



## Development of Community Tourism in Na Hang District, Tuyen Quang Province, Vietnam Associated With the Protection of Special- Use Forests

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### ABSTRACT

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Community-based tourism is currently a popular trend of developing countries, including Vietnam. After the Covid 19 pandemic, most of the travel needs of tourists have changed. From bustling urban areas, tourists want to find remote areas to be close to nature, find inner peace and enjoy a green life. Therefore, community-based tourism in the form of experience, adventure, ecology and healing is being prioritized for development in Tuyen Quang province. This is a province with the largest natural forest cover in Vietnam, in which, Na Hang district has over 21,000 hectares of natural forest in Thanh Tuong, Son Phu, Con Lon and Khau Tinh communes. In order to better manage and protect forests, over the past time, Na Hang Special-use Forest Protection Department has strengthened propaganda, patrolling, controlling and protecting existing forest areas, contributing to preserving the living environment, natural disaster prevention, socio-economic promotion, tourism development. The issue of special-use forest protection associated with community-based tourism development has both created livelihoods for the people here and raised people's awareness of preserving the landscape environment.

### KEYWORDS:

Community tourism, Tuyen Quang, Vietnam, forest protection.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Research on tourism development in general, as well as community-based tourism in particular, is one of the issues of concern today. Around the world, the study of community-based tourism began to appear in the 70s of the twentieth century. Rozemeijer. N (2001) not only gives a fairly complete definition of community-based tourism as well as the necessary factors for the development of community-based tourism, but also proves the important role of community-based tourism in the development of community-based tourism. socio-economic, bringing great benefits to the community.

Weaver and Lawson (2009) said that community-based tourism activities can only be effective and sustainable when simultaneously ensuring three objectives: (1) Sustainable economy; (2) Sustainable culture and society; (3)

Environmental sustainability. Rhonda Phillips (2014) argues that in addition to economic benefits, community-based tourism also helps improve community capacity, overcome cultural barriers and better conserve tourism resources. The authors also believe that sustainable tourism must aim to provide a harmonized and regulated approach to development by emphasizing the need to pay attention to ensuring harmony and compatibility between development models. with other factors of the local economy; quality of development in terms of culture and environment.

Aris Anuar et al. (2017) argue that CBT is a tool for poverty alleviation. Therefore, many developing countries have used CBT as a way to improve the quality of life and also to support economic growth. The authors also emphasize that the current emerging problem is that most local communities are lacking in understanding about community-based tourism, so it is necessary to have solutions to make the local community realize that community-based tourism is not. not only brings opportunities for economic development, but also preserves culture and environment and improves the quality of education for the population.

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In Vietnam, starting in the 90s of the twentieth century, when tourism developed strongly and played an increasingly important role in the economy, new research projects on tourism and community-based tourism appeared and flourished. Vo (2006) and Bui (editor, 2012) both go into depth explaining the concept of tourism, community-based tourism, assessing community-based tourism resources and proposing solutions to develop different types of tourism. Community-based tourism to conserve ecosystems, reduce poverty in rural areas, national nature reserves, etc.

In addition to general studies on community-based tourism, there are also studies that propose solutions to develop community-based tourism in localities.

Le (2016) affirmed that Vietnam's ecotourism has great potential for development because there are many natural landscapes. In the second part of the book, the authors dedicate a chapter to highlighting the role of ecotourism in environmental protection, which is to contribute to efforts to preserve and develop the environment sustainably with active participation. poles of the local community. The third part of the book studies some ecological models in Vietnam (mainly in the southern provinces).

Second, the group of research works on community-based tourism in Tuyen Quang and community-based tourism in Na Hang.

Nguyen Duc Khoa (2010) in Research on conditions for developing community tourism in Na Hang district, Tuyen Quang province (Master's Thesis in Tourism, University of Social Sciences & Humanities, Vietnam National University, Hanoi) Analyze the conditions for developing community-based tourism in Na Hang district, Tuyen Quang province, including: tourism resources, residential communities, facilities, tourists, local authorities... On the basis Then, the author proposes orientations and solutions to develop community-based tourism in Na Hang district, Tuyen Quang province.

Hoang (2019) assessed the current situation of tourism and community-based tourism development in Tuyen Quang. At the same time, the authors also research and propose solutions to develop community-based tourism in Tuyen Quang province in the near future such as: Building 03 models of applying community-based tourism development solutions in Tuyen Quang province. ; encourage the community to open more experience tourism services at home; preserving typical cultural values; restore and develop festivals attracting tourists such as Thanh Tuyen Festival, Long Tong Festival, Mother Goddess Procession of Ha Temple...

Nguyen (2020) affirmed that Lam Binh district, Tuyen Quang province is an attractive destination for many domestic and foreign tourists, contributing a lot to local economic development, raising awareness levels for people, while preserving and developing traditional cultural values. Author Le (2022) has proposed solutions to preserve and

promote the value of cultural heritages, transform them into resources for sustainable socio-economic development such as: continuing to lead, direct, and grasp thoroughly. , propagate widely and seriously and effectively implement the Party's guidelines, resolutions and directives on culture; create a living environment and practice cultural heritage of ethnic minorities; preserve and build houses according to traditional architecture associated with landscape space; organizing activities, enhancing community exchanges, clubs...

Through the process of collecting and researching reference materials at home and abroad, we found that the research on community tourism in Na Hang district, Tuyen Quang province has been mentioned in a number of works. research on community-based tourism, as well as a number of studies on the preservation of traditional cultural values associated with community-based tourism. However, there has not been any research on the development of community-based tourism in Na Hang district, Tuyen Quang province associated with special-use forest protection. The article is the first published work on strategic solutions to develop community-based tourism in communes with special-use forests in Na Hang district.

### **2. METHODOLOGY**

The article uses the field survey method in districts with special-use forest areas in Na Hang district, Tuyen Quang province, Vietnam such as Thanh Tuong commune, Son Phu commune. The content of the survey includes observing, collecting information, filming, taking photos and exchanging ideas with local authorities, people, tourism staff and tourists at potential tourism development destinations. community. The survey method by questionnaire was conducted at the same time as the field survey. The sampling method used is the convenience sampling method applied to tourists and the stratified sampling method applied to local people. The total sample of the study is 300, including: 200 tourists and 100 locals. Priority sampling locations for areas with potential for CBT development. The survey data were processed using SPSS for Window 20.0 software. The SWOT analysis method is used in analyzing the potential, current status, opportunities and challenges of community tourism development in Thanh Tuong, Son Phu, Na Hang districts. From there, a number of orientations and strategic solutions are proposed to develop community-based tourism in Na Hang district in association with the protection of special-use forests.

### **3. RESULTS**

Na Hang is blessed with beautiful landscapes, majestic mountains, outstanding scenic system and unique attractions to tourists. These can be mentioned as: Mo Waterfall (another name is Pac Ban waterfall); Na Hang Lake is

## Pham Thi Huyen Trang, Development of Community Tourism in Na Hang District, Tuyen Quang Province, Vietnam Associated With the Protection of Special- Use Forests

likened to "Ha Long Bay in the middle of thousands", Pac Ta Mountain; Nam Me Waterfall; Na Hang Nature Reserve.

Not only has unique natural resources, Na Hang also has rich and diverse human resources, with 22 ethnic groups living together. In which, ethnic minorities account for 52%, including: Tay (25.45%); Dao ethnic group (11.38%); the San Chay ethnic group (8.0%); Mong ethnic group (2.16%); Nung ethnic group (1.90%), San Diu ethnic group (1.62%), other ethnic minorities account for 1.28%. Each ethnic group has a huge cultural treasure both in terms of material culture and spiritual culture such as: Hong Thai terraced fields have a history of hundreds of years in Hong Thai commune, with an area of about 82 hectares of rice cultivation, located at an altitude of 1,287m above sea level; Phia Muon cave (Son Phu commune) where more than 1,000 relics and 12 prehistoric human burial tombs were found; Pac Ta Temple is an ancient temple with vestiges from the Tran Dynasty, worshipping the local fiancée of the good general Chieu Van Vuong Tran Nhat Duat during the second resistance war against the Nguyen - Mong army; The relic of the Central Special Printing Office (Nang Kha commune) is the site of the first money printing of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam.

Besides works of historical - cultural value, ethnic minorities in Na Hang have a rich material and spiritual life in terms of cuisine, customs, and festivals. The Tay, Dao, and Hmong communities still retain their typical traditional culture. The stilt houses of the Tay people, the yin and yang tile houses of the Dao people, or the wall houses of the Mong people, although they are much more spacious and clean (with auxiliary works), but still retain the traditional architecture. The dishes with bold mountain flavors such as: field fish sauce, sour meat, dried buffalo meat, five-color sticky rice, corn wine, bamboo shoots ... all bring attraction to tourists. The lyrics, dances or musical instruments all express the desire to be in harmony with nature, the rise of people in productive labor, the love of couples and the desire for a better life. Then singing was honored by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage, Choi singing, playing the Tinh lute, Phong Slu singing, and Pao Dung singing along with very special festivals such as the Long Tong Festival, the ceremony of granting identity, the festival of pounding rice, the festival of terraced fields ... are increasingly preserved and accumulated, like the water of Nang and Gam rivers that flow forever and never dry up.

In the framework of the article, the author places forest resources as a separate resource to emphasize the importance of this resource for the development of community tourism in Na Hang district, Tuyen Quang province. Because the distribution of special-use forest resources here mainly belongs to the communes: Thanh Tuong, Khau Tinh, Son Phu, the scope of the study is also concentrated in these localities. Through the survey, we found that this is a very special type of resource because its renewable ability is very large, but if it is not used properly

and protected, this resource can be completely degraded. and cannot be recreated.

In which, Na Hang is the locality with the largest forest coverage rate in Tuyen Quang province, Vietnam (accounting for over 78% of the natural area), with many primeval forests and relatively dense vegetation. Here is Tat Ke - Ban Bung nature reserve (located in the Ba Be - Na Hang nature reserve complex), with an area of 41,930 ha, of which the strictly protected area is 27,520 ha. Strict conservation area is divided into two subdivisions: Tat Ke subdivision in the north has an area of 12,500 ha; Ban Bung subdivision in the south covers an area of 15,020 ha. On March 23, 2017, the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism reported to the Prime Minister on the preparation of documents for Ba Be - Na Hang Natural Heritage Area to be recognized by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site.

According to the research results, the forest cover here consists of 7 main types: (1) Rainy season evergreen closed forest on limestone soils at elevations above 700 meters; (2) Rainy evergreen closed forest on limestone soils in the lower 700m belt; (3) Lowland tropical evergreen shrubland; (4) Lowland tropical secondary grasslands; (5) Forest tree mats; (6) Short-term agricultural crops; (7) Long-term agricultural crops. In addition, in Na Hang special-use forest, there are nearly 2,000 species of animals and plants living, including many rare and precious animals and plants listed in the Red Book of Vietnam and the world 37 rare and endangered animal species, including endemic species that are currently in danger of extinction. In particular, the species *Rhinopithecus avunculus* is a species included in the IUCN's List of Extremely Rare (CR) with global conservation value. The List of Critically Endangered (CR) includes: *Trachypithecus francoisii*, *Nycticebus coucang*, *Nycticebus pygmaeus*, *Macaca artoides*, *Macaca nemestrina*, *Ursusthibetanus*, *Chrotogale owstoni*, *Pardo/Neofelis nebulosa*, *Catopuma temmincki*, *Paiithera magnagous*, *Gallopets magnagous*, *nemoricola*; *Platystemon megacephalum*, *Geoemyda spengleri*... and other rare plants. There are 48 species of rare plants that are threatened with extinction, of which typical are *Dacrydium elatum*, *Nageia Wallichiana*, *Garcinia fagraeoides*, *Chukrasia tabulari*, *Excentrodendron tonkinense*. Medicinal plants in the area are also quite rich and diverse, such as the Asteraceae family, the Asteraceae family, the Mint family, the Truc peach family, the Oro family, the Coffee family, the Bean family... Species with large numbers, such as: Hoang Tinh, Real Son Ayurvedic, Millennium Sue, Bach Bo, Tho Phu Linh, Cu Binh Lime, Hoai Son, Mistletoe...

In addition, in the primeval forests, there is a rich system of pristine caves such as Bat Cave, Bo Kim Cave, Ke Hinh Cave (Bung Village, Thanh Tuong Commune). These are all caves with convenient entrance and exit, high humidity and relatively high water vapor in the cave, so the air is cool. In particular, in Bo Kim cave, there is also a system of

## **Pham Thi Huyen Trang, Development of Community Tourism in Na Hang District, Tuyen Quang Province, Vietnam Associated With the Protection of Special- Use Forests**

iridescent stalactites (reflective mushrooms) creating a unique and fanciful beauty that very few pristine caves have. With the values of natural landscape and special-use forest resources, Tat Ke - Ban Bung conservation area has the potential to develop strong tourism, especially the type of tourism to explore and experience. This trend can satisfy different needs of visitors such as: tourism alone, tourism combined with scientific research, tourism combined with hunting for beautiful photos of natural landscapes, capturing beautiful landscapes. Rare moment takes place in the middle of the forest. Therefore, developing tourism here will help visitors get closer to the animals and plants, discover interesting stories about nature such as thousands of years old grinding trees, stories about places, stories about animals and plants, understand the value of forests and have a sense of forest protection and living environment. However, the development of community-based tourism here in recent years has not been commensurate with its potential and strengths, due to the poor infrastructure system, technical facilities, and tourism human resources. Lacking and not highly qualified, local authorities are still slow in proposing mechanisms, policies and plans to develop community-based tourism.

On the basis of analyzing the potential of community-based tourism in communes with special-use forests in Na Hang district, Tuyen Quang province, and based on the goals and development orientation of tourism in Tuyen Quang province in general, Na Hang district In particular, the authors have proposed five strategic solutions to develop community-based tourism in a sustainable way, creating long-term jobs for the resident community here.

### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

#### **4.1. Solution about residential community**

Strengthen communication to raise awareness about community-based tourism for leaders, managers, social organizations, businesses and residents in order to make officials and people properly aware. about the potential, local tourism advantages and responsibility for the development of community tourism. From there, each person will take practical actions such as preserving forest resources, cleaning the environment, being friendly with tourists... At the same time, awareness will contribute to the formation of business ideas and ideas. tourism development investment.

#### **4.2. Solutions on human resources**

During the implementation of the research work, the author collaborated with officials of the commune and village of Ban Bung to organize a refresher course on community tourism. Because the number of classes is limited to a maximum of 35 students, only staff from Thanh Tuong commune, Ban Bung village, forest rangers and representatives of households have registered as homestays. After the training session, the authors conducted a quick test with these participants to determine the level of

understanding as well as the level of application in community tourism. The authors realize that, in addition to in-depth training for homestay households, there is a need for intensive training courses on tour guides for forest rangers and local collaborators. in propaganda on forest management, protection and development associated with forest tourism development to guide tourists.

In addition to training and retraining, it is necessary to directly recruit local people and forest rangers with experience in community tourism to take advantage of human resources at tourist destinations and routes. In particular, for the experience tours in the forest, it is necessary to have a team of professional guides in the jungle and fluent in survival skills. In the training process, it is necessary to combine professional practice and integrate community awareness raising in nature conservation and preservation of community cultural identity.

#### **4.3. Solutions for tourism promotion and marketing**

It is necessary to innovate in both content and form in the promotion and marketing of community-based tourism in communes with special-use forests, in Na Hang district. The promotion of eco-tourism and community-based tourism products needs to attract the attention of tourism service businesses inside and outside the province to have more investment capital for promotion. Currently, the promotion of Tuyen Quang tourism through route-finding applications is very popular, marketing through the internet and social networks (zalo, facebook) is also strongly promoted. However, for new tourist attractions (Culture and Tourism Community Village in Ban Bung Village, Thanh Tuong Commune; Tat Ke - Ban Bung Nature Reserve; Phia Chang Community Tourism Culture Village, Son Commune) Phu needs to update geographical indications, as well as tourism products. According to a survey by the author's team on the tourism application of Tuyen Quang province (Tuyen Quang Tourism), using only a smartphone or tablet can only have geographical indications to Tat Ke primeval forest (Khu Tinh commune. ), while the rest of the locations are not yet geographically indicated. Therefore, the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Tuyen Quang province should coordinate with the Culture Department of Na Hang district to quickly bring the geographical indications to the above points. Because with an average of 1.5 visits per year, Tuyen Quang Tourism app is one of the effective sources of information for tourists, as well as promoting the marketing of new tourist destinations.

In addition to digital transformation in tourism promotion and marketing, provincial and district leaders still use traditional media such as newspapers, magazines, publications, posters, leaflets, etc. Signboards, road signs to help tourists easily access and reach new tourist destinations, especially tourism in communes with special-use forests, Na Hang district. Filming promotional videos on television, youtube channels or encouraging influential figures on travel

## Pham Thi Huyen Trang, Development of Community Tourism in Na Hang District, Tuyen Quang Province, Vietnam Associated With the Protection of Special- Use Forests

social networks (youtubers) to travel and experience to increase interaction with tourist attractions wild tourism.

### 4.3. Solutions to build community tourism model

During the research process, the authors actively cooperated with the authorities of Thanh Tuong, Chau Tinh, Son Phu communes, and consulted experts in assessing the current status of special-use forest resources and traditional culture. system of local residents to build routes and points for organizing eco-tourism and entertainment in special-use forests. In which, creating maximum conditions for local people to participate in various types of tourism, thereby increasing income, improving material and cultural life; raise awareness of environmental protection, biodiversity and ecosystem protection, as well as conservation of rare species of flora and fauna in the area.

Initially selecting 10 households to pilot homestay; develop a plan to send officials and households on field trips to learn experiences in the provinces where community-based tourism is operating effectively (Dao and Tay ethnic groups). Financial support for home improvement, standard toilets, amusement parks...

The design of new tours is based on the principle of the author group and district, commune and village officials: No negative impact on forest resources and environment; High safety for people when participating (Forest rangers and forest patrol officers, officers and forces of Na Hang Special-use Forest Management Boards, Na Hang Protection Forest Management Boards and people assigned to manage them) forest management and protection directly guide and deploy); Attractive and enjoyable online experience; Time and cost are reasonable but still bring diverse, new and unique experiences for tourists. Emphasis is placed on tours and routes that preserve natural values, promote environmental and resource protection, and provide easy access to stops, breaks, visits, and experiences on the route.

Accordingly, the authors assess that the implementation of 4/7 tours, experience and discovery tours in the forest (in the period of 2022 - 2023) is highly feasible and in the period 2024 - 2025 still apply 3 The remaining 7 routes with the theme "Na Hang beautiful fairyland". Specifically: Lung Vai, Pu Bao, Bac Vang routes, Lung Vai village, Con Lon commune; Route 6: Lung Vai, Pu De route to Tat Ke Tat Ke village, Chau Tinh commune; Route 7: Doi 5 route goes to Na Hang ecological lake bed.

In addition, in the process of coordinating with cultural officials of Thanh Tuong commune, Na Hang district, forest rangers to research and deploy, identify tours, ecotourism routes, explore natural forests according to weekly routes. forest survey in Ban Bung village, the authors have researched about 7 new tours within the management of Thanh Tuong commune, specifically: Tat Loong - Bo Kim - Na Loc route (Yen Thuong village) - about Ban Bung checkpoint; Tug Tac route - Flagpole - to Ban Bung post;

Route Bo Cung - Lung Kham - to Ban Bung checkpoint; Khuan Cu - Pull Tac - to Ban Bung pole; Lung Kham route - Milestone 19.20 - to Ban Bung checkpoint; Bo Kim - Tat Loong route - to Ban Bung checkpoint; Phieng Leng route - Flagpole - to Ban Bung post; Ecological route in Ban Bung forest (Thanh Tuong commune) to Nam Trang or Mu Man (Son Phu commune).

### 4.5. Solutions for preserving and promoting traditional culture

The building of models of community-based tourism development to attract local communities in special-use forest communes in Na Hang district not only contributes to socio-economic development, but also enables local people to actively participate. participate in forest protection, natural resources conservation, indigenous culture. In particular, when planning community tourism here, it is necessary to combine with projects to restore and preserve traditional culture such as preserving folk songs, folk dances, musical instruments, traditional costumes, and ceremonies. folk festivals and games, ethnic cuisine; written word, voice; traditional crafts.

In addition to protecting forest resources as a special form of tourism resources, authorities at all levels should focus on preserving and promoting traditional cultural values of ethnic minorities. From there, educate local residents to preserve traditional culture to develop community tourism. Strategic measures can be taken such as: preserving speech and writing; costumes (in important events, weddings, festivals, arts and culture - sports); Restoration and development of traditional craft (Embroidery decoration on Red Dao costumes, Silver processing, carving, cotton planting, brocade weaving of the Tay ethnic group); Preserving customs and beliefs (mourning ghosts, grades, festivals, etc.); Organizing traditional festivals (Spring festival in Son Phu commune, Banh Giay pounding festival in Thanh Tuong commune); Restore folk games (toss, tug of war, sack jumping, crossbow shooting, running on stilts...); Developing the unique features of mountain cuisine; Establishing clubs of Then singing, Ao Dung singing...

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