

Creative Tourism in Songkhla Lake Basin

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ABSTRACT

Songkhla Lake Basin has a long history of at least 6,000 years and has a wide variety of tourism resources including nature, history, beliefs, culture and various traditions of the local people. It covers 3 provinces, the whole area of Phatthalung, 12 districts of Songkhla and 2 districts of Nakhon Si Thammarat Province. It has an area of approximately 8,727 square kilometers. There are many tourist attractions because the basin has a long history through different eras, natural, historic, ancient sites, and the culture of the local people. In 2018, both Thai and foreign tourists visited Songkhla and Phatthalung, which is the main area of Songkhla Lake Basin. The total number of tourists that came was 7,628,813 and 1,641,841 and an income of 68,252.64 and 3,470.96 million baht was generated from each province, respectively (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2020). Although Songkhla Lake Basin has various tourist attractions, the promotion of tourism with the involvement of government agencies in the past mainly focused on promoting tourism along with the tourist attractions rather than encouraging tourists to experience and learn the culture of the people living in the area; the culture that reflects the uniqueness of the people in the south. This study, therefore, aims to find creative tourism activities in SLB in order to increase the value of tourism resources, create tourism activities that are aligned with the resources available in the community and increase the number of tourists in the area. Data for this study were collected using a secondary source of data collection method. It was done through a literature review of related documents, texts, magazines, and research which focus on Songkhla Lake Basin as a guideline for designing tourism activities. The field survey was done through twelve community-based tourism sites in SLB to find creative tourism activities. Data on each activity were collected in detail by interviewing the tourism community leaders and the local people. Content analysis was used to describe the individual open-ended questions by focusing on the important issues and the information obtained was presented as a narrative.

Keywords: Songkhla Lake Basin, Creative Tourism, Local Wisdom