

Responsible Rural Tourism Capacity (Rrtc) Framework: A National Approach Towards Sustainable Tourism

Vikneswaran Nair¹, Badaruddin Mohamed²

¹Assoc. Professor & Programme Leader, Taylor's University, Malaysia;

²Professor, Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM)

¹vicky.nair@taylors.edu.my

ABSTRACT

With the launch of the Economic Transformation Programme (ETP), Malaysia is set to achieve high income nation status by the end of the decade. Hence, the tourism industry in Malaysia is being transformed from low yield to high yield. Rural tourism is growing at a phenomenal rate in Malaysia and is expected to be a major contributor to the nation's tourism receipt. Nonetheless, in the last decade, the concept of ecotourism rural tourism has melded with mainstream tourism to lose its distinctness. Consequently, the tourism industry's growth through-out the years has created an increasing amount of stress economically, socially and environmentally. Hence, the development of a sustainable and responsible rural tourism is needed on fulfilling the objectives of all stakeholders in the system. Hence, the main objective of this study is: (1) to discover the various models used in economic, socio-cultural and environmental responsibility and carrying capacity in rural tourism destinations; (2) to investigate all stakeholder's perspective on the economic, socio-cultural and environmental responsibility and carrying capacity in rural tourism destinations; (3) to establish appropriate economic, socio-cultural and environmental model to measure stakeholders' impacts in rural tourism destinations; (4) to develop economic, socio-cultural and environmental responsible and carrying capacity indicators for rural tourism destinations; and (5) to develop a tourism barometer to assess and monitor the economic, socio-cultural and environmental responsible impact of rural tourism destinations using an integrated decision support system. This fundamental study plays an important role in innovating new approaches by developing indicators to holistically measure the multi-dimensional relationships between different tourism models and the linkages to local economies and environment in key natural and rural destinations in Malaysia.

KEYWORDS: responsible tourism, carrying capacity, tourism barometer, impacts, high yield, rural tourism