



Green environment – A key to sustainable tourism development in Quang Nam

With its rich and diverse natural resources, Vietnam has great potential for tourism development, particularly green tourism. The country considers protecting natural resources a way to ensure sustainable tourism development. The policy of developing green tourism, preserving the unique indigenous values of Quang Nam Province has seen an active response by authorities at all levels, businesses, and people, creating a number of new tourism products, attracting both domestic and foreign tourists.

RAISING AWARENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

Opening of the Visit Vietnam Year - Quang Nam 2022, Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh requests to focus on key solutions to restore and develop sustainable tourism. Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh said: “We need to create a green tourism environment where friendliness, public safety, and visitor safety are the commitment of all stakeholders, including the state, businesses, and the public, who exploit tourism without damaging natural resources or the environment. Administrations, the business community, and the public should join hands in practical, responsible actions to create a green environment for the sustainable development of the tourism sector. We need to maximize tourism potential and advantages, strengthen links between localities to create chains of destinations, and bring into play the creativity of each person in the region to create a combined strength for tourism and economic development. It’s important to build breakthrough mechanisms and strategies to make Vietnamese tourism more competitive regionally and globally. We also need to increase the competitiveness of cultural and natural heritages, festivals, craft villages, historical traditions, and the ecological and humanitarian values of each locality to make our tourism products more diverse and attractive.”

The Prime Minister asked travel companies and hotels to strengthen investment, reform technology, and accelerate digital transformation to boost tourism development, adding that these are current global trends toward promoting a smart tourism ecosystem connecting tourists, service suppliers, and state agencies. Tourism associations and businesses need to focus on developing tourism models which are economically, socially, and environmentally stable.

UNIQUE GREEN TOURISM RESOURCES

Located in a key tourist area of the country, Quang Nam is one of the localities with many potentials and advantages in terms of natural resources, indigenous culture, and history to develop tourism towards green growth.

Quang Nam has more advantages in terms of tourism resources than other localities in Vietnam and other countries in the region. Quang Nam is located in an important place on national and international tangible and intangible maps. The province has several heritages at national and international levels, such as Hoi An ancient town and My Son sanctuary (recognised as world cultural heritages by UNESCO in 1999) and Cu Lao Cham - Hoi An Biosphere Reserve, which was recognised by UNESCO in 2009. Bai Choi performance art, another UNESCO -recognised intangible cultural heritage, also plays an important role in local tourism development.

In addition, Quang Nam has a 125km long coastline with many famous beaches, nearly 70 festivals, hundreds of traditional craft villages, and nearly 500 historical-cultural relics and scenic spots. That is the advantage of Quang Nam to develop tourism, especially green tourism.

In the provincial tourism development plan, Quang Nam identifies three UNESCO world cultural heritages and one world biosphere reserve as the keys. These tourism products provide travellers and tourists with typical local natural and cultural experiences. At the same time, they are green tourism models at the international level. The local-specific tourism product is “one destination, three international-level experiences.” Besides, Quang Nam owns several beautiful beaches, river systems, natural and cultural landscapes, hundreds of traditional craft villages, characteristic festivals and local typical cuisine. Quang Nam people are friendly and hospitable. All of them become potential and advantages for Quang Nam tourism to develop.

Coming to Quang Nam, visitors have opportunities to get unforgettable experiences in different places from the mountainous area to the plain, such as Song Thanh Natural Reserve, Ngoc Linh ginseng area in Nam Tra My, Tra Que vegetable village in Hoi An, Dai Binh ecotourism village in Nong Son... So, Quang Nam becomes attractive to both domestic and foreign tourists.

A lot of green tourism products are now popular with visitors such as the tours of planting nipa palms and collecting trash in the Thu Bon and Hoai rivers. They are also honored by Forbes Travel, Travel and Leisure, ASEAN Travel Forum. Moreover, some models of green tourism have been approved by the locals and



visitors such as saving energy and water, saying no to plastic bags. Quang Nam will also connect green tourism products in the province to build tours that are attractive to visitors. At the same time, Quang Nam will make a linkage of green tourism with other provinces and cities in the country and abroad to help this model of sustainable tourism grow, introduce Quang Nam tourism brand name to the public.

The government of Quang Nam is constantly improving the quality of tourism products, catching up with new trends for green tourism when planning to build and develop from 10 to 20 green tourism products by 2025. Green tourism is considered the goal for sustainable tourism development in Quang Nam, a solution for the conservation and promotion of provincial natural, cultural and historical values. The province is ready to act, cooperating with other localities, businesses, communities, non-governmental and international organizations to jointly build and develop green tourism products, protect the environment and adapt to climate change.

GREEN TOURISM CRITERIA

The Quang Nam People's Committee issued Plan on green tourism development to 2025; at the same time promulgating the "Green Tourism Criteria". Quang Nam province will be the first local area in Viet Nam to promote green tourism criteria. Tourism businesses must employ waste recycling, waste reduction, energy-saving and plastic-free consumption.

The Quang Nam provincial Tourism Association has promoted green tourism in free plastic-zero waste-recycling and non-chemical communities. The chairman of the Quang Nam Tourism Association, Phan Xuan Thanh, said eco-tours aimed to promote awareness of fitness and hygiene in environmentally-friendly living spaces. It's a new choice among tourists during the coronavirus pandemic, so the association is boosting 'green' behaviour including cleaning, waste recycling, organic consumption and healthcare tourism products. Local tourism businesses offer healthy and safe service by boosting recycling waste, reducing plastic use and developing organic farm produce. This is the new trend in tourism in the province.

A group of local travel agencies and people have successfully established the Tan Thanh weekend open market as an artisanal and organic production rendezvous for local and expat vendors. Tan Thanh has been recognised as a one-commune, one product eco-tour brand - one of the first 'green' tourism brands employing

the 'circular economy' as a sustainable tourism strategy in Quang Nam. The community began waste classification at source and recycling by starting the first Material Recovery Facility in Hoi An for receiving recyclable and reusable waste for better treatment rather than dumping it at overloaded landfills.

PROMOTING GREEN AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

In recent years, Quang Nam has invested in green tourism development and considers this an important task in the tourism development strategy. After successfully ending the National Tourism Year 2022 with the theme "Quang Nam - A green tourism destination", Quang Nam continues to mobilise investment resources for the development of ecotourism and green tourism, aiming to build a national green tourism centre.

Director of the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism of Quang Nam Province Nguyen Thanh Hong said that after the COVID-19 pandemic, tourists' travel habits and needs have changed a lot. The selection of destinations and tourism products is the top focus of international tourists. That requires local authorities, tourism and service businesses to constantly invest and innovate products in the direction of improving quality, strengthening promotion and attraction, and ensuring the security and safety of tourists.

To develop tourism with high results, Quang Nam has proposed specific solutions



▲ Quang Nam is making every effort to become a classy green tourist attraction



▲ *Promoting green and sustainable tourism development*

and roadmaps. Quang Nam issued a resolution on supporting the development of mountainous tourism until 2025. Accordingly, the province will support a total budget of more than 121 billion VND for planning and planning; infrastructure investment in tourist zones and spots; product formulation and development; training, fostering, and developing human resources; and supporting tourism promotion and advertising. Up to now, mountainous districts have built eco-tourism sites associated with preserving traditional cultural values in the locality. Of these, the Dong Giang Heaven Gate Eco-tourism (Dong Giang district) is invested and built with the total investment of 2,600 billion VND.

In addition to this tourist area, there are currently many eco-tourism sites in mountainous areas that have been put into operation such as: the community tourism village of Bho Hoong, Dho Roong (Dong Giang district); the brocade weaving village of Zara (Nam Giang district); the heritage forest of Pomu; the community tourism village of Ta Lang (Tay Giang district); and the ancient village of Loc Yen (Tien Phuoc district).

Quang Nam has issued a plan to attract and welcome international tourists in the new period. Accordingly, the locality reviews, evaluates and develops appropriate tourism products; forming diversified and attractive products and organising activities to attract international tourists such as: sea festivals, food festivals, festivals, street activities. The province focuses on building new tourism product model on the basis of national cultural values and the unique and characteristic natural resources of each region and each locality.

In the immediate future, the province will attract social resources to embellish, perfect and upgrade facilities, tourism infrastructure, and stabilize human resources; promote the formation of alliances linking tourism development

between regions, localities, destinations inside and outside the province.

On the other hand, the province promotes the application of information technology, organises digital marketing campaigns on social networking platforms; develop websites to introduce destinations, local products and services, businesses with foreign language versions to market to target markets.

At the same time, the province strengthens the management of the tourism environment, ensures security and safety for tourists, creates a friendly, safe, and responsible tourism environment, towards the goal of building and promoting green and sustainable tourism development.

Quang Nam is making every effort to become a classy green tourist attraction. This is the provincial aspiration expressed in the Quang Nam Provincial Plan for the period 2021 - 2030, with a vision to 2050. One of the goals is to develop tourism into a key economic sector in Quang Nam by 2030. Quang Nam tourism resources are helpful for sustainable tourism development in Quang Nam. There will be more priority for tourism investment and development. These spaces will contribute to the load reduction in the heritage areas via eco-tourism products, community-based tourism, agricultural tourism, traditional handicrafts associated with tourism, leisure travel, and MICE. Quang Nam also has a lot of policies to support businesses and individuals who invest in the province ■

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