COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

IN

ECOTOURISM

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ABSTRACT

Ecotourism is an amalgam of interests arising out of environmental, economic and social concerns. Over the last twenty years, it has assumed a global presence and has been acknowledged as a potential tool to improve sustainability by modifying human social behaviour in regard to environmental conservation. In other words, ecotourism incorporates a strong commitment to nature and a sense of social responsibility.

There are examples of successful ecotourism ventures, which are making a real and significant contribution to conservation of the natural resources as well as the development of impoverished communities. Active involvement of communities in the planning process and in operations management is vital in order to achieve the development and conservation goals of ecotourism. However, these activities are extremely rare because they have generally been peripheral to tourism planning and management especially in developing countries.

In light of the research needs in the above context, this research, which is exploratory in nature, attempts to examine the contribution of ecotourism to local community's livelihoods in rural areas in Malaysia by exploring local opportunities and limitations in the industry as well as evaluating the current practice and the potential for community participation in the planning process. In general, the study found that the level of local involvement in ecotourism in Malaysia is low because there are operational, structural and cultural limitations to community participation in tourism development process. The study also found that active local participation in planning is compounded by the technocratic planning system and highly centralised government structure. Therefore, this study suggests that the realisation of community ecotourism in Malaysia must overcome these two major impediments before it can successfully take place. As ecotourism research is relatively new and limited in Malaysia, the outcome of this study is believed to have expanded the existing body of knowledge on community participation in ecotourism and planning and have provided valuable insights into the practicality of this approach in Malaysia.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

ASEAN	The Association of Southeast Asian Nations
DANIDA	Danish International Development Assistance
DWNP	Department of Wildlife and National Parks
EPU	Economic Planning Unit
EU	European Union
FAMA	Federal Agriculture Marketing Authority
FR	Forest Reserve
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GDP	Gross Domestic Products
HAT	High Adventure Travel
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature, currently known as the World Conservation Union
JKKK	Village Development and Security Committee
KOPAM	Ulu Mua Fishermen's Cooperative Association
LA	Local Authority
MARA	The Council of Trust for the Indigenous People
MARDI	Malaysian Agricultural Research and Development Institute
MOCAT	Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism
MPK	Majlis Perbandaran Kangar (Kangar Municipal Council)
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NEP	National Ecotourism Plan, New Economic Policy
NDP	National Development Policy
NDPC	National Development Planning Committee

NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
OPP	Outline Perspective Plan
PCPD	Popular, Casual, Passive and Diversionary
PFE	Permanent Forest Estate
PIC	Planning, Incremental and Collaborative
PSFD	Perlis State Forestry Department
PSP	Perlis State Park
RM	Ringgit Malaysia (Malaysian Currency)
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
SEPU	State Economic Planning Unit
SPC	State Planning Committee
TCPA	Town and Country Planning Act
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WTO/UNEP	World Tourism Organisation/United Nations Environment Programme
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature
WWFM	Worldwide Fund for Nature Malaysia

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This thesis addresses key themes in contemporary tourism debate, particularly tourism planning and the role of community within that process and the manner in which these themes can be understood in the context of eco-tourism development in Malaysia. This chapter provides a general introduction of the study. A broad background of the study area and its significance are discussed, followed by an explanation of the research objective and research questions. A brief outline of the thesis is discussed at the end of the chapter.

1.1 Background of the Study Area

In the last three decades, conventional tourism has been joined by an alternative paradigm offering a different mode of thinking, promises of prosperity, new opportunities, and hope for local people, tourists and service providers alike (Fennell, 2002). This alternative has spawned a proliferation of new tourism types, each seeking to carve a lasting niche in a market that continues to expect novelty and satisfaction. One of these is ecotourism, which represents one of the fastest growing segments of alternative tourism both in its practice within the tourism marketplace and in its discussion at the level of theory (Fennell, 2002). It is likely that the principles, which

forms the basis of ecotourism, evolved at least *in part, from the* environmentalist crusade of the 1960s, the eco-development movement that emerged during the 1970s, and from concerns about sustainable development which took off during the 1980s. In the 1970s, certain groups in society particularly academics, policy makers and citizen groups were dissatisfied with governments and industry who were excessive and exploitative in their development policies (Nelson, 1994). This stimulated a slow but steady growth of discussion on environmental issues and strategies with the purpose of identifying the broad social and ecological dimensions of development and under-development (Irving and Priddle, 1971).

While the best examples of ecotourism are making a real and significant contribution to the conservation of the natural environment and the development of impoverished communities, these instances are still relatively rare and most of them are very small-scale in quantitative terms (Buckley, 2003). According to Brandon (1993), these scale problems can be traced to many sources, which explain why ecotourism has not led to significant levels of ecological development or eco-development. The first is an absence of political will and commitment by governments to mobilise the resources – human, financial, cultural and moral – to ensure the integration of ecological principles with economic development (Bunting *et al.*, 1991). Secondly, tourism is often promoted by large-scale interests from outside the area, and there is, therefore, a lack of integration of local needs and preferences into the planning process. As a result, tourism is not structured to meet local needs and benefits often flow outside the area (West and Brechin, 1991; Wells *et al.*, 1992).

The above theme of equitable community involvement in tourism development has been discussed in the literature for more than two decades. To provide some historical perspective, in the late 1970s, the University of Missouri (1978) developed and published the first edition of *Tourism USA: Guidelines for Tourism Development*. While not specified in the title, the purpose of this publication was to aid communities interested in initiating or further developing tourism as one component of their economic development programmes (Van der Stoep, 2000). During the mid to late 1980s, there appeared a series of articles and other publications focused on community tourism development. Among them were Murphy's *Tourism: A Community Approach (1985)* and *Community Driven Tourism Planning (1988)* and Blank's (1989) *The Community Tourism Industry Imperative*. Other authors have included tourism development within a broader approach to community and economic development (Matulef, 1988; Fessenmaier and Fessenmaier, 1993; Brass, 1995; Butler *et al.*, 1998).

There has been little progress so far towards addressing the question of whether there can indeed be a general model for managing the development process in host communities, particularly in developing countries. Although many of the recent texts on tourism planning do allow some space for a discussion on the relationship between tourism and community development, usually expressing the desire that tourism should benefit the host community, they say very little on how to actually mobilise local involvement (Din, 1997). The contention here is that equitable involvement of the host community is a prerequisite to sustainable tourism development. In ecotourism

development, active local participation in the planning process and in operations

management is essential in order to achieve the conservation and development goals of

ecotourism (Drumm, 1998). Based on the above discussion, it can be argued that the

participation of local communities in the planning and management of tourism activities

has been the weak link in the process of evolution from nature tourism to ecotourism

(Drumm, 1998).

1.2   Research Objective and Questions

In light of the research needs in this context, this study attempts to examine the current

practice and the potential for community participation in ecotourism development in the

specific context of Malaysia by addressing the following research questions:

i)   To what extent can ecotourism contribute to a community's livelihood?

This will be addressed by exploring local opportunities and limitations in

the industry, given the prevailing socio-political, economic and cultural

structure in many developing countries including Malaysia, and

ii)   To what extent can 'bottom-up' approaches to planning be implemented

within a top-down planning system such as that found in Malaysia? How

does the local community engage in the planning process and how does

the community mechanism operate?

1.3   Significance of the Research

There are many examples of ecotourism locations that are situated within community settings, which may have been introduced into a community intentionally through a planning approach or unintentionally as something which evolved in that location. In general, the tourism products in Malaysia are mainly urban or sun, sea and sand based although ecotourism is emerging as a locally important activity within protected areas (Weaver, 1998). However, compared to Sabah and Sarawak with their relatively intact natural habitats, sparse populations and increasing number of protected areas, there is little evidence of the extent and impact of ecotourism on local communities within Peninsular Malaysia. For this reason, this research has selected two ecotourism sites in Peninsular Malaysia as the case study entities, with the objectives of obtaining an understanding of the situational context of community in ecotourism and its planning and acquiring valuable insights into the practicality of this approach in Malaysia. At the same time, the study is expected to expand the existing body of knowledge in this related field particularly in the context of developing countries.

1.4   Structure of the Thesis

The organisation of the chapters is as follows:

Chapter One   provides a general overview of the study with regards to

the background, objective and significance of the study. A

brief outline of the thesis is also presented.

Chapter Two   discusses the origin of the concept of ecotourism and the

complexity of trying to define the ecotourism term. Given

the ambiguity associated with the historical origins of

ecotourism, the early literature on ecotourism sought to

debate the issue of semantics, definitions and the very

essence of this term. The subsequent part of the chapter

critically   appraises   its   relationship   to   sustainable

development and sustainable tourism because ecotourism

fits within the larger concept of sustainability. The final

part in the chapter examines several application issues of

ecotourism, with regards to natural and unnatural types of

ecotourism, exploitive-passive-active types of ecotourism,

and typologies of ecotourists.

Chapter Three   describes the history and definitions of tourism planning, followed by a discussion on its significance and on present approaches to tourism planning. Community participation in the context of general planning practice and the tourism planning environment are discussed extensively in the subsequent parts of the chapter. An overview of planning practice and community participation in Malaysia is also examined in the chapter. The final part discusses briefly the scope of future planning approaches and advances in tourism planning theory.

Chapter Four   examines several dimensions of community involvement in tourism with specific reference to ecotourism development. The first section appraises the concept of 'community' and 'community involvement', followed by a discussion on the significance of community involvement in ecotourism. Conflict at the community and ecotourism interface is also investigated in the subsequent section. The final part focuses on various community approaches to ecotourism and planning, which can be seen to be critical to the success of ecotourism development in terms of promoting the well being of local people and their environment.

Chapter Five | provides a brief background of tourism and ecotourism development in Malaysia. The main focus of this chapter is to describe the two case study areas: the Perlis State Park (PSP) in Wang Kelian, Perlis and the proposed State Eco-Park in Ulu Muda, Kedah. Description of the natural resources, significant features and the nature of local involvement in tourism activities in both areas are discussed at the end of the chapter.

Chapter Six | discusses the methodological choices made within this study. Having justified the case that a qualitative approach is appropriate for the study, this chapter discusses the origin of qualitative research alongside the emergence of tourism research within social science disciplines. The remaining parts of the chapter focus on case study as the research design, in-depth interview as the data collection technique, sampling considerations and techniques, and data analysis process.

Chapters Seven and Eight | present the empirical findings of research according to main themes, primarily in the context of community involvement in ecotourism and planning. Emergent themes are also included in these two chapters.

Chapter Nine relates the empirical findings, presented in Chapters Seven and Eight, with the relevant literature. The order of discussion is similar to the theme structure in the previous two chapters.

Finally, Chapter Ten summarises the research findings and recommends possible approaches to overcome the limitations and problems that have emerged from the study. The contributions of this research to the existing body of knowledge, its limitations and suggestions for further research, are discussed at the end of the chapter.

Chapter Two

ECOTOURISM: CONCEPTS AND ISSUES

2.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the origin of the concept of ecotourism and the complexity of trying to define the ecotourism term. The subsequent part critically appraises its relation to sustainable development and sustainable tourism because ecotourism fits within the larger concept of sustainability. The final part in the chapter examines several application issues of ecotourism, with regards to natural and unnatural types of ecotourism, exploitive-passive-active types of ecotourism, and typologies of ecotourists.

2.1 Origin of Ecotourism

The phenomenon known as ecotourism was in existence long before the terminology began to be used within tourism studies although it was often called other things. This is emphasised by Beaumont (1998, p. 240) when he notes that:

> 'Ecotourism is not new to Western society. It has been around
> since at least 18th century but by a different name. The early
> geographers who toured the world in search of new lands, species
> and cultures were ecotourists ... The establishment of National

Parks – Yellowstone in the US in 1872 and Banff in Canada in

1885 – is further evidence of the early interest in nature tourism

... African wildlife safaris and Himalayan treks in the 1960s and

1970s were also part of this trend'.

Given the ambiguity associated with the historical origins of ecotourism, Fennell (1999)

has traced one of the origins of the term 'ecotourism' to the work of Hetzer (1965).

Hetzer used it to explain the intricate relationship between tourists, the environments and

cultures in which they interacted. Hetzer identified four fundamental pillars that needed

to be followed for a more responsible form of tourism, which included:

- minimum environmental impact;

- minimum impact on – and maximum respect for – host cultures;

- maximum economic benefits to the host country's grass roots; and

- maximum 'recreational' satisfaction to participating tourists.

Other early references to ecotourism are found in Miller's (1978) work on national park

planning for ecodevelopment in Latin America, and documentation produced by

Environment Canada in relation to a set of road-based 'ecotours' they developed from

the mid-1970s through to the early 1980s. Each tour focused on a different ecological

zone found along the corridor of the Trans-Canada highway, with an information pack

available to aid interpretation (Fennell, 1998).

Ecotourism developed 'within the womb' of the environmental movement in the 1970s
and 1980s (Honey, 1999, p. 19). Growing environmental concern coupled with an
emerging dissatisfaction with mass tourism led to increased demand for nature-based
experiences of an alternative nature. At the same time, less developed countries began
to realise that nature-based tourism offers a means of earning foreign exchange and
providing a less destructive use of resources than alternatives such as logging and
agriculture (Honey, 1999). By the mid 1980s, a number of such countries had identified
ecotourism as a means of achieving both conservation and development goals.

2.2   Definitions of Ecotourism

The first formal definition of ecotourism is generally credited to Ceballos-Lascurain
(1996), who defined it as travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural
areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its
wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and
present) found in these areas. While definitions such as that of Ceballos-Lascurain
(1996) and Boo (1990) tended to emphasise the nature-based experience sought by the
tourist, more recent definitions have tended to highlight various principles associated
with the concept of sustainable development. According to Wight (1993a), sustainable
ecotourism imposes an 'ethical overlay' on nature-based tourism that has an educative
emphasis. Although this overlay has, arguably, been implicit, if not explicit, the concept
does appear to have evolved into something explicitly normative over the past decade.
This, in part, is a reflection of increasing recognition among industry and government

that nature-based tourism can only be sustained in the long term if a principled and

proactive supply-side management approach is adopted.

Figure 2.1 An inclusive approach to defining ecotourism using three key principles
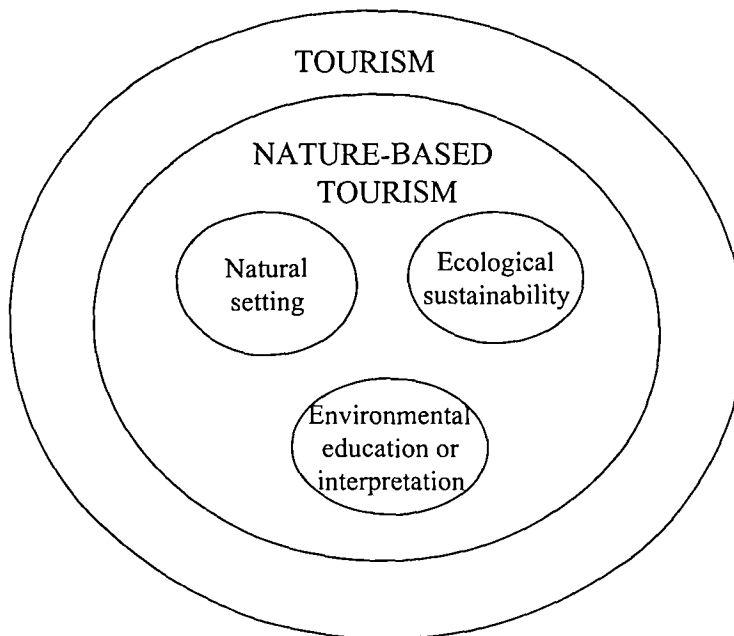
Source: Beaumont (1998)

Beaumont's (1998) approach to ecotourism (see Figure 2.1) suggests that ecotourism is a

subset of nature tourism, which in turn, is a subset of tourism. The three main

principles, which are also common to a number of other definitions of ecotourism, are

natural setting, ecological sustainability and environmental education or interpretation.

The Ecotourism Society (now the International Ecotourism Society), for example,

approaches ecotourism as responsible travel to natural areas, which conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people (Lindberg and Hawkins, 1993).

Similarly, the Australian Department of Tourism (1994) defines ecotourism as nature-based tourism that involves education and interpretation of the natural environment and is managed so as to be ecologically sustainable. This Australian definition recognises that 'natural environment' includes cultural components and that 'ecologically sustainable' involves an appropriate return to the local community and long-term conservation of the resource. The IUCN (World Conservation Union) definition, cited in Ceballos-Lascurain (1996), also emphasises similar key components of ecotourism discussed earlier. Ecotourism is defined 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 negative impact and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of the local populations.

From the above discussion, it can be argued that any number of principles of ecotourism can be devised. However, an analysis of definitions such as those above indicates that the three dimensions represent the main essence of ecotourism concept. It is useful for this research to consider the range of definitions offered in terms of the conceptual approaches they represent to avoid confusion that has surrounded the concept of ecotourism to date (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1 Comparison of selected ecotourism and nature tourism definitions

Main principles of definition a	Definition														
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Interest in nature	x	x			x	x	x	x		x	x			x	x
Contributes to conservation			x		x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x
Reliance on parks and protected areas	x		x		x	x		x	x				x	x	x
Benefits local people/long -term benefits			x		x	x	x		x				x	x	x
Education and study	x	x	x			x					x			x	x
Low impact/non -consumptive						x						x	x	x	x
Ethics/responsibility				x				x	x						x
Management						x		x		x					x
Sustainable								x		x				x	x
Enjoyment/appreciation	x				x								x		
Culture	x				x								x		
Adventure		x													
Small scale												x		x	

1 Ceballos-Lascurain (1987); 2 Laarman Durst (1987)b; 3 Halbertsma (1988)b; 4 Kutay (1989); 5 Ziffer (1989); 6 Fennell and Eagles (1990);
7 CEAC (1992); 8 Valentine (1993); 9 The Ecotourism Society (nd); 10 Western (1993); 11 Australian National Ecotourism Strategy (nd);
12 Brandon (1996); 13 Goodwin (1996); 14 Wallace and Pierce (1996); 15 Page and Dowling (2002)

a Variables ranked by frequency of response
b Nature tourism definitions

Source: Fennell (1999: 41)

To a large extent, this confusion is a result of different stakeholders adopting different perspectives (Blamey, 1997), in particular i) scientific, conservation and non-governmental organisations; ii) multilateral aid organisations; iii) developing countries; and iv) the travel industry and travelling public (Honey, 1999). According to Page and Dowling (2002), part of the problem also arises from an external set of circumstances in that it is confused with a plethora of terms used to describe types of alternative tourism. Secondly, when used on its own, the term 'ecotourism' has been accorded a variety of meanings, some of which are merely tautological.

Page and Dowling (2002) also argue that much of the early literature on ecotourism that sought to debate the issue of semantics, definitions and the very essence of this term added to the complexity of trying to define the 'ecotourism' term. The result is a plethora of case studies and research outputs that have provided descriptive depth but limited debate on this seemingly amorphous phenomenon. This has meant researchers are faced with a vast array of studies, many of which reinvent the wheel, seek to rehearse well-worn arguments and do not establish new domains for research based on conceptual clarity.

2.3   Sustainable Development as a Concept

The present debate over issues of sustainability and sustainable development represents the current manifestation of recognition of 'environmental crisis' that has affected societies in most parts of the world. In recent decades, sustainable development, sustainable tourism and ecotourism are topics with substantial literatures and rich fields of discourse and debate (Butler, 1993; Goodall and Stabler, 1997; Wall, 1997; Weaver, 1998; Fennell, 1999). Mowforth and Munt (1998, p. 105) consider these topics are 'potentially never-ending for the academic community', and such issues have been high on local, national and international policy agendas for a significant period. Although tourism activity has a long history, the concept of sustainability added to it has a relatively short one; it is an extension of the new emphasis on sustainable development.

Since the introduction of the World Conservation Strategy (IUCN, 1980) with its emphasis on 'ecodevelopment', there has been a strong move towards recognising the interdependencies that exist between environmental and economic issues. This led to the Brundtland Commission's (WCED, 1987) 'sustainable development' concept, which equates development with environmental and social responsibility. The momentum for global action continued to mount, with the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, also referred to as the Earth Summit, being held in Rio de Janeiro in June 1992.

There are a multitude of definitions for the term 'sustainability'. Often the descriptions or explanations include characteristics such as: long term maintenance of natural resources; minimal adverse environmental impacts; appropriate and adequate economic benefits to local communities; optimal production with minimal negative outputs; and satisfaction and provision for human, social, political and economical needs (Jordan, 1995). The WCED established a definition for sustainability that encompasses and applies to all resources. Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Jordan, 1995). Three principles are fundamental to ecological sustainability, which also have the capability and potential to be applied to all resources and activities (after Harris and Leiper, 1995):

- Do not use non-renewable resources faster than renewable substitutes can be found.

- Do not use renewable resources faster than they can be replenished.

- Do not release pollutants faster than the biosphere can process them to be harmless.

Discussions and initiatives are also commonly focused around lists of sustainability principle and guidelines. In the first edition of the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, for example, Bramwell and Lane (1993) outline four basic principles of sustainable development and sustainable tourism development: (i) holistic planning and strategy making; (ii) preservation of essential ecological processes; (iii) protection of both human heritage and biodiversity; and (iv) development to ensure that productivity can be sustained over the long term for future generations. Another well-known list of principles and guidelines is that developed by Tourism Concern (1991) in association with the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Barbier (1989) argues that responses to the sustainable development concept appear to take one of two main forms. The first is a generalised, normative and energised response associated with the pursuit of synergisms and balance among environmental impacts, economic development, participatory processes, intergenerational and intragenerational equity, sustainable livelihoods and so on. The second, while overlapping with the first, is narrower and involves the development of formal rules for sustainability. Different rules or models are associated with different assumptions regarding what it is that is to be sustained, and this has become known as the *constant*

capital perspective. According to the *constant capital rule*, sustainable development is interpreted to imply a requirement that human welfare does not decline with time. This can be achieved by leaving the next generation a stock of capital assets (including man-made, human, natural, moral and cultural capital) no less than the current stock. Intergenerational equity is achieved by acknowledging the right of future generations to 'expect an inheritance sufficient to allow them the capacity to generate for themselves a level of welfare no less than that enjoyed by the current generation' (Turner et al., 1992, p. 2).

When understood in terms of the maintenance of environmental capital, sustainability shows its relation to the older idea of 'limits to growth' and 'capacity'. This does not mean that growth is necessarily limited but it does imply that, in order to be sustainable in the long term, 'the nature of growth must be such that it respects constraints set by the need to maintain critical environmental capital (and in some interpretations the total value of the environmental capital stock) intact' (Cowell and Owens, 1997, p. 17).

2.3.1 Sustainable Tourism

As mentioned earlier, the concept of sustainable tourism is inextricably linked to the ethic of sustainable development (Mathieson and Wall, 1982; Farrell and McLellan, 1987). It is suggested that sustainable tourism incorporates most of the key features of sustainable development. Among the first advocates of a sustainable development approach to tourism were Mathieson and Wall (1982) who compiled their treatise on

tourism's economic, physical and social impacts since planning for tourist development is a complex process which should involve a consideration of diverse economic, environmental and social structures. In his advocacy of a community approach to tourism planning, Murphy (1985) also concluded that tourism planning needs to be restructured so that environmental and social factors may be placed alongside economic considerations. Getz (1986) approached the situation from his investigation of tourism planning models and indicated that reference to theoretical models will remind tourism planners not to act in isolation from other forms of social, economic and environmental planning.

During the late 1980s, the sustainable development approach to tourism planning was advanced by a number of authors (Inskeep, 1987, 1988; Gunn, 1987, 1988; Pearce, 1989; Romeril, 1989a, b). Most authors agreed that the underlying concept of sustainable tourism development is the equating of tourism development with ecological and social responsibility. Its aim is to meet the needs of the present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing environmental, social and economic values for the future. Sustainable tourism development is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that it can fulfil economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems (Page and Dowling, 2002). As a result, the concept of sustainability has become a mediating term in bridging the ideological and political differences between the environmental and development lobbies, a bridge between the fundamentally opposed paradigms of eco- and anthropocentrism (Wearing and Neil, 1999).

According to GLOBE 90 (1990, p. 2), the goals of sustainable tourism are:

- to develop greater awareness and understanding of the significant contributions that tourism can make to the environment and the economy,

- to promote equity in development,

- to improve the quality of life of the host community,

- to provide a high quality of experience for the visitor, and

- to maintain the quality of the environment on which the foregoing objectives depend.

Despite its currency, Butler (1993) contests the use of the term sustainable tourism, arguing that it implies the maintenance of tourism itself, whatever its impacts, rather than maintenance of the human or physical context within which the tourism occurs. Accordingly, Butler advocates the term 'sustainable tourism development', entailing:

> 'Tourism which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in such a manner and at such a scale that it remains viable over an indefinite period and does not degrade or alter the environment (human and physical) in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and well being of other activities and processes' (Butler, 1993, p. 29).

Thus, sustainable tourism is conceived as a form of tourism that facilitates sustainable development. Some researchers equate sustainable tourism with 'alternative tourism' (Pigram, 1990), although it seems clear that most, if not all, modes of tourism can be potentially sustainable in the sustainable development sense, if managed in an appropriate way within suitable settings. This perception is related to the dominance at that time of the so-called 'cautionary' and 'adaptancy' approach platforms (Jafari, 1989), which posited that mass or large-scale tourism was inherently unsustainable. However, the 'knowledge-based' platform, which became dominant in the 1990s, de-emphasised the relationship between scale and impact. According to this view, small-scale or alternative tourism can be basically positive or negative in terms of destination impact, depending on where it is implemented and how it is managed, and the same can be said about mass tourism. Hence, the notion of sustainability was extended right across the entire spectrum of tourism activity, and not confined just to the small-scale end of that continuum (Clarke, 1997). The logic of the extension also derives from the simple observation that tourism as a whole cannot be sustainable unless mass tourism is made sustainable, since that component by definition accounts for and will continue to account for the great majority of all tourism activity.

2.3.2 Arguments against Sustainable Development as a Concept

A major problem with the concept of sustainable development – in tourism, as in other economic activities – is that it takes a very long time to be sure that any activity is sustainable (Butler, 1996). The contemporary magnitude of sustainable tourism is

impossible to estimate, not only because the concept is still novel, controversial and ill-defined, but also because it is defined by future outcomes, which cannot be predicted in advance. Practices that appear sustainable at the present time may prove otherwise in another ten years (Weaver, 1998). Society is generally poor at accurately predicting anything for more than a few months or years ahead, and with something as dynamic as tourism, this is even more true (Butler, 1996).

Johnston and Edwards (1994) argue that sustainability is a distracting and unarguably unobtainable notion. MacLellan (1997) argues that the original definition of sustainable development in the Brundland Report has spawned a vast range of refinements, applications and policies, which often contradict each other and are frequently impossible to apply in practice or measure effectively. In the context of ecotourism, for example, even the most benign forms of ecotourism will still have some negative impact on the environment. There is no example of tourist use that is completely without impact. If the primary goal is one of protection and preservation of the environment in an untouched form, then, in all truth, there cannot be tourism development at all (Butler, 1991). Furthermore, absolute restriction is not a truly sustainable option because the high cost of exclusiveness resultant from such restriction can result in an elitist tourism product, which has been labelled ego-tourism (Wheeller, 1992).

Lawrence *et al.* (1997) argue that the legitimacy of ecotourism is threatened by the tension between sustainability principles and the basic fact that growth in ecotourism involves more and more tourists moving into pristine areas. Wheeller (1995) has

questioned whether there can ever be a symbiotic relationship between tourism and the environment, arguing that the commitment of tour operators, tourists and host communities to principles of sustainability will tend to be conditional on self-interest: 'we rarely sacrifice so much as to cause any adverse effect on ourselves. The utility derived (by us) usually outweighs the cost of that sacrifice. So, too ... with expressed support for sustainable tourism' (Wheeller, 1995, p. 128).

While such concerns are generally regarded as important, they have taken little of the gloss off the growing ecotourism movement. One way that the continued pursuit of ecotourism has been justified, in light of such concerns, is to argue that ecotourism can serve as a model for other forms of tourism, thereby facilitating the greening of tourism as a whole. The ultimate goal of the ecotourism 'movement' is thus to infuse the entire travel industry with sustainability principles (Honey, 1999). Clearly, there are substantial benefits to be gained by integrating environmental technologies and practices into mainstream tourism development, rather than restricting their application to a small niche market.

2.3.3 Sustainable Ecotourism

Wight (1993a), taking an ethics-based perspective, enumerates several principles considered fundamental to sustainable ecotourism, as indicated below. Wight (1993a) further argues that these principles may be extended, in greater or lesser degree, into

other tourism operations in addition to ecotourism, which could have the effect of reorienting mainstream tourism operations in the direction of greater sustainability.

- It should not degrade the resource and should be developed in an environmentally sound manner.

- It should provide first-hand, participatory and enlightening experiences.

- It should involve education among all parties – local communities, government, non-governmental organisations, industry and tourists (before, during and after the trip).

- It should encourage all-party recognition of the intrinsic values of the resource.

- It should involve acceptance of the resource on its own terms, and in recognition of its limits, which involves supply-oriented management.

- It should promote understanding and involve partnerships between many players, which could include government, non-government organisations, industry, scientist and locals (both before and during operations).

- It should promote moral and ethical responsibilities and behaviour towards the natural and cultural environment, by all players.

- It should provide long-term benefits – to the resource, to the local community, and to industry (benefits may be conservation, scientific, social, cultural or economic).

- Ecotourism operations should ensure that the underlying ethics of responsible environmental practices are applied both to the external (natural and cultural) resources, which attract the tourists and to the internal operations.

To illustrate a more sustainable model of ecotourism, Wight expanded Sadler's (1990) sustainable development systems model and incorporated the central principles of ecotourism. The model (see Figure 2.2) demonstrates an approach where all three spheres (environmental, economic and social) must have goals fulfilled for there to be a balance, which is required for a possibility of sustainability. Ecotourism is still a relatively young industry, yet there are already well-documented cases of unsustainable ecotourism operations due to the fact that principles fundamental to ecotourism are not being incorporated into the conception, planning, design, development, operation, or marketing of the product (Boo, 1991; Lindberg & Hawkins, 1993).

Figure 2.2 Sustainable Ecotourism: Values and Principles Model
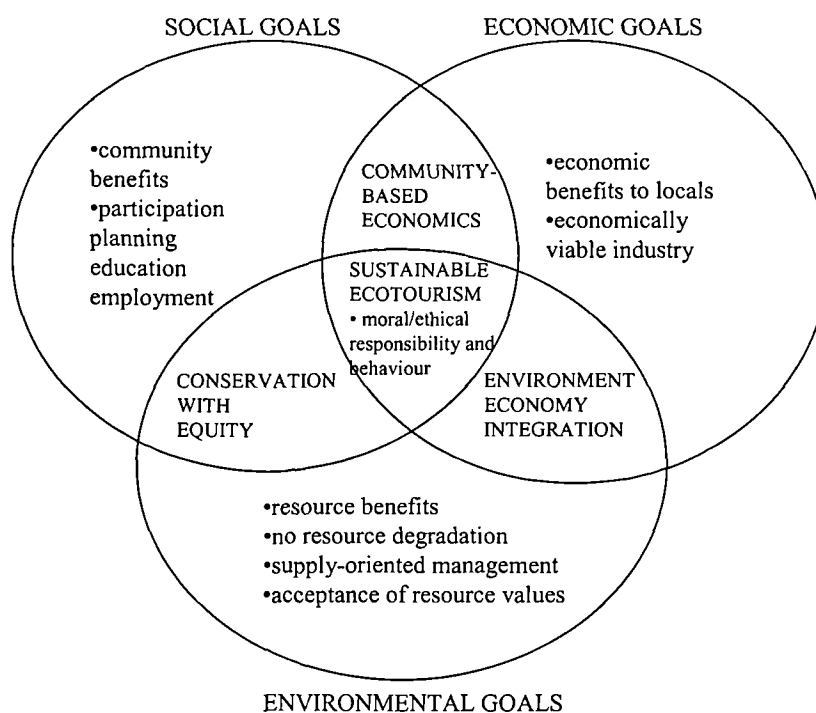
Source: Wight (1993a)

According to Honey (1999, p. 63), sound ecotourism should meet four criteria:

- It should be designed, built and operated so that it leaves a 'soft imprint';

- It should contribute money to the local economy and local community services;

- It should contribute financially to environmental protection; and

- It should educate visitors and members of the local community.

Wallace and Pierce (1996, p. 844) suggest that six principles must be addressed to achieve true ecotourism:

- It entails a type of use that minimises negative impacts to the environment and to local people;

- It increases the awareness and understanding of an area's natural and cultural systems and the subsequent involvement of visitors in issues affecting those systems;

- It contributes to the conservation and management of legally protected and other natural areas;

- It maximises the early and long term participation of local people in the decision-making process that determines the kind and amount of tourism that should occur;

- It directs economic and other benefits to local people that complement rather than overwhelm or replace traditional practices (farming, fishing, social systems, etc.); and

- It provides special opportunities for local people and nature tourism employees to utilise and visit natural areas and learn more about the wonders that other visitors come to see.

It is clear from the above discussion that 'the concept of ecotourism is still often used synonymously with that of sustainable tourism. In reality, ecotourism fits within the larger concept of sustainable tourism' (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1998, p. 8). And, herein lies a conundrum. It could be argued that ecotourism is a niche form of tourism that fosters sustainable development principles. That is, the former is a 'type' of tourism to which the latter is an approach, or it is a 'process' that drives tourism. Thus, ecotourism encompasses sustainability principles and in fact should be regarded as the exemplar of the sustainability approach within tourism generally (Fennell and Dowling, 2003).

2.4 Definition to application -
i) natural-unnatural types of ecotourism

Types of ecotourism can be considered in terms of their relationship with nature. Miller and Kaae (1993) have described the diverse definitions and applications of the concept of ecotourism as part of a continuum of relatedness to nature (see Figure 2.3). This continuum of ecotourism paradigms is bounded by polar extremes. At one pole is the view that all tourism (including ecotourism) has negative impacts on the natural world. That is, no matter what management strategies are in place, humans through their mere

presence have an unnatural impact. Therefore, ecotourism, in this view, is impossible

because any kind of tourism will have a negative effect.

Figure 2.3 Humans as natural and unnatural influences and ecotourism

```
┌─────────────────┐                                      ┌─────────────────┐
│ Humans are part of │                                   │ Humans are separate │
│     nature      │                                      │   From nature   │
└─────────────────┘    ┆ Current definitions of ecotourism ┆   └─────────────────┘
        │              ┆                                 ┆          │
        └──────────────┆─────────────────────────────────┆──────────┘
        │              ┆                                 ┆          │
┌─────────────────┐    ┆                                 ┆   ┌─────────────────┐
│  All tourism is │                                      │  Ecotourism is  │
│    ecotourism   │                                      │   impossible    │
└─────────────────┘                                      └─────────────────┘
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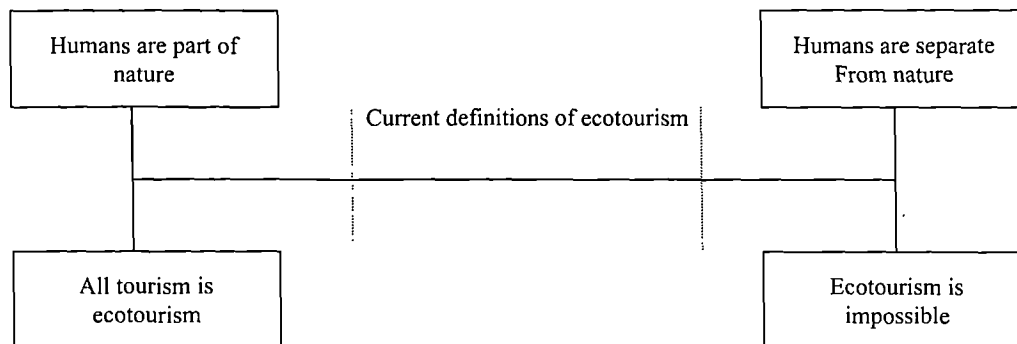
Source: after Miller and Kaae (1993)

At the other extreme, humans are viewed as living organisms – fauna – whose behaviour

is inevitably 'natural'. That is, humans are part of the natural world, just like all other

living things, and therefore human behaviour is 'natural behaviour' and contributes to

the natural evolution of life. This view holds that, because humans are part of the

'natural process', as a result, they are literally unable to behave unnaturally. There is,

therefore, no difference between ecotourism and other forms of tourism in terms of their

'naturalness' and thus, all ecotourism is tourism and vice versa. These two positions

represent extreme and unrealistic views. In reality, types of ecotourism can be

considered as living somewhere between these polar extremes.

ii)   exploitive-passive-active types of ecotourism

Ecotourism types can also be classified according to their tendency to be consistent with their degree of impact on the natural environment. This classification is linked with a consideration of ethics in ecotourism and is seen by a number of authors as an integral part of any discussion of ecotourism (Kutay, 1989; Wight, 1993b; Duenkel and Scott, 1994; Karwacki and Boyd, 1995; Orams, 1995; Fennell, 1999).

In this respect, Orams (1995) argues that definitions of ecotourism can be classified as to whether they have a high or low level of responsibility, with more passive approaches associated with lower levels of responsibility (see Figure 2.4). The more active approaches have a higher level of human responsibility. Consequently, Orams (1995) is a useful approach by which to classify definitions, so that those by Ziffer (1989), Valentine (1992) and Richardson (1993) are within the 'active' category with a high degree of human responsibility and that by the Ecotourism Association of Australia is within the 'passive' category (Orams, 2000).

Figure 2.4 The continuum of ecotourism paradigms

High human   Low human
responsibility pole

Ecotourism is   Active contribution   Passive, so that one   All tourism
impossible   to protect resources   seeks to minimise damage   is ecotourism
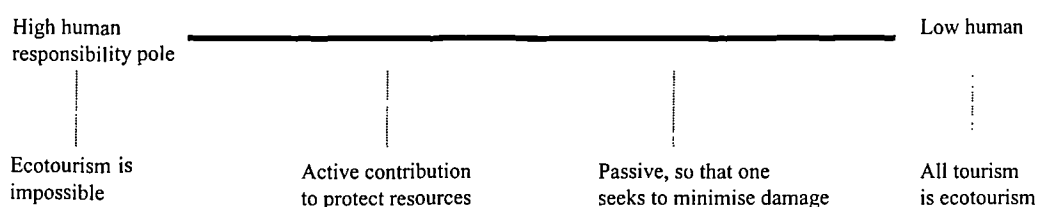
Source: Modified from Orams (2000)

According to Orams (2001), it is, in fact, difficult to view ecotourism in any other way; for inherent in almost all definitions of ecotourism is the suggestion that ecotourism is attempting to 'do the right thing'. The concepts of conservation, sustainability and alternative tourism have a similar ethical component and are concepts closely linked with that of ecotourism. The variation within the ecotourism realm surrounds what the 'right thing' actually is. Without delving too far into deep ecology and environmental ethics, the oft-quoted contention of Leopold (1949, p. 224) is a useful fundamental guideline with regard to ecotourism. He argues that 'a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise'.

Thus, ecotourism operations that actively contribute to the improvement of the natural environment can be viewed as 'better' (Orams, 1995), or as more positive and responsible. Operations that detract from the quality of the natural environment can be viewed as 'worse' or more exploitive and irresponsible. Between these types of ecotourism are those types that can be viewed as more neutral and passive, operations that simply seek to minimise their impacts on the natural environment (see Figure 2.5). Orams (1995) acknowledges that there are many different types of ecotourism but considers that some are better than others. Furthermore, this typology has been used as a basis for arguing that role of ecotourism operators and agencies charged with managing ecotourism should be to prompt movement from less desirable to more desirable states along this continuum.

Figure 2.5 The continuum of ecotourism types

Exploitive	**Passive**	**Active**
-results in damage	-minimal damage	-contributes to the
to the host environment	to the host environment	health of host environment

More responsible and more desirable ecotourism
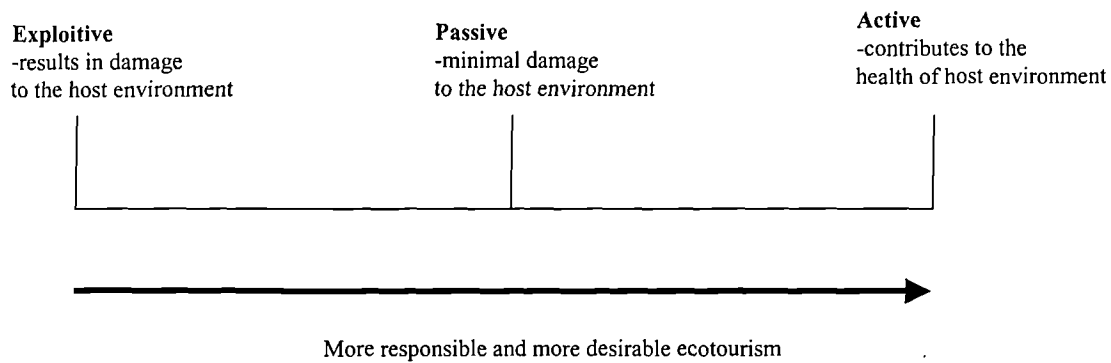
Source: after Orams (1995)

One way to balance the demand for conservation and recreation is by designation and zoning processes. At one end of the spectrum, humans are virtually excluded from nature reserves and wilderness areas in some countries. Within parks, efforts are made to concentrate high-volume visitation in limited areas, where services can be provided and the impact on the natural environment can be contained. At the other extreme, country parks are primarily devoted to recreation and are sometimes indistinguishable from the larger urban parks, especially in the UK (Veal, 2002).

iii) Typologies of Ecotourists

The often asked question, 'Who are ecotourists?', has no definitive answer for many reasons, including limited studies of markets, poor definitional understanding, and the

fact that ecotourist markets are not homogeneous. Despite the large body of literature on

ecotourism, market studies are limited to destination area markets, to tour operator

perceptions, or to more general studies of nature or adventure-based tourists. Studies

tend to discuss general growth in interest, or markets to particular destinations, rather

than identifying characteristics, preferences and motivations of broad 'origin'

populations. Studies at the global scale do not exist (Wight, 2001).

However, according to Page and Dowling (2002), various attempts have been made by

researchers to derive classification of ecotourists, and this section reviews some of the

key elements of these studies in order to arrive at some degree of consensus on what the

ecotourism market looks like based on the discussion of the characteristics of

ecotourists. Fennell (1999) provided an excellent historical review of the early attempts

by researchers to profile ecotourists, and it is pertinent to examine some of the key

issues raised by these studies. In an early study by Kusler (1991), ecotourists were

allocated to three principal groups, namely:

- *Do-it-yourself ecotourists*, which comprised the largest number of visitors. These visitors stayed in a variety of accommodation types with a high degree of flexibility to visit a variety of ecotourism environment and settings;

- *Ecotourists on tours*, where a high degree of organisation characterised their visit, often involving visits to exotic locations such as Antarctica;

- *School groups or scientific groups*, where expeditions or scientific research accompanied the visit and meant visitors would endure harsher site conditions than other visitors.

In contrast, Lindberg (1991) argued that dedication and time were important discriminating factors when distinguishing between different types of ecotourists, where four types could be discerned. Lindberg (1991) suggested that four types of nature tourists existed (although these are not necessarily ecotourists), based solely on the motivation and/or interest level of the participants:

- *Hard core* – scientific researchers or members of educational or conservation tours;

- *Dedicated* – people who visit protected areas to learn about local natural history;

- *Mainstream* – people who visit unique natural area destinations just to take an unusual trip;

- *Casual* – people who partake of nature incidentally as part of a broader trip.

Boo (1990) classified nature tourists according to how important protected areas were in their decision to visit a site. Highly motivated visitors were influenced by the existence of the protected areas in their travel decision, while less motivated visitors regarded the presence of the protected area as slightly or not important in their travel decision.

Related to trip duration, Boyd and Butler (1996) classified ecotourist specialists as engaging in a recreational activity for more than 7 days while generalists for less than 48 hours. Duffus and Dearden (1990) proposed a continuum between wildlife specialists and generalists, based partially on physical rigour and interest level. Specialists require little infrastructure, interpretive or management facilities, and their presence is absorbed by existing support systems. On the other hand, generalists are less ambitious, have little special interest in a site's attraction, rely heavily on infrastructure and visit in large numbers. Thus, in areas dominated by wildlife generalists, additional management is required to offset the impacts of increased pressure.

Figure 2.6 Hard and soft ecotourism
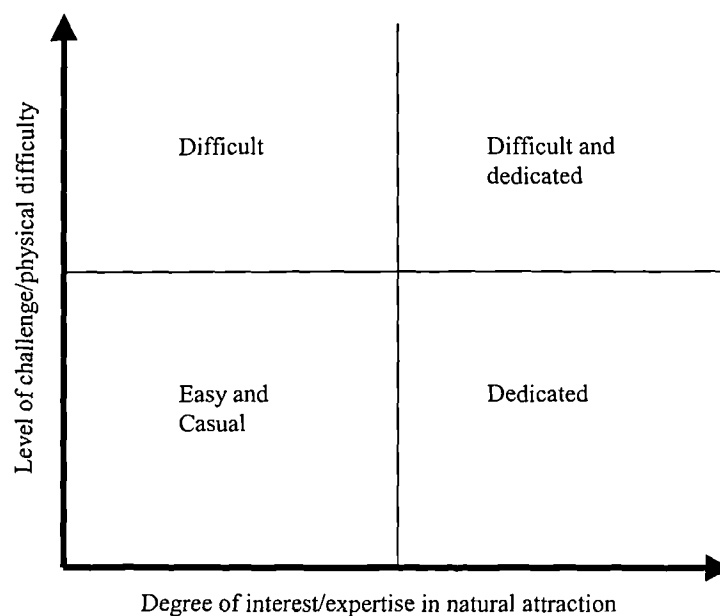
Source: Laarman and Durst (1987)

Similarly, the early work of Laarman and Durst (1987) highlighted a vital distinction between the 'hard' and 'soft' dimensions of ecotourism, based on both the physical difficulty and level of interest in nature as shown in Figure 2.6. 'Hard-core' ecotourists have a deep level of interest and, often, expertise in the subject matter. For example, they may have a life-long passion for birdwatching or other forms of nature observation. In addition, ecotourists have differing dispositions regarding the level of physical challenge and comfort they wish to experience or are prepared to tolerate. A 'hard' ecotourist is prepared and may even desire to live basically, with few comforts, and to live in difficult circumstances for long periods within a wilderness context in order to truly 'experience' nature. Conversely, the 'soft' ecotourist has casual interest in the natural attraction but wishes to experience that attraction on a more superficial and highly mediated level. Similarly, the 'soft' ecotourist is less prepared to accept discomfort and physical hardship as part of the experience, and may be content to spend a considerable amount of their time in an interpretive centre surrounded by other tourists. Typically, 'hard' ecotourists are engaged in specialised ecotourism travel, while 'soft' ecotourists engage in ecotourism as one, usually short duration, element of a multi-purpose and multi-dimensional travel experience (Orams, 2001). Laarman and Durst's (1993) discussion and subsequent work provide a useful contact when considering the types of ecotourists themselves.

In a major survey of North American ecotourists, Wight (1997) found that a shift in interest by general consumers was favouring the growth of ecotourists' preferences. Overall, the characteristics of current and potential ecotourists may be viewed as having

a much wider impact on tourism trends. In other words, the growing interest in ecotourism is spreading to many population segments, and the characteristics of the experienced ecotourist are becoming incorporated into mainstream markets. Despite this influence, it is useful to summarise the characteristics and typologies of ecotourism into a meaningful framework. One interesting classification of the ecotourist as a diverse and yet distinct series of tourist groups can be found in Mowforth (1993). Developing the earlier typology by Budowski (1976) that distinguished between two types of ecotourists: the scientific and nature tourists (which were also subdivided into the hard, soft and adventure tourists), Mowforth (1993) devised a threefold classification as shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2 A threefold classification of ecotourists

Feature	The rough ecotourist	The smooth ecotourist	The specialist ecotourist
Age	Young – middle-aged	Middle-aged – old	Young - old
Travelling	Individually or in small groups	In groups	Individually
Organisation	Independent	Tour-operated	Independent + specialist tours
Budget	Low: cheap hotel/ B&B; local/fast food; uses buses	High: 3*/5* hotels; luxury cafes; uses taxis	Mid-high: cheap-3* hotels; mid-luxury cafes; as necessary
Type of tourism	Sport and adventure	Nature and safari	Scientific investigation/ hobby pursuit

Source: Mowforth (1993)

Mowforth's (1993) classification of ecotourists is useful in that it incorporates the different motivations of ecotourists in relation to the pursuits they engage in as well as the organisation and cost of the experience. The vital distinction between traveller and packaged forms of tourism, ranging from the individualised through to tour-operated form of ecotourism experience, was also implicit in Mowforth's (1993) classification together with the age profile of ecotourists. Although this classification may illustrate the scope of the criteria and characteristics of ecotourists, it is also important to recognise that ecotourism is also an attitude of mind – an experience and a perceived element, which cannot be readily classified.

A study by Chirgwin and Hughes (1997) found that among visitors to Fogg Dam in Australia, an artificially created wetland, 90 per cent of those surveyed perceived it as an ecotourism destination. What this indicates is that the concept of an untouched, pristine natural environment is not necessarily the only defining characteristics of what defines ecotourism in the mind of the tourist. The fact that the experience was aesthetically pleasing and facilitated an opportunity to learn about wildlife and nature indicated that a degree of flexibility has to be incorporated into attempts to classify and allocate tourists to specific groupings that are labelled 'ecotourist'. Furthermore, Chirgwin and Hughes's (1997) study also raised one other vital element – the experience of ecotourism which is a complex amalgam of factors that shape the tourists' feelings and attitude towards their visit (Page, 1995).

However, it is impossible to predict, in the tourism context, tourist responses to individual situations where a range of interrelated factors may impact upon the tourist experience. For example, some tourists feel that overcrowding and high levels of usage of tourism resources diminish the visitor experience. This is likely to be the case for ecotourism, although in the wider tourism context, the evidence is inconclusive on the issue (Page and Dowling, 2002). Ryan's (2000, p. 369) analysis is useful since it highlights a number of holiday characteristics, which impact upon the tourist experience and are relevant to the ecotourism experience:

- a strong emotional attachment for the tourist;

- there is a strong motivation by the client (i.e. tourist) for successful outcomes from the holiday which has been purchased;

- a number of holiday services, so that visitors may select between alternatives;

- a structure whereby the tourist can perform a number of roles - each of which can involve an element of satisfaction;

- a time dimension that resides in the memory of the tourist and is a resource for ego-sustainment during non-holiday periods.

2.5   Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the concept of ecotourism and its relationship to sustainable development and sustainable tourism. At its best, when sustainably managed and when it involves environmental education, conservation of resources and empowerment of

local people through direct benefits and control over ecotourism activities, ecotourism can provide an excellent example of sustainable development in practice. However, successful management of ecotourism operations benefits when it is coupled with active participation of local people in the planning process in order to achieve the development goals of ecotourism, and this issue will be addressed further in the chapter that follows.

Chapter Three

TOURISM PLANNING: PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

3.0 Introduction

This chapter discusses the history and various definitions of tourism planning, followed by a discussion on its significance and on present approaches to tourism planning. Community participation in the context of general planning practice and the tourism planning environment are discussed extensively in the subsequent parts of the chapter. An overview of planning practice and community participation in Malaysia is also examined in the chapter. The final part discusses briefly the scope of future planning approaches and advances in tourism planning theory.

3.1 Origin of Tourism Planning

According to Mill and Morrison (1985), tourism planning appears to have originated in Europe, quickly being adopted thereafter in several developing nations in Africa and Asia. France, United Kingdom and the Irish Republic were among the pioneers of the technology of tourism planning, with all three nations involved in some form of planning for tourism in the early 1960s. Canada has also been in the forefront of tourism planning, its efforts originating in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The United States has

seen little organised tourism planning to date and certainly lags behind its northern neighbour in this respect.

In Britain, in particular, planning for leisure can be said to have passed three stages since the 1960s (Veal, 1994). The period of 1960-1972 was designated as the *demand phase*, when planners were responding to population and income growth as well as rising car ownership. From 1973-1985, the *need phase*, the attention shifted more towards the needs of particular groups in the community and focused less on general demand. From the mid-1980s to present, the *enterprise phase*, the dominant government view is that leisure planning is, ideally, a private-sector function.

Costa (2001) argued that the roots of tourism planning may be traced back to the Industrial Revolution, and in particular to the social, economic and urban developments that emerged during this period. With greater disposable income, reduction of working hours and with improvements in travelling conditions, people started to travel more frequently to areas away from their usual place of residence. It was believed that the expansion of tourism was equivalent to the growth of urban development set aside for tourism purposes. Tourism planning was viewed, and thus undertaken, under the umbrella of town planning. Tourism planning, singled out as being one of the key critical areas for the success of a destination, has recently emerged as a specialisation of town planning, and is still looking for its own approach, body of knowledge and relationship with other better established disciplines. Costa (2001) provides an insight into the origin of tourism planning to describe how the theory and practice has evolved

after the Industrial Revolution ('classical planning'), after World War II ('rational

planning') and after 1980s, as shown in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1 The Evolution of Tourism Planning Theory and Practice

	Classical planning (1850-1950)	Rational planning (1950-1980)	'Present' planning (1980 until now)
Origins	Expansion of domestic tourism	Expansion of mass tourism	Experience from mass tourist developments and neoliberalism
Disciplines	Business/economics	Mostly economics and some town planning	Economics, sociology and physical planning
Planning solutions	Variable – dependent upon practical innovators	Short-term profit	Rational determinism and forms of corporate planning
Level of development	Absence of a planning school	Very weak planning school	Emergence of a planning school

Source: Costa (2001)

3.2   Definition of Tourism Planning

In its broadest definition, planning is seeking to organise the future to achieve certain

objectives, and there is a strong element of predictability in planning because it attempts

to envision the future (Inskeep, 1991). As planning is a process of choice from among

alternative courses of action, it also entails selecting goals, strategies and objectives for

the destination area (Mill and Morrison, 1998). Mill and Morrison (1998) further argue

that five basic purposes of tourism planning are identifying alternative approaches,

adapting to the unexpected, maintaining uniqueness, creating the desirable and avoiding the undesirable.

Within the wider management literature, planning is normally one task which is subsumed under the heading, 'management'. Although there are many divergent views on what constitutes management, McLennan *et al.* (1987) describe the principal activities in management as planning, organising, leading and controlling. These four tasks are common in most forms of management and are important for tourism destinations in coordinating the private and public sector interests in relation to the tourist experience (Page and Dowling, 2002). Inskeep (1991) acknowledges that good planning and careful management of tourism are essential in order to optimise the benefits of tourism and prevent or at least mitigate any problems that might be generated. Planning for tourism is as important as is planning for any type of development in order for it to be successful and not create problems.

Meanwhile, according to Chadwick (1971, p. 24), 'planning is a process, a process of human thought and action based upon that thought – in point of fact for the future – nothing more or less than this is planning, which is a general human activity'. What this means is that change and the need to accommodate change in the future requires a process whereby a set of decisions are prepared for future action. Similarly, Mill and Morrison (1985) claim that one of the core functions of tourism planning is to provide the basic framework to allow the destination area to cope with change. The destination has two choices: (1) react to changes after they occur; or (2) develop a method or plan to

assess the present situation, and select an appropriate course of action to make the most of available opportunities. Murphy (1985) agrees that planning is concerned with anticipating and regulating change in a system to promote orderly development, so as to increase the social, economic and environmental benefits of the development process. To do this, planning becomes 'an ordered sequence of operations, designed to lead to the achievement of either a single goal or to a balance between several goals' (Hall, 1970, p. 4).

3.3   Reasons for Tourism Planning

There are many good reasons for tourism planning. Gunn (1994) suggests five basic reasons:

- Tourism development has both negative and positive impacts.

- Tourism is more competitive than ever before, and there has been a proliferation in the promotion of tourism destinations.

- Tourism is a more complicated phenomenon than it was previously thought to be.

- Tourism has damaged many natural and cultural resources.

- Tourism affects everyone in a community, and all people involved in tourism should participate in the tourism planning process.

Figure 3.1   Butler's Tourism Life Cycle
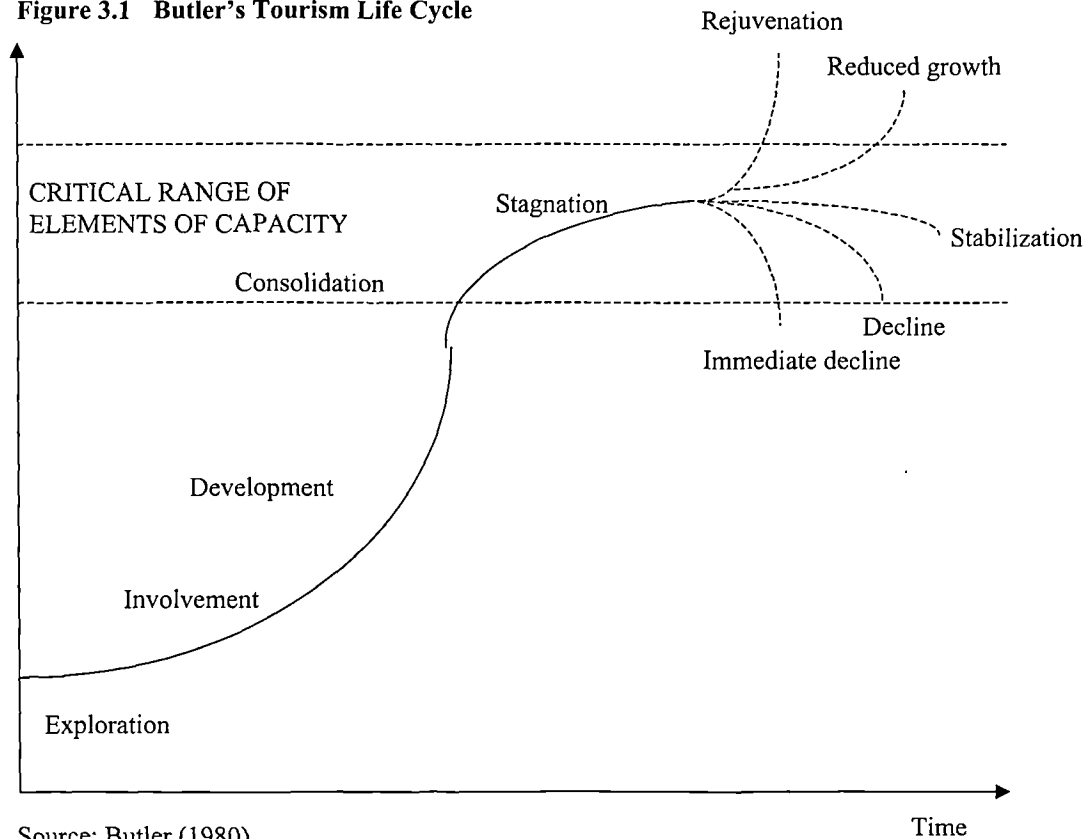
Source: Butler (1980)

The negative and positive impacts of tourism are well demonstrated through the 'destination life cycle' concept (Butler, 1980; Butler and Waldbrook, 1991; Getz, 1992), which suggests that the evolution of all destination areas follow several predictable stages: exploration, involvement, development, consolidation, stagnation, decline and rejuvenation (see Figure 3.1 on Butler's Tourism Life Cycle). Butler's (1980) concept of tourist area life cycle evolves from discovery through development and eventually declines, and the types of visitors at the exploration stage are different from those at the consolidation or stagnation stage. The model is neither specific with regard to actual

tourist numbers nor to its time horizon, thus the judgement of where a destination is situated in the life cycle is impossible to make. It is not really a planning tool, but its main strength is that it enables tourism planners to understand the tourism system and the potential of the destination area to wander through a boom and a bust cycle (see Table 3.2 on Characteristics of a destination area according to life cycle stages).

Table 3.2   Characteristics of a Destination Area According to Life Cycle Stages

Stages	Descriptions
Exploration	Small number of adventurous tourists, main attraction is unspoilt nature or cultural features. Poor access and facilities. Environment unchanged.
Involvement	Local initiatives provide facilities and some advertising ensues. Increasing number of visitors, a tourist season, and public sector involvement follows.
Development	Large number of tourists and control passes from locals to national or international companies. The destination begins to change appearance (i.e. deterioration of environment). Over-use may begin.
Consolidation	The destination is now a fully fledged part of the tourist industry. The rate of increase of visitors is reducing. A recognisable recreational business district has emerged.
Stagnation	Peak visitor numbers have been reached and the destination is unfashionable with environmental, social and economic problems. Major promotional efforts are needed to maintain visitor numbers.
Decline	Visitors now visit newer, rural resorts as the destination goes into decline. It is dependent on a smaller geographical catchment and repeat visitors.
Rejuvenation	Here the authorities attempt to 'relaunch' the destination by providing new facilities, attracting new markets and re-investing.

Source: Butler (1980)

Similarly, Plog (1973) proposed that tourist destination areas go through cycles based on the types of tourists they tend to attract, suggesting that all destination areas eventually decline. Plog stated that those tourist destinations can carry with them the potential

seeds of their own destruction if they allow themselves to become over-commercialised and lose their unique qualities that attracted tourists in the first place. However, this has not always been the case. With good planning and imagination, older tourist destinations have been maintained and in some cases revived, and the planning approaches now being applied are aimed at maintaining the continued vitality of newly developed destinations (Inskeep, 1991). In other words, new areas can be planned to allow for future flexibility of development and older tourism areas can be planned for revitalization.

3.4   Approaches to Tourism Planning

Tourism planning operates at various levels, with each level focusing on a different degree of specificity. Although not always possible to achieve, planning should be prepared in sequence from the general to the specific, because general levels provide the framework and guidance for preparing specific plans (Inskeep, 1991). Furthermore, according to Inskeep, the general approach being applied to planning is a continuous process and must be flexible, depending on changing circumstances, but still seek to achieve the basic development objectives. As part of the flexibility approach, planning should be done incrementally and with continuous monitoring and feedback on effects of previous development and evaluation of new trends, both of which may influence decision making within the next stage of development.

With reference to planning for tourism, it is useful to make a distinction between developed and developing countries (Lickorish and Jenkins, 1997). In most developed countries, there is no formal tourism planning mechanism and whatever planning is done is usually incorporated into regional rather than national planning. Planning at national level is usually a function of the size of the country and its tourist resources, so it would be virtually impossible to plan for tourism development in the USA and may be even in the UK. In developing countries, on the other hand, development planning is a well-established practice, normally based on five-year development plan periods. Where tourism is important in a country, for example in Malaysia, then it is usual to find a chapter devoted to the tourism sector in the national plan.

According to Gunn (2002), experience with tourism planning demonstrates that even though the goals may be similar, there are differences in objectives and processes from the macro to the micro scale. The most popular today is at the *site* scale – individual property development for hotels, restaurants, resorts, roads and attractions. However, when tourism functions are better understood, it becomes clear that there are many opportunities for better tourism success by planning at the scale of the *destination zone*, here defined as a community (or several) and the surrounding area. In order to determine greatest potential for a larger area, a *regional* scale (nation, province, state) of planning is needed. Even though planning is slightly different at these separate scales, integrating tourism development at all scales holds greatest promise for guiding development towards the desired goals.

Getz (1987) observed that there are four traditions to tourism planning - boosterism, an economic-industry approach, a physical-spatial approach and a community-oriented approach, while Hall (2000) has recognised that a fifth approach now exists – sustainable tourism planning. Sound tourism planning is obviously essential because planning can ensure tourist development has the ability to realise the advantages of tourism and reduce the disadvantages. Good planning defines the desired result or goal and works in a systematic manner to achieve success, which would eliminate problems and provide user satisfaction (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3 Priorities and Goals of Tourism Planning

Priority	Circumstances	Initial needs	Goals
Demand led development	Destinations offering suitable resources which need to match facility developments to particular market requirements	Market identification Selective development incentives	Economic benefits leading to other development opportunities
Supply led control	Risk of damage to vulnerable environmental or socio-cultural resources by excessive or inappropriate use	Management and regulation of use	Conservation of resources Long-term sustainability of tourism
Diversification of demand	Decline or saturation of existing attractions. Need to create new products or alternative destinations	New product research, design, development and marketing	Extension of economic benefits. Establishment of new images
Implementation of new products	Development of proposal to implement a network of theme parks, parks, etc.	Market identification, evaluation of regional and/or local impacts	Ascertaining attractions and feasibility of proposed facilities
Reduction of leakages	Excessive growth, shortages leading to high importation of supplies	Phasing of development, inter-sectoral coordination	Widening of economic benefits Reduction of external dependency
Community recreation	Increasing urbanisation, encroachment on attractive landscapes, loss of amenities	Reservation of land, improved public access and facilities	Benefits for local communities and domestic tourism

Source: Baud-Bovy & Lawson (1998: 168)

Getz (1986) has made a comparative review of models in tourism planning and concludes that they all have certain deficiencies in integrating tourism systems theory and the planning process. A review of tourism models suggests that tourism planning is predominantly project and development orientated, based on problem-solving planning processes. What is generally absent is a link between development planning and systematic research and modelling, and tourism planning is often narrowly defined and lacks comprehensiveness. This is evident in many instances where tourism is considered the only viable economic alternative for future growth with limited natural resources for commercial development. Choy (1991, p. 328), for example, pointed out particular weaknesses in a selection of Pacific island tourism plans, mentioning failure to include social, cultural and environmental concerns in some plans and the lack of a 'helpful body of knowledge' for planners to use.

Meanwhile, Hall (2000) argues that while the desirability for tourism planning is generally accepted, the most effective form and method of planning remains a contested concept. The consequences of tourism development are wide ranging and often unpredictable. As a result, planning can often only articulate concerns or uncertainties, society must guide planners in assessing their acceptability. Haywood (1988) further demonstrates that the practical challenge for tourism planners is to match the planning approach to the needs of the community. Planning, as currently practiced, cannot help but be *ad hoc*, informal, non-rational and concerned with values and power. In contrast, planning theory is deliberate, rational and sequential.

3.5   Planning in Malaysia

The planning system in Malaysia, which started with the *Town Planning Enactment of 1923* - an instrument for planning, development control and powers to implement town improvement schemes - adopted the British style of planning (Goh, 1991). It is characterised by a hierarchical 'federation' system, i.e. federal government, state governments and local authorities, and the involvement of various agencies and departments at different level of administrations. The powers of each tier of government are enshrined in the Constitution and a number of Parliamentary Acts. In general, matters related to local government and planning are the concurrent responsibility of both federal and state governments. In other words, the federal government can pass legislation to ensure uniformity in the planning system in all the states. However, the individual state government is free to decide whether or not to adopt the legislation, which shall remain inoperative until they are adopted by the state government (Goh, 1991).

In practice, the federal government exerts a very strong influence over the running of the state governments and through them the local authorities, via federal grants. At a lower level, the state government exerts an even stronger influence over the running of the local authority, primarily because the state government creates the local authority and defines its powers and spatial areas. Furthermore, the President or Chairman and members of the local councils are appointed on the recommendations of the state government. Lakhbir Singh (1984, p. 13) argues that the powers of the local authority

are based on a 'decentralised competence system', which means that it can only do what
it is specifically empowered to do. According to Veal (2002), local government in both
unitary and federal systems, while democratically elected, is very much controlled in
terms of power and funding by the higher tiers.

In federal planning, the central government is primarily concerned with the formulation
of policies and enactment in the strategic, economic and social interests of the nation,
even though the *Town and Country Planning Act of 1976* (TCPA) does not give any
specific planning role to the federal government (Goh, 1991). The policies and
strategies that are approved in Parliament are presented through several means, which
include:

- New Economic Policy (NEP) (1970-1990) was introduced in 1969 to eradicate
  poverty irrespective of race and to restructure the Malaysian society;

- National Development Policy (NDP) (1991-2000) was introduced in 1991 to
  continue the objectives set in the NEP and the Outline Perspective Plan (OPP)
  (1971-1990);

- Third Outline Perspective Plan (OPP3) (2001-2010) is a continuation of the
  Second Outline Perspective Plan (1991-2000); and

- Long term Five Year National Development Plans, which indicate overall
  targets, objectives and strategies within the framework of OPP. The present plan
  is the Eighth Malaysia Plan, 2001-2005.

The federal government is also responsible for the directions and policies of various regional and sectoral plans. In fact, the 5-year National Development Plan provides the basis for planning for these sectoral and regional plans. With reference to the tourism industry, it was during the Second Malaysia Plan (1971-1975) that tourism received recognition through the policy relating to the development of tourist sites and facilities in each state. Tourism was included as a sector in the Fifth Malaysia Plan, but gained prominence from the Sixth Plan onwards.

Officially, there are three categories of government departments that are involved in planning in Peninsular Malaysia. These are the Federal Town and Country Planning Department, State Town and Country Planning Department and planning departments in the Local Authorities. The highest bureaucratic body that is involved in the formulation of policies and programmes is the National Development Planning Committee (NDPC). The Economic Planning Unit (EPU) is the secretariat of this Committee, and it is this Unit that prepares the overall socio-economic plans for the country.

At the state level, the State Planning Committee (SPC) coordinates all planning activities within the state. Amran (1997, p. 246) argues that SPC's main role is to provide 'institutional and administrative support to allow the smooth implementation of projects and programmes planned at the federal level'. The State Planning Economic Unit (SEPU) acts as a secretariat to SPC, and it provides inputs towards the preparation of the National Development Plan. SPC has absolute control over the local authorities, land use and development, budget approval and appointment of councillors.

The Local Authority (LA) is the lowest level of government in Peninsular Malaysia, which can be in the form of Municipal Council or District Council. The powers of the authority are to regulate, control and plan the development and use of all lands and buildings within its area. The instruments used are structure and local plans. In the case of a structure plan, the LA only prepares the plan while the approving authority is the SPC. On the other hand, in the case of a local plan, the LA prepares as well as approves the plan.

3.6 Community Participation in the Planning Process

In theory, the primary objective of public participation is to ensure that the diverse interests of the society are incorporated in the plan, and it accords with the people's right to participate in decisions that affect their lives. This democratic credibility is part of the trend towards democratisation of all aspects of society (Wates, 2000). Wates (2000) further argues that there are several reasons why communities are actively involved in the planning process, as defined below:

- Additional resources

   Government rarely have sufficient means to solve all the problems in an area. Local people can bring additional resources, which are often essential, if their needs are to be met and dreams fulfilled.

- Better decisions and more appropriate results

Local people are invariably the best source of knowledge and wisdom about their surroundings, and design solutions are more likely to be in tune with the local needs.

- Empowerment and community building

Community involvement builds local people's confidence, capabilities and skills to cooperate, and this process of working together creates a sense of community belonging.

- Professional education

Working closely with local people helps professionals gain a better insight into the communities they seek to serve.

Many authors agree that local benefits can be derived from active community participation (Murphy, 1985; Drake, 1991; Chalker, 1994; Cater, 1996). The benefits from such participation include joining in the process of self-governance, responding to authoritative decisions that impact on one's life, and working cooperatively with others on issues of mutual concern. Til (1984) refers to community participation as a form of voluntary action within which individuals confront opportunities and responsibilities of citizenship. This concept of community participation could also be seen as a powerful tool to educate the community in rights, laws and political good sense (Low, 1991) and could involve a shift of power, from those who have had major decision-making roles to those who traditionally have not had such a role (Willis, 1995).

Guijt and Kaul Shah (1998) argue that the broad aim of the participatory approach is to increase the involvement of socially and economically marginalised people in decision-making. The assumption is this approach empowers local people with the skills and confidence to analyse their situation, reach consensus, make decisions and take action, so as to improve their circumstances. This may also imply that community participation, as a development strategy, is based on community resources, needs, decisions and capacities. Hence, the community is the main actor in the development process, and the community members are allowed to control activities that affect their lives. This is in contrast to the beneficiary approach, in which people receive benefits but are not empowered (Brandon, 1993).

Smith has identified four prerequisites for public participation. These include the legal right and opportunity to participate, access to information, provision of enough resources for people to get involved, and genuinely public, that is broad rather than select involvement, from these communities (Smith, 1984). Hence, the broad participation of all community members is an important prerequisite. The process should be driven by those for whom it is designed with ownership remaining in the hands of the members of the community (Brethour, 1994). Specialists working in the field of community development have long considered that at the heart of the process is the emphasis on self-sufficiency and local control over change, making the process actually more important than the outcome (Wismer and Pell, 1981).

It is important to recognise that there is a spectrum of participation. Painter (1992) has distinguished between 'pseudo', 'partial' and 'full' participation. 'Pseudo' participation is said to be restricted to processes such as informing and endorsement, and offers a feeling of participation without its substance. 'Partial' participation, on the other hand, gives participants some opportunities for exercising influence, but reserves the final power to make decisions with an authority holder. 'Full' participation is defined as a process where each individual member of a decision-making body has equal power to determine the outcome of decisions (Painter, 1992).

On the other hand, Paul (1987), a World Bank expert on community participation, makes a useful distinction between four levels of intensity in local participation. The first level is information sharing between project designers and managers with the public to facilitate collective or individual action. The subsequent two levels are consultation and decision-making, while initiating action is the highest level of intensity (Paul, 1987).

Arnstein (1969) has constructed a typology of public participation according to the degree of power sharing in the decision-making process. According to Arnstein, there are eight rungs in the degree of citizen participation, ascending from manipulation through therapy, information, consultation, placation, partnership, and delegated power to citizen control (see Figure 3.2). This participation ladder illustrates a simple point not previously articulated and recognises that there are significant gradations of citizen participation. The first two rungs, 'manipulation' and 'therapy', are considered as non-participation. Any semblance of participation is illusionary and contacts between

planners and the planned are more to soothe the feelings of the citizens than to allow

them to be involved in the formulation of plans (Goh, 1991). The subsequent three

rungs are characterised by 'tokenism', being interpreted as the practice of making only a

token effort or doing no more than the minimum (Collins, 1995). There is no real

chance for the public to influence the formulation of plans, although they are kept

abreast of what is going on. And, the final three rungs are considered to reach degrees

of citizen control where effective public participation takes place and citizens have

power to influence planning decisions.

Figure 3.2   Ladder of Citizen Participation in the Planning Process
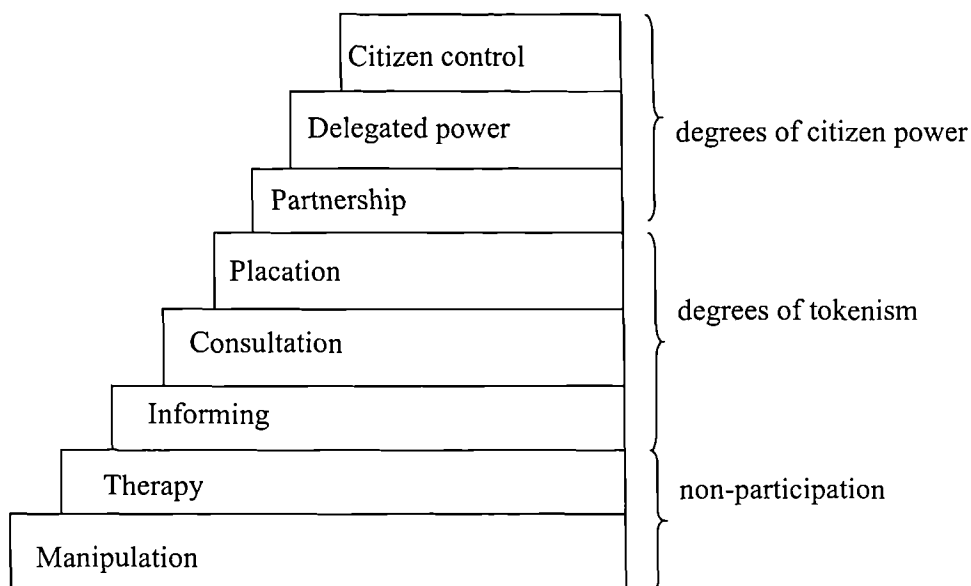
Source: Based on Arnstein (1969)

Arnstein's model, which is based on a typology of citizen participation in U.S. Federal social programmes, rests on the assumptions that the extent of citizen participation would climb as a linear extension of the rights of citizenship. According to Arnstein, citizen participation involves the redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future. It is also argued that they can induce significant social reform for them to share the benefits of the affluent society (Arnstein, 1969).

Pretty (1995) presents a typology of participation, which ranges from 'manipulative participation' to 'self-mobilisation'. The first four stages, 'manipulative participation, passive participation, participation by consultation, and participation for material incentives', represent a classic example of a 'top-down' approach, in which governmental authorities, outside entrepreneurs and/or external agencies exercise their power in the community. The local people, who are excluded from involvement and decision-making, become passive recipients of the benefits gained for the community. On the other hand, the last three stages, 'functional', 'interactive', and 'self-mobilisation', allow for an increasing degree of enduring benefits to the community.

Butler's (1999) five-rung typology, ranging from 'imposition to 'equality', reflects similar basic characteristics of participation level and decision-making power vested in the communities, as Arnstein's and Pretty's typologies. It is argued that Butler might have considered Arnstein's and Pretty's typologies in presenting his own typology. It is

worth noting, however, that he uses the concept of 'integration' of community in tourism development to support his definition of participation.

In general, there is rarely a quick fix or blueprint because each community needs to carefully design its own community planning strategy to suit local conditions. Figure 3.3 illustrates a Participation Matrix on how different levels of participation are appropriate at different stages of a project. Despite the simple illustration from the matrix, public participation is actually a notoriously difficult concept to be operationalised (Arnstein, 1969). Some basic conditions and prerequisites, as being discussed extensively in this section, have to be satisfied before it can take place.

Figure 3.3 Participation matrix

Project stages				
	Initiate ➡	Plan ➡	Implement ➡	Maintain
Self Help Community control	Community initiates action alone	Community plans alone	Community implements alone	Community maintains alone
Partnership Shared working and decision-making	Authorities & community jointly initiate action	Authorities & community jointly plan and design	Authorities & community jointly implement	Authorities & community jointly maintain
Consultation Authorities ask community for opinions	Authorities initiate action after consulting community	Authorities plan after consulting community	Authorities implement with community consultation	Authorities maintain with community consultation
Information One way flow of information Public relations	Authorities initiate action	Authorities plan and design alone	Authorities implement alone	Authorities maintain alone

Level of community involvement (left vertical axis label)

Source: Wates (2000)

3.7   Community Participation in the Planning Process in Malaysia

The practice of allowing the general public to contribute to the formulation of town plans is believed to be as old as the introduction of urban planning in the country. The Town Planning Enactment of the Federated Malay States of 1927 provided for the general town plans to be displayed for the public to make objections and to propose recommendations about the plans. Similar arrangements for public participation also existed under the provisions of *Cap 137 Part IX* (Goh, 1991). However, the public in the past was allowed to participate only after the draft plan had been completed, and the participation was limited to making objections to what the planners had already proposed.

Under the provisions of *TCPA of 1976*, public participation is mandatory during the formulation stage of a plan and after the draft plan is approved. In drawing up a structure or a local plan, the legal provisions for public participation as contained in the Act state that the local authority must:

- give adequate publicity to both the report of survey on which the plan is based and the policy which the planners propose to be included in the plan;

- provide publicity for its proposals and provide adequate opportunity to enable representations to be made by the public;

- take into account the representations in drawing up the plans;

- place the plan on deposit for public inspection, together with a statement of the time within which objections may be made to the proper authority; and

- submit the plan to the State Planning Committee together with a statement of the steps which have been taken to comply with the requirements (GOM, 1976).

The minimum necessary approach takes the forms of publicity in the newspaper, exhibition, briefing, public representative meeting and public objection meeting. However, Shamsudin (2000) argues that, since the early 1980s, this standardised approach to holding public participation has been based predominantly on consultation, mostly typified by a one-way communication process. Over the years, suggestions were made to improve this situation, but these were merely concerned with managerial and procedural aspect than with substantive aspect of participation itself (Shamsudin, 2000). These relate to placement of exhibits in various locations, reducing the scale of participation exercises and wording of its notification in the newspaper.

According to Goh (1991), there are four major assumptions underpinning effective public participation in Malaysia. These are knowledge of the planning process, availability of information, representativeness of participants and a high degree of political sophistication. The following discussion argues whether the socio-economic and political conditions in Malaysia fulfil these requirements.

i)   Knowledge of the Planning Process

It is basically true to say that there is lack of knowledge of the planning process in the

country because Malaysians generally do not know the current planning practices, let

alone the numerous substantive areas upon which planning decisions are based (Goh,

1991). The two main reasons are the participatory approach is rather new and the

planning practice is rapidly changing. It is very difficult for non-practitioners to keep

abreast with the latest practice and its theoretical assumptions. Furthermore, the general

public have traditionally been denied the opportunity to participate in the formulation of

five-year national development plans and other sectoral plans, such as the Industrial

Master Plan and National Agricultural Policy, although the plans were made public after

the Cabinet had given its approval. In the case of regional and master plans and master

plans of major infrastructure projects, the plans are prepared in complete secrecy and

remain as official documents, even after they are approved by the relevant authorities.

From the planners' perspective, it is also important they are not engaged in excessive

data manipulation, planning jargons and complicated modelling techniques, which tend

to overwhelm the lay citizens into agreeing with what they propose (Goh, 1991).

ii)   Availability of Information

Goh (1991) argues that there is still a serious lack of access to government data and

information in Malaysia, which is partly compounded by the mass media failure to

disseminate information to the public. In addition, the government, which is the biggest

data source, is stringent in disseminating the information. The amendment to the

Official Secrets Act in 1986 leads to even stricter control of information from the

government to the public. However, there are some favourable trends, in which some government departments have been producing good annual reports, containing useful information. Special interest groups, known as non-governmental organisations, have also played an important role in raising the consciousness of the general public on planning issues through their seminars and publications. Not surprisingly, active non-governmental organisations have always been sceptical about public participation exercises, and they view it as window dressing, tokenism and a public relation ploy played on the public (Raman, 1994), and a common complaint is nothing comes out from such exercises.

iii)   Representativeness of Participants

In Malaysia, the need for effective public participation is particularly important because local councillors are appointed by the State government, and not elected by the people. It is most likely that these appointed councillors are members of the political parties which form the State government, and they may not truly represent the interests of the electorates in the local authority area. In addition, public participation, in practice, is also limited to very few people, mainly the articulate and concerned individuals and leaders of organisations and community groups. As Maurice Broady pointed out in 1963, it is neither possible nor desirable to involve everyone in the formulation of development plans:

> 'The activity of responsible social criticisms is not congenial to
>
> more than a minority. Most of us for most of the time are content

to remain complacently acquiescent in our social niche... The activist, the social critic, the reformer, will always be a small section of any society. Their activities require not only an extra effort which few are willing to expand, but also the ability to criticise and organise which comparatively few possess' (quoted in Cullingworth, 1985, p. 378).

A majority of the public do not seem to be interested in attending public meetings or exhibitions because they may be acquiescent to the decision-making policy of the few. It is felt that participation is a phenomenon conducive to an elitist environment, and attendance at meetings are usually from political groups, NGOs, business associations and other pressure groups (Sheikh Long, 1988). Table 3.4 shows that the number of people, in terms of percentage of the population, who visited the exhibitions was very small.

Table 3.4   Number of Visitors to Exhibition Halls

Local Authority	No. of visitors	Total population	% of population	Period of exhibition
Ipoh	1,700	350,000	0.5	1 month
Klang	7,500	312,000	2	1 month
Johor Bahru	11,100	285,400	4	1 month
Penang Island	4,600	498,500	1	1 month
Kuala Lumpur	18,000	977,000	0. 2	37 days

Source: Goh (1991)

In Ipoh and Penang, for examples, less than one per cent of the population, in the respective local authority areas, visited the exhibitions. This raises the question whether these participants are good representatives of a cross section of the population. In a small study for an academic exercise, Ooi (1985) found that over 75 per cent of visitors to the Penang exhibition were middle-class urban males. Goh (1991) argues that it is possible that, with public participation, development plans may become less equitable and more damaging to the welfare of average Malaysians because of the lack of representation from the poorer sections of the population. Two contributing factors are: i) many organisations are ethnically based and stronger ethnic sentiments might be reflected in the plan as a result of representations by some conservative religious and ethnic organisations, and ii) there are no funds to enable progressive planers to act as advocates for the poor because advocacy planning is not well developed in Malaysia.

iv)   High Degree of Political Sophistication

As discussed in Section 3.5, the government in Malaysia is highly centralised and power is concentrated in the hands of a few people. In developing countries, it is common for a limited number of people or one individual from the privileged class to have the voice in social decision-making. The conventional power structures in systems governed by patriarchal rulers commonly exclude most population groups from decision-making and preclude them from participation in the benefits of tourism (Singh et al., 2003). With the exception of the short-lived election of local councillors and its subsequent abrogation, the decision-making structure of local authorities in Malaysia is largely a closed one, with considerable State influence at the local authority level. Decision-

making is largely based on centralisation of command and hierarchy of authority, there being limited devolution of state power to local authorities (Shamsudin, 2000). It is, therefore, difficult to envisage a situation where the public can participate effectively in the development plan-making process.

It is not only the case where politicians and planners are not willing to share power, but it is also the citizens themselves who are not able to make effective representations. In fact, researchers and practitioners have often argued that much of the confusion regarding the function and desired output of public participation in planning is due to its lack appreciation of the political process, in which it operates (Styles, 1971; Damer and Hague, 1971; Whitehead, 1976; Boaden et al., 1980; Bruton, 1980; Healey, 1983). Sociologists and academicians, in particular, have gone to the extent of suggesting that radical institutional changes have to be made prior to any participatory programmes for public participation to be meaningful and beneficial to the public (Styles, 1971; Damer and Hague, 1971; Whitehead, 1976; Boaden et al., 1980; Tewdwr-Jones, 1999).

These two aspects of political process and institutional decision-making process have a great bearing on whether meaningful participation can be fully realised, given the value systems of technocracy among planners and a legacy of non-participatory bureaucratic administrative culture in Malaysia (Shamsudin, 2000). Shamsudin (2000) further argues that the introduction of participatory democracy appears at odds with varying levels of tension within the existing decision-making structures and plan-making process. According to Goh (1991), the present power-holders, namely the politicians and

government planners, must realise that they do not have absolute power in deciding what is good for the people. The politicians must realise that in being elected into the State Assembly or appointed as local councillors, they are only entrusted to lead and not to make all decisions for those who elect them. Similarly for the planners, their planning qualifications do not give them absolute right to say that they are the only experts and they know what is best for the people.

From the technocratic and elite's perspective, the success of participation is seen as 'an end in itself' rather than as 'a means to an end' (Rosener, 1978, 1981). The latter entails greater participation in nature and public benefit. The minimum publicity requirements as specified by the Act are examples conforming to the former, whereas dialogue sessions and greater involvement in strategy formulation akin to a decision-forming partnership are examples of participation as 'a means to an end'. Shamsudin (2000) argues that the level of public participation in Malaysia sits in the first lower quarter of the Arnstein ladder, ranging from no participation to tokenism, and the involvement of NGOs in special committee on certain issues were merely seen as co-optation. Likewise, Goh (1991) agrees that participation in Malaysia is more in the form of informing rather than sharing powers to decide on policies and strategies.

On a positive note, many young planners have social science background and are willing to incorporate a rich source of public views (Shamsudin, 2000). The trend is towards participation and the public has responded to the opportunities provided by the planners, although the progress is painfully slow (Goh, 1991). The Malaysian Institute

of Planners helps to educate the public about the planning process by publishing booklets and distributing them freely to non-governmental organisations and schools. Meanwhile, many local authorities are currently promoting the non-statutory Agenda 21 strategies that cover a wide range of issues including public participation, sustainable development, conservation and pollution. The concept of public participation is, therefore, increasingly seen as a basis for legitimation. There is a likelihood that public participation in Malaysia will move up the rungs on Arnstein's ladder in the future.

3.7.1 The Village Development and Security Committee (JKKK)

At a village level, the local people can voice their opinion through their local representatives who, in turn, are represented by the District Action Committee. The development proposals submitted to this committee are vetted and are forwarded to the State Action Committee. At the state level, the development proposals from the various districts are combined, vetted and refined by the State Development Committee. Subsequently, the refined development proposals are further assessed by the State Economic Planning Unit and, finally, submitted to the Implementation Coordination Unit of the Prime Minister's Department and the Treasury.

Local voices can also be channelled through the Village Development and Security Committee or the JKKK, which is an organisation of leadership at the grass roots level. In principle, it acts as a government mechanism to facilitate development in rural areas, although it maintains its voluntary status and is administered part-time. Members of the

JKKK are appointed by the Chief Minister based on recommendations from the respective local representative, and the duration of their appointment is for two years. Usually, this 15-member committee consists of a Chairman, a Secretary and 13 ordinary members.

The main duties of the JKKK include:

- to plan and prioritise development projects to benefit the rural communities,

- to develop and implement projects with the help of government departments and NGOs,

- to act as a liaison between the village folks and local representative, government departments and NGOs,

- to ensure community harmony and security, especially against subversive element, anti-government sentiment and other social problems,

- to collect and update village profile and data, and

- to organise meeting at least once a month.

Despite the fact that JKKK is an important government mechanism at the village level, Ramlan (2003) argues that lack of education, communication and leadership skills among the committee members affect JKKK's credibility in the eyes of the rural people. It also fails to perform its functions effectively because this organisation is managed voluntarily, and a majority of the members are not fully committed in their duties. The appointment of members, which is often at the discretion of the local representative,

puts individual loyalty above personal capability and academic qualification as the main selection criteria. Ramlan (2003) further argues that a JKKK's performance should be appraised annually and training programmes should be emphasised, in order to improve its service. In addition, this organisation should also be managed full-time by qualified personnel.

3.8   Community Participation in Tourism Planning

Community involvement in planning is a fairly recent development and has been more of a feature of environmental planning than tourism planning, especially through the environmental assessment process (Page and Dowling, 2002). Proponents of community participation have contended that community participation, as an element of development, has been considered, promoted and woven into the development process in different ways since the 1950s and early 1960s under different terms and names (de Kadt, 1982; Gow & Vansant, 1983). That is to say, the concept of community participation has been a component of political dynamics of the post-industrial era, which mirrored, in part, a longer term movement towards a new public administration.

The overall result is that, since the 1970s, community participation in many ways has become an umbrella term for a supposedly new genre of development intervention (Tosun, 2000) and an ideology in tourism planning, akin to the participatory planning ideologies of 1970s in urban and regional planning (Fagence, 1977). However, Tosun (2000) claims that the practicality of a participatory tourism development approach in

developing countries has not been considered in detail because the concept has emerged

and been refined in the context of developed countries. Also, it has been popularised by

advocates writing on developed countries such as Murphy (1985), Gunn (1988),

Haywood (1988), Blank (1989), Keogh (1990), Simmons (1994), and Reed (1997).

It is argued by Woodley (1993) that a community-based approach to tourism

development is a prerequisite to sustainability. Hence, Getz and Jamal (1994) refer to

the 'environment-community symbiosis' as the concept of community involvement

moves nearer to the centre of sustainability debate. Notable among advocates of

participatory planning in tourism development has been Murphy, who has argued for an

issue-oriented involvement of residents in decisions at an early stage in the decision

process, before commitments are made. He has termed this process as a *community*

approach (1985) and a *community driven approach* (1988). Murphy's stance has been

developed in reaction to externally derived tourism development, and as such is similar

in derivation to the urban and regional planning debates of the 1970s, which flowed

from the reactions of academics (Davies 1972; Dennis 1972) and residents threatened

with unwanted developments (Gregory 1971; Perman 1973).

Murphy's (1985) model of an ecological approach to tourism planning is a

simplification of complex processes and no proportionality or relativity should be

implied (see Figure 3.4 and 3.5). The spatial perspective, with its associated hierarchy,

is represented by the community scale boxes in Figure 3.4. These are discrete

jurisdictional systems, each with their own priorities and goals, and their scale is

indicative of their size of operations. The physical, economic, socio-cultural and exchange components of the community's ecology are portrayed as continuums to illustrate their continuous nature and have been joined to show they are interrelated. The negative and positive signs represent situations where a component is undeveloped or over-developed with regard to the community's tourism carrying capacity. An ecological model would be achieved at some mid-point where all the components can function without being threatened. In Figure 3.5, different goals have been associated with each planning level, representing the divergent interests which exist at various community levels. But above these considerations is the challenge to the *status quo* which all change represents, and whether the public considers a proposal that will produce net improvements over existing conditions (Murphy, 1985).

Figure 3.4 Ecological model of tourism planning

Source: Murphy (1985)
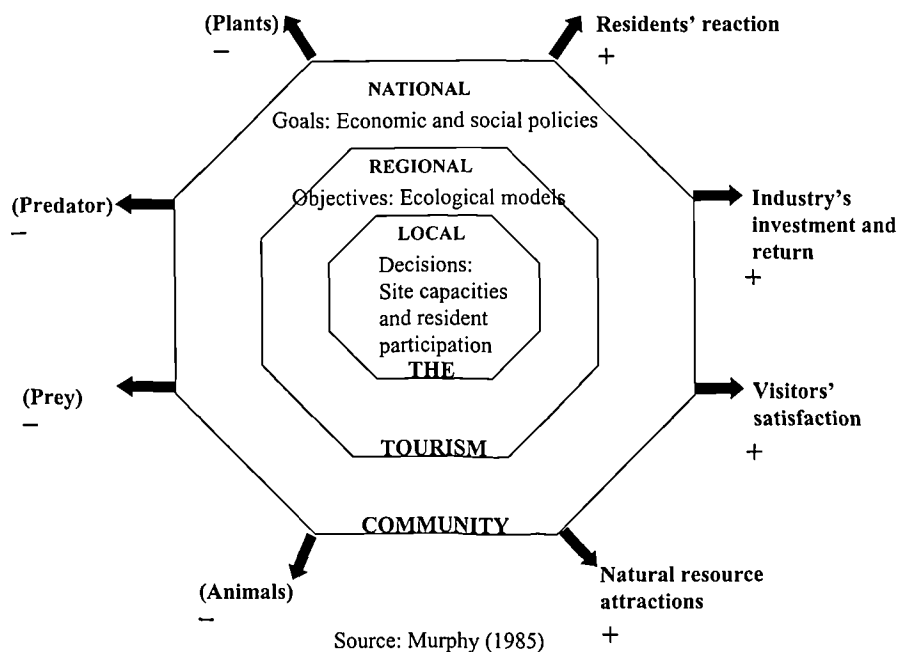
Figure 3.5 The Tourism Community

Source: Murphy (1985)
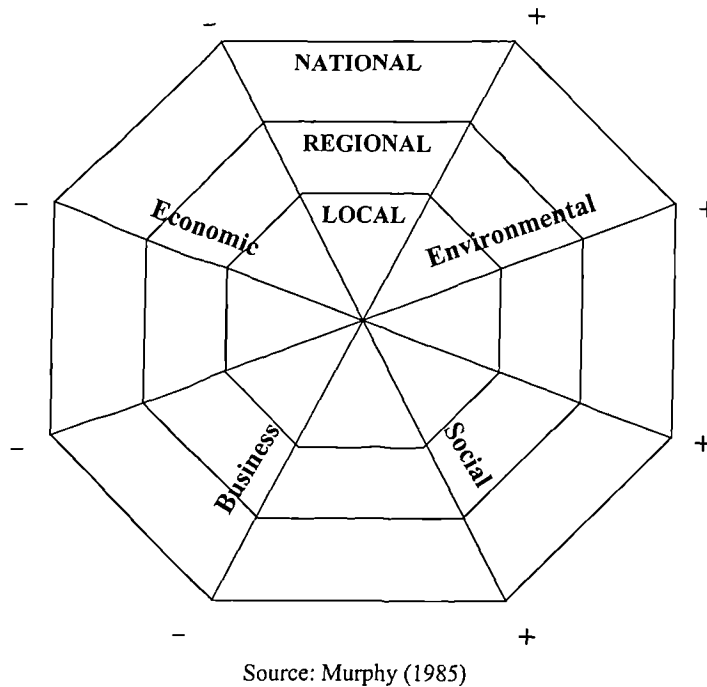
Getz also identifies a community-oriented approach as one of the four broad traditions of tourism planning, as indicated in Section 3.4. Getz claims that the four traditions are neither mutually exclusive, nor they are necessarily sequential. Nevertheless, this categorisation is a convenient way to examine the different and sometimes overlapping ways in which tourism is planned, and the research and planning methods, problems and models associated with each (Getz, 1987, cited in Hall, 2000). Table 3.5 below outlines the characteristics of a community-oriented approach.

Table 3.5 Community-oriented Approach

Underlying assumptions and related attitudes	Definition of tourism planning problem	Examples of related methods	Examples of related models	Examples of related literature
Need for local control	How to foster community control?	Community development	Ecological view of community	Murphy 1985 Blank 1989 Macbeth 1997
Search for balanced development	Understanding community attitudes towards tourism	Awareness and education	Social/perceptual carrying capacity	
Search for alternatives to mass tourism	Understanding the impacts of tourism on a community	Attitudinal surveys	Attitudinal change	
Planner as facilitator rather than expert	Social impact	Social impact assessment	Social multiplier	
Development defined in socio-cultural terms				

Source: Hall (2000)

In relation to the above, Getz (1983c) has recommended more attention be given to planning and initiatives from the bottom up, while Rosenow and Pulsipher (1979) have suggested a personality planning approach that attempts to identify those elements which make a community unique and brings this tourism appeal into a meaningful package for both residents and the industry. Tosun and Jenkins (1996) argue that a central planning approach has its limitations and cannot guide community participation in tourism development. Therefore, a regional or a destination specific planning approach is the only appropriate scale, which may encourage community participation in tourism development.

According to Pizam and Marien (1997), there are many techniques available for community participation in the tourism planning process. Since many participation programmes have failed because the wrong techniques were implemented, it is important that the techniques chosen be based primarily on the participation objectives, which can be broadly divided into two categories: administrative objectives or citizens' objectives. Techniques of administrative objectives are those which best satisfy the local government's needs for public participation in tourism planning, while the citizens' objectives techniques are those that satisfy the citizens' needs for taking an active part in the tourism development process. The best participation programmes strike a balance between administrative and citizen expectations for participation.

Many authors have advocated the community approach to tourism planning and management as one way to create harmonious host-guest relationships (D' Amore, 1983; Haywood, 1988; Ritchie, 1988; Keogh, 1990; Murphy, 1983, 1985, 1988, 1992). Specifically, Keogh (1990) argues that the need for a changed approach to public involvement in tourism planning has come from numerous tourism impact and resident attitude studies conducted in host communities over the past 25 years. These studies have shown that while tourism's economic impacts are generally welcomed (Keogh, 1982; Kendall and Var, 1984; Liu and Var, 1986), many of the social and ecological consequences of tourism development are perceived in a more negative light (Pizam, 1978; Cooke, 1982; Liu et al., 1987) and, if allowed to build, may ultimately be reflected in deteriorating and even hostile resident attitudes towards tourism and tourists. When this happens, everybody loses: residents, visitors and the tourist industry. The

outcome of such studies has been a call for increased public participation and, in

particular, a more community-oriented approach to tourism planning (Cooke, 1982;

Getz, 1983a; Loukissas, 1983; Murphy, 1985, 1988; Haywood, 1988).

Long and Glendinning (1992) expand on the perceived benefits of community-driven

initiatives, which include assistance in policy implementation, the generation of local

enthusiasm, the avoidance of confrontation, access to local skills, identification of

persons and groups involved in decision making, the encouragement of long-term

projects and the balance of physical and commercial orientations in development.

Similarly, Haywood (1988) argues that a community approach can 'legitimise' tourism

development and speaks of the sharing of decision-making:

> 'Community participation in tourism planning is a process of
>
> involving all relevant and interested parties (local government
>
> officials, local citizens, architects, developers, business people
>
> and planners) in such a way that decision-making is shared'
>
> (Haywood, 1988, p. 106).

Implicit in such stances is a belief that conflicts can be resolved and ultimately, if with

difficulty, heterogeneous communities can come to a homogeneous view of what is

acceptable. Such a view challenges quite fundamental inequalities of interest found in

western societies (Pahl, 1970) and in developing countries (Tosun, 2000). It also

implies a less embattled view of the role of professionals in tourism planning than the

'participatory-reactive' era of 1970s in land use planning suggests (Eversley, 1973).

Moreover, Murphy's (1988) stance further assumes that local communities will have a

high preference for environmental quality when decisions on economic development are

to be met. The extent to which these assumptions may be met may depend on the extent

to which views both on the pertinence of tourism as a form of economic development

and on economic development at the expense of environment are held by differing

segments of a community. It may be that tourism is a developmental view around which

communities concur in view. If not, community-driven tourism planning is likely to

lead to inaction in the face of lack of local common purpose (Prentice, 1993). This leads

to a false belief that a heterogeneous community will respond in a homogeneous way

towards tourism development, as there is a danger in the use of the term 'community'

that implies an impression of cohesion and shared objectives. Thus, it identifies a major

conundrum inherent in community-oriented tourism development – how can a

comprehensive, equitable and democratic overview be achieved? (Stevens, 1995).

3.9 Future Tourism Planning Approaches

In spite of the fact that there is no consensus on the format and content of future

planning approaches, it is, nevertheless, possible to observe that agreement is being

created around several critical areas which will decisively encompass a more unanimous

planning approach that is likely to emerge in the near future (Costa, 2001). Amongst the

most important areas that will support the future planning paradigm (or approaches), the

following may be cited.

Firstly, policies should no longer be produced in 'laboratory atmospheres', and should not be designed by only professionals. Planning is to be seen as a social constructive process that is supported by a holistic (system) approach, taking into account the social, economic and physical characteristics of a place (Mill and Morrison, 1985; Murphy, 1985). Moreover, Martin and Uysal (1990) argue that each stage in the destination life cycle will reveal different capacity thresholds and requires distinct policy responses.

Secondly, there is a growing awareness that the efficiency and effectiveness of tourism planning comprises not only advances in tourism planning theory and practice, but also improvement in the organisational framework within which decisions are designed and put into practice (Costa, 1996). Effective and efficient organisations demand lateral (and not hierarchical) interaction, better coordination of the tourism stakeholders, and closer links between private, public and non-profit organisations (Amabile *et al.*, 1996; Drucker, 1998). Research on network, collaboration and partnership theory published in the field during the 1990s is a good example of how academics are becoming sensitive to this matter (Healey, 1990; Cappellin and Batey, 1993; Jamal and Getz, 1995; Costa, 1996; Hall, 1999). Academics have already realised that one of the cornerstones of tourism planning in the future will be how to allow ideas to escape from institutional boundaries, i.e., how to escape from dominance in our present structures (Forester, 1989; Healey, 1990).

Thirdly, planning should become an activity mainly oriented towards bringing knowledgeable solutions into the core of the decision-making and decision-taking processes as well as in coordinating all the actors involved in the planning process ('mediation'). In a world of increased competitiveness, 'power' will no longer be based on its traditional forms, i.e. 'wealth' and 'violence', but instead on 'knowledge' (Toffler, 1990). The construction of knowledgeable solutions entails the concepts of 'lateral thinking' (Roberts, 1974) and the idea that planning has to be designed bit by bit according to the actors' *creativity and availability of resources (Healey, 1990)*. This situation cannot be disassociated with the characteristics of the organisational structures responsible for the planning process set up for that purpose.

Fourthly, policies have to be supported by public participation (inclusive planning) (Darke, 1990; Healey, 1990) because increased levels of public participation may lead to the development of more knowledgeable, creative and better adjusted policies.

Fifthly, planners should look for the right balance between substantive and procedural forms of planning (Faludi, 1978). Nowadays, planners are faced with the dilemma of having to base their policies on rigorous studies (substantive planning), and, at the same time, they are demanded to design policies more rapidly and in accordance with markets and the citizens (procedural planning). The creation of working groups where planners, representatives of the tourism industry and citizens, i.e. stakeholders of the tourism development process, can actively participate in the decision-making and decision-taking process, seems to be one of the possible ways forward to deal with this matter.

Finally, planners have to be aware that globalisation is decisively affecting the way in which policies are designed and put into practice (Capellin and Batey, 1993; Ohmae, 1995; Cooper, 1999). Strategies have to be designed by taking into account guidelines set both by national government and by other supranational organisations such as EU (European Union), GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement). Tourism actors have to look wisely for their partners, and alliances, and be aware of their competitors not only within the country's borders but also abroad.

Specifically, according to Haywood (1988), a more responsible and responsive approach to tourism planning is one that is multidisciplinary and continues to recognise the importance of formal planning. It is also an approach that should be designed to encourage innovative and creative thinking, attempt to improve the overall understanding of tourism, recognise the political aspects of planning, i.e. power inside and outside the industry, speculate on the future as an essential background for current planning and consider broadly based qualitative considerations (instead of viewing all decision-making as resource allocation).

3.10 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the concept of community participation in the context of general planning practice and the tourism planning environment. In theory, community participation in the planning process is taunted as a good and progressive exercise. In reality, it can sometimes degenerate into a futile expensive exercise and a cruel hoax played on the unsuspecting public (Goh, 1991). The following chapter discusses to what extent community participation can be conceptualised in ecotourism planning and management.

Chapter Four

CONCEPTUALISING COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN ECOTOURISM AND PLANNING

4.0 Introduction

This chapter examines several dimensions of community involvement in tourism with specific reference to ecotourism development. The first section appraises the concept of 'community' and 'community involvement', followed by a discussion on the significance of community involvement in ecotourism. Conflict at the community and ecotourism interface is also investigated in the subsequent section. The final part focuses on various community approaches to ecotourism and planning, which can be seen to be critical to the success of ecotourism development in terms of promoting the well being of local people and their environment.

4.1 Definitions of a 'Community' and 'Community Involvement'

The New Oxford Dictionary of English (Pearsall, 1998, p. 371) defines community as a group of people 'living together in one place' or 'having a religion, race, profession, or other particular characteristics in common'. The group can also be 'the people of a district or country considered collectively, especially in the context of social values and responsibilities' or still 'a body of nations or states unified by common economic

interests'. Within sociological literature, there are three broad meanings that can be attached to the concept of 'community' (Worsley, 1987). The first is described as 'community as a locality', which exists within a fixed and bounded local territory. Secondly, community has been used to denote a 'network of interrelationships' (Stacey, 1969). In this usage, community relationships can be characterised by conflict as well as by mutuality and reciprocity. In the third usage, community can be seen to refer to a particular type of social relationship; one that possesses certain qualities. It infers the existence of a 'community spirit' or 'community feeling'. It can also be based on a sense of shared purpose, interest and common goals, built on heritage and cultural values shared among community members. This usage comes closest to a common-sense usage and does not necessarily imply the existence of a local geographical area or neighbourhood (Jary and Jary, 2000). In general, community is defined by both sociologists and geographers as any set of social relationships operating within certain boundaries, locations or territories.

As discussed above, the concepts of 'locality' and 'place' are strongly related to community (Warburton, 1998; Milne, 1998; Mowforth and Munt, 1998). The importance of location has long been endorsed by spatial scientists (Nobbs et al., 1983; Savage and Warde, 1993; Hodgson, 1995), and the idea of geographical space, with all its physical endowments, is an indisputable element in the meaning of community. This is because one of the basic requisites of community living is that its members relate to their physical environment in many ways, which are reflected in their lifestyles and economic activities.

'Community' has long been interpreted in a number of ways. Tourism academics have generally referred to communities as locals, residents, natives, indigenous people and hosts, with much importance placed on the later term (Singh *et al.*, 2003). Half a century ago, 94 definitions of 'community' could be compiled (Hillery, 1955). Forty years on, and within a tourism context, Urry (1995), building on the work of Bell and Newby (1976), could cite four different uses of the term:

- Belonging to a specific topographical location;

- Defining a particular social system;

- A feeling of *communitas* or togetherness; and

- An ideology, often hiding the power relations, which inevitably underpin communities.

However, according to Joppe (1996), 'community' defined in this way is not always synonymous with 'municipality'. In some cases, communities may cluster together beyond their municipal boundaries, based on their assessment of the value in working together. Dealing with one municipality already presents many challenges but multi-jurisdictional communities, often with strong political rivalries among the individual municipalities or regions, pose a whole different set of challenges. Yet, there are very few case studies that actually deal with these realities (Joppe, 1996). In addition, while several authors have argued that the community cannot be isolated from its locality or geographic context, the spatial 'community of interest' is often overlooked in the tourism literature, despite its relevance.

It is, therefore, important to recognise the complexity of the term because it involves geography, ethnicity, demography, governance, stakeholders and the power structure that exists within the community (Swarbrooke, 1999). It has been suggested that the concept of community is one of the most difficult and controversial in modern society (Jary and Jary, 2000). Guijt and Kaul Shah (1998) argue that community incorporates heterogeneity rather than homogeneity. Likewise, Burkey (1998) claims that communities can have many features in common, but they are still complex and should not be thought of as one homogeneous group. Cater (1996, p. 7) points out that 'even amongst the poor, there are lines of division sharply drawn according to access to resources as well as to markets and employment'. Similarly, Smit (1990) argues that the notion of a community is always something of a myth. A community implies a coherent entity with a clear identity and a commonality of purpose. The reality is that communities, more often than not, are made up of an agglomeration of factions and interest groups often locked in competitive relationships.

In complex modern societies, it is possible to speak of 'community without propinquity' because people, due to high mobility, may sometimes have more interaction and more in common with people living at a distance than their next-door neighbour (Jafari, 2000). Zeldin (1994, p. 467) notes that the modern world is being 'criss-crossed afresh by invisible threads uniting individuals who differ by all conventional criteria, but who are finding that they have aspirations in common'. Hence, in order to successfully implement community-based strategies for tourism development, more varied concepts

and models are required to accommodate this evolving notion of community and the diversity of real and imagined communities (Roberts and Hall, 2001).

Meanwhile, the terms 'community involvement' and 'community participation' in the tourism literature are being used interchangeably as there are no substantial differences in the meanings of those words in the English language. The word 'involvement' is defined by Oxford English Dictionary (1983) as 'the act or instance of involving; the process of being involved'. In the same dictionary, the meaning of 'participation' is defined as 'to share or take part (in)'. According to the New Shorter Oxford Dictionary (1993), the word 'involvement' is 'the action or process of involving something or someone; the fact or condition of being involved; concerned, caring, committed'. 'Participation' is defined as 'the action or fact of having or forming part of; the fact or condition of sharing in common; association as partners; the action or an act of taking part with others (in action or matter), especially the active involvement of members of a community or organisation in decisions which affect them'. Yet in the Spanish language and in some Latin American countries, the word 'involvement' is used to express a deeper concern and a more active role in the community than 'participation' (Carballo-Sandoval, 2001).

4.2   Significance of Community Involvement in Ecotourism

It is clear from Murphy's (1985) statement that, tourism, like no other industry, relies on the goodwill and cooperation of local people because they are part of its product.

Within the tourism and community interface, Murphy (1983) explains that a community

supplies the assets (landscape, heritage, culture), public goods (parks, transport) and the

hospitality. Where development and planning does not fit in with local aspirations and

capacities, resistance and hostility can raise the cost of business or destroy the industry's

potential altogether.

> 'The tourism industry possesses great potential for social and
>
> economic benefits if planning can be redirected from a pure
>
> business and development approach to a more open and
>
> community-orientated approach, which views tourism as a local
>
> resource. The management of this resource for the common good
>
> and future generations should become the goal and criterion by
>
> which the industry is judged. This will involve focusing on the
>
> ecological and human qualities of a destination area in addition to
>
> business considerations' (Murphy, 1985, p. 37).

With the growing recognition among communities that ecotourism may offer

opportunities for sustainable development, there has been an increased awareness among

researchers that 'active local participation in the planning process and in operations

management is essential in order to achieve the development and conservation goals of

ecotourism' (Drumm, 1998, p. 197). Indeed, it is also one of the few themes that World

Ecotourism Summit, which was held in May 2002 in conjunction with International

Year of Ecotourism 2002, considered and addressed both in the current context and in

relation to the future (Page and Dowling, 2002). Yet, there is a recognition that this is far from an easy process (Ashley and Roe, 1998).

Proponents of the above strategy agree that community participation in the tourism development process is needed for 'a reasonable consensus' that is essential for long-term success of the tourist destination (Ritchie, 1988, p. 199); 'strong community support' that is important for successful tourism development (Getz, 1983b, p. 87); 'desired guest-host relationship' (Haywood, 1988, p. 117); and for increasing the quality of tourism's benefits to national development (Lea, 1988). Dei (2000) suggests that community involvement in tourism development will help create entrepreneurial opportunities for locals and will help engage them in developmental decision-making, particularly relating to socio-cultural and environmental consequences associated with tourism.

One of the basic tenets of ecotourism is that it should be both economically viable for business owners and should provide material well-being to the local communities. The profitability of ecotourism and flow of money and resources back to a local area and its community is axiomatic to development of ecotourism (Page and Dowling, 2002), and these benefits should outweigh the costs of ecotourism to the host community and environment. The benefits must also be sufficiently visible, so that local community sees them occurring and understands where they are coming from. Perhaps the most evident opportunity is through employment in and income from the ecotourism industry itself. Besides employment, other benefits of ecotourism include diversification of the

local economy, increased markets for agricultural and local products and improved

transportation infrastructure (WTO/UNEP, 1992). In general, local communities can

become involved in various ecotourism operations and in the provision of knowledge,

services, facilities and products.

With the introduction of ecotourism, it is found there is a better basis for conservation of

the natural resource as there are direct benefits to be gained from an intact environment.

These benefits can be seen by local communities thereby encouraging awareness to

conserve within an economic framework (Wearing and Neil, 1999). The Australian

National Ecotourism Strategy recognises that 'ecologically sustainable' involves an

appropriate return to the local community and long-term conservation of the resource

(Allcock et al., 1994, p. 3). Similarly, Drumm (1988) argues that local communities

perceive ecotourism as an accessible development alternative, which enables them to

improve their living standards without having to sell off their natural resources or

compromise their culture. In the absence of other sustainable alternatives, their

participation in ecotourism is often perceived as the best option for achieving their

aspiration of sustainable development. Thus, ecotourism can provide a context for local

incentives to conserve and protect the environment and to improve the quality of tourism

experience (Tourism Concern, 1991).

The requirement that local communities and regions benefit from ecotourism and

participate in decision-making, or at least be no worse off, appears to be based on two

main premises. The first draws on the principles of intragenerational equity and

intergenerational equity underlying the concept of sustainable development, and essentially holds that it is the socially responsible, or right thing to do. The second is instrumental in nature and involves the assumption that local communities are most likely to protect or maintain a resource base in a form that is suitable for tourism if they stand to benefit from it. In this case, they have an incentive to protect the resource (Blamey, 2001).

It is clear from the above discussion that there are many advantages to incorporating local involvement in ecotourism development. According to Rovelstad and Logar (1981), community involvement provides better understanding of interdependence between attractors and service businesses, promises greater community harmony by avoiding problems, reduces business failures by assuring sound growth, fosters community acceptance of tourism, and assists in obtaining needed human and financial resources. Paul (1987) recognises, indeed, that local input legitimises the decision-making process and reinforces the accountability of project managers, whether governmental or nongovernmental.

4.3   Ecotourism – Community Dilemma

Most ecotourism occurs in beautiful, remote locales. In most of these locales, local people are affected by the tourism activities. Generally, the local residents are used to having a resource-based economic system, based on the exploitation of the forests, fisheries or agricultural potential of the area. In very remote locales, the local people

may not be in a market economy, and are used to trading between each other for needed goods and services. Tourism is quite different. Those who exploit natural resources see the environment as a source of physical products, and frequently do not understand an economic system that sees the environment as a source of experience (Eagles, 2001). Moreover, when poverty is prevalent in remote rural areas, it is difficult to incite enthusiasm among community members for setting long-term goals and enacting broad-based policies when their immediate survival is most important (Timothy, 1999).

There are many potential sources of conflict between the ecotourism industry and local people. The interference between those who want to physically utilise nature and those who want to spiritually experience nature can be the basis of substantial conflict. The setting aside of lands used exclusively for nature travellers can leave local people beyond the fence, jeopardising the livelihoods of the rural poor and provoking their opposition (Horwich *et al.*, 1993). Moreover, the influx of foreign money, new ideas and new power structures may leave the locals in a state of concern. For local rural communities, protected areas are often perceived as an alien concept, which deny them access to necessary resources. That anyone would actually want to wander through the forest to appreciate the wildlife may, at best, seem inexplicable. Unless these local residents can obtain some kind of compensatory benefit from the protected areas, their attitudes will continue to be hostile and their attempts to gain access to the resources will undermine the viability of park systems (Weaver, 1998).

The success of any ecotourism venture is dependent upon the broader socio-political context of a country or region. In Africa, for example, tourism alters the nature of politics and may initiate conflict when governments impose tourism development without consultation. In this case, consensus must be reached to reduce conflicts and to ensure indigenous culture is not 'commoditised' (Dei, 2000). Therefore, integrating local community needs, lifestyle and activities is necessary to avoid conflicts and problems for ecotourism resources.

It has been noted that in developing countries that tourism may be set up by agreements between foreign image-makers/investors and local elites, and there may be no participation by, and consultation of, the people of the host country in shaping the phenomenon (Tosun, 2000). Thus, planning decisions are frequently seen by the local population as being imposed from outside and, in many cases, the results are often strong public opposition and long and drawn-out legal proceedings (Keogh, 1990). Due to this, local community involvement in tourism planning is neglected as being too troublesome and expensive for government or business to support (Inskeep, 1994, p. 214). Local communities are also excluded from the planning and development process (designated as euphemisms such as 'beneficiary' and 'end user'), represented instead by government agencies that commission planners and developers to work on development projects (Serageldin, 1997).

Sewell and Coppock (1977) strengthen this view by claiming that the emergence of public involvement in the development process is rooted in the failures of social and

political theories, in terms of philosophical and pragmatic considerations. Philosophically, elected representatives in modern democratic government have failed to represent grassroots and at least significant segments of communities have feelings of alienations towards governmental decision-making, as already discussed in Section 3.7. Pragmatic considerations are chiefly related to the failure of plans and decision-making process to determine public preferences correctly (Sewell and Coppock, 1977).

Similarly, Arnstein (1969) argues that one of the major difficulties in implementing a community approach to tourism planning is the political nature of the planning process. Generally, this approach has not been adopted by government authorities because of complaints from business interests of the economic impact of decision-making delays, which arise out of any statutory requirement for participation. Moreover, community control can be interpreted as a loss of their power and control over the planning process. Indeed, the level of public involvement in tourism planning throughout most of the world can be more accurately described as a form of tokenism, in which decision or direction of decision has already been prescribed by government. Communities rarely have the opportunity to say no and their decision not to allow tourism development at a particular site may well be at odds with a regional or national tourism plan, which has been drawn up by a superior level of government (Hall, 2000). In peripheral areas, in particular, national-level policies may be at odds with the needs and priorities of distant communities because physically isolated areas can be viewed as unimportant in national efforts to modernise and develop. This results in a lack of managerial support and financial assistance for programmes like tourism because it is much more common for

populations and communities located in core areas and industrial interiors to be favoured (Timothy, 2002).

Substantial problems also exist in implementing public participation at the community level (Sewell and Phillips, 1979; Timothy, 1999). For example, formal legalistic processes of consultation usually require the hosting of public meetings. However, individuals and organisations, who best know how to utilise meeting procedures and dynamics in their favour, can exploit public meetings. Indeed, the more formal the participation process, the more legalistic it tends to become thereby disadvantaging poorer resourced stakeholders. And, the local elites may have roles in skewing decisions towards their own interest rather than wider community needs (Hall, 2000).

It is also important to recognise that the capacity to enter the tourism market is not evenly distributed across all communities. Resource empowerment and potential vary, and community's preparedness to harness this indigenous potential also varies (Gunn, 1972). From an economic perspective, inadequate public funding is one major limitation to community tourism planning. Budgetary constraints among local governments increase their dependence on national administrators and foreign corporations, which have the tendency to increase outside control of tourism industry initiatives and local resources (Singh et al., 2003).

In a similar argument, Cater (1993) claims that the extent to which the present and future

needs of the host communities in developing countries are met by ecotourism

development is somewhat dubious, as there are several factors that hinder the progress.

- The high degree of foreign investment

  Foreign developers based in developed countries have become increasingly

  involved in ecotourism development in the Third World because ecotourism has

  become an attractive investment proposition.

- The international organisation of ecotourism

  Ecotourists originate from the more developed countries. Consequently, their

  tour, travel and accommodation needs are largely coordinated by firms based in

  the generating countries. Whilst ecotourists may be affluent, much of their

  expenditure is not made at the destination end. The direct revenue of ecotourism

  is constrained by the dominance of PCFD (popular, casual, passive, diversionary)

  ecotourists, whose expenditures within the protected areas or in adjacent

  communities tend to be minimal (Weaver, 1998). Furthermore, the true

  wilderness tourist is a poor economic bet because there are no opportunities to

  spend in the wilderness (Butler, 1991).

- Inflationary pressure on land prices

  Largely as a result of this degree of foreign investment, land and property prices

  have become inflated beyond the means of the average low-income residents.

- The local population can rarely afford to participate

The high cost of even locally based day trips, for example US$100 for a day trip to Crooked Tree Sanctuary in Belize, precludes the participation of the average low-income resident (Cater, 1993).

In discussing tourism policy in rural New South Wales, Australia, Jenkins (1993) identifies seven impediments to public participation in tourism planning:

- The public generally has difficulty in comprehending complex and technical planning issues.

- The public is not always aware of or understands the decision-making process.

- The difficulty in attaining and maintaining representatives in the decision-making process.

- The apathy of citizens.

- The increased costs in terms of staff and money.

- The prolonging of the decision-making process.

- Adverse effects on the efficiency of decision-making.

Meanwhile, Tosun (2000) has identified operational, structural and cultural limits to community participation in tourism development process in many developing countries, although they do not equally exist in every tourist destination. While these limits tend to exhibit higher intensity and greater persistence in the developing countries than in the developed world, they appear to be a reflection of prevailing socio-political, economic and cultural structure in many developing countries. It is also found that although these

limitations may vary according to types, scale and levels of tourism development, the

market served, and cultural attributes of local communities, forms and scale of tourism

developed are beyond the control of local communities.

Krippendorf's (1987) view below best reflects on the impacts and tensions that emerge

when the community perceives itself to be in some way 'threatened' by the volume,

type, scale, or character of tourism activity:

'Tourism is not a charitable institution for the host area. It is a

business for which one is prepared, explicitly, to make quite a few

sacrifices. It is, however, dubious whether the local population

gets a square deal' (Krippendorf, 1987, p. 49).

It is worth noting that not all tourism is susceptible to the 'community' approach, nor is

all tourism necessarily good for community tourism. Low volume, low spend may be

environmentally sound, but in terms of community viability, it may be irrelevant.

Equally, the traditional view that large scale tourism developments are out-of-place in a

community tourism scheme needs to be carefully reconsidered. Recent research in

North America and Wales suggests that, in certain circumstances, community-led

tourism only materialised following the injection of a large-scale development such as a

chain-owned hotel or a visitor attraction (Stevens, 1995).

4.4   Community Approaches to Ecotourism and Planning

The full involvement of the community is required at each stage of the planning and

management of ecotourism, with the understanding of how local communities can best

be approached, understood and integrated. In other words, ecotourism at the community

level must be developed within the context of sustainable regional, national and even

international tourism development (Page and Dowling, 2002). This balanced approach

to planning and management is required if tourism, as a renewable resource industry, is

to become a successful and self-perpetuating industry many have advocated, based on

local capacities and community decision making (Murphy, 1985).

At the national and regional levels of preparing tourism plans, the common approach to

obtaining public involvement is to appoint a steering committee, which is represented by

relevant government agencies in tourism, the private sector, and community, religious

and other relevant organisations. Open public hearings can be held on the plan to

provide opportunities for the public to learn about the plan and express their opinions.

This procedure, which is usually practised in a large country or region, e.g. in the USA,

is termed the 'top-down' approach (Inskeep, 1994, p. 9). On the other hand, the

'bottom-up' approach involves holding meetings with local districts or communities to

determine what type of development they would like to have. These local objectives and

ideas are then fitted together into a national or regional plan. This approach achieves

greater local public involvement in the planning process, but it is more time consuming

and may lead to conflicting objectives, policies and development recommendations

among the local areas. These conflicts need to be reconciled at the national and regional levels in order to form a consistent plan. Often, a combination of the 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approaches achieves the best results. More importantly, the development patterns of the local areas complement and reinforce one another and reflect the needs and desires of local communities (Inskeep, 1994, p. 10).

However, Blank argues that a community approach to tourism planning should be a 'bottom up' form of planning, which emphasises development *in* the community rather than development *of* the community. Blank recognises that 'communities' are the destination of most travellers. Therefore, it is in communities that tourism happens. Because of this, tourism industry development and management must be brought effectively to bear in communities. Under this approach, residents are regarded as the focal point of the tourism planning exercise, not the tourists. And, the community, which is often equated with a region of local government, is regarded as the basic planning unit (Blank, 1989, cited in Hall, 2000).

Timothy and Tosun (2003) present a normative model of destination community tourism planning that combines three broad strategies into one under the abbreviation 'PIC' (Planning, Incremental and Collaborative). On the basis of participatory, incremental and collaborative planning, this model, as illustrated in Figure 4.1, implies that a combination of strategies is a more sure technique in the planning process than a singular method or approach. Timothy and Tosun (2003) further argue that principles, such as equity, efficiency, integration, balance and ecological and cultural integrity, are

more effectively brought about when community members are allowed and encouraged to participate in tourism planning and development, when collaboration and cooperation are allowed to occur, and when tourism is developed in an incremental fashion. However, this model is not meant to replace the traditions of procedural planning, for example, the step-by-step planning process. Instead, the PIC principles should function in the broader context within which the rational comprehensive planning steps take place.

Figure 4.1 PIC planning principles

Participatory

- residents' voice in establishing goals and desires for tourism
- all stakeholder involvement in decision-making
- economic opportunities for residents
- resident education and awareness building

Steps in the planning process

Cooperation/Collaboration

- between government agencies
- between private and public sectors
- between administrative levels
- between same-level polities
- between private sector services

Incremental

- careful selection of development options
- gradual implementation
- regular and continuous monitoring and evaluation

Source: Timothy and Tosun (2003)

Meanwhile, Cater (1993) argues that a useful way to discern responsible community-based ecotourism is to approach it from a developmental perspective, which considers social, environmental and economic goals, and questions how ecotourism can '...meet the needs of the host population in terms of improved living standards both in the short and long term' (Cater, 1993, p. 85-86). This perspective differs from those approaching ecotourism predominantly from an environmental perspective. For example, Buckley has devised a framework of ecotourism that is based on nature tourism, which is sustainably managed, environmentally educative and supportive of conservation (Buckley, 1994). While Buckley's framework helps us understand that ecotourism is much more than just a product, nature, he fails to consider whether the quality of life of local communities is enhanced by ecotourism activities (Scheyvens, 1999).

On the other hand, Lindberg et al. (1996), take an economic perspective when they examine ecotourism case studies form Belize. While they consider the extent to which ecotourism generates economic benefits for local communities, they do not account for how the amount of money entering communities is distributed, or how communities are affected socially and culturally by ecotourism ventures. Even when ecotourism results in economic benefits for a local community, it may result in damage to social and cultural systems, thus undermining people's overall quality of life (Wilkinson and Pratiwi, 1995). Therefore, community-based approaches to ecotourism need to acknowledge the importance of social dimensions of the tourism experience, rather than primarily focusing on environmental or economic impacts (Scheyvens, 1999).

The above discussion has demonstrated that the way ecotourism is approached is critical to its success, in terms of promoting the well being of both local people and their environments. In order that local people maximise their benefits and have some control over ecotourism occurring in their regions, Friedmann (1992) has suggested an empowerment framework, which could determine the effectiveness of ecotourism initiatives in terms of their impacts on local communities. Four levels of empowerment are utilised in the framework: psychological, social, political and economic empowerment.

Similarly, Scheyvens (1999) develops similar framework that includes disempowerment in addition to empowerment, in relation to four levels mentioned above (see Table 4.1 on 'Framework for determining the impacts of ecotourism initiatives on local communities'). These multiple views of empowerment require the involvement of multiple agencies, and Scheyvens (2003) identifies governments, the private sector and non-governmental organisations as critical stakeholders in facilitating the involvement of destination communities in managing the tourism industry. Several types of opportunities are available for host communities to be involved in the management of ecotourism: i) private business run by a local entrepreneur, ii) community enterprise, iii) joint venture between community and private sector, and iv) representation in tourism planning body or conservation authority (Ashley and Roe, 1998).

Table 4.1   Framework for determining the impacts of ecotourism initiatives on local
            communities

	Signs of empowerment	Signs of disempowerment
Economic empowerment	Ecotourism brings lasting economic gains to a local community.	Most profits go to local elites, outside operators, government agencies.
Psychological empowerment	Increasing confidence of community members leads them to seek out further education and training opportunities.	Many people have not shared in the benefits of ecotourism, yet they may face hardships because of reduced access to the resources of a protected area.
Social empowerment	Community cohesion is improved as individuals and families work together to build a successful ecotourism venture.	Disharmony and social decay. Many in the community take on outside values and lose respect for traditional culture and for elders.
Political empowerment	The community's political structure provides a forum through which people can raise questions relating to the ecotourism venture and have their concerns dealt with.	The majority of community members feel they have little or no say over whether the ecotourism initiative operates or the way in which it operates.

Source: Scheyvens (1999: 247)

In a related development, residents' reactions to tourism should also be incorporated by the above approaches to gain a more balanced assessment of the local situation. Doxey's (1975) irridex model and Ap and Crompton's (1993) concept provide useful insights into local attitudes that change with the scale and form of tourism development. Development can lead to euphoria or antagonism, the general objective being to achieve a balanced development that brings economic and amenity benefits within acceptable levels of commercialism and congestion (see Figure 4.2 on 'Doxey's irridex model' and Figure 4.3 on 'Ap and Crompton's model of resident attitudes to tourism'). In a similar

impact assessment, residents are equated with animals of the local ecosystem. They are

part of the community's general attraction and are expected to be hospitable, yet they

also need to go about their daily lives while they are part of the community show

(Murphy, 1985).

Figure 4.2 Doxey's irridex model

Stages of Development	
EUPHORIA	Initial phase of development, visitors and investors welcome, little planning or control mechanism
APATHY	Visitors taken for granted, contacts between residents and outsiders more formal(commercial), planning concerned mostly with marketing
ANNOYANCE	Saturation points approached, residents have misgivings about tourist industry, policymakers attempt solutions via increasing infrastructure rather than limiting growth
ANTAGONISM	Irritations openly expressed, visitors seen as cause of all problems, planning now remedial but promotion increased to offset deteriorating reputation of destination

Source: Doxey (1975)

Figure 4.3   Ap and Crompton's model of resident attitudes to tourism

Embracement	Residents eagerly welcome tourists.
Tolerance	Residents show a degree of ambivalence towards tourism (there were elements of tourism they liked or disliked).
Adjustment	Residents adjusted to tourism, often by rescheduling activities to avoid crowds.
Withdrawal	In this context, residents withdrew temporarily from the community.

Note: All four strategies are likely to be adopted concurrently, since there are going to be different reactions to tourism in any community. The strategies and behaviour adopted by individuals and groups of residents need to be viewed in relation to thresholds and tourism impacts.

Source: Ap and Crompton (1993)

4.5   Conclusion

There has now been a move away from the narrow concern with physical or promotional planning facilitating the growth of tourism, to a broader more balanced approach recognising the needs and views of not only tourists and developers but also the wider community (Dowling, 1991, 1997).   Similarly, efforts to make ecotourism a more sustainable option have been focusing increasingly on a community-oriented approach. However, an analysis of the differences and conflicts between tourism and community interface clearly shows that there are limitations to participatory tourism development approach.   A   successful   community   approach,   therefore,   requires   a   complex

combination of interlocking parts, environmental, economic, socio-cultural and management considerations, leading to a general goal that can be identified and measured. Above all, it is vital that local communities are involved in planning and management of tourism resources and directly benefit from the utilisation of these resources to ensure true sustainability (Mat Som and Baum, 2004).

Chapter   Five

TOURISM IN MALAYSIA

5.0   Introduction

This chapter provides a brief background of tourism and ecotourism development in Malaysia. The main focus of this chapter is to describe the two case study areas: the Perlis State Park in Wang Kelian, Perlis and the proposed State Eco-Park in Ulu Muda, Kedah. Description of the natural resources, significant features and the nature of local involvement in tourism activities in both areas are discussed at the end of the chapter.

5.1   Tourism in Malaysia

Malaysia is a federation of thirteen states and has a land area of 330,434 square kilometres. There are eleven states in Peninsular Malaysia and two states in the northern part of Borneo, namely Sabah and Sarawak (see Figure 5.1 on Map of Malaysia). The population is 21.2 million (Asiaweek, 1998), and the people are multiracial: Malays and other indigenous people constitute 59.0 per cent of the total population, Chinese 32.1 per cent, Indians 8.2 per cent and other races 0.7 per cent (Information Malaysia, 1998).

Figure 5.1 Map of Malaysia
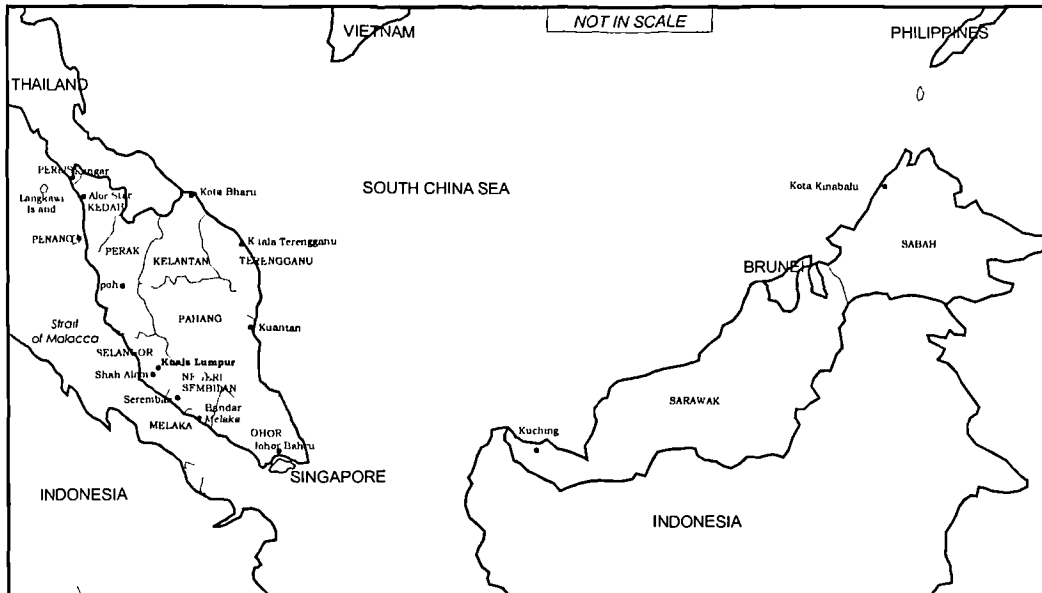
Tourism was virtually unknown in Malaysia until the late 1960s. In the 1970s, the government's involvement in tourism development was initiated to accomplish several development objectives such as increasing foreign exchange earnings, increasing employment and income levels, fostering regional development, diversifying the economic base and increasing government revenue (Khalifah and Tahir, 1997). During this period, the emphasis was on the provision of basic tourism infrastructure, and the government played a central role and at times engaged as entrepreneur and guarantor for overseas investment (Jenkins, 1994).

In the 1980s, more incentives were given for the development of new accommodation, visitor centre facilities, manpower and greater participation of native Malays in the tourism industry (GOM, 1981, 1986). The participation of the private sector in tourism development was encouraged through various incentives, while the government continued to develop certain facilities and locations where the private sector was reluctant to venture (Khalifah and Tahir, 1997). Even when private- or voluntary-sector management is involved, public agencies generally retain overall responsibility or provide operating funds, land and capital (Veal, 2002). During the Fifth Malaysia Plan 1986-1990, the development of secondary tourist nodes, especially the coastal resorts, was also emphasised, in addition to developing primary tourist nodes such as Kuala Lumpur and Penang (Wong, 1990).

The establishment of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture in 1987 acknowledged the important economic contribution of tourism to the country. It was renamed the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism (MOCAT) in 1990. Since then, the industry has had full support in terms of funding, planning, coordination, regulation and enforcement (Musa, 2000). Government commitment to the tourism industry is also reflected in increased spending in the development of tourism infrastructure, marketing and promotions during each Malaysia Plan, from RM17.2 million in the Second Malaysia Plan to RM966 million in the Seventh Malaysia Plan (Hall, 1997; Khalifah and Tahir, 1997).

In the 1990s, the Seventh Malaysia Plan 1996-2000 provided for extensive development of tourism products, marketing and promotion, private-sector involvement and local

participation (Hall, 1997). The economic crisis in 1997 and 1998 affected the industry, but concerted efforts by the public and private sectors and successful implementation of measures outlined in the National Economic Recovery Plan quickly revitalised the tourism industry (GOM, 2001). For the Eighth Malaysia Plan 2001-2005, the policy thrust is to achieve rapid tourism growth on a sustainable basis. Greater efforts will be undertaken to provide a wider variety of quality tourism products to stimulate tourism demand both internationally and domestically. In addition, effective promotional strategies in established and emerging markets will also be carried out continuously to capture a larger share of the tourism market (GOM, 2001).

Tourism has become the second biggest foreign exchange earner and employs 102,833 people in the country (Tourism Malaysia, 1997). In 2000, arrivals reached a record of 10.2 million tourists, which surpassed the target by 3.7 million (see Table 5.1 on Selected Tourism Indicators for 1995-2005). Tourist arrivals are expected to grow at an average rate of 6.9 per cent per annum to reach 14.3 million by 2005, and tourism receipts are targeted to grow at an average annual rate of 9.5 per cent to reach RM29.5 billion in 2005 (GOM, 2001). The elevation of Tourism Ministry's status as a single portfolio ministry, after the 2004 post-election cabinet reshuffle, is a further boost to the tourism industry when the tourism portfolio was separated from Arts and Culture. Hence, the tourism sector will assume an even greater role in stimulating the future economic growth of the country, particularly during the Eighth Plan period.

Table 5.1   Selected Tourism Indicators for 1995, 2000 and 2005

Indicator	1995	2000	2005
Number of Tourist Arrivals ('000)	7,469	10,221	14,273
By Country of Origin (%)			
ASEAN (excludes Myanmar, Vietnam and Cambodia)	73.5	70.3	63.5
Japan	4.4	4.5	5.2
China	1.4	4.2	4.8
Taiwan	3.9	2.1	2.4
Hong Kong SAR	2.0	0.7	1.8
India	0.4	1.3	2.7
Australia	1.8	2.3	2.7
United Kingdom	2.2	2.3	2.5
USA	1.3	1.8	2.1
Others	9.1	10.5	12.3
Total Tourism Receipts (RM million) [1]	9,927.8	18,756.7	29,499.5
Number of Hotels [2]	1,220	1,492	1,541
Number of Hotel Rooms	76,373	134,503	140,503
Average Length of Stay (nights)	4.8	5.5	5.8
Occupancy Rate of Hotel	65.5	55.0	60.0
Employment [3]	67,214	78,671	79,603

Notes: 1. Tourism receipts = tourist receipts + excursionist receipts
2. Hotels with 10 rooms and above, excluding service apartments and condominiums
3. Employment covers the hotel industry only

Source: GOM (2001)

5.2   Protected Areas and Ecotourism in Malaysia

Protected areas are characterised by their natural and cultural resources, support

infrastructure and visitor services (Machlis and Tichnell, 1985) and are regarded as an

important tool for conservation of wildlife and landscape (Bishop *et al.*, 1997). Almost

all countries in the world have established their own national parks and other forms of

protected areas to ensure long term protection of the natural resources. Dixon and

Sherman (1990) recognise the importance of protected areas in tourism and their

contribution to the economy and regional development of a country. In many countries, national parks are the focus of international tourism and have played a significant role as tourist attractions. In some other countries, they are the foundation of small but often important tourism industries (Butler and Boyd, 2002).

The World Conservation Union, through the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, has classified protected areas into six categories: Ia - strict nature reserves, Ib - wilderness areas, II - national parks, III - natural monument, IV - habitat and species management areas, V - protected landscape/seascape, and VI - managed resource protected area (IUCN, 1994). The concept of managing protected areas is based on their management objectives and categories (see Table 5.2), and the priority of objectives will determine the different types or categories of protected areas.

The earliest protected areas in Peninsular Malaysia were game reserves, when in 1903, the Chior Game Reserve was established as the first protected area in Malaya to protect a herd of seladang (gaur) (Aiken, 1994). Conservation was the main priority when national parks were established, and early efforts of conservation in Peninsular Malaysia were mainly related to the protection of wildlife especially birds and mammals (Amat and Osman, 2001). Over the years, these priorities have shifted into the conservation of ecosystem or biodiversity and the assimilation of local communities in park management.

Table 5.2 Matrix of Management Objectives

Management Objectives	Categories						
	Ia	Ib	II	III	IV	V	VI
Scientific research	1	3	2	2	2	2	3
Wilderness protection	2	1	2	3	3	-	2
Preserve species and genetic diversity	1	2	1	1	1	2	1
Maintain environmental services	2	1	1	-	1	2	1
Protection of special features	-	-	2	1	3	1	3
Tourism and recreation	-	2	1	1	3	1	3
Education	-	-	2	2	2	2	3
Sustainable use of resources	-	3	3	-	2	2	1
Maintenance of cultural/traditional attributes	-	-	-	-	-	1	2

Source: IUCN (1994)

Key: 1 Primary objective
2 Secondary objective
3 Acceptable objective
- Not applicable

In Malaysia, the ownership and management of protected areas are the direct responsibility of the federal or state government. There exist several legislative instruments that provide facilities to create protected areas and to gazette parks in Malaysia. National parks are under the jurisdiction of the federal government while various states, under the Malaysian constitution, have jurisdiction over land and forests.

State governments are often reluctant to have national parks because the process involves surrendering state land to the federal government.

The *Protection of Wild Life Act of 1972* and the *National Parks Act of 1980* provide for the creation of protected areas in Peninsular Malaysia (Aiken, 1994). The *Protection of Wild Life Act of 1972* makes provision for state governments in Peninsular Malaysia to establish 'wildlife reserve' and 'wildlife sanctuaries' for the protection of numerous animals and bird species with the responsibility of its management lies in the federal government. The *National Parks Act of 1980* provides a legislative framework for the establishment of national parks in Peninsular Malaysia, which does not apply to Sabah and Sarawak (Amat and Osman, 2001).

The Department of Wildlife and National Parks (DWNP) under the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment (MOSTE) has jurisdiction over wildlife and federally constituted national parks using the *Protection of Wild Life Act of 1972* and *National Parks Act of 1980*. In Sabah, state parks are managed by Sabah Parks *(Parks Enactment No. 6/1984)*. In Sarawak, parks are managed by the National Park and Wildlife Office (under the Sarawak State Foretsry Department) using the *National Parks and Nature Reserves Ordinance, 1998*. The National Parks Corporation (Johor) manages its parks under the *National Park Corporation Enactment, 1989* (Amat and Osman, 2001).

The *National Parks Act of 1980* was amended in 1983 to give state governments better control over national parks. However, until today, there has not been any new national

park gazetted under this Act except for Pantai Aceh National Park in Penang. The unwillingness of state government is due to potential loss of earnings through logging concessions and future income from tourism development. The administration of *Wild Life Act of 1972* in Peninsular Malaysia is limited to wildlife protection with provisions for both the protection of fauna and habitat in wildlife reserves. The instrument does not have provision for staffing and the preparation of management plan to be used in the park.

Under the *National Forestry Act of 1984 (NFA)*, forest reserves in Peninsular Malaysia are classified under 11 categories according to their ecological and economic functions. In general, the Forestry Department Peninsular Malaysia (FDPM) categorises forest in Peninsular Malaysia into three main functions: permanent forest estates (PFE), parks and sanctuaries, and stateland (Amat and Osman, 2001). PFE are forests managed by FDPM under the Ministry of Primary Industry. While the Forestry Department is given the task of drawing up policies and laws on forest management, it does not have the power to act on them until the respective state government gazettes PFE. This is due to federal-state dichotomy over natural resources, whereby the power to add or subtract forest reserves lies entirely at the discretion of state governments (Amat and Osman, 2001).

As there is no existing state legislation in Perlis or other states in Peninsular Malaysia for the creation of parks under the NFA, a model legislation is proposed. Towards this end, Section 10(1) and the creation of Forest Rules, under Section 111 of the NFA, have been identified as the most likely pieces of legislation to be developed. Section 10(1)

classifies forest into 11 different classes, and a new bill instrument is now being proposed to include 'state park forest' as the 12th class. On acceptance by the State Assembly, it will be reclassified as a 'state park' using Section 10(3) and rules for 'state park' will then be established using Section 111, for examples, legal administration and management of the state park (Amat and Osman, 2001). It is expected that successful implementation of the proposed legal instrument will be a model for future development of parks in Peninsular Malaysia under FDPM.

In general, Malaysia has 54 protected areas of more than 1,000 hectares, totalling 1,485 million hectares or about 4.5 per cent of the country's land surface. They include 28 strict nature reserves (inaccessible to tourism activity), 16 national parks or their state-level equivalents, nine managed nature reserves or wildlife sanctuaries and one protected landscape (WWFM, 1996c). Recent statistics reveal that nature-based activities are the fastest growing tourism product in Malaysia, and it is estimated that 10 per cent of Malaysia's tourism revenue in 2000 originated from ecotourism (Hashim, 1998).

To attract and sustain this growth, the National Ecotourism Plan (NEP) was drafted in 1996 to assist the federal and state governments in developing Malaysia's ecotourism potential. The Plan is intended to serve both as an appropriate instrument within the overall sustainable development of Malaysia and the economy as a whole, and as an effective tool for conservation of natural and cultural heritage of the country. Due to proximity of most ecotourism sites to rural areas, the Rural Tourism Master Plan was subsequently drafted in 2001 to complement strategies in NEP. Prior to the NEP, the

Malaysia Tourism Policy study (Peat Marwick, 1993) identified ecotourism as an ancillary form of tourism, but the study did not define its relationship with other types of tourism. The policy study was misleading in its recommendation that development policies in the natural environment were directed at accessibility, resource preservation and conservation to minimise adverse environmental impacts (Peat Marwick, 1993), and it placed an undue emphasis upon infrastructure and impact reduction rather than enhancement of natural environment as a positive feedback mechanism (WWFM, 1996b).

The NEP was developed in relation to national policies and plans. The Plan recognises direct involvement of the local community, environmental protection and preservation and inter-agency and inter-sectoral cooperation (WWFM, 1996b). This clear understanding and application of ecotourism is required if Malaysia is to succeed in the ecotourism industry. Successful ecotourism in Malaysia also depends to a large extent on effective interpretation, promotion and marketing approaches and good site management because various countries in the region, with almost identical ecotourism attractions, are pursuing similar markets.

There are three main interactive components in the NEP, which are the action plans, site proposals and guidelines. All three components are of equal importance, and each component must be implemented with specific reference to the other two. The Plan identifies 52 project suggestions, relating to 48 areas and four suggestions that are not site-specific. About 20 sites in Peninsular Malaysia, Sabah and Sarawak account for the

vast majority of ecotourism by foreign and domestic tourists (WWFM, 1996b). Primary

data for this research was obtained at two selected ecotourism sites, namely the Perlis

State Park (PSP) in Wang Kelian, Perlis and the proposed State Eco-park in Ulu Muda,

Kedah. Both ecosites were selected because they not only have superb natural assets,

but also they are ranked among the ten very special places for Malaysian ecotourism out

of 52 project suggestions identified in the Plan (see Table 5.3).

Table 5.3 Ten Very Special Places for Malaysian Ecotourism

The listing is in rough order of priority, beginning with the most important.	
Ecotourism sites	**Features**
Lower Kinabatangan River, Sabah	Proboscis monkeys, river, wildlife
Wang Kelian, Perlis	**Limestone, caves, forest**
Kenong Forest Park, Pahang	Elephants, caves, streams
Belum, Perak	Wildlife, forest, lake
Stong, Mountain, Kelantan	Mountain, waterfall, rockfaces
Ulu Muda, Kedah	*Forest, lake, sandstone*
Bera Lake, Pahang	Lake, culture, fish
Hose Mountains, Sarawak	Forest, trekking, bird watching
Kenyir Catchment, Terangganu	Lake, trekking, fish
Kukup Island, Johor	Mangroves, wildlife

Source: WWFM (1996a)

5.2.1 Issues of Developing Ecotourism in Malaysia

In general, the local communities living near ecotourism sites typically have incomes lower than the national average, and they have limited options for economic activities because they are often financially neglected and poorly managed. Relations between development and environment are complicated by this rural poverty and the general absence of environmental awareness. As a result, incidence of resource exploitation is observed because demands by the urban population for medicinal and horticultural plants are high, prompting local communities to collect them for immediate financial gain (Amat, 2002). They engage in consumptive activities that offer tangible products. Sherman and Dixon (1991, p. 95) suggest a list of 'consumptive benefits' derived from timber, non-timber products (for examples, edible plants, herbs, medicines, rattan, building materials, rubber) and wildlife products. As compared to indigenous people who treat the forest as a resource provider, most of the local communities treat the forest as a commodity provider (Amat, 2002). Local communities generally live within the periphery of protected or forested areas, while indigenous communities live within the forested areas.

If poverty is to be reduced, ecotourism must represent a viable economic alternative, so that local people can participate in chalet operation, homestay programme, food, handicraft and transport businesses, and local community organisations can act as concessionaires for these support services. For example, local people can become effective nature guides if they receive adequate training since they have good and

practical local knowledge. Essentially, when local people can meet many of the needs of tourists themselves, they are more likely to retain some control over tourism. Controlling one's own enterprise is a positive step in the direction of self-determination for people otherwise dependent on the tourism industry for menial jobs or handouts, and is more likely to lead to self-fulfilment (Singh *et al.*, 2003).

In Malaysia, participation by non-governmental organisations in ecotourism is limited, but several state, regional and national trade organisations and tourist guides' associations are beginning to explore ecotourism opportunities and provide training. In terms of community involvement in ecotourism, there are only a few examples, particularly in Kinabalu Park, where local residents from nearby villages receive financial spin-offs from park operations and are involved in guiding and staffing. In many other sites, the local community is only a passive component of the tourism product and excluded from tourism development. Where local residents are involved in ecotourism, there tends to be a shortage of training and management opportunities for them (WWFM, 1996b). In Taman Negara, for example, a high percentage of staff (except those in the lower ranking) were from outside the territory (i.e. from Kuantan and as far as Kuala Lumpur) (Khalifah, 1997). Employment fluctuates due to seasonality, and it is difficult to retain staff and build their skills. It is also difficult to attract well-qualified staff from urban areas because the location is relatively remote (Amat, 2002).

Another development issue is whether there will be sufficient demand for ecotourism services to make the investment profitable. There is ever increasing pressure on parks to show direct economic benefits in order to justify their existence, and developing an area solely on a tourism basis is a risky proposition. There are several factors that affect the number of visitors to an ecotourism site such as seasonal variations, natural hazards (flood and drought) and accessibility (Amat, 2002). In Malaysia, rainfall or dry season is the result of regular variation in climatic conditions, and the impact of seasonal demand variation is one of the operational concerns of tourism interests in both the public and private sectors (Baum and Lundtorp, 2001). In addition, many ecotourism areas in Malaysia are considered not appealing as tourist destinations, and it is impossible to observe large mammals due to the heavily dense forests, unlike wildlife safaris in Africa. As a result, the tourism facilities will be underused for a significant period of the year and are subject to vandalism, and eventually are abandoned by tourists. These areas are being left as 'no-man's land', without a caretaker, especially when there are several agencies involved in the management of the protected areas. They face overlapping and various administrative issues and problems such as inconsistency of policies and lack of coordination among the agencies (Mohamed and Hussin, 2003). Efficiency might be improved if these government agencies were encouraged to cooperate in their development efforts. Considerable money in many cases is wasted on overlapping and parallel projects, so that in theory such cooperative efforts would mean less money spent and more funds available for other purposes (Spann, 1979).

In managing visitors, park management should be cautioned against attracting the wrong groups of visitors and the provision of inappropriate activities. There is also a tendency to develop inappropriate facilities or attractions to attract visitors to maximise economic benefits. Such development will eventually lead to mass tourism and exceed carrying capacity, which are in conflict with the primary objectives of conservation and ecotourism development. In the case of the Galapagos Islands, the number of foreign arrivals exceeded four times the recommended carrying capacity (Honey, 1999). The island's ecology is the victim, with agriculture expanding due to in-migration of communities from the mainland and the extinction of twelve native plants (Steele, 1995). While the number of visitors has increased, the types of visitors were 'diluted' (becoming softer) by less serious and less curious visitors.

Therefore, when promoting ecotourism, a stronger focus on domestic market than the international market is more favourable, from an economic point of view (Stephan, 2000). An ecotourism project, that meets the requirements of the international markets, tends to be based on heavy capital investment. Investing to attract foreign visitors can be risky as it is vulnerable to product substitution and strong competition. While foreign visitors can provide the required hard currency, domestic visitors can help prevent the out-flow of foreign exchange (Amat, 2002). In Malaysia, one constraint on ecotourism is the dominance of the ASEAN tourist markets (75 per cent), given that intraregional markets have less proclivity to partake in ecotourism than arrivals from metropolitan regions (EIU, 1994).

In relation to the above, the management and protection of visitors and the provision of services represent a major segment of a park's budget. The park's success in managing the protected areas is dependent upon four factors: a) the quality of the resources; b) professionalism in all aspects of the park business; c) an active and appreciative public; and d) partnership with the private sector. However, there are often gaps in the capability to effectively manage parks in Malaysia, and staff development and external technical assistance may be required to bridge such gaps (Amat, 2002).

5.3 Perlis State Park (PSP) in Wang Kelian, Perlis

Perlis, the smallest state in Malaysia, lies at the northwestern extremity of Peninsular Malaysia. Its western coastline borders the Straits of Malacca (see Figure 5.2). Bounded by Thailand to the north and Kedah to the south and southeast, Perlis measures approximately 795 square kilometres and has a population of 217,480 people (Tourism Malaysia, 2003). Although small in size, Perlis is not without its attractions, foremost among which is its serene unspoilt beauty, rustic rural scenes and paddy fields. However, being a tiny state, Perlis is at a disadvantage by not having vast agricultural land, lowland dipterocarp forests, large river systems and water bodies (Latiff *et al.*, 2001). The coastline is short, and the state is dominated by a large limestone hill forest to the west. The lowlands were once covered with dipterocarp forests, but they were cleared or logged to pave ways for agricultural activities, human settlements, townships and villages, infrastructure and small and medium industries (Latiff *et al.*, 2001).

Figure 5.3 Map of Perlis
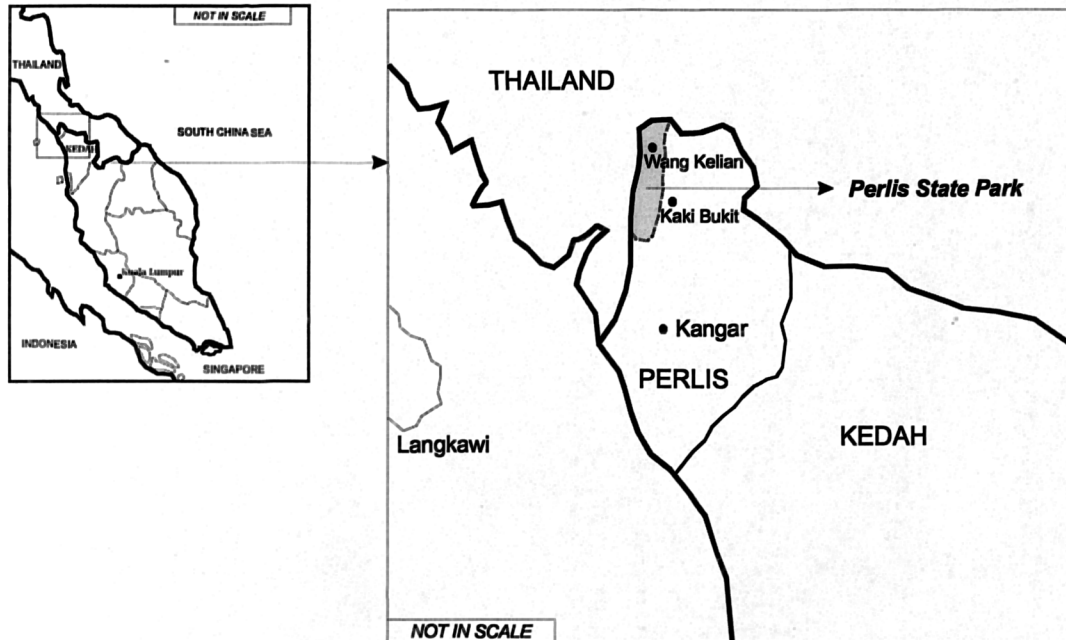
The size of Permanent Forest Estates (PFE) in Perlis is relatively small (13.5 per cent of

total land area), and harvesting of its timber ceased in the early 1990s (Amat and Osman,

2001). Outside of the PFE, the state forests or stateland may still be forested, but they

could be possibly converted to agriculture or other uses. This situation has prompted

Perlis State Forestry Department (PSFD) to examine its present role in managing the

small yet valuable remaining resources and simultaneously generating revenue for the

state in a sustainable manner. Recognising the fact that there are a substantial number of

natural attractions suitable for tourism, PSFD has over the years played an increasing

role in promoting and developing tourist attractions in its forest reserve, although PSFD

is not directly related to tourism development in the state. The establishment of Perlis State Park (PSP) reflects the symbiosis and harmonious relationship between environment and tourism, and it is also in line with the state government's effort to eradicate poverty through a four-pronged development strategy – education, industry, tourism and agriculture.

The development of Perlis State Park (PSP) was mentioned as early as 1984 in a report by WWFM (1984). It identified Mata Ayer Forest Reserve (FR) as having a rich and distinct biodiversity and recommended its conservation for scientific, protective (against soil erosion and for watershed protection) and amenity functions (Amat and Osman, 2001). In 1990, PSFD proposed to the state government to gazette Wang Mu FR as a state park. In 1993, the state government agreed in principle to establish about 1,000 hectares of Mata Ayer FR as Wang Kelian State Park (Latiff *et al.*, 2001). Subsequent reports by Perhilitan (1993), Sharma (1993), Kiew (1993) and Khoo (1997) continued to highlight the needs for its conservation. In 1996, the state government further approved the extension of the proposed Wang Kelian State Park into a larger entity known as PSP, which comprises Mata Ayer FR, Wang Mu FR and Wang Tangga (Amat, 2002). Subsequent to this, the state government requested PSFD in 1997 to gazette the entire PFE in Perlis as a state park using the most appropriate legislation (Amat and Osman, 2002). PSP is currently classified as a water catchment area and forest sanctuary for wildlife. As mentioned in Section 5.2, a bill to enact a new instrument, known as the *National Forestry Act 1984 (Amendment) (Perlis) Enactment 2002*, has been put forward to the State Legislative Assembly to reclassify PFE as a state park using Section

10(3). Of considerable importance are the need to zone the area based on its resources, preparation of management plans and the setting-up of management or advisory committees. The inclusions of appropriate clauses to address the above problems are addressed in the new instrument. Thus, the new legislation will strengthen the degree of protection afforded to the park's resources and ensure that the establishment, administration and management of the park are in accordance with its objectives (Amat and Osman, 2001).

Considering that PSP comprises half of the total forest reserve in Perlis, the move to gazette the area shows the state government commitment to protecting valuable natural and cultural resources. Now managed by the State Park Unit under PSFD, the park has been carefully developed according to management plans drawn up with consultants from the World Wide Fund for Nature and funding from Danish International Development Assistance (DANIDA).

5.3.1 Natural Resources in Perlis State Park

PSP protects 5,075 hectares of geological, ecological and historical importance (Osman *et al.*, 2002). The park is the Peninsula's first trans-frontier protected area, together with Thailand's Thaleban National Park, which it joins at the border. This makes its conservation role more effective since it helps protect a much larger area.

The forests differ from those found in most of Peninsular Malaysia due to the unique climate in Perlis. The natural vegetation, known as White-Meranti *Gerutu* seasonal forest, is characteristic of the Burmese-Thai region. It refers to the semi-deciduous forests (based on Dipterocarp family) that are slightly different from the more common Red Meranti forest found throughout the country (Amat and Osman, 2002). Schima-bamboo forest is the predominant vegetation in the secondary forest, and is of limited distribution within Peninsular Malaysia (Khoo, 1997). The limestone flora of Perlis comprises at least 215 species in 65 families, 22 per cent being endemic to Malaysia and 8 species to Perlis (Kiew, 1993).

A total of 143 non-timber species were recorded in the area, including the palm *Maxburetia gracilis* and 3 species from the ginger family, which have never been recorded elsewhere on limestone habitat (Sharma, 1992). As for wildlife, 60 species of mammals were recorded to exist in the area, including 5 species of primates and 5 ungulates. Of particular interest was the confirmed sighting of the extremely rare Stump-tailed macaque (*Macaca arctoides*) in Perlis, which was previously thought to be extinct (Amat and Osman, 2002). Three threatened mammals, which are confirmed to exist in PSP, are the Panther (*Panthera pardus*), the Low's Squirrel (*Ptilocerus lowii*) and the Serow (*Capricornis sumatraensis*), in addition to 46 known species of reptiles (Sharma *et al.*, 2001), 180 species of birds and 6 species of hornbills (Matthew and Sharma, 1993). PSP is also a migratory route for raptors, which fly from north to south in October.

5.3.2   Significant Features of Perlis State Park

There are a number of significant features in the PSP:

- The Perlis section of Nakawan is the country's longest and continuous limestone range. The range consists Ordovician-Silurian limestone of 440 million year-old Setul Formation, which forms an extensive and deeply dissected range of hills (Amat and Osman, 2002). In addition, this range provides massive networks of underground water that would ensure continuous supply of quality water for the state.

- There is a limestone/granite interface at Gua Wang Burma that is possibly the northern-most cave in Peninsular Malaysia. The cave contains not only a passageway of 3.8 kilometres but also many interesting natural formations and mining artefacts, which are of interest to historians, naturalists and tourists (Amat and Osman, 2002).

- Gua Kelam or 'Dark Cave' has a natural passageway that used to provide the only access between the tin-mining town of Kaki Bukit and the village of Wang Kelian. The original cave was enlarged in 1935 by a resident Englishmen to serve as a route to transport tin ore (Tourism Malaysia, 2003), but mining activities in the caves ceased operations in the 1970s (Latiff *et al.*, 2001). A

wooden walkway, stretching the entire length of the cave, has been constructed to allow visitors to view the magnificent stalagtite and stalagmite formations.

- Wang Kelian Border Market allows visitors to cross the Thai-Malaysian border up to two kilometres on each side without the use of passports, provided that they remain within the market area.

- Gunung Perlis (733 metres), the highest peak in Perlis and the northern-most end of Peninsular Malaysia, is also located in PSP.

5.4   The Proposed State Eco-Park in Ulu Muda, Kedah

Kedah is situated northwest of Peninsular Malaysia, and is bordered by Thailand and Perlis to the north, Penang to the southwest and Perak to the south (see Figure 5.3). Its size is approximately 9,425 square kilometres, and its population of one million is primarily Malay people, though there are significant Chinese and Indian minorities (Tourism Malaysia, 2002). Over the last two decades, the economic structure of Kedah has evolved and changed considerably from being predominantly agriculture-based. In 1995, Kedah contributed 56 per cent of the country's rice production. The state's GDP contribution from the agricultural sector decreased from 35 per cent in 1990 to 21 per cent in 1998 (UPEN Kedah and WWFM, 2002).

Figure 5.3 Map of Kedah
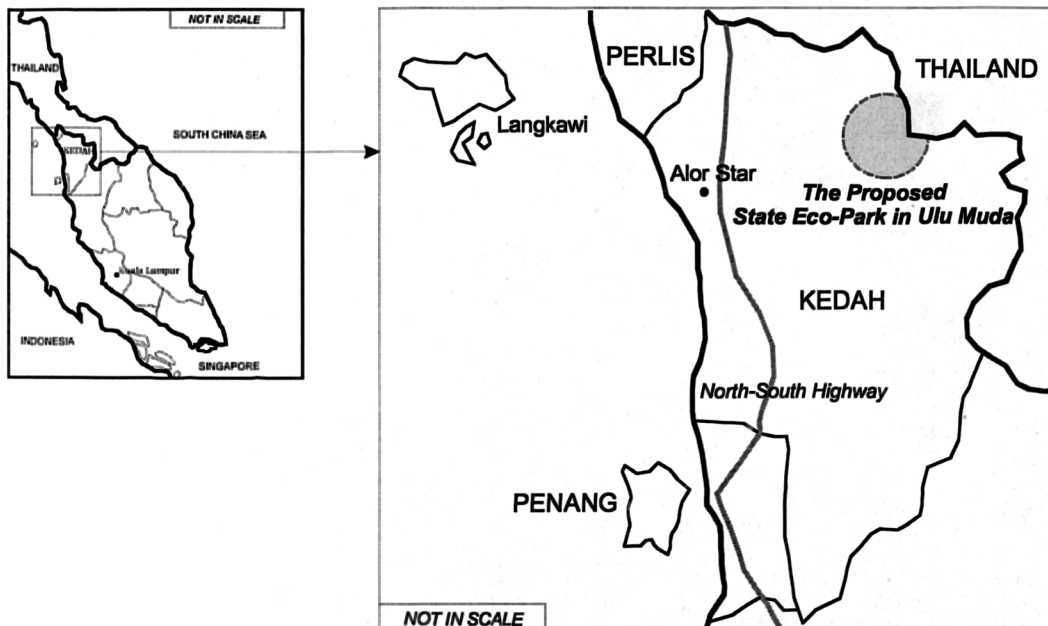
Whilst maintaining a strong agricultural base, Kedah has experienced a rapid growth in manufacturing and construction sectors. The tourism sector has also emerged as a major economic sector with Langkawi Island being the primary tourist attraction in Kedah. The proposed development of Ulu Muda as a premier natural attraction is seen by the state government as an important avenue to diversify Kedah's economic base and enhance development in rural areas. To enhance the value and ensure sustainability of the resources, various initiatives have highlighted the significance of Ulu Muda forests and recommended its adoption as a State Park or State Eco-Park. In fact, the Kedah Action Plan 2010 has identified nature tourism in Ulu Muda and island tourism in Langkawi as parts of its development strategies to progress Kedah as a developed state by 2010.

5.4.1 Natural Resources in Ulu Muda

The Ulu Muda forests are located in the northeastern part of Kedah and are part of a forest area that stretches well into Thai territory. Similar to Perlis State Park, its flaura and fauna incorporate a large degree of the so-called 'northern element' due to its location, i.e., biological components of Continental and Mainland Asia, as well as the Sundaland elements found further to the south. The overall biodata of the Ulu Muda forests is distinct from other parts of Malaysia and include a large Thai-Burmese component. While some of the forests in the Greater Ulu Muda area have been logged, the existing primary forests are enough to consider Ulu Muda as a 'High Conservation Value Forest' area (UPEN Kedah and WWFM, 2002). Ulu Muda forest is essential for water catchment (supplying over 30 per cent of water to the agricultural sector in Kedah), climate regulation, pest control and wildlife roaming areas (UPEN Kedah and WWFM, 2002). These benefits outweigh the potential costs of the proposed heli-logging activities, which could have earned the relatively poor state of Kedah RM52 million per year (UPEN Kedah and WWFM, 2002).

There are a number of hot springs and saltlicks along the Muda river and some of its tributaries, which represent critical resources for many species of animals. The presence of these saltlicks and the continuity of Ulu Muda Forest reserve with other forests (in Thailand and Malaysia) are partially the reason for the apparent abundance of wildlife observable in Ulu Muda. It is hardly surprising that most of the large mammals of Peninsular Malaysia can be found in the Ulu Muda area, and the most common to be

encountered are elephants. Other large mammals that have been spotted are tigers, sun

bear, sambar deer and tapir. A total of 109 species of mammals in 31 families

(including 6 species of non-human primates), 174 species of birds, 54 species of reptiles

and 42 species of amphibians, have been recorded in Ulu Muda (UPEN Kedah and

WWFM, 2002). There is also a great diversity of freshwater habitat due to the presence

of a large lake and many primary rainforest streams in the area.

5.5   Local Communities in the PSP

The development of the PSP has direct impacts on two local communities, Kampung

Wang Kelian and Kaki Bukit. Kampung Wang Kelian is a homogeneous Malay

community with a population of approximately 200 people. Most of its people are

farmers working in paddy fields, rubber smallholdings, orchards and vegetable farms

besides rearing chickens and breeding fish. Kaki Bukit, with a population of 3,000, is

the main town outside the PSP. The community is predominantly Chinese, and some of

them are descendants of tin-miners who used to work in mining activities in caves that

ceased operations in the 1970s. They are currently involved in small businesses and

agricultural practices.

Since the establishment of the PSP project in 2000, PSFD has established a park

headquarters comprising a visitor centre at Wang Kelian and an accommodation centre

with chalets, dormitories and campsites at Wang Burma. As a matter of policy and

practicality, general workers at the park headquarters are sourced from local

communities to carry out maintenance work. Some of the general workers are also qualified nature guides, and they double up as guides for visitors to the natural attractions whenever required.

Meanwhile, the involvement of local communities in tourism-related business activities started even before the onset of PSP, through trading at Wang Kelian Border Market. Goods sold at the market include agricultural produce such as fruit and vegetables, cheap household items, clothes and handicraft (mostly from Thailand). The border market operates throughout the week, but the Sunday Market is the most popular and attracts disproportionately a large number of visitors to the area. Visitors vary from an estimate of 6,000 to an all time high of 40,000 (Amat, 2002). Records of 'free flow' border crossings showed an increase in the number of visitors from 396,983 in 1997 to 1, 317,775 in 2002 (Pos Imigresen, 2002). The Village Head of Wang Kelian estimates that about 20 families from Kampung Wang Kelian and 80 families from Kaki Bukit benefit directly from activities at the Sunday Market.

The international border in Wang Kelian not only functions as a tourist attraction, but it also has represented an easy means to cross the boundary where similar cultures but different societies meet (Timothy, 1995). Many parts of the world are full of examples where political lines have been drawn through regions populated by culturally similar groups of people. Wang Kelian is no exception, and contact between similar groups often goes unaltered by the presence of a political divide. As tourists are permitted to cross the border easily, the growth of tourism on both sides is greatly promoted, and

touristic areas eventually abut the boundary on both sides. As in many parts of the world, cross-border shopping in Wang Kelian is a common activity for a number of perceived benefits, including lower prices and taxes and a wider or different selection of goods. However, border can also be a barrier even in the context of tourism, and the growth of cross-border shopping along the US-Canadian border was blamed for a drastic increase in the loss of Canadian jobs, retail bankruptcies and billion of dollars in lost government revenue (Timothy, 1995). According to Suksuwan (2002), there is a perception among the local community in Wang Kelian that a leakage of revenue is occurring, whereby Thai traders are benefiting more from the Sunday market compared to local traders.

In general, incidence of poverty can still be observed in some of the villages surrounding PSP. Poverty gives rise to environmental problems such as faecal contamination of streams and the generally poor living conditions, in comparison to urban areas (Amat, 2002). While the state per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP) has improved from RM2,944 in 1985 (MPK, 1998) to RM10,802 in 2000 (GOM, 2001), the situation in Wang Kelian has not seen much change. Public facilities such as schools and clinics are still unavailable. The physical development in Wang Kelian is expected to improve with the development of a new tourist town to replace the existing Sunday market and the construction of a new housing development.

However, it is necessary to complement the physical development with human resource development, in order to develop tourism resources within PSP as economically viable

tourism products. Among the proposed measures to improve the community organisation and skills in Wang Kelian and Kaki Bukit are the establishment of a local cooperative and a revolving fund, to focus on training and education, to increase the role of women and to propose a homestay programme (GOM, 2001a).

5.6 Local Communities in Ulu Muda

In Ulu Muda, there are several villages located on both sides of the main road leading to the forested area, dam, natural attractions and resorts. The villages are Kampung Surau, Kampung Pinang, Kampung Bukit Berangan, Kampung Belantik Dalam, Kampung Belantik Luar and Kampung Kota Aur. The population is approximately 3,000 people, and all of them are Malay. They are mainly involved in paddy farming, rubber smallholdings, animal husbandry and fishing activities.

KOPAM or Ulu Muda Fishermen's Cooperative Association was established to safeguard the interests of fishermen, who depend upon fishery activities as their major livelihood. To supplement its members' incomes, this cooperative provides boat rentals (with or without a boatman-cum-guide), on a rotating scheme, to fishing enthusiasts and nature tourists (See Table 5.4 on Summary of Tourism Establishments in Ulu Muda). High Adventure Travel (HAT), which was established in December 2001, was the only tour operator in Ulu Muda that specialised in nature and adventure tours. However, HAT stopped operations in June 2002 due to poor demand and low tourist arrivals, caused by low water levels.

Table 5.4 Summary of Tourism Establishments in Ulu Muda

Area (Year Established)	Type of set-up	Features	Visitor Market Type
Desa Utara Pedu Lake (1995)	Resort	106 rooms (3-star)	High-end, leisure, business, team building
Mutiara Pedu Golf and Lake (1995)	Resort	80 rooms (3-star)	High-end, leisure, business, team building
Muda Resort	Resort	28 rooms	Medium to low end, training, team building, meetings
High Adventure Travel (HAT)	Tour operator	Campsites, observatory tours	High to low end, nature education
Fishermen's Cooperative Association (KOPAM)	Community jetty area	52 broad wooden boats	Fishing enthusiasts

Source: UPEN Kedah and WWFM (2002)

There are two private resorts and a government resort in the Ulu Muda and Pedu areas. The two private resorts located along the banks of Pedu Lake are Desa Utara Pedu Lake Resort (106 rooms) and Mutiara Pedu Golf and Lake Resort (80 rooms), while the government-owned Muda Resort (28 rooms) is located near the Muda reservoir (UPEN Kedah and WWFM, 2002). As is the case in the PSP, the presence of several resorts in Ulu Muda and Pedu only provides blue-collar jobs for the local people. This may be inevitable because local people usually do not have appropriate skills, knowledge and the required educational background, and management positions often go to outsiders. While the resorts provide employment opportunities to the local people, resort enclaves

are often criticised in the literature as being not only a major contributor to the negative impacts of tourism (Britton 1982, 1989, 1991; Rodenburg, 1980; Long, 1991), but also an inhibitor to local participation because of the large capital requirement for their development. Wall and Long (1996) argue that a large resort development needs to acquire economies of scale and access to international markets and marketing systems in order to be viable. Hence, profits are taken out of the community by outside investors. As a result, many small establishments yield low and highly variable occupancy rates.

Meanwhile, incidence of poverty can still be observed in most of the villages in Ulu Muda, but public facilities are adequate, for examples, schools, mosques and clinics. Shops, eateries and a petrol pump can be found along the trunk road leading to natural sites and resorts. Due to the dual nature of tourism functions, these business operators primarily serve the needs of local people, and are occasionally supported by visitors who pass-by the area. Local people usually make their purchases or utilise services at the closest opportunity to do so. The tourists, on the other hand, may ignore or bypass this intervening opportunity in favour of either a price advantage or a quality advantage elsewhere, especially at the resorts (Stansfield, 1996).

5.6.1 Establishment of Homestay programmes

In many developing countries, the proliferation of homestays is a response to economic opportunities associated with the growth of tourism (Wall and Long, 1996). Homestays provide opportunities for residents to participate actively in the development of tourism

by providing accommodation for visitors. Malaysians, in general, have a traditional love for meeting people, making new friends and welcoming guests into their own homes. This programme can act as an important mechanism to share and reinforce local values and customs to visitors (Abdullah and Yaman, 2005) because they experience direct interaction with the adopted family when they live together.

In Peninsular Malaysia, Japanese students are the main target market for homestay, but its supply as an overnight accommodation base is quite limited. There are real limits to how long someone can be entertained by the inevitably limited range of attractions in a village and its immediate environment. There are few tourists who wish to spend their entire holiday immersing themselves in the minutiae of daily village life (GOM, 2001a). Furthermore, most rural villages do not have the same exotic appeal of an indigenous tribe's village in East Malaysia. In many cases, they may not be much different from other small urban communities.

In the case of PSP, the present physical conditions of the houses in Wang Kelian fall below the required minimum standards specified by MOCAT to qualify for its homestay programme, especially in terms of cleanliness and hygiene (Perlis Forestry Department and DANIDA, 2002). Given their limited resources, the villagers may be advised to initially offer home-visits, in which tourists are taken around the village to experience the local way of life. It can later be upgraded to a proper homestay programme once the infrastructure is ready. In a related development, a licensed nature tour guide from Kangar, the state capital of Perlis, has always included Wang Kelian in his itinerary

when bringing foreign and local visitors to PSP. These home visits are conducted on an ad hoc basis with only a few houses selected by the nature guide as being suitable. This tour often includes visits to small local industries such as a mini-bakery producing traditional biscuits, tobacco smallholdings and fruit orchards.

5.7   Conclusion

The National Ecotourism Plan was developed in relation to national policies and plans. The policy thrust in the Eighth Malaysia Plan 2001-2005 is to achieve tourism growth on a sustainable basis. The initiatives by the state governments to develop Perlis State Park and Ulu Muda, respectively, as a premier ecotourism attraction are laudable because they can be seen as an important avenue to ensure sustainability of the natural resources and to enhance development in rural areas. The following chapter discusses the methodological approaches and strategies that are relevant for this study.

Chapter Six

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

6.0   Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodological choices made within this study and the decision to adopt a largely qualitative approach. At the beginning of the chapter, the general approaches to research are examined, followed by a discussion on the origin of qualitative research alongside the emergence of tourism research within social science disciplines. The significance of qualitative research is discussed in the subsequent section. The remaining parts of the chapter focus on case study as the research design, in-depth interview as the data collection technique and data analysis process.

6.1   Approaches to Research

In general, research is an organised, systematic process for investigating problems to find solutions or to increase understanding of problems and their underlying causes. Research also involves *finding out* and *explaining*. Finding out might be called the 'what?' of research – what is happening? what is the situation? Explaining might be called the 'how?' and the 'why?' research – how do things happen? why do they happen? Finding out involves description and gathering information. Explaining involves an attempt to understand that information, which goes beyond the descriptive.

Description and explanation can be seen as part of a circular model of research (Williamson *et al.*, 1982, p. 7) as illustrated in Figure 6.1. Research methods should facilitate both of these processes: describing and explaining.

Figure 6.1 Circular model of the research process
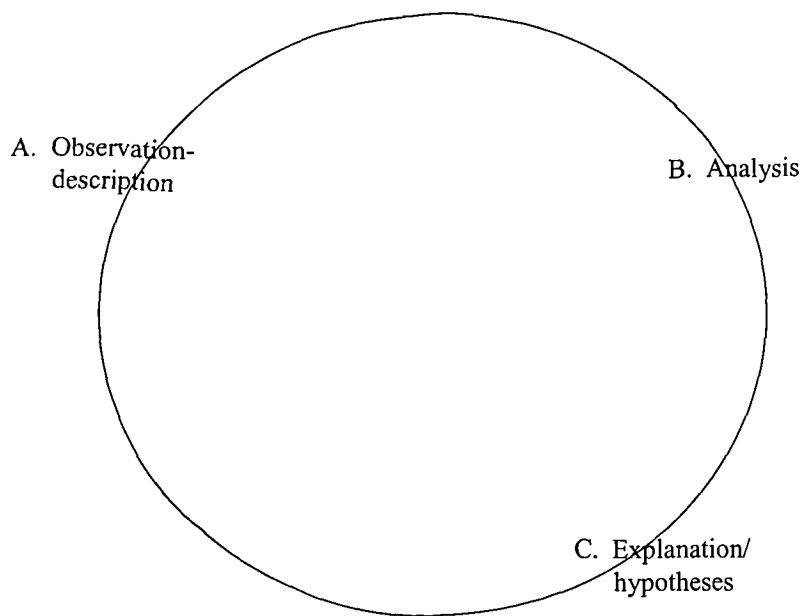
Source: Williamson *et al.,* (1982)

A research process can begin at point A, description, or at point C, explanation/theory formulation. A research project may involve a single circuit or a number of circuits, possibly in both directions. If the research process begins with description at point A, and moves from there to explanation, the process is described as *inductive*. The explanation is induced from the data – the data come first and explanation later. If the

research process starts with prior logical reasoning at point C, then it involves *deduction*. This entails developing hypotheses as to how or why something might happen, then collecting the requisite data to test the hypotheses.

Hypotheses are statements which may be supported or refuted by the evidence, and might arise from informal observation and experience of the researcher or from the existing literature. If the hypotheses form a coherent whole and possibly relate to other ideas about human behaviour, then they may form *theories* (Veal, 1992). In practice, however, data are rarely collected without some explanatory model in mind (Veal, 1992). Otherwise, how could the researcher know what data to collect? There is always an element of deduction. Likewise, it is also not possible to develop hypotheses and theories without at least some initial information on the subject in hand. So, there is always an element of induction.

Related to the circular model of research postulated by Williamson *et al.* (1982), Berg (2004) points out how ideas promote potential research endeavours because the generation of an idea is a typical starting point for every research project. But how is the idea related to theory? There are some who argue that ideas and theory must come before empirical research. This has been called the *theory-before-research* model (Nachmias and Nachmias, 1992, p. 46). Others argue that research must occur before theory can be developed, and this research orientation has been called the *research-before-theory* model (Merton, 1968). Berg (2004), however, argues for a different model for the research enterprise that encompasses both the research-before-theory and

theory-before-research models. The proposed approach is conceived as spiralling rather than linear in its progression, as illustrated in Figure 6.2. In this approach, researchers begin with an idea, gather theoretical information, reconsider and redefine the idea, begin to examine possible designs, re-examine theoretical assumptions, and refine these theoretical assumptions and perhaps even the original or refine idea. Thus, with every two steps forwards, researchers take a step or two backward before proceeding any further.

Figure 6.2 The Spiraling Research Approach
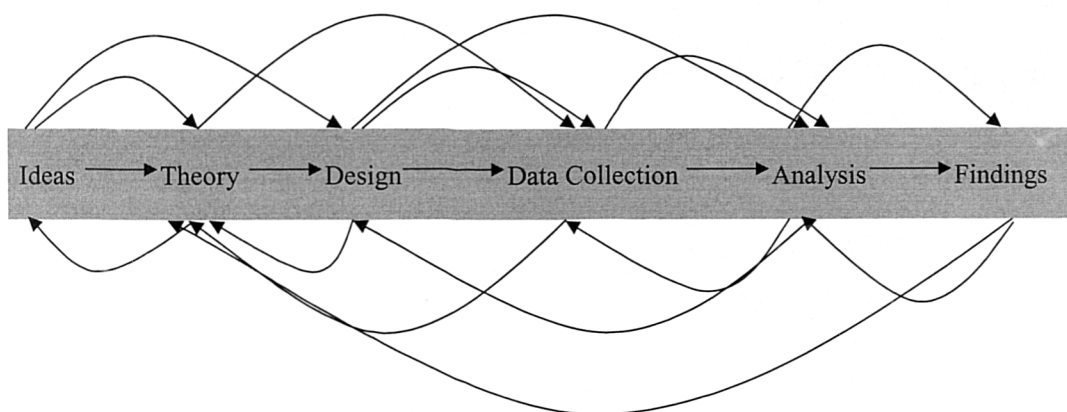
Source: Berg (2004: 20)

6.2   Origin of Qualitative Research and Tourism Research

Qualitative research is as old as social science itself. In the nineteenth century, tension arose between scholars within the fields of sociology, anthropology and psychology, who were believers in the admirable 'objective' results achieved in the much older

natural sciences, and those who felt that 'human' sciences needed a different approach because of their complexity and the existence of a phenomenon unknown in the mechanical world: consciousness (Tesch, 1990). The 'objective' social scientists aspired to the clean and clear rules that physics and chemistry could produce, and their philosophical stance is what is today known as 'positivism' (a term made popular by Saint-Simon of the French enlightenment movement) that refers to the 'positive' data of experience as the basis of all science (Encyclopedia Britannica, 1974, p. 877). In contrast, other scholars argued that human beings were not things and did not function according to such simple causal laws. These scholars were soon known as anti-positivists, who were inspired by the German romantic movement that 'recognised the life experience of humans, the emotional and vital feeling of life and the engagement of human with others and with the world' (Polkinghorne, 1983, p. 21).

However, these early promoters of a humanistic social science were unable to produce a method of investigation that could rival the coherent and standardised natural science procedures of measurement and experimentation. Except in sociology, where some scholars combined statistical and 'journalistic' methods, non-positivistic researchers found themselves in a pitiful minority (Tesch, 1990). Despite the dominance of positivistic methods, researchers in small niches of all social sciences had quietly continued to conduct non-positivistic studies. They did not construct concepts and measured variables. They observed, described, asked, listened, analysed and interpreted, and some even published accounts of their methods (Webb and Webb, 1932).

In the context of tourism research, there was initial reluctance by the social scientists to embark on the study of tourism. Since the 1930s, when mass tourism emerged in France and other places, it has become a salient social fact of the contemporary world. Yet social scientists have shown a strange reluctance to consider this phenomenon (Dann *et al.*, 1988). Richter (1983, p. 314) points out that, though tourism is only surpassed by oil as an item in world trade, 'political science has scarcely a clue about it'. Additionally, Mitchell (1979) claims that, though research on tourism has been conducted by geographers for about fifty years, there is still a dearth of publications in the geographic literature on the subject.

The bulk of leisure and tourism research has arisen not from the demands of practising managers, but from the interests of academics who generally owe allegiance to particular disciplines. Early studies of tourism usually came about as a spin-off from other research (Nunez, 1977). The most significant of these disciplines are sociology, geography, economics, psychology and social psychology, and history. While the above statement is broadly true of both leisure and tourism research, it is more true of the former than the latter (Veal, 1992).

Lack of financial support was one of the reasons why social scientists were reluctant to turn to tourism. In addition, social scientists tended to avoid it to maintain their image as serious scholars because tourism often has a frivolous side (Matthews, 1983). As the work of tourism has proliferated, the full extent of this large, intricate and multidimensional field is beginning to unfold, and tourism has become a legitimate area

for systematic investigation since the 1970s (Dann *et al.*, 1988). The growth in tourism has precipitated a complementary need for growth in tourism information. Research has become an important tool for the tourism industry both nationally and internationally since most parts of the world are touched by tourism in one way or another. It is a tool used by private and public sectors alike to gather data on a variety of aspects of tourism (Jennings, 2001).

In ecotourism research, there has been an abundance of studies of the economic impact of ecotourism development because economic benefits of tourism are often the driving force for implementing ecotourism. The large majority of those studies use an input-output economic model (Backman and Morais, 2001). There is also a significant component of the ecotourism literature that employs qualitative methods to examine various ecotourism phenomena. The use of qualitative methods is arguably very useful in this field due to the lack of knowledge and need for understanding the meaning of phenomena that do not necessarily obey the theories developed under the scope of mass tourism (Backman and Morais, 2001).

6.3   The Significance of Qualitative Research

In the past, many researchers believed that the only phenomena that counted in the social sciences were those that could be measured. They called any phenomenon they intended to study a 'variable', indicating that the phenomenon could vary in size, length, amount or any other quantity. The qualitative approach to research, which is based on non-

numerical data, is not concerned with this sort of statistical analysis because not all phenomena in the human world come naturally in quantities. There are many occasions in which the researcher would not want to count or quantify some social phenomenon or interaction, but to investigate those unobservable and intangible factors that help explain human behaviour – only words can do that (Clark *et al.*, 1998).

Van Maanen (1983, p. 9) argues that qualitative methods seek to 'describe, decode and translate ... the meaning ... of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world', in situations where the *frequency* of the phenomenon is not the issue. Qualitative research is concerned with descriptive information, concepts, meanings, ideas, insights, new perspectives and understandings (Ryan, 1995). It also acts as a foundation on which strong, reliable research programmes are based, and is often the first step in a research programme to uncover motivations, reasons, impressions, perceptions and ideas that relevant individuals have about a subject of interest (Peterson, 1994).

The sample size of qualitative research is small, but it provides an extensive amount of information from the comments of the respondents. Such 'thick descriptions' provide detail of the context and meaning of events and situations for those involved and those investigating (Geertz, 1983). In principle, this type of research gathers a great deal of information about a small number of people rather than a limited amount of information about a large number of people, as is the case in quantitative research. The information gathered is generally not presentable in numerical form. In the context of tourism, for

example, the information is based on an understanding of a particular situation in a tourist destination, however unrepresentative it might be, is of more value than a limited understanding of a large, 'representative' group.

According to Veal (1992), qualitative research can be used for pragmatic reasons, in situations where formal and quantified research is unnecessary, impossible or inappropriate. There are also theoretical reasons for using qualitative methods. For example, it may be felt that structured research imposes too much of the researcher's view on the situation, that it is inappropriate for the researcher to be the only one to determine the whole framework within which the discourse of the research will be conducted. Furthermore, qualitative approaches may be appropriate at different stages of the research process that have different objectives.

With specific reference to leisure research, Kelly (1980) argues that qualitative research has the following advantages over quantitative research:

- Leisure is a qualitative experience, and the method corresponds with the nature of the phenomenon being studied.

- Leisure itself involves a great deal of face-to-face interaction between people, and qualitative research is much better at investigating this.

- The method is better able to encompass change over time. In contrast, quantitative research tends to look at current behaviour as related to current

social, economic and environmental circumstances, ignoring the fact that most

people's behaviour is heavily influenced by their life history and experience.

- The results may be more understandable to people who are not statistically

  trained.

Table 6.1 illustrates the main differences in the approaches to research between

qualitative and quantitative research.

Table 6.1 Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches to Research

	Qualitative	Quantitative
Design characteristics	Emergent design	Pre-ordinate design
Data	Meaning using words	Measurement using numbers
Setting	Natural, interactive, personal	Impersonal, controlled, manipulative
Relationship with theory	Developing theory	Confirming theory
Process and procedure	Intuitive	Rational

Source: Henderson (1990: 177)

6.4 Research Strategy and Questions

The approach in this research is qualitative and inductive in nature because its

theoretical orientation is consistent with the assumptions of a qualitative paradigm. As

Creswell (1994) states, this research includes an enquiry process of understanding an

ecotourism problem by building a complex, holistic picture formed with words,

reporting the detailed views of informants and conducting this research in a natural setting. A qualitative approach is considered to be appropriate because the research questions, which are generated by the research problem, are concentrated to a few subjects that require a great deal of information on them.

As noted in Chapter 1, the main research questions are:

i)   To what extent does ecotourism contribute to community's livelihoods? This will be addressed by exploring local opportunities and limitations in the industry, given the prevailing socio-political, economic and cultural structure in many developing countries including Malaysia, and

ii)   To what extent can 'bottom-up' approaches to planning be implemented within a top-down planning system in Malaysia? How does the local community engage in the planning process and how does the community mechanism operate?

Defining the above research questions is probably the most important step to be taken in a research study. In fact, the type of research question is one of three basic conditions that distinguish five major research strategies in the social sciences, as illustrated in Table 6.2. The remaining two conditions are: i) the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural events, and ii) the degree of focus on contemporary as opposed to historical events (Yin, 1994). Based on the above illustration, the case study was deemed the most relevant strategy for this research

because 'how' and 'why' questions are focus of the study, and the questions are examining contemporary events over which the researcher has little or no control.

Table 6.2 Relevant Situations for Different Research Strategies

Strategy	Form of research question	Requires control over behavioural events?	Focuses on contemporary events?
Experiment	how, why	yes	yes
Survey	who, what, where, how many, how much	no	yes
Archival analysis	who, what, where, how many, how much	no	yes/no
History	how, why	no	no
Case study	how, why	no	yes

Source: Yin (1994)

6.5 A Case Study Approach

There are four major components of a research design that are especially important for a case study. These are:

- a study's questions and its propositions (if any),

- its unit (s) of analysis,

- the logic linking the data and the propositions,

- the criteria for interpreting the findings.

The first part has been discussed in the previous section, and the remaining parts will be discussed in the subsequent sections of this chapter.

In general, researchers have used the case study method for many years across a variety of disciplines. Social scientists have made wide use of this method to investigate contemporary real-life situations and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods. The case study has been used very frequently in the general tourism literature (Ryan, 1995), and it is also the most frequently used qualitative method in the ecotourism literature (Backman and Morais, 2001). In tourism research, case studies are used mainly to describe the evolution of several variables supposedly due to the implementation of specific tourism developments.

Defining 'case studies' is not necessarily as simple as it may appear because many authors and researchers tend to use the terms 'cases' and 'case studies' somewhat interchangeably. Cases and case studies are not synonymous (Robson, 1993). Some authors refer to case studies as a 'strategy' (Robson, 1993; Hartley, 1994; Eisenhardt, 1995), an 'approach' (Rose, 1991; Hamel et al., 1993), or a 'method' (Merriam, 1988; Smith, 1991) for undertaking research. Some researchers strongly contend that case study research is predominantly qualitative rather than quantitative in nature (Smith, 1991), while others take a more balanced perspective in claiming that there is no a priori reason to characterise and classify case study research as one or the other (Hartley, 1994).

For simplicity purposes, this research adopts Bromley's (1986, p. 7,8) definition of a

case study as 'a general term widely used in the social and behavioural sciences to refer

to the description and analysis of a particular entity [which are] natural occurrences

within definable boundaries'. In other words, a case study is a discrete, bounded entity

within which the phenomenon and context are inseparable facets of the study. Creswell

(1998) refers to a case study as an exploration of a 'bounded system', which is bounded

by time and place. In principle, once the issue or problem or area of interest has been

defined, the parameters of the unit of analysis – the case study – should be quite clear

(Clark *et al.*, 1998).

The two case studies, the Perlis State Park and Ulu Muda, were selected because they

exist and function within a dynamic context of surrounding circumstances. With data

collected over a period of time, the aim of the research is to develop a wider

understanding and provide an analysis of the context and processes involved in the

phenomenon under study. As Hartley (1994, p. 208,209) points out 'the phenomenon is

not isolated from its context ... but is of interest precisely because it is in relation to its

context'. Thus, if the phenomenon-context is central to the definition of what constitutes

a case study, it can be argued that the ability to satisfactorily identify and bound both the

phenomenon, or subject, and its context is the key issue (Abbott, 1992). According to

Gummesson (1991), the inseparability of phenomenon and context in case study

research presents a 'natural' opportunity to obtain holistic synergies. Where

phenomenon and context are conceived as a single entity, the case becomes a 'whole'

from the outset. Nevertheless, the process of 'bounding' a case study is not without

problems. Abbott (1992) suggests the researcher's ontological stance will have a

fundamental impact upon how case studies are conceived and defined. The positivist

position requires rigidly delimitable cases and assigns them properties with trans-case

meanings, while the phenomenological perspective assumes cases with fuzzy boundaries

and takes all properties to have case-specific meanings (Abbott, 1992).

In the literature, case studies can be categorised in a number of different ways, which are

not mutually exclusive. They can be differentiated according to their primary

disciplinary base, assuming that they have not been explicitly designed as

interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary ventures (Brotherton, 1999). Case studies can also

be classified according to their theoretical orientation (Hartley, 1994) – deductive versus

inductive in nature, as discussed in the previous section. Stake (1995) makes the

typological distinction between case studies on the basis of the purpose of the study.

The *intrinsic* type of case is undertaken because of an interest in, or the need to know

about its specifics, the case itself is of interest. On the other hand, the *instrumental* case

is studied as a means to develop a wider understanding of a particular issue or to redraw

generalisation, the case is of secondary interest. It is also possible to dichotomise cases

into 'typical' and 'atypical' instances of a given phenomenon: average, extreme, unique

or replication.

Additionally, Merriam (1988) suggests that case studies can be classified according to

the objective of the research and the nature of the final report. A *descriptive* case study

presents a detailed account of the particular phenomenon being studied. An

interpretative case study also contains detailed descriptive materials, but is characterised by a greater extent and degree of abstraction and conceptualisation. This may range from suggesting possible, emergent relationships, categories, and typologies to the construction of a more formalised theoretical framework. An *evaluative* case study embraces not only those elements of description and explanation found in descriptive and interpretative case studies, but it also incorporates the element of judgement.

Jensen and Rodgers (2001) offer another typology of case studies:

- *Snapshot case studies* - detailed, objective studies of one research at one point in time.

- *Longitudinal case studies* - studies of one research entity at multiple time points.

- *Pre-post case studies* - studies of one research at two time points separated by a critical event. A critical event is one that on the basis of a theory under study would be expected to impact on case observations significantly.

- *Patchwork case studies* - a set of multiple case studies of the same research entity, using snapshot, longitudinal and/or pre-post designs. This multi-design approach is intended to provide a more holistic view of the dynamics of the research subject.

- *Comparative case studies* - set of multiple case studies of multiple research entities for the purpose of cross-unit comparison.

Finally, Yin (1994) subdivides case studies into single or multiples studies, with holistic

or embedded units of analysis. This combination produces a 2 x 2 matrix which Yin

uses to suggest a fourfold typology, as illustrated in Figure 6.3. With reference to Yin's

typology, the case study design of this research falls within Type 3, in which the Perlis

State Park and Ulu Muda are two holistic units of analysis, and each case becomes

subordinate to the overall scope of the study. Obviously, the multiple case study,

whereby a number of individual situations are investigated, may be far more powerful

and fruitful because of the ability to compare and contrast findings (Clark *et al.*, 1998).

Figure 6.3 Case study research design

	Single cases	Multiple cases
Holistic	TYPE 1	TYPE 3
Embedded	TYPE 2	TYPE 4

Source: Yin (1994: 39)

Hartley (1994) argues that there are instances where the case study is likely to be the appropriate choice:

- satisfactory answers to the research question are contingent upon developing an understanding within a context (be that historical or contemporary);

- the phenomenon is new or little understood at present;

- the intention is to explore extreme or atypical incidence of the phenomenon and/or its emergent properties [the discovery of unanticipated findings and the openness to surprise are the real strengths of case studies (Platt, 1988)];

- the dynamics of the phenomenon need to be incorporated;

- a detailed understanding of meanings is required in comparative research.

Although case study is a distinctive form of empirical inquiry, many research investigators have prejudices against a case study strategy. Critics of this method claim that the study of a small number of cases offers no grounds for establishing reliability or scientific generalisability of findings; it is obviously not possible to make inferences about all 'cases' on the basis of empirical data collected from a sample of one. Others argue that it takes too long, and intense exposure to study of the case biases the findings. Some dismiss case study research as useful only as an exploratory tool.

However, according to Brotherton (1999), the case study method is capable of providing valid theoretical generalisation beyond the specific case(s) considered in the study, especially if the results can be compared against existing studies to strengthen the

validity of theories or to suggest refinement of theories (Clark *et al.*, 1998). Generalisations are closely related to theory, the difference being that theory specifies the relationship among a set of variables while generalisations concern the extent to which whatever relationships are uncovered in a particular situation can be expected to hold true for every situation (Patton, 1980). Yin (1994) argues that the case study, like the experiment, does not represent a 'sample', and the invesigator's goal is to expand and generalise theories (analytic generalisation) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalisation). Additionally, Bassey (1981, p. 85,86) points out that 'the relatability of a case study is important ... if they are relatable, and if by publication of the findings, they extend beyond the boundaries of existing knowledge, then they are valid'. It is reasonable to suggest that the selection of case study research, as a preferred method, is far more likely in research studies having a qualitative orientation. Some authors justify this largely on the basis that studies with a qualitative orientation are concerned with the uniqueness of the particular, rather than the universality of the general. Furthermore, case study research facilitates logical rather than statistical inferences (Brotherton, 1999).

6.6   Data Collection Technique – In-depth Interviews

In a qualitative study, two approaches to the unit of observation can be used. The *emic* approach emphasises the importance of collecting data in the form of verbatim texts from the informants in order to preserve the original meaning of the information (Pelto and Pelto, 1978). Some examples of this method are participant observation, key-

informant interviewing and collection of life histories. The second approach is the *etic* which studies human behaviour as the classification of body motions in terms of the effect these emotions have on the environment (Pelto and Pelto, 1978). Some *etic*-focused study methods are measurement of social interaction, proxemics and videotape research, and content analysis.

This research adopted the *emic*-study method by conducting a total of 81 in-depth interviews among officers from government agencies and non-governmental organisations, town and country planners, managers and staff of park operations and local people – particularly the village heads and business people (see Appendix I for the 'Full List of Interviewees'). The actual fieldwork was conducted between mid-May to mid-August 2003. In principle, informant samples for qualitative research tend to be relatively smaller and non-random, and the selection of interview informants is also driven by objectives other than generalisability (Kwortnik, 2003).

The general breakdown of interviews, according to main categories, is illustrated in Table 6.3. It should be noted that an additional five interviews were conducted among town and country planners in other states in Peninsular Malaysia to strengthen the data and to substantiate some claims made in the findings with regards to planning practice in the country. The respondents are selected from a combination of criteria and snowball sampling to include people with experience of the phenomena being studied, on the assumption that 'one wants to discover, understand, gain insight; therefore, one needs to select a sample from which one can learn the most' (Merriam, 1988, p. 48). The

researcher uses their knowledge to determine who or what study units are the most

appropriate for inclusion in the study based on the potential study units' knowledge base

or closeness of fit to criteria associated with the study's focus (Jennings, 2001), for

examples, Village Heads on community issues, state planners on planning issues and

state directors of government agencies on various implementation issues.

Table 6.3 General breakdown of interviews according to categories

	Government Institutions			Local Communities		Private/ NGOs	PSP/ resort staff	Sub-total
	State/Local authorities	Planning	Educa-tional	Local people	Business people			
PSP	13	2	1	13	8	3	3	43
Ulu Muda	11	1	1	12	3		3	31
Other states		4				1		5
Unrecorded interview		2						2
TOTAL	24	9	2	25	11	4	6	81

In-depth interview techniques are used because they allow the researcher to enter into

other people's perspective, with the assumption that the perspective is meaningful,

knowable and able to be made explicit (Patton, 1980). The researcher needs to ask

questions about how people have organised the world and the meanings they attach to

what goes on in the world. Some authors subdivide this phenomenological approach to collecting qualitative data into unstructured and semi-structured interviews, and Easterby-Smith *et al.*, (1991) suggest that these types of interviews are appropriate when:

- it is necessary to understand the construct that the interviewee uses as a basis for his or her opinions and beliefs about a particular matter or situation;

- the aim of the researcher is to develop an understanding of the respondent's world;

- the step-by-step logic of a situation is not clear;

- the subject matter is highly confidential or commercially sensitive;

- the interviewee may be reluctant to be truthful about this issue other than confidentiality in one-to-one situation.

Questions from unstructured and semi-structured interviews are likely to be open-ended. There is a general assumption that the longer, the more difficult and the more open-ended the question schedule is, the more likely the preference will be for the use of interviews (Oppenheim, 1992). According to Patton (1980), there are three basic approaches to open-ended interviews, which are:

- the informal conversational interview;

- the general interview guide approach; and

- the standardised open-ended interview.

The *informal conversational interview* relies entirely on the spontaneous generation of questions in the natural flow of an interaction, typically an interview that takes place as part of an ongoing participant observation exercise. The *general interview guide* approach involves outlining a set of issues to be explored with each respondent, but the interview guide simply serves as a basic checklist during the interview to make sure all relevant topics are covered. The *standardised open-ended interview* consists of a set of questions carefully worded and arranged with the intention of taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions with essentially the same words. The third approach is used when it is important to reduce time and to minimise variation in the questions posed to interviewees as well as to obtain systematic and thorough data. However, that approach reduces flexibility and spontaneity (Patton, 1980).

When conducting the fieldwork, the researcher combined the general interview guide approach with the standardised open-ended approach. Thus, a number of basic questions are worded in a predetermined fashion to guide the dialogue toward specific topics (see Appendix II on the 'List of Main Interview Questions'), while permitting the interviewer more flexibility in probing and more decision-making flexibility in determining when it is appropriate to explore certain subjects in greater depth. It even allows the interviewer to undertake whole new areas of inquiry that were not originally included in the interview instrument (Patton, 1980). These are basically the strengths of qualitative approaches to interviewing because the researcher can ask more complex questions and ask follow-up questions, thus, further information can be obtained.

Additionally, respondents can express their understandings as precisely as possible in their own terms and words, and non-verbal communications such as the attitude and behaviour of the interviewees can also be observed. In contrast to quantitative evaluation techniques, such closed instruments force respondents to fit their knowledge, experiences and feelings into the evaluator's categories. Despite their advantages, there are several problems associated with conducting interviews. The process can be very time consuming and expensive, and there is an issue of data confidentiality. Respondents cooperated very well during interviews because confidentiality of data was assured, and this promise must be honoured in order to uphold good ethical practice. Data confidentiality and anonymity of respondents are important because they can enhance trust and reduce the chance that participants will try to play the role of 'good subjects' by telling the interviewer what they think he or she wants to hear (Rosnow and Rosenthal, 1997).

In a qualitative study, there is no definitive answer to how many in-depth interviews should be conducted. Thirty to forty interviews is probably typical (Oppenheim, 1966), but the researcher has managed to conduct eighty-one interviews due to good cooperation from respondents in both study areas. During the fieldwork, additional interviews were conducted up to the point when the researcher felt that redundancy or *theoretical saturation* had been achieved, where no new insights emerged from the analysis of an additional case (Strauss and Corbin, 1998).

For practical purposes, all interviews except two are recorded on tape, so that they can be analysed in detail afterwards. When tape-recording was not permissible, notes were taken at the time of the interviews. Audio recording has advantage over note taking because note taking is time consuming, and the interviewer may unwittingly leave out important information, miss behavioural clues and not explore all the issues because he or she is busy writing.

6.7 Data Analysis Stage

There is a need for careful analysis of any qualitative data if it is to provide useful and meaningful information, so that valid and reliable conclusions can be drawn from it. The goal of qualitative data analysis is to summarise the data into related themes and patterns, to discover relationships among the themes and patterns, and to develop explanations for these relationships (Walsh, 2003). As Patton (1980) points out, this analysis process falls into three stages: *analysis*, *interpretation* and *evaluation*. *Analysis* is the process of bringing order to the data, organising what is there into patterns, categories and basic descriptive units. *Interpretation* involves attaching meanings and significance to the analysis, explaining descriptive patterns, and looking for relationships and linkages among descriptive dimensions. *Evaluation* involves making judgements about and assigning value to what has been analysed and interpreted (Patton, 1980).

Miles and Huberman (1994) and Ritchie and Spencer (1994) demonstrate frameworks that are similar in their conceptual principles and both take a very pragmatic approach to

the analysis of qualitative data, as illustrated in Table 6.4. The procedures are neither 'scientific' nor 'mechanistic' (Tesch, 1990), and they should not be viewed as a rigid structure to be followed, but rather as a form to allow the appropriate framework for analysis to be created or developed.

Table 6.4 Stages in the data analysis process

Stage number	Miles and Huberman (1994)	Ritchie and Spencer (1994)
1	Early steps in analysis	Familiarisation and identification of thematic framework
2	Exploring and describing	Indexing
3	Ordering and explaining	Charting
4	Drawing and verifying conclusions	Mapping and interpretation

Source: Miles and Huberman (1994) and Ritchie and Spencer (1994)

All recorded interviews from the fieldwork had been transcribed prior to the analysis stage. This is a labourious process because one hour of interview, for example, takes as much as six hours to transcribe. There is a great value in producing complete verbatim transcripts of interviews because they can be used to analyse the results of interviews in a methodical manner (see Appendix III on the 'Example of a Transcribed Interview'). However, it was not done completely verbatim since the explanation or repetition of the interview questions were not repeated in the transcription.

The initial steps in the analysis involve methodical procedures to classify and organise data, and thematic analysis approach is used to organise this raw information. Thematic analysis is a process for encoding qualitative information. The encoding requires an explicit 'code', which can be a list of themes, indicators, and qualifications that are causally related, or something in between these two forms (Boyatzis, 1998). A theme is a pattern found in the information that at minimum describes and organises the possible observations, and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon. A theme may be identified at the manifest level (directly observable in the information) or at the latent level (underlying the phenomenon). According to Boyatzis (1998), thematic analysis can be used for several purposes:

- a way of seeing,

- a way of making sense out of seemingly unrelated material,

- a way of analysing qualitative information,

- a way of systematically observing a person, an interaction, a group, a situation, an organisation, or a culture, and

- a way of converting qualitative information into quantitative data.

There are a number of competencies to use thematic analysis effectively: 1) *pattern recognition* is the ability to see patterns in seemingly random information, 2) *openness and flexibility* of the researcher to perceive the patterns, 3) *planning and systems thinking* that enable a person to organise his or her observations into a usable system,

that others can use or the person can use consistently at other times, and 4) *relevant*

knowledge to the area being studied (Boyatzis, 1998).

In the first stage of thematic analysis, the researcher must be able to 'sense themes' or to

recognise the codable moment. By reviewing the transcripts repeatedly, the researcher

is involved in 'total immersion' in the data. A careful, line-by-line reading intends to

look for processes, actions, assumptions and consequences. The next stage is to develop

a coding scheme inductively and manually, which involves giving names to codes only

when the notes and analysis start suggesting possible labels, in order to capture the

essence of the observations and to organise concepts from the transcripts. According to

Strauss and Corbin (1998), analysis of the initial few interviews relies on the process of

textual deconstruction, meaning-based abstraction and conceptual labelling. However,

with the reading of each new interview, the analytic strategy may gradually shift from

open coding of data to comparison of new data elements with previously coded incidents

that shared similar conceptual properties. Qualitative researchers describe this iterative

process of back-and-forth analysis in which new data are compared to concepts in use

and new concepts are compared to previously coded data as constant comparative

analysis. The range of tactics used appears to be large, ranging from the typical and

wide use of comparison/contrast, noting of patterns and themes, clustering, use of

metaphors to confirmatory tactics, looking for negative cases, following up surprises,

and checking results with respondents (Miles and Huberman, 1994). Gherardi and

Turner (1987) characterise this process as 'data transformation', in which the

information is condensed, clustered, sorted and linked over time.

The themes are then clustered into main headings, which are juxtaposed against one another to ensure they are conceptually distinct. The main headings are important because they guide the development of a theoretical model, in which researchers present a 'logical chain of evidence' (Huberman and Miles, 1994). The main headings of the findings, which are discussed in details in Chapter 7 and 8, are as follows:

- the conception and understanding of ecotourism as a term,

- community relationship with the forest,

- community relationship with the park,

- community relationship with tourism,

- community involvement in business,

- management issues of PSP and Ulu Muda,

- JKKK as a community mechanism,

- local involvement in the planning process,

- planning practice in Malaysia, and

- tourism planning practice in Malaysia.

The development of themes is illustrated in Figures 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6. The main purpose of the illustration is to causally relate a list of themes, which describes the essence of the observations. In Figure 6.4, for example, the themes interpret the main phenomena of the community context and its relationship with the forest, and the pattern found enables the researcher to systematically observe the relationship of themes and to seek a logical

understanding of the situation. Figures 6.5 and 6.6, respectively, demonstrate the relationship of themes in two different contexts: 'community involvement in business in PSP' and 'local involvement in the planning process'.

Figure 6.4 | **Community Relationship with the Forest**

Before the park was established

After the park was established

- easy access to the forest

- local people earned income from the forest

Local relationship with nature

- Malays treat nature as nothing special, unlike Chinese who are predominantly urban
- local opportunities to propagate plants for sale to increase nature awareness

- control/limited access ⟶ law enforcement

- local income generally not dependent upon forest

government agency plays a 'soft' approach

- local people generally support forest conservation

isolated encroachment/ resource exploitation

- demands for such products by urban communities
- Malays treat forest as a commodity provider
- encroachment issues are more contained in PSP

- lack of coordination among agencies shortage of manpower
- lack of patrolling

| Figure 6.5 | Community Involvement in Business in PSP |

Border Market

Main attractions
- Siamese goods
- easy to cross border
- pleasant environment

Initial stage

Later stage

- good local participation

- strong competition from Thai traders
- lack of business skills and capital among local traders

Business conflict

- local traders start to sublet and sell premises

Outside monopoly

Thai traders start to encroach Malaysian territory, conflict is aggravated by lack of enforcement from the authority

Development of border town

- leakage to Thailand
- whether it benefits local economies?

Development of a new tourist town

+ve
- clean environment for shopping

-ve
- land and property price inflation

Proposal to build a duty free complex

- development is perceived to be inappropriate

Monopoly of other business opportunities by outsiders

local people do not have the required capital and skills, local community is defined in a wider context

Figure 6.6 | **Local Involvement in the Planning Process**

Level of community participation is low

Planner's view

Local community's view

- lack of planning awareness among the public

- strong culture of paternalism

- elitist perception
    - local people are unable to make informed decision

- time consuming

- redundancy among bottom-up planning applications

- reports too technical

- other determinants that affect participation level, location of meetings and types of communities

- one-way communication process

- local people are not anti-development

- lack of capital

- local role is limited to infrastructure planning

- presence of an opportunist group excludes ordinary community members from attending meetings

In the final stage, the researcher interprets the information and themes to draw meaning from the displayed data. When interpreting the data, the useful and common technique is to include quotes from the respondents, and these provide 'illuminative' statements to support the data analysis and interpretation and may help understanding as they 'tell it like it is' (Coolican, 1996, p. 103). However, communication of the 'meaning' of the findings required translation into English because most of the raw information generated

was in the Malay language. Two other Malay-speaking research students at The Scottish Hotel School verified the consistency of judgement - the reliability - by checking whether the data had been encoded in a consistent manner and had been accurately interpreted. In other words, the perception and coding do not merely reflect the researcher's idiosyncratic view of the world because sometimes the researcher is tempted to project his or her values or conceptualisation of the events onto the people from whom the raw information has been collected (Boyatzis, 1998).

Computer software was not used in the data analysis primarily because most of the raw data was in the Malay language and a qualitative software package was not available in the Malay version. It would be very time consuming and expensive to translate nearly three hundred pages of transcript notes because additional translators must be used to minimise subjectivity and to seek consistency in data interpretation. When data is kept in its original form, more valid findings can be expected because they accurately represent what is happening in the field. In other words, the data collected is a true picture of what is being studied.

Moreover, the researcher had no intention of breaking the meaning of texts into quantifiable units because computer-assisted analysis fails to take into account important situational and contextual factors (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994); the task of the analyst is to bring out the hidden meanings in the text. Likewise, many practitioners express reservations about using computer software, assuming that it will result in quantitative analyses of qualitative data and a time-consuming learning curve (Maclaran and

Catterall, 2002). Another concern was that researchers might wind up adapting their research to the software they use, rather than the other way around (Lonkila, 1995; Coffey *et al.*, 1996; Kelle, 1997) – that is the software will impose a methodological or conceptual approach. In fact, software developers bring assumptions, conceptual frameworks, and sometimes even methodological and theoretical ideologies to the development of their products.

6.8   Limitations of the Research Methodology

Although sampling was based on snowball and criteria techniques, the selection of respondents was based on their proximity, availability and the ease with which the researcher can access them at the time the study was conducted. It enables quick collection of data within a limited time frame. The researcher was constrained by time because the fieldwork had to be completed within a three-month period. As a result, some respondents were conveniently selected, depending on their availability, as long as they matched the criteria.

6.9   Conclusion

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the research methodology, strategy and design used in this research activity. A qualitative approach is considered to be appropriate because the research questions are concentrated to a few subjects that require detail of the context and meaning of events from the respondents. Although case study method is

used as an exploratory tool, it is capable of providing valid theoretical generalisation

beyond the two cases considered in the study. The use of in-depth interviews enhances

the richness of data, which are subsequently analysed using thematic analysis approach.

The data collected from the respondents is presented in the chapter that follows.

Chapter   Seven

FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH – COMMUNITY
INVOLVEMENT IN ECOTOURISM

7.0   Introduction

To begin with, this chapter discusses a general overview of interview responses within

and across categories of respondents, followed by presentation of findings according to

the main headings, as mentioned in Chapter Six.

7.1   An Overview of Interview Responses

It is evident from Table 6.3 in Chapter Six, respondents are diverse in terms of their

professional background, stake holding and level of hierarchy. This situation has

inevitably created richness of data and diversity in their responses. In general, responses

are broadly consistent in each category. For example, local communities in both study

areas are generally supportive of forest conservation, tourism development and park's

establishment.

However, there are circumstances where responses appear to be at variance with one

another, both within and across categories. One interesting example is the different

perception among different communities and government agency towards the homestay

programme. While the findings indicate that the Malays are more supportive of the programme, the Chinese do not see it as a business proposition. In addition, the programme has been put on hold because the State Forestry's priority is to generate revenue from the park's chalet accommodation. In another instance, a number of Malay respondents in the study treat forest as a commodity provider and engage in resource exploitation activities. On the other hand, the Chinese respondents, who are predominantly urban, have a different view of nature and land use.

Another interesting observation is the similarities and differences to opinions among local traders and government officers, in relation to business conflict that occurs at Wang Kelian Border Market. Local traders and government officers responding to this study agree that the conflict is due to lack of capital, skills and knowledge, lack of awareness about tourism potential, and complacency in attitudes among local traders. However, a few respondents claim that the conflict is aggravated by lack of enforcement from the relevant government agency. Therefore, it can be argued that, despite the general consistency in responses, the above examples demonstrate that there are differences to responses between group of actors and between ethnic communities. Descriptions of findings are explained in greater details in this chapter and Chapter Eight.

7.2   The Conception and Understanding of Ecotourism as a Term

This section addresses respondents understanding of ecotourism as a term. Addressing this understanding was not a core objective of the study but emerged as an important theme during the interviews. Given that the Malaysian Government and its agencies makes extensive use of the term in their development and marketing of the natural environment in Malaysia, some consideration of how the term is understood is merited.

In general, government respondents in both study areas define ecotourism in the context of the natural environment and agree that conservation of natural resources should be the main focus or emphasis in the development of the state park or environmentally sensitive areas. They are, however, more limited in their understanding of ecotourism as a concept that is frequently taken to include a human or community participation dimension. They also appear to be constrained, as public servants, in their use of the term 'ecotourism' and show clear and apparently uncritical adherence to the understanding of the term represented in Malaysia's National Ecotourism Plan (WWFM, 1996a). This, in turn, draws closely on the definition provided by Ceballos-Lascurain (1996).

> 'The development of the state park must comply with certain principles of conservation. When we initially developed the new tourist town, we minimised cutting down of trees'. (Interviewee no. 12, government officer)

'Nature has to be preserved. If we fight with nature by over-development, it will eventually destroy the area'. (Interviewee no. 31, government officer)

'Development in the state park must be minimised to sustain the ecology. Mass development has to be avoided because it disrupts the natural environment'. (Interviewee no. 28, government officer)

A senior government officer argues that ecotourism is a development strategy that can also achieve environmental protection goals.

'Nature preservation and development are not two distinct items. They can be integrated. For example, we can build nature-friendly lodges or accommodation in the forested area without jeopardising the environment'. (Interviewee no. 17, senior government officer)

Planners share a similar view, but they express the caution that strict development guidelines should be enforced, so as to preserve the natural heritage of sensitive areas and to prevent these areas from being transformed into mass tourism.

'In sensitive areas, we still allow development but with

strict guidelines, for example, low-density development'.

(Interviewee no. 58, planner)

'Ecotourism is part of sensitive areas. It is non-recoverable.

There must be mechanisms to protect the environment'.

(Interviewee no. 78, planner)

One respondent from a non-governmental organisation highlights the importance of

environmental education to increase nature awareness among local communities, and,

consistent with most established definitions of the term, acknowledged that local people

should have a stake in and benefit from ecotourism development. This appears to be in

contrast to the interpretation placed on the term by public officials.

'Ecotourism in this country should benefit the local

community, and they should take care of their own

environment'. (Interviewee no. 79, non-governmental

officer)

However, a third level of interpretation was evident from some local community

respondents who were unable to clearly define the term ecotourism and to understand

their own position within its implementation. As extreme examples of this uncertainty,

the eco-prefix was misinterpreted as 'economics' of tourism or 'city in a forest'.

'Based on my understanding, ecotourism means 'economics' of tourism. There we will be plenty of business opportunities for the local people to get involved'. (Interviewee no. 2, Village Head)

'This area is very remote. By promoting ecotourism, this place will be developed as a 'city in a forest'. (Interviewee no. 14, Village Head)

It is clear from the above that there is evidence of differences in understanding of ecotourism as a term but that this evidence set is rather limited. Addressing this issue was not the primary focus of the study, and this omission is accepted as one conceptual limitation to the research. Yet, the limited evidence that is presented on the ambiguity of definitions not only has significant implications for the research, but also has raised several issues relating to the premises upon which the research is based. As a result of this limitation, attempts to explore ecotourism in its entirety are hindered. The final two chapters of this thesis include further discussion of the meaning and implications of the ambiguity that exists with regard to the meaning of ecotourism as a term.

7.3   Community Relationship with the Forest

The themes of this section are listed below:

- Easy access before the park was established.

- Controlled access to the forest due to law enforcement.

- Local income is not dependent upon the forest.

- Local people generally support forest conservation values.

- Isolated encroachment incidences.

- Government agency plays a 'soft approach' with the local people.

- Local people treat nature as nothing special.

- Local opportunities to propagate plants for sale.

In the case of Perlis State Park, the local people surrounding the area especially the Malay community in Wang Kelian have a close relationship with the forest and enjoy easy access to the natural area before the park was established. This was evident from many interviews with the local people, as indicated below.

'Previously, villagers sought mousedeer in the forest. But, after the park was gazetted, we could no longer disturb the area'. (Interviewee no. 3, Village Head)

'Before the park existed, nobody supervised. We were free to enter or leave the forest. If the village people

wanted to eat porcupines, they just went to the cave'.

(Interviewee no. 4, Village Head)

'I used to find guano in caves and earned RM20-30 per

day. Since the park existed, I never entered the area until

now'. (Interviewee no. 22, local people)

'Previously, the Forestry Law was not yet enforced. The

villagers simply cut the trees if they wanted to build

houses'. (Interviewee no. 16, local people)

Due to proximity, some villagers in Wang Kelian planted fruit trees in the forested area

before the park was established, which prompted the State Forestry to issue special

permits for the 'land owners' to enter the forest during fruit seasons.

'Once gazetted as a State Park, we do not issue any license

or permit because the area is totally protected. But, they

had fruit orchard permit before the park was gazetted. For

social reason, we extend the permit'. (Interviewee no. 12,

government officer)

Unlike PSP, local communities in Ulu Muda had easy but restricted access to the forest

in the past because the area was designated as a 'black zone' to curb communist

activities especially during the pre-1970 period.

> 'During those times, they could not enter at night. Their
>
> movement was restricted, and they had to report to the
>
> Army Base'. (Interviewee no. 65, government officer)

Compared to the past, local access to the forest is now controlled under forestry law in

the PSP area. In Ulu Muda, different government agencies such as Forestry, Wildlife

Protection and National Parks, and Fisheries Departments are entrusted with different

authorities and jurisdictions.

> 'Now, it is already an offence. We could no longer shoot
>
> birds or mousedeer. It is wrong'. (Interviewee no. 19,
>
> Village Head)

> 'They warned us the fine would be RM10,000 if we
>
> entered forest and cut trees'. (Interviewee no. 21, local
>
> businessman)

'The Wildlife office is just nearby. Most people were

afraid because the fine was so severe'. (Interviewee no.

46, local businessman)

Nevertheless, local people in both areas, at present, are not dependent upon the forest

for income, except fishermen in Ulu Muda who rely on the dam and river for daily

fishing activities. Since the main occupations of the villagers are in paddy and rubber

plantations, farming activities and animal husbandry, some of them enter the forest

primarily for supplementary income, food and medicinal purposes, as described below.

'Some villagers work part-time by cutting bamboos

(interviewee no. 48, Village Head) and canes (interviewee

no. 51, Village Head)'.

'Some of us gathered honey for income'. (Interviewee no.

2, Village Head)

'Many also caught fresh water fish for food (Interviewee

no. 19, Village Head) and sought agarwood near the river

bank to make perfume'. (Interviewee no. 46, local

businessman)

Unlike PSP, the Forestry Department in Ulu Muda still issues permits for the local

people to extricate certain plants and herbs, which are not rare and normally grow wild

in nature such as bamboo and cane. The Fishery Department also issues permits for

locals to engage in fishing activities in the Ulu Muda area.

All but one respondent interviewed in PSP, in general, supported forest conservation to

enhance tourism values of the natural areas, as described below.

'When the State Park was erected, we would get caught if

we entered forest. It was not benefiting the local economy

because we were not allowed to encroach the area'.

(Interviewee no. 2, Village Head)

Respondents that supported forest conservation cited the followings:

'In the past, we used to seek rattans, mousedeer and deer

in the forest. Now, the animals are getting scarce. It is no

big deal for the villagers not being able to enter forest

now'. (Interviewee no. 19, Village Head)

'It is good if we want to preserve the trees and animals.

Otherwise, the animals cannot breed. So, what is the point

of having a State Park? If trees are being cut

indiscriminately, erosion will occur'. (Interviewee no. 42,

local businessman)

In particular, all respondents in Ulu Muda disagreed with the state government's proposal to introduce heli-logging, at a time when the dam recorded the lowest water level in the last five years.

'I dislike the idea. If logging is allowed, the dam will dry. Tourists will not come, and local people cannot make living from it'. (Interviewee no. 45, local people)

'In my opinion, heli-logging is not good. Even now, the water level is already decreasing. If we log, the situation will deteriorate'. (Interviewee no. 54, local businessman)

In spite of the above, local communities in both areas have observed isolated encroachment incidences such as removal of plants and animal poaching, particularly by outsiders.

'Outsiders fish-bombed the river and brought fishes back. Wildlife staff waited but they were never caught. Three days later, a deer was shot. Local people did not do this

because they did not have guns'. (Interviewee no. 63,

Village Head)

'A few Siamese were caught because they shot pigs'.

(Interviewee no. 46, local businessman)

Likewise, interviews with relevant government authorities in both areas also revealed

several encroachment incidents such as illegal cutting of trees, removal of protected

plants for medicinal and ornamental purposes and illegal hunting of animals.

'We caught them when they were transporting 'bogak'

trees (ornamental trees)'. (Interviewee no. 12, government

officer)

'I worry about construction workers, mostly Thais. The

impact on the environment is that they consume wildlife.

Nevertheless, snakes, monitor lizards, monkeys are

animals that breed so fast, except gibbons'. (Interviewee

no. 18, government officer)

'Illegal hunting activities do occur. But the number has

been decreasing since we have been placed here...We

caught people entering forest under the pretext of fishing.

When we confiscated their belongings, we found
prohibited items'. (Interviewee no. 65, government
officer)

These encroachment issues are more contained in PSP because the area is managed by a

single agency, as compared to Ulu Muda which is manned by various agencies under

different authorities and jurisdictions. It is evident from the interviews that this

overlapping creates various administrative issues and problems such as lack of

coordination among the related agencies, as indicated below.

'In terms of work, we never coordinate. We do our duty,
they do theirs... If we found logging activities, we
informed Forestry Department when we returned to office.
It is not our authority to stop them because there are
certain areas that can be logged'. (Interviewee no. 65,
government officer)

In addition, shortage of manpower and lack of patrolling also contributed to this

problem.

'The park area is so huge. With limited number of staff,
we could not supervise twenty-four hours'. (Interviewee
no. 12, government officer)

'We patrol only two or three times in a month, and staff

will stay overnights'. (Interviewee no. 65, government

officer)

One way to tackle this encroachment issue is to enforce stiff penalties coupled with

education and continuous monitoring.

'We have to impose heavy penalties to deter 'hardcore

offenders' from further encroachment. In addition to

awareness building, our enforcement should also be

monitored continuously. It should not be seasonal'.

(Interviewee no. 25, government officer)

While enforcing tough laws are required to prevent further encroachment, the related

government agencies are sometimes a bit lenient when dealing with encroachment cases

that involve local people, such as reducing the severity of compounds and allowing

unlicensed small activities as long as for personal use like fishing activities. Since local

people have had a close relationship with the forest, this flexibility is necessary to foster

a good relation between the government agency and local communities. Although their

relationship is generally good, these government agencies are operating within the

surrounding of local communities, and they should avoid any scepticism and hostility

among the local people towards them.

'One local was fined for RM50,000. He went to the Chief

Minister's office, and the fine was reduced to RM300.

There was some negotiation between the agency and the

local people'. (Interviewee no. 2, Village Head)

'Our relationship with the local people is like sibling. We

cannot be too rigid with them in terms of law. We just

warned them to leave the area'. (Interviewee no. 72,

government officer)

This approach may work well for the vast majority of local people who put law above

everything else. But, these government agencies should be cautioned against the

minority few who seem undeterred by law and may take advantage of the 'relaxed'

situation. A government respondent revealed:-

'We erected signage, but sometimes they still enter. They

were not afraid of law'. (Interviewee no. 72, government

officer)

Although they appreciate nature in general, it is interesting to acknowledge that Malay

communities in both areas treat nature as nothing special. This is because they have

been living in remote and natural surrounding for generations, unlike the Chinese community in Kaki Bukit and urban communities.

'For most of us, we are not interested in nature tourism.
Forest is nothing special. But for urban people, they want
to feel the natural surroundings'. (Interviewee no. 35,
park staff)

In addition, these Malay communities the treat forest as a 'commodity provider', as compared to indigenous people who treat the forest as a 'resource provider'.

'Their knowledge and skills are dependent because
knowingly the Malays are not forest people. How much
knowledge do they have about the resources in forest
compared to 'orang Asli' and indigenous people? They
are at peripheral areas, wanting to benefit from the
resources ... The community has a different view of land
use. Their view is basically land to be exploited by them.
(Interviewee no. 18, government officer)

Nevertheless, one respondent from a non-governmental organisation argues that by involving the local community in the propagation of plants for sale, their degree of appreciation towards nature can be increased, as cited below.

'There is another area that has a lot of potentials is the propagation of plants for sales because ornamental plants now are very popular. Even medicinal plants, for example 'tongkat ali', 'kacip fatimah' and 'bogak'. Few other kind of plants that have potential to be commercialised. If we can get some kind of assistance from the right agencies, MARDI, that can help local communities to propagate this plant, either by planting through seeds or cutting. Then, this plant can be sold to visitors. This will also help the park, because it would discourage people from removing plants from the park'. (Interviewee no. 33, non-governmental officer)

7.4   Community Relationship with the Park

The themes of this section are as follows:

- Park is situated on government land.

- Local objections at the beginning of park development.

- Local people generally welcome tourists and park's establishment.

- Park development is new.

- Park development is in an enclave.

- Limited job opportunities.

- Special privileges for local people to enter park.

- Communities enjoy better facilities and amenities with park's establishment.

When asked about community involvement with the State Park, a significant majority of interview respondents in Wang Kelian and Kaki Bukit related this to local involvement in business activities at the border Sunday Market, which is by coincidence situated in the PSP area. They did not consider the market as part of the park, and they perceived local involvement with the park as being minimal. One of the reasons is indicated below.

'The park was built on government land, and it did not interfere with the local people'. (Interviewee no. 2, Village Head)

In fact, it was disclosed that early park development had little connection with the community.

'The intention to gazette a park has nothing to do with the community ... Development of the park never takes community consideration at the very beginning. They gazette a park is not because of community per se, but because of conservation values. However, along the way, successful

management of a park is highly dependent upon working

together with the people ... How can they benefit from the

park? The question is that way. Not how the park can benefit

from them'. (Interviewee no. 18, government officer)

There was some objection from the Wang Kelian community at the time of the park's

establishment.

'Some villagers were not satisfied because they opened up

the forested area for fruit cultivation'. (Interviewee no.

14, Village Head)

A government respondent also revealed the same situation because the community had a

different view of land use.

'When you talk about park, it is depriving them of certain

privileges. After all this while, they have access to the area.

Definitely there is objection by them'. (Interviewee no. 18,

government officer)

Nonetheless, local communities in Wang Kelian and Kaki Bukit, in general, welcomed

the park's establishment especially after several briefings and development discussions

by the related agencies. Likewise, the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) has

conducted a survey to gauge the response of Wang Kelian communities, and it was

found that there was a high degree of support for the park by the locals (Interviewee no.

33, non-governmental officer).

'After briefings by the government agency, the villagers

accepted the State Park development concept to attract

tourists'. (Interviewee no. 14, Village Head)

'We are pleased when many people come to this area,

although we do not have any contact with the park tourists'.

(Interviewee no. 4, Village Head)

'The State Park is good. Tourist arrivals would bring about

positive attitudes and mind-sets among the village people. If

we stay in one group, we do not have any information

exchange'. (Interviewee no. 42, local businessman)

Many respondents agreed that two other factors that contributed to low involvement of

local people in the park were that i) the development stage of park is new and ii) park

development is in an enclave.

'The benefit is not fully felt yet because State Park development is not fully completed'. (Interviewee no. 12, government officer)

'The park is quite new. Not many tourism activities have started yet'. (Interviewee no. 33, non-governmental officer)

'There is no local contact with the park tourists. Once they enter, they do not come out ... Villagers do not benefit from the park. It is just like a movie theatre, we just watch. They get revenue, we do not get anything'. (Interviewee no. 5, local businessman)

The only direct involvement with the park, as seen by many locals, is employment. But the jobs are not only menial but are also limited, as described below. A local park staff member was offered the opportunity to cater food services, whenever required, to guests during their stay at the park accommodation.

'Some get employed but not many because they do not require big staff'. (Interviewee no. 4, Village Head)

'They work as labourers, carrying out maintenance work'. (Interviewee no. 38, local businessman)

There are presently seven general workers at the park headquarters who are sourced from the local area due to proximity and State Forestry policy. An interview with a government officer disclosed that 'job creation is important because they need jobs. They are given first priority because they stay near the park' (Interviewee no. 31, government officer).

However, another government officer argued:

> 'It is proven again that employment for the community is still at the lowest level ... Women always work. There are many women who work in the hospitality industry, but they are all waiters. Not managerial. The locals work at the lowest level under the PPRT (Development Programme for Poor Households) scheme. They do cleaning jobs'. (Interviewee no. 18, government officer)

Some of the general workers double up as guides for visitors to the natural attractions whenever required. It is interesting to note that the locals were not particularly interested in guide training organised by the government agency because they were not in the right age group.

'We did try to encourage the local communities to participate

in our training, guide training. But the problem we faced was

there were very few young people in the village. Most of

them were in the 40s, 50s or still in schools. Not many people

in the right age group.' (Interviewee no. 33, non-

governmental officer)

A Village Head disclosed that low local participation in guide courses was due to lack of

information dissemination.

'Only a few of villagers knew about the guide courses

organised by the State Forestry due to lack of information.

Some were persuaded. The villagers should not be blamed'.

(Interviewee no. 2, Village Head)

In another development, the local people also complained that they should have been

given special privileges to enter the park.

'If the villagers wish to enter the park, they should not pay the

entrance fees. They should enter for free'. (Interviewee no.

4, Village Head)

'The local people should be treated special'. (Interviewee no.

6, Village Head)

'We used to enter the forest for free. Now, we have to pay

one Ringgit to enter'. (Interviewee no. 21, local businessman)

Nonetheless, a few interviews revealed that some local people managed to enter the park

for free if they knew the ticket attendants well.

'Some villagers still had to pay RM1 to enter the cave, unless

they knew well the ticket guard'. (Interviewee no. 2, Village

Head)

'If you know the ticket attendant, he let you enter for free'.

(Interviewee no. 6, Village Head)

Despite minimal local involvement with the park, a majority of respondents agreed that

park establishment has brought about a significant development to this rural community.

'In the past, we used to walk for about three miles from Wang

Kelian to Kaki Bukit town. When the road was built, our

incomes started to increase because we could market our

agricultural produces'. (Interviewee no. 16, local people)

'In the past, there was no electricity and tap water. Now we

have the road. It is even better after the park existed'.

(Interviewee no. 19, Village Head)

7.5 Community Relationship with Tourism

The themes of this section are listed below:

- Local people generally support tourism development.

- Some local people are not reaping any benefit from tourism and unaware of tourism potential.

- They are more interested in immediate returns before they can actively engage in tourism activities.

- Complacent attitudes further inhibit local participation in tourism.

- Comparatively, lower local involvement in Ulu Muda because the tourism stage is newer.

- Local people to acquire appropriate skills to overcome the limitations.

Interviews with many Village Heads disclosed that local communities in PSP and Ulu Muda had high expectations of tourism and supported government efforts to develop the industry.

'Villagers basically support tourism because it generates income to the local people... Business will increase if tourism grows'. (Interviewee no. 6, Village Head)

'It is good if tourism is developed because it will bring more development to the village'. (Interviewee no. 4, Village Head)

'We were pleased when the government wanted to develop tourism in this area'. (Interviewee no. 51, Village Head)

'The local people supported government efforts to develop this area as a tourist destination'. (Interviewee no. 26, Village Head)

Nonetheless, many local people are unaware of the tourism potential because the tourism sector is new.

'Tourism is a new phenomenon for Perlis citizens. They are unaware of the potential that can be derived from it'. (Interviewee no. 43, Village Head)

'At the moment, many villagers had no idea how to get
involved in the tourism industry'. (Interviewee no. 56,
Village Head)

'It takes time for the villagers to realise the tourism
development potential'. (Interviewee no. 35, park staff)

Furthermore, some local people are distant from tourism because they are not directly
involved with or are not reaping any benefit from tourism-related activities.

'Some people could not be bothered with tourism because
they are too occupied with daily chores'. (Interviewee no.
26, Village Head)

'Some villagers do not see any contribution from tourism.
Every morning, they work in the rubber plantations'.
(Interviewee no. 35, park staff)

'We do not get any benefit when tourists come'.
(Interviewee no. 63, Village Head)

'The further away they live, the more negative they
become because they are not reaping the benefits. Ones

that are nearer are always supportive because their lives

change. They get employment and their businesses

improve'. (Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

As noted in section 7.2, it is worth emphasising that 'enclave' development of PSP and

resorts near Ulu Muda further contribute to distant relationship between local

communities and tourism.

'Most tourists went direct to resorts without stopping over

at the villages'. (Interviewee no. 53, Village Head)

'If they came by bus, they did not stop by the villages'.

(Interviewee no. 63, Village Head)

The proposed construction of a new road, that will shorten travelling time to Perlis State

Park, aggravates the above situation.

'With the proposed new road, they will bypass this area.

Our business is even worse'. (Interviewee no. 41, local

businessman)

However, in Ulu Muda, some small businesses operating along the trunk road leading to

the natural attractions benefit from tourists passing by the area.

'They stopped to buy food at groceries or ate at the food

stalls'. (Interviewee no. 51, Village Head)

'They stopped at the petrol pumps'. (Interviewee no. 66,

Village Head)

Low levels of local involvement are also related to low tourism activities, particularly in

Ulu Muda where the tourism development stage is newer.

'In Ulu Muda, nature guides are not full-time. Perhaps,

there are still not many people coming into the area'.

(Interviewee no. 50, government officer)

'Small businesses especially the food stalls are not

operating full-time. Sometimes, the shops are open. On

some other days, they are closed'. (Interviewee no. 48,

Village Head)

'The business cannot survive. There are more restaurants

than the number of people patronising them'. (Interviewee

no. 70, Village Head)

In addition, some local people are more interested in immediate returns before they can

actively engage in tourism-related activities.

'The villagers are more interested in monetary returns

before they can get involved'. (Interviewee no. 17, senior

government officer)

'They look at the returns and what benefits they will

receive from the activity. If they get something out of it,

they will participate'. (Interviewee no. 31, government

officer)

'They need to see the monetary returns. Now, they do not

have the proof'. (Interviewee no. 27, park staff)

Complacent attitudes of local people further inhibit government's efforts to increase

local participation in tourism activities.

'By government definition, they are considered the

hardcore poor. But they have enough to eat and their

children can go to school. Even though they are not living

luxurious lives, they have enough to spend and most of

their basic needs are met... I am not sure if there is

enough incentive to educate and train them to become nature guides or to be involved in business. It involves additional work and risk as well. They are quite happy being the way they are. They do not earn much, but they do not have to work so hard'. (Interviewee no. 33, non-governmental officer)

According to several government respondents, local people should acquire appropriate skills, particularly in training and marketing to overcome the limitations and to increase their knowledge in tourism.

'They do not have the required knowledge to handle tourists and to develop their village to become a tourist attraction'. (Interviewee no. 11, government officer)

'Local people especially community leaders should undergo training on basic hygiene, cleanliness and hospitality'. (Interviewee no. 9, government officer)

'Before Tioman Island was developed into an international tourist destination, the villagers did not know how to operate chalets and restaurants. The government sent them to Langkawi for training. The state government

should do the same to Wang Kelian folks. Those who are involved in food business should be sent to Langkawi to learn food catering'. (Interviewee no. 12, government officer)

'Local handicraft and traditional food are local products that can be marketed. But local people could not exploit these opportunities because they did not understand marketing. It is a successful industry in Thailand'. (Interviewee no. 28, government officer)

7.5.1 Community Involvement in Homestay Programmes

The themes are as follows:

- The Malays are more supportive of the homestays compared to the Chinese.

- Lack of local initiatives and understanding dampen government's efforts to develop homestays.

- Conflict with State Forestry's priority to implement homestays.

Local communities in Wang Kelian are supportive of the homestay proposal, which literally means tourists spending nights in the villages.

'They like the homestay idea. They are open to tourism'.

(Interviewee no. 27, park staff)

'The Malays are so honoured to have visitors coming to their houses. They serve coffee and tea. It is a pleasureable thing to do'. (Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

A few villagers in Wang Kelian have already applied to participate even though the programme has yet to take off the ground.

'So far, no visitor has ever come to stay in the village, but five households have already applied and filled out the forms'. (Interviewee no. 3, Village Head)

Interestingly, the Malays in Wang Kelian are more interested in the programme, as compared to the Chinese in Kaki Bukit.

'The Chinese are not particularly interested in the homestay programme as compared to the Malays. We are busy earning incomes, and we do not have time to entertain guests'. (Interviewee no. 6, Village Head)

'The Chinese are better off financially. They are not going

to waste their time and efforts on this homestay

programme for 10 ringgit in one night. They can afford

not to work, and they can still earn 10 ringgit'.

(Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

However, the local people have misinterpreted this tourism product due to lack of

exposure and follow-up from the related government agency.

'The exposure is still lacking. When we mention

homestay, they do not really understand the concept.

What sort of activities they need to provide? It is a

tourism product'. (Interviewee no. 28, government

officer)

'The response was only good at the beginning but it

eventually died down because there was no follow-up

from the government agency'. (Interviewee no. 2, Village

Head)

'When homestay programme was suggested, the villagers

actually asked for funding for their houses to be upgraded.

It is true in some cases that the villagers do not have

enough money to renovate their houses'. (Interviewee no.

33, non-governmental officer)

Lack of local initiatives also dampen government's efforts to successfully implement a homestay programme in Wang Kelian.

'What they perceive is that the money must come from the

government'. (Interviewee no. 28, government officer)

'They can also be proactive, take the initiative to clean up

the house, improve the toilet. They do not have to wait for

the government to initiate that. They can do it

themselves'. (Interviewee no. 33, non-governmental

officer)

Nevertheless, further interviews with government officers indicated the programme was put on hold because it was not the State Forestry's main priority or policy to implement it.

'It is not State Forestry's main priority to develop the

homestay programme'. (Interviewee no. 27, park staff)

'I totally do not support of this programme at the moment.

The first reason is because the park has facilities that were

built using funds from the Tourism Ministry. Secondly,

homestay is part of the Ministry's programmes. In

principle, we do not promote one programme at the

expense of the other. We have the chalet accommodation.

The primary purpose is to fill chalets with people to

generate revenue for the state. I do not think this is the

right policy. If there is excess, then we share with the

local people. This will come in later when we have good

occupancy, not at the moment. We have to support the

first policy to generate revenue for the state'. (Interviewee

no. 18, government officer)

Meanwhile, homestay programmes have been successful in a few villages in Perlis and

other states in Peninsular Malaysia.

'In Selangor, the villagers organised activities themselves

when visitors arrived by bus. They realised the

opportunities that could be derived from it'. (Interviewee

no. 28, government officer)

'It has been done successfully in one or two places that are
more developed in Malaysia. In Bangkuris, Selangor, for
example, the community is very proactive. They take the
initiative, some of them put in some money. They are
more organised. They are willing to work together and
share ideas'. (Interviewee no. 33, non-governmental
officer)

7.5.2 Community Relationship with the Resort Industry in Ulu Muda

The themes are:

- Resorts provide blue-collar jobs for the local people.

- Resorts increase local awareness towards the hotel industry.

- Negative but isolated social incidences have been reported.

The development of a government and two private resorts near Ulu Muda area has
provided blue-collar jobs for the local people. Due to proximity, the staff are sourced
from the surrounding areas.

'There are more than twenty local people being employed
at this Muda resort. There are only three outsiders
including two technicians'. (Interviewee no. 44, senior
resort staff)

'Eighty per cent of our staff are sourced from the local

areas. They are mainly the youths from nearby villages'.

(Interviewee no. 62, senior resort staff)

'We created job opportunities for the local people'.

(Interviewee no. 61, senior senior staff)

These youngsters, with no prior hotel experiences, undergo hotel training to develop

their job skills.

'We gave them opportunities to try out hotel industry. We

provided training because they had zero hotel experience

such as self-grooming for the front-liners'. (Interviewee

no. 62, senior resort staff)

Besides employment generation, this resort development has also increased local

awareness toward the hotel industry.

'In the initial stage, people were wondering why we

wanted to build a five-star resort in this rural area. The

awareness is low. Later on, they get the tourism boost.

Visitors pass by their villages. This area is made known to

outside people'. (Interviewee no. 62, senior resort staff)

'We created job opportunities to make them understand

what the resort industry was all about. We changed their

previously negative perception'. (Interviewee no. 61,

senior resort staff)

However, negative but isolated social incidences have slightly tarnished the resort

image.

'The staff are too socialised. They drink alcohol and

practice free sex. These are not appropriate for rural

youngsters... To a certain extent, some religious parents

restricted their children from working at the resorts'.

(Interviewee no. 64, local business woman)

Meanwhile, in a more positive development, the local people participate in social events

and functions organised by the resorts. They also supply local produces to the resorts on

a regular basis such as vegetables, edible jungle herbs and poultry products (Interviewee

no. 61, senior resort staff).

'Sometimes, we involved local people in resort events such as traditional sports tournament and honey gathering activities. We also invited them to cook traditional food in our social functions... Our corporate guests and even foreigners requested this sort of event. This is extra money for them'. (Interviewee no. 62, senior resort staff)

7.6   Community Involvement in Business

-    **Local Involvement in Business at Border Sunday Market, Wang Kelian**

The themes are listed below:

- Good local participation in business in the initial stage.

- Main attractions are the Siamese goods and easy to cross border.

- Strong competition, lack of business skills and capitals force many local people to close business.

- Thai traders start to encroach the Malaysian territory.

- The business conflict is aggravated by lack of enforcement from the authority.

- Enforcement is made difficult by a number of factors.

When the Sunday Market was newly established in the late 1980s, many local people especially from Wang Kelian community participated in business activities.

'Many villagers participated in business when the market

was newly opened'. (Interviewee no. 4, Village Head)

'In 1989, more than forty households in Wang Kelian

involved in business at the border market'. (Interviewee

no. 34, local businessman)

There are two types of business operations at the border market. The permanent stalls

are open throughout the week. The temporary roadside stalls, straddling the border to

about two kilometers in each direction of Malaysian and Thai territory, are operational at

weekends only. A vendor is allocated one lot to trade during weekends, and he or she is

required to pay weekly tax of RM6 to the State Forestry. According to tax collection

records from the authority, the number of weekly lots fluctuated throughout the months

and year, as shown in table 7.1 below. Festive seasons and school holidays usually

recorded higher number of businesses, while wet season recorded otherwise.

Table 7.1 Tax Collection Record

Date	Number of Vendor Lots
07.04.03	164
14.04.03	151
21.04.03	138
27.04.03	135
05.05.03	123
12.05.03	128
19.05.03	124
27.05.03	43

Source: Perlis State Forestry Department (2003)

The main border attractions are the Siamese goods and free movement of citizens across the border without any official documents. The location of the market in a natural surrounding is also an added attraction.

'The main attraction to visitors is the Siamese goods.

Wang Kelian will not be popular without them'.

(Interviewee no. 8, government officer)

'People flock this market because they are allowed to cross border without passports. If this privilege is taken away, they will no longer come here'. (Interviewee no. 15, local businessman)

'The market is popular because the atmosphere is quite pleasant. You can do shopping in a natural environment'. (Interviewee no. 33, non-governmental officer)

However, local goods could not compete with Siamese goods because they were cheaper and more attractive.

'Visitors usually buy Siamese goods on the Thai side at cheap prices. We cannot sell at lower price because that is our cost price. We cannot compete with them'. (Interviewee no. 42, local businessman)

'When we sell Siamese goods on the Malaysian side, we have to sell at higher prices because we pay import taxes. The Thai people sell at lower prices. Nobody wants to buy our goods'. (Interviewee no. 20, local people)

'We cannot compete on prices because of the import taxes.

That is our major weakness'. (Interviewee no. 34, local

businessman)

Initially during the boom time, there were approximately two hundred permanent stalls

in the area, which were built by the local people using their own resources. Due to

competition with Thai traders and lack of business skills and capital, only a handful of

the local businesses have survived, leaving behind many empty and dilapidated shop-

houses.

'The local traders here did not have the skills and capital

to do business'. (Interviewee no. 6, Village Head)

'When we do business, we must be hardworking and must

have high endurance spirit to survive. Local businessmen

did not have these qualities... At present, there are only

eleven local businessmen who survive'. (Interviewee no.

15, local businessman)

'They are not risk-takers, and they do not have the

business attitudes. These people are small-scale

entrepreneurs who do not have big capital'. (Interviewee

no. 18, government officer)

In addition, economic downturn during the mid-1990s forced many local traders to close

their business.

> 'During the economic crisis in 1996 and 1997, many of us
>
> were forced to close business. Only a few people remained
>
> in businesses'. (Interviewee no. 34, local businessman)

The trading volume also fluctuated because visitors usually flocked the market during

weekends and school holidays.

> 'The influx of visitors was high during weekends and
>
> school holidays'. (Interviewee no. 15, local businessman)

> 'The market was quiet during weekdays, especially from
>
> Mondays to Thursdays'. (Interviewee no. 6, Village
>
> Head)

> 'The business is good on Sundays only'. (Interviewee no.
>
> 41, local businessman)

As a result, many business owners started to sublet and even sell their premises to

outsiders, particularly the Thai traders, the so-called the Pattanis.

'It is better to rent out the business premises to outsiders rather than do business without any profit'. (*Interviewee no. 26, Village Head*)

'The local people discontinued their businesses because they could not survive. They started to sublet and eventually sell their stalls'. (Interviewee no. 20, local people)

'They closed the business when it was down, and subsequently rented it out to the Pattanis'. (Interviewee no. 34, local businessman)

Hence, lack of local involvement in business created a vacuum for Thai traders to encroach onto Malaysian territory.

'We cannot blame the outsiders because this area is open to anybody who wants to do business. We have to blame the local people because they do not grab the business opportunities'. (Interviewee no. 4, Village Head)

'We should criticise the local people because they are not

serious in business'. (Interviewee no. 21, local

businessman)

'The Pattanis should not be held responsible because our

people allow them to come in'. (Interviewee no. 31,

government officer)

'Local people do not grab the opportunities because they

do not have the expertise. We certainly give priority to

them if they want to get involved in business'.

(Interviewee no. 12, government officer)

Some business owners are too complacent that they are comfortable with guaranteed

incomes from fixed rental rather than uncertain incomes from business.

'Our people are too complacent. For example, the shop's

monthly rental is RM50, and they sublet to an outsider for

RM300. In this case, they receive RM250 without having

to put any effort in businesses'. (Interviewee no. 31,

government officer)

'They are subletting for RM50 a week, and they are

getting guaranteed income with minimal efforts. They do

not have to worry about running the business, product

development, and profit and loss. In fact, they have the

time to do other things'. (Interviewee no. 33, non-

governmental officer)

It is interesting to note that a group of opportunists exist among the villagers. These

people often hold positions at the village level and have access to 'inside' information

about future development of the area.

'The opportunists are the 'crocodiles'. They are often the

Village Heads or committee members that have access to

information about development in the area... Within

overnight, they started to set up stalls in the area that we

wanted to develop... They are not genuine business

people, but they hope they would be granted business

premises by the authority. Subsequently, they would

sublet and sell their premises. And worse, they would

seek compensation for their lost incomes. This is easy

money for them'. (Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

The factors, discussed above, contribute to further encroachment of outsiders in the area, particularly the Pattanis. Compared to local people who are newer to business, the Pattanis are more entrepreneurial and have been in business for generations.

'The Pattanis are expert in business'. (Interviewee no. 14, Village Head)

'The business spirit of the Thai traders is exceptionally high. Even when there is no visitor to the market, they still open their shops'. (Interviewee no. 34, local businessman)

'The Pattanis have a good business network. If the father gets involved in business, the remaining members including the grandchildren will follow'. (Interviewee no. 42, local businessman)

This business conflict with outsiders is also aggravated by lack of enforcement from the relevant authorities.

'The relevant authorities should be held responsible because they do not take tough actions against the outsiders'. (Interviewee no. 3, Village Head)

'Enforcement should be done from the beginning. It is

now difficult to eradicate because the situation is already

rampant'. (Interviewee no. 42, local businessman)

'The conflict happened because there was lack of control

at the beginning'. (Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

On the other hand, a local respondent argued that the Pattanis involvement in business

was necessary to create a lively market environment at Wang Kelian.

'Without their participation, the market will look empty.

It is better we just keep quiet about their presence'.

(Interviewee no. 5, local businessman)

In a related development, enforcement was made more difficult because the Thai traders

sometimes knew beforehand when round-up operations were to be done.

'When we complained, the authority did spot-checks to

oust the Thai traders. But, they knew in advance, and they

did not operate businesses on that particular day'.

(Interviewee no. 2, Village Head)

'When the enforcement officers patrolled the market, they

ran away to avoid being caught'. (Interviewee no. 42,

local businessman)

Even successful round-up operations did not deter the Thai traders from re-entering the

Malaysian territory.

'The spot-check operations did not frighten them off.

They ran away but they would make the comebacks.

(Interviewee no. 4, Village Head)

The above situation is further complicated because some Thai traders married local men,

and they run businesses using their spouse's permits.

'Many Thai traders married local men. They used their

husbands as proxy to gain trading permits and licenses'.

(Interviewee no. 22, local people)

Some Thai traders are very smart in that they employed local people to look after their

shops for wages especially during enforcement.

'The Pattanis were very smart. They employed local

people to supervise their shops, and they were paid RM15

per day. We could not prevent this because they wanted

money'. (Interviewee no. 42, local businessman)

'During spot-checks, the Thai traders swapped with local

people to take care of their shops for a few hours'.

(Interviewee no. 20, local people)

This business conflict is not only peculiar to Wang Kelian, but also occurs in many

border towns across the northern states of Peninsular Malaysia.

'Initially, the arcade center in Padang Besar belonged to

the local traders. Now, the Pattanis monopolised the

businesses'. (Interviewee no. 14, Village Head)

'The situation is similar in Padang Besar where the

Pattanis conquered the businesses at MARA shopping

arcade. The locals were driven out by the competition'.

(Interviewee no. 42, local businessman)

'This is a common border situation because our people do

no have the survival skills in business'. (Interviewee no.

31, government officer)

It is arguable whether development of border towns across the northern parts of the country benefits local economies.

> 'If we are talking about the country's economy, we are on
>
> the losing side because our money is flowing to Thailand.
>
> Even in our territory, there are more Thai goods being sold
>
> than local products'. (Interviewee no. 33, non-
>
> governmental officer)

Many local people urged the local authority to manage the market to remedy the situation, which is now the responsibility of the State Forestry. In the early stage, the market started as a 'Farm Market' and was managed by Perlis FAMA (Federal Agriculture Marketing Authority).

> 'We urged the local authority to manage this market. But
>
> the State Forestry took over'. (Interviewee no. 4, Village
>
> Head)

> 'The State Forestry should not manage this market
>
> because business is not their expertise. Their expertise is
>
> in forestry'. (Interviewee no. 21, local businessman)

'The local authority is the appropriate agency to manage

business at the market, just like elsewhere'. (Interviewee

no. 20, local people)

7.6.1 Development of a New Tourist Town in Wang Kelian

A new tourist town is presently under construction to replace the existing market.

However, many local people are sceptical that the new town development would bring

greater benefits to them.

'The local people will not afford to buy the new shops

because the price is very high. Likewise, they do not have

the money to pay monthly rental because they are small

entrepreneurs'. (Interviewee no. 4, Village Head)

'The local traders are new in business, and they will not

afford to pay high rental of premises. Eventually, the

Chinese will conquer the business, and the local people

will be marginalised'. (Interviewee no. 21, local

businessman)

'The government should have built medium-priced shop-

houses in rural areas that are suitable for small and

medium-scale entrepreneurs'. (Interviewee no. 16, local

people)

A few respondents disagreed with the government's proposal to build a duty free

complex in Wang Kelian that will further jeopardise local businesses.

'The proposed duty free complex will be built closer to the

border, and Thai visitors will enter it first before they go to

the new tourist town. The local business will suffer. This

duty free complex should not be built here'. (Interviewee

no. 5, local businessman)

'The local participation in business will be declining if this

town is being upgraded. We can only survive if they

develop a small-scale town'. (Interviewee no. 34, local

businessman)

On the other hand, several government respondents argued that the integrated

development of the new tourist town is long-awaited and necessary to create a better

market environment.

'It is envisaged that the new tourist town will be a clean

environment for shopping and recreational activities.

Cleanliness will be given priority. Litter is the main

problem in Sunday markets elsewhere. (Interviewee no.

31, government officer)

'We encountered problems with small stall operators

because they converted their stalls into permanent houses

through illegal extension. The toilet was not properly

maintained, and rubbish was thrown everywhere. We

need to establish a new concept of development'.

(Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

In addition, since the border attraction is one of Perlis' tourism products, the state

government feels the pressure to develop border towns to avoid further leakages into

Thailand.

'We have to develop our border towns to keep pace with

rapid development in Thailand. If we are slow to respond,

they will reap more benefits'. (Interviewee no. 37,

government officer)

7.6.2 Monopoly of Other Business Opportunities by Outsiders in Wang Kelian

The local communities were particularly disappointed to observe that several business opportunities in Wang Kelian area were granted to outsiders by the relevant authority. They were the management of visitors' parking and rubbish disposal at the border market and souvenir shop operations at PSP's Visitor Centre. Initially, the sub-contract for rubbish disposal was awarded to local people, but was subsequently given to outsiders due to wage disputes among the local workers.

> 'Initially, the local people secured the contract to dispose rubbish at the market. They earned some money from the job that they did twice a week. Due to wage dispute among the local workers, the contract was terminated... We also wanted to manage the visitors' parking area at the border market to generate revenue for our village fund. But it was leased to a private firm'. (Interviewee no. 3, Village Head)

A government respondent argued that outsiders were given priority in business because the local people did not have the required capital and skills, especially in setting up a souvenir shop.

'Do the villagers in Wang Kelian have RM80,000 upfront

to set up a souvenir shop? They also do not produce good

quality souvenir products. The quality is so bad, and we

will get complaints all the times. On the other hand, a

Chinese businessman approached and offered a better

business deal. We took up the offer. In the end, the local

people are the losers'. (Interviewee no. 18, government

officer)

State authorities rationalised their decisions because they had a different view and
definition of a 'local community'.

'To the state government, anybody from Perlis is

considered a local community. If you talk to the federal

government, someone from Johore is a local person. The

definition of a local community is very subjective. But my

understanding of local communities are those who live

within vicinity parameter of the park'. (Interviewee no. 1,

government officer)

It is further argued that outside monopoly is inevitable in any growing tourist
destination.

'Tourism starts with a lifecycle and will reach mass tourism over the years. You cannot protect an area for too long. You can protect the area inside the boundary. But you cannot control development outside the boundary. Good examples are Kinabalu Park and Cherating where big and foreign hotels dominate the area'. (Interviewee no. 18, government officer)

7.6.3   Local Business in Gua Kelam

There were approximately fifteen local vendors, including four Chinese, who operated roadside and make-shift stalls near Gua Kelam Recreational Centre. The Malay vendors concentrated on food while the Chinese sold souvenir and clothing items. Business is good during weekends and school holidays only, and many visitors pass-by this area, which is situated at the foothills, on their way to Wang Kelian border market. Unlike the border market, Gua Kelam is managed by the State Agriculture Department, even though the area falls within the jurisdiction of Perlis State Park.

The state authority is presently constructing a new food court, which is nearing completion, to replace the existing make-shift stalls. Earthwork has also begun to develop a six million ringgit business centre, which will be equipped with a visitor centre, souvenir shop, an anchor restaurant and a few supporting small businesses. A

government respondent argued that *this new concept of development is more beneficial*

than the conventional roadside stall businesses.

'The anchor tenant will be Kentucky Fried Chicken, and

the franchisee will be a local guy from Kangar, the state

capital. As far as the state government is concerned, this

guy is a local person. This guy pays tax and creates jobs

for local people, as compared to twenty stall owners who

do not pay taxes'. (Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

'We have decided that the business centre will be run by

an international food chain. They will control the whole

premise and take good care of the public facilities'.

(Interviewee no. 18, government officer)

A proposal to privatise Gua Kelam management is also being considered by the state

authority, and it remains unclear whether this option will benefit the local economy.

'We propose to privatise Gua Kelam management, which

is presently being managed by the State Agriculture. We

expect greater local participation in business from this

privatisation'. (Interviewee no. 17, senior government

officer)

7.6.4 Local Involvement in Business in Ulu Muda

In Ulu Muda, local participation in business is confined to restaurants, food stalls, groceries and petrol pump operating along the trunk road leading to natural attraction sites and resorts in Ulu Muda and Pedu areas. Their function is to serve the primary needs of local people and is sometimes supported by visitors who pass-by the area. Since the number of visitors fluctuates according to seasons, they do not receive much benefit from tourist spending. Furthermore, as mentioned in the previous section, the enclave development of the resorts further limits local benefits from tourism-related business activities and services.

As is the case in PSP, lack of capital and knowledge in business, fear of loans and youth migration are among the limitations that hinder active local participation in business in Ulu Muda.

'The villagers do not have capital to start business. And, they are reluctant to take up loans from banks'. (Interviewee no. 66, Village Head)

Interestingly, lack of product innovation limits the growth of local business.

'Three new shops were opened, but they all served food.

In the end, we competed for the same market, and nobody

outdid another'. (Interviewee no. 46, local businessman)

'I was the first to sell fishing equipment and boat

accessories. There was no competition at that time.

Sooner, I found out all other shops were selling similar

things'. (Interviewee no. 64, local businesswoman)

Unlike PSP, the element of 'business opportunism' is not yet evident because there are

not many opportunities available. In fact, the tourism stage is newer and the state

government has yet to gazette the area as a state park. It was also observed that some

shops always changed ownership, and a local travel agent was closed due to poor

business.

'There are neither business opportunities nor development

contracts ready to be exploited by the local people. In

fact, the locals are not cunning enough to exploit

opportunities'. (Interviewee no. 69, local people)

'Even if the opportunities are in front of them, they do not

know how to exploit them because they are not proactive'.

(Interviewee no. 52, Village Head)

7.7 Management Issues of Perlis State Park and Ulu Muda

The themes of this section are listed below:

- Conservation versus tourism values of Perlis State Park.

- Different market segments between park and Sunday Market tourists.

- Zoning as a management strategy to control land use and tourist activities.

- Environmental education to create nature awareness among tourists and locals.

- Development control mechanisms to preserve natural heritage of Wang Kelian.

- Heli-logging proposal in Ulu Muda.

- Low water level of Muda dam.

- Dam's water supply is primarily used for farm irrigation.

In the initial stage of park development, there were some disputed concerns over the main objectives of setting the State Park, in relation to conservation versus tourism values.

'This is the voice of an NGO. They always think that we preserve a park because of its values, scientific and intrinsic values... In marketing to the government, we sell tourism values. We talk about dollars and cents, and that makes the government interested. If you keep the park as it is, you have to expect money. We do not get money. If

you sell the park because of tourism, you get a lot of

money from Ministry of Tourism... But for

conservationists, they are not happy if tourism is the main

reason to set a park'. (Interviewee no. 1, government

officer)

Nevertheless, conservation is necessary to preserve the limited natural resources in

Perlis, and tourism is important to generate revenue for the state.

'Perlis has approximately 12,000 hectares of forest

reserve... We cannot afford to disturb or destroy. We

have to conserve it... This is the remaining biodiversity

that we have in Perlis'. (Interviewee no. 12, government

officer)

'In Perlis, we do not have any other resources. Forest

cannot be logged anymore, no more area. So, what is our

revenue here? How do we support the civil services? No

manufacturing, no tax. Tax all goes to the federal. We

have to start looking at something. The new approach is

tourism'. (Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

The Border Sunday Market, which is under the park jurisdiction, is an added attraction

to the State Park.

> 'The market is an added attraction. There are not many
>
> parks that offer this unique experience, some diversity of
>
> experience. You can also experience some cultural
>
> activities, how the communities mingle with each other'.
>
> (Interviewee no. 33, non-governmental officer)

> 'Sunday Market resembles mass tourism, but we want to
>
> maintain its control under the State Park... In my opinion,
>
> Sunday Market is part of State Park's activity'.
>
> (Interviewee no. 31, government officer)

It attracts mass tourists, but they do not integrate well with the park tourists because

they seldom visit the park.

> 'Those people who come solely to the Sunday Market do
>
> not have any interest in conservation and nature'.
>
> (Interviewee no. 12, government officer)

'Based on my observation, those that visit Sunday Market

seldom go to the State Park'. (Interviewee no. 31,

government officer)

On the other hand, park tourists consider the market as a 'must-see' attraction especially

if they come on Sundays.

'Those people who find solitude at the State Park are

definitely going to the Sunday Market especially if they

come on Sundays'. (Interviewee no. 12, government

officer)

Therefore, the State Park management has to consider different types of tourists, the so-

called generalists and nature lovers.

'We subscribe to the principle that park is for the people,

not for the niche group. When you subscribe to that

principle, you have to consider all aspects of people who

visit the park. You have to satisfy that'. (Interviewee no.

18, government officer)

Zoning is an essential management strategy utilised by the State Forestry to accommodate different types of tourists, to control land use and to minimise adverse environmental impacts.

'What we do is zoning. Only 2 or 3 per cent of the area is gazetted for development. Still people can go inside but with minimal damage to the forest'. (Interviewee no. 31, government officer)

'We have honey pot areas where people concentrate. But it is only a small area'. (Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

'How do we manage them? The people who love to be seen around, making rubbish and noise, we put them in one area. That is the reason why we develop the new tourist town. We centralise the rubbish, litter and waste disposal system'. (Interviewee no. 18, government officer)

'Of course you have to make sure the market does not lead to long term negative impacts to the park in terms of pollution, traffic congestion. Those things must be

controlled. It is possible to have the market and the park side by side. But steps must be taken to ensure the environmental effects of the market are minimised'. (Interviewee no. 33, non-governmental officer)

It is acknowledged by the State Forestry that environmental education is important to create nature interest among the tourists, but the information centre is under-utilised.

'The information centre is just by the roadside. That is where we can create the interest. The information is very important to educate them. But the centre is not fully developed yet. There are many other information that have not been included'. (Interviewee no. 12, government officer)

With the implementation of certain control mechanisms, it is envisaged that Wang Kelian's natural heritage will be preserved, and it will not move into mass tourism development in the coming years.

'We are in the process of gazetting the area as a state park... Under the rules, we have to do public inquiry if we want to remove the area for certain purposes'. (Interviewee no. 31, government officer)

'There will be no industries in this area. We will not allow

any development that will jeopardise water catchment

area'. (Interviewee no. 24, government officer)

In addition, hilly topography and easy access to the state capital and other neighbouring

towns will also hinder rapid development of Wang Kelian in the future.

'It has never been in the plan that Wang Kelian will have

hotels. It is just basic accommodation provided by the

authority because of the accessibility of Kuala Perlis and

Kangar... Wang Kelian is too small, not a viable project

to run a hotel. Hotel normally requires between 80-100

rooms for viability... Because accessibility is so good,

people can leave, nobody wants to stay. And, we limit the

development because of land use. About 80 per cent of

the land is greater than 30-degree slope. There is not

much choice of development... In this manner, mass

tourism will not be observed in the next ten years'.

(Interviewee no. 31, government officer)

The State Park, in recent years, has observed declining number of tourists but increasing

number of overnight stays due to the SARS outbreak and Iraq war. Interestingly, the

park authority argues that this is beneficial to the park development because revenue collection is more important than the tourist volume.

'Is number all about in tourism? Classic example is Perlis State Park. If you look at the figure, 2001 recorded about 5,800 people. 2002 dropped to 4,400. Do you look success based on numbers? We do not. Our income for 2002 increased three times compared to 2001. Revenue collection. Here it indicates that number drops but number of nights increase. This is conservation. In mass tourism, you want the figures to make the costs low. In park, you want less people. They spend more time, money. I do not think we fail'. (Interviewee no. 18, government officer)

In Ulu Muda, conservation value took priority over economic value of the forest as the state government's proposal to introduce heli-logging was rejected by the federal government. A senior government officer, who supported the proposal, disclosed in his interview that heli-logging concept would not jeopardise the environment.

'Timber trees will die upon reaching maturity. We cut the old trees using helicopter without damaging the environment. We choose three trees in every hectare. This is called pruning. We prune the trees, so that other

trees can grow. The state government will get income from the logging activities'. (Interviewee no. 59, senior government officer)

The potential revenue that could have been generated from the forest reserve is considered as a lost income to the Kedah government.

'Kedah is very unfortunate because it has 480,000 hectares of forest reserve that cannot be logged. The potential income is about 100,000 million ringgit. As an alternative, the state government built water reservoirs in the area'. (Interviewee no. 59, senior government officer)

There are presently four man-made water reservoirs in Kedah including Muda dam that supply water for paddy irrigation and domestic use in Kedah and neighbouring states – Penang and Perlis. It is again unfair, according to one interviewee, for Kedah to supply free water to two neighbouring states.

'We supply free water to Penang and Perlis. They get our water, do farming and get returns. They also purify our water and sell. Timber trees in Kedah cannot be logged. Is this fair? We also need development. Kedah is a poor

state. We sacrificed 120 million ringgit for the past twenty

years'. (Interviewee no. 59, senior government officer)

In a related development, the heli-logging issue drew media coverage and public

attention because Muda dam was experiencing low water levels due to the drought

season. In addition, Muda river is getting shallower due to soil erosion (Interviewee no.

74, government officer).

'The lowest water level in the history of Muda dam was

274.85 feet above sea level in 1978. The spill level is 330

feet. In 2003, the water level was 280 feet. Since then, it

fluctuated around that figure... And, about 50 per cent of

the catchment is dependent upon rainfalls'. (Interviewee

no. 73, government officer)

This is further aggravated by the fact that dam's water supply is primarily used for farm

irrigation.

'The purpose of dam is to supply water to paddy fields.

We will supply water whenever required. In Muda area,

we have 63,000 farm families and 98,000 hectares of

paddy fields. If you want us to maintain the water at

certain level, we cannot do that... If they require water,

we will supply. The water keeps dropping. If there is no

rainfall, we will still supply the water... Sometimes, it

affects tourism'. (Interviewee no. 73, government officer)

Since Muda dam is one of the major attractions in the Ulu Muda area, this low water

level affects the tourism industry because it limits tourist activities. The fastest access to

the natural area, which normally takes 45 minutes by boat, is disrupted. The alternative

route by track takes between four to five hours to reach the camping sites.

'Due to low water level, they cannot go to the site. They

can use the track, but it will be far and not be attractive'.

(Interviewee no. 73, government officer)

Upgrading the old logging track is one alternative being considered by the related

agency to resolve the above situation, so that non-seasonal tourists can be attracted

throughout the year. One major setback is this track may provide easy access for local

people to enter forest illegally (Interviewee no. 74, government officer)

'We have discussed with the Forestry Department, and we

are thinking of upgrading the old logging tracks. The idea

is there will be no cutting of trees... When the water level

drops, we have problems because we cannot manage

holiday packages. Tourists are not seasonal. They come

during wet and dry seasons'. (Interviewee no. 74,

government officer)

In a similar development, resort operators in nearby Pedu lake are also affected by the

dry season.

'It is sad to say that the irrigation system was built for the

paddy farmers. We are on the losing side. There is no

win-win situation. It is a problem for us when the water

drops or when it spills... The water level according to our

sales kit is 310 feet above sea level. The current water

level is 271 feet. We can hardly do any motorised

activities... We had guests checking in but decided to

leave. We had to refund because we did not deliver what

they expected'. (Interviewee no. 61, senior resort staff)

Similar to Perlis State Park, zoning will also be implemented in Ulu Muda to control

land use and tourist activities.

'In our planning, we will zone different areas for different

categories such as day-trippers, researchers. Sensitive

areas will no be open to public visitors, and we will apply

carrying capacity... We have decided that there will be no

development of hotels or resorts in this area. We provide

access facilities only'. (Interviewee no. 74, government

officer)

'Ulu Muda will be developed as an activity centre only.

There will be no development of resort'. (Interviewee no.

59, senior government officer)

The State Economic Planning Unit is presently drafting a proposal to develop Ulu Muda

as a State Park. And, it is also suggested that Ulu Muda be managed by a newly

established corporation agency (Interviewee no. 74, government officer).

7.7.1 Specific Issues Confronting the Perlis State Forestry Department

The main issues facing the Perlis State Forestry in managing PSP are limited manpower,

budget constraint and under trained staff.

'The problem with the Forestry department is limited

manpower because we have only eight staff to manage the

park... Due to this, our proposal to take over Gua Kelam

from the State Agriculture is being put on hold'.

(Interviewee no. 31, government officer)

'The department is also facing budget constraint. The

funding on training is quite limited, and park staff are

generally under trained'. (Interviewee no. 27, park staff)

Other national and state parks are federal-owned and managed by Wildlife Protection

and National Parks Department. PSP, on the other hand, is state-owned and managed by

the State Forestry.

'Forestry department is a state agency and has full

authority and control over PSP. The federal government

will not intervene on our matters, unlike other national

parks, which are managed by federal agencies'.

(Interviewee no. 27, park staff)

It is claimed that forestry law covers wider forest issues than wildlife protection law, but

the State Forestry acknowledges that park planning and management is a new field to

them.

'Forestry law covers bigger jurisdiction and wider forest

issues than wildlife protection law that covers animals

only'. (Interviewee no. 27, park staff)

'Park management has not been emphasised in forest
management before. We are the first forester to manage
park in Peninsular Malaysia. This will the future of
Forestry Department'. (Interviewee no. 31, government
officer)

7.8   Conclusion

The research findings are clearly the core of any research presentation and are the
central basis upon which the study will be judged (Baum, 1999). In this chapter, the
researcher interprets the information and themes to draw meaning from the empirical
data. The quotes from the respondents support the interpretation and understanding of
the data. Concepts are clustered into common categories, but it is found that they are
interrelated within and in between categories. The following chapter presents the
second stage of the empirical findings of the research.

Chapter Eight

FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH – COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

8.0 Introduction

This chapter presents findings primarily in the context of community participation in the planning process. The main headings are as follows: the Village Development and Security Committee (JKKK) as a community institution, the local community in planning, general planning and tourism planning practice in Malaysia.

8.1 The Village Development and Security Committee (JKKK) as a Community Institution

The themes of this section are listed below:

- JKKK as an informal government mechanism at the grass roots level.

- JKKK is seen as a political mechanism.

- Element of favouritism among committee members is evident in Ulu Muda.

- Limitations of JKKK.

- JKKK's effectiveness is dependent upon its leadership.

Government agencies, on regular basis, conduct development discussions and briefings with the committee members of JKKK, where development plans are put forward and

opinions of these people are considered. On one hand, this committee, which represents

the local community, is seen as a proper channel by the local people to voice their views

and opinions to the government.

> 'Anything that is related to rural development is normally
>
> channelled through this mechanism because JKKK
>
> represents local people at grass roots level'. (Interviewee
>
> no. 49, government officer)

However, there are many factors that hinder this community institution from functioning

effectively. One of the main limitations is political intervention from the government

because JKKK is seen as a government instrument at the village level.

> 'JKKK is a government machinery because it is set up by
>
> the government. So, they are the government's voice at
>
> the village level'. (Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

> 'JKKK plays the traditional role as the eyes and ears of the
>
> government at grass roots level'. (Interviewee no. 28,
>
> government officer)

'JKKK is established to benefit the ruling party, and it is

undoubtedly biased toward the government'. (Interviewee

no. 69, local people)

Government subsidies from various agencies are often distributed to villages through

JKKK. Therefore, elements of favouritism are evident and rampant in Ulu Muda where

the constituency is under the political control of the opposition party.

'When government aid was distributed to the villages, we

gave priority to government supporters first'. (Interviewee

no. 53, Village Head)

'I admitted favouritism existed in this village. The

committee members purposely distributed the subsidies

among the government supporters'. (Interviewee no. 56,

Village Head)

In addition to favouritism, some committee members hold positions because of personal

interest because they have the opportunity to dispense government subsidies among their

friends and next of kin.

'When government aid reached the village, they shared out

among their siblings and next of kin'. (Interviewee no. 56,

Village Head)

'It turned out to be that their immediate family members

benefited more from the boat allocation rather than needy

fishermen, who did not own any boat'. (Interviewee no.

63, Village Head)

'Some were eligible, but they did not receive any benefit

because the subsidy was not distributed fairly'.

(Interviewee no. 54, local businessman)

The committee members also receive meagre allowances from services they voluntarily

render, and many committees are inactive because their members are too preoccupied

with their daily economic activities. They also complain that their scope of work is

unlimited and includes even personal matters relating to villagers.

'The Village Head receives an allowance of three hundred

ringgit per year for his service, and it does not

commensurate with the time and efforts he has spent with

the local people'. (Interviewee no. 3, Village Head)

'They did not play enough roles in village development because they were too preoccupied with their daily occupations'. (Interviewee no.30, Village Head)

'There were all sorts of problems that we had to handle in the villages, including personal matters'. (Interviewee no. 26, Village Head)

Many Village Heads and committee members are old and uneducated, and they are not proactive enough to initiate ideas to develop their villages.

'Many of the committee members were old and uneducated'. (Interviewee no. 70, Village Head)

'The educational background of many Village Heads was low, and their level of thinking was limited. That was the reason why we always consulted the constituency representative instead'. (Interviewee no. 31, government officer)

'They were quite passive and just waited for any government subsidy or development to reach their village'. (Interviewee no. 43, Village Head)

The effectiveness of JKKK is also very much dependent upon community leadership.

> 'Committed and active leaders could bring about significant changes to the villages. The Village Head in Padang Siding, for example, was very dedicated, and his village had entered several village competitions at the state and national levels... They also initiated the homestay programme'. (Interviewee no. 11, government officer)

> 'We observed various leadership styles among the Village Heads. Some of them were open to views, and some were not'. (Interviewee no. 33, government officer)

Leadership, self-development and village administration have been identified as vital areas to which the committee members should be exposed in courses they regularly attend.

> 'Leadership module should be emphasised in the forthcoming JKKK courses'. (Interviewee no. 46, local businessman)

> 'Special courses should be organised for the committee members such as on self-development and village

administration. We also need to learn on how to prepare a

development plan and project proposal to be forwarded to

relevant government authorities'. (Interviewee no. 56,

Village Head)

However, recent trends have seen younger generation and white-collar workers joining

this institution, and this has injected a new mindset and outlook into this community

mechanism.

'Newcomers, mostly youngsters, have started to join this

committee. They started to discuss serious development

issues including tourism'. (Interviewee no. 50,

government officer)

'JKKK's system has improved a lot, and their knowledge

in administration has also increased'. (Interviewee no. 49,

government officer)

8.2 Local Involvement in the Planning Process

The themes are as follows:

- Level of local involvement in planning is low.

- Elitist perception among planners.

- Local people are not anti-development.

- Obstacles to bottom-up planning approach.

- Local involvement is restricted to infrastructure planning.

- The government has recognised the importance of greater public participation.

As mentioned in the previous section, JKKK is a community institution, through which government agencies often hold meetings to discuss planning and development issues at grass roots level. This section attempts to discuss bottom-up planning scenarios and to explore their limitations, both from the community's perspective and the planners' viewpoint. From the community's perspective, their level of participation in planning is minimal and is often regarded as a one-way communication process.

'They did not take our views into consideration. We could only voice out our opinions during meeting, but no action was taken beyond that... The authority did not give serious thoughts into it '. (Interviewee no. 34, local businessman)

'There was no action taken by the authority despite our numerous complaints and appeals. Our voice is powerless'. (Interviewee no. 20, local people)

This is further supported by a planner's view that planners seldom give feedback to the

community due to a strong culture of paternalism.

> 'They know you only want to listen, but do not take their
>
> views. We do not have the effective responsiveness to
>
> these people. What have we done with their views? They
>
> give their views, but we do not give feedbacks. It is a one-
>
> off activity... We have a strong culture of paternalism,
>
> and the participatory approach takes the form of
>
> consultation only'. (Interviewee no. 78, planner)

A few local people are of the opinion that planning is supposed to be done by the

relevant government authority.

> 'It was not appropriate for the local people to be involved
>
> in planning because it was the responsibility of the
>
> relevant government agency'. (Interviewee no. 26,
>
> Village Head)

The same is true of the planners' perception that 'not much can be received from

extensive local involvement. But, the so-called elitist perception is not totally true.

And, the public perceives governmental activities rarely involve them and are done by

technocrats'. (Interviewee no. 78, planner)

Local communities, particularly in rural areas, are not anti-development and presume government development plans are always right due to the good track record of the present government in developing the country.

'The villagers always agree on whatever the government has planned for them'. (Interviewee no. 19, Village Head)

'They are not anti-development. They are not going to stop any development especially if it benefits them'. (Interviewee no. 58, planner)

'The people have undergone tremendous development under the present government. They enjoy the benefits and always agree on what we plan'. (Interviewee no. 37, government officer)

Government views often overrule community ideas because local people are recipients of government development programmes. They always act as beneficiaries and are unable to make informed decisions.

'Top down decision is made because local people are not used to come up with their own ideas. In most cases, government proposals will be implemented especially if

the local people could not come up with their own ideas'.

(Interviewee no. 33, non-governmental officer)

'The villagers are not capable of making correct decisions because they are not decision-makers'. (Interviewee no. 58, planner)

Lack of capital is another obstacle to a bottom-up planning approach.

'We do not have the capital and expertise to prepare a plan'. (Interviewee no. 69, local people)

'There are some individuals who foresee certain development opportunities. But they are reluctant to suggest because they do not have the money'. (Interviewee no. 9, government officer)

'The government still has to assist them because they do not have the financial capability to plan independently'. (Interviewee no. 67, government officer)

The participatory approach is viewed as a slow process, but planners do not look at it negatively.

'It is a slow process if you were to wait for the villagers to
come up with their own ideas'. (Interviewee no. 33, non-
governmental officer)

'The participatory approach creates a hurdle because it is
time consuming. But planners do not look at it negatively.
It only costs delay, and the costs will be borne by the
government. Our main concern is we fail to meet the
deadlines'. (Interviewee no. 81, planner – field note)

A government respondent argues that there appears to be redundancy among bottom-up
planning applications, which causes delay.

'Most of bottom-up planning applications were redundant.
Each party proposed an almost identical project in one
area and claimed his was better than the rest. This caused
some delay. If they can collaborate between one another,
the decision can be made quicker'. (Interviewee no. 57,
government officer)

Many respondents claim that lack of local participation in planning is also due to reports
and plans being too technical and incomprehensible.

'The materials that we exhibit are too technical'.
(Interviewee no. 10, planner)

'The exhibits are too technical. We have to make them user-friendly, so that people will understand'.
(Interviewee no. 75, planner)

Meanwhile, local involvement in planning is restricted to infrastructure planning because basic infrastructure is still lacking in many rural areas.

'The local planning issues were mostly for infrastructure development, such as access road to farmland. Their priority is not big projects, but to solve their immediate needs'. (Interviewee no. 52, Village Head)

'Most of the development applications concentrated on basic amenities such as road, bridge, community hall and mosque. We seldom received applications for economic activities. Even if it was related to the economy, it had something to do with their traditional activities, such as drainage system for farming and access road to transport agricultural products'. (Interviewee no. 50, government officer)

'Based on the minutes from JKKK meetings, I had not

received any planning application for tourism projects.

Their level of thinking had not reached the level to discuss

big development projects'. (Interviewee no. 55,

government officer)

Interestingly, the presence of an opportunist group in Wang Kelian excluded ordinary community members from attending development discussions and meetings, even though the government authorities had no intention of keeping them out from the planning process.

'We never excluded the ordinary folks from the planning

process, but they always missed the boat. The

opportunists were the ones that wanted to get involved and

came to meetings. Eventually, ordinary community

members became excluded due to pressure from this

opportunist group. They felt that it was not worthy

attending any meeting because it did not benefit them'.

(Interviewee no. 18, government officer)

It is argued that few planners go beyond normal practice to reach out to these people, the so-called non-joiners.

'Usually, only the active public want to get involved. So,

we have to reach out to these people, the so-called non-

joiners, who do not attend our meetings and exhibitions.

But few planners go beyond this normal practice'.

(Interviewee no. 78, planner)

With the recent amendment of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1976*, the government has recognised the importance of greater public participation and has introduced two stages of participation in local planning, from the former one stage. This minimum necessary approach takes the form of publicity in newspapers, exhibitions, briefings, public representative meetings and public objection meetings.

In general, the level of public participation in various planning stages is low due to lack of planning awareness in Malaysia.

'The planning awareness in Malaysia is low. The public

citizens are not aware of their rights to comment on plans'.

(Interviewee no. 10, planner)

'They are unsure of their responsibility to participate, and

they do not understand the planning process'.

(Interviewee no. 75, planner)

'I had a dialogue session, which was attended by only

twelve people, despite our extensive newspaper and media

coverage'. (Interviewee no. 58, planner)

The turnout is only good at the beginning of the public meetings and exhibitions, which

are normally held for a certain fixed period.

'The public attendance was good only at the beginning,

especially during the opening ceremony. (Interviewee no.

10, planner)

Some other determinants that affect participation level are location of meetings and

types of communities. Despite their busy schedule, urban communities are 'more aware

of their rights to participate in the planning process (Interviewee no. 76, planner)'. As

compared to the Malays, the Chinese community even engage consultants to speak on

their behalf during meetings and dialogue sessions.

'The Chinese did not mind spending money. They

engaged consultants to go through details of the plans,

such as population projection. And, they argued with us'.

(Interviewee no. 58, planner)

However, it is claimed by one respondent that public participation in rural areas is good

due to demographic homogeneity of rural society.

> 'In a rural society, the participation is good because the
>
> people are more cohesive and have collective
>
> responsibility. In urban areas, on the other hand,
>
> individualism is more prevalent'. (Interviewee no. 76,
>
> planner)

Despite the prevailing top-down planning practice in Malaysia, a few local people admit

that some top-down projects are unsuccessful because government authorities have

failed to fulfil community needs.

> 'Many agricultural projects fail because government
>
> authorities overlooked some of the risks involved'.
>
> (Interviewee no. 56, Village Head)

> 'The authority was sometimes unaware of the existing
>
> problems in the village. They did not have a clear picture
>
> of the overall situation when they implemented the
>
> project'. (Interviewee no. 54, local businessman)

Nevertheless, it is argued that 'the combination of top-down and bottom-up is the best approach to planning, and the move to adopt fully bottom-up approach will be politically contentious'. (Interviewee no. 78, planner)

8.3   Planning Practice in Malaysia

The themes are mentioned below:

- Top-down is the prevailing planning practice.

- Planning is inseparable from politics.

- The role of State Planning Committee is limited.

- Planning approach is urban-biased.

- Rural planning is neglected.

Despite the recent amendment of *Town and Country Planning Act 1976* that recognises the importance of greater public participation, the top-down approach is the prevailing planning practice in Malaysia.

> 'The overall planning in Malaysia is top-down because government policy has been framed by the national agenda, for examples, Vision 2020, ten-year development plan, five-year development plan, structure and local plans'. (Interviewee no. 18, government officer)

'The government is federalism, and planning is concurrent

responsibility between federal and state agencies'.

(Interviewee no. 76, planner)

Because federalism is still enshrined and dominant, planning cannot detach itself from

politics.

'Major economic determinants such as foreign policy and

privatisation are still prerogative of federal government'.

(Interviewee no. 76, planner)

However, one respondent argues that politics is not a barrier to planning.

'Politics is not a barrier to planning because political

masters act as mediators to lobby for funding'.

(Interviewee no. 81, planner – field note)

Due to this relationship, it was reported that there had been cases of government

intervention that upset planning evaluations.

'There had been cases where government intervention

upset our planning evaluations.   The proposed

development contradicted our initial proposal of land use

in the area'. (Interviewee no. 77, planner)

'A few government policies contradicted plan guidelines.

We approved the status change in land use especially for

government projects'. (Interviewee no. 29, planner)

The above phenomenon is happening because development guidelines in local plans are

not mandatory.

'The local plan is done by human beings, and it can be

altered. We are not one hundred per cent rigid, in terms of

land use. If there is a good planning proposal in a

particular area, we will give a second thought to change

the status of land'. (Interviewee no. 37, government

officer)

Furthermore, the role of the State Planning Committee is only advisory to state and local

governments.

'Our decision is sometimes overruled by the state

authorities because our planning role is only advisory'.

(Interviewee no. 58, planner)

'The main role of the State Planning Committee is to

advise the state government on land use of structure and

local plans.   The decision is still referred to the state

authorities'. (Interviewee no. 77, planner)

It is quite interesting to disclose that planning approaches in the country are seen to be

urban-biased.

'Malaysia is a developing nation, and the best approach to

accelerate the growth of development is through

urbanisation.   Urbanisation   is   also   related   to

industrialisation.   It is the urban area that has factors of

production to sustain the economy. The First, Second and

Third Malaysia Plans focused the development on few

urban centres through the growth pole theory. That was

the intended policy. So, it is a very urbanised system of

development'. (Interviewee no. 76, planner)

'When we talk about planning for development, we always

concentrate on traditional kind of development, such as

residential, commercial and industrial. The approach for

development is urban'. (Interviewee no. 75, planner)

Furthermore, the built-up areas of local plans are within urban areas. Likewise, the

territory of a local government authority is also generally urban.

'Any planning application must be within the jurisdiction

of the local authority, which is in the urban area'.

(Interviewee no. 58, planner)

'Structure and local plans are to guide development in

urban areas'. (Interviewee no. 76, planner)

Due to the perceived urban-biased approach, it is alleged by a few planners that rural

planning has been neglected.

'One good example was the Rural Growth Centre. The

rural area was developed in a similar manner to an urban

area. The development was constrained to roadsides, and

eventually it turned into a small town. There was no

proper planning for rural areas'. (Interviewee no. 10,

planner)

Nevertheless, the National Physical Plan is being drafted to guide overall physical

planning of the country, and rural planning has been given serious attention within it.

'Previously, we looked at rural areas as resource-based

areas. We exploited them to accelerate the development.

Now, we have to utilise the resources and heritage in a

sustainable way. This element is given a serious focus in

our planning system now, and Local Agenda 21 is

particularly relevant'. (Interviewee no. 76, planner)

8.4 Tourism Planning in Malaysia

The themes are as follows:

- Tourism planning is government-led.

- Failed tourism projects due to improper planning and poor maintenance culture.

- Private sector involvement in tourism is lacking.

- Private sector needs government support.

Tourism in Malaysia is a government-led industry. One of the reasons for this, cited in

the interview, is the high cost involved in developing tourism product. In Perlis, in

particular, Visit Perlis Year 2003-2005 and Perlis State Park are government-initiated

tourism products.

'Tourism in Perlis was government-led. It was the state

government that started to build the State Park and good

road access. The privilege to cross border without proper

documentations was also mutually agreed between the governments of Perlis and southern province of Satun, Thailand'. (Interviewee no. 18, government officer)

Planning in Malaysia is inseparable from politics, and there are many examples of tourism plans that were initiated by political actors. This is particularly true in Ulu Muda because Kedah is the home state of the former Prime Minister.

'The idea to develop Ulu Muda was initiated by the Prime Minister, and our Chairman was inspired by the development concept'. (Interviewee no. 62, senior resort staff)

'Our parent company heeded Prime Minister's plea to develop this area as a primary tourist destination'. (Interviewee no. 61, senior resort staff)

'A prominent example is Langkawi island. Everybody knew it was the Prime Minister that initiated the development of Langkawi as a duty-free island'. (Interviewee no. 75, planner)

While many tourism plans are based on needs assessment, as claimed by one respondent, Gua Kelam in PSP was turned into a recreational and tourist spot by coincidence.

> 'Initially, Gua Kelam was not a tourist spot. We did a landscaping project to beautify the surrounding area. It soon became so attractive, and tourists started to come'. (Interviewee no. 9, government officer)

As a result, Gua Kelam Recreational Centre has been managed by the State Agriculture since the project started.

> 'Since we initiated this project, the state government decided we continue managing this area although tourism is not our expertise'. (Interviewee no. 9, government officer)

It is suggested that the PSFD take over the management control of Gua Kelam.

> 'To streamline our operation, we decide to take over the management of Gua Kelam from the State Agriculture because the area falls under the PSP'. (Interviewee no. 31, government officer)

There are many examples of failed tourism projects due to an absence of feasibility studies, improper planning and poor maintenance culture.

'Quite often, there are no feasibility studies being conducted for small projects. Even for big projects, you can tailor-made the plans to meet your objectives. If you want to materialise the proposal, you will say all the good things to get it approved'. (Interviewee no. 75, planner)

'Improper planning also caused many tourism projects to fail. The location was not strategic and the building was not user-friendly'. (Interviewee no. 74, government officer)

'Many tourist spots in rural areas were not properly maintained. Maybe, the maintenance cost was too high'. (Interviewee no. 44, senior resort staff)

'Due to poor maintenance, the projects, mostly government projects, failed. The project was nicely completed, but there was no allocation to maintain it in the long term'. (Interviewee no. 67, government officer)

In a related development, it is necessary for the government to provide basic infrastructure and facilities before the private sector plays their role in tourism, as is the case in Ulu Muda.

> 'The government identifies a potential destination area to be developed and provides the required infrastructures and facilities. Investors will be invited to participate by giving them certain incentives. In the case of Ulu Muda, the hoteliers were offered cheap land by the state government'. (Interviewee no. 57, government officer)

From the hoteliers' perspective, their viability is dependent upon continuous support from the state government especially when their occupancy rate is low.

> 'The current water level jeopardises the tourism industry in Ulu Muda. We definitely require support from the state government to solve this problem ... We are willing to expand if we receive support but our average occupancy rate throughout the year is between 20-30 per cent'. (Interviewee no. 61, senior resort staff)

Despite the above situation, one resort operator in Ulu Muda claims that its main customer base is from the government sector.

'We get support from the government sector because they organise meetings, seminars, team building courses and even dinner functions. They also send their executives for retreat. The bulk of our business is mainly from the government sector'. (Interviewee no. 62, senior resort staff)

In Perlis, on the other hand, private sector participation in tourism is still lacking.

'The private sectors are playing the wait and see attitude before they could harbour the benefits from tourism. At the moment, the cost is too high for them to participate'. (Interviewee no. 1, government officer)

To develop successful tourism, one respondent argues that tourism should be treated as a basic economic sector.

'Tourism should not be regarded as a secondary sector. It should be in the same perspective as in agriculture and petroleum. There is the spillover, upstream and downstream. In ecotourism, you have to preserve the forest, the upstream. But at the same time, you have to

develop the rural areas, attractions and communities,

which are the downstream'. (Interviewee no. 76, planner)

Finally, a tourism product needs to be continually improved to remain competitive.

'A tourism product has to be sustained years in and years

out to remain viable. It is not a one-off project like

constructing a bridge. New elements need to be included

to improve the product'. (Interviewee no. 10, planner)

8.5   Conclusion

As noted earlier, this chapter present findings primarily in the context of community

participation in the planning process. The common categories are used to create themes

in order to present a logical chain of evidences, and the following chapter relates the

evidences from the findings with the relevant literature.

Chapter Nine

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

9.0   Introduction

This chapter links the empirical findings, as presented in Chapters Seven and Eight, with the relevant literature. The order of discussion is similar to the theme structure in the previous two chapters.

9.1   The Conception and Understanding of Ecotourism as a Term

It is evident from the findings that different stakeholders place various understandings on the term ecotourism. In general, there seems to be lack of a coherent view as to what constitutes ecotourism, and there is lack of clarity and consensus as to an understanding of ecotourism definitions. However, it can be argued from the findings that government respondents commonly view ecotourism in the context of the natural environment, and their broad view is that conservation of natural resources should be emphasised in ecotourism development.   Their views closely mirror the official definition of ecotourism adopted by the Malaysian Government. This definition has been taken aboard in a relatively uncritical manner without reference to the considerable debate that exists, both at an academic and practitioner level, regarding the usefulness of the term. Ecotourism is, in part, used as a destination branding tool for selected parks throughout

Peninsular and East Malaysia and the actual practical implications of its use, in terms of,

for example, community participation, are, perhaps lost in this packaging.

Planners, also public employees, appear to share a similar perception as to what

constitutes ecotourism but do express the cautionary view that strict development

guidelines and appropriate mechanisms should be enforced, so as to preserve the natural

heritage of sensitive areas and to prevent these areas from being transformed into mass

tourism. Some non-governmental respondents, in part, go a bit further in their

interpretation of ecotourism but such responses were fragmented and limited.

At a community level, there seems to be a greater ambiguity as to ecotourism's

definition because the term appears to be little understood by the local people. A few

respondents among them were clearly did not understand the term ecotourism because

the eco-prefix was misinterpreted as 'economics' of tourism and 'city in a forest'. Local

benefit is only acknowledged as being important from an interview with a non-

governmental organisation's respondent. The apparent marginality of the concept of

ecotourism to respondents at a community level is an important finding from this study,

even if the basis for conclusions in this regard may be tentative. As we have seen,

definitions that exist for ecotourism place considerable emphasis on the role of

community. This is a distinguishing feature of this form of tourism compared to nature-

based tourism which does not imply any necessary stakeholding for the local

community. However, the findings of this study raise interesting questions as to whether

such involvement can be imposed in a top-down manner on apparently disinterested

local communities. They also beg discussion as to whether the Malaysian Government, in adopting its Ecotourism Plan, really intended the application of the bottom-up approach that is implicit, for many people, in the very use of the term.

The above discussion has demonstrated that ecotourism is not a well-defined concept across different categories of respondents in the research areas, and this confusion is a result of different stakeholders adopting different perspectives on what constitutes ecotourism. This confusion is, perhaps, not surprising because the literature (Page and Dowling, 2002) acknowledges that the whole nature of ecotourism as a subject is highly contested and controversial, and the term is still novel, ill-defined and has often been accorded a variety of meanings.

Despite the above, the general perception among government respondents on ecotourism is consistent with the Australian Department of Tourism's (1994) definition and Orams's (1998) argument that ecotourism involves long-term conservation of the natural resources. This is necessary in order to achieve a more desirable and responsible ecotourism operation, as depicted by Orams's (1995) continuum of ecotourism types, because active ecotourism operations contribute to the improvement of the natural environment. What may be lacking in their understanding, as we have already noted, is a full understanding of the implications of using ecotourism in relation to the role that many commentators ascribe to the local community in its development and operation.

9.2   Community Relationship with the Forest

Based on the research findings, the community links within the forest in terms of access

and relationships are illustrated in Figure 9.1. Prior to the park's establishment, access

to the forest was relatively easy and the communities had a close relationship with

nature. Similarly, the literature (see Section 4.4) argues that local communities are used

to having a resource-based economic system, based on forest exploitation, because most

ecotourism occurs in remote localities. Interestingly, the findings reveal that local

communities in both areas, in general, are not dependent upon forest for income. They

treat the forest as a 'commodity provider' and exploit natural resources as a source of

physical products (see Section 5.2.1), as opposed to indigenous people who are more

likely to treat the forest as a 'resource provider'. This resource exploitation is

complicated by rural poverty and the absence of environmental awareness in PSP and

Ulu Muda, which have prompted some local people to collect medicinal and

horticultural plants for immediate financial gain, as the demand for such products by the

urban population is high (see Section 5.2.1).

Figure 9.1 Community Relationship with the Forest

	ACCESS		RELATIONSHIP	
	PSP	Ulu Muda	PSP	Ulu Muda
BEFORE	easy	easy but restricted	close	close
AFTER	controlled	controlled	distant	controlled

As indicated in Figure 9.1, the local community in PSP has a restricted access and distant relationship with the forest due to law enforcement by the State Forestry since the park was established. The concept of protected areas, as discussed in the literature, denies them access to necessary resources (see Section 4.4). In Ulu Muda, the presence of various government agencies in the area, which are entrusted with different levels of authority and jurisdiction, limits community's access and relationship with the forest.

However, the findings reveal that encroachment incidences still occur in both areas, despite regulation and law enforcement, particularly by outsiders. As stated in the literature (Eagles, 2001), this happens because local people may not be in a market economy, and they do not understand tourism as an economic system that sees the environment as a source of experience. Interestingly, the findings disclose that

encroachment issues are more contained in PSP as the area is managed by a single

agency, as compared to Ulu Muda. The literature (Mohamed and Hussin, 2003) argues

that the presence of various agencies creates overlapping and various administrative

issues and problems such as inconsistency of policies and lack of coordination among

the agencies (see Section 5.2.1). This is the case in Ulu Muda, and, as indicated in the

findings, shortage of manpower and a lack of patrol worsen the situation, which has led

to some of these areas being left as 'no-man's land' without a caretaker. These areas

also suffer from a lack of maintenance and are subject to vandalism, and eventually may

be abandoned by tourists (see Section 5.2.1). Despite isolated encroachment incidences,

as mentioned above, the findings reveal that local communities in both areas generally

support forest conservation values. Based on discussion in the literature (Drumm, 1998;

Wearing and Neil, 1999), this community support is essential to achieve the

conservation and development goals of ecotourism, whereby the community is

encouraged to conserve natural resources within an economic framework (see Section

4.3).

In another development, the findings reveal that the Malay communities in both areas

treat nature as nothing special, although they generally support conservation. This is

because they have been living in remote and natural surroundings for generations, unlike

the Chinese community in Kaki Bukit and urban communities. In fact, the literature

(Weaver, 1998) also argues that for the local rural communities to actually wander

through forest to appreciate nature and wildlife seems inexplicable (see Section 4.4).

One respondent argues that by involving the locals in the propagation of plants for sale,

by planting through seeds or cuttings, their degree of appreciation towards nature could be increased. This will also discourage the locals from removing ornamental and medicinal plants from the park.

9.3   Community Relationship with the Park

The findings indicate that, in the initial stage, there was some objection from the Wang Kelian community because they had opened up the forested area for fruit cultivation prior to PSP establishment. As mentioned in the previous section, park establishment deprives them of certain privileges because they have a different view of land use. In fact, Weaver (1998) acknowledges that conflict exists between the local community and the ecotourism industry especially when development does not fit in with local aspirations and capacities (Murphy, 1983). Outsiders, when investing in an area, believe that they can exploit the area for their own purposes, often in ways incompatible with local priorities and ways of life. In addition, when the concept of protected areas is not well understood by the local people, hostile attitudes will persist, increase business cost and undermine viability of park systems (see Section 4.4). Another reason for local conflict, according to findings, is because park development did not take community consideration at the very beginning because the park is situated on government land. This is often the case when planning decisions are imposed on communities from external sources, and there is no local participation in shaping the phenomenon (Tosun, 2000). The setting aside of land used exclusively for nature travellers can also provoke local opposition (Horwich *et al.*, 1993). However, after several briefings and

development discussions by the related agencies, the villagers eventually accepted the development concept, especially when they learned that tourism development would bring about positive changes and benefits to the community. This is important because the literature (Getz, 1983b) often emphasises that strong community support is important for long-term success of a tourist destination.

The literature (Ritchie, 1998) discusses that conflicts can be reduced if a reasonable consensus is reached and if local community needs are incorporated. In both areas, government agencies are flexible when dealing with encroachment issues that involve local people. While enforcing tough laws is required to prevent further conflicts, this flexibility is necessary in order to maintain a good relationship and to avoid skepticism and hostility among local people towards the agencies. In PSP, local conflict is reduced when 'land owners' continue to access the forest during fruit seasons because the State Forestry issue special permits for them. This flexible approach may work well for the vast majority of local people who abide by the law, but the related agencies should be cautioned against the minority who seem undeterred by the law and may take advantage of the 'relaxed' situation. In a related development, there are also requests from the local people in the PSP that they should be given special privileges to enter the park, i.e., exemption from paying the entrance fees. It is important to maintain a close relationship between local people and the park because they can rarely afford to participate due to the costs involved, and it precludes the participation of low-income people (Cater, 1993).

Despite the above conflicts, the findings indicate that local communities in Wang Kelian

and Kaki Bukit generally welcome tourists and the park's establishment. A survey by a

non-governmental organisation to gauge the response of the community found that there

was a high degree of support for the park by the local people. Similarly, in Ulu Muda,

the local people have a high degree of expectation regarding tourism and support

government efforts to develop the industry in the area. The presence of several resorts

also increase local awareness about the hotel industry, and they regularly supply local

produce and participate in social events organised by the resorts. This tourism and

community interface can be related to Doxey's (1975) irridex model and Ap and

Crompton's (1993) model, in which host communities welcome tourists in the initial

stage of tourism development (see Section 4.5).

In another development, the findings disclose that the level of local involvement with

the park is low, and two contributing factors are the early development stage of PSP and

park development is in an enclave. Similarly, in Ulu Muda, the tourism stage is even

newer because the area has yet to be gazetted as a state park, and the presence of several

resort enclaves in Ulu Muda and Pedu further contribute to a distant relationship

between local communities and tourism. With specific reference to Butler's (1980)

tourism life cycle, the initial stage of tourism development is often associated with a

small number of tourists, small-scale development and slow growth. Many local people

perceive the involvement of PSP and resorts in Ulu Muda as being external due to

minimal benefits and low leakages from tourists. This is true because resort enclaves are

often criticised in the literature (Britton, 1991) as being a major contributor to the

negative impacts of tourism and an obstacle to local participation because of the large

capital requirements (see Section 5.6). In Ulu Muda, the findings report negative but

isolated social incidences, which have slightly tarnished the resort image.

The only direct involvement with the park, as seen by many locals in PSP, is

employment. But the jobs are frequently not only menial, they are also limited. As

discussed in the literature (Khalifah, 1997), management positions often go to outsiders

because local people do not have appropriate skills, knowledge and the required

educational background. Furthermore, according to the State Forestry, the jobs are

limited because they do not require a large number of staff at present. They currently

employ seven general workers at the park headquarters who are sourced from the local

area due to proximity and the State Forestry's policy. Similarly, due to proximity, the

development of several resorts in Ulu Muda has also provided blue-collar jobs for the

local people. Job creation is important because it is often argued in the literature (Page

and Dowling, 2002) that ecotourism should provide obvious local community benefit by

involving them in ecotourism operations, such as in the provision of knowledge,

services, facilities and products. Its profitability and the flow of money back to the local

community are axiomatic to the development of ecotourism (see Section 4.3). Job

opportunities can also be regarded as some kind of compensatory benefits, especially to

reduce conflict between local people and protected areas (see Section 4.4), as discussed

in the previous section. However, some authors in the literature (Wallace and Pierce,

1996) argue that direct economic benefits should complement existing traditional

economic activities in order to attain true ecotourism (see Section 2.3.3), instead of replacing traditional economic practices as is the case of PSP and Ulu Muda.

Some of the general workers in PSP double up as guides for visitors to natural attractions whenever required. Similarly, some fishermen in Ulu Muda supplement their incomes by acting as guides to fishing enthusiasts and nature tourists. It is clear that nature guides are not full-time jobs due to seasonality and low number of visitors. In Ulu Muda, the situation is aggravated by the drought season and low water level at Muda and Pedu dams that discourage nature tourists from visiting the areas. This supports literature argument (Amat, 2002) that natural hazards and seasonal variations affect the number of visitors to a particular natural attraction (see Section 5.2.1).

Interestingly, the findings disclose that local people in PSP are not particularly interested in guide training courses organised by the government agency. Two reasons are indicated: i) there are few young people in the village due to youth migration, and ii) lack of information dissemination. According to the literature (Smith, 1984; Goh, 1991; Long and Glendinning, 1992), access to local skills and information are among the prerequisites for public participation, and government's efforts to increase their involvement will be fruitless if local people are denied to this access (see Sections 3.6, 3.7, 3.8 and 4.2).

9.4 Community Relationship with Tourism

Besides employment and guides, the findings also highlight that community involvement in tourism comes in different forms, particularly in homestay and home-visit programmes, business activities and development discussions. While the previous section indicates that enclave status and early stages of park development contribute to low local involvement, the findings reveal several other local limitations: i) lack of local awareness of tourism potential, ii) complacency in attitudes among local people, and iii) lack of appropriate skills and knowledge. The literature (Gunn, 1972) expresses a similar argument in that community's preparedness to harness this tourism potential varies because the capacity to enter the tourism market is not evenly distributed among the community (see Section 4.4). In fact, the literature (Cater, 1996) also acknowledges that there are lines of division drawn according to access to resources, markets and opportunities, even among the same rural community (see Section 4.1).

The findings further reveal that local people are more interested in immediate returns before they actively engage in tourism-related activities. This is true because tourism benefits are not sufficiently visible, and local people do not see them occurring (see Section 4.3). Some local people in PSP and Ulu Muda are distant from tourism because they are not directly involved with or do not reap any benefits from tourism-related activities. Similarly, the literature (Pretty, 1995) argues that local people will become more passive recipients if they receive less benefit from tourism (see Section 3.6).

Despite minimal local involvement, a majority of respondents agree that tourism and park development have brought about significant development in rural communities in PSP and Ulu Muda. The advent of tourism has prompted the state governments to improve the road system and provide basic amenities, but the PSP community in Wang Kelian is still without a school and a clinic. Meanwhile, the Chinese community in Kaki Bukit expressed their concern that the proposed construction of a new road, which will shorten the traveling time to PSP, will jeopardise their business because the new road will bypass the town. According to the literature (Scheyvens, 1999), this is a visible sign of economic empowerment where tourism brings in lasting economic gains to a local community (see Section 4.5), although the gains are not solely generated from ecotourism activities. There are notable improvements in local services and infrastructure, for instance, rural people are able to transport and market local produces to nearby town with the improved road system.

9.4.1 Community Involvement in Homestays and Home-visit Programmes

In many countries, homestays provide opportunities for local people to engage actively in the development of tourism by providing accommodation for visitors (see Section 5.5). In the context of ecotourism, homestays foster guest-host relationship and allow visitors to learn local culture, which is part of the underlying ecotourism principles (see Section 2.2). Residents can supplement their incomes with a relatively low initial capital requirement.

In the case of PSP, the Malays in Wang Kelian are more supportive of the homestay proposal, compared to the Chinese in Kaki Bukit. The Chinese communities, who are better off economically, do not see this opportunity as a business proposition because the anticipated revenue is relatively lower. According to the literature (Wall and Long, 1996), the small scale, low occupancy rates and low prices of homestays restrict economic benefits. Interestingly, the Malays in Wang Kelian appear to misinterpret the homestay concept due to lack of understanding and exposure from the related government agency, and the villagers actually request funding for their houses to be upgraded. In addition, lack of local initiatives dampen government's efforts to successfully implement this programme in Wang Kelian. Nevertheless, the findings indicate that this programme is put on hold for two reasons: i) most of the houses do not meet the minimum standard requirement, and ii) the State Forestry's priority is to generate revenue from the park's chalet accommodation. This phenomenon represents a classic example of manipulative participation, in which government authorities exercise their power in the community, and local people are purposely excluded from involvement and decision-making (see Section 3.6). With homestays being put on hold, a few houses in Wang Kelian participate in home-visit programmes organised by a tour guide from the state capital, and the itinerary often includes visits to the local small and medium industries.

9.5   Community Involvement in Business

The findings highlight that many local people in Wang Kelian and Kaki Bukit participate in business activities at the Border Sunday Market, which is situated in the PSP area. Its location in a natural surrounding, free movement of citizens across the border without any travel documentation and Siamese goods are the main attractions of the market. On the positive side, the market provides opportunities for local people in each country to be involved in business, and it promotes cross border tourism between Malaysia and Thailand. As mentioned in the literature (Timothy, 1995), border functions as a tourist attraction, and cross-border shopping is a common leisure-based or economic-based activity in many countries.

However, the findings reveal that local involvement in business is declining due to economic downturn in the late 1990s and seasonality of visitors. The trading volume is high only during weekends, school holidays and festive seasons. In Section 5.2.1, seasonal variation is claimed to be one of development issues in tourism in Malaysia. The findings further reveal that, over time, many local traders have been forced to close business due to strong competition from the relatively cheaper Siamese goods, and local traders do not have the survival skills to sustain the competition due to lack of capital and business knowledge.

This situation creates a vacuum for more entrepreneurial Thai traders to encroach the Malaysian territory, and they initially sublet and subsequently buy business premises

from the local people. Some local business owners are too complacent in that they are comfortable with guaranteed incomes from fixed rentals rather than uncertain incomes from business. The situation in PSP can be characterised by the 'development' stage in Butler's Tourism Life Cycle (see Section 3.3), although the tourism stage is relatively new. At this stage, local ownership and control is declining due to external ownership as well as a leakage of money to people outside the area. In fact, there is already a perception among the local people that Thai traders benefit more from the Sunday Market than local traders (see Section 5.5). It is questionable whether the development of border towns across the northern parts of the country benefits local economies because the business conflict between local and Thai traders is not only peculiar to Wang Kelian, but it also occurs in neighbouring Padang Besar and other border towns across the northern states of Peninsular Malaysia. In tourism context, a border can act as a barrier, and cross-border shopping has been blamed for retail bankruptcies and lost government revenue in many countries (see Section 5.5).

In a related development, business conflict between local and Thai traders is also aggravated by lack of enforcement from the beginning by the relevant authorities. According to the findings, there are several factors that hinder successful enforcement: i) Thai traders are persistent, ii) they know in advance when spot checks are to be conducted, iii) local people 'conspire' to act as middlemen during round-up operations, and iv) they marry local men and operate business using their spouse's permits. The complicated situation can be explained by the high degree of permeability between two different societies but with similar cultures (see Section 5.5) – the Pattanis of Thailand

and the Malays of Perlis. Inter-society marriages are observed, and many locals speak fluently Thai language, and vice versa. To these people, contact between them goes unaltered by the presence of a political divide (Timothy, 1995).

In general, the above discussions indicate that local people in PSP welcome tourism's economic impacts (see Sections 3.8, 4.5) from the development of Wang Kelian border market. The literature (Page and Dowling, 2002) argues that viable ecotourism should provide material well-being to the local people (see Section 4.3), and the market should provide maximum and long-term economic benefit to the host community, although its activity is not purely ecotourism. However, over time, the local traders are marginalised because they are not empowered with the required skills to improve their circumstances (see Section 3.6) and they are not self-sufficient in the change process (see Section 3.6). It is also a sign of economic disempowerment and a typical example of manipulative participation, where outside entrepreneurs exercise their power in the community (see Sections 3.6, 4.5). If this business conflict is allowed to increase, the literature (Murphy, 1985; Haywood, 1988) argues that resident attitudes towards tourism will become hostile and may result in damage to the social and cultural systems of the local community (see Sections 3.8, 4.5). In addition, it will also decrease the quality of tourism experience at PSP (see Section 4.5). Eventually, local people will become passive recipients and do not share in the economic benefits (see Section 3.6) due to high degree of external investment (see Section 3.3).

Elements of business opportunism are evident in PSP, as the findings reveal. On the positive side, a certain level of business opportunity is required to allow local people to participate in business. On the other hand, the level will reach a critical point where external sources will exploit local control. As is the case in PSP, outsiders (besides Thai traders) have started to monopolise other business activities in Wang Kelian, particularly the management of visitors' parking and rubbish disposal at the border market, souvenir shop operations at PSP's Visitor Centre and Gua Kelam's new business centre. From the government authority's perspective, this is fair because community is defined in a wider geographical context (see Section 4.1), and communities that extend beyond PSP boundaries are interpreted as local by the state authorities. In addition, they also claim that local communities in Wang Kelian and Kaki Bukit do not have the required expertise and capital to operate such business endeavours. However, this is clearly a sign of political disempowerment where the implementing agency treats local communities as passive beneficiaries and fails to involve them in decision-making (Scheyvens, 1999). The presence of a small group of local opportunists, who exploit opportunities for personal interest, have worsened the above situation. As discussed in the literature (Cullingworth, 1985), these opportunists, while remain a small section of the society, are the articulate and concerned individuals who have roles in skewing decisions or opportunities towards their own interest (see Sections 3.7).

In a related development, the findings also disclose that many local people are skeptical that the new tourist town development will bring greater benefits to them. This supports the argument in the literature (Weaver, 1998) that the influx of new development ideas,

foreign money and new power structures may leave the local people in a state of concern (see Section 4.4). The local traders are also worried that the new development will discourage local participation and jeopardise local business because they cannot afford to buy the premises. This is true because the high degree of foreign investment may result in land and property price inflation, beyond the means of the average low-income residents (see Section 4.4). The state government has also proposed to build a duty free complex in Wang Kelian, but many respondents perceive such development is inconsistent with the overall development concept in PSP because it promotes foreign goods and 'internationalisation' of ecotourism (see Sections 4.4, 5.2.1).

Unlike the situation in PSP, the element of business opportunism is not substantial in Ulu Muda. It was observed from the findings that a few shops changed ownership, and a local travel agent was closed due to poor business. Generally, local constraints in business are lack of capital and business knowledge, lack of product innovation, fear of loans and youth migration. Local participation in business in Ulu Muda is confined to restaurants, food stalls, groceries and petrol pump, and their existence is primarily to serve the needs of the local people and secondary needs of visitors who occasionally pass-by the area. Visitors, in most cases, bypass this intervening opportunity in favour of a quality advantage at the nearby resorts (see Section 5.6). These resorts were established by the private sector, at an early tourism stage, after receiving land incentives from the state government. Government incentives and support are necessary to encourage private sector involvement, which is still lacking in Malaysia (see Section

5.1). As mentioned in Section 9.2, these resort enclaves, however, limit local benefits

from tourist spending (see Section 5.6), and this is the case in Ulu Muda.

9.6 Management Issues in the PSP and Ulu Muda

In the initial stage, there have been some disputes over the main objectives in the

establishment of PSP, with regards to conservation versus tourism values. The non-

governmental organisations are more concerned with the preservation of the scientific

and intrinsic value of the park, while the state government appears to be more interested

in selling the tourism values. This situation has prompted the Perlis State Forestry

Department (PSFD) to examine its role in managing the limited natural resources and,

simultaneously, generate income for the state government in a sustainable manner. The

establishment of PSP reflects the symbiosis and harmonious relationship between

environment and tourism, and it is also in line with the state government's strategy to

eradicate poverty through tourism development (see Section 5.3).

In a related development, strong public opposition and concern from non-governmental

organisations have prompted the federal government to overturn the state government's

proposal to introduce heli-logging in the Ulu Muda area. In fact, the public fear that

heli-logging will further aggravate the current situation when the area is experiencing

drought, and the Muda dam recorded its lowest water level in the last five years. The

conflict between potential economic gains from tourism and heli-logging activities and

forest conservation clearly reflects that ecotourism operates along one continuum, as

described by Orams (1995) in Section 2.4. At one extreme, exploitive ecotourism results in damage to the host environment while more responsible ecotourism contributes to the health of the host environment. Being a relatively poor state in Malaysia, Kedah could have potentially earned RM52 million per year from heli-logging. But, the potential costs outweigh the benefits as heli-logging has potential impacts on water catchment areas, wildlife roaming areas, and implications for Malaysia's efforts towards timber certification (see Section 5.4.1).

As discussed above, conservation value takes precedence over economic value in heli-logging development in Ulu Muda. In the case of Muda dam, however, tourism value is given less priority because the dam's water supply is also used for farm irrigation. Low water levels in the dam limit tourist activities because the fastest route to the natural areas, which normally takes less than one hour by boat, has been disrupted. Upgrading old logging tracks is one alternative being considered by the state agency, but one major disadvantage is some local people may use this track to access the forest illegally. This water level affects the tourism industry and resort operators in Ulu Muda and nearby Pedu. Forest conservation is necessary to protect water catchment areas in Ulu Muda, but water levels cannot be maintained at a certain minimum level, for the sake of tourism activities. Wheeller (1995) has questioned the legitimacy of sustainability principles by arguing that there can never be a symbiotic relationship between tourism and the environment. In this case, the commitment of the state government and host communities to the principles of sustainability tends to be conditional on self-interest, in favour of farming activities.

In another development, a new tourist town is presently under construction to replace the existing border market in PSP. According to the findings of this study, the integrated development of the new tourist town is long-awaited and necessary to create a better market environment because the popularity of the market has seen an increase in the amount of rubbish and in the level of unplanned erection of semi-permanent structures that are occupied by the traders. The State Forestry is introducing sustainable development as a concept (see Section 2.3) because the new tourist town will be a clean environment for shopping and recreational activities. The concentration of market activities in one area is a zoning process, which is essential to control land use and to accommodate different types of tourists. As Veal (2002) point out this is part of the efforts to concentrate high-volume visitation in limited areas in the park, where services can be provided and the impact on the natural environment can be minimised. However, the authority may wish to consider caution with respect to mass tourists moving into pristine areas (see Section 2.3.2) because the types of tourists that flock to Sunday markets are overwhelmingly classified as mass tourists, not ecotourists (see Section 2.5).

In relation to the above, tourists to the border market do not integrate well with the park tourists because they generally do not have any interest in nature and conservation. Park tourists, on the other hand, consider the market as a 'must-see' attraction. Therefore, environmental education may be important to create nature interest among the mass tourists. Most definitions acknowledge education and interpretation of the natural environment as among the main principles of ecotourism, in order to promote

conservation and nature awareness (see Section 2.2). The role of the information centre at PSP headquarters is very important to create this interest, but the centre is under utilised and not fully developed.

There is an increasing pressure for any park to show direct economic benefits, in order to justify its existence. In maximising the economic benefits, the authorities in PSP and Ulu Muda may need to exercise caution with respect to developing additional or unnecessary facilities and attractions because such development may lead to mass tourism and carrying capacity over-limit (see Section 5.2.1). Besides zoning, the implementation of other development control mechanisms, such as restrictions on land acquisition, may be required to preserve the natural heritage of both areas. In PSP, the hilly topography of the surroundings will hinder rapid development of the area, and mass tourism is unlikely to be observed in the next ten years.* In addition, once gazetted as a state park, a public inquiry is compulsory before removing any parcel of land for development.

In terms of overall management, PSP is state-owned and managed by PSFD; other national parks in the country are federally owned and managed by the Wildlife Protection and National Parks Department. The findings of this study indicate that forestry law covers wider forest issues than wildlife protection law, especially with the enactment of new legislation to strengthen the degree of protection afforded to the park resources (Amat and Osman, 2001). However, park planning and management is relatively new to PSFD because the authority's role was not directly related to tourism

development in the state. Over time, the agency has played an increasing role in developing tourist attractions in its forest because there exists a substantial number of natural attractions suitable for tourism (see Section 5.3). The main issues facing PSFD are budget constraints, limited manpower and under trained staff. Amat (2002) highlights the same matter by arguing that there are gaps in the capability to effectively manage parks in Malaysia. Staff development and external technical assistance are required to bridge the gaps, in addition to ensuring the right quality of resources and professionalism in the park business.

9.7 The Village Development and Security Committee (JKKK) as a Community Institution

JKKK is seen by many respondents as a proper channel to voice or represent local opinions to government authorities. As noted in Section 3.7.1, JKKK is an organisation of leadership at the grass roots level, and it acts as a government mechanism to facilitate development in rural areas. However, there are various factors that hinder this community mechanism from functioning effectively.

The most commonly highlighted issue is political intervention from the government as JKKK is seen as a government instrument at the village level. This is true because the Chief Minister has a vested power to appoint committee members based on recommendations of the respective local representatives, and individual loyalty is judged as the main selection criterion above individual capability and academic qualification

(see Section 3.7.1). As a result, elements of favouritism are evident in Ulu Muda especially in dispensing government subsidies because the constituency is under the political control of an opposition party. There are also cases of subsidies being distributed among their cronies and next of kin because some committee members hold positions for personal interest.

While the literature (Ramlan, 2003) acknowledges that many committee members lack education, communication and leadership skills (see Section 3.7.1). The findings add that some of them are old and not proactive enough to initiate development ideas. Both literature and findings disclose that some of them are not fully committed and too preoccupied with their main economic activities, which have resulted in some of the committees being inactive. They also complain that the allowance received is too small, and it is not commensurate with the amount of voluntary responsibilities that even include personal matters of the villagers.

As a voluntary organisation, JKKK can only be managed part-time by its members (see Section 3.7.1). Therefore, in order to improve this mechanism, the literature (Ramlan, 2003) suggests that JKKK should be administered full-time by qualified staff and be appraised annually by the relevant development agency (see Section 3.7.1). Specific training courses on personal development, leadership and village administration should be emphasised since JKKK's effectiveness depends to a large extent upon its leaders and committee members. In a positive development, the findings reveal that recent trend has

observed younger generation and white-collar workers joining this institution, and has injected new mindset and outlook into this community mechanism.

9.8 Local Involvement in the Planning Process

In general, the findings indicate that the level of community participation in the planning process is minimal; one main reason is lack of planning awareness among the general public in Malaysia. In a similar discussion, Goh (1991) agrees that the public have been denied the opportunity to participate because there is lack of knowledge of the planning process and lack of access to government data and information. As a result, a majority of the public generally do not understand the current planning theory and practice.

To substantiate this claim, Goh (1991) revealed that the number of people, in terms of percentage of the city population, who visited exhibition was very small, ranging from one to four per cent. Interestingly, the findings disclose that public attendance is usually good at the beginning of public meetings and exhibitions, which are normally held for a certain fixed period. Some other determinants that affect participation level are location of meetings and types of communities. The findings further indicate that urban communities are more aware of their rights to participate, and the Chinese community, as compared to the Malays, even engage consultants to speak on their behalf during public meetings and dialogue sessions. Similarly, Ooi (1985) found that over 75 per cent of visitors to a Penang exhibition were generally middle-class and urban males. In one particular case, public participation in rural areas is claimed to be better due to

demographic homogeneity, social cohesiveness and collective responsibility of rural society. One respondent argues that individualism is more prevalent in urban areas.

The above discussion raises the question of effective representation of a cross section of the population in the planning process. Both the literature (Singh *et al.*, 2003) and findings agree that there is lack of representation from the poorer sections of the population. In addition, there is no progressive planner to advocate for the poor because advocacy planning is not well established in Malaysia. This situation is characterised by select involvement rather than broad participation of all community members, which is an important prerequisite for effective public participation (Smith, 1984).

The literature (Shamsudin, 2000) claims that it is difficult to envisage a situation where the public can participate effectively in the planning process in Malaysia. Local councilors are appointed by the State government, and the decision-making structure of local authorities is largely a closed one. Shamsudin (2000) argues that participatory democracy is at odds with the technocracy value system among planners and non-participatory bureaucratic administrative culture in the decision-making and political process in Malaysia. In fact, the findings reveal that few planners go beyond the normal practice to reach out to these non-joiners.

As a result, the participatory approach, as indicated in the findings, takes the form of consultation only. It is often regarded as a one-way communication process because planners seldom give feedback to the community due to a strong culture of paternalism.

Planners perceive that not much can be received from extensive local involvement. Similarly, some local people are in the opinion that planning is a governmental activity that rarely involves them. In addition, local communities, particularly in rural areas, are not anti-development and tend to agree on government plan especially if it benefits them.

The above situation is a classic example of tokenism (Arnstein, 1969) or pseudo participation (Painter, 1992), which is restricted to processes such as informing and endorsement rather than sharing powers to decide on policies and strategies (Goh, 1991). Raman (1994) depicts community participation as public relation ploys played on the public, and nothing comes out from such exercises. From an elite's perspective, participation is seen as 'an end in itself' (Rosener, 1981), and the final power to make decisions is reserved with the authority holder.

Besides low planning awareness, there are several other obstacles to the bottom-up planning approach. Lack of capital is one major hurdle because local people do not have the financial capability to plan independently without government assistance. Likewise, the literature (Singh *et al.*, 2003) suggests that inadequate funding is one major limitation to community planning. There also appears to be redundancy among bottom-up planning applications, which can cause delay. However, planners do not look at it negatively because the extra costs, due to delays, will be borne by the government. The reports, plans and exhibit materials are also too technical and incomprehensible. Goh (1991) argues that excessive planning jargon and data manipulation tend to overwhelm

the ordinary citizens into agreeing what the planners propose. The findings further claim that local people are perceived to be unable to make intelligent decisions. Ironically, in many cases, government views overrule community ideas because local people are seen not to be used to coming up with their own ideas. This exemplifies a beneficiary approach (Brandon, 1993), in which local people receive benefits but are not empowered and purposely excluded from the decision-making process.

Interestingly, the presence of an opportunist group in PSP excludes ordinary community members from attending development discussions and meetings, even though government authorities have no intention of keeping them out from the planning process. As noted in Section 3.7, public participation is limited to very few concerned people. Most ordinary citizens are content to remain complacent and are acquiescent to the decision-making policy of a few.

Public participation in rural areas is limited to infrastructure planning because the provision of basic infrastructures is still inadequate in many rural areas. Most planning applications are for basic amenities and not for economic activities. Despite the prevailing top-down planning practice, some top-down development projects are unsuccessful because government authorities have failed to fulfill community needs. If communities are involved in the planning process, Wates (2000) claims that better decisions are expected because they are the best source of knowledge about their surroundings.

The recent amendment of *Town and Country Planning Act 1976* recognises the importance of greater public participation, which is part of the current trend towards democratisation of society (Wates, 2000). The trend is in the right direction although the progress is slow (Goh, 1991). Young planners are now willing to incorporate public views, and many local authorities are promoting Local Agenda 21. Public participation is seen as a basis for legitimation. Some government departments have been producing good annual reports, and non-governmental organisations have played their role in increasing planning awareness through seminars and publications. Despite the favourable trend, the findings suggest that it will be politically contentious to fully adopt bottom-up approach in Malaysia because effective public participation requires radical institutional changes. Therefore, it is argued that the combination of top-down and bottom-up is the best approach because they complement and reinforce one another (Inskeep, 1994).

9.9   Planning Practice in Malaysia

The findings indicate that the prevailing planning approach in Malaysia is top-down because the government is federal and highly centralised, and power is concentrated in the hands of a few people. Federalism is enshrined in the Constitution and a number of Parliamentary Acts (see Section 3.5), and major economic determinants are still the prerogative of federal government. The literature (Goh, 1991) further acknowledges that the planning style, which is based on a hierarchical federation system, is the concurrent responsibility of both federal and state governments (see Section 3.5).

The literature (Styles, 1971; Whitehead, 1976; Healey, 1983) frequently claims that planning is characterised by a high degree of political sophistication, and the confusion regarding its function is closely linked with the political process in which it operates (see Section 3.7). It is, therefore, unsurprising to acknowledge that the planning practice in Malaysia cannot detach itself from politics. In the local context, this political sophistication is clearly expressed in Section 3.5, in which the state government creates the local authority and defines its powers and spatial areas. The state government also exerts a strong influence over the appointment of local council's members and the running of the local authority.

On one hand, it is shown in the findings that politics is not a barrier to planning because politicians act as mediators to lobby for funding. On the other, there are reported cases of government intervention that upset planning evaluations. The two main reasons cited are: i) the development guideline in local plan is not mandatory and can be changed, and ii) the role of the State Planning Committee is only advisory, and its decision is sometimes overruled by the higher authorities. It is argued, respectively in the literature (Lakhbir Singh, 1984), that the limited power of the local authority is based on decentralised competence system, while the SPC's main role is to provide institutional and administrative support to the federal authorities (see Section 3.5).

In a related development, it is interesting to highlight that the overall planning approach in Malaysia is urban-biased. The two main reasons are: i) the territory of the local authorities is within urban areas, and built-up areas of local plans are also within urban

areas, and ii) as a developing country, the best approach to accelerate growth and development is through urbanisation and industrialisation. It is the urban area that has factors of production to sustain the economy. Planning applications generally concentrate on traditional kind of development such as residential, commercial and industrial. In a similar argument, the literature (Goh, 1991) also acknowledges that rapid growth has always been the policy thrust and intended strategy in New Economic Policy (NEP), National Development Policy (NDP), Outline Perspective Plans (OPP) and Five-Year National Development Plans.

As a result, it is alleged by some planners that rural planning has been neglected. There is no proper planning for rural areas, and many of these areas have been subjected to resource exploitation to accelerate development. One typical example is the Rural Growth Centre, which has been developed in a similar manner to an urban area. The development is confined to roadsides, and the area is gradually transformed into a small town. Nevertheless, National Physical Plan has recently been drafted to guide overall physical planning of the country including rural areas. Rural planning and, specifically the development of rural tourism, have been given serious emphasis in Rural Tourism Master Plan, which was drafted in 2001 (see Section 5.2).

9.10 Tourism Planning Practice in Malaysia

Tourism in Malaysia, in general, is a government-led industry. In Section 5.1, the literature discusses that the industry, as the second biggest foreign exchange earner,

continues to receive full support from the government due to important economic contribution of tourism to the country. Visit Perlis Year 2003-2005 and Perlis State Park, in particular, are examples of government-initiated tourism products, and these initiatives are to accomplish several development objectives such as increasing state government revenue, diversifying economic base and generating job opportunities.

Lickorish and Jenkins (1997) argue that tourism planning in developing countries is normally based on five-year development plans. This is the case in Malaysia where a chapter is devoted to the tourism sector in the long-term plan, as tourism gains prominence in the country's economy in recent decades. The plan approach is also sectoral and development orientated, such as the formulation of National Ecotourism Plan and Rural Tourism Master Plan.

As is the case in general planning, tourism planning in this country is also inseparable from politics. There are many examples of tourism plans that are initiated by political masters, particularly in Ulu Muda because Kedah is the home state of the former Prime Minister for over two decades. In the literature, Haywood (1988), for example, recognises the importance of formal planning and its political aspects, especially power inside and outside the tourism industry.

As mentioned in the findings, needs assessment is another conventional approach to tourism planning, particularly when planners are responding to specific tourism interest or the needs of particular groups in the community (Veal, 1963). Gua Kelam in PSP,

however, was turned into a recreational and tourist spot by coincidence. Due to its unique features, Gua Kelam, at the site scale development (Gunn, 2002), was transformed into a popular tourist destination through a landscaping project that beautified the surrounding area. This is in line with Mill and Morrison's (1998) argument that among the basic purposes of tourism planning are to adapt to the unexpected, to create the desirable, and to maintain uniqueness (see Section 3.2).

Meanwhile, the findings indicate that there are many examples of failed tourism projects in the country due to absence of feasibility studies, improper planning and a poor maintenance culture. This is in contrast with Inskeep's (1991) emphasis that good planning and management are essential to maximise the benefits of tourism and to promote orderly development (see Section 3.2). It also indicates that the tourist destination fails to react to changes as they occur and to develop an alternative approach (Mill and Morrison, 1998), especially when the area is over-commercialised, under-used for a significant period of the year or loses its unique qualities that attracted tourists in the first place.

It is also necessary for the government to provide basic infrastructure and tourism facilities before private sector can play an active role in tourism. Khalifah and Tahir (1997) claim that the government continued to develop certain facilities and locations where the private sector was reluctant to venture. Even when the private sector is involved, public agencies or state government generally retain overall responsibility (Veal, 2002). The participation of the private sector in tourism development is

encouraged through various incentives, and in the case of Ulu Muda, investors were offered cheap land to build resorts by the state government. However, their viability is dependent upon continuous support from the state government because tourism industry in Ulu Muda is frequently affected by natural hazard such as the drought season. In a similar argument, the literature (Veal, 1963) acknowledges that effective tourism planning requires close links between private and public organisations. Ideally, tourism planning in the enterprise stage is a private-sector function (see Section 3.1), but in Perlis, on the contrary, private sector involvement in tourism is still lacking.

Finally, it is shown in the findings that successful tourism should be treated as a basic economic sector, not as a secondary sector. This is true because tourism planning should be supported by a holistic system approach, taking into consideration the social, economic and physical characteristics of an area (Murphy, 1985). Furthermore, as tourism industry is becoming a more complicated phenomenon than ever before, tourism products need to be continually improved to remain competitive and viable.

9.11   Conclusion

As reported in the findings, the various forms of local involvement, such as jobs, nature guides, home-visit programmes, business activities and development discussions, are generally government-initiated. The state government in each respect has played a vital role in promoting the establishment of state parks and resorts, cross-border tourism as well as good access and infrastructure. However, due to external involvement, the

degree of local involvement tends to decrease over time because local people are not empowered with the necessary resources to sustain the environment. Furthermore, park and resort enclaves can limit local benefits from tourist spending. The level of local involvement in Ulu Muda is much lower because the tourism stage is relatively newer, and resorts were established at an early tourism stage due to incentives from the state government.

It is also evident from the findings that the prevailing planning practice is top-down and the approach to tourism planning is generally government-led. The level of community participation in the planning process is low due to various local limitations, a closed decision-making structure and paternalistic culture among planners. The research implications of these findings will be further discussed in the conclusion chapter that follows.

Chapter Ten

CONCLUSION

10.0 Introduction

This chapter summarises the research findings and recommends possible approaches to overcome the limitations and problems that have emerged from the study. The contributions of this research to the existing body of knowledge, its limitations and suggestions for further research, are discussed at the end of the chapter.

10.1 An Overview of the Study and Research Implications

In general, the study has indicated that the level of local involvement in ecotourism is low in the PSP and Ulu Muda, and types of involvement are restricted to a few economic activities such as menial and unskilled jobs, part-time nature guides, seasonal boat guides and home-visit programmes. In the literature, research findings on variable impact of ecotourism in several less developed countries by Weaver (1998) also indicate that domestic participation is limited and the number in a community who are directly affected is negligible. Similarly, a recent study on ecotourism employment in Lower Kinabatangan River, Sabah, Malaysia, suggests that the level of community involvement is relatively low because resort operators do not integrate their activities with the local residents (Syed Khalid Wafa *et al.*, 2005).

The above situation can be explained by the various limitations to community participation in tourism development process that exist in the PSP and Ulu Muda. Among the limitations are lack of capital, skills and knowledge, lack of awareness of tourism potential, complacency in attitudes among local people, who are more interested in immediate returns. Tosun (2000) notes that there are operational, structural and cultural limitations to community participation in tourism, and the degrees of limitation tend to exhibit higher intensity in developing countries than in developed countries – Malaysia is no exception. With specific reference to the homestays in Wang Kelian, as an example, the local people are unable to participate effectively because the conditions of their houses do not meet the required minimum standard to qualify for the programme. At the same time, the PSFD has put the programme on hold because it is in conflict with the PSFD's policy to increase park revenue through accommodation. This clearly indicates there are operational and structural impediments to community involvement in the homestay programme in Wang Kelian.

Another operational limitation that has been identified in the findings of this study is lack of a standard definition and policy application to encompass ecotourism development in Malaysia. The findings point to some of the range of definitions and perceptions that surround the concept of ecotourism. Different stakeholders adopt different perspectives, which result in a complexity of definitions and understandings of ecotourism as a term. In practice, central to this is the evident weakness in the definition of the term used by government because their views are not consistent with what might be expected in practice and, as a consequence, the use of the term does not appear to

have been fully thought out. In particular, the top-down approach to ecotourism in Malaysia, whereby locations were designated as ecotourism destinations almost by decree within the Government's National Ecotourism Plan, appears to be totally at variance with the bottom-up approach advocated by most academic and tourism development commentators in the field

The Governments approach further suggests a lack of information dissemination because the term is not fully understood by the local people. A significant interpretation of this is that attempts to stimulate community-based ecotourism under present organisational arrangements are difficult to accomplish, especially when the government's definition does not recognise the local benefit and engagement dimension as being important.

In a general sense, these problems regarding the use of terminology bring discussion back full circle to the debate regarding the use of ecotourism as a descriptor for the kind of tourism development found in the two parks in Malaysia. Using the term ecotourism in a practical development and marketing sense, as the Malaysian authorities seek to do, also implies acceptance of a package of measures that encompass both natural environment and organisational development measures. Ecotourism, therefore, is not a value-free concept that can be used to describe natural environmental attributes alone, which is what the Malaysian authorities appear to do. Far safer and more neutral, in community development terms, is the notion of nature-based tourism. Were this the term in use in the research sites, there would be far fewer problems in relation to the role of

the community because nature-based tourism, in itself, makes no claims about the role of the people who live in the locality.

Due to the above limitations, it is also important to recognise that local involvement in tourism activities is dependent, to a large extent, upon government initiatives. The injection of large-scale development by the state government is necessary to foster tourism and materialise community-led tourism in both areas (Stevens, 1995). In fact, the development of the State Park, a new tourist town, border tourism and resorts are government-initiated because tourism planning approach in Malaysia is generally government-led. The joint-cooperation and mutual agreement between the state government of Perlis and the Thai government to ease border crossings has helped to boost tourism in the PSP, particularly in the border market area. Even the private resorts in Ulu Muda were built through incentives from the state government of Kedah.

It is reasonable to postulate that the profile of ecotourism in the PSP and Ulu Muda is dependent upon the existence of a well-developed mass-tourism sector, such as the development of the border market in Wang Kelian and the establishment of several resorts in Ulu Muda. Butler (1991) argues that true wilderness tourism has poor economic potential. Developing an area solely on the basis of pure ecotourism is a risky proposition. On the other hand, the mass-tourism sector has the potential to achieve economies of scale and 'critical mass' in terms of visitor number. Hence, it may be even necessary, according to Weaver (1998), to use the term 'mass ecotourism' to describe the increasingly common intersection of sustainable mass-tourism and non-consumptive

nature tourism. The challenge for ecotourism and park planners is to foster mutually beneficial linkages between the two sectors and to avoid a situation where the negative traits of mass tourism are simply transferred to other venues. It would be unrealistic to expect that ecotourism could provide an alternative to mass tourism in many cases as this would put undue pressure on very fragile ecological areas (Scheyvens, 2002). Therefore, it is essential for the implementing agencies to adopt a comprehensive development plan and appropriate management strategies to cater for the different land use and different types of visitors – 'hard' versus 'soft' ecotourists.

Environmental education, which is one of three main principles of ecotourism, is important to create nature awareness among the tourists especially when the study has indicated that both areas are over-dependent on mass tourists and soft ecotourists. It can also help reduce resource exploitation due to lack of environmental awareness among the local communities. Informational signage and guided-informational story telling tours are a few examples of visitor management strategies that can enhance this awareness. The use of a visitor centre at the PSP's headquarters, which is presently underutilised, should also be maximised as it is an important avenue to disseminate information to the public. In addition to environmental education, regular patrolling and heavy imposition of fines are necessary to discourage 'hardcore' offenders from committing similar encroachment offenses. In the case of Ulu Muda, this can be done efficiently if the relevant government agencies would coordinate their efforts, streamline their operations and avoid overlapping programmes and inconsistency of policies.

While government initiatives are necessary to foster tourism in both areas, the state governments of Perlis and Kedah should be aware of the minimal tourist leakages to local communities due to the infancy stage of tourism development and enclave development of the State Park and resorts. Upon completion, the development of a new tourist town in Wang Kelian will further limit local participation in business as a result of land and property price inflation. It is indicated in the findings that some local people already perceive this new development as being external especially when outside monopoly is allowed to increase. The level of external involvement is expected to increase further because the state government has proposed to build a duty-free complex in Wang Kelian. This proposed development is inappropriate and at odds with the overall development concept of PSP because it promotes foreign goods and 'internationalisation' of ecotourism. Despite producing national ecotourism plans and strategies, Lindber *et al.* (1998) argue that some developing countries have not effectively followed up on these documents – lack of government continuity being one of the major obstacles; the above phenomenon is one classic example. This supports Butler's (2004) contention that there is lack of implementation in management because plans are produced as mandatory exercises. Furthermore, there is evidence from this study to support Butler's concern that many destinations areas manage tourism facilities for the sake of tourists and tourist activities, instead of managing the natural and human environment in a way that permits it to contribute to tourism.

It is evident from the findings that the border market in Wang Kelian has provided opportunities to many local people to participate in business activities. However, the

degree of local involvement tends to decrease over time because they are not empowered with the necessary resources to sustain the competitive business environment. Hence, border tourism is perceived to be a limiting factor because Thai traders, due to proximity and lack of enforcement, are allowed to encroach the Malaysian territory and subsequently monopolise the business environment. The findings have noted that there is a perception among the local community in Wang Kelian that a leakage of revenue is occurring, whereby Thai traders are benefiting more from the Sunday market compared to local traders. The border town of neighbouring Padang Besar has also experienced a similar trend. If this trend is allowed to continue, it can be debated whether the development of border towns across the northern states of Peninsular Malaysia benefits local communities especially when the literature (Timothy, 1995) already suggests that the growth of cross-border shopping along the US-Canadian border was blamed for a drastic increase in the loss of Canadian jobs, retail bankruptcies and billion of dollars in lost government revenue.

Besides Thai traders (foreigners), the findings have also indicated that outsiders, as opposed to local people, are given the priority to operate several business opportunities in Wang Kelian. Given the local limitations in business and skills, it is true that they do not have the required capital and business expertise to operate such business endeavours. However, there is a danger when local community is defined in a wider geographical context by the state authority because it allows an outside monopoly in business to increase. In the context of this research, local communities, who should be the direct

recipients of ecotourism benefits, are defined as those who live in the peripheral areas of the protected area.

The prevailing planning practice in Malaysia is top down because the government is federal and highly centralised. Despite the recent amendment of the *Town and Country Planning Act 1976* that recognises the importance of greater public participation, it is evident from the findings that there are various limitations to community participation in planning. Among the limitations are lack of planning awareness, local people are content to remain complacent to the decision-making of a few, lack of representation from the poorer sections of the population, lack of capital, and reports and exhibition materials are too technical. At the same time, due to strong culture of paternalism, planners perceive that not much can be received from extensive local involvement because, one reason as they claim, local people are unable to make informed decisions. As a result, the approach to holding public participation is typified by a tokenism and a one-way communication process. The above discussion suggests that effective public participation in Malaysia is compounded by three main factors: 1) decision-making is largely based on centralisation of command and hierarchy of authority, 2) paternalistic culture is still prevalent among planners, and 3) there are various limitations, at the local level, to community participation in the planning process. Therefore, the practicality of a participatory tourism development approach, which has been popularised by advocates writing on developed countries (Murphy, 1985; Haywood, 1988; Blank, 1989), must take into consideration the above factors and refine them in the context of Malaysia. Tosun (2000) argues that local socio-economic and political environments will

determine the most effective form of participatory tourism development. Or perhaps, this approach may never materialise under present conditions because it is unrealistic to claim its universal validity, particularly in developing countries.

When public participation is typified by a one-way communication process, it can be assumed that decision-making in the planning process does not effectively incorporate community needs and resources. According to the literature (Wates, 2000), local people are the best source of knowledge and wisdom about their surroundings. But the strong culture of paternalism prompts the planners and government authorities to make judgement about what is good for the local people, rather than letting them choose their own destinies. In some cases, not all design solutions are in tune with local needs. Hence, it is not surprising that there are many examples of failed top-down projects in the country due to improper planning, in addition to poor maintenance culture and absence of feasibility studies.

Successful public participation in Malaysia must also consider effective functioning of JKKK because this community mechanism is seen by many as a proper channel to voice local opinions to the government authorities. At the grass roots level, it is an organisation of leadership, and it acts as a government mechanism to facilitate planning and development in rural areas. The literature (Drumm, 1998) suggests that active local participation in the planning process and in operations management is essential in order to achieve the conservation and development goals of ecotourism. They need to be involved at all levels of ecotourism development from planning through management.

Thus, being a community's forefront, JKKK must overcome its operational and structural limitations, as discussed in the findings, so that the level of local involvement in planning particularly in rural areas can be increased and is not restricted to basic infrastructure planning.

Based on the above discussion, it is reasonable to suggest that the general planning practice and the tourism planning approach in Malaysia is characterised by a high degree of political intervention. The closed decision-making structure extends well into planning practice, and this affects the integrity of the State Planning Committee (SPC) and credibility of the planning profession. One example cited in the findings is political intervention that upsets planning evaluations because the role of the SPC is only advisory. Therefore, this study suggests that radical institutional changes have to be made prior to any meaningful participatory programmes. At least, the decision-making structure should be designed to be more transparent because to fully adopt bottom-up approach in Malaysia will be politically contentious, as the findings suggest.

The study has found that the planning practice in Malaysia is perceived to be urban-biased, which has resulted in rural planning being neglected. Given that the role of the SPC is only advisory and local plan guidelines are not mandatory, this has major implications for ecotourism planning and future development because most ecotourism sites are in remote rural areas - one example that has been discussed in the early section of this chapter is the proposal to build a duty-free complex in Wang Kelian. Thus, the implementation of appropriate development control mechanisms, such as restrictions on

land transfer, are necessary not only to protect local interests but also to prevent the

surrounding area from being transformed into mass tourism in the future.

PSP is in the process of being gazetted as a State Park to ensure long-term sustainability

and protection of the forest reserves. Likewise, the State Planning Economic Unit of

Kedah has also proposed Ulu Muda as Kedah Eco-Park. Once gazetted as a State Park,

any declassification of land from forest to non-forest will become difficult because it has

to go through a public inquiry for approval and in a manner consistent with applicable

regulations. The main challenge facing the state authorities is to justify the park's

existence and whether it can generate sufficient revenue to the state government through

tourism activities. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the authorities in the PSP and

Ulu Muda, in maximising the economic benefits, need to exercise caution with respect to

developing additional facilities and attractions because such development may lead to

mass tourism and carrying capacity over-limit. Another critical success criterion is the

professionalism of PSFD in managing the park business because PSFD itself is

constrained with limited budget and manpower and under-trained staff. Park planning

and management are also relatively new to PSFD. In the case of Ulu Muda, the park's

future viability depends to a certain extent on successful collaboration and cooperation

with the private sector. But the existing private resorts are reluctant to expand because

the tourism industry is affected by the recurring drought and continuous utility of the

dam's water supply for farm irrigation, despite low water levels.

In conclusion, it is essential to complement the physical development with human resource development in order to develop tourism resources within PSP and Ulu Muda as economically viable tourism products. Greater economic benefits could be accrued if local people are allowed to operate ecotourism ventures themselves, especially through locally owned operations. Among the proposed measures, as already indicated in the literature, are the establishment of local cooperatives or community-based non-governmental organisations, a revolving fund, to focus on training and education, to increase the role of women, and the involvement of local people in the park management in the long term. However, this can only be achieved if the relevant government agencies intensify their support services and programmes and the private sector integrates its activities with the local people. Governments and the private sector are generally identified as critical stakeholders in facilitating the involvement of local communities in managing the tourism industry (Scheyvens, 2003).

10.2 Conceptual Representation of Main Findings

The degrees of local involvement in ecotourism in PSP and Ulu Muda are illustrated in Figures 10.1 and 10.2. The figure graphically summarises the findings of the study in a simplified fashion. The representation in Figures 10.1 and 10.2 does not represent exact measurement along the specified axes and no exact proportions should be attached to the diagrams. The illustration is only conceptual and is not intended to represent data that has been empirically proven.

However, the diagrams provide the interrelationship and a sense of understanding between opportunity level and involvement levels – local and external. Despite its limitations, the illustration is meaningful because it is integrating disparate factors. It can also be claimed that the conceptualisation, which can be used as a descriptive tool, has significantly contributed to the development of knowledge in the field of community participation in tourism development, which can be further developed or refined in future research.

In general, a certain level of opportunity is required to allow local people to participate in certain activities. It is safe to assume that as the opportunities grow, the level of involvement also increases. In tourism, the level of local involvement in tourism-related activities is closely linked with the level of tourism opportunities. However, tourism growth will reach a critical point where external sources will exploit local control. In developing countries, growth of tourism does not simply derive from processes internal to local communities (Urry, 1990). They are affected by external conditions, not only from the establishment of tourism but also from their day-to-day activities. When the external factors that are beyond the control of local communities start to increase, the level of local involvement begins to decline. Therefore, it can be argued that tourism both influences and is influenced by external events and factors.

Main Conceptual Findings in PSP
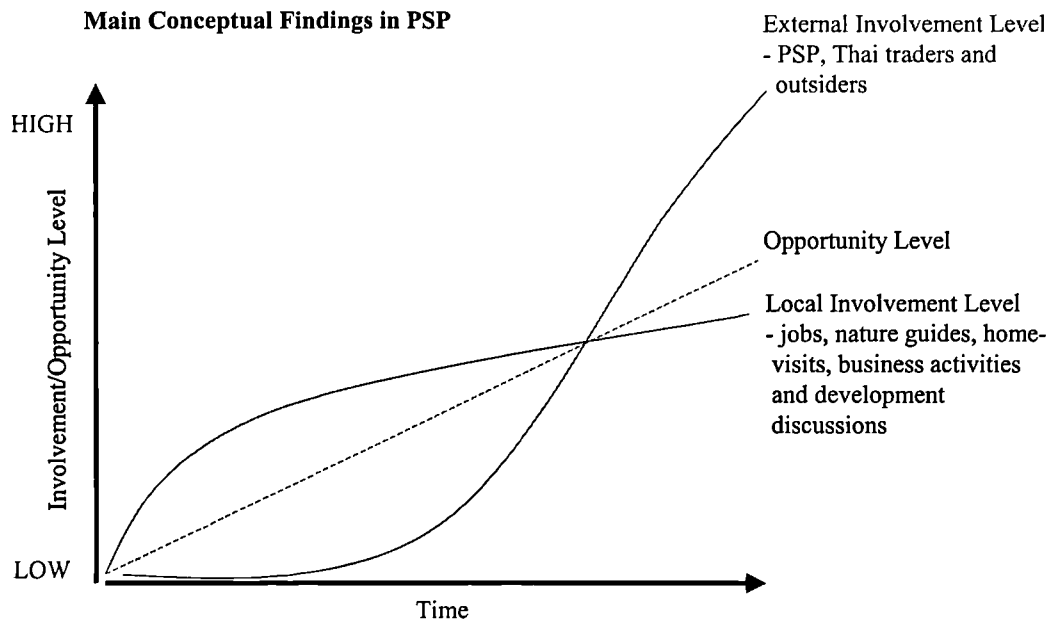

Figure 10.1 Local involvement level vs. Opportunity and external
involvement level in PSP

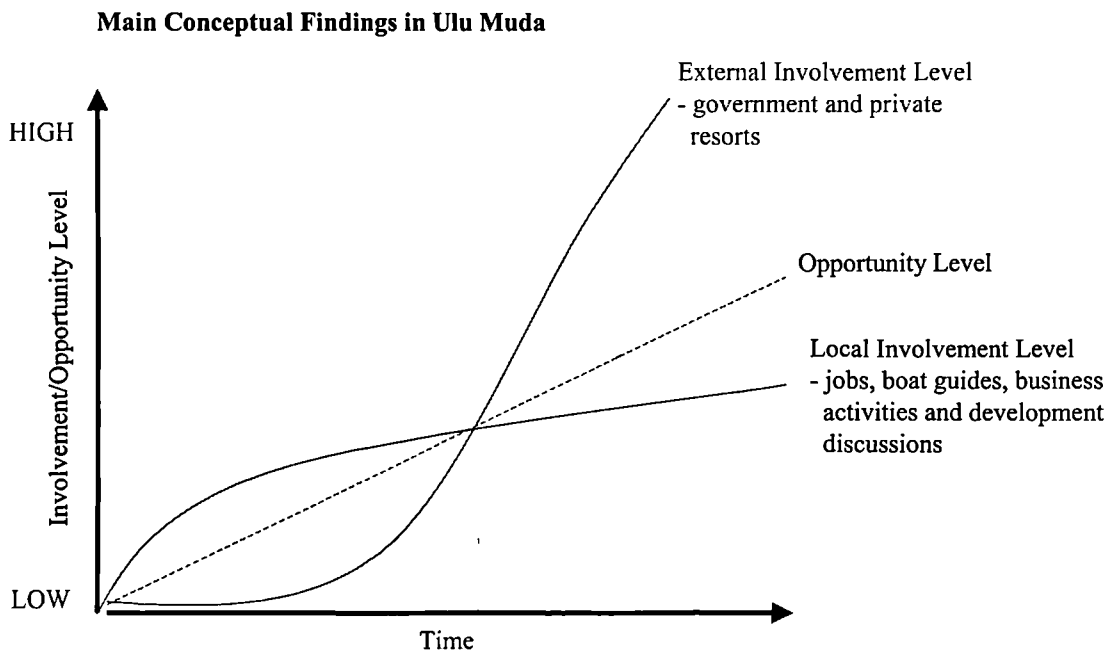**Main Conceptual Findings in Ulu Muda**

Figure 10.2 Local involvement level vs. Opportunity and external
involvement level in Ulu Muda

The involvement of local communities in Wang Kelian in tourism-related activities started even before the onset of PSP, through trading at the Border Market. With the establishment of PSP, the forms of local involvement expanded into job opportunities, nature guides, home-visit programmes and development discussions. These are basically government-initiated because the state government of Perlis has played a vital role in promoting good access and infrastructure, cross-border tourism and development of the state park. However, the degree of local involvement tends to decrease over time because local people are not empowered with the necessary skills and resources to sustain the competitive environment due to external involvement, particularly from the Thai traders and outsiders. The development of the park in an enclave also limits local benefits from tourist spending.

In Ulu Muda, the tourism stage is relatively newer and resorts were established at an early tourism stage due to incentives from the state government. Thus, the interception of all three lines, as depicted in Figure 10.2, occurs at an earlier stage, compared to PSP. As a result, the level of local involvement is much lower, and the types of participation are limited to blue-collar jobs, seasonal boat guides and development discussions. Business activities primarily serve the needs of local people in the vicinity. Due to heavy capital investment, resort enclaves inhibit local participation. Therefore, it can be assumed that the state governments in both study areas, who are directly involved in the tourism industry and use tourism to meet their development objectives, have failed to maximise community participation in tourism development process.

10.3   Contribution of the Study

In general, this study is believed to have expanded the existing body of knowledge on community participation in ecotourism and the planning process particularly in developing countries, while providing valuable insights into the practicality of this approach in Malaysia.   The realisation of community ecotourism in Malaysia must overcome two major impediments before it can successfully take place – the limitations of community participation in the planning process and in the management of ecotourism.   Further research can use this understanding as a foundation to develop a theory, a model or a community ecotourism framework in the context of Malaysia, in particular, and in developing countries, in general.   Since this study is applied research, its contribution has also direct practical implications for ecotourism policy and planning practice in the country.   Tourism policy makers and planners can evaluate the claims and use the arguments made in this study to develop a more effective community ecotourism plans and policies.

10.4   Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study have been exploratory in nature because there is no previous research, at an academic level, on community involvement in ecotourism in Peninsular Malaysia.   As mentioned in Chapter One, this type of research is relatively limited in the Malaysian context.   In the broader perspective, there is also lack of theory and body of

knowledge regarding community participation in tourism development process in developing countries.

One major limitation of the study was time because the researcher was given a maximum period of three months by the sponsoring university to complete the fieldwork. It was for this practical reason that the researcher had to select two case study areas that were adjacent to one another. Due to limited time, the main approaches to sampling were snowballing and convenience selected – depending on the availability of respondents. The conduct of the fieldwork also incurred a considerable amount of financial cash to cover the return air-ticket to Malaysia, accommodation, local transportation, food and administration costs. Both study areas, which are located in the northwestern parts of Peninsular Malaysia, are approximately a six-hour drive from the researcher's hometown. If financial resources had not been a constraint, the researcher would have preferred to include an indigenous community in the sampling, but indigenous communities are generally concentrated in the eastern and south-eastern parts of Peninsular Malaysia.

A further limitation arose from the researcher's decision to adopt the official designation of the two sites as 'ecotourism' locations. In practical terms, this decision had certain advantages because the term is one used (but not necessarily understood) by most public officials at a state and federal level. However, as we have already noted, ecotourism is a value-laden term and brings into its discussion expectations with respect to both natural environmental and human dimensions. This dual demand certainly created challenges in

interpreting the evidence presented by the various groups of respondents and may have resulted in certain levels of ambiguity in the findings of the study. The researcher has sought to clarify such matters in the discussion but this issue may remain as a weakness.

10.5   Recommendations for Future Research

The results of the study could potentially stimulate related research in the future. The researcher would recommend the followings: 1) refinement of the methodology and instruments, especially through quantitative research, to quantify the intersection of opportunity and involvement level, as shown in Figure 9.2 and 9.3, 2) replication of this study in other ecotourism sites in Peninsular Malaysia, 3) a comparative study of similar nature between local and indigenous communities, and 4) a cost-benefit analysis to investigate the present and future status of border tourism in the country.

10.6   Final Remarks

To judge from the case studies presented in this study, it seems that ecotourism is currently still at the very early and fragile stage in its development. The overall concepts and principles of ecotourism are continually beset by larger-scale interests seeking to divert or co-opt them for other purposes (Buckley, 2003). While there certainly appears to be the opportunity to provide the tourist with a degree of the ecotourism experience on a bigger scale, caution needs to be used in promoting such areas as true ecotourism sites. One of the unfortunate realities of ecotourism is that there is little evidence that it

is less intrusive than other types of tourism development, despite its altruistic intentions

(Fennell, 2003). In many localities around the world, local initiatives are chipping away

at the conditions or circumstances that continue to plague ecotoursim development. It is

within the local arena that such change must occur.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

A FULL LIST OF INTERVIEW RESPONDENTS
- Recorded Interviews

Interview no.	Designation	Place/Organisation
1 & 18	General Manager	State Tourism Action Council, Perlis
2.	Village Head	Kampung Batu 15, Kaki Bukit, Perlis
3.	Village Head	Kampung Wang Kelian, Perlis
4.	ex. Village Head	Kampung Wang Kelian, Perlis
5.	Local businessman	Wang Kelian Border Town, Perlis
6.	Village Head	Kaki Bukit Town, Perlis
7.	Manager	Amanah Ikhtiar Malaysia, Perlis
8.	Deputy Director	Federal Agriculture Marketing Authority, Perlis
9.	Director	State Agriculture Department of Perlis
10.	Director	State Town and Country Planning Department of Perlis
11.	Director	District Administration Unit of Perlis
12.	Assistant Director	Perlis State Forestry Department
13.	Freelance Tourist Guide	Kangar
14.	Village Head	Kampung Batu 17, Kaki Bukit
15.	Local businessman	Wang Kelian Border Town, Perlis
16.	Local people	Kampung Wang Kelian

Interview no.	Designation	Place/Organisation
17.	State Executive Councillor	Culture, Arts and Tourism, Perlis
19.	Head of Mosque	Kampung Wang Kelian
20.	Local people	Kampung Wang Kelian
21.	Local businessman	Kampung Wang Kelian
22.	Local people	Kampung Wang Kelian
23.	Lecturer	Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia
24.	Director	State Irrigation and Drainage Department of Perlis
25.	Director	Department of Environment, Perlis
26.	Village Head	Rancangan Perumahan Awam, Batu 16, Kaki Bukit, Perlis
27.	Park Officer	Perlis State Park
28.	Director	State Development Department, Perlis
29.	Assistant Planner	Kangar Municipal Council
30.	Village Head	Kampung Padang Siding, Perlis
31.	Director	Perlis State Forestry Department
32.	Director	State Land Department, Perlis
33.	Officer	World Wide Fund for Nature, Malaysia
34.	Local businessman	Wang Kelian Border Town, Perlis
35.	Staff	Perlis State Park

Interview no.	Designation	Place/Organisation
36.	Staff	Perlis State Park
37.	President	Kangar Municipal Council
38.	Local businessman	Gua Kelam Recreational Centre, Kaki Bukit, Perlis
39.	Chairman	Perlis Miner's Association, Kaki Bukit
40.	Local businessman	Kaki Bukit Town, Perlis
41.	Local businessman	Kaki Bukit Town, Perlis
42.	Local businessman	Kampung Wang Kelian, Perlis
43.	Chieftain	Mukim Beseri
44.	General Manager	Muda Resort, Ulu Muda, Kedah
45.	Local people	Kampung Belantik, Ulu Muda
46.	Local businessman	Kampung Kota Aur, Ulu Muda
47.	Local people	Kampung Kota Aur, Ulu Muda
48.	Village Head	Kampung Belantik Luar, Ulu Muda
49.	District Officer	District Council of Sik, Kedah
50.	District Officer	District Council of Baling, Kedah
51.	Village Head	Kampung Belantik Dalam, Ulu Muda
52.	Chieftain	Mukim Sok, Kedah
53.	Village Head	Kampung Pinang, Ulu Muda
54.	Local businessman	Kampung Kota Aur, Ulu Muda
55.	Assistant District Officer	District Council of Padang Terap, Kedah

Interview no.	Designation	Place/Organisation
56.	Chairman	Association of Rubber Plantation Smallholders
57.	Assistant Director	State Economic Planning Unit, Kedah
58.	Director	State Town and Country Planning Department of Kedah
59.	State Executive Councillor	Culture, Arts and Tourism
60.	Lecturer	Universiti Utara Malaysia
61.	Executive Assistant Manager	Mutiara Pedu Lake Resort, Pedu
62.	Resident Manager	Desa Utara Pedu Lake Resort
63.	Acting Village Head	Kampung Surau, Ulu Muda
64.	Local business woman	Kampung Kota Aur, Ulu Muda
65.	Assistant Officer	Department of Wildlife and National Parks, Ulu Muda
66.	Village Head	Kampung Bukit Berangan, Ulu Muda
67.	ex. District Officer	District Council of Padang Terap, Kedah
68.	Director	Kedah State Forestry Department
69.	Chairman	Fishermen's Cooperative Association (KOPAM), Ulu Muda
70.	Village Head	Kampung Perumahan KEDA, Kota Aur
71.	Village Head	Kampung Kota Aur, Ulu Muda
72.	Ranger Officer	Forestry Department, Gulau, Kedah
73.	Senior Officer	Muda Development Authority
74.	Manager	State Tourism Action Council, Kedah

Interview no.	Designation	Place/Organisation
75.	Assistant Chief Director	Project Division, Federal Department of Town and Country Planning, Kuala Lumpur
76.	Director	Project Division, Federal Department of Town and Country Planning, Kuala Lumpur
77.	Assistant Director	State Town and Country Planning of Selangor, Shah Alam
78.	Senior Assistant Director	Federal Department of Town and Country Planning, Kuala Lumpur
79.	Project Coordinator	Malaysian Nature Society

- Unrecorded Interviews (Field notes)

Interview no.	Designation	Place/Organisation
80.	Director	State Economic Planning Unit of Perlis
81.	Assistant Director	State Town and Country Planning of Negeri Sembilan, Seremban.

General breakdown of respondents according to interview number

	Government Institutions			Local Communities		Private/ NGOs	PSP resort staff	Sub-total
	State/Local authorities	Planning	Educa-tional	Local people	Business people			
PSP	Int. # 1,8,9, 11,12,17,18, 24,25,28,31, 32,37 (13)	Int. # 10,29 (2)	Int. # 23 (1)	Int. # 2,3,4 6,14,16,19, 20,22,26,30, 39,43 (13)	Int. # 5,15, 21,34,38,40, 41,42 (8)	Int. # 7,13, 33 (3)	Int. # 27,35, 36 (3)	(43)
Ulu Muda	Int. # 49,50, 55,57,59,65, 67,68,72,73, 74 (11)	Int. # 58 (1)	Int. # 60 (1)	Int. # 45,47, 48,51,52,53, 56,63,66,69, 70,71 (12)	Int. # 46,54, 64 (3)		Int. # 44,61, 62 (3)	(31)
Other states		Int. # 75,76, 77,78 (4)				Int. # 79 (1)		(5)
Unrecorded interview		Int. # 80,81 (2)						(2)
TOTAL	(24)	(9)	(2)	(25)	(11)	(4)	(6)	(81)

APPENDIX II

LIST OF MAIN QUESTIONS OF IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW

1. How do you see the involvement of local people in tourism and ecotourism activities in this area? What are the opportunities available to them?

2. What are the obstacles or limitations to community participation in tourism? Why do these occur?

3. How to overcome the above obstacles or limitations in order to increase the level of community involvement in tourism development?

4. How do you see the involvement of local people in the planning process, particularly in tourism development? How do they engage in it?

5. How does the community mechanism operate?

6. What are the limitations to community participation in the planning process? Why do these occur?

7. How to overcome the above limitations in order to increase the level of community participation in the planning process?

APPENDIX III

AN EXAMPLE OF A TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW

Interview no. : 18
Date : 4th June 2003
Time : 12.00 p.m.
Designation of respondent : General Manager, State Tourism Action Council, Perlis

Q: What planning approach was taken in planning PSP?
A: Generally, we approached at local level, the lowest level in the hierarchy. That is where it all started, ideas, concepts were created. This involves empowerment of communities. It is very important in a big international project, the lower levels are very important people because they are the stakeholders. People affected by any changes, rules, regulations. By discussion at that level, you can come up towards the higher level, approval of land. Of course in terms of overall planning, it is downwards. But now, policy has been set. We started with vision 2020, followed by every ten years of development plan, 5-year national development plan, 8th Malaysia Plan, the guiding principles, followed by local plan, structure plan.

Q: To what extent the inputs of local communities have been taken into account?
A: First of all, the intention to gazette a park has nothing to do with community. Community has a different view of land use. Their view is basically land to be used by them. I look at it, the local community in Wang Kelian look at forest as a commodity, as compared to indigenous groups of people in Sabah and Sarawak who look at forest as a resource. I go to the forest, look at the deer, shoot, kill and sell. Collect *tongkat ali* and sell. You don't have money, you go and take *bogak* trees and sell at 200 ringgit. *Orang asli* or indigenous people, go to the forest, they want vegetables, collect, take home and cook. I have observed that. With that, when you talk about park, it is depriving them of certain privileges. All this while, when it is not park, they have access to the area. Definitely there is objection by them, very serious objections. How to develop a park when you have objections from the community in the first place. Here, development of a park never takes into consideration of a community in the very beginning. They gazette a park is not because of community per se, but because of conservation values. However, along the way, successful management of an area of a park is highly dependent upon working together with the people. We will benefit, not immediately. You lose, you will gain somewhere. That is where we started to have community service, we talked to them. Through all publications, work that has been done, the further you go, the less benefit you get. Distance and location is partially very important. The people in Wang Kelian were the earliest people in 2000 to enjoy benefits - work. But here, it is proven again that employment for community is still at the lowest level. Because why, certain publication is right. Women always work, there are many

women who work in the hospitality industry, but they are all waiters. Not managerial. The locals work at the lowest level under *PPRT* scheme, they do cleaning. But we do acknowledge that they are good in many things. So we started several programmes for communities. UiTM was brought in to teach these people how to do chambering, how to change bedsheet, put the pillowcase, blanket. For three days, intensive practical thing. They become good, they are proud of it. We have people who supply food, technically they cook local food. Suddenly you have people from overseas eating *nasi lemak*. Why don't we start making bread, they realise this is much easier. Then, they start to do packages for visitors, 3 days 2 nights. We have seen the results of them benefiting. The community has benefited in the planning. Other discussions we involved were on activities to be held, where the community benefited through discussions, telecommunications, road, water supply. They get piped water from JKR, they used to get water from the park. In that area, 012 is very well compared to 019. There is a tower. In the end, they benefit in that manner, in smallest way, because running a park is highly sophisticated. But with people's knowledge would have been good. They know quite a lot. But very unfortunately, there are only two opportunities. One, something that they can benefit, the commodity. A lot of them know about the commodity, product that can be taken out. Good for what, *tongkat ali, kacip fatimah*. Other than that, they don't know. They are local communities, they are not indigenous people. Indigenous people know a lot, whether you eat or you don't eat. The knowledge is different.

Q: What are the factors that hinder their active involvement?
A: There are several, two-sided of coins. One side is their mentality. They are not risk-takers. They don't have business attitude. The society here has been called a welfare society, charity society. Only a few of them are willing, those are willing make it. The other side is these people are small scale business communities. They don't have big capital. The government on the other hand want things to be prestigious, class, quality. How do you expect a person with very low capital to come up with quality. Imagine setting up a souvenir shop. To set up, before you buy the products, costs 30,000. What about your stock of products. You tell me any the villagers in Wang Kelian, do they have 80,000? How could these people participate if that is the way you want it to be done. This is the biggest problem. They want them to produce to do souvenirs. They sell things, they want to make so much profit, the quality was so bad. We got complaints all the times. Suddenly a Chinese businessman come for 8 ringgit, give you beautiful cotton shirt selling only 11,12 ringgit. Lower price, higher quality goods. In the end, they are the losers. We have learnt many things, several of the problems rise that they don't work together in small scale. Everybody wants, they compete. That kills off. They refuse to acknowledge that everybody has a different skill. You can sell soya bean, sugar cane, fried mee. Don't end up because he sells soya bean, he is doing well. You also want to sell. In the end, you get no business. Same catchment.

When we decided Gua Kelam business centre which is under construction. How do we want to develop RM6 million of properties, a souvenir centre with good mall. How do we want it to be run? We have the choice of having ten stalls like what Agriculture Department is doing now. You have ten stalls in one complex that costs

6 million, sharing the same toilet, space. We have seen so many places, nobody cares about each other and facilities. They are destroying each other. It is not my space, because I only take care of my part. They always compete, extend here and there. We decided to give to a very big organisation, Kentucky Fried Chicken, the whole premise. We can have two supporting small businesses, a little ice cream shop, newsagent. But he controls the whole things, at least they maintain the toilet to their standard, floor, rubbish collecting system. Their knowledge and skills are dependent because knowingly the Malays are not forest people. How much knowledge do they have about the resources in forest compared to orang Asli and indigenous people. They are at peripheral area, staying outside to get benefits. Maria puts a few positive arguments about how they can play a role. There are many ways, not necessarily how to run the park. How can they benefit from the park? The question is that way. Not how the park can benefit from them. We always look how we can benefit from these people. We found out that we can't. If the people get benefit from the park, they will support the park. When people support the existence of park, they will want more, conservation values will increase. The government when intends to do something, always think twice like heli-logging in Ulu Muda. People are fighting for it, in the end, abandoned. The bottom line is they want money. Is not viable by helicopter.

Q: You mentioned earlier about the presence of opportunists. How does this affect local participation in the planning process?
A: We never exclude them from the planning process. But they always miss the boat. Opportunists have the contacts, more information. These people normally will be the ones who will get. Automatically, in terms of implementation, the local people were excluded. In the planning process, we involved. We have people who are opportunists who will look into the aspects to get business. This has somehow created problems when in the future when we want to organise something. Is not the community themselves that want to get involved, come to the meetings. Is the opportunist. In the end, these people become excluded, that is correct in that aspect. But we never exclude them. They feel it is not worth going. Automatically, exclusion because the pressure from this opportunist group. We keep reminding them, you must come.

Q: What should be done to overcome this situation?
A: Is difficult if you look at politics, business. But you look at the positive side. If the people are given the opportunities to come in, invest, have money, it does not matter. Outsiders come in, Cherating, very classic example. You look at the concept of development, it is all homestays. They started to come in the 70s, backpacker travel. Suddenly a lot of foreigners there. Then, these all big hotels started buying. Development is all about that. You look at Butler, the same concept of argument. Tourism is the mother of all destruction. How sustainable can a destination be? It starts with the lifecycle, explorer. Finally, it will go to mass over the years. You can't protect an area for too long. If not within, it is within the surroundings. Kinabalu Park, you can protect the inside. Look at the amount of hotels. Taman Negara, you can protect inside the boundary. Outside, you look at the development. You can't.

Q: How do you foresee the development in Wang Kelian, given the above situation?

A: I don't see Wang Kelian will move in the next ten years to that level of mass, hoteliers. It has never been in the plan that Wang Kelian will have hotels. It is just basic accommodation provided by the authority because of the accessibility of Kuala Perlis and Kangar's accommodation. It is 30-minute drive, you can reach. Wang Kelian is too small, not a viable project to run a hotel. Hotel normally requires between 80-100 rooms for viability. We will also not go to the point of being into the mass tourism because accessibility is so good. People can leave, nobody wants to stay. And, we limit the development because of land use. About 80 over per cent of the land is greater than 30 degree slope. Not much choice of development. What is left is all on the slopes. In this manner, it is quite safe, moving into mass tourism will not be observed in the next ten years. What worries me is the Sunday market. The volume as can be observed by the statistics of the immigration, about 800,000 people. This is very high, only on Sundays. Does not it have an effect on commodity, social, environment? Economics is definitely because the impact is there. Imagine 800,000 people coming every year. That is a positive impact. But environmental impact, I don't think there is a very serious impact. We have not seen monkeys, gibbons being killed or snake in that region. Monitor lizard can still be seen crossing, not dead. In that aspect is yes in terms of traffic. But I worry about construction workers, mostly Thais. The impact on the environment is that they consume wildlife. Nevertheless, snakes, monitor lizards, monkeys are animals that breed so fast, unlike gibbons. I only worry about the social impacts if we start to move towards the mass area. Volume is higher, traffic gets busy at Wang Kelian. A lot of people come initially, Pretty's level of involvement, Doxey's index. Kampung Wang Kelian is still at that level, no money. Then they go higher level, they start to ask for money? Very soon, they get exhausted. Last one, they bang your head, the resentment. The question is where are we now? The point is still welcoming. We shouldn't abuse that.

The homestay has not taken off yet although there is intention by the community. I totally not support of that at the moment. Rule number one is that the park has facilities built by the Ministry of Tourism. And the homestay programme is part of Ministry of Tourism's. In principles, we do not sabotage another programme or policy that is the Ministry's policy. That is why we do not go for the homestay rather than homevisit because facilities in the park has been built using Ministry of Tourism's money. We have accommodation. The purpose is to fill with people to generate revenue for the state. In the end, I don't think that is the right policy. If there excess, then we share with them. This will come in later when we have good occupancy, not at the moment. We have to support the first policy to generate revenue for the state. One is the biggest problems we face today is that they are still discussing at higher level with EPU. How can the state government benefit from tourism? Always people talk about pros and cons of tourism, foreign exchange. That is in terms of the nation, taxation. State government gets zero. Tax collected by the customs, service tax 5% also federal. What do they collect? Local business, the people benefit but they don't pay taxes. Roadside stalls never pay tax. Local authorities charge them 5 dollars for a lot, they make noise. How can the state

government benefit? This is one question that is being looked into. Maybe, the more people use your point of entry, the more development fund you will get, not directly with tourism. Like service tax, maybe the state government can keep 2%.

Q: How best to integrate the different market segments of PSP and Sunday market?
A: One is generalist and one is nature lover, we acknowledge that. We subscribe to the principle that park is for the people, not for the niche group. When you subscribe to that principle, you have to consider all aspects of people who visit the park. You have to satisfy that. If you want to go there and throw rubbish, you have to satisfy. Let them go in. Then you have to start looking at the objectives of the park, research, education, conservation. When you talk about conservation, the purpose is to make it as cleanest possible without damaging it. This is where the system management is all about. How do you manage them? The hard way or easy way? The hard way is put a notice, if you are found guilty, we will shoot you. The easy way, talk to them, hope they will understand. Education process. These two markets will never see eye to eye. You have to make sure that they stay in one area, enjoying the fun. The people who love to be seen around, making rubbish and noise, put them in one area. Hot spots, enclave. That is the reason why it is planned to develop tourist town of Wang Kelian It is centralised because of the rubbish, litter, waste disposal system. EIA requires all these things. Budget wise, they still seek Ministry's fund, costs 4 million. There will be area for entertainment, cultural shows, state park movies. My point is always awareness.

Q: There are two agencies involved in managing State Park. How do you perceive this?
A: Technically, the strength is the knowledge and expertise. The weakness we found out is we are not very strict. The government normally bypass. Working in the state is different because of bureaucracy. You cannot change the system. They know you come, next time you go. So, who cares. You make noise on your own. On the state government, we have to compliment. The strength that they have is the eagerness to work together. Gua Kelam is being handled by the Agriculture Department. Land matters, ownership belongs to Forestry. They are supposed to hand it back to Forestry. Technical Committee, very unfortunately, they lack the knowledge about park, system. They are only able to facilitate approval or getting things done. That is not their fault. That is why they get people from outside to provide them with expertise. As far as document is done, we have followed accordingly and agreed by all stakeholders, Project Steering Committee and Technical Working Committee.

Q: How do you see the effectiveness of community-led approach to planning in a top-down situation?
A: To start with, it is always important it should be downward because of the costs. In Perlis or Langkawi, it was the government who started. When the government started to show something, people start to come. Communities start to say something, they will slowly enjoy the benefits. Some of them become entrepreneurs. The community can only grow to a certain limit. They cannot grow to the full benefit of reaping tourism. They don't have the capital, the risk-taking attitude, they will

remain small. Of course there has been some success in other parts of the world. But it always starts with government-led. Taman Negeri is government-led. People-led, become successful entrepreneurs in Sunday market which they say nothing to do with government. But you must learn that it is always the government who started to build state park, good access, benefit on Sundays, no document. Isn't that all government initiatives? You tell me any idea in isolation, the government has no role. Like Costa Rica, they start the national park. Community started to build lodges. It is still the government that started the national park. I don't see they go very far.

To increase number of room nights, number of people or to increase the revenue? Is number all about in tourism. Classic example is Perlis State Park. If you look at the figure of 2001 and 2002. 2001 is about 5,800 people. 2002 dropped to 4,400. If you look success based on numbers. We don't. My income for 2002 increased 3 times compared to 2001, revenue collection. Here it indicates that number drops but number of nights increase. This is where in conservation. If you do mass tourism, yes. You want the figures to make the costs low, you chartered airplane. You want that numbers, otherwise, the cost per person is high. In the park, you want less people. They spend more time, money. Planning is all about long term. I don't think we fail. The concept will still be the same. Tourism for conservation. Because of tourism, you are going to conserve the area. You are going to promote the tourism aspect. But actually 90 per cent is all conservation.