

Abstract

Head of Project Pimlapas Pongsakornrungrsilp, Ph.D.
Email pimlapas59@gmail.com
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The study of tourism capabilities and developing sustainable tourism development plan in Koh Phangan, Suratthani Province aimed to analyze tourism potentials of Koh Phangan and to develop tourism plan of Koh Phangan. This research employed the mixed method research methodology to collect data from key informants in tourism industry of Koh Phangan, including the analysis of tourism threats and problems, tourism resource potentials, and also government policy and planning through the concept of sustainable tourism.

The results show that Koh Phangan has high potential in infrastructures and tourism businesses – accommodation with 5,712 rooms and more than 20 restaurants. Regarding to the diversity of vascular plants in Koh Phangan show that there are 68 Family, 131 Genus, and 154 Species. Moreover, this study demonstrates that the 6 threatened plants are classified as rare plants. Remarkably, the survey of marine resources at Koh Phangan sampling found the corals in the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. There are 9 Species threatened animals in a group of EN and VU. The results show that 40 % of tourism destinations at Koh Phangan are high potentials in terms of attractiveness, but most destinations are still low-to-moderate potentials in management. Full moon party is the unique tourism activity of Koh Phangan, but there are also alternative activities related with island culture; i.e. local way of life, fishery, coconut farm, including healthy activities, Yoga, and Thai boxing. Noteworthy, major problems of Koh Phangan which need to be accounted are foreign investors, road accidents, quality and a number of labors. This study shows that most local people at Koh Phangan would like to strengthen the local economy in parallel with the growth of tourism industry. Finally tourism management plan has to focus on solving those issues, and strengthening the community economy by promoting the key occupation – coconut for life, developing souvenirs from local product, promoting creative tourism activities, and developing tourism human resources, especially focusing on sustainable conservative and development plan.