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by Minister of Culture and Tourism of the Republic of Indonesia

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WILINGNESS OF LOCAL TOURISTS TO PAY FOR CONSERVATION OF TOURISM SPOTS IN THE DAMAI DISTRICT SARAWAK

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This research analyzes individual's willingness to pay (WTP) for the conservation of Tourism spots in the Damai district, Kuching, Sarawak. The study applied the dichotomous choice of Contingent Valuation Method (CVM), to visitors sampled randomly. Results indicated a per person median value of RM11.64 WTP for the preservation of Damai, using the logit modern. The collection of a fee would allow local authorities to provide and promote various conservation activities, in addition to the reduction of problems associated to the public good.

Willingness to pay, conservation, Sarawak

INTRODUCTION

The increasing competition for land use, due to development at Damai beaches and its other wilderness within the coastline of Santubong in Sarawak, has significantly agitated wildlife ecosystems and contaminated beaches to the extent of decreasing the income of the surrounding indigenous groups. Thus the ability to conserve this area is of significance in balancing the ecosystem and conservation of the environment for future generations. The objective of this paper is to determine visitor's satisfaction levels through their willingness to pay for the conservation of the Damai Resort district. This study utilizes CVM (Contingent Valuation Method) to measure willingness to pay.

CVM has been widely used to calculate willingness to pay by individuals for products or services obtained. Among other studies using the method are Rendall *et al.* (1974), Bishop and Heberlein (1979), Bishop *et al.* (1983), Sellar *et al.* (1986), Abala (1987), Cameron and James (1987), Bowker and Stoll (1988), Cameron (1988), McConnel (1990), Balderas and Laarman (1990), Donaldson *et al.* (1997), Rollins (1997), Ryan (1997), Willis and Powe (1998), Hayes and Hayes (1999), Carlson and Johansson-Stenman (2000), Shackly and Dixon (2000), Loomis *et al.*, (2000), and Scarpa (2000). The next section presents the location of the study, followed by a theoretical framework, and subsequently results and conclusions.

LOCATION OF THE STUDY

Damai is located at the tip of the Santubong Peninsula where the Sarawak River branches and meets the South China Sea. The Santubong Peninsula had acted as a magnet for travelers for thousands of years. The area had always been a prime target for pirates, due to its relative prosperity and isolated location. The settlement of Santubong