Integrating wetlands into tourism planning for the sustainable development of communities and the environment using Ridge-to-Reef ecosystem approach

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Presentation Outline

I. Wetlands and Tourism
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V. The case of Bacnotan, La Union
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I. Wetlands and Tourism

Worldwide, wetlands offer significant opportunities for tourism and recreation, generating income for governments, for the tourism industry itself, and for local communities as well. (Ramsar & UNTWO, 2012)
I. Wetlands and Tourism

“Tourism can also be an innovative mechanism for funding nature conservation and poverty reduction in wetland areas... an opportunity for communities to develop sustainable economic strategies... on the other hand, tourism can impact wetlands: habitat loss, pollution, over-consumption of water, and visual or noise impacts.” (Van der Duim, R. & Henkens, R. 2007)
I. Wetlands and Tourism

Sustainable tourism can be defined as:

“Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”. –UNEP & WTO, 2005
II. What is Ridge-to-Reef Approach?

An integrated resource management approach which recognizes the interconnections of social and natural systems from the mountain ‘ridges’ of volcanic islands, through coastal watersheds and habitats, and across coastal lagoons to the fringing ‘reef’ environments... (Pacific R2R –Ridge to Reef, 2018)
II. What is Ridge-to-Reef Approach?

“Effective ridge-to-reef management requires improved understanding of land-sea linkages and decision-support tools to simultaneously evaluate the effects of terrestrial and marine drivers on coral reefs, mediated by anthropogenic activities” (Delevaux, et al., 2018)
III. Current practices of Tourism in Wetlands

Bali, Indonesia

Safeguards and protects the authenticity of the Cultural Landscape of Bali World Heritage Site with its unique subak system

Bali, Indonesia Snapshot (WWF):
• About 3,263,000 live in Bali – approx. 1.4% of Indonesia’s total population
• 80% of Bali’s population relies to some extent on income-generation tourism industry
• The estimated number of foreign tourists visiting Bali in 2007 is 1,700,000

Image source: http://www.bali-indonesia.com/
III. Current practices of Tourism in Wetlands

Ensure all stakeholders have a common understanding and appreciation of the Outstanding Universal Value to promote the safeguarding and protection of the World Heritage Site according to sustainability principles.

Ensure all development (relating to tourism, infrastructure, housing, etc.) supports and strengthens the authenticity of the Cultural Landscape of Bali Province, minimizes negative environmental impacts, enforces land use policy, and strengthens site management and monitoring through collaborative and participatory efforts.

Empower local communities to directly engage in sustainable tourism to improve their welfare.

Develop a visitor management system that minimizes negative impacts and enhances the visitor experience.

Encourage the development of sustainable tourism products and services that respect the local cultural values.

Source: UNESCO & Republic of Indonesia
III. Current practices of Tourism in Wetlands

Halong Bay, Vietnam
inclusive growth for tourism indicators

**Economic Dimensions**
- Supply chain and backward linkages
- Ownership patterns and economic leakage
- Employment patterns
- Tourist expenditures

**Institutional dimensions**
- Institutional and institutionalized networks

**Social dimensions**
- Local participation and collaboration

III. Current practices of Tourism in Wetlands

Halong Bay, Vietnam

Six strategies for sustainable tourism development in Halong area

- Strategy 1: Enhancement of management capacity for sustainable tourism development
- Strategy 2: Development of legal and institutional framework, and policy for supporting ecotourism
- Strategy 3: Protection of tourism resources
- Strategy 4: Development of sustainable tourism products
- Strategy 5: Upgrading service and quality of tourism facilities and business
- Strategy 6: Propaganda and promotion of sustainable tourism

Image source: Hampton, Jeyacheya, Hong Long (2018)
IV. Methodology for Tourism Planning using Ridge-to-Reef Approach at Bacnotan La Union

The overall approach to this project is community-based tourism development master planning. It will employ Ridge-to-Reef and other ecosystem approaches including the wise use of coastal areas and other natural and wetland resources. This approach makes natural resources centre stage in complementing all existing tourism resources.

Historical and cultural planning will use a landscape approach that enriches and enhances the connection of town, people, heritage, and environment. Additionally, the development plan will integrate zoning, land use, infrastructure development, the national system of standards for tourism enterprises, heritage and environmental protection imperatives, disaster risk reduction and climate change in a manner that encourages sustainable tourism development.
IV. Methodology for Tourism Planning using Ridge-to-Reef Approach at Bacnotan La Union

Component 1: Inception/Preparatory Activities
- Mobilization
- Levelling Off
- Inception Report

Component 2: Tourism Data Collection and Gathering
- Courtesy Meetings and Project Orientations
- Multi-Sectoral Consultations and Tourism Planning Workshop
- Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)
- Key Informant Interviews
- Site Visit to Bacnotan’s Tourist Attractions
- Secondary Data Gathering
- Situational Analysis and Formulation of Goals and Objectives

Component 3: Preparation and Presentation of Draft Final Report
- Development Tourism Strategies and Environmental Management
- Identification and Prioritise of Tourism Programs, Projects, and Activities
- Tourism Product Identification and implementation of pilot tourism activity or product for Barangay Quirino;
- Investment Portfolios & Promotions, including the conduct of marketing training for selected stakeholders;
- Monitoring and Evaluations Framework
- Presentation of Draft Final Report and Approval

Component 4: Preparation of Final Report
V. The Case of Bacnotan La, Union

- Rivers and waterfalls
  - Annual fluvial parades in celebration of the feast of Our Lady of Peñafrancia (Baroro Beach)
  - River boat cruise for diners
  - River farm
  - Kayaking
V. The Case of Bacnotan La, Union

- Beaches and coves

Integration of tourism activities with conservation and protection of beaches and turtles
V. The Case of Bacnotan La, Union

- Beaches and coves

✓ Nesting areas of sea turtles in Brgy. Tammocalao and the surfing area in Brgy. Quirino (Marine Protected Areas)
✓ Picturesque view and waves perfect for surfers
✓ Rock cliff
✓ Wetland Learning Center & Marine Research Center envisioned
V. The Case of Bacnotan La, Union

- Dam/ Lakes

Bussaoit Dam
This man-made dam forms a lake over time and is possibly the largest man-made lake in the province of La Union. The site has the potential to be a good spot for camping, fishing, and other recreational activities.

Tourism that considers local economic development, culture, and wise use of resources
V. Ways Forward for integrating wetlands into tourism planning (Ramsar & UNWTO, 2012)

National, regional and local planning and policies are key factors in environmental conservation and in ensuring that tourism contributes equitably to the development of local economy.

Development plans for tourism should be integrated with wetland management plans for biodiversity conservation and compatible with the objectives for conservation and wise use of each site.

Wetland management planning and plans are essential tools for resolving the multiple issues arising from activities in wetlands, including tourism.

 Offering enriching experiences at wetlands is important for attracting tourists but needs careful planning to ensure that visitation rates and activities are ecologically and socially sustainable.

Meaningful involvement of local communities in decision making is a central element of both wetland wise use and successful tourism.

Communication and education about wetlands help to raise awareness about wetland values and wetland biodiversity, and win support from tourists and others for wetland conservation.
References:


Thank you!