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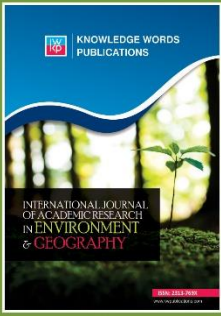
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Sustainable Tourism in Poring Hot Spring Sabah: An Experience

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Abstract

Poring Hot Spring are one of the tourists attraction destination in Sabah, which applied the sustainability concept in maintain the tourists' arrival to the area. Based on the sustainability applied in Poring Hot Spring, there are several categories to be concern namely the natural environment, services, facilities accommodations and transportations, and friendly approach in local citizen towards the tourists. Due to these advantages, the tourists arrival will be increase and this will help the Poring Hot Spring to be more develop with practices the conservation and preservation concept from destruction towards the environment of flora and fauna.

Keywords: Sustainability, Flora and Fauna, Services, Accommodations and Transports, Friendly.

Introduction

Tourism industry becomes important and grows rapidly. Since 1950, the tourism sector has contributed to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The sector continues to be a major source of foreign exchange, which contributed to economic growth, investment and creates job opportunities. A total of 16.4 million tourist arrivals in 2005 have contributed about 18.1 billion (RM) to national income (Prime Minister's Office, 2012; Hua, 2015). The government has focused on the development of the tourism sector in the budget presentation of the 9th Malaysia Plan (RMK 9) to attract more tourists, especially from the foreign or international tourists. In moving forward with the mission, the government has launched the theme of 'Visit Malaysia Year'. The good response would further enhance the country's economy as well as to promote Malaysia as the tourist destination. The development of the tourism sector in Malaysia has been benefits the changes and potential of the tourism industry in the future. The advantages of tourism industry become a catalyst for national income, the integrated approach implemented in the planning and implementation of sustainable tourism (Khalid, 2006).

Tourism and environment are interconnected with each other. Normally, the tourism is developing in the area with surrounding by the environmental characteristics. The concept of sustainability is crucial in promoting to tourist area. In the tourism sector, sustainability can be

refers as the availability of an area in the sustainable use of environmental or sustainable in promoting the area to tourists (Hunter, 1997; Hall & Lew, 1998). Sustainability emphasizes the preservation of the environment in generating economic interests, cultural and social development of the local community together in conducting tourism activities to minimize damage to the environment (Little, 1972; Peace & Turner, 1990). The approach used to ensure the sustainability of tourism development is positively towards the local community, tourism companies and tourists (Bramwell & Lane, 1993; Ritchie & Crouch, 2003). Nowadays, sustainability becomes a major tourist attraction factors that applied into a tourist area.

Results and Discussion

Poring Hot Springs Pool is a well-known hot spring tourist area, located at the foot of Mount Kinabalu, Sabah. Poring Hot Spring is part of the Kinabalu Park, which is under the jurisdiction of the Sabah Park. Poring Hot Spring was founded in 1965 after the Kinabalu Park was gazetted in 1964 (Trustees of The Sabah Parks Official Portal, 2016). At that time, around Poring Hot Spring is largely dominated by the village and indirectly, they have given the name to this place of Poring. The term comes from the English village 'Poring' means bamboo. Poring is a large bamboo tree species that grow in the area, and even to this day the Poring Hot Spring area is still dominated by bamboo trees. There are rumors saying that the area was first explored by Poring at the time of the Japanese occupation, which is in the year of 1962 and 1965. However, the Poring was firstly discovered and explored by the village in ancient times, which is in the 30s.

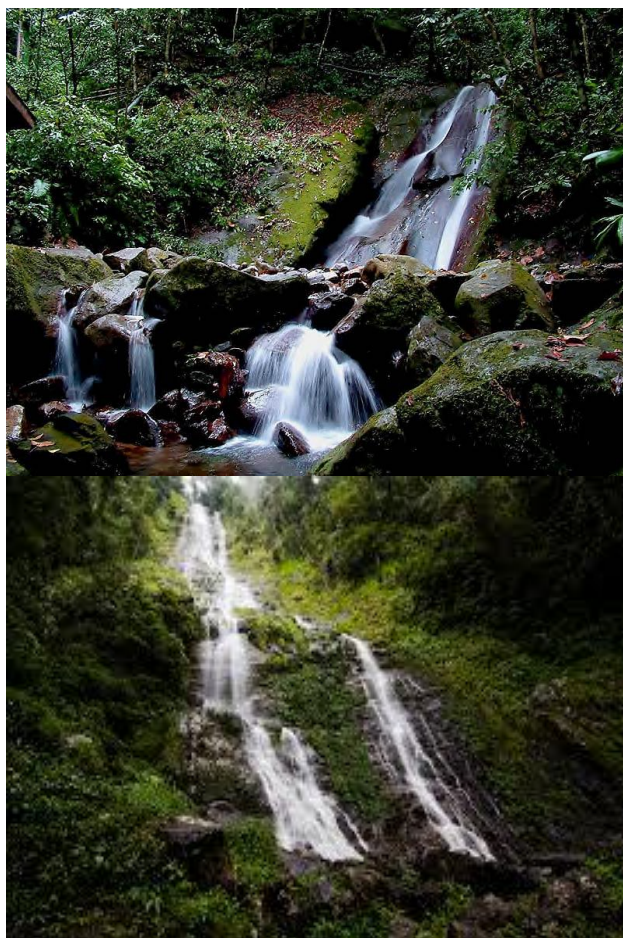
Physical Characteristic

There are several factors to attract the tourists who want to come to the Poring Hot Spring. Among these are the natural conditions in the area, activities and services provided, the price offered is fair (which is affordable), and so on. Poring is well known with its characteristic of hot springs that containing sulfur minerals in helping for freshen up. At the places, there is a heated indoor pool and outdoor hot tubs. The difference between the two hot tubs is the cost and facilities that provided. The closed heated pool is more attract the foreign tourists who love the quiet and calm atmosphere. These hot tubs will be charged to visitors. The outdoor hot tubs are also available with 24 small hot tubs. The hot springs is derived from the underground that stems out are reached boiling temperature up to 70 °C on hot day while on normal day the hot springs pool temperature can reach at an average temperature between 40 – 60 °C. The hot tubs will not have any charged.

The climber who has climbed Kinabalu Mount will usually come to this place to eliminate fatigue by soaking in hot water. Visitors can enjoy hot water from the hot tub that containing mixed sulfur with the family on weekends. Poring are also having two waterfall namely waterfall Kipungit (Figure 1) and waterfall Langanan (Figure 2). Activities of barbecue and picnic can also be carried out in the waterfall area. The road to Kipungit waterfall will take about 15 minutes (1km). This waterfall has a height of approximately 10 meters and is suitable for recreational areas. Meanwhile, the Langanan waterfall is the longest waterfalls in Poring with 120 meters in length. The trip journey from the Kipungit waterfall takes approximately 90 minutes. In additional, every tourist that visits Poring will have an opportunity to see the Rafflesia flower outside the entrance of Poring where it was under the custody of local citizens

and a fee of RM10 per person will be applied. Rafflesia is the biggest flower in the world. There are two different types of Rafflesia species, namely Kethii (Figure 3) and Pricei (Figure 4). The Rafflesia life expectancy is growing for about 7 days, but the Rafflesia will take a longer time to grow for about 9 months to 12 months.

In addition, tourists are satisfied and attracted to the services provided because the management of Poring has a variety of fun activities during the stay there. Among the activities available at the Poring is the "Canopy Walkway" (Figure 5) that has been officially opened on May 02, 1990. The canopy has a long suspension bridge of 157.8 m and a height of 41 feet above the trees. Canopy walkway with 6 bridges long and each bridge is connected from tree to tree. The next activity conducted in the Poring Hot Spring is a butterfly (Butterfly Farm) which was founded in 1989. The butterfly park has an area of five acres of the total area Poring Hot Spring. In the park, there are about 60 species of butterflies and these species have been classified into eight families of species of butterflies that found in Poring Hot Spring. Another attraction is the tropical garden, where the garden consists of deer, wild monkeys and an orang-utan. The tropical garden has an area of 5 acres of the total area Poring Hot Spring.



Source Figure 1:

<http://www.trekearth.com/gallery/Asia/Malaysia/East/Sabah/Ranau/photo50744.htm>

Source Figure 2: <http://slippery-stan.deviantart.com/art/Langanan-Waterfall-519344873>

Figure 1: Kipungit Waterfall



Figure 2: Langanan Waterfall



Source Figure 3:

http://www.phytoimages.siu.edu/imgs/paraman1/r/Rafflesiaceae_Rafflesia_keithii_23189.htm
|

Source Figure 4:

http://phytoimages.siu.edu/imgs/psor/Rafflesiaceae_Rafflesia_pricei_23210.html

Figure 3: Rafflesia Keithii



Figure 4: Rafflesia Pricei

Source Figure 5: <http://www.gosabah.my/poring-treetop-canopy-walk/>

Figure 5: Canopy Walkway

Another factor that successfully to attract the tourists are the facilities provided. At the Poring Hot Spring, there are various facilities provided for the convenience of visitors. Among of them are accommodation, transportation, infrastructure, and so on. From an accommodation view, there are four types of accommodation, namely cabins, hostels, chalets and campsites. The price of accommodation is divided into two categories, which is for citizens and foreigners. The minimum prices charged will be for 2 days and 1 night. Accommodations include a full breakfast and dinner only. If the guests are request to have the lunch and the noon tea, they have to pay extra. The food packages of breakfast and dinner is not available for renting campsites. In terms of transport, the vehicle can only be reached in the entrance area because the Poring site is totally for conservation and preservation of the natural and it should not be

widely explored. In the garden of Poring, visitors are encouraged to walk at the prepared pedestrian-only. The distance from Kota Kinabalu to Poring Hot Spring is 136 km, which takes about 3 hours. The bus service that to-and-return trip are in charged by the silk Sactuary Lodges (SSL) from the Kinabalu Park HQ to Poring Hot Spring will takes one and a half hours.

Meanwhile, the facilities provided will be included with prayer rooms (for muslim), toilets, changing rooms, showrooms, souvenir shops, restaurants and so on. This facility is available to travelers for their comfort in the Poring Hot Spring. For example, the showrooms will be display about the sketch origin Poring history and aspects of the use of bamboo as a dominant plant in Poring Hot Spring. Therefore, this situation may indirectly provide an opportunity for visitors and tourists to gain more knowledge about Poring Hot Spring.

Another factor in attracting the tourists to come to Poring Hot Spring is in terms of the price offered for the hotel at there. According to a general study, the price of the activities offered is still low if compared to tourism activities in other locations. Similarly, the cost for transportation and accommodation are affordable for tourists to enjoy with the low price. For example, the price for the campsite, citizens and foreigners are the same charge of RM40 per person. For dormitories of Serindit, contains 10 beds for each dome and the total for the dome are four. The price charged is RM100 to RM120 for Malaysian citizens and foreigners. Accommodation in Twin Share Kelicap was charged RM310 and RM350 for Malaysian citizens for foreigner and it is provide a room for two people. For the chalet, the accommodation at River Lodge is RM755 to RM830 for Malaysian citizens and foreigners. The price is almost the same for the accommodation at Jungle Lodge, where it is subjected to RM590 and RM660 for Malaysian citizens to foreigner. The most expensive for accommodation at Poring are the Palm Villa, where the fee charged is RM3500 for Malaysian citizens and foreign nationals.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As conclusion, sustainability concept is important in the tourism sector as an attraction for tourists to visit at tourism destination that they wish for. As such, the sustainability that applies in the Poring Hot Spring are the natural environmental include flora and fauna, excellent services provided, complete facilities with low prices include hotels and transports, and most importantly are the local citizen that they are very friendly in dealing with tourists from local or international. Tourists will be able to pay for almost everything when the sustainability is continuously carried out especially in preserving the environment in order to meet their satisfaction. With this emphasis, the diversity of wildlife of flora and fauna in Poring Hot Spring will continue to be preserved and tourists from local and international will continue to grow with sustainability as an attraction for their arrival (Hua & Marsuki, 2014).

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