

NATIONAL ECONOMICS UNIVERSITY (NEU)
FACULTY OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
PROCEEDINGS

NEW TOURISM: LOCAL TO GLOBAL INITIATIVES

**KỶ YẾU HỘI THẢO KHOA HỌC QUỐC TẾ
DU LỊCH MỚI:
SÁNG KIẾN TỪ ĐỊA PHƯƠNG
TỚI QUỐC TẾ**

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HỘI THẢO KHOA HỌC QUỐC TẾ
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**ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT
IN NATIONAL PARKS IN THE RED RIVER DELTA
AND COASTAL NORTHEAST OF VIETNAM THE
CASE STUDIES:
BA VI, TAM DAO AND CUC PHUONG**

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Abstract

The Red River Delta and the Coastal Area of North East of Vietnam have 6 national parks, which cover approximately 17.6% 34 National parks in Viet Nam with valuable biological diversity and a variety of rare plants and animals species. This is an advantage for developing ecotourism in the region. However, there are significant differences being observed between the theory and practice. This study analyzes the importance for developing ecotourism legal framework and its limitation in national parks; analyzes the elements for attracting visitors to national parks. Theoretically based, the authors study three national parks to analyze the current tourism business situation in 3 National Parks: Ba Vi, Cuc Phuong, and Tam Dao; analyzes the elements attracting visitors to national parks. Moreover, the study cites out some comments and suggestions for developing ecotourism in some National parks in area such as building of complete legal framework, planning and proposing possible solutions, attractive tourist elements to national parks.

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Keywords: ecotourism, national park, the Red River Delta and coastal Northeast

Tóm tắt

Vùng Đồng Bằng Sông Hồng & Duyên Hải Đông Bắc Việt Nam có 6 Vườn Quốc Gia chiếm 17,6% trong tổng số 34 Vườn Quốc Gia của cả nước với giá trị đa dạng sinh học và nhiều động thực vật quý hiếm. Đây là một lợi thế để phát triển du lịch sinh thái của vùng. Tuy nhiên, lại có sự khác biệt giữa lý thuyết và thực tiễn. Nghiên cứu này nhằm phân tích tầm quan trọng và những hạn chế của khung pháp lý về phát triển du lịch sinh thái trong các Vườn Quốc Gia; phân tích các yếu tố hấp dẫn khách du lịch tới Vườn Quốc Gia. Trên cơ sở lý thuyết tác giả tiến hành nghiên cứu 3 Vườn Quốc Gia cụ thể là Ba Vì, Tam Đảo và Cúc Phương để đánh giá hiện trạng tổ chức kinh doanh du lịch sinh thái của các Vườn Quốc Gia. Qua đó phân tích các yếu tố hấp dẫn khách du lịch, đồng thời đánh giá được những nét chung và điểm khác biệt trong phát triển du lịch sinh thái tại 3 Vườn Quốc Gia. Một số nhận xét và đề xuất ý kiến được đưa ra nhằm phát triển du lịch sinh thái tại các Vườn Quốc Gia khu vực Đồng Bằng Sông Hồng & Duyên Hải Đông Bắc Việt Nam đó là: giúp pháp về hoàn thiện khung pháp lý, giải pháp về quy hoạch và giải pháp về thu hút khách du lịch.

Từ khóa: du lịch sinh thái, Vườn Quốc gia, Đồng bằng Sông Hồng và Duyên hải Đông Bắc

1 . INTRODUCTION

Tourism is not only a great source to generate revenue, but it also creates job opportunities, boost the growth of other manufacturing industries. Tourism, the largest and fastest-growing industry in the world, generates 10% of world GDP, 7% of global trade and is one of 10 attractive jobs (UNWTO, 2017). However, beside positive aspects, tourism has also caused many negative impacts such as increasing of CO2 emissions (Dwyer, Forsyth, Spurr, & Hoque, 2010; UNWTO, 2013); Soil and water pollution (Xu, Mingzhu, Bu, & Pan, 2017); inappropriate tourism behavior (Alessa, Bennett, & Kliskey, 2003); reduction of biodiversity due to poor tourism management (Mayaka, Croy, & Cox, 2017); and increasing of crime rate, which poses a threat to local culture (Sood, Lynch, & Anastasiadou, 2017). In order to improve its positive impacts and reduce negative ones from tourists and sustainable tourism development, the development of ecotourism is necessary.

Ecotourism has been chosen from early stage of 1980s. This type of tourism is often found in “natural areas, thus contributing to preservation of nature” (Fennell, 2008). According to World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2002), “Ecotourism is a form of tourism that is conducted in nature areas which are less interfered by humans, with main purpose of contemplating, learning about animals and plants that inhabit in the areas to help minimizing and avoiding negative impacts on the area visited by human beings. The tourism industry has developed strongly and affirmed its position in national economy, making an important contribution to socio-economic development in recent years in Vietnam. According to a report done by Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT, 2018), “Vietnam reaches the number of 13 million foreign visitors in 2017, an increase of 30% over same period in 2016, serving 73.2 million domestic visitors, total revenue from visitors reaches more than VND510,900 billion, equivalent to USD 23 billion.

In 2017, according to the report of Vietnam Administration of Forestry on ecotourism activities in the national parks, there are 61 of 167 special-use forests carrying out ecotourism activities (including 25/34 National parks and 36/133 nature reserves). In addition, the National parks of Vietnam in 2016 received over 2 million visitors, an increase of 178% compared to 2015 (1,154 thousand visitors). Total revenue from tourism activities of the national parks/nature reserves in the region reached over VND114 billion, an increase of 48% compared to 2015 (VND77.3 billion). The above data shows that the number of visitors and revenue from ecotourism activities of the National parks / nature reserves have increased dramatically and will continue to increase in the future. At present, the living standard of population is increasing; modern and convenient means of transportation. However, the environment is polluted, the demand for resting in places closed to nature is increasing and the trend of ecotourism will be increasing then.

According to master plan of Vietnam’s tourism development to 2020 with a vision to 2030 of the Prime Minister, the Red River Delta and the Coastal Area of North East of Vietnam is one of the seven key tourism areas. The Red River Delta and the Coastal Area of North East of Vietnam have 22 nature reserves, approximately 20% of which including 6 national parks; 4 animal and plant reserves and 12 culturalenvironmental forests. This is an advantage for developing ecotourism in the region. Despite the advantages of biological diversity, the majority of National parks have not made use of those advantages. The eco-tourism activities primarily concentrate on some National Parks; the remains have very few activities relating to

eco-tourism. Moreover, these National parks have not exploited their eco-tourism potentials much as well. With the scope of this article, we only focus on analyzing the theory legal framework and limited its in national parks; analyzes the elements attracting visitors to Red River Delta and Coastal Northeast.

There have been many researches on developing eco-tourism in national parks. However, the authors mainly studied the potential and current eco-tourism development in these National Park. Nguyen Thi Son (2000); Nguyen Van Manh (2005); Nguyen Duc Hau (2000) researched on the development of Eco-tourism and conservation, Vu Dang Khoi (2004); Nguyen Van Manh, Nguyen Van Hop (2007) researched on business and eco-tourism product development.

These researches primarily studied the potentials, current development as well as business of eco-tourism products in general and in national parks in particular that has no comparative study, evaluating the development of eco-tourism among National Parks. For the above reasons, research on the eco-tourism development in the Red River Delta and the North Eastern coast is really essential in both theory and practice. The study also suggests some policies and strategies to attract eco- tourists to the Region.

Legal framework for ecotourism development in the National parks in Viet Nam

Ecotourism development in the national parks/nature reserves is now regulated by a number of legal documents issued by different agencies. In terms of classification of management, Protected Areas system in Vietnam is divided into two types: (1) legal documents under management of national agencies and (2) legal documents under management of local agencies. Based on data in Decision 45/2014/QĐ-TTg and Decision No. 1107/QĐ-BTNMT, there are 166 protected areas nationwide; of which, 31 national parks, 64 nature reserves, 16 protected areas and 55 landscape protected areas in Vietnam. Of which, only six National parks are managed by national agencies (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development). The remaining ones are managed by the People's Committee of provinces or cities. With this type of organization, the ecotourism development in the National parks / nature reserves by different agencies and in different localities varies according to policies and mobilization of resources of each locality.

Essentially, the ecotourism activities in the national parks/nature reserves are inter-sectoral, regulated by relevant laws (eg. Forest Law, Biodiversity Law,

Tourism Law, etc.), legal documents (Decrees, Decision, Circulars, etc.) issued by the Government and Ministries (Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development - MARD, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, Ministry of Natural Resources & Environment, Ministry of Finance, etc). Ecotourism activities in special-use forests in general, and National parks / nature reserves in particular, are regulated in many legal documents of the forest sector such as: Law on Forest Protection and Development 2004 (effective until 31/12/2018); Forest Law 2017 (effective from 01/01/2019); Decree No. 117/2010/ND-CP, dated 24/12/2010 on organization and management of special-use forest systems; Decision No. 24/2012/QĐ-TTg dated 01/6/2012 on investment policy for special-use forests in the period 2011-2020 and Joint Circular No. 100/2013/TTLT-BTC-BNNPTNT dated 26/7/2013 guiding the implementation of some articles of Decision No. 24/2012/QĐ-TTg dated 01/6/2012. Previously, MARD issued Decision No.104/2007/QĐ-BNN dated 27/12/2007 promulgating the Regulation on Management of Ecotourism Activities in National parks / Nature Reserves (in force), however, many points have been changed/adjusted to meet actual requirements. Some highlights are as follows:

- Stakeholders of ecotourism business in the National parks

The government encourages all economic sectors to invest in ecotourism development in the National parks.

- Methods of organization of ecotourism business in the National parks

The organization of ecotourism business activities in the National parks/nature reserves can be implemented in three forms depending on capacity of management organization and the ability to mobilize resources, as follows:

+ The management board of the national parks/nature reserves organizes ecotourism business activities in form of tourism centers, tourism boards ... According to Decision No. 24/2012/QĐ-TTg dated 01/6/2012 and Joint Circular No. 100/2013/ TTLT-BTC-BNNPTNT dated 26/7/2013, ecotourism business of the National parks / nature reserves are currently dependent accounting units (tourism centers, tourism boards, etc.) with revenue of over VND 3 billion / year converted into National Parks/ Nature reserves Development Joint Stock Company (Decree No. 59/2011/NĐCP dated 18 July 2011 on transformation of state owned enterprises into joint stock companies), in which management boards of the national parks/nature reserves owns a controlling share of at least 51% of the charter capital of a joint

stock company. + The management board of the National parks/nature reserves may use part of the forest and forestry land allocated to organizations and individuals for the purpose of trading ecotourism in combination with protection and development of forests and nature reserves in accordance with the approved planning and current regulations of applicable law.

+ Management Board of the National Parks will work with other organizations and individuals to carry out eco-tourism activities.

- Some requirements for Ecotourism Project in the National Parks

The management board of National parks management will organize, cooperate or associate with organizations or individuals that lease forest for ecotourism business, recreation in the National Parks/Nature Reserves to ensure that they do not negatively affect preserve the natural ecosystem, biodiversity, environmental landscape and other functions of the forests; in accordance with the planning (approved by competent authorities) of the National Parks and observing the law provisions on forest protection and development, environmental protection, tourism, cultural heritage and regulations on management of special-use forests.

Through the legal framework analysis, we realize that some drawbacks as follows:

-There are some differences in self-organizing eco-tourism business among the national parks, provinces in the whole country; Depending on the opinions, investment attracting policies of each province.

-The current financial mechanism (mobilization, use of capital funding; allocation of revenues; sharing of benefits...) has not been clearly defined, so that it has not yet created the motivation to promote the development of eco-tourism business activities in the National parks.

-There is no overall development strategy for eco-tourism market-oriented markets (market-oriented ecotourism); The strategy promotes biodiversity conservation based on the eco-tourism development platform (ecotourism-based conservation).

Attractive tourist elements to National parks (According to Kreg Lindberg & Donal E. Hawkins 1998: Ecotourism: a guide for planners and managers, Ecotourism Society) cited out that:

- The distance from international airport, inland or a main tourist center.
- The ability to reach the sightseeing sites, easy or hard?

-Natural ecological characteristics: The diversity of rare species, typical, endemic species, the appeal and the ability to natural Ecological Characteristics: The variety of rare species, typical, endemic species, attractions and the ability to observe them (how, frequently or season), the safety of observation.

-Other attractive elements such as beaches, rivers, lakes with recreational equipment; waterfalls or swimming pools; and other recreational types.

- The elements of local social culture appealing to visitors.

-The level of service assurance: dining, accommodation and other services.

-The distance/proximity to nearby tourist destinations, the attractions of these sites to visitors, the ability to combine sightseeing.

Normally, eco-tourism visitors desire to find places with special characteristics, and can be combined with other recreational activities. Therefore, a natural zone or a National Park will be more likely to appeal tourists when there are many combined elements.

2. METHODOLOGY

This article uses general analytical methods based on secondary sources including statistics on tourism revenue, visitors over years; reports on assessment of tourism authorities; scientific articles; thematic reports; monographs, etc in the country and internationally related to the theme of ecotourism in the national park.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Current condition of ecotourism development in the the Red River Delta and the Coastal Area of North East

3.1.1. Basic tourism features of the Red River Delta and the Coastal Area of

North East

Table 1: List of nature reserves according to the Biodiversity Law of the Red River Delta & North East Coastal Area of Việt Nam

I	National park	area (ha)	III	Landscape protection area	area (ha)
1	Bái Tử Long	15.783	1	Yên Tử	2.783
2	Cát Bà	16.196,8	2	Chùa Thầy	17
3	Tam Đảo	29.515,03	3	Hương Sơn	3.760
4	Ba Vì	10.749,7	4	K9 - Lăng Hồ Chí Minh	234
5	Cúc Phương	22.408,3	5	Vật Lại	10
6	Xuân Thủy	7.100	6	Đồng Mô - Ngải Sơn	900
II	National Reserves	area (ha)	7	Sóc Sơn	12
1	Đồng Sơn Kỳ Thượng	15.110,3	8	Hồ Suối Hai	1200
2	Bạch Long Vĩ	27.008,9	9	Côn Sơn Kiếp Bạc	1.216,9
3	Vân Long	2.736	10	Kinh Môn	323,4
4	Tiền Hải	12.500	11	Đồ Sơn	228
			12	Hoà Lư	2.985

Source: Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (Decision No.1107 / NNRE, 2015)

We can see that the Red River Delta and the Coastal Area of North East is an area spreading from the West to East with different terrains such as mountainous forests, midlands, deltas, seas and islands”. With an area of 21,060.0 km², the population (2017) was 22,925.5 thousand of people.

This is an area with a diversified and rich tourism resource, which is a favorable factor for tourism development such as sea and island tourism, cultural - spiritual tourism, community tourism, ecotourism, adventure sports tourism, countryside tourism etc.

According to the statistics of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, there are 22 protected areas in the Red River Delta, with an area of 176,113 ha, including 6 National parks and 4 nature reserves (12 NRs). The distribution and size of protected areas is shown in Table .1. In terms of management organization, there are only three units out of 6 protected areas in the Red River Delta and the Mekong River Delta. (Ba Vi National Park, Cuc Phuong National

Park, and Tam Dao National Park), the remaining units belong to the provincial People's Committee.

3.1.2. Tourism business situation in some National parks of the Red River Delta and the Coastal Area of North East

Table 2: Some indicators of biodiversity in the National Parks

Indicator	Unit	Ba Vi National Park	Cuc Phuong National Park	Tam Dao National Park
Area	Ha	7,377	22,200	36,883
Plants	Family	715	1,944	904
Animals	Species	182	2,239	307

Source: Summarized from the authors

It can be said that the Red River Delta and the Coastal Area of North East have natural tourism resources in the special-use forests are diverse and rich, can provide many attractive tourism products, to meet the needs of the ever increasing ecotourism for both domestically and internationally.

Table 3: Tourism business situation in some National parks of the Red River Delta and the Coastal Area of North East

1. Visitors	2015	2016	2017
Cuc Phuong National Park	73,000	82,600	85,700
Ba Vi National Park	216,050	371,821	377,312
Tam Dao National Park	17,434	13,737	4,902
2 . Revenue (VND, Milion)			
Cuc Phuong National Park	4,670	5,150	5,410
Ba Vi National Park	8,860	14,648	20,201
Tam Dao National Park	348	274	98

Source: Summarized from the authors

From the table 3, we see that visitors coming to Ba Vi National Park account for the highest accompanied with the highest revenue, while Tam Dao National Park

welcomes very little visitors and tends to decrease from 10,236 in 2014 to 4,902 visitors in 2017. Visitors coming to Ba Vi National Park in recent years tend to increase. Locations where the visitors mostly come are the 400m-level area, Da Quy Flower Hill, ancient church, Ho Chi Minh temple, Duc Thanh Tan temple, etc. and a large number of students and pupils come to the park for camping, practicing and researching. There has been no investment in advertising, researching the market and technologies serving ecotourism are the reasons visitors coming National parks are not high.

3.2. Organization of ecotourism activities in some National parks/ Nature reserves in the Red River Delta and the Coastal Area of North East in Vietnam.

There are some similarities between Ba Vi, Cuc Phuong and Tam Dao National parks about as follows:

Ecotourism development condition of Ba Vi, Cuc Phuong and Tam Dao national parks: *Tourism resources:* All the National parks have common advantages and value biological diversity, a variety of rare plant animals; *Infrastructure condition*

Transport: The inter-district roads also create favorable conditions for the tourist from other provinces to visit the national parks. Such as: National highway 1A, highway 2, highway 6, highway 21A etc. It is easy to go there. *Electricity and water system:* There is a water system which ensures safely and hygiene at the gate of the national park. The center is using natural water through tanks. The power network is connected from center to ensure convenient to use the essential facilities serving staff work and activities of visitors. *Communication systems:* Currently, electricity networks, mobile phone, email and fax systems are equipped. But some areas, there is no mobile phone network. Those are the advantages for developing ecotourism in the region and attractive tourist elements to national parks.

However, between the National parks also have some following differences as:

At present, Ba Vi and Cuc Phuong National parks are carrying out ecotourism activities in three forms: (i) self-organizing; (ii) Joint ventures; and (iii) forest environment renting. In 2002, Ba Vi National Park is the first unit assigned to pilot lease policy for forest environment. Tam Dao National Park has just been approved the project to lease of forest environment for eco-tourism since 2016.

- Cuc Phuong National Park

Cuc Phuong National Park is located in three provinces of Ninh Binh, Hoa Binh and Thanh Hoa, with a total area of 22,408 ha, the first National Park in Vietnam (1962). With many values of natural landscapes, ecological diversity, cultural and historical values, Cuc Phuong National Park has long become a famous and attractive ecotourism base.

(1) *Walking in the forest such as:* camping and overnight in the forest, long day walking trip to the Ngoc Son protected area, Pu Luong Protected Area which are attractive to many visitors. (2) *Ecotourism with the community participation.* the Muong people with enthusiasm, hospitality will bring visitors comfort and opportunity to explore, discover the unique local culture. (3) *Wildlife watching:* visitors can see some such wildlife as Black Squirrel, Squirrel, Muntjac, Loris and some small predators. (4) *Cuc Phuong bird watching* is one of the most diversified points in terms of bird fauna in the Northern Vietnam, with 308 species discovered and recorded, including many such rare species as Red-headed Woodpeckers, Silver Pheasant, Austen's Brown Hornbill, Bar bellied pitta, etc., especially there are here many endemic species of Vietnam and Indochinese. (5) *Cycling in the forest:* Cycling in the forest will bring not only quiet, true feelings of the nature, but also give chance to see animals difficult to meet in Cuc Phuong. (6) *Observation of reptiles, amphibians and insects:* Cuc Phuong is a multiform site for reptiles, amphibians and insects. (7) *Visiting biodiversity sites.* At present, Cuc Phuong has totaled up 43 biodiversity sites. Coming here, visitors shall have chance to study and learn about the species of tropical floras and finally (8) *Kayak boat trip.* Staying at Cuc Phuong, visitors can participate in the kayaking on the Mac Lake and Yen Quang Lake, which is one of attractive activities.

- Ba Vi National Park

On 16/01/1991, according to Decision No. 17/CT by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers (now the Prime Minister) approved. At present, the forest land area of Ba Vi National Park is 11,079.5 ha, of which forest area is 7,095.9 ha, accounting for 64% of the total area of the national park. Ba Vi National Park has nearly 1,000 ha of primeval forest with little human impact.

Ba Vi National Park is an area favorable for the development of tourism and research. Natural landscape is diversified in biology, beautiful scenery, fresh air quite different to the urban noise, bearing the historic hallmark and ethnic culture.

EcoTourism Products in Ba Vi

(1) *Sightseeing, research on forest resources and rare plants in VQG Ba.* (2) *Sightseeing, study of forest flora, fauna, insect, study the projects on the conservation of rare animal genes such as mongoose, fire leopard... or preserve of plant genes such as Cypress green, Pine bamboo, Sen honey...* (3) *Walking through the forest to breathe in the fresh air, listen to the birds singing, see the scenic natural scenery.* (4) *Studying on the richness of forest resources in Ba Vi Natural Park combining with the local cultural values. This is such a valuable resource to exploit and develop the type of ecological tourism in Ba Vi National Park.*

- Tam Dao National Park

Tam Dao National Park is located in Tam Dao mountain range, a large mountain range over 80 km long, 10-15 km wide, running in the direction of North West-South East. The park spreads over three provinces of Vinh Phuc (Tam Dao district), Thai Nguyen (Dai Tu district) and Tuyen Quang (Son Duong district), about 75 km north of Hanoi. Tam Dao primary forest has a clean and cool climate, with an average annual temperature of about 18°C which is a very favorable condition for the development of ecotourism and leisure tourism.

Eco Tourism Products in Tam Dao National Park

With a rich and diverse flora and fauna, Tam Dao National Park has a very favorable condition to develop various kinds of resort tourism, Eco-tourism, Sightseeing, scientific researches on tropical forest ecosystem and Tropical Asia on the Mountain.

(1) *Walking through the pine hills, landscapes in the forests, which can organize camping, fishing, BBQ, enjoying local products. There are also many kinds of orchids, and various kinds of colorful wildflowers along the way.* (2) *Visiting Biodiversity points, Xa Huong lake, study the forest flora, sightseeing at Thac Bac water falls, sailing on Xa Huong lake.* (3) *Watching wildlife: walking along the small path, you will be introduced to the value of some species of animals, rare plants endemic only in the three islands: sloths, golden monkeys, Monkey Faces, flowers, soil python, threeline turtle and Tam Dao toad.* (4) *Watching birds: Tam Dao National Park is one of the diverse points of the bird region in northern of Vietnam, with 239 species discovered and statistically: gold cash, white-throated partridge,*

White Pheasant, Grey tail, greytailed tails, blue-tailed collared, small-tailed blue-tail, long-tailed red-tail, white-eared cotton, small shrike, Fiery Warbler.

4 . RECOMMENDATION AND CONCLUSION

Through the current business as well as the organizing eco-tourism activities in the National Parks, we have noticed that: all the National parks have common advantages and value biological diversity, a variety of rare plant animals; transportation is convenient. Therefore, it is easy to organize the tours such as walking through the forests to see the natural beauty, rare animals, etc. Yet, the revenues from the tourism activities of the National Park are not very high. There are not many attractive products attracting the tourists to stay overnight. The introduction of tourism products to visitors is still limited. Tam Dao National Park with the advantage of the tourism resources, specially the climate, convenient transportation however, the services are still very poor, and there are not many specialized tourism products. Similarly to Ba Vi National Park, in spite of the revenues and a high number of visitors, however, it is mainly a spiritual visitors and the eco-tourism products are not yet varied and distinctive. Differing from those two National parks mentioned above, Cuc Phuong National Park has made many diverse products with many forms for tourist attractions.

With the lacks of rules and detailed guidance not only make these National parks and the Natural Conservations face with difficulties in promoting, but also create an illegal rule for the tourist companies develop economical traveling in these destinations with the name of eco-tourism. Activities of the National parks and nature reserves in Vietnam tend to the ecotourism but not match with the potentiality and without a real ecotourism business model. In fact, visitors who come to the National parks only access forest ecosystems, plants, and some insects, rarely seeing wild animals. In addition, the promotions are still in difficulties, not be paid much attention; team of managers and guides are not equipped with adequate knowledge, especially lack of organizational skills, as a result, the ecotourism has not attracted many tourists. Many tourism bases lack sewage and solid waste treatment systems that pollute the environment, so they do not attract the tourists. The benefit for those operating in this aspect is not high.

In the general trend, ecotourism is a type of tourism being taken interest and widely developed. Vietnam has a system of National parks potential to attract

ecotourism visitors. From the practice in organization of tourism activities, to develop ecotourism in the National parks and Nature Reserves better, we would like to give some following opinions:

(1) *Ecotourism strategy and law:* Lack of the policies and guidance's for promoting the activities. In the related legal law that has an existing number of activities, in which still lack of the rules and detailed guidances for development, such as the business analysis for business tourism, for the environmental forest renting in combination with companies to develop tourist activities, rules for finance, guidance for attracting the participation of the community and the criteria for ecotourism assessments. Without proper ecotourism law or a national ecotourism strategy like in other ASEAN countries, unqualified ecotourism-based products remain in Vietnam, such as ecotourism based theme parks, which are only fabricated tourism activities with related natural-based resources. In Vietnam, therefore, the tourism industry needs a national ecotourism strategy and law to review management permissions in different regional levels.

(2) *There should be a master plan and planning for each area to build appropriate tourism activities:* National parks aim to have an overall plan and a plan for each area, which is invested considerably in tourist activities basing on natural resources, the regional tourism potentials and areas. For the linear tourism with the participation of the community, must be created the profit shared clearly and preferably.

(3) *Attractive tourist elements to national parks:* Design of tourism activities based on natural resources, area and regional tourism potentiality should be consulted with experts as well as domestic and international tourism sites. Development the specific ecotourism products: Development of the specific ecotourism products that is to create new and strange experience to the visitors based on the natural tourism resources as well as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and challenges of each National Park and each locality.

Besides that, establishment of network of ecotourism supporting serviceproviders

Visitors to the National parks using the main ecotourism products must be entitled to other supporting services such as passenger transportation, staying, accommodation, banking, communication, insurance, health and securities, etc. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a network of ecotourism supporting service

providers in accordance with certain standards and closely coordinate with these units to ultimately satisfy the tourism's needs in the National Parks. Ecotourism Communication and Marketing: National Parks should promote their products and brands on the mass media, reputable e-commerce sites, social networks, travel websites.

This study has analyzed the current status of ecotourism services in three national parks: Ba Vi, Cuc Phuong, Tam Dao through the consideration of tourism resources, design of specific ecotourism products, method of organization and business of ecotourism in each national park. We thereby suggest pushing up the ecotourism in the National parks of Vietnam.

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