

Waranan Tantiwat 2011: Economic Evaluation of Humpback Dolphin and Adaptation of the Local People from Tourism Activity: A Case Study of Khanom District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province.

Master of Economics, Major Field: Economics, Department of Economics.

Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Somskaow Bejranonda, Ph.D. 203 pages.

The objectives of this study were to: 1) evaluate the recreational benefit of Humpback Dolphin and 2) study the adaptation of local people in Khanom District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province after Khanom District has become tourist attraction for sustainable tourism and the factors affect these adaptations. The data were collected from the 282 tourists visiting the Humpback Dolphin and 286 households in Khanom District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province during March to June 2011. The study consists of 3 techniques: Individual Travel Cost Method (ITCM) for evaluating recreational benefit of Humpback Dolphin; Path Analysis for examining factors affecting the adaptation of people and sustainable tourism; and the analysis of the correlation coefficient to indicate the relationship between people's adaptation and sustainable tourism of recreational benefit evaluation

The result of recreational benefit evaluation of Humpback Dolphin found that the factors affecting the frequency of travel was travel cost at 0.01 significance level. The value of recreational benefit of Humpback Dolphin was 255,679,600 Bath in 2010. The study of local people's adaptation and factors affecting these adaptations were that there were moderate adaptations of local people and Khanom District has highly adapted according to sustainable tourism principles. The factors affecting local people's adaptations were income level, people's career, local healthcare system at significance level of 5 percent. At a significance level of 10 percent, factor affecting on the sustainable tourism of people was their income levels and the factors affecting on the sustainable tourism of tourists were age of tourists, and a variety of tourism activities in the community. Thus the analysis of the relationship between adaptation and sustainable tourism found a negative correlation between them.

The suggestion is that service fee should be raise and revenue from the Humpback Dolphins tourism should be used for conserve the Humpback Dolphins. They should cooperate with the private sector and civil society in the preparation of policies and measures to manage resources consistent with the Humpback Dolphins including creating a sense of ownership of resources in areas with Humpback Dolphins.

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