

**Monitoring Report on the Sustainable Tourism
Development of Xishuangbanna
(2020)**

**Culture and Tourism Bureau of Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous
Prefecture**

Monitoring Centre for UNWTO Sustainable Tourism Observatories

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Address: Building 329, Sun Yat-sen University, 135, Xingang
West Road, Guangzhou, P.R. China

Postcode: 510275

Tel: +86-20-84114683

Fax: +86-20-84113621

1.Foreword

1.1 Process of Monitoring

From 9 August to 15 August in 2020, with the support and cooperation of the Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture Culture and Tourism Bureau (hereinafter referred to as the Bureau), a monitoring team consisting of two associate professors, a monitoring project coordinator, a post-doctoral researcher, a doctoral student and two master students from the School of Tourism Management of Sun Yat-sen University successfully completed this year's fieldwork in the Xishuangbanna monitoring observatory.

The monitoring work was divided into two parts: the first was to monitor the current situation of sustainable tourism development in Xishuangbanna according to the basic indicators system of sustainable development in Xishuangbanna, and the second was to conduct a thematic study on tourism with special features in Xishuangbanna. In the field research stage, the monitoring team used various methods such as observation, questionnaire and interview methods. 316 questionnaires were distributed to tourists and residents, and 311 valid questionnaires were collected, with an effective rate of 98.4%; seven stakeholders related to local tourism development (including representatives of relevant departments of Xishuangbanna state government, local residents and tourists) were interviewed, and the valid interview recordings lasted for 250 minutes.

The monitoring covered a total of six tourism sites, including the Manting Park, the Wild Elephant Valley, the Botanical Garden of the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Dai Garden, the Primeval Forest Park and the Mengyuan Wonderland.

1.2 Major Issues and Indicators

This monitoring depends on the methodology provided by the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) and the actual situation of tourism development in Xishuangbanna to develop a basic indicator system for the sustainable development of tourism in Xishuangbanna.

Table 1 Basic Indicator System for Sustainable Tourism in Xishuangbanna

Theme	Major Issues	Basic Indicators
Tourism and Resources, Environmental Protection	Ecosystem conservation	Forest coverage
		Conservation of precious species
		Size of conserved areas
		Impact of tourism development on conserved areas
Tourism and Community	Land use	Land utilisation rate
	Residents' perceptions, attitudes towards tourism	General attitude of the residents towards tourism development
		Residents' evaluation of the economic influence of tourism
		Residents' evaluation of the socio-cultural influence of tourism
		Residents' evaluation of the environmental influence of tourism
	Residents' use of tourism resources	Residents' visits to tourist attractions
	Residents' participation in tourism and awareness	Level of community involvement
Awareness of community involvement		
Tourism Perception and Satisfaction	Tourism image	Destination resources, general image, infrastructure, safety and health related situations
	Service evaluation situation	Visitors' evaluation of five basic services such as scenic spots, catering, transportation, accommodation, shopping and entertainment
	Tourism complaints and inquiries	Tourists' evaluation of tourism complaints and advisory services
Tourism and Economy	Current situation of tourism industry development	Tourism statistics (total tourism revenue and composition, total number of tourists, number of domestic tourists, number of international tourists)

Tourism and Economic Growth	Share of tourism revenue in GDP
	Overall trends in the tourism-led tertiary sector
Tourism and Investment	Overall trends in tourism investment
	Direction of tourism investment

2 Tourism and Resource Conservation and Application

2.1. Status of resource and environmental conservation

In 2019, Xishuangbanna's ecological and environmental quality remained generally good with a stable ecosystem and relatively good air quality. Three counties and cities are outstanding, with the proportion of ambient air meeting the standards above Level 2 all above 90%.

Table 2 Number of days when urban ambient air reaches Level 2 or above in Jinghong (Day)

Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Jinghong	334	332	328	345	362	337
Percent	94.1%	96%	90.0%	94.5%	99.2%	92.6%

(Source: Environment Bulletin of Xishuangbanna 2014-2019)

2.2. Drinking water quality rating

The relevant data from Xishuangbanna Bureau of Statistics in 2019 shows that the water quality of the main rivers in Xishuangbanna (Lancang River, Puwen River, Luosuo River, Liusha River, Nan'a River, Nanla River, Nanlan River and Nango River) all reached the excellent level.

2.3. Environmentally treatment of municipal waste

In 2019, Xishuangbanna promotes the improvement of urban and rural habitat,

investigates and deals with 273,000 square metres of two kinds of illegal buildings, increases the urban sewage treatment rate to 88.9% and the rubbish treatment rate to 100%, fully implements the natural village cleaning system, and continues to improve the quality of the ecological environment throughout the state.

3 Economic Influence of Tourism

In terms of tourism receipts, Xishuangbanna received 48532100 domestic and foreign tourists in 2019, an increase of 20.0% over the previous year, maintaining a stable development trend. There are 47.04 million domestic tourists in 2019, an increase of 20.2% over the previous year; the number of overseas tourists rose to 711,400, an increase of 21.2% over the previous year; the number of inbound one-day tourists at the port was 780,700, an increase of 10.9%, showing a slow growth trend.

According to the development trend from 2011 to 2019, the seasonality of Xishuangbanna's tourism industry gradually increased from 2011 to 2017. The standard deviation of Xishuangbanna's annual monthly tourism receipts declined in 2019, from 48.60 in 2017 to 34.45 in 2019. This is mainly due to the fact that the relevant authorities in Xishuangbanna were concerned about the intensification of peak and off season and thus took measures to rectify it. Corresponding measures should continue to be taken to improve the obvious problem of seasonality and promote sustainable tourism development.

While some scenic spots experienced a decline in visitor numbers in 2017 as a result of the 22 strict regulations on tourism market, visitor numbers have slowly picked up in 2019 at various scenic spots. The Wild Elephant Valley and the Mengle Buddha Temple reached the highest number in 2019, with 1,687,600 and 911,300 visitors respectively. The rest of the scenic spots such as the Primeval Forest Park, Dai Garden and Mengjinglai did not reach their previous highest visitor numbers, but the visitor numbers in 2019 were very impressive over the years.

The tourism revenue of Xishuangbanna in 2019 amounted to 82.795 billion yuan in total

tourism revenue, an increase of 23.4% of the previous year. The foreign exchange income from tourism was US\$666 million, an increase of 31.2%; domestic tourism income was 7819500 yuan, an increase of 22.7%. The total tourism income of 2019 was dominated by domestic tourism, accounting for 94.44% of the total tourism income.

In terms of the contribution of tourism revenue, tourism is one of the important tertiary industries in Xishuangbanna and has a prominent influence on the economic development of Xishuangbanna. This report uses the ratio of tourism revenue to GDP to measure the contribution of tourism to GDP. Xishuangbanna's total tourism revenue in 2019 has reached 82.795 billion yuan, equivalent to 145.74% of GDP.

4 Residents' Perception and Attitude

4.1. Information of sample residents

A total of 123 questionnaires were collected from residents, of which 120 were valid, with an effective rate of 97.6%. The questionnaires were distributed from August 9, 2020 to August 15, 2020. The distribution area included tourist attractions such as Xishuangjing, Manting Park, Wild Elephant Valley and Primeval Forest Park in Gaozhuang. The distribution method is random sampling. The sample of residents collected is balanced between men and women, rich in ethnic types, mainly young and middle-aged residents, with a more even distribution of permanent locations, long years of residence, and a higher level of education, and a more balanced distribution of the sample.

4.2. Current status of residents' participation in tourism

According to the questionnaires collected in previous years, although the proportion of local residents who are aware of sustainable tourism development has increased compared to previous years, the number of local residents who know about sustainable tourism development is still relatively small. Only 30% of the residents in this questionnaire understand sustainable tourism development. The residents' understanding of sustainable tourism development is more in ecological protection, cultural heritage. Only some residents (13.9%) would make connections between different elements, indicating that residents

generally lack an overall understanding of sustainable tourism development. 41.7% of the respondents were tourism practitioners, mainly working as tour guides, scenic spot interpreters and tourism merchandise sellers. The extent and ability of residents to participate in the tourism industry has room to improve. A total of 29 tourism-related business operators or individual business owners operate businesses, mostly in the areas of tourism merchandise, accommodation and catering.

The mass tourism market is booming, and the large number of tourists visiting the area has caused a certain degree of distress and inconvenience to local residents, creating a negative perception. While the enthusiasm for the development of mass tourism is somewhat lower than in previous years, the positive action of the Xishuangbanna government in promoting the development of tourism in the region has also won the goodwill of the residents, who are more satisfied with the government's execution of tourism development and have gradually increased their sense of ownership.

4.3.Residents' perceptions of the influence of tourism development

In general, the majority of Xishuangbanna residents affirm the value of Xishuangbanna's tourism and its potential for tourism development, but also believe that the accessibility and infrastructure of the Xishuangbanna region needs to be improved.

In terms of economic impact, tourism activities can bring a positive impact to the local economy. Compared to the 2019 data, residents' perception of tourism-led economic development has increased significantly, specifically in terms of their agreement that tourism promotes overall economic development, raises living standards, brings economic benefits and reduces the gap between the rich and the poor. However, among the negative indicators, residents are increasingly sensitive to the fact that tourism development has increased the price of land or housing in the area. During the global crisis of the pandemic, tourism came to a standstill and the economic development of traditional tourist destinations was hit. In this crisis, the residents of Xishuangbanna felt that tourism had a boosting effect on economic development, while the government's efforts to repair the local economy through the development of tourism properties led to a rise in property prices, which made the residents

quite critical.

In terms of perceived socio-cultural impacts, the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism development in the Xishuangbanna region are recognised by local residents, while residents perceive the negative social impacts of tourism development relatively less strongly. Overall, it seems that although residents' negative perceptions of social problems brought about by tourism development are relatively weak. Attention should still be paid to building and guiding the social climate, safeguarding the simple social culture of local residents and maintaining their orderly, calm and dignified daily lives.

In terms of perceived resources and environmental impacts, more than half of the residents believe that tourism development is conducive to local natural resources and the ecological environment conservation, but a certain percentage of residents also feel the negative environmental impacts brought about by tourism development. There is still a need to strengthen the treatment of the wastes and the supervision of environmental protection, to widen the waste discharge channels and to pay attention to environmental hygiene.

5 Tourists' Behavior and Satisfaction

5.1. Information of sample tourists

A total of 192 tourist questionnaires were distributed for this monitoring and 189 valid questionnaires were returned, with an efficiency rate of 98.4%. Convenience sampling method was used and the questionnaires were distributed in the areas of Xishuangjing, Manting Park, Wild Elephant Valley, Xishuangbanna Dai Garden and Primeval Forest Park.

5.2. Analysis of tourists' behavior

In terms of visitor access to information, visitors mainly obtained tourism information through introductions by friends and relatives and through the internet. Under the influence of the pandemic, the direct contact and in-person communication has been reduced, and the strength of word-of-mouth travel advice has been slightly reduced. Therefore, under the

special period, Xishuangbanna should pay more attention to internet marketing, travel agency publicity and other online and offline channels, focusing on word-of-mouth publicity as a way to attract more tourists.

In terms of tourist travel forms, the main form of travel for tourists is self-guided travel, accounting for 66.1% of the total tourists surveyed, increasing by 7.2% from 2019; followed by group travel by friends or family; forms of travel organised by companies, conference visits and other forms of travel have decreased due to the pandemic; individual trip in a group and other forms of travel have also decreased. In the post-epidemic era, Xishuangbanna tourism should pay more attention to the high-end retail market of self-drive tours and the mass tourism market of family and friends travelling with a group, and do a good job in following up the corresponding infrastructure and tourism market regulation.

In terms of tourists' travel motivations, the main motivations for tourists to travel to Xishuangbanna are to relax, to learn about the culture and to enjoy the food and good weather. The proportion of other travel motives is less than 15%, including "education or knowledge", "business or commercial", "visiting friends and relatives", "adventure or adventure", etc.

In terms of transportation, 70% of visitors chose air travel as their main mode of transport, followed by self-driving, while the frequency of choosing coach, train and other modes of transport decreased compared to that in last year. This shows that, with the improvement of airline construction and the increase of domestic direct flights in Xishuangbanna in recent years, the accessibility of Xishuangbanna has been greatly enhanced, but the lagging development of public transport such as long-distance buses and trains still causes inconvenience to many ordinary casual visitors.

In terms of length of stay, visitors to Xishuangbanna mainly visit for 2-7 days. One-day trip visitors account for 3.2%, which is a decrease from last year. More than half of the visitors chose to stay in starred hotels, followed by homestays and youth hostels, all with the same proportion of accommodation types as last year. The market share of the tourism accommodation sector is relatively stable, with star-rated hotels remaining the main type of accommodation for visitors to Xishuangbanna.

5.3. Tourist perceptions of Xishuangbanna

Overall, visitors' perceptions of the various tourism resources and tourism services in Xishuangbanna are at a medium level, but satisfaction with most indicators has increased compared to last year. The overall satisfaction level of tourists is high, with most indicators exceeding 80% satisfaction, with average scores of over 4.

In terms of the features of tourism resources, the overall satisfaction of tourists is high, with most indicators exceeding 80% satisfaction, with an average score of more than 4. However, in the mid-to-late stage of tourism development, it is difficult to avoid commercialisation and homogenisation, which reduces the viewability of tourist attractions. The Xishuangbanna government should always cherish and protect the originality of local tourist attractions when developing tourism.

In terms of the overall image of tourism, compared with the 2019 data, tourists' satisfaction with the overall image of Xishuangbanna tourism generally improved, with satisfaction with the sharpness of Xishuangbanna's tourism image rising the fastest. However, the overall image of Xishuangbanna in terms of natural environment tourism has been slightly slower compared to the human image, especially in terms of local noise pollution.

In terms of infrastructure, tourists are only slightly satisfied with Xishuangbanna's infrastructure compared to other tourism resources, but compared to previous years' data, every indicator of tourists' perception of Xishuangbanna's infrastructure is the highest, especially in terms of satisfaction with local public transport, the situation of public toilets and public rest facilities, which shows that the Xishuangbanna government has actively invested in infrastructure in recent years. However, tourist satisfaction with local public toilets was only 61.9%. As a world-class tourist destination, the construction and maintenance of tourist toilets is crucial and must not become a shortcoming that affects tourists' perception of tourism.

In terms of safety and health, visitors were more satisfied with the local safety facilities, medical equipment and security situation, which also improved slightly compared to the 2019

data.

In terms of scenic services, visitors' satisfaction with scenic services is slightly above average. The most satisfied with the clarity of the scenic spot signage system, visitors were slightly less satisfied with the sanitation of the scenic spot toilets, the degree of crowding and the reasonable price of tickets, but the satisfaction level of all three indicators increased relative to previous years. The latter two improved most significantly due to the pandemic, which reduced the flow of people to the scenic spot and lowered the tickets. According to tourists' satisfaction with Xishuangbanna's scenic services, it is suggested that scenic spots still need to make improvements in infrastructure construction, such as toilet hygiene and internal and external traffic conditions, in order to improve the satisfaction of tourists' scenic experiences.

In terms of catering services, tourists were generally more satisfied with the catering services. Tourists were most satisfied with the taste, variety and characteristics of the food and beverage, and least satisfied with the initiative of the food and beverage service, but compared with the data in 2019, all aspects of the food and beverage service indicators have increased.

In terms of transportation, visitors were moderately satisfied with the transport services. Visitors were most satisfied with the traffic signage system and traffic safety. Compared with previous years, visitors' satisfaction with all aspects of transport services has increased, indicating that Xishuangbanna's transport construction has been effective overall. However, there is still much room for improvement, especially in terms of the convenience, comfort and reasonableness of transport prices.

In terms of tourism accommodation, tourists are generally more satisfied with Xishuangbanna's tourism accommodation services. Satisfaction levels for all accommodation service indicators have increased compared to 2019, which also shows that Xishuangbanna has been effective in the construction and management of accommodation services.

In terms of shopping experience, visitors rated the overall shopping experience in Xishuangbanna as only slightly satisfactory. Compared with that in 2019, satisfaction in all

aspects of the shopping experience has increased, indicating that the overall environment of Xishuangbanna's tourism shopping has improved, but there is still much room for improvement in terms of value for money of goods and market order, which requires greater attention and continuous improvement.

In terms of entertainment services, tourists are more satisfied with the entertainment services in Xishuangbanna. Among them, visitors are most satisfied with the safety of the entertainment facilities or programs, and least satisfied with the variety of entertainment programs or facilities and the reasonableness of their prices. Even though Xishuangbanna has improved its entertainment services compared to previous years, it should still actively improve the development and management of entertainment programs to enhance visitors' experience and bring more secondary consumption income to the scenic spot.

In terms of consultation and complaint services, tourists were largely satisfied with Xishuangbanna's tourism consultation and services, with a satisfaction rate of around 80% and an average rating of above 4, all of which were also improved compared to 2019. This is somewhat related to the development of all-area tourism and the standardisation of various tourism service measures.

5.4.Overall rating of Xishuangbanna tourism by tourists

The majority of visitors were satisfied with their visit to Xishuangbanna. The proportion of visitors who said they were satisfied and very satisfied remained more or less the same as last year and tended to stabilise over the five-year fluctuation, with the proportion of visitors who said they were very satisfied reaching the highest in five years.

5.5.Visitors' willingness to revisit and recommend

All in all, the lower willingness of tourists to revisit this year compared to previous years does not mean that Xishuangbanna has started to lose its appeal. The willingness of tourists to recommend is still the highest in the past five years. Only in the post-epidemic era, there are too many uncertainties for tourists to make absolute judgments easily, so the uncertainty of tourists' willingness to revisit is also the highest in recent years.

6 Conclusion and Suggestions

(1) Infrastructure: public transport, transport routes, scenic facilities etc. need to be improved

Nearly half of the tourists interviewed mentioned infrastructure problems in Xishuangbanna, especially transportation, suggesting that the traffic conditions should be improved; tourist routes and public transport facilities should be increased; public transport schedules should be rationalised, and public transport services should be improved. Some tourists also mentioned the problems of outdated facilities in scenic spots and the need to strengthen the renewal and repair of infrastructure.

(2) Overall sanitation: sanitation in public and consumer areas needs to be improved

In terms of environmental hygiene, visitors mentioned that the hygiene of the city. Catering and accommodation needs to be improved. Hygiene standards need to be set and regulated. It is suggested that environmental protection publicity for local residents should be increased to raise their awareness of environmental protection.

(3) Market order: excessive prices for tickets and commodities in scenic spots and market irregularities

Tourists believe that the overall tourism market is overpriced in many aspects, including entrance fees, accommodation, transportation and merchandise. The shopping environment and market order need to be regulated so that they can develop legally and orderly and avoid rip-offs.

(4) Ethnicity: culture needs to retain its authenticity and avoid homogenisation of products

Some visitors mentioned the need to highlight the ethnic characteristics of Xishuangbanna, to protect and preserve the originality while trying to avoid homogenisation

of tourism products, and to strengthen cultural development and promotion.

(5) Service quality and attitude: the quality of the service needs to be improved, and the service attitude of tourism professionals needs to be improved

Scenic area basic services have not kept up. Tourists tend to feel fatigue in the process of playing. Resting facilities are not enough. In addition, many tourists also responded to the internal signs of the scenic area is not clear enough, affecting the travel experience. The poor attitude and unsatisfactory service of the catering staff in the scenic spots also tend to reduce the tourist experience of visitors. It is suggested that the service awareness training of tourism practitioners be strengthened to improve the service level.

(6) Ecological conservation: avoiding over-exploitation and protecting the ecological environment

Some tourists mentioned the need to protect the ecological environment in tourism development, and that while carrying out tourism development, excessive development should be avoided and urban green areas should be guarded.

To sum up, tourists' opinions on tourism in Xishuangbanna are mainly on two aspects: service experience and conservation. In terms of service, the most important thing is the improvement of accessibility, followed by improving infrastructure construction, maintaining hygiene and cleanliness, regulating the tourism market and improving the overall quality of local tourism services. In terms of conservation, in addition to paying attention to the preservation and development of ethnic and cultural characteristics, attention should also be paid to the protection of the ecological environment and natural resources.

Topic 1 Impact of COVID-19 and Recovery

This feature summarises and analyses the impact of the COVID-19 on Xishuangbanna, and the challenges it has caused to the demand and supply side of the cultural tourism industry.

The COVID-19 has had a significant impact on China's macro economy, with negative impacts exceeding those of SARS. Cultural tourism is one of the most severely damaged industries. Xishuangbanna's tourism industry experienced a state of total shutdown in January and in February, before starting to open conditionally in March. Since the second half of the year, there has been a good recovery in visitor numbers and a recovery in scenic spots. The impact of the epidemic is mainly reflected in the demand side of tourists, the supply side of the tourism industry and the social life of residents.

Firstly, the questionnaire showed that most of the tourists in Xishuangbanna were travelling for the first time after the epidemic. Their travel was shortened compared to that before the epidemic. There was an overall tendency to spend less on food, accommodation, travel, shopping and entertainment, as the vast majority of tourists had a reduced annual income due to the epidemic.

Secondly, the impact of the pandemic on the supply side of the cultural tourism industry also included the suspension of border tourism; difficulties in the management of scenic spots and increased financial pressure; some new tourism projects were forced to be delayed and some tourism developments diverted; the epidemic had a negative impact on local property prices; and travel agencies and intermediaries were forced to transform.

Thirdly, from the perspective of employment, the empl and incomes of some residents have been significantly affected. On the other hand, some positive feelings such as easier travel have been generated due to the reduced traffic. After the pandemic, scenic attractions that are in contact with natural animals and plants, tropical rainforests and outdoor environments are more popular with residents.

This topic also suggests a number of recommendations for the development of cultural tourism in Xishuangbanna after the pandemic: (1) build confidence at government level and develop a cultural tourism revitalisation plan; (2) develop nature-friendly projects to restore and establish the image of a "safe tourism destination"; (3) actively exploit the advantages of the location and develop border tourism; (4) opening-up holiday-oriented tourism products; (5) cultivate internal strength, deepening the integration of cultural tourism and developing innovative business models.

Topic 2 Tropic Rainforest Products

This topic focuses on tropical rainforest tourism products through questionnaire, participatory observation and interview to understand the situation of tropical rainforest scenic spots as well as the design, operation and future development of tourism education products.

In 2019, the basic situation of the major tropical rainforest scenic spots is as follows: firstly, the various infrastructures of Wild Elephant Valley have continued to improve. The entertainment programmes have become more educational and the service has been improved; secondly, the peacock release activity in the Primeval Forest Park is subject to competition from other scenic spots and is currently actively planning the renewal of the programme; thirdly, the Botanical Garden of the Chinese Academy of Sciences is exploring new paths of development in the study tour market and intends to develop in the future. Fourthly, Manting Park was used as a filming location for the fourth season of the "Wife's Romantic Journey" show broadcast in 2020, which has raised awareness nationwide and increased tourists' numbers; fifthly, Mengyuan Fairyland is currently actively exploring the upmarket study tour and has achieved good results. The future plan will focus on recreation and health, mainly for the recreation and health crowd in big cities.

The tourism and education products of the tropical rainforest scenic area have two main types: sightseeing and interactive experience, covering both flora and fauna resources and humanistic tourism resources. For the study tours, most of the rainforest scenic areas are currently at a preliminary stage of research and education product design. In the future, tropical rainforest scenic areas need to take into account the needs of multiple parties, including schools, organisations, teachers, parents and students, in designing study tour, and design more activities with sufficient experience and rich educational information around students' tourism and educational activities in the scenic areas, in order to cultivate a unique competitiveness in the study tour market.

Table 1-1 Tropical Rainforest Nature Educational Tourism

Type	Wild Elephant Valley	Primeval Forest Park	Botanical Garden of the Chinese Academy of Sciences	Manting Garden	Mengyuan Wonderland
Sightseeing	Herding elephants in rainforests, observation tasks, nature observation notes	Tropical Rainforest, Peacock Release, Ethnic Flavours	Tropical Rainforest Scenic Area, Famous Trees Garden, Hundred Bamboo Garden, National Tree Garden, Yunnan Tropical Wild Flower Garden, Relocation Reserve for Cherished and Endangered Plants, Wild Orchid Garden	/	Tropical Rainforest, Baojiaoniudong
Interactive Experiences	Interaction with Asian elephants, having meals with elephants, painting baby elephants, Yetuo painting, tent camping, elephant medical check-ups	Jungle Leap	/	Elephant show, Campfire	Ethnic culture

(Resources: according to the research result)