PROMOTING THE BUSINESS OF CONSERVATION TOURISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA



Foreword Most of us like to travel. To meet friends and family, to experience new cultures and cuisines, to explore the great outdoors, to climb mountains, to dive in deep seas and snorkel over coral reefs, to come face-to-face with wildlife from iconic species like rhinos in the great African plains and orangutans in the canopy of tropical forests of Sumatra, to excite species like macaws on salt licks along the Amazon river. There is so much natural beauty and culture to be explored in our world. It brings us happiness as well as peace of mind. For us to enjoy these experiences and adventures, we need to conserve these places and species, as well as support the indigenous peoples and local communities that live in and protect these landscapes. Our tourism dollars go a long way to make this possible. However, how we travel and how tourism is planned and developed defines the conservation outcomes.

Eco-tourism when done well is conservation tourism, which focuses on the protection of wild places and wildlife and the engagement and empowerment of local communities as its core aim. We have many examples of good conservation tourism efforts from across the world – some of which are highlighted in this report.

Mandai Nature's mission is to conserve species, protect and restore ecosystems while engaging local communities – in Southeast Asia. Southeast Asia is exceptionally rich in biodiversity with more than a fifth of the world's vertebrates and plant species – many which can't be found anywhere else! Vast tropical forests, wetlands and coral reefs provide habitats for a myriad of species. Most iconic are the Asian elephant; Sumatran, Malayan and Indo-Chinese tigers; Orangutan; and the highly threatened Sumatran rhinoceros.

Conservation tourism is one – very important – way to value nature and bring benefits to people, bringing in millions of people and millions of dollars.

This white paper explores the potential for conservation tourism in Southeast Asia, learning from twelve case studies of good practice from around the world. It provides core tenets to guide tourism players to increase their conservation contribution.

We hope this will inspire more investment in conservation tourism in Southeast Asia and ignite the curiosity and support for our amazing wildlife and wild places.

We look forward to working together with you all to harness this potential!

Kavita Prakash-Mani CEO, Mandai Nature

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Unless otherwise indicated, the views and opinions expressed in the white paper are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent those of Mandai Nature.





Summary

This paper aims to encourage commercial investment in conservation tourism in Southeast Asia. Southeast Asia has unique wildlife and wild places offering extensive commercial opportunity to support tourism development while protecting the region's biodiversity now and into the future.

Conservation tourism is a nuanced version of ecotourism focused specifically upon net positive gains for ecosystems and biodiversity, including threatened and endangered wildlife and ecosystems such as tropical forests, mangroves and coral reefs. It seeks to strengthen and enhance the positive approach of ecotourism, an industry sector of growing economic importance to global sustainability including the delivery of the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Owing to a lack of data on conservation tourism, the paper draws upon statistics from the fields of ecotourism and nature-based tourism.

Between 2010 and 2019, tourism earnings across Southeast Asia grew from US\$68.6 to US\$147.6 billion, while international arrivals more than doubled, from 65.7 million to 143.5 million. Chinese visitation and spending accounted for more than half of these figures. Although estimates vary as to the size and value of ecotourism in Southeast Asia, commentators agree the sector was growing significantly prior to COVID-19, which has led to the collapse of large sections of the tourism industry. While it is unclear how long the pandemic will continue to undermine Southeast Asian tourism, evidence suggests that once recovery starts in earnest the sector will rebound quickly and with growing emphasis upon the importance of domestic and intra-regional tourism, especially to areas rich in biodiversity and natural heritage.

Southeast Asia is home to exceptional wildlife species, forests and wetland, coral reefs and marine biodiversity. Despite some limitations, the region has the foundations of an enabling policy environment for conservation tourism to support these often threatened and vulnerable assets. To fulfil its potential, conservation tourism demands considerable business acumen.

The paper recommends businesses be designed and executed with a focus upon nine core tenets:

- (i) define the conservation storyline;
- (ii) plan for conservation gains;
- (iii) define and deliver SMART conservation goals;
- (iv) invest in financial viability;
- (v) design for minimal footprint;
- (vi) build community partnerships;
- (vii) maximise supply chain linkages;
- (viii) educate for engagement with conservation; and
- (ix) optimise conservation branding, marketing and sales channels.

To support the uptake of these core tenets, the paper references and lists <u>online</u> key sustainability tools and standards to help businesses of all scales design and manage conservation tourism. With regard to the design of conservation tourism, there is no "one size fits all" approach and a mix of types, scales and approaches should be adopted: with some operating as stand-alone entities, while others partner to support the commercial operations and financial sustainability of not-for-profit models and approaches.

Considering growing threats to endangered wildlife and ecosystems across Southeast Asia and, by way of contrast, improvements in the design and execution of tourism businesses able to deliver significant and demonstrable conservation gains, there can be little doubt that increased investment in conservation tourism is greatly needed; not least to support the efforts of governments and conservation NGOs that often lack resources to protect these critical assets.







Seeking to capitalise on growing consumer demand for tourism products and services that demonstrably support the conservation of especially threatened and endangered wildlife, this paper aims to guide and increase business investment in conservation tourism. To this end, the paper focuses on the characteristics, or rather the core tenents underpinning the design and operation of proven business models delivering high-quality conservation tourism experiences. Such experiences typically take the form of nature walks, birdwatching, wildlife viewing and tracking, or assisting flora and fauna research programmes, for example, and are information rich in terms of their presentation and delivery. They are frequently (but not exclusively) linked to overnight stays in ecolodges immersed in nature and, critically, are priced and packaged in ways that allow the business model to:

- strengthen the protection, conservation and rehabilitation of threatened wildlife species and ecosystems;
- (ii) benefit indigenous and surrounding communities economically, socio-culturally and environmentally to the extent that management of the target biodiversity and ecosystems becomes an intrinsic goal of the community; and.
- (iii) raise local, national and international awareness as to the conservation value of the target wildlife and ecosystems.

Recognising these general traits of conservation tourism businesses, and the intention to dig deeper to define underlying core tenets, the paper reviews and learns from leading examples of conservation tourism in Africa, Asia and Latin America. These geographical regions are selected owing to their comparable socio-economic and governance conditions with Southeast Asia, and the paper's additional aim to support the growth of conservation tourism in Southeast Asia 7; a region of high interest to the projects and programmes of Mandai Nature.

With these aims and objectives in mind, Chapter 1 provides a summary review of Southeast Asian tourism and an assessment of the region's potential for conservation tourism. Due to a lack of conservation tourism data, Chapter I draws heavily upon statistics from the fields of nature-based tourism and ecotourism to Southeast Asia. Chapter 2 centres on a review of 12 contrasting good-practice models to distil and define nine core tenets of conservation tourism. Summary descriptions of the 12 businesses are available online. Chapter 2 includes reference to management tools and resources available to conservation tourism businesses to design, measure and promote their sustainability and commitment to conservation goals. A tool box listing and summary of key resources is available online. Chapter 3 presents conclusions and recommendations for investing in conservation tourism in Southeast Asia.



Chapter 1

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR CONSERVATION TOURISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

1.1 Travel and Tourism in Southeast Asia

Travel and tourism have been a pillar of economic growth with contributions to poverty alleviation, government revenue and protected area management across Southeast Asia for more than 30 years. While growth over this period is linked to wider global trends, its growth has been especially tied to Asia-Pacific. Between 2004 and 2019, Asia-Pacific was the world's fastest growing tourism region.⁸ In 2017, it was:

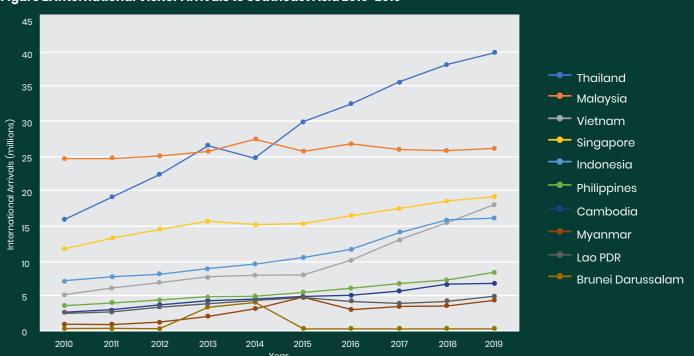
- (i) the second-largest destination for international visitors;
- (ii) the second largest in terms of international tourist receipts; and
- (iii) the biggest source of global outbound visitor spending, with most of that spend going to intraregional travel.9

Focusing on growth across Southeast Asia, between 2010 and 2019 regional tourism earnings grew from US\$68.6 to US\$147.6 billion, 10 while international arrivals more than



doubled, growing from 65.7 to 143.5 million. Figure 2 depicts this growth by country, illustrating that in 2019 Thailand received the greatest number of arrivals with almost 40 million visits, followed by Malaysia, Singapore and Vietnam, while Lao PDR and Brunei Darussalam received the least. Significantly, more than 50% of total arrivals came from China, which accounted for 32.3 of the region's 51.6 million arrivals. Other key originating markets for Southeast Asia in 2019 include the Republic of Korea, Japan, India and the US.

Figure 2: International Visitor Arrivals to Southeast Asia 2010-2019



⁷ The ten countries that make up Southeast Asia (that also comprise the Association of South East Asian Nations – ASEAN) are Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore,Thailand and Vietnam.

⁸ 2014. https://blog.euromonitor.com/asia-pacific-set-to-become-the-worlds-fastest-growing-region-for-10-years-running/

^{9 2019.} The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2019: World Economic Forum
10 2019. https://www.statista.com/statistics/261711/international-tourism-receipts-of-the-asia-pacific-region/

^{12019.} Source: unless otherwise stated, all data from the ASEAN Visitor Arrivals Dashboard https://data.aseanstats.org/dashboard/tourism



1.2 The Potential for Conservation Tourism in **Southeast Asia**

Southeast Asia is exceptionally rich in biodiversity. It is home to three of the world's 17 mega-diverse nations (Indonesia, Malaysia and the Philippines) and has the highest proportion of endemic bird and mammal species (9 and 11%) that cannot be found anywhere else and the second highest proportion of endemic plant species.²² While its forests are one of the world's most biologically rich and diverse, its marine environment hosts 28% of the world's most extensive and diverse coral reefs.23 Collectively, these ecosystems provide habitats for some of the world's most iconic yet increasingly threatened species, including: the Asian Elephant; Sumatran, Malayan and Indo-Chinese Tigers; Orangutan; Sumatran Rhinoceros; and about half of the world's mostly arboreal hornbill species.

These and other non-iconic yet critical biodiversity assets are however increasingly threatened by "habitat change, climate change, invasive alien species, over-exploitation (as a result of deforestation and land-use and wateruse change, as well as wildlife hunting and trade for food), pollution and poverty."24 Strategies to address these threats, set out in detail in the "ASEAN Biodiversity Outlook", include: increasing the area and number and effective management of protected areas; preparing endangered species action plans including wildlife conservation programmes adopted by environmental organisations; designing ecotourism strategies and activities; strengthening management of the region's 38 ASEAN Heritage Parks; and civil education and public awareness-raising programmes.

Noting the significance of the region's natural assets and the importance of ecotourism to support biodiversity conservation and generate rural incomes, tourism ministers at the 2016 ASEAN Ecotourism Forum signed the Pakse Declaration. The Declaration, providing a roadmap for the strategic development of tourism corridors to connect the region's "ecotourism clusters", complements and builds upon the preparation of country-specific ecotourism plans and policies prepared by each ASEAN member state.

Highlighting the importance of enabling policy environments, considerable additional effort is needed

by many ASEAN governments to remove barriers and incentivise private investment in good-practice ecotourism. Recent tourism reports by the World Bank on Lao PDR and Vietnam, for example, recommend: simplified procedures for tourism business registration and operating licenses; improved conservation regulations and guidelines; the revision of tax incentives; and, improved procedural transparency and deployment of ombudsman to investigate malpractice.25 Further, and by way of contrast to African ecotourism, for example, an additional substantial barrier to goodpractice approaches in Southeast Asia, is the lack of laws, regulations and procedures to establish ecotourism concessions in protected areas or natural landscapes. This is a situation likely to be slowly yet incrementally addressed moving forward, which is in line with many global policies including the passing of Motion 130 of the 2021 IUCN World Conservation Congress that calls on members countries, to: strengthen "sustainable tourism's role in biodiversity conservation and community resilience"; and "establish enterprise-based partnerships to incorporate conservation and biodiversity monitoring across the tourism supply chain".26 ASEAN member countries of IUCN include Cambodia, Lao PDR, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam.

In summary, Southeast Asia

- (i) is home to exceptional biodiversity and natural assets of high tourism value, and
- has the foundations of an enabling policy environment for conservation tourism to support these often threatened and vulnerable assets.

Recognising threats to the region's natural capital, especially through climate change and over-harvesting for sale and consumption, the World Bank and others point to the high potential of nature-based tourism to help "build forward better", and transition to greener regenerative economies. Thus, clear opportunities are emerging for conservation tourism to capitalise on

- increasingly favourable policy environments and
- the COVID-19 induced demand for domestic and nature-based tourism, especially experience-rich products targeted towards young travellers and the upsurge in regenerative tourism,27 which briefly stated "aims to restore the harm that our system has already done to the natural world".28

Chapter 2

NINE CORE TENETS OF CONSERVATION TOURISM: LESSONS FROM AFRICA, LATIN AMERICA AND ASIA

This section of the paper summarises findings from a review of 12 good-practice businesses demonstrating strong alignment with the aims, values and traits of conservation tourism. The 12 businesses, listed in Table 1, were selected from a longer list of around 30 businesses reviewed through desk-top and secondary research. The review distils key ingredients or rather, the core tenets of conservation tourism. The 12 businesses were selected owing to their ability to reflect:

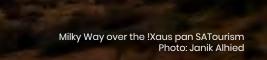
- a strong commitment to wildlife and ecosystems conservation;
- varying price points from mid- to high-end;
- contrasting ecosystems (land- and sea-scapes);
- different geographies from Africa, Asia and Latin

"Sustainability is embedded in the DNA of companies committed to conservation tourism. They want to do it right and are willing to fight for it."

Eleanor Muller !Xaus Lodge, Transfrontier Parks Destinations

Table 1: Good Practice Businesses Included in the Study

Business	Region, Country
Borana Lodge	East African, Kenya
Chumbe Island Coral Park Ltd	East Africa, Tanzania
Nkwichi Lodge	Southern Africa, Mozambique
Wolwedans	Southern Africa, Namibia
!Xaus Lodge	South Africa
Wilderness Safaris	Eastern and Southern Africa
Lapa Rios	Central America, Costa Rica
Rainforest Expeditions	South America, Peru
Huilo Huilo	South America, Chile
Misool	Southeast Asia, Indonesia
Cardamom Tented Camp	Southeast Asia, Cambodia
Blue Ventures Expeditions Ltd	Global



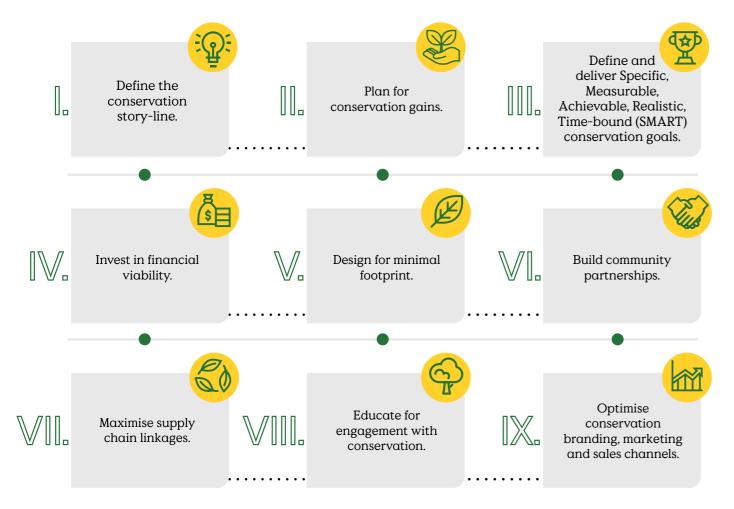
https://environment.asean.org/awgncb/
 ASEAN Centre for Biodiversity (2017). ASEAN Biodiversity Outlook 2. Philippines.
 24 2021. http://chm.aseanbiodiversity.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=146&Itemid=232
 Developing Nature-Based Tourism as a Strategic Sector for Green Growth in Lao PDR* © World Bank 2020. & "Recent Economic Developments" of Vietnam. Special Focus: Vietnam's Tourism Developments: Stepping Back from the Tipping Point - Vietnam's Tourism Trends, Challenges, and

²⁶ 2021. https://www.iucncongress2020.org/motion/130

²⁷ 2020. https://www.regenerativetravel.com/impact/taking-regenerative-tourism-to-scale-everyone-has-a-role-to-play/

²⁸ 2020. https://www.globalfamilytravels.com/post/regenerative-tourism-defined-3-examples

The nine core tenets identified through the review are listed below and described under sub-headings that follow. Unless otherwise stated, the examples of good practice quoted below were discerned from desk-top review or through interviews and email exchanges with representatives from each business. As the models assessed can be used to showcase additional points of good practice, brief summaries of each business are available online.



Beyond these core tenets, an additional and critical consideration influencing the design and operation of conservation tourism are issues pertaining to land-rights and ownership. This is a complex area of consideration that is situation specific with legal issues and frameworks varying between sites within a nation as well as across nation states (including across Southeast Asia). Hence, this issue is not addressed in detail herein as the paper's purpose is to distil the core tenets of designing and operationalising conservation tourism, rather than examine and contrast arrangements for structuring land-rights agreements (which is reviewed elsewhere²⁹).

I. Define the Conservation Story-line

At the heart of every conservation tourism business, is a compelling conservation story-line to explain to clients and visitors and share with the broadest possible audience. A central story-line is inevitably

broken down into smaller component stories, each contributing towards the rich tapestry of the main story. Story-lines may centre around efforts to protect and conserve an endangered species such as tigers, elephants or gibbons, or threatened ecosystems such as mangroves, cloudforests or coral reefs supporting an eclectic mix of species. It may tell the story of the creation of a (privately) protected area, for example, or the role of the local community in supporting the health of the ecosystem. Whatever the focus, visitor products and excursions such as treks, boat-rides, camps, photography tours, cultural tours and monitoring patrols are developed around the story-lines; thus bringing the conservation objective and related activities to life and, in so doing, explaining the web of beneficiaries linked to the conservation tourism business. Wherever possible innovative tools and approaches are used to explain story-lines.

- The goal of Kenya's **Borana Lodge** is to create a rhino sanctuary and habitat for this and other endangered species. Activities developed around this story-line include horse-riding, game drives, guided walks, mountain-biking, farm tours, family and cross-cultural experiences, and conservation activities such as rhino-tracking.
- Huilo Huilo in Southern Chile's Patagonian Andes was developed as Biological Reserve and 100,000ha privately protected area. The site, being home to a wealth of unique species of flora and fauna, aims to protect and conserve the reserve for future generations through its three pillars of conservation, community integration and sustainable tourism. Activities include bike tours, spiritual tours, canopy walks, fine-dining, trekking, trail running, craft workshops and many more besides.
- · Working mainly around the Indian and Pacific Oceans to restore ocean life by putting local communities first, Blue Ventures is "working to create a world where small-scale fishers have bigger catches, better livelihoods and improved food security, and where healthy oceans teem with life for generations to come". Client activities include diving and snorkelling, joining reef surveys, village tours and homestays.

II. Plan for Conservation Gains



In contrast to other types of tourism that may or may not diligently aim to safeguard threatened biodiversity, the business objective of conservation tourism is to measurably and demonstrably conserve and increase target biodiversity and ecosystem health, thus enabling visitors to

- enjoy the site without degrading it, and
- know they are directly and purposefully contributing to its long-term protection, conservation and regeneration.

Conservation issues, as a key pillar of the business model, are considered in every business decision. A business mind-set is required to achieve the objectives of protection, conservation and rehabilitation of threatened wildlife together with their habitats and surrounding ecosystems such as tropical forests, wetlands and coral reefs. Tourism and conservation complement and support each other. The business component is typically designed either simultaneously or after initiation of the conservation component. This contrasts with other forms of tourism, that are based around natural resources, which may contribute to conservation, perhaps by paying park fees or hiring local guides, but not have clear conservation goals embedded in their business plans with a long-term vision of how profits and conservation targets will increase over time.



²⁹ https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/global-wildlife-program/publication/collaborative-management-partnership-toolkit

- Cardamon Tented Camp in Cambodia is a joint initiative between Yanna Adventures, The Minor Group and international NGO, Wildlife Alliance, to develop a product that directly supports the ongoing activities of Wildlife Alliance to protect the biodiverse Cardamon forest and its wildlife, including patrolling of the forest and monitoring wildlife activities, which are also part of the tourism product. The roles of the tourism businesses and the international NGO were clearly defined from the outset enabling the strengths of each to combine and create positive synergies for conservation and income generation.
- Building on the Tambopata Research Center, Rainforest Expeditions (under its previous name Tambopata Nature Tours) in Peru was launched to build a lodge integrated with local forests and the environment, using traditional materials that would allow indigenous communities to generate incomes from visitation, research and conservation rather than unsustainable extraction-based activities.

As such, net-positive conservation outcomes are a primary objective of the business model, safeguarding the long-term integrity of the ecosystem as the habitat for vulnerable wildlife species. This is in contrast to other forms of nature-based tourism, that use natural assets to attract visitors but have limited if any measurable conservation outcomes.

Where conservation tourism involves travel to relatively undisturbed and often protected natural areas, there may be acute challenges and even contradictions in the quest to balance ecosystem services with tourism development. The development of conservation tourism often finds itself at the nexus of this contradiction. Its design and delivery require net-positive outcomes that enable conservation through development, allowing the business to develop and guarantee biodiversity and heritage assets are preserved for future generations. To ensure habitat and key species protection, conservation tourism embraces a holistic approach to business planning identifying profitable investments that conserve and enhance natural capital and align with local community vision. Thus, the business model itself becomes a visitor attraction and story-line.

- Tanzania's Chumbe Island Coral Park was designed as a holistic conservation-oriented social business that included zoning with long-term conservation of terrestrial resources in mind (e.g., a small zone for tourism activities subject to a limit of 18 visitors on the island at one time), as well as balancing community fishing needs in the design of reef protection with no-go zones and a managed fishing area. The business also made early plans to generate long-term support for conservation by creating free-of-charge school and educational programmes for local people.
- A key enabler to develop conservation tourism is government legislation. Legal and regulatory structures are required to protect and manage natural areas while allowing tourism business development in designated areas. Combining conservation and business regulation in government policy is essential to allow the controlled and regulated use of a region's natural assets and support thriving economies for local communities. Where such legal structures are weak or poorly defined, an entrepreneur may decide to pursue a conservation tourism initiative while simultaneously lobbying for improvements in the legal and regulatory environment.
- The Namibian government recognises community tourism enterprises, which have created the opportunity for 86 communal conservancies run by local residents. People living on conservancy land are granted rights to utilise wildlife sustainably, including harvesting meat and the sale of trophy hunting rights, based upon regulation and quotas. This way they benefit from wildlife management and tourism and have less incentive to trade in illegal animal parts. In this context, the community initiated Torra Wildlife Conservancy has a long-standing joint-venture partnership with high-end safari operator Wilderness Safaris for their Damaraland Camp. Recognising the value of experienced lodge operations to ensure high-quality standards, the joint-venture partners have engaged Namib Lodge Company in a 10-year management lease.



"To be sustainable is highly complex in some areas and at the same time incredibly simple in others. No matter how carefully you build your business, it has an impact."

Eleanor Muller
!Xaus Lodge, Transfrontier Parks Destinations

III. Define and Deliver SMART Conservation Goals



In their effort to achieve target species protection and net-positive conservation outcomes, Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound (SMART) conservation goals are an essential component of conservation tourism.³⁰ To concretise priorities of protecting biodiversity and maintaining ecosystem integrity, conservation tourism identifies optimal methods to achieve long-term net-positive impact. In the process, they typically

- (i) specify the target biodiversity the business aims to protect,
- (ii) define and prioritise key opportunities and threats to be managed through tourism interventions,
- iii) identify impact measurement protocols, and
- (iv) set out a habitat management strategy with specific actions co-designed by core stakeholders that are integrated into the businesses' marketing and interpretation strategies.
 - Borana Lodge and Conservancy sets targets and goals for the protection of one of Kenya's largest rhinoceros populations and other key species, thus increasing target populations by reducing poaching and other threats. Their longterm conservation objectives are made possible by long-term financial investments from the business into its conservation activities.
 - Wilderness Safaris leverages significant donations and support from its clientele base network for its conservation efforts through its non-profit, Wilderness Wildlife Trust. Through donations and partnerships with other conservation NGOs and businesses, it completed the largest cross-border translocation of the critically endangered Black Rhinoceros

in Botswana on three occasions between 2003 and 2015, in addition to many other conservation initiatives around Africa including wild dog conservation in the Kalahari, elephant conservation in Rwanda, and anti-poaching in Zimbabwe.

 At Rainforest Expeditions' Tambopata Research Center, the Tambopata Macaw Project was born "with the dream of saving the macaw population that 30 years ago was threatened by hunting, indiscriminate logging, and the black market."

When designing SMART conservation goals, consideration must also be given to how conservation activities will be measured and the risks and potential impacts of the total business operation on its natural and cultural environment will be monitored. The consideration of potential outcomes and risks leads directly to the design of frameworks, guidelines and actions to minimise risks and robustly demonstrate net-positive conservation and community wellbeing credentials (such frameworks also form part of the venture's education and interpretation strategy). Thus, conservation tourism embraces a continuous and long-term monitoring of

- (i) the biodiversity being protected, and
- (ii) tourism impacts on natural resources and community wellbeing.

While this can be a time- and resource-intense effort, feedback loops lead directly to business improvements with stronger conservation outcomes. Conservation tourism may seek collaboration with local communities and/or visitors as a cost-effective means of achieving long-term monitoring protocols and increasing stakeholder understanding of project goals. In some cases, such collaboration may be a requirement of a concession contract, lease agreement or donor financing contract.

- At Lapa Rios, an ecolodge in Costa Rica that manages a private reserve adjacent to Corcovado National Park, guests pay to install and review camera traps generating photos and data essential to the survival of Jaguars and other cats. The lodge also supports researchers conducting important monitoring and research on key species in the private reserve and the national park by providing them with accommodation, food and other support.
- Wilderness Safaris management structure includes environmental teams responsible for reporting on species monitoring and community engagement, noting on their website "In a world of fake news and fake claims we make it measurable."
- Blue Ventures promote science-led ecotourism in marine areas. In Timor-Leste, visitors take part in cetacean and reef monitoring around Atauro Island generating data for communitymanaged reef conservation areas. The tours generate community awareness on the value of reefs through a homestay programme that hosts visitors joining monitoring programmes.
- Findings from the Tambopata Research Center highlight that the macaw clay lick observation by tourists does not cause any significant reductions in the number of birds using the lick and thus supports the sites' conservation objectives.



Like any business, conservation tourism requires capital investment and financially viability to generate a profit. Yet it is also required to deliver net-positive benefits to the target biodiversity, ecosystems and host community wellbeing, and visitor experiences that generate strong word-of-mouth sales. In short, sound business models and positive financial returns are prerequisites to achieve conservation goals, which may require robust revenue models with lower profits over the short-term. As such, profits and returns on investment may take longer than other forms of business.

The size of any initial investment depends on multiple factors, such as the scale of any facilities for on-going operation including access-related infrastructure; land rehabilitation that may be needed; and capacity building and skills development for local employees and community members. In addition, a stepping-stone in the design of conservation tourism is a positive relationship with public (and where relevant park) authorities and local communities, which can be time- and resourceconsuming.31 While conservation tourism typically involves higher costs and risks related to community engagement and conservation-related activities, some businesses reviewed obtained grant funding or in-kind support to part-finance these elements. Moreover, unless land is owned, in times of hardship the venture faces the risk of losing lease or concession agreements owing to payment defaults. Hence, long-term agreements that include lease payments based on a percentage of turnover rather than profit are typically essential.

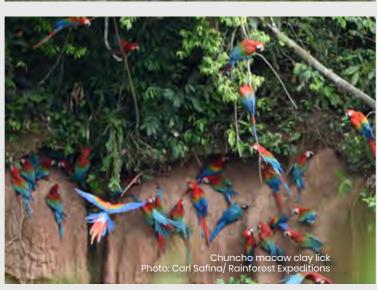
Once smaller-scale operations have established a viable and reliable product, they may benefit from investments to upscale or diversify their business model. Conversely, while on the one hand the larger the project the greater the financial risk, on the other it may be that larger projects are able to benefit from partnerships with larger, more experienced investors that bring

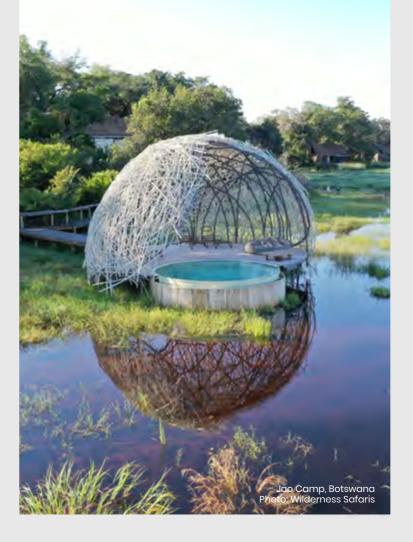
- (i) a reliable, quality brand with greater access to visitor markets, and
- greater depth of experience to navigate challenges and potential pitfalls.

In summary, conservation tourism requires experienced investors with considerable business acumen and exceptional dedication to conservation outcomes. Successful ventures are typically established and managed with a mindset of extraordinary (often personal) commitment and diligent financial planning.32









Moreover, owing to the complexity

- (i) of different business models and types of concession agreements, and
- demand for successful conservation tourism, there is on-going creativity and innovation in the structure of agreements (between public, private and community stakeholders), as well as the design of financial models and approaches, which may be pieced together with contributions from development partners.33
 - The resilience and impact of the privately funded Borana Conservancy has increased by engaging private investors as shareholders, whose initial contribution funded the conservancy's trust. Each shareholder contributes no less than \$100,000 per year (can be higher based on per guest fees, which are \$175 per guest night). This funding system generates \$900,000 annually for conservation, or some 75% of the total annual operational budget, supporting more than 140 rangers and multiple conservation programmes.
 - Through its expansion plan, Wilderness Safaris diversified its operations and became a publicly traded company in 2010. While this initial effort to enable public ownership did not achieve the targeted result, the experiences stimulated new thinking. In 2018/19 the safari company sold 58% of its shares to two shareholder groups, including a social impact investment fund and a private equity investor, enabling it to better finance and manage overall costs.
 - Huilo Huilo offer multiple lodging, accommodation and activity options across a range of price-points catering to domestic and international visitors, thus maximising income potential and not depending upon any one visitor market.34
 - <u>The Long Run</u>, a global membership organisation for nature-based tourism businesses committed to driving sustainability, facilitates exchange of knowledge and experience between members, including knowledge-sharing on structuring financing and financial planning.

³¹ Following initial community meetings, it took Rainforest Expeditions 7 years to establish their first lodge. ³² See for example, Massyn, P.J. 2021. "Feasibility studies, business plans and predicting returns for new lodging facilities" in Spenceley, A. 2021.

[&]quot;Handbook for Sustainable Tourism Practitioners". Elgai

³³ See for example, Thompson, A., Massyn, P.J., Pendry, J., Pastorelli, J. 2014. "Tourism Concessions in Protected Natural Areas: Guidelines for Managers". United Nations Development Programme AND, 2016. "An Introduction to Tourism Concessioning: 14 Characteristics of Successful Programs". The

³⁴ See, Hora, B. (2017) "Do large private protected areas contribute to sustainable development? A case study from the Huilo Huilo Biological Reserve in Neltume, Chile." Eco.mont, Vol. 9, No. 1. AND, Hora, B. (2018) "Private Protection Initiatives in Mountain Areas of Southern Chile and Their Perceived Impact on Local Development—The Case of Pumalin Park." Sustainability, 10.



"It took us many years to establish the business. Ignorance was the key to success; it was a combination of luck and common sense."

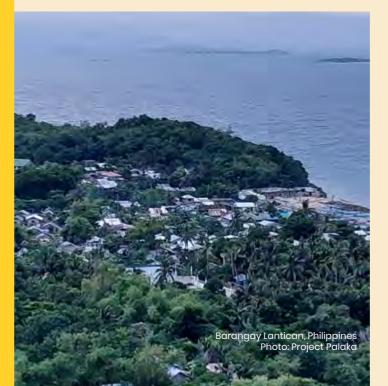
Eduardo Nycander Founder & President, Rainforest Expeditions

V. Design for Minimal Footprint

With a conservation driven agenda, the tourism system is designed to minimise impact on the environment. This core tenet starts with site access as one of two fundamental 'must haves'.35 As the journey to the site is likely to form an important part of the visitor experience, in conservation tourism attention is directed to transport modes designed to have a minimal impact on the environment. While traditional forms of transport such as dug-out canoes, a horse and cart or even a jungle walk to the site might serve as the optimal arrival experience, design needs extend to evacuating guests in emergencies and bringing in supplies, which might require harder infrastructure including the need for environmental impact assessments to determine the most appropriate and minimal footprint.

Similarly, visitor experiences and the wider tourism system are carefully designed to promote enjoyment without degradation. Conservation tourism limits intrusion into vulnerable habitats by excluding or limiting visitors and their impacts. Projects embrace a low-impact, high-value approach to their design. Low impact can be achieved through low impact tours such as a cap on visitor numbers. Across the board, the size of lodging and built infrastructure is kept deliberately small to reduce environmental impacts. High value can be achieved through targeting high-end markets, or through visitors that contribute to conservation goals, for example through citizen science projects that enable long-term monitoring of vulnerable species.





 Misool, an ecolodge in Indonesia's Raja Ampat has been constructed with sustainability integrated in its design and operation. Built with recycled hardwoods and adopting an architectural style to blend with the island environment, the lodge also supports the local economy through locally crafted furniture. The lodge reduces its overall impacts by managing grey water through an artificial wetland system, collecting the majority of its water from rainwater and using only biodegradable soaps with no use of chemical cleaners or herbicides.

Conservation tourism may involve investment as well as de-investment in infrastructure, depending upon the former land use. In some instances, rehabilitation projects are required to facilitate new use that meets conservation objectives and enhances the visitor experience.

• In Nambia, **Wolwedans** (part of the Greater Sossuvlei Landscape Association) uses a co-management approach that embraces a mosaic of private lands including other tourist lodges and guest farms, working cattle farms, game farms and private reserves to create a larger conservation landscape. The company has created the largest private reserve in Southern Africa with an area of over 170,000ha, by removing cattle grazing fences and converting grazing land to protected open space.

In other cases, sites may already have the assets for conservation tourism and require only visitor accommodation. In such cases, any supporting infrastructure and management systems must ensure compliance and alignment with recognised sustainability standards, protocols, and good practices.

• The Nkwichi Lodge in Mozambique designed and constructed their low-impact facility from locally available natural materials, ensuring that in the event of its removal, the environment would return to its natural state within 2 years.

³⁵ The second fundamental is safety; visitors must be able to reach and enjoy a destination with minimal risk.



VI. Build Community Partnerships



Conservation tourism contributes to transformative opportunities for indigenous and local communities to enhance their wellbeing. Tourism development exerts a myriad of effects that change host community relationships with surrounding ecosystems and their quality of life. Hence, inclusive community participation and support for conservation actions and sustainable tourism development are a prerequisite. This is especially the case in areas with legal or traditional rights to resources where tourism is considered essential for the prosperity of local communities.

Conservation tourism demands a holistic yet targeted approach to embracing indigenous people and host communities in ways that are sensitive to their cultural heritage.36 Effort is focused on communities, groups of communities, or specific community members who are most important for, and relevant to, conservation aims. This contrasts with other forms of tourism, that may provide employment opportunities to the nearest or most convenient communities to "check the box" of community involvement. In conservation tourism, community members identified as key conservation actors are embraced as partners. This not only includes community leaders, but also hunters and other groups of individuals who are part of the conservation situation

analysis. Throughout their life-cycle, conservation tourism businesses engage in deeper levels of dialogue with communities to better understand their goals and preferred futures, thereby directing tourism development toward local needs, interests and limits to enhance tourism's value to the host community. Conservation tourism benefits host communities economically, socially and environmentally; demonstrably improving their collective quality of life to the extent that management of the target species (and the ecosystems upon which they depend) becomes an intrinsic goal of the community.³⁷

> • The Ese'eja Indian Community in the Tambopata Candamon Reserve Zone has engaged in a joint venture with tour operator **Rainforest Expeditions** in the co-management of the Posadas Amazonas Lodge. The key to the success of the lodge's long-term conservation impact is a profit-sharing agreement, which treats the community as a business partner. In a second 20-year agreement, 75% of the lodge's profit is retained by the community while the lodge founders receive 25%.

It is not uncommon for conservation objectives to compete with other resource or land uses, with conflicts becoming acute where there is a lack of regulation or, for example, use of harmful products such as crop

pesticides. While some uses may co-exist, they are frequently mutually exclusive resulting in competition for land.38 Where resource demand becomes higher than its supply, trade-offs between competing uses are typically negotiated. In such negotiations, conservation tourism engages with communities to collectively set out income generation, community development and, if relevant, poverty alleviation goals to reduce resource competition and ultimately convert the community into biodiversity and ecosystem conservation ambassadors.

· As landowners and guardians of a 120,000-hectare community conservation area, 16 villages in Mozambique aim to stop hunting. felling trees, and utilising destructive fishing practices and instead encourage sustainable agriculture. They receive technical support from their board member Nkwichi Lodge, who encourage and support them in the creation and management of the conservation area.

Genuine community participation and entrepreneurship are fundamental to the on-going success of conservation tourism. Communities should advance the development process to the greatest extent possible and, wherever workable, have ownership of economic opportunities. Key to a successful partnership is a meeting of leadership philosophy, style and approach

between the entrepreneur and the community, developing shared values and purpose. This in contrast to other efforts to involve communities in tourism, that may move ahead faster than the local community can process or use a more top-down approach, which fails to offer long-term gains in benefit sharing or local employment.

• In South Africa, !Xaus Lodge is co-managed by Transfrontier Park Destinations with the indigenous ‡Khomani San and Mier communities. Both communities have equity in the lodge, instilling a long-term vision and commitment to conservation alongside direct employment benefits, which are also significant compared with other ventures in the area. The partnership is unique as it was able to bring together two communities with historic animosity towards each other, thus promoting the long-term joint management of ancestral lands for conservation of the Kalahari's wildlife and desert landscape. Long-term thinking drives the partnership; in the event that Transfrontier Park Destinations is removed from the equation, the entire legal structure would pass to the communities.

³⁶ "Free, Prior and Informed Consent" protocols published by Conservation International may be relevant; see Section 3.2 below.
³⁷ One Nature's "Wild Happiness" framework summarised in section 3.2 offers an approach to engage host communities in the design of conservation tourism and measure its impacts on their wellbeing.

³⁸ Van Berkum, S., E. Arets and I. Bezlepkina (2012) Competing claims on land for food and biodiversity; Drivers, impacts and responses. LEI

VII. Maximise Supply Chain Linkages



Tourism supply chains relate to the local procurement of products and services directly or indirectly related to the operation of the business and local tourism system. They offer wide-ranging, situation specific opportunities to maximise socio-economic linkages to local communities through, for example, linkages to small scale agricultural and handicraft producers and local transport providers. From an economic perspective, minimising leakage (tourism expenditure that leaves the destination economy) is an important and responsible sustainability strategy, with higher leakages corresponding to lower economic benefits.³⁹ Minimising leakage implies strengthening intersectoral linkages by converting supply chains to value chains. Due to their generally remote locations, conservation tourism demands creativity to establish and grow backward linkages that benefit local economies, while being cost-effective (or at least, impact effective) for the business.

- To overcome issues of produce quality and reliability of supply, Borana Lodge established its own organic farm employing local people to provide fresh fruit, vegetables and other produce to guests. Knowledge shared and learned through this operation increases the likelihood of local people starting their own businesses over time.
- Operating expeditions in remote areas away from any visitor services led Blue Ventures to develop the capacities of local communities to provide homestay experiences, guided tours and other supply chain services. Moreover, coping with COVID-19 which halted all expeditions, led **Blue Ventures** to train community members in collecting data and managing conservation monitoring to ensure uninterrupted continuity of their decade-long efforts to track the resilience and vulnerability of key species and their marine ecosystems.
- The **Huilo Huilo** Biosphere Reserve illustrates that private protected areas can motivate local people to engage in entrepreneurial endeavours, access startup capital and tap into supply chains associated with the visitor economy. With improved paved-road access, local services increased from one hostel in 2005 to more than 15 cabins, five hostels and bed & breakfasts, four campsites, six lodges and two hotels in 2016. Thus, local families established services such as small supermarkets, bakeries, coffee shops, restaurants, internet facilities and craft shops to serve an expanding tourism system, thereby reducing household dependency on the harvesting of forest and wildlife assets from the protected area.





VIII. Educate for Engagement with Conservation



A core value of conservation tourism is to provide groups or individuals (including local people, clients, other businesses, public servants etc.) with knowledge to expand their understanding of the natural world and the impact of people on the environment. Conservation tourism aims to diligently raise local, national, and international awareness as to the conservation value of the target species and their related ecosystems and encourage participation in conservation goals.

• Chumbe Island Coral Park has provided free tours to students and locals for over twenty years, which has led to greater conservation support owing to many of these visitors becoming community and local government leaders.

Interpretation is oriented towards visitor and host communities to raise awareness, enhance understanding and, by design, clarify, broaden and ultimately change perspectives and attitudes.⁴⁰ Where conservation tourism operates in locations where sightings of target or exotic species are not guaranteed, a quality interpretation strategy serves to explain the likelihood of sightings and as a tool to manage any disappointment that may occur with non-sightings.

- At **Lapa rios**, guests pay to participate in the installation and maintenance of camera traps. Hence they learn about the images generated and data collection methods that are essential to the survival of jaguars, pumas and other cats.
- Rainforest Expeditions recognise and celebrate sustainable indigenous knowledge and livelihoods, which is reflected in their tour package around brazil nuts, which can only grow wild in healthy, old-growth rainforest.
- **Blue Ventures Expeditions** hosts "voluntourists" or tourists who volunteer to particiate in uninterrupted long-term monitoring of species.

³⁹ E.g. Meyer, D. (2007). Pro-poor tourism: From leakages to linkages. A conceptual framework for creating linkages between the accommodation sector and 'poor' neighbouring communities Current Issues in Tourism, 10(6), 558–583 40 Wearing, S. and J. Neil (2013) Ecotourism. Oxford: Reed Educational and Professional Publishing.

IX. Optimise Conservation Branding, Marketing and Sales Channels

Marketing, branding and promotion are critical success factors for conservation tourism. Often located some distance from mainstream tourism sites and attractions, conservation tourism businesses must deliver high-quality visitor experiences able to generate significant word-of mouth sales. Further, long-term competitiveness benefits strongly from a recognised brand (aligned with the wider destination brand) and proactive marketing and sales channels.

Conservation tourism targets travellers motivated to experience unique natural assets and authentic manifestations of local culture. Their products curate special, memorable experiences often tailored to the individual guest's needs and wants, which resonates with their generally higher rates. Although not all conservation tourism ventures fall into the high-end category, many build their business and marketing strategies at the entry-level of high-end markets.

While many conservation tourism products serve the primary focus and reason for their clients' trip, wherever possible they must also tap into nearby visitor market

flows. While remoteness is typically one of the product's key values (and unique selling points), access issues can also be a significant challenge. While some conservation tourism ventures benefit from the financial means and technical capacity to establish their brand, others have made do with a skeleton marketing strategy on a tight budget.

- Borana Lodge's partnerships with family members and investors together with the owners of the adjacent Lewa Conservancy with a total of ten separate high-end lodges has resulted in a viable ecosystem for supporting a diversity of species while creating a variety of accommodation options, sizes and price-points for clients of different group sizes with differing spending patterns and willingness to pay.
- While surrounded by many unique fauna, flora and landscape features of high visitor appeal,
 !Xaus Lodge adds to its brand position and marketing potential by promoting
- (i) the traditions and folklore of its two principal communities and
- (ii) itself as Africa's only International Dark Sky Sanctuary.

- Providing opportunities for recognition and profiling exceptional conservation tourism efforts, sustainability platform The Long Run positions and promotes ecolodges that are committed to promoting an inclusive, holistic paradigm of conservation that enhances livelihoods and fosters intercultural dialogue, including through their Global Ecosphere Retreats standards and certification.
- With around 50 visitor experiences to sell,
 Wilderness Safaris has its own inhouse sales team to offer a wealth of tour options and combinations as well as arrange international flights and associated door-to-door services.

Lastly, partnerships with outbound agents such as Regenerative Travel or Responsible Travel can help to target the right audience and boost sales.

Earth Changers, for example, works to connect travellers with tourism destinations, products and services that are demonstrably sustainable. Developed by tourism sustainability experts, all products and services listed on their website are included "by merit of being Earth Changers: the demonstrable results from true commitment to sustainable development through tourism."







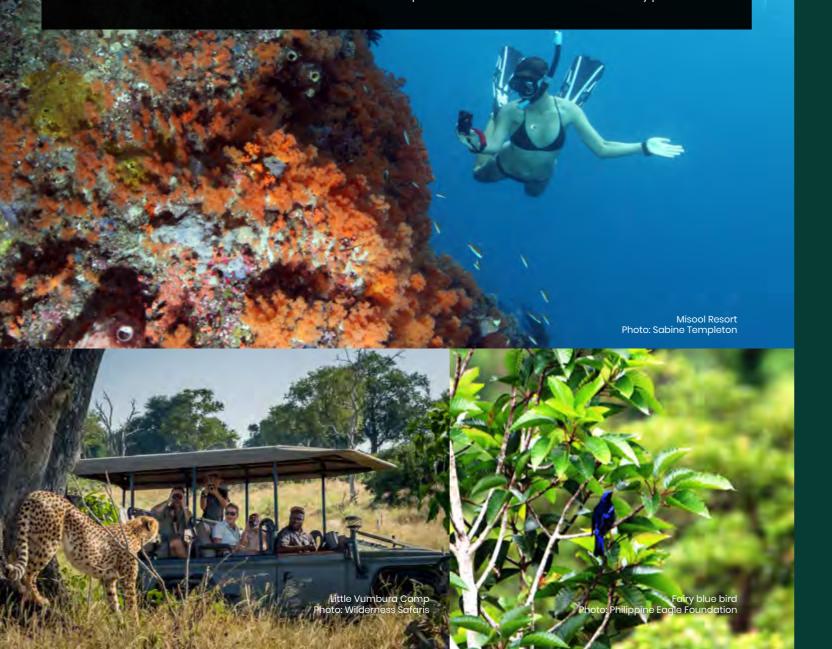
TOOLS AND STANDARDS FOR CONSERVATION TOURISM

As an industry, travel and tourism is complex and multifaceted. It is composed of multiple types of: transport; accommodation; restaurant and retail providers; sports, adventure, cultural and other recreational service providers; together with their accompanying and extended management components embracing, for example, financial, insurance, marketing and promotion services. Given each element of the system has its own sustainability implications, the design and delivery of sustainability standards and protocols for any tourism business, including conservation tourism businesses, is equally complex requiring adoption of different tools and compliance with various standards.

As illustrated in the core tenets, managers of conservation tourism business need to embrace and demonstrate alignment with sustainability practices and standards, not least to illustrate the businesses'

conservation tourism credentials to clients and investors. This process starts with the need to read widely on the topic to understand options and approaches relevant to the approach and scale of the business design. Unsurprisingly, larger businesses will need to consider a wider range of tools and standards than smaller enterprises, which maybe able to focus on discreet tools and reporting systems especially relevant to their smaller scale and footprint.

To guide businesses of all scales through the wide range of tools and standards available to support conservation tourism decision-making, the paper includes a tool box with 24 sustainability tools, standards and resources available online. The tool box lists resources that are directly relevant but non-specific to conservation tourism, and those that are specific to the needs of conservation tourism. Collectively, the resources provide a foundation to guide the design and operation of conservation tourism businesses, enabling them to practice and advocate their sustainability practices.



Chapter 3

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CONSERVATION TOURISM IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

3.1 Conclusions

As demonstrated in this paper, the tourism private sector can play a crucial role in conserving threatened and endangered biodiversity.

Firstly, where legal frameworks are conducive, tourism entrepreneurs have created protected areas

- (i) through private reserves and by partnering with communities to jointly manage areas or support community management of communal protected areas, or
- by strengthening protection of public park systems and embracing private lands adjacent to protected areas or even working with government to create new protected areas.

This is highly significant owing to the role and significance of protected areas and protected area networks in

- protecting and conserving critical biodiversity and ecosystems, and
- conserving sufficient and representative examples of major ecosystems that are deemed necessary to achieve the UN SDGs and the Aichi Biodiversity Targets and in so doing maintain life on earth and avoid systems collapse.41

Secondly, besides businesses being more adept, versatile and able to develop higher-quality visitor experiences and optimise sales channels than government or NGO actors, commercially-led activity is able to

- support monitoring and evaluation through visitor and citizen-science research, and
- provide accommodation, resources and services to professional researchers.

To deliver such benefits, businesses can operate as standalone conservation tourism ventures, or enter into joint venture agreements with governments, NGOs and local communities. While the range and potential structure of joint venture agreements is complex and reviewed in detail elsewhere,42 their purpose is straightforward: to achieve conservation objectives through more commercially viable and lucrative approaches. In short, conservation tourism ventures can help fund and co-implement conservation activities, often in a way that allow such activities to become part of the tourism product, thus creating win-wins for visitors, local communities, governments, NGOs and conservation.



Owing to these opportunities, tourism businesses need not be confined to marketing and sales roles for donor-funded, community-based projects created by NGOs as is often their main role in Southeast Asia. Rather, experienced entrepreneurs can creatively and purposefully develop conservation-focused initiatives which, through diligent design, can

- (i) deliver greater commercial viability as well as conservation impacts, and
- incentivise entrepreneurial partnerships between private companies and communities not found in donor-led projects.

As such, large and small commercially-led initiatives can add to the conservation efforts of the wider conservation community, and help Southeast Asia reach its goals of protecting species and habitats, many of which hang in the balance amid growing threats and pressures.

Although the concept of conservation tourism may appear to be a small niche market, this paper illustrates growing demand and interest in this form of tourism, which is especially significant as it provides a market for some of the most high-paying forms of ecotourism. By protecting key natural assets that form the basis of high-value products, conservation tourism can provide a platform to attract higher-yield markets willing to pay a premium for quality experiences with demonstrable conservation credentials.

Thus, this paper concludes there is potential for a new ecotourism paradigm in the form of conservation tourism for Southeast Asia that builds upon examples from around the world and locally in Southeast Asia.

⁴¹ For an explanation of the significance of the Aichi Target – see https://www.cbd.int/sp/targets/
⁴² See for example: (1) S. Snyman, S. & Spenceley, A (2019). "Private Sector Tourism in Conservation Areas in Africa" CABI; (2) Thompson, A., Massyn, P.J., Pendry, J., Pastorelli, J. (2014) "Tourism Concessions in Protected Natural Areas: Guidelines for Managers." United Nations Development Programme and (3) https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/global-wildlife-program/publication/ collaborative-management-partnership-toolkit

3.2 Recommendations

The following recommendations are set out to support the growth of conservation tourism in Southeast Asia. They are targeted towards the business community including businesses of all scales engaged in nature-based tourism and ecotourism, as well as tourism business associations and networks eager to improve good practice and strengthen the enabling environment for conservation tourism in Southeast Asia. Businesses and investors interested to establish conservation tourism enterprises should:

"We consider it a success when the community finds another partner that complements their tourism product better than we can."

Eleanor Muller
!Xaus Lodge, Transfrontier Parks Destinations







Treat communities as

business partners and

stakeholders not simply as beneficiaries, enabling a more organic and honest understanding of their stake in conservation tourism.









Appendix I: Summary Tables of Good Practice Models

The following tables provide summaries of 12 good-practice, often award-winning, ecotourism businesses in Africa, Asia and South America. They are not intended to be all-encompassing reviews, but rather summaries of the key information supporting the objectives of this White Paper. Of the ten included, six responded to requests for on-line interviews to expand and clarify research findings, namely: Blue Ventures; Borana Lodge and Conservancy; Chumbe Island; Misool; Posada Amazonas Lodge / Rainforest Expeditions; Wilderness Safaris; and, !Xaus. Owing to the additional information received, the tables for these businesses are more detailed than those that follow, which include: Huilo Huilo; Lapa Rios; Nkwichi Lodge; and, Wolwedans that are based solely on publicly available information.

Business	Blue Ventures Conservation (charity) / Blue Ventures Expeditions Limited
Region, Country	Multiple (including Madagascar, Kenya, Belize, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Thailand and the UK)
Landscape	Coastal and marine areas
Product	Voluntourism – expedition citizen science programme
Conservation Model	 Marine conservation through locally managed marine areas (LMMAs) initially developed through ecotourism expeditions in partnership with local communities. To ensure long-term financial sustainability, Blue Ventures has developed a variety of funding mechanisms including marine ecotourism programmes.
Conservation	 In Madagascar: Creation of the Barren Isles protected area; the largest LMMA in the Indian Ocean. Creation of Velondriake; the first LMMA to embark on registration as a nationally recognised protected area in Madagascar. Expansion of the LMMA model to communities beyond Velondriake inspiring and guiding the creation of large-scale LMMAs. Over 600 community-managed temporary fishing closures have been developed, based on community-based fisheries model first developed in Andavadoaka, Madagascar. Development of the largest community-based monitoring programme for artisanal sea turtle and shark fisheries in the Western Indian Ocean. Supported coastal communities to develop and launch one of the world's largest mangrove carbon conservation projects. Diversified coastal livelihoods by introducing innovative community owned business models such as aquaculture (sea cucumber and seaweed farming) and community-based tourism (homestays and community activities). In Timor-Lest, Belize and Madagascar:: Replicating the LMMA model into new territories and regions.

	Developing community-based tourism approaches that link community conservation with citizen science expeditions and homestays.
Best Practices	 Started in 2003, the voluntourism approach helped finance ongoing research that would otherwise be too costly. An entrepreneurial approach generating income through paid-for expeditions, linked to conservation, education, and economic development. Monitoring conducted by paying visitors through a citizen-science approach. Capacity building to create new jobs and community income streams. Long-haul expedition trips of 4-6 weeks reduce overall carbon footprint, give back more to the local economy and allow for data collection for reef ecosystem monitoring. Blue Ventures certified as a 'Responsible Whale Tour Operators' in Timor-Leste. Local staff and community members trained in monitoring after learning with visitor expeditions.
Ingredients for Success	 While first and foremost a conservation organisation, essential first steps of the model are to engage local communities, build trust and develop alternative livelihoods (same approach replicated in each site). The expeditions laid the foundations for registering as a charity enabling access to grants and donor funding. Blue Ventures Expeditions donates all its profits back to the charity and its conservation programmes, while Blue Ventures Conservation attracts grant funding for its wider activities. The tourism business was successful as a first step to engage communities in conservation by building trust and providing immediate income and benefits. The ecological data collected through the expeditions over years has proven the marine management is effective and strengthened trust and commitment to the model. In-house digital marketing strategy, operational support and training. Clear conservation goals enabled growth of grant and donor-funding, which has allowed lower-priced tours with higher take-up to support conservation monitoring.
Applications	 Voluntourism as a funding mechanism (in combination with others). Voluntourism as a tool for continuous research.
Resources	https://blueventures.org

Business	Borana Lodge & Conservancy
Region, Country	East African, Kenya
Landscape	Mt. Kenya UNESCO World Heritage Site Elephant Migration Corridor, Lewa-Borana Landscape
Product	5 lodges (and organic farm) across a private wildlife conservancy landscape providing high-end wildlife experiences that support conservation activities.

Conservation Private farm converted into a wildlife conservancy that has become Model an important landscape for protecting rhinos and 28 endangered species in the region. Commercial earnings support conservation costs of the Borana Conservancy and beyond • Leasehold company supports conservation through (i) fixed annual conservation contribution by each lodge and (ii) conservation fees charged to guests. • Protects more than 13,000ha of habitat that is part of the Lewa-Conservation Borana 37,000ha landscape, home to one of the largest rhinoceros **Impacts** populations in the world. • Increasing Black Rhinoceros population (9.4% increase in 4-year period, no poaching for seven years). Lewa-Borana Landscape has protected over 200 rhinoceros. • 12% increase in elephant population over past 5 years. • Maintains significant populations of Grey's zebra and lions **Best Practices** • The Borana Lodge is a family-owned business housed within the Borana Conservancy that became more impactful by offering shares to other lodge investors, each paying six-figure annual contributions to a conservation fund providing some 75% of total conservation budget, that supports more than 140 rangers and multiple social and environmental programs. • Conservation is part of the tourism product; guests can book "Behind the Scenes Activities" to learn about dog tracking and participate in programs that help communities. A private organic farm provides fresh fruit and vegetables to guests • The conservancy employs over 500 people from nearby communities; including and supporting them in conservation outside of the conservancy in adjacent land to broaden conservation and support social justice in land management. • The conservancy works with other NGOs and stakeholders in the landscape to make joint funding proposals and work on jointmanagement actions. Funds generated from the annual conservation contributions from shareholders support health and education programs. Ingredients for Shareholder Board oversees the financing and management of the Success conservancy. Greening the family portfolio has resulted in long-term benefits both financially, sustainability and ethically, • Balance between conservation and business. • Long-term vision for conservation is based on a business model that generates employment, taxes and revenue. High-end ecotourism goes hand-in-hand with high quality conservation. High conservation fee and minimum annual contribution has allowed the conservancy to be resilient during COVID. Invests in rigorous sustainability and resilience audits to maximize benefits for conservation, the environment and the business. **Applications** Conversion of logging concessions to private conservancies

	Biodiversity offsets of private companies set aside for conservation and ecotourism
Examples in SEA	Danum Valley (converted logging concession on Borneo that has become one of the most important conservation areas on the island)
Resources	https://www.borana.co.ke https://www.boranaconservancy.com/ https://www.lewa.org/ Annual Report

Business	Chumbe Island Coral Park Limited (CHICOP)
Region, Country	East Africa, Tanzania
Landscape	Coral island and reef ecosystem
Product	Private island experience Barefoot ecolodge 'glamping' experience Day trips snorkelling and forest walk Environmental education for local youth and community members
Conservation Model	 Marine protected area privately financed and managed through ecolodge operation. CHICOP successfully negotiated with the government for the western coral reef and forest of Chumbe Island to be gazetted as a marine protected area (MPA) and protected forest reserve, with management entrusted to CHICOP (with 10 local people on an advisory board). 24/7 patrolling financed and managed by the business. No-take zone. Day tours for local school groups and community members provided free of charge to generate maximum awareness for local people. 74ha of the island is protected with just 2.4ha set aside for ecoinfrastructure. Limit of 18 visitors on the island at one time (including day trips and overnight visitors).

Conservation Impacts	 Largest population of coconut crabs. Greater biomass recorded over time within the MPA compared to fished areas. Less impacts from bleaching on the coral than other areas. After 20+ years of protection, the Coral Reef Sanctuary has become one of the most pristine reefs in the region, with over 514 fish species and 59 hard coral genera, 90% of all recorded in East Africa, all on a one kilometre stretch of reef; turtles permanently resident due to protection and enough food in the no-take zone. Local fishermen respect the no-fishing zone boundaries as they experience its spill-over effect onto their nearby fishing grounds The Forest Reserve is one of the last undisturbed semi-arid 'coral rag' forests in Zanzibar, particularly after successful rat eradication, with 178 plant species, 82% of them being indigenous, 80 bird species.
Best Practices	 Self-sustaining MPA, a model for Payment for Ecosystem Services. Creating a no-take zone, with positive spill-over and tourism-related income guarantees a win-win for communities. Zero impact infrastructure such as collection of rainwater has minimized impacts, reduced costs and made the business resilient to drought and other resource problems. Patrolling and law enforcement done without weapons or force but through education. Annual monitoring conducted through the company's conservation & education unit with the help of students. Employing local fisherfolk has helped improve conservation synergies; 98% of staff are from local communities (40 people); most have been with the company for 10-20 years.
Ingredients for Success	 Not-for-profit objectives (commercial enterprise reinvesting profits in MPA management) Long-term vision and early investment in low impact infrastructure Strict zoning to limit impacts Profits and resources invested in rangers and conservation Advisory board made up of local people with government support
Examples in SEA	Misool
Resources	https://chumbeisland.com/about-chumbe/project-history/

Business	Misool
Region, Country	Southeast Asia, Indonesia
Landscape	Coastal reef, Raja Ampat
Product	Private island resort at the center of the 300,000 acre Misool Marine Reserve, partnered with the Misool Foundation, a registered Indonesian charity

Conservation Model	 For-profit/non-profit partnership model that supports conservation and reduces reliance on donor funding. Suite of conservation programmes including private/Community partnership marine reserve. Zoning of the reserve with no-take zones and linking the reserve to a restricted-gear blue water corridor. Privately funded local rangers patrol the area with support from marine police
Conservation Impacts	 Protection of 1220km² marine habitat (nearly twice the size of Singapore) in South Raja Ampat 250% average increase in fish biomass within the reserve (600% increase in some key sites) over a six year period 25 times more sharks inside the marine reserve than directly outside. Stopped shark finning and unchecked destructive fishing that was destroying bio-diverse reefs of Raja Ampat. Collection of 700tons of waste per year through recycling program.
Best Practices	 Manta Project conducts critical research on Oceanic mantas (<i>Mobula birostris</i>) and Reef mantas (<i>Mobula alfredi</i>), providing an education experience to guests and engage local community members. Guests contribute Manta ID photos to the manta database. Currently over 2,300 individuals. Community Recycling Project provides financial incentives to community to recycle and properly dispose of waste. Misool Resort is the main funder of the Misool Ranger Patrol, which enforces the two No-Take-Zones established in collaboration with local communities. The business operated at a loss for several years to invest in the natural asset, which has since paid dividends.
Ingredients for Success	 ROIs are measured not just in dollars but on safeguarding biomass, reducing CO2 footprint and restoring keystone species. All-in-one, holistic business-project combining site-based protection, patrolling, research and education, and a 5-star product. Ecosystem is thriving because it is the central asset of the business; the business is thriving because the ecosystem is thriving. Sustainable tourism at Misool Resort creates an income stream that adds value to Misool Foundation's conservation work. Support from diverse stakeholders, including Government of Raja Ampat, BLUD UPTD Pengelolaan Kawasan Konservasi Perairan Raja Ampat, the villages of South Misool, the Raja Ampat and Sorong Environmental Services Department, private donors, guests, and shareholders. Investors and shareholders who uphold the stated mission and vision and support Misool Foundation
Applications	 Sites that are outside of normal protected areas Investments in sensitive island or mangrove areas Remote ecotourism investment areas
Resources	https://www.misool.info/ https://www.misoolfoundation.org

Business	Posada Amazonas Lodge: Infierno Community & Rainforest	
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	Expeditions Joint Venture
Region, Country	South America, Peru
Landscape	Amazon Rainforest Tambopata National Reserve
Product	Ecolodge joint venture between Infierno Community of the Ese Eja Native People and Rainforest Expeditions
Conservation Model	 Joint venture profit-sharing partnership between an indigenous community and tour company, established in the 1990s, that has created significant long-term economic benefits and employment for the entire community in return for ensuring protection of the surrounding forests and wildlife. Private communal reserve is community protected and is where local guides take visitors to see various bird and other species The community has a concession to manage an additional area home to the Giant Otter. Self-monitoring and management of the forest and concession (the community has rules to penalize community members for hunting). Inviting researchers to conduct scientific monitoring of key species.
Conservation Impacts	 Protection of rare Giant Otter, Howler monkeys, and bird species Protection of community forest (2000ha) Protection of community ecotourism concession and oxbow lake (3000ha) Hunters turned nature guides The community has expanded its conservation business into partnering with a conservation NGO in last 6 years to sell carbon
Good Practices	 Joint venture with an indigenous community including community planning and negotiation Long-term capacity building to increase the community's ability to manage and benefit from the business including ongoing training, education and internship
Ingredients for Success	 Business-oriented joint venture that maximizes the skills and expertise of both the community and company Initial planning with the community and support to the community to negotiate with the company Legal contract between the community and company that is reviewable and gives the community the right to and incentives to improve their benefits and share over time. 60-40 benefit sharing agreement between the community and company High-end ecotourism allows for significant benefits to both parties. Investment by conservation donors provided the community with ownership of the lodge Lodge designed by the company. Marketing done by the company.
Applications &	 Development of ecotourism products in areas with ethnic groups who have indigenous knowledge and traditional rights to the forest Ecotourism projects that aim to include communities in a meaningful business arrangement

Examples in SEA	Lisu Lodge
Resources	https://www.perunature.com/amazon_lodge/posada-amazonas/lodge- overview

Business	Wilderness Safaris
Region, Country	Multiple countries in Africa (including Botswana, Namibia, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Kenya, Rwanda)
Landscape	Various (including savannah, desert, rainforest, montane)
Product	 Established high-end safari tour operator operating ±50 sites High value – low volume model Clients can choose bespoke tours or full-service end-to end package within the countries Wilderness Safaris operate (also operate their own private aircraft) Circuits connect Wilderness Safaris products and camps
Conservation Model	 Create sustainable wildlife-based economies, by employing significant numbers of people from rural communities adjacent to the wildlife areas in which camps are situated. paying significant lease/concession fees to land-owners, be they government (e.g. National Parks) or communities (e.g. community concessions), thereby creating direct support for conservation of the land and wildlife. creating value for small businesses in rural areas through local procurement initiatives. harnessing significant donations and support from its client base and network to deliver its many conservation initiatives. motivating rural people to be ambassadors for wildlife conservation through employment and empowerment. supporting research, habitat management and community upliftment through the Wilderness Wildlife Trust (not-for-profit arm). supporting education opportunities through Children in the Wilderness (not-for-profit arm). Various models with local communities, governments, and private partners including concessions with national park agencies, governments and communities, and equity stakes in joint ventures with communities. Government political support has been critical.
Conservation Impacts	 Through its Wilderness Wildlife Trust, Wilderness Safaris has supported over 150 research projects, including: Reintroduction of white and black rhino in the Okavango Delta, Botswana, and continuous rhino monitoring. Wild dog relocation in Zimbabwe. Rwanda: Protection of 17 critically endangered, endangered and vulnerable species including mountain gorillas across three landscapes (Volcanoes, Akagera, and Gishwati-Mukura national parks)

	 \$14.6 million contributed to conservation in 2018 (12% of total revenue) that includes roughly \$5 million in concession and park fees.
Best Practices	 Circuits (inclusive tours between camps) have allowed the company to make business (investment) decisions that appeal to their clientele looking for high value, authentic experiences while making the best choices for conservation and business sustainability. Internal sustainability fund and supported through a bed-night levy. Environmentally sensitive camp architecture: luxurious lodges designed to have the lightest environmental impact. 2,800 employees. 85%+ of camp staff come from remote, rural communities; for 63%+ the job is their first formal employment.
Ingredients for Success	 Taking the business to scale enables greater conservation opportunities. Long-term investments in, and proactive involvement for, community development and biodiversity conservation. Tours are authentically maintained (no animal feeding or human-animal interactions). By building a multi-country program the company has received proposals from governments or other organizations. Willingness and ability to move on if the projects fail to deliver profits or conservation impact.
Related Examples in SEA	 &Beyond YANNA Ventures Green Discovery
Resources	https://wilderness-safaris.com

Business	!Xaus Lodge
Region, Country	Kgalagadi Trans-frontier Park, South Africa
Landscape	Desert – !Ae!Hai Kalahari Heritage Park
Product	Remote 12-room community owned ecolodge managed by Transfrontier Parks Destinations through a social enterprise joint venture agreement with two Community Trusts.
Conservation Model	 In May 2002, the ‡Khomani San and Mier communities reached an historic land settlement agreement with the government of South Africa and SANParks, restoring 50,000ha of land to the communities who had once roamed or farmed the area. The settlement agreement benefits roughly 7,000 community members providing broad incentives to adhere to SANParks' conservation regulations. !Xaus Lodge guests pay a conservation levy, which is passed to SANParks and contributes directly to park staff salaries and conservation programmes.
Conservation Impacts	The International Dark Sky Certification campaign led and developed by !Xaus Lodge resulted in the Park's certification as the only International Dark Sky Sanctuary in Africa.

	 Revenue to the park has enabled effective management of one of the world's best desert parks. Community Trust revenues generate significant community incentives to peacefully and sustainably follow conservation regulations.
Best Practices	 Community owned land leased to SANParks for its environmental management under a 99-year agreement. The Community Trusts receive a monthly rental from the lodge operation based on its turnover, plus a percentage of lodge profits. Almost all the lodge employees (29) are drawn from local communities (an average of 7 people depend upon each salary). After the first ten-years' of operation, a ‡Khomani San and Mier Community Trust was established to receive a 17% equity stake in the lodge management company.
Ingredients for Success	 Recognizing the partners' strengths in the best interest of conservation (community ownership, with outsourcing of environmental management and lodge management). A mix of revenue- and profit-sharing ensures the communities have sufficient short-term benefits (when there is no profit), while also incentivizing them to value the long-term viability of the venture and conservation efforts. Providing full ownership of the entire investment with the community at the end of the agreement increases these incentives, as opposed to many other ventures which will not handover all assets at the end of such concession agreements leaving communities without all tools needed to continue. 25-year management agreement allows for investment returns from developing a higher-quality product. Sustainability practices embedded owing to remote location and an initial environmental impact assessment that set the limit on the number of bungalows, visitors and staff allowed on site. The business has incorporated resources efficiency as a way to reduce costs and increase profitability. Xaus Lodge is one of four properties managed by the Transfrontier Parks Destinations company (its operating costs are spread across the properties).
Resources	https://www.xauslodge.co.za https://www.peaceparks.org/how/community-development/aehai-kalahari- heritage-park/

Business	Huilo Huilo
Region, Country	South America, Chile
Landscape	Valdivian temperate rainforest
Product	 Low to high end eco-lodging. Special interest tourism activities, including rafting, kayaking, trekking, mountaineering, skiing, mountain biking, horse riding and fly fishing. Scientific tourism.

Conservation Model	Private reserve located within the Reserva de la Biósfera de los Bosques Templados, established by UNESCO in 2007 (comprising 2296795 ha in which many other national parks are located).
Conservation Impacts	 Protects 100,000 ha in the municipalities of Panguipulli and Futrono. Preservation and breeding of the nearly extinct Huemul deer Darwin frog habitat protection and research
Good Practices	 Variety of accommodation options (low- to high-end) The accommodation is designed to represent natural and cultural heritage and employs environmentally-friendly landscaping.
Ingredients for Success	 Diversification in types of lodging and activities offered appeals to domestic and international markets. Local community members have established complimentary tourism enterprises Most of the Huilo Huilo Biosphere Reserve is in the buffer zone of the Biosphere reserve, where limited human activity is permitted, and a transition zone where greater activity is allowed.
Applications	 Market diversification Private protected areas adjacent to national parks
Resources	https://huilohuilo.com

Business	Lapa Rios
Region, Country	Central America, Costa Rica
Landscape	Central American tropical lowland rainforest
Product	Ecolodge
Conservation Model	 Private reserve through a conservation easement negotiated with the government which has strict protection and non-development rules (maximum 10km of trails only infrastructure allowed) Supports conservation of jaguars and other cats by supporting researchers through providing accommodation, food and equipment
Conservation Impacts	Protects 400ha tropical forest adjacent to Corcovado National Park, which adds 1% additional land to the protected area and acts as a buffer zone and wildlife corridor
Good Practices	 Guests pay to install and review camera traps that generate photos and data essential to the survival of cats Lapa Rios Guide School so that local guides can be trained and not require hiring non-local guides

Ingredients for Success	 Holistic approach that combines conservation, research, sustainability, training and education for employees
Applications	 Protection of forests adjacent to a national park Research and wildlife monitoring through a private lodge
Resources	https://www.laparios.com

Business	Nkwichi Lodge
Region, Country	Southeast Africa, Mozambique
Landscape	Riverine forest, savannah, swamps and streams, mountains, and beaches of Lake Niassa
Product	Remote ecolodge
Conservation Model	Private ecolodge on concession land that closely collaborates with 16 communities in the protection of a community conservation area
Conservation Impacts	 Created a 120,000-hectare new community conservation area with 16 communities. Nkwichi successfully protects its pristine concession of 650 hectares, with 4km of coastline, from poaching, overfishing, and uncontrolled fires. As a result, zebras, warthogs, kudu, and otters are starting to return.
Good Practices	 The lodge is the main support for the conservation and community development initiatives Nkwichi employs 41 permanent staff from neighbouring villages and sometimes up to 60 daily contractors. It is one of the biggest single employers in the whole province of Niassa.
Ingredients for Success	Put local communities in the driver seat and work at their pace
Applications	Businesses working in areas where land is communally owned and managed
Resources	http://www.nkwichi.com/ http://mandawilderness.org

Business	Wolwedans
Region, Country	Southern Africa, Namibia
Landscape	Greater Sossusvlei-Namib Landscape NamibRand Nature Reserve
Product	Luxury camps portfolio

Conservation Model	 Private nature reserve that has integrated a large number of former sheep farms and rehabilitated the area by removing 1600km of fences Daily management of reserve funded through tourism Part of the Greater Sossuvlei Landscape Association (GSNL) that uses a Co-management approach that includes a mosaic of private lands including other tourist lodges and guest farms, working cattle farms, game farms and private reserves
Conservation Impacts	173,000ha ara protected21 cheetahs and 2 leopards successfully
Good Practices	 Converting farmland to conservation area Variety of activities Cooperation with surrounding tourism business, private farms and other stakeholders to create a larger conservation landscape
Ingredients for Success	Working with landholders and businesses outside of the tourism sector
Applications	Business working landscapes with many actors related to conservation
Resources	https://www.wolwedans.com http://www.namibrand.com/

Business	Cardamom Tented Camp
Region, Country	Southeast Asia, Cambodia
Landscape	Mountain
Product	All-inclusive safari-style tent lodging with activities that include patrols with rangers, trekking, kayaking, birding and wildlife viewing
Conservation Model	Partnership between a hospitality company and an NGO to use tourism to support a privately-managed forest concession of 18,000ha with revenue supporting ranger teams to protect key species including clouded leopard, Asiatic black bear, Dhole, pileated gibbon and sun bear.
Conservation Impacts	Hunting and illegal logging have dropped dramatically, Removal of thousands of snares and confiscation of numerous chainsaws and homemade guns.

Best Practices	 Strengths of both partners are maximized to bring together the best of hospitality and the best of conservation. Professionally designed, managed and marketed safari camp and ecotourism business that is supported and backstopped by a major hospitality company. Clear links between conservation and tourism with 5% of total earnings toward the protection and conservation efforts of the area. Conservation is embedded in the experience with activities with rangers including patrolling. Directly supports 12 rangers and patrols, in addition to funding added by the NGO. Open Business Policy, to provide other businesses with energy and impact measurements to benchmark and learn from each other
Ingredients for Success	 Understanding and valuing the synergies of business and NGOs working together. Privately-managed concession allows for both better conservation results and assurances for the private sector partner Partnership between an experienced hospitality with businesses outside of ecotourism and with an NGO that is focused on the specific site is a good combination Private sector investment creates business incentives that improve overall design and long-term viability
Applications	 Joint partnership between a tour company/investor and NGO Developing integrated ecotourism package that involves ranger, patrolling, and other typical ecotourism activities
Resources	https://cardamomtentedcamp.com

Appendix II: A Tool Box for Conservation Tourism

The following Table sets out tools, resources and standards to support the design and operation of conservation tourism. It includes a web-link to the resource, a brief description of the resource and the organisation responsible for its publication or management. It embraces tools, resources and standards that are directly relevant but non-specific to conservation tourism, and those that are specific to the needs of conservation tourism.

Tool	Description	Organisation
TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY STANDARDS & APPROACHES		
Certified B Corporation	Larger businesses might consider becoming a Certified B Corporation to strengthen business transparency and social and environmental reporting. B Lab aims to transform the global economy to benefit all people, communities, and the planet.	B Lab
Global Reporting Initiative	Comprehensive set of sustainability reporting standards delivering transparency for organisational impacts on the economy, environment, and people.	Global Reporting Initiative
Universal Sustainable Tourism Industry Standards	Following the proliferation of entities offering certification services in sustainable tourism, the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) was established in 2007 to "foster increased understanding of sustainable tourism practices and the adoption of universal sustainable tourism principles." Building on industry-wide consultation, the GSTC Criteria "serve as the global baseline standards for sustainability in travel and tourism. The Criteria are used for education and awareness-raising, policy-making for businesses and government agencies and other organization types, measurement and evaluation, and as a basis for certification." The Criteria are arranged in four pillars covering: (i) sustainable management; (ii) socioeconomic impacts; (iii) cultural impacts; and (iv) environmental impacts (including consumption of resources, reducing pollution, and conserving biodiversity and landscapes). The Criteria are divided into two sets, for industry (accommodation and tour operators) and for destinations. In brief, the design and management of conservation tourism should aim to align with GSTC's industry criteria. Businesses wishing to promote themselves as being aligned with GSTC Criteria, need to be certified by a	Global Sustainable Tourism Council

https://www.gstcouncil.org/about/gstc-history/ https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/

	Certification Body that is GSTC <u>Accredited</u> . While this process can be costly and beyond the reach of small-scale businesses, the Criteria are freely available and can be incorporated into the design, operation, reporting and, importantly, interpretation of the business to its clients and stakeholders.	
	CLIMATE CHANGE & CARBON FOOTPRINT	
SUNX	While estimates of travel and tourism's contribution to climate change vary, the need to reduce the industry's carbon footprint is clear. Offering businesses tools and resources to support this journey, SUNx is an initiative that engages industry stakeholders including businesses enabling them to measure their carbon footprint and guide them towards net zero emissions.	SUNx
Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency	Based on a Climate Action Plan, this initiative brings together a community of tourism organisations, companies, and professionals pursuing a common goal in support of halving sector emissions by 2030.	A membership organisation
Glasgow Declaration for Climate Action in Tourism	Following the November 2021 COP26 in Scotland, all tourism businesses should consider becoming a signatory to the Glasgow Declaration for Climate Action in Tourism.	One Planet
	COMPREHENSIVE TOOLBOXES	
Tools and resources for nature-based tourism	A comprehensive review of the tools and knowledge resources to help practitioners prepare and implement projects that promote sustainable NBT practices and policies.	World Bank
Tourism and visitor management in protected areas	Guidelines on tourism and visitor management issues in protected areas to help managers achieve sustainable tourism. Includes case studies from Southeast Asia.	IUCN
MANAGEMENT MODELS (PARTNERSHIPS, CONCESSIONS, ETC.)		
Collaborative management partnership toolkit	A toolkit aimed at stakeholders involved in partnership management, including governments, private sector and non-profits. Especially helpful for businesses embarking on agreements with protected areas for investment in conservation tourism. Includes many examples and resources, including agreement templates.	World Bank
Stimulating sustainable development	Elaborates on concessions policies that facilitate and engage local communities in NBT, by	World Bank

through tourism concessions	providing practical examples of management models utilized by destinations around the world.	
Tourism concessions in protected areas: a guide for managers	Aimed at public sector protected area managers, this resource guide elaborates on a range of tools to plan for, allocate and manage concession activities to maximize the benefits of working with the private sector, including contract templates and negotiation suggestions.	UNDP
	PRIVATELY PROTECTED AREAS	
Guidelines for privately protected areas	For conservation tourism ventures that aim to establish their own protected area, IUCN have produced comprehensive guidelines to address the planning and management considerations of privately protected areas. The guidelines, produced for practitioners and policy makers, support all aspects of privately protected areas' establishment, management, and reporting. Information is provided on principles and good practices with examples illustrated from many parts of the world.	IUCN
	DIGITAL LIBRARIES	
<u>Ecoclub</u>	This forum has members from around the world who operate ecolodges and ecotourism businesses, are ecotourism practitioners, or simply have a general interest in ecotourism. There are many useful resources and discussions, as well as announcements for ecolodge properties for sale or newly opened and other business opportunities.	Ecoclub
Mekong Tourism	This platform contains a comprehensive library of tourism resources from around the region in multiple languages with many "how-to" manuals and reports related to sustainability practicies and eco-tourism. The site includes announcements for funding competitions for start-ups and is a good resource to market sustainable tourism enterprises through Mekong Collections and the Mekong Tourism Summit, held annually.	Mekong Tourism
ECOLODGES		

Ecolodges are an established and widely promoted industry feature often promoted as attractions in their own right. A wealth of publications are available offering standards and guidelines on the design, construction, and operation of small and large ecolodges. In ASEAN guidelines have been produced including <u>Guidelines for developing ecolodges in Myanmar</u>, and <u>Designing and operating an ecolodge in the Lao PDR</u>

Ecolodges: exploring opportunities for sustainable business	A review of key factors determining the business viability of ecolodges. Examines the business characteristics and market for ecolodges operating in developing countries.	International Finance Corporation
Asian ecotourism standards for accommodations	Designed to fit the Asian ecotourism contexts and aligned with the GSTC Industry Criteria.	Asian Ecotourism Network
International ecolodge guidelines	Provides guidance to ecolodges or other nature- based accommodations and facilities from the day that an idea is conceptualised to the time when the ecolodge is built and in operation.	UN World Tourism Organisation
Ecolodge planning, design, and operation handbook	Developed in support of Egyptian accommodation looking to embrace a more socially and environmentally responsible tourism business model.	USAID
NATURE-BASED TOURISM BUSINESS NETWORKS		
The Long Run	Offering sustainability standards recognised by GSTC, the Long Run is an expanding membership organisation of nature-based tourism businesses committed to driving sustainability to "support, connect & inspire nature-based businesses to excel in following the highest standards of sustainability." Their approach embraces "the 4Cs of conservation, community, culture and commerce". Collectively, the Long Run's members are working to conserve over 20-millionacres of biodiversity and improve the lives of over 750,000 people. A number of the good-practice international examples covered in this paper are members of the Long Run; each advocating the benefits of its knowledge sharing services that enable strengthened business models. The Long Run's Global Ecosphere Retreats standard provides a recognised measurement of sustainable destination management, providing opportunities for international recognition.	The Long Run
Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network	With a mission to "protect wildlife in wild places, and on agricultural lands in-between, by certifying enterprises that assure people and nature coexist and thrive", the Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network (WFEN) aims to "conserve threatened wildlife while contributing to the economic vitality of rural communities." WFEN provide expert-driven standards for wildlife friendly practices. Their Certified Wildlife Friendly labels help consumers to	Wildlife Friendly Enterprise Network

³ 2021. <u>https://www.thelongrun.org</u>

Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation	support products that match their values. Among others, their labels embrace Certified Gorilla Friendly Tourism and Certified Sea Turtle Friendly Tourism. CONSERVATION STANDARDS To ensure long-term conservation impact, the Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation provides an internationally recognised framework, process and tools for conservation projects	Conservation Standards	
	including conservation tourism businesses to design and achieve conservation targets.		
	COMMUNITY-BASED WILDLIFE STEWARDSHIP		
Community-based wildlife conservation well-being survey	One Nature works to protect wild animals and their habitats through research that demonstrates the value of wildlife conservation and empowers community-based wildlife stewardship. One Nature's "Wild Happiness" approach centres on the deployment of an Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recognised, peer-reviewed survey instrument that engages host communities to place their wellbeing and wildlife conservation at the centre of (tourism) development processes. The survey aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and allows for the inclusion of tourism-specific questions. Thus, through suitably spaced iterations, the approach (i) offers a methodology to assess and strengthen the impact of tourism and conservation upon the wellbeing of host communities, and (ii) enables measurement towards conservation goals and the SDGs. ⁴	One Nature	
GUIDELINE	GUIDELINES FOR COLLABORATION WITH INDIGENOUS COMMUNITIES		
Guidelines for Applying Free, Prior, and Informed Consent	For conservation tourism developed at sites that are home to indigenous communities and where religious and cultural considerations are of particular concern, it may be appropriate to gain the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of those communities to ensure, "that the rights of indigenous peoples are guaranteed in any [tourism] decision that may affect their lands, territories or livelihoods." To gain this consent, Conservation International have developed	Conservation International	

⁴ One Nature partners with <u>Planet Happiness</u> to embrace tourism-related questions into the survey instrument (that are aligned with the way tourism is positioned in the UN SDGs), and also offers the option of including carbon footprint-related questions to engage stakeholders in conversations and agendas to move toward net-zero emissions.

zero emissions.

⁵ https://www.conservation.org/docs/default-source/publication-pdfs/ci_fpic-guidelines-english.pdf?sfvrsn=16b53100_2

guidelines, standards and a manual to ensure indigenous communities "have the right to give or withhold their consent to [tourism] activities without fear of reprisal or coercion, in a timeframe suited to their own culture, and with the resources to make informed decisions." While the process set out in the manual is detailed and time-consuming to follow, it may be appropriate for businesses to follow and thus manage medium- or long-term risks that may potentially undermine a project.

⁶ As above





www.mandainature.org



inkedin.com/company/mandai-nature/



https://www.facebook.com/mandainature/