



Study on the Eco-tourism Environment Protection Based on the External Theory

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Abstract

From the connotation and nature of the eco-tourism, this article use the external theory to analyze the external diseconomy in the eco-tourism development. The external diseconomy of the eco-tourism contains production aspect and consumption aspect, such as the external diseconomy produced by irregular exploring actions, by lacking in strict tourism management measures and by the non-ecological actions of tourists. The external diseconomy in the tourism development has not only affected sustainable development of the eco-tourism, but also may bring about unrecoverable damage to the fragile ecological environment. Thus the government should play a leading role in the eco-tourism development to take on necessary intervention and regulation to the eco-tourism. The government must establish eco-tourism planning and strict examination and approval system, must strengthen eco-tourism environmental monitoring, must set up complete macro policies and laws or regulations on the eco-tourism development, must eliminate or weaken the external diseconomy of the eco-tourism and must protect the ecological environment on which eco-tourism relies. Only by such measures, do we promote sustainable and healthy eco-tourism development.

Keywords: External theory, Eco-tourism, Environmental pollution, Environmental protection

1. Introduction

It is the hot spot tourism in the 21st century, which is also an inevitable choice of improving tourism destinations' economies and protecting ecological environment and recourses. At present, the growth momentum of ecotourism industry is very prosperous in the whole world, with 20-30 percent increase each year. Ecotourism has been a kind of tide in tourism development in the world today, with at least 20 billion US dollars product value per year for the globe.

As early as 1982, Zhangjiajie National Forest Park had been built, which is the first forest park in china. Subsequently, the ecotourism activities had begun to appear and develop in China. Especially, depending on natural landscape superiority, the forest parks and nature reserves regard ecotourism as pillar industry of sustainable utilization of resources. However, although the development of ecotourism has brought economic interests to tourism destination, it has caused great influences to local ecological environment. According to related organizations investigation on 100 nature reserves above the provincial level, there has been 22 percent of nature reserves causing environment destruction because of ecotourism development, and 11 percent of them appearing tourism resources degradation .

Good ecological environment is not only the premise and basis of ecotourism, but also the important guarantee of state ecological safety. Therefore, in order to develop the ecotourism well, the ecological environment should be depended on, so as to promote the ecotourism development. Well how to promote ecotourism to develop healthy and coordinate is a new subject to us all.

2. The definition of eco-tourism

Strictly speaking to date, there has not been a uniform final conclusion on the definition of ecotourism among the scholars at home and abroad. The reason is not only that the understanding and comprehension of people toward ecotourism is continuously deepened, but also that many researchers, developers and business administrators artificially take their respective needs and garble a statement. This article argues that the connotation of ecotourism mainly embodies in the following aspects:

First, the destination of ecotourism is refers to the natural regions that are subjected less interferences and pollutions .

Second, the progress of ecotourism emphasizes on the principle of ecological protection. Ecotourism pays much attention to the protection during its development and uses development to promote protection, which is the harmony and unification among economic benefit, social benefit and environmental benefit .

Third, ecotourism is the green industry of high scientific and technological content. It is a kind of unique sustainable tourism and responsible tourism form that pays more attention to the continuity of ecology and cannot result in the environmental destruction or the decrease of the environmental quality.

Fourth, ecotourism pays much attention to the economic development of tourism destinations and the improvement of the living standard of local residents; the income of ecotourism should not only be used to protect the ecological environment but also benefit the local residents.

Fifth, ecotourism gives prominence to the educational function of ecological environment.

In all, ecotourism should regard environmental education, science popularization and spiritual civilization construction as the core content, and really let itself be a grand school of people studying nature, loving nature and protecting nature.

3. The external analysis of eco-tourism

3.1 External theory

The externality theory is brought by Marshall in his masterpiece “Principles of Economics” in 1890 earliest. Externality is a basic concept in Economics, generally speaking, external is a discordant phenomenon referred to the private income and social benefits, the private costs and social costs. Lufthansa Samuel define it as, “A person makes others suffered additional costs or additional revenue in the course of production and consumption, and these costs or revenue imposed on others are not compensated in the form of money, external or spillover effect occurs. Exactly, Externality is the conduct of an economic party impact on the welfare of others; this effect is not reflected through the monetary form or the market mechanism. ”

Externality does not directly affect the economic environment or other economic benefits through price influences; it transfers the consequences of their acts and is not responsible for such consequences by themselves fully. That is, certain economic activities or economic decision-making bring the beneficial effects or “free riders” free benefits for others. Externality is a spillover effect of economic activities, in the affected persons’ opinion, the spillover effect is not voluntarily accepted, but is imposed by the opposite party.

Externality theory is the theoretical basis for environmental economics. On one hand, it reveals the root of market economic activities in some low-efficiency allocation of resources. On the other hand, it provides alternative ideas for how to solve problems of environmental external diseconomy. The analysis to external theory and market failure, is not only advantageous in adopting more environmental economic means to protect the environment in the market economy system reform, but also advantageous in allocating the resources effectively when government exercises functions of macroeconomic regulation and control, providing more public goods of environmental quality. Externality appears accompanied by production and consumption activity, brings both positive and negative influences.

3.2 The reasons of the external diseconomy of eco-tourism. Ecotourism possesses external economy

The development of ecotourism industry is advantageous to local residents to change the idea of traditional values and the way of life and production, realizes the replacement of traditional farming, logging industry, utilizes forest resources by the form of non-consumption, promotes the development of forest communities and regional economy.

At the same time, ecotourism also possesses obvious external diseconomy. The set constituted of many tiny ecotourism external diseconomy activities causes enormous ecological damage to the environment, emerging with the phenomenon which contradicts with ecotourism's connotation originally. Ecotourism external diseconomy includes external diseconomy of ecotourism production and external diseconomy of ecotourism consumption.

3.3 Concrete manifestation and harm of ecotourism external diseconomy. These are as follows

First, external diseconomy caused by nonstandard development behavior. Many developers regard ecotourism as a fashionable tourism product and develop haphazardly because of lacking scientific and effective demonstration and violating the basic principle of ecotourism. The plans of some areas are formulated by the investors themselves, who are

often from interests of their own departments or business, at the cost of the damage to the environment and the loss of scenic areas' development potential. Deciding the development according to reception, not having the overall tourism development planning, doing not pay attention to resource conservation, descending of environmental quality, all of which make the original "ecotourism" products lost the "ecological" characteristics at last. Some operators construct some buildings and tourism infrastructure in the core region which prohibited exploiting by law, making some regions loss the continuity of landscape and the integrity of ecological system permanently. Create many artificial attractions in some region, changing the original natural or human landscape, leading to serious urbanization for scenic spots. Especially the integration of some artificial attractions and the servicing facility construction with landscape and scenic spots is poor, which has caused great losses to the protection of natural heritage, cultural heritage. Built modern cableway arbitrarily on the famous ancient mountain, establishment of cableway in the central region of the national attractions, which has destroyed not only the original appearance of the natural scenic area, and also has made a large number of visitors assemble on the peak of limited capacity, resulting in the damage of landscape and ecology. The construction of ecotourism infrastructure has destroyed the animals' living environment, causing the deterioration in the quality of living environment for animals, so that these animals live there were forced to move.

Second, external diseconomy caused by lacking strict measures in management of ecotourism environment. In order to attract more tourists, ecotourism operators remake the tourist infrastructures on their own initiative, local transportation lines, communication facilities and so on, which have facilitated the local people's production and living invisibly, that is external economy; but the ultimate aim of the operators is to pursuit high profits, therefore, they will pour the waste water of catering, accommodation and other living waste water directly into the water, waste oil of the motorboat and so on can permeate the water, automobile exhaust and the dust of diet will be directly discharged into the air, these will create the environmental pollution leading to external diseconomy. From the view of tourism operator, the increase of its profit appear on the basis of the reduction of the total profits, causes gaining the benefit at the expense of resources environment and welfare of other people. However, tourism operator does not carry on the corresponding compensation on the influence, which is typical external diseconomy.

The ecotourism environment has its own carrying capacity; ecological tourists will bring pressure to the ecological environment inevitably when they carry on tourism activities. Natural and historical humanities resources are the foundations of developing tourism, they will be difficult to be restored once be damaged. So only utilizing reasonably under the premise of protection and doing our best to protect when using can guarantee the sustainable development of tourism. The development of ecotourism must be based on the carrying capacity of ecological environment, once over this limit, will make the ecological environment overload, then leads to ecological imbalance. Because of short-term economic activities and driving of benefits, economical benefits are also first in the guiding ideology of developing ecotourism in many places, while environmental and social benefits are ignored, and the phenomena that some places gain short-term benefits at the cost of long-term benefits and environmental protection often occur.

Third, external diseconomy caused by tourists' un-ecological behavior. There are a lot of arbitrary trampling on, all kinds of discarded waste, random climbing and clamber, scribbling and random carving, random picking and so on. Un-ecological behavior in ecotourism scenic spots causes environmental pollution in ecotourism scenic spots, the deterioration in the quality of landscape and eventually causes the drop of overall attraction of tourist destinations, which will reduce the value of tourism. If tourists trample on plants randomly in the process of touring, a direct result of death, often will also affect germination of plant seed, the plant can not grow smoothly because of soil compaction, or even lead to normal species replaced by wear-resistant species, bring changes in the structure of species and downward tendency in the types of plants. Tourists' random picking will also cause harm to the plants, especially some of the rare plants who become the main targets of predatory picking, often faced with extinction. Trampling on vegetation by hiking, horseback riding, camping and the related activities result in various degrees of damage to vegetation. Slight damage can reduce growth quantity and coverage area of vegetation. Serious damage will lead to reduction of plant communities and species change. For the imperfections of tourism facilities in itself and tourists' low quality, the amount of garbage abandoned in attractions is increasing with the expansion of the scale of tourism activities. So much garbage abandoned and accumulated randomly in the tourism area has destroyed the natural landscape, polluted the water in attractions, and brought eutrophication to the water in tourist areas. The water in China's many tourist areas has been polluted at different degrees, the transparency, color, flavor and other indicators of a considerable part of tourism water, exceed standards of the state's tourism water, the floating matter, the matter suspended in the air, the oil pollutants have already affected the tourist sense organ, caused traveling interest reducing. The appearance of too many tourism rubbishes has brought serious contamination and destruction to ecological environment.

4. The strategies and measures of eco-tourism environmental protection

4.1 Establish the strict examination and approval system of scientific demonstration

As the kind of tourism with a sense of responsibility and special sense to ecological and cultural, ecotourism is surely a strategic choice, which can promote sustainable development of tourism. As the areas which suit to develop ecotourism

are often sensitive areas of fragile ecological environment, the quality of the ecotourism planning directly refers to the protection of tourism resources, and will influence the sustainable development of tourism. Only under the promise of scientific planning can ecotourism play its function of protecting the ecological environment, achieve the sustainable development of tourism. Before developing a new ecotourism project, the experts of sociology, environmental science, culture, economics and other fields should conduct a comprehensive and scientific demonstration. Finally, the planning can be implemented only after the approval of relevant departments. And environmental impact assessment system of ecotourism resources' exploiting should be set up. Only the project which does not cause harm to local ecological system and landscape after assessed and must be permitted by executive authorities, can be exploited. Establish examination and approval system and monitoring system of ecotourism projects, so as to make examination and approval on eco-tourism project, inspect periodic these ecotourism resources; establish a strict mechanism for trade access, so as to be required for different scale of eco-tourism projects and have the appropriate qualifications of the developers for the development; assess aptitude of its ecotourism resources development regularly.

4.2 Establish ecotourism authentication system

To standardize the behavior of ecotourism enterprises, bring their development activity implied principle of protection truly, the standard must be set by the government or profession association macroscopically to distinguish ecotourism from common tourism. And the certification, by meeting the standard, on one hand, will enhance the popularity of certified enterprises, and will set an example for others, both of which will give impulse and pressure to improve their environment management level and low negative influence. On the other hand, it will arouse tourist's attention on their own tour and custom activity. And it makes them more care about environment factor when they choose the tour operators, resorts, hotels and other tourist service providers and buy the product made by the enterprises, which care about environment more. These will contribute, directly or indirectly, to environmental protection. Ecotourism Certification Committee set up by the State Quality Supervision Bureau or the State Environmental Protection Administration can give official certification. The certification work can be also entrusted qualified and trustable private or foreign enterprise to give unofficial certification.

4.3 Strengthen the management of ecotourism environment

Ecotourism is not able to realize consciously the coordination between tourism development and the ecological environment because it is with the "eco" label. So if we really want to achieve coexist and co-prosperity of ecotourism and ecological environment, we must stress that this form of tourism is managed by scientific and effective environmental ways. And the environmental management takes an important part in the whole process of ecotourism and environmental protection, which has become the crux of tourism sustainable development. An effective way of eliminating external influence is to introduce the market mechanism in environmental management, through the market mechanism the principle that "polluter pays" can be realized. However, because of the defect of the market mechanism exists in itself, functions of the government's environmental management should not be weakened by the introduction of market mechanisms, on the contrary, the government's functions should present a strengthening tendency with the development of social economy. In order to ensure the efficiency and quality of environmental management, we must handle well the relations between the government and the market, and divide rationally the jurisdiction and scope of the role between the two. The government must occupy the dominant position in the environmental management, so as to enforce some measures of environmental management by adopting market approaches to achieve the combination between government mandatory regulation and the market mechanism.

4.4 Perfect the ecotourism management system

Using the experience of foreign tourism management system and implying the unified management to all levels of tourist areas which are developing ecotourism to improve management efficiency and protect the environment. Ecotourism is comprehensive, involving wide areas, and with close relationships. At present, Chinese ecotourism areas change mostly on the basis of the original nature reserves, forest parks and scenic areas at all levels, with typical characteristics of fragmentation in the management system. There are many actively profitable business organizations in ecotourism areas, including ecotourism scenic areas and the communities. Because there are differences in investors, it causes an alternately complex relationship between enterprises which makes tourism as the main business and compartmentalized system. Ecotourism will inevitably involve disputing in interests among the bodies of participators, and straightening out such relations of the ownership can not be solved by relying solely on the tourism sector itself or the community itself, it only be possible to coordinate by government. It must be acted by the various local governments even central government to guide, coordinate uniformly, break down the boundary between the administrative and the region, realize the union of region and the coordination of departments, so as to effectively address a range of issues in the development and management of tourism resources, formatting resources joint effort to ensure an orderly tourism development.

4.5 Perfect ecotourism legislation and strength ecotourism legal supervision

Ecotourism legislation is mainly to cultivate ecotourism market mechanisms, establish ecotourism market rules and protect ecotourism market order. To improve the ecotourism legislative level, we should promulgate Ecotourism Law, Ordinance of Ecotourism Development and Management; establish a set of legal system of ecotourism to safeguard the smooth development of the ecotourism industry; strengthen the supervision to the government in the implementation of ecotourism laws and regulations; supervise the governments at all levels and their related departments abiding by and carrying out ecotourism laws and regulations. It is necessary to not only supervise their specific administrative conduct, but also the conduct of its abstract administrative conduct; not only supervise procedures whether they are legal and appropriate which are applicable for administrative conduct, but also supervise whether entity content of administrative conduct is legal and appropriate. Only in this way, can the function of the government be improved. In order to effectively supervise the implementation of ecotourism laws and regulations in government, it is necessary to set up the relatively independent supervising mechanism of ecotourism laws and regulations, and give greater authority to supervised objects. Therefore, we should strengthen the judiciary's supervision to the implementation of ecotourism law and play the overall efficiency of ecotourism legal supervision.

5. Conclusion

Ecotourism is a tourism activity of dual responsibility and to protect the natural environment and safeguard local people's living standards. It is the way to realize sustainable tourism. However, ecotourism is not the sustainable tourism development principle itself, whose development can produce external diseconomy, causing serious damage to ecotourism resources and deteriorate of the environment. Market mechanisms alone can not solve adverse effects to the environment in the development of ecotourism, so the government should play a leading role in the development of ecotourism, in carrying on the necessary intervention and regulation to the ecotourism. Government should establish the system of ecotourism planning, strict examination and approval; strengthen the supervision to ecotourism environment, establish sound macroeconomic policies, laws and regulations on development of ecotourism and take other measures to eliminate and weaken the external diseconomy of ecotourism, protect the ecological environment of ecotourism for the survival and development, and at last promote the ecotourism to develop continuously and healthy.

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