries are even more important.

The Vietnamese government has divided the country into three major regions for tourism planning and development purposes. The Northern Zone comprises the 23 northern provinces and is centred on Hanoi with the addition of some seaside and hill-resorts. According to Cooper (1997), this region is largely to be developed for domestic tourism demand. However, the resource base is not unlike the one existing on the West Coast of Peninsula Malaysia, where the typical tourist circuit combines city visits with stays in hill- and seaside resorts.

The Central Zone comprises five provinces and the main potential is historic and natural attractions. However, due to the currently limited infrastructure (both access as well as accommodation), this region provides little short-term potential for international tourism.

The Southern Zone includes 25 provinces and currently provides the greatest potential as well as current concentration of international tourism in Vietnam. According to Cooper (1997), some 70% of all international tourists arrive in Ho Chi Minh City. Very few venture beyond it. Seaside resorts, hill-resorts, river cruises, historic, cultural and architectural sites, and natural attractions are all part of the tourism resource potential in this region. Given the financial resource constraint and the current demand patterns, it is the most logical area to concentrate tourism development on in order to maximise the Country's tourism potential.

It needs to be recognised by the responsible planners that such a concentration on one area, given especially the critical role that Ho Chi Minh City will play as the primary attraction and gateway for the foreseeable future, can lead to bottleneck situations which will have their repercussions throughout the region and country. Insufficient flight seat-capacity or flight handling capability at the airport can deter tourists, as can insufficient accommodation supply in Ho Chi Minh City itself. It needs also to be recognised that the provision of high quality hotels only in Ho Chi Minh City could lead to a bottleneck situation for travellers who otherwise would venture outside into the more peripheral areas but are deterred by the lack of appropriate low-to medium-price range facilities in the gateway city. Too often, tourism development planning focuses on the “high-quality” tourist, forgetting that backpackers and other low-per day budget tourists may be of greater benefit to the country, not only in terms of total spending per visit but because of their better integration into the local economy with a resulting higher multiplier factor and higher regional economic benefits (Oppermann and Chon 1997).

Conclusion

Vietnam is currently at the crossroads in its tourism development. It is at the verge of becoming a major tourism player in South East Asia, for which it definitely has all the potential, but it requires a carefully thought strategy to develop through this critical stage without overextending its resources and/or dissatisfying tourists. With its adoption of a Tourism Development Plan in 1995, the government seems to have made a very sensible choice, recognising both tourism potentials and limitations to development.

Unlike some other countries in the region whose tourism development policy was obviously anti- low per day expenditure tourists, Vietnam seems to have recognised the importance of developing lower quality accommodation in form of “relay” hotels, especially in the provinces outside the major centres. The typical path of tourism development is that destinations need to be “discovered” first by allocentric tourists (Plog 1973), or explorers (Cohen 1972), before the mass tourism establishment recognises the value of these destinations and consequently integrates them into the formal tourism system (Oppermann 1993). Hence, a specific development strategy for newly emerging tourism destinations could, and perhaps should, is to attract backpackers and alike to out-of-the-way destinations. Over time, this initial trickle of tourists can be expected to gain momentum and investors for larger-scale accommodation projects will follow. This development path was very obvious on the East Coast of Peninsula Malaysia, where in Cherating the initial local guesthouses and chalets operators were complemented by outsiders building both large-scale chalet-type accommodation as well as 3- to 4-star tourism resorts.

Finally, Vietnam has to ascertain that it retains an open climate for investment and that it places a high value on safety. The example of neighbouring Cambodia indicates the volatility and fickleness of international tourism. Unfortunately, sometimes even neighbouring countries are indirectly affected. Vietnam also needs to recognise that the largest potential of tourists are within the region, in neighbouring China as well as the other South East Asian countries.

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Strategic Tourism Planning for Sustainable Development: Singapore and Hue

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Abstract

Governments frequently promote tourism development because it offers the potential for job creation, increased household incomes for local communities and enhanced revenues for governments. Tourism also offers the potential for conservation of historic buildings and places, as well as environmentally or aesthetically important natural areas. Conversely, tourism has sometimes been viewed as a destructive industry due to its negative impacts on socio-economic, cultural and natural environments. Seeking ways of avoiding these problems while maximising potential benefits, alternative sustainable development strategies have been promoted in many places as preferred development models. This paper discusses one such framework for the strategic planning of sustainable tourism, utilising case studies of Singapore and Hue to illustrate the concepts outlined.

Attributes of Tourism Development

A Positive Force

The tourism and travel industry is recognised as the world's largest industry and has played an important role in global economic development. In 1996, the industry provided 10.7 percent of world Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and employed 10.5 percent of the global workforce (WTTC, 1997). In the East Asia and Pacific region, tourism is a dynamic sector with an annual growth of visitor arrivals of 7.9 percent in 1996. In 1994, tourism receipts accounted for 5.5 percent of total export earnings in Singapore, 5.9 percent in China and 9.8 percent in Thailand (WTO, 1997).

Governments frequently promote tourism development because it offers the potential for job creation, increased household incomes for local communities and enhanced revenues for governments. In developing countries, governments have used tourism as a catalyst for development of other economic sectors such as agriculture, fisheries and manufacturing. As tourism provides jobs and income generation for local communities, it

is often viewed as a vehicle for regional development. Tourism also offers the potential for the conservation of historic buildings and places as well as environmentally or aesthetically important natural areas.

Tourism as a Negative Force in Development

Conversely tourism has sometimes been viewed as a destructive industry due to its negative impacts on socio-economic, cultural heritage and natural environments. Degradation of the natural environment and water pollution at the beach resorts of Pattaya and Hua Hin, Thailand; damage to the coral reefs in Bali, Indonesia; and ecological deterioration of Nepalese alpine regions are global examples of the negative impact of ill-planned tourism development. Related impacts include degraded living conditions, proliferations of crime, prostitution, institutional collapse, weakened social values and corrupted cultural heritages among others. Such impacts can and do result in weaker tourism attraction and consequential poorer economic performance for tourism destination areas. (Gartner, 1996; Pye and Lin, 1983; Smith, 1991).

Seeking ways of avoiding these problems while maximising the potential benefits, alternative sustainable development strategies have been promoted in many places as preferred development models. The integrated beach resorts of Nusa Dua, Bali, Indonesia, and Phuket Laguna, Phuket, Thailand, are examples which have had varying degrees of effectiveness (Smith, 1992 and 1993; Inskip and Kallenberger, 1992). Poorly planned and managed tourism development has resulted in global concern on the urgent need for well-planned and managed tourism development. Following from these concerns, this paper discusses a framework for strategic planning of sustainable tourism and tests this by reference to the cases of Singapore and Hue, Vietnam.

Planning Paradigms

Tourism is a complex set of activities that have a variety of direct and indirect impacts on socio-economic life and environmental ecosystems. Tourism is defined as an esoteric and dynamic industry with multiple dimensions, namely: economic, socio-cultural, historic, psychological, international and environmental. Understanding the nature of the tourism industry will provide a basis for sustainable tourism planning, development and management (Fridgen, 1991).

It has long been recognised that planning in business is narrowly conceived and executed. Business analyses are directed to the maximisation of profit. Resource consumption by business is thus based on restricted criteria related primarily to financial analyses. In competitive business contexts, there is often little or no scope for consideration of ecological, social and other non-financial factors unless there is a direct link to venture profitability. Inclusion of these factors would potentially place individual business ventures at a disadvantage in comparison with other competing businesses. Typically, their inclusion only occurs when required by law. The negative impacts on non-financial environments are not likely to be included in resource allocative decision making. The

consequence is that communities and nature are at risk of significant negative impacts. Another problem is related to the artificial analytical basis of a comparative short-term project life. Consequential impacts of projects on ecosystems and communities may well be long-term. Such negative impacts sometimes entail high external costs over long periods. There are few incentives to include these in business planning or decision making.

Economic project evaluation, in comparison, is conducted within a considerably broader decision framework as compared with business-based analyses. Economic project planning recognises the importance of resource allocation and the comparison of alternative resource allocation strategies. Attempts are often made to incorporate value for the alternative uses of resources as well as positive and negative externalities; that is global project impacts. Weaknesses of this process stem from the limited resources for competing demand and the resultant political dimension of decision making. There are also procedural problems in assigning values to use, change and output of resource use. This latter issue is greatly complicated by time considerations and the differing norms and values of economists, policy makers, sociologists, environmentalists, developers, facility operators, local communities and others. Conflicting values and political priorities often weaken economic-based evaluations; essentially a contest between who wins and who loses.

The Need for Sustainable Tourism Planning

Business and economic based planning provides deficient frameworks for strategic tourism development and management. These shortcomings are brought into focus when the principles of sustainable development are considered. Sustainable development has been formalised as desired best practice for development with the Brundtland Report of the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development (UN, 1987). The central concept of sustainable development relates to meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. This concept is central to all forms of development including tourism.

The symbiotic relationship between the environment and tourism emphasises the need for adoption of sustainability for tourism planning. It is universally accepted that few tourists are likely to be attracted to destinations with degraded natural environments. This aspect needs to be stressed as tourists are applying discretionary time and income to satisfy leisure needs. Destination decision-making by tourists is undertaken within a fiercely competitively international market. Generally tourists have a wide range of choice for destinations and products. The diversity of tourism supply coupled with the relative cheapness, flexibility and efficiency of tourism transportation encourages “demand fickleness”, which may be invoked at short notice. A compounding factor is the availability of substitutes to travel. For tourism to succeed, sustainability becomes the foundation for strategic planning.

The spatial setting for tourism is important, as individual components of a destination are usually not the sole attractive force. Tourism attraction is generally multi-faceted and

therefore relies on the composite tourism product of the destination area to attract. Failure of specific components of the tourism product are likely to damage the overall attraction of the destination area and its overall business and economic success. Coordinated and integrated planning then becomes a central function for sustainable strategic tourism planning.

An equally important facet of tourism attraction is the service facet of the tourism sector. Effective tourism relies on the quality of service provision, which in turn is grounded in human resources. Allied with tourism service is the cultural dimension of attraction. In some places, indigenous culture may form part of the primary attraction for the specific destination. Whether this is so or not, in all cases the cultural dimension of the place permeates the “service software”. Cultural factors become as important to attraction as environmental quality.

Local communities will have a major role in tourism. Direct and indirect involvement in the tourism sector will provide many essential services. Positive community support and cooperation will also contribute significantly to tourism sector success through the resolution of conflicts and the management of tourism development. With community support, much may be done to strengthen community values and culture through proactive conservation and development programs that are linked economically and socially to tourism development.

A Framework for Sustainable Tourism Planning

Planning in the past has been characterised by overwhelming dominance of physical development. The goals have been related to supply expansion with the view to encouraging economic growth. In this regard tourism planning has not been an exception. Tourism planning has been typified by projections for hotel room supply expansion, growth in total tourist expenditures and job creation to reduce unemployment. Echoing the trends of planning in general, tourism planning has lately acknowledged the need for consideration of environmental, cultural and social factors. Gunn (1994), Inskeep (1991) and Murphy (1985) have presented various ways of bring these issues to bear on tourism planning.

It is only recently that planners have adopted sustainability as a formal and central paradigm. Sustainable tourism development, stresses the need for interdisciplinary planning, integrated coordination by government, involvement of non-government organisations, community participation, environmental and cultural conservation and the realisation of both short-and long-term objectives. An important aspect of sustainable tourism is its compatibility with long-term reinforcement of economic development (Eber, 1992; APEC, 1996).

Sustainability may be applied to a range of spatial scales from the smallest site through to international regions. Of course, different spatial levels will require varying planning procedures and outcomes. For example national planning will have a high incidence of strategic planning while site planning is more likely to have a significant physical

component. Institutional arrangements for planning will also vary with change of spatial level. Government is likely to dominate national and regional tourism planning and private business is more likely to determine plans for site-specific planning. National planning is therefore top-down in nature. Top-down approaches define central strategic intent and policy by which lower levels of planning may be coordinated and developed.

Conversely, bottom-up tourism planning is grounded in community involvement in the planning process for destination areas or sites. For success, bottom-up planning requires technical inputs, as may be provided by non-government organisations. While many communities are politically competent, technical support becomes important for articulation of community values and objectives with respect specific tourism initiatives, forecasting the likely consequences - both positive and negative - of tourism and facilitating involvement in the tourism planning process.

There will be a vertical dimension that links the scales of national, regional and destination area and site. At each level there will be horizontal links between the various public and private institutions, interests and individuals that interact to provide tourism services at the particular level. Coordination between levels becomes critically important if sustainability is to be universal. The great variety of institutional characteristics of the various actors complicates and has the potential to frustrate the best of intentions for sustainable tourism.

Tourism Planning in Singapore

The Republic of Singapore covers an area of 641 square kilometres. This city-state is located centrally in South East Asia and has a multi-racial population of three millions. Given its small size and limited resources, Singapore has accomplished much by way of formulation of a tourism strategy that has sustained a high growth rate for the tourism industry. During the period of 1985-1994, tourist arrivals increased at an annual average of 9.6 percent, and tourism receipts increased at an average of 13.0 percent per annum. Singapore is one of Asia's leading destinations and tourism is one of Singapore's leading economic sectors. In 1996, 7.3 million tourists arrived in Singapore (STPB, 1995 and 1997).

Singapore has potential to build on its leading position as a tourism destination. The challenges of limited natural resources and emerging competing regional destinations have become the driving forces of change for the Singapore tourism strategy. Within this context, the Tourism 21 plan was prepared for tourism development into the next century. In 1994, the Singapore Tourism Promotion Board (STPB), as the national tourism organisation, embarked on comprehensive studies to prepare this strategic plan (STPB, 1996).

Discussions with other public agencies and the private sector were integral to the procedure for preparing the Tourism 21 plan. Under the guidance of a steering committee, the planning process involved more than 350 people, who represented government agencies, professional institutions, non-government organisations and the

private sector. There were 70 committee members, 220 resource persons, 50 secretariat members and 12 tourism-related associations and organisations. As an outcome of this process, the Tourism 21 Plan proposed the vision of Singapore as a “Tourism Capital” which repositions Singapore as not only as a primary tourism destination, but also as a tourism business centre and tourism hub for the region. Singapore has targeted 6.4 percent annual average growth rate and 6.6 percent annual increase in tourism receipts during the period of 1995-2000 so as to receive 10 million tourist arrivals and around US\$11 billion in tourism receipts by 2000.

It can be seen that the concept of strategic planning is not only well applied and expressed in the planning process itself, but also in the way the Tourism 21 plan deals with the changing regional context through generating a strategic new vision of a tourism capital. The concept of “Tourism Unlimited” is introduced as a broad strategy for Singapore’s tourism development and has two dimensions: “Bring the World to Singapore” and “Bring Singapore to the World”. This strategy manifests outward-oriented and forward-looking concepts so as to deal with the challenges of limited resources and maintaining its competitive position in the region. To bring the vision to reality, several strategic thrusts were articulated: redefining the tourism product, service quality, information technology, marketing, institutions and organisational issues of the industry.

The strategic thrust of redefinition promotes the concept of Singapore having a leading role in a regionalisation process. A spirit of coexistence allowing both cooperation and competition among regional partners is sought. For the product reformulation strategy, the concept of thematic zone development is introduced as the central idea for the creation of a memorable Singapore as a world-class destination. The thematic zone approach will serve to enhance uniqueness of tourism attraction and product that caters to the needs of the target markets as well as residents.

The plan seeks to develop tourism as an industry that adopts a clustered development approach so as to create horizontal integration across sectors and businesses. The plan also enhances operating environments by strengthening the organisational structure for tourism cooperation between the STPB and other agencies such as the Urban Redevelopment Authority, Port of Singapore Authority and Economic Development Board. At the same time, configuring new tourism space, partnering for success and championing tourism are other strategic thrusts which help to enhance efficient cooperation and competition for Singapore tourism in which the STPB is positioning itself to play a key role beyond tourism promotion alone. Partnership and cooperation are planned both horizontally and vertically at all levels to create a greater pool of resources and synergy of effort for sustainable tourism development.

Planned development, where tourism is no exception, has become a trademark of Singapore’s success story (Teo and Huang, 1995; Smith, 1988). The preparation of the Tourism 21 plan for Singapore was essentially a strategic planning exercise based on comprehensive and integrated planning procedures. Participation and contribution of committees, resource experts as well as government agencies and organisations in the

planning process will hopefully facilitate effective implementation of the plan.

Tourism Planning in Thuathien-Hue

Located in the Central Northern Region of the socialist Republic of Vietnam, the Province of Thuathien-Hue (Hue) covers an area of around 5,000 square kilometres. The province has 120 kilometres of coastline with excellent scenic beaches. A capital of Vietnam early in the nineteenth century, the city of Hue was constructed as an urban complex in which the Perfume River had a vital transportation role. As an ancient city, Hue possesses a myriad of antiquities belonging to Dinh, Ly Tran, Le, and Nguyen dynasties and many traditional festivals and cultural customs that characterise the unique cultural heritage of Hue. With an abundance of cultural resources, Hue is a major tourism center in Vietnam, well known for its historical and magnificent architecture as reflected in the Citadel, palaces, royal tombs, pagodas and temples that were erected during the Nguyen Dynasty (1802-1945). Hue is recognised as having international importance and was listed as a World Cultural Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1993 (UNESCO, 1995).

In recent years, recognising the vital role of tourism industry in economic development, the Vietnamese government has been concerned with tourism development-related issues. The National Master Plan for the period of 1995-2010 as well as master plans for Tourism development of many provinces provide guidelines and frameworks for tourism development of the various regions of the country (VNAT, 1991). In addition, by provision of a foreign investment law, as amended in November 1996, the government encouraged foreign investment for economic development in general and tourism in particular.

In recent years, Vietnam has enjoyed very high growth rates for tourist arrivals. In 1994, the annual growth rate was 52 percent. Hue had the highest growth rate in Vietnam; 82 percent per annum during the period of 1991-1995. However, there is growing concern that this growth may not be sustainable. There is also the worry that tourism development may have negative impacts on the socio-economy and natural environment.

In the quest for sustainable tourism development, a master plan for tourism development in Hue was prepared. Under the authority of the Thuathien-Hue Department of Tourism, the Institute of Tourism Development Research (ITDR-VNAT) prepared a master plan in 1995, for the development of tourism in Hue (THPC, 1995). The main tasks for the planning process have been:

- to analyse the existing tourism situation and assess tourism resources;
- to delineate sectoral and spatial tourism planning in the province;
- to define tourism development strategies for Hue for the period 1995-2010 which aim to optimise resource utilisation and enhance tourism contribution to socio-economic development of the province so as to improve the living standard of the people and to protect and conserve cultural and natural environments; and
- to provide guidelines and a development framework for tourism development in the short-term, the mid-term and the long-term.

The plan prepared by ITDR was revised by the Department of Tourism in consultation with many related government authorities such as the Construction Department, the Department of Science, Environment and Technology, the Department of Culture and Communication, the Finance Department, and the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT). Several operators of large hotels in Hue were also invited to comment and advise on the plan. The final plan was approved by the Province Peoples' Committee as official guidelines for tourism development in the province.

The Hue tourism plan was defined not only for achieving economic objectives but also for attaining socio-cultural, environmental and national security objectives. Making the tourism industry a pivotal economic sector should not be at the expense of cultural, historical or natural environments. Rather, tourism should complement the socio-cultural and environmental resources through conservation and improvement. The projected targeted annual growth rate for the period 1995-2000 is 25.0 percent for international and 27.0 percent for domestic tourist arrivals which is higher than the country average of 22.1 percent and 19.6 percent, respectively. It is hoped to achieve 560,000 to 650,000 international tourist arrivals and 1.0 to 1.2 million domestic tourist arrivals by 2000. To meet these targets, the plan recommends five development strategies covering human resources development, tourism product development, improvement of product and services quality, protection and conservation of tourism resources, and investment.

These key strategies are oriented to sectoral tourism development planning and spatial tourism development planning. Sectoral tourism development is designed to obtain a projected economic contribution by tourism to provincial gross domestic product. There are three scenarios: 17.8 percent, 19.7 percent, 21.7 percent in 2000 and 30.0 percent, 38.0 percent, and 46.2 percent in 2010. The development aspect stresses privatisation in tourism with the provision of favourable institutional arrangements so as to encourage multi-sectoral investment for diversification and improvement of tourism products and services. This will help to expand tourism markets and hopefully reduce the seasonality of tourism in Hue. Privatisation brings more opportunities for investment in tourism. Several state-owned firms would be maintained with high priority given to investment projects that are capable of competing in regional and world markets. The plan also emphasises strengthening the institutional framework by enhancing government roles and intervention to ensure controlled tourism development.

For spatial tourism planning, the plan proposes specific projects and programs for exploitation and development of the rich cultural historical heritage and diverse natural resources with tourism potential. The intent is to establish tourism clusters. Unfortunately, no comprehensive study has been carried out to facilitate planning for cluster development in the province. The plan identified a lack of marketing strategies, promotional programs suitable for Hue and tourism information exchange as significant issues that limit tourism development in Hue. Actions are proposed in the master plan to overcome these situations.

The tourism development plan was prepared based on comprehensive studies with participation from public and private sectors. The plan has provided guidelines for specific tourism development. However, several points related to the planning process should be considered for better plan implementation. The major concern is that of limited participation from the business enterprises who play an important role in tourism. This may lead to inefficiency of tourism plan implementation. Also there is the issue of planning bias. To gain some basic understandings of this issue, a survey of local government tourism agencies and 15 hospitality firms (four state-owned and 11 privately owned) in Hue was carried out in March 1997.

The Hue Tourism Survey 1997

At present, there are 64 hotels in Hue, of which 96.8 percent are located in the centre of the city. Most of these hotels in Hue are small-scale and privately owned. There are no large privately owned hotels. By ownership, 15 percent are state-owned which provide 51.4 percent of hotel rooms and account for 94.4 percent of hotel room revenue in Hue. Non-profit organisations own 15 percent of the hotels, which represent 20.8 percent of the room supply and 1.9 percent of the room revenue. The rest are under the private sector. While there may be some distortion in revenue reported by the private sector, these data provide indicators for sectoral tourism development and management in Hue.

The survey found that there exist different perceptions and understandings about tourism planning and implementation between the state-owned and private firms in Hue. When asked about their understanding of national and provincial tourism plans, 75.0 percent of surveyed state firms proffered to know about these plans, which is the expected response as they had participated during the planning process. Most of the private firms do not know about the national tourism development plan, and only 54.5 percent of surveyed private firms knew about the provincial tourism plan. This response is not surprising, as the private firms have been given little opportunity to contribute to provincial planning.

On the effectiveness of implementation of tourism plans, all of state firms responded that these plans were implemented quite successfully. For the private firms, 45.4 percent of respondents said these plans are poorly implemented. Concerning the planning by firms, the state firms had more effective planning because there had been able to refer to the provincial plan. The state firms have designed their technologies, marketing strategies and human resource training to coordinate with the provincial plan. These initiatives give the state firms considerable competitive advantage over the private firms due to the latter's limited capacity to include the provincial plan in their own strategic business planning. Private firms also mentioned the differences in business environment between state and private sector that is more biased to the state sector. The state sector obtains preferential credit and loans from the government as well as favourable locations for development. State firms also claim an unfair competitive environment because private firms are subjected to less stringent tax and finance management policies which contributes to lower operational costs for the private sector.

Other potentially disruptive issues relate to urban planning and zoning. There are no well-defined development guidelines for urban development resulting in poor architectural designs for hotel construction and upgrading. This poses a threat to the traditional garden-house architecture of Hue. In addition, the slow process of review and approval for the overall socio-economic development plan of the province has impacted negatively on tourism planning and development. This may cause uncertainty and discourage investment in tourism.

There is also the situation mentioned in the Tourism Development Master Plan of Vietnam 1995. Several institutions are concerned with tourism, performing a variety of functions that frequently overlap or leave gaps leading to confusion and inefficiency. This holds true for tourism development and management in Hue.

Conclusions

The evolution of planning concepts in recent years has served as an effective management tool towards problem-avoiding strategies for sustainable tourism development. However, application of these to national and regional tourism planning has not been fully effective due to lack of knowledge, limited expertise and inappropriate institutional arrangements for tourism planning and implementation. Needed is official planning guidelines to motivate the coordination of public participation in planning, to enhance public awareness and to improve information exchange.

An overview on tourism planning in the cases of Singapore and Hue suggests that sustainable planning concepts can be adapted in several ways according to specific tourism developmental contexts. This is a continuous and flexible process in which a plan is a primary document that provides guidelines for specific development projects as well as long-range plans. Successful implementation of tourism development plans basically relies on adaptability to the changing context of overall development.

Hue is currently at the inception stage of tourism development. Decentralisation and diversification of tourism development is necessary to meet the growing demand for tourism in Hue in recent years. This trend has continued to involve many firms of different sectors, which raises questions related to the overall management of tourism development. The institutional separation between public policy functions and commercial activities should be redefined to enhance the roles of private management in the context of tourism privatisation. Equally important, effective guidelines are needed to provide opportunities for private sector involvement and community participation in the preparation of specific development plans. Tourism planning should not be limited to within any specific study boundary. Rather, tourism planning needs to consider other provinces in the region so as to provide integration into the North Central Region tourism development pole of Vietnam.

To achieve sustainable tourism development, the central principles of sustainability need to be fully integrated. Effective sustainable tourism will only be achieved through

planned balance of competing interests and concerns. The need to modernise has to be considered against the global value of conservation of cultural heritage and environmental resources. The strengths of the state sector could well be tempered by balance of input from the private sector. Plans themselves are meaningless if effective institutional arrangements are not available. These need to address development and operation regulation, project finance and government revenue. Regional tourism development has a major role to play in ensuring regional development potential. To facilitate this infrastructure has to be planned and coordinated and regional level management mechanisms effected. Consistency of strategic policy is the foundation of effective plan implementation. Investment confidence will be bolstered by these strategies. Only then will tourism in Vietnam become sustainable.

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The Last Day Of The War

Vu Cao Phan

A Prize Winning Short Story Translated into English by Blue Lotus

For some odd reason I have not told this story to anyone. Yet vividly imprinted on my mind are the pair of trembling skinny hands of *ma soeur* looking for the keys, the tumbledown courtyard, the faces of the children and even the sound of my own startling loud cry at that moment, twenty years ago.

That moment, early in the morning of the day before the 30th of April, five soldiers stood outside the dilapidated iron gate looking at the tottering cement tower that rose from the inside: so this was it. We called out through the gate, *the guardian* appeared briefly then disappeared. Low indistinct voices could be heard, then silence, then low indistinct voices again. After a short while, a few heads peeped around the corner. A woman in black came out from the back of the courtyard:

“Excuse me, are you the liberators?” she asked.

“Yes, we are, may we come in?” I requested.

“Of course, please do come in.

She opened the gate. I looked at the woman:

“Is this a church?”

“No, a school, it was a school. Lieutenant.”

(She just made up the title for me. There was no badge of any kind on my body.)

“The school is now closed. It has been closed perhaps since last month or so. We are now using this as an orphanage, orphanage G. We moved to here from the central province to escape the aggressors. Pray the Lord. I beg your pardon (She kept her look down) to escape the bombing there. The school used to be occupied by the soldiers. When we came they let us use it to house the orphans”.

Alarmingly, I held on to my gun. I asked:

“Are the soldiers still inside?”

The old woman also looked startled:

“No. No Sir. They all left a few days ago. Yesterday a group of soldiers passed through here, only to abandon their uniforms, then ran away”.

The pile of discarded uniforms could be seen around the corner. The whole country was in an evacuating mood. It was difficult to tell if this area had been liberated or it was still in the hands of the Saigon Army. We stopped near the cement tower. It did not look exactly like a watchtower. What purpose it had within the school ground was not clear. Perhaps it had been used regularly for some kind of observation. The construction was primitive but solid. I asked my companions to keep watch, then climbed up the tower.

The general assault of inner Saigon had begun the previous day. The anti-aircraft unit was ordered to follow closely the ground army pursuing the enemies *en route*. However our regiment was to stop in this region, quite a bit further north of Saigon. We were to be ready to detect any enemy's aircraft coming from the bases stationed outside of Vietnam. They could mount a surprise attack on our army at any time. As the head of the Regiment's scouting unit, I was ordered to set up a reconnaissance station here for that purpose. We discovered this tower one day ago in a 1/25000 scale UTM map which we obtained from the enemy. It took us six hours to find it.

“Ideal place, can't describe it in any other way”.

I nodded to my companions when I came down from the tower. Indeed, the tower was built not only in the right location but also provided the gunner with a very wide-angled firing range without any obstructions. I turned the radio set on to communicate with the regiment commander. I reported the news and affirmed the commencement of my duties. From that moment, all the local 2-watt networks were ready to receive our information. The regiment commander also gave me the right to fire in case of emergencies.

I informed *ma soeur*, the woman in black, Director of the orphanage that due to our military duties we had to stay here and that I had to inspect the place where we were going to be stationed. The old lady said “yes” very softly, but her eyes betrayed her. Finding the right location for reconnaissance work was my main duty; however I wanted to find a place where my whole small unit could stay.

After marching all night everyone was exhausted. I left Vinh, the experienced scout leader of the Unit, at the tower on watch and took the rest of my men to follow *ma soeur*.

The school was located in a large area, but it had only one row of several classrooms which were now being used by the orphanage for classrooms and living quarters. The nuns managed to re-establish the children's daily routine soon after they moved in. We walked past the rooms quickly and noiselessly trying not to disturb the children, still all heads were turned and all eyes were on us in surprise. The young innocent faces were of different ages. One small boy pointed his hands up; pretending to fire into the sky which

frightened the nun in charge of the class. I smiled. Children were always children no matter where. In another classroom, the young girls were doing sewing lessons. When we came to the last room, it was locked. I asked *ma soeur* if this was a vacant spare room. The answer came as fast as a shooting arrow.

“No. No, this is our most sacred place, dear Lieutenant, we use it as our chapel where we also keep our religious icons”.

Perhaps it was true, as this was a Catholic orphanage. In that case, we would have to put up our tent in a corner somewhere. It did not matter much. *Ma soeur* seemed to read my mind. She pointed toward a small cottage, a short distance from the main building.

“You can have a look at that cottage. A family employed by the orphanage lives there, but I can make other arrangements for them”.

A small family of three lived in the cottage: a young woman with one small child and a young girl of about 16 or 17 years old. We understood the sadness on the face of the young woman. *Ma soeur* told us that her husband was still stationed somewhere in the war zone. However when we came in, she warmly welcomed us and called out to the young girl.

“Offer the gentlemen something to drink, please Diu-Thom” (Gentle Fragrance)

Ah. Her name provoked such a sense of peacefulness that the war seemed to cease to exist in this house.

While the girl was fetching the drink, *ma soeur* made up her mind.

“Miss Hong, you can move in with us. Let the liberators stay here temporarily”.

She turned toward me.

“And dear Lieutenant, how long are you going to stay?”

“Until the war ends, dear *ma souer*”, I laughed, “But the war will end with this last battle. I don’t think it will be prolonged”.

Once again, *ma soeur* looked at me waveringly.

That day, we took turns to keep watch in the tower. We felt apprehensive listening to guns firing from different directions, from the East, the West and even from further South. Sometimes small gunshots could be heard echoing. We will enter Saigon one day: tomorrow or the day after or ...?

A new development however changed the course of our duties. It all started when First Class Private Ruan, a Catholic from *Hai Hau* came to me late in the afternoon with a dilemma.

“Sir, there is something fishy. It is difficult to explain. I asked *ma soeur* when mass would be held. At the beginning she pretended not to hear my question, but later she said, ‘Being liberators, are you also interested in mass? We had our mass already, thank you’. I had to explain to her that I also am a Catholic, when I was in the jungle, I could only pray to God in silence. Now if there was a proper Chapel, I would be happy, and I would like to attend mass. After she listened to me she looked at me strangely and just left without adding another word. You see, we arrived here early in the morning and I haven’t noticed any mass being held. There was neither morning nor afternoon mass. I kept an eye out for it. It was strange that she said so”.

I did not have enough time to share Ruan’s doubt when Vinh appeared:

“Sir, it does not look right!” He whispered “there are enemy”.

Apparently while looking for some Indian spinach around the schoolyard, Vinh went past the back of the chapel; the window suddenly opened then slammed shut. He put his ear against the wall and heard some noises from inside.

“You see, from here we can see the black lock on the chapel door”, he pointed out. “It is obvious...”

Ruan added his opinion:

“I noticed that when *ma soeur* approached the chapel, she slowed down, muttering to herself while keeping a look out in all directions”.

My scouting soldiers were not too bad. I already had some doubts. Now with this new input my professional instinct told me that *ma soeur* had hidden someone in the locker room when we marched in. But whom did she hide?

I did not have any reason to contradict Vinh that they could be the enemy. It could also be possible that there were more than one. It could be that the enemy had left a small unit here for some reason, after offering the school to the orphanage, as *ma soeur* had told me. And they could also be deserters who arrived here as she also said. I decided to have the chapel watched, without further questioning. I devised my plan of action based on two possibilities: it could be either that the enemy would wait until dark to escape or they would plan to attack us. I only knew that from this moment, for the mere five of us, the burden of our duties multiplied ten fold.

To have the back of the school covered, I had no choice than to have Ruan hang up his hammock among the trees at the end of the cottage. This action did not go unnoticed by *ma soeur* though it was getting dark. I still could see her questioning eyes move toward my direction as if to ask why we bothered to take over the cottage.

Finally night came, and the atmosphere became more oppressive and fearful. Gunfires rang out continuously. Flashing lights brightened the horizon. Our bodies were strained with tension. We listened for the victorious steps of our comrades, we tried our best to complete our duties and we...that's it, no need to add anything more. As the night progressed, it became quieter, we felt a bit more relaxed but none of us wanted to sleep.

Just past midnight, when the three-quarter moon had not yet reached the top of the trees, a shadowy figure appeared. I signalled my companions to follow it. The figure moved slowly along the wall from the other end of the building, very slowly progressing toward us using the dense trees for camouflage. It succeeded in reaching the tree in front of the chapel. The objectives of the adventurer were quite obvious: he could be the liaison person who would pass on the information or he would try to help his friends to escape. Unfortunately, the space in front of the chapel was very exposed; the figure had to stay immobile under the tree. I had the intention of capturing him alive, but before I could act the tide turned. The figure stepped out from under the tree looked around then jumped up to the step in front of the chapel. He missed the step and fell down with a clashing noise. Quickly he stood up and shot in the opposite direction and disappeared. I decided not to pursue him.

In the morning we found an empty food carrier with rice and soup spilled all over the step together with loaves of bread and a single sandal. We then realised that the aim of the night's adventurer was much simpler that we had imagined. I had the step cleaned and left everything in order.

The working day began but no one from the orphanage came past the chapel, and the nuns seemed distressful and fidgety. Of course there was no morning mass in the chapel either. None of us had seen the *ma soeur*, the Director. She seemed to be hiding somewhere. All the evidence pointed toward a self-confessed conspiracy.

At the next communication with the Regiment Commander, I was reminded to keep a close watch on the situation and was also told that perhaps today the army would march into the inner capital. I reported to him the details of our work and I requested to have the authority to decide my actions. The regiment commander agreed:

“Try to capture the enemy alive or call them to surrender. Don't waste any life, the war is nearly ended. However there are a lot of children as well, are there not?”

I decided to confront *ma soeur* the Director. I had to talk to her. Of course there would be no political explanation, nor an argument of what's right or wrong, especially at this point in time. It was better to get straight to the point. I thought I understood her. Nuns

always behave charitably; this orphanage spoke well for it. The difficult situation which we were now facing could be caused by the fact that *ma soeur* did not want any blood spilled. I would insist that was exactly what we also wanted, therefore I would request her to persuade the enemy to surrender. The revolution would forgive them. However I was told that *ma soeur* the Director was sick. I could not wait any longer, so I approached another older nun:

“Dear *ma soeur* please unlock the door to the chapel, we have to inspect it”.

“Pray the Lord” she cried. “But I do not have the keys, Mother Superior has the keys”.

“Could you please convey our wish to Mother Superior. From now on the Chapel will be surrounded. Please arrange to evacuate everyone, especially all the children to a safer area,” I announced.

The nun crossed herself then left quickly. Half an hour passed with no sign of her return. However I noticed that the children had been moved away from near the chapel.

We had to act immediately. I summoned all my companions, except one who stayed watch on the tower. Vinh arrived; his face was devoid of any emotion and said,

“The enemy has surrendered. Listen.

He turned up the volume of the Sony radio, which he carried with him all the time. Clearly, I heard the voice of President Duong Van Minh ordering his Saigon troops to lay down their guns to surrender. Neither did I show any clear emotion when I looked at my comrades.

“We will fight the last battle of the war”.

Anything could happen. The thought passed through my mind quickly when I was working out the strategic position for each soldier. Everything had to be done immediately and absolutely.

I gave my order. “Break the lock and call the enemy to surrender.”

“Wait Sir, the Director...”.

I turned around. *ma soeur* the Director appeared from nowhere stumbling toward me. Her steps were unsteadily hesitating. She tried to raise her hand holding a bundle of keys, breathlessly muttering something which was only clear when she came nearer:

“Please do not shoot into the room, Lieutenant”

It was only since last night that I saw her, and yet she seemed to have lost a lot of weight. She bent down, her trembling pair of skinny hands searching for the right key to the door of the chapel. She must have come across it several times but still continued searching for it. Finally, she held out one key and looked up.

“Excuse me, Lieutenant, please let me”.

All of a sudden, her action became strangely faster and surer. She seemed to be able to resume her authority as the Director. The key turned, the door opened. She crossed herself and called out clearly.

“It is me, your mother, please come out children”.

Then she tumbled to my feet and cried out.

“Dear God, please don’t shoot them, they are innocent, they are innocent”.

At last, I understood everything when I saw from the dark corner of the chapel three emaciated and frightened half-cast children emerged: two black and one white American.

“My God. How could it be? Jesus.” “Get the milk from the knapsack for the children quickly”. I cried out to my companions, bending down to help *ma soeur* up.

That was all I could manage. I made a quick turn, then hurried away to escape my own tears.

“How could it be! How could it!

Review: The Tourism Industry in Vietnam and Indo-China: Opportunities for Investment, Development, and Marketing

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Tourism in Industry in Vietnam: The First Conference in 1993

“Tourism Industry in Vietnam: Opportunities for Investment, Development and Marketing” was the theme of the international conference which was held in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, April 25-27, 1993. Hosted by the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (U.S.), in collaboration with the Universite d’Angers (France) and Da Nang Polytechnic in Vietnam, the three day event sought to provide international hotel and tourism industry firms, financial institutions, tourism marketing organisations, consultants, researchers, and educators with an opportunity to learn about potential investment, development, and marketing opportunities existing in Vietnam’s tourism and hotel industry. The conference was co-chaired by Professor Kaye Chon, then at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and Professor Michel Bonneau, Universite d’Angers. The 30 participants included representatives of Vietnam, Hong Kong, Singapore, United States, The Netherlands, and France. One individual who was instrumental in facilitating the organisation and implementation of the conference was Ms. Nima Chandler, then a correspondent of *The Travel Trade Gazette (Asia)* stationed in Ho Chi Minh City. She provided the conference organisers with much needed insight into the issues facing the tourism and hotel industry in the country.

The conference started with a welcome speech by Professor Dr. Vu Tuan Canh, Director of the Institute for Tourism Research at the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, Hanoi, followed by a speech by Luc Lejeune, Program Officer of the UNDP Office in Hanoi, who provided an insight on the tourism master plan for Vietnam. As the featured speaker at a luncheon, Dr. Nguyen Son Tra, Deputy Director of the State Committee for Cooperation and Investment, Ho Chi Minh City, provided an insider’s look at the tourism development plans for Vietnam and also laid out the investment opportunities in the country’s tourism industry.

The conference featured ten paper presentations dealing with various topics ranging from hotel industry marketing strategies to the demand for Vietnam tourism in the United States. Of particular interests was the paper by Professor Vincent Heung of Hong Kong Polytechnic University who proposed a marketing mix strategy for Vietnam’s tourism industry. He pointed out the difficulty of accessibility, stringent and inconsistent visa

regulations, and lack of infrastructure as major limitations of tourism development and marketing in Vietnam. All paper presentations were documented in the published conference proceedings, which became one of the first English-language publications which reported on tourism development and marketing activities in Vietnam.

Tourism in Industry in Indo-China: The Second Conference in 1996

As a result of the successful completion of the First Conference in 1993, the second conference was staged in Ho Chi Minh City, April 25-27, 1996. The Saigon Prince Hotel was the conference venue. Hosted by the University of Houston (U.S.), Universite d'Angers (France), and the University of Economics, Ho Chi Minh City (Vietnam), the second conference focused on a larger geographic area of "Indo-China" instead of Vietnam alone, thus "The Second International Conference on Tourism in Indo-China: Opportunities for Investment, Development and Marketing." The conference sponsors for the second conference included the ASEAN Tourism Association, Harvey World Travel of Australia, Hanyang University, Korea, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong, Prince of Songkla University, Thailand, Southern Cross University, Australia, Vietnamtourism, Vietnam, and Waiariki Polytechnic, New Zealand.

A notable difference in the second conference was the larger number of participants (approximately 110) representing approximately 12 countries. As many as 25 papers and presentations were included in the conference program, and another notable difference in the second conference was the diversity of paper and presentation topics.

Indo-China, for the purpose of the conference, was defined as those countries including Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand, and Peninsula Malaysia. Papers and presentations were mainly centred around four themes. First, for each of the six Indo-Chinese countries, there was a paper dealing with investment and development. Second, there were several papers addressing issues related to marketing of tourism products and services in Indo-Chinese countries. Third, there were papers dealing with marketing strategies from the buyer's point of view. For example, the presentation by Thuy Do of *The Global Spectrum*, a tourism operating company in Washington, D.C., focused on the marketing strategies of U.S. tour operators in conjunction with the Indo-Chinese tourism products. Finally, a number of empirical investigations of psychological and demographic profiles of visitors to Indo-Chinese destinations were presented. Of particular interest in this category were two papers dealing with studies of Vietnam War veterans in the United States and South Korea. All 25 papers were published in the conference proceedings at the University of Houston's Conrad. N. Hilton College.

Tourism in Industry in Indo-China & South East Asia: The Third Conference in 1998

Based on the success of the first two conferences in Vietnam and growing interest in research information on tourism development and marketing in Indo-China and its

neighbouring countries of South East Asia, another conference under the catch phrase of “Third International Conference on Tourism in Indo-China & South East Asia: Development, Marketing and Sustainability” was scheduled for June 4-6, 1998 in Phuket, Thailand. The third conference was hosted by the University of Houston (U.S.), Prince of Songkla University (Thailand), and the Universite d’Angers (France) and sponsored by the Asia Pacific Tourism Association, Thai Airways International, Tourism Authority of Thailand, and Thai Hotels Association. The outcomes of this Conference will be discussed in a future edition of this Journal.

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