The Potential of Tanjung Batu, Pekan Pahang as an Ecotourism Destination

Mohd Akmal Rohiat¹, Abdul Rasid Abdul Razzaq², Amran Hamzah³, Mohamad Zaid Mustafa⁴, Azman Hassan⁵
¹,²,⁴ Faculty of Technical and Vocational Education, Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia, Batu Pahat Johor, Malaysia
² Faculty of Built Environment, University Technology Malaysia
rasid@uthm.edu.my

Abstract--- This research paper explores the Tanjung Batu’s tourism resources to explore any activities and features to become a potential ecotourism destination. In order for the tourism destination like Tanjung Batu sub-district of Bebar as ecotourism destination; the main factor will be the tourism resources besides other services and facilities. Based on an understanding of this tourism resource inventory studies, the purpose of this paper is to provide an overall assessment of the resource features in terms of development opportunities and constraints to be a promoted as an ecotourism destination. Data collection and analysis were done through observations and interviews conducted with a selected group of rough the community differing in cultural practice and economic activities with the help of the following checklist - natural resources analysis, cultural resources analysis, community analysis, site analysis and tourism services and facilities analysis. After concluding the study, Tanjung Batu has within its own material and facilities subject to a little bit of enhancement to be a potential tourism destination and attraction that may offer local and foreign tourist a different level of experience that they never had before elsewhere.

Keywords—component; formatting; style; styling; insert (key words)

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is the sum of the phenomena and relationships arising from the travel and stay of non-residents, insofar as they do not lead to permanent residence but it reflects with local earning activity. In Malaysia, tourism sector majorly contribute the second largest income as the government put such effort in promoting tourism product such as its own natural resources and other resources. Tourism in Malaysia can be divided into few sub cores such as ecotourism.

Ecotourism has been defined as the visit of natural environments remained relatively intact with a low negative impact, including a socio-economical implication for the local populations which is at the same time active and beneficial. Nowadays, we commonly admit that ecotourism includes the principles of lasting tourism regarding the impact of such an activity on the economy, society, and environment, and additionally, it includes the following specific principles which distinguish it from the broader concept of lasting tourism.

Tanjung Batu sub-district Bebar in Pekan, Pahang is rich with abundant natural resources and other resources within its surrounding area. Tanjung Batu area covers 8, 518 hectare, which is compromising four main villages which is Kampung Batu Sungai Enam Belas, Kampung Hulu Tering, Kampung Tanjung Batu and Kampung Tering. The origin of the name came from the “Cape of Rocky” which is an evident along its coastal area. Most of the community economic activities in Tanjung Batu are fishing, farming and rearing. The total population in Tanjung Batu covers ethnicity, such as Malay and Orang Asli Jakun. It is important that in order for Tanjung Batu to form the core of visitor attractions they have to pull out the “pull factor” its own natural beauty and attraction to promote and attract tourists of different groups to Tanjung Batu as an ecotourism destination. As the present situation and current condition, Tanjung Batu will be unable to develop unless the task of assessing its potential by resource quality. Accessibility to Tanjung Batu area and pulling factors should be put at the forefront. This research paper will assist the potential ecotourism destinations to identify any gaps or weak links in services that avoids development in Tanjung Batu.

A. Purpose of the Study

Under the 9th Malaysian Plan, Pahang has been East Coasts Economic Region (ECER) centre for ecotourism. One of the Ninth Malaysia Plan by Government of Malaysia is to encourage and promote tourism activities to be taken up, especially by individual citizen, or via a community effort (group of people in the area) so as to trigger economic returns in a way helping them to have a better standard of living.

The main purpose of this study is to explore the possibility of promoting the Tanjung Batu’s natural resources and all other resources as a potential ecotourism destination product that could attract the attention from the local and foreign tourist. After identifying the resources and infrastructure in this area that could be used as a tourism product and kick start the activities, it is critical in the process of this study to find out the people characteristics and personalities, and the younger generation interest in sustaining this project in the future.
B. Significance of the Study

In line with the ECER, this research will assist the stakeholders in finding ways to eradicate poverty and improve the quality of life for its people. The emphasis on promoting ecotourism activities and attraction of the destination. The community in Tanjung Batu can use tourism activities to generate income. Setting up establishment for the activities may well create job opportunities for the unemployed, single parents, and the disabled persons. On top of that, these activities could well spin-off other complimentary activities that translate to income generation and create business awareness among its community, such as fishing activities, Orang Asli lifestyle, and also small-scale businesses based on agricultural activities.

Ecotourism activities open the doors to outsiders to share and appreciate the existence of unique diversified economic activities such as enjoying the conventional fishing activities or the aquaculture breeding process. Visiting historical sites and understand the history leading to its creation. Therefore, experience in any ecotourism activities that is unique to the people of Tanjung Batu could now be shared with others and that could lead to more local and foreign tourists. These activities could well spin-off other complimentary activities that translate to income generation and create business awareness among its community, such as fishing activities, Orang Asli lifestyle, and also small-scale businesses based on agricultural activities.

C. Research Framework

The research process undergoes the following phases:

- Analysis of the natural resources
- Analysis of the cultural resources
- Analysis of the community
- Analysis of the site
- Analysis of environment
- Analysis of the tourism and facilities
- Assessment of potential ecotourism destination
- Promotion of ecotourism destination and attraction

The first phase is to collect all data and understand in depth the diverse the natural resources, culture and lifestyle of the descendants of the original settlers of Tanjung Batu. The second phase is to get the view and perception of the community with regard to turning the area as an ecotourism destination and getting the community to participate in the project. The third phase is to make an observation and taking note of the existence of any historical site or any items discovered that could be of any historical importance. The fourth phase is to identify for any tourism services and facilities that are already available in the area. The final phase is to make an assessment of all the information collected from the four analyses (i.e., cultural resources, community, environment assessment, site and tourism services and facilities) to determine the potential of Tanjung Batu as an ecotourism destination.

Fig. 1. Conceptual Frameworks and Situational Analysis
II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Ralph Lenz (2002) stated that ecotourism as defined, refers to limited scale, locally managed, and ecologically benign forms of tourism. Ecotourism, in theory, provides a double benefit. The locally managed, grassroots nature of these projects is supposed to spread tourism dollars throughout local communities. Ecotourism depends on natural resources such as forests, mountains, rivers and lakes. Dr. Marc McDill (1999). Ecotourism typically is provided by a network of businesses that, together, offer the different products and services needed by the ecotourist. This includes food services and food supplies, sports and outfitting equipment and supplies, lodging, and guide services. These businesses have some underlying characteristics that make them successful.

Attraction tourism inventories can be distinguished essentially natural, constructed or cultural. Besides the wealth of the nature, culture as indicated by Pancic and Kombol (2000) is where the basic motives for traveling, tourism is to observe a cultural event or cultural value. The WTO (2001) defined culture as: "Other people’s lifestyles expressed through their religion, festival, costumes, arts and craft, architecture, music and dance, folklore, and literature. According to UNESCO (2004) cultural heritage inventories can cultural heritage sites, historic cities, cultural landscapes, natural sacred sites, the underwater cultural heritage, museums, the movable cultural heritage, handicrafts, the documentary and digital heritage, the cinematographic heritage, oral tradition, languages, festive events, rites and beliefs, music and song, the performing arts, traditional medicine, literature, culinary traditions, traditional sports and games. ESCAP (2001) propagate that in order to enhance the image of the country, as well as create greater international understanding of people, places and cultures, cultural attractions and heritage sites must be well managed and properly interpreted for the benefit of not only the tourist but also the local community, the tourists and the site managers.

In many developing countries where there is with a shortage of financial resources it is common to conduct a resource inventory as a process of gathering information and data on the variety of tourism attractions available. Pearce (2004) suggested seven broad categories in the analysis of tourism resources that are climate, physical conditions, attractions, accessibility, existing facilities, land tenure and use, and other considerations such as government incentives. He also suggested that another approach to resource inventory is to scan tourism guidebooks for features and activities and to measure the 3 amount of space allocated for different type of tourist attractions. The Tourism Center of Africa (2004) suggested five criteria in the evaluation of a tourist potential site which are: quality assessment of attraction, authenticity of attraction, uniqueness of attraction, activity of attracting and drawing power of attraction. Kaufman (1959) and Wilkinson (1991) viewed that the substantive element of community is social interaction which is the thread that ties together the four ingredients of community, which are (a) delineates an area as shared territory, (b) contributes to the wholeness of local life, (c) gives structure and direction to collective actions, and (d) is the source of mutual identity.

Hunter and Green (1995) provided an overview of the major potential impacts of tourism on the natural environment. Many factors are driving the need for more sustainable forms of tourism that includes the need for environmental concern, protection of the remaining of natural ecosystems, empower people in developing countries, and a significant rise in nature-based travel (McCool, 1994). Fennell and Smale (1992) also recognized the need to protect the resource base of a tourist destination while providing the types of visitor experiences expected by tourists. In examining environmental impacts of tourism and recreation in national parks and conservation reserves, Buckley and Pannell (1990) contended that to minimize environmental degradation, it requires appropriate land use zoning, regulation and surveillance of access and activities, direct physical protection of particular areas, on and off site education, incentives for contemplative, naturalist and wilderness travel activities, and discouragement of high impact pursuits. Henning (1993) went further to argue that ecotourism can be a powerful force for protecting and promoting national parks and reserves, while increasing sustainable rural and national development. This requires cooperation by public and private sectors, as well as adequate funding, planning and training (McCool, 1994).

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A. Research Design

The research method in this study uses both the exploratory designs because the extent of the findings is relatively unknown and descriptive designs since the material represents a description of the various resources to be examined. Primary data were collected from the site and secondary data, is extracted from reliable published articles for the whole duration of this research covering a period of four (4) months. An analysis of all the information gathered from both the primary and secondary means were done together.

B. Types of Data

Primary data is collected via observation and interviews with Tanjung Batu community, community leaders, passers by and local authorities. Secondary data are extracted from published articles, statistical data from Tanjung Batu and research project reports.

C. Data Collection Methods

Methods used in collecting data during the study period are mainly using the observation method and the interview method. Data on the natural resources, cultural resources, site resources and tourism services and facilities resources are collected by using the observation method. Data for community analysis are collected using the interview method (i.e. by interviewing a selected group of local resident, community leader, local authority and visitors to Tanjung Batu, either they are Malaysian or foreigner. The secondary data is extracted from books, articles and journals, magazine, newspaper, internet, and brochures produced by trusted authors and publisher.
D. Instruments Development

**Instrument 1: Natural Resources Analysis Checklist**

This instrument evaluates the overall condition of the resources, the area size, the types of activities carried out at the site, the types of tourists who visited the area (if any) and the economic or business activities carried out.

**Instrument 2: Cultural Resources Analysis Checklist**

This instrument evaluates the same five dimensions as in instrument 1.

**Instrument 3: Community Analysis Checklist**

This instrument consists of the following dimensions: Community size/population density of the area, Perceptions on the rate of growth of the community, Major type of residence, Condition of residence, Community surroundings, Community ethnic background, Household/Family size, Average age of the head of household, Major source of household income, Economic activities around residence, Social status of community, Recreational activities around residence, and Major household transportation mode. A ratio scale will be used in response to the dimensions.

**Instrument 4: Site Analysis Checklist**

This instrument consists of the following dimensions and the corresponding items to be evaluated: (1) Area Economics – Type of business activities, transport availability from outside the area, within site transport availability, special features or attractions, and distance to tourism attractions; (2) Physical characteristics – drainage system and solid waste disposal system; (3) Area shape – Area size; (4) Availability of utilities – water and electricity; (5) Accessibility to the area, (6) Positional characteristics (Traffic flow, People traffic information, visibility of the area) – Distance and time, estimation on number/type of transportation, and area map/contour/landscape; (7) Pollution – Types: Noise, air, water, environment, and level; (8) Local labour - Labour supply, ethnic group, and types of skills; and (9) Other services – Police, fire, health, services.

**Instrument 5: Environment Assessment**

This instrument involves the evaluation on following the 5 dimensions with their related features: (1) Potential for ecological damage of – Soil, Plant life, Animal life, coral reefs, water/sea, coastal areas, and water supply; (2) Pollution, coastal areas, and others – assessment on the level of pollution; (3) Conservation needs of marine life, and (5) Impact of increased number of visitors/tourists on community, infrastructure, utilities, traffic, and scenery changes.

**Instrument 6: Tourism Services and Facilities checklist**

This instrument involves and assessment (1) Accommodations - types and quality of facilities and surroundings; (2) Foodservice, and (3) Recreation Facilities - types, overall quality.

The unstructured interview questions for the local community, local authorities, business agencies and operators will be constructed based on the need to follow-up and obtained clarifications on the items on the six checklists.

IV. FINDINGS

**A. Natural Resources Analysis**

Natural resources refer to all aspects of land and landscape such as the mountains, geographical phenomena such as wildlife species, birds or rare plants and water features such as lakes, rivers or waterfalls. Tanjung Batu is located in one sub-district of Bebar, Pekan. Tanjung Batu occupancy 8158 hectares surround by beachfront and tropical bushes with almost 10% of the area under development of which there is potential of nature exploration and preservation tourism related activities.

Besides of that, research has indicated that as an attraction category, natural resources are extremely important to many destinations. Tanjung Batu rich with its own phenomenal coastal area such as Pantai Bt. Sg. Enam Belas, Kuala Bt. Sungai Enam Belas, Pantai Tanjung Batu and Bukit Tanjung Batu. Two main rivers in Tanjung Batu is Sg. Bt. Enam Belas and Sg. Tering. Both rivers were acted as the main transportation by Jakun aboriginal a long time ago. Sg. Bt. Enam Belas was identified as a black water region, which is known with the ecology and preservation of wildlife species. Considering Pekan Forest Reserve located in Tanjung Batu area, it will attract outsiders to come enjoying the flora and fauna and wild life on that particular area.

Most of Tanjung Batu natural resources are still in good condition as it’s still untouched by human interferes. Constitute as a resources not only for tourism as potential for water base recreation tourism but also supporting others sectors such as agricultural for irrigating aqua cultural, fishing and rearing and most importantly as a mean of transportation for local. Tanjung Batu land is mostly covered with its tropical plant and rich in its flora and fauna. Tanjung Batu would become an ecotourism destination where coastal area and Orang Asli settlement could be main attraction for mostly local tourist. Tanjung Batu has potential to provide nature-based activities, sport based activities and fishing spot area. Orang Asli settlement at Kg. Hulu Tering provides a community of its own and locals can experience the lifestyle by staying with the orang asli families. The settlement has a lot to offer, from fruit orchards, jungle trekking, finding wild herbs and plants for alternative medicine to fresh streams for retreat.

**B. Cultural Resources Analysis**

Archaeological sites, historic buildings and structures, landscapes, and objects are the fabric of heritage resources. Collectively known as cultural resources (or sometimes heritage assets), they are tangible links with the past. Generally, Tanjung Batu has a very distinctive cultural product that is the historical sites of Sultan Abu Bakar recreational area at Pantai Bt. Sg. Enam Belas. The historical sites of the recreational activities for Sultan Abu Bakar and Daro Maria Menado require much needed preservation in order to acquire an iconic status to represent the history of the heritage of the site. In addition to it, Kampung Bt. Enam Belas and Kg. Tering recorded history from Mat Kilau or known as Mat Siam which is being used as his hidden settlement after being chased by Japanese army. The historical sites of the place of still available strong at its original site, but not very well maintained. The site
requires much needed preservation in order to acquire an iconic status to represent the history of the heritage of the site.

C. Community Analysis

Another inherent element that constitute to the success factor of a destination is the community. The community must be able to tie into a set of travel attractors, which will appeal significantly to the tourists. At time the community itself forms the attraction complex and at another instant attraction may be located close to the community. Tourism can be a viable method of development and economically feasible that will enhances the recreational opportunities of the community, residents and leaders would take pride and will take responsibility in the process.

In our research analysis, Tanjung Batu being in close proximity to Nenasi small town makes it very unique in terms of linguistic and lifestyle. They are predominantly very conservative and religious and informally communicate in Malay with a Terengganu dialect. The population is predominantly Malay (70%) of which the average age of the head of household is between 35 to 44 years old followed with Orang Asli (20%) while others (10%). More than 64% of the residents are in the agro culture sector whereas the rest 20% are self employed such as in fishermen and rearing activities. From the research team observed, the community is quite complacent with their life and it will not be surprising that the growth or development of community in Tanjung Batu is seen to be dawdling.

Tanjung Batu has established its own identity and uniqueness where the houses and buildings are clustered and arranged with different orientations in both modern and traditional Malay designs to suit with the topography. The favorite pastime of the local community being badminton, takraw and gardening and also traditional games like fishing competition are some of the examples that were truly enjoyed as a community during their recreational and leisure time. Economic activity that has been observed was centered on agro culture industries especially in the residential area. Women predominantly play an important role in the upgrading the family standards of living.

D. Site Analysis

In tourism planning, site selection is an important in order to understand the availability and location of resources in order to make effective decisions. If a site is accessible by one main road, it will have a positive effect of facilitating entry control but the negative effects will be creation of potential bottlenecks and isolating the site in the event of natural catastrophic such as floods or earthquakes. During the research study of the site analysis, the team observed that the transportation system is either through land and sea. The street patterns are simple with only one main road but with many junctions to link to the internal areas. Public bus such as Bee Huat is available but at very low frequency which encourage the local community to use their own transport either by cars and motorcycle. Parking space facilities are available. The local community also enjoys basic utilities such as electricity and water supply, telephone landline and also cell phone reception. Other basic infrastructure and facilities available are community hall, clinic and surau.

E. Environmental Analysis

The quality of the environment, both natural and man-made, is also essential for tourism development. The relationship is very complex and involves many activities that can have adverse environmental effects. Many of these impacts are linked with the construction of general infrastructure such as roads and tourism facilities. The negative impacts of tourism development can gradually destroy the environmental resources on which it depends. On the other hand, tourism has the potential to create beneficial effects on the environment by contributing towards environmental protection and conservation. It is a way to raise awareness of environmental values and it can serve as a tool to finance protection of natural areas and increase their economic importance (United Nations Environment Program, 2002). Waste disposal systems are being outsourced to a local private company.

F. Tourism Services and Facilities Analysis

Transportation facilities and services, water supplier, electric power, sewage, and solid waste disposal, drainage and telecommunication are also components of the infrastructure typically required for development of tourism. Proper development of infrastructure is very important in maintaining environmental protection from air and water pollution, congestion, and other types of environmental problem and achieving resource conservation. During the research we have observed that in close proximity to Nenasi is the local community centre which can cater for tourist needs that has the tourist facilities such as restaurants and public toilets. Angullia Beach House & Resorts stretching along side of Sungai Tering with view of Bukit Tanjung Batu (moon sighting place) and the white sandy beach of Pantai Tanjung Batu coastline is a common sight. As Tanjung Batu is the first area of Pekan town for tourist before they depart to Tioman Islands, the state government has to build many infrastructures to meet the needs of tourist traveling to Tioman Islands.

V. RECOMMENDATION

This research paper will proposed tourism activities to be carried out in Tanjung Batu. There is a low level of awareness and interest in ecotourism among residents as well as among local and regional tourist. Tanjung Batu is no exception. This study proved the above mentioned statement and identified the potential tourism activities and all its resources to be promoted. This research paper also identified the gap and weak links in services that avoids development in Tanjung Batu such as improper signage, visibility of certain area, accessibility of the area and no promotion of such tourism activities to pull in the crowd from outside. By improving this factor, it’s not impossible to promote Tanjung Batu sub-district as one of ecotourism destination in Pekan Pahang.

Ecotourism in Tanjung Batu should be more sustainable. Local communities should invest in
mechanisms that allow them to monitor development over time in the environment, in the economy, and in social and cultural aspects, as they can promote themselves as a tourism product in Tanjung Batu. In reducing dependency and increase diversity among local communities in Tanjung Batu, linkages must be established with other economic sectors, such as agriculture and livestock herding, transport, communication, and small and medium business enterprises.

VI. CONCLUSION

Tanjung Batu has rich natural resources and other resources which are ever present and continue to influence much of its subject's way of life as they pursue modernization. Its charms and warmth is an attraction itself. The richness and distinctiveness of its nature prevailing unique environment are an experience to amaze. Natural resources and economic activities links are the main factor enables Tanjung Batu to adapt and merge to create an identity of its own. It is regarded as the cradle of Malay civilization where the experience of adapt ability has enhanced its own originality and identity. These tourism products and activities of Tanjung Batu will not only serve as home attraction for the local population but also serve to promote Pekan as well as Pahang to public and mainly in the domestic market.

Tanjung Batu has immersed potential to be the ecotourism destination for Pekan. The local history of Kampung Bt. Sungai Enam Belas could be promoted which are colorful and has mysterious historical elements. It would also be strategic to display not only the local culture and history but also to exhibit its local exotic and probably outlandish local cuisine, dress forms, language and its traditional games and pastimes which may be a great attraction to local and foreign tourists. The historical site of Sultan Abu Bakar recreational area has a potential to be developed as Tanjung Batu's recreational area, worth of its historical story. The existence of recreational area will encourage history education among Malaysian especially the new generation to ensure the sustainability of the historical site.

Bukit Tanjung Batu as a moon sighting place is provides the right ingredients of a potential ecotourism destination with its diverse natural beauty as well as its economic activities and cultural, it would no doubt be a major tourist attraction in Pekan in the near future if the tourism activities are well promoted to ensure its sustainability. Bukit Tanjung Batu also has that the natural and physical resources that contribute to an understanding and appreciation of our natural resources. The understanding and appreciation of the natural resources and other tourism activities is very important for the sustainability and management of these nonrenewable resources. Bukit Tanjung Batu is a selected based on the available facilities and services that meet all tourism requirement and thus, Tanjung Batu has the possibility to generate income and can be develop as the ecotourism destination.

Although time constraints prevented an in-depth study of the resources, through observation and interviews has identified a number of important opportunities and shortcomings. The strategies recommended are intended to assist promote the successful development of tourism activities such as fishing, rearing and farming activities in Tanjung Batu sub-districts. Tanjung Batu has the capacity to deliver a lot of economic benefits to local community. However whether those benefits are realized depends on how well the ecotourism is managed. To get the greatest local benefits requires careful management to maximize the time which the ecotourists spend locally. Having a good resource to attract them is a good start. However as well as promoting that resource and making sure that it is well known, it also requires management skills to extend their stay in Tanjung Batu. Most of this should be based around providing information to local tourist or international tourists.

REFERENCES