

THE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM IN VIETNAM: OBJECTIVES, PRACTICAL EXPERIENCES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

In modern times, the form of rural tourism is developing ceaselessly due to its positive effects towards the economy, the society, and the environment of a country. In Vietnam, the potentials for development of rural tourism are greatly enormous, but its enhancement is inconsiderable and unsustainable. There has been misused the potentials somehow. The paper supplies some questions about the development tendency of Vietnam's rural tourism based on experiences learned from other countries, on its potentials, on the orientation of Vietnam Communist Party and Government; and some solutions are suggested accordingly.

Keywords: rural tourism, Vietnamese rural areas, tourism products.

TÓM TẮT

**Phát triển du lịch nông thôn ở Việt Nam:
quan điểm, kinh nghiệm thực tiễn và những thách thức**

Thế giới hiện đại đang không ngừng phát triển các loại hình du lịch nông thôn, bởi nó mang lại hiệu quả tích cực về kinh tế, xã hội và môi trường cho mỗi quốc gia. Ở Việt Nam, tiềm năng cho phát triển du lịch nông thôn rất lớn, nhưng du lịch nông thôn phát triển còn chậm, lãng phí tiềm năng, thiếu bền vững. Bài viết trình bày một số nội dung về xu hướng phát triển du lịch nông thôn Việt Nam nhìn từ kinh nghiệm của một số nước, tiềm năng, định hướng của Đảng, Chính Phủ và đề xuất những giải pháp.

Từ khóa: du lịch nông thôn, nông thôn Việt Nam, sản phẩm du lịch.

1. Introduction

In many countries, rural tourism has been strongly developing. The form of rural tourism has brought in many benefits for these countries to solve such problems as the poverty alleviation, producing jobs, improving the quality of life for the local community, preservation, and promotion of the national tradition and culture's

characteristics, and capital accumulation for the national economy.

In Vietnam, the countryside occupies a large area of the mountainous regions, mid-lands, plains, and coastal regions with the abundant natural resources. Therefore, no wonder why the agricultural production is the predominant industry. Moreover, with 54 ethnic groups, Vietnam's culture

becomes more and more diversified. Customs, production practices, cultural activities, and festivals have taken shape and developed through the history of thousand years. As well as a variety of cultural products created from daily lives of different local ethnic groups, rural environment has not only got attracted by local residents but also by people from other regions. Rural products are the foundation of establishment and development of various forms of tourism which can be interested in by domestic tourists, especially in some specific areas like Mekong Delta and Red River Delta, the Northern mountainous regions, Central Highlands, the coastal regions of the North, the Central, and the South. However, so far the rural tourism is still limited in scale and speed; It lacks sustainability; in particular, there has not been overall national strategies, solutions, logical and synchronous policies of investment and development for rural tourism.

Therefore, the development of Vietnam's rural tourism should concentrate on building suitable strategies and solutions based on assessing potentials accurately as well as combining with experiences learned from the developed countries; and logical policies need to be built to face with new challenges. Execute these things well will help the potentials of the rural tourism be utilized and kept maintaining its benefits.

Research objectives comprise the policy systems of the Vietnam's Communist Party and Government; the orientation of tourism industry; the tourism potentials of rural regions, and the experiences of the development of rural tourism from regional countries and the

world as well.

Applied approaches of the past and future: (i) Theoretically, on the consolidated and systematic view (observe and record the objective rules of development and distribution of potentials and the system of orientation and policies of the Party, Government, and tourism industry. (ii) Practically, approaching the ways to develop the rural tourism from experiences of countries over the world and even the Vietnam's rural areas in which there has been the development of traditional craft villages, the unique ethnic cultural features, and experiences in producing the agricultural products. (iii) Aim to achieve the environmental protection - sustainable development for the rural areas of Vietnam.

2. Research methodology

Using some specific research methods such as (i) Collection, synthesizing documentation, facts and figures and data (those are directly or indirectly related to the development of Vietnam's rural tourism). (ii) The statistical method (the statistical data are classified as the primary or secondary data according to proposed objectives. (iii) Analysis, comparing and assessing (setting up criteria and standards to assess different resources; assessing on the quantitative and qualitative base according to proposed criteria and standards, assessing the potentials of rural tourism - aim to apply to Vietnam).

3. Results and Discussions

In this paper, the concept of "countryside/ rural area" is defined as the territory that is not a part of a city or a town, and it attaches to the people and

agricultural production's activities as well as the cultural diversity of ethnic groups.

Rural tourism is a form of developing tourism associated with rural areas, which are based on exploiting potentials (nature and human culture), as well as developing types and products of tourism that meet tourists' satisfaction. Rural tourism that consists of ecotourism, cultural tourism, experiences and experiential tourism, agricultural tourism, sustainable tourism, responsible tourism, leisure tourism, festival tourism ... has taken place in rural areas. Rural tourism is developed as the subject that ensures the connection between various types of products and traveling, which constitutes a **value chain of products and tours** in rural areas.

3.1. Developing rural tourism in the world

In the early 1980s of the 20 century, rural tourism was considered as a form of tourism that needs to be developed by many countries in the world, especially in European countries (France, Bulgaria, Denmark, Netherland, Sweden, and Hungary) for its synthetic benefits. At that time, rural tourism was also known as Green tourism, heritage tourism, and farm tourism... Nowadays, this type of tourism has many common names, for example: Ecotourism, handicraft village tourism, cultural tourism, experiential tourism, agricultural tourism etc... and it is spreading across Asia (Abby Liu, 10/2006).

- ***In France:*** there are about 300 beautiful and romantic rural sites that have been selected to be invested in the development projects, modern transportation, and that have been being

attracted a lot of international tourists. The rural tourism network such as: **Accommodation network** (ranging from 1 to 5-star standard), **welcome farmer network**, **welcome farm network**. Farmers who want to join the rural tourism network must firstly register, must attend necessary training sections for skills of management, of advertising tourism services, and then must be permitted by the authority.

- ***In China:*** since the 1990s, the government has developed a rural tourism program with the sole purpose to reduce the poverty rate in Guangdong and Guangxi province which have attracted a huge amount of tourists. The tourism revenue contributes significantly to the local economy, and improves the famer's livelihood. By 2010, rural tourism formed 150.000 villages with more than 3.000.000 villagers joining in the tourism business, and attracted 2 billion visitors annually; which helped to reduce the poverty for 12 million farmers.

- ***In Thailand:*** the government has an encouragement policy for investing and developing rural tourism in set models that are associated with agricultural production like closed farms offering all kinds of services for visitors. Since 2000, rural tourism has grown rapidly with the motto "**one village, one specific product**", based on the products that were made by different local resources of the surrounding sights, the environment, the agricultural production.

- ***In Japan:*** since the 1990s, the rural rest - house program has been established and built by rural family households on their own farms to supply accommodations to visitors as they enjoy farming daily

activities such as: cultivating, harvesting, doing such entertainments as fishing and cooking. Japanese people consider that the development of rural tourism is also the development of all the rural areas nationwide (the deltas, mountainous, and coastal areas...). They think this is the way to develop livelihood activities of each ethnic groups (agricultural production, forestry, fishery, cultural activities, entertainment...), associated with other activities as leisure tourism, enjoying the rural special products (eating and drinking, fishing, harvesting), visiting the rural sites (the production sites of crops and livestock, cultural activities, and festival...), learning about the production tradition through the locals' experiences, taking part in the educational activities to protect the rural environment.

- *In Korea:* since 1984, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry has been regulating the tourism farm program and inns in the developed rural areas. In 2000, based on the planning of rural territories in the period of 2000-2020, the main goal was set to invest in and develop these areas into rural ecotourism and rural recreational sites (Duk-Byeong Park, Yoo-Shik Yoon, 09/2009).

3.2. The Government and the Party's view on rural tourism development

- *The Party's viewpoint (the Political Bureau's) states that:*

+ To develop tourism into a spearhead economy is an important strategic orientation to further improve our nation, and also to speed up the growth rate of other industries.

+ Tourism development is a comprehensive, interdisciplinary, focused,

effective, branded, and highly competitive, highly socialized industry with deeply cultural features..., emphasizing the link between tourism and other industries in the whole value chain to create the special tourism products.

+ The international and domestic tourism need to be developed correspondingly; to create adventurous opportunities for the local people and tourists from everywhere to explore, to research, to enjoy our nation's landscapes, natural and cultural heritages; to respect the tourists and treat them equally no matter where they come from.

+ The development of sustainable tourism means to preserve and uphold the cultural heritages and the best traditional values of our country; to protect the natural environment; to solve the unemployment and social safety and security; to defend our nation; and to ensure the order of the society.

+ To develop Tourism comprises the responsibilities of the entire political system, the industries, and the society..., to strongly promote the steering force of industrial boat and communities (The Department of Politics, 2017).

By 2020, the tourism industry will basically become the spearhead economy, to create the momentum for the socio-economic development; to have its professionalism and a relatively synchronous and modern system of material and technical bases; to supply tourism products which are highly qualified, diversified, branded, nationally recognized with its cultural identity; which can compete with other countries' products in the region. By 2030, tourism will strive to become a really key economy, strongly

promote the development of other sectors. Vietnam will be among the countries that have the leading tourism development in Southeast Asia (The Department of Politics, 2017).

- *The mission and solutions are:*

+ Renew the awareness and thinking way in development of tourism in general and rural tourism in particular; recognize that tourism is a service economy which is integrated, interdisciplinary, interregional, highly socialized, and profoundly cultural; possible to largely contribute to the economy's development, creates jobs, reconstructs the economy and motivates the other industries to grow; additionally, tourism development brings many advantages to other aspects, such as: economy, culture, society, politics, foreign affairs, security, and national defence. Strongly renovate thinking ways, develop tourism according to the market economy's rules...; Raise the awareness of our people, businesses, and communities on building and protecting the national image, environment to further improve the brand of Vietnam's tourism and its attraction.

+ Restructure the tourism industry by implementing the project of restructuring tourism with the priority of upgrading tourism infrastructure... , concentrate on developing the products of marine tourism, cultural tourism, spiritual tourism, ecotourism, and community tourism, which are of great attraction and highly competitive ability; control and improve the quality of the tourism products and services in a modern and differential way; renovate the methods and improve the efficiency of promotion activities that are associated with the products and the environment; to ensure a safe and civilized

tourism environment (Qui Thong, Phung Son, 2016).

So far, the implication of rural tourism has not made it present on the government's official legal documents. Together with the modern agricultural development and planning strategies, the constructing of Vietnam new rural areas, the development plan of tourism industry (2001), some provinces like: Sapa (Lao Cai); Thua Thien-Hue have carry out the experimental programs of sustainable tourism for the poor (with the assistance of Dutch international development organization) in collaboration with Departments of Sports, Culture and Tourism to enact many practical programs to raise awareness about sustainable tourism; reduce the poverty rate; create the community tourism model; Enhance the responsibility of State management of tourism in localities.

Strategies to develop rural tourism (specifically, community tourism, ecotourism, craft village tourism, culinary tourism) have been made, developed and strongly invested by the localities at the Red river delta (Thai Binh, Ninh Binh, Hung Yen, Ha Nam, the rural areas of Ha Noi city); the coastal provinces in the North, Central, and South Central areas (Thanh Hoa, Nghe An, Ha Tinh, Quang Binh, Quang Tri, Quang Nam, Quang Ngai, Ninh Thuan, Binh Thuan ...); the provinces of Mekong delta (An Giang, Ca Mau, Bac Lieu, Soc Trang, Dong Thap, Tra Vinh, Vinh Long ...).

3.3. Vietnam's rural tourism potential

In Vietnam, the percentage of rural takes 67% of its population and 80% of its natural area. There is a diversity of

enormous tourism potential in the rural regions. The combination of a long history of formation and development, numerous ethnic groups, advantages of geographical location, varied terrain, and hydrological climate diversity, fertile soils... creates a diversified territory and great potential to develop and exploit tourism, especially rural tourism.

- For the natural characteristics, the unique natural landscapes are formed and developed with the tectonic history of the Earth. The beautiful and attractive nature (the ecosystem, the plain terrains of agricultural production, beaches, and rivers...) of the local regions has been recognized nationally and internationally. It has been planned and managed by the government and local authorities according to the law for the purpose of conservation, protection of the ecological environment and tourism development (when required). On the territory of Vietnam, there are 30 national parks, 59 natural reserves, which particularly need to be protected and maintained of their biological diversity and natural resources associated with cultural resources. Vietnam has 9 biosphere reserves that are recognized by UNESCO as the world biosphere reserves; 12 reserves of scarce precious species; 54 protected areas of natural landscapes and humanities including the historical and cultural forests, the landscapes of historical relics.

- For the human characteristics, Vietnam has its long history of formation and traditional process of construction, protection the country, which comprises 54 ethnic groups with differential unique identified cultures. The productive and cultural activities of each ethnic group

make the miraculous attraction to interest tourists inside and outside the country. Currently, Vietnam has about 7,300 historic and cultural relics that are in 63 provinces and cities, but mostly in rural areas. Of which, there are 18 world cultural heritages (06 tangible ones, 12 intangible ones), national and local cultural and historical relics. The national and local attractions have about 3,026 vestiges, of which 1,411 are historical, 1,422 are architectural, 76 are archaeological, and 117 are scenic. There are about 7,965 festivals (statistics in 2008) including 7,039 folk festivals, 544 religious festivals, 332 revolutionary historic festivals, 10 festivals imported from foreign countries, and about 40 ceremonies. There are more than 2,000 traditional handicraft villages and handicraft villages that have been invested in developing, manufactured serving the community and visitors. (Different materials made: 713 from bamboo, 61 from ceramics, 341 from embroidery, 432 from textile, 342 from wood, 45 from stones, 08 from papers, 4 printed by wood mould, 2014 from metal, 509 from others); There are about 64 developing traditional handicraft villages with qualified and unique products to serve tourists (Le Anh Tuan, 2014).

3.4. Identify the activities of Vietnam's rural tourism

Through the policy and tourism potential of Vietnam, there have not been legal documents promulgated by the government so far, but there is an apparentness in recognition, understanding of the tendency and the exposition of rural tourism activities. "The practical development of Vietnam's rural tourism"

was published in the framework of Vietnam-Japan cooperation, by Japanese international cooperation agency and Vietnam Research Institute for Tourism Development (2003). It was compiled from the results of the Japan project to support Vietnam's rural tourism development at the Duong Lam ancient village (Ha Noi), Dong Hoa Hiep (Tien Giang); Phu Lang craft village, Dinh To, Hoa Long (Bac Ninh); Phuoc Tich, Thanh Toan (Thua Thien-Hue); Hong Phong (Hai Duong)... This has affirmed its position on the strategic development of rural tourism due to its benefits (Ha Van Sieu, Ando Katsushiro, 2013).

Although the type of "rural tourism" is not in the hierarchy of types of tourism and the organizational system of Vietnam tourist territory; in reality, various forms of tourism development in rural areas has been established and developed for years in great speed to make people benefits of economy, culture, society, environments; to participate in poverty alleviation, to improve living conditions of rural populations, to develop sustainably; especially some forms of tourism are preferred by domestic and foreign tourists as:

▪ **The handicraft - village tourism:** It comprises the following activities visiting, shopping, experiencing – learning from experiencing at *the bronze foundry villages* at Ngu Xa (Ha Noi); Dai Bai (Bac Ninh); Duong Xuan (Hue); Cau Nom (Hung Yen); Phuoc Kieu (Quang Nam); Tan Hoa Dong, Hoa Hung (Ho Chi Minh City). *The jewelry handicraft villages* at Chau Khe (Hai Duong); Dong Xam (Thai Binh); the Dat vang kieu ky village (Ha Noi) with the famous products that are used in temples,

tombs and shrines which are solemn places, and other jewelry items for people. *The ceramics craft villages* at Bat Trang (Ha Noi); Huong Canh (Vinh Phuc); Dong Thanh (Quang Ninh); Bau Truc (Ninh Thuan); Bien Hoa (Dong Nai); Lai Thieu-Minh Long (Binh Duong); Van Son (Binh Dinh); Thai Den (Son La); Chu Dau (Hai Duong). *The craft villages of wood and stone carving, lacquer painting* in Ngu Hanh Son village (Da Nang); Buu Long (Dong Nai); Nhoi village (Thanh Hoa); Ninh Van (Ninh Binh). *The craft villages of silk, brocade and sedge weaving, embroidery* in typical villages such as Van Phuc silk village (Ha Noi); Tan Chau (An Giang); Ma Chau (Quang Nam); Cham brocade village (Ninh Thuan); Van Phuong silk village (Hung Yen); Quat Dong embroidery village (Ha Noi); Van Lam (Ninh Binh). *The bamboo and rattan (weaving) villages* in typical villages like Phu Vinh rattan village, Ninh So (Ha Noi); Tang Tien (Bac Giang); Xuan Lai (Bac Ninh).

▪ **Ecotourism: (landscape ecology):** It comprises the following activities such as visiting, playing in the garden, gathering and enjoying fruits, sailing on the canals, fishing ... in the eco-garden of beauty plants and flowers (Dong Thap, Bac Lieu, the suburb of Ha Noi, Ho Chi Minh City, Da Lat...), in the birds garden (Ca Mau, Bac Lieu, Dong Thap...), in the Biosphere Reserves, the world and national nature reserves: Tram Chim Ramsar sites (Tram Chim national park) (Dong Thap), Mui Ca Mau (Ca Mau), Bau Sau (Cat Tien), Ba Be (Bac Kan), Con Dao (Ba Ria-Vung Tau), Xuan Thuy (Nam Dinh)..., the orchards such as Lai Thieu (Binh Duong), Vai Thieu (Bac Giang, Hai Duong), Tan Trieu

(Dong Nai)...

▪ **Culinary tourism or food tourism:** It comprises the following activities such as enjoying and experiencing to make typical rural beverages, dishes and different kinds of wine such as: Ruou Can wine (Tay Nguyen, Hoa Binh...), Phu Le Bau Da whisky (Ben Tre), Go Den whisky (Long An), Bau Da whisky (Binh Dinh), Lang Van whisky (Bac Ninh), grilled snakehead fish (the provinces of Mekong Delta), Banh Trang cuon (stuffed pancake) (Tay Ninh), Pia cake (Soc Trang), Green bean cake (Hai Duong).

▪ **Festival Tourism:** (religion, habits, customs) It includes such activities as participating, enjoying, experiencing and researching the spiritual festivals in daily lives of the peoples in the temples, pagodas and shrines: festivals of Ba Chua Kho temple (Bac Ninh), Ba Chua Xu (An Giang), Chua Ba (Chua Ba temple) (Tay Ninh, Binh Duong), Chua Huong (Chua Huong temple) (Ha Noi), Bai Dinh (Ninh Binh), Den Hung (Thai Nguyen), Phu Dong (Vinh Phu, Ha Noi); Long Tong festivals (Hoa Binh, Cao Bang, Dak Lak), Cau Ngu festivals (Binh Thuan, Bac Lieu, Soc Trang...), Buffalo Fighting Festival (Troai Chau) (Hai Phong), Bullfighting festival (Dau Bo - An Giang).

▪ **Agritourism (Agricultural tourism):** The new tourism form has just formed in Vietnam, the tourists experience activities by participating in agricultural production such as transplanting rice, growing sweet potatoes and vegetables, harvesting, learning breeding techniques in the deltas, coastal plains, valleys in the mountainous (the terraces); enjoying cuisines from the results of the experience such as: Com lam (bamboo cooked rice), baked chicken and

duck eggs (the Northern mountainous provinces), Banh Xeo (sizzling cake or Vietnamese pancake), baked sweet potato, Banh Trang (ricepaper), Banh Uot (steamed rice paper) (the provinces of the Mekong Delta)...

3.5. Opportunities and challenges for Vietnam's agricultural tourism development

- Opportunities

+ The globalization and international integration are speeding up and growing dramatically. It makes every nation, every local, and every industry improve itself in order to meet its required mission. Tourism must be the key industry on the way to participate in the integration process.

+ The opportunities to receive the budget from the foreign investment and experiences from many other developed countries. There is a variety of markets to supply the diversified and plentiful rural tourism products.

+ There is a tendency in developing eco-tourism and cultural tourism in most of the developing and developed countries; and It keeps growing and expanding to all over the world based on varied and qualified products required by the tourist.

+ Vietnam is a country that is embraced by mother-nature. It is given huge, potentials in developing eco-tourism, cultural tourism, particularly the fertile rural areas, attractive beautiful landscapes and diversified agricultural production practices, high qualified tourism products. The Party and Government have imposed a reasonable policy in planning, developing and investing in the sustainable development of agriculture and the new rural areas. Thanks to promoting tourism

products, acquiring experiences and carrying out the stimulating policies of the industry; tourist businesses are blooming, which suits the commonly growing trend.

- Challenges

+ The mentality and awareness of local leaders are limited in the development of rural tourism. As a result of the outdated operation of scattered agricultural production, that there is no overall planning and there is an unsuitable investment.

+ There are still remnants of rural and agricultural production, whose habitant are not concentrated; the transport infrastructure is narrow and unqualified; There is not a synchronized system among electricity supply, clean water supply and other services supplies (culture, sports, health care, schools ...); Therefore, it is difficult to meet the tourists' needs.

+ There have been the serious degradation and demolishment of many natural sceneries and rural culture; many traditional industries, architectural works, customs and traditions have been lost, degraded, transformed. To restore and regenerate these, it requires the big investment in human and material resources; the unique traditional agriculture of ethnic minorities is no longer maintained.

+ There has been the shortage of overall planning in developing the process of industrialization and modernization of agriculture and rural areas, which has caused many social and environmental consequences (social evils, security - safety, water and air pollution ...). Great investment needs solving the problem.

+ The awareness and willingness of

rural people to participate in tourism activities is limited; there are a lack of self-motivation and experiences in production management, preservation, brand building, production promotion... It needs to be upgraded.

4. Some solutions for developing Vietnam's rural tourism

Rural tourism is considered as a developing trend of the world though. Different countries have their own ways to develop this tourism form, which have their own distinct cultural features and specific conditions and which have suited with their situation and environment of their country. However, for the purpose of making an advance in rural tourism to meet the tourists' demands, every country should find itself the most suitable and effective approaches to the development. For Vietnam, it is recommended with these solutions:

4.1. Improve the government's development policies

- Create and promulgate a system of appropriate policies that can be applied for all activities of the tourism industry in general, and rural tourism in particular. Those policies have to focus on solving the remaining issues related to budgeting, human resources, protection, the management mechanism of consuming products, rights and responsibilities of enterprises, of local communities, and of the government as well.

- The government needs to determine which tourism forms are the main ones based on The Party and Government's ways and policies. It depends on what our country's available potentials are, planning

and developing should be made to appeal the investment by issuing specific resolutions for the industry and local authorities.

- Accomplish the overall plan of rural tourism development in connection with the developing strategy of the rural and agricultural economy in the period of industrialization and modernization.

4.2. For industrial management organizations, enterprises, and local authorities

- Make detail plans for industrial development (in short, medium, and long term) for the particular product, tourism form, and specific stage to meet tourists' needs if there are any changes as we predicted.

- Focus on exploiting and developing specific tourist products that hold the local rural areas' remarkable potentials (natural landscape and civil cultural practices etc...). They may be cultivation techniques, daily activities, cultural lifestyles, traditional dishes, jewelry and accessories as a part of attracting tourists.

- Make it understand thoroughly, united highly in tourism development among the industrial management organs, enterprises, local authorities, local communities in investment, rights and duties through exchanging knowledge, propaganda and education to ensure sustainable development.

- Build the local skilled labors of well-trained knowledge and foreign languages ready to work in tourism (professional, seasonal, casual).

- Utilize appropriate marketing strategies to promote rural tourism products in honest and objective ways,

avoiding exaggeration. Especially, the quality, the rationality and fixed price must be applied and checked regularly.

4.3. The role of related organizations and industries

- The Ministry of Transportation needs to take the rural tourism development as an important mission by investing and upgrading transportation system as well as travel vehicles to assure the safety for rural tours.

- Make sure that the communication, electricity and water sources work correctly and uninterruptedly during the tourists' journeys and travel companies' working hours.

- Build good supplies of accommodation, cultural activities, sports facilities, and entertainment amenities with high - standard equipment to meet the needs of different customers according to the motto: "Governors, enterprises, and farmers in cooperation".

- Gradually, encouraging the collaboration of people, associations, communities, non-governmental organizations to raise their responsibilities in finance and human resources to take part in propagandizing, advertising, and mobilizing for the purpose of attracting more and more tourists.

4.4. Concentrate on investing in specific tourist product development

- Evaluate and find out outstanding and "specific" potentials which are available in every rural area, closed to the habitant's daily lives. And start producing specific products that are able to become distinct brands for our tourist industry (such as landscape, festivals, and cuisine,

etc...). By this way, more and more tourists are attracted.

- Make a strategic plan in cooperation with local authorities, communities and travel agencies to produce a valuable series of specific tourist products; on the other hand, the duplication in production should be avoided because of negative competition.

- In marketing strategies, the trustworthy promotion of tourism products should be made both in its form and quality. It is recommended to give the name for each kind of travel purpose as done like Canada in which they are named various titles, for instance 'Nostalgia', 'Come back home', 'Longing for paradise', and 'The return to childhood', etc...

4.5. Apply development policies and organize marketing operations efficiently

- In the process of constructing new countryside and modernizing agriculture, the government's development policies of infrastructure and technical facility such as transportation, communication, electricity and water supplies, accommodation service, culture and education, sports facilities should actively get the cooperation among related organizations to take the advantages of full potentials of domestic tourism.

- The tourism industry should be responsible for building and protecting achievements which are utilized to develop itself and facilitate the other industry to grow synchronously (economic sectors, social organizations, socio-economic and environmental protection, environmental protection).

- Honestly, it is necessary to show a full picture of the quality of the

infrastructure and facilities available to rural tourism. This is a typical kind of tourism product to position and to build the confidence and reliability towards the tourists. This is also a way to add them up into the whole body of advertisement to promote the image of a destination and/or an attraction of tour programs. At the moment, rural tours are not almost paid attention to this advertising form.

- Tourism Industry leaders should supervise and inspect the marketing operation of travel enterprises in order to reach a unification and consistency in the content of destination marketing operation in order to firstly minimize and then to terminate the negative competition, dishonesty in advertisement "one destination, different advertising content".

- Marketing operation for rural tourism products is just allowed after the results of the market survey on tourists needs are determined appropriately. Currently, the needs and tastes of tourists in different regions and/or countries are very different; however, rural tourism products are diversified and distributed in different regions. The results obtained from marketing activities will be highly effective if the belief of tourists is built on the basis of the right products they consume.

5. Conclusion

Rural tourism is becoming more approachable with tourists and has contributed considerably to the sustainable development of economy, society and environment in a country and a region. Vietnam has absolute advantages to develop rural tourism. However, in order to achieve the great success of rural tourism equal to its potential, on the

viewpoint of the Party and Government, we need to be aware of the importance of rural tourism development and have to learn and gain a lot of experiences from the developed countries. Then we have to assess our tourism potential properly for developing approaches. Since rural tourism is a sensitive type of tourism, it must not cause harmful side-effects to the national politics, cultural traditions of each ethnic and the relationship of ethnic communities nationwide. At this time, the development

of rural tourism is suitable for the general trend of the modern world.

Therefore, the responsibility to advance and improve this tourism form belongs to the authority at all levels, tourism enterprises, and other agricultural production industry. Besides, everyone in a local area also takes full responsibility to give a hand in the overall development of the society for the sake of the prosperity and the sustainable development of the country.

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