

## Homestay for Community Based Tourism Development at Kampung Jelawang in Kelantan, Malaysia

\*Md. Anowar Hossain Bhuiyan

Assistant Professor, National University, gazipur, Bangladesh

anowarlestari@gmail.com

### Abstract:

Community-based tourism (CBT) can ensure environmental, social and cultural sustainability of an area. The Malaysian homestay program was announced officially as a CBT product in 1995. Jelawang is one of the officially registered villages of Kelantan for homestay accommodations. Local people lifestyles, cultural heritage, traditional food, and local musical performances are attracting the guests of home stay accommodations in this village. The present study analyzes the potentials and opportunities of CBT development at Jelawang based on homestay accommodation through stakeholder consultations and communities perception. CBT implementation depends on the active participation of stakeholders- local communities, tourism organizations, and government institutions. The potentials situations of Jelawang to develop CBT activities are biodiversity, water catchments, ecotourism potential, ecosystem, environmental education, nature recreation, and easy access. The study recommended several initiatives including tourism packages, identified products, pricing and promotion, modified homestay, develop communication skill, training and research initiatives for CBT development at Jelawang. Finally, effective planning, financial allocation, managerial efficiency, and proper community participation will be ensuring CBT development at Jelawang which will benefit the local communities through their social and economic well beings.

**Key-words:** Community Based Tourism, Homestay, Jelawang, Kelantan, Malaysia.

### Introduction:

Accommodation is one of the important elements in the tourism industry as well as the economy in a country. It is most energy concentrated component in the tourism industry for heating, cooling, lighting, cooking, cleaning, pools and other regular activities (Peeters et al. 2010). With respect, the growth of accommodation related emissions, environment-friendly accommodations become a key factor for sustainable tourism development in 2050. Environment-friendly accommodations become familiar in the tourism industry due to sustainable energy consumption, reduce environmental pollution and increase the benefits for local communities (UNEP and WTO, 2012). Moreover, accommodation can create employment and income generation opportunities for the local people and ensure economic well-beings for them. Homestay accommodation is suitable for tourism and environment-friendly accommodation development in an area. This accommodation can generate active participation for local people in the tourism industry. Local communities can foster and share their culture and customs with the tourists by homestay accommodation program (Bhuiyan et al., 2012). Stakeholders involvement is very important for any businesses and service industries. Tourism development in an area depends on the effective and active role of stakeholders. The common stakeholders of tourism development are local community people, local business people, tour operators, tour guides, non-government organizations, educational institutions, and government involvement.

Community-based tourism (CBT) is managed and owned by communities with the purpose of enabling tourists to increase their consciousness and awareness and to learn about the community and living ways of local people. Successful community-based tourism can ensure environmental, social and cultural sustainability of an area (Suansri, 2003). It can achieve sustainable development and can improve the living conditions of local people without damaging the environment. The aims of CBT are communities' ownership and empowerment, natural and cultural resources conservation, enhance socio-economic development and ensure tourists' experiences (Hiwasaki, 2006). Furthermore, CBT can be utilized as a strategy to enlarge the flexibility of socio-ecological systems for contributing to sustainable development (Simpson, 2008). Sophea (2013) have developed principles

for CBT standard in Cambodia. The principles are, involve and empower the community, a partnership with stakeholders, gain legal recognition, social well-being, and human dignity, establish and enhance linkage to the local and regional economy, respect the local culture and tradition, natural resource conservation, improve visitor experiences and achieve financial self-sufficiency. Moreover, CBT can integrate both sustainable tourism and environmental conservation in an area (Taiwan Tourism Bureau, 2012).

Over the last two decades, CBT has developed widely in South East Asia. In the mid-1990s, the CBT projects were developed and implemented in The Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand. In these years, CBT has taken initiatives on the impacts of tourism, aspects of sustainability and local communities' role in tourism activities. At the end of 1990, CBT initiatives emerged in most of the South Asian countries. Laos and Vietnam started CBT activities to support the local communities through several projects. In Cambodia, community-based ecotourism was established in 2002. The South Asian countries developed CBT in different ways. Thailand, Philippines, and Indonesia received technical assistance and financial support from international agencies for planning and development of CBT in their countries with strong collaboration with local NGOs. Laos, Cambodia, and Vietnam developed CBT activities by the financial support of larger donor agencies like ADB and EU. The CBT activities in Malaysia, Brunei, and Singapore are mostly government oriented. The federal governments in these countries have more influences in directing CBT. In these countries, CBT and homestay accommodation are used as alternative livelihoods in rural areas (Kris and John, 2013).

Tourism is the second largest foreign exchange earning sources of Malaysia after manufacturing. This industry plays an important role in the source of income, employment opportunities and economic enhancement of the country (Bhuiyan et al., 2011). In Malaysia, CBT was first introduced as a new tourism product during the period of 7th Malaysia Plan (1996-2000). The Malaysian government has focused on CBT to develop rural communities to reduce the economic imbalance between the rural and urban areas. Community participation in tourism was mentioned in the National Tourism Policy, formulated in 1992. The policy emphasized rural enterprises; cultural exchanges acceleration of urban and rural integration, and encouragement for local communities' participation in the conservation and tourism activities ((Siti-Nabiha, 2010). The Malaysian homestay program was announced officially as a CBT product in 1995. This program can be regarded as a rural and cultural community-based tourism product. It was also recognized as a tourism product in the rural tourism master plan (RTMP) of 2001(UNDP, 2003). The RTMP was passed to promote the homestay program as part of community development. In Malaysia, homestay accommodation is mainly operated and organized by the Kampung (village) people (Clammer, 1996; Kennedy, 1993). Homestay program provides tourists to gather experiences in multi-ethnic life conditions with cultural and economic well beings for the local people (Liu, 2006).

Kelantan is one of the state of East Coast Economic Region (ECER) in Malaysia. This state is full of natural beauties, beaches, recreational forests, waterfalls, and cultural attractions. Most of the tourism attractions of this state are situated in the rural and nonurban areas. CBT activities may be developed in this state on the basis of these attractions and natural resources. This tourism segmentation has been an important economic tool in this state, attracting both domestic and foreign tourists to the state's charming natural and cultural attractions (ECER, 2007). Kampung Jelawang is one of the officially registered villages of Kelantan for homestay accommodations. Local people lifestyles, cultural heritage, traditional food, and local musical performances attract the guests of homestay accommodations in this village. Local communities of this area participate in homestay accommodation to enhance their economic well-being as well as social and cultural exchange opportunities. The present study analyzed the potentials and opportunities of CBT development at Jelawang based on homestay accommodation.

### **Methods and Materials:**

**Methods:** The study conducted stakeholder consultation through focus group discussion to identify the potentialities and opportunities of CBT development based on the homestay accommodations at Jelawang. Moreover, the study collected data from the local communities to analyze their perception regarding homestay

and CBT development at Jelawang. This study also reviewed published materials such as research reports, articles and books as secondary sources to attain the objectives.

**Focus Group Discussion:** The representatives from local communities, a tourism organization, government and businessmen participated in focus group discussion. A total of 20 participants from different stakeholders took part in the discussion. Among them, four from each group stakeholders of community people, homestay operators, local businessmen, tourism organizations, and officials from the Ministry of Tourism and Culture (MOTAC), Kelantan office. The focus group discussion has facilitated in the second week of August 2016.

**Primary data collection:** The study followed non-probability convenience sampling design and purposive sampling technique for primary data collection. A total of 100 respondents were selected from the local communities to give their opinion on seven statements regarding homestay and CBT. The opinions were collecting through a questionnaire to use a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neither disagree nor agree, 4= agree, 5=strongly agree. The field survey has been completed in May 2016. The researchers have collected data by self and enumerators.

**Homestay in Kelantan:** There are 8 Kampung (village) are involved mainly in homestay accommodation in Kelantan. These villages are Seterpa, Pantai Suri, Kubang Telaga, Kemunchup, Batu Papan, Bukit Jering, Renok Baru, and Jelawang. Homestay accommodation is one of the potential tourism and economic activities in Kelantan. This accommodation program should emphasize local custom and cultural practices, attract the tourists and create authentic interest and commitment among the local youth in this state. The traditional food, local lifestyle, fruits, cultural heritage, and local musical performances are attracting the guests of homestay accommodations in this state. Some 3200 guests stayed at homestay accommodations of Kelantan in 2013 (Malaysia, 2013).

**Kampung Jelawang:** Kampung Jelawang is located about 130 kilometers from Kota Bharu, the capital city of Kelantan. The village is famous for its international attraction, Gunung Stong State Park which is the highest cascade waterfall in South East Asia. The visitors may explore most of the common caves, natural flora and fauna, rich biodiversity and water catchment which are suitable for CBT development.

### **Conceptual Framework:**

The government can motivate all other stakeholders to play an integral and collaborative role in CBT planning and management. Government role is also important for land-use planning and management, environmental policy formulation, infrastructure development, environmental services, capacity building and ensure benefits for local communities. Other supportive activities, such as marketing, information services, and education and public-private collaborations should potential roles of government for CBT development (Hall, 1999). The educational institutes have positive roles in CBT development to delivery of benefits to communities through conducting research, consultancy, campaigning, and capacity building within the community and transfer skills opportunities. Tour operators and tour guides respond to market trends, local social concerns, product positioning, quality and scheduling, and tourism marketing. Community involvement in CBT can concern the issues of sustainability, understand the needs of communities, preservation of natural resources, fundamental to tourism products, maintenance of goods related to tourism and protection of the environment. CBT gives opportunities to the local communities for participating in planning, managing and operating tourism activities for their benefits (Simpson, 2008).

CBT is an approach for community development where local people can directly participate in tourism activities to ensure their sustainable development. The principles of CBT are the transfer of benefits to the community based on location, size, and level of wealth, involvement, and ownership. These principles are emphasizing on the role of tourism stakeholders to address the needs of communities in all situations (Simpson, 2008). It is a tool for poverty reduction, employment, business opportunities and improves the quality of life for the local communities. CBT implementation at Homestay Jelawang depends on active participation of stakeholders- local communities, tourism organizations, and government institutions. Local communities can participate in planning

and development, decision making, activities and SME operations for tourism development. Tour operators and guides from tourism organizations are promoting homestay through their operations. Government institutions are working at Homestay Jelawang for CBT development (Figure-1).

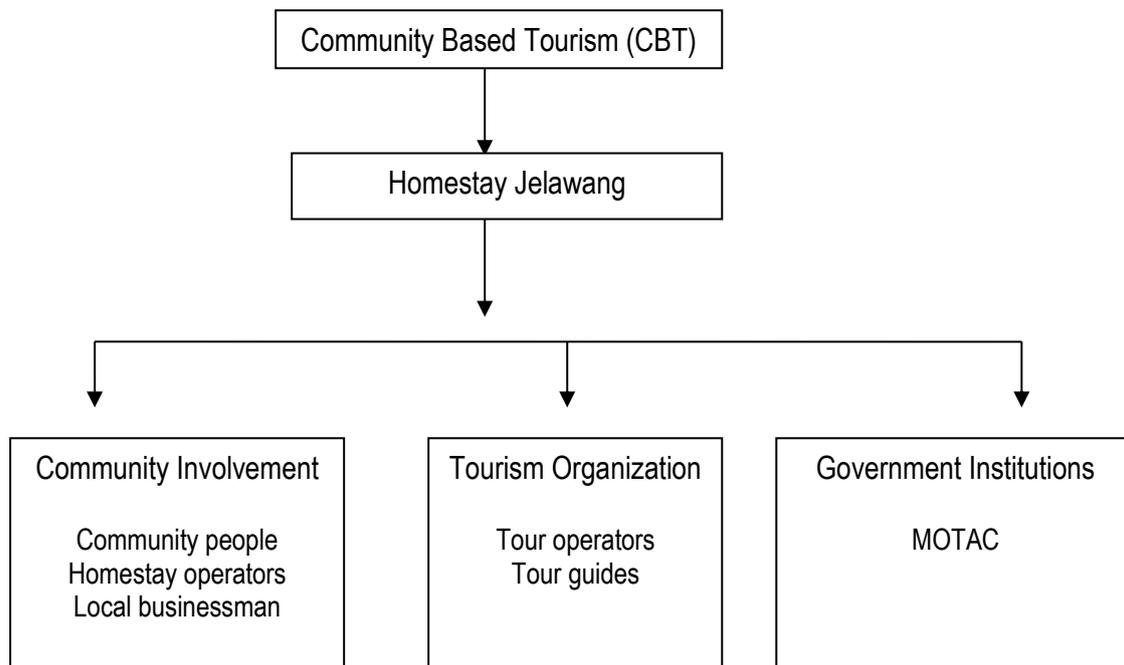


Figure 1: Implementation of CBT through homestay at Jelawang

**Analysis and Discussion:**

The stakeholders’ consultation meeting identified the CBT resources, stakeholders’ role for CBT development, and benefits of CBT through homestay and potential situations for CBT development at Jelawang. Table-1 highlights the stakeholders’ role for CBT development at Homestay Jelawang. Communities are involving in planning and development, decision making, accommodations, tourism activities, and SME’s business. The tour operators and guides are promoting tourism packages for a homestay at Jelawang. Universities are engaging in research and entrepreneurship development. MOTAC is providing logistic and promotional services for homestay development (Table-1).

Table 1: The role of stakeholders for CBT development at Jelawang

Stakeholders	Initiatives	Activities
Community Involvement	Local community	Planning, development and decision making
	Homestay operators	Operate accommodations and manage tourism activities
	Local businessman	Engage SME business and activities based on tourism
Tourism organization	Tour operators	Promotion and marketing of tourism packages at Jelawang
	Tour guides	Encourage the tourists to stay and visit at Homestay Jelawang

Institutions	MOTAC	Engaging in research and entrepreneurship development Provide logistic and promotional services

There are 13 house owners participating as homestay operators with 34 rooms at this village. The main homestay activities are craft demonstrations, making local delicacies, village tour, Malay martial art performance, cultural symphony and Malay mock weeding, mountain climbing, caving activities, and tree plantation. The food and horticultural attractions of Jelawang are mini curry puff, banana chips, honey, salak, and mangoes. The operators are offering several packages of activities with staying at homestays for the guests (Table-2).

Table 2: CBT resources at Kampung Jelawang

Items	Resource
Accommodation	34 rooms for stay
Activities	Craft demonstration, local delicacies, village tour
Cultural attraction	Malay martial art performance, cultural symphony, Malay mock wedding
Natural attraction	Tree plantation, mountain climbing, caving activities
Food	Mini curry puff, banana chips
Horticulture	Honey, salak, mangoes

Table-3 represents the benefits of CBT development through homestay at Jelawang in terms of economic, social and environmental aspects. CBT can develop the local economy, local business enterprises and create employment opportunities. It is helpful to preserve natural resources, environment and increase environmental awareness of community. In social, CBT can develop infrastructure, increase safety, promote mutual benefits for all stakeholders and cultural understanding and preserve cultural heritage, crafts, and skills.

Table-3: Benefits of CBT development through homestay at Jelawang

	Benefits
Economic	Employment opportunities, develop the local economy, support to multi-sector or mono-sector non-profit enterprises, increases land values, and thus rates payable to the council for community services
Environmental	Encourages awareness and appreciation by the community of natural assets and the environment, enhances management and stewardship of natural resources
Social	Stimulates infrastructure development (roads, communications, healthcare, education, public transport, access to drinking water and food supplies), increases safety and security, mutually beneficial (to all stakeholders in the community), promotes cultural understanding, preserves cultural and social heritage, preserves local and unique crafts and skills, promotes greater cross-institutional understanding

The stakeholders' consultation has identified that some potentials and suitable situations are remaining at Jelawang to develop CBT activities. These are;

**Biodiversity:** This area is providing sanctuary for wildlife conservation native plants with almost 56 species of mammals surrounding in the forest areas of Jelawang. Moreover, this area is full of rich biological resources that includes forest ecosystems, spices of plants and animals, which have great economic potentials.

**Water catchment:** This village and its surrounding forests are catchments for the Sg. Pergau, Galas, and Kelantan. The water of these catchments is being utilized for agriculture and drinking. These catchments are also suitable for tourism development.

**Ecotourism potential:** Gunung Stong State Park is ranked five among the top 10 ecotourism destination in Malaysia. This site is famous for tourists due to natural assets, mountains, waterfalls, and wildlife. The presence of Rafflesia provides the aesthetic value for ecotourism.

**Ecosystem:** The ecosystem diversity of this area is high. There are large water bodies and waterfalls offer aquatic ecosystem. The geological heritage of this area also attracts tourists from home and abroad.

**Environmental education:** The area provides environmental education opportunities for students and youths via nature camps, nature trips and nature courses.

**Nature recreation:** This area got an ideal condition of nature recreation for local people especially for angling, jungle trekking, hill climbing, and camping. The lifestyle of Orang Asli communities at Gunung Stong State Park also attracts visitors.

**Easy access:** Jelawang is accessible by road, rail, and boat transport. There are three settlement centers namely Kuala Balah, Dabong and Jelawang situated near the village with basic facilities such as schools, community health centers, government clinics, and police stations.

Table-4: Community perception regarding CBT and homestay

Statements	Mean value	S.D.
CBT is helpful to develop local entrepreneurship	4.24	0.81
The homestay has an awareness program on the environment for community people	4.10	0.63
Homestay promotes local culture, traditions, and handicraft	4.07	0.64
CBT helps to improve the quality of life for local communities	4.14	0.71
Homestay increases understanding between visitors and local people	4.25	0.63
Homestay has provision for environmentally friendly activities for guests	4.17	0.72
Homestay involves the guests in local activities, e.g. arts, handicrafts, traditional events, and festivals	4.30	0.70

Table-4 represents the community perception regarding CBT and homestay development at Jelawang. The high yield means scores of the statements are showing the positive perception of respondents towards CBT and

homestay accommodation. The respondents feel that CBT is helpful to develop their entrepreneurship skills and improve their quality of life. This scenario means that the local communities are hopeful to increase their income opportunities and quality of lifestyle through tourism development. The highest mean scores of communities perception show that homestay accommodation involves the guests in local activities which promotes local culture, traditional events, festivals, and handicraft. Homestay can arrange awareness program for the local communities and includes environment-friendly activities for guests. The positive perspectives of local communities are suitable for CBT and homestay development at Jelawang. Without the strong support of local communities, tourism development is difficult in an area. Several studies (Tosun, 2000; Simmons, 1994) found that community support and participation are a vital process for tourism development in an area which ensures visitors expectation and local people's well-being. The studies showed community participation ensured their involvement in decision-making; get benefit from tourism development, encouraged in small-scale businesses.

Government institutions (MOTAC and universities) are engaging to involve students from various universities and colleges in the tourism industry through entrepreneurship development at Jelawang. They also provide entrepreneurial and consultancy skills to the youths and future graduates for the development of SMEs in the tourism industry. Homestay is recognized as a major contributor to the economic and social well beings of local people at Jelawang. Universities provide entrepreneurship knowledge transfer program through homestay to enhance CBT development. MOTAC is supporting to develop homestay incorporates financial allocation, marketing strategy, new products, and services development by involving students and lecturers from the educational institutions. The government institutions are involving several activities such as a makeover program, identify products and services to be developed or marketed, identify suitable packages, proper pricing, effective promotion, communication skills and professional training that could enhance the entrepreneurship skills of youth and students as well as the homestay owners and stakeholders in the local communities at Jelawang.

The study findings identify that CBT development through homestay accommodation at Jelawang creates social, economic and environmental benefits for the local people. These benefits will ensure sustainable development in this area. Previous studies (Bhuiyan et al., 2012; Kayat, 2010; Liu, 2006) supported these research findings. Bhuiyan et al. (2012) revealed positive socio-economic impact develop the homestay accommodation in tourism areas. Kayat (2010) emphasised on good value of life among local communities for homestay development. Liu (2006) addressed the economic benefits of homestay for local community involvement and success of this accommodation.

### **Recommendations:**

The following initiatives will enhance CBT development at Jelawang and attract more tourists at homestay accommodations.

**Tourism packages:** This area is famous for mountain climbing, caving and rural lifestyle to the tourists. Suitable packages with these attractions will be increasing visitors in this area.

**Identified products:** Jelawang has rich cultural and natural tourism products. The potential tourism products must be identified and combined in packages for the tourists.

**Pricing and promotion:** The existing and proposed packages of Jelawang should be revised to ensure proper pricing. These packages will be offered at a promotional price to the students of universities, colleges, and urban schools.

**Modified homestay:** The homestay accommodations of Jelawang will be modified with basic facilities to meet the guest's demands. Bedrooms and toilets facilities, safety, security, food, operation, and hospitality will be given more concern for the modification.

**Develop communication skill:** The homestay should develop websites, blogs, facebook group and use other information technologies based promotion and marketing activities. The operators should be developed their communication and language skills to facilitate the foreign guests.

Training: The MOTAC can arrange training programs to develop the capacities and skills of homestay operators for successful operations.

Research initiatives: The universities can conduct research activities to develop and enhance the various aspects of homestay accommodations at Jelawang.

### **Conclusion:**

The Malaysian government has embraced and emphasized effective initiatives in environment-friendly accommodation for sustainable tourism development in the country. The country has targeted that homestay accommodation will contribute at a mentionable portion for tourism earning in 2020. The government policies of Malaysia have formulated effective strategies for homestay as environment-friendly accommodation to maintain sustainability. CBT programs are providing alternative livelihood strategies and other benefits to the communities in rural areas of Malaysia. Homestay accommodation can be developed as major activities for a livelihood at Jelawang. The local communities will be benefited economically, socially and culturally through the development of homestay accommodations. Joint efforts, such as consultations, coordination, partnership, a collaboration between government, tour operators and guides, educational institutions and local communities are necessary for the development of CBT at Jelawang. Highest priorities will be given in service quality and hospitality of homestay to meet the guest's expectations and satisfaction. Finally, effective regulations, financial allocation, managerial efficiency, and proper community participation will be ensuring CBT development at Jelawang which will benefit the local communities through their well beings.

### **References:**

1. Bhuiyan, M.A.H., Siwar, C., Ismail, S.M. and Islam, R. 2011. The Role of Home Stays for Ecotourism Development in East Coast Economic Region. *American Journal of Applied Sciences*, 8: 540-546.
2. Bhuiyan, M.A.H., Siwar, C., Ismail, S.M. and Islam, R. 2012. Home Stay Accommodation for Tourism Development in East Coast economic Region. *American Journal of Applied Sciences*, 9 (7): 1085-1090.
3. Clammer, J. 1996. *Values and Development in Southeast Asia*. Coronet Books, ISBN 10: 9679785688
4. ECER Master Plan, 2007. *East Coast Economic Region Master Plan*. East Coast Economic Region Development Council. Kuala Lumpur. <http://www.ecerdc.com/ecerdc/dc.htm>
5. Hall, C. M. 1999. Rethinking collaboration and partnership. A public policy perspective. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 7(3): 274-289.
6. Hiwasaki, L. 2006. Community-based tourism: a pathway to sustainability for Japan's protected areas. *Society and Natural Resources*, 19(8): 675-692.
7. Kayat, K. 2010. The Nature of Cultural Contribution of a Community-based Homestay Programme. *TOURISMOS* 5 (2): 145-159.
8. Kennedy, J. 1993. *History of Malaya* (3rd ed). Kuala Lumpur: S. Abdul Majeed & Co.
9. Kris, D. and John, H. 2013. Community Based Tourism in ASEAN- An Overview. In John, H., Hugo, D.J. and Kris, D. (Eds.) *Innovating CBT in ASEAN: Current Directions and New Horizons*. The Thailand Community Based Tourism Institute (CBT-I) and Payap University, Thailand.
10. Liu, A. 2006. Tourism in rural areas: Kedah, Malaysia. *Tourism Management* 27: 878-889.
11. Malaysia, 2013. Ministry of Tourism, Kelantan office, Kota Bharu, Malaysia.
12. Peeters, P., Gössling, S., and Scott, A. 2010. Background Report (Tourism patterns and associated energy consumption), prepared for the tourism chapter of the UNEP Green Economy Report.
13. Simmons, D. G. 1994. Community participation in tourism planning. *Tourism Management* 15 (2): 98-108.

14. Simpson, M. C. 2008. Community Benefit Tourism Initiatives-A conceptual oxymoron? *Tourism Management*, 29: 1-18.
15. Siti-Nabiha, 2010. Towards a Sustainable Tourism Management in Malaysia, Website "Tourism in Malaysia". pp. 301-312. Accessed on September 18, 2010.
16. Sophea, S. 2013. CBT Standards: development and application in Cambodia. In John, H., Hugo, D.J. and Kris, D. (Eds.) *Innovating CBT in ASEAN: Current Directions and New Horizons*. The Thailand Community Based Tourism Institute (CBT-I) and Payap University, Thailand.
17. Suansri, Potjana 1997. *Handbook on Community-based Tourism*, Bangkok, Thailand: Responsible Ecological Social Tours Project.
18. Taiwan Tourism Bureau, 2012. Tourism policy. Retrieved from. [http://admin.taiwan.net.tw/public/public\\_en.aspx?no%46](http://admin.taiwan.net.tw/public/public_en.aspx?no%46).
19. Tosun, C. 2000. Limits to community participation in the tourism development process in developing countries. *Tourism Management* 21: 613-633.
20. United Nations Development Program (UNDP). 2003. *Rural tourism master plan for Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Tourism, Malaysia.
21. UNEP and WTO, 2012. *United Nations Environment Programme and World Tourism Organization, Tourism in the Green Economy- Background Report*, UNWTO, Madrid.