Sport as a robust form of ecotourism development: examples from water-based sport tourism activities

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Outline

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Ecotourism Products

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Findings

Conclusions
Products and activities of ecotourism

- Adventure
- Nature-based
- Culture
- Sporting events
- Educational

Diagram:
- Adventure recreation pursuits
  - Sky
    - Skydiving
    - Hang gliding
    - Ballooning
    - Etc.
  - Land
    - Bicycling
    - Hiking
    - Rock climbing
    - Trekking
    - Mountaineers
    - Backpacking
    - Orienteering
    - Rappelling
  - Water
    - Kayaking
    - Sailing
    - Diving
    - Rafting
    - Rafting
    - Swimming
    - Boating
    - Fishing
    - Surfing
Water-based tourism activities are often regarded as coastal tourism or marine tourism, either for conservation or sporting purposes.

Recreational uses of coastal zones

Consumptive
- Fishing and Collection of shells

Non Consumptive
- Kayaking
- Surfing
- Sailing
- Diving
- Rafting
- Swimming
- Boating
- Snorkeling

Recreational uses of coastal zones source: United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP, 2009)
Surfing

The origin of surfing is traced back to the eighteen centuries, where surfing was seen as a dominant culture of the Hawaiian society (Finney, 1960). Surf tourism has shown a number of potential strengths in advancing the tourism brands of a destination, but scientific inquiry is less explored in sport tourism market research (Dolnicar & Fluker, 2003).
Fishing

Fishing has been grouped into commercial fishing and recreational fishing. There is evidence that commercial fishing is viewed as a threat to the sport or recreational fishing where commercialization of the coastal region exists. Catch and release sport fishing is seen as a substitute for commercial fishing and an alternative means in achieving sustainable use of fisheries resources (Thone-Souza et al., 2014).
Research Approach

Qualitative Approach

Tupira Kumul Long Board Surf Championship

Case Studies

The Game Fishing Titles

Observations

Interviews
In 2017, the Tupira Surf Club hosted the world long board championship with participation from ten different countries: Australia, Peru, Brazil, Japan, South Africa, United States, Great Britain, France, Hawaii and Reunion Island. There were thirty-four male, eighteen female international participants. In addition, four local surfers were given wild card entries.
Is surfing authentic ecotourism product and sustainable project?

Yes

“It is ecotourism because the wave is there all the time, it is not oil palm that needs to be planted, you make good money every day and it is a sustainable project” (Interviewee at Tupira, 2017).

Surf tourism is certainly a potential component of any sport tourism development framework that addresses water-based sport activities.
Case Study 2: Game Fishing Titles Madang Province

• Attracted >1000 visitors to Madang over one week
• Some benefit to charity from sales of captured fish
• Public benefit through catch & release and tagging program
Categories of fish species captured and harvested

Harvested species = 18

- Tagged = 236
- Captured = 62
- Released = 174

- Discarded fisheries 37%
- Captured 13%
- Tagged 50%

Sustainable harvesting
What is the benefit of catch and release sport fishing?

The goal of achieving marine conservation raises concerns for planning and management of the coastal regions.

“You don’t catch unnecessary fish and the catch and release sport fishing help in sustaining the fish population” (Interviewee at Game Fishing Titles Madang, 2017).

Is there any link between fishing and tourism?

• Game fishing competitions can be viewed as a potential avenue to expand tourism and ecotourism activities through sport fishing.
• One motivation behind sport fishing is for recreational fishermen to meet family and friends and it forms part of their social lives.
• Therefore catch and release recreational sport fishing or catch to eat is a sustainable harvesting and conservative approach to fisheries resources.
## Comparisons of the two case studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tupira Kumul Long Board Surf Championship</th>
<th>The Game Fishing Titles Madang Province</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Stakeholders’ participation, involvement and sponsorship</td>
<td>• Participation through sponsorship/membership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Event costing PGK 1,347000 $420,938</td>
<td>Event costing PGK 323,500 $101,740</td>
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<tr>
<td>• International and local media representation/live coverage</td>
<td>• Lack of media representation and coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of cooperation among stakeholders especially the Madang Tourism and Commerce Department</td>
<td>• Well established nationally, comparatively easy to organize logically and managerially given the expertise available from game fishers in Madang</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Local economic impact is limited</td>
<td>• Economic impact on accommodation, food and beverages and general shopping</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Tourism boost in the aspect of showcasing surfing in Madang to world viewers</td>
<td>• Tourism boost for Madang town</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Limited benefits to local communities. No involvement for accommodation providers, art and craft and other aspect of tourism engagement</td>
<td>• The Game Fishing Titles are organized to help communities. Fish caught during the game fishing titles are sold to restaurants and individuals and money realized is donated to assist communities to improve basic amenities like hospital facilities</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Sustainable Project</td>
<td>• Sustainable harvesting</td>
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Lessons from Case Study 1

- Tupira has shown the way for community tourism and the importance of engaging local communities.
- Tourism needs to be developed in partnership with resource custodians and not in isolation, as the gatekeepers of resources are essential for tourism development, especially for sustainable ecotourism.
- In order to improve the event next time, there is a need to make it more interesting for surfers as there are two aspects of surf tourism: (1) sport and (2) tourism.
- It is important that the aspect of tourism in sporting activities be included. This will require inclusive tour packages for sports tourists.
Lessons from Case Study 2

• The Game Fishing Titles certainly provided a tourism boost for Madang Town and, possibly, for Madang Province.

• The event is well-established nationally, unlike the; ’one off’ international surfing competition at Tupira but will require more sponsorship support from stakeholders.

• On the one hand, the activity itself (catch and release fishing) is sustainable, local handicrafts were available for sale as usual in Madang, and local markets and attractions would have been visited.

• On the other hand, much of the accommodation and meals for visitors – other than those who stayed with family or friends – would have been provided by larger commercial operators whose activities are not necessarily environmentally sustainable to any significant degree.
Summary and Conclusions

• Sports generally are powerful resources that need to be embraced for the development of ecotourism in developing nations. It is important to recognize that organizing sporting events in PNG can bring about changes in the perception of Papua New Guinea to overseas persons and accordingly, help in rebranding the image of the nation, when properly planned and implemented.

• Sport-based ecotourism should be given greater prominence in national tourism plans.

• Sport-based activities are essential for destination management to consider while planning for sustainable tourism. At the same time, not all elements of sport-based or water-based tourism necessarily contribute to sustainable tourism or ecotourism. The two case studies indicate that highly active planning and coordination is needed to support social development and ecological sustainability in all its forms for tourism based on coastal resources.
References


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**My participants**

And others…