Social Capital and Development Trends in Rural Areas Volume 6

Kiyoshi KOBAYASHI Hans WESTLUND Hayeong JEONG editors



Social Capital and Development Trends in Rural Areas Volume 6

This volume contains the examined and selected papers of the 6th International Workshop on "Social Capital and Development Trends in Japan's and Sweden's Countryside." It was held on July 1-2, 2009 in Ishigaki Island, Japan. The workshop aims to discuss sustainable development of rural areas and provide innovative academic perspective regarding social capital. The volume consists of 19 contributions by authors from Japan and Sweden, successfully accepted through peer review. They present interesting and diverse viewpoints on the interface between the concept of social capital and the development of rural regions.

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Cover: Red-Tiled Roof, Shiisaa, and Stone Wall in Taketomi Island, Japan

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Chapter 8

Environmental Impacts of Ecotourism on Mangrove: Case Study of Kuala Selangor Nature Park

Maisarah ALI and Mohd FAIZ Bin Musa

8.1 Introduction

Mangrove forest is one of the natural settings, which fall under wetland forest category with diverse ecosystem. With its location between the upland and coastal ecosystem, mangrove forest is an ecotone zone; a region of transition between two biological communities with diversity of wildlife habitat and human natural resources. The valuable intrinsic (natural) ecological functions and socio-economic values of mangrove forest make it one of the reasons why mangrove forest has been exploited under the name of development for example aquaculture production, timber or chip wood production, fuel wood production and also tourism development. The success in generating profit from the tourism sector in Malaysia has led to vast development of natural settings for tourism infrastructures. Tourism in Malaysia, especially after 1990, continued to be popular and most of the development still focused on traditional (natural) resorts. WWF Malaysia estimates that Malaysia gains RM655 million per year from ecotourism (Badaruddin, 2002). Currently, ecotourism contributes about 10 per cent of Malaysia's tourism revenue (Vasanth, 2005). According to The National Ecotourism Plan of Malaysia (1997), ecotourism is defined as 'travel and visitation that is environmentally responsible to relatively undisturbed areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (including accompanying cultural features: both past and present), promotes conservation, has low impact and provides beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations' (MOCAT, 1997). The growth of ecotourism in Malaysia sees mangrove forest as one of its targeted destinations to promote an educational and sustainable tourism to local and foreign visitors. The attraction in developing mangrove as ecotourism destination is because many activities

can be carried out within the mangrove ecosystem. Activities like nature trail, research and education, photography, bird-watching and many more attract numbers of visitors to the mangrove forest. The development of ecotourism facilities and services somehow gives adverse environmental impacts towards mangrove forest directly or indirectly. The introduction of buildings in the estuarine sensitive ecosystem should be approached by zoning the site into public, semi-public and private zones. The zoning approach will ensure that buildings and structures of the resort integrate into the physical and climatic characteristics of the mangrove forest as well as the need of guests experiencing the natural wetland resource (Ismail, 2000). The mangrove cover in Malaysia has declined by 30% over the past five decades: from 800,000ha in the 1950s to 575,000ha now. Mangrove losses are highest in Perlis, Selangor, Johor, Sarawak, Negri Sembilan and Penang (Tan, 2005). Large tracts of mangroves have been cleared for agriculture, aquaculture, infrastructure, industries and housing development. Mangrove land is cheap as the goods and services which they provide are grossly undervalued or do not have market value and often labeled as 'wastelands'. State Governments see no immediate benefit in protecting their mangroves. As a result, mangroves are converted for other uses that generate more revenue.

8.2 Research Goal

The goal of this research is to investigate the environmental impacts on mangrove caused by ecotourism development and its causes and to propose recommendations for designing mangrove forest for ecotourism development that can meet the needs of human without destroying the immediate natural habitats

8.3 Research Objectives

Four objectives have been established in order to achieve the research goal. The objectives include:

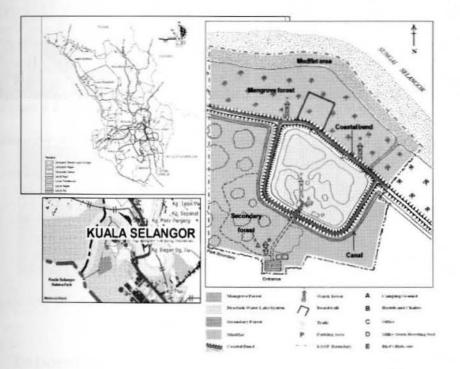
- To identify the ecosystem of mangrove forest and their limitation towards development and human intervention.
- To explore the environmental impacts occurring on mangrove due to ecotourism development.
- To identify the causes of the environmental impacts.
- To proposed recommendations for ecotourism development at mangrove forest that meet the needs of human without destroying the nature.

8.4 Research Methodology

Various methods of collecting data have been adopted in this study; Literature review, data from related government bodies such as Forestry Department, Wetland International, data from Kuala Selangor Nature Park management office, field observation at Kuala Selangor Nature Park and interview management of Kuala Selangor Nature Park and visitors and experiments were carried namely: in-situ measurement (field test) and laboratory tests. Four water quality parameters which include: pH, dissolved oxygen (DO), biological oxygen demand (BOD), chemical oxygen demand (COD) were taken from three different locations were tested.

8.5 Kuala Selangor Nature Park (KSNP)

Located at the estuarine of Sungai Selangor, Kuala Selangor Nature Park (KSNP) comprises of three ecosystems which are the secondary forest (201 hectares), brackish water lake system (1 hectare) and mangrove forest (95 hectares). Kuala Selangor Nature Park was chosen as a case study for this research because KSNP is a popular ecotourism destination on the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia. It becomes a favorite spot for nature lovers, birders and students to do many activities that relate to the environment especially the mangrove forest. The facilities of Kuala Selangor Nature Park were developed within the secondary forest; near the entrance of KSNP to prevent environmental impacts towards the mangrove forest are connected by trails, coastal bund and boardwalk as shown in Figure 8.1.





8.6 Results and Findings

8.6.1 List of Fauna

168 species of birds were recorded at Kuala Selangor Nature Park (KSNP) as of January 2008, 4 species of birds have not been sighted by the officers of KSNP and tourists; *Turnix suscitator, Cisticola juncidis, Heliopais personata* and *Tringa stagnatilis* as shown in Figure 8.2. Meanwhile, 1 species of new bird has been sighted; *Bubo sumatranus* as shown in Figure 8.3. For the other species of fauna, the numbers remain the same as with the past checklist. The KSNP management office has established a checklist of fauna in KSNP. The checklists enable the KSNP officers and tourists to record the fauna species, date and total number of fauna they have sighted at the white board provided in the informative centre. This recording system is important for ecotourism operators to record the extinct and new species at their ecotourism site. Further action can be taken for improvement and conservation of ecotourism development because the numbers of species at ecotourism site indicate the successful level of management by the ecotourism operators.

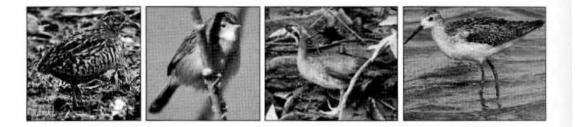


Figure 8.2: From the left; Turnix suscitator, Cisticola juncidis, Heliopais personata and Tringa stagnatilis (Google images)



Figure 8.3: Bubo sumatranus (Google image)

8.6.2 List of Flora

All the nineteen main species of flora were found at the KSNP because plants of these species are difficult to extinct within their ecosystem.

8.6.3 Inventory and Observation

After carrying out the inventory and observation, two types of environmental impacts were identified. There are positive and negative environmental impacts. Table 8.1 and 8.2 shows the inventory checklists of environmental impacts for both positive and negative environmental impacts and it causes respectively.

Most of the negative environmental impacts occurred in KSNP as shown in Figure 8.4, 8.5, 8.6, 8.7, 8.8 and 8.9 are within the facilities and services areas and along the trails and boardwalk. Two major factors which caused the negative environmental impacts in KSNP are the development of ecotourism facilities and services and the tourists' activities. In development of ecotourism in KSNP, there are also positive environmental impacts that derived from the ecotourism development as shown in Table 8.2 and Figure 8.10, 8.11 and 8.12:



Figure 8.4: Pollution of solid waste



Figure 8.6: Tourist feeding the primates



Figure 8.5: Eutrophication



Figure 8.7: Noise from tourists

8.7 Laboratory Testing

The laboratory testing of water was conducted on 11th February 2008 for 4 hours. Three (3) stations were specified to collect the water samples. The 3 stations are:



Figure 8.8: Illegal cutting



Figure 8.10: Reforestation activities



Figure 8.9: Decrease of soil quality



Figure 8.11: Environmental Education Centre

- Station 1: The canal.
- Station 2: The brackish water lake system.
- Station 3: River (Sungai Selangor).

The laboratory testing of water sample in KSNP that was conducted include the pH, Dissolved Oxygen (DO), conductivity and salinity, Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD). The results of the tests are shown in Table 8.3. The results show that the water quality in Kuala Selangor Nature Park shown a typical reading in terms of the pH, Dissolved Oxygen (DO), conductivity and salinity, Biological Oxygen Demand (BOD) and Chemical Oxygen Demand (COD) for brackish water. Many marine organism and birds can be sighted within Station 3 followed by Station 2 and Station 1. This is because water within Station 3 can sustain more marine organism than Station 2 and 1. The high rate of flow of Sungai Selangor that creates more oxygen and the mangrove trees act as a breeding ground and provide food and shelter for marine organism make Station 3 (mangrove forest) the habitat of marine organisms. This shows that the Kuala Selangor Nature Park management is successfully managed and monitored .The water quality in KSNP can still sustain the wildlife within its niche.

8.8 Conclusions

Mangrove forest is a type of wetland tropical rainforest which has diversity of abiotic and biotic components within the ecosystem. Both the abiotic and biotic components of man-



Figure 8.12: Ecotourism. and informative centre.

grove ecosystem are easy to degrade due to human intervention but hardly recover from any degradation because of it sensitiveness towards any intervention. Abiotic components of mangrove forest such as soil and water are subject to fast reaction towards any chemical and biological reaction that has contacts with them. The condition of mangrove soil such as marine alluvium or muddy condition needs scientific and long-term planning in developing ecotourism facilities and services within it. This is because, when the topsoil of mangrove are ploughed and exposed the acid sulfate in the soil will be oxidized. The water becomes more acidic and thus ferrous salts oxidize to form the ferrous hydroxide. This consequently kills the algae which the fish feed on. This was proven by the acidic soil condition along the metal and concrete boardwalk which affected the plants nearby the boardwalk. Consequently, this will affect the zonation of flora and wildlife species at mangrove forest because the zonation of flora and fauna species in mangrove ecosystem is control by the soil condition. Since the pH and salinity of water at mangrove forest is affected by tides and the location either towards the sea or nearby the source of freshwater. Any changes in the pH and salinity will affect the ecosystem of abiotic and biotic components. The changes of abiotic components such as soil and water as mentioned above has great influence towards the number of species of flora and fauna at KSNP. Unfortunately, the effect of degradation in soil and water towards the number of species for flora and fauna cannot be seen clearly in this research owing to time limitation. To study the impacts of abiotic changes towards the ecosystem of flora and fauna need a long-term research and analysis. However, the studies on the impact of noise from the tourists towards the legibility and easiness to spot the fauna were carried out. These were proved when there is high level of noise from tourists especially who moved in a group, fauna is hardly to be spotted. Whereas, when the tourists move quietly, there are numbers of fauna that can be spotted easily. Hence, mangrove ecosystem is really sensitive towards development and changes within the ecosystem since it is a breeding ground for diversity of terrestrial and aquatic wildlife.

8.9 Recommentations

In developing ecotourism within mangrove forest, three stages of planning need to be established each stage requires specific planning. The three stages are initial planning, development phases and management as shown in Table 8.4.

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No.	Negative Environmental Impacts	Causes	
1.	Pollution: i. Solid waste (Litter). ii.Eutrophication in pond and drainage.	i.Tourists feed the monkeys and leave the rubbish without throwing it into the provided dustbin.ii.Solid waste and domestic waste from monkeys and irrigation dung in the drainage which eventual lead to eutrophication.	
2.	Fauna degradation: i.Decrease number of primates population. ii.Decrease number of inverte-	 i.Silvered Leaf Monkey and Long-tailed Macaque migrate from KSNP to Bukit Melawati because food-feeding from tourists. ii.Illegal fishing by the local people. 	
	brates and fish. iii.Less sighted fauna during eco- tourism.	iii.Noise from tourists and vehicles.	
3.	Flora degradation: i.Trampling of plants along the trails. ii.Loss of trees along the con- structed boardwalk	i.Tourists pick or collect some plants dur- ing ecotourism.ii.Clearance of trees along the constructed boardwalk during the construction. More- over, chemical reaction of acid sulfate in the soil occurs when the mangrove soil is ploughed.	
	iii.Decrease number of mangrove trees.	iii.Illegal cutting of mangrove trees by the local people.	
4.	Increased of land use for tourism facilities resulting from unsus- tainable development plan.	Increase numbers of tourists especially group of tourists.	
5.	Vandalism or graffiti on plant.	Lack of self-awareness among the tourists.	
6.	Soil erosion along walked trails.	Caused by monitor lizard and smooth ot- ter which pass by the trails.	
7.	Decrease of water quality in brackish water lake system.	Problem with sluice gate that not well functioned in controlling inlet and outlet of water from Sungai Selangor.	
8.	Decrease of soil quality along the constructed boardwalk.	The rust metal and concrete along the boardwalk contaminate the soil which makes the soil become acid sulfate.	

Table 8.1: Negative environmental impacts and the causes within KSNP

No.	Negative Environmental Impacts	Causes	
1.	Pollution: i. Solid waste (Litter). ii.Eutrophication in pond and drainage.	i.Tourists feed the monkeys and leave the rubbish without throwing it into the provided dustbin.ii.Solid waste and domestic waste from monkeys and irrigation dung in the drainage which eventual lead to eutrophication.	
2.	Fauna degradation: i.Decrease number of primates population.	i.Silvered Leaf Monkey and Long-tailed Macaque migrate from KSNP to Bukit Melawati because food-feeding from tourists.	
	ii.Decrease number of inverte- brates and fish.iii.Less sighted fauna during eco- tourism.	ii.Illegal fishing by the local people.iii.Noise from tourists and vehicles.	
3.	Flora degradation: i.Trampling of plants along the trails. ii.Loss of trees along the con- structed boardwalk	i.Tourists pick or collect some plants dur- ing ecotourism.ii.Clearance of trees along the constructed boardwalk during the construction. More- over, chemical reaction of acid sulfate in the soil occurs when the mangrove soil is ploughed.	
	iii.Decrease number of mangrove trees.	iii.Illegal cutting of mangrove trees by the local people.	
4.	Increased of land use for tourism facilities resulting from unsus- tainable development plan.	Increase numbers of tourists especially group of tourists.	
5.	Vandalism or graffiti on plant.	Lack of self-awareness among the tourists.	
6.	Soil erosion along walked trails.	Caused by monitor lizard and smooth ot- ter which pass by the trails.	
7.	Decrease of water quality in brackish water lake system.	Problem with sluice gate that not well functioned in controlling inlet and outlet of water from Sungai Selangor.	
8.	Decrease of soil quality along the constructed boardwalk.	The rust metal and concrete along the boardwalk contaminate the soil which makes the soil become acid sulfate.	

Table 8.1: Negative environmental impacts and the causes within KSNP

No.	Positive Environmental Impacts	Factors	
1.	Educate tourists towards conservation programme.	Through Environmental-Educational Pro- gramme and reforestation of mangrove sampling which was organized by KSNP management during ecotourism programme and partnership with institutions, organizations and societies.	
2.	Increase of public aware- ness in protecting the mangrove ecosystem.	Through ecotourism activities and informative center of KSNP where information and issue are disseminated.	
3.	Expansion of conservation area of mangrove forest.	Through the expansion of ecotourism develop- ment of KSNP "Taman Wilayah Warisan Alam" as planned in Local Development Draft of Kuala Selangor District Council 2015.	

Table 8.2: Positive environmental impacts and the factors in KSNP

Table 8.3: Laboratory test results of water from KSNP

No.	Laboratory Test	Station 1	Station 2	Station 3
1.	pH of water	6.96pH	6.97pH	6.95pH
2.	Dissolved Oxygen(DO)	0.76ppm	2.01ppm	2.31ppm
3.	Conductivity	32ms/cm	$51.1 \mathrm{ms/cm}$	52.0ms/cm
4.	Salinity	18.4ppt	30.9ppt	31.0ppt
5.	Biological Oxygen Demand(BOD)	2.85 mg/l	1.44 mg/l	1.74mg/l

1.Initial Planning	2.Development Phases	3.Management
1.Inventory and analy- sis of Environmental Im- pact Assessment (EIA) and Social Impact Assess- ment (SIA) need to be carried out thoroughly.	1.Local people involve- ment during construction of facilities can reduce the construction cost.	1.Local people involve- ment in managing eco- tourism operation.
2.Specified experts in mangrove are required; botanist, environmental engineer and landscape architect in initial stage of planning.	2.Construction of trails and boardwalk should fol- low the alignment of trees.	2. Rules and regulations of ecotourism development within mangrove forest need to be reviewed ac- cording to the current is- sues and situations.
3.Local people involve- ment as they are the end users who later will expe- rience the impacts of the ecotourism.	3.Avoid the usage of heavy machine because it will cause high rate of damage to plants and soil.	 Marketing and promo- tion of ecotourism desti- nation should be carried out at local, national and international level.
4.Classification of zona- tion areas for develop- ment and conservation.	4.Construction material should tolerant to salty and acidic condition of Mangrove; timber.	4.Interactive activities based on nature educa- tion and awareness of conservation should be carried out.
5. The location of facili- ties must be developed within the entrance area and buffer of 400m mini- mum form sea edges must be developed.	5.The height of board- walk platform should be higher than the annual maximum level of high tide.	5.Informative signage along the trails and boardwalk.
6.Suitable landscape plants; native and tropi- cal species.		6.Carrying capacity of tourists in one time should be enforced.
		7.Rules and regulations towards trespassers and tourists should be en- forced.

Table 8.4: Three stages of planning ecotourism development within mangrove forest