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**Assignment 2 Topic 1: Barriers to Sustainable Tourism Development in Peripheral Regions**

Introduction of Peripheral Region

Peripheral region usually refers to a region in particular that has limited economic, located away from the main cities, usually are not involved in any decision making or politics (Botterill et al, 2002).

Case of Southern Highlands, Australia

Southern Highlands, it is located 110km away from Sydney Canberra - Melbourne in southwest direction. The three main areas where the locals reside at are Bowral, Mittagong and Moss Vale. It is governed by Wingecarribee Shire Council, is created by Tourism Southern Highland Marketing department, to ensure conservation and protect the natural environment, provide assistance in developing the local economy, by boosting subtle growth of tourist facilities that needs to fit with the environment and community (Baric.A, 1997).

Barriers faced by Southern Highlands (Baric.A, 1997)

1. Wingecarribee Shire Council has failed to establish good relationship with the local community and tourism operators. Hence this has resulted the local operators to place more attention on increasing inbound tourism to Southern Highland. International Inbound tour operators are totally clueless towards Southern Highlands, they do not even have any idea of what it offers and its location.
2. The parking in Bowral central business district area. This is already a pressing problem during peak tourist times for the residents, to the point that some of them would opt to do their shopping outside the district, and it is an economic losses for the region. In addition, the local roads are not up to standard, it is an unfavourable factor for tourism. For instance, the road that leads to Wombeyan Caves is so dirty that no one would visit it although it is considered as one of the top natural place to visit for, with its peculiar limestone caves.
3. Restaurants and niche retail outlets, tend to charge high price for visitors, choosing to enjoy short term profit than to consider long term profit where it ought to be a fair and honest business practice in place.
4. Many parks but with limited facilities to support, although in this area there are many parks but there is not a single BBQ or picnic amenities.
5. Limited transportation, this is a big deterring factor towards people who do not have a car and there is no tour services at the start of the region either.
6. Limited research that makes it very difficult to gain statistical information, the data are not up to date, irrelevant data which makes it particularly hard to do any form of planning or to even discover new target market

Case of Brandon, Canada

Brandon is just like any ordinary town with limited developments, it is relatively far away from the major cities. Some tourists whom have visited Brandon before felt that there were not much to expect or see, their length of stay range between only one to three days. The amount spent on tourist promotion by the City Council of Brandon is below $100 000 per year (Brandon, 1998a). In addition, only the big cities are allowed to have popular sports franchises. Although Brandon has had festivals organised and were held but in consideration on the attractions’ infrastructure, it only had support from the local and does not attract tourist (Getz, 1991).

Although Brandon has had hallmark events such as Winter Olympics, which has gained international attention. There were money raised from private fundraising activities and were credited to both federal and provincial governments, although both parties have paid for the principal cost. The daily operational cost were under the local taxpayers’ liabilities if these facilities make any losses.

All hallmark events created and planned were purely for the politicians and local elites’ gains as these were paid using the local taxpayers’ money, whom gain nothing in return (Hall, 1994).

For example: the reconstruction of the infrastructure were built to benefit the business elite but the cost was taxpayers’ liabilities, who lived outside the city using both provincial and federal subsidies given to them. Indeed, such tourist hallmark event has certainly been a “roller coaster” in its economic trend which makes it really hard to expect and to be dealt with by the profitable businesses (de Poudre, 1998).

Brandon’s existing sports facilities for tennis, softball and soccer are still highly prone to flood although it was recovered but the damage amounts to $700,000 (Horne, 2000). This means that if a flood were to happen, another damage of $700, 000 would be incurred.

Although these hallmark events may be managed and organised by a small group of volunteers but there is a likelihood that they would feel tired out from having to meet the various needs and wants at both national and international level based events (Horne, 2000).

Case of Indonesia – Togean Islands

(Conservation International Indonesia, 2001)

Togean Islands is managed by Conservation International Indonesia and Yayasan Bina Sains Hayati. It also involves related stakeholders such as the local NGOs, private sector and government related agencies. In this program, it will assist the local community and oversee issues such as attraction management, product marketing, and promotion capacity building of stakeholders and reforming policies.

Here are some the problems faced in Togean Islands

The local communities do not know anything about tourism management, marketing and business related knowledge. The government also are clueless on managing nature resources and policy making for getting the community to be involved in tourism. In addition, the economic and political are unstable in Indonesia and Central Sulawesi.

Some of the solutions were put in place to resolve the mentioned problems

They implemented local skills identification with training relating to management in eco-tourism and services. Workshop and seminars were organised for policy makers to understand more in depth on sustaining nature resource management that are related to the local government as well. Collaboration was forged with the local tour operators in the nearest town, identifying alternative safe routes for visitors to locate around Togean Islands.

Since then, Togean was recognized by the Provincial Government in 1996, as an eco-tourism destination. More commitment and support were given as part of the boardwalk maintenance. The length of stay by tourism coming to Togean has increased in range between 5 to 7 days. More rooms were added and revenue has increased as well. It was through eco-tourism that has allowed Togean to succeed in convincing the Provincial government to take action against forest reduction allowance in Togean.

In their activities monitoring progress, the consortium and CII has formed a team of field officers, three main tasks were involved

1. They teach the local communities, Marombo, Wakatan and Tikuan to learn the ways in managing eco-tourism products. These three local communities group are also assigned to report on the progress from time to time, and they need to keep in contact with the field officers.
2. If these local communities were to face any problems, they can record and analysed the problems via teamwork in partnership with Joint Secretary Sekber
3. Since the program is under supervision, intrusive of support and policy making by the government were added in as well.

Case of Romania – Bran

Under Ceausescu ruling, the agriculture sector became a full state-controlled. 95% of the arable land were under state ownership. This has affected both crops and livestock production, distribution to be ruled by Ministry of Agriculture and Food Industries. As most of the production are sent for export, this has led to centralised planning and control, hence this has affected the employment rate to decline (Turnock, 1990). Rural populations were forced to move to industrial centres, the agriculture and rural areas became deprived of resources and investments. As a result, it has almost cause traditional economies and societies to extinct.

Gradually years after, since Romanian was restored, both rural economic and social become the top issue. In order to ensure there are adequate food supply, 80% of the land that were taken away was reinstate to private proprietorship. Soon, the agriculture industry became bigger and bigger, dominated by the big and frugal farm management. With effect from the reform policy for agriculture, it has maintain the people from rural islands’ attention to join in tourism, as a solution to assist in building up the rural economies using modification of farm, while also to reinstate Romanians’ agriculture culture (Sharpley.R, 1997).

Some problems has happened after Romanians’ agriculture was reinstated.

Most overseas visitors who has visited Bran were only in daytime, they do not spend much time nor spend much.

One the barriers is that Bran needs to promote and increase Romanian Bran accommodation to the overseas market, and this would need the support from the National Organisation, ANTREC.

As the training was limited, the local residents were not able to properly showcase tourism products to tourists

Tourists’ perception are inconsistent with the actual requirements particularly if they see that a farmhouse has modern furnishings, it does not match with what they had in mind about rural area living experience.

The local residents themselves were too enthusiastic in attempt to mingle with the tourists in the extent that, tourist themselves felt perturbed.

In addition, the local residents are not willing to take the first step to start some form of business due to the strong influence they had under the rule of Ceausescu for years.

Most acknowledge the fact that to be working in a tourism industry can be very tiring, and this perception has led to the point that the tourism industry is unable meet or improve in its service quality and standards, which has impacted on the rural tourism operators unable to attract tourists.

In order for a community to be engaged and understand the way to managed tourism business and development, ( (Bingen, 2003)

1. Contracts must be drafted that will assist the community on how they can start and provide both tourist goods and services

E.g. government grants

This will encourage building of amenities and improving infrastructure, also to get assistance from experts’ on how they can do marketing

1. Project programs with the necessary funding and support for procurement, with help from new technologies to start production.

E.g. developing websites and tapping on social media in sharing tourist information

1. Getting human investment where by the local residents build on their basic skills first, which then leads to social capital to collective action groups when they share common goals in mind, with that it is the start of networking internally and externally, allowing the local residents to learn the ways in getting straight contact with the industry and required knowledge needed.

It is true to say that for basic skills to be built, it is more than just communication abilities but it is getting the right production and marketing access, as this will require some time in order to see the desired solid results (Moscardo, 2006 ).

For the case of Romanian, they could use the follow solutions as mentioned of their policy making to improve their situation and could also apply similar methods used in Togean Island in getting the community to be more engaged and participative in the rightful way.

For the case of Australia – South Highlands and Canada – Brandon, both of these peripheral regions will require the intervention from the NGO who will highlight the problems that the people are facing and garner support from the state government to conduct checks on the provincial government accounts and as well as the elite business. As the state government, they could reform the policies, collaborate closely with the NGOs to see what should be done to resolve, consult with the residents for their opinions. With engagements and communication established, this helps in fostering positive relationship, establishing an effective tourism management.

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