



ການຈັດການທ່ອງທ່ຽວແບບອະນຸລັກ ປະຊາຊົນມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງ ບ້ານຊຽງລ້ອມ, ເມືອງຫຼວງພະບາງ, ແຂວງ ຫຼວງພະບາງ, ສ ປ ປ ລາວ

ທິບພາວັນ ດວງວິໄລແກ້ວ, ຈຳປາ ລັດຕະນະສຸວັນນະຜົນແລະ ທອງມາລາ ໄພສິຄຳ

ພາກວິຊາ ບໍລິຫານການທ່ອງທ່ຽວ, ຄະນະເສດຖະສາດ ແລະ ການທ່ອງທ່ຽວ ມະຫາວິທະຍາໄລສຸພານຸວົງ

ບົດຄັດຫຍໍ້

ການວິໄຈໃນຄັ້ງນີ້ ແມ່ນໄດ້ສຶກສາ ການຈັດການທ່ອງທ່ຽວແບບອະນຸລັກ ປະຊາຊົນມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງ ບ້ານຊຽງລ້ອມ ເມືອງ ຫຼວງພະບາງ, ແຂວງ ຫຼວງພະບາງ, ສ ປ ປ ລາວ . ເຊິ່ງມີ 3 ຈຸດປະສົງ ຄື: 1) ສຶກສາ ການຈັດການທ່ອງທ່ຽວແບບອະນຸລັກ ປະຊາຊົນມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງ ບ້ານຊຽງລ້ອມ, 2) ສຶກສາເຖິງລະດັບການມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງ ປະຊາຊົນ ແລະ 3) ສຶກສາ ແນວທາງໃນ ການຈັດການການທ່ອງທ່ຽວແບບອະນຸລັກ ປະຊາຊົນມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງ ບ້ານຊຽງລ້ອມໃຫ້ມີຄວາມຍືນຍົງ. ການສຶກສາຄັ້ງນີ້ ເປັນການວິໄຈແບບປະສົມປະສານ ລະຫວ່າງ ການວິໄຈແບບປະລິມານ ແລະ ຄຸນນະພາບໄປພ້ອມກັນ. ກຸ່ມຕົວຢ່າງທີ່ໃຊ້ ເຂົ້າໃນການສຶກສາແມ່ນສຸ່ມເອົາແບບເຈາະຈົງທັງຫມົດ 65 ທ່ານ, 30 ທ່ານແມ່ນມາຈາກຂະແໜງການທ່ອງທ່ຽວ ແລະ ຜູ້ທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງກັບການທ່ອງທ່ຽວທັງພາກລັດ ແລະ ເອກະຊົນພາຍໃນບ້ານຊຽງລ້ອມ. 35 ທ່ານ ແມ່ນຄະນະຈັດຕັ້ງບ້ານ ແລະປະຊາຊົນພາຍໃນບ້ານຊຽງລ້ອມ. ການເກັບກຳຂໍ້ມູນແມ່ນໃຊ້ແບບສຳພາດ ແລະ ແບບສອບຖາມ, ການວິເຄາະຂໍ້ມູນ ແມ່ນໃຊ້ໂປຣແກຣມ SPSS.

ການສຶກສາພົບວ່າ ສ່ວນໃຫຍ່ມີແຫຼ່ງທ່ອງທ່ຽວທາງທຳມະຊາດທີ່ສຳຄັນ ຄື: ພູຜາທີ່ສາມາດເດີນທາງທ່ອງທ່ຽວ ຫຼື ການທ່ຽວຊົມທິວທັດສະນິຍະພາບ ຂອງ ພູຜາ, ແມ່ນ້ຳ, ປ່າໄມ້ ທີ່ມີຄວາມສວຍງາມ ແລະ ເໝາະສົມກັບການຈັດກິດຈະກຳການທ່ອງທ່ຽວແບບອະນຸລັກ ປະຊາຊົນມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ເຊັ່ນ: ກິດຈະກຳການເດີນປ່າ, ການຈັດກິດຈະກຳການຂີ່ຊ້າງທ່ຽວຊົມທຳມະຊາດ ຕາມແຄມແມ່ນ້ຳຄານ ແລະ ກິດຈະກຳລ່ອງເຮືອຕາມແມ່ນ້ຳຄານ ທີ່ເປີດໃຫ້ບໍລິການແກ່ນັກທ່ອງທ່ຽວ ທີ່ມີຄວາມສົນໃຈໃນລາຍການທ່ອງທ່ຽວ ຂອງ ຜູ້ປະກອບທຸລະກິດທ່ອງທ່ຽວ ທີ່ຢູ່ໃນບ້ານຊຽງລ້ອມ ຊຶ່ງເປັນບໍລິເວນຈຸດທີ່ອອກເດີນທາງ ເຮັດກິດຈະກຳ ແລະ ພັກຜ່ອນ ຮັບປະທານອາຫານ, ພາກສ່ວນທີ່ມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ມີຄື: ພະແນກຖະແຫຼ່ງຂ່າວ, ວັດທະນະທຳ ແລະ ການທ່ອງທ່ຽວ, ຜູ້ປະກອບການທຸລະກິດທ່ອງທ່ຽວ ແລະ ປະຊາຊົນ ພາຍໃນບ້ານ ທີ່ໄດ້ເຂົ້າຮ່ວມການເຝິກອົບຮົມກ່ຽວກັບການທ່ອງທ່ຽວ ທີ່ຈັດຂຶ້ນພາຍໃນບ້ານ. ຜົນການສຶກສາພົບວ່າ ລະດັບການມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມຂອງປະຊາຊົນ ຕໍ່ການຈັດການທ່ອງທ່ຽວແບບອະນຸລັກ ປະຊາຊົນມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງ ບ້ານຊຽງລ້ອມ ແມ່ນຢູ່ໃນລະດັບປານກາງ ມີຄ່າສະເລ່ຍລວມ ເທົ່າກັບ 2.97, ປະຊາຊົນມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ດ້ານການວາງແຜນ, ດ້ານປະຕິບັດກິດຈະກຳ, ດ້ານການໄດ້ຮັບຜົນປະໂຫຍດ ແລະ ດ້ານການກວດກາປະເມີນຜົນ ຢູ່ໃນລະດັບປານກາງ ໂດຍມີຄ່າສະເລ່ຍ ເທົ່າກັບ 2.73, 3.32, 3.01 ແລະ 2.64 ຕາມລຳດັບ, ການສຶກສາໃນຄັ້ງນີ້ ແມ່ນໄດ້ເຮັດໃຫ້ ຜູ້ທີ່ມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ໄດ້ມີຄວາມເຂົ້າໃຈຢ່າງເລິກເຊິ່ງ ກ່ຽວກັບການພັດທະນາການທ່ອງທ່ຽວ ແບບປະຊາຊົນມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ແລະ ໄດ້ຮຽນຮູ້ເຖິງບັນຫາທີ່ເກີດຂຶ້ນ ລວມທັງຮຽນຮູ້ ວິທີການໃນການແກ້ໄຂບັນຫາຕ່າງໆ ຄຽງຄູ່ກັບການເຂົ້າເຖິງ ລະບຽບການຕ່າງໆກ່ຽວກັບການທ່ອງທ່ຽວ ຂອງ ຜູ້ປະກອບການ ຫຼື ບໍລິສັດນຳທ່ຽວ ທີ່ພາກພະແນກການທີ່ກ່ຽວຂ້ອງ ໄດ້ວາງອອກ ໄດ້ຢ່າງເຂັ້ມງວດ ແລະ ກໍ່ໃຫ້ເກີດປະໂຫຍດອັນຍາວນານໃຫ້ແກ່ທຸກພາກສ່ວນ.

ຄຳສຳຄັນ: ການທ່ອງທ່ຽວແບບອະນຸລັກ, ການມີສ່ວນຮ່ວມ ຂອງ ປະຊາຊົນ, ການພັດທະນາແບບຍືນຍົງ.

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Community Based Ecotourism Management in Xieng Lom village, Luang Prabang Province, Lao PDR

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Abstract:

Community based ecotourism management in Xieng Lom village, Luang Prabang province is a study of the following: to investigate the management of community based ecotourism in Xieng Lom village, to study the level of participation by local people in community based ecotourism management and also the management approach towards sustainable community based ecotourism. This study employs both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. Population and sampling: 65 people: 30 people from the tourism sectors (public and private sectors): 35 from the villager. Material used in data collection was questionnaire surveys and face-to-face interviews. The study used descriptive analysis and analysis questionnaires from Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). This information was presented through frequency, mean and percentage graphs. The information collected from interviews was examined in regard to the relevant theories and methodology consistent with the purposes of the study in order to present the results of estimation.

Results from the study indicated that Xieng Lom village is an important ecotourism model that can offer a variety of beautiful landscape and scenery, in particular, mountains, rivers and forests. There is also a range of ecotourism activities, for example, riding elephants through the village to observe the village's way of life, visiting villages and farming sites, and trekking to the mountains and visiting waterfalls. Rafting and kayaking are also well known adventure tourism activities. Currently, most ecotourism activities are operated and run by tour companies and resorts, especially, trekking, riding elephants, and kayaking down the Khan River. These tour packages are now available for those who prefer adventure tourism. The level of overall participation of villagers in the community based ecotourism management project in Xieng Lom village was on "neutral" level with a total mean of 2.97: The level of participation in planning of the villagers who sometimes participate, has a mean of 2.73. The level of participation in the implementation of those who sometimes participate, has a mean of 3.32. The level of participation in obtaining benefits from tourism development shows those villagers who sometimes participate, has a mean of 3.01. The level of participation in evaluation shows the villagers who sometimes participate has a mean of 2.84. All stakeholders, the Department of Information, Culture and Tourism, the NGOs, tourism enterprises, people involved from villages are important parts and components of sustainable community based ecotourism development and management in Xieng Lom village, Luang Prabang city and province. These people have played important roles in ecotourism activity development. Another important thing is to educate local people, both male and female about sustainable development. The villagers are proud of what they have done to protect their own future resources and realize the impacts of environmental issues and the need to find solutions. Development processes and real implementation would help people fully understand the needs and regulations of community based ecotourism in the long term..

Keywords: Ecotourism, Community participatory, Sustainable development.

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1. Introduction

The World Conservation Union (IUCN) (Nature, T, 2014) defined ecotourism as "environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features - both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact, and provides for the beneficially active socio-economic involvement of the local populations". According to Sproule (1998), community based ecotourism (CBE) refers to ecotourism enterprises that are owned and managed by the community. Furthermore, CBE implies that a community is taking care of its natural resources in order to gain income through operating a tourism enterprise and using that income to better the lives of its members. Hence, CBE involves conservation, business enterprise and community development. Local community participation in all endeavours of ecotourism is not a new concept. The word participation implies how and to what extent people are able to share their views, take part in an activity, project, programme, decision-making, profit sharing and other issues related to the tourism development process. The most important reason for the inclusion of local inhabitants in ecotourism is equity, taking into consideration the conservation of the area through ecotourism development which inevitably entails restrictions in the traditional usage of local resources by the residents (Eagles, 2002). In fact, numerous studies indicate the importance of incorporating the perceptions, values and interest of the local people in the very region where the ecotourism resource/destination is found (Vincent and Thomson, 2002). The involvement of local people should be encouraged from the very beginning by promoting public dialogue and by enabling them to participate in the process of decision making and profit sharing (Diamantis, 2004). The main underlying concept for the development of community-based ecotourism is the empowerment of local people. This is only possible when ecotourism planning takes into consideration the views, the perceptions and preferences of the local inhabitants (WWF-International, 2001). Community participation in community-based ecotourism makes the

project sustainable and attains the objective in its establishment.

When people do not receive sufficient benefits as a result of non-participation, they are prone to develop a negative attitude towards ecotourism development. This might occur for example when indigenous people whose survival depends heavily upon the exploitation of the natural resource, perceive tourism as a threat that deprives them of their livelihood by competing with others over land and resource (Ross and Wall, 1999). In such instances, community-based ecotourism is very likely to either fail completely or not succeed to the minimum possible degree thus, remaining far from the desired sustainability (McCool and Moisey, 2001). Community-based ecotourism management is described as a form of tourism where the local community has substantial control over and involvement in its development and management, and a major proportion of the benefits remain within the community (WWF International, 2001). It can be regarded as a form of natural resource management practise that is sustainable, environmentally responsible, supports conservation and equal sharing of benefits among the locals. It is based on the premise that the locals are better placed to conserve and manage natural resources, especially if these resources are directed towards improvement of their livelihood and the benefits are more than the cost. According to United Nations (2004), only by taking a long-term perspective can we ensure the well-being of future as well as present generations. It was emphasized that it is now more important than ever to put into practice the concept of sustainable development, which integrates economic growth, social development, and protection of the environment.

Over the past two decades, the Lao PDR has promoted eco-tourism as a key engine of development in the country. This practice can be seen through the active participation and cooperation between public and private sectors, and local residents in tourism development. In 1999, the Lao National Tourism Authority received funding and technical assistance from UNESCO (2004) and the government of New Zealand to conduct the Nam Ha Ecotourism Project in the National Protected Area of Luang

Namtha province. Nam Ha Ecotourism Project, a project of UNESCO-Lao National Tourism Administration (LNTA, 2005), has provided a model for the development and operation of community-based ecotourism in the Lao PDR's National Protected Areas (NPAs), based on the principles of local ownership and stewardship of natural resources. The Nam Ha project has provided alternative employment and income generating opportunities to communities living in and around the 222,400 hectare Nam Ha NPA, allowing them to reduce unsustainable use and harvesting of natural resources in the NPA. In 2003, the Nam Ha Ecotourism Project was designated an ASEAN Heritage Park and in 2006 it won the Equator Prize (UNDP Equator Initiative Winner, 2006).

Since 2002, the concepts have been enhanced and disseminated nationwide by the Lao National Tourism Authority. Luang Prabang was one of provinces that already introduced a sustainable ecotourism program, followed by Savannakhet province, Khammounh province, Phou Khao Khouay National Protected Area (Community-based Tourism) Project in Vientiane province, and Sepian National Protected Area in Champassak province (Somephong Vongxay, 2012). Currently, community-based ecotourism projects have been implemented in 9 districts of Luang Prabang province, namely: Luang Prabang, Xieng Nguen, ChomPhet, Pak Ou, Nam Bak, Phonxay, Nan, Pakseng and Ngoi districts, covering 37 villages. The community-based ecotourism project was supported by ADB, and implemented for 5 years (2003-2007) with a total budget of US\$ 400,000. The Luang Prabang district targeted 6 villages namely; Nong Heo, Long Lao 1, Long Lao 2, Tha Paen, Xiang Lom and Phonsavath village where ecotourism products and services are trekking, visiting cultural heritage places and the landscape. In order to support and facilitate tourism, local organizations and facilitators such as village tour guide services, lodges and accommodation, music and traditional performance groups, etc. have operated successfully operated through the sharing of some benefits and collective activities, in particular, local tour guides and local people are more actively involved in tourism activity development. Each authority has encouraged

local residents and involved communities to realize the importance of community-based tourism, and understand the process of policy formulation, regulations and measures. Technical staff and tourism businesses were dispatched to the targeted villages to provide training such as, job training, cooking, reception services, handicraft, and also data collection about tourist arrivals and report writing, the Baci-Soukwuan ceremony service and working in groups. Although training was provided, the lessons and skills acquired were not effectively applied to tourism activity development. This can be seen from the sites near villages where tree cutting and slash and burn activity can be found along the trekking routes, and have destroyed the landscape and attractiveness for tourists (Provincial Annual Report, 2013).

Xiang Lom is a village rich in natural resources, situated on the banks of the Khan River, surrounded by villages, forests and mountains. Xiang Lom village is located only fifteen kilometers from Luang Prabang town center. It is well known for its production of vegetables in Luang Prabang province, it's beautiful geographic landscape, the pleasant climate and fertile lands, making the village ideal for attracting tourists. The eco-system of the area still remains fertile and fresh. Xiang Lom village has a total population of around 200 people. Their culture and traditions are well preserved. Therefore, the local government and the Luang Prabang Provincial Department of Information, Culture and Tourism have vigorously developed the community in an attempt to make it a popular tourism destination. As a result, the number of tourists visiting Ban Xiang Lom has increased greatly. The increase in tourism industry provides the village with an alternative source of income, the ability to preserve natural resources and culture, while it provides the opportunity for tour companies to invest in the area, for example, establishing facilities such as resorts and guest houses. The tour operators also offer an opportunity for the community to access the potential of a global market. Villagers, however, lack the experience, knowledge and skills to manage and operate a tour service business in all its aspects. Therefore, the villagers are still relying on the tour companies to provide training, guidance, and marketing and bring the tourists to them.

1.1. Objectives

- 1) To investigate the management of community-based ecotourism in Xieng Lom village.
- 2) To study the level of villagers participation in community-based ecotourism management.
- 3) To study the management approach towards sustainable community-based ecotourism.

2. Materials and Methods

This study employs both quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. The material used in data collection was questionnaire survey and face-to-face interviews. Analyses: the study used descriptive analysis, population and sampling: 65 people: 30 people from tourism sectors (public and private sectors): 35 were villagers: Evaluation used SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). These information would be represented through frequency, mean and percentage.

3. Results

The landscape and natural resources of Xieng Lom village offer a variety of beautiful landscape, mountains, forests, rivers and interesting farming activities. Therefore, it is suitable to promote as an ecotourism area of Luang Prabang Province. Ecotourism activity has existed since the private resorts entered this area to meet the needs of tourists who have interests in adventure tourism like trekking to the mountains and forests, white water rafting on the river Khan, riding elephants along the river and forests, and camping and picnic activities are also popular. The villagers also provide home-stay programs for tourists. Ecotourism activities are promoted and supported by the local community and resort owners, especially riding elephants, jungle trekking, canoeing, kayaking, feeding and bathing elephants, learning how to control, mount and dismount the elephant with elephant experts and give commands like go, stop, left, right, etc. The detailed program is explained as follows:

- 1) Environmental preservation and management is a very important task in Xieng Lom village. People now realize the importance and impact of the environment, and they are

doing their best to promote a greener environment and to protect the environment and biodiversity for their own sustainable society and community. Ecotourism is a green, clean environmental activity that can connect people to nature and bring various benefits to people, society and the community. Ecotourism is the best activity for the environment. People who are concerned should start thinking of how to conserve and protect resources and the ecosystem to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

- 2) Waste disposal and water treatment are also important for people. The community and society need to address environmental degradation, and pollution generated by households, tourism and industry. Transition to a sustainable society requires good policy by government and actions by corporations and civil society; in particular, protecting tourism sites from tourist tourism activities. Therefore, waste disposal and environmental management is our common problem and we have to pay close attention to sustainable environmental protection.

- 3) The participation of villagers in the Xieng Lom ecotourism development project is relatively limited. Generally speaking, the Ecotourism Development Master Plan in Luang Prabang Province, particularly, the Xieng Lom Ecotourism Development Program is drafted and written by the Department of Information, Culture and Tourism. However, before drafting the program, experts and technical officers were dispatched to Xieng Lom village to collect primary data and information about the village and explore the possibility to develop village ecotourism, conduct analysis to find the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to the community and village, including the suitability and availability of human resources to serve tourists. The overall participation of Xieng Lom villagers in community-based ecotourism as neutral and has a mean score of 2.97 (Table 1).

The level of participation of respondents in the planning process of community-based ecotourism shows that villagers have a neutral level of participation on CBET planning and have mean score of 2.73. This indicates that

villagers pay less attention to tourism planning when the process of the tourism development plan is done and conducted by the provincial authority (Department of Culture, Information and Tourism). Village leaders had less opportunities to share opinions and perceptions about the problem findings. Therefore, the findings reveal that level of participation in planning, in general, is still low because of a lack of knowledge about project appraisal and a lack of understanding about which activities are important and attract tourists. They don't have the adequate knowledge and good ideas to solve problems, which related to tourism development.

From the interview survey in the planning process, only the village headmen are invited to the meeting and discussion. They are not directly involved in the decision making process, but they can share ideas and opinions about developing an action plan and ask what the villagers and community need to facilitate ecotourism. Tour companies and entrepreneurs are directly involved in the development plan and have more bargaining power to discuss and negotiate with local government, especially, with the Department of Information, Culture and Tourism, in regards to an ecotourism development program.

The level of participation of the villagers in the implementation of tourism activity shows that the mean is 3.32 and it is sometimes the villagers who implement the tourism activity of the village. This can be seen from the division of responsibility in the implementation of tourism activities. Some families are actively involved in the implementation of the program and some lack motivation. The village leaders divided the responsibility evenly and this made the villagers involved in the implementation. Most participants have quite low level of education and do not have the ability to communicate with other relevant groups which come to develop tourism within the village. E participant is local, and resides in the village, therefore the implementation of the regulations are everyone's concern. Some families in a good economic situation can collaborate with the relevant authorities to develop and organize tourism activities.

From the interview survey and interviews, we found that activities such as the tour guide unit at village level, home-stay groups, handicraft, cultural and music groups, food and beverage are organized by the Department of Information, Culture and Tourism, as well as the Tourism Business Management Unit which is responsible to organize activities, based on the current conditions and uniqueness of every village to achieve mutual benefits, jobs and income from tourism. Those who want to work with tourists must be trained in terms of tourism services, to be local guides, to have a home-stay business, to do marketing, to organize cultural and music performances, cooking classes, have English language training courses plus basic sanitation and a collection method of basic data and statistics about tourists. However, the training programs provided by local government do not work very well due to human resource constraints, and as Xieng Lom village is located very close to the city of Luang Prabang, those activities are not usually implemented. There are only a few tourists who prefer home-stay programmes and village ecotourism activity and furthermore, tour companies bring their own English speaking guides. Therefore, local participation is increasingly disappearing.

A benefit from tourism, the mean is 3.01, which shows a neutral level or sometimes participation. Some families rely on the benefits from tourism. Tourism is an additional source of income for some families because they get the benefit depends on the level of tourist satisfaction. The villages which participated in the CBET project did not have their own unique products that could serve and meet the demand of tourists. Only food can make additional income for them, therefore, participation in selling products is neutral level. There were only a small number of tourists visiting villages; therefore the income earned from tourism was just a small proportion of the family income. Those who participated in the tourism activity implementation directly received more benefits. Villages which participated in the CBET project had their own development fund, some earnings were from the tourist services and the uses made from this fund were not appropriate and effective.

Table 1. Sample size, percentage, mean and level of participation of Xieng Lomvillagers in community-based ecotourism.

Community Participation	N	%	Mean	Level of participation
Participation in planning	35	100	2.73	neutral
Participation in implementation	35	100	3.32	neutral
Participation in Benefits from tourism	35	100	3.01	neutral
Participation in evaluation	35	100	2.84	neutral
Total	35	100	2.97	neutral

From the interview survey we find that during the receiving the assistance from development projects, all stakeholders can claim their benefits. Households and people involved in the projects get benefits, for instance, the village tour guide unit, home-stay group, cultural and music performance group, food service unit all benefit. Benefits or income generated from ecotourism is divided into 3 parts: village development fund, group fund, and for individuals. Income generated from ecotourism is divided into direct and indirect sources. 6 percent of direct income generated by households or people who participated in the ecotourism activity is allocated to the village development fund and 2 percent is allocated to the group fund. Village revenue is from two sources: village development fund and group fund. Every household has equal rights to access the village development fund. Everyone can borrow money from the village development without paying interest rate. However, after the project deceased, benefits from the project decreased because most ecotourism activities belong to tour companies and resort owners.

The level of participation in the evaluation of CBET project is a mean of 2.84. It shows a neutral level of participation. Due to top-down planning by the Department of Culture, Information and Tourism in formulating a CBET plan, where they provide technical experts and assistance to conduct a feasible survey in the village, the villagers only take part in the providing necessary information. Every meeting on tourism was held in the Department of Culture, Information and Tourism meeting rooms or at other meeting conference venues in the city center. Villages were invited to the meeting, however only village leaders or the more powerful people in the villages could attend the meetings.. The key player in the evaluation of revenue from tourism is the public

sector, in particular, the Department of Culture, Information and Tourism. There is a reason behind why only this authority has the right to do this job. Most villagers think that it is the government's responsibility, so they rarely participate in the environmental impact assessments of tourism development projects. They just give a report to the government about their active participation, and then the government evaluates this and reports back to the village.

From the interview survey, we find that the villagers provide little comment and ideas to the summary report prepared by the Department of Information, Culture and Tourism. The local government is responsible for monitoring and evaluation; even if there is a negative impact. Villagers act like project facilitators, coordinators for local government officials, because local people are not qualified participants and lack the knowledge and capability to conduct evaluation and monitoring.

4. Discussion

The environment has changed in Xieng Lom village due to competition amongst tourism businesses and resorts. Tourism activity promotion has consequences and impacts on environmental degradation such as waste and garbage, wastewater pollution into the rivers, high risk water quality, the slash and burn of forests for agricultural farming activity which harm the ecosystem and causes loss to biodiversity. Therefore, local government with the collaboration of resorts and local village authorities has established responsible organizations (local government, authorities, business groups and related NGOs) to protect Xieng Lom villages and each unit has a function as below:

These experiences suggest that ecotourism can be a constructive component of strategies to

promote, at the same time, both environmental protection and development of private enterprise. The Lao government can help promote nature tourism in a way that maximizes its contribution to both the economies and the ecologies of villages. Specifically, village authorities, other donors, NGOs, and local governments can work together.

Identify and mobilize funding for potential private nature tourism investments. Ecotourism enterprises, like most business ventures, need operating capital. Local financial institutions and other donors can help identify promising funding sources.

Formulate fiscal policies to promote nature tourism and to maximize its economic and environmental benefits. Local government can encourage public policies (such as visitor fees, regulations for tourism operations, and investment incentives and land-use zones for tourist facilities) that promote environmentally sound tourism as well as community involvement in terms of services and products such as guides, lodging, transport, and crafts.

Tourism officers must pay attention to the inspection, monitoring and evaluation of a tour company's performance and the land concession projects of entrepreneurs in Xieng Lom village, at the same time, providing technical assistance, training programs, awareness of sustainable development concepts, give advice to any tourism business in sustainable land use management and if there is any violation of land concession, local government must take action and follow policy.

Village authorities who have been nominated by local government and businessmen who have come to invest in an ecotourism facility development in Xieng Lom village, have an obligation to be committed to infrastructure development, such as road maintenance and the cleaning up of garbage and wastewater.

Ecotourism in certain designated areas is based on the law on investment promotion and policy of the Lao PDR. Tourism enterprises and firms should find suitable areas to establish their own businesses where land use and zoning concession is allowed by the local government. The private sector should develop land and

existing resources for ecotourism activities, for example, activity planning, human resource development and training on ecotourism management, developing networking amongst private-public partnership, enhance the strong relationship with local community to maximize the social and economic benefits and individual profits. At the same time, the private sector should market and promote through media and public relations in collaboration with the local community in regard to the performance of the ecotourism activity and create an awareness of the sustainability of the natural forest and protect and conserve the environment.

The villagers devote their spirit, ideas and rights to preserve their valuable nature, culture and tradition and develop sustainable social and economic activities for the present and future . Therefore, it is very important to have the right ecotourism activity for the right ecotourists. Finally, we can say that all stakeholders, the Department of Information, Culture and Tourism, NGOs, tourism enterprises, people involved from the 6 villages are important components of a sustainable, ecotourism development and management in Xieng Lom village, Luang Prabang City and Province. These people have played important roles in the development of ecotourism . Another important thing is to educate local people , both male and female about sustainable development. Villagers are proud of what they have done to protect their own future resources and realize the impact of environmental issues and the need to find solutions. Development processes and real implementation would help people more clearly understand the needs and regulations for community-based ecotourism development in the long term.

5. Conclusion

This study shown that Xieng Lom is an important ecotourism village that can offer a variety of beautiful landscapes and scenery, in particular, mountains, rivers, forests, ecotourism activities, for example, riding elephants through the village to observe the village's way of life, village sightseeing, and visiting farming sites, and trekking to the mountains and visiting waterfalls, plus rafting and kayaking as adventure tourism activities. Xieng Lom is a Lao Lum ethnic group which has similar

traditional lifestyles to other villages in the Luang Prabang area. Buddhism is the main religion in the village. The main source of their income is from agricultural production- selling vegetables. Traditional fishing is still maintained and food and vegetables and non forest timber products play an important role in their daily life. Currently, most ecotourism activities are operated and run by tour companies and resorts, especially, trekking, riding elephants, and kayaking down the Khan River. These tour packages are now available for those who prefer adventure tourism. Environmental and biodiversity protection and conservation is now well known by local residents and the community. The villagers realize the importance and impact of environmental degradation on their own lives and society. Therefore, ecotourism can stimulate local social economic growth and development and inspire people to pay closer attention to conservation for future generations.

However, we should be aware that all stakeholders have become important parts of ecotourism development and promotion, particularly, local government agencies and local entrepreneurs. However villagers should play a more active role in community-based ecotourism. Furthermore, they should have more opportunities to show their local knowledge and experience in the development of ecotourism and gain more benefits, income and job opportunities.

Local residents and the community should participate in the development processes because they know well about the local resources which have the potential to be developed as sustainable ecotourism activities. Their ideas and perspectives should be appreciated and taken into account. Village headmen and leaders are the main people to deal with in formulating a village tourism development plan and economic activity. Local government agencies are also important to support these economic activities and provide technical assistance and financial allocation.

Tourism can be sustainable if participation is undertaken by everyone in the ecotourism development project. The recommendations below should also be considered:

- The public sector should pay attention to the planning process, implementation and evaluation of ecotourism development projects in regard to the actual situations and expected outcomes, even if the project has already ceased.
- Tourism entrepreneurs should cooperate with local residents and the community to promote and implement the ecotourism activity and employ locals to ensure that community directly benefited from tourism.
- Villagers must learn more about the importance of ecotourism for the social and economic development of the local community. At the same time they should improve and protect natural resources and the environment, including the preservation of their culture and lifestyle to offer the best ecotourism services for future generations.

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