Community-Based Tourism in Thailand: The Need and Justification for an Operational Definition

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ABSTRACT

In Thailand, any form of tourism that is associated with local and/or indigenous communities is treated as community-based tourism, regardless whether they have actively participated in its development and management and/or if the communities have collectively benefitted from it. Furthermore, community-based tourism is often referred to by several terms, which are used with neither distinction nor agreement. Its definitions or variations of its definitions mostly describe the phenomenon, the objectives, or its principles. This manuscript looks at the characteristics of community-based tourism as it pertains to Thailand, and proposes the adoption of an operational terminology relevant to the practices observed without compromising its principles. Given that community-based tourism and associated terms in Thailand are viewed as complex and confusing, an operational definition will allow a better characterization of community-based tourism, assist in achieving its objectives, and possibly work towards its accreditation. Moreover, an operational definition will allow consumers, partners, investors, and other interested parties to distinguish it from similar forms of tourism.

Keywords: community tourism, community-based tourism, community-based ecotourism, homestay, Thailand

บทคัดย่อ

ในประเทศไทย รูปแบบการท่องเที่ยวที่เกี่ยวข้องกับท้องถิ่นและ / หรือชุมชนพื้นเมือง ถูกจัดว่าเป็นการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชน ซึ่งไม่ได้มีการพิจารณาว่าคนในท้องถิ่นนั้น มีส่วนร่วมในการพัฒนาและการบริหารจัดการหรือได้รับผลประโยชน์จากการท่องเที่ยวหรือไม่ นอกจากนี้ การท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนมักถูกใช้อ้างอิงไปอย่างแตกต่างกัน โดยส่วนมากคำจำกัดความของการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนมักอธิบายถึงปรากฏการณ์ วัตถุประสงค์ หรือ หลักการ บทความนี้นำเสนอการพิจารณาถึงลักษณะของการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนที่เกิดขึ้นในประเทศไทย โดยนำเสนอแนวคิดการเชื่อมโยงระหว่างคำจำกัดความกับแนวทางปฏิบัติหรือการดำเนินการที่เกิดขึ้นจริงโดยไม่เบี่ยงเบนไปจากหลักการ ซึ่งในความเป็นจริงแล้ว มีความซับซ้อนและสับสนเกิดขึ้นในการพิจารณาคำจำกัดความของการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนกับการดำเนินการที่เกิดขึ้นในประเทศไทยอยู่ไม่น้อย ดังนั้น การพิจารณาคำจำกัดความจากแนวทางปฏิบัติที่เกิดขึ้นจริงอีกครั้งจึงเป็นการพัฒนาและส่งเสริมความเข้าใจเกี่ยวกับการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนให้ชัดเจนขึ้น ซึ่งสามารถนำไป

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พัฒนาเพื่อการดำเนินการให้บรรลุเป้าหมายของการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนโดยแท้ได้นอกจากนี้ยังเป็นการส่งเสริมและสนับสนุนให้ผู้บริโภคหรือนักท่องเที่ยว กลุ่มเครือข่าย นักลงทุน และผู้ที่สนใจเกิดความเข้าใจมากขึ้นว่าการท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนมีความแตกต่างกับการท่องเที่ยวในรูปแบบอื่นอย่างไรบ้าง

คำสำคัญ: การท่องเที่ยวชุมชน การท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชน การท่องเที่ยวเชิงอนุรักษ์ โฮมสเตย์ ประเทศไทย

INTRODUCTION

International travel and tourism account for a significant proportion of the revenues generated in Thailand, creating income and livelihood improvement opportunities for local communities through direct employment or the supply of goods and services. Occasionally local communities themselves serve as one of the attractions, i.e. visitors typically travel for experiencing their traditional way of life and culture. The degree of this experience is dependent on the visitors' level of participation at the community destinations.

Visitors' passive participation is typically limited to using the offered services and facilities, enjoying local attractions, purchasing local produce and handicrafts, or observing local performances. whereas visitors' active participation can extend into the local communities' daily livelihood activities and rituals, learning and cooking local foods, learning local wisdom, or assisting with local socio-economic development projects (Boonratana, 2009).

The interests in experiencing the traditional way of life and culture along with the interests in improving the socio-economic status of local communities, many of whom are rural and socio-economically marginalized, have lead to the development and promotion of community-based tourism (CBT). In Thailand, several community destinations offer tourism in the form of CBT, community-based ecotourism, and related tourism such as homestay and agrotourism, and some of these destinations were reported to have successfully assisted local communities in achieving some or all the ideals of CBT, while others not (Boonratana, 2009).

In addition, observations during a recent study (Boonratana, 2009) have shown that a number of these destinations knowingly or unknowingly do not conform to the concept and principles of CBT, and there is apparently a general misconception and/or poor awareness of CBT among the stakeholders, including the consumers. The same study also observed that several destinations or their products and services are managed and developed by a few members of the community or by external businesses with little or no participation from the local communities, and these are often marketed as CBT.

Furthermore, there exist several definitions and variations of the definitions for 'community tourism' and 'community-based tourism'. They mostly describe the phenomenon, the objectives, or its principles, and these two terms are often used synonymously without any distinction. For example, to Ashley (2006), CBT normally refers to a particular type of small tourism enterprise that is owned and often run collectively by a group of residents, and has both economic and social development objectives. Rozemeijer (2001) defines CBT as *tourism initiatives that are owned by one or more defined communities, or run as joint venture partnerships with the private sector with equitable community participation, as a means of using the natural resources in a sustainable manner to improve their standard of living in an economically viable way.*

The Mountain Institute (2000) sees CBT as describing activities that encourage and support a diverse range of economic, social development, and conservation objectives, and further emphasizes that the key rationale underlying the approach and objectives of CBT is that it provides widespread economic and other benefits and decision-making power to communities through increased intensity of participation. Alternatively, Tourism Concern (2009) is more concerned with its principles, that CBT

should include active community involvement, informed consent, community benefits, environmentally sustainability, respect for traditional culture and social structures, and mitigation measures against negative tourism impacts.

A survey looking into the success of CBT by Goodwin and Santilli (2009) discovered that there was no agreement about the meaning of CBT, and a clarification was needed whenever the term was used. Similarly in Thailand, the terms 'homestay' and 'community-based ecotourism' are often used synonymously with CBT; and CBT, community tourism, and community-based ecotourism destinations are frequently labeled as 'One Tambon One Product' or OTOP for short. By concept, OTOP refers to local products, and these may include handicrafts, garments, pottery, household utensils and foods.

To address the lack of agreement about the meaning of CBT, Goodwin and Santilli (2009) simply defined CBT as *tourism owned and/or managed by communities and intended to deliver wider community benefit.* Although the definition captured the essence of CBT, it would not function well in serving to address the issues related to the use of its terminology in Thailand. In Thailand, the concept of CBT is better captured by REST (as cited in Suansri, 2003: 14), which defines CBT as *tourism that takes environmental, social and cultural sustainability into account, that is managed and owned by the community, for the community, with the purpose of enabling visitors to increase their awareness and learn about the community and local ways of life.* However, this definition does not take into account partial ownership or partnership with the private sector, which do not necessarily undermine the objectives and values of CBT, but instead enhances it (Boonratana, 2009).

Nonetheless, in actual practice, any form of tourism in Thailand that is associated with local and/or indigenous communities is regarded as CBT and/or community-based ecotourism, regardless of the community's participation in the development and management, or of the benefits to them (Blackstock, 2005; Boonratana, 2009; Goodwin and Santilli, 2009); and homestays are likewise regarded as CBT (Boonratana, 2009; Goodwin and Santilli, 2009). Suansri (2003) aptly summarized the use of CBT and associated terms in Thailand as complex and confusing, and that CBT in Thailand is lacking a standardized terminology. Readdressing this situation therefore warrants the development of an operational definition.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In addition to reviewing various materials on CBT (e.g., Hatton, 1999; The Mountain Institute, 2000; Rozemeijer, 2001; Suansri 2003; Blackstock, 2005; Ashley, 2006; Ashley *et al.*, 2006; Goodwin and Santilli, 2009; Tourism Concern, 2009), ten sites (Table 1) were visited between September 2007 and December 2008 to understand better current definitions used within the Thailand context, their underlying theories, and to distinguish the different forms of tourism offered at those destinations. The ten destinations comprised Ban Mae Lai and Ban Mae Kampong in Chiang Mai Province; Sam Chuk 100-year Old Market and Thai Buffalo Conservation Village in Suphanburi Province; Mahasawat Agrotourism, Lumphaya Floating Market, and Don Wai Floating Market in Nakhon Pathom Province; Bang Nam Pheung Floating Market in Samut Prakarn Province; Koh Kret Community Tourism in Nonthaburi Province; and Amphawa Floating Market in Samut Songkhram Province. The focus however, was on Ban Mae Kampong and Ban Mae Lai, for the following reasons:

1. A long and well-established CBT destination (Ban Mae Kampong);
2. A renowned model for CBT and/or for its 'best practices' (Ban Mae Kampong);
3. A wholly owned community enterprise (Ban Mae Kampong);
4. A newly established CBT destination (Ban Mae Lai);
5. A unique type of community destination,

Table 1 Comparative analysis of community-based tourism characteristics of sites visited

Site	Ownership	Retains traditional lifestyles and culture	Informed consent	Community involvement	Empower community	Complements to community lifestyles	Equal income generation opportunities	Additional or alternative income	Collectively benefits community	Conservation of cultural and natural heritage	Presence of mitigation measures	Visitors briefed, and exhibit responsible	Promote mutual respect	Avoids commoditizing culture
Ban Mae Lai	Partnership with a business	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	≈	✓	✓	✓	✓	≈	≈	NA
Ban Mae Kampong	Community-owned with presence of independent businesses	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	≈	≈	≈	≈
Sam Chuk 100-year Old Market	Partnership with local governance; businesses owned by local and nearby residents	≈	✓	✓	≈	✓	✓	✓	?	~	×	×	~	NA
Thai Buffalo Conservation Village	Private business with local employees and their buffaloes	~	NA	?	NA	NA	×	✓	?	✓	×	×	NA	NA
Mahasawat Agrotourism	Independently owned and managed by 18 participating households	≈	~	~	~	≈	✓	✓	×	~	×	×	~	NA
Lumphaya Floating Market	Businesses independently owned by residents and non-residents	~	≈	~	?	?	?	✓	?	×	×	×	×	NA
Don Wai Floating Market	Businesses independently owned by residents and non-residents	~	≈	~	?	?	?	✓	?	×	×	×	×	NA
Bang Nam Pheung Floating Market	Partnership with local governance; businesses independently owned by residents (and non-residents?)	~	≈	~	~	?	?	✓	?	×	×	×	×	NA
Koh Kret Community Tourism	Businesses independently owned by residents and non-residents	≈	≈	~	~	≈	?	✓	?	≈	×	×	×	NA
Amphawa Floating Market	Businesses independently and jointly owned by residents and non-residents	~	≈	~	~	~	?	✓	≈	?	~	×	×	NA

✓ Yes ≈ To a large extent or carried out more frequently ? Uncertain
× No ~ To a limited extent or carried out infrequently NA Not applicable

one not marketed as CBT, but as an outdoor education and research centre (Ban Mae Lai);

6. A unique partnership between the community and a private business (Ban Mae Lai);

7. Proximity to each other (about 40 minutes driving);

8. Both are awarded winners (Ban Mae Kampong won the 2007 Thailand Tourism Award for Community-Based Tourism, and Pang Soong Lodge at Ban Mae Lai won the 2006 SKAL Ecotourism Award).

The study necessitated a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches (Babbie, 2005; Veal, 2006). At all sites, opportunistic interviews were carried out with members of the host communities, the business stakeholders, and the visitors. The study also relied, to the extent possible, on some participant and non-participant observations. The former consisted of observations made while partaking and experiencing as a visitor. The latter consisted of observations and assessment made on the behaviors of visitors and the host community. At the two focal sites, the study carried out in-depth interviews with the host communities and a business partner (at Ban Mae Lai only) using semi-structured and unstructured questions, and visitor surveys using structured and semi-structured questionnaires. The purpose for employing a number of techniques is to validate the information obtained through a process commonly referred to as triangulation or cross-examination (David and Sutton, 2004: 44; Veal, 2006: 107).

In-depth interviews focused on obtaining a descriptive background of tourism at the destination (e.g., history, objectives, stakeholders involved, roles and benefits of the stakeholders, functions of the local committee); characteristics of tourism at the destination (e.g., reasons and criteria for participation by community members, benefits to participating and non-participating members, visitor characteristics and expenditures, types and quality of amenities and activities, pricing and marketing of products and services); and community's perspectives on tourism (e.g., success in meeting objectives, comparison with traditional incomes, fair and equitable sharing of benefits, and positive and negative impacts).

The rationale for carrying out visitor surveys were to determine their motivation(s) for visiting the destinations; to obtain their evaluations and assessments of the destination, and its components; and to obtain their opinions, suggestions or comments on various aspects of the destination. Survey questionnaires were, however, limited to those visitors who stayed overnight or more, and to those who used the accommodations designated by the host communities. This was to ensure that responses reflected at least some understanding of the concept and principles of CBT, and that their evaluations and opinions were acceptable.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Characteristics of community-based tourism

A comparative analysis of the assumptions, characteristics, and principles of CBT from a narrowed-down selection of literatures reviewed (e.g., Hatton, 1999; The Mountain Institute, 2000; Rozemeijer, 2001; Suansri, 2003; Blackstock, 2005; Goodwin and Santilli, 2009; Tourism Concern, 2009) and the sites visited (Boonratana, 2009) showed that the concept of CBT should essentially comprise the following:

1. Host communities retain a traditional way of life and culture that is of interest to tourists;

2. Tourism in host communities are planned, developed, and managed with their consent;

3. Host communities are actively involved in the planning, developing, and managing the tourism products and activities;

4. The process of planning, developing, and managing the tourism help unify, empower, and instill pride in the host communities;

5. Host communities are empowered to plan, develop, and manage the tourism complementary to their lifestyles;

6. All residents of host communities have

equal opportunities to earn income as land managers, entrepreneurs, service and produce providers, and employees;

7. Income generated is an additional or alternative source, or used for poverty alleviation;

8. Part of the tourist income is reserved for projects that collectively benefits host communities;

9. Tourism in host communities contribute to the preservation of cultural heritage and conservation of natural heritage;

10. Host communities, visitors, and other stakeholders are aware of the negative impacts of tourism, and have measures in place to mitigate such impacts;

11. Visitors are briefed about social and cultural norms of host communities before or upon arrival, therefore encouraging responsible behavior;

12. Exchanges between visitors and host communities foster tolerance, understanding, and cross-cultural learning; and

13. Host communities, visitors, and other stakeholders are obliged to avoid commoditizing rituals and ceremonies (especially sacred and/or religious).

Characteristics of community destinations visited

Observations at the ten sites visited showed that some of these destinations knowingly or unknowingly do not conform to the concept and principles of CBT, and there is apparently a general misconception and/or poor awareness of CBT among the stakeholders, including the consumers. Several destinations or their products and services are managed and developed by a few members of the community or by external businesses with little or no participation from the local communities, and these are often marketed as CBT. These are summarized in Table 1, with descriptions in accordance with definitions provided by Boonratana (2009).

Definition of Thailand's community-based and associated tourism

Given that REST's (as cited in Suansri, 2003: 14) definition of CBT in Thailand does not take successful partnerships with the private sector into account (Boonratana, 2009), therefore an improvised definition is proposed to better encompass and reflect the CBT practices in Thailand. This improvised definition has nevertheless been adapted and adopted from REST's definition, taking into account that partial ownership by or collaborating with the private sector may not necessarily undermine, but instead enhance the objectives and values of CBT.

The practices at Ban Mae Lai has shown that it is possible for a business enterprise to establish a partnership with the local community without the community risking its ownership, as social responsibility and profitability are not mutually exclusive (Ashley, 2006; Boonratana, 2009). The involvement of specialist businesses can add value to and professionally market the products and services. Private sector agencies may collaborate with the participating community, by providing the funds, clients, marketing, tourist accommodation or other expertise; and depending on the agreement made, the private sector agency may or may not have a stake in the tourism enterprise (Ceballos-Lascuráin, 1996; Ashley, 2006; Ashley *et al.*, 2006). However, the agreement usually involves providing support to community development and to active partnership with the community when planning the tourism development.

Hence, developing an operational definition for CBT in Thailand will necessitate the inclusion of some explanation. In addition to defining CBT, some forms of tourism practiced at community destinations, synonymously referred to as CBT, are defined, as follows:

Community tourism

Community tourism as a generic term can be used to describe all forms of tourism associated with a local or indigenous community, to reflect the diversity of such tourism in Thailand, and to distinguish it from a true CBT. Thus, community tourism in Thailand is defined as *visitation to local/*

indigenous communities to purchase various products and services, meaning that visitors are not obligated to be economically, environmentally, socially, and culturally responsible, and the tourism products and services are primarily a collection of businesses that are individually owned, developed, and managed. Hence, the local community may not collectively benefit from the tourism, and the benefits from tourism are mainly in the form of economic returns.

Community-based tourism

CBT is thus defined as *economically, environmentally, socially, and culturally responsible visitation to local/indigenous communities to enjoy and appreciate their cultural and natural heritage, whose tourism resources, products, and services are developed and managed with their active participation, and whose benefits from tourism, tangible or otherwise, are collectively enjoyed by the communities.* The phrases used in this definition are explained in Table 2.

Community-based ecotourism

Given the alternate definition of CBT, therefore the form of CBT in Thailand that focuses on the conservation of local natural resources and biodiversity, and the preservation of local culture through financial support and increased awareness gained from tourism in the community will also need to be distinguished. Hence, community-based ecotourism is defined as *economically, environmentally, socially, and culturally responsible visitation to local/indigenous communities to enjoy, appreciate, and simultaneously enhance conservation of their cultural and natural heritage, whose tourism resources, products and services are developed and managed with their active participation, and whose benefits from tourism, tangible or otherwise, are collectively enjoyed by the communities.* The slight modification to the definition for CBT, i.e. *to enjoy, appreciate, and simultaneously enhance conservation of their cultural and natural heritage* means that visitors have the opportunity and are obliged to assist the conservation of local natural resources and the preservation of local culture through financial support and increased awareness.

Homestay

Homestay is a significant component of many, if not all, community-based (eco)tourism destinations, and because the concept of homestay in Thailand is rather vague, referring to a diversity of accommodation types, therefore it is likewise necessary to provide a definition of homestay for Thailand (Boonratana, 2009). In addition, it is also necessary to distinguish it from accommodations offered in or close to community tourism or community-based (eco)tourism destinations. Lynch (2000) consider homestays as those establishments that offer commercial hospitality within the private home, either serving as the primary home or secondary home for the hosts, and may include from private house bed and breakfasts to guesthouses, from many small hotels to townhouses, from self-catering cottages to host families.

This classification may not be apt for Thailand, as homestays have been loosely used for a range of commercial hospitality that is located within or adjacent to a local or indigenous community, regardless of ownership (Boonratana, 2009). These have included space or room within the private residences of host families, private bed-and-breakfasts, small lodges, privately owned guesthouses, community lodges, and small privately owned resorts, all of which are offered to visitors for a fee. In addition, Lynch (2000) classification does not suggest close interactions and cultural exchanges between the host and visitors. However, an authentic homestay, usually within the CBT setting, refers to accommodation in the host family's home (Suansri, 2003). Visitors have the opportunity, for a nominal fee, to experience and learn simple or traditional lifestyles through close interactions and exchanges with the host family, including partaking in some of the host family's daily activities.

Table 2 Explanation of the community-based tourism operational definition

Phrase	Explanation
Economically, environmentally, socially, and culturally responsible visitation	Means that visitors are aware (to some extent and by whatever means, such as a pre-visit briefing or through personal enquiry) of the possible impacts of their visitations on the community, therefore would take precautions to minimize or avoid their impacts on (and preferably enhance) the community's local economy, physical environment, and social and cultural values.
Visitation to local/indigenous communities	Means that visitations are made because visitors have a genuine interest to learn firsthand about the community and their usually traditional life.
To enjoy and appreciate their cultural and natural heritage	Means that visitors have the opportunity to observe the community's daily and cultural activities (e.g., farming and rituals), and their natural resources (e.g., waterfalls and forests). It also means that visitors have the opportunity to partake (within reasonable limitations) in the community's daily and cultural activities, and activities set in their natural environment (e.g., trekking and outdoor education).
Whose tourism resources, products, and services are developed and managed with their active participation	Means that the community is actively involved in the tourism development and the day-to-day management of some or all the tourism products, services, facilities, or activities. Some communities have established a partnership with a non-governmental organization or a business (Boonratana, 2009; Goodwin and Santilli, 2009) to assist them in developing and managing tourism (e.g., marketing and bookings) and some resources (e.g., developing and maintaining nature trails); and products (e.g., accommodation) may be owned by the partner, lending more flexibility to the rather restrictive '*managed and owned by the community*' as defined by REST (cited in Suansri, 2003: 14).
And whose benefits from tourism, tangible or otherwise, are collectively enjoyed by the communities	Means that the benefits can be tangible (e.g., monetary income and funds for repairs to community buildings) or intangible (e.g., pride, empowerment, cultural preservation, and nature conservation), and all members of the community are expected to enjoy some or all those benefits. Although participating households are expected to gain financial benefits for their services and products, yet a portion of their monetary income goes to the community development fund that benefits both participating and non-participating households.

Source: Boonratana, 2009.

To distinguish homestays from other accommodations, it is thus defined as *room or space within the private homes of community members, offered to guests for a nominal fee, who expects to experience simple rural living or traditional lifestyles, and to interact and have cultural exchanges with the host family, therefore providing a meaningful learning experience for both host and visitors.* The phrases used in this definition are explained in Table 3.

Justification for an operational definition of community based tourism for Thailand

Having an appropriate terminology is considered important in terms of assisting local communities and their partners or other stakeholders keen on developing CBT towards fulfilling the objectives of, and complying with the principles of CBT. In addition, it allows those communities offering authentic CBT to distinguish themselves from other destinations with similar products and services, possibly through an accreditation system. Furthermore, it allows visitors with interest in authentic CBT or supporting the objectives of CBT to distinguish it from similar forms, again possibly through an accreditation system. Inability to obtain an authentic CBT might deter both domestic and international visitors (through word-of-mouth or other means) from partaking in such tourism in Thailand. Moreover, it allows corporations, non-governmental organizations, government agencies, and other interested parties to make better decisions should there be a desire in supporting or developing CBT.

Table 3 Explanation of the homestay re-definition

Phrase	Explanation
Room or space within the private homes of community members	Means that host families are members of the local/indigenous community, and that they will provide basic, but clean, beddings to visitors in a corner or a room within their homes.
Offered to guests for a nominal fee	Means that host families would be reasonably compensated (rather than earn an income) for allowing unfamiliar guests a place to board and lodge.
Who expects to experience simple rural living or traditional lifestyles, and to interact and have cultural exchanges with the host family	Means that guests have the opportunity to experience simple or traditional lifestyles, and learn local culture and traditions through close interactions and exchanges with the host family, and by partaking in some of the host family's daily activities.
Therefore providing a meaningful learning experience for both host and visitors	Means that both host and visitors benefit from the interactions and exchanges. The host is likely to gain awareness and understanding of their visitors and their diverse cultures, and possibly acquire some foreign language skills. The visitors are very likely to gain awareness and understanding of local culture, traditions, and simple rural lifestyles. In addition, they are likely to acquire respect for local wisdom, and acquire new skills such as cooking local food and producing handicrafts.

Source: Boonratana, 2009.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Distinguishing and clarifying CBT in Thailand is important in determining whether community destinations conform to the concept and principles of CBT. Otherwise, it would be too simplistic to conclude, and very likely arrive at the wrong conclusions, given the wide range of tourism set within the local and indigenous community setting. Furthermore, CBT in different parts of the world carry different meanings, by virtue of their different social, cultural, political, and economic context, coupled with other influencing factors such as ethnic make-ups, religious beliefs, and tourism objectives.

Thus, a consideration should be given towards adopting the operational definition of CBT; and redefinitions of community-based ecotourism, community tourism, and homestay for Thailand, to prevent misunderstanding (and the possible abuse) of the meanings of the tourism terms, and to differentiate and distinguish the products and services associated with such types of tourism. Furthermore, a consideration should also be given towards establishing and/or revising the accreditation system for CBT, community-based ecotourism, and homestay in Thailand, to ensure a set of clearly defined and appropriate objectives, and to encourage improvement. Finally, relevant agencies, institutions, organizations, and businesses, should consider making available accurate information on community destinations, to assist interested parties in locating the desired products and services.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This study was supported by the Mahidol University International College's Seed Grant.

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