

**Sustainable Governance of Rural Tourism
Destinations in China**

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In memory of my late grandmother and parents

Also for and my darling son Tianlei

Abstract

One of the critical issues for sustainable rural tourism is to develop a proper governance mode that can balance the divergent interests of the destination stakeholders. This is particularly true with regard to rural tourism destinations in China where tourism development has rapidly changed thousands of villages since the 1990s. Some villages have benefited fairly well from rural tourism development but some others are not so successful. No one has adequately explained why this is the case. This PhD research, therefore, investigated the real-world situation of rural tourism destination governance in China to answer the questions: What is going on in the villages? How do the villages develop the destination governance approach? How does the governance approach shape the sustainability of rural tourism destinations?

This research took a social constructionist position to study rural tourism destination governance as a process of dynamic social interactions that involves people, place and institutions. It adopted the Grounded Theory method to investigate the decision-making process for managing rural tourism development. Three rounds of field studies were conducted in the theoretically selected villages in North China. The patterns of stakeholders' perceptions and practices of rural tourism development emerged from constant comparison of data that were collected through participant observation, in-depth interviews, focus groups, etc. These patterns presented a hybrid governance model that integrates the pyramid and hierarchical structures of governance systems of the rural tourism destinations.

It was discovered that the governance models of rural tourism destinations evolve through intensive interactions between local government, the village, tourism businesses, tourists, etc., despite differences in the physical and geographical parameters of the rural tourism destinations. The interactions between the formal and informal institutions of destination development constantly change the mechanism of sustainable governance. In such interactions, the village decision-making process is influenced significantly by powerful government policies but is fundamentally determined by the village self-governance capabilities that enable the village communities to develop working rules as operational rules-in-use for daily practices and for managing village affairs. Inadequate village self-organisation or self-regulation capability constrains village self-governance capabilities. Interactive governance enables the villages to cooperate closely with local government and the tourism markets to achieve sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations.

The significance of this research is in its scope, method and outcomes. It extended its scope to the villages that are the basic units of China rural governance. The situation in the villages illustrates the social reality in rural China and explains its rapid growth. The Grounded Theory method enabled the researcher to examine the concept of “governance” using an inductive approach and discover the working rules for managing rural tourism that are common in the Chinese context. Its original contributions are in both the substantive and formal theory areas. The substantive theory of interactive governance can help stakeholders in making tourism policies, and planning and managing development programmes for rural tourism destinations. It offers practical contributions to the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations in China and

other developing countries. The theoretical contribution is in the formal theory of governance mechanism that offers a framework for the study of how the governance models facilitate or hinder sustainable development in transitioning societies.

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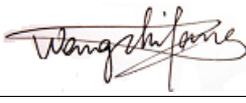
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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

Signed:  Date: 20/05/2016

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Ethics

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Chapter 1 Introduction

This research studies the governance of rural tourism destinations in China, where thousands of villages have developed rural tourism for poverty elimination and rural development. The rapid growth of rural tourism generated positive and negative effects on the socio-economic development and the natural environment in recent years. Some villages have fared better than others but no one has undertaken any research that adequately explains why this is the case. It does appear, however, that destination governance is a key factor for resolving the old and new problems encountered by the villages. Therefore, this research attempts to study the real-world situation of destination governance in rural China in order to answer the question.

1.1 Research background

The world is astonished by China's dramatic socio-economic transformation in the last three decades. With more than 20 per cent of the global population, China has transformed itself from being one of the poorest countries in 1978 to being the second-largest economy in the world in the early 2000s. Such an unprecedented phenomenon of socio-economic development has drawn various concerns and interpretations. Many people discuss China's development with an emphasis on its overall or sector growth. They tend to interpret its continuing economic growth with regard to the development strategy driven by investment or attribute it to the significantly improved productivity and efficiency (Davis, 2010). Also, some researchers have noticed the coexistence of prosperity and poverty, the mixture of

modern/postmodern patterns with traditions in the major cities, and the huge socio-economic disparities between the urban and rural areas in the country (Lin & Liu, 2008; Wan, 2008; X. L. Wang, 2008; Yao, 2009). However, few research investigate what is going on in the villages, where lives nearly a half of China's large population, according to the annual report issued by National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC) in 2015. Obviously, without a thorough understanding of the transformation in rural China, it is impossible to gain insights into China's rapid socio-economic development.

Since the late 1980s, thousands of villages have been transformed into rural tourism destinations. Before China's economic reform, there were only a few Chinese people who travelled for holidays. After 1978, China's rapid economic growth and the continuing improvement in average living standards have enabled millions and millions of Chinese people travel in the country and around the world. The increasing Chinese domestic and outbound tourists have challenged the tourism industry worldwide. In this context, rural tourism has been emerging and growing in the peripheries of the major cities and expanding to the remote and isolated rural areas. Apparently, the rapid growth of rural tourism destinations has paralleled the rural transformation in China. This research, therefore, intends to study the development of rural tourism to gain insights into rural transformation that enable a better understanding of the phenomena of China's rapid growth and its development strategy.

The development of rural tourism in China was in the setting of rapid economic growth alongside social differentiation and environmental crisis. Since the early 1980s, with significant progress in economic development, China is often observed to have huge

income gaps and enlarged inequality in the provision of public services between regions, particularly between the urban and rural areas. Such unbalanced socio-economic progress aroused political concerns (Frangialli, 2006). Hence, the Chinese pursuit of economic growth turned towards “constructing a harmonious society” in the first decade of the 2000s. Since then, terms such as “sustainable development”, “protection of vulnerable groups”, “cultural conservation”, “environmental protection”, “governance”, etc. have been the catchwords in China. In this context, rural tourism is promoted as a tool for poverty alleviation and rural development.

The national development strategy for rural tourism has been actively implemented in the country, particularly in the provinces where a large rural population is living on agriculture. One example is Hebei Province in North China. Hebei Province has typical agricultural traditions that contribute a large proportion of its gross domestic product. It has a large, rural, poverty-stricken population that lives mostly in the villages around Beijing and Tianjin. As is the case in other provinces in China, Hebei Provincial and county governments have actively promoted rural tourism development with policy support, financial subsidies, technique assistance, etc. Such efforts were aimed at increasing rural household income and improving the living conditions in remote and isolated rural areas (Z. Li & Cao, 2004). The development of rural tourism programmes, however, was not a panacea for various problems that impede rural development. Although sustainable development principles are part of the master plans of rural tourism development and are guidelines for tourism development and management, China rural tourism has tended to be more successful in rural economies that were

already healthy (Jing, 2006). One of the undesirable results of rural tourism development has been the enlarged economic disparities between social-economic groups, in addition to the degradation of the natural environment and social morality in rural tourism destinations (J. Chen & Lu, 2007; Lai, Li, & Feng, 2006; Liu, Xie, & Huang, 2006; Y. Wang & Niu, 2006; Willson, 2006).

Practical approaches to sustainable rural tourism have been the focal issue for both tourism practitioners and academics in China. Modes of rural tourism development, i.e. government policy support and financial/technique assistance, rural tourism planning, corporate management of rural tourism destinations, cooperation and collaboration between tourism businesses, tourism organisations and destination communities, etc., have been advocated as good practices for sustainable rural tourism development. In this context, the concept of governance was adopted to coordinate the public and private sectors to solve problems in rural tourism destinations. However, what is good governance for sustainable development of rural tourism destinations in the Chinese context? This question is not answered explicitly in existing tourism literature yet.

Existing theories and research on sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations explain the phenomena and the problems of rural tourism development in China inadequately. Tourism researchers and practitioners adopted the concept of “sustainability” in the early 1990s and then accepted “governance” as an ideal approach to sustainable tourism in the early 2000s (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). In practice, however, both “sustainability” and “governance” are still umbrella concepts and many ambiguous interpretations are made by various societies and cultures. This is

particularly true in the case of rural tourism destinations, where tourism development is based on the rural community with its various cultural traits. Therefore, it is accepted commonly that the interrelationship between “rural tourism sustainability” and “governance approaches” is still beyond further investigation by both theoretical and empirical research within tourism academic circles, even in the academics of social science.

The existing tourism literature shows that, in practice, which principles of sustainability might be achieved depends greatly on the circumstances of the destination (D. Hall, Roberts, & Mitchell, 2003; W. Moore & Whitehall, 2005; Sharpley, 2003). An explicit requirement for sustainable rural tourism is a local community approach that seeks to optimise tourism benefits for all stakeholders but according to local needs (Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003). Therefore, many researchers (Briggs, 2005; Sharpley & Roberts, 2004) argue that it is critical to understand how stakeholders achieve consensus on sustainable rural tourism development. Specifically, stakeholder relationships are suggested as one of the key factors that influence destination tourism planning and governance (Aas, Ladkin, & Fletcher, 2005; Araujo & Bramwell, 1999; Araujo & Bramwell, 2002; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Caffyn & Jobbins, 2003; D. Hall, Mitchell, & Roberts, 2003; Hardy, 2005; Hegarty & Przeborska, 2005; Novelli, Schmitz, & Spencer, 2006; Ryan, 2002; Sautter & Leisen, 1999; Sheehan & Ritchie, 2005). Further, building stakeholder networks has proved to be an effective approach to sustainable governance of tourist destinations (Lebe & Milfelner, 2006; Munro, King, & Polonsky, 2006; Presenza & Cipollina, 2010). These pieces of research, however, inadequately illustrate

how stakeholder relationships or networks shape the process of rural tourism destination governance and, hence, the sustainability of rural tourism development. Obviously, more sufficient and explicit understanding of the dynamics of rural tourism destination governance is needed.

Besides stakeholder networks, some other models of destination governance have been examined by tourism academics. Some researchers (Beritelli, Bieger, & Laesser, 2007; Bramwell, 2010, 2011; C. Michael Hall, 2011b; Laws, Richins, Agrusa, & Scott, 2011; Ruhanen, Scott, Ritchie, & Tkaczynski, 2010; Zahra, 2011) have discussed models of community governance, market governance, authority governance, etc. However, it seems that research on tourist destination governance often stresses the description of typology and the discussion of governance models (C. Michael Hall, 2011b; Laws et al., 2011). Such discussions are also prevalent in empirical research on destination development (Duffy & Moore, 2011; Gill & Williams, 2011; C. Michael Hall, 2011a; Higgins-Desbiolles, 2011; Jamal & Watt, 2011; Sofield & Li, 2011). Both theoretical and empirical research have generally described the governance models and strongly recommended good models for the sustainability of tourist destinations.

It seems that those sorts of models are combined in governing a tourist destination. The question is: How do these models coexist in a functional way? Could one model provide the primary function while the other models are supplementary? Another question is, as various models of sustainable governance are observed in different destinations: How do these models develop in the destination? These questions emerged from the real-world situation in Chinese rural tourism development and the review of relevant

literature on governance models/approaches for rural tourism destinations. Despite it being widely acknowledged that tourist destination governance models are largely determined by the destination's physical and sociocultural circumstances, little research specifically scrutinises how the governance model forms, what factors determine or influence the formulation of sustainable governance and how these factors shape the governance process. Such a gap in research is typical, not only in China but also worldwide, where rural tourism development and its impacts have aroused the attention of tourism organisations and academics globally. Obviously, this calls for a better understanding of Chinese practice in the governance of rural tourism for sustainable development. This PhD research, therefore, examines this by focusing on how governance approaches have developed and changed at different rural destinations located outside of Beijing.

1.2 Research aims and objectives

In order to identify the key elements of good governance for sustainable development of rural tourism destinations, this research investigates the social, political and natural interactions involved in the development of rural tourism in the villages outside of Beijing. It aims to find out what is good or bad governance in the real-world situation of rural tourism destinations in China so as to gain some insight into the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations. Therefore, the general topic falls under the category of sustainable governance of rural tourism development.

The key objectives of this research are: 1) to identify the problems that impede the sustainability of the rural tourism destination; 2) to identify the key stakeholders, the

key governors of the destination; 3) to examine the governors' actions in governing the rural tourism destination so as to identify Chinese practices in solving the destination problems; 4) to scrutinise the formulation of effective rules for governing rural tourism destinations; 5) to examine the governance models of rural tourism destinations and to discover how the governance models emerge and evolve in the process of rural tourism development and how the governance approach fits the situations or circumstances of rural tourism destinations in the context of the Chinese socialist-market system; 6) to examine the contributors to and obstacles for governing rural tourism destinations towards sustainability, to identify the key components of sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations and to illustrate how governance models have influenced and shaped the development of sustainable rural tourism in China.

Specifically, examining the governance systems of rural tourism destinations can help to identify the governance actors, the institutions they use, and the attributes of the social and natural systems of the rural tourism destinations. Hence, it helps to examine the evolution of governance models and detect the factors that may determine or affect the interactions between elements of the governance system, particularly in initiating rural tourism programmes and managing the tourism commons in the rural tourism destinations. Furthermore, this research deliberately scrutinises the decision-making processes for key issues in the villages to illustrate the interactions between formal and informal institutions used for governing rural tourism destinations; hence, it will identify the determinants of working rules for coping with problems of the tourism commons in rural tourism destinations.

To summarise, this research aims to gain a better understanding of the interrelationship between “governance” and “rural tourism sustainability” in the Chinese context. It is designed to discover the real-world situation of rural tourism destination governance, through exploring the evolution of governance models and examining interactions between the elements of governance systems of rural tourism destinations in China. By scrutinising the decision-making process and the evolution of institutions used in managing tourism commons, this research intends to identify the determinants of sustainable governance of rural tourism development in the Chinese context and to illuminate the interrelationship between good governance and rural tourism sustainability. In one sentence, through investigating and examining the governance of rural tourism destinations in China, this research aims to determine in what respects it follows the basic routes of sustainable tourism in Western countries and in what respects it develops along a path of its own.

1.3 Research methods

To gain insights into the real-world situation of rural tourism destination governance in China, this research studied destination governance as a process of social interaction between or among various stakeholders of the destination, as well as interactions between the actors and the tourism resources in the destination. It adopted a Grounded Theory approach to collecting primary and secondary data, and theoretically selected some Hebei villages as cases where rural tourism development had been implemented as a contributor to sustainable rural development.

Grounded Theory is appropriate to the nature of this research. This research studied the governance of rural tourism destinations against the background of China's socio-economic development, i.e. economic imperative, a socialist-market system, the building of a harmonious society, etc., that is significantly different from that of other economies. Moreover, Western and Chinese cultures have different views regarding the relationship between humanity and nature, the role of personal relationships and the predisposition towards classification (Ryan & Gu, 2009). This is forcing a reevaluation of taken-for-granted assumptions about the research paradigms used and the cultural milieu within which they are formed. This research, therefore, took a Grounded Theory approach in investigating the reality and context of rural tourism development in China to find key elements for sustainable rural tourism destination governance in the Chinese context.

Theoretical sampling methods in combination with the criteria of sustainable rural tourism development are used to select villages as research settings. Pre-field study was conducted in five Hebei villages to determine the general patterns of rural tourism development and its socio-economic context in China. Finally, three of these villages were studied as the officially designated demonstration sites of sustainable rural tourism destinations. Three rounds of field studies were conducted for data collection and analysis in the inductive approach. Secondary data were collected from existing literature related to sustainability, governance, rural tourism, tourism commons, etc. Primary data were collected from field studies through government documents, field observations, focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, etc. Data were processed

and analysed with theoretical coding and memos, constant comparative analysis either during or after the fieldwork to generate properties, patterns, categories and variables, and the substantive theories of obstacles and determinants of sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations in China.

1.4 Research findings

Taking a Grounded Theory approach, this research studied the real-world situation of the governance of rural tourism destinations in China. Through the constant comparative analysis of primary and secondary data, the patterns of rural tourism destination governance in China are grouped into three themes: 1) the rural tourism destination is a complex of dynamic interactions and interrelationships between various stakeholders, the village community and the tourism resources in the village; 2) the governance system involves multiple governance actors with various governance instruments for divergent interests in rural tourism development in the village; 3) the performance of rural tourism destination governance depends on the patterns of the village decision-making process, which is determined by the village self-governance capability and affected by the village's external factors, such as government intervention and market forces. Therefore, village self-governance capability is identified as a fundamental factor that determines the performance of rural tourism destination governance.

Based on constant comparison of data from field studies in the villages, this research detected the factors that determine or affect village self-governance capability. These factors may include: the organisational structure and the communication channels in the

village community, the decision-making procedures for collective village issues, the villagers' willingness and preferences regarding rural tourism development, the village's folk customs and village norms, neighbourhood relationships, etc. Also, village self-governance capability is affected by government intervention, i.e. tourism development policies, etc.

Specifically, this research firstly discovered the real situation of rural tourism development in the villages. All these villages were poverty-stricken and developed rural tourism after the local government opened the tourist zone or scenic area for economic purposes in the late 1980s. Nowadays, two villages are enjoying rural tourism development while one is struggling to survive in the competitive rural tourism market. These villages showed patterns of top-down or bottom-up development in the initiation and implementation of rural tourism development programmes that involved various stakeholders, i.e. the local government, village elites, the village community, tourism businesses, and visitors and tourists, despite the differences in physical and geographical parameters of the rural tourism destinations.

The interactions between/among the stakeholders consequently indicated three typically different governance models: bureaucracy governance, commune governance and community governance. In the bureaucracy governance model, the local government and the village cadres dominate the decision-making regarding the initiation and implementation of rural tourism development programmes, through manipulating various governance instruments, i.e. tourism policy, financial subsidies, technique assistance, etc. In the commune governance model, the village cadres are

decision-makers and the village elites have powerful influence via private investment, technology, information, etc. These two governance models are fading out in the development of rural tourism programmes in the villages. Instead, community governance models facilitate the sustainable development of rural tourism in the villages that show a higher degree of village self-governance capabilities. Comparative analysis on the governance models found that Chinese rural tourism destinations demonstrated hybrid patterns of the coexistence of bureaucracy governance, commune governance, community governance, stakeholder network governance, etc. This indicates that local government and the village cadres are the key actors and the local people value the personal connections and dynamic relationships with local government as the critical factors that construct the governance models of rural tourism programme initiatives.

Further field studies on the development of rural tourism programmes in the villages discovered that sustainable rural tourism was challenged by the problems of tourism commons. Typically, underinvestment in infrastructure and overuse of tourism commons were observed in these villages, despite each village having its particular system for managing the tourism commons in the village. In coping with the problems of tourism commons, the village communities developed their working rules to regulate the maintenance and use of tourism commons, as well as a neighbourhood watching system to monitor the maintenance and use of tourism commons in the villages. These working rules were developed in their daily practices, by integrating formal regulations with informal rules in the villages. The village that experienced conflicts between the

tourism participants and non-participants failed to develop working rules for coping with the problems of tourism commons.

Justice and fairness of participation in rural tourism programmes are critical factors in forming working rules. Such justice and fairness are embedded in the village community's self-governance capabilities that consist of village self-organisation, i.e. village self-government, the relationship between the two village committees, the neighbourhood relationships, etc., and village self-regulation, i.e., the village norms and conventions, and the transparency of information-sharing and communication channels. The village self-governance capabilities are also affected by the interactions between the village community and the village outsiders, i.e. local government, tourism businesses, tourists and neighbouring villages.

Based on institutional analysis of the working rules for managing tourism commons in the villages, a framework was generated for the institutional analysis of rural tourism destination governance in the Chinese context. Specifically, an integrated governance model with a hybrid of the pyramid and hierarchical structures was developed to describe the models of rural tourism destination governance in the cases studied in this research. The evolution of governance models indicates that rural reform and industrial restructuring significantly changed the mechanism of governance for rural tourism destinations. In the formulation of the governance mechanism, the formal institutions ("Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of the People's Republic of China,") interacted with informal institutions or cultural traits (neighbourhood relationships, conventions, norms, village codes of conduct, values and morals of a

society/community) to form the working rules for governing the rural tourism destinations. Moreover, in governing rural tourism destinations, the policies made by top government were often not implemented directly by the bottom of the pyramid. Instead, the village communities were empowered with self-governance or autonomy in internal village affairs.

Three themes emerged from the constant comparative analysis of primary and secondary data: the complexity and dynamics of social and natural tourism resources in the villages, the coexistence and integration of governance models, and the working rules for governing the complex and dynamic tourism resources in the villages. Further comparative analysis of the interrelationships between these themes argues that rural tourism destination governance is a process of consistent and intensive interaction between or among various destination stakeholders in managing the complex, dynamic social and natural tourism resources in the village. It involves the government, the village and the market in the governance of the rural tourism destination, but village self-governance capability is the determinant factor of the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations.

1.5 Research significance

This research has both practical and theoretical contributions to offer for sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations in China and other developing countries.

Specifically, the research significance is in the research scope, the research method and the research findings.

The first significance of this study is its research scope, which extends to the villages in rural China, where lives nearly a half of its population (NBSC, 2015). It studies the real situation of rural tourism development in the villages that initiated rural tourism as an approach for poverty reduction and then for sustainable rural development. The development of rural tourism in these villages bridges the gap between the rural and urban areas and reflects the huge and rapid socio-economic transformation in China in the last 30 years. There are thousands of similar villages in China where large populations of peasants live. The governance of rural tourism destinations hence illuminates the grassroots' perceptions and the practices of rural development in China. It helps academics understand not only what is going on in the villages but also the rapid and huge socio-economic transformations in China.

The second significance of this study is in the research method. It adopted a Grounded Theory approach to examine the concept of "governance". In the most abstract sense, this research used the term "governance" as a theoretical concept, referring to the actions and processes by which stable practices and organisations arise and persist. However, it differs from most theories of "governance as a process" that build deductive models with the assumptions of neoclassical economics to show how rational actors may come to establish and sustain formal and informal organisations. Instead, this research took a Grounded Theory approach and identified the key actors of governance in rural tourism destinations. It investigated their decision-making processes to discover the pattern of their governing actions and their perceptions of sustainable

governance. Therefore, this research discovered the working rules used for governing rural tourism commons.

The third significance is that the research findings lay an empirical foundation for the theoretical research of destination governance. The investigation of the formulation and evolution of these working rules unveiled the interaction between formal and informal institutions; hence, it identified the determinants and influential factors that contribute to the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations. Although the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) claimed that the smaller, more open national economies tend to pursue especially sustainable policies (OECD, 2005), that does not mean the concept of “governance” is absent in the Chinese practice of rural tourism destination management. It is obvious that a single study cannot cover comprehensively all the subjects commonly considered in the disciplines of sustainable tourism, rural tourism and rural development. Therefore, this study focused on the governance of rural tourism destinations, and examined particularly the formulation and evolution of governance models for rural tourism destinations in China. The research findings presented in this thesis, however, provide a framework within which we can examine many of the important issues that arise in the literature on tourism destination governance and sustainable rural tourism in a broad yet systematic way.

In practice, the original contribution of this research is that it identified the key elements of good governance for sustainable rural tourism in the Chinese context. The research examined rural tourism destination governance as a decision-making process in the dynamic interaction between multiple stakeholders, tourism resources and governance

systems; it was based on examining the real-world situation of Chinese practices in governing rural tourism destinations. It identified government intervention and village self-governance capability as the key elements of good governance for sustainable rural tourism in the Chinese context. This substantive theory of governance models and identification of actors and their decision-making patterns in the Chinese context may help the policy-makers, development agencies and other stakeholders of tourism destinations in making tourism policy, planning and managing development programmes for rural tourism destinations.

For academics, the original contribution of this research is that it develops an analytical framework for studies of rural tourism destination governance in China. Based on the further constant comparison between the substantive theory within existing Chinese and Western literature regarding the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations, a formal theory is generated for understanding how the governance models facilitate or hinder sustainable development in transition societies or cultures. In comparison with existing theories, this research integrates institutional analysis of commons (Ostrom, 1990, 1999, 2010; Ostrom & Field, 1999) with interactive governance framework (Kooiman, 2003, 1993; Kooiman & Bavinck, 2013; Kooiman, Bavinck, Chuenpagdee, Mahon, & Pullin, 2008; Kooiman & van Vliet, 2000) and develops a diagram of institutional analysis for interactive governance of rural tourism destinations. It offers a deeper and broader understanding of how governance models evolve to facilitate sustainable tourism development. While the success of sustainable tourism in the developed world may help the developing world to pursue the goal of sustainable

development, knowledge of the developing world can offer tourism researchers and practitioners a better understanding of rural tourism development in a transitional society.

1.6 The structure of the thesis

Chapter 2: Research background: Rural tourism development in China. This chapter analyses the socio-economic context of rural tourism development in China. It briefly reviews the rapid growth of Chinese mass tourism since the 1990s that stimulated rural tourism destinations to emerge around cities to meet the domestic tourist demand for excursions. With this background, rural tourism development is observed as a process of social interaction and negotiation between urban and rural people in China. As the government has promoted rural tourism as a strategy for poverty reduction and an approach for “constructing a new socialist countryside”, it is believed, inevitably, to be the dominant governor of rural tourism destinations. However, this is not true in reality.

Chapter 3: Literature review: Sustainable development and governance of rural tourism destinations. This chapter reviews the concepts, theories and practices of governance and tourism sustainability in both English and Chinese literature. Rural tourism is based heavily on rural communities that have various cultural traits. Identifying factors that determine or affect the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations remains a research gap, particularly in the Chinese context. There is an absence of further scrutiny of the decision-making patterns of those who are governing rural tourism destinations.

Based on the real-world situation and on an extensive literature review, this PhD research, therefore, studies rural tourism destination governance as a process of

interactions between various stakeholders of the destinations, and the interactions between the people and the place.

Chapter 4: Research methodology and methods. This chapter argues that the Grounded Theory approach is appropriate to the nature of this research. With theoretical sampling methods, three villages outside of Beijing were selected as examples of rural tourism destinations. With the principle of “all is data”, both secondary and primary data were used in this research. The secondary data were extracted from existing literature and socio-economic statistics. The primary data were collected from field studies in the villages, using the methods of participant and non-participant observation, interviews and focus groups. Theoretical coding and memos, as well as constant comparison, were used for qualitative data analysis. The data analysis results and research findings are reported in Chapters 5 to 8.

Chapter 5: Village profiles. This chapter generally describes the situation of rural tourism development in the villages that were studied as examples of rural tourism destinations. It reports the demographic information and the development of rural tourism programmes in each of the villages. All three villages based their rural tourism programmes on the culture of folk customs and the natural landscapes but they took very different paths in the initiation of rural tourism programmes in the villages and illustrated different performance options for sustainable tourism. The studies on the village profiles found that all three villages were in poverty-stricken rural areas and started rural tourism programmes for economic purposes 30 years ago. These villages had similar socio-economic and natural resources for rural tourism development but,

now, two villages are enjoying their rural tourism businesses while one is facing a big challenge to survive in the competitive rural tourism markets. These three villages also demonstrated three different patterns of governance of rural tourism development. The causes of such differences are analysed in Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

Chapter 6: Governance in the initiation and implementation of rural tourism

development programmes. This chapter reports on the research findings regarding the governance systems in rural tourism destinations. The key stakeholders of the destinations, i.e. local government, the village committees, the village communities, tourism businesses and tourists, all engaged actively in the initiation of rural tourism programmes in the villages. However, the patterns of the interaction between these stakeholders differed from village to village and the governance of rural tourism initiatives follows different models: bureaucracy governance, commune governance and community-based governance. In each of these models, the county government strongly affected the formation of the model via direct or indirect intervention with various instruments, i.e., policy support, technique assistance, financial subsidies, jurisdiction boundaries, etc. The community-based governance model emerged in the villages, where the local government was absent from “steering” rural tourism development programmes. As rural tourism rapidly grew in the villages, however, the problems of tourism commons emerged as a critical issue challenging the destinations’ sustainability.

Chapter 7: Problems of tourism commons in rural tourism destinations. This chapter analyses the widely observed problems of tourism commons in the villages. These

problems are: 1) increasing numbers of visitors compete with villagers for the use of village infrastructure and recreation facilities; 2) rural tourism businesses and local residents compete for the use of landscapes, i.e. natural grasslands, wetlands and water surfaces, for tourist activities; 3) increasing numbers of tourists and declining village financial resources aggravate the tensions between tourism development and environment protection; and 4) neighbourhood relationships and community harmony are challenged by the enlarging disparities of household income from tourism businesses in the villages. According to the interviewees, all these problems were attributed to the absence of government in providing public services in the rural area. In this circumstance, one village lost its priority position in the rural tourism market. In contrast, other villages developed their own working rules for coping with the problems of overuse and free-riding for tourism commons.

Chapter 8: Working rules for governing rural tourism commons. This chapter reports on the working rules developed by the village communities in managing rural tourism commons. Specifically, both formal and informal institutions are used in managing tourism commons. As each village has established its village self-government system, it has usually used formal institutions, i.e. laws and government policies, as external regulations to make the village statutes fulfil the implementation of external regulations. Although village statutes are also written to inform institutions in the village, they are used as internal rules in the village community. When the village statutes were not suitable to the situation of tourism commons in the village, the village community abandoned the village statutes and developed their working rules by integrating external

regulations with village informal rules, i.e. village norms, customs, conventions, neighbourhood relationships, etc. This illustrated the fact that destination governance models were not designed by governors but developed through interaction between the key stakeholders, and formal and informal institutions.

Chapter 9: Discussion: Components of sustainable governance of rural tourism

destinations. This section discusses the research findings in comparison to the relevant theories in existing literature. Based on constant comparison, it firstly groups the research findings into three themes: governing rural tourism destination as a complex and dynamic social-natural system; interactions among multiple governance actors; and institutions for governance. In comparison with research findings in existing relevant literature on destination governance in China, it points out village self-governance capability and government intervention as the key components of sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations in China. At the end of this chapter, there is a recommendation that the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations in China is strongly reliant on cooperation between the government, the market and the village.

With a reflection on Ostrom's institutional analysis diagram of the commons and Kooiman's interactive governance framework, this chapter argues that the framework of sustainable governance dynamic mechanism can be used as a formal theory for analysing sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations.

Chapter 10: Conclusion. This chapter reflects on the research project and research report.

With a review of the research aims and objectives, research methods and research findings, it argues that the significance of the research is that it offers a Chinese

narrative of tourism commons management and sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations. Therefore, it may help Western society to have a better understanding of the real world of China rural tourism, particularly of the current situation there, as well as offering some insights from the dynamic governance systems of rural tourism destinations into answer the question of why there is such huge disparity.

Chapter 2 Research background: Rural tourism development in China

This PhD research is set against the background of rapidly growing domestic tourism in China since the 1990s, which has stimulated rural tourism destinations to emerge to meet the demand for short-distance travel for recreational purposes. The pathway of rural tourism development in China shows significant difference from that in developed countries. Due to widely observed income disparities between residents of urban and rural areas, rural tourism has been promoted as a strategy for poverty reduction and an ideal approach to “constructing a new socialist countryside” in China. However, some villages benefited well from their rural tourism programmes while other villages did not do so, even though they were under the same jurisdiction with similar social and natural conditions for rural tourism development. How and why? These questions are to be answered through scrutinising the process of rural tourism destination governance in China. In this context, the rural tourism destination governance is studied as a process of social interactions between urban and rural people in China.

2.1 The pathway of tourism development in China

Tourism has been promoted as a development strategy with strong government policy support in China since 1978, when the country initiated economic reform and adopted an open-door policy to the world. In this context, China developed tourism through a pathway that is different from that of the developed countries. In developed countries,

i.e., the Organisation of Economic Cooperation Development (OECD) member countries, where mass tourism started with domestic tourism and then extended to international travel services. In contrast, as a less developed country, China started inbound tourism in the late 1970s, then developed domestic tourism in the 1980s and 1990s. Until the early of 2000s, China gradually and methodically eased restrictions on Chinese outbound tourism. Since then, travel for holidays has become a new fashion for Chinese consumers. However, overseas travel for holidays is still mostly for people with high or middle incomes. Conditioned by discretionary income and having holidays with pay, short-distance travel at the weekends for the purposes of recreation and leisure is more affordable to the mass of Chinese people. Therefore, in the last 20 years, rural tourism destinations have emerged around big cities and attracted increasing numbers of domestic visitors.

The rapid development of rural tourism in China has drawn wide attention from central and local government, and tourism authorities and organisations, as well as from tourism academics in China. Rural tourism has been promoted as the panacea for rural development in China. It is advocated as a bridge for urban and rural communication, a creator of rural economic growth, a tool for eliminating rural poverty, and a facilitator for building a new socialist countryside and constructing a harmonious society.

Dramatic growth of mass domestic tourism undoubtedly has produced innumerable positive impacts for both rural tourism destinations and the national economy; however, it is also observed as overdeveloped in terms of resource exploitation and enlarged income disparities between rural households, and, consequently, has caused social

conflicts in rural areas. It seems that governance approaches for rural tourism destinations are imperative for sustainable rural tourism development in China.

2.1.1 Tourism policy and tourism development in China

Chinese tourism development has been strongly impacted by national development strategy and tourism policy, with the conditions of economic growth in the country.

During the early 1980s, because of the economic limitations, the government prohibited domestic tourism. In 1990s, as the Open and Reform policy led robust economic growth in the country, the government changed the policy of public holidays and triggered mass domestic tourism development in China but restricted overseas travel. After 20 years of continuous economic growth, the Chinese government gradually eased the restriction on Chinese tourists travelling overseas for holidays at the beginning of the 21st century.

This is evidenced by the growth in the number of Chinese domestic and outbound tourists, as shown in Table 1, on page 28. While the statistics for inbound tourists are available from 1979, the numbers of domestic tourists and outbound tourists are calculated since 1984 and 1993 respectively.

Obviously, tourism in China started with inbound tourism, expanded to domestic tourism and then to outbound tourism. This unique pathway of Chinese tourism development corresponds with China's national development strategy in the later 20th and early 21th centuries. After the Third Meeting of the Eleventh China Community Party in December 1978, the country adopted "constructing socialist modernisation" as the national development strategy and turned the focus of development practices to economic growth (G. W. He, Sun, Zhang, Chen, & Dong, 2000).

Table 1: Tourist numbers in China from 1978 to 2013 (million, person/night)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Inbound tourists</i>	<i>Domestic tourists</i>	<i>Outbound tourists</i>
1978	1.81	-	-
1979	4.20	-	-
1980	5.70	-	-
1981	7.77	-	-
1982	7.92	-	-
1983	9.48	-	-
1984	12.85	200.00	-
1985	17.83	240.00	-
1986	22.81	270.00	-
1987	26.90	290.00	-
1988	31.69	300.00	-
1989	24.50	240.00	-
1990	27.46	280.00	-
1991	33.35	297.00	-
1992	38.11	330.00	-
1993	41.52	410.00	3.74
1994	43.68	620.00	3.73
1995	46.38	680.00	4.52
1996	51.12	685.00	5.07
1997	57.58	680.00	5.32
1998	62.08	720.00	8.35
1999	72.79	745.00	9.23
2000	78.31	762.00	10.47
2001	89.01	784.00	12.13
2002	97.91	878.00	16.60
2003	91.66	870.00	20.22
2004	109.03	1,102.00	28.85
2005	120.29	1,212.00	31.03
2006	124.94	1,394.00	34.52
2007	131.87	1,610.00	40.95
2008	130.02	1,712.00	45.84
2009	126.47	1,902.00	47.66
2010	133.76	2,103.00	57.39
2011	135.42	2,641.00	70.25
2012	132.40	2,957.00	83.18
2013	129.07	3,262.00	98.18

Source: Adapted from CNTA, *Tourism Statistic Yearbook*, 1979–2013

In this circumstance, tourism was advocated as an instrument to earn foreign currency and to attract foreign investment to China. From then, services for inbound tourists were transformed from having a political orientation to having an economic orientation;

consequently, tourism was added to the national economic statistics as a sector of the national economy (CNTA, 2000). Therefore, Chinese tourism was oriented to inbound tourism before 1984; this is evidenced by the statistics for domestic and outbound tourists, as shown in Table 1 on page 28. It implies that the demand for domestic travel for holidays was prohibited by national tourism policy. It was not until 11 May 1985 that the State Council issued the *Interim Regulations on Travel Management* that greatly mobilised the enthusiasm for travel and tourism nationwide (CNTA, 2000). It triggered Chinese tourism into expanding from providing tourist reception services to exploiting tourism resources, extending travel services to domestic tourists, and attracting multiple investment components, i.e., national, local, sector, collective and individual self-reliance, and foreign investment, etc., into tourism infrastructure. Consequently, both the size and performance of the tourism industry were improved in the late 1980s.

In the early 1990s, the dramatic growth of domestic tourism heralded the era of mass tourism in China. The rapid economic growth of the 1980s created a marketplace for tourism. With the improvement of living standards and changing ideas about life, tourism became a new way of leisure for urban residents in the early 1990s. An urban-market segment emerged, which aspired to emulate the consumer spending of its Western counterpart (Ryan & Gu, 2009). In addition, the policy of five working days, instigated in 1998, and the implementation of the public holidays of “1st May” and “1st October”, significantly increased the holiday allowances of urban residents. Such changes in holiday policy enabled urban residents to take long-distance journeys within

the country and abroad to neighbouring countries. The fashion for travelling during holidays has moved towards various types of tours: short tours around the city, a weekend's domestic travel, domestic holiday tours and outbound travel; travel is with a tour group or is in the form of a self-help tour by private car.

With the rapid socio-economic development in China, the tourism industry maintained a fast, stable and healthy development momentum in the past 30 years. In December 1998, the Central Economic Work Conference identified tourism as one of the new growth poles of the national economy. Since then, tourism has been believed to be one of the most dynamic and effective tertiary industries and it plays an increasingly critical role in the realisation of the modernisation of China. According to the National Bureau of Statistics of China (NBSC), the number of domestic tourists in 2007 reached 1.61 billion people, that doubled the number of that in 1994, with an average annual growth rate of 28.3 per cent (NBSC, 2008).

The pathway of Chinese tourism development reveals that tourism in China shows a different pattern in terms of inbound compared with domestic tourism. Inbound tourism has become the growth pole of the country following the "open-door policy" that was adopted in 1978. In contrast, China's domestic tourism was constrained by its economic condition in the 1980s and the early 1990s, but robust in the late 1990s and early 2000s. Since then it has retained flourishing growth. In 2004, the number of domestic tourists reached 1,102 million person/nights; that is, about 84 per cent of its population travelled around the country (CNTA, 2005). Since then, the number of domestic tourists has steadily increased and reached 3,262 million by the year 2013, as shown in Table 1 on

page 28. As a new social phenomenon, the rapid growth of Chinese domestic tourism was advocated as having forcefully stimulated domestic consumption, promoted tourism and relative industries, increased the central and local government's financial revenue, and enriched people's lifestyles (Xinhua News Agency, 2007).

To summarise, the pattern of tourism development in China corresponds to China's development strategy over the past 30 years. The analysis of Chinese tourism policy shows that tourism development approach is greatly embodied in the context of the Open and Reform policy, as well as to China's pursuit for modernisation in the last 30 years. After the Open and Reform policy was initiated in 1978, China's development strategy focused on economic growth. The four modernisations, i.e. industrial modernisation, agricultural modernisation, the modernisation of national defence, and scientific and technological modernisation, were set up as the goals of national development that would be achieved by the end of 20th century. To achieve the goal of the four modernisations, nationwide reform was initiated in both urban and rural areas.

The robust nature of mass tourism in China since late 1990s became a notable social phenomenon in China. While tourism demand increased, short-distance travel to rural destinations around the cities became fashionable in China. This trend is based on the huge gap between urban and rural socio-economic development caused by the urban-rural dual structure in China. It shows that State tourism policy is one of the key factors that shaped the pathway of tourism development in China; government intervention has critically affected the approach to tourism governance. In such a context, rural tourism has been used as a tool to facilitate rural development in China.

2.1.2 Rural tourism for poverty elimination and rural development

Rural tourism emerged around big cities to meet the market demand for more diversified accommodation and transportation services in China in the late 1980s. It was soon promoted as a poverty-reduction strategy in some inland provinces in the early 1990s. Since then, rural tourism has closely linked to rural development and facilitated the construction of new socialist countryside in China. Apparently, the pathway of China rural tourism development is significant different from that of the developed world, particularly the members of OECD. Hence, China's rural tourism development has strong characteristics of government intervention, diverse and numerous forms of rural tourism activities, but based on unplanned exploitation of tourism resources in rural area, and unskilled tourism services and management.

Firstly, the pathway of rural tourism development in China differs from that in developed countries, such as the members of Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). In these countries, rural tourism emerged in the 1970s and 80s, in the context that agricultural modernization resulted in losing jobs and income in the countryside. The development of rural tourism was seen as a rural diversification and development tool and a restructuring option for a countryside (Lane & Kastenholz, 2015). China rural tourism emerged in the periphery of some big cities to meet the domestic tourists' demand for travel for short-term holidays in late 1980s. However, the development of rural tourism was hindered by the national tourism policy, which was oriented by the inbound tourism, in addition to the limited transportation and accommodation capacity in the country. In the 1990s, the world witnessed the exciting

phenomenon of the massive increase of tourists from and to China (Frangialli, 2006). However, due to the uneven geographical spread of socio-economic development after 1978, the dramatic growth of the mass tourism has been spread very unevenly across the regions of the country. China's inbound tourism was highly concentrated in its coastal regions, where the economic boom created prosperity, cutting-edge industry, and rapidly transforming large cities. About 80 per cent of tourism receipts were earned by 12 coastal localities whose population amounts to only about 40 per cent of the national total (CNTA, 2000). On the other hand, an immense rural population was still suspended in a state of underdevelopment, enjoying only marginal benefits of the country's impressive modernisation efforts. The growth of inbound tourists appeared to contribute to regional disparities. It was predicted that inbound and domestic tourists would not be accommodated simply in big cities, no matter whatever level of investment could be achieved by 2020. In such a circumstance, rural tourism was then believed to be the best way to diversify and spread the tourist flows all over the country.

Secondly, rural tourism was promoted as a development strategy for poverty reduction in rural areas of China, while rural tourism in industrialized and urbanized OECD member countries was developed for restructuring rural economy of modern agriculture to sustain the vitality of rural area (Lane & Kastenholz, 2015). When rural tourism emerged in China in the 1990s, the country was still a less developed country. While the country was struggling to change the dual economy that widening rural-urban gaps and creating a large number of impoverished people in the countryside, rural tourism programmes were developed in the urban fringes and promoted as poverty-reduction

strategies in remote rural areas. In the 1990s, the national policy that introduced seven-day public holidays and two-day weekends increased discretionary time. Combined with increasing disposable income of urban residents, this significantly stimulated robust domestic tourism in China. Villages on the fringes of big cities attracted urban residents for two-to-three-day holidays, but villages in peripheral regions had fewer opportunities for traditional or purely rural tourism activities (Y. C. Huang, 2004). In this context, the central and local government advocated and promoted rural tourism as a strategy for poverty reduction in remote rural areas of inland provinces. In the 1990s, the “pro-poor tourism development projects” were carried out in Xishuangbanna, Dali and Lijiang in Yunan Province, Aba in Sichuan Province, and Taihang mountain area in Hebei Province (Yang, 2004). From the very beginning of this century, the Chinese government started to research and to put into practice the new “Poverty Alleviation Project” (Fúpín Gōngchéng) in order to enlarge continuously the effect of poverty reduction through tourism development. One such programme is red tourism, which is based on education about the revolutionary history of the Community Party, as well as ecological tourism (Cai, 2004).

Thirdly, Chinese rural tourism has been closely integrated with rural development despite there being no commonly accepted definition of rural tourism in the Chinese context. The CNTA advocated “rural landscape, agricultural production activities and rural lifestyle” as the core attractions of rural tourism. A promotional programme was initiated to create “national agricultural tourism demonstration sites” so that tourism was generally and closely integrated with agriculture (G. W. He et al., 2000). However,

a news report by Xinhua News Agency stated that, “in 2007, tourist spots in China’s vast countryside receive 300 million visitors every year, reaping revenues of 40 billion Yuan (US\$5.13 billion) as rural tourism and private cars are rapidly gaining popularity in the country” (Xinhua News Agency, 2007). Such statistical reports indicate that a clear definition may practically help a precise understanding of the conditions and denotation of rural tourism, as well as the trend of rural tourism development.

Fourthly, with distinctively multiple interpretations of rural tourism development, rural tourism products and services are delivered according to diverse and numerous models but through very rough utilisation of tourism resources in China. The most popular forms of rural tourism are one-day excursions or overnight stays for recreational activities, i.e. visiting farmhouse (Nóngjiālè), picking vegetables and fruits in the field (Guōyuán cǎizhāi), rural traditional culture, such as folk loun and customs (Xiāngtǔ mínsú), etc. Respectively, the exploitation of resources for rural tourism development involves four stages: to use rural, natural and sociocultural resources for recreation, e.g. *Nongjiale*; to use rural resources comprehensively for both tourism and agricultural production, e.g. *Caizhai*; to utilise the conserved local culture for rural tourism activities to improve both tourism resources and cultural conservation, i.e. *Xiangtu Minsu*; and to create resources for rural tourism activities, i.e. to construct accomodation and entertainment facilities as rural tourism development programmes. These four stages are coexisting in the process of rural tourism development in China and reflect the regional disparities of socio-economic conditions in China (Wei, 2004).

In addition, the Chinese rural tourism business has a large overall scale but consists of small businesses. These small businesses are often family businesses with unskilled services and poor management, constrained by limited access to tourism markets and financial resources. As tourism experts and professionals identified at the *2006 International Forum on Rural Tourism* (5-6 September, Guiyang, China), these problems are related mostly to local people's lack of knowledge about the tourism industry, the power of decision-making and influence in tourism project planning and implementation, and the culture of commercialisation. Despite the government's active promotion of rural tourism in the whole country and the principles of sustainable tourism that have been written into the national and provincial Master Plans of Tourism Development, rural tourism in China tends to be more successful in rural economies that are already healthy. Even in a given location, different groups of people have unequal opportunities for participating in rural tourism development. Hence, unexpected income gaps and social disparities are enlarged in the process of tourism development in the villages of rural tourism destinations, at the cost of degraded natural and social environments.

To summarise, Chinese rural tourism has been promoted by the State, provincial and local governments as a tool for poverty reduction and rural development. However, no voice from the communities can be heard in the forums of rural tourism development. The question of how to ensure that the benefits of rural tourism development go to local people and to those who are most in need remains unanswered. Many of the questions noted above can be rephrased to fit the context of Chinese rural tourism development.

Specifically: Who are involved in rural tourism development in China? Why do they develop rural tourism programmes? What resources do they use to develop rural tourism? How do they manage the resources of rural tourism destinations? What rules do they use to manage the rural tourism destinations? Furthermore, who are the important people acting as development agencies? What are the roles of government, community, NGOs and other stakeholders? How do they interact with each other? How can a fulfilling, mutually beneficial relationship between tourists and villages come to exist? What are their perspectives on sustainable rural tourism? How should the local population be approached to achieve economic benefits along with cultural and natural heritage preservation? These questions can be answered only through research into the governance of rural tourism destinations in China.

2.2 Regional socio-economic background of the research area

This PhD research focuses on governance of rural tourism destinations which directly links with sustainable rural tourism development. I extended this research to the fieldwork and determined the research area for investigating and discussing the specific issues stated above. Based on the survey of both English and Chinese literature related to rural tourism development in China, in addition to consulting the officials of local tourism administrations, the suitable fieldwork sites were identified in Hebei Province where rural tourism has been promoted as a tool for “rural poverty alleviation and building new socialist rural areas”. Therefore, this research is set in the regional socio-economic background of Hebei Province, China.

2.2.1 The profile of Hebei Province

Hebei Province has a special geographical location in China. With the coordinates of 113°27' to 119°50' east longitude, and 36°3' to 42°40' north latitude, it is located in the northern part of the North China Plain. Nowadays, it has Taihang Mountain acting as the border with Shanxi Province in the west, the Bashang Plateau with Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region in the north and the north-west, and Yanshan Mountain with Liaoning Province in the north-east. Facing the Bohai Sea in the east, Hebei Province joins with Shandong Province in the south-east and Henan Province in the south. In addition, on its upland are seated two autonomous municipalities: Beijing and Tianjin.

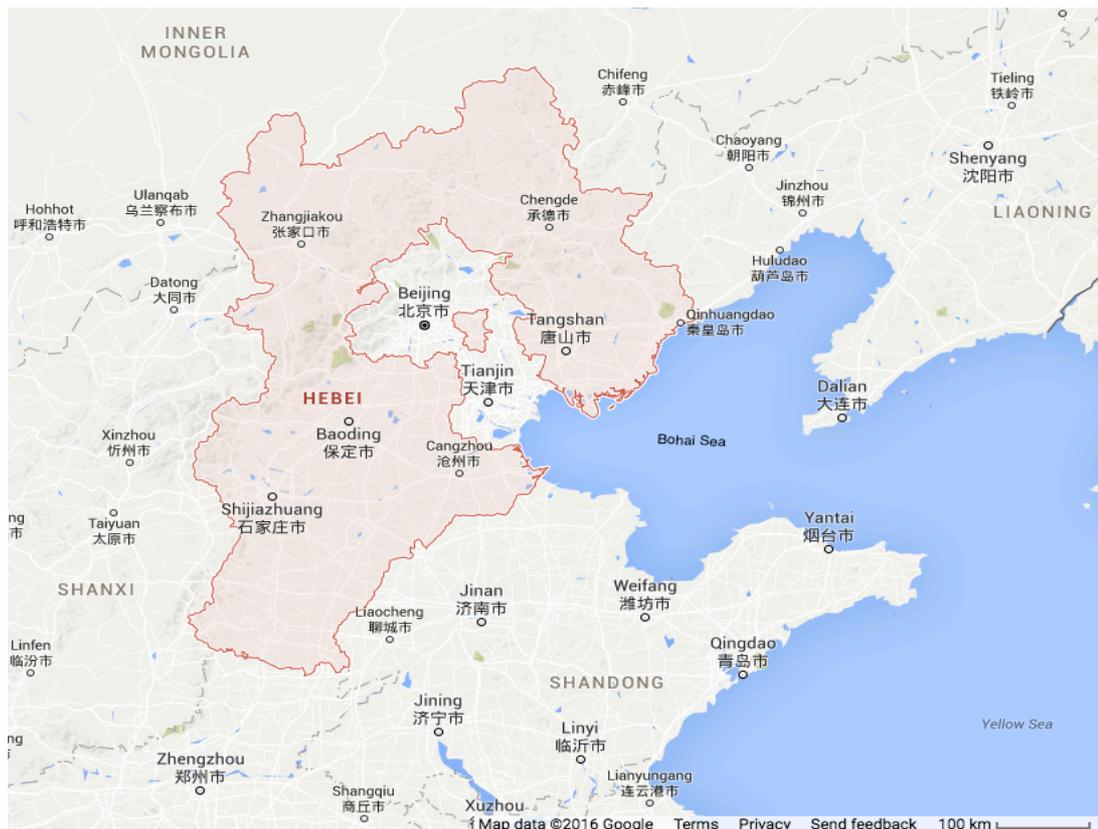


Figure 1: Location and topography of Hebei Province

Source: Adapted from Google maps, retrieved on 17 May 2016 from <https://www.google.co.nz/maps/place/Hebei,+China/@39.9261872,114.6217849,6.46z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x358ca930ca4c86d5:0x60450a22e71efb21!8m2!3d38.037057!4d114.468665!5m1!1e2?hl=en>

With such a special geographical location, as shown in Figure 1: Location and topography of Hebei Province on page 38, Hebei Province takes advantages of high accessibility, in terms of time and space, to attract urban residents of big cities to its rural tourism destinations.

With a tremendous variety of landscapes, Hebei Province has favourable natural resources for rural tourism development. Covering an area of 187, 693 square kilometres with a 487-kilometre coastline, Hebei Province has various landscapes, such as mountains, hills, plateaus, rivers, lakes, wetlands, beaches, sea and a vast plain. The terrain configuration of Hebei Province is like a multi-step staircase, sloping down from the Taihang Mountain in the west, to the North China Plain in the middle, then to the wetlands and beaches of the Bohai Sea in the east. Such a varied topography provides favourable conditions for diversified economies with regional characteristics.

In addition to abundant natural resources, Hebei Province has ample social and cultural resources for rural tourism development. This province is named “Hebei” since its lands once reached to the northern bank of the Yellow River in Han Dynasty. However, its name changed constantly in different dynasties with different administration systems in Chinese history. Shang Dynasty (21st century BC) once set the national capital city in Hebei. In the Spring and Autumn Period (771–476 BC), the State of Yan was in northern Hebei and the State of Jin was in southern Hebei. During the Warring States Period (475–221 BC), Yan and Zhao were among the seven hegemony, Wei, Zhao, Han, Qi, Qin, Chu and Yan States in China, which set their capital cities in Hebei (CNTA, 2015). Since then, “The land of Yan and Zhao States” (Yàn zhào dàdì, in Chinese

pinyin) is a common alternative name for Hebei Province and Hebei people are recognised as “the descendants of Yan and Zhao” (Yàn zhào érnǚ, in Chinese pinyin); those people are known for their bravery, justice, loyalty and righteous deeds. Such characteristics of Hebei’s local people have been part of the attractiveness of Hebei rural tourist destinations, such as Yesanpo, Zhalaying and Wangjiazhai villages.

From the historical perspective, the socio-economic development of Hebei Province has depended significantly on its tight relationship with the national capital city Beijing.

The name of Hebei came into being in the Western Han Dynasty (206 BC–25 AD) but it existed as the name of a large administration in the Tang Dynasty (618–907 AD) when Emperor Tang Taizong ordered the development of small administration divisions in order to establish Dao, a kind of provincial-level administration. In the Yuan Dynasty (1271–1368 AD), the system of provinces was adopted and China was divided into 11 provinces; the main part of present-day Hebei was under the jurisdiction of Zhongshu Province because it was around Dadu or Khanbaliq (the Grand Capital of the Yuan: today’s Beijing). In the Ming Dynasty (1468–1644), Hebei was called Jingshi (meaning the Jurisdiction Capital) after the capital city was moved from Yingtian Fu (today’s Nanjing, Jiangsu Province) to Shuntian Fu (today’s Beijing). In the Qing Dynasty (1644–1912), it was called Zhili Province (directly ruled by the imperial court) because it surrounded and was under the jurisdiction of the capital Peking (Zhao, Yang, & Li, 2010). In 1928, Zhili Province was renamed as Hebei Province because the capital of the Republic of China (established in 1911) was Nanjing; at that time, Hebei was not around, nor under the jurisdiction of, the capital city.

In 1949, the People's Republic of China set its capital in Beijing and the name of Hebei Province remained unchanged until now. However, the administration divisions of Hebei Province were changed a great deal from the 1950s to the 1970s. Some counties from three other provinces (namely Pingguan Province, Chahaer Province and Rehe Province) were put under the administration of Hebei Province but eight counties of Hebei were incorporated into Beijing in the 1950s. Another five counties of Hebei Province were incorporated into Tianjin in the 1970s, thus forming the present territory of Hebei Province ("Hebei," 2012). Such a history of administration gives Hebei Province close and tight relationships, both geographically and socio-economically, with the large cities of Beijing and Tianjin.

In this PhD research, the selected villages for field studies are located in different typological areas with different natural and social-cultural resources for rural tourism development. Zhalaying village is located in the tourist area that is named as the "Jingbei Diyi Caoyuan", which refers to the first grassland in the north of Beijing; this tourist area is the part of southern Bashang Plateau. The village developed rural tourism programmes by integrating ecotourism with cultural tourism activities, based on its rustic landscape of natural grasslands and the Manchu folk customs of nomadic traditions. Yesanpo village is a small village, located next to the Yesanpo National Geopark on the south side of Yanshang Mountain; it developed Nongjiale programmes with simple and cheap accommodation and recreational activities to attract visitors to the Geopark. Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages are located on islands in the Baiyangdian Lake, where rural tourism programmes are based on wetland landscapes

and folk customs of fishing and aquaculture. Xigucheng village is located between the Beidaihe Beach and the Jifa Agricultural Sightseeing Garden, which developed rural tourism attractions with high-tech horticultural and agricultural programmes, creating opportunities for villagers to take jobs in the garden and operate family hotels or restaurants in the village.

2.2.2 Regional socio-economic development of Hebei Province

The geographical location of Hebei Province is of prime importance. In theory, Hebei Province has been one of the regions with the greatest potential for economic development in China since it has tight and close relationships with Beijing and Tianjin, both geographically and socio-economically. Being the only province embracing the nation's capital city Beijing and the large seaport for foreign trade, Tianjin, Hebei is within the innermost part of their economic radiation rings. Moreover, Hebei has the convenience of rapid transportation by air, sea and land. All railways that link Beijing with other parts of China pass firstly through Hebei Province. With the unique geographical features surrounding Beijing and Tianjin, and running along the coastline of the Bohai Sea linking China's north-east, north-west and north, Hebei has geographical advantages in rapid coming and going of commercial goods, as well as a remarkably small transportation costs. Therefore, as far as economic development is concerned, Beijing and Tianjin are inseparable from Hebei and so is Hebei from them. In the process of socio-economic development, the three are interdependent; thus, the Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei economic zone was formed.

In addition, for historical and geographical reasons, there are no language difficulties or differences in customs between the peoples of Hebei Province, Beijing and Tianjin. These three places are deeply interrelated in terms of blood ties and geographical location: the city of Tianjin was the capital city of Hebei Province; Beijing has the largest number of residents from Hebei Province; Hebei Province has been supplying Beijing and Tianjin for what they need for economic and social construction, such as raw materials, energy, goods required for daily life and environmental protection. In return, because Hebei Province is on the periphery of Beijing and Tianjin, the advantages relating to the economy, science and technology, culture and talented personnel of these two big cities provide important external conditions for its socio-economic development. Therefore, ideally, Hebei Province would be expected to experience faster industrialisation and urbanisation than would other provinces in China. In reality, however, compared with other coastal provinces, Hebei Province has lagged behind in output growth, employment growth, economic diversification, productivity improvements and social development over the last three decades.

Hebei Province nowadays is recognised as one of the major agricultural provinces in China. Its primary industry accounts for a large share of its GDP. According to the Information Office of the People's Government of Hebei Province, Hebei Province reached a GDP of 1618.86 billion Yuan in 2008 and leapt to fifth place among the provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions in the mainland of China. However, in comparison with the national industrial structure of primary industry (11 per cent), secondary industry (48.6 per cent) and tertiary industry (40 per cent), Hebei's GDP has

a larger contribution from primary industry (13 per cent) but a smaller contribution from tertiary industry (33 per cent). Such an economic structure indicates that the Hebei economy was in the middle of the industrialisation process. Adjustment of the industrial structure is still one of the strategies for economic development of Hebei Province.

Hebei is one of the major agricultural provinces in China, most of Hebei people are rural residents. This is evidenced by the national Chinese population census from years 1953 to 2010, as shown in Table 2, on page 44. Moreover, in 2006, Hebei had a population of 69.88 million at a growth rate of 6.55 per cent annually, but about 75 per cent of this large population lived in rural areas and the majority of the rural residents (about 92 per cent) were engaged in grain farming. Comparing this with the average density of population in mainland China, where 41 million people lived in an area of 300,000 square kilometres, Hebei is one of the densely populated provinces in China (NBSC, 2009).

Table 2: Rural and urban residents in Hebei Province (million persons)

Year	1953	1964	1982	1990	2000	2010
Population Census	1 st Census	2 nd Census	3 rd Census	4 th Census	5 th Census	6 th Census
Total population	35.6346	45.6877	53.0055	61.0828	66.6844	71.8542
Urban residents	4.1953	6.4479	7.2589	11.7339	17.5601	31.5753
Rural residents	31.4393	39.2398	45.7466	49.3489	49.1243	40.2789
Han Nationality	35.2783	44.9498	52.1514	58.6737	63.7816	68.8613

Source: Adopted from National Bureau of Statistics of the People's Republic of China, *Census Data*, retrieved from www.stats.gov.cn

Another feature of Hebei Province is its uneven socio-economic development with both urban–rural disparities and regional disparities since 1978 to 2010. The huge gaps between urban and rural socio-economic development can be seen by comparing rural and urban income disparities and Engel's coefficients. Despite both rural and urban

households enjoying dramatically increasing income since 1978, the income disparities between urban and rural households are noticeably large and even increasing.

According to the Hebei Provincial Bureau of Statistics (2007), in 1978, per capita annual disposable income of the average urban household was 276.24 Yuan but the per capita annual net income of a rural household was 114.06 Yuan. Apparently, urban households had double the income of rural households. In 2006, the average urban household had 10,304 Yuan of per capita annual disposable income, which is almost triple that of the average rural household's per capita annual net income (about 3,801.82 Yuan). This indicates that disparities between urban and rural household incomes were increased rather than decreased.

The differences between rural and urban households' Engel's coefficients reveal the gap between rural and urban areas in terms of socio-economic development. The disparity between rural and urban areas can also be illustrated by the Engel's coefficient. As the proportion of household income spent on food, the Engel's coefficient represents the difficulty people have in acquiring the basic needs of life and their living standards. As shown in Table 3, on page 46, the Engel's coefficients for both rural and urban households were falling during the years 1980 to 2006, and lower than the average for the country, while Hebei people could spend more money on clothing, housing, education and travel for holidays. During the 1980s, rural households benefited from the land reform of the late 1970s and had comparatively lower Engel's coefficients than did the urban householders. However, in the early 1990s, as the urban people enjoyed

increasing household disposable incomes, the rural households experienced heavier burdens of life.

Table 3: Annual income per capita and Engel's coefficient of urban and rural households in Hebei Province (1978–2006)

Year	Rural households' annual net income		Urban households' annual disposable income		Engel's coefficient	
	Value (Yuan)	Index (1978=100)	Value (Yuan)	Index (1978=100)	Rural (%)	Urban (%)
1978	114	100	276	100		
1979	136	119	313	113		
1980	176	154	401	145	56.06	60.08
1981	204	179	402	146	52.19	53.34
1982	239	209	433	157	54.29	56.28
1983	298	261	449	162	53.52	56.93
1984	345	303	519	188	52.24	55.36
1985	385	338	631	228	50.03	49.96
1986	408	357	766	278	48.51	50.24
1987	444	390	855	310	48.44	51.67
1988	547	479	1,080	391	46.95	46.50
1989	589	517	1,257	455	48.12	52.00
1990	622	545	1,397	506	49.05	51.16
1991	657	576	1,489	539	47.94	51.34
1992	682	598	1,763	638	52.47	49.51
1993	804	705	2,201	797	58.39	46.31
1994	1,107	971	3,008	1,089	56.69	47.29
1995	1,669	1,463	3,674	1,330	56.81	46.22
1996	2,055	1,802	4,430	1,476	52.18	44.78
1997	2,286	2,004	4,959	1,652	50.28	41.95
1998	2,405	2,109	5,085	1,694	47.51	40.02
1999	2,442	2,141	5,365	1,788	43.68	37.70
2000	2,479	2,073	5,661	1,886	39.50	34.39
2001	2,604	2,283	5,985	1,994	39.72	35.35
2002	2,685	2,354	6,679	2,226	38.92	35.42
2003	2,853	2,502	7,239	2,412	39.94	35.16
2004	3,171	2,780	7,951	2,649	42.51	36.82
2005	3,482	3,053	9,107	2,735	41.02	34.56
2006	3,802	3,333	10,305	3,093	36.69	33.94

Source: Statistical data adapted from *Hebei Economic Statistical Yearbook 2007*

The changes in the Engel's coefficients of rural and urban households, as shown in Table 3, on page 46, indicate that the disparities between rural and urban areas increased in the early 1990s and then decreased in the later 1990s. This is widely believed to be one of the positive effects of pro-agriculture policies and pro-poor development strategies in the country in late 1990s (D. Lu & Neilson, 2004). One of these policies and strategies for rural development has been the promotion of rural tourism development in Hebei Province.

Another observation of uneven development in Hebei Province is of the regional disparities between the coastline areas in the east and the mountain areas in the north and west. The eastern and southern parts of Hebei Province are mainly composed of plains with lakes and coastlines. These areas are rich in both natural and socio-economic resources, with well-developed primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. Among the 114 counties in the province, the top 30 GDP counties are concentrated in its east and south, e.g. Bedaihe District of Qinghuangdao City and Anxin County of Baoding City. In addition, the plain area has a higher population than do the mountain and plateau areas, whereas the southern part is more densely populated than is the northern part of the province ("Hebei," 2012).

Comparatively, the northern and western peripheral areas of Hebei Province are less developed than are its southern and eastern areas. The majority of its rural, poverty-stricken populations are concentrated in northern Hebei Province, where several National Designated Poverty-stricken Counties (Guódìng pínkùn xiàn) still experience severe living conditions. According to Hebei Provincial Poverty Alleviation and Development Office, in 2002, Hebei Province had 2.726 million people in 3,798

villages of 32 counties, who were designated as a poverty-stricken population. Among these counties, a group of 21 poverty-stricken counties are in northern Hebei Province and 14 of them are immediately bordering with Beijing and Tianjin. Therefore, these 14 counties were identified as the poverty belt surrounding Beijing and Tianjin (L. Li & Song, 2004).

2.2.3 The poverty belt surrounding Beijing and Tianjin

The poverty belt surrounding Beijing and Tianjin is geographically adjacent to these two metropolises. It has 1.804 million poverty-stricken, rural residents of 2,730 villages under the jurisdiction of Hebei Province. In 2004, these people lived with an average household income that was under the national poverty line of 625 Yuan per year (L. Li & Song, 2004). These Hebei villages were generally at the same level of economic development as were their neighbouring villages of Beijing and Tianjin in late 1970s. Over the 1980s and 1990s, however, these Hebei villages have lagged behind significantly; their peasants' per capita net income, per capita GDP and local fiscal revenue are only about one-third, one-quarter and one-tenth, respectively, of those of the villages in outer suburbs of Beijing and Tianjin. Such huge gaps are also observed in output growth, employment growth, economic diversification, productivity improvement and social development (W. Xu, 2012).

All the poverty belt areas demand effort to help rural residents meet their basic needs and improve their living conditions. Geographically, the counties in the poverty belt surrounding Beijing and Tianjin are mainly scattered in the north-western part of Hebei Province, i.e. Bashang Plateau, Yanshang Mountains and the northern end of Taihang

Mountain. In these poverty-stricken counties, a total of 546,000 people lived in 788 villages on Bashang Plateau, and some 953,000 people in 1,561 villages in Yanshang Mountains, and about 305,000 people in 381 villages in Taihang Mountains in 2006 (HPBS, 2007). Comparatively speaking, these counties lack the advantages of industrial development but possess unique natural and social resources that are suitable for the development of rural tourism programmes to attract domestic tourists from the large cities in North China.

For instance, Bashang Plateau is a sharply rising prairie with average altitude of 1,200–1,500 metres. It is covered by about 16,000 square kilometres of meadow steppes with a variety of vegetation. Its semi-arid climate of the northern temperature zone distinguishes the four seasons with significant temperature differences, whereas its semi-acid soil conditions this area for dry land agriculture only with limited irrigation with ground water. Therefore, the plateau is covered with vast natural grasslands and is dotted with lakes, creeks and hills. Historically, since the Qing Dynasty, this area was used as the meadows for breeding horses for the army. The meadows were gradually converted to agricultural lands and this resulted in serious soil desertification and basification, which has been a significant challenge for people living in this area since the 1950s. Bashang Plateau had a total of six nationally designated poverty-stricken counties in 2004. Fengning Manchu Autonomous County was one of these six poverty-stricken counties and Zhalaying was one of the poorest villages. Poverty alleviation and rural development was the most important task for local government at the end of the last century.

During the 1970s, in the poverty-stricken counties, rural people could not feed themselves from the land but lived on relief from central or local government. Since the 1980s, local government stressed poverty alleviation and infrastructure improvement in remote mountain areas – building roads and providing electricity to every village. Peasants were encouraged to plant fruit trees or edible fungi, raise livestock on the barren land, and develop industries such as in building materials and minerals. In recent years, eco-agriculture is believed to have been effective for economic and social development in this region. The first task has been to fight against desertification, improve the ecological environment, and achieve green and high-quality socio-economic development (J. Wang & Cao, 2012). In doing so, the government launched incentives to encourage peasants to develop captive animal husbandry with high-quality forage and to adjust the agricultural structure, shifting from grain plants to greenhouse vegetables, sugar beet, edible fungi or forest farming to increase rural household income. However, most rural households lacked both the financial capabilities and the skills needed for change. As earnings from agriculture were much lower than those that could be achieved from being migrant workers, young villagers left to work and live in Beijing or other big cities in the 1990s. In this context, local governments promoted rural tourism in some villages that had the natural and socio-economic conditions conducive to tourism development.

To summarise, poverty reduction and livelihood improvement has been the most important task of socio-economic development in Hebei Province. It was believed that the poor natural conditions, e.g. mountainous terrain, barren land and frequent droughts,

the lack of fiscal support from central government and the poor infrastructure development were the three key causes of the poverty belt surrounding Beijing and Tianjin (W. Xu, 2012). However, Asia Development Bank (2004) believed that the poverty-stricken counties had the natural and social resources for the development of rural tourism or agri-tourism. These counties included Fengning Manchu Autonomous County, Weichang County and Guyuan County in Bashang Plateau, as well as Laishui County located in the joint area of Taihang Mountain and Yan Mountain. Despite the villages in Bashang Plateau and Taihang Mountains lagging behind in terms of economic growth, they had comparative advantages in natural and social tourism resources for the development of leisure tours. Hence, rural tourism was suggested as one of the feasible means for poverty reduction and rural development in these villages. In one sentence, pro-poor tourism was chosen as a tool for poverty alleviation and rural development for Hebei villages in the poverty belt surrounding Beijing and Tianjin.

2.3 Rural tourism development in Hebei Province

2.3.1 Tourism resources in Hebei Province

Hebei Province is rich in tourism resources because of its long history, varied topography and unique geographical location. A total of 670 historic places and 88 national-level cultural relic sites, three World Cultural Heritage sites and five National Historic Cities are located in Hebei Province (Hebei Provincial Tourism Bureau, 2002). The most attractive spots are the Imperial Mountain Resort and its surrounding temples in Chengde City, the groups of mausoleums of the Qing Dynasty and the highlights of the Great Wall. Hebei also has varied landscapes, e.g. seashores, plains, lakes, hills and

plateaus. Among these, Bedaihe Beach, Baiyangdian Lake, Taihang and Yanshan Mountains, and Bashang Plateau are all tourist favourites.

Given the abundance of natural and cultural tourism resources, obviously, Hebei Province has comparative advantages for attracting tourists from Beijing and Tianjin. With the additional advantage of the well-developed transportation system, Hebei tourism grew rapidly since 1978. Provincial Tourism Bureau statistics shows that the international and domestic tourism revenues accounted for 3.98 per cent of the province's GDP in 1998. Tourism performance was higher than the economic growth rate of Hebei Province, and even higher than that of the national tourism industry. However, at that time, tourism was not integrated into the provincial economic development plan. Hebei tourism, especially domestic tourism, spontaneously developed without any development planning and consequently resulted in improper exploitation of tourism resources in Hebei Province.

It was until 1999, Hebei Province identified tourism as a new growth pole of GDP. Since then, tourism is believed to have made a positive contribution to both economic growth and social development. In particular, the tourism industry was used as a window to the outside world. It was also promoted as a sector of tertiary industry that was absorbing surplus labour forces, stimulating domestic consumption and, hence, facilitating the growth of other industries. Moreover, tourism was advocated as a feasible means for poverty reduction and rural development in Hebei. According to the provincial tourism bureau's annual report on the tourism industry, by the end of 2008, the Hebei tourism industry boasted 432 tourist spots, more than 200 star-rated hotels,

400 travel agencies and 30 tour coach companies. In that year, Hebei Province received a total of 750,000 international tourists who spent US\$270 million. At the same time, the Hebei tourism industry also served 97 million domestic tourists and generated a total of 53.55 billion Yuan of tourism revenue. Together, international and domestic tourism accounted for 4 per cent of Hebei GDP in 2008.

2.3.2 Government intervention in Hebei tourism development

Government intervention has played a key role in Hebei tourism development, particularly in initiating, promoting and regulating the programmes of rural tourism in the province. It is believed that peasants in the villages can have more opportunities to earn money through participating in rural tourism services; hence, the development of rural tourism can facilitate poverty alleviation and improvement of the ecological environment in the peripheral areas. Hebei Province, therefore, advocated rural tourism as a strategy for rural poverty reduction in the late 1980s and promoted it as a feasible means to increase rural household income in the early 1990s. At the beginning of the 2000s, rural tourism programmes were developed rapidly around big cities in Hebei Province. Both provincial and local governments took on rural tourism as a facilitator for “constructing a new socialist countryside”.

Rural tourism developed spontaneously in Hebei Province from the late 1980s. There was no policy or regulation on the exploitation of rural tourism resources because of the complicated property rights associated with rural tourism resources. Rural tourism was driven by tourist market and this resulted in serious problems of unsustainable exploitation of rural tourism resources: e.g. the tragedy of CPRs in the villages, the

marketing dilemma of rural tourism programmes, and the social conflicts between the tourism-participant rural households and non-participant rural households in the villages. To solve such problems, the Provincial government started to make policies and regulations to guide rural tourism development. The propaganda of rural tourism development reached to its peak in 2006.

As the year of 2006 was named as “The Year of Rural Tourism” (Xiāngcūn lǚyóu nián) in China, Hebei government implemented a series of rural tourism development strategies to encourage urban residents to have holidays in the countryside. In this context, the Hebei Provincial Tourism Bureau, in cooperation with other departments of the provincial government, initiated a series of promotional programmes. Rural tourism was advocated as a fashionable way to “return to nature and enjoy the natural” (Huíguī zìrán, xiǎngshòu zìrán), given that the Province is rich in the natural and cultural resources for rural tourism activities that are favoured by the mature tourist markets in its neighbouring cities Beijing and Tianjin.

To further advance the sustainable development of rural tourism, the provincial tourism bureau initially issued industrial standards and regulations for rural tourism services: the “Norms of Rural Tourism Services in Hebei Province” (Héběi xiāngcūn lǚyóu fúwù guīfàn). This regulation specifically set the standards of rural tourism services, in respect of the environment, transportation, public facilities, tourist accommodation (farmhouse hotels), food and beverage services (farmhouse food), shopping and souvenirs, travel safety, and rural tourism management, etc. For example, the specific standard for a farmhouse hotel is: no fewer than four beds, and a set of clean sheets, a

duvet cover, a pillow and a pillow cover for each guest. It even lists the criteria for farmhouse lighting and sanitation facilities. Moreover, it requires the farmhouse owner provide health checks for all staff working at the farmhouse. The full specification for rural tourism services and rural tourism industrial regulations undoubtedly build the institutional foundation for industrial norms formed in rural tourism development.

To facilitate villages to develop rural tourism successfully, tourism authorities initiated the rural tourism assessment programme to identify good examples of rural tourism development in Hebei Province. The implementation of this programme involved multiple departments of the hierarchical government, village committees, tourism professionals and experts. In 2006, based on systematic assessment of tourism resources in the villages and rural tourism development models, a total of 19 villages were appointed as the “Demonstration Site of Rural Tourism Development” (Xiāngcūn lǚyóu shìfàn diǎn). By the end of 2008, more than 1,000 Hebei villages developed rural tourism programmes. Among these, 26 villages were credited as national demonstration sites of rural tourism development in China. In addition, Hebei tourism administration authorities also initiated rural tourism development planning programmes in 2006. This program helped a total of 30 villages make “detailed” specific rural tourism development plans, taking “sustainable tourism” as one of the principles of rural tourism development. Among these 30 villages, Zhalaying village, Wangjiazhai village and Yesanpo village were selected as the fieldwork sites at the initial stage of this PhD research.

2.3.3 Development models of rural tourism in Hebei Province

It seems that the provincial tourism authority and the local government have the key roles in rural tourism development in Hebei Province. The governmental intervention, however, did not reach to each of the rural tourism villages. Spontaneous growth is another typical feature of rural tourism development in Hebei Province. Generally, in Hebei Province, a total of four types of rural tourism development models have been identified. These models are named as Scenic-Spot-Based Model, Urban-Suburb Model, Agricultural-Resource-Based Model, and Folk-Custom-Village Model. However, none of these models was designed or planned by tourism authorities.

The Scenic-Spot-Based Model was the most popular model in the later 1980s when rural tourism emerged in China – the rural households ran tourism businesses in the village while the State or the local government exploited tourist spots for tourism development. One typical example of this model is Yesanpo village's Nongjiale (tourists stay in a farmhouse to experience the happiness of rural life). It was developed spontaneously through interactions between local people in the village and the tourists who visited the national geographical park in Laishui County.

Another popular model of rural tourism is the Urban-Suburb Model: typically a one-day trip from city to farms in the suburbs for picking fruit or vegetables and eating farmhouse food. One example of this model is the Jifa Agricultural Sightseeing Garden, which is located in the suburb of Beidaihe District of Qinhuangdao City. This sightseeing garden not only provides various tourist activities involving picking fruit and vegetables but also offers rural-style food and restaurant services to visitors. As

well as this, it is an example of another type of rural tourism model –

Agricultural-Resource-Based Model, where rural tourism is based on high-tech horticulture and agriculture or eco-agriculture.

The Folk-Custom-Village Model is promoted mostly in Hebei Province and is advocated as an approach for balancing economic growth and cultural conservation at the destination. In this model, rural tourism development is based on the village folk customs and natural landscapes. Both Wangjiazhai village and Zhalaying village are typical examples of Folk-Custom-Village Model. Wangjiazhai village is an island village in the centre of Baiyangdian Lake and one of tourist spots in the Baiyangdian Scenic Zone. This village community built a folk village at a smaller island next to the village and has a run tourism business since the early 1990s. Zhalaying village is located in the Tourist Zone of First Grassland north of Beijing, and has run a rural tourism business based on the Manchu minority's traditional activities (i.e. horse riding and archery), traditional Manchu and local farm foods, and the natural scenery of the pastoral landscape. Each of these models of rural tourism development involves specific conditions of rural tourism resources and socio-economic context within and outside of the village.

2.3.4 Summation:

The above analysis of rural tourism in China reveals the context, the patterns of tourism development in China, its policies and socio-economic context. It shows that the pathway of rural tourism development in China is significant different from that in the developed countries. China rural tourism development is against the China's

socio-economic development, i.e. economic imperative, a socialist-market system, the building of a harmonious society, etc., that is significantly different from that of other economies. Moreover, Western and Chinese cultures have different views regarding the relationship between humanity and nature, the role of personal relationships and the predisposition towards classification (Ryan & Gu, 2009). This is forcing a reevaluation of taken-for-granted assumptions about the research paradigms used and the cultural milieu within which they are formed.

Apparently, China's rural tourism development is the result of government intervention and rural China's pursuit for modernisation. This corresponds to China's development strategies of the past 30 years. Such phenomena can be illustrated by the rural tourism development in the villages outside of Beijing, in the north of China. In 2005, Hebei Provincial Tourism Bureau designated these villages as good examples of rural tourism development programmes. Each of these villages has a specific model of rural tourism development. These models can be grouped, respectively, into bottom-up and top-down models that are embedded in the particular context of Chinese development strategies during the past 30 years, especially the national strategies for tourism development and rural development. Consequently, rural tourism has been promoted as a tool for poverty alleviation and rural development in China.

In the past 30 years, local governments at different levels have been providing policy support and technique assistance to many rural tourism programmes with the aims to increase rural household income and to improve living conditions in rural area.

Nevertheless, the development of rural tourism programmes is not a panacea for various

problems or dilemmas of rural development in China. In the national and provincial development plans, the principles of sustainable development have been promoted as the guidelines for the practice of tourism development programmes. In practice, Chinese rural tourism tends to be more successful in rural economies that are already healthy (Jing, 2006). One of the undesirable results has been that income gaps and social disparities are enlarged in the process of rural tourism development, at the cost of degradation of the natural environment and moral degeneration in rural tourism destinations (Lai et al., 2006). Therefore, practical approaches to the sustainability of rural tourism development have been the focal issue for both tourism practitioners and academics in China.

Models of rural tourism development, such as government technique assistance in rural tourism planning, corporate management of rural tourism destinations, and cooperation and collaboration of tourism businesses with tourism organisations and destination communities, were frequently advocated as ideal approaches towards sustainable rural tourism. In this context, the concept of governance was adopted to coordinate public and private sectors to work together to solve the sorts of problem that arises in the development of tourist destinations. However, in practice, villages have to deal with issues of government intervention and market orientation in the socialist-market system in the development of rural tourism.

To what extent governmental intervention effectively and efficiently facilitates rural tourism development in the village and to what extent the market does the work? In order to understand the real world situation of rural tourism development in the villages,

it is a must to answer the following key questions: Who are the development agencies? Do they include the government, the village community, the tourists or the tourism business? What roles do they play in the decision-making for rural tourism development? How do they influence the decision-making process and, hence, the decisions regarding rural tourism development and management? These questions are answered through investigating the interactions between the destination stakeholders in the process of rural tourism development in China to examine interrelationship between the concepts of governance and sustainability.

Specifically, this research aims to find the key components of effective governance of rural tourism destinations in the context of Chinese social-market system. As shown in Figure 2: Research framework on page 61, I took a grounded theory approach to investigate the governance approach to sustainable rural tourism development in specific villages and gained some insights of governance of rural tourism destinations China. Constant comparative analysis of the patterns of rural tourism destination governance approach lead the investigation to the resource exploitation of rural tourism activities that involved interactions between the people and the place, as well as among destination stakeholders who are engaged in rural tourism development in that village. Further investigation on the village decision-making process revealed that village self-governance capability and government intervention are key elements of effective governance of rural tourism development in the villages. Thus, this research investigated the reality of rural tourism development in China to find key elements for sustainable rural tourism destination governance in the Chinese context.

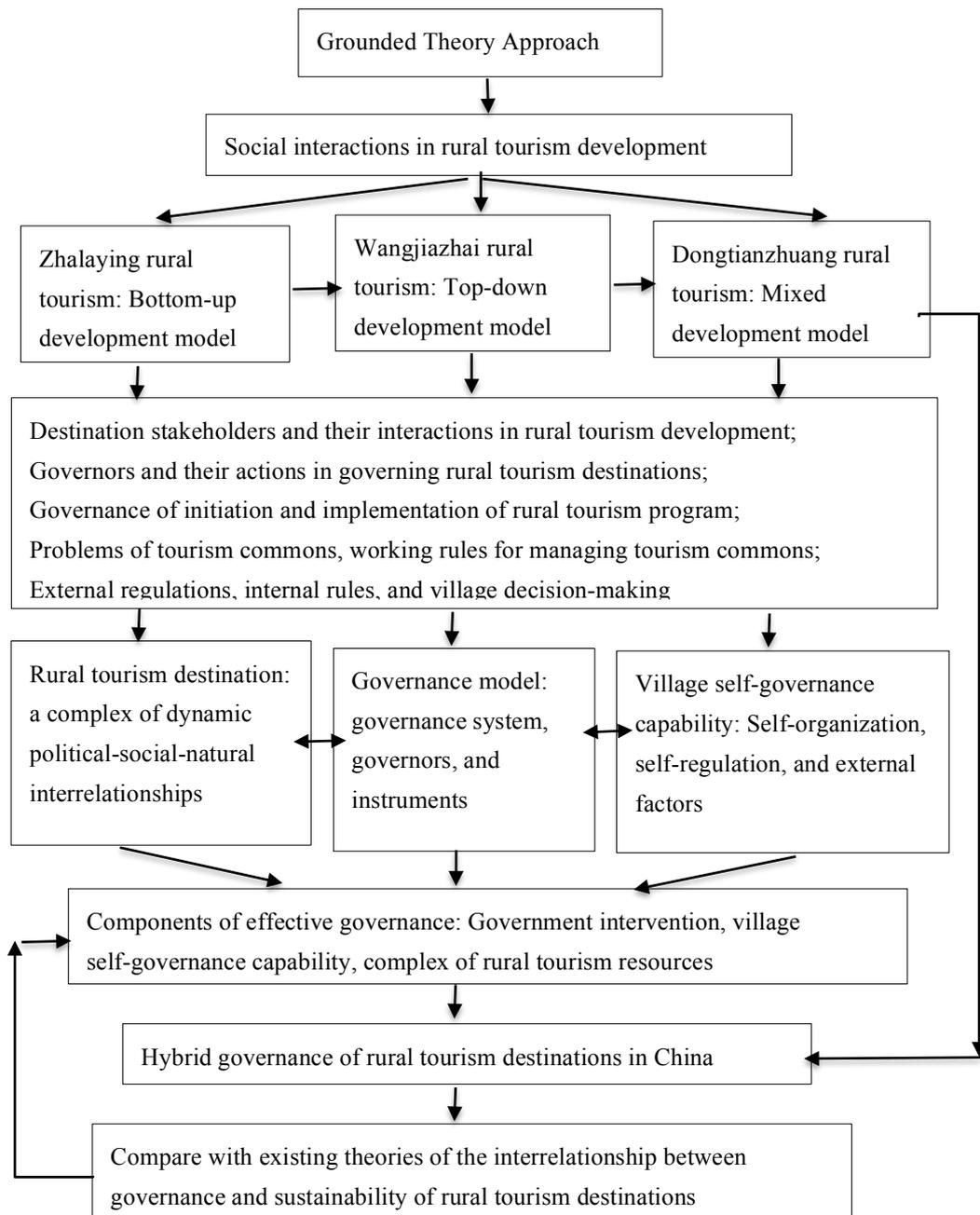


Figure 2: Research framework

Chapter 3 Concepts of sustainable development and rural tourism destination governance in existing literature

With the aim of determining how development theories have influenced development strategies and practices worldwide and in China, this chapter analyses the concepts, theories and practices of governance and tourism sustainability that are discussed in the existing literature, in both English and Chinese. Firstly, it briefly reviews the evolution of development theories since the 1950s until the present day to illustrate how the Chinese adopted Western theories and perspectives, and how practices of development have been influenced by those development theories. Then, from the perspective of development studies, it theoretically scrutinises the relationships between sustainability and governance, particularly in the case of sustainable development of rural tourism destinations. The end of this chapter explores how existing development theories cannot clearly explain the dramatic growth of Chinese rural tourism and the key issues concerning governance of rural tourism destinations in China.

Reviews of the theories and practices regarding sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations show that there is still a research gap in identifying determinants and influential factors of sustainable governance for rural tourism destinations. Generally, rural tourism is based heavily on rural communities with various cultural traits that inevitably influence the actors' decision-making patterns. However, in existing tourism literature, there is an absence of further scrutiny of the patterns of actors'

decision-making and their actions in governing rural tourism destinations, which may fundamentally determine the model of destination governance. Therefore, this research studies the development of rural tourism destinations as a process of social interaction between urban and rural people in the Chinese context. From the pre-field studies of both the literature and the reality of rural tourism development in China, Grounded Theory was identified as an appropriate method for this PhD research.

3.1 Evolution of development theory: From growth to sustainability

The study of development is concerned with how “developing countries” can improve their living standards and eliminate absolute poverty, though the concept of development has undergone significant change since the end of the Second World War. The evolution of development theory has never been uniform. Instead, progress in thinking has been disjointed until it was no longer possible to adhere to convenient assumptions (Kingsbury, Remenyi, McKay, & Hunt, 2004). For a better understanding of the approaches taken towards sustainable tourism development, this section briefly reviews the evolution of development theories, i.e. from grand development theories of the 1950s to current sustainable development theories. It also reviews the theories of governance and their application for sustainable development of tourist destinations, from the perspective of development studies.

3.1.1 From economic growth to human-centred development

The grand development theories were all applied at the macro scale (country, region) in the 1950s and 1960s, and probably well into the 1970s (Darkoh, 1977; Frank, 1966;

Seers, 1977). From the perspective of grand development theories, a majority of development professionals, policy-makers and academics viewed “modernisation” and “economic growth” as synonymous with development. Hence, the development aimed to maximise GDP through rapid industrialisation and urbanisation for a modern economy (Lee, 1981). At that time, no attention was paid to development being about the improvement of people and their circumstances at the household level (Remenyi, 2004).

Grand development theories became less fashionable in the 1970s. The disappointing outcome of growth strategies led to various attempts to find alternative strategies. The objectives of development were broadened to include growth with equality, increase of employment and poverty reduction (Lee, 1981). As a result, new development strategies produced various formulas: employment-oriented strategies, growth with redistribution, and also the “basic needs approach” that targeted Third World poverty and inequality (Samater, 1984).

In development strategies in 1980s, the boundaries of State intervention and control were rolled back, while micro-intervention was dominant. Efforts in development were instead focused on allowing individuals to help themselves. Additionally, terms such as “stakeholder”, “farmer first”, “participation” and “individual capability” rapidly gained ground in the 1980s and 1990s (Hansen, 1981; Samater, 1984; Sen, 1983, 1999; Woolcock & Narayan, 2000). This led the United Nations Development Programme’s Human Development Report to use “health and education” measures together with GDP to calculate an overall index of development success (UNDP, 2000). Since then, the link

between poverty and development has been given explicit attention in mainstream professional journals and other development literature.

By tracing the evolution of the concept of development, it is obvious that, as development policy evolved, different approaches have been emphasised at different times. To sum up, all these efforts in development aimed to improve people's physical living standards in terms of increasing income and eliminating poverty but neglected the cost to environment and culture (Gaspar, 2004). The rush to achieve material development has been predicated on the capacity of the physical and cultural environment to support it. However, the nature of the environment, and its use in a sustainable and affordable manner, are critical but neglected issues in the development process (Kingsbury, 2004). Harsh critics of the development paradigm see these issues as indicative of fundamental error and this awareness of the limitations of conventional development thinking led to the increasingly wide acceptance of a new concept – sustainable development (Ostrom & Field, 1999).

3.1.2 Sustainable development: A holistic perspective of development

The evolution of thought on development had not been uniform until the publication of *Our Common Future* by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987. This publication issued a bold call for recalibrated institutional mechanisms at global, national and local levels to promote “sustainable development” (SD):

“development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (WCED, 1987). The original definition of SD sought to address the problem of conflicts between environment and development

goals. But it has generally been recognised that SD encompasses three dimensions of welfare – economic, social and environmental – and involves complex synergies and trade-offs among them (Stevens, 2005). Its multi-disciplinary focus, encompassing economics, culture, social structures and resource use, has ensured that it is perhaps the ultimate culmination of development theories (Goodwin, 2001; J. M. Harris, 2000; Truman & Lopez, 1993).

The combination of economic, social and ecological perspectives provides a new vision of development (Sneddon, Howarth, & Norgaard, 2006). The 1990s saw the rapid expansion of SD theory and, increasingly, the idiom of SD has framed international debates about environmental and development policy-making (Robert, 2004). World leaders at the Rio Earth Summit formally endorsed SD as a policy objective in 1992. It has been absorbed into the conceptual lexicon of international organisations such as the World Bank and the OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) and has been accorded its own global secretariat in the form of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (Lafferty & Meadowcroft, 2000). Nowadays, SD has become one of the dominant approaches of development and sustainability has been the most fashionable term in the world (Tomasini, 2003).

Undoubtedly, the call for SD meant a redirection of development projects, a pragmatic response to the problems of the times, and a marked watershed in thinking on environment, development and governance (Sneddon et al., 2006). However, the three elements of sustainability introduce many potential complications to the original simpler definition. As suggested in the SD literature, development is possible only if we

move beyond a narrow concern with economic development to ensure that people's basic needs are being met, that resource bases are conserved, that there is a sustainable population level, that environment and cross-sectoral concerns are integrated into decision-making processes, and that communities are empowered (Mc Lennan & Ngoma, 2004). These principles express multidimensional goals and raise the issues of how to balance objectives and how to judge success or failure (J. M. Harris, 2000).

While the broad goals were widely embraced, the critics argued that the steps towards their implementation would be thwarted (Goodwin, 2001). In practical applications, however, the three-pillar-focused SD approaches have suffered from insufficient attention to overlaps and interdependencies, and a tendency to facilitate continued separation of economic, social and ecological analyses (Kemp, Parto, & Gibson, 2005).

There are two key challenges faced by SD. The first is the fundamental contradiction between the renewed call for economic growth in developing countries and enhanced levels of ecological conservation. The second is the increasing inequality in access to economic opportunities and marginalisation within and across nations (Sneddon et al., 2006). The difficulties of achieving SD reflect several internal tensions in the three-pillar approach: the adoption of economic development as a separate pillar from social development challenges the view that the purpose of one is to achieve the other; economic valuation of the environment removes the distinction between environmental and economic goals; and the lack of distinction between the development of developing countries and the development of developed ones. These tensions have been shown to be symptomatic of difficult issues that are being avoided (George, 2007).

The challenges of implementing and achieving sustainable development face both the developing and developed world. Evidence of unsustainable resource utilisation as the basis for short-term wealth, affluence and economic growth is not rare in developing countries (Mc Lennan & Ngoma, 2004). Yet, study of the responses of developed countries to SD also confirms an impression of inaction and inequality among high-consumption societies (Lafferty & Meadowcroft, 2000). There are numerous strategic plans for implementing and monitoring SD at national and local levels in industrialised countries but these plans have not been consolidated and suffer from a lack of a consistency either within or external to government channels (Sneddon et al., 2006).

Research and practice in SD indicate that a key issue for achieving the goal of SD is the competition or cooperation among various social actors in the use of resources they share with others for development. Although there is a great deal of rhetoric surrounding the concept of SD, its principles are often not translated into useful action because endless theories regarding the concept have not been operationalised (Hyden, 2001). This more comprehensive and inclusive way of defining development calls for new institutional arrangements among stakeholders, both in policy and in the institutional framework within which people act (Mc Lennan & Ngoma, 2004).

In this situation, governance has become the common label to answer the fundamental questions that Kooiman (2003) posed: Who sets the rules, when and how? Who gets what, when and how? Much attention has been paid to governance for SD with emphasis on changing power relations between State and society, empowering locals,

and promoting community participation development (Lafferty, 2004). Though all these efforts focus on the role that State and community play in SD, they neglect the fact that SD is a holistic process that encompasses diverse motives and multiple capabilities, not only of conventional government agencies but also of the full set of public, private and civil society players, collective and individual, plus their myriad interrelationships. The challenge of SD is, therefore, to produce sufficient integration of understanding, direction and action to achieve the desired transition (Kemp et al., 2005). Despite the complexity of identifying stakeholders of particular SD projects, this calls for a better understanding of who is involved in a project and how they are interrelated so rules can be developed for collective action to achieve their common objectives (Hendry, 2004). In other words, the paradigm of SD calls for a new approach to achieving the multiple goals of development, and the governance approach is a necessity at the beginning of development planning as well as throughout the process of development.

To summarise, development is meant to be about improving the lives of people so it is logical that development should start with people (Kingsbury et al., 2004). Both academics and practitioners agree that sustainable development implies a long-term, holistic approach to dealing with livelihood predicaments so people themselves must have an interest and a stake in any effort to improve their livelihoods (Hyden, 2001). In other words, development becomes sustainable if it is owned and generated by real people working together. This shift from the macro- to the micro-level is an important ingredient of SD. This is why the SD approach must emphasise greater reliance on local resources and strategies to cope with social and economic issues, empowerment of local

actors, and the need for improving their access to additional resources that can help them make progress on their own. All of these concerns about operationalising SD were addressed under the common label of “governance” in late 1990s . Although academics and practitioners have reached little agreement on the meaning of the concept, governance has become a central catchword across the social and political sciences (Mc Lennan & Ngoma, 2004), as well as in development studies.

3.1.3 Governance for sustainable development

3.1.3.1 The concepts of governance

The term “governance” rose to prominence following the public sector reforms in the USA and the UK in the 1980s, whereby expanded principles of corporate management and joint public–private policy development were adopted in government bureaucracy. Governing activities are the responsibility not only of States, but also of social organisations, civic society and the private sector. Such reforms have been significantly changing the relationship between State and society worldwide and, hence, have stimulated academic enquiry based in the fields of political science and corporate management (Rhodes, 1996). Since then, discussions on governance have occurred in diverse contexts and disciplines, including development studies, economics, geography, international relations, planning, political science, public administration and sociology (Bevir, 2012). Literature on governance has increased rapidly, also, in many different research fields, such as urban governance, clinical governance, natural resource management and tourism, among others (Ruhanen et al., 2010).

Due to the diverse usage of this concept, the definition, scope and dimensions of governance are controversial in different disciplines. The typical conceptualisation of governance has been developed in two distinct traditions; one is in the context of political science and another is corporate based (Stocker, 1998). However, in social sciences, the term “governance” generally refers to all forms of social coordination and patterns of rule (Bevir, 2010). It is widely accepted that governance is different from government. Whereas government refers to political institutions, governance refers to processes of rule (Bevir, 2012). From a social-political perspective, governance is also different from governing. Governing is an act, a purposeful effort to steer, guide, control and manage (sectors or facets of) society. In comparison, governance is how one gets to act, through what types of interactions (deliberation, negotiation, self-regulation or authoritative choice) and the extent to which actors adhere to collective decisions. Therefore, governance involves the level and scope of political allocation, the dominant orientation of the State and other institutions, and their interactions (Kooiman, 1993). From a public administration perspective, governance is defined as “a new process of governing; or changed condition of ordered rule, or the new methods by which the society is governed” (Rhodes, 1996, p. 652). Particularly, six uses of the term governance, including: “the minimal State”, “corporate governance”, “the new public management”, “good governance”, “socio-cybernetic system” and “self-organising networks” were listed by Rhodes (1996). Moreover, “at least double the number” of uses were added to this list by Kooiman (1999, p. 68) based on a further deliberate survey on the different uses of the concept governance.

Despite of the diversity of the use of “governance” in political science, it has been widely accepted that governing society goes beyond the responsibility of the State; both society and the market have prominent roles in governing society. Governance is a system in which societies are governed, ruled or “steered” (Stocker, 1998). The common elements of governance are the emphasis on rules and qualities of systems, cooperation to enhance legitimacy and effectiveness, and the attention paid to new processes and public–private arrangements (Kooiman, 1999). Debate on the authority of governance, however, is not easy between society-centric and State-centric governance. While Jon Pierre (2000) argued that governance refers to sustaining coordination and coherence between a wide variety of actors with different purposes and objectives, his society-centric definition of governance was challenged by Peters and Pierre (2000) who offered a more State-centric definition of the term governance. They argued that governance relates to the changing relationships between State and society, and a growing reliance on less-coercive policy instruments; however, the State still plays a leading role in setting priorities and defining objectives for “steering” society and the economy (Pierre & Peters, 2000). During the last two decades, the notion of governance has drawn attention to the complex processes and interactions that constitute patterns of rules; the focus on the formal institutions of States and governments has been replaced by the recognition of the diverse activities that often blur the boundary between State and society (Bevir, 2010).

The literature of governance studies, including both theoretical and empirical research, show that studies of governance are focused on the governing system: the actors in that

system, their actions, their activities and the process of governing a society. The actors of governance often include: the State, the societal sectors or social organisations, the private sector, civic society, individuals, communities, networks, etc. From the perspective of the actor, the focus of governance study is often placed on the different roles of various actors in the governing system and their actions. From the perspective of the activity, governance is often studied as institutions and rules that guide the actor's actions in governing a social system. From the process perspective, the research of governance focuses on the patterns of relationships and interactions between these various actors. Therefore, with different perspectives of governance actors, activities and process, various governance modes are generated, such as hierarchical governance, self-governance, network governance, corporate governance, market governance, community governance, etc. However, these perspectives of governance study stress the governing system and neglect the characteristics of the system-to-be-governed.

Different from these perspectives or approaches to governance studies, from the social interaction perspective, governance is defined as a dynamic and complex system that consists of a governing system, the system-to-be-governed, and the interactions within and between them (Kooiman, 2003). In the interactive governance approach, governance is perceived as a dynamic process of social interactions; the centre of interactive governance is interactions, rather than actors or activities. Therefore, interactive governance offers a holistic system approach for studies of governance.

3.1.3.2 Interactive governance and governability

Interactive governance is defined as “*The whole of interactions taken to solve societal problems and to create societal opportunities, including the formulation and application of principles guiding those interactions and care for institutions that enable and control them*” (Kooiman & Bavinck, 2005, p. 17). To assess the status of governance, interactive governance theory uses the term “governability” and defines it as “*The overall capacity for governance of any societal entity or system*” (Kooiman et al., 2008, p. 3). Therefore, at a general level, interactive governance is a governance approach that takes “interactions” within and between the “governing system” and the “system-to-be-governed” as the central forums of governance study.

Kooiman and his colleagues developed the theoretical framework of interactive governance and governability over the past two decades. From the social-political perspective, Kooiman (1993) argued that governance is understood as “a mode of social coordination” (p. 2). With a focus on the governing interactions between the State and society, the different perceived roles of the State in the social-political interactions lead to different governance modes. Based on the discussion of social-political governance (Kooiman, 1999) and self-governance (Kooiman & van Vliet, 2000), Kooiman and his colleagues developed the interactive governance theory and applied it in the study of the governance of fisheries (Kooiman, 2003, 2008; Kooiman et al., 2008; Kooiman & Chuenpagdee, 2005). To assess the governance status of fisheries, they extended governance study from a social-political perspective to a system perspective and launched the concept of governability (Kooiman & Chuenpagdee, 2005). Recently, the

analytical framework of governability has been improved and theorised as a holistic approach which focuses governance study on the “governing system”, the “system-to-be-governed” and the interactions within and between the systems (Kooiman, 2013; Kooiman & Bavinck, 2013).

Through revisiting the conceptualisation of governance to capture the different elements, modes and orders of governing and governance, Kooiman (2003) defined governance as a process of interaction between different societal and political actors and the growing interdependencies between the two, as modern societies become ever more complex, dynamic and diverse. He argued that the central themes of governance are the interactions between various actors. These interactions depend on processes influenced by the capabilities of different actors and shaped by the context of complexity and diversity of the structured environment in which they take place. Therefore, the interactions between different governance actors can be divided into three types: interference, interplays and interventions. “Interference” appears to be about the common processes that dominate everyday exchanges in different settings; “interplays” are collective actions that are horizontal and do not involve hierarchy; “interventions” are about formalised attempts at directing the exchange process.

Different types of interaction generate different modes of governance: self-governance, co-governance and hierarchical governance (Kooiman, 2003). In the processes of different types of social interaction, governance offers actors a variety of roles, including leadership embedded and practised in different ways. At the same time, governance requires actors to have a capacity for communication with other actors.

Therefore, coordination is the central task for governance performed by these actors. Self-governance refers to the capacity of people to govern themselves so that different actors interact to work out their collective solutions, such as governing the commons (Ostrom, 1990). Co-governance is how a group cooperates on a horizontal level, including through various forms of collaboration, network formation, public–private partnerships and regimes. Hierarchical governance is focused on the steering role of the State in respect to governance as the State shifted its pattern of steering away from direct legislative intervention and control to more subtle forms of regulation and oversight.

The above conceptual clarification of governance by Kooiman (2003) was focused on the interactions between various actors and their activities, and the actions of governance. As criticised by Stoker (2004), it gives an overview of interactive governance rather than offering a theory. With the assumption that societies are governed by a combination of governing efforts, Kooiman and his colleagues extended their discussion of governance from the “governing system” to the “system-to-be-governed” to develop the theoretical framework of interactive governance further (Kooiman & Bavinck, 2005; Kooiman et al., 2008; Kooiman & Chuenpagdee, 2005). Therefore, they define governance as interactions between the state and the society for solving societal problems and creating societal opportunities. Such interactions may include the formulation and application of principles guiding the actions of governance (Kooiman & Bavinck, 2005). In applying the interactive governance theory to the study of the governance of fisheries, the governance status is

assessed by the “governability,” which is defined as “*The overall capacity for governance of any societal entity or system*” (Kooiman et al., 2008, p. 3).

Based on these definitions, interactive governance is a theoretical perspective that perceives governance as the aggregate of governing activities carried out by societal actors in response to public needs and to visions of a societal system (Kooiman & Bavinck, 2013). It emphasises the governing roles of the State, the market and civil society in solving social problems and creating opportunities through their interactions. Interactions between various governing actors are important factors in the success or failure of whatever governance takes place. Governability provides a conceptual basis for assessing and improving the governance of the societal system, which is understood to be a combination of human and natural characteristics. With an emphasis on interactions, the notion of interactive governance argues that diversity, complexity, dynamics and scale are major variables influencing the governability of societal systems and their three interrelated components: a system-to-be-governed, a governing system and a system of governing interactions mediating between the two (Kooiman & Bavinck, 2013).

From the interactive governance perspective, the governing system can be deconstructed to three components: the actors of governance (State, market and civil society), the elements of governance (images, instruments and action) and the order of governance (the first order, the second order and the third order). To assess the governability of a societal system, governance is firstly analysed as intentional activities that consist of three elements: images, instruments and action (Kooiman et al., 2008).

“Images” evolve from visions, knowledge, facts, judgments, presuppositions, ends, goals, etc., that are related to specific issues at hand and the assumptions of fundamental matters such as the relationships between society and nature, the role of government, etc. Such “images” constitute the guiding lights for the how and why of governance.

“Instruments” link the “images” of governance to “action”. Instruments that can influence societal interactions significantly are available in a wide range of options, including “soft” instruments (i.e. information, bribes, peer pressure, etc.) and legal or financial policies (i.e. taxes, permits, fines, etc.), as well as “hard” instruments (i.e. physical force); however, the range of available instruments is determined by one’s position in society. The last element is “action”; that is, putting “instruments” into effect.

It is a routine affair such as the implementation of policies according to set guidelines.

Analysis of these three elements of governance is the first step for the assessment of the governability of a governing system that requires answers to the questions: How do governing elements of images, instruments and action, used by governors, contribute to governability? In which ways do facts and value systems, resources and social capital contribute to the way governing images are formed, instruments developed and action potential employed?

Secondly, the interactive governance theoretical framework uses the term “orders of governance” to discuss the scope of governance activities. The metaphor of “three concentric circles nested as in the peels of an onion” explains the scope of governance (Kooiman et al., 2008, p. 7). “First-order governance” refers to the daily affairs of governance practice that take place wherever people and their organisations interact in

order to solve societal problems and create new opportunities. The challenge of first-order governance is to identify the societal problems and solutions that are characterised by diversity, complexity, dynamics and the scale of the situation.

Consistently, “second-order governance” refers to the institutional arrangements, such as agreements, rules, rights, laws, norms, beliefs, roles, procedures and organisations that are applied by first-order governors to make decisions. Further, “third-order governance” or “meta-governance” refers to values and principles that feed, bind and evaluate the governing exercise (Kooiman et al., 2008, p. 7). These three governing orders in a societal system should be complementary to one another and each order should receive adequate attention.

Thirdly, interactive governance theory argues that governance interactions determine governance modes (Kooiman et al., 2008). Different from other governance frameworks that analyse interactions from the actors’ perspective, the interactive governance analyses interactions from a structural perspective. From the actors’ perspective, governance studies focus on the roles and actions of various actors, and governance interactions are categorised as participatory, collaborative, and management interactions. From the structural perspective, governance interactions are analysed with a focus on the interaction between the governing system and the system-to-be-governed and, hence, there are three different interaction modes: interference, interplay and intervention. Correspondingly, the action level of governance generates three types of governance modes: self-, co- and hierarchical modes. However, interactive governance theory argues that “all societies demonstrate, and require, mixes of these three governance

modes, and all three modes contribute in specific ways to the role governance systems play in maximising governability” (Kooiman et al., 2008, pp. 8-9). It implies that, in the study of the governing system, interactive governance emphasises “interactions” between various social-political actors, including individuals, organisations, groups, movements or other forms of collective action. Therefore, for assessing governability of a societal system, it is important to know how the social-political actors participate in governing interactions. In addition, power relationships and societal-political cultural traditions deserve to be taken into consideration.

The above theory of interactive governance and the conceptual framework of governability are applied in the continuous study of the governance of fisheries and aquaculture by a group of researchers and academics from the Netherlands, Norway and Canada. (Bavinck & Salagrama, 2008; Chuenpagdee & Jentoft, 2007; Chuenpagdee, Kooiman, & Pullin, 2008; Jentoft, 2007; Jentoft & Chuenpagdee, 2009; Jentoft, Chuenpagdee, Bundy, & Mahon, 2010; Mahon, 2008; Mikalsen, Hernes, & Jentoft, 2007; Song, Chuenpagdee, & Jentoft, 2013). After a decade, through applying interactive governance theory in empirical studies, the framework of interactive governance is theorised as a holistic model for the study of governance and the analytical framework of governability is formed for assessing the governance status of a natural or societal system (Kooiman, 2013; Kooiman & Bavinck, 2013). The theoretical framework of interactive governance is illustrated in Figure 3 below.

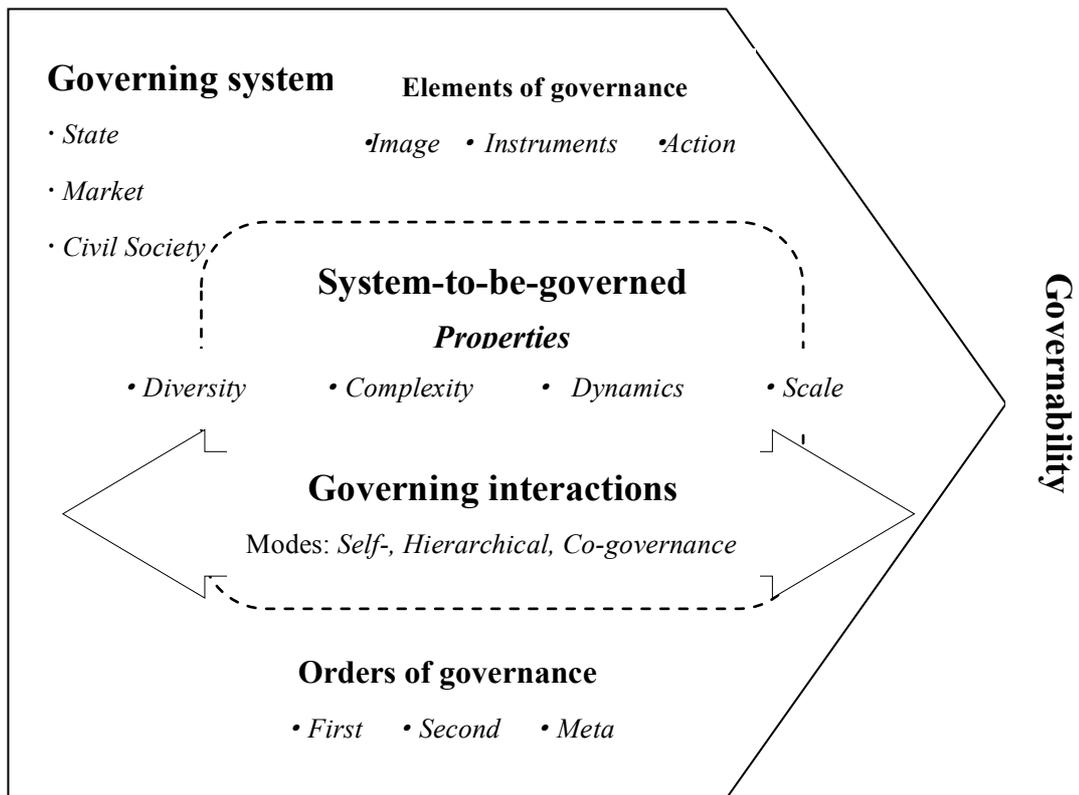


Figure 3: Interactive governance perspective of a social system

Source: Adopted from Kooiman and Bavinck (2013, p. 13)

The theoretical framework for interactive governance offers a holistic approach for the study of governance of a social system. This theoretical framework generates a methodology for examining the characteristics of both the natural and the social system that are to be governed, as well as of the institutions governing the interactions between them. It stimulates the phrasing of research questions essential to addressing the complexity of the challenges that a better governance of a social system would require (Kooiman, 2013). Moreover, these challenges are varied and can be felt among governments and communities; the diagnosis of the problem must, therefore, come from their interactions and align with their ideas of what the solutions may be (Kooiman & Bavinck, 2013). Such emphasis on interactions distinguishes the interactive governance

approach from others that tend to presume that the tasks of governing lie either with the State or with communities (Chuenpagdee & Jentoft, 2013).

Although the application of interactive governance theory, so far, is mainly in the empirical study that emphasises the global challenges for fisheries and aquaculture governance, the interactive governance approach has relevance for other societal sectors. However, taking such a broadly holistic approach in the study of governance may not be a panacea for every circumstance. Each societal system has its own particular history, organisation, dynamics and contemporary circumstances.

3.1.3.3 Governance issues in sustainable development

In the international development community, governance has become most popular in recent decades. The development school sees governance as those activities aimed at steering societies in the direction that these organisations conceive as being good governance. The World Bank (1993) defines governance as the method through which power is exercised in the management of a country's political, economic and social resources for development. According to the World Bank (1994), the specific criteria for good governance entail sound public sector management (efficiency, effectiveness and economy), accountability, transparency (free flow of information), a legal framework for development (justice, respect for human rights), policy dialogue, participatory approaches and institutions. Good governance comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their conflicts (UNDP, 1997).

From a good governance perspective, governance is an all-encompassing concept that

permeates public, private and voluntary sectors, and all phases of making public policy (Hyden, 2001).

The evolution of the meaning of good governance is reflected in the dissemination of the concept of sustainable development. In the last decade, scholars from both the developed and the developing worlds have paid much attention to governance for SD at both practical and theoretical levels (Agrawal, 2003; Evans, Joas, Sundback, & Theobald, 2006; Hyden, 2001; Mc Lennan & Ngoma, 2004). Specific efforts can be seen in the research on operationalising governance for SD in the developing world (Hyden, 2001; Mc Lennan & Ngoma, 2004), the governance institution of CPRs (Agrawal, 2003; Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003; Ostrom, 1999), and the process of community-based participatory development (David & Liz, 2005; Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003; Ostrom, 1999; Rapley, 2006; Truman & Lopez, 1993). However, case studies from both the developed and the developing worlds demonstrate that the effectiveness of social capital or social networks and community cooperative strategies is shown to be particularly rich in the application of local knowledge and social capital towards SD (Ramaswami, Zimmerman, & Mihelcic, 2007). Tracing the origins of governance in different disciplines, Hyden (2001) summarises that, despite differences in the assumed meaning of governance, there is still an emerging consensus that governance involves the relationships between government and citizens, concerning cooperation among social actors.

In the context of SD, governance is one aspect of politics; it focuses on the constitutional rules that determine behavioural conduct and choice rather than on the way in which public resources are allocated in society. From this perspective, the

ultimate end of governance is the realignment and management of relationships between State and citizens with a view to enhancing the legitimacy of the public realm.

Therefore, governance can be treated as a tool for promoting SD. To operationalise governance for SD, the government should “empower local resources in the decision-making of development”, “mobilise social capital to seek out others for common action to maximise the gain for themselves”, “delegate power and responsibility to local organisations”, and “confirm this new rule in institutions” (Hyden, 2001). From this institutional perspective, governance focuses on the changes in power relationships between government and citizens but neglects the relationships among other social actors involved in the process of SD.

Some empirical research on operationalising SD stresses the use of common-pool resources as one of three pillars of SD. CPRs or “commons” are resources for which the exclusion of beneficiaries is particularly difficult or costly, and exploitation by one user reduces resource availability to others (Ostrom, 1999). Commons include both natural resources, such as rivers, forests and global resources, as well as constructed infrastructures such as irrigation canals (Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003). Historically, these resources have been managed by societies through private property and markets, regulatory institutions and communal institutions (Agrawal, 2003) but inevitably fall into the “tragedy of the commons” (Ostrom, 1999). Free market mechanisms and regulations were proposed as the only solutions to moderate such self-interested behaviour and have since been the primary focus of the developed world, where communal property management is now viewed largely as a vestige of the rural past (Agrawal, 2001). However, there is a growing awareness of several limitations

associated with regulatory and market-based approaches to commons governance, such as cost inefficiencies to ensure compliance, and issues of coverage, monitoring and validation (Dolsak et al., 2003). Empirical research from the developed world also suggests that great caution should be taken in privatising the commons and moving to market mechanisms for regulating a common resource because of the potential to undermine cooperation and sharpen the heterogeneity of stakeholder interests (Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003). The cases of both Iceland (Eythorsson, 2003) and New Zealand fisheries (Yandle & Dewees, 2003) demonstrate that many types of institutions and actors are involved in the management of commons. The visibility and strength of different interest groups shape the structure of and participation in stakeholder forums, the content of the debate and the eventual outcomes.

Governance of CPRs is evidently proven to be the ultimate solution for the tragedy of the commons. Some empirical research suggests that self-governance and informal institutions can provide alternative solutions for sustaining the commons. The case of Japanese CPRs for irrigation (Sarker & Itoh, 2003) illustrates that a patronised self-governance approach is effective in managing Japanese irrigation CPRs. In this case, through self-organising and formulating endogenous institutions with government patronisation, irrigation users have successfully sustained their common interests.

Similarly, a collection of case studies of indigenous societies also demonstrates resilient and sustainable real-world implementation of cooperative commons management over many generations and a variety of commons resources: e.g. irrigation in Nepal and rangeland management in Mongolia (Tang & Tang, 2001). Simultaneously, theoretical study outcomes suggest that communication channels and institutional structures that

enable reciprocal arrangements can foster voluntary cooperative solutions to commons challenges (Ramaswami et al., 2007). Human behaviour studies based on game theory are providing strong evidence that, in addition to self-interest, humans exhibit a strong preference for reciprocity and fairness (Ostrom & Hess, 2007). Also, social network theory claims that the effective exercise of power is through a network of interconnected actors, in which all actors hold power, through knowledge resources, money and the rights granted to them (Dredge, 2006a; Ostrom, 1999; Putnam, 2001; Saxena, 2005). In addition, an investigation into types of ownership of forests discovered that resources that are in good condition have users with long-term interests who invest in monitoring and build trust. This is even more so when local communities have strong, rule-making autonomy and the incentive to carry out monitoring. Therefore, it is clear that polycentric systems can cope with complexity (Ostrom, 2009).

In summary, both theoretical and empirical research highlights that the success of democratic mechanisms for regulating common resources, whether market-based or not, will depend on whether or not the various parties can establish sufficient trust among themselves to enable cooperation and political consensus. Given that SD is embedded in resource management actions, it calls for consensus and cooperation among the various stakeholders of common-pool resources. Among all the stakeholders of common resources, the government and community have been the silent stakeholders in nature because development should start with people. A lack of community participation reflects a failure of the capacity or the will of governments to meet the development needs of people in localised, usually rural or minor urban, areas. Therefore, community

should be central in governance for SD, and the power relationships between State and community should be focal to governance structures for SD.

3.2 Sustainable tourism and rural tourism

This section presents the way in which the evolution of development theories influenced tourism development strategies worldwide. It particularly discusses the application of the concept of “sustainability” in tourism development to define sustainable tourism and rural tourism, as the relationships between sustainable and rural tourism. Review of the existing literature about the practices of sustainable rural tourism development shows that governance is advocated as an efficient solution for all old and new problems related to sustainable development of rural tourism destinations.

Tourism has become one of the main social and economic phenomena of our times. The patterns of increased tourism arrivals and revenues have continued since the end of World War II. In the last decade, the exploding domestic and outbound tourist markets of China and India are propelling global tourism into another period of accelerated expansion (Weaver, 2006). As mass tourism destinations are developing in even more remote places, rural tourism has been booming in both the developed and developing worlds (Sharpley, 2007). Undoubtedly, this intensifying tourism activity has the potential to create fundamental economic, environmental and sociocultural change, both positive and negative. An understandable desire to maximise the positive impact of tourism has given rise to the paradigm of sustainable tourism (McKercher, 1993).

3.2.1 Sustainable tourism: Tourism and sustainable development

Sustainable tourism is articulated as “tourism development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”

(UNWTO, 1998). This has become universally accepted as a desirable and politically appropriate paradigm for tourism development (R. Harris, Griffin, & Williams, 2003). From the local to the international level, many sectoral and destinational organisations within the tourism industry have produced sustainable tourism plans and policies (Sharpley, 2003) whilst defining sustainable development in the context of tourism has become something of a cottage industry (Hardy, Beeton, & Pearson, 2002). Nowadays, this paradigm is regarded, most simply, as the application of the SD idea to the tourism sector (Weaver, 2006) despite the argument that “principles and objectives of sustainable development cannot be transposed onto the specific context of tourism” (Sharpley, 2000).

The term “sustainable tourism” emerged from a broader discourse on the idea of “sustainable development” (Weaver, 2006). Although tourism was not the subject of a chapter in the *Agenda 21* strategy from the Rio Earth Summit in 1992, tourism was one of the sector themes of the Programme for the Further Implementation of *Agenda 21*. This programme was adopted by the General Assembly at its 19th special session in 1997. It recognised tourism as one of the largest industries in the world and one of the fastest-growing economic sectors, and also highlighted the need to pay special attention to the relationship between environmental conservation and tourism development (Hardy et al., 2002). On the other hand, a significant and growing proportion of tourism literature has been devoted to describing the principles and practices of sustainability in the tourism context of the early 1990s (Dowling, 1993; McKercher, 1993; Muller, 1994). Since the first edition of the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* in 1993, the

responses on SD by tourism researchers have been increasing, both in theoretical and practical research.

At the most fundamental level, as Hardy, Beeton and Pearson (1995) pointed out, however, there was a dichotomy in sustainable tourism thinking; should sustainable tourism be concerned with attempting to create the conditions whereby tourism flourishes as an end itself, or should sustainable tourism thinking be directed at finding a role for tourism as part of a more holistic strategy encompassing the more general aims of SD? This question implied that the term sustainable tourism was still a vague concept, blending the goal and means. This may be partially due to the ambiguity of its parent term “sustainable development” (Clark, 1997; Hunter, 1995; Muller, 1994; Sharpley, 2000; Weaver, 2006).

One dominant approach of sustainable tourism in the early 1990s was called “tourism-centric” (Hardy et al., 2002). The approach balances the “need” for continued growth in the tourism sector and the “need” for tourist satisfaction, with the protection of the quality and quantity of the environmental resources which support tourism. From a tourism industry perspective, McKercher (1993) scrutinised the underlying reasons for tourism’s impacts on the social, cultural and physical environments appearing to be inevitable. He claimed that tourism is a resource-dependent industry – it consumes resources, creates waste, has specific infrastructure needs and competes for scarce resources to ensure its survival – and so has the ability to over-consume resources. Moreover, tourism is dominated by private industry where investment decisions are based predominantly on profit maximisation, and it generates income by importing clients rather than exporting products. As a consequence, tourism can generate only

limited economic well-being for local people. Additionally, tourism is a multi-faceted industry that is almost impossible to control; tourists are consumers not anthropologists, who expect entertainment from the tourism industry (McKercher, 1993). All of these truths found the basis for the tourism-centric paradigm that tourism must be sustainable for its own good.

The tourism-centric approach focuses on the tourism industry and considers only its direct impacts on the destination or the tourism business, balancing the requirements of tourism development with the protection of environment; but this paradigm fails to address many critical issues for the concept of sustainable development (Hunter, 1995).

This paradigm can be described as “light green” thinking: that tourism enthusiasts’ concerns about the environment are limited to the maintenance of sufficient environmental quality at the destination for the survival of tourism itself (Hunter, 2002).

One consequence of this tourism-centric approach is the UNWTO’s definition of sustainable tourism:

The development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems. (UNWTO, 1998, p. 20)

This definition of sustainable tourism, however, has been criticised because the principles are inappropriate measures designed for practical sustainable development of tourism (Sharpley, 2000). As a guide for policy-makers ensuring that tourism is more sustainable, sustainable tourism is then redefined as “*Tourism that takes full account of*

its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities” (UNEP & UNWTO, 2005, p. 11); this places more emphasis on the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders and a strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus-building to achieve sustainable tourism.

Another dominant approach in sustainable tourism is called “extra-parochial” (Hunter, 2002). This approach advanced the concept of sustainable tourism around three major themes: the scope, scale and sector contexts for resource utilisation issues. It is claimed to be a more suitable conceptual vehicle for the evolution of policies and management approaches for implementing sustainable tourism (Hardy et al., 2002). However, this approach automatically interprets sustainable tourism primarily in terms of how tourism development (based on specific centres or areas) can contribute to the goal of SD at local, regional, national and global levels (Clark, 1997). Nevertheless, Sharpley (2000) tried to build a theoretical bridge between sustainable tourism and the broader framework of SD. Comparing principles of sustainable tourism with those of SD, he argued that the principles and objectives of SD cannot be transposed onto the specific context of tourism because tourism theory remains embedded in early modernisation theory, whilst the principles of sustainable tourism overlook the characteristics of the production and consumption of tourism (Sharpley, 2000). However, most tourism commentators disagree with Sharpley’s conclusion and assert that Sharpley (2000) did not examine the different meanings of SD.

Tourism researchers have been required to engage in the debate on the meaning of SD to identify the key aspects of the arguments that have emerged since the publication of the World Commission's report (WCED, 1987). This resulted in adaptive views of sustainable tourism and has significantly enriched the concept of sustainable tourism from environmental (Briassoulis, 2002; Gössling & Hall, 2005; Hunter, 2002) and socio-cultural perspectives (Greg & Hall, 2003; C. Michael Hall, 1999; D. Hall & Brown, 2006; Ryan, 2002). From the natural resource perspective of "dark green" thinking, Hunter (2002) claimed that sustainable tourism should emphasise the protection of natural resources for the sake of the natural environment itself. He clearly argued the case for strong sustainability conditions in the context of tourism development being the most appropriate for preserving biodiversity. This description is an environment-centric approach, apparently neglecting the social and cultural issues related to natural resources at the tourism destination. Nevertheless, any kind of improvement in the environmental function of tourism operations can be seen as beneficial; however, environmental betterment comes in many forms and does not necessarily mean long-term sustainability (S. A. Moore, Smith, & Newsome, 2003).

In addition, other tourism researchers argue that tourism inevitably has environmental, as well as social and economic, impacts. Sustainable tourism, therefore, surely does not mean only the protection or improvement of the natural environment. Briassoulis (2002) extended the environmental concern to include the use of resources, not only natural resources, but also sociocultural resources in destination areas. If these resources are overused and degraded, as is the tragedy for most CPRs, SD is severely threatened:

economic well-being declines, environmental conditions worsen, social injustice grows and tourist satisfaction drops. From this point, the concept of sustainable tourism concerns environmental protection not only for tourism itself, but also for the users within and outside of the destinations (Briassoulis, 2002). However, the question of how to manage tourism resources at destinations to avoid the tragedy of the commons and to develop tourism in a sustainable way remains unanswered. Such issues are related to the social and cultural aspects of sustainable tourism and have been addressed by other researchers. From a public policy perspective, C. Michael Hall (1999) critically analysed the structure of power relationships in finding new solutions for problems of resource management and destinations by developing more sustainable forms of tourism. Christ Ryan (2002) also discussed equity, management and power sharing in addressing the issues of sustainability and argued that sustainability is insufficient as an objective; rather, managers within tourism should be looking to add value for environments, communities, entrepreneurs and tourists.

Review of sustainable tourism literature shows that the interpretation of the term sustainable tourism falls into two categories: “confined sustainable tourism” and “holistic sustainable tourism”, as defined by David Weaver (2006). The “confined sustainable tourism” considers only the direct impacts: those which emerge directly from the actual tourism sector. Meanwhile, the holistic approach towards sustainable tourism goes beyond the tourism sector to incorporate tourism’s indirect and induced effects that can be identified and quantified in economic, environmental and sociocultural terms (Weaver, 2006). Nowadays, the holistic approach to sustainable

tourism is widely accepted by tourism researchers and practitioners, and most tourism researchers agree that sustainable tourism can contribute to the broad goal of SD, which encompasses economic growth, sociocultural development and environmental protection.

The holistic approach to sustainable tourism points to the fact that the term sustainable tourism has come to represent and encompass a set of principles, policy prescriptions, and management methods that chart a path for tourism development such that a destination's environmental resource base is protected for future development. However, this approach is hindered in practice by the possibility of incompatible outcomes and undersired trade-offs. Specifically, the basis of sustainable tourism development is recognition of the relationship that exists between the three components of the tourism operating environment, namely, tourists, the destination environment and the host community. Thus, the objective of sustainable tourism is to maintain a harmonious balance between these three components whilst protecting the resource base in long term.

In short, a holistic approach to sustainable tourism development has been widely accepted as an ideal for sustainable tourism and it is generally useful to describe a destination or business as "tending towards" SD. But the numerous challenges associated with the implementation of SD and sustainable tourism make it impossible to say whether or not a given destination or product is ever definitively "sustainable". The operationalisation of holistic, sustainable tourism needs to be embedded in a specific form of tourism. While "alternative tourism" is regarded as an early form of

engagement with the idea of sustainability, the principles of sustainable tourism are both logical and attractive in the context of rural tourism development. Particularly, as Richard Sharpley (2003) defined, sustainable rural tourism development is ideally a holistic process with the aim to sustain the rural environment, the rural economy, the structure and culture of local rural communities, the experience of visitors, and the long-term viability of the tourism industry in the rural areas.

3.2.2 Sustainable rural tourism: Sustainable tourism and rural development

3.2.2.1 Rural tourism

Rural tourism development attracted increasing interest in the 1990s and a growing literature has contributed to our understanding of it as an evolving phenomenon (Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003). However, there is no internationally accepted definition of rural tourism (Sharpley & Roberts, 2004). Bernard Lane attempted to define rural tourism as “the development of tourism in a rural area” and examined “the special relationship between tourism in the countryside and the concept of sustainable tourism” (Lane, 1994b, p. 7). Even this simple statement, however, was criticised for containing a number of ambiguities (Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997). This is partially because the definition of tourism itself can vary and, also, because it is difficult to define the concept of a rural area or of countryside. Additionally, the term rural tourism is frequently used interchangeably with other terms, such as ecotourism, green tourism or nature tourism, as well as agricultural tourism.

Lane (1994b) argued that pure rural tourism exists as a concept: tourism that is located in rural areas. The scale, character and function of rural areas reflect the differing and

complex pattern of the rural environment, and its economy, history and location; thus, the nature of rural tourism can be represented by a continuum. The countryside on the urban fringe enjoys a “strong day-visitor trade”, while peripheral regions may attract lower levels of visitation although they may offer opportunities for more traditional or “pure rural tourism activities”. Therefore, the demand for rural tourism is related directly to the particular characteristics of rural areas, and it is assumed that the principal motivation for visiting the countryside is to experience “rurality”.

This definition of rural tourism assumes a causal relationship existing between the rural environment and tourism, and it forms the basis for many of the principles of sustainable rural tourism development (Sharpley & Roberts, 2004). With a focus on the location, demand and product of rural tourism, however, the notion of “pure rural tourism” does not clearly define the scope and scale of rural tourism. These problems persisted through the 1990s. As the demand for “touristic use of rural areas” accelerated, the concepts of rural tourism have grown (Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003). Rural tourism’s wider conceptualisation suggests that it may be more commonly accepted as any form of tourism in a rural area. This wider definition extends Lane’s continuum and places a focus on activities rather than on the “pure rural” product (Sharpley & Roberts, 2004).

Nowadays, most rural tourism researchers agree that rural tourism is largely a domestic phenomenon but useful definitions of rurality depend upon social-cultural constructs that reflect people’s learned perceptions of what represents rurality and these are culturally bound. At the same time, there are other terms describing forms of tourism in rural areas. One of them is “agritourism”, which frequently appears to mean tourism

linked to agriculture or farm-based tourism, but also covers festivals, museums, craft shows, and other cultural events and attractions. Another is “green tourism”, which refers specifically to environmentally friendly tourism in the countryside. In addition, “ecotourism”, which aims to promote environmental conservation but largely depends on a rural environment, is a subset of rural tourism (Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997).

It is interesting to see that, despite the confusion caused by the multiple terms related to rural tourism, all these terms are pointing to protecting the rural social and natural environment. It is, therefore, implied that rural tourism is seen to be synonymous with sustainable tourism development (Scheyvens, 2002). As sustainable tourism is a positive approach intended to reduce the tensions and friction caused by the complex interactions between the tourism industry, visitors, the environment and the communities that host holidaymakers, the principles of sustainable tourism are both logical and attractive in the context of rural tourism development. It is particularly relevant for tourism in rural areas where the interdependency between tourism and the environment is most evident (Lane, 1994a).

3.2.2.2 Sustainable rural tourism: Tourism and sustainable rural development

The term “sustainable rural tourism” refers to the relationship between rural tourism and sustainable rural development. It was initially discussed in a special issue of the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, with consideration for the development of rural tourism in ways where the supply of tourist facilities and experiences is appropriate to meet the needs of both demand and supply (Bramwell, 1994). That is, rural tourism development should

meet the needs of the host community, the environment and the local suppliers, but should also match the requirements of tourists. Those discussions expressed concerns that local communities and local businesses should take up the prominent roles in shaping rural tourism; this reflects the adoption of the sustainability concept in the study of rural tourism development.

In the light of holistic sustainable tourism, ideally, sustainable rural tourism development is a holistic process. It aims to sustain the rural environment, the rural economy, the structure and culture of local rural communities, the experience of visitors and the long-term viability of the tourism industry in rural areas (Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997). In other words, rural tourism can be seen as a means for achieving the goal of sustainable rural development (Roberts & Hall, 2001). Although rural tourism is not “new”, as rural areas have always been integral elements of the tourism industry, aspects of late modernity (Giddens, 1991) mean that consumption relating to rural landscapes has been playing a far more active role in contributing to regional development (Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003).

Since the 1970s, in the developed world, economic restructuring and the decline of agriculture have reduced rural communities’ economic opportunities. These changes have limited the economic development options for rural communities, making older development strategies less viable and forcing many to look for non-traditional ways to sustain themselves (Ostrom & Field, 1999). One of the most popular non-traditional rural development strategies has been tourism and its associated entrepreneurship opportunities because of tourism’s ability to bring in dollars, generate jobs and support

retail growth. Research into rural tourism in England confirms that large attractions can act as growth poles for the local economy and community. It suggests that, under certain circumstances, mega-attractions for rural tourism can not only substantially increase the number of visitors to rural areas but also, through appropriate policies and processes, can underpin the longer-term SD of those areas (Sharpley, 2007).

The latent conflicts in rural tourism development, however, were highlighted by other researchers, who raised some intriguing theoretical questions about the relationships between economic, social, human and natural capital in rural areas, and winners and losers within any form of regional development (Roberts & Hall, 2001). It was widely observed that tourism development alters residents' relationships with one another and with their communities. On the one hand, rural tourism development may diversify the community, blur social boundaries and shift the basis of community solidarity. On the other hand, it may confirm an ideal image of the rural community and, hence, the shared image can become a source of social bonding in the community (Huang & Stewart, 1996). In addition, some researchers argue that a shift of focus from production to consumption within advanced economies will undoubtedly provide opportunities for the development of the leisure, recreation and tourism industries in both metropolitan and rural areas. Rural communities will be able to capitalise on this and compete against one another for the "leisure and lifestyle dollar" (Walmsley, 2003).

To summarise, rural tourism is an increasingly important component in the dynamic of economic, environmental and political change in the rural community. Rural tourism has potential as a development tool for the developing world. Despite the fact that there

are a number of constraints such as the lack of experience and training amongst the industry's providers, rural tourism has the potential to protect attractive areas, facilitate the modernisation of supply structures and widen opportunities for community participation in rural development. Additionally, well-integrated rural tourism can provide an important complement and counterbalance to the coastal mass tourism that has characterised many countries with warm climates.

3.2.3 The way towards sustainable rural tourism

The concept of SD has become almost universally accepted as a desirable and politically appropriate approach to, and goal of, rural tourism development in the last decade (Briggs, 2005; Sharpley, 2003; Sharpley & Roberts, 2004). While the potential roles of sustainable tourism in rural development processes may be well understood in principle, the ways in which they might be achieved in practice depend a great deal on local circumstances (D. Hall, Roberts, et al., 2003). Evidence from both the developed and the developing worlds shows that sustainable rural tourism is not ready to be achievable and the principles of sustainability have been viewed increasingly as forming a development blueprint that is unable to accommodate the almost infinite diversity of rural tourism development contexts (Sharpley, 2003; Verbole, 2003).

A fundamental problem that challenges the concept of sustainable rural tourism is the issue of control or governance. An explicit requirement for the achievement of sustainable tourism development is a local, community approach, which seeks to optimise the benefits of tourism for all stakeholders but according to local needs (Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003; Sharpley, 2003; Verbole, 2003). However, rural tourism does

not develop in a vacuum; it is embedded in a given social, political and historical context (Verbole, 2003). The resource allocations, policy ideas and institutional practices embedded within society may often restrict the influence of particular stakeholders in the process of rural tourism development (Chambers, 2005). Moreover, the concept of sustainability may mean different things to different stakeholders and it is difficult to identify a consensus among the relevant groups involved in a particular tourist destination (Munro et al., 2006). For this reason, it is important for development policy-makers and management to identify the interests of each stakeholder and to define a consensus among the relevant groups of a tourist destination, and to understand how stakeholders achieve unanimity or sufficient consensus of purpose and views on sustainable rural tourism development.

The power relationships between government and community at the destination are perceived as the key issue in governance for sustainable rural tourism. In existing tourism literature, the issues of stakeholder coordination, collaboration and partnership have attracted many tourism researchers (Aas et al., 2005; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; Caffyn & Jobbins, 2003; D. Hall, Roberts, et al., 2003) to find solutions for resource management and destination development problems. However, despite the value of such attention in possibly improving the management and the development of more sustainable tourist destinations, C. Michael Hall (1999) pointed out that the concept of stakeholder relationship is related to the changing role of the State in Western society and the attempt to find market or semi-market solutions to resource and production

problems. He argued that the utilisation of these concepts might have implications that undermine the development of the social capital required for SD.

The relationship between the government and community is another key issue for sustainable rural tourism. In the context of Western society, as the role of government has changed, community participation has been promoted as an important player of SD. Moreover, sustainability depends on a convergence of mutual understanding. It requires management of an environment that embraces people as well as landscapes and reflects the needs of both. Whilst government agencies will play vital roles in development processes as influencers, enablers and leaders, implementation of a visitor economy should largely depend on “others” in the public, private and voluntary sectors (Verbole, 2003). At the implementation stage, issues relating to quality and experience become the responsibilities of a range of stakeholders and local governments or government agencies take nothing more than coordinating roles (D. Hall, Mitchell, et al., 2003). These arguments indicate that the relationship between the government and the community is another key issue for sustainable rural tourism.

To summarise, the review of rural tourism literature indicates that SD has been widely accepted as the principle underlying rural tourism development. However, destinations in both the developed and the developing worlds are still on the way towards the goal. Just as Sharpley and Roberts (2004) pointed out, in rural tourism research, the question remains unanswered: Why is it so difficult to translate the policy and strategy of sustainable rural tourism into action at the local level when the benefits of doing so are well documented and understood in principle? Many researchers (Araujo & Bramwell,

1999; Briggs, 2005; Gunjan, 2006; Kastenholz, 2004; Munro et al., 2006; Sharpley, 2003) have suggested that consensus among various stakeholders of rural tourism development is required. Research to enhance understanding of the importance of stakeholder relationships, collaboration and voluntary participation is, therefore, critical for both tourism academics and practitioners. For a particular destination, the questions specifically remain: Who is involved in, and affected by, rural tourism development? Who has access to decision-making on the destination development? How do they influence the decision-making process and, hence, the process of rural tourism development at the destination? What are the roles of State, regional and local governments in sustainable rural development? What is the role of the community? How does the government influence the process of rural tourism development? How do the community and the government interact with each other and influence the policy-making, destination development planning and implementation? All these issues are related to interactions between the stakeholders of a tourist destination and to features of the umbrella concept of sustainable governance of rural tourism destination.

3.3 Sustainable governance of rural tourism destination

This section discusses the theory of governance and its adoption in the tourism context, particularly its application in tourist destination development.

3.3.1 Governance of tourism destination

Tourism destination is a complex and dynamic organism that calls for governance practices towards sustainable development. It is commonly accepted that dynamics and complexity are key characteristics of destinations, despite the term tourism destination

being defined from different theoretical approaches. Tourism destination is a basic unit of analysis in tourism studies. With regard to the destination life-cycle concept and theory, tourism destination is perceived as dynamic, evolving and changing over time (R. W. Butler, 1980; Richard W. Butler, 2006). In the geographic-economic approach, tourism destinations are studied as “places towards which people travel and where they choose to stay for a while to experience certain perceived attractions” (Leiper, 1995, p. 87). Meanwhile, from the perspective of tourism business and marketing management, tourism destination is studied as a product that denotes complex, consumptive experiences resulting from the process whereby tourists use multiple travel services such as information, transportation and accommodation during their visits (Gunn, 1988). This definition stresses the elements of tourism destination products and services to construct tourist experiences. Recently, a holistic and complex approach is adopted to define tourism destination as “a set of institutions and actors located in a physical or a virtual space where marketing-related transactions and activities take place, challenging the traditional production–consumption dichotomy” (Saraniem & Kylänen, 2011, p. 133). All these definitions concern the dynamic interactions between the places, people and purposes of travel.

In practice, UNWTO defines tourism destination from the destination management perspective. In the conceptual framework of the Destination Management and Quality programme, UNWTO states that tourism destination is the fundamental unit on which all the many complex dimensions of tourism are based. It defines tourism destination as:

... a physical space in which a visitor spends at least one overnight. It includes tourism products such as support services and attractions, and tourism resources within one day's return travel time. It has physical and administrative boundaries defining its management, images, and perceptions defining its market competitiveness. Local tourism destinations incorporate various stakeholders often including a host community, and can nest and network to form larger destinations. (UNWTO, 02-04.12.2002)

From this definition, tourism destination is the focal point in the development and delivery of tourism products, and the implementation of tourism policy: a cluster of activities (products and services) that are linked horizontally, vertically or diagonally along the value chain and served by the public and private sectors. Therefore, tourism destination is a dynamic and complex organism that involves diverse stakeholders and requires a governance system to adopt new governance models and structures for its sustainable development.

3.3.1.1 Early studies related to governance of tourism destination

Governance is not a new concept in the tourism context. Traditionally, tourism has been managed as being part of the public sector with "top-down", centralised and bureaucratic approach. According to this convention, government is assumed with the responsibility for infrastructure provision, planning control, marketing and promotion, and proactive development for the perceived public good of tourist destination development (Dowling, 1993; Inskeep, 1991; UNWTO, 1998). However, as tourism has become increasingly complex and widespread worldwide, involving multiple interrelated and interdependent relationships between the public, private and community sectors since the 1980s (Weaver & Lawton, 2010), the governance concept was then

adopted to study the impact exerted by interest groups on public policy in the field of tourism in the early 1990s (Greenwood, 1993). This signalled that tourism policy-making had involved not only government but also other stakeholders of tourist destination development. Since then, the study of tourist destination development shifted focus from the “top-down” model to the “bottom-up” approach. The research scope also extended from government to destination stakeholders and their interactions, covering key issues such as public–private partnership and collaboration in tourism policy-making (Araujo & Bramwell, 2002; Bramwell & Lane, 2000; Bramwell & Sharman, 1999; C. Michael Hall, 1999), managing stakeholders in tourism planning (Araujo & Bramwell, 1999; Sautter & Leisen, 1999) and empowering the community in sustainable tourism development (Scheyvens, 2002; Wearing & McDonald, 2002).

As tourism sustainability has become widely accepted as an approach to and the goal of tourism development in the new millennium, “exploration of the governance of tourism spaces and sustainable tourism initiatives” became one of the key issues for the study of tourist destination development (Hopfinger, Coles, & Church, 2003). Since the European Union initiated its international research and policy project “Sustainable urban tourism: Involving local agents and partnerships for new forms of governance” (SUT-Governance) in 1999, studies of tourism governance have been promoted and increasingly embodied in the complex interdisciplinary and multi-sectorial issues, as they have examined existing practices of public–private–community partnerships in sustainable urban tourism (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2004). In the last decade, many case studies on tourist destination development noted that cooperating and networking

between public–private sectors and stakeholders of the destination have, evidently, been enhancing destination management and moving destinations to sustainable development. The success factors of enhanced destination management are “the involvement of stakeholders in tourism projects”, “the development of locally oriented codes of conduct”, and “the role and participation of local authorities and the importance of leadership” in the case of Lillehammer in Norway (Welford & Ytterhus, 2004, p. 410). Sustainable tourism product is territorially embedded in ongoing social networks and relationships in destination development in the UK (Saxena, 2005). Similarly, stakeholder involvement in the processes of tourism planning is perceived as the best practical principle of sustainable tourism in the case of Australia (Munro et al., 2006). Moreover, the involvement of the host community in destination management and cooperative community efforts supported by non-governmental agencies can help destinations to cope with challenges such as economic leakage, local control and socio-economic inequity, in the cases of Annapurna, Nepal, and Northwest Yunnan, China (Nyaupane, Morais, & Dowler, 2006). Furthermore, studies on stakeholder relationships and networks of a tourist destination offer a better understanding of the structures and social interrelations between government, tourism producers and civil society, and, in turn, inform collaborative destination management policy and practice (Dredge, 2006a). In addition, the networks spanning public and private sectors are increasingly important in shaping tourism planning and development, through fostering and inhibiting relationships between local government and the tourism industry. To build public–private partnerships, therefore, requires careful management between State

and societal dominance, and the relationship between the active tourism network and the wider, passive community (Dredge, 2006b).

All this early research related to tourist destination development concerns the public–private relationship, the role of stakeholders and their actions and interactions in managing the destinations. These pieces of research have contributed to the study and practice of governing tourist destinations. However, most of these studies have been carried out with a particular perspective of destination management, such as policy-making, planning or stakeholder relationships and networks, rather than with the governance perspective. With the argument that societies are moving or have moved from authoritarian to liberal democratic economic and political models in the new millennium, some studies on tourism destination development (Cornelissen, 2005; D. Hall, 2004) are published under the name of “governance”, but few with the theoretical framework of tourism governance.

Theoretical frameworks of tourism governance are developed gradually only after governance theories are adopted from broad academics and applied in the study of tourist destinations (Baggio, Scott, & Cooper, 2010; Beritelli et al., 2007; Caffyn & Jobbins, 2003; Nordin & Svensson, 2007; Ruhanen et al., 2010; Svensson, Nordin, & Flagestad, 2006). Nowadays, contemporary governance has been an emerging paradigm for optimising destination management models and tourist destination governance becomes one of catchwords in tourism research. The increasing numbers of academic publications on the subject of tourism include both theoretical and practical research on tourist destination governance. The key issues are related to the conceptualisation of

tourist destination governance, the theoretical framework and approaches of applying governance theory to tourist destination development, as well as the modes of tourist destination governance, etc.

3.3.1.2 Conceptualisation of tourism destination governance

It is difficult to capture a simple definition of tourist destination governance, considering the complexity and proliferation of the parental concept of “governance”. As there is no agreement on the scope, elements and dimensions of governance, the empirical research on governance in the tourism context is limited by the case studies without a common conceptual framework (Ruhanen et al., 2010) and the concept of governance is multidimensional (Borges, Eusébio, & Carvalho, 2014). Through further examination of the academic literature on governance for sustainable tourism, it is evident that the conceptualisation of tourism destination governance has evolved through adopting and applying governance theories in the study of various issues of governance in the tourism context.

In existing tourism literature related to destination governance, the term “tourism governance” is most frequently and broadly used by tourism researchers (Beaumont & Dredge, 2009; Dredge & Whitford, 2011; Erkuş-Öztürk, 2011; Greenwood, 1993; Newmeyer, 2008; Sofield & Li, 2011; Zahra, 2011). The term “destination governance” is used in the study of governance structure and governance process from the perspectives of public administration (Nordin & Svensson, 2007; Svensson et al., 2006) and corporate governance (Baggio et al., 2010; Beritelli et al., 2007). The term “tourist destination governance” was used by more researchers (Bruyn & Alonso, 2012; Laws et

al., 2011) soon after the publication of the special issue on tourist destination governance of the *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*. At the same time, the term “sustainable tourism governance” (Amore, 2015; Bramwell & Lane, 2011; Dinica, 2009; C. Michael Hall, 2011a, 2013) is in use for the study of tourist destination governance, from the critical perspective that “tailored and effective governance is a key requirement for implementing sustainable tourism” (Bramwell & Lane, 2011, p. 411).

Despite the different terms used in the study of governance in the tourism context, both theoretical and practical studies have been based on tourist destinations in urban or rural areas, on a local, regional, global or local-global scale (Nordin & Svensson, 2007; Presenza & Cipollina, 2010; Ruhanen et al., 2010). Most current empirical studies on governance of tourist destinations are limited to temporal and spatial scopes, examining governance practices in one area or several areas with definite geographical or jurisdictional boundaries. Only a few researchers have examined the evolution of tourist destination governance through a historical scope to reflect the impact of the changing social-political and economic environment on tourism governance (Bramwell, 2011; Gill & Williams, 2011; Sofield & Li, 2011).

In the study of tourism governance, governance concepts that originated from academics of both management and politics are adopted. A few researchers try to synthesise corporate governance theories with tourist destination management (Beritelli et al., 2007; Pechlaner, Volgger, & Herntrei, 2012) while most researchers use the notions of governance suggested by Stoker (1998), Rhodes (1996), Pierre and Peters (2000), and Kooiman (1999, 2003, 1993) in the conceptualisation of tourist destination

governance (Bramwell & Lane, 2011; C. Michael Hall, 2011b; Laws et al., 2011; Ruhanen et al., 2010). Regarding governors, action and activities, C. Michael Hall (2011b) recognises the two broad meanings of “governing”. One is a new mode of governance; another refers to conceptual and theoretical representation of the role of the State in the coordination of socio-economic systems, with a focus on the State’s ability to steer the social-economic system and the relationship between the State and other policy actors (Pierre & Peters, 2000), or on coordination and self-government, especially in respect to network and public–private partnerships (Rhodes, 1996). Respectively, the elements and dimensions of tourist destination governance are generally defined from three perspectives: State/government intervention in public administration/management, social self-governance and the new mode of governance.

From the perspective of government intervention in public administration and management, tourism governance stresses the role of State/government in making and implementing policy for sustainable tourism development. With Stoker’s concept that governance is a “system of governing” to govern, rule or steer the society, Bramwell (2011) perceives tourism governance as the process for producing social order by the regulation and mobilisation of social action among tourism stakeholders. This clarification of governance concepts helps understand how the institutional arrangements for tourist destination governance determine the ways in which the State acts in the tourism policy arena and selects instruments and indicators that are used to achieve policy goals. The instruments of State intervention in tourism are framed by different constructs of governance (C. Michael Hall, 2011b).

The significance of governance by the State for tourism and sustainable development in destinations is also explored from political-economic approach. Bramwell (2011) argues that sustainable tourism development requires collective actions that are underpinned by various conflicts between groups with different interests; only the State has the power to coordinate various interest groups because the “State involves an institutional ensemble that has political authority and power, including sovereignty, within a national or more local territory” (Bramwell, 2011, p. 460). Case studies taken from China, Germany, Malta, Turkey and the UK show that, in practice, the government or the State is often a primary influence on governance, including in policy-making for sustainable development. Despite the growing role for agencies, public–private sector partnerships, the voluntary sector, and markets and quasi-markets in public governance in many countries, the State’s continuing influence can occur through subtle government steering of the priorities for action of the new agencies and partnerships (Bramwell, 2011).

Due to the absence of strong industry leadership and due to top-down directives from State and federal governments, local government has also assumed responsibility for facilitating the sustainable tourism agenda. However, power struggles, tokenistic public participation and the strong influence of local government authority in local governance structures were found to be inhibitors to sustainable tourism development (Ruhanen, 2012). Governance with the principle of subsidiarity is proposed as one that would align well with the principles of sustainable tourism in the case of governance of regional tourism organisations in New Zealand (Zahra, 2011), since this governance style requires open communication and consultation, must foster trust and legitimacy, and

contributes to securing the organisation's ongoing required resources and, therefore, would align well.

In practice, the role of the state and government is also the emphasis of the super-national tourism organisation's definition of tourism governance. The UNWTO (2010) defines tourism governance as a system and process to define and implement strategies to achieve competitiveness and sustainable development of the tourism destination. The survey on tourism destination governance (UNWTO, 2010) indicates that the pursuit of competitiveness has become a major policy objective for national tourism administrations (Pintassilgo) at the central government level and a strategic issue for destination management organizations (DMOs) at the regional and local level. However, tourism governance is highly decentralised and key industry stakeholders have been involved further in the policy-making process and actively engaged in tourism development and destination management issues. Therefore, UNWTO evaluates the governance performance of destination governance in the four dimensions: the public-private interface, multi-stakeholder complexity, level of involvement and level of autonomy, resource dependencies and the impact on performance (UNWTO, 2011). Correspondently, although the OECD has been promoting "a whole-of-government approach to tourism policy", the coordination of horizontal and vertical tourism policy was seen as the greatest or a major challenge to effective tourism governance in the OECD countries. This is due in part to the nature of tourism as an open and fragmented industry where it is usual to find that multiple central government

ministries and levels of government are undertaking various tourism-related roles (Scott & Marzano, 2015).

From the self-governance perspective, governance refers to self-organising, inter-organisational networks characterised by interdependence, resource exchange, rules of the game and significant autonomy from the State (Rhodes, 1996). That means the networks, coving both State and non-State actors, are self-governing and autonomous; the society is governed or steered with less control by the public sector, but more networks and public–private partnerships. Applying self-governance in the tourism context, destination governance, therefore, refers to a variety of network concepts used for describing and analysing the way that policy processes are shaped, managed and organised (Nordin & Svensson, 2007). The concept of network relationships has received considerable attention in studies of sustainable tourism. Highlighting interactions amongst actors, the complex web of relationships enables actors to accommodate shared concerns about local environments consciously and sell the destination collectively (Saxena, 2005). Moreover, networks can integrate different policy perspectives to facilitate coordination of public and private interests and resources in tourism planning and policy-making (Dredge, 2006a, 2006b; C. Michael Hall, 1999; Kastenholz, Carneiro, Eusébio, & Figueiredo, 2013; Romeiro & Costa, 2009; Scott, Baggio, & Cooper, 2008; Wray, 2009). In examining local tourism governance networks, Beaumont and Dredge (2009) identified parameters in six dimensions: positive cultures, constructive communication and engaged communities; transparency and accountability; vision and leadership; acceptance of diversity and the

pursuit of equity and inclusiveness; developing knowledge, learning and sharing expertise; and clear roles and responsibilities of participants and, clear operational structures and processes within the network. However, highlighting complex relationships and value systems, the network structure may result in a different interpretation of parameters of effective governance and underpin the governance arrangements, and, hence shape effective tourism governance. Moreover, the slow adoption of new destination development strategies are also found in the domination of tourism-related policy networks by short-term sectorial and local interests (Halkier, 2013).

From the perspective of collaboration and cooperation between public and private sectors, governing is interpreted as the new mode of governance, where the contemporary State adapts to its changing social and economic environment by involving the private sector in policy formulation (C. Michael Hall, 2011b). The new mode of governance has six elements: participation and power sharing; multi-level integration; diversity and decentralisation; deliberation, flexibility and reversibility; experimentation; and knowledge creation. In the new mode of governance, policy-making is not considered as the sole domain of regulators, but private and public stakeholders from different levels are meant to participate in the policy-making process as part of public–private partnerships. Coordination between different levels of government needs to occur both horizontally and vertically, and should involve private actors. In the tourism context, the new form of governance is promoted by the international research and policy project, “Sustainable urban tourism: Involving local

agents and partnerships for new forms of governance” (SUT-Governance) of the European Union’s Fifth Framework Programme. It has the aim of addressing complex interdisciplinary and multi-sectorial issues by examining the practices of public–private–community partnerships in sustainable urban tourism in some Western European countries (Paskaleva-Shapira, 2004).

Destination governance means less control from government but more dominant roles for communities and local people in destination development. The role of communities and networks in destination management has received considerable attention in tourism destination studies (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006; Cole, 2006; Greg & Hall, 2003; Nyaupane et al., 2006). With a focus on the significance of social capital in community and smaller spatial governing units that are closer to the community, community governance highlights the importance of public participation in public policy-making. Although the community approach is criticised as demanding more direct citizen involvement in governance, community governance in tourism planning has been a significant theme in tourism literature since the 1980s (C. Michael Hall, 2011b). Empowerment and community participation in tourism planning and policy-making are identified as the key success approaches to sustainable destination development, in the cases of both Western countries with democratic politics (Cole, 2006; Hensel, Kennett-Hensel, & Sneath, 2013; Jamal & Camargo, 2013; Jordan, Vogt, Kruger, & Grewe, 2013; Parnwell, 1999; Scheyvens, 2002; Wearing & McDonald, 2002; Wesley & Pforr, 2010; Wray, 2011) and the developing countries with more centralised politics (Han, Wu, Huang, &

Yang, 2014; Hensel et al., 2013; D. Su & Xiao, 2009; M. M. Su & Wall, 2012; H. Xu, Zhang, & Lew, 2014; Ying & Zhou, 2007; Zhang, 2014; Zhou & Ma, 2009).

To summarise, there is no common definition for tourist destination governance that can be used universally in the study of destination governance. The conceptualisation of tourist destination governance, as Svensson et al. (2006) combine two notions, is applying notions of governance in the tourism context. Two approaches are used in conducting research on tourism governance; the first approach considers the process for governing, and the second considers the actors and activities of governance (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). In the first approach, the pattern of governing that arises may be led by government or by societal sectors; the governance processes are likely to vary from case to case. The second approach considers that governance relates to specific trends in the roles and activities of the State in some countries following neo-liberal public sector reforms, which began in the 1980s and 1990s.

As the concept of a destination is based on the grouping of organisations clustering together to form a destination context (Laws et al., 2011), the study of tourism governance reproduces many of the definitional concerns and confusions evident in the wider literature. To bring these two perspectives together, some researchers argue that “the concept of governance applied to tourist destinations consists of setting and developing rules and mechanisms for a policy, as well as business strategies, by involving all the institutions and individuals” (Beritelli et al., 2007, p. 96). Similarly, some other researchers (Nordin & Svensson, 2007) focus on social networks and relationships with an emphasis on those between the public and private sectors. Their

study on a single case study of the Swedish ski resort found that public–private relationships are built on trust; joint risk-taking, informal structures and strategic consensus do have a positive impact on the level of growth at a tourist destination. There is, however, recognition that the public and private sectors are involved, and hence, implicitly, that the governance dimensions applicable may be derived from those used in both sectors. Nevertheless, the existing literature on tourism governance studies, which focuses on both theoretical and empirical research, has achieved no agreement on what constitutes the appropriate dimensions for examination of the sustainable governance of tourist destinations.

3.3.1.3 The theoretical framework of tourist destination governance

Theoretical frameworks are crucial to research on tourism governance because they influence what is studied, how it is studied, the conclusions reached, the recommendations proposed and the political implications of the research (Bramwell & Lane, 2011). Bramwell (2011) point out that the use of social theory from broader academic fields can mutually benefit research on tourism governance and contribute to debates on governance across the social sciences. In existing tourism literature, a few theoretical frameworks for study of tourist destination governance are developed by adopting governance theories from broader academics of social sciences.

The processes of tourism governance are likely to involve various mechanisms for governing, “steering”, regulating and mobilising action, such as institutions, decision-making rules and established practices for destination sustainable development. Therefore, typology is used to distinguish the different relationships between

government intervention and self-regulation, and the relationships between the governance actors and steering modes. C. Michael Hall (2011b) proposed a framework of typologies of governance into four types: hierarchies, markets, networks and communities. Hierarchies represent the situations where the public actors such as nation, State and super-national institutions dominate the steering, while markets modes are recognised where private sectors are pre-eminent. Networks and communities are non-hierarchical steering modes. While networks are integrated by public and private actors, communities are private actors only. With this typology of governance, a 12-point framework of governance identifies core elements: classifying characteristics; policy themes; policy standpoints; democratic models; primary focus; views of non-central actors; distinctions between policy-making and implementation; success criteria; implementation gaps; reasons for deficits; solutions to those gaps; and the primary policy instruments used.

With its focus on the coordination and control of economies or industries, the political economy approach to governance studies is used in tourist destination studies (Bramwell, 2011; Erkuş-Öztürk, 2011; Sofield & Li, 2011; Wu, Xu, & Eaglen, 2011).

Using a strategic-relational political economy approach, Bramwell (2011) examines how governance by the State affects tourism and sustainability in destinations. From a holistic, relational and dialectical perspective, the political economy approach focuses on the State's roles in regulating the economic and political systems, and its concern to understand interactions between agency and structures in specific conjunctures. Other distinctive perspectives relate to the importance of spatial and temporal variations, the

adaptation of State activities at different spatial scales and at different times, and the interpretation of path dependence and path creation (Bramwell, 2011).

From the perspective of the public administration of tourist destinations, a theoretical framework for governance capability and stakeholder interactions in the development and management of a coastal tourism study was developed by Caffyn and Jobbins (2003), based on the literature in the field of sustainable tourism management, integrated coastal management and Kooiman's socio-political theory of governance.

With this analytical framework, key components of governance capabilities and stakeholder interactions at both the intentional level and the structural level are identified and analysed, but interactions between the governing system and the system-to-be-governed were neglected. Another study on coastal tourism governance introduced an environmental collaboration communication model with four components – information, education, participation and environmentally friendly behaviour – to analyse stakeholder participation in the tourism governance process (Svensson et al., 2006). In a further study focusing on public–private relationships, formal and informal networks, and resource dependencies of tourist destination governance, Nordin and Svensson (2007) adopted Rhodes (1996) governance theory to develop a conceptual framework and studied the impact of governance on destination development. From the case study, they found that trust, joint risk-taking, informal structure and strategic consensus have a positive impact on growth at a tourist destination.

The application of public–private relationships and network governance is also found in the studies of the dynamic processes of policy-making, implementation and action in

destinations (Beaumont & Dredge, 2009). Concepts derived from the policy community, the policy network, the inter-organisational network paradigm and issues management theories are also used to understand the roles, activities and interactions of government, corporate and pressure group stakeholders engaged in tourism policy, planning and management in destination contexts (Wray, 2009). However, much of the discussion is from a Western perspective and assumes democratic processes are in place.

To summarise, the recently increasing numbers of publications include both theoretical and practical research, covering themes such as the conceptualisation of tourist destination governance, the significance of and approaches to applying governance theory in tourist destination development, modes of tourist destination governance, etc. These publications reflect the fact that development models are changing from a “management” to a “governance” paradigm in tourist destinations worldwide. Most of the empirical research on tourist destination governance is based on case studies, using parental theories of governance from either a management or a public administration perspective, except for a few examples of empirical research, which look at tourist destination governance from a holistic system perspective. Taking into consideration that tourism itself is an increasingly widespread and complex system consisting of interdependent and interactive relationships between various stakeholders of tourist destinations, adaptive management is required to realise its full potential as a sustainable economic, ecological, social and cultural force (Weaver & Lawton, 2010). This implies that a holistic approach and a systematic framework are needed for the study of tourist destination governance, to analyse multi-interactions between various

stakeholders as the governors of tourist destinations, as well as the interactions between the governors and the tourism resource system of the destination.

3.3.2 Governing commons in rural tourism destinations

This section discusses the problems of the CPRs in rural tourism destinations. It firstly discusses the concept of common-pool resources and the adoption of that notion in tourism: tourism commons. Tourism commons refers to the CPRs that are used by tourists, locals and others in tourist destinations (Briassoulis, 2002). Typically, tourism commons are tourism resources including transportation, infrastructure and other public services, as well as landscape, tourist spots, etc. As the basic elements of a tourist destination, these resources share the attributes of CPRs – subtractability and non-excludability – and experience the tragedies of freeriding and overuse. Comparatively speaking, such tragedies have more fatal effects on tourism sustainability, particularly on the sustainability of rural tourism destinations that rely greatly on the conservation of social and natural tourism commons. Such attributes of tourism commons determine that tourism commons management inherently concerns the overall governance of the rural tourism destination.

3.3.2.1 The tragedy of the commons

This section discusses the theory of CPRs generally and its resource management approach. The concepts and theories of CPRs are adopted from Ostrom's works from 1990 to 2010. The approach of community self-governance of CPRs is widely observed in many places in the world and Ostrom's theory of institutional analysis of governance of CPRs is also generally accepted by academics in resource studies. Her perspective is

that of political economy, specifically, institutional economics. Her theory can explain some phenomena in the use and management of tourism resources but it does not explain the particular situation of tourism resource management of rural tourism destinations in China, due to the mixture of property rights over tourism resources in rural tourism destinations.

Attributes of the commons: Subtractability and non-excludability

The “tragedy of the commons” was discussed initially by Hardin (1968) from the perspective of institutional economics. Since then, the concept of CPRs has been widely adopted in many disciplines for the study of natural resources and human-constructed resources (Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003; Ostrom, 1990, 1999, 2009, 2010; Ostrom & Hess, 2007; Ostrom, Sabatier, & Wynne, 1993). The “tragedy of the commons” often refers to the “free-riding” in provision of and the “overuse” in appropriation of a CPR when there is a lack of regulation of usage of the CPR (Ostrom, 2010); this inevitably results in the CPR becoming unsustainable. Such tragedies are believed to be inherent in CPRs’ two typical attributes: high “rivalry” in use and low “non-excludability” in appropriation. Within the trends of globalisation, population growth and resource depletion, many researchers are paying increased attention to the importance of the governance of CPRs and believe that it is critical to manage these resources in an equitable and sustainable way (Agrawal, 2001, 2003; Blanco, Rey-Maqueira, & Lozano, 2009; Dolsak et al., 2003; Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003; Eythorsson, 2003; Gautam & Shivakoti, 2005; Hess & Ostrom, 2007; Hooghe & Marks, 2001; S. A. Moore & Rodger, 2010; Ostrom & Hess, 2007; Yandle & Dewees, 2003). Particularly, the

parental study on governing the commons by Elinor Ostrom (1990) laid a foundation for the institutional analysis of governance of CPRs.

From the political economy perspective of development studies, a common-pool resource is defined as a natural or man-made resource from which one person's consumption of resource units makes those units unavailable to others but it is difficult to exclude or limit users once the resource is provided (Ostrom, 1990; Ostrom et al., 1993). Resources, such as fisheries, underground water, forests, and grasslands are typical CPRs (Ostrom, 1990). Moreover, other natural resources, such as air and the atmosphere, water resources, oceans, ecosystems, wildlife, grazing fields and irrigation canals, etc. are also usually studied as common-pool resource systems (Dolsak et al., 2003; Healy, 1994; Ostrom & Field, 1999; Ostrom, Sabatier, & Wynne, 1993). Recently, some human-constructed resources, such as mainframe computers, the Internet or cyberspace, the electronic-magnetic spectrum, genetic data, digital libraries, streets and transportation systems, ports, urban areas, environmental and socio-economic costs and benefits, traditional transmission (cultural commons), intellectual resources, various types of associations, etc., are also labelled as CPRs (Dolsak et al., 2003; Dolsak & Ostrom, 2003; Hess & Ostrom, 2001; Ostrom, 2009; Ostrom & Hess, 2007; Pintassilgo, 2007). At the same time, tourism resources including landscapes and other background elements of tourism are studied in light of the approach of CPR management (Blanco et al., 2009; Briassoulis, 2002; Caffyn & Jobbins, 2003; Fehr & Leibbrandt, 2011; Holden, 2005a, 2005b; S. A. Moore & Rodger, 2010; Pintassilgo, 2007).

All these resources are regional or global resources that are critical for human development, but all are indivisible and open-accessed or open-accessed in a limited way by their users. This situation gives rise to two terms for describing the attributes of a CPR: “subtractability” and “non-excludability”. The first term means that the amount of CPRs exploited by one individual user reduces the amount of CPRs available for the others while the latter refers to the fact that the exclusion of additional users of CPRs is difficult or impossible (Ostrom, 1990, 1999, 2009). Therefore, as Ostrom (1990) claimed, CPRs share subtractability with private goods and the difficulty of exclusion with public goods (e.g. forests, water systems, fisheries, the global atmosphere, etc.). There is a “third type” of property: non-excludable but rival (Earl & Potts, 2011). Such attributes imply the difficulties in managing a CPR. It is difficult to delineate the boundary of a CPR, to hedge un-entitled users from access to it, to monitor illegal appropriation of it, and to maintain its provision (Fehr & Leibbrandt, 2011). Thus, inherently, free-riding and overuse are big problems of CPRs that cause un-sustainability of CPRs as an inevitable “tragedy of the commons”.

The incentives for free-riding and overuse of CPRs

Free-riding and overuse of CPRs are typical “tragedies of the commons” that are normally believed to be inherent in the attributes of the CPRs: specifically embodied in the process of provision and appropriation of a CPR. According to Ostrom (1990), the provision of a CPR concerns providers and producers who arrange the provision of a CPR or actually construct, repair or maintain the resource system itself in the long term. Providers and producers are frequently the same individuals but they do not have to be.

Thus, a CPR can be provided jointly and/or produced by more than one person or firm. On the other hand, the appropriation of a CPR concerns users and the resource units that each of the users withdraws from a CPR. In the process of appropriation of a CPR, multiple users simultaneously or sequentially withdraw the resource units but the resource units are usually not subject to joint use. Hence, the use of a CPR by an individual appropriator can reduce the available resource units for others. Therefore, this encourages appropriators to use a CPR as much as possible to increase individual benefits and this, inevitably, results in “overuse” of a CPR.

Once multiple appropriators rely on a given resource system, however, improvements to the system are simultaneously available to all appropriators. It is costly (and, in some cases, infeasible) to exclude one appropriator of a resource system from improvements made to the resource system itself. Therefore, all users benefit from maintenance performed on a CPR system whether they contribute or not. This is the non-excludability of a CPR and encourages users “free-riding” in a complex and uncertain CPR system. That means that open access to a CPR encourages the users who tend to access the CPR freely and exploit the resource units as much as they can in a certain time, and there is no incentive for them to maintain the CPR. Appropriators’ behaviour of overusing and free-riding, hence, can significantly reduce the provider/producer’s incentive to maintain that CPR and this results in the underinvestment of a CPR. Overuse in appropriation of and free-riding in the provision of CPRs, therefore, are believed to be inevitable tragedies (Ostrom, 1990) and the

exploitation of a CPR involves a negative interpersonal and inter-temporal externality (Fehr & Leibbrandt, 2011).

3.3.2.2 The problem of CPRs in rural tourism destinations

The concept of CPRs has been adopted lately by tourism academics (Briassoulis, 2002; Caffyn & Jobbins, 2003; Holden, 2005a, 2005b; S. A. Moore & Rodger, 2010; Pintassilgo, 2007; Ruhanen, 2012) in the study of tourism resources management. In a tourist destination, resources created mainly for tourists are also used by the local people and, hence, are frequently subject to take on the attributes of CPRs. That is, exploitation by one user reduces the amount available for others but exclusion of additional users is difficult or impossible. These resources are, therefore, labelled as tourism commons and studied in the approach to CPRs.

Because of the increasing growth of world tourism, many types of CPRs, both natural and constructed by humans, are used for tourism. Specifically, natural resources, such as the oceans and seas, the atmosphere, coral reefs and mountains, and human-constructed resources, such as recreational landscapes, gardens, theme parks, national parks, resort communities, beaches, resort hotels and historical areas, which are used as basic elements of tourism, certainly have the attributes of CPRs. Moreover, crowds of tourists often compete with the local residents for the use of tourism background elements. It is difficult to prevent either tourists or local residents from accessing these resources. Therefore, overuse and free-riding are often observed in tourist destinations where there is a shortage of regulations for the use and maintenance of these resources, particularly in the tourist destinations where major tourism resources

are natural (Fehr & Leibbrandt, 2011; S. A. Moore & Rodger, 2010; Yabuta, Scott, & Ozawa, 2014).

For managing tourism commons, all three property regimes – ‘privatisation’, ‘management by government’ and ‘common property regimes’ – are widely found in the case of tourism resources, and mixtures of regimes are frequently encountered (Healy, 1994). However, the management of scenic and historic landscapes and other background tourism elements is problematic because they, very frequently, are CPRs with the attributes of susceptibility to overuse but with a lack of incentive for productivity-enhancing investment (Briassoulis, 2002). This is also true for the promotion and improvement of tourist destination images, where “market failure” is observed as a dilemma in the management of tourist destinations.

3.4 Chinese perspective and practice of sustainable development

China’s rapid economic growth has drawn the attention of the world. Although China is under a socialist-market system, its development model has been largely influenced by Western development theory. The four modernisations, economic reform and open-door policies reflect the evolution of development theory from modernisation to globalisation. Moreover, the strategy to “build a resource-efficient and environment-friendly society” reflects the country’s commitment to SD, while “scientific development” represents an adaptive SD model in the Chinese context. These models of Chinese development will be explained and analysed in the following paragraphs.

3.4.1 Scientific development as an approach for sustainable development

Since the 1950s, led by the Chinese communist party, Chinese people have initiated the great course of constructing democracy and socialism with Chinese characteristics.

However, during the 1960s and the early 1970s, China experienced a period when people struggled for the basic needs of food, clothing and health (Bao & Zhang, 2004).

The Land Reform in 1978 initiated a series of economic and political reforms in China and drove China towards economic development. The economic reforms and open-door policy consequently facilitated the realisation of the four modernisations (Cai, 2004):

the modernisation of agriculture, industry, national defence, and science and technology.

In the 1980s, China successfully solved the problem of feeding the Chinese people and the proportion of the population living in poverty has declined significantly. However,

after 1992, China adopted a neoliberalism policy and extended economic reforms to include a social welfare system. A social-market system developed in China and,

consequently, produced rapid economic growth, industrialisation and urbanisation,

accompanied by overdeveloped areas in the country which competed for resources for their development (Zheng, 2000).

Although all developed countries relied on the traditional industrialisation model in

their processes of modernisation, China did not have the social and economic

environment that the industrialised countries enjoyed at beginning of their

industrialisation. Its strategic resource constraints and environmental challenges make

China fully aware of the rules underpinning development. In response to the SD

strategy, the country attempted “to build a resource-efficient and environment-friendly

society” as a major strategic option for its model of modernisation, as well as adopting an overall orientation for the common development of human society (Y. C. Wang & Fesenmaier, 2006). This shift reflects the Chinese commitment to a SD strategy.

At the same time, the government played its role in providing public services to private businesses in cities, as well as its role of public administration in rural areas. Thereafter, in the later 1990s, public services in villages faded out (D. Lu & Neilson, 2004) and, due to the structural adjustment of the agricultural economy, a huge amount of labour power has been released. The decrease in farmers’ incomes, the reduction in the amount of cultivated land and the increasing relative poverty – all these problems have become challenges facing Chinese rural areas. These problems were once summarised as the “three rural issues”: the problems in the development of agriculture, rural areas and peasants in China. These problems are articulated as a saying: How poverty-stricken is the countryside, what a hard life the farmers are living and how dangerous is the agriculture (Wei, 2004). The problems in rural development alarmed the Chinese central government; enlarging social disparities, caused by its dual economic structure, could undermine the country’s efforts towards modernisation (Lin & Liu, 2008).

In this circumstance, the central authorities proposed the “scientific development” strategy to deal with these urgent issues in urban and rural development (Bao & Zhang, 2004). Under the concept of “scientific development”, the goal of development in China shifted from the “construct of a strong socialist nation” to a “construct of a harmonious society”. A focus on “human” instead of “material”, and “human” instead of “society”, became the subject of development (Fu, 2005). Additionally, the ultimate goal of

development is to realise the individual's dignity, equity and freedom (Ye & Wang, 2006); therefore, in the scientific development paradigm, the drive for development is intrinsic and endogenous rather than extrinsic or exogenous. The key dimension for assessing the process of development is the harmony of the relationships between natural resources, economic growth and social progress. In this context, sustainable development is, necessarily, one of approaches needed to achieve the ultimate goal of scientific development.

Both "scientific development" and "sustainable development" are still fashionable terms in development blueprints at State and local government levels. No evidence shows the successful implementation of SD in China (Wan, 2008). Moreover, there are still some questions to address, such as, how to apply scientific development and SD ideas in the practice of development planning and implementation. However, the understanding of development theory and strategy can help to identify clearly the practical issues that need to be addressed in sustainable rural tourism practice.

3.4.2 Rural tourism as a tool for sustainable rural development

The year of 2005 was a milestone for tourism. For the first time in history, world international tourism arrivals surpassed 800 million, showing 5.5 per cent growth worldwide. Performance was strong in the regions of Asia and the Pacific. In this context, the massive increase in tourism to and from China was one of the most exciting phenomena of that decade. Whatever the level of investment that will be achieved by 2020, inbound and domestic tourists will simply not be accommodated in big cities.

Rural tourism is the best way to diversify and spread tourism flows all over the country – this phenomenon is inescapable (Frangialli, 2006).

As reported in the Chapter 2, China's tourism development has different patterns in terms of inbound and domestic tourism. Inbound tourism has become the growth pole of the country since the "open-door policy" was adopted in 1978. Since then, international arrivals have been growing significantly in China. China's domestic tourism market has continued its flourishing growth in recent years. Nevertheless, the dramatic growth in the tourism industry has been very uneven across the regions in the country. This is due to the uneven geographic spread of its development in the past 30 years. However, China's inbound tourism is even more skewed and unequal regionally than is economic activity in China, and shows a higher degree of concentration in the coastal region.

About 80 per cent of tourism receipts are earned by the 12 coastal localities whose population is only 40 per cent of the national total (CNTA, 2005); thus, the growth in inbound tourists does not contribute to reducing regional disparity but appears to increase it. The recent economic boom has created a prosperous coastal region, cutting-edge industry, and large, rapidly transforming cities. On the other hand, it also has produced an immense rural population suspended in a state of underdevelopment and enjoying only marginal benefits from the country's impressive modernisation efforts. The unbalanced growth has caused economic disparity and political concern .

In this context, rural tourism began to develop in China in the late 1980s. It has been promoted as a poverty-reduction strategy in some inland provinces. In the 1990s, the policy of three seven-day holidays and two-day weekends increased discretionary time,

and this, combined with the increase in disposable income, has significantly stimulated robust domestic tourism. More urban residents can take two-to-three-day holidays during the Golden Weeks, and China's rural tourism development has been concentrated on the urban fringe in Lane's continuum. The villages at the urban fringe enjoy a strong day-visitor trade; conversely, peripheral regions attract only a few opportunities for traditional or pure rural tourism activities (Y. C. Huang, 2004).

It seems that a clear definition may help a better understanding of the conditions and denotation of rural tourism, and, practically, of the main direction of rural tourism development. However, there is no commonly accepted definition of rural tourism. In the Chinese context, some tourism academics and practitioners have argued that rural tourism means a kind of tourism activity in the rural areas in which tourism attractions are the natural and humanistic objects that bear rurality (J. He, Li, & Wang, 2004; Meng & Zhou, 2007; Ying & Zhou, 2007). Meanwhile, to some other scholars, rural tourism is taking farmers as the owners of businesses and urban inhabitants as the customers of the target market, and taking folk cultures and sightseeing activities in rural areas as the great attractions required to satisfy the desires of the tourists to return to nature for entertainment (B. Su, 2011). The latter definition of rural tourism is obviously from the industry perspective. However, under this definition, rural communities in villages are perceived as the development agencies and farmers are the owners of the businesses that provide rural tourism products and services that can reflect the features of the local lifestyle. At the same time, urban inhabitants are the main body of customers because the uniqueness of rural tourism is to be away from urban noises.

However, China's rural tourism development has strong characteristics of government intervention, diverse and abundant forms, and unskilled business operators. The first, rural tourism development in China, which is aimed at poverty alleviation, has undergone a process of development for more than 20 years. Government was the dominant player in promoting rural tourism development in the 1980s and 1990s. From the beginning of this century, the Chinese government has started research and put into practice the new pro-poor projects, which aim to enhance the effect of anti-poverty initiatives continuously through tourism development programmes: i.e. rural tourism, red tourism (based on education about the revolutionary history of Community Party) and eco-tourism (Cai, 2004).

The second feature is the diverse and abundant forms of rural tourism which result from the rough utilisation of resources. According to Wei (2004), the process of overall development and the utilisation of resources involves four stages: preliminary utilisation of resources (e.g. Happy tourist-visit of farmer's house); comprehensive utilisation of resources (e.g. Fruit-picking in wild fields); further development of resources; and resource creation. These four coexisting stages represent a cycle of rural tourism development and reflect the differences in China's current national conditions in the regions.

Another feature is that Chinese rural tourism has a large overall scale but consists of small individual businesses. The operation of rural tourism businesses is characterised by lack of financial resources and access to markets, and poor management and service-provision skills. In addition, at the "2006 International Forum on Rural

Tourism”, tourism practitioners worked with tourism academics to identify the problems of development projects for Chinese rural tourism. These problems mostly concern local people’s lack of knowledge, their lack of power to influence project planning and implementation, and the culture of commercialisation (Frangialli, 2006).

Finally, the government has been playing a key role in promoting the development of rural tourism in China. However, although the principles of sustainable tourism have been included in the national and provincial Master Plans of Tourism Development, rural tourism in China tends to be more successful in rural economies that are already healthy. Even in a given location, different groups of people have unequal opportunities for participating in rural tourism development. One of undesirable results is that income gaps and social disparities have been enlarged in the process of tourism development in the rural community in China, and at the cost of degraded natural and social environments.

The review of Chinese rural tourism development shows that rural tourism has been promoted by the State, provincial and local governments as a tool for rural development and poverty reduction. However, no voice from communities can be heard in the forums of rural tourism development. The question of how to ensure that the benefits of rural tourism development go to local people and to those who are most in need remains unanswered. Many of the questions noted above can be rephrased to fit the context of Chinese rural tourism development. Specifically, how are rural tourism programmes initiated in rural areas? Who makes the decisions about rural tourism programmes in the areas? How are the decisions made? What rules are used in making decisions about

rural tourism development programmes? Who are involved and what role do they have in policy-making and tourism planning for destination development? How are rural tourism destinations managed with regard to sustainable development? What's the role of the State, the governments, the rural community, tourism businesses, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and tourists in managing rural tourism destinations? How do they interact with each other? What are their perspectives on sustainable rural tourism? How should the the local population proceed in order to achieve economic benefits with cultural and natural heritage preservation? How can a fulfilling, mutually beneficial relationship between tourists and villages come to exist? These questions can be answered only through investigating the interactions amongst various stakeholders in the process of rural tourism development in the destinations with the concept of tourist destination governance.

3.4.3 Governance of rural tourism destinations in China

In the studies of destination tourism governance, particularly in Anglo-American English publications, governance is thought to be a concept or practice of new public management in societies with democratic politics and market economy systems (Bruyn & Alonso, 2012; C. Michael Hall, 2011b; Laws et al., 2011). Since the 1980s, as China has been experiencing a series of socio-economic and political reforms, its public administrative system has moved far from functioning in a pyramidal pattern, in which decisions taken at the top are implemented smoothly at lower levels. Instead, a hierarchical system is adapted. However, complex multiplicity of the hierarchical system leads to unclear responsibilities and accountability relationships between the

authorities in both the vertical and the horizontal dimensions (OECD, 2005).

Consequently, such complex relationships have caused a series of governance problems:

i.e. tensions between national and sub-national policies; inadequacy of the public services delivered at the local level (Lin & Liu, 2008; X. L. Wang, 2008); extensive inequalities in public services provided across provinces and between urban and rural areas (Wan, 2008); and imposition of illegal taxes, corruption and other forms of mismanagement of public funds (Lin & Liu, 2008; OECD, 2005). China is a communist State with a booming capitalist economy, where modernisation coexists with ancient traditions and diversity of cultures; how well the country deals with its governance challenges will impact not only all of Asia but also the entire world (Davis, 2010).

Hence, the governance system in this transitional society has aroused increasing attention from both organisations and academics inside and outside of China, with research focused on: the tensions between the State and the society (A. Chen, 2014; Davis, 2010; Sun, Warner, Yang, & Liu, 2013); grassroots self-government in urban areas (J. Chen & Lu, 2007; Y. Lu & Tang, 2014; Yu & Guo, 2012); informal institutions in rural development (Hu, 2007; Huhe, Chen, & Tang, 2015; Tsai, 2002); and institutionalisations and State intervention in rural governance in China (Alpermann, 2009; J. Lu, 2014; Smith, 2010). These pieces of research on rural governance in China provide broad knowledge about the socio-political background and constraints of Chinese practices in governing rural tourism destinations.

In parallel with the changing economic, social and political environment in China, the explosive growth of tourism in China since the 1980s has attracted growing academic

interest in its governance model of tourism development (G. Chen & Bao, 2014). The Chinese government has played a key and decisive role in shaping the development of tourism through the adoption of a specific series of tourism policies, even though the roles played by the government and the accompanying policies were distinct in different periods (R. Huang, 2004). In transitional China, however, tourism governance models have been evolving in step with the country's marketisation and modernisation, as along with the retention but evolution of governance by the Chinese communist party. This is reported by both the explorative studies on the macro-governance system of China's tourism industry in the post-1990 reform period (Sofield & Li, 2011) and case studies on micro-governance models of specific resorts or tourist areas (G. Chen & Bao, 2014; L. Chen, 2014; M. M. Su & Wall, 2012). At the same time, the power of China's 4,000-year-old cultural and philosophical heritage plays a key role in contemporary tourism governance and planning, with a special emphasis on Confucian/Taoist thought and the Chinese search for harmony and a middle way (Sofield & Li, 2011). Despite the fact that tensions between modernisation and progress are still shaping the governance of heritage in China (Oakes, 2013; Shepherd & Yu, 2013; M. M. Su & Wall, 2012; Y. Wang & Bramwell, 2012), sustainable tourism development is shown to have had positive influences on transport, wildlife and natural heritage conservation, and regional development (Sofield & Li, 2011; D. Su & Xiao, 2009). This is also the case in rural tourism destination governance, given that the overall governance of Chinese rural areas is also impacted by the pursuit of modernisation and political/administrative reform, financial challenges, and sociocultural changes. Nevertheless, as the State has institutionalised self-governance in rural China, governance of rural tourism

destinations involves comparatively more issues of community participation/self-governance for sustainable governance of rural tourism development.

Community participation has been one of the critical issues for Chinese rural tourism destination governance, particularly in the villages where community-based rural cultural tourism has been developing (L. Chen, 2014; H. Xu et al., 2014; Ying & Zhou, 2007). Based on the case studies of two adjacent villages in central China, a brand-new communal approach is identified as an innovative attempt and is prevailing in rural China for tourism development (Ying & Zhou, 2007). This approach integrates a socialist community management model with capitalist business activities, in which the village or rural community is acting as the basic unit of destination: a special corporation is formed to control the integral businesses of cultural tourism with various capital structures. A certain proportion of the tourism revenue is shared by the whole community through cash distribution and an improved welfare system; the locals still have the right to run their own small tourism businesses but should be under the coordination of the special corporation. This communal approach, therefore, can arguably ensure a basic involvement of the village community in tourism benefit sharing. The practical controllers of tourism development and operation greatly influence the formation of the interrelationships between the community, governments and external capitals; hence they affect the degree of a community's participation in the whole process of tourism development. Obviously, there are power tensions between the village community, local government and external capital in governing community-based destinations. In this communal approach to rural cultural tourism,

“who is in control” seems a critical factor for sustainable governance of rural cultural tourism development.

Moreover, with an emphasis on institutional perspectives, some more recent studies of village-based community tourism development in China also show that village participation in decision-making is growing, although examples of disempowerment are as rife as are those of growing empowerment (H. Xu et al., 2014). The research on the cultural impact of modernisation and tourism in Dai villages also reveals that the sustainable development of ethnic tourism communities depends very much on both bottom-up and top-down factors: i.e. the leading role played by community elites internally, and government policy, guidance, facilitation, and planning (L. Chen, 2014). However, in-depth interviews, text analysis of government documents and case studies on government intervention in community tourism in China discover that disempowerment of residents (i.e. exclusion from accessing productive living space, natural resources, information, travel benefits and travel participation) is underpinned by the mechanism of government development strategy and system design, elite community relationship networks, individual socio-economic conditions and social support measures (Han et al., 2014).

All of this research on tourist destination governance provides some insight into the dynamic and complex interrelationships between various stakeholders, who are competing for the power to control or influence rural tourism destination development for their own stakes. However, these pieces of research demonstrate the distinct character of domestic tourism research in China, which is generally less connected to

broader international debates in the predominantly Anglo-American English publishing world (H. Xu et al., 2014). Moreover, these researchers usually employ methods learnt from sociology, management or geography to develop research proposals based on problems identified in rural tourism. The broad economic and political circumstances, in which the rural tourist destination is set, are usually neglected. In reality, there are numerous power tensions and conflicts aroused by the governance system of rural tourism destinations. Despite the fact that many studies reveal that government intervention is thought to be important for determining priorities between economic growth and heritage protection (Y. Wang & Bramwell, 2012), the adoption of village self-governance empowers the village community to govern rural tourism development and denies the legitimacy of the government's direct intervention in village affairs. Therefore, a Grounded Theory method is needed in the study of the governance system of rural tourism destinations, for a better understanding of Chinese practices of governing rural tourism destinations and to gain insight into the components or mechanisms of sustainable governance for rural tourism destinations that can be extended to other developing countries.

3.5 Summation

Review of the existing tourism literature on sustainable tourism and rural tourism reveals that none of the existing development theories can clearly explain the phenomenon of Chinese development in the past 30 years, nor is any theoretical governance model completely suitable for analysing the governance of rural tourism destinations in China. This indicates that simply transferring concepts from Western

academic literature to inform tourism research in China is not appropriate. This is also confirmed by other tourism researchers (Ryan & Gu, 2009), who have argued that Western and Chinese cultures have different views regarding the relationship between humans and nature, the role of personal relationships and the predisposition towards classification. China's practice of economic imperative, its socialist-market system and its plan to build a harmonious society also determine that there are many differences of structure, policy, culture and nuanced understanding when comparing China to other economies. It is necessary to undergo a reevaluation of taken-for-granted assumptions about the research paradigms used and the cultural milieu within which they are formed.

Therefore, based on the background of the real-world situation of rural tourism destination development in China, combined with an extensive review of relevant literature on sustainable rural tourism development, it is evident that the development of rural tourism destinations in China can be studied as a process of social interaction and negotiation between urban and rural people. Moreover, from the above review of existing literature relevant to the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations, a proper use of the Grounded Theory approach can help researchers figure out the key issues faced by Chinese rural tourism destinations and, hence, can help to obtain some insights into proper governance for the sustainable development of rural tourism destinations in the Chinese context. In this way, this research can help both academics and practitioners in the tourism development area to have a better understanding of China's rural tourism development over the past 30 years.

Chapter 4 Research methodology and methods

This PhD research takes a social constructionist position. From the view of social constructionism, the nature of social reality is both subjective and objective. The knowledge of a society includes not only scientific and theoretical knowledge but also customs, common interpretations, institutions, shared routines, habituations, and actors and their actions in social processes (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). It assumes a relativist epistemological position which claims that reality must be understood as relative to a specific conceptual scheme, theoretical framework, paradigm, form of life, society or culture (Bernstein, 1983). Social reality can be created only by the human process of ongoing interactions (Giddens, 2006) and can be understood only through interactions between and among researchers and participants in the context of the phenomena of interest. It requires the researcher to carry out fieldwork in a particular setting to discover what is actually happening in the symbolic world of the participants (Chitere & Mutiso, 2015). Because there are commonalities in social interactions, theories and models of social reality can be developed with wide applicability although they always need adjustment to fit the relevant situations.

As discussed in Chapter 3, tourism destination is a dynamic and complex organism that involves a set of institutions and actors located in a physical or a virtual space where marketing-related transactions and activities take place, challenging the traditional production–consumption dichotomy. The actors are various stakeholders of the destinations. The institutions, as Ostrom (2010) defined in the Institutional Analysis and

Development Framework (IAD framework), can be seen as human-made systems within which individual choices take place and which configure consequences of the respective choices. Once established, such institutions can be “objective” in their effects. The real-world situation of a tourism destination, therefore, can be seen as the social phenomenon created through dynamic interactions between the place, people and purposes of travel. The nature of such a phenomenon is both subjective and objective so that theories or models of it can be developed with wide applicability although always needing adjustment to fit the relevant situations.

From a social interaction perspective, rural tourism destination governance was studied as a dynamic process of social interactions and negotiations in managing tourism resources for the development of rural tourism in the destinations. Such a process involves many destination stakeholders who continuously interact to reshape and transform the development of rural tourism to meet their perceptions and needs. At the same time, their perceptions and perspectives are increasingly influenced by wider economic, environmental and political changes. In such dynamic interactions, the stakeholder that has the dominant role largely depends on the specific circumstances (Verbole, 2003). This implies that there is not a one-size-fits-all model for understanding the governance of sustainable rural tourism development, considering that rural tourism development usually is based on the rural communities with various culture traits. Therefore, this research used stakeholder analysis as a device to identify the destination stakeholders: i.e. the State and local government, the village community, the tourism businesses, the rural households and individual peasants, tourism

professions, academics etc., who have dominant roles in governing rural tourism development in China. In doing so, the research focused on the cases of rural tourism destinations in North China that were selected with a Grounded Theory approach.

As revealed by the literature review in 3.4, there is little theory established on sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations in China. This research employed a Grounded Theory method to study how destination stakeholders make decisions to shape the process of rural tourism development and its sustainability. Grounded Theory method has the goal of generating concepts that explain the ways that people revolve their central concerns, regardless of time and place (Glaser & Strauss, 1967/1999). It does not aim for the “truth” but aims to conceptualise what is going on by using empirical research (Glaser, 1978). Therefore, the researcher conducted field studies in the villages that were theoretically selected as rural tourism destinations. Methods of participant and non-participant observation, face-to-face in-depth interviews, focus groups and personal documents were employed for collecting primary data. Secondary data were extracted from relevant socio-economic statistics and tourism literature. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analysed using methods of theoretical sampling, coding and memos, and constant comparative analysis. In collecting and analysing data, the researcher did not seek to pass judgment on the phenomena she was studying, but only wished to understand more fully recent social change in rural China and to improve the general understanding of social change elsewhere on the basis of findings about China.

4.1 Grounded Theory approach for qualitative tourism studies

This PhD research adapted Grounded Theory as an inductive approach to qualitative research methods for the study of rural tourism development in China. This approach was chosen because: a qualitative research approach tries to understand people from their own frames of reference and to experience reality as they experience it; and qualitative researchers develop concepts, insights and understandings from patterns in the data rather than collect data to assess preconceived models, hypotheses or theories.

4.1.1 Grounded Theory as an inductive approach to qualitative research

Grounded Theory is used as an inductive approach to qualitative research methods for this study, since it is particularly appropriate for situations where no pre-existing theory exists. Glaser and Strauss (1967/1999) coin the phrase “discovery of Grounded Theory” to refer the inductive theorising process involved in qualitative research. That means, a theory may be said to be grounded to the extent that it is derived from and based on the data themselves (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998).

Specifically, grounded theorising is the process of iteratively and inductively constructing theory from observations, using theoretical sampling in which emergent insights direct selection and inclusion of the “next” informant or slice of data (Glaser & Strauss, 1967/1999). It involves constant comparative analysis whereby groups are compared on the basis of theoretical similarities and differences (Locke, 2000).

Therefore, the logic of the Grounded Theory is to ask two formal questions: What are the chief concerns or problems of the people in the substantive area? What category or what property of that category does this incident indicate? One asks these two questions

while constantly comparing incident with incident, coding and analysing according to Grounded Theory (Glaser, 1998). Soon categories and their properties emerge; these fit the world and are of relevance to the processing of the problem (Hendry, 2004).

A good qualitative study combines an in-depth understanding of the particular setting, investigated with general theoretical insights that transcend the particular type of setting (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). Most qualitative researchers have some general questions in mind when they enter the field; these general questions typically fall into two interrelated categories — substantive and formal (Glaser, 1998). The substantive category includes questions related to specific issues in a particular type of setting. Hence, the Grounded Theory approach is often used as a form of comparative case-oriented explanation building and has been popular in sociological research. Based on continuous interplay between data collection and theoretical analysis, the formal category is generated and closely tied to basic issues in reality (Locke, 2000).

4.1.2 Grounded Theory approach in tourism studies

Since the Grounded Theory approach enables understanding to be formed into concepts and theories without a priori definition, it is employed for conceptualising or modelling key tourism issues related to either place or people, or both of them. In the studies of tourist destinations, many researchers employed the Grounded Theory approach. Early in the 1990s, Grounded Theory was applied in the geographical study of tourism in Kona, on Hawai'i Island, to generate inductive theories that refine the tourism theories related to tourism resource, destination life cycle and tourist spaces (Johnston, 1995). Later, Grounded Theory was employed as a tool of iterative data collection to build

theory on the relationship between stakeholder analysis, perceptions of tourism-induced change and sustainable development of tourist destination (Hardy, 2005).

In recent years, Grounded Theory has been further applied in the investigation of relationships between destination governance and corporate governance of DMOs. With the Grounded Theory approach, four testable hypotheses emerged for future generalising research attempts through theory-generating case studies (Pechlaner et al., 2012). In investigating the proposed tourism policy directions of three Pacific Island countries, the Grounded Theory method was applied to develop a set of theoretical insights, referred to as tourism involvement-conformance theory (TICT), which underscore the potential latent consequences that can occur as tourism develops due to policy shifts which emphasise sustainability (Stumpf & Swanger, 2014). More recently, Grounded theory methods have also been used in the investigation of Beijing hutong's neighbourhood and sustainable tourism to generate a theory of interrelationships between sustainability, sustainable development and sustainable tourism (Johnston, 2014).

The Grounded Theory method has also been adopted in the studies of tourist experience and behaviour, as well as of tourism entrepreneurs' perceptions and actions. Following the techniques and procedures instructed by Strauss and Corbin (1998) for generating Grounded Theory, Grounded Theory methods are applied in modelling visitor experiences at heritage sites. Moreover, practical issues of using Grounded Theory for modelling visitor experiences at heritage were explored through contrasting Grounded Theory methods with more traditional assumptions and methods used in consumer

research (Daengbuppha, Hemmington, & Wilkes, 2006). In contrast to the conventional research methods that involve collecting and analysing data to rigorously test a deductive theory, long interviews of tourists were used in the Grounded Theory approach to interpret international visitor experiences and uncover insights on leisure travel decisions and tourist behaviour (Martin & Woodside, 2008). A similar approach to that of Grounded Theory was employed to determine sustainable tourism meanings and practices undertaken by tourism entrepreneurs operating in the Gold Coast of Queensland, Australia; a Grounded Theory of pursuing for sustainable tourism emerged (Kensbock & Jennings, 2011).

4.1.3 Grounded Theory used as a method of data collection

It is notable that, in the tourism studies mentioned above that used the Grounded Theory approach or method, few researchers use a pure Grounded Theory approach. Instead, Grounded Theory is more often employed as a method of data collection or an inductive approach of qualitative research to develop substantial or formal theories that are testable or can be generalised in future research. Such an approach is believed to enable researchers to find the balance between “being a Grounded Theory purist and a pragmatist” (Stumpf & Swanger, 2014, p. 7). From this point of view, a Grounded Theory approach is appropriate for this PhD research to answer the question which has emerged in the real world in China: Why have some villages fared better than others in terms of sustainable rural tourism development, despite having the same socio-political environment and similar tourism resources? To answer this general question, Grounded Theory methods were employed to explore the interrelationship between “rural tourism

sustainability” and “governance approach” in the context of China’s socialist-market system, since it is, so far, beyond further scrutiny by both theoretical and empirical research within tourism academics, even within the academics of social sciences.

In this research, a Grounded Theory approach is adopted particularly to answer three general questions: How do governance approaches develop and change at different rural tourism destinations? How does the governance process influence and shape the development of sustainable rural tourism in China? What are the components of effective governance for sustainable rural tourism development? The first two questions are related to the specific issues on governance systems of rural tourism destinations in China. These two questions fall into the substantive category that can be answered through investigating the process of development and governance of rural tourism destinations in China. The third question falls into the formal category and is related to the formal theory of sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations. This indicates that Grounded Theory fits this research, considering both the purpose and the questions of this research. Therefore, this research employed Grounded Theory methods in selecting the settings for field studies, data collection and analysis. From this process, emerged a substantive theory of governance models for rural tourism destination in China and the formal theory for a governance approach for sustainable rural tourism was generated.

4.2 Selecting sites for field study

The ideal research setting is one in which the observer obtains easy access, establishes immediate rapport with informants and gathers data directly related to the research

interests; however, such settings seldom exist (Taylor & Bogdan, 1998). In this research, the sites for field studies were selected from the pre-field study of Chinese rural tourism development since the 1980s, in combination with the criteria of sustainable tourism development. In addition, the accessibility of the sites and the cost of the field studies were considered to ensure that the field research did not only reflect the research purposes but also was practical as a PhD research project.

4.2.1 Pre-field study for locating field study sites

With the criteria of sustainable tourism, a pre-field study was conducted to select sites for field studies. The pre-field study was focused on the patterns of rural tourism development in China, and its political and socio-economic context. As reported in Chapter 2 and discussed in 错误! 未找到引用源。 , the study of the real-world situation and the review of relevant literature regarding Chinese rural tourism development discovered that the development of rural tourism in China can be seen as a result of government intervention and the villages' pursuit for rural modernisation; this corresponds to China's development strategies since 1978.

In consultation with local tourism professionals in Hebei and Beijing, the pre-field study research findings were accepted and confirmed. Five Hebei villages were recommended as typical cases of rural tourism destinations that could illustrate the phenomenon of rural tourism development in China. These five villages included: Zhalaying village of Fengning County, north of Beijing, Wangjiazhai village and Dongtianzhuang village of Anxin County, south of Beijing, Gougezhuang village of Laishui County, to the west of Beijing, and Gucheng village of Beidaihe District, to the

east of Beijing. All five villages are located in Hebei Province, about 200 kilometres away from Beijing. It usually takes between two and five hours by train or four to six hours of driving to travel from Beijing to these destinations. Moreover, each of these villages has developed rural tourism since the late 1980s or early 1990s and has formed its own distinctive model of rural tourism development. The locations of these villages are illustrated in Figure 4, on page 152.

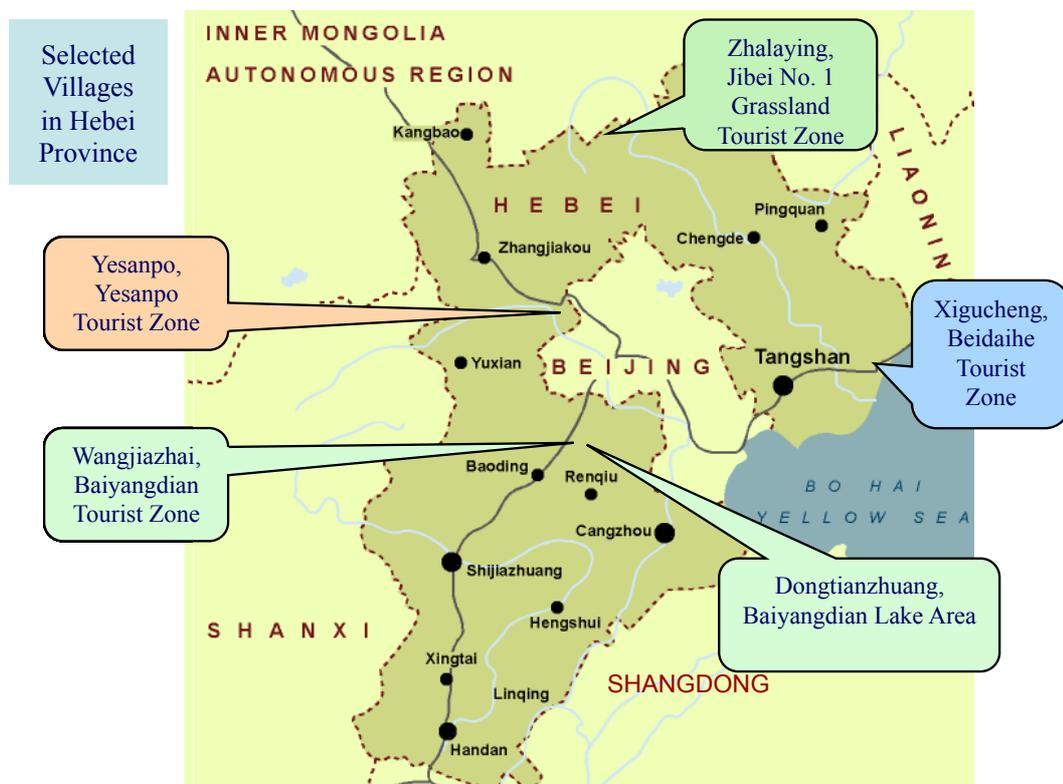


Figure 4: Locations of selected sites for field studies

Source: Adapted Google maps, retrieved February 28, 2015 from

<https://www.google.co.nz/maps/place/Hebei,+China/@39.2557097,112.1661415,6z/data=!4m5!3m4!1s0x358ca930ca4c86d5:0x60450a22e71efb21!8m2!3d38.037057!4d114.468665!5m1!1e2?hl=en>

As shown in Figure 4, these five villages are located in rural tourism destinations with particular rural tourism activities that attract urban people to spend weekends or

two-to-three-day holidays there. Most of their visitors were from Beijing, while some were from Tianjin and other large cities of Hebei, Shanxi and Shandong Provinces, Inner Mongolia and the northeast of China. Such a scope of settings ensured that the field studies were manageable and productive. Specific information of these villages is displayed in Table 4 on page 153.

Table 4: Villages selected for field studies

Village	Zhalaying	Gougezhuang	Wangjiazhai, Dongtianzhuang		Xigucheng
County/District	Fengning	Laishui	Anxin		Beidaihe
Direction to Beijing	North	West	South		East
Distance to Beijing	280 km	180 km	230 km		330 km
Population (persons)	4,000	3,100	4,800	1600	4,200
Number of rural householders	780	800	1,200	480	1,100
Types of tourist attraction	Pasture and pastoral lifestyle	National geological park, rural lifestyle	Lake and wetlands, fishing and rural lifestyle		High-tech agricultural park, seaside resort, fruit picking
Rural tourism started	1993	1988	1988		1993
Development model	Bottom-up	Bottom-up	Top-down		Bottom-up
Economic conditions	Poor	Good	Poor		Very good
Reason for being selected	Poor economic conditions with well-protected ecological environment for niche market of ecotourism, but poor infrastructure	Good economic conditions with well-developed social infrastructures, rural tourism for mass market but caused the degradation of natural environment	Poor economic conditions with degrading ecological environment, tourism designed for mass market caused natural environmental damage and social conflicts		Tourism development as a supplementary business of the village, a successful case of sustainable rural tourism

All five villages were officially appointed as pilot sites of “rural tourism demonstration projects” by the local government to demonstrate how to develop rural tourism to

facilitate rural development with a balance of economic growth, social progress and environmental preservation. Rural tourism programmes in these five villages, hence, have been advocated as ideal solutions for sustainability of rural development.

Therefore, in the pre-field studies for selecting examples of rural tourism destinations, these five villages were measured as fulfilling the criteria for sustainable tourism.

4.2.2 Criteria for selecting appropriate cases of rural tourism development

In selecting sites for field studies, the criteria for sustainable tourism development were used to identify suitable villages that could be studied as cases of rural tourism destination. The criteria for sustainable tourism were taken from the concept of sustainable tourism defined by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO):

Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism in all types of destinations, including mass tourism and the various niche tourism segments. Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic and sociocultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability. (UNWTO, 2004)

According to this definition, sustainable tourism can be seen as the status or the process of the balance between economic growth, social development and environmental conservation. Cultural elements are also included in this definition, but they are combined with the social aspect of sustainable development. Therefore, the ideal status of sustainable tourism can be demonstrated by a green equilateral triangle, as shown in Figure 5: Measuring selected villages according to criteria for sustainable tourism on

page 155. The equilateral triangle illustrates balanced economic, social and environmental development.

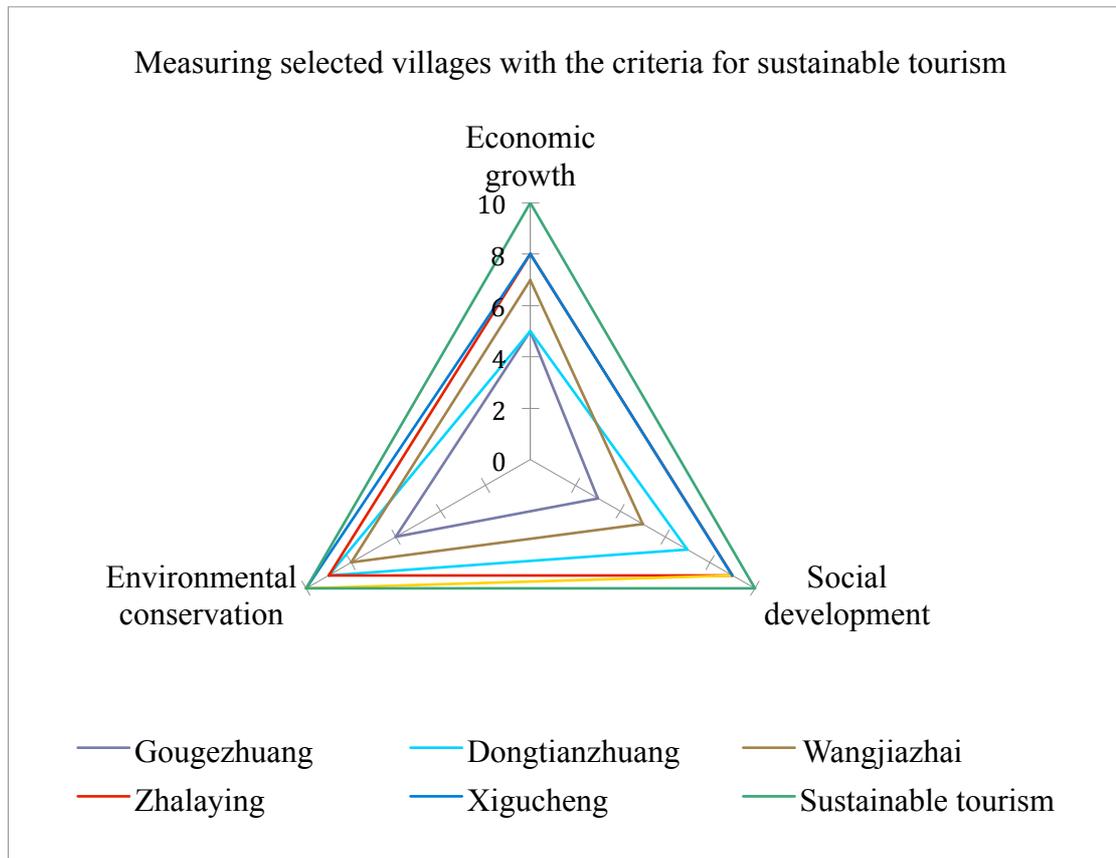


Figure 5: Measuring selected villages according to criteria for sustainable tourism

Measured with the criteria for sustainable tourism, each of those five villages was found to have a different status. Rural tourism development in the village of Xigucheng was based on the high-tech agricultural park, along with the best performance in sustainable rural tourism development: rapid and steady economic growth with social harmony, and cultural and environmental conservation through the development of rural tourism. It best represented the ideal; however, the other villages did not. The other four villages – Gougezhuang, Zhelaying, Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang – were lagging in social development. Gougezhuang and Wangjiazhai villages had rapid economic growth but showed poor performance in environmental conservation in addition to tensions

between residents and tourists, as well as conflicts within the village communities. Zhalaying village had conserved its natural environment well but had a poor economic performance. Similar to Gougezhuang village, some Wangjiazhai villagers had gained rapid economic growth with environment degradation, and this aroused tensions between nature and human, but also within the village community. On the other hand, Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang shared similar tourism resources to those of Baiyangdian Lake's natural landscape and folk customs, but Dongtianzhuang village had a harmonious community and well-conserved natural lake landscape. To explain the huge differences in rural tourism development in these villages, follow-up field studies were conducted to collect and analyse primary data.

After the first and second rounds of field trips, two of these five villages were removed from the list of sites for field studies. After the first round of field studies, Gougezhuang village of Laishui County was deleted from the field site list because this village lost its "rural" tag and barely met the parameters of sustainable rural tourism. In addition, the difficulties in its social accessibility prevented me from doing field studies in this village. In my first trip to this village in May of 2007, the hostel owners and villagers refused to tell me anything about the initiation or development of rural tourism programmes in the village. However, a few older villagers complained that most of the villagers have abandoned "growing crops" in order to operate restaurants, hostels or shops in the village in the hope of earning "quick and big money". Moreover, after I indicated what my research purpose was and presented the "Consent Form", the village cadres immediately refused me for doing the research in the village, although they did

welcome me to have holidays there. From two days of participant observation, as a holidaymaker, I found that the village had developed Nongjiale to attract people who were visiting the nearby national park. Most of Nongjiale programmes were recreational and amusement activities: i.e. horse riding, river rafting, BBQ and Karaoke, and even illicit gambling and prostitution etc., with simple and cheap accommodation and food services at farmhouses. Apparently, without agriculture or farming production included in its economic structure and rural lifestyle, the village completely lost its “rurality” and does not meet the parameters for “rural tourism” any more.

After two rounds of field studies during 2008 to 2010, Xigucheng village was abandoned as an example of a rural tourism destination because it was found that the village had been completely urbanised. Xigucheng village is under the jurisdiction of Daihe Town, Beidianhe District of Qinhuangdao City. The cultivated lands of this village were rented by a local company to develop the Jifa Agricultural Scenic Garden, which is operated and managed as one of the corporate group’s diversity businesses. This programme is more often named as “high-technology agriculture tourism” to demonstrate the cutting-edge, advanced technology of agriculture and horticulture. The village and its lands were also officially changed to be a new district of the “urban area”, under the local administration authority of Beidaihe District, Qinghuangdao City. After being urbanised, the village community lost its lands but the people gained their new identification as “urban residents”. Consequently, the dissolution of the village community was inevitably observed soon after the real estate projects developed in the village. Therefore, Xigucheng village is no longer a “rural” place.

Finally, in the third round of field studies during 2010 and 2011, three villages were further studied as cases of rural tourism destinations where rural tourism was developed for poverty alleviation and rural development, without being urbanised or industrialised by the local government or by market forces. All these villages are remote from the big cities, more than 200 kilometres from Beijing. In the study of governance of rural tourism development in these villages, Grounded Theory methods were employed for data collection and analysis. Both secondary data and primary data are used in this research.

4.3 Data collection

“All is data”, as has been emphasised repeatedly. In the approach of Grounded Theory, both qualitative and quantitative data are used to generate substantive theory and formal theory. The quantitative data required by this research were mainly in the form of statistics gleaned from secondary data while qualitative data were obtained from primary data collection.

4.3.1 The source of data

In order to have a systematic understanding of the entire process of tourism development in these villages since the late 1980s, the Grounded Theory approach was employed as the main research method to collect qualitative data, as it is well suited to the study of social process over time. In addition to a review of archival materials and past research, the field research spanned six years from 2007 to 2012, and was conducted generally in the forms of participant and non-participant observation, open-ended interviews, focus groups, etc.

4.3.1.1 Quantitative data

In this research, in order to study and analyse the development of rural tourism in the villages, both macro and micro socio-economic statistical data were used. Most of the secondary data were collected from government and non-governmental organisations, while some of the secondary data were extracted from Chinese literature on tourism. A set of secondary data sources is listed in Table 5, on page 159.

Table 5: Source of quantitative data

Data required	Sources of the data	Location
Socio-economic statistics data of rural households, villages, agriculture of Hebei Province and China, Chinese domestic tourism development	National Bureau of Statistics of China; Ministry of Agriculture, China; China National Tourism Administration	Beijing, China
Statistics of rural development, rural households' social and economic status in selected counties in Hebei Province	Provincial Bureau of Statistics of Hebei, China	Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, China
Documents of tourism development plan, statistics of rural tourism development in selected villages and counties in Hebei Province	Hebei Provincial Tourism Administration	Shijiazhuang, Hebei Province, China
Statistics of tourism businesses, investment in rural tourism, numbers of tourists in the villages	County (District) Bureau of Statistics, County (District) Bureau of Tourism, in Fengning County, Beidaihe District, Laishui County, and Anxin County, Hebei Province	Anxin, Beidaihe, Fengning, Laishui
Statistics of rural tourism development in the selected villages, e.g. numbers of hotels, restaurants and businesses related to tourism, employment, investors, etc.	Village accounts of administration fees, taxation, village income, allocation, etc., administrative authorities of the tourist resort zone	Gougezhuang, Zhelaying, Wangjiazhai, Xigucheng, Dongtianzhuang

As shown in Table 5, macro-socio-economic data, i.e. the growth in numbers of domestic tourists and in investment in rural tourism, were obtained from the State and the provincial statistics bureaus. The NBSC conducted the first National Agricultural Census (NAC) in 1997 and the census report provides statistical data on socio-economic development in each of the towns and villages in China. The second NAC started in January 2007, and provincial statistical reports were available from June 2007. In addition, socio-economic data on rural households were obtained from the Ministry of Agriculture. The statistical data on domestic tourism and rural tourism were obtained from China National Tourism Administration, while Hebei Provincial Tourism Administration supplied the tourism statistical socio-economic data of the counties where the selected villages are located.

Demographic data regarding the selected villages were extracted from the statistical results of the 2007 NAC. Micro-socio-economic data on rural tourism development in the selected villages, i.e. growth of tourists, numbers of hotels and restaurants and other tourism businesses, tourism employment and investors, non-governmental organisations in the villages, etc., were obtained from the county tourism bureaus and the township governments. In addition, some of these data were extracted from documents of administration fees, taxation, etc. in the villages.

4.3.1.2 Qualitative data

Qualitative data about the stakeholders' perceptions, concerns, and practices about sustainable rural tourism were collected from field studies, including participant and non-participant observations of farmers' daily work and living, infrastructure in the

village and its users, tourist accommodation, farmer dwelling houses and tourist activities, as well as interactions between villagers and tourists. Interviews with individual stakeholders inside and outside the villages were conducted via email, phone and face-to-face meetings. In-depth, face-to-face interviews and focus groups were employed in the second and third rounds of field studies until the data was saturated. Some other sources were also used: i.e. local newspapers, magazines, advertisements, and Internet discussion groups that are related to the research topic and questions. In one sentence, everything that may help the researcher to obtain insights about the answers to the research questions was treated as data in this research.

Both field observation and interviews are suitable for collecting primary data. As Glaser (1978) discussed, Grounded Theory methods deal with “what is going on there”. Since all people and settings are intrinsically interesting and raise important issues for understanding and theorising, observation can help the researcher to explore phenomena as they emerge during the study. However, observation was not enough. The researcher conducted interviews along with the observations to investigate the meaning of the phenomena that were observed. Observations did not, in and of themselves, include the meanings from the perspectives of the participants. Therefore, grounded theorists are interested in the meanings of what is observed or the subjects whose actions are observed and, through constant comparison, discover the underlying patterns (Locke, 2000).

In this research, the researcher began with the study of one of the selected villages. That village was studied as a setting of rural tourism development. People who were

involved in rural tourism development at the village were selected through theoretical sampling. They were observed and interviewed in order to learn what was going on in the village and what their perspectives and concerns were regarding sustainable rural tourism. Their perceptions and concerns were constantly compared with others until a group of actors or stakeholders of the destination was identified.

Theoretical sampling was applied to identify the next informant. Emerging insights directed the selection of the next interviewees until the data of one group was saturated, meaning that no more insights emerged from the observations or interviews. Through this process, a group of preliminary stakeholders was identified and analysed as the actors governing each rural tourist destination. These actors included villagers, tourists, rural tourism business owners, outside investors of tourism businesses at that village, village leaders/cadres, local government officers, tour guides, travel agents and tourism professionals, etc. Based on constant comparison of groups' perceptions of and practices within rural tourism activities, in terms of the initiation of rural tourism programmes, provision and management of rural tourism products and services, making and implementing policy and regulations/rules for exploitation of rural tourism resources etc., the pattern of their actions of governing rural tourism development in the village emerged. Also, the way in which their actions influenced and shaped the process of rural tourism development in the village became evident.

Interviewees were selected through the theoretical sampling method. The next informants were identified when the data for a research question was saturated. As shown in Table 6: Selected informants with theoretical sampling method, on page 164,

a total of 97 individuals was selected and interviewed. The interviews began with the provincial tourism administration officer, Huo. As the head of Department of Tourism Planning and Development office of Hebei Provincial Tourism Administration, Huo was in charge of overall tourism planning in Hebei Province. After the interviews with Huo, theoretical sampling was used to find another officer for next interviews; 11 tourism officers were interviewed. Face-to-face interviews with tourism officers were conducted at their offices in Shijiazhuang or their “hang-outs” in Beijing and during the meetings for assessing specific plans for rural tourism development in selected villages.

With the theoretical sampling method, the tourism officers were asked to recommend tourism development planners who had been involved in specific rural tourism development planning for the villages. Interviews with this group of tourism professionals were conducted after they gave presentations at the meeting for assessing the plans they had made for the villages. These professionals might be the same or different from village to village and nine tourism development planners were interviewed as a group of stakeholders of rural tourism development in the three villages. Face-to-face interviews with the planners were conducted before and after the panel meetings for assessment of village-specific plans for rural tourism development, held in the cities of Baoding and Chengde. Follow-up interviews with tourism officers and rural tourism development planners were conducted via phone, online chatting and emails. These tourism officers and rural tourism planning experts are grouped as “outsiders” since they are stakeholders that are seen as “outsiders” in the eyes of villagers.

Another group of interviewees are reported as “insiders” of the village. They are village leaders, villagers and tourism business owners, travel agents, tourists etc. as shown in Table 6, on page 164. The interviews with these informants were conducted inside the villages, during the participant and non-participant field observations in the villages. All these interviewed individuals were selected using the theoretical sampling method. During the interviews, the interviewed villagers were divided into subgroups, i.e. tourism business owners, tourism participants, tourism non-participants, outside investors of rural tourism businesses, etc. The numbers of subgroups were increased while the interviews continued.

Table 6: Selected informants with theoretical sampling method

Outsiders of the villages	Numbers of informants			Total
Provincial tourism administration officers			2	2
Municipal tourism administration officers	3		2	5
County tourism administration officers	3		1	4
Tourism planning experts/professionals	4	5	0	9
Subtotal				20
Insiders of the villages	Zhalaying	Wangjiazhai	Dongtianzhuang	
Village leaders	3	4	2	9
Villagers/Farmhouse owners	12	13	7	32
Tour guides/Travel agents	3	3	1	7
Tourists	9	10	9	29
Subtotal	27	30	19	77
Total				97

All the interviewed villagers live in the villages. The interviewed travel agents/tour guides are also local people who were born in the villages but work in the cities. I usually started interviews with the host of the farmhouse in which I stayed. Then the

host was asked to recommend the next informant: his or her guest, or a neighbour who would know something about my questions. Then, with a theoretical sampling method, more tourists were recommended as the next informants. All the interviewed tourists were frequent visitors who had developed friendships with the hosts and had experienced the whole course of rural tourism development in the village. Therefore, they are also “insiders” in the eyes of the villagers.

To summarise, through theoretical sampling, a total of 97 individual stakeholders of the rural tourism destinations was interviewed, including nine village cadres (three from Zhalaying, two from Dongtianzhuang, four from Wangjiazhai), 32 villagers (12 from Zhalaying, seven from Dongtianzhuang, 13 from Wangjiazhai), 29 tourists (nine from Zhalaying, nine from Dongtianzhuang, 10 from Wangjiazhai) and seven tour guides/travel agents (three from Zhalaying, one from Dongtianzhuang, three from Wangjiazhai), as well as 11 tourism officials (two of provincial level, five of municipal level, four of county level) and nine professional consultants of tourism planning. Among these interviewees, 21 informants were revisited for follow-up face-to-face interviews or phone interviews: five village leaders and nine villagers, two tour guides and five tourism officers. More details on informants are listed in Appendix 1: Informants list on page 449.

4.3.2 Fieldwork

Three rounds of field studies with eight trips to the villages were conducted to collect data to saturate. The first round of field studies, including participant observation and interviews, was conducted through trips to each of the five villages in 2007 and 2008.

After the first round of field studies, Gougezhuang village, located in the Yesanpo tourist area, was deleted from the list of field study sites, because its tourism programmes lost the “rural” tag. The second round of field studies, including participant and non-participant observation, face-to-face in-depth interviews and focus groups, was conducted in the year 2008. After the second round of field studies, Xigucheng village was eliminated because the village had been urbanised. The third round of field studies was conducted during the year 2010–2011 for follow-up interviews, both face to face or by phone, as well as for study of updated governmental documents related to rural tourism development policy and regulations in Hebei Province. Trips to the sites and the primary data collected from the field studies are listed in Table 7: Field studies in the selected sites, on page 167.

First round of field study was conducted in 2007, including two trips for participant observation at Xigucheng village and Beidaihe Jifa Agricultural Garden during 7–9 June 2007; one trip to Zhalaying village for participant observation and non-participant observation, as well as interviews with tourism business owners, villagers and tourists during 16–19 June 2007; one trip to Wangjiazhai and Dontianzhuang villages to conduct participant observation and interviews with travel agents, restaurant owners and workers, village cadres and villagers during 22–25 June 2007, collected primary data, i.e., photos, field notes of participant observation, digital records of interviews with tour guides and tourists in the tour groups, villagers and rural tourism business owners in the villages, and the village cadres of Dontianzhuang village.

Table 7: Field studies in the selected sites

Dates	Sites/Villages	Data collection methods	Types of data
First round			
7–9 June 2007	Xigucheng, Beidaihe Jifa Agricultural Park	Participant observation as a tourist; interviews with villagers, tour guide and managers of Jifa Agricultural Garden	Photos; field research notes and journal; digital audio recordings of interviews; tour brochures of Anxin Baiyangdian Tourist Zone
16–19 June 2007	Zhalaying village	Participant observation as a tourist; non-participant observation; interviews with travel agents, farmhouse owners, villagers, tourists	
22–25 June 2007	Wangjiazhai village, Dontianzhuang village	Participant observation as a tourist; non-participant observation in the village; interviews with travel agents, restaurant owners and workers, village cadres and villagers of Dongtianzhuang village; participant observation as a tourist in Wangjiazhai village	
Second round			
14–16 May 2008	Baoding City, assessment of rural tourism development plans for villages of Baoding Municipality	Participant observation as a member of the expert panel; follow-up interviews with tourism officers of the provincial tourism bureau; interviews with tourism officers of the municipal, county tourism bureau; interviews with local experts/professionals, planners of the Wangjiazhai rural tourism development specific plan; interviews with villager representatives	Photos; field research notes and journal; digital audio records of interviews; hand-drawn maps of islands and wetlands; tourist numbers of Wangjiazhai, and Zhalaying villages; official statistics of tourist numbers in Fengning County
17–19 May 2008	Wangjiazhai village	Non-participant observation in the village; interviews with the Folk Village managers, village cadres, farmhouse owners and workers, villagers, tourists	
26–28 May 2008	Kuangcheng of Xinglong County, and Chengde City; Assessment of Rural Tourism	Participant observation as a member of the expert panel; follow-up interviews with tourism officers of the provincial tourism bureau; interviews with tourism officers of the municipal, county tourism	

	Development Plans for villages of Chengde Municipality	bureau; local experts/professions, planners of Zhalaying rural tourism development specific plan	
27–30 June 2008	Zhalaying village	Non-participant observation; follow-up interviews with village cadres, farmhouse owners, villagers, outsider investors, tourists and tourism officers of Fengning County Tourism Bureau; focus group meetings with village cadres and farmhouse owners	
30 December 2008 – 2 January 2009	Xigucheng village	Non-participant observation; interviews with village cadres, family hostel owners, villagers, outsider investors and tourism officers of Beidaihe District Tourism Bureau	
Third round			
26 and 27 June 2010	Wangjiazhai village	Non-participant observation; follow-up interviews with village cadres and farmhouse owners; focus group meetings of tourists, farmhouse owners, tourism researchers	Photos; fieldwork notes and diary; digital recordings of interviews; notes from focus group discussions
1–3 July 2010	Zhalaying village	Non-participation observation; follow-up interviews with farmhouse owners, village cadres and villagers	
October 2011	Wangjiazhai, Zhalaying, Dongtianzhuang	Follow-up telephone interviews with farmhouse owners, village cadres and villagers	

Second round of field study was conducted in 2008. I conducted participant observation of assessment meetings for rural tourism development plans (first meeting in Baoding during 14–16 May 2008 and second meeting in Chengde in 26–28 May 2008), non-participant observation and interviews at Wangjiazhai village during 17–19 June 2008, non-participant observation and interviews at Zhalaying village during 27–30

June 2008, non-participant observation at Xigucheng village between 30 December 2008 and 2 January 2009. Data include photos and field notes, digital recordings of interviews with tourism officers of Baoding and Chengde, rural tourism planners from local tourism planning centres, and panel members from local government and universities during and after assessment meetings; photos and field notes of non-participant field observation at the villages and interviews with village cadres, villagers, tourists and rural tourism business owners, as well as officers of the county tourism bureaus of Fengning County, Anxin County.

Third round of field study was conducted through non-participant observation and interviews at Wangjiazhai village during 26 and 27 June 2010 and non-participant observation and interviews at Zhalaying village during 1–3 July 2010. Data include photos and field notes of non-participant observation and digital recordings of interviews with villagers, farmhouse and hotel owners, employees in rural tourism businesses, village cadres and tourists.

Through three rounds of field studies, 97 individual stakeholders of rural tourism destinations were interviewed, including tourists, villagers, village cadres, travel agents/tour guides, tourism development planners and officers of the tourism authorities in Hebei Province. From these field studies, obtained primary data include field notes, notes and records of interviews, documents regarding rural tourism policy and rural tourism development plans. The processing of these primary data was conducted on-site and off-site, using Grounded Theory methods.

4.4 Data analysis

Grounded Theory methods were used in processing and analysing data, both on-site at and off-site from the villages. The primary data were analysed with methods of opening coding and memo, as well as of constant comparative analysis. On-site data analysis comprised data storage, processing and analysis. Off-site data analysis comprised a series of theoretical coding and memos to sort and categorise the data to look for patterns, to group patterns into categories and to constantly compare categories to generate variables of the substantive framework.

On-site data analysis was conducted while the field studies were being carried out. For field observations, the researcher took photos and notes to store the data on-site during the day, and wrote a field study diary during the night. Photos and notes were sorted by the themes of the research questions, along with coding and comments written as the memos of the field studies. The memos were then coded with memos for the second round of data processing; the decision over whether or not to process data on-site or off-site depends on the specific circumstances of the field study and the recall of the data collection. For interviews and focus group discussions, with the interviewees' permission, digital recorders were used to store the data.

Theoretical sampling was used in finding the next informant for in-depth, face-to-face interviews. The interviewed informants were often asked open-ended questions, such as: "Would you please tell me how you start rural tourism businesses in this village?" "How do you like the rural tourism programmes in this village?" "What comments would you like to give about the rural tourism programmes in this village?" "How did

you learn about the rural tourism programmes in this village?” The answers to such questions were processed immediately as data to sort out the information in relation to the research themes, using the researcher’s theoretical sensitivity. The sorted and processed answers often generated the next questions, which then guided the researcher to find the next informant. In this way, the research was oriented by the emerging research questions from the interviews and observations in the field. In addition to the digital records, notes were taken during the interviews, and memos were written along with the notes. The notes and memos were then re-coded in the fieldwork diary. Comments on the information collected from the field were written as memos for the follow-up interviews and off-site data processing and analysis.

Off-site data processing and analysis were conducted soon after the researcher returned from the field sites. The first step was data transcription and translation. All the primary data, i.e. photos, notes, diary and digital records, were translated from Chinese to English. The second step was to code and memo the translated data in English, then to summarise the patterns of the answers to the particular research questions and to sort patterns into categories. Through open coding and memo of primary data, some key words were sorted out to show the patterns that emerged regarding actors and their actions in the activities of rural tourism destination governance. Generally, these patterns were grouped into six categories:

- 1) Initiation of rural tourism programmes in these villages
- 2) Rural tourism products and tourist activities in these villages
- 3) Informal economic factors in rural tourism destinations
- 4) Rural tourism marketing and sales channels

- 5) Policy and regulations for rural tourism development
- 6) Conflicts and problems in rural tourism development.

Under each of the six themes of rural tourism destination governance, the data were analysed with the aim of answering the following research questions:

- a) Who are the key stakeholders of this rural tourism destination?
- b) How is this rural tourism destination managed and developed in these villages?
- c) Who are the key actors of rural tourism destination governance?
- d) How did they develop and set up the policy and regulations for rural tourism development?
- e) How do they interact with each other in the process of making the policy and regulations?
- f) Are there any conflicts or problems in rural tourism destination development? If there are, what are the conflicts and problems?
- g) And, how do they solve the problems?

Through iteratively coding, memo and constant comparison, patterns of actors and their actions in the activities of rural tourism governance were appearing. Constantly comparing these emerging patterns created categories that showed the properties of the governance system of the rural tourism destinations. Then, these properties were categorised through constant comparative analysis and generated three themes of concepts: 1) Governance in the initiation of rural tourism programmes; 2) Governance of rural tourism commons; 3) Working rules for governing rural tourist destinations. Under these three themes, categories were further compared until the key variables emerged.

The connections and correlations among the variables delivered the diagrams that describe the rural tourism development governance model, the governance system and the formulation of working rules for governing tourism commons in the villages.

Further constant comparison of these models helped identify the key components for sustainable governance of rural tourism programmes in these villages, which were discussed as the substantive theory. To generate formal theory by constant comparison of examples, the cases of the villages were studied in a broader scope, constantly comparing the cases of selected villages with other cases in the real world or theories in existing literature.

4.5 Summation

To summarise, this study was based on the real-world situation of rural tourism development in China, with a focus on the governance of rural tourism destination. In particular, it examined the formulation and evolution of governance models for rural tourism destinations in China. Therefore, this research investigated the interactions between people, who were involved in the development of rural tourism programmes and interacted with each other to achieve a consensus for collective action in exploiting various resources to develop rural tourism in a sustainable way. Since there are few existing theories that can adequately explain the phenomenon of rural tourism development in China, Grounded Theory was identified as an appropriate approach for this study. In addition, the stakeholder approach was used as a tool to identify the key actors in the governance of rural tourism destinations. The assumption used for choosing this method is that the stakeholder approach is a tool to be utilised as long as it proves useful and is not simply an ideology.

Based on an extensive survey of both the English and the Chinese literature that is relevant to rural tourism development in China, in addition to consulting the local

tourism professionals in Beijing and Hebei Province, five rural tourism destinations were preliminarily identified as suitable sites for fieldwork for this research. These five villages were selected from pre-field studies, including a literature survey, email and face-to-face consultation with local tourism professionals and tourism officers. Being measured with sustainable rural tourism criteria, two of these five villages were found to have lost the rurality tag and, finally, three villages were studied as cases of rural tourism destinations.

From the pre-field study, each of these villages had a specific development mode of rural tourism, respectively named as bottom-up and top-down, in terms of the role of government in the initiation of rural tourism programmes in these villages. In addition, Xigucheng village was studied because of the success of Jifa Agricultural Park, which integrates tourism with high-tech agriculture, through transformation from village self-governance to modern corporate governance. These different modes of rural tourism development in North China are embedded in the particular context of Chinese development strategies and tourism policies since 1978, especially reflecting the national strategies for rural tourism development. However, why did these villages enjoy similar socio-economic and policy environments but demonstrated different performances in terms of sustainable rural tourism? To answer this question, further case studies of these villages were conducted to gain some insights into Chinese practices in governing rural tourism destinations.

Grounded Theory methods were adopted for data collection and analysis in and outside the villages. Both quantitative and qualitative data were obtained, either as secondary

data extracted from statistics and the literature, or as primary data obtained from field studies that were conducted in the villages selected with theoretical sampling methods. The primary data were collected through participant and non-participant observation, interviews and focus groups in and outside the villages. Theoretical sampling was used for finding informants for interviews. Data were analysed with methods of open coding and memos. The constant comparison method was used to generate substantive theories of rural tourism destination governance.

The data analysis results and research findings are organised according to the three themes and reported in the following chapters: Chapter 5 Village profiles; Chapter 6 Governance in the initiation and implementation of rural tourism development programmes; Chapter 7 Problems of tourism commons in rural tourism destinations; and Chapter 8 Working rules for governing tourism commons. It is obvious that a single study cannot comprehensively cover all the subjects commonly considered in the disciplines of sustainable tourism, rural tourism and rural development. However, it is notable that the research findings presented in this thesis provide a framework within which we can examine many of the important issues that come up in the literature on tourism destination governance and sustainable rural tourism in a broad yet systematic way. In one sentence, the choice of the Grounded Theory approach did not rule out the desirability of using other approaches for the study of sustainable rural tourism in the Chinese socio-economic and cultural circumstances. Therefore, through investing in and examining the course of rural tourism development in China, this research aims to

determine in what respects it follows the basic routes of sustainable tourism in Western countries and in what respects it is developing along a path of its own.

Chapter 5 Village profiles

To gain insight into the real-world situation of Chinese practices in rural tourism destinations governance, this research investigated the process of rural tourism development in the theoretically selected Hebei villages that have developed rural tourism since the late 1980s. These villages are Zhalaying village of Fengning Manchu Minority County in the Bashang Plateau, and Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages of Anxin County in Lake Baiyangdian area. Rural tourism developments in these villages were based on the natural landscapes and the culture of folk customs, and there were similar socio-economic conditions and tourism policies. This research studied the villages as rural tourism destinations and identified similar destination stakeholders: i.e. local government, the villagers, rural householders, farmhouse owners, outside investors, tour agents/guides, etc. These villages, however, demonstrated different performances in sustainable tourism. In the period of 2007 to 2010, Wangjiazhai village suffered from declining visitors but increasing conflicts within the village community; by comparison, Dongtianzhuang and Zhalaying villages were engaged in easing the tensions between increasing numbers of visitors and the limited carrying capacity of natural landscapes and tourism facilities in their villages. This chapter firstly demonstrates the socio-economic background of rural tourism development in these villages and then presents the village profiles to demonstrate their rural tourism development models.

5.1 Zhalaying village: An emergent destination of grassland tourism in Bashang Plateau

Zhalaying is a small village of Datan Town, Fengning Manchu Autonomous County (hereafter Fengning County) in northern Hebei Province. The location of Zhalaying village is illustrated on the map of Chengde Administrative Divisions, shown as Figure 6, on page 178.



Figure 6: Geographical location of Zhalaying village

Source: Adapted from Chengde in Wikipedia, retrieved on May 18, 2009 from <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chengde>

Fengning County is located at the northern end of Bashang Plateau, bordering with Beijing in the south-east and Inner Mongolia in the north. This county was established

as a Manchu autonomous county in 1987, under the jurisdiction of Chengde City, previously known as Jehol or Rehe but now a prefecture-level city in Hebei Province (*Chengde*, n.d.).

5.1.1 Development of the Jingbei First Grassland tourist zone

Fengning tourism has been growing rapidly from 1989, when the Jingbei First Grassland (Jīngběi dì yī cǎoyuán in Chinese pinyin, hereafter the First Grassland) was established as a tourist zone. The First Grassland refers to the vast natural grassland bordering Beijing, about 240 kilometres north of Beijing and 240 kilometres west of Chengde City. It is located in the north-west of Fengning County, covering about 350 square kilometres of natural grasslands.

The First Grassland, as the central part of Bashang Plateau, is also commonly known as “Fengning Bashang Grassland”. In a broad sense, Bashang Plateau is the southern slope of the Inner Mongolia Plateau and covers an area of about 16,000 square kilometres from 115°50' to 117°23' east longitude and from 40°54' to 42°01' north latitude, with an average altitude of between 1,300 and 1,500 metres above sea level (X. Chen, 2015).

Concerning geographical location, Bashang Plateau is not only the northern gate of Beijing but also supplies water sources for Beijing and Tianjin. However, the regional function of Bashang Plateau had been focused on productivity for a long period and this resulted in continuous deterioration of the ecological environment in the area (Moiwo, Yang, Li, Han, & Yang, 2010). The desertification of Bashang nearly doubled in scope from 1978 to 1996, with a total increase of about 2,199.11 square kilometres: and average increase of about 122.17 square kilometres per year (X. Chen, 2015).

Land desertification in Bashang is the combined result of natural factors and human economic activities. Bashang Plateau is located in the semi-arid continental monsoon climate region; hence, its extremely fragile eco-environment is liable to develop desertification (T. Wang, Li, Hasi, & Li, 1991). In addition, cultivated land expansion, population growth, grassland over-grazing, etc. aggravated desertification in this area. Since 1949, the livestock population in China has increased from 29 million to more than 90 million animals, whereas grassland has decreased by 6.67 million hectares due to human damage and natural desertification (X. Chen, 2015). Over-grazing damages the surface of these lands, making that surface vulnerable to wind erosion and desertification. This is also the case for the Bashang Plateau. Driven by population growth and market interests, herdsmen blindly increased their livestock holdings to exceed the grassland's carrying capability in the Bashang area. In recent years, however, a Beijing-Tianjin sand control project has significantly curbed desert expansion, restored vegetation and improved ecology remarkably (M. Xu et al., 1998). Nowadays, Bashang Plateau is covered with natural grasslands, white birch forests, wetlands, etc.; therefore, it plays an important role in the security frame of the ecological environment of the Large-scale Beijing Region (Zhong, Yang, Cui, & Liu, 2008).

Located in the central part of Bashang Plateau, the First Grassland is operated as a national 4A-grade scenic area for domestic holiday-seekers. With an average altitude of 1,486 metres above the sea, the average temperate is 17.5 degrees Celsius in summer. Fengning tourism season extends from the middle of June to early October. Along with the First Grassland Scenic Area, there are many other tourist spots in Fengning County:

i.e., Baiyuan Valley, Labashan Gallery, Hongtang Temple Hot Spring, Qingsongba Forest Garden, etc. In addition, tourists can enjoy a variety of folk customs and cultural activities, i.e. Manchu riding and archery, bonfire parties, folk songs and folk dances, etc., in the Fengning tourist zone. In the late 1990s, Fengning County incorporated all those tourist spots into the “First Grassland tourist route”. Since 1996, the number of visitors to Fengning County has increased dramatically; at the same time, Fengning County absorbed various sorts of investment to improve the tourism infrastructure and accommodation facilities to develop new tourism products. The statistical data from Fengning County Tourism Bureau show that, by the end of 2007, tourism had absorbed more than 400 million Yuan in investment in fixed assets, including two two-star hotels, more than 30 holiday resorts, and about 500 family hostels with more than 30,000 beds in the First Grassland. At that time, the basic elements of a tourism industry, i.e. tourist attractions, transportation, food and accommodation, entertainment and tourist souvenirs, tended to support a more rapid tourism development in Fengning County.

To develop tourism, Fengning County focused on the exploitation of both natural and social tourism resources, and actively made an effort to protect the natural environment.

The county government enacted pro-tourism investment policies as incentives for international investment in agriculture, forestry and ecological projects to increase the tourist attractions in the First Grassland Scenic Area. Some projects had been implemented successfully, i.e. a German aid reforestation project, and the Toyota project for desertification and environmental protection activities etc. These projects helped the villages to fence the natural grassland for the purpose of conservation.

Conservation and protection of the natural grassland have become common concerns for the local government and the rural residents. With all of these efforts, the First Grassland has attracted increasing visitor numbers since 1989. This is evidenced by the primary data extracted from the Fengning County Tourism Bureau official documents that I obtained during the field studies in 2008. As shown in Table 8 on page 182, the number of tourists to Fengning County increased from 3,100 to 600,000 person/nights, while the county tourism revenue increased from 197,000 Yuan to 180 million Yuan during the period of 1989 to 2007.

Table 8: Tourist numbers and tourism revenue of Fengning County, 1989–2007

Year	Tourist numbers (10,000 person/nights)	Tourism revenue (10,000 Yuan)
1989	3.1	19.7
1990	5.2	25.6
1991	5.5	36.7
1992	6.5	60.8
1993	4.6	42.0
1994	5.0	58.6
1995	5.5	145.0
1996	12.6	2,400.0
1997	20.0	4,000.0
1998	26.0	5,200.0
1999	31.0	7,200.0
2000	40.0	12,000.0
2001	25.0	7,500.0
2002	45.0	13,500.0
2003	35.0	10,000.0
2004	41.0	12,300.0
2005	45.2	13,500.0
2006	53.0	16,500.0
2007	60.0	18,000.0

Source: Tourism Bureau of Fengning County, June 2008

5.1.2 Rural tourism development in Datan Town

After the opening of the First Grassland, tourism grew dramatically in Fengning County. The growth of Fengning tourism is contributed to mainly by the development of rural tourism in the First Grassland Scenic Area. The majority of visitors to Fengning choose the villages of Datan Town as their destinations. Datan Town is in the centre of the First Grassland Scenic Area, where 22 villages are scattered in vast natural grasslands. In the late 1990s, eight of these villages developed rural tourism programmes to provide tourist services: i.e. food and bed services, tourist souvenirs, local specialties, sightseeing tour guides, etc. Its marketing brand is grassland tourist recreational activities: i.e. riding horses, archery, equestrian sports, grassland motorcycles, grass skiing, etc.

The rapid growth of rural tourism in Datan Town has significantly stimulated the economic development in the villages. With very low industrial barriers, more than 80 per cent of rural households were attracted to engage in tourism businesses. However, these rural tourism businesses often lowered the price of tourism services in order to compete for tourists in the village. Consequently, poor-quality tourism services along with the disordered tourism market resulted in declining tourist numbers in 2001. To solve this problem, the Datan Town government established a tourism administration committee to regulate the tourism businesses in the villages. With the mission of regulating the tourism industry, the tourism committee was empowered with multiple administrative functions: registration, tax collection, public security, public and environmental sanitation, market regulation of rural tourism, etc. According to the town

government annual report, the establishment of the tourism administration committee effectively improved the business environment of rural tourism in Datan Town. By the end of 2007, the eight villages of Datan Town operated 500 farmhouse hotels with more than 10,000 beds and involved more than 4,000 villagers in tourism services. From 1995 to 2007, rural household income increased from 530 Yuan per capita to 3,000 Yuan per capita; that was much higher than the county average of 2,376 Yuan in 2007.

5.1.3 Rural tourism in Zhalaying village

Among the eight specialised rural tourism villages in Datan Town, Zhalaying village has been ranked as the favourite tourist destination. It is about three kilometres from Datan Town centre, approximately 80 kilometres to the county downtown, and about 270 kilometres north of Beijing. Historically, Zhalaying was midway between Zhangjiakou and Beijing. Nowadays, the provincial road S244 and the sealed grassland scenic road pass by the village. The specific locations of Zhalaying village and Datan Town are illustrated in

Appendix 5.1 Satellite map of Zhalaying Village, Datan Town, on page 469.

Tourist activities in Zhalaying village can be tracked back to the late 1980s. Before that, no visitor was allowed to enter this area because it had been a military base since the early Qing Dynasty (1644–1921). According to elder villagers, e.g. the village accountant Luo, Old Lady Cui, the tour guide Li, the herdsman Han, the farmhouse host Zhang, the village party branch secretary Hou, etc., the name Zhalaying refers to the “the barracks of Zhala”. This is because it was one of the barracks of the “eight banners” (bāqí, in Chinese pinyin) that were military divisions of the Manchu army in the Qing

Dynasty. These barracks were placed with Manchu banner soldiers and their households as defenders of the capital city Beijing. Since then, the village developed but had never changed its name despite numerous social changes. Even in the period of the Cultural Revolution from the 1960s to the 1970s, the name Zhalaying remained in use because this area was still designated as a military base after the establishment of new China in 1949.

As a supply base for army horses since Qing Dynasty, Zhalaying village had limited contact with the world outside of the Bashang area. The population in this village was small and grew very slowly. In 2008, Zhalaying village had a population of 688 rural residents; 168 rural households were divided into five production groups. The village collectively owned 21 square kilometres of grasslands, including five acres of arable lands and 133.33 acres of natural grasslands. Traditionally, the villagers made a living from raising horses and planting grains but their earnings were insufficient to feed themselves. In the 1970s and early 1980s, rural households had to live on government subsidies. Even in the late 1980s, commercial activity in the village was rare. In those days, the living conditions in the village were so poor that most of the men could not get married (Accountant Luo, 27 June 2008, personal communication).

Zhalaying village opened to domestic tourists in the late 1980s and then to foreigners in 1996. Rural tourism developed in the village soon after the opening of the Jingbei First Grassland tourist zone in 1989. The Fengning County Tourism Bureau cooperated with two Beijing hotels jointly built the First Grassland Resort Hotel on bare land that was owned collectively by the village. This hotel was the first three-star hotel in the county

and attracted the media from Beijing. After a newspaper article introduced the grassland of Datan Town to Beijing people in 1989 (*Chengde*, n.d.), Zhalaying village increasingly attracted Beijing visitors and gained its reputation as a favourite place for rural tourism and ecotourism activities, such as natural grassland sightseeing, riding horses, archery and villagers' hospitality. In 2008, more than 80 per cent of Zhalaying villagers were engaged in rural tourism businesses, and their household incomes increased from 350 Yuan in 1995 to 4,000 Yuan in 2007. Nowadays, tourism business is the primary source of rural household income in Zhalaying village. Although the villagers still grow grains and vegetables, most of their produce is for self-use and the remains are sold to tourists or farmhouse hotels. The improved living conditions and the increased earning opportunities in the tourism businesses attracted young people return to the village from their migrant work in major cities.

The provision of accommodation services has been the main part of rural tourism businesses in Zhalaying village. As shown in Figure 7, on page 187, there are two types of hotels: farmhouse hotels and grassland resorts. Farmhouse hotels are mostly owned and operated by Zhalaying villagers, who have converted their homes to farmhouse hotels in summer to accommodate tourists, with about 20–30 beds and three meals each day. The number of such farmhouses reached over 80 in 2008, while more were still in construction. Comparatively, the grassland resorts are constructed on the village's collectively owned wastelands, with outside investments from cities, e.g. Beijing and Tianjin. This kind of grassland resort usually has a larger accommodation capability, e.g. with 100–200 beds, to serve holiday-seekers and large tour groups. In 2008, there were

twelve such grassland resorts in Zhelaying village. Since then, the village has been able to accommodate about 4,000 guests per night in the tourism seasons.

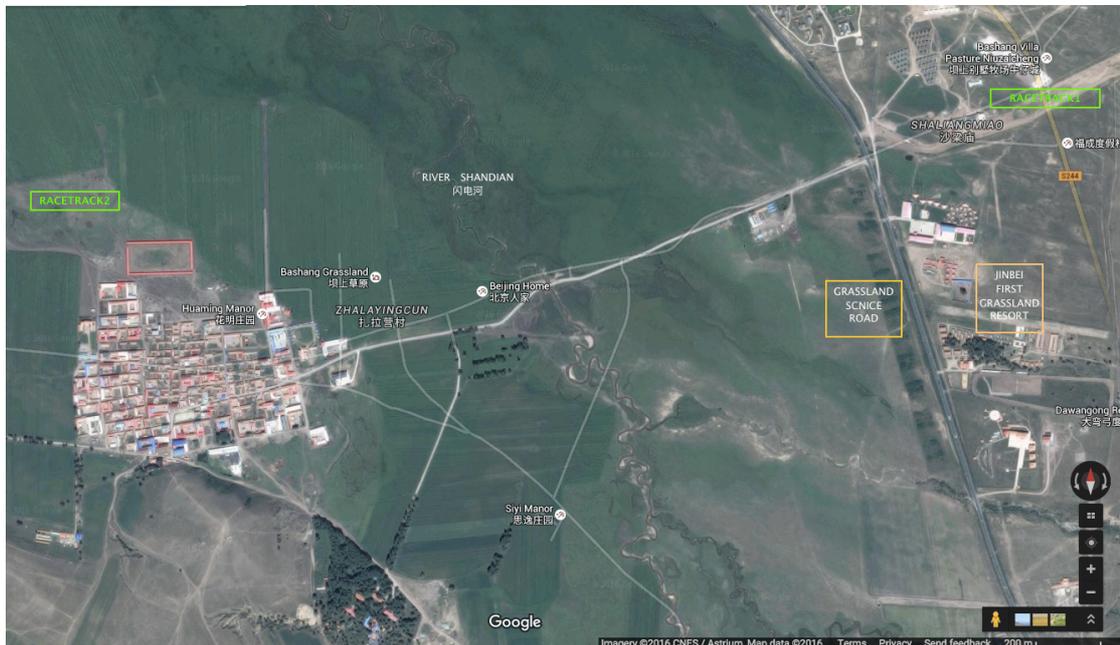


Figure 7: Zhelaying tourism resources and facilities

Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 26 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@41.5991414,115.9859274,2142m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Riding horses has been another part of the rural tourism business in Zhelaying village. Most of the villagers offered horse-riding services to the tourists. To maintain the order of tourism services, the villagers developed an informal rule for managing the riding of horses in the village. The farmhouse owners recruited guests from Beijing to the village so that farmhouse owners took the responsibility of entertaining their guests by arranging tourists' recreational activities in the village. The farmhouse hosts arranged horse riding for their guests and added the horse rentals to the inclusive bill that consisted of beds, meals and recreational activities. About 50 per cent of the horse rentals were taken as a commission and the remains transferred to the horse owners or

horse-riding guides. Then, half of the commission was paid to the police station as a security fee for riding and racing horses in the village. The horse owners and the riding guides were not allowed to collect horse rentals directly from the tourists. However, the horse owners complained that their earnings were small because too many horses competed for the use of tourists in the village. The number of horses increased from 500 horses to more than 800 between 1995 and 2008. On the other hand, the villagers complained that the horse numbers exceeded the carrying capability of the village grasslands and caused serious over-grazing of the village common grasslands.

To meet the increasing tourist demand for riding horses, Zhalaying herdsmen expanded their businesses to include equestrian clubs. These equestrian clubs converted some of their Beijing guests to being the horse owners in the village. These Beijing horse owners usually visited Zhalaying village at the weekends to ride horses for recreational purposes. Therefore, there was an increasing number of joint-venture equestrian clubs but no commercial racing-horse events in the village. As the horse-riding activities increasingly attracted tourists, Zhalaying village built two riding tracks on the sandy lands collectively owned by the village but a small part of a riding track was on the agricultural lands contracted to a group of villagers (as shown in Figure 7, on page 187; also see more details in Appendix 5.2: Zhalaying Village topography and tourism facilities, on page 470). Along these two riding tracks, some villagers set up a couple of pop-up canopies to sell drinks and snacks to tourists and jockeys. However, the conflicts aroused by the use of the riding tracks have never been settled in the village.

Infrastructure problems constrained rural tourism development in Zhalaying village.

One problem was the poor sanitation conditions, with muddy streets in the summer caused by the inadequate drainage system and the increase in riding horses in the village.

Another problem was the increase in the number of traffic accidents caused by the competition for the use of the streets. Pedestrians in the village had to share the only-three-metre-wide sealed road with horses, carriages, motorcycles, cars and tour coaches. The third problem was that the village collective economy had inadequate funds to construct the much-needed infrastructure: i.e. to harden the streets and build a drainage system in the village, to set up tourism signs and road signs in and outside the village, to pay for the village tourism logo licensing, to reforest the hills beside the village, and so on.

To solve the infrastructure problems, the village once successfully gained government financial subsidies. In 2004, with the town government's help, the village raised a fund of 150 million Yuan from the county government to build the 2.5-kilometre-long sealed road that connects the village to the provincial road S224. In addition, the village built a new community centre, including a folk culture square with about 2,000 square metres of paved ground, a wall with folk-custom drawings and paintings, a two-storeyed building to be used as the villagers committee's office, the village library, the community recreation centre, etc. To improve the public sanitation system, the village constructed three public toilets and eight garbage stations. Telephone lines, television and Internet cables were also installed into each of the rural households. Internet is used by most of the farmhouse hotels in the village for marketing their farmhouse services.

With these significant changes made after the development of the rural tourism businesses, Zhalaying village has drawn attention from higher-level government. In early 2006, the city government listed Zhalaying village as one of ecological civilisation villages in the Chengde prefectural area. In that summer, the provincial government designated Zhalaying as a model rural tourism village and initiated a tourism-planning programme to help the village make a specific plan for sustainable rural tourism development.

5.2 Wangjiazhai: A pilot folk tourism destination in Lake Baiyangdian

Wangjiazhai village gained a reputation for being a good destination from its folk customs village that was developed as a rural tourism programme in the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area, Baoding City. Wangjiazhai village is about 2.5 kilometres of waterway from the downtown area of Anxin County, about 162 kilometres south of Beijing and 159 kilometres west of Tianjin. Located on islands that are centred in one of the big lakes in the Baiyangdian area, Wangjiazhai village is isolated by water. Its socio-economic development was largely dependent on agriculture and aquatic produce. Nowadays, its natural scenery of wetlands and Baiyangdian folk customs are used as rural tourism resources for tourist activities.

5.2.1 Dynamic changes in the natural environment of Baiyangdian area

Lake Baiyangdian is the largest body of fresh water in the Haihe Plain in central Hebei Province. It is a large basin that comprises a total of 143 shallow lakes and wetlands. Since the largest lake in this basin was named Baiyangdian, the basin is generally called

Lake Baiyangdian. It covers an area of 366 square kilometres in the range of 115°38'–116°07' east longitude and 38°43'–39°02' north latitude. The map of Baiyangdian area is displayed in Figure 8 on page 191. A large version of this map is also presented in Appendix 5.3 on page 471.



Figure 8: Map of Lake Baiyangdian, Hebei Province, China

Source: Adopted from Google Maps, retrieved on 26 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@38.9022012,115.9771246,12z?hl=en>

Since Baiyangdian is a basin on the alluvial lowland of the Fuhe River and the Tanghe River, it receives water inflows from several rivers, such as Bahe, Tanghe, Caohe and Zhulonghe, respectively, from the north, west and south. The average water-storage capacity of Lake Baiyangdian is around 1.32 million cubic metres and the average monthly water level is between about seven and nine metres. This area has a warm temperate, semi-humid, continental monsoon climate with four distinct seasons: dry and windy spring, rainy and hot summer, cool autumn, and cold and dry winter. Famed as the “Pearl of North China”, Lake Baiyangdian has a critical role of supplying water

resources, controlling floods and moderating regional climate in North China. However, due to the warming of the climate and human disturbances, such as agricultural irrigation and water storage in reservoirs, the lakes in the Baiyangdian area suffered drying up and shrinking from considerably inadequate water inflows (Liu et al., 2006).

The change of water storage of Lake Baiyangdian is related largely to the development of Beijing City. Historically, Lake Baiyangdian was first documented as a natural, shallow, fresh-water lake in the Western Jin Dynasty (265–316). The lake was expanded significantly when several waterways were blocked for the construction of the Grand Canal during the Sui Dynasty (580–618) and water from Taihang Mountains flooded and gathered in the depressions of the North China Plain. The lake reached its largest size when it was used as a defending line against the invasions from northern minorities during the North Song Dynasty (960–1127). Its water bodies shrank when Beijing became the capital city for various dynasties and the Baiyangdian area was the source of wood felled for the construction of capital. Since the Qing Dynasty, farmlands developed around the lakes reduced the water surface from 1,000 square kilometres to the present 366 square kilometres. Notably, since the 1960s, the lakes have shrunk by 35 per cent due to persistent droughts, water pollution, silting and over-farming. In the late 1950s and 1960s, about 90 medium-sized or small reservoirs were built with the intention of preventing flooding of the Haihe River. Such intensive construction of reservoir projects within the watershed of Baiyangdian also sped up the disappearance of its water bodies (Zhao et al., 2010). In the 1980s, increased demand for water for the socio-economic development of cities, i.e. Beijing, Tianjin, etc., accelerated the

reduction of water inflow to the lakes in the Baiyangdian area (Zhong et al., 2008). As a result, this area was completely dried up in the years from 1982 to 1988 (Liu et al., 2006).

Before Baiyangdian started drying up, it was the largest wetlands in the North China Plain. It was the natural habitat of 47 varieties of water plant, 54 kinds of fish, 192 kinds of bird and 14 wild mammal species. Nevertheless, the numbers of species of wild fauna and flora declined drastically as the ecosystem in the lake deteriorated rapidly while it was drying up (M. Xu et al., 1998). In 1988, as the large summer rainfall significantly increased water inflows to the Baiyangdian basin, the fresh water restored the lakes and hence the ecosystem in the Baiyangdian wetlands (Zhong et al., 2008). However, since Baiyangdian lies in the largest funnel of groundwater depression in North China, drought still threatens to dry it up again (Liu et al., 2006). The ecosystem crisis of the Baiyangdian area and the shortage of water resources have impeded regional socio-economic development; therefore, the Hebei Provincial government designated the Baiyangdian area as a nature reserve of wetlands in 1992 (Y. Li, Cui, & Yang, 2004).

To rescue the lakes of Baiyangdian from drying up and to protect the ecosystem of Beijing and Tianjin, the central government and the provincial government joined together in an effort to transfer water to the Baiyangdian basin. In the period from 1997 to 2004, about 1,050 million cubic metres water were transferred from the surrounding reservoirs to lakes in Baiyangdian; that relieved the water shortage crisis temporarily (Moiwo et al., 2010). Moreover, a huge project of transferring water from the Yellow

River to Lake Baiyangdian is on schedule (Hebei News, 2012a, 2012b). In addition, the central and provincial governments initiated a series of environmental protection projects beginning in the 1990s. Shelterbelts have been developed in the upstream areas of Baiyangdian Lake and more than 2,000 factories and plants that caused water pollution have been shut down (Zhao et al., 2010). These measures have significantly increased the water level and water-storage volume of Lake Baiyangdian. In the spring of 2009, the water level of Lake Baiyangdian reached 7.36 metres with a water-storage volume of 133.1 million cubic metres, marking the highest natural water level and storage volume of the last 10 years (X. Chen, 2015).

The dynamic ecological system of Lake Baiyangdian has significant effects on the living conditions of the rural residents in the area. As shown by the Baiyangdian satellite map in Appendix 5.4: Topography of Lake Baiyangdian area, on page 472, a total of 39 villages are scattered across Lake Baiyangdian and other 62 villages are located along the lakeside. These villages, with more than 200,000 rural residents, are separately under the jurisdiction of five counties of Hebei Province but most of them are in Anxin County (see the map on page 473). Most rural residents in these villages traditionally live on aquatic produce, i.e. planting reeds and lotuses, fishing and farming; some rural households are also engaged in agriculture and the manufacture of reed products, etc. There are a total of 120,000 mu (8,000 hectares) of reeds and 100,000 mu (6,667 hectares) of lotuses growing in the Baiyangdian area. About seven million tons of reed mats are made in the Lake Baiyangdian area each year, and this accounts for 40 per cent of reed products made across the nation. Therefore, endless reed and lotus

fields represent the image of Lake Baiyangdian. Traditionally, fishing was the second source of rural household income. Nowadays, fishing produce has declined drastically due to water pollution and the drying up of the lake. Many fishers use their boats only for transportation. Since 2000, after tourism developed in the Lake Baiyangdian area, duck farming has increasingly become the main source of rural household income in the Lake Baiyangdian area. The wild and planted reed and lotus, boating for transportation and duck farming are not only the income source for the local people, but also they give these villages the unique natural scenery of Lake Baiyangdian. Surrounded by water and being relatively isolated from the cities, these villages still keep the Baiyangdian traditional styles of living, production and residential properties. In addition, the Baiyangdian area is affluent with revolutionary traditions from the Anti-Japanese War between 1937 and 1945, e.g. the Yangling guerrillas, the little soldier Zhang Ga, etc. The peaceful natural scenery, along with images of brave and talented local people, gives this area all the potential to attract both domestic and international tourists.

5.2.2 Development of Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area

Tourism development in Lake Baiyangdian area started soon after the lake re-stored water in 1988. About 85 per cent of the Lake Baiyangdian area is under the jurisdiction of Anxin County, but the other part is under Xiongxin County jurisdiction, as shown in the map of Anxin County (see Appendix 5.5: Anxin County jurisdiction and Lake Baiyangdian area on page 473). With comparative advantage in tourism resources, Anxin County adopted tourism development as a driving factor for economic growth and social development. In 1989, Anxin County set up Anxin Baiyangdian Tourist Zone

that covers most of the area of Lake Shaochedian, which is one of the largest water surfaces in Lake Baiyangdian (see Appendix 5.6: Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area satellite map 1, on page 474). A tourist wharf and several artificial tourist spots were constructed with investments from multiple sectors: local government and private enterprises. For administration purposes, the tourist zone has been operated and managed by the Anxin County Tourism Bureau; however, the lake is a natural open space so it has been difficult to collect administration fees from people entering the tourist zone.

An administration fee was collected from tourists, in the name of improving the natural environment and protecting the ecosystem of Lake Baiyangdian. In the 1990s, this administration fee was a key contributor to the county's fiscal income. The development of Baiyangdian tourism successfully stimulated the growth of related industries, such as duck farming, agricultural production, manufacturing and transportation, in the area. However, to guarantee the quality of tourism services and to develop order in the tourism market, the tourism authorities prevented rural residents from operating tourism businesses in the tourist zone. The tourism administration committee established a Law Enforcement Team to carry out inspections in the Scenic Area and to fine any "person, store or ship" that offended the regulations.

In the late 1990s, in order to ease the tensions between the tourism authorities and local rural communities and to meet the tourists' demands, the county tourism bureau registered some local boats and rural households to provide transportation or accommodation services directly to tourists. The tourism authorities also fostered duck

farming in the area to allow rural households to sell a local specialty, i.e. ducks and duck eggs, along with lotus roots and seeds, and water chestnuts, to tourists. At the same time, the tourism authority developed the “advice card system” and the “complaint handling system” to enhance the tourist experience of tourism services. Since then, according to an officer of Anxin county tourism bureau, both the tourism industrial environment and tourism products in the tourist zone have been significantly improved (Ya. L., 19 May 2008, personal communication). In 2001, the China National Tourism Administration assessed Anxin Baiyangdian Tourist Zone to be one of the “4A-grade” national tourist attractions and approved it as one of the “5A-grade” national scenic areas in 2007. After that, the Anxin Baiyangdian Tourist Zone was renamed as Baiyangdian Scenic Area. In 2015, Lake Baiyangdian was listed as one of the “5A-grade” national tourist attractions (CNTA, 2015).

In order to improve the authenticity of Baiyangdian tourism products, the county government designated three villages, i.e. Wangjiazhai, Dongtianzhuang and Dadiantou, as pilots of Baiyangdian folk customs in the late 1990s. Wangjiazhai village is located in Lake Shaochedian, within the boundary of Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area, while Dadiantou and Dongtianzhuang villages are located, respectively, in Shihoudian Lake and Fanyu Lake. These are beyond the boundary of the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area and comparatively far away from the tourist wharf of the Scenic Area (See Appendix 5.7: Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area satellite map 2, on page 475, and Appendix 5.8: Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area satellite map 3, on page 476). Although the rural communities in these villages were encouraged to specialise in rural tourism

development, Wangjiazhai was officially listed as one of tourist spots in the Scenic Area and, during the 2000s, attracted many more visitors than did the other villages. In those days, Dongtianzhuang and Dadiantou villages lagged behind in rural tourism development.

5.2.3 Rural tourism in Wangjiazhai village

Wangjiazhai village is about 2.5 kilometres away from the tourist wharf in the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. The village had a total of 320 rural households and 1,280 rural residents in 2010. All the rural households dwell on an island that covers about 2.5 hectares of land and is surrounded by about 22.5 hectares of water surface. The rural tourism development programme in Wangjiazhai, however, is based completely on its Folk Village that was constructed as one of the tourist spots in the Scenic Area.

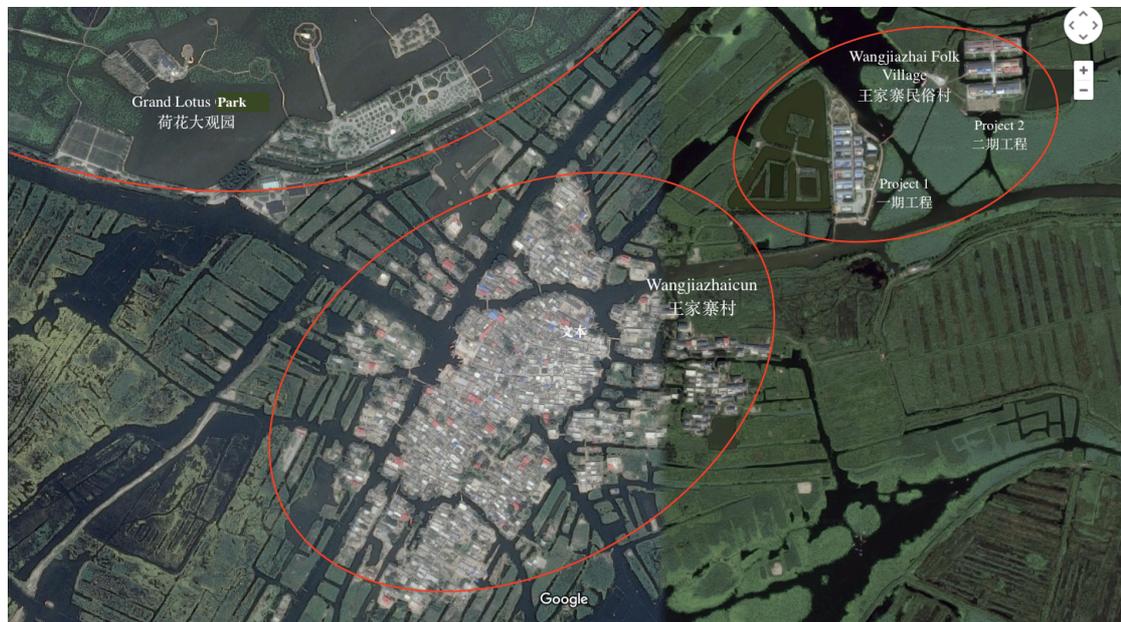


Figure 9: Wangjiazhai village satellite map

Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 29 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@38.9156739,115.9998561,1395m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

The Folk Village, as shown in Figure 9: Wangjiazhai village satellite map, on page 198, is located on two small islands, between the main village and the Grand Lotus Park, which is a tourist spot in the Baiyangdian Scenic Area. Surrounded by water surfaces, most residential properties in Wangjiazhai village were built in the 1950s in the Baiyangdian folk style: flat house with small courtyards, grey brick walls and flat roofs, narrow lanes and streets, and with piers in the backyards. Some properties in the village were built a hundred years ago. In the past, the villagers have traditionally lived on planting reeds and fishing. However, most Wangjiazhai villagers lived on government subsidies during the 1960s and 1970s. From the 1980s, some Wangjiazhai villagers started to peddle fish in the cities of Baoding, Tianjin and Beijing. In the 1990s, young villagers became migrant job-hunters in fish markets in the cities; some of them operated their own fish shops or restaurants in Beijing and Tianjin. From that time, income from migrant workers and family businesses in the cities became the primary source of earnings for Wangjiazhai rural households. However, the economic conditions in the village did not change much. Most rural households had inadequate cash income to cover their daily living costs in the 1990s (W. D. Wei, 19 May 2008, personal communication).

Life in Wangjiazhai village did not change until the village developed the Folk Village as a rural tourism programme in the early 2000s. The Wangjiazhai Folk Village was designed as one of the tourist spots in the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. It consists of two projects that have been constructed on islands outside of the Wangjiazhai village dwelling area. A total of 37 Baiyangdian courtyard houses provide accommodation

services for domestic tourists to the Scenic Area (W. D. Wei & L. S. Wang, 18 May 2008, personal communication). Each courtyard house is built on a lot of 300 square metres, with a gate open to the south, a fengshui wall (Yingbi Qiang, in Chinese pinyin) painted with a scenic poem of the Tang Dynasty in Chinese calligraphy, a 100-square-metre courtyard, and a 200-square-metre house with four or five guest rooms and a living room. The house is equipped with a TV set, a DVD player and karaoke in the living room. A kitchen and bathrooms are built in the west and a sleep-out room in the east. The courtyard is sheltered with a reed sheet and changed to be the dining area in the summer. All the construction materials were sourced carefully from local producers to ensure the properties present the unique style of Baiyangdian courtyard houses (D. Wang, 17 May 2008, personal communication).

As illustrated in Figure 9: Wangjiazhai village satellite map, on page 198, a wooden bridge connects two small islands and gives the Folk Village a scenic view of the open water surface. Therefore, the Wangjiazhai Folk Village was advocated as a paradise with Lake Baiyangdian scenery and localised accommodation services. The Folk Village offers visitors a unique experience of all-round rural life during their stay with the fishermen's families: they dine with the host families and participate in the hosts' production activities, such as fishing with nets or pelicans, catching shrimp, boating, picking lotus, knitting reed mats/screens, planting rice and vegetables, etc. In this way, the visitors can experience real life in the Lake Baiyangdian area, can be in touch with nature and enjoy the rurality.

The Folk Village was operated and managed as a village collective enterprise despite its being constructed with both village collective and villager private investment. The villagers committee contracted accommodation services to the host families of the courtyard houses in the Folk Village and appointed a village cadre as the Folk Village manager. This manager did not own a residential property in the Folk Village so that he could represent the villagers committee and manage the Folk Village on behalf of the Wangjiazhai village economic collectives. The manager was responsible to the villagers committee, with the duties of marketing the Wangjiazhai Folk Village, managing the reception desk, allocating visitors to host families according to the guest rotation system, and maintaining the facilities in the Folk Village. With the principles of fair competition, the Folk Village developed a guest rotation system and standards of accommodation services and room rates. In this guest rotation system, the Folk Village collectively recruited guests through cooperating with the Baiyangdian Scenic Area and the media. The reception desk allocated guests to host families in rotation. Then, the host families provided standardised accommodation services to the guests. The guests paid for accommodation services and recreation activities to the reception desk when they checked out. This guest rotation system worked well when the Folk Village enjoyed increasing visitors from 2003 to 2005. The host families in the Folk Village earned, on average, about 20,000 to 30,000 Yuan of annual income in 2005. The Wangjiazhai Folk Village was then designated as a model of agricultural tourism development in Hebei Province in 2006.

The increased disparities between rural household incomes caused conflicts between the villager groups in Wangjiazhai. Since differences in the quality of accommodation services in the Folk Village caused complaints from tourists in the same tour groups, the reception desk then allocated more guests to the host families with good word-of-mouth reports and reduced the numbers of guests to the courtyard houses that were complained about by tourists. As a result, the host families with fewer guests complained about the unfairness of the Folk Village management. The Folk Village changed its operation system in 2006; while the Folk Village management continued to allocate visitors to host families according to the rotation system, the host families also recruited guests via the Internet or other channels but under the name of Wangjiazhai Folk Village. In these circumstances, to compete for guests, some host families often lowered the price of their food and their room rates but consequently lowered the quality of the accommodation. Such competition dramatically decreased visitors to the Folk Village. In 2007, the Folk Village manager resigned but none of the Wangjiazhai villagers would take the job. In 2008, the villagers committee contracted the Folk Village management to a young villager D. Wang, who had been running fish shop businesses in Beijing for a couple of years.

Besides conflicts inside the Folk Village, from 2002, there were also increasing conflicts between the Folk Village and the main village. The key complaint was that the Folk Village was a village collective enterprise but benefited only those villagers who joined the rural tourism development programme. The village collective funds were spent to construct and maintain infrastructures of the Folk Village, without there being

any infrastructure improvement on the main island where the majority of Wangjiazhai villagers were dwelling. The infrastructure in the main village was so poor that it was not permitted visitors to be accommodated there. Hence, the majority of Wangjiazhai villagers did not have the opportunity to participate in tourism businesses. In 2005, a few of the villagers renovated their residential houses on the main island to accommodate tourists. Competing for guests increased the conflict between the Folk Village and the main village. This kind of conflict, consequently, aroused disputes between the village cadres of the two committees, that is, the villagers committee and the village party committee.

Wangjiazhai villagers wanted to expand the rural tourism businesses to their dwelling area – the main village – but both infrastructure and accommodation facilities in the main village required numerous improvements before rural tourism could be developed. Apparently, the village needed a specific development plan for rural tourism based on the whole community of Wangjiazhai village. In 2006, the Tourism Administration Bureau of Hebei Province offered financial subsidies and technique assistance to develop the Specific Plan of Wangjiazhai Rural Tourism Development but the planning programme involved only the village cadres. Since the number of visitors to Wangjiazhai Folk Village had declined significantly, the owners of courtyards in the Folk Village changed their management system frequently and threw the Folk Village into the dilemma of having no management.

5.3 Dongtianzhuang: A “black market” of ecotourism in Lake Baiyangdian

As one of the three pilot villages for rural tourism development in Anxin County, Dongtianzhuang village actively implemented a county-government-designed rural tourism development programme. Unfortunately, soon after the village established tourism facilities for rural tourism development, the county government withdrew its tourism policy and financial support to the village. The village was then prohibited from running rural tourism businesses. To recover the money invested in the tourism facilities, however, the village actively cooperated with travel agencies in the cities to develop ecotourism programmes based on its authentic folk culture and the natural scenery of Lake Baiyangdian; consequently, a “black market” of Baiyangdian ecotourism emerged in the village.

5.3.1 Demographic information about Dongtianzhuang village

Dongtianzhuang village is about 18 kilometres south-east of Anxin County downtown and about nine kilometres south of Wangjiazhai village. As shown in Figure 10: Dongtianzhuang village satellite map, on page 205, this village is on the island between Shihoudian Lake and Fanyu Lake. It has west-side bridges with Datianzhuang village, while vast water surfaces, endless reed fields and large lotus fields surround the other three sides. In the past, Dongtianzhuang village was beside the waterway to Tianjin City and played a pivotal role in supplying aquatic products to the city. Even nowadays, the village is still accessible only by waterway from its neighbouring villages, i.e. Datianzhuang village, Duancun village, etc.

As it was in Wangjiashai village, planting reeds and fishing were, traditionally, the only ways to make a living in Dongtianzhuang village. In this village, a total of 480 rural households, with about 1,600 rural residents, collectively owned about 680 mu of reed fields in 2007. Since the 1980s, some villagers have operated fish-processing plants in Beijing and in Zhanjiang of Guangdong Province. In 2008, more than 700 younger villagers were recruited to work at their neighbors' or relatives' seafood-processing plants in the cities. Only about 800 villagers stayed in the village, but most of them were elderly people, women and children, who lived on remittances from migrant workers in the cities and supplementary earnings from reed produce. To increase rural household income and improve living conditions in the village, the village cadres had been actively promoting rural tourism development programmes in the village.



Figure 10: Dongtianzhuang village satellite map

Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 29 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@38.8376885,115.9866096,1236m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

5.3.2 Dongtianzhuang rural tourism programme

Dongtianzhuang rural tourism has been affected significantly by the changes in local tourism development policies. This village was selected as a pilot of rural tourism development, after the leader of the Anxin County communist party inspected and investigated the rural development programme of “Construction of the New Socialist Countryside” in Dongtianzhuang village in the summer of 2001. That leader advised the village cadres to develop rural tourism to increase rural household income and improve the living conditions in the village. Soon after that, the county government approved a special funding of 500,000 Yuan to help the village build a tourist resort.

The party leader personally guided the design of the tourist resort and the specific rural tourism project plan. As illustrated in Figure 10, on page 205, this holiday resort is located on a small island, outside of Dongtianzhuang village. The secretary of the village party branch claimed that such a location was an elaborate design. It ensured that rural tourism activities would not disturb the villagers’ daily lives and, hence, would help the village to keep the authenticity of Baiyangdian rurality. At the same time, it also helped to safeguard the holiday-seekers during their stays in the resort. Moreover, it would be easier for the villagers committee to manage rural tourism programmes and aquatic production.

The village holiday resort, according to the development plan, was designed with 50 standard guest rooms, a restaurant and conference rooms, etc. It required a total investment of about 1000,000 Yuan and that was unaffordable for the village economic collectives. Therefore, after several meetings of villager representatives, with the

approval of the villager assembly, the villagers committee contracted the holiday resort project to seven rural households in the village. These rural households jointly completed the construction with their private investment of 200,000 Yuan and a loan of 200,000 Yuan in the name of the village collectives in 2001.

The holiday resort opened and started to accommodate big tourist groups and company annual meetings/conferences in the summer of 2002. The annual income of this tourist resort reached 500,000 Yuan in 2006. Since some other rural households intended to join the tourism development programme, the village community allocated a bare island to two rural households to build a restaurant beside the main waterway and operated a boat restaurant in the lotus field in 2007. The village party branch secretary planned to start the stage II projects of rural tourism development, but his proposal was not widely accepted by villagers nor supported by his fellow cadres in the village.

The interviews with some villagers and tour guides offered another story about the Dongtianzhuang rural tourism development programme. Soon after the tourist resort opened to tourists, the county party secretary was transferred to another county in Hebei Province. Consequently, the county government halted the Dongtianzhuang rural tourism development programme since this village is located outside of the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. Without local government support, the rural tourism programmes in Dongtianzhuang village survived through active cooperation with travel agents to organise ecotourism groups to the village.

5.3.3 Discovery of Dongtianzhuang as a “black market” of ecotourism

Regional exclusion in the rural tourism development of Dongtianzhuang village was discovered during my first field trip to the Lake Baiyangdian area on 22–23 June 2007. Before the field trip, through an online survey of information about tour groups to Wangjiazhai village at the weekends and rural tourism in Lake Baiyangdian area, a tour agent Han, S. M., showed up. This tour guide recommended strongly that I study rural tourism development in Dongtianzhuang village rather than in Wangjiazhai village. He asserted that Dongtianzhuang has the “original ecosystem and folk customs” of authentic Baiyangdian, without anything “fake” and without any “designed” tourist attractions.

After further investigation through the Internet and by telephone, I discovered that tourist routes to Dongtianzhuang village had been developed by “tour pals” (travel fans), despite the local tourism authority’s prohibition of tours to villages outside of the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. Such tour routes were also promoted by tour agents and tour guides to their customers, particularly to people who enquired about ecotourism in the Lake Baiyangdian area. However, Han and his customers saw rural tourism and ecotourism as the same thing (S. M. Han, 19 June 2007, personal communication).

Dongtianzhuang “ecotourism” activities meant that the tourists, tour agents/guides and the village developed a niche market of ecotourism in Lake Baiyangdian but beyond the supervision of the local government. Is this a niche market labelled as “black market” beyond governmental control? Why did none of the tourism professionals or officers mention this niche market? With these newly emerged questions, I joined Han’s tour

group and conducted participant observation and face-to-face interviews in Dongtianzhuang village.

The tour agent organised a tour group of 12 tourists to take a two-day trip from Beijing to Dongtianzhuang village at the weekend. The tour group took a van from Beijing to Duancun pier and then changed to a motorboat to Dongtianzhuang village. The tour guide and the boatman carefully chose waterways to avoid the patrol boats of the law-enforcement team in Lake Baiyangdian. In order to collect the entrance fee and administration fee, the tourism authorities required all tourists boarding at the tourist wharf to enter into the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. Obviously, Dongtianzhuang village is outside the Scenic Area so the local government did not permit the tour route to Dongtianzhuang. Everyone on the boat knew that they were somehow offending the government regulations but none felt guilty. The tour guide explained that his “disobedience” and “skip off” the entrance fee was not only for the purpose of lowering the tour cost but also to offer his customers an authentic tour of “real Baiyangdian scenery and rurality” (S. M. Han, 21 June 2007, personal communication).

The boatman, who was from another village in Lake Baiyangdian, introduced Dongtianzhuang as a “real” Baiyangdian village. With vast water area growing reeds and lotus plants, this village represents the typical Baiyangdian landscapes. Moreover, Dongtianzhuang villagers have retained traditional methods for cultivating lotus, weaving reeds and fishing so that the village had authentic Baiyangdian folk customs. The tourist group leader and his colleagues preferred to stay in the village, which has a real taste of “rurality”, to see the “original” Baiyangdian, rather than to see the

“designed”, “artificial” spots in Lake Baiyangdian (S. F. Gao, 22 June 2007, personal communication).

5.4 Summation

From field studies in these villages, some words, i.e. “real”, “original”, “authentic”, “rurality”, “designed” and “artificial” were repeatedly mentioned and discussed by the tour guide, the boatman, the tour group leader and his colleagues, as well as the farmhouse owners, village cadres and tourism officers. Their talking implies that they regard ecotourism as the same as rural tourism. This might be because tourism activities in these three villages are based on natural landscapes that are very fragile and sensitive to changes in the natural environment. In addition, all of the tourism activities in these villages are related to rurality in that local residents combine agricultural/farming production activities with their routine lives, which include traditional folk customs.

Comparing the two villages in the Lake Baiyangdian area, Dongtianzhuang village has more tourism resources with typical Baiyangdian rurality. Both villages developed rural tourism programmes based on their unique natural scenery and Baiyangdian folk customs. Both of the villages separated their rural tourism development projects from their village communities and managed their rural tourism programmes as village collective enterprises. Moreover, both villages were selected as pilots for rural tourism programmes and initiated rural tourism programmes with government policy and financial support, as well as technique assistance. However, as regional tourism development continued in Lake Baiyangdian, Wangjiashai village was deleted from the recommended tourist route in the Baiyangdian Scenic Area, despite its rural tourism

programme being designed and developed as one of the tourist spots in the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. At the same time, a “black market” of ecotourism emerged in Dongtianzhuang village, beyond the control of local tourism authorities. This “black market” was developed fully by the villagers, the tour guides, and the tourists, based on their understanding and pursuing of “authentic” and “real” Baiyangdian scenery and folk customs.

Comparatively, rural tourism programmes in Zhalaying village are also highly integrated with ecotourism and folk cultural tourism activities. Despite tourism activities in Zhalaying village that emerged after the establishment of the tourist zone, which was invested in by the government, rural tourism activities such as horse riding and farmhouse accommodation services were developed through interactions between Zhalaying villagers and tourists. Therefore, rural tourism programmes involved most of the villagers, changed the economic structure and improved living conditions in the village. However, the dramatic growth of rural tourism challenged the carrying capacity of the village; there was inadequate tourism infrastructure in the village and over-grazing of grassland, while unskilled villagers were working in tourism businesses. On the one hand, the village actively requested government support in rural tourism development; on the other hand, the farmhouse owners and owners of horses developed stable and long-term relationships with their guests. The village attracted returning and loyal tourists because of its vast natural grassland and its hospitality with authentic Manchu folk customs. Based on long-term, stable relationships between guests and host

families, Zhalaying had successfully converted tourists into investors of rural tourism businesses in the village.

In one sentence, through investigating the real situation of rural tourism development in these villages, village profiles were discovered, including the demographic information about the villages, the natural and social resources for rural tourism development in the villages, the rural tourism programmes initiated and operated in the villages, etc. These villages showed similar patterns in terms of “authenticity” and “rurality” of rural tourism resources. This might explain why urban residents preferred to go for holidays in rural tourism destinations. It also confirmed that nature and authenticity are two basic elements of rural tourism. However, rural tourism programmes in these three villages exhibit different patterns and different performance in terms of sustainable development. Such differences induced two questions: Why are there such differences between the rural tourism development in these villages? What are the causes of these differences? These questions were answered through further field studies in these villages. Through investigating the initiation and development of rural tourism programmes in these villages, it was found that these villages demonstrated different patterns of governing rural tourism development in the past 20 years. The causes of such different patterns of rural tourism destination governance are analysed in the following chapters: Chapters 6, 7 and 8.

Chapter 6 Governance in initiation and implementation of rural tourism development programmes

This chapter reports on the research findings of the investigation of the initiation and implementation of rural tourism development programmes in the villages, i.e. Zhalaying, Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang. All these villages initiated rural tourism programmes in the late 1990s and early 2000s, with pro-tourism policy support, financial aid and technique assistance from local government. After about 10 years, as reported in Chapter 5, these three villages were observed to have huge gaps in sustainable tourism development. Therefore, further field studies were focused on investigating the process of rural tourism programme initiation and implementation in these villages.

Based on the constant comparison of the patterns of rural tourism development in these villages, as reported in Chapter 4, it was discovered that all the villages have developed scenic-spot-based rural tourism programmes but with different patterns of government intervention in their initiation, implementation and management. Zhalaying village showed bottom-up development patterns in the opening of grassland tourism in the village; there was spontaneous host-guest cooperation in developing tourist activities and farmhouse accommodation services, and in investing in rural tourism businesses, without any government interference. By comparison, Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang showed top-down development patterns in the initiation and implementation of folk tourism development programmes in those villages. The field studies discovered that active government intervention significantly affected rural

tourism development in these two villages and the changing public policy or rural tourism development brought different outcomes to the villages. Apparently, all these villages encountered a similar dilemma, which involved the intervention of local government and the legitimacy of the village community in the decision-making of rural tourism development. It seems that the scope and scale of government intervention in rural tourism development programmes affected the governance model of rural tourism destinations. At the same time, village community participation in the initiation and management of rural tourism programmes significantly eased the conflicts and worked to consolidate cooperation between the village community and the other stakeholders of rural tourism destinations.

This chapter firstly presents the patterns of the initiation and implementation of rural tourism development programmes in each of the villages. Then, it compares and categorises these patterns to identify three governance models: bureaucracy governance, commune governance and community-based governance. These governance models changed over the different stages of rural tourism development and the result was hybrid-governance patterns in these villages. The changing governance models illustrate how government intervention affected village decision-making regarding rural tourism development. Various interactions between government intervention and village community participation in the development of rural tourism programmes constitute different models of rural tourism destination governance. A further comparison of these governance models reveals that local government has played a dominant role in rural tourism development, but the capacity of village self-governance significantly

contributes to the patterns of rural tourism destination governance and, hence, the performance of rural tourism sustainability.

6.1 Spontaneous development of Zhalaying rural tourism

Zhalaying rural tourism businesses developed as by-products of the opening of a government-invested tourist zone, whose aim was to attract outside investment to the county. The opening of this tourist region exposed the unique grassland landscape, the moderate climate, herdsman folklore customs and the rural/farming lifestyle to visitors. Consequently, communication and interaction occurred naturally between the visitors and villagers. Without any particular design or development plan, rural tourism activities spontaneously emerged, in the late 1980s, in Zhalaying and its neighbouring villages, located within the First Grassland.

6.1.1 Local government intervention in tourism development

To understand the role of government in rural tourism development, further field studies focused on the perceptions of local people, i.e. villagers, village cadres, governmental officers, tourism investors, frequent visitors, etc. All the data obtained from field observation, interviews, focus groups, government documents, etc. show that local government developed the First Grassland tourist zone as a platform to attract investment for pursuing GDP growth. The local government tourism development plan did not design or plan rural tourism programmes particularly, but rural tourism emerged spontaneously to meet the demands of tourism. Local government then managed rural tourism programmes as by-products of the government-invested tourism development programmes. As rural tourism grew rapidly, local government adopted industrial

regulations and development planning as intervention tools to guide rural tourism development towards the goal of economic growth.

6.1.1.1 Develop tourism as a platform for attracting outside investment

The county government established the First Grassland tourist zone as a tourism development project in the late 1980s and actively promoted it as the “Backyard Garden of Beijing” and “a must of the tourist route that connects Beijing and Inner Mongolia”. A Beijing newspaper introduced the First Grassland as an ideal summer resort in 1989. In the 1990s, 18 documentary videos were shown on media such as China Central TV, Hebei TV and Chengde TV. The county government also launched an official website to promote grassland tourism in the early 2000s and labelled it as “ecotourism”. Such efforts in tourism marketing consequently increased tourists to and investments in Fengning County, as reported in Chapter 5.

Further field studies revealed that local government has stressed the promotion of government-initiated tourism development programmes but neglected rural tourism development in the villages. With the aim of creating opportunities for rapid growth of GDP, the county government invited experts from the Water Resource Ministry, the Forest Ministry and the Chengde Municipal Electricity Bureau to investigate water and forest resources in Fengning Bashang Grassland. During this investigation, experts stayed with rural households in Zhalaying village. They found the beautiful natural grassland around the village and the simple, quiet and peaceful lifestyle to be entirely different from that in the cities. After that, the Jingbei First Grassland was set up in 1987 (J. H. Li, 17 May 2007, personal communication).

A similar claim was made by a focus group that involved village cadres and villagers in discussing government support in Zhalaying rural tourism development; they believed that the opening of the First Grassland triggered Zhalaying rural tourism development. However, the village cadres attributed the regional tourism development to local people pursuing it for “the increase of income” and “the improvement of their living conditions” (R. Luo, D. Sun, & G. H. Hou, 29 June 2008, personal communication). This corresponds with the widely observed phenomenon in China in the early 1990s, that local government adopted tourism as a new “growth pole” of regional development and initiated tourism development programmes as platforms to attract investments to stimulate economic growth.

6.1.1.2 Manage rural tourism as a by-product of the First Grassland

Rural tourism was a by-product of the First Grassland. The villages were not informed of the tourism development projects in the area but rural tourism activities spontaneously emerged in the villages without any particular design or plan. Such statements were made in the interviews with Zhalaying villagers and village cadres, and then were confirmed by the officers of higher-level tourism authorities (see informants in Appendix 1: Informants list, on page 449). All the interviewed villagers complained that they were not informed of the tourism development projects or programmes in the First Grassland. Instead, they heard such news through informal channels, i.e. relatives or friends in government. After the county government established the Jingbei First Grassland Resort Hotel on the Zhalaying village collective grassland, the villagers

cooperated with the tourists and created grassland recreational activities, such as horse riding and farmhouse accommodation services, in and around the village.

The field studies discovered that the county government actively promoted tourism development to attract investment to the area but involved none of the villagers in the initial stages of the tourism development programmes in the area. After the experts investigated in Zhalaying village, the county government held the Bashang Grassland Exploitation and Development Conference at the site of Zhalaying village. Soon after this, the Jingbei First Grassland Resort Hotel was built on bare land, owned collectively by the village, that is about one kilometre north-east of village dwelling area. That resort hotel was the first outside investment in the Fengning tourism industry. The co-investors were Fengning County Tourism Bureau, North China Petroleum Administration and Beijing Zhongyuan Hotel (J. H. Li, 17 June 2007; R. Luo, D. Sun, & G. H. Hou, 29 June 2008, personal communication).

Nothing regarding the Zhalaying rural tourism activities was arranged officially or formally. Some frequent visitors from Beijing, who witnessed the growth of Zhalaying rural tourism, made this similar comment: “visitors to the Resort Hotel asked herdsmen to provide horse riding and simple food and bed accommodation to them” (H. S. Liu & H. B. Zhang, 18 May 2007, personal communication). This indicates that the Resort Hotel was the first tourism business on the land of Zhalaying village, but that the investors and management were outsiders from Beijing and higher tourism authorities. None of the Zhalaying villagers was involved in either development planning or

implementation of this tourism project. However, Zhalaying villagers and the tourists actively cooperated to develop rural tourism activities in the village.

6.1.1.3 Establish rural tourism industrial regulations and development planning

As the local government expected, the First Grassland attracted increasing investments in amusement parks and holiday resorts in the area. It stimulated the rapid growth of rural tourism activities, i.e. farmhouse hostels, riding/racing horses, grassland motorcycles, street vendors, etc., that were beyond what the county government had anticipated. As rural tourism emerged in the First Grassland tourist zone, local governments adopted tourism industrial regulations and development planning as intervention tools to guide tourism development towards the goal of economic growth in Fengning County. In 1995, the Fengning county government issued “The Regulation of Tourism Management”. In 2000, the Chengde Municipal government issued the master plan of Chengde tourism development and identified tourism as the “pillar industry” of Chengde economy. The plan guided the county government to provide policy and financial support actively to tourism businesses in the First Grassland. In 2001, the county government registered the trademark for “Jingbei Diyi Caoyuan”, which was the first county-government-owned trademark of the tourist zone in Hebei Province. In 2002, the First Grassland was graded as a national “4A-grade” tourist spot by the national tourism authority. In 2005, this tourist zone completed the certification for ISO9000 quality and ISO14000 environmental system; this effectively improved the quality of its tourism service and its care of the environment (Z. P. Zhang, 28 June 2008, email communication).

In 2005, the county government established a specialised tourism management committee to coordinate the relevant departments assisting in the development of tourism programmes. This committee consisted of the county head and directors of relevant tourism departments, acted as a coordinator and dominated the overall arrangements of tourism policies and regulations. It set up an office in the First Grassland to coordinate multiple departments to manage the tourism market jointly. It issued a series of tourism development policies and regulations, and established industrial standards and specific standards for rural tourism services in the First Grassland. Such legalisation regulated rural tourism development effectively in Fengning County and, consequently, the First Grassland became an important tourist destination in the Beijing-Tianjin region and, in 2007, was named “Hebei Scenic Charm” (Z. P. Zhang, 28 June 2013, email communication).

Statistics data from Fengning Agriculture and Animal Husbandry Bureau also show that the First Grassland has significantly enhanced accommodation capacity. By the end of 2010, the tourist zone had established three large amusement parks and employed about 5,000 tourism workers. There were a total of 38 resort hotels with an average capacity for accommodating about 200 guests per night; in addition, there were 525 farmhouse hotels, which could each accommodate about 10 to 20 guests per night. Therefore, in the summer of 2010, the total accommodation capacity reached 8,000 beds per night, accommodated about 100 million visitors in the year and achieved annual tourism revenue of about 230 million Yuan in 2010. Although most of the tourism revenue were generated by the outsider-invested resort hotels, this consequently increased income

opportunities for local herdsmen and peasants. About 3,000 riding horses were engaged in tourism services and that activity contributed about 85 per cent of the herdsmen's household net income in 2010 (Geng, Wang, & Ge, 2012).

All data from the county government and from Chinese tourism literature show that the development of the First Grassland tourist zone has successfully achieved the goal of “bringing outside investment to the area and creating more income opportunities for the local people” (W. D. Bai, 19 June 2007; Z. Q. Li & G. Z. Cao, 28 May 2008, personal communication). According to the officers of local tourism authorities, the First Grassland attracted investment to the tourism industry that generated more jobs and income opportunities for the local people. However, they also admitted that the First Grassland was planned as an ecotourism development programme, with the focus on investment in resort hotels and amusement parks, but without any particular plan for rural tourism activities.

To summarise, all the data show that government intervention was apparent in the initiation, management and development of the First Grassland tourist zone. The county government acted in multiple roles in tourism development but was absent in the initiation of rural tourism development programmes. It was the sole decision-maker, the active advocate and promoter of tourism projects in the First Grassland to attract outside investment. It was also an investor and management party of the big tourism projects from the late 1980s to the early 1990s. In addition, local government was the only policy-maker and provider of industrial standards for tourism services. Obviously, with a focus on GDP growth, the local government stressed “attracting investment” to the

First Grassland but did not make any development plan for rural tourism within the First Grassland. Consequently, when rural tourism businesses spontaneously emerged, the local government was absent in the supply of policy or guidelines for rural tourism development.

6.1.2 Host–guest cooperation in initiating rural tourism activities

Zhalaying rural tourism activities developed through cooperative interactions between the villagers and the tourists to the First Grassland. In response to requests from the tourists, Zhalaying villagers offered horse-riding services and farmhouse accommodation as supplementary tourism products in the government-invested tourist zone. In these tourist activities, hosts and guests interacted for their mutual interest of rural tourism development. The cooperative interaction between the villagers and the guests helped them develop friendly host–guest relationships, which embodied trust and reciprocal respect and are the core attraction of a rural tourism destination, e.g. Zhalaying village.

As a consequence of the establishment of the government-invested resort hotels in the First Grassland tourist zone in 1987, rural tourism businesses, i.e. horse riding and farmhouse accommodation, emerged in Zhalaying village and spread to the villages of Datan. This statement is backed up by stories told by the Zhalaying villagers and frequent visitors to Zhalaying village. More details are shown in Appendix 2: Zhalaying village interview data, on page 454. However, in those days, although the villagers had no problem in earning “three meals a day”, they were “short of money” to improve their living conditions or to give their children better education. Most rural households lived

in simple and crude farmhouses; only a few households had spare rooms and extra food to offer to guests (R. Luo, D. Sun, & G. H. Hou, 28 June 2008, personal communication). There are more such statements in the data from the focus group with village cadres, as displayed in Appendix 2: Zhalaying village interview data, 5. Zhalaying focus group, 29 June on page 454.

The interview data and focus group discussion show that, when domestic tourists extended their holiday trips to Zhalaying village, the villagers were not “equipped” well for running family businesses, which are now called “rural tourism businesses”. To accommodate “guests” rather than “tourists”, the villagers cleaned their “spare bedrooms” and prepared their special farmer meals and local delicacies for their “guests from Beijing”. The villagers had no “consciousness” or “concept” even of charging “guests” for “food and beds”. That was not part of their folk culture of “hospitality” and “friendship”. The visitors to Zhalaying village were overwhelmed by the kindness, charm and hospitality of the local people (J. H. Li, 17 June 2007, personal communication). It seems, at that time, friendship and hospitality were the core of the host–guest relationship.

Investigation of the initiation of Zhalaying horse-riding services reveals that villagers were involved in tourism services and businesses but in response to the requests from guests who stayed in the Grassland Resort. The village cadres also confirmed that the visitors to Zhalaying village, at the very beginning, were tourists that stayed at the Resort Hotel. It seems that, after the horse riders and herdsman had realised their mutual interests, the reciprocal agreement was made between them and they cooperatively

innovated Zhalaying rural tourism activities and services. Here, emerged a question: Why did the guests prefer the simple food and bed services in the farmhouses rather than the standard services in the professionally managed Resort Hotel? “Cheap” might have been a reason, considering the cost of Chinese domestic tourism in those days. However, some frequent visitors to Zhalaying village gave another reason: the trust involved in the personal host–guest relationship.

The host–guest relationship with friendship, trust and reciprocal respect offers the intrinsic value of Zhalaying rural tourism services. It drew guests from the Resort Hotel to Zhalaying village. As a frequent visitor to Zhalaying village and someone who enjoyed the fun of riding horses, the manager of a property management company in Beijing stated, “Staying in farmhouses is something like visiting relatives and friends in a home town. It is not only a weekend for riding a horse but also a holiday to meet relatives and friends here” (H. S. Liu, 17 June 2006, personal communication).

Similarly, Liu’s colleague reckoned that many visitors from large cities came to the Grassland Resort for “a relaxed weekend”. “Whenever I am tired or annoyed about the work in the company, I just want to come back to the village” (H. B. Zhang, 17 June 2006, personal communication). “To escape from the restlessly crowded city” was their apparent purpose (H. S. Liu, 17 June 2006, personal communication). Therefore, these tourists came to the villages looking for the “true me” feelings of a “return to nature” and of going “back to the home town”.

From conversations with the frequent visitors in the village, it was not difficult to understand that Zhalaying visitors not only cared about the rural landscape so that they

could keep a connection with nature but also tried to know more about the local people to maintain a connection with the traditions. In this context, when the guests of the First Grassland Resort Hotel met the herdsmen for horse riding, their intensive interactions during horse-riding activities soon developed into personal connections for friendship. Based on such friendship, trust and reciprocal relationships were established between hosts and guests. As the frequent visitor declared, “I’d not bargain with villagers, just let them arrange my stay, they are trustworthy” (H. S. Liu, 17 June 2006, personal communication). This trusting and reciprocal host–guest relationship kept guests visiting Zhalaying village regularly, and formed the basis of the Zhalaying model of rural tourism businesses, that is, guest–host joint-venture investment and operation of rural tourism businesses.

6.1.3 Host–guest joint-venture investment and operation of rural tourism businesses

Outside capital was another critical contributor to the rapid growth of Zhalaying rural tourism in the 1990s. The stable host–guest relationships encouraged Zhalaying guests to bring outside resources to the village. Some guests loaned money to the host families to renovate their residential properties or to build new farmhouses. Some frequent visitors directly invested in farmhouses and horse riding, and then became partners in the tourism businesses in Zhalaying village. Both the villagers and the tourists believed that this kind of investment was not only for money but also for personal connection with the local people.

Zhalaying farmhouse services emerged with horse-riding/racing services in 1991 and 1992. In those years, Zhalaying villagers used to charge the guests about 20 Yuan per person per day for a bed and meals. It was a very low price (G. H. Hou, 28 June 2008, personal communication). Although Zhalaying villagers realised that farmhouse businesses could bring extra cash income, they had no money to build new properties to accommodate tourists. In 1993, a Beijing guest spent about 70,000 Yuan to construct a farmhouse on the residential land of his host family in Zhalaying village. That was the first host–guest joint-venture tourism investment in the village. After that, Zhalaying villagers developed more farmhouses and horse-riding clubs with investments from their guests (G. H. Hou, 28 June 2008, personal communication; more details are shown in Appendix 2, on page 459).

Host–guest joint-venture investment and operation is a model that is typical of Zhalaying rural tourism businesses. The tourists became the investors, based on their stable personal relationships with the host families in Zhalaying village. Most of these tourists were fans of horse riding. They visited the village regularly at weekends and intended to own farmhouses for recreational purposes. According to the land law, however, only registered villagers were eligible to own residential land and the properties on it. Therefore, some host families and guests cooperated to invest in farmhouse businesses jointly. Some tourists bought horses from the villagers and hired villagers to look after these horses in summer (G. H. Hou, 28 June 2008, personal communication). The host–guest relationships began as friendships and developed into joint-venture partnerships in rural tourism businesses. This kind of host–guest

cooperative interactions helped Zhalaying village maintain the tourist flow successfully since 1993.

6.1.4 Cooperation between government, village community and tourists in initiation of rural tourism development

In the initiation and development of Zhalaying rural tourism, the intensive interaction and cooperation between the local government, the village community and the tourists demonstrated bottom-up development patterns. The villagers and tourists cooperatively initiated Zhalaying rural tourism activities, based on the government-invested tourism development programmes. Although the local government played multiple roles in the initiation and management of tourism development, it was absent in the initiation of specific rural tourism businesses in the villages. Rural tourism activities emerged to meet the tourist demand. Consequently, Zhalaying rural tourism businesses developed spontaneously without government intervention.

The development of Zhalaying rural tourism relied critically on the development of the tourist zone. In managing the tourist zone, the local government limited its administrative intervention to policy support and destination marketing, rather than designating a physical boundary of the tourist zone. None of the villages within the tourist zone was constitutionally excluded from rural tourism development opportunities. This “no boundary” strategy allowed the villages in the area to compete on an equal basis for the development of rural tourism businesses. It enabled villagers and tourists to innovate rural tourism products and services in the tourist zone cooperatively. Consequently, rural tourism developed spontaneously in the area as a

“matching of market demands with tourism supply” rather than a government-designed or dominated rural tourism development programme.

Zhalaying rural tourism development was based on rural tourism activities initiated by the villagers and tourists. It was an example of a bottom-up development model where the village community dominates the decision-making processes of rural tourism businesses in the village. Zhalaying villagers responded actively to the tourists’ requests for recreational activities and accommodation services, suited to the domestic tourist demand at that time. Without specific government guidelines for rural tourism development programmes, the villagers innovatively developed host–guest relationships. They involved guests in the design of rural tourism activities and services, and in tourism business investment and management in the village. Such involvement enabled tourists to share their information and cutting-edge knowledge with the village community; for example, returning guests helped host families use computers and access the Internet and that allowed host families market their rural tourism businesses online and improve their learning capabilities.

The community-based development model is another contributor to the success of Zhalaying rural tourism. Zhalaying farmhouse businesses were located on the bases of villagers’ residential properties in the village. New farmhouses with guests’ investment were on residential lands rather than on the agricultural land or natural grasslands. The increased number of farmhouses expanded the scope of the village but they were still used as villagers’ residential properties within the village neighbourhood. Therefore, the farmhouse businesses continued to have intensive social interactions with their

neighbours so as to conserve their traditional folk customs, rural lifestyle and close neighbourhood relationships. In this way, the development of rural tourism has consolidated the village neighbourhood community and increased social resources for rural tourism development in the village.

Extensive participation in rural tourism also helped the village maintain its reputation for fairness in village development. Nearly all the Zhalaying villagers were engaged in rural tourism businesses. Although agriculture was still a key component of the village economy, the majority of Zhalaying households earned more from rural businesses than from cultivating lands. The villagers who did not own tourism businesses were involved in rural tourism services during the tourism seasons. They took jobs as chefs, kitchen hands, local tour guides and riding guides. Villagers who did not have the ability to serve in rural tourism could earn extra household income through selling agricultural produce and local special farming products to the farmhouse owners and their guests. Moreover, the decision-making process of rural tourism development was transparent in Zhalaying village. The land development contracts were signed by the village self-governance committee with the investors but only after the issues had been discussed and approved by villagers' meetings. Therefore, it can be concluded that the community-based governance involved in the initiation and development of Zhalaying rural tourism programmes contributed to a large extent to the sustainable development of the village.

6.2 Failure of the top-down development of the Wangjiazhai rural tourism

In comparison with Zhalaying rural tourism, Wangjiazhai rural tourism shows no significant pattern of sustainable development. The village based its rural tourism on a folk tourism programme that the government initiated in one of the tourist spots in the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. This folk tourism programme enjoyed rapidly increasing tourist numbers from 2002 to 2006. However, this Folk Village was removed from the recommended tourist route in the Scenic Area in 2006, when the Scenic Area was graded as a “5A-grade” national tourist zone. Since then, the Folk Village was excluded from the official marketing system of the Scenic Area and lost its “priority” position in the Baiyangdian rural tourism market. Despite a few returning visitors, visitor numbers to the Folk Village declined dramatically.

Table 9: Tourist numbers in Wangjiazhai Folk Village (2002-2010)

Year	Number of farmhouses	Number of tourists (person/night)
2002	11	1,000
2003	19	4,500
2004	19	10,000
2005	37	15,000
2006	37	13,000
2007	37	10,000
2008	37	10,000
2009	37	9,000
2010	37	8,500

As shown in Table 9, on page 230, tourist numbers to the Folk Village grew rapidly from 2002 to 2005 but there was a sudden decline in 2006 and the trend of decline continued after that year. Since then, rural tourism business owners started to advertise

the Wangjiazhai Folk Village individually via online communication tools, i.e. websites, blogs, WeChat, QQ, etc., as well as via personal social networks with urban people.

These data were obtained from interviews with the villagers who participated in the initiation and management of the Folk Village programme. What has happened to Wangjiazhai Folk Village since 2006? How and why did Wangjiazhai village lose its market position in the official marketing system of Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area?

These questions emerged in the field study and the further research was then focused on the stakeholders of Wangjiazhai Folk Village. With theoretical sampling methods, more informants were identified and interviewed. These informants included owners of rural tourism businesses, villagers committee members, local tour guides, local tourism authority officers, returning tourists and villagers who did not participate in Wangjiazhai rural tourism businesses (see Appendix 1: Informants list, on page 449).

From the interviews, it was discovered that the market reputation of Wangjiazhai Folk Village was damaged by the various conflicts between stakeholders, including the village insiders and the village outsiders. “Village insiders” referred to Wangjiazhai villagers who had registered as rural residents in Wangjiazhai village while “village outsiders” referred to stakeholders without eligibility or legitimacy in managing village affairs, such as neighbouring villages, local government, rural tourism development planners, tourists, travel agents, etc. The interview data show that the initiation of the Wangjiazhai rural tourism programme aroused numerous conflicts between the village insiders, and between the village and the village outsiders. All these conflicts were caused by social exclusion from rural tourism development.

6.2.1 County government initiated Wangjiazhai Folk Village as a tourist spot

As Wangjiazhai villagers reported, some tourists discovered the natural scenery of Wangjiazhai village in the summer of 1998 (Boatman Zhao, 17 May 2008, personal communication). In early 2000, with support from the county government, the village cadres of Wangjiazhai visited some other rural tourism villages in Hebei Province and were convinced that rural tourism could improve both rural household incomes and the village living environment. In 2001, the leaders of Anxin County government inspected Wangjiazhai village and designed Wangjiazhai Folk Village as one of tourist spots in the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area (W. D. Wei & L. S. Wang, 17 May 2008; S. T. Wang, 18 May 2008; Z. C. Xin & X. L. He, 27 June 2010, personal communication).

This Scenic Area hosted five big tourism projects and four supplementary tourist spots, as shown in Figure 11, on page 233. Each of these projects was designed with a specific theme and located in the centre of the Scenic Area. For example, Yuanfei Lotus Garden and the Grand Lotus Park were designed to be sightseeing places, showing the unique Baiyangdian landscape of lotus ponds among reed beds, and the spices from lotus that are considered to be precious across the world. Comparatively, the supplementary tourist attractions were small and located at the periphery of the Scenic Area. These small tourist spots were also designed by the local tourism authority but invested in and operated by local villagers. One of these supplementary tourist spots was Wangjiazhai Folk Village.

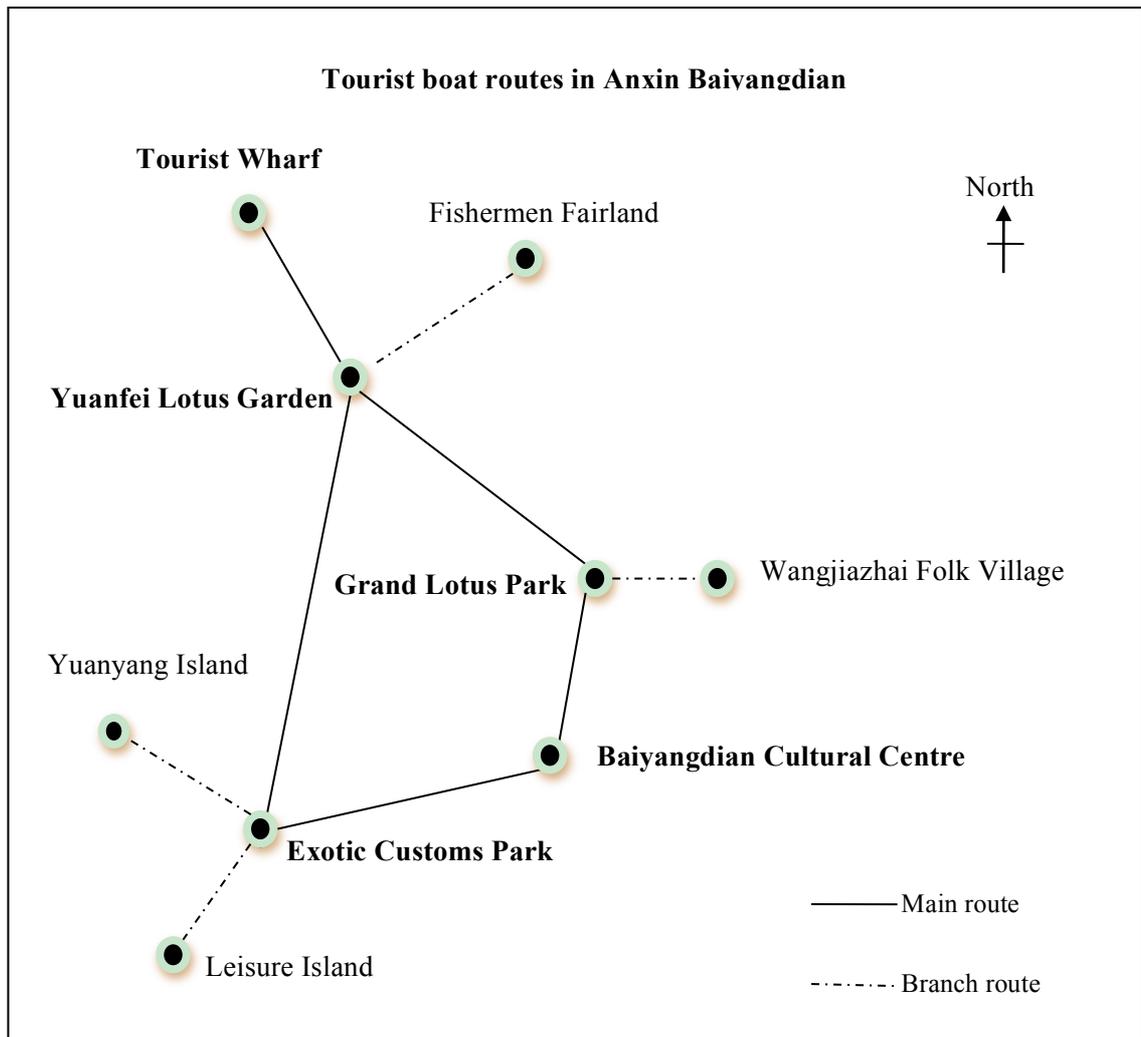


Figure 11: Tourist boat routes in Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area

Source: Adapted from the information board posted at the tourist pier of Wangjiazhai Folk Village

It shows that all the tourist spots – the big tourism projects and the supplementary spots – were accessible only by boat. A circular route of scheduled boats connected the five big tourist spots. From these big spots, branch routes for boats, operated by local villagers, took tourists to the small supplementary attractions. The Folk Village was at the periphery of the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. As a supplementary tourist spot, it was next to the Grand Lotus Park that was one of the big tourism projects in the Scenic Area. However, in contrast to the Grand Lotus Park that was managed as a theme park by the local tourism authority, Wangjiazhai Folk Village was designed by the local

tourism administration authorities, invested in, constructed and operated by individual households but managed as a village collective enterprise by the Wangjiazhai villagers committee.

6.2.2 Village cadres manipulated the implementation of the Wangjiazhai Folk Village project

The government-designed Wangjiazhai Folk Village did not involve the village community in the initiation of the rural tourism programmes; the village cadres manipulated the implementation of this programme in Wangjiazhai village. With county government policy and financial support, the village party branch secretary, Wei, persuaded the village party cadres to accept the Folk Village programme and forced the villagers committee¹ to agree to build the Folk Village on a bare island, owned by a village collective but outside of the village. The villagers committee made an explicit policy to compel the village community to accept this project. Only the registered rural residents of Wangjiazhai village were eligible to join this programme. The courtyard house investor could use the residential land for free but needed to spend about 150,000 Yuan to build a designed residential property. In addition, the investor held the ownership of the property but had to join the Folk Village rural tourism programme to provide accommodation services to tourists in the tourism season (L. S. Wang & W. D. Wei, 17 May 2008; X. F. Xin, 28 June 2010, personal communication).

¹ The villagers committee is the grassroots organisation for villagers' self-management, self-education, self-service, democratic elections, democratic decision-making, democratic management and democratic supervision. It takes the responsibility to manage the village's public affairs and public welfare, mediate civil disputes, maintain public order, report villagers' opinions and demands to the People's Government, and to make suggestions ("Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of the People's Republic of China," 1998).

Despite the government financial support and village incentive policy, Wangjiazhai villagers did not actively accept the Folk Village project. They were reluctant to join this programme because of a “lack of money to invest” and because they were “worried about the uncertainty of the programme” (X. F. Xin, 28 June 2010, personal communication). Interviews with other villagers, e.g. the former manager of the Folk Village, the current manager of the Folk Village, courtyard house owners and the village cadre, confirmed this statement. It seems that Wangjiazhai villagers suspended the government-designed and supported rural tourism programme in the village. In this circumstance, the village party branch secretary requested the village cadres to join the rural tourism development programme as a “task” assigned by the party (X. L. He, 28 June 2010, personal communication). The village party cadres joined the programme to convince the villagers that the rural tourism project would bring benefits to the investors and to the whole village (Z. C. Xin, 28 June 2010, personal communication). This indicates that the rural tourism development programme of Wangjiazhai Folk Village was “top-designed” by the village communist party branch and “promoted” by the village cadres.

The village collectives constructed infrastructure on the island to encourage villagers to join the Folk Village programme. After a concrete sealed road was built on the island, the Folk Village programme received the first investment application from Wangjiazhai villagers. However, the courtyard house owner claimed that his family joined this programme because it was a good deal. “My son needs a new house for his marriage, the residential land is free, and the village collectives constructed roads, power lines and

tap water with subsidies from the county government” (X. L. He, 28 June 2010, personal communication; more details in Appendix 3: Wangjiazhai village interview data, on page 463). This indicates that, for villagers like Mr He, the money spent on the courtyard house had no investment risk despite the fact that the return from tourism businesses in the Folk Village was uncertain. Apparently, being “short of money” was the obstacle for joining this programme. The other courtyard house owners admitted that the Folk Village programme was attractive to all the villagers, but it was affordable for only a few rural households. “None could build the courtyard house without debt. In those years, no bank loaned money to peasants, even borrowing money from relatives or friends was not easy since all villagers were short of money” (D. Wang, 18 May 2008, personal communication).

The biggest obstacle to the implementation of the Folk Village project was the uncertainty about the investment return. “Nobody knows whether the Folk Village can earn money or not. We joined this programme with the hope to make good money, but we also had taken the risk; if lost, we may be unable to pay the debt” (E. G. Wang, 18 May 2008, personal communication). Another courtyard house owner agreed on this. “My father was the village cadre and has been a party member for more than 40 years. When he was requested to be a leading sheep, I said no. At that time, we really could not foresee that we could earn the money back so soon” (Z. C. Xin, 28 June 2010, personal communication). Some other villagers and older boatmen told a similar story. Only the rural households that “have money or can borrow money”, or “have relationships” were able to participate in the programme while “most of the villagers

were still struggling for food and clothes; they had no economic capability to join this programme” (Boatman Zhao, 18 May 2008, personal communication).

Further interviews with villagers who did not join the Folk Village found that they deemed it inconvenient to live in the Folk Village. “The Folk Village is isolated from the village dwelling area. The owners stay there only during the tourism season but have to return to the main island in winter because heating the guest rooms in the courtyard costs too much” (L. S. Wang, 18 May 2008, personal communication). However, they admitted that villagers who did not join the programme also benefited from the development of rural tourism, especially the women and older men in the village.

Women could earn money by weaving reed mats and making herbal tea for the tourists, and the older boatmen could rebuild their boats to earn their daily expenses from boating tourists. Even the families that made a living from agriculture or horticulture could earn more money by selling vegetables and tofu to the Folk Village.

Through interviews with participants and non-participants of the Folk Village programme in Wangjiazhai, it was discovered that villagers were reluctant to join the rural tourism development programme because of “unawareness of the project”, “uncertainty in the investment return” and “shortage of money to invest”. This implies that Wangjiazhai villagers did not actively accept and join the rural tourism development programme because they learned little about it. In addition, the villagers were not aware and did not know about rural tourism development at that time. In this context, they decided not to join the rural tourism development programme at the very beginning, as they did not anticipate the rapid growth of rural tourism businesses in the

Wangjiazhai Folk Village. However, the increasing number of visitors to Wangjiazhai Folk Village in the years of 2003 and 2004, as reported in Table 9: Tourist numbers in Wangjiazhai Folk Village (2002-2010) on page 230, showed that there were significant potential benefits for the courtyard house owners. It induced the desire for investment in rural tourism and encouraged more villagers to apply to join this programme. The villagers committee prudently estimated the tourist flows for the next few years and proposed the second project to add another 18 courtyard houses on a small island next to the first project, as shown in Figure 9: Wangjiazhai village satellite map, on page 198. The rural tourism businesses in the Folk Village reached their peak in 2005, with a total of 37 Baiyangdian courtyard houses opened to tourists and an average income of about 20,000 to 30,000 Yuan per courtyard house.

Increasing earnings in the Folk Village enlarged the income gaps between the courtyard house owners and the villagers who did not participate in the programme. More villagers applied to join the Folk Village programme but there was no space to add another courtyard house in the Folk Village, nor other bare islands to build residential property. Considering tourist flows and agricultural land reservation, the villagers committee decided to keep the Folk Village at its current size. This decision aroused complaints and numerous conflicts within the village community.

To ease the village's internal conflicts, the villagers committee accepted the rural tourism development plan initiated by the provincial tourism administration in 2006.

With financial and technique assistance from the provincial tourism administration and coordination by the higher-level government, tourism development planners from a

local university inspected the village and made a specific plan for Wangjiazhai rural tourism development. The plan focused clearly on the improvement of infrastructure and construction of tourism service capacity in the main village to give villagers more opportunities to participate in rural tourism businesses. However, this plan was criticised as “idealistic” rather than “practical” (L. S. Wang, 18 May 2008, personal communication). Only three village cadres participated in the planning but they reacted strongly against the specific plan and believed that the village was not capable of implementing it. Obviously, in the process of Wangjiazhai rural tourism planning, the local tourism authorities and planners dominated the decision-making. The village community learned nothing about this planning programme and it seemed as though it did not ease the tensions between the tourism-participant and the non-participant rural households in Wangjiazhai village.

The growing conflicts between tourism participants and non-participants in the village community aggravated the disputes between the two committees and consequently resulted in frequent changes in the Wangjiazhai Folk Village management system. As reported in 5.2.3, on page 198, the Folk Village management model had been changed three times by the year of 2010. After its opening in 2002, the Folk Village was managed as a village collective enterprise under the leadership of the villagers committee. Then, it was contracted jointly to a few courtyard house owners in 2008 but this joint contract was terminated in the spring of 2010. After that, the Folk Village was operated by courtyard house owners as a number of private businesses, without any

administration or supervision from the villagers committee. Such frequent changes in the management system badly impeded Wangjiazhai rural tourism development.

6.2.3 Dilemma of Wangjiazhai Folk Village

It seems that Wangjiazhai Folk Village became a dilemma of tourism destination management. “No one manages it” (L. S. Wang & X. L. He, 28 June 2010, personal communication). As a rural tourism development programme, the Folk Village was initiated by the county government, designed as one of tourist spots in the Scenic Area, invested in by individual villagers with private investments, developed on the islands owned collectively by the village, and managed as a village collective enterprise with a united management system. After the Folk Village had lost government support and its priority market position as a rural tourism destination, the united management system was replaced by a contracted management system. However, this contracted management system did not work well. Without individual courtyard owners’ cooperation, the current Folk Village manager was not able to coordinate 37 courtyard houses as a united body of rural tourism business. Moreover, the Folk Village involved multiple components of investment, i.e. local government, the village collective economy, private investment, etc.; therefore, none of the villagers had the right to claim private ownership or individual management authority. Such a dilemma for Wangjiazhai Folk Village development required further analysis of the causes and the solutions.

Why did the local governmental initiative of the Wangjiazhai rural tourism programme fall into the dilemma of development and management? Interviewed Wangjiazhai

villagers insisted that the problem should be attributed to the cut-throat competition between the courtyards in the Folk Village, the frequent shifts of village leadership, and the increasing disputes and conflicts within the whole village. Since two groups of villagers had struggled against each other for power in the village, the re-election had failed to set up the new villagers committee in 2008. Since then, the villagers committee had been paralysed. Only a few party members were coordinating the village affairs (X. L. He, Z. C. Xin, & X. F. Xin, 27 June 2010; L. S. Wang & W. D. Wei, 28 June 2010, personal communication). It means that there was no legitimate village self-governance organisation in Wangjiazhai at that time.

What was the essential conflict between the two groups of Wangjiazhai villagers? Was it anything to do with rural tourism development? The answer was revealed through further interviews with Wangjiazhai villagers. Some villagers believed that unequal opportunities for participation in rural tourism development triggered the conflicts within the village community. The key complaint was that “only the village elites who have money or relationships with the leaders joined the programme and benefited from rural tourism”. “The Folk Village is a collective enterprise of the whole village, but it benefits only a few able people” (Boatman Zhao, 19 May 2008, personal communication). It seemed that villagers with no investment capability were excluded from participation in the rural tourism development programme. Moreover, the villagers who lived on the main island were also excluded from development benefits, since “the village spent a lot of money on infrastructure improvement in the Folk Village but no money was spent on the main island” (S. D. Wang, 18 May 2008, personal

communication). Obviously, the non-participants of the Folk Village programme complained about the unfair distribution of rural tourism development benefits (S. T. Wang, 18 May 2008, personal communication). Such complaints imply that the local government initiatives of Wangjiazhai rural tourism development programme neither constitutionally secured a villager's equal right to participation in the process of rural tourism development nor institutionally guaranteed to distribute benefits from rural tourism among all the villagers in Wangjiazhai.

Further interviews were focused on the decision-making process of rural tourism development initiatives. They revealed that the focal dispute was the non-transparency in leasing the village collective reed and lotus fields to the developer of tourist spots in the Scenic Area in early 2000. It was a deal between the developer and the village head, guided by the county party committee head and coordinated by the county government. The village party branch secretary forced the villagers committee director to sign the contract to lease the reed beds and lotus ponds to the developers at a rate of 100 Yuan per mu per year, with a term of 50 years. In return, the county government supported the village to develop the Folk Village as a supplementary tourist spot in the Scenic Area. However, this deal was not processed through the normal procedure for decision-making in village affairs (see Figure 15: Normative operation of village public affairs in Anxin county, on page 311) but manipulated entirely by the village party branch secretary, without villagers' consensus or villager representatives' agreement. Some villagers were unwilling to lose their reed beds or lotus ponds; other villagers complained it was an unfair deal because the land rentals were relatively reasonable in

2002 but too low in the year of 2006 (Z. C. Xin, 28 June 2010, personal communication). Although Wei defended himself by the comment that “no one could foresee that the land rental would need to go up so quickly and so high nowadays” (W. D. Wei, 18 May 2008, personal communication), the villagers blamed him for the small rental earned from the collective lands. He was suspected of corruption in leasing village collective lands to the developers of Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. Some villagers argued that “the price of everything is going up, so should the land rental” (X. L. He, 27 June 2010, personal communication); other villagers questioned the fairness of the contract with a term of 50 years. The old village accountant sighed out: “it’s impossible to change the contract, neither the rentals nor the term” (X. F. Xin, 27 June 2010, personal communication).

It seemed that the villagers committee should be responsible for this village affair but, in fact, “the power was actually in Wei’s hands, and that was why the villagers accused Wei rather than the villagers committee in 2006” (L. S. Wang, 18 May 2008, personal communication). Villagers also accused Wei of misconduct in initiating the rural tourism programme of Wangjiazhai Folk Village. Villagers who could not participate in rural tourism programmes complained that the programme was benefiting only Wei and his relatives and friends, rather than the whole community of Wangjiazhai. Some courtyard owners also complained that Wei manipulated the programme unfairly to benefit a few courtyard owners. The villagers supported Wei and defended him by saying that “some villagers could not earn money from tourism development, and they are jealous of courtyard owners” (X. L. He, 28 June 2010, personal communication). It

seems that the complicated personal relationships in the village aggravated the conflicts between the rural tourism participants and non-participants and within the Folk Village.

The increasing disputes between the different groups of villagers caused frequent changes of village leadership and paralysed village public affairs. Being accused of corruption, the village party branch secretary resigned but the village party members failed to elect a new secretary. The higher-level government appointed the deputy director of the town party committee as the secretary of Wangjiazhai village party branch in 2006. As an outsider, however, the new secretary had little influence on the party members in the village, nor the ability to coordinate the two groups of villagers. The failure of the re-election of the villagers committee in 2007 resulted in the paralysed village self-governance organisation and threw the Folk Village into the dilemma. The village collective enterprise was operated as individual private businesses. The increased controversy between the courtyard owners intensified the tensions between the Folk Village and the village community.

To summarise, the above analysis shows that the Wangjiazhai rural tourism programmes were designed by the local government and implemented by the village elites but without village community participation. The villagers had no say in choosing whether or not to develop rural tourism programmes in the village but passively accepted the Folk Village programme designed by local government officers. The village party branch manipulated the implementation of the top-level designed rural tourism development programmes in the village. The villagers committee was forced to mobilise individual villagers to join the programme. The government investment in

infrastructure and financial subsidies to individual investors was employed to attract private investment to the programme. As a result, only a few elites with economic capability joined this programme. Moreover, the Folk Village was built as a brand new tourist spot that was isolated from the main village; few guests of the Folk Village visited the main village. Obviously, without village community participation, rural tourism development aroused conflicts in the village. Uneven distribution of development benefits in the village created an incentive for village cadres to compete for political power to the control or influence the decision-making of village public affairs. With different interests in rural tourism development, the rivals in the village completely paralysed the village self-governance organisation.

6.2.4 Failure of the top-down development of the rural tourism programme

The initiation and implementation of the Wangjiazhai Folk Village programme indicate that this programme is a failure of the top-down tourism development programme. The local government dominated the initiation of the Wangjiazhai rural tourism development programme but neglected the fact that the Wangjiazhai rural tourism programme is based on natural and social resources that are owned by the whole village. The development of rural tourism programmes is a public affair in the village.

According to the *Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of the People's Republic of China* (1998), the villagers committee is the village self-governance organisation that has the legitimacy and authority to manage the village's collectively owned land and properties. Therefore, at the constitutional level, the village as a whole should be the decision-maker for rural tourism development and the villagers committee has the

authority and responsibility to implement the rural tourism development programme chosen by the villagers. That means that local government has no legitimacy or authority to interfere directly in village affairs.

At the operational level, however, the villagers were not involved in the decision-making regarding the rural tourism development programme. Government intervention, e.g. policy support, financial subsidies and technique assistance in the initiation of the Wangjiazhai Folk Village programme, had substantially influenced the village decision-making process. Moreover, insufficient communication and a lack of transparency in the decision-making on the rural tourism programme left loopholes where village cadres could manipulate the rural tourism programme to benefit the elites rather than the low-income householders. The majority of the villagers, who lacked “money” or “relationship”, were operationally excluded from participation in rural tourism development. Inequality of community participation in rural tourism development inevitably aroused disputes and conflicts between tourism participants and non-participants in the village. It seems that the top-down development of the Wangjiazhai Folk Village resulted in a distinct social exclusion in rural tourism development. Such social exclusion was contributed by government intervention, which was carried out with the perception that “development” is “economic growth”.

6.3 Social exclusion in rural tourism development:

Dongtianzhuang and other villages in the Baiyangdian area

The field studies in Dongtianzhuang village also observed social exclusion in the development of the rural tourism programme, which was a top-down rural tourism

programme, similar to that of the Wangjiazhai Folk Village. Different from Wangjiazhai village, however, Dongtianzhuang village experienced regional exclusion because of its geographical location and the physical boundary of the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. The local government designated the boundary of the Scenic Area and systematically blocked Dongtianzhuang village from the opportunities offered by rural tourism businesses. Such social exclusion occurred in villages that are geographically located outside and inside the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area.

6.3.1 Boundary of the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area

The administrative boundary of the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area was designated when it was set up. The local government rigidly restricted investment in tourism projects within the boundary in order to stimulate intensively the development of Baiyangdian tourism. However, the Scenic Area is located geographically in the Lake Shaochedian area, which covers only about one-third of Lake Baiyangdian. The designated boundary of the Scenic Area constitutionally excluded most of the Baiyangdian villages from rural tourism development.

Within the Scenic Area, there are 21 villages with similar Baiyangdian landscapes and rurality that are suitable for rural tourism activities. The tourism authority designated Wangjiazhai as the only village to develop community-based rural tourism programmes despite the fact that its Folk Village was completely based on a deliberately placed tourist spot outside the villagers' dwelling area. Its neighbouring villages, e.g. Guolikou, Dazhangzhuang, Xiaotianzhuang, Songzhuang, etc., and other villages within the Scenic Area were prohibited from developing rural tourism programmes. Consequently,

rural tourism businesses in these villages were labelled as “not legal” according to local tourism development policy and regulation.

The boundary of the Scenic Area constitutionally prohibited most of the Baiyangdian villages from the development of rural tourism programmes but it was impossible to prevent villagers from running rural tourism businesses. “There is not a physical boundary that could prevent tourists from accessing these villages” (Y. Li, 16 May 2008, personal communication). The map of Lake Baiyangdian topography (Appendix 5.4 on page 472) shows that Baiyangdian villages are the knots in a vast network of countless waterways among endless reed fields. Therefore, it is impossible to set up a physical boundary in this area. The so-called “boundary” of the Scenic Area was designated administratively to develop and manage tourism projects in a particular physical area.

6.3.2 Local government initiated and halted the Dongtianzhuang rural tourism development programme

Dongtianzhuang was one of the pilot villages of Baiyangdian rural tourism before the opening of Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. After that, the county government withdrew its financial and technique assistance from Dongtianzhuang rural tourism development programmes, and the local tourism authority banned rural tourism businesses in the village. Without government support or permission, the village developed a niche market of Baiyangdian ecotourism but it is labelled as a “black market”. That means rural tourism businesses and activities are not permitted according to the government regulations.

How and why does the village lose its “legitimacy” to run rural tourism businesses on its collectively owned Lake Baiyangdian landscapes? This question was answered through further interviews with villagers and tour guides in Dongtianzhuang (Appendix 4: Dongtianzhuang village interview data, on page 449). With a strong desire for economic development, the village actively implemented the government-initiated rural tourism projects – Dongtianzhuang holiday resort. These projects were half constructed when the county government suddenly withdrew its financial and technical support. With “big money” already invested, these projects could not be changed to anything else. The projects were then completed by villagers’ private investment and opened to domestic tourists. While these rural tourism businesses were growing and showing market potential, the local tourism authority banned their business licences and this explains why Dongtianzhuang rural tourism development is “not legal” (G. Q. Tian, 22 June 2007, personal communication). Naturally, Dongtianzhuang rural tourism stepped into a trap but the village leaders were reluctant to admit it. The village party branch secretary and the villagers committee head had been the co-leaders in the village for more than 25 years. They were still making every effort to obtain village “legitimacy” of rural tourism development in Lake Baiyangdian area (G. Q. Tian & S. M. Han, 23 June 2007, personal communication; more details in Appendix 4: Dongtianzhuang village interview data, on page 466).

Why did the local government initiate a rural tourism development programme in Dongtianzhuang but halt it later? The villagers and the tour guides thought it was because of the village’s location. The village was so far away from the county

downtown and the Tourist Wharf that it was “inconvenient” for the tourism authority to collect administrative fees, and to inspect and supervise tourism activities and businesses in Dongtianzhuang village (S. M. Han, 23 June 2007, personal communication). This confirms the findings from field studies in Wangjiazhai village, that “convenience for tourism administration and supervision” was one of the key factors that local government considered in drawing the boundary of the Scenic Area and designating the sites for rural tourism programmes in the Lake Baiyangdian area.

In contrast with Wangjiazhai village, where rural tourism initiation and development aroused various conflicts within the village community, the Dongtianzhuang village community seemed to be relatively consolidated. With strong desires for economic development, the village actively implemented the government initiatives for the rural tourism programme. When the local government halted this programme, the village community passively accepted the government decision without any complaint. It seems that two well-established village committees eased frictions between local government and the village community. However, the villagers complained that they did not have any “power” or “capability” to influence government decisions. Similar things happened in Dongtianzhuang’s neighbouring villages, as reported by the owner of the riverside restaurant, the tour guide and other village cadres in Dongtianzhuang village (see Appendix 1: Informants list, on page 449).

Without government permission, how did Dongtianzhuang rural tourism businesses survive after the county government withdrew rural tourism development program? The follow-up, in-depth interviews detected that the village community cooperated with the

tour guides to develop a “black” rural tourism market. The local people used “tactics” such as “bribing the police” and “developing personal connections” with government officers in “chasing and avoiding” games (S. M. Han, 23 June 2007, personal communication). At the same time, the villagers “actively cooperated with the travel agencies/tour guides to maintain tourist flows to the villages”. These “tactics” helped the village maintain rural tourism businesses without tourism licences (D. B. Tian, 22 June 2007, personal communication). This indicates that the village developed a niche ecotourism market through active cooperation with the tourism industry and tourists. Without governmental permission, the village could market its ecotourism products and services only via personal relationships and word of mouth. This illustrates that “regional exclusion” in rural tourism development consequently stimulated the rural “black markets” despite this not being what local government, villagers or tourists wanted.

6.3.3 Regional exclusion of villages inside the boundary

Regional exclusion of rural tourism development also occurred within the Scenic Area. Despite there being 21 villages located in the Scenic Area, Wangjiazhai was the only village with governmental permission to run community-based rural tourism programmes. Similar rural tourism businesses were prohibited in its neighbouring villages. The local people attributed such “priority” for Wangjiazhai village to its geographical location, except that a few Wangjiazhai villagers claimed that “close relationship with local government” also contributed to this “priority”.

Wangjiazhai village is located geographically next to the Grand Lotus Park and is much closer to the Tourist Wharf than are the other villages (see Figure 11: Tourist boat routes in Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area, on page 233, and Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area satellite map 1 in Appendix 5.6). Since boating was the only transport to Wangjiazhai village, all the visitors had to pay the “entrance fee” at the Tourist Wharf before taking the boat ride to the village. Therefore, it was very “convenient” for tourism administration authorities to inspect and monitor tourist activities and collect entrance fees from the tourists visiting Wangjiazhai Folk Village. Again, the interviews in Wangjiazhai village frequently mentioned and repeatedly verified the factors of “location” and “convenience” (see Appendix 3: Wangjiazhai village interview data, on page 463). This information confirms that geographical location was the fundamental factor for the village’s legitimacy for rural tourism development in the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. For convenience, the Scenic Area administration committee set up the law enforcement team to strictly inspect and monitor the Scenic Area. Without tickets sold by the government-operated ticket office at the Tourist Wharf, no tourist could pass the checkpoints. Moreover, boats without the Tourism Administration Committee’s permission were not allowed to take tourists to the Scenic Area (L. S. Wang, 18 May 2008, personal communication). Such enforcement of collecting entrance fees, in addition to collecting tickets to the tourist spots, prevented tour groups from visiting or staying in the Wangjiazhai Folk Village (W. D. Wei, 18 May 2008, personal communication).

The interviews in the villages revealed that the local government designated Wangjiazhai Folk Village as one of the tourist spots in the Scenic Area because it was convenient for the tourism administration authorities to collect fees from the tourists and tourism businesses. The local tourism administration officer did not, however, agree completely with this viewpoint; he explained that the local government actions were “for the purpose of regulating the tourism market and improving the destination image of Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area” (Y. Li, 16 May 2008, personal communication). This statement is obviously different from the view of villagers and the tour guides. However, from the stakeholder perspective, it was not surprising to understand that the villagers, tour guides and tourism administrative officers had different interests in and concerns about Baiyangdian rural tourism development. While the tour guide complained that government intervention had caused regional exclusion in rural tourism development in the Baiyangdian area, the tourism administration officer declared that it was the government’s effort to “improve the destination image” and “regulate the order of the tourism market”.

Although there are different explanations for government intervention in rural tourism development in the Lake Baiyangdian area, it is clear that local government has dominated rural tourism development. With a similar pattern to that in the Zhalaying rural tourism development, the county government played multiple roles: e.g. the policy-maker for rural tourism development, the decision-maker for the rural tourism programme and the coordinator of tourism developers and land owners, as well as the regulation-maker, monitor and administrator of sanctions for the tourism industry.

However, the boundary of the Anxin Baiyangdian area constitutionally excluded the outside villages from rural tourism programmes. The designation of Wangjiazhai Folk Village as the tourist spot also administratively banned its neighbouring villages within the boundary from running rural tourism businesses. The regional exclusion of rural tourism development deprived most villagers of “legitimacy” for rural tourism development; consequently, the government’s actions led to an unwanted “black market” of rural tourism businesses in the Lake Baiyangdian area.

6.4 Government intervention and governance models

The data analysis above indicates that rural tourism development programmes in these villages were by-products of the government-managed tourist zone but presented different development patterns. The emergent rural tourism businesses in Zhalaying village showed patterns of spontaneous, bottom-up development. The village community and the tourists cooperatively initiated Zhalaying rural tourism activities in the government-invested tourist zone, without the design of or any assistance from the local government or tourism professions. Different from Zhalaying village, Dongtianzhuang and Wangjiazhai villages demonstrated significant patterns of top-down development. The local government initiated and designed rural tourism development programmes, and the villages implemented and managed the programmes as village collective enterprises. However, the initiation and implementation of the top-down development programmes lacked transparency, equality and community participation; hence, they caused enlarged income gaps and aroused numerous conflicts within the Wangjiazhai village community. Such top-down tourism development

programmes also seriously interfered with Dongtianzhuang rural tourism development. The local government's changing policy resulted in social exclusion in rural tourism development and consequently stimulated the emerging "black markets" in the villages in the Lake Baiyangdian area.

This shows that governmental intervention into rural tourism development is a double-sided sword. For the purpose of economic growth and rural development, the county government initiated rural tourism development programmes in the villages. According to the current administration system of village autonomy, the county government had no legality or legitimacy to interfere in village affairs. However, as the village self-governance mechanism is still imperfect in many villages, the absence of governmental intervention often led to the consequent problem that the villagers could not handle village affairs by standard procedures. The disordered village status generated disorder in rural tourism operation and management. In the process of rural tourism development, all these villages encountered similar dilemmas of destination governance. Who has the legitimate role of initiation and management of rural tourism programmes in the village? It seems that local governments have dominated the policy-making processes of rural tourism development, but the village communities demonstrated different reactions to government intervention in destination development. The interactions between government intervention and the village communities resulted in various patterns of destination governance and generated three different governance models in initiation and implementation of rural tourism development programmes: bureaucracy governance, commune governance and community-based governance.

6.4.1 Bureaucracy governance: Local government dominated

The top-down development programmes of Dongtianzhuang and Wangjiazhai rural tourism show that local authorities and village cadres dominated the decision-making process for rural tourism development. As shown in Figure 12, on page 257, the county party/government leaders initiated rural tourism development programmes for the economic development of the villages. They directly interfered with the design of the rural tourism development programme and, also, often used various instruments, e.g. government policy, financial subsidies, technique assistance, etc., to intervene in the implementation of the development programmes in the villages. Such top-down development programmes often excluded the village communities from the decision-making regarding rural tourism development, and constitutionally deprived the villagers of their rights to be involved in development choice.

The village community passively accepted government arrangement of tourism development programmes. As a result, the whole village was “being developed” into a rural tourism destination. In such a “being developed” situation, the information asymmetry problem was significant. For example, in the case of Wangjiazhai village, while the village cadres advocated the rural tourism programme to the village community, the villagers claimed their rights for decision-making about the use of their collectively owned lands. Therefore, information asymmetry inevitably hindered the implementation of the top-down rural tourism programmes.

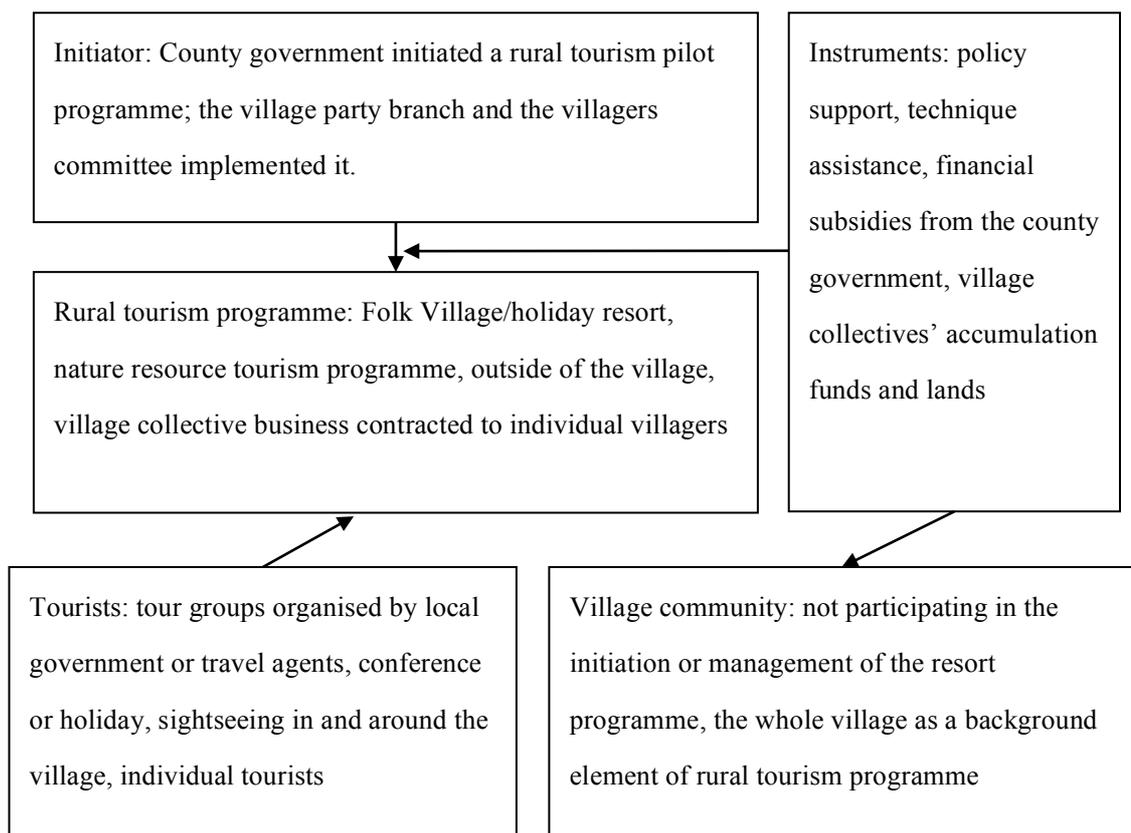


Figure 12: Bureaucracy governance

Moreover, the bureaucracy governance model, when applied for the initiation of rural tourism programmes, also aroused disputes regarding the legitimacy and authority for the use and management of lands owned collectively by the villagers. According to the current "Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of the People's Republic of China." (1998), the villagers committee had the authority to manage the village's collectively owned lands and properties; the town/township or county government had no legitimacy to interfere in the internal affairs of the villages. However, the real situation was that the village cadres of the communist party acted as the development agents in the implementation of the top-down rural tourism development programmes in the villages. In this way, local government could directly interfere and firmly control rural societies. On the other hand, the villagers claimed that the county government had no authority to interfere in the internal affairs of the village, e.g. land use and development.

The village's collectively owned land and properties should have been managed by the villagers committee elected directly by the village community in accordance with the existing villager organisation law in China. Such contradictory interpretation and practice of "legitimacy" of village self-governance resulted in the bureaucracy governance model failing in the development of top-down rural tourism programmes. Local government interference with village affairs caused tensions between the local government and the villages, as well as conflicts within the village communities. Insufficient communication between the village cadres and the village communities could have been one of the contributors to such conflicts but the fundamental cause of such conflicts was social exclusion in rural tourism development.

6.4.2 Commune governance: Tensions between the village collectives and the private investment

In the case of Wangjiazhai village, the initiation and management of rural tourism development programmes involved both the village collectives' investment and individual villagers' private investments, but four unified principles were adopted to manage the Folk Village as a commune. The governance of rural tourism development in Wangjiazhai village, hence, presented patterns of commune governance. As shown in Figure 13: Commune governance, on page 259, the rural tourism programmes were constructed on lands belonging to village economic collectives. Besides the problems of bureaucracy governance as discussed in 6.4.1, the plurality of property rights generated unclear obligations and responsibilities in the management of tourism resources in the village.

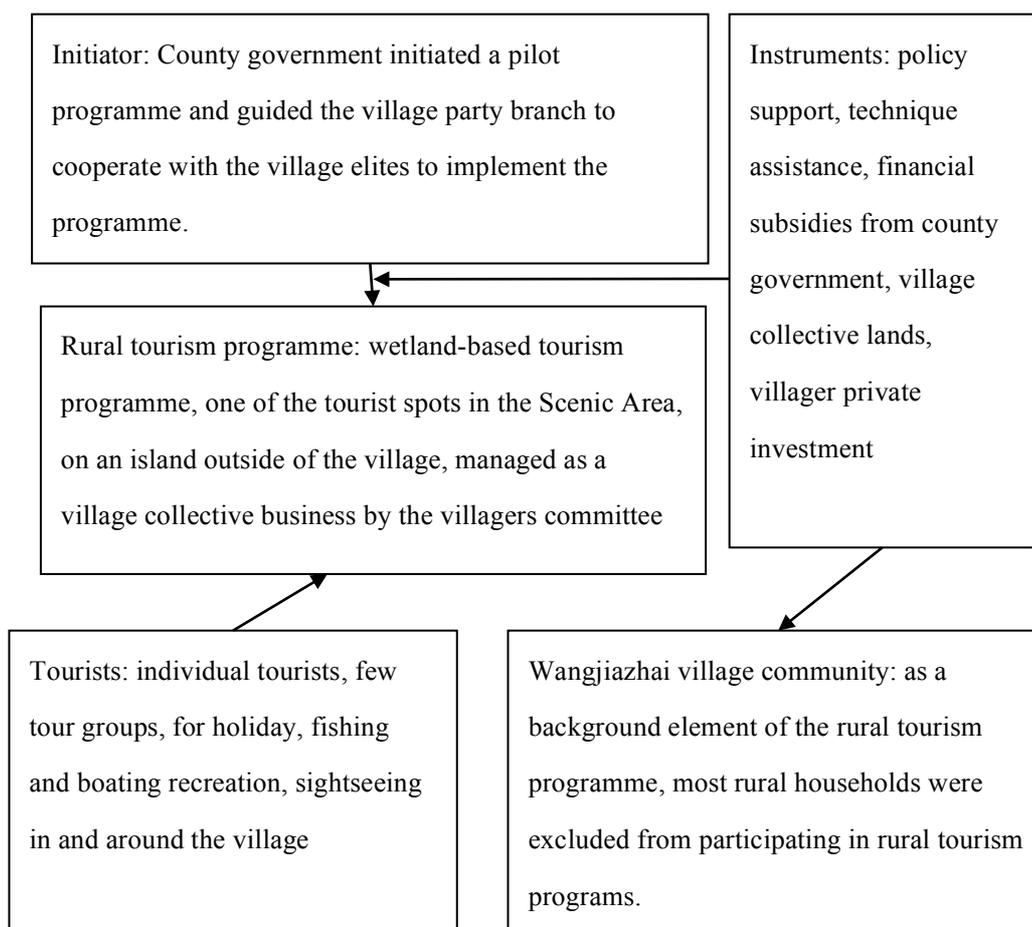


Figure 13: Commune governance

In commune governance, the local government and the village cadres manipulated the political powers and financial subsidies to mobilise villagers' private investments. With collective and individual investments, the rural tourism programme was operated as a commune and managed with "four unified principles" to standardise the products and services of the rural tourism programme. The "four unified principles" worked well at the beginning but, as rural tourism grew and then declined, tensions between the village collective investments and the individual villagers' private investments escalated into serious social conflicts in the community.

The focal dispute was aroused by unfair distribution of tourism benefits and unequal opportunities for community participation in the rural tourism development programme.

Ultimately, the private investors of the rural tourism programme ended the commune management model but there was no other management model in place. The rural tourism programme was in the dilemma of having no one managing it.

6.4.3 Community-based governance: Village dominated

When compared with Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang village, Zhalaying rural tourism showed more patterns of sustainable development. The initiation of Zhalaying rural tourism programmes demonstrated patterns of community governance of a rural tourism destination. The village as a whole was the dominant governor of the destination, as illustrated in Figure 14: Village community-based governance, on page 261. It shows that the village community actively interacted with the destination external stakeholders, i.e. local government officers, experts in the major cities, State and private investors, tourists, tourism industry, etc. Various stakeholder networks emerged in the development of the rural tourism programmes and brought external resources, i.e. information, technology, financial investment, etc., into the village, which sustained the destination development significantly. For instance, mutual goals enabled the villagers and tourists to work cooperatively to innovate grassland tourism activities. The intensive interactions between the guests and the hosts converted the former into the investors and created joint-venture rural tourism businesses in Zhalaying village.



Figure 14: Village community-based governance

The analysis above indicates that the success factors of Zhalaying rural tourism development may include: the destination stakeholder network, cooperative host–guest relationships, community-based rural tourism products and services, extensive participation of the village community in rural tourism development, and sufficient communication within the village community in the decision-making process of rural tourism development. All these factors helped the village increase visitor numbers, protect the natural environment, conserve its Manchu folk customs and ethnic identity, and improve social stability in the village. It implies that extensive community participation in the decision-making processes for rural tourism development ensures that the governance of rural tourism destinations can move towards sustainable development.

6.5 Summation

The investigation of destination stakeholder actions in the initiation and implementation of rural tourism development programmes shows that the interactions between local government intervention and village community participation formed different models of destination governance. Zhalaying village community spontaneously developed rural tourism businesses and demonstrated significant patterns of bottom-up development, while Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages showed more patterns of top-down development. In both the bottom-up and top-down development tourism programmes, local governments have dominated the tourism development policy-making processes and played multiple roles in the development of rural tourism destination. In the top-down development programmes, local governments have often interfered directly in village decision-making regarding village internal issues, e.g. the use of lands, the design and implementation of rural tourism programmes, tourism planning, etc.

The contradictory interpretation of village self-governance resulted in the tensions between the local government and the village community in these villages. However, the villages had different reactions to government interferences. The Dongtianzhuang village community passively accepted the higher-level government arrangement for rural tourism development, while the Wangjiazhai village community claimed their rights of participation in and benefit from rural tourism development. The well-organised village community and sufficient communication in the village community significantly moderated tensions in Zhalaying village, while the paralysed

village self-governance organisation aggravated the tensions and led to serious conflicts in Wangjiazhai village.

It seems that the focal disputes lay in the scope and scale of governmental intervention and the particular community's participation in the governance of rural tourism development. As discovered from the field studies in these villages, community participation in decision-making about rural tourism development strategy and policy is believed to be a key contributor to easing the conflicts and consolidating cooperation between the village community and local government in the governance of rural tourist destinations. Meanwhile, insufficient communication within the village community or between the village community and local government seems to hinder good governance of rural tourism destination.

Why did these three villages demonstrate such different performances of rural tourism development? It seems that the destination governance model affected their performance significantly. Zhalaying village showed a stronger capacity for self-governance and developed community-based governance for the initiation of rural tourism programmes; thus, it achieved more sustainable development. By comparison, Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages exhibited relatively less self-governance capacity and adopted top-down rural tourism programmes and commune-based governance in managing the rural tourism destination. However, these two villages failed to sustain their rural tourism programmes. How and why does village self-governance capability produce different models of rural tourism destination governance? What factors determine or affect a village's capacity for self-governance?

Furthermore, how do these factors interact with each other to develop governance models for rural tourism destinations? These questions are answered through scrutiny of the changes in working rules for governing tourism commons in rural tourism destinations, with an assumption that the formulation of and changes in working rules reflect the evolution of the governance model. The detailed research findings are reported in the following chapters. Chapter 7 reports on the emerging problems of tourism commons in rural tourism destinations; Chapter 8 reports on the working rules used in governing tourism commons in the villages; and Chapter 9 discusses the components of a sustainable governance system for rural tourism destinations.

Chapter 7 Problems of tourism commons in rural tourism destinations

Tourism commons refers to tourism resources, such as transportation, infrastructure, public services, landscape, tourist spots, etc., that are used by tourists, locals and others in tourist destinations (Briassoulis, 2002). As discussed in Chapter 3, these resources are the essentials of a tourist destination but share the attributes of CPRs and experience the tragedies of free-riding and overuse. Such issues have fatal effects on the sustainability of rural tourism destinations that rely heavily on the conservation of social and natural tourism commons. The attributes of tourism commons determine that tourism commons management inherently concerns the overall governance of rural tourism destinations, and tourism commons management has been a big challenge to the destination communities. It applies especially to the rural tourism destinations in China where the socialist-market socio-economic system means that the rights and obligations of users and providers with regard to common resources and property are inexplicit. Tourists as incremental users of the rural tourism commons make the situation more complicated. Therefore, this chapter reports on the research findings regarding emerging problems of tourism commons in the villages to illustrate the real-world situation of resources management in these villages and to identify the impedimental factors in the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations in China.

In the field studies, the problems of tourism commons are widely observed in the villages. Questions related to tourism commons management emerged in the interviews

and became hot issues that were discussed urgently in the focus groups. The field studies in the villages discovered that underinvestment in and overuse of infrastructure, e.g. transportation, public sanitation services, drinking-water supplies and sewage systems, etc., constrained the sustainable development of rural tourism in these villages. Moreover, the problems of free-riding and over-farming/over-grazing of the common pastures or common water surfaces threatened the agricultural productivity of these resources and caused disputes within the village communities. In Chinese rural tourism destinations, the rights and obligations of the tourism commons are unclear with regard to the resource users and providers. The increasing numbers of tourists as the incremental users of the tourism commons made the situation more complicated and accelerated the problems of tourism commons. In coping with these problems, the government retreated from rural public services, and the villages were overwhelmed with limited collective funds to maintain their tourism commons and to protect the natural landscapes around the villages. Despite the users having incompatible interests in the tourism commons, the village communities developed working rules to solve the problems of tourism commons through cooperation between the tourists, the villagers and the tourism businesses. This chapter firstly reports on the problems of tourism commons and then analyses the challenges to the villages in coping with these problems. The end of the chapter reports on the solutions that the village communities found in managing tourism commons.

7.1 Emerging problems of tourism commons in villages

As tourists increasingly competed for the use of natural and social-cultural resources, the problems of tourism commons emerged in the villages. All the villages encountered the problems of underinvestment in infrastructure, insufficient funds for protecting natural landscapes from being degraded by tourist activities, the free-riding and overuse of tourism commons by the tourism business owners, etc. The most critical issue was how to protect the natural resources, e.g. wetlands and grasslands surrounding the villages that are used for agricultural production and simultaneously exploited for rural tourism programmes. Another critical issue was how to construct and maintain the village infrastructure and public services needed to meet the tourists' needs. Also, the village communities needed to figure out how to ensure rural tourism businesses rationally and efficiently used the tourism commons in the village.

7.1.1 Underinvestment of infrastructure in villages

Underinvested infrastructure was apparent from the time when the villages started rural tourism development. The interviewed tourists complained that the current transportation system limited the accessibility of the destinations. The villagers complained that the sanitation system lowered the farmhouses' accommodation capabilities. As rural tourism grew, this situation was made worse by the increasing numbers of tourists that competed with the villagers for the use of the villages' infrastructure.

7.1.1.1 Underinvestment in transportation

Accessibility is pivotal for destinations if they are to develop rural tourism. However, there had been serious underinvestment in transportation for decades in all these villages. Zhalaying village had only one route to the provincial roads. This six-metre-wide sealed road converted to a commercial street in the village, blocking traffic in the rush hours when tourists were departing or arriving. Similarly, visitors to Wangjiazhai village could use only the boats of a franchised ferry company in the Scenic Area. There was no public transport to Dongtianzhuang village but private boats were prohibited from taking tourists to the village. The underinvestment in the transport system apparently lowered the accessibility to and degraded the image of rural tourism destinations.

The villages lacked the financial capacity to improve the transportation system for rural tourism development. Funds for road construction and maintenance in these villages were mainly from local government's financial subsidies. Zhalaying village built the only sealed road with a special fund for "New Socialist Countryside Construction" in Fengning County in 2003 and a small supplementary portion from the village collectives' fund (G. H. Hou, 27 June 2008, personal communication). However, "after that, the village has no collective funds to seal the streets" (J. H. Li, 18 June 2007, personal communication). In the Lake Baiyangdian area, the villages had no financial capacity to maintain the waterways: clear the reeds, maintain the river water level, etc. (G. Q. Tian, 22 June 2007; W. D. Wei, 28 June 2008; X. L. He, 29 June 2010, personal communication). The theme park developers cared only about the business turnover and

profits, and not about the sustainability of the waterways and landscapes in the lake area. Therefore, the local tourism authority added a compulsory “lake entrance fee” to the ferry fare in the name of waterway maintenance and ecosystem preservation in the lake (Yang Li, 18 May 2008; Ying Li, 19 May 2008, personal communication).

It seems that a lack of financial capacity was a giant obstacle to improving accessibility to the destinations. The local government was often the sponsor for the road construction and waterway maintenance needed to facilitate rural tourism development in the villages. In return, however, the village communities lost their legitimacy for making rules for the management of destination transportation. The deprivation of local communities’ capability and legitimacy in making formal rules consequently gave them opportunities to formulate working rules for the improvement of accessibility to rural tourism destinations, e.g. the “black market” of boating tourists to Dongtianzhuang and Wangjiazhai.

7.1.1.2 Underinvestment in public sanitation services

Underinvestment in public sanitation services was another challenging problem that was often complained about by tourists and villagers in these villages. The muddy village streets spotted with domestic animals’ faeces worsened as tourist numbers increased in the village. Conventionally, environmental sanitation was maintained by villagers’ self-services; every rural household swept the street in front of their courtyard, neighbours were watching and “a clean street in front of the gate” was one of the criteria for a “good family” in the village. This convention started in the early 1980s when the People’s Commune dissolved and the village’s collective accumulation was

no longer available in the rural community. However, it changed soon after rural tourism developed in the community. While tourists increased the work of maintaining environmental sanitation, the village community could not reach a consensus on the duties related to environmental sanitation services. The emerging question was: Who should sweep the streets and collect the garbage in the village, and when? (J. H. Li, 19 May 2007; L. S. Wang, 18 May 2008; personal communication).

The primary disagreement was between the tourism participants and non-participants in the village community. The interviewed villagers claimed that the tourism business owners had the obligation to maintain the sanitation services in the village. In Zhalaying village, as the increase in horse numbers seemed to be out of control, individual households could not sweep the streets so often. With a limited village collective fund, the villagers committee contracted a villager to collect household garbage and take it to the landfill outside of the village but had no funds left to have the streets swept. In this situation, non-tourism participants insisted that the tourism businesses should take on the duty of sweeping the streets (Accountant Luo, 28 June 2008; Old Lady Cui, 19 June 2007; Tea house owner, 27 June 2008, personal communication). Nevertheless, the rural tourism business owners claimed that the villagers committee had the obligation to arrange sanitation services to improve the tourism environment in the village (Horse-riding guide Zhang, 29 June 2008; J. H. Li, 18 June 2006; D. Sun, 28 June 2008, personal communication).

Another sanitation problem was the disposal of horse faeces in Zhalaying village. The herdsmen usually had their horses grazing on the common pasture in summer but fed

them under shelters temporarily built in the courtyards during winter. They piled the horse faeces along the streets in winter due to the heavy snow and severely cold weather and then moved the horse manure to their agricultural fields in early spring. However, often, some herdsmen could not remove the horse faeces until the early summer. The sight of massive and stinking piles of animal waste along the streets highlighted the absence of public sanitation services in the village and degraded the village tourism environment. Therefore, the villagers and tourists could see evidence of the underinvestment in solving the environmental sanitation problems, which related to the lack of village collective funds, weather conditions and villagers' living habits (J. H. Li, 19 June 2007; Z. H. Liu, 20 June 2007, personal communication).

A similar sanitation problem was observed in Wangjiazhai main village but not in its Folk Village. The main village had a more-than-100-year history. In the centre of the village were old brick-and-tile houses closely aligned along narrow streets and lanes, and new waterfront residential buildings had been developed along the lake bank.

Sanitation facilities, including drainage ditches and sewers, were established with the houses but, now, these facilities were too old to be in use. The villagers used to clean the streets in front their gates but landfilled household waste into the drain ditches next to their backyards. As the village population grew, life waste increasingly lowered the carrying capacity of natural degradation so landfills were exposed to the rivers and wetlands around the main island (X. F. Xin, 28 June 2010, personal communication).

The sanitation environment in the main island devalued the image of the destination when tourists visited for sightseeing and experiencing the local lifestyle in the main

village. Also, the villagers committee once hired a villager to collect household garbage in the main village but stopped after a short time due to the lack of the collective's funds (X. L. He, 29 June 2010; L. S. Wang, 18 May 2008, 28 June 2010; W. D. Wei, 28 June 2010, personal communication).

In contrast, the owners of Folk Village courtyards were willing to assume the duty of maintaining a quality sanitation environment at the site in order to attract tourists. They collectively hired a cleaner to sweep the main streets and collect the household garbage, and every courtyard resident helped to keep the streets clean in the Folk Village. They also regularly reviewed the sanitation services to ensure their guests were satisfied with the sanitation environment (D. Wang, 19 May 2008; E. Wang, 20 May 2008, personal communication). A similar sanitation service system was adopted in Dongtianzhuang holiday resort. Although there was no sanitation service on the main island, in contrast to the Wangjiazhai villagers, Dongtianzhuang main island dwellers kept the streets and lanes tidy and clean so that the view of the villagers' early morning work, e.g. packing reeds and weaving mats, etc., added to the must-see scenery of the village. In return, many villagers could usually sell their reed handcrafts to the visitors staying in the holiday resort on the small island (G. Q. Tian & S. M. Han, 23 June 2008, personal communication).

The environmental sanitation services in these three villages showed that the villagers were capable of developing a system to maintain sanitation quality in the village, but only when it would have an immediate effect on their income. Apparently, in this case, it seemed that "collectives' funds" or "money" was always the main concern in the

villages. However, further interviews with the villagers and village heads revealed that the villagers' primary concern was not money, but fairness and equal opportunity for participation in rural tourism programmes. Therefore, this implies that a transparent process of decision-making to develop rules that can be accepted by all the villagers would be a fundamental factor for governing tourism commons. This statement is verified by the further study of the water supply and sewage system in the villages.

7.1.1.3 The problem in drinking-water supplies and sewage systems

Tap-water supply was available in Dongtianzhuang and Wangjiazhai villages, but not in Zhalaying village. No sanitary sewers were established or used in these villages. These villages were commonly observed to have problems disposing of sewage, which had the potential to contaminate the source of drinking water.

Each Zhalaying village household usually dug a well about seven or eight metres deep in the yard and used a hand-pressurised pump to draw groundwater for drinking. On the other side of the yard, they dug a sink well for disposal of sewage. As rural tourism rapidly grew in the village, they encountered two problems: one was that the groundwater level was lowering and supplied insufficient drinking water during tourism seasons; the other was that the sink wells potentially contaminated the groundwater during rainy days in summer. To ensure drinking-water quality and to compete for guests, farmhouse owners dug their wells deeper to more than 30 metres and used electric pumps to draw underground water. However, the undergroundwater level continued to move further down, while the villagers have “dug wells to the rocks, could not dig deeper” (J. H. Li, 19 June 2007, personal communication). It was believed that

the shortage of underground water was a result of the over-exploitation of subsurface water since the village population has grown and the warmer climate has increased groundwater evaporation in recent years. However, “so far, there is not any regulation or limitation of underground water exploitation within the village” (G. H. Hou & D. Sun, 28 June 2008, personal communication). Villagers considered that their concerns about the supply of drinking water were a public affair for the village. They believed it must be improved for the benefit of both rural tourism services and villagers’ living conditions.

Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages installed tap-water supply systems with the county government subsidies of the 1980s. The tap-water supply was maintained with village communal funds so that rural households used free tap water in the village. After the rural tourism development programmes were initiated, the village extended tap-water supply to the Folk Village/holiday resort outside of the main village, at the cost of the village collectives’ accumulation funds. In Wangjiazhai village, however, as the disputes and conflicts between the main village and the Folk Village increased, the villagers committee was forced to charge the Folk Village courtyard owners for the installation of tap-water pipes and tap-water use. Consequently, the courtyard owners raised a special fund to maintain the availability of the tap-water supply in the Folk Village. In contrast, in Dongtianzhuang village, the villagers committee proposed and the villager assembly approved to extend tap-water supply to the holiday resort as an enterprise of the village collective and contracted the task to a group of villagers. None

of the Dongtianzhuang villagers disagreed with extending infrastructure improvement to the holiday resort.

To summarise, underinvestment in infrastructure, e.g. transportation, the sanitation environment, drinking water and sewers, etc., was a common problem in these villages.

The absence of public services in rural areas constrained the development of rural tourism but stimulated self-governance in managing tourism commons. Although tourists and villagers often complained about the poor sanitation environment in these villages, the village communities developed their working rules to repair and improve the infrastructure and maintain the sanitation quality in the communities. Each village had its particular model for solving such problems despite money having been the primary concern in investment and management of infrastructure in these villages. One fundamental principle that was commonly used by the village communities is equality and fairness of opportunity for participation in rural tourism development.

7.1.2 Problems of free-riding and over-farming

The problems of free-riding and over-farming have been commonly observed in these villages. Zhalaying village had been struggling with the maintenance of riding tracks and the over-grazing of common pastures. Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages encountered the dilemma of protecting the common wetlands from overuse by tourists and villagers. The costs of protecting the fragile natural area from over-grazing, over-farming and the trampling of tourists have been heavy financial burdens for these villages. However, it has been too difficult to prevent tourists and villagers from

accessing the fragile ecological resources that have been exploited for the purpose of tourism development.

7.1.2.1 Free-riding in Zhalaying village

The use and maintenance of horse-riding tracks in Zhalaying village fell into the trap of commons. The village built two riding tracks on the collectively owned pastures to be tourist facilities. On the open sandy lands without any fences, the riding tracks were accessed easily by Zhalaying guests and also attracted horse riders from neighbouring villages. The increasing numbers of horses on the riding tracks consequently led to over-grazing of the common pastures of Zhalaying village. Hence, the village community was facing the challenging issues of free-riding on the riding tracks and over-grazing of the common pastures in the village.

The villagers committee adopted monitoring measures, i.e. hiring guards for watching the riding tracks and the pastures to prohibit free-riding or overuse, mobilising villagers to monitor the guards' work, etc., but these measures never successfully prevented tourists or horsemen from other villages from using Zhalaying riding tracks and common pastures. This failure was caused by the close relationships between the local people and their acquaintances. "It is too often that horsemen take their guests to our village, but the guards or the villagers know the horseman as an acquaintance or a villager's relative or friend" (J. H. Li, 19 June 2007, personal communication).

Apparently, no one would like to displease "the others" in the village (Accountant Luo, 28 June 2008, personal communication).

The free-riding of Zhalaying riding tracks and common pastures consequently increased the number of horses on the common pastures of Zhalaying village. As a result, over-grazing of the common pastures became another CPR problem and, hence, caused conflicts between villagers, damaged the reserved wetlands around the village and threatened the sustainability of Zhalaying ecotourism.

7.1.2.2 Over-grazing of the common pastures

Over-grazing of the common pastures has been another critical issue in Zhalaying village. The common pastures were converted from the reserved agricultural lands in the early 1990s, soon after the central government issued the water and soil preservation policy that called for “returning the over-cultivated land to pasture and forest”. However, at that time, the villagers committee had contracted the collective lands to individual households with terms of 30 years (the length of the contracts extended to 70 years in the early 2000s). Rural households used to grow grains and vegetables for family consumption so none of them was willing to convert agricultural lands to grasslands. The villagers committee converted two plots of the grain lands, which were collectively reserved by the village, to common pastures to fulfil the tasks assigned by higher-level government.

The village adopted a deferred rotational grazing system to manage the common pastures. In grazing seasons, the villagers committee used to open one pasture and fence another to grow forage. However, as horse riding increased in Zhalaying village, one pasture was not enough to feed the horses. With the villagers’ consent, the villagers committee opened a part of the fenced pastures but kept about 400 mu of pastures to be

fenced for hay. The added common pastures did not reduce the grazing intensity but stimulated the increase of horse riding in the village. The common pastures were unavoidably over-grazed by the increasing number of horses in Zhalaying and its neighbouring villages. Free-riding accelerated the over-grazing problem for Zhalaying common pastures.

While all the users tended to be free-riders, the provision and maintenance of the common pastures and riding tracks was the duty of the Zhalaying villagers committee only. The villagers committee urgently called for controlling the number of horses in the village to reduce the grazing intensity of the common pastures. However, it was too difficult to prevent individual households from increasing their numbers of horses. It was also impossible to prevent livestock from the other villages from accessing Zhalaying common pastures and riding tracks. Also, the riding tracks and the common pastures were used by the visitors but maintained by the village's collective accumulation funds. Tourism non-participants complained that this was unfair (Old Lady Cui, 19 June 2007, personal communication) and they were unwilling to pay extra fees to improve infrastructure in the villages or to add more fences to the grasslands. They insisted that the tourism businesses should pay the extra costs of the infrastructure improvement and maintenance.

7.2 Unclear rights and obligations of wetlands users and providers

The villages encountered a common problem, that is, the rights and obligations for managing the wetlands around the village were unclear. These villages developed rural tourism based on the national preserved wetlands around the village. The government

also promoted ecotourism programmes as an approach to the preservation of the wetlands ecological system in the area. The wetlands, therefore, have been one of the basic background elements of these rural tourism destinations and tourist activities in these villages have been promoted with the tag of “ecotourism” or “folk culture tourism”. Apparently, it has been unavoidable that tourist activities have often reached as far these wetlands. Due to the unclear rights and obligations of users and providers, the protection of common wetlands has generated heavy financial burdens for the villages. It has been entirely beyond the villages’ financial capability to protect the ecological system of the natural wetlands surrounding them. In these circumstances, however, the village communities needed to formulate solutions to safeguard the wetlands for sustaining their rural tourism programmes.

7.2.1 Retreated State government and the overwhelmed village community

Zhalaying wetlands are on the northern side of the village, next to the common pastures. The wetlands cover about four square kilometres (6,000 mu), with two springs running all the year and developing swamp meadows along the creeks. These wetlands serve as the source of drinking water for the Beijing metropolitan area and hence are part of the State-owned forests in the area. Therefore, the protection and conservation of the wetlands is pivotal for sustaining both Beijing drinking water and Zhalaying rural tourism. The interviewed villagers understood that Zhalaying rural tourism relied on the grassland landscape and tourist activities may have had adverse impacts on the wetlands. The villagers committee organised the village community to safeguard the wetlands from being polluted or degraded by tourist activities despite the wetlands not being

owned by the village. The villagers were aware, also, that they needed to reduce tourist and horse numbers for the sustainability of the wetlands. The villagers committee fenced the wetlands and the grasslands, hired guards to watch the wetlands and requested the farmhouse owners to inform their guests to avoid riding into the wetlands, etc. However, as tourist numbers increased in and around the village, the village leaders found that it was impossible for the villagers committee to protect the wetlands.

It seems that the competitive relationships between tourists and the village community in the use of the wetlands were worsening the overall landscape and weakening its ecological capabilities. Since fencing the wetlands had overwhelmed the finances of the village, both the local government and the State-owned forest company promised funds for wetlands protection. However, such funds rarely reached the village (Accountant Luo & G. H. Hou, 28 June 2008, personal communication; more details in Appendix 2: Zhalaying village interview data, on page 454). In this situation, the village accountant insisted that the conservation and protection of the wetlands was a public affair: “It relies on everyone’s efforts” (Accountant Luo, 29 June 2008, personal communication). The village cadres tried to ask the police station to help with watching the grassland but were not very optimistic. “The county government spends a little money on the grassland reservation. The county tourism bureau officers are keen to protect the grasslands but they do not have any funds to do so” (G. H. Hou, 29 June 2008, personal communication). “Despite grassland tourism contributing to local economic growth, the local government neglected rural tourism” (X. Chen, 27 June 2008, personal communication). Instead, the county government stressed its efforts for the exploitation

of mines to pursue a higher GDP but had no specific plan for rural tourism development (P. Zhang, 27 June 2008, personal communication). The village accountant confirmed these statements and claimed that, “Zhalaying rural tourism development lacks the local government’s support” (Accountant Luo, 29 June 2008, personal communication).

To summarise, field studies in Zhalaying village revealed the puzzle aroused by rural tourism development there. Increased tourist activities demanded more space and extended to the reserved national wetlands but State-owned forest farms and local government did not provide enough funding for protecting the wetlands from the invasion of tourists. Competing relationships were widely observed between the tourists and the village community for the use of the wetlands and the grasslands.

Correspondingly, there was tension between horse owners and villagers without horses, as well as farmhouse owners and non-farmhouse owners within the village community.

7.2.2 Tourists as new users of the common wetlands

Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages also encountered problems with the use and protection of the common wetlands. Before the initiation of rural tourism programmes, the villagers usually grew reeds in their allotments and went fishing in the common fishery. The village committees managed the common wetlands with the village collectives’ communal funds; the local people were the only users of the common wetlands. They had systems in place for protecting the wetlands from trampling; therefore, there was no fence around the common wetlands. After the villages developed rural tourism, the tourism businesses actively promoted villagers’ daily production activities as tourist activities were based on the common wetlands. However,

in coping with the problems of overuse of the common wetlands, these villages developed different solutions.

In Wangjiazhai village, negative impacts on the wetlands ecological system emerged soon after the tourist numbers increased in the village. The villagers fenced their individual allotments with posts and iron wires to keep tourist activities within the common wetlands and fisheries. In the common wetlands, tourists with little awareness or knowledge of ecotourism often picked flowers and leaves of wild and cultivated water plants, e.g. lilies, lotus, reeds, etc. Moreover, the villagers used to make meals with tender leaves in summer. These special meals were soon developed into the Baiyangdian delicacies that were highly appreciated and commonly consumed by tourists. The increased tourist consumption encouraged the villagers to pick more tender leaves and significantly reduced the common wetlands production.

Another problem observed in Wangjiazhai village was the degraded scenery of the natural landscape of Lake Baiyangdian. Before, the village had natural and beautiful landscapes with bushy reeds and plentiful lotus waving on the endless white water surface (D. Wei, 28 June 2010, personal communication). At the time of the current research, the increased posts and iron wires around the common wetlands had blocked the waterways among the reed lands and lotus fields, and degraded the natural scenery of the lake landscape. The villagers often had to take a detour to go to work on their allotments or to go to the county town centre. Motorboats were used to save the time of transportation, despite the fact that the villagers understood that motorboats polluted the water and damaged the shallow lakebeds. Consequently, the increasing frequency of

motorboats invading the water surface disrupted the growing environment of the aquatic plants and animals.

The problems encountered by the Wangjiazhai villagers indicate that rural tourism programmes have added tourists as new users of the wetlands. This inherently changes the utility of the common wetlands. In satisfying the tourists' requirement of leisure, aquatic production activities (fishing, picking leaves, etc.) were changed to cater "mainly for tourist recreation". Tourists gradually became the main users of the common wetlands. Consequently, tourist activities added a new utility – tourism resources – to the common wetlands that were used normally for aquatic production and natural environment preservation. However, tourist activities, led by people with limited awareness or knowledge of ecotourism, unavoidably caused the degradation of the wetlands ecological environment.

7.2.3 Cooperation between the village community and the tourists

Dongtianzhuang village encountered similar problems with the common wetlands but the village community was actively seeking solutions to solve these problems. It used a rotation system to manage the wetlands to maintain the reeds and lotus production and simultaneously meet the needs of tourist activities. Half of the lotus fields and reed beds were opened to the tourists while another half were kept growing for harvest by the village community. The opened wetlands were divided into four sections. One section opened for tourist activities, the other sections were in rest to let the flowers and leaves grow. Both the villagers and the visitors very much appreciated this rotation system.

The boatmen apparently knew which field was open to the tourists and took their guests

only to the wetlands in use. Therefore, tourist activities added the new use of the common wetlands but did not change the rotation system.

To protect the wetlands from being over-trampled by the tourists and the villagers, the Dongtianzhuang villagers committee mobilised the village neighbourhood and hired older villagers as guards. These older villagers not only took on the duty of watching the individual households' allotments but also the village common wetlands. It was too difficult to prevent boats from entering the prohibited common wetlands completely because of physical and technical obstacles. Physically, the village common wetlands are next to the main shipping route that is connected to densely networked channels in Lake Baiyangdian. It is easy to take a boat to the common wetlands via channels that extend in all directions in reed beds and lotus fields. Technically, it is impossible to distinguish the flowers or leaves of the common wetlands from those of the individual allotments. Moreover, there is no way to persuade village women and tourists not to pick flowers or leaves, because such activities have been promoted as some of the tourist attractions in Lake Baiyangdian. To solve this problem, some older villagers estimated the production of the lotus fields and advised an amount that each person could pick from the common wetlands per day. Then the villagers committee set it as a regulation in the village community and gave the guards legitimacy to impose a fine on a villager or a tourist who offended this regulation. The villagers also monitor their neighbours and the guards' work. These rules are written in the village statutes, e.g. "Dongtianzhuang rural tourism programme", "development of ecotourism village", and

the village policy of “construction of a new socialist countryside”, etc., that are painted on the walls of the village cultural square.

The propaganda of the ecotourism principles and regulations helped the villagers and tourists to understand the goal of the rural tourism programmes and the rules for the use of the common wetlands. Villagers were willing to use these regulations to watch their neighbours, and offending the regulations on the common wetlands was a shameful act for a villager of Dongtianzhuang (G. Q. Tian, 22 June 2007, personal communication). These principles were also used for the tourists. The boatmen, usually older villagers, willingly and proudly introduced these rules to their guests before taking them by boat to the common wetlands. The village community also worked with the tour guides to let tourists learn the principles of the common wetlands management and the protection of the wetlands and gain other knowledge of ecotourism (S. M. Han, 22 June 2007, personal communication). The village community also welcomed tourists to visit their dwelling properties, join in their daily work of weaving reeds or fishing, and test their daily food made with local ingredients. In this way, “tourists can learn and understand that the local people live on the wetlands. It helps them realise the meaning of the protection of the wetlands ecological system” (S. F. Gao, 23 June 2007, personal communication). Hence, the tourists very much appreciated the wetlands protection regulations and most of the tourists were willing to cooperate with the tour guides and boatmen (S. M. Han, 23 June 2007, personal communication).

It is notable that the Dongtianzhuang villagers were willing to watch and monitor the wetlands. As the village community lacked funds to pay for the guards, some members

of the villagers committee and some elder villagers took the guards' jobs as volunteers in the village. These older villagers stated that they "want to protect the wetlands" since their families were living on growing reeds and lotus. Since the 1990s, reeds were not used for covering cargos as much as they had been before; villagers designed and developed reed mats and handicrafts for decoration purposes. They believed that tourists coming to their village brought more opportunities for selling their reed handicrafts to urban people (D. B. Tian, 22 June 2007, personal communication). It is understandable that the protection of the wetlands to maintain its production concerned the livelihoods of rural households since most of the rural households lived on reed production. The village community welcomed the rural tourism programme since it could help with the marketing of its reed products, as well as offering some rural households opportunities to run tourism businesses in the village. This indicates that rural tourism was a supplementary sector in the village economy. Moreover, the village decision-making process was transparent in the village community and this ensured that the rules for managing the common wetlands were based on the consent of the village community.

To summarise, "money" and "funds" were mentioned frequently in the interviews. All the villages lacked "collective funds" to protect the wetlands. Zhalaying and Wangjiazhai villages demonstrated the underinvestment in wetlands protection and in preventing the degradation of the wetlands ecological system. Dongtianzhuang village community solved this problem through cooperation with tourists because the villagers make a living on the wetlands and the production of the wetlands immediately affects their household incomes.

7.3 Sourcing funds for maintaining the tourism commons

It seems that “money” has been the key factor in balancing wetlands protection and rural tourism exploitation. When the village leaders talked about funds for wetlands protection, they all complained about the absence of “funds or financial assistance from the government” for the village and the shortage of village collectives’ funds. Why was the village short of collective funds for village infrastructure and wetlands protection? How did the village accumulate and manage the collective funds? These emerging questions were answered by the investigation of the management of village collectively owned cultivated lands and pastures in Zhalaying village, as well as of the common wetlands in Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages.

7.3.1 Land rentals as the only source of village collective fund

Land rentals have been the only source of village collective fund that can be used for the improvement of village infrastructure, such as repairing roads, cleaning streets, supplying tap water, etc. This situation has not been particular to these villages but has been ubiquitous in rural China since 1990s. Before the 1990s, village’s collective accumulations were mainly from collecting land contract fees as an additional charge to the agricultural tax. Alternatively, the rural households could contribute 10 to 20 days of free labour annually to the village collectives to offset a portion of the land contract fees. After 2004, when the central government exempted the agricultural tax, it has been impossible for the villagers committees to collect any fees from rural households or benefit from labour on a voluntary basis. Therefore, the rentals of village reserve lands became the only source of collective funds for managing village affairs.

7.3.1.1 Land rentals in Zhalaying village

Investigation of village reserved land management in these villages provided more insights into the real situation of village self-governance in managing the village affairs. The village reserve land was the only source of village collective fund in Zhalaying (see Appendix 2, 5. Zhalaying focus group, 29 June). The villagers committee managed and leased the village reserve lands and leased them to Zhalaying villagers and outside investors; the land rentals were used for managing village affairs. However, all the village cadres declared that the rural lands were cheap and the rentals were not enough for maintaining village infrastructure and public services. The village accountant claimed that Zhalaying cultivated lands had very low yields and grew only one crop each year so the rental was only about 60 Yuan per mu per year in 2006. Also, in leasing the collectively reserved lands, the village adopted a pro-poor principle that stated that Zhalaying villagers with less capability to engage in rural tourism businesses had priority to bid for cultivated lands at a lower rate of rental (Accountant Luo, 28 June 2008, personal communication).

The villagers committee leased the reserved barren lands to the outside investors of rural tourism businesses in Zhalaying village. Through leasing lands to outside investors, the village could use the outside investments to develop tourism facilities in the village.

The land rentals also increased the village collective funds for infrastructure improvement in the village. However, the land rentals were shared between the town government and the village. The town government withheld about 30 per cent of the land rentals (Hou, G. H., 29 June 2008, personal communication; more details in 5 e.

Land rentals of the First Grassland Resort in Appendix 2: Zhalaying village interview data, on page 454). Zhalaying villagers questioned the sharing of land rentals with town government and considered that the village collective should collect the entire rentals. The county leader promised to urge the town government to return the land rentals to the village, but “the resort hotels signed the land lease contracts with the town government and were unwilling to pay the rentals to the village” (Accountant Luo, 28 June 2008, personal communication).

The case of Zhalaying village shows that the rentals of the village collective’s reserve lands was the only source of village collective funds but was withheld by the town government. Apparently, the town government had no authority or legitimacy to do so. This indicates that local government interfered powerfully in village affairs through withholding a part of the land rentals of the village collective lands. Since the village collective funds were not large enough to maintain the infrastructure and public services in the village, the villagers expected the higher-level government to support rural tourism development with financial subsidies.

7.3.1.2 Land rentals in Wangjiazhai village

As was the case in Zhalaying village, land rentals from the tourism businesses were the only source of finances for managing village affairs in Wangjiazhai village. There was a difference from the experience of Zhalaying village, however, in that Wangjiazhai village was paid a lump sum of land rentals when the private developers built amusement parks on the collective’s wetlands in the late 1980s and the early 1990s. The villagers committee signed the land lease contracts with the private investors at the

annual rental of 100 Yuan per mu, with a term of 70 years. The leased lands included rural household allotments of reed fields and the village reserve wetlands. The rentals for the individual household allotments were paid to the villagers; the rentals of the village reserve wetlands were used as village collective funds to manage the village public affairs, i.e. maintaining telephone lines, supplying tap water, cleaning streets, etc. Moreover, the villagers committee also used these collective funds for construction of the infrastructure in the Folk Village, which was developed as compensation for the villagers whose allotments of reed beds or lotus fields had been used by the theme parks. As discussed in Chapter 6, the villagers claimed that the rural tourism programme was unfair and urged the villagers committee to stop using collective funds for the Folk Village. The disputes increased as the Folk Village programme developed the second project. The villagers appealed to the higher authorities to investigate the village financial situation and land management. This appeal lasted for about five years but no higher authority accepted this case. Then, some villagers jointly accused the village leader of non-transparent conduct in land leasing and land rental management. The conflicts between tourism participants and non-participants completely stopped all the financial resources for the management of village affairs.

The situation of village land management in Wangjiazhai and Zhalaying villages indicates that the shortage of village collective funds was threatening the sustainability of rural tourism programmes and the social stability of the rural community. The village cadres and the villagers complained that the local government and the State had been absent in providing public services in the village. They also clearly realised the huge

gap between State investment in the urban areas and that in the rural areas in China, but the only thing they could do to solve the problem was for the villages to do so by themselves. Nevertheless, none of the Wangjiazhai villagers took any action to solve this problem due to the paralysed self-government in the village. The Zhalaying villagers committee was actively sourcing funds from tourism businesses for infrastructure improvement in the village and gained support from the outside investors of rural tourism businesses in the village.

7.3.2 Sourcing infrastructure improvement from tourism businesses and local government

The investment in infrastructure improvement has been all from the village collective funds. The villagers criticised the absence of the local government in rural public service. They also criticised tourism business owners for not donating a cent to the village after they earned a great deal of money from Zhalaying rural tourism. On the other hand, tourism business owners argued that tourism income was insufficient to finance infrastructure construction or improvement in the village.

The village leaders claimed that village collective funds were all spent on village infrastructure improvement to develop Zhalaying as a rural tourism destination. In addition to the construction of a sealed road and the landfill for domestic waste, the village also used collective funds for setting up tourist signs, fencing the wetlands and grasslands, building recreation facilities on the village culture ground, etc. The village public services, i.e. painting the street walls, planting trees along the road, cleaning the

streets and managing household garbage, etc., were all supplied by the village collective funds.

The village once tried to raise funds from tourism businesses and local government, but did not succeed. Although the outside investors earned money from rural tourism businesses based on Zhalaying village resources, few tourism businesses in Zhalaying village were willing to donate money to improve the village infrastructure. Moreover, “none of the local owners of farmhouses or riding horses was willing to pay for the village collective affairs” (Accountant Luo, 29 June 2008, personal communication).

Similar complaints were made by a farmhouse owner but he claimed that the farmhouse income was “pretty small” and they “had no money” to improve the village infrastructure. He insisted that infrastructure construction and improvement, e.g. tap-water supply, sewage treatment and sealed streets, were “basic living conditions and essential infrastructure for rural tourism development, but till now it is still unaffordable for the village” (J. H. Li, 19 June 2008, personal communication). It seems that the villagers realised that the village infrastructure should be improved but none took it as their own business.

Zhalaying villagers claimed that local government should fund the village infrastructure construction and improvement. They believed that the county government should provide more financial subsidies to improve the infrastructure and public services in the rural area, as the village had been converted to a rural tourism destination that contributed to the GDP growth of the county. Moreover, they argued that the village infrastructure was not only used by villagers but was accessed openly by all of the

tourists. Also, they criticised the county government for not taking on rural infrastructure improvement as part of local governmental duties. “The county ‘governor’ does not realise how the rural tourism development in Zhalaying village has benefited Fengning County in economic growth and social development” (G. H. Hou, 28 June 2008, personal communication).

While the village cadres criticised the absence of the local government in funding the village infrastructure improvement, some villagers claimed that the village should have more sources for collective funds. They thought land rentals collected from the resort hotels should be a financial resource for infrastructure improvement in Zhalaying village. “There are many resort hotels around our village. All the owners are outsider investors. They pay the land rentals to our village but I don’t know how much and where the money is used in our village” (J. H. Li, 19 June 2008, personal communication). The villagers also insisted that, even though there was no tourism business in the village, the village should use collective funds or accumulations to install street lamps and clean the streets, because these make up the basic infrastructure of a residential place (S. B. Zhang, 20 June 2007, personal communication).

To summarise, the need for public services and infrastructure improvement in the village was recognised by farmhouse owners who had some experience and more knowledge of urban life. However, funding for public goods and infrastructure improvement was a sensitive topic in the village. Villagers had different opinions from those of the village leaders. It seems that villagers did not know the village collective’s revenues and costs and that implies that the village financial reports were not

transparent or open to the villagers. This indicates that the growth of Zhalaying rural tourism increased the competition for the use of village infrastructure and public services. As the government had retreated from taking part in the improvement of village infrastructure, the only provider of village infrastructure and public services was the village itself. The village was short of collective funds but failed to raise funds from the tourism businesses: neither from the resort hotels with outside investment nor from villager-owned farmhouses. Moreover, no villager or tourist was willing to pay any more fees that could contribute to construction or improvement of village infrastructure.

7.3.3 Villagers' incompatible interests in tourism commons

There was a huge divergence in villagers' attitudes towards the issue of the tourism commons and this was the case not only in Zhalaying village but also in Wangjiazhai village. This divergence reflected their different interests in and concerns about the rural tourism development programmes.

7.3.3.1 Degraded neighbourhood relationships in the village

Zhalaying villagers had different attitudes towards public services and common goods in the village. The tourism business owners had different opinions from those of the villagers who were not engaged in tourism businesses. While some villagers were keen to say something good in order to indicate that village public services were well organised, farmhouse owners complained about the insufficient infrastructure improvement and public services and were critical that villagers did not care about village affairs. The farmhouse owners claimed that "the urgent issue that needs to be nailed down is the problem of the tourism environment, at least, to give tourists a clean

street” (J. H. Li, 19 June 2008, personal communication). However, the villagers were criticised for “not caring about the common issues”.

The farmhouse owners pointed out that the villagers had been settled there for more than four generations, and they did have some good traditions, but they also had some bad habits. The villagers were criticised for “only managing their businesses”, “not caring about the common issues”, “being obedient to the local governors”, as well as “being jealous of their rich neighbours” (J. H. Li, 19 June 2008, personal communication). The farmhouse owner complained that he was distressed by the tension with his neighbours and indicated that village norms were ignored in the village at that time. As rural tourism businesses grew, villagers were jealous and even hated households that earned more money. This phenomenon was observed in Wangjiazhai village, also, as discussed in Chapter 6.

7.3.3.2 Conflicts between tourism participants and non-participants

There are obvious conflicts between tourism participants – villagers who own or work for tourism businesses – and tourism non-participants – villagers who do not directly earn money from tourism businesses. In Zhalaying village, tourism non-participants claimed that “tourists to Zhalaying are the guests of the farmhouses” and had nothing to do with them (J. H. Li, Accountant Luo, 28 June 2008, personal communication).

“Some villagers even hate tourists because these villagers benefit nothing from their visiting our village” (Accountant Luo, 28 June 2008, personal communication). The village accountant Luo and some older villagers believed that tourism businesses cost the village collective’s resources, but these businesses did not benefit the villagers.

They complained that they had lost the simple but peaceful living environment of the past since their neighbours had begun operating farmhouse businesses in the village (OL Lady Cui, Accountant Luo, Tea house owner, Horse-riding guide, 27–29 June 2008, personal communication).

The farmhouse owners argued that villagers do benefit from tourism by supplying riding horses and food, such as sell local farm products, such as meats, vegetables, naked oats and other food, to the farmhouses. The increased number of tourists to the village could, potentially, have augmented the sale of local farm products. In this way, the villagers who did not provide services to the tourists could indirectly increase their household incomes also. However, “few villagers think so” (J. H. Li, 19 June 2007, personal communication).

Regarding the common resources, the farmhouse owners did not think that they should have more responsibility than did the other rural households in the village. They argued that Zhalaying rural households had residential lands for housing and cultivated lands for farming or planting. Farmhouse businesses were based on the villagers’ old residential properties or on newly constructed properties on their residential lands. Moreover, they had paid for the public goods, i.e. power and telephone lines, etc. (J. H. Li, 19 June 2007, personal communication). Moreover, they believed that their farmhouse businesses indirectly benefited their neighbours.

Moreover, the village leaders in Zhalaying also reported that the older people, who were 60 to 70 years old, did not care about the construction of roads and streets, but the households that received tourists required the road system in the village to be built and

improved. The farmhouse owners or households receiving tourists took for granted that the village should build the road system as part of the public services or infrastructure in the village. The conflicts between the farmhouse owners and non-farmhouse owners were obvious in Zhalaying village, particularly regarding the issue of the public resources/goods/services, the use of them and the responsibility for them. This is typical of the conflict between tourism participants and non-participants regarding CPRs management.

The above interview data analysis shows that the village included two groups of rural tourism stakeholders: the households that received tourists and the households who did not. The rural households that were engaged directly in rural tourism businesses were not willing to pay for the use of tourism commons while the households not receiving tourists insisted that the farmhouse business owners should pay for the use of public services, as well as the tourism commons in the village. However, none of the farmhouse owners thought that they should pay more for the use of public resources in the village. Obviously, this is the tragedy of CPRs in the villages. The key problems were the absence of regulation of farmhouse businesses and the management of common resources. These two problems were threatening and damaging the tourism environment and the destination image, and may have resulted in a decline in the number of tourists. The farmhouse owners saw it as a serious problem but did not realise that this was also the responsibility of farmhouse businesses. It seems that no one in the village knew how to deal with this issue; the rural tourism development in this village encountered a problem that the village could not solve thus far.

7.3.3.3 Divergence of village cadres' attitudes towards tourism commons management

The village cadres also had different attitudes towards tourism commons management. In Wangjiazhai village, the manager of the Folk Village, the secretary of the village party branch and the current villagers committee members showed various attitudes towards the management of tourism commons. Zhalaying village had a similar situation. The village accountant insisted that the farmhouse owners should pay more for the use of public resources in the village while the other village cadres who owned farmhouse businesses did not agree with the village accountant.

It seems that village leaders did not have any consensus on the issue of tourism commons management. However, the village leaders stated that the village community was not capable of solving the problem of CPRs management. In Wangjiazhai village, the paralysed villagers committee could not call for the villager representative meeting or the villager assembly to discuss the problem of the use of public resources. Zhalaying village accountant Luo believed that such an issue should have been solved with governmental intervention because neither the village leaders nor the villagers were capable of addressing such problems. "The village self-governance needs a capable leader to be able to function. The village leaders do not have such a consciousness. Even the Datan township government or the Fengning County government did not have such awareness or realisation or consciousness" (Accountant Luo, 28 June 2008, personal communication).

The issue of CPRs management had been there in 2003 when the village re-elected the villagers committee. However, all the candidates were farmhouse owners. In their election campaign, none of them mentioned the issues of CPRs management in their speech. Although all the villagers participated in the election of the village self-governance committee and voted for the village leaders, they had no awareness of villager meetings and their role in discussing and deciding village affairs. The villagers did not participate actively in the management of village affairs or in the decision-making process.

7.4 Summation

This chapter discussed the problems of tourism commons, with a focus on the underinvestment in infrastructure and the overuse of common resources by tourism in the villages. Each village had a unique situation regarding tourism commons management but all these villages had been facing the problems of infrastructure underinvestment since the State withdrew its public services in villages. The villages had limited funds for infrastructure improvement. In addition, the problems of free-riding and overuse in the management of common pastures and riding tracks challenged the sustainability of Zhalaying rural tourism development. Similar problems were observed in Wangjiazhai village, where over-farming of common reed beds and lotus fields caused damage to the Wangjiazhai landscape of wetlands. Such problems, however, were not the case in Dongtianzhuang village.

Lacking funds for village infrastructure improvement and wetlands protection were fundamental problems for managing tourism commons in the villages. In addition to the

lack of clarity regarding the rights and obligations of tourism commons management in the villages, the absence of the local government in rural public services contributed to the financial burden of wetlands protection for the village communities. The problems of free-riding and over-farming in the villages caused disputes between tourism participants and non-participants in the villages.

Further field studies discovered that different groups of villagers had incompatible or conflicting interests in tourism commons. Tourism participants and non-participants expressed distinctively different concerns about and attitudes to the provision and maintenance, use and monitoring of tourism commons in the villages. Moreover, their divergent interests in tourism commons might have determined their conflicting choices of working rules for governing tourism commons. Individuals or a group of stakeholders, however, could not dominate the decision-making processes in governing tourism commons. Instead, it was “the village as a whole” that needed to participate in the process of tourism commons governance and develop the working rules for coping with the problems of tourism commons.

In managing tourism commons, the situations in these three villages corresponded to Ostrom’s observation regarding governing common-pool resources. In Wangjiazhai and Zhalaying villages, the monitoring arrangement was used, but the “guards” were rarely “external” agents (Ostrom, 1999). However, in Dongtianzhuang village, the users of tourism commons played a major role in monitoring each other’s activities. In addition, it was notable that all the village leaders were keen to rely on governmental intervention for managing the village commons despite Dongtianzhuang and Zhalaying villagers

developing their working rules for solving the problems. It seems that the ability of the village for self-governance fundamentally determines the tourism commons governance model. Then, the further field studies were focused on the development of working rules for managing tourism commons to examine the interrelationship between the village self-governance capacity and the rural tourism destination governance. The research findings from the constant comparative analysis of data from field studies are reported in the next chapter, Chapter 8: Working rules for governing tourism commons.

Chapter 8 Working rules for governing tourism

commons

The problems of tourism commons are widely observed to be obstacles that hindered the sustainability of rural tourism destinations. Coping with the problems of commons, as discussed in Chapter 7, has been the commitment of the villages alone. The local government has been absent in village infrastructure improvement since the State withdrew its public services from Chinese rural areas in the early 1990s. As GDP growth has been the driving force of the whole country's development, it was also oriented towards rural tourism development. In this context, rural people were encouraged to run rural tourism businesses for the purpose of increasing household income and improving living conditions in the villages. Nevertheless, "the village" is firstly the dwelling place of "villagers" and then a rural tourism destination for "tourists". These rural people have been willing to protect the natural environment and conserve folk customs in order to sustain tourism businesses and their dwelling place. Therefore, the village communities developed working rules to manage the rural tourism commons towards sustainability; this was discovered from field studies in the villages: Zhalaying, Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang.

These studies discovered that the village communities integrated external regulations with internal rules to develop working rules for managing rural tourism commons. In the interviews, villagers often referred to formal rules made by the State and local governments as external regulations, e.g. "the laws", "local government policy and

regulations”, on agricultural land use and reservation, specific standards for rural tourism services, and the guidelines for horse-riding pricing, etc. These external regulations reflected government intervention in rural tourism development. The village self-governments usually developed village statutes to fulfil the implementation of the external regulations from the higher-level authorities. These village statutes were used as formal rules that were written and published in the village. However, in practice, when the village statutes were not suitable to the situation, the villagers adapted the village’s informal rules, e.g. the village conventions, folk customs, etc., to develop working rules. More detailed research findings about the working rules for governing tourism commons are reported in this chapter and illustrate how the decision-making concerning village internal affairs is confined by external regulations and internal rules. Based on the analysis of the formulation and implementation of these rules, including formal and informal rules, the determinants of the working rules were identified, as were the reasons why the villagers developed their own working rules in managing tourism commons.

8.1 External regulations on tourism commons management

In the practice of managing tourism commons, the villagers used “laws” as constitutional rules and “local government policy and regulations” as guidelines for developing the “village statutes”. The villagers labelled the “laws” and “local government policy and regulations” as external regulations since these formal institutions were established by the higher-level governments and enforced in the village by State power. The villages barely had a say in implementing these external

regulations in the village. These formal institutions were, therefore, treated as external factors that regulated tourism commons management in the villages.

8.1.1 Laws and regulations: Constitutional rules for making village statutes

In formulating “village statutes” for managing tourism commons, the villagers usually used two “laws” as constitutional rules. One is the *Land Contract Law* ("Law of the People's Republic of China on Land Contract in Rural Areas," 2002) that grants the villagers long-term and guaranteed land-use rights and also sets the principles for managing the village collective’s economic resources. Another is the *Organic Law of the Villagers Committees* ("Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of the People's Republic of China.," 1998), which is promulgated to ensure the villagers administer their villages according to the law. The villagers often referred to these two laws as the legal bases for developing the “village statutes” for managing tourism commons.

8.1.1.1 The Law and relevant regulations on rural land management

In China, rural lands are collectively managed by village self-government according to *Land Contract Law* ("Law of the People's Republic of China on Land Contract in Rural Areas," 2002). This law not only precisely defines the scope, the ownership and the management system of rural land, etc. but also explicitly describes the relationships of interest between the State, the peasants’ collective economic organisations and the individual peasants. The villagers usually applied this law as the constitutional rules for guiding the development of the “village statutes” for managing village common pastures and wetlands, such as defining the boundaries, the providers and the users of the common fields in the village.

Specifically, in the cases of the studied villages, both the common pastures and the common wetlands were the village's collectively owned rural lands but were reserved as village commons that all the peasants of the village could access. As the village self-government, the villagers committees defined the boundaries and the usage of these common pastures/wetlands. The village collectives held the ownership, and all the peasants were the users and the providers of the commons in the villages. As the members of the village economic organisations, these peasants had established long-term, interdependent relationships with each other and shared the common interests of the reserved pastures/wetlands, that is, to maintain the common pastures/wetlands for sustaining their agricultural productivity. In this situation, it was not difficult for peasants to make rules for the provision, maintenance and use of the commons, and to safeguard and punish the offenders, etc. The village statutes, developed by the villagers committees with the villagers' consent, were used as operational rules for managing the common pastures and wetlands. The villagers committees acted as the administrative authorities to punish the offenders against the village statutes; the peasants were willing to follow these internal rules to sustain the collectively reserved pastures/wetlands for their common interests. Therefore, there was no problem of the commons.

The launch of rural tourism programmes changed the situation of the common pastures/wetlands in the villages. Despite the boundaries remaining the same, the tourist activities added new usages and new users to the common pastures/wetlands. The common pastures/wetlands, usually used as rural lands by peasants only for the purpose

of agricultural production, now were used for both agricultural production and tourist recreation. A new function, “tourism resource”, was added to these commons. The peasants of the villages had to share the commons with tourists and tourism business owners/workers from the outside of their respective villages. These increased users of the commons, however, were not members of the village economic collectives, hence, did not have ownership of the commons. Therefore, the incremental users of the commons had no legitimate rights to or obligations regarding the provision of the commons. However, as the “guests” or the “investors” in the villages, they were given the legitimacy of using these commons. In this situation, the village common pastures/wetlands were changed to be “tourism commons”. That meant the providers and the users of the resources were not the individuals within a group that shares common interests but were individuals from different groups with various or contradictory interests in the commons.

The development of rural tourism changed the common pastures/wetlands into tourism commons. It increased the number of users and the functions of the resources but the providers remained the same. The peasants of the village were the legitimate providers and users of the commons. Therefore, they had the right to change the functions of the pastures/wetlands and to increase the numbers of new users. In the case of rural tourism activities in the villages, theoretically, it was the villagers’ collective choice to change the common pastures/wetlands into tourism resources. Ideally, the members of the village collectives could share the interests of rural tourism development equally. Then, the villagers might have consented to open the commons to the tourists and tourism

business owner/workers. If so, the provision and maintenance of the resources would, rationally, be the responsibility of the village collectives. In such circumstances, the “village statutes” could adjust to such “new situations” and the peasants would follow the new statutes as the operational rules for the use of the common pastures/wetlands.

The theoretical assumption discussed above was not always true in each of the cases of a rural tourism destination. As explored in Chapter 7, Dongtianzhuang village successfully adapted the village statutes for managing the common pastures after rural tourism businesses developed in the village. In Zhalaying village, the village statutes for managing tourism commons were supplemented with the “working rules” that were created by the villagers through communication and negotiation with tourists and the tourism business owners. In contrast, in Wangjiashai village, no working rule was in use for managing tourism commons. In other words, the village statutes for managing tourism commons were abandoned but no new rules, either formal or informal, were established in Wangjiashai village. Both the tourists and the villagers complained about such a “no order” situation of tourism commons management in the village. This situation was blamed on the fact that the villagers had never achieved any consent agreement for the development of rural tourism programmes in the village.

The situation of tourism commons management in the villages indicates that the operational rules for managing tourism commons are determined particularly by “the village situation”. Specifically, the providers and the users develop the operational rules for using and maintaining the tourism commons in daily practice. It is usually the villagers’ collective choice, which is significantly determined by the village

decision-making process and, simultaneously, affected by negotiation and communication between the providers and the users of the resources. However, how did the village decision-making process affect the formulation of villages' collective choices and, hence, the operational rules for managing tourism commons effectively in these villages? This question is answered through analysing the institutions for the village decision-making process.

8.1.1.2 The law and relevant regulations on village decision-making procedures

In making decisions on village internal affairs, the villagers usually used the *Organic Law of the Villagers Committee* as the constitutional rules. This law was enacted in accordance with the *Constitution* in 1998 and revised in 2010. It aims to ensure the village self-governance in the countryside and empowers the villagers to administer their village affairs ("Organic Law of the Villagers Committees of the People's Republic of China," 1998). It is, therefore, respected as the guide to “grassroots democratic practice in rural China” and is studied as the law on village governance (Alpermann, 2009, p. 397).

It is worth noting that national legislation and provincial implementation regulations have institutionalised village self-government and gradually established the constitutional base for village self-governance in rural China. The *Organic Law* decrees that the villagers committee (*Cūnmín wěiyuánhui*) is democratically elected by villagers and acts as “the primary mass organisation of self-government” in the countryside (Article 1). This law empowers the villagers committee with the legitimate rights to

“manage the public affairs and public welfare undertakings of the village” in accordance with the *Organic Law* (Article 2). To ensure the legitimate rights of village self-government, the *Organic Law* also explicitly defines the authority relationships between autonomous village and local government in the administration of village affairs. It stresses guidance and support/help, rather than interference, from local government for the operation of village self-government. It expressly states that the township government “shall guide, support and help the villagers committees in their work but may not interfere with the affairs that lawfully fall within the scope of the village self-government” (Article 4). Nevertheless, the law gives the villagers committee the duty to “convey the villagers’ opinions and demands and make suggestions to the people’s government” (Article 2). The villagers committee also has the duty to “publicise the Constitution, laws, regulations, and State policies among the villagers; help them understand the importance of performing their obligation as prescribed by law” (Article 6). At this point, the villagers committee acts as a bridge between the higher-level government and the village community in governing the village.

By comparison, authority relationships between the village-level organisations are inexplicit; hence, they can induce competition between the villagers committee and the village party branch for the power in managing village affairs. The village self-government system coexists with the village party branch for village governance. The *Organic Law* allocates responsibilities for managing village affairs to the villagers committee but assigns core leadership in the village to the village party branch. On the

one hand, village self-government consists of well-functioning organisations, such as the democratically elected villagers committee, but may also include the village small groups (VSGs, *Cūnmín xiǎozǔ*), the villager representative assemblies (VRAs, *Cūnmín dàibiǎo dàhuì*) and the villager assembly (VAs, *Cūnmín dàhuì*). On the other hand, it does not explicitly define the authority relationships and responsibilities of these village organisations. Nevertheless, all of these agencies of village self-government are under the leadership of the village party branch.

Such a piece of legislation, which describes the authority relationships among the villagers' organisations, indicates that the *Organic Law* (1998, 2010) establishes the Chinese communist party branch as the “core leadership” in the village, despite the villagers committee being the primary mass organisation that holds the responsibility of managing village affairs. The CCP's dominant status in village governance is even further enforced in the implementation of the *Organic Law* in Hebei Province, which explicitly subjected the elected villagers committee, under the party branch leadership, to institutionalise the village party branch's dominant leadership in the villages. The county government actively implemented and enforced this regulation by standardising the village decision-making procedure. As shown in Figure 15, on page 311, Anxin County developed a diagram to illustrate the normal village decision-making procedure so as to guide the village self-government in handling the village public affairs. This diagram is transcribed from the photo taken at the Wangjiazhai villagers committee's office and translated into English.

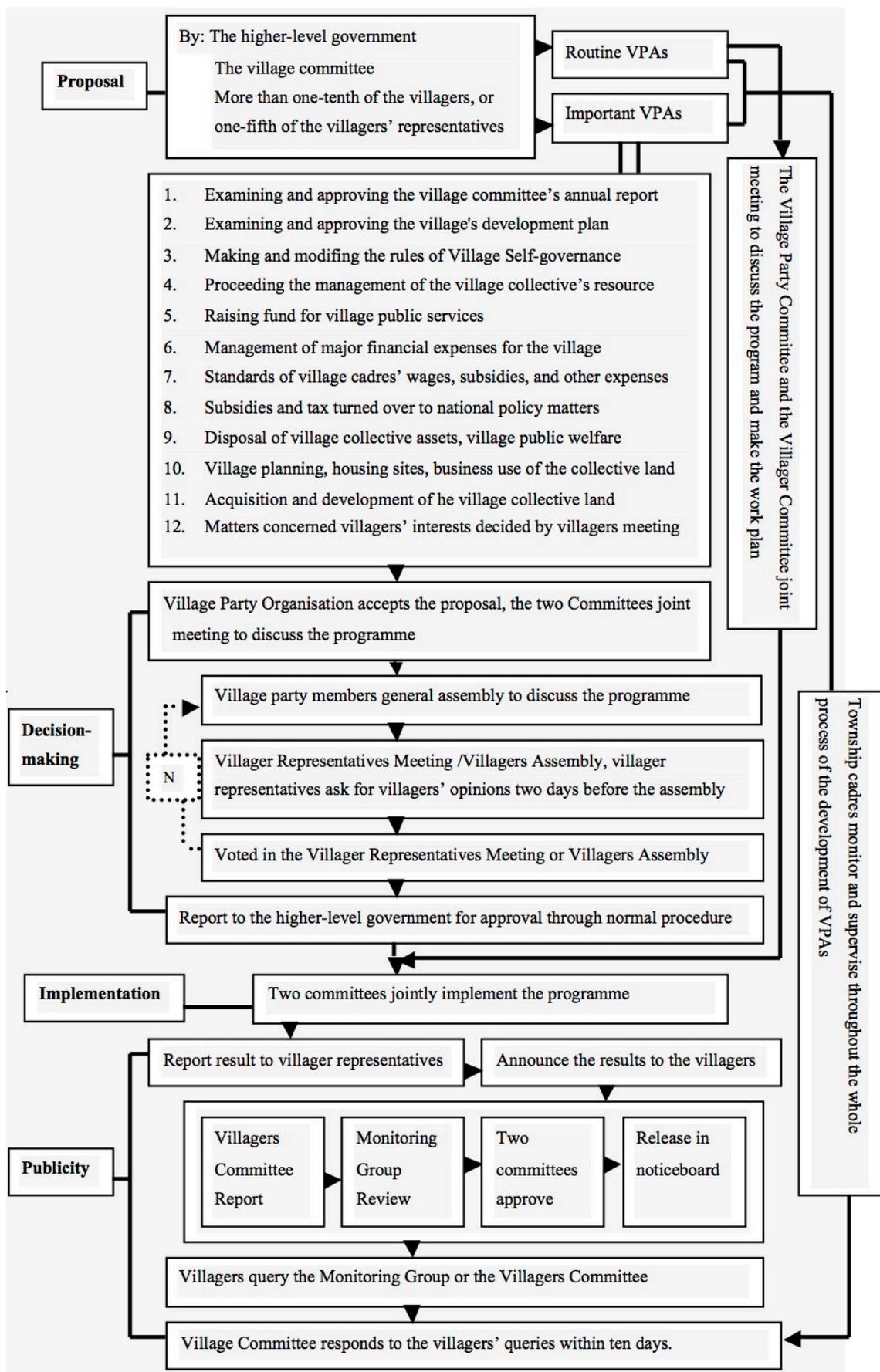


Figure 15: Normative operation of village public affairs in Anxin county

This diagram illustrates that, besides the villagers committee and the villagers, the higher-level government also can put forward proposals for resolving village issues. It specifically defines 12 issues as the “important village affairs” and the decision-making procedures for these issues. According to this “normative operation procedure”, the proposals related to the above “important village affairs” shall be discussed firstly at the joint meeting of the two committees and then approved by the villager representatives meeting or the villager assembly before implementation. Moreover, the township cadres who supervise village self-governance should take part in the whole decision-making process. It shows that the party committee and party members have the core power to influence the decisions of village affairs. The *Organic Law* and its implementation regulations institutionalise the party branch’s dominant leadership in village governance but do not explicitly define the responsibility of the village party branch in managing village affairs. It seems that the village party branch has the overwhelming leadership role but responsibility is overlapped with the villagers committee. This research finding may explain the widely observed tension between the villagers committees and the village party branches in managing village affairs in Wangjiazhai and Zhalaying villages, as discussed in Chapters 6 and 7.

The above institutional analysis of the village decision-making process indicates that, ideally, the *Organic Law* is the constitutional rule for making decisions in managing village affairs. It has improved the opportunities for villagers to access power in managing their village affairs. However, the field studies on the exercise of village self-governance discovered that various external actors, such as the State, local

government, the party and other social actors, surrounded the villages with competitive power in order to control the rural societies. In this circumstance, the village decision-making process is shaped significantly by the authority structure that integrates authority relationships between the village and the hierarchical government, and the power relationships among the village-level organisations, etc. Consequently, constant interactions between village external and internal actors and various institutions resulted in the different performances of tourism commons management in the villages.

In the villages, the self-governance system is set under the same hierarchical administration in Hebei Province but shows different patterns in the management of village affairs. Former Wangjiazhai village cadres complained that it was too difficult to apply village self-governance in accordance with the *Organic Law* in practice because of the competitive power relationships between the two committees and villager groups with different interests (X. L. He & L. S. Wang, 28 June 2008, personal communication). With guidance from the township government, the village cadres and the party members drafted *The Chart of Village Self-government* and hung it on the wall, but they seldom abided by the chart in managing village affairs. The law defines the village decision-making process as a grassroots democratic procedure. In practice, however, it is usually under the control of the party branch with the collaboration of a few elites. The majority of the villagers have limited opportunities to participate in the decision-making regarding the important village affairs, i.e. village development plans, rural tourism development programmes, and the use of the village collective lands, etc.

By comparison, Zhalaying village showed more cooperation between the villagers committee and the village party branch. The interviewed villagers proudly declared that the villagers elected the villagers committee democratically, with a strictly designed election procedure, and the voting operated in accordance with the *Organic Law* and the implementation regulations. The villagers committee and the village party branch have cooperated well in managing village affairs. The secretary of the village party branch, Mr Hou, was elected by the village party members and remained in that role for more than 20 years in the village. The village party branch organised the voting for villagers committee members in the village community centre. The interviewed villagers praised Mr Hou for his leadership in managing village affairs, and appreciated his ability to moderate disputes in the village and maintain the stability of the village community. The villagers committee head, Mr Sun, won the election since the villagers believed he could use his knowledge and experience of the tourism market to help the village develop farmhouse businesses. Both of these village leaders have maintained close and stable relationships with the officers of the town government and the county government.

To summarise, this research found that both external and internal rules are used for governing rural tourism commons. The villagers frequently mentioned terms such as “institutions” (*zhidu*), “regulations” (*guiding*) and “official documents” (*hongtouwenzjian*) as external regulations from higher governments. They also talked about the “village statutes” (*cungui*) and “working rules” (*tubanfa*) but referred to these institutions as internal village regulations. This shows the linkage between formal

institutions, village statutes and working rules in the daily practice of tourism commons management. It reveals that the official institutions are used as the constitutional basis for village self-governance. Hence, village statutes are formulated under the framework of formal institutions for the operation of village self-governance. However, the decision-making for village affairs is significantly shaped by the power competition between the villagers committee and the village party branch. In this circumstance, the implementation of law and regulations with regard to rural lands and village self-government demonstrated different patterns in the different villages. Such different relationships occurring between the two committees imply that village self-governance capacity is a matter of effective governance of rural tourism destinations.

8.1.2 Local government policies and regulations as the guidelines for making the village statutes

In practice, the local government's policies and regulations are used as guidelines for developing the village rules for managing tourism commons in the villages. These policies and regulations are "official documents" that are posted in the village community centres, farmhouse guest rooms or on street walls in the villages. Some rural tourism development policies and regulations issued by the provincial or municipal government were obtained from the tourism bureaus. The local people, both the government officers and the villagers, generally call these policies and regulations "official documents" (Hóngtóu wénjiàn, in Chinese pinyin).

Hebei Provincial government initiated a series of policies and regulations to advance rural tourism development. These documents show the government intervention in

governing rural tourism development programmes in these villages, through policy support/interference in the initiation of rural tourism programmes, regulations for normalisation of rural tourism services, and technique assistance and financial support for tourism development planning in these villages. For example, the “Norms of Rural Tourism Services in Hebei Province” (Hebei Xiangcun Lvyou Fuwu Guifan, 2006) was issued as the industrial regulations for rural tourism services. The document sets the standards for rural tourism services with specific criteria for the environment, transportation, public facilities, tourist accommodation (farmhouse hotels), food and beverage services (farmhouse food), shopping and souvenirs, travel safety, management, etc.

It seems that local government has taken an active role in the governance of rural tourism destinations. However, the interviews with the villagers revealed that the policies, regulations and even the specific tourism development planning are often “good on the paper but bad in the practice” (Zhǐ shàng shuō de hǎo, shíjì zuò de chà, in Chinese pinyin). These “official documents” are usually released to the village party branch or the villagers committee. The village cadres often convey some official documents, i.e., regulations on rural tourism businesses, standardisation of rural tourism services, etc., to the rural tourism businesses owners or managers. However, they keep documents of rural tourism development policy and planning within the members of the “two committees” (the villagers committee and the village party branch). These “official documents” are issued ideally as the guidelines for villagers in making their village rules. In practice, however, the village rules are usually formulated by the

village cadres according to their interpretations of the official documents, with the help of the township officers and the village elites.

8.1.2.1 Policies and regulations on rural tourism management

Field studies found several official documents regarding rural tourism development and management in Zhalaying village. These documents are listed in Table 10, on page 317, and show that the county and town government acted as the policy-makers and provided guides and regulations on both the codes for rural tourism businesses and the conduct of tourists.

Table 10: Policy and regulation on rural tourism management in Zhalaying village

Policy/Regulations	Policy-makers	Date of promulgation
1 Notification on strengthening normalisation of farmhouse tour and reception	Beijing North Grassland Tourism Management Committee; Datan Town Branch of Fengning County Public Security Bureau; Datan Town Office of Fengning County Industry and Commerce Bureau	25 July 2006
2 Notice to Tourists	Beijing North First Grassland Resort; Beijing North Grassland Tourism Management Committee	n.d.
3 Notice on renting and riding horses in Bashan Grassland Tourist Zone	Grassland Tourism Management Office of Datan Town	31 March 2007

As shown in Table 10, the multiple departments of the county government jointly issued the “Notification on Strengthening Normalisation of Farmhouse Tour and Reception” (Guānyú jiāqiáng nóngjiā lǚyóu jiēdài shìchǎng de tōngzhī). It sets specific standards for the farmhouse services, i.e. room equipment, quantity and quality of meals, tour services to groups and individual tourists, room rates, the price of meals and recreation

activities, etc. This document particularly regulates the lowest rates for bed and breakfast, meals and other services for tour groups and individual tourists. It indicates the local government's efforts in regulating the rural tourism market in order to avoid unfair low-pricing competition. More such efforts are shown in the second document, the "Notice to Tourists" issued by the tourism management committee, which comprises multiple departments of county government but under the coordination of the county tourism bureau. This document provides information about the tourist zone, the standards of tour services, and the pricing policy of farmhouse services and tourist recreation activities in the villages.

Moreover, the Datan Township Grassland Tourist Zone Administration Office issued the "Notice on Renting and Riding Horses in Bashan Grassland Tourist Zone". It discloses more detailed regulations on tourist recreation activities. It informs tourists that "only the registered horses have licences to serve the tourists for riding and racing recreation" and "the rentals are calculated on the base of a half-hour, billed by the horse owners, paid to the farmhouse host", etc. Such detailed rules for renting horses proposed to prohibit unauthorised horses from serving the tourists. As stated in the document, the provisions were formulated according to Fengning county government, the Public Security Bureau, the Tourism Bureau and the town government's instructions, with the purpose of maintaining order in the market and the stability of horse-riding services, and ensuring tourists' safety.

The above documents reveal that multiple departments of county government have been directly involved in the governance of Zhalaying rural tourism development. They

jointly issued and implemented rural tourism development policies and regulations under the leadership of the county government or the town government. All these DMOs offered formal institutions to the village for managing rural tourism programmes, but for their own sakes. These policies and regulations were rarely suitable to the situation in the village and, hence, were seldom actually implemented in the villages. For instance, the standardisation of farmhouse accommodation services was totally beyond the ability of some farmhouse owners. To meet these criteria for accommodating tourists, some villagers built new houses with loans from relatives and friends. However, the newly built “standard rooms with shower and flushing toilets” could not recruit more guests than did the old-style farmhouses with Manchu “*huokang*” (heated mud-brick beds), which are symbols of “tradition”, “rural life” and “the old days” but are not used in cities nowadays. As discussed in Chapter 6, most of the guests in Zhalaying village, at the time of the research, were returning visitors, who have developed close and stable personal relationships or even friendships with their hosts. They returned to the village for visiting friends or “going home” to find the feeling of “being in nature” rather than for recreation or luxury; therefore, they did not care about the “hardware” of the accommodation. Clearly, this explains the complaints regarding official policies and regulations as “whimsical”, “unrealistic” and “impracticable”.

8.1.2.2 Supervision and inspection of rural tourism business operations

Similar regulations on the operations of rural tourism businesses were also observable in the Wangjiazhai Folk Village. The Scenic Area administration committee set up the park noticeboard in the Folk Village to display regulations on rural tourism business

operation and management. It stated that the transparency of the supervision system could enhance the management of Baiyangdian tourist attractions, regulate business practices, guarantee tourists' legitimate rights and, hence, establish the order of the rural tourism market in the Baiyangdian area.



Figure 16: Publicity of supervision on Baiyangdian Resort operations

Source: Photo taken at Wangjiazhai Folk Village on 28 June 2010.

As shown in Figure 16, on page 320, it disclosed the specific regulations and requirements for rural tourism business operations: i.e. the operators' health conditions, prohibition of selling by force, short weights, price cheating, faulty goods, fraud, wild

animal products, etc. Moreover, it displayed the regulations on codes, obligations and commitments of rural tourism businesses to supply normalised goods and standardised tourism services to visitors.

The park noticeboard also included the photos and contacts of the tourism officers who were in charge of monitoring and supervising the tourism products and services in the Folk Village. The officers were from the Price Bureau, the Industry and Commerce Bureau, respectively, and a manager of Wangjiazhai Folk Village. Such publicity of the supervision system shows that destination management organisations and private businesses cooperatively supervise the rural tourism businesses in the Folk Village. The interviews with the boatmen of Wangjiazhai village found that this publicity about the supervision system efficiently reduced the numbers of vendors of local products around the resort. The hosts of courtyards in the Folk Village also claimed that the transparency of the supervision system helped them to establish tourists' trust. However, the supervision system could not operate for 24 hours a day, and the supervisors were responsible for inspecting the whole area. Also, the office of the Scenic Area Management Committee was too far away from the Folk Village. It was impossible to process tourist complaints or the disputes on the site immediately so this supervision system was criticised as "ineffective and inefficient".

Through constant comparison of the external regulators, the authority structure for supervision of rural tourism destinations, i.e. Wangjiazhai and Zhalaying villages, was identified. The authority structure is illustrated by the diagram in Figure 17, on page 322. The diagram shows that multiple departments of local government were involved

in supervision of the operation of rural tourism businesses in the villages. The functional departments that were responsible for Price, Taxation, Tourism, Industry and Commerce, and Public Security jointly formed the Scenic Area Management Committee. As the authority of rural tourism destination management, the Scenic Area Management Committee took the responsibility for coordinating the functional department of local government to make the tourism development plan, compose tourism policies and regulations, and supervise the implementation of the plans, policies and regulations within the Scenic Area.

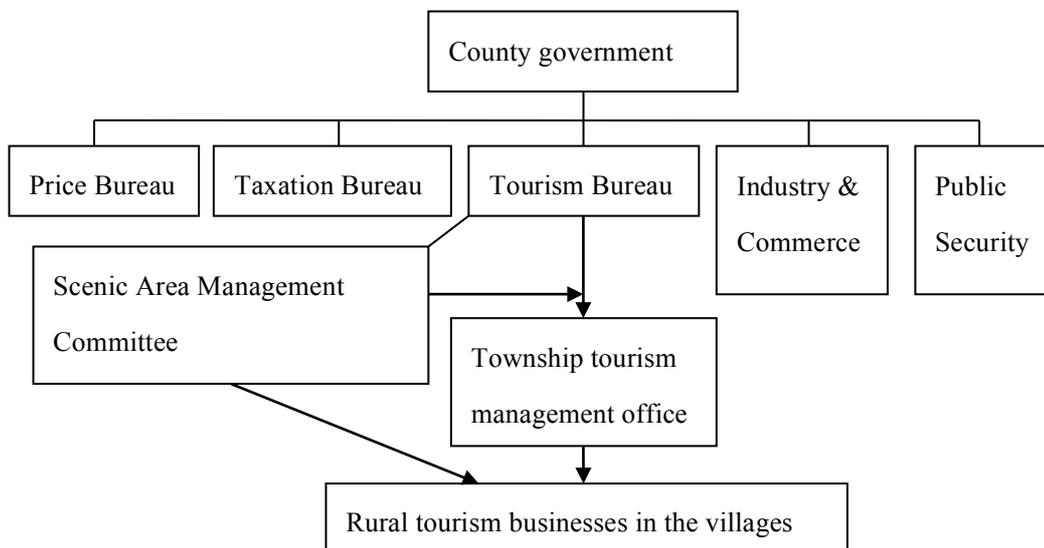


Figure 17: Authority structure for supervision of rural tourism businesses operation

Since both Wangjiazhai and Zhalaying villages had been developed as tourist attractions of the Scenic Area, their rural tourism businesses were under the supervision of the Scenic Area Management Committee and were supposed to apply the guild regulations of rural tourism development in the village. The Scenic Area Management Committee, as the destination management organisation, however, had no legitimate authority to interfere in internal village affairs, e.g. operation and management of farmhouse businesses in the village. The implementation of guild regulations on rural tourism

businesses, hence, relied on cooperation between the village self-government and the administrative authorities at county and township levels.

Further comparative analysis of policies and regulations imposed on rural tourism businesses in the villages discovered a hierarchical structure of local government intervention in rural tourism destinations. As discussed above, from the horizontal dimension, multiple departments of the county government (see Figure 17, on page 322) were involved in the regulation and supervision of the operation of rural tourism businesses in the villages. From the vertical dimension, as shown in Figure 18, on page 323, the villages were under the jurisdiction of county and town governments. Yet, the village self-government system had been applied in the villages.

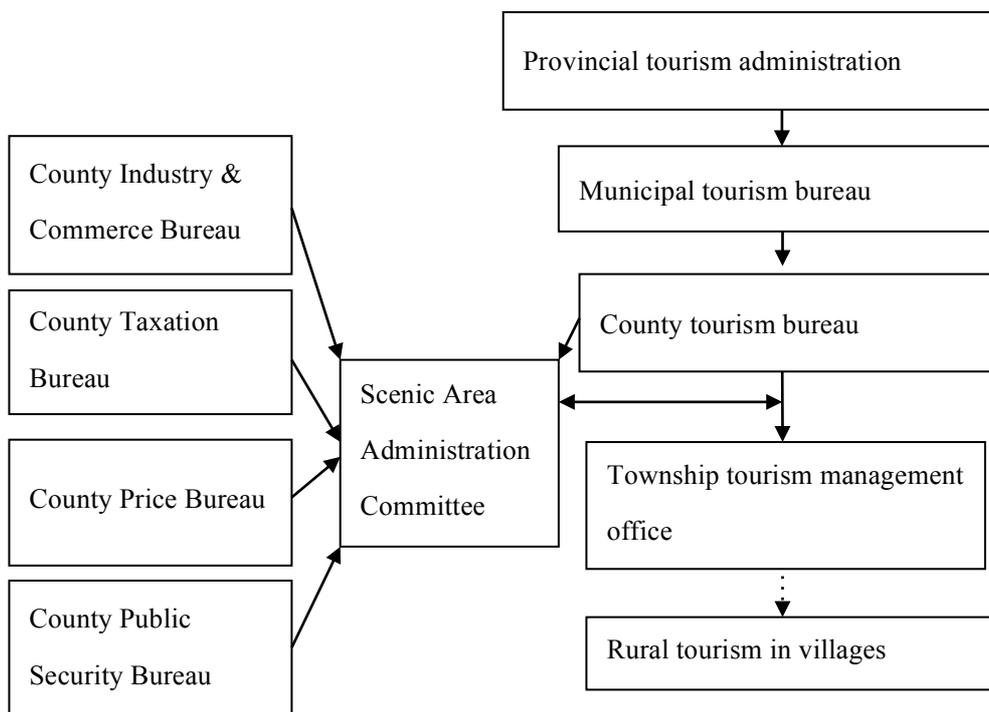


Figure 18: Hierarchical structure of government intervention in rural tourism destination governance

As the village self-government system had been applied in the villages, it implies that the county/town governments had no legitimate authority to interfere in village affairs,

i.e. rural tourism business operation and management. In such a hierarchical structure of government intervention, guild regulations issued by the government could not be implemented in the villages. Conflicts arose when there were uneven distributions of interest between the village community and the local government. For instance, the local tourism authorities set up the normalisation of rural tourism productions and services: i.e. the licensing of and taxation collection from farmhouse/courtyard operations, licensing and collection of administration fees from horse riding, setting the standards of farmhouse guest rooms, etc., but villagers complained that these regulations were “local government competing for tourism interests with villagers”. Some rural tourism business owners sharply pointed out that these regulations created opportunities for the local government officers to “seek to rent power”. The job of a government officer was enviable, and villagers were keen to develop close personal connections with the people in the government, as discussed in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Therefore, this research finding may explain why the villagers referred to government policies and regulations regarding rural tourism development as “external regulations” while the village statutes were known as “internal regulations”.

8.2 Internal rules: Village statutes and working rules

The villagers also referred to the “village statutes” as formal institutions but they saw them as fair internal rules made by the village community. The “village statutes” were usually established by the village self-government under the guidelines of the external regulations but with consideration for the “village conventions”. The “village conventions” are unwritten rules established by the villagers as their norms and codes of

the village community. Hence, “village conventions” are referred to as informal institutions for managing village internal affairs. Apparently, the “village statutes” are formal institutions established by the village community by combining external regulations and village internal rules. Theoretically, the village statutes are supposed to be the general guides for managing tourism commons in the village. In practice, however, these “village statutes” are rarely obeyed by the villagers. Instead, the villagers often developed their own “working rules” in coping with the problems of tourism commons.

8.2.1 Village statutes: Fulfil the implementation of external regulations

In the field studies, village statutes were observed in all the villages, i.e. Zhalaying, Wangjiazhai, Dongtianzhuang, Gougezhuang and Xigucheng villages. Their village statutes were printed, framed and hung on the wall of the villagers committee’s office or the village community centre. The interviewed village cadres and villagers often referred to these village statutes as village internal regulations. Usually, the two committees (villagers committee, village party organisation) jointly drafted the village statutes, with guidance from the township government officers and in consultation with elites in the village. The purpose of these village statutes was to fulfil the implementation of policies and regulations made by higher-level governments. More frequently, without the participation of the majority of villagers, such printed and framed “village statutes” were criticised as “paper exercises” by both the village cadres and villagers. This was particularly the case in both Wangjiazhai and Zhalaying villages.

8.2.1.1 Wangjiazhai village statutes on rural tourism management systems

Village statutes on rural tourism commons were framed and hung on the wall of the reception area in Wangjiazhai Folk Village. The village statutes included the notice to the tourists, standards for the folk tourism programme, the four unified management system of the folk tourism programme, standards for accommodation and food, and criteria for host families. The interviews with the former Folk Village manager and courtyard house owners revealed that these statutes were formulated by the Wangjiazhai Folk Village management, under the instruction and supervision of the villagers committee, concerning county and township rural tourism development regulations. All the reception households were required to sign an agreement regarding these statutes and to comply with these rules in their operating practices in Wangjiazhai Folk Village.

As discussed in Chapter 6, the normalisation and the criteria for folk tourism services helped Wangjiazhai Folk Village gain market reputation and enjoy rapid growth.

However, the standards of the folk tourism services and the communal four unified management system were challenged by increasing competition in the rural tourism market. During an initial period, by calculating the estimated future flow of tourists, if most of the reception households agreed to follow the four unified management system and the standards for accommodation and food services, the courtyard owners agreed to follow the village statutes. After reaching agreement on the four unified management system, the reception households had to make a decision on whether or not to comply with it every day. When the Folk Village had a severe lack of tourists, the courtyard owners were keen to break the rules of rotation of tourist reception and self-solicit

guests, if the immediate return from self-soliciting guests might recover his/her losses. When such a breach was to be punished and the immediate financial return less than the punishment would be, the courtyard owner would comply with the agreed “four unified management system”.

When the unfair distribution of guests among the reception households was observed, the implementation of the “guest rotation system” was challenged as involving “favouritism” and, consequently, household owners were encouraged to break the rules more often. The “favouritism” also hindered the punishment of offenders; neither the manager nor the reception households would like to challenge the sensitivity of neighbourhood relationships but would be keen to “save the face” of the offender. Finally, as competition increased in the rural tourism market, most of the reception households recruited tourists via the Internet or through personal relationships rather than by the “guest rotation system” applied in the Folk Village. The village statutes were not suitable for the situation of the Folk Village and the communal management system was then abandoned. After this, disputes and conflicts increased between the two committees, as well as between the reception households and the households that did not participate in tourism. As a result, no more village statutes have been developed by the end of 2010 in Wangjiazhai village.

8.2.1.2 Zhalaying village statutes on control of the racing horse numbers

In a different way from that of the Wangjiazhai Folk Village, Zhalaying village statutes on control of racing horse numbers were formulated by the two committees’ joint meeting and in consultation with the township tourism management office. Before the

implementation of this village statute, the villagers committee calculated the rational number of horses for the village. Since racing horses were kept mainly for serving tourists in tourism seasons, the number of horses in the village is correlated to the number of tourists coming to the village and the carrying capacity of the village grasslands. The village accountant calculated the grazing capability of the common pastures and the average numbers of tourists in the village, and estimated roughly that, ideally, if each household were to keep one or two horses, there would be an ideal number of horses in the village. It enabled the villagers to make optimal income from horse-riding services in the tourism seasons and protected the common pasture from over-grazing. Then, the villagers committee organised all the horse owners to take a vote on the regulations on the horse numbers. Therefore, the horse owners in the village accepted the limitation of horse numbers as part of the village statutes.

To control the horse numbers in the village and to implement the horse-racing management regulations made by the township tourism management office, the village adopted the registration fee system. In this system, the villagers committee charged a management fee on each of the horses used for tourist services. Calculated according to the number of days in a tourism season and collected by the villagers committee, the horse management fees were used to maintain the riding tracks and the common pastures. Although all the horse owners agreed to pay this management fee, they often negotiated to pay less or pay nothing for keeping horses in the village. Some horse owners refused to pay horse management fees since they were discontented about the control of horse numbers; other horse owners objected to the horse fees since they

wanted favours from the fee collector. In this situation, an external agency was introduced to manage the horse fees.

The villagers committee entrusted the town police substation as an external agency to collect horse fees when the horse owners registered their horses to be used for tourist services. The township police substation insisted that horse owners pay for horse registration fees and village horse management fees. As an external enforcer, the police substation was supposed to be able to impose a punishment on horse owners who offended the village statutes by refusing to pay horse fees. However, the staff of the police substation often charged their relatives or acquaintances less, or even nothing, but charged more when horse owners were not their acquaintances or had no personal connections with them. Therefore, there is no evidence that external coercion (Ostrom, 1999) was a practical solution to this problem. In contrast, “favouritism” effectively contributed to the failure of the implementation of village statutes; again, this is similar to the case of Wangjiazhai village. Moreover, disagreement and various interests between the horse owners, farmhouse owners and farmers also contributed to the failure of the village statutes.

Comparing the cases of Wangjiazhai and Zhalaying villages indicates that the villagers committees formulated village statutes according to relevant policy and regulations issued by the higher-level government. These village statutes were approved by all the villagers but failed to solve the problems of tourism commons, due to the changing situation of the village resources and the villagers’ divergent interests in the tourism commons. However, a common problem that contributed to the failure of the village

statutes was “favouritism” in the distribution of interests or in imposing sanctions on the offenders against the rules, because both the managers and the villagers were “unwilling to offend the sensitivity of neighbourhood relationships” but willing to “save face”.

8.2.2 Working rules: Developed by the village community in daily practice

In daily practice, when the village statutes were not suitable to the situation of the tourism commons, the villagers combined the formal and the informal institutions to develop the working rules. The formal institutions, i.e. laws, government policies or regulations, and the village statutes, were explained and interpreted by the village cadres to the villagers to apply to the local situation. The informal institutions, i.e. village conventions and folk culture traits, norms and codes, customs, etc., were used as moral benchmarks to develop working rules for managing the village common resources.

8.2.2.1 New rules: Pay for the use of common-pool resources

The field studies in Zhalaying village found that “the village works as a whole” to formulate regulations for using and maintaining the tourism commons in the village. Since the village statutes were ineffective in controlling the number of horses in the village, the village community adopted a new rule: “Pay for the use of common-pool resources” to control the horse numbers and maintain the riding tracks. The new rule was applied so that the horse troop management fees were collected from the farmhouse owners rather than from the horse owners. The former village accountant, farmhouse owners, horse owners and tourists interpreted the new rules differently and, through

constant comparison, the development and the formulation of “the rule of pay-for-use” was figured out like this:

The problem was that the riding horses use the common-pool resources, such as the common pastures, the riding tracks and other infrastructure in the village but the horse owners are unwilling to pay for the use of those amenities. However, the villagers committee failed to collect the money from the horse owners. We had no choice but to ask the police station help the village to collect horse troop management fees from the horse owners. The police station transfers the money to the villagers committee. But, it doesn't work. (G. H. Hou, 28 June 2008, personal communication)

Villagers often argue, “Why should the village build the 40-metres-wide riding track for their free use?” Obviously, the more farmhouse guests in the village, the more riding horses they hire and the more common pasture they use, and the more administration fees they should pay. Therefore, the farmhouse owners should take responsibility for managing the riding horses for their sakes and for the village good. (D. Sun, 29 June 2008, personal communication)

Every year, the farmhouse owners pay the horse troop management fee to the police station. It is a fixed amount, calculated according to the numbers of the farmhouse's rooms and beds. To collect the horse troop management fees, the farmhouse owner charges the tourists at a rate of 30 Yuan per hour for horse-riding activity, in which, 15 Yuan is transferred to the horse owner, then a certain amount is deducted as the horse troop management fees, and the remainder is the earnings of the farmhouse owner. (Accountant Luo, 29 June 2008, personal communication)

This new rule effectively reduced the administration fees and increased the horse-riding income. Before, the horse troop management fee was a fixed amount of around 100 thousand Yuan per year; but, in recent years, the horse troop administration fee is reduced to 50–60 thousand Yuan per year. (Accountant Luo, 29 June personal communication)

The farmhouse owners are willing to pay the management fees but we have to arrange riding horses carefully for our guests to ensure they are satisfied with horse-riding activities. (J. H. Li, 19 June 2007, personal communication)

This case illustrates that the village community was active in developing working rules to manage the common resources, despite a small portion of tourist reception households being unwilling to pay the cost of public resources. The villagers were concerned that the problems of sanitation services, free-riding and overuse of common pastures were aggravated by the increasing number of riding horses in the village. The control of the horse numbers and the establishment of working rules for common pasture management were efforts of the villagers committee and the village community. Some outside investors in farmhouses and horse-riding clubs were also concerned with these issues and were actively involved in the discussion on these matters in the village, despite these outsider investors having no eligibility to interfere in the decision-making process for village internal affairs. Other villagers also desired to solve the problems of the common issues, despite being reluctant to participate in the discussion about the working rules or to change their habits of dumping horse faeces along the streets. It indicates that the Zhalaying village community was able to demonstrate its ability to achieve self-governance, particularly its capacity for self-regulation and self-organisation.

8.2.2.2 Changing rules of guest houses management in Wangjiazhai

The changing rules for the management of guest houses in Wangjiazhai Folk Village is a case that illustrates the way that the village community failed to develop working

rules in managing the tourism commons. As reported in Chapters 5 and 6, the management model of Wangjiazhai Folk Village has been changed three times since it was set up in 2002. The “four unified principles” were proposed by the secretary of the village party branch and accepted by all of the 37 tourist reception households in the Folk Village. However, when the number of visitors to the Folk Village declined, some host families abandoned the “four unified principles” to recruit visitors through marketing their accommodation services individually under the name of Wangjiazhai Folk Village; this practice, consequently, resulted in disorder caused by competition among the host families.

To solve the problem, some host families signed a contract agreement jointly with the villagers committee but this joint contract was accused of being illegal. “There were at least two faults in that joint contract. The contracting offended the normal procedure of village affairs and indulged in corrupt practices” (X. L. He, 28 June 2010, personal communication). The joint contract offended the normal procedure of village affairs because it was signed without any discussion at the meetings of the two committees or the villager representatives meetings, and it was not approved by the villager assembly (X. L. He & Z. C. Xin, 28 June 2010, personal communication). Another fault in this joint contract was that all the contractors were relatives of the village party committee head and only a small amount of money was charged as an administration fee to be turned over to the village collectives. “This was obviously indulging in corrupt practice” (W. D. Wei & L. S. Wang, 27 June 2008, personal communication). The villagers also accused the contractors of allocating more tourists to their courtyards and making much

more money than did the other courtyards in the Folk Village (X. L. He, 28 June 2010, personal communication). The courtyard owners completely abandoned the “four unified principles” in managing the Folk Village and the joint contract was terminated in the spring of 2010. Since then, there had been no more consent among courtyard owners. All the courtyard owners realised that the market image and goodwill of the Folk Village relied on their unified management and marketing strategy but none of these owners intended to coordinate and organise the public affairs in the Folk Village. Each of the owners operated their own courtyard as an individual business rather than a collectively owned enterprise. The individual courtyard Internet ads fragmented the destination image of the Folk Village.

It seems that the changing situations of both the rural tourism market and the village community contributed to the changing rules of Folk Village management. The frequent changes in the Folk Village management system were due to the rapid increase and sudden decline of visitors to the Folk Village, in addition to frequent shifts of village leadership. The failure of the Wangjiazhai “four unified management principles” can be attributed to “favouritism”. Unfairness in the distribution of interests among the reception households encouraged courtyards to abandon the “four unified principles” rather than amend the operational rules. The power competition between the two interest groups resulted in the failure of the re-election of villagers committee members. The village grassroots organisation was paralysed; hence, no one would take on the duty of developing working rules that could be applied instead the ineffective village statutes.

For instance, in the operation of the “guest rotation system”, all the reception households knew the general configuration of the commitment problem but none of them wished to change the rules of guest rotation. Every host household was watching the tourist reception in his or her neighbour’s courtyard. When they realised that someone breaking rules would not be punished by the system, no one would choose to follow the rules. Despite the fact that neighbours cooperated in the reception of tourist groups, they each competed for the improved reputation of their own courtyard. An enthusiasm for developing stable and close personal connections with their guests was a technique used by hosts to set up their courtyards’ private marketing channels. Nevertheless, none of the reception households made an effort to amend the ineffective operational rules of the “four unified management system” because they predicted that it would not enhance the host households’ welfare in the future.

The commitment of the host households was also a factor that contributed to the failure of the village statutes. In the village statutes of the “four unified management system”, there was no rule to calculate how many guests a courtyard could be allocated via the rotation system or to predict when and how a courtyard would receive bookings for accommodation and food services. Apparently, this was an imperfect rule for the operation of tourist reception in Wangjiazhai Folk Village. However, the question is: Why did the courtyard owners sign the agreement to accept these operational rules? A focus group of three reception households in the Folk Village found that the courtyard owners were forced to sign the agreement when they joined the Wangjiazhai Folk Village programme. A group of village elites and party members had more discourse

opportunities in making the management rules than did other host households and benefited more from the “four unified management system”. The ordinary villagers could not benefit from the system and hence distrusted the system itself. In addition, the village had not formed a complete internal supervision mechanism; hence, the villagers had more opportunities to commit breaches of contract and bad faith.

The failure of Wangjiazhai village to develop working rules for managing the rural tourism programme was not unusual for rural tourism destinations. It seems that the lack of self-governance capacity may have prevented the village from acting as a whole to manage tourism commons. The above institutional analysis implies that both internal factors and external regulations may have constrained village self-governance capability. Comparing Wangjiazhai village with Zhalaying village, it shows that the inner village factors significantly contributed to the development of working rules for managing tourism commons. These internal factors may have included the fact that the majority of villagers participated in making and implementing village rules for managing tourism commons, the close and stable neighbourhood relationships, the openness and transparency of the village decision-making process, and the cooperation between the villagers committee and the village party branch, etc.

8.3 Governance system of the tourism commons

From the investigation into the development and formulation of working rules in managing tourism commons, the governing system was understood. Governing tourism commons involved multiple actors, including the providers and the users of the tourism commons, as well as the policy-makers. Both formal and informal institutions that

related to tourism commons were observed in these villages. The village integrated external regulations regarding development that related to the village situations into the village statutes for managing tourism commons. However, most often, the village statutes did not suit the changing situations of the tourism commons in the villages. A village with self-governance capabilities could work as a whole to develop working rules for managing tourism in their daily practices. Otherwise, the village could have a dilemma with the problems of the tourism commons.

8.3.1 Actors of governing tourism commons

Governing tourism commons involved multiple actors, including the providers and users of the tourism commons, as well as the policy-makers.

8.3.1.1 Users of tourism commons

The users of the Zhalaying rural tourism commons comprised rural residents, tourism business owners/investors from cities, kinship groups and horsemen from neighbouring villages, as well as tourists visiting Zhalaying village. Zhalaying villagers were people who had Hukou¹ of the village. That is, they were registered as permanent rural residents of Zhalaying village and, hence, were the collective owners of the village CPRs. On the contrary, the rural tourism business owners/investors from cities were urban people who lived temporarily in Zhalaying village for their tourism businesses, which were built on lands they rented from the village. The kinship groups are Zhalaying villagers' relatives or friends, who were rural residents of other villages but

¹ Hukou is a Chinese word in pinyin. In English, it means "registered permanent residence". Hukou has been used as a national policy for administration of urban and rural areas in China since the 1950s. Under this policy, a citizen's individual rights, obligations and social welfare benefits are bonded to the city or village where s/he is registered as a resident.

either worked for farmhouse owners or horse-riding owners in Zhalaying village.

Neighbouring village horsemen were people who grazed horses on Zhalaying common pasture or guided tourists riding horses on Zhalaying village's riding tracks. All of these people were initially dependent on the rural tourism development projects for housing, income supplements and provision of social services, and, hence, they were all users of the tourism commons. However, in managing the village commons, these people showed divergent interests, due to their different identities and legitimacies in developing the rules for provision and the use of the tourism commons in the village.

The interviewees usually used Hukou as a criterion to divide the users of the tourism commons into two categories – the villagers and the outsiders – since Hukou concerns the legitimacy and eligibility for ownership of the resources in the village. Zhalaying villagers were legitimately collective owners and users of the common pastures, the riding tracks, the sanitation services and other infrastructure in the village. At the same time, they also had the eligibility and responsibility to provide and maintain these resources in the village. Without the Hukou of Zhalaying village, the other users neither had ownership of the commons nor eligibility for making the rules for provision/management of the commons. Hence, all the other users of the commons were grouped as “outsiders” of the village. That is to say, with the collective ownership of the common pastures, the Zhalaying villagers were the only party for provision, appropriation and management of the common pastures. Hence, the villagers were the legitimate makers of rules for governing the commons, and the village could work as a whole to develop working rules in managing the tourism commons.

In comparison with Zhalaying village, a different pattern of tourism commons users was observed in Wangjiazhai village. The field study at Wangjiazhai village discovered that tourism commons were mainly used by a small group of villagers who had joined the Wangjiazhai Folk Village and registered as tourist reception households, despite other villagers also having the legitimacy for using the tourism commons in the village. The disputes between the rural tourism participants and non-participants were generated as the rural tourism programme developed in the village. Consequently, every villager wanted to benefit from using the tourism commons but none of them cared about the maintenance of the commons. This situation was criticised by all the villagers, both the participants and non-participants of rural tourism businesses within the village, and complained about by tourists, travel agents and even officers of the county tourism bureau. All the interviewees believed that “the downturn of Wangjiazhai Folk Village is inevitable” due to the “failure of village self-governance” caused by the conflicts and disputes within the village community.

A further investigation in the village discovered that both the owners of courtyards in Wangjiazhai Folk Village and the villagers who renovated their residential houses to become hostels in the main village attributed the downturn of the Folk Village to the “destruction of the village collective establishment” and the “paralysis of the villagers committee”. The causes of such destruction and paralysis were perceived to be “power struggles between gangs of villagers” for “the distribution of tourism benefits in the village”. Apparently, the unfairness and inequality in the development of rural tourism programmes aroused conflicts in the village community and caused the “failure of

village self-governance capability”. On the other hand, the “failure of village self-governance” finally resulted in the downturn of Wangjiazhai rural tourism development.

The above consideration of the effect of the internal conditions of governance on tourism commons indicates that village self-governance capability is a key factor for rural tourism destination governance. In these two cases, the inner village factors determined the formulation and implementation of working rules in managing tourism commons of the village. These factors included “villagers’ attitudes towards development of rural tourism”, “choice of whether or not to develop rural tourism programmes”, “the development model of rural tourism programmes” and “the management model of tourism commons in the village”, etc. The external factors, however, particularly the local government’s “direct interference with tourism investment”, “indirect intervention with tourism policy”, etc., also strongly affected the village decision-making.

8.3.1.2 Policy-makers for managing the tourism commons

The cases studied in this research demonstrated that the village decision-making process integrates the bottom-up and the top-down models in managing tourism commons but that the “village as a whole” has been the core decision-maker of the village affairs. As discussed above, before the initiation of the rural tourism programme, the commons were managed as collective properties. The rules and regulations for managing these resources were usually established in the village (G. H. Hou & D. Sun, 28 June 2008, personal communication). The villagers were more willing to follow or obey the

regulations. They monitored and watched each other in the provision and use of the village commons. The offenders of the rules were punished not only by the villagers committee according to the formal regulations but also by the neighbourhood according to the village norms. In such a situation, offending the rules for commons management would be at the cost of penalties from the village self-government, in addition to “bad words of mouth” from the village community. “The bad words of mouth” were usually labelled as a more serious punishment than were the “penalties”. A person’s reputation was valued much more than anything else was, even though the villagers were much poorer in those days (Old Lady Cui, 19 May 2007; Accountant Luo, 29 June 2008, personal communication). The villagers also established close relationships with the nearby village people, including the horsemen of neighbouring villages. As outsiders, horsemen from other villages were forbidden from grazing their horses on Zhalaying village’s common pastures or the natural grasslands. Under such rules, however, offenders were not often seen since the horse numbers were so small that the horses could be grazed within the village (J. H. Li, 27 June 2008, personal communication).

It seems that, before rural tourism developed in Zhalaying village, the villagers coped with the problems of the commons very well. The interviewed village accountant, farmhouse owners and horsemen of Zhalaying village attributed this to three factors: the explicit policy of rural land use, close relationships and interdependence within the village community, and the small number of horses. The village followed the guides of the *Law of Land* strictly to use the village collective’s lands. The regulations for managing village cultivated lands, residential lands and common pastures were

developed with reference to the guidelines from higher-level governments – county government and township government – to ensure that the agricultural tax could be successfully collected from the villagers for the cultivated land allocated to rural households with land rent contracts. Therefore, the policy and regulations regarding common pasture were implemented in the village rather than established by the villagers. In this way, there was no space for the villagers to negotiate about the use of the common pasture by an individual household.

The villagers committee acted as an agency to manage the common pasture as a collective property. This indicates that the clear collective ownership of the lands defined the providers and the users as well as the boundary of the common pastures.

The village as a whole acted as the providers, and the villagers or individual households were the users. The boundary of the common pastures was designated through a transparent process of negotiation and communication in the village community, normally proposed by the villagers committee, discussed at the village representatives meetings, and approved by the villager assembly. In this process, the villagers clearly knew the portion of the common pasture they can use and their responsibilities for maintaining and sustaining its productivity.

Another contributing factor was the situation in the village community. As the village was isolated from the outside world, villagers established long-term and close interrelationships within the community for “living a better life” (J. H. Li, May 18 2007, personal communication). With such established interrelationships within the community, it was easy for the village to make and implement regulations and rules for

provision, appropriation and maintenance of the common pastures. In addition, village norms and codes were internal factors that could contribute to the formulation of working rules. Comparing the penalties of not complying with a rural household's reputation, the reputation was more highly valued by the villagers of Zhalaying.

It seems that the villages with strong abilities for self-governance were likely to be more dominant in the process of decision-making regarding tourism commons management and, hence, were likely to be more successful in governing rural tourism destinations. Here, the final village decision-making could be seen as the village collective choice. Different models of village collective choice, consequently, resulted in the different models of tourism commons governance. For the villages that became rural tourism destinations, only when the collective choice of those villages matched the governmental direct and indirect intervention into rural tourism development, could the villages fully exploit the advantages of tourism policy in managing tourism commons.

8.3.2 Institutions for governing tourism commons

There have been two sets of institutions for governing tourism commons in the villages. One set was the external regulation consisting of the laws, policies and regulations established by the State and the local governments. Another set was made up of the internal rules, including village statutes and working rules. The village statutes were developed by the villagers committee to fulfil the implementation of the external regulations. However, when the village statutes were not suitable to the situation in the village, the village worked as a whole to develop working rules for managing tourism commons in their daily practice.

8.3.2.1 External regulations

External regulations refer to many types of formal institutions that are related to managing tourism commons. These formal institutions include national and provincial legislations, i.e. the “laws and regulations” (*fagui*), “State policy” (*guojia zhengce*) promulgated by the central government, and the “implementation measures” (*shishi banfa*) or “implementation regulations” (*shishi tiaoli*) issued by the provincial government. Tourism policies and regulations on rural tourism development and management issued by local government are also referred to as formal institutions, i.e. “rules” (*guize*), “opinions” (M. Xu et al.) or “circulars” (*tongzhi*) by the municipality, county or township governments, etc. The villagers call all such tourism policies and regulations “official documents” (*hongtou wenjian*).

In the villages, the State “laws and policies” and provincial “implementation measures” were highly respected and strictly followed by the villagers in managing the village collectives’ economic resources and village internal affairs. The villages used the “laws” and their implementation as constitutional rules when making their rules for managing village affairs, i.e. for making “village statutes”. By comparison, the “official documents” with written regulations on the development of rural tourism attractions and the standards for rural tourism services were not strictly implemented in the villages. These official documents were seen as administrative orders issued by the local government or tourism management authorities and implemented by the external forces. Often, they were printed and hung on the walls but rarely obeyed or followed by the villagers in the practice of tourism commons management.

8.3.2.2 Internal institutions

Internal institutions refer to the village rules that are made by the villagers for managing village affairs. The village rules consist of village statutes, village conventions and working rules. The village statutes are written rules with the common agreement of all the villagers. However, as the formal institution in the village, the village statutes are significantly impacted by the dynamic interaction between the external regulations, i.e. central intervention, and local implementation. The village statutes are formulated by the villagers committee, with the law and national policies as constitutional rules and the local government's "official documents" as the guidelines, along with consideration of the village conventions. Therefore, the village statutes combine the external regulations and the "village conventions and folk customs" for provision and use of the commons.

Apparently, in the studied villages, the "village statutes" are formulated as the village's formal rules for managing tourism commons, through combining those policy and regulations established by village external forces with the informal institutions established by the villagers. The "village conventions" were unwritten rules but were established by the villagers and evolved as villagers' norms and codes in the villages; these rules had never been discussed or approved by any authorities but were accepted through common practice. Hence, "village conventions" were informal institutions for managing the tourism commons of the village. When there were conflicts between formal institutions and informal rules, the villagers turned to follow the latter ones. This research finding explains the phenomenon that the village statutes were usually

established by the villagers through a formal procedure but were often abandoned by the villagers. Particularly, when rules written in the village statutes were no longer suitable for the changed situation in the village, the villagers turned to develop their own working rules in managing tourism commons.

8.3.2.3 Working rules

The “working rules” are unwritten but in-use principles for the use and provision of tourism commons in the village. The working rules serve as operational rules in practice and are developed by the villagers when the rules written in the village statutes or the village conventions are not suitable to the situation of the tourism commons in the village. The cases of these three villages show that the working rules for governing tourism commons did not resemble the formal regulations or the informal rules, but were a combination of formal and informal institutions.

The villagers developed their working rules with reference to the rules defined in the formal institutions such as law, regulations, etc. and they declared that they were unwilling to break any law or offend any formal rules. They also considered the village conventions for dealing with village affairs, i.e. village norms and codes. The villagers developed their working rules for managing tourism commons based on the current situation and consequences with the aim of maintaining a balance between the commons used for tourism and for neighbourhood living, as well as the balance between the cost of maintenance and the benefit of use. Therefore, in developing the working rules, they not only used the principles of “fairness” to balance the benefits and commitments, they also made trade-offs between or among immediate economic gains

from using the tourism commons, harmonious neighbourhood relationships, reciprocal personal relationships, family and personal reputations, and penalties that would be suffered by the next generation, etc.

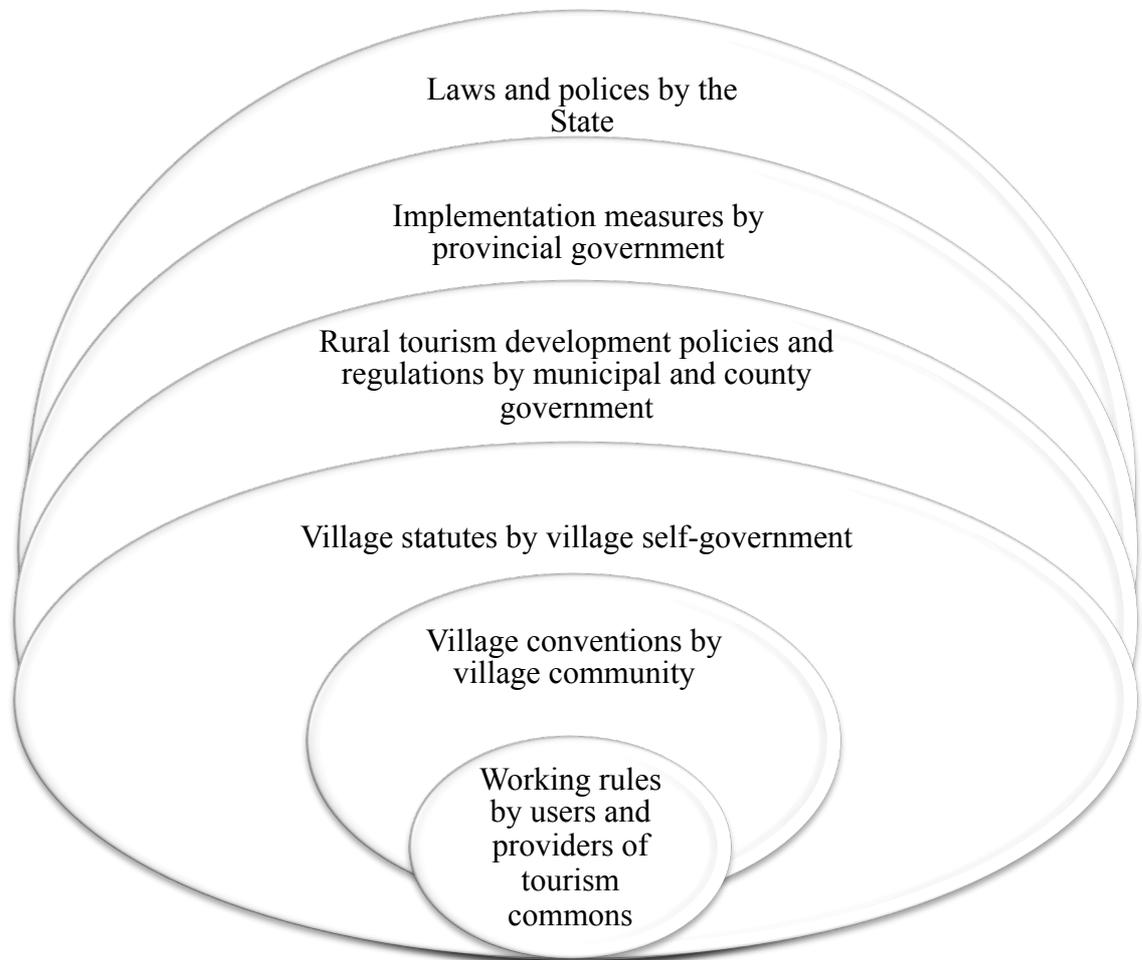


Figure 19: Formulation of working rules for managing tourism commons

The working rules were formulated without communication or forum in a formal procedure but through informal discussions and interactions between the villagers. The villagers concerned with the tourism commons were permitted to develop new rules through informal communications with the village leaders, the neighbours, the guests, etc. in the village. Therefore, the working rules were unwritten, invisible rules but were developed by the villagers in practice and used as village internal rules for managing the

commons. The penalties for breaking these rules were executed by the village community with word-of-mouth or community exclusion, rather than with any penalties imposed by the village self-government.

The working rules integrated the formal and informal institutions for managing tourism commons, as show in Figure 19, on page 347. The village self-government developed village statutes through integrating external regulations, e.g. the laws and government regulations, with the village conventions established in the village community. The village statutes were used as formal village rules for managing tourism commons. When the formal rules written in the village statutes were not suitable for the situation of the tourism commons, the users and providers of the tourism commons developed working rules for coping with the problems of the tourism commons in their daily practices. Despite the working rules being unwritten, they were actually in use in managing tourism commons.

8.4 Summation

This chapter reports research findings regarding working rules for governing tourism commons in rural tourism destinations. Through analysing the formal and informal institutions related to tourism commons management, it was discovered that there were working rules for governing tourism commons in the villages of Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang, but not in Wangjiashai village. With further investigation of the village decision-making processes, it was identified that village self-governance capability determined the development and formulation of working rules for managing tourism commons in the villages. All these research findings were drawn from field

studies on the management of tourism commons in the villages. Specifically, it was discovered that both formal and informal institutions were used for managing tourism commons in the villages. The villagers divided these institutions into “external regulations” and “internal rules” according to “who made the rules”. The “external regulations” were the official institutions, such as laws and government policy; the “internal rules” were all the institutions made by the village self-governance and the village community. These internal rules included both the formal rules, i.e. the “village statutes”, and the informal rules, i.e. the village conventions, etc., established in the village for managing the tourism commons.

Through investigating the formulation and implementation of the external and internal regulations in the villages, this research discovered the working rules developed by the villagers and used for managing tourism commons in their daily practices. These working rules were analysed as the results of village collective choice. Particularly, the research scrutinised the formulation and changes of working rules for provision, use, supervision, rewards and penalties relating to the tourism commons in the village to identify the properties of the working rules. Based on the constant comparison of the properties of these working rules, the mechanisms for managing tourism commons in each of the villages emerged; the dominant actors, the working rules in use and the influential factors of the decision-making processes for village internal affairs determined the performance of tourism commons management.

Why did some villages form the village collective choice through a relatively democratic decision-making mechanism while other villages did not? To answer this

emerging question, the follow-up analysis combined the formation and evolution of working rules for managing tourism commons with the patterns of the village decision-making process. It discovered that, despite higher-level governments enacting a normative procedure for the village decision-making process, each village community developed its own decision-making procedure that was most appropriate for that village. Further constant comparison of the village decision-making process detected that the village self-governance capability seemed to be the core component for developing an effective mechanism for governing the tourism commons in these villages. It was found that the capacity for self-governance in the village determined the patterns of commons management, thereby significantly affecting the performance of destination governance for sustainable rural tourism development. However, what determines the village self-governance capabilities? This question can be answered by follow-up studies on the determinants and influential factors for village self-governance capability for sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations.

Chapter 9 Discussion: Components of sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations in China

This chapter incorporates the research findings on Chinese practices in rural tourism development, as reported in Chapters 5 to 8, to generate a whole picture of the real situation of rural tourism destination governance in China. The constant comparative analysis of various patterns, properties and categories of actors, activities and actions relating to the governance of tourism commons generated a group of factors that contribute to or constrain the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations.

These factors are grouped into two categories, i.e. external factors and internal factors. Further constant comparative analysis on the interactions and interrelationships between these categories generated a set of variables as the components of sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations. The correlations between these variables produced a general analytical framework for the study of the governance system for rural tourism destinations in China.

Specifically, through comparing the research findings with the existing relevant literature on destination governance, government intervention is identified as an external factor that critically affects the governing system of the rural tourism destination. The governance model of rural tourism destinations, however, is greatly determined by the village's internal factors, i.e. self-governance capability, village decision-making models, working rules for governing the tourism destination, etc. It seems that the village with strong self-governance capability is more likely to be

dominant in the process of decision-making regarding tourism commons management and, hence, more likely to be successful in governing rural tourism destinations.

Therefore, effective governance of rural tourism destinations in China relies very much on cooperation between the village, local government and the village's positioning in the rural tourism market. Further comparing the research findings, the patterns of rural tourism destination governance are categorised into three themes: the complex and dynamic social-natural-political interactions in rural tourism destinations, multiple stakeholders acting as governors of rural tourism destinations, and working rules for governing rural tourism destinations. These three themes are identified as the key variables that determine the performance of rural tourism destination governance.

With a comparison of the theories of interactive governance (Kooiman & Bavinck, 2013), the interrelationships between these variables are analysed to generate an analytical framework for the study of rural tourism destination governance. Moreover, comparing the research findings about governing tourism commons in Chinese rural tourism destinations, it was clear that "the village as a whole" rather than the "village community" acts as the principal governor of the rural tourism destinations. In addition to the "information symmetry" and "transparency" that have been emphasised by classic theories on CPRs governance (Ostrom, 1990, 1999, 2010), other factors such as "order" and "harmony" are identified as determinants of effective governance of tourism commons in Chinese rural tourism destinations, where it is believed to be affected by the traditions and values of Chinese culture. These research findings, therefore,

challenge the conventional argument that “individual choice determines the collective decision” in the institutional analysis of CPRs governance.

9.1 Governing the rural tourism destination as a complex of dynamic political–social–natural interrelationships

In the study of rural tourism destination governance, the first question is: What is to be governed? This question emerged from the real-world phenomenon of rural tourism development in China – the problems in rural tourism development that hindered its sustainability. To answer this question, the problems of tourism commons in the villages were investigated. The research findings reveal that the complicated property ownership of rural tourism resources and the imperfect village self-governance systems led to complex and dynamic circumstances for community-based rural tourism destinations. Therefore, rural tourism destinations are studied as complexes of dynamic interactions and interrelationships between government, society and tourism resources.

9.1.1 Diversity of the governance actors: Multiple stakeholders with divergent interests in rural tourism development

Rural tourism development programmes involve various interested parties, i.e. tourists, local government, village communities, tourism businesses, tourism professionals, etc. Theoretically, all of these stakeholders are assumed to be acting as governors of rural tourism destinations through various approaches or instruments, e.g. institutions, financial or technical authorities, etc. However, in the cases of the three villages, local government, tourists and the village communities were observed to be the principal

governors. Competition and cooperation for the power in governing rural tourism destinations increased the complexity of the interactions between them.

In addition to complexity and dynamics, diversity is also an essential property of rural tourism destinations. The complex nature of rural tourism destinations is demonstrated by the socio-economic and political background of rural tourism development, the multiple stakeholders with various interests in tourism development in the villages, the types of resource, and the users of these resources that are involved in rural tourism. In this research, rural tourism development programmes in the villages, e.g. Gougezhuang, Wangjiazhai, Dongtianzhuang and Zhalaying villages, were employed as tools for the pursuit of rural development for multiple purposes, such as poverty elimination, economic growth, social improvement and, recently, environmental conservation and protection. These multiple purposes compete for allocation of attention and resources, thus increasing the complexity of balancing these goals.

9.1.2 Complexity of rural tourism resource

Rural tourism activities in the villages of Zhalaying, Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang have used both natural and the human-created resources with various property rights, e.g. collective, private, public and common-pool resources. This has also been the case in other community-based rural tourism destinations. Rural tourism in China is based on the village collectives' resources and individual rural households' private properties. The rural landscape and agricultural production activities are often referred to as the key attractions of rural tourism. In China, according to the *Land Administration Law*, the whole village collectively owns agricultural lands, including lands for agriculture,

construction and unused lands. Therefore, the property rights of the rural lands were clear before the development of rural tourism in the villages.

After the development of rural tourism programmes, the village is converted to a rural tourism destination. Both collectively owned and privately owned properties are exploited to attract tourists to the village. Therefore, the village resources are used for both agricultural production and the recreation of tourists. The tourists increase the use or change the appropriation of the village resources but the total amount of the village resources, i.e. lands, roads and other public services, remain the same. The number of resources used by the tourists inherently reduces the number available to all the villagers. While tourism-participant villagers take economic advantage of the increasing number of tourists, the tourism non-participant villagers lose the well-being gained from using the village resources. The village as a whole faces the challenge of the problems of tourism commons and the aggressive use of the rural lands for agricultural production and tourism businesses.

The plurality of property rights and the mixed use of rural tourism resources produce a complicated situation for tourism resource management in the villages. The problems of tourism commons, both the natural and the human-constructed resources used for rural tourism, are widely observed in the villages. The villagers and tourism businesses owners are aware that their rural tourism businesses rely on the village's unique natural landscape, agrarian and farming production activities, their rustic countryside lifestyle, and the "tourism image" of their village. However, the villagers also have to share with the tourists in the use of village public services, e.g. the unpaved rural road and narrow

streets in the village, the village's collectively owned pasture or fishery, the village cultural square, the rural electricity power grid, and even the grocery shops in the village. All of these resources constitute the village infrastructure and natural resources. Conflicts caused by such competition significantly reduce individuals' well-being, i.e. day-to-day convenience for non-participant villagers, business opportunities for the tourism-participant villagers and tourists' experiences of rural tourism in the village. As a rural tourism destination, however, it is impossible for the village to prevent tourists from accessing the village infrastructure or the village's collectively owned natural resources.

The competition for the use of village resources often arouses disputes between tourism participants and non-participants in the village. Non-tourism participants complain that tourism businesses use the village public services for their private economic benefit and should correspondently increase their duties of provision and maintenance of the village common resources, i.e., the village infrastructure, common pastures, wetlands, fisheries, etc., and of protecting them from over-exploitation by the rural tourism development.

On the other hand, without practical and concrete rules or regulations for managing the village common resources, the tourism businesses inevitably try to avoid such commitment and tend to be free-riders. Moreover, to take more economic advantage, tourism businesses tend to attract more tourists by using the village as a rural tourism destination but under the names of their private tourism businesses. Although the rural tourism business owners understand that they have to rely on the village image to attract guests, none of them tends to invest in the improvement of the destination image of the

village. Therefore, every tourism business acts as a free-rider and intends to use the village common resources for individual well-being as much as possible. Hence, the whole village faces the challenge of managing the village common resources where rural tourism development is occurring.

9.1.3 Dynamics of interactions between the social and the natural systems

Interactions between various stakeholders and between the actors and the physical and social systems increase the dynamic relationships of the rural tourism destinations.

Natural resources used for rural tourism programmes are usually ecologically fragile with natural carrying capacities: i.e. the wetlands and grasslands used for rural tourism programmes in Zhalaying, Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages. Thus, the diversity of rural tourism resources further increased the complexity of the social-natural-political interrelationships involved in the rural tourism destinations. Just as discussed in existing tourism studies, complexity and dynamics are commonly accepted as the essential characteristics of tourism destinations (Baggio et al., 2010; R. W. Butler, 1980; Richard W. Butler, 2006; Wesley & Pforr, 2010). From a holistic and complex approach, tourism destination is defined as a set of institutions and actors located in a physical or virtual space (Saraniem & Kylänen, 2011) where there are dynamic interactions between places, people and purposes of travel. Therefore, a rural tourism destination can be seen as a vibrant and complex organism, which involves diverse stakeholders and requires a governance system to adopt new governance models and structures for its sustainable development.

The above analysis reveals that the success of rural tourism destination governance largely depends on the characteristics of the social-natural system of the destination. This system comprises its social and natural systems, and the interaction between those systems. The social regime of a rural tourism destination consists of various stakeholders who are involved in and interact with each other in the development of rural tourism programmes in the destination. Correspondingly, various natural resources that are used in tourism activities consist of the natural system in the destination, despite the fact that these natural resources are often simultaneously used for agricultural production. The interactions between these two systems, hence, combine the social-natural regime of the rural tourism destination with the characteristics of diversity, complexity and dynamics, as well as a variety of scale in the physical and social-cultural dimensions. In the study of rural tourism destination governance, such social-natural systems can be analysed as “the system-to-be-governed” with the perspective of interactive governance theory (Kooiman, 2013). That is, investigating tourism resources (natural and human-created) and analysing the characteristics of the resources could be the starting point for answering the question: What is to be governed? Therefore, the study of rural tourism destination governance begins with the place, the people and their interactions in the rural tourism destination.

9.2 The governance system: Governors and instruments in governing rural tourism destinations

In the study of rural tourism destination management, from the interactive governance perspective, another question needs to be answered: Who is the governor? (Kooiman &

Bavinck, 2013; Kooiman et al., 2008). This question is answered by investigating the initiation of rural tourism programmes and the management of tourism commons in the villages. As discussed in section 9.1.2 Complexity of rural tourism resource, on page 354, multiple actors involved in destination governance are identified. The State and local governments, the village-as-a-whole and the tourism businesses are defined as the active agents while the tourists and society are also involved in governing rural tourism destinations. These actors employ various instruments, e.g. tourism policy, tourism planning, financial subsidies and technique assistance, and formal and informal institutions, etc., for their purposes for or interests in rural tourism development. However, when the formal or informal institutions are found to be unsuitable in the changed situation in the village, the villages with self-governance capabilities can usually develop their own working rules for managing rural tourism commons.

9.2.1 Governors of rural tourism destinations in China

Multiple stakeholders of rural tourism destinations are involved in the initiation and development of rural tourism development programmes. The hierarchical government has engaged in promoting rural tourism development as a strategy for rural development. In some cases, the county government competes with the village for the dominant role in governing rural tourism development, as was the case in the initiation of rural tourism programmes in Dongtianzhuang and Wangjiashai villages. In the other case, tourists, villagers and rural tourism businesses drove the development of rural tourism programmes effectively in Zhalaying village. For instance, the tourists cooperated with the villagers in initiating and developing rural tourism programmes in Zhalaying village;

the travel agents cooperated with the village to develop an ecotourism “black market” in Dongtianzhuang village. Therefore, all of these stakeholders acted as destination governors but at different stages of rural tourism development or within a certain scope of governing activities.

9.2.1.1 The changing role of hierarchical government: From administration to service

The State and the local governments are active in governing rural tourism destinations despite the villages applying the self-governance system as a means of grassroots democratic governance in rural China. Taking rural tourism as an approach to poverty reduction, economic growth and the “construction of a new socialist countryside”, the local government plays multiple roles to intervene in rural tourism development activity. As revealed in the cases of the Hebei villages, local government has been the policy-maker for rural tourism development, the decision-maker for rural tourism programmes, the coordinator between the tourism developers and the villages, as well as the regulation-maker, monitor and sanction agent of the tourism industry.

From the research findings regarding these cases, the hierarchical structure of government intervention in rural tourism development was understood and is illustrated in Figure 20, on page 361. It demonstrates that, in the vertical dimension, a five-level hierarchical government structure of the State, the province, the municipality, the county and the township act cooperatively as the authorities with divisions of duties for intervening in the development of rural tourism in these villages. The lower-level government implements policies and regulations made by higher-level

government. The vertical hierarchical structure allows for top-down instructions with authority and with strong bureaucratic characteristics. For instance, the county government initiated the Dongtianzhuang holiday resort as a pilot for rural tourism development programmes but the new leader of the county government terminated the pilot programme despite the village having emptied its collective funds to invest in it.

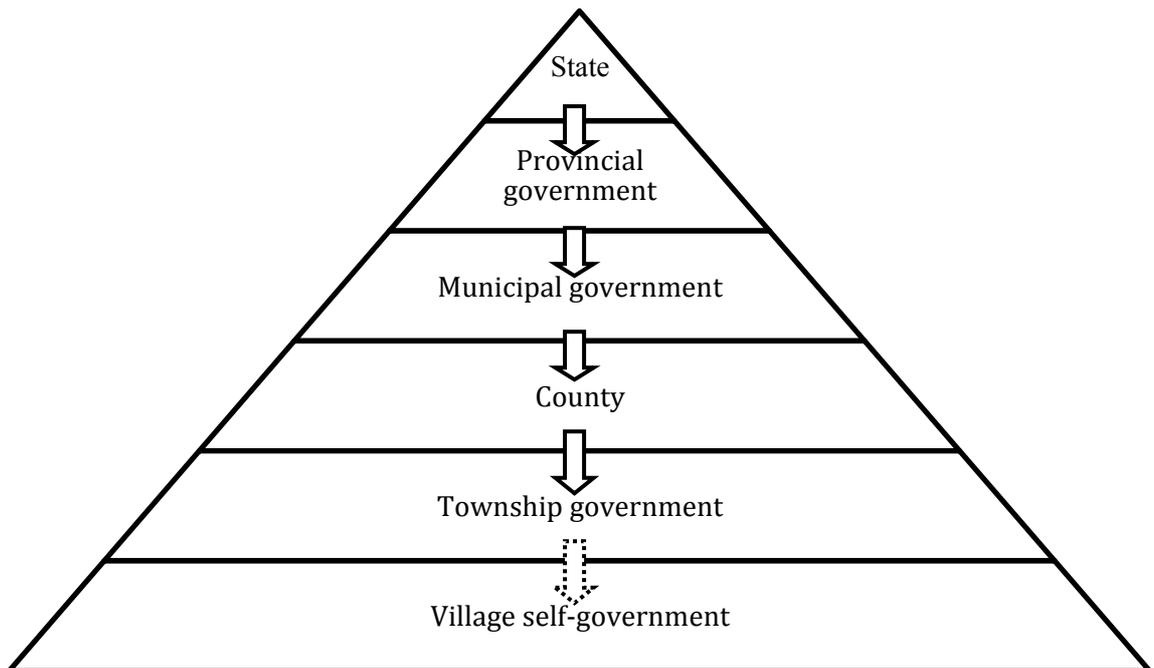


Figure 20: The structure of hierarchical government

The application of the village self-government system significantly reduced the effect of bureaucracy on rural tourism development in the villages. With the village self-government system, the hierarchical government lost its legitimacy of direct interference in village affairs, as illustrated in Figure 21, on page 362. This diagram shows that, since the self-government system was applied in rural China, the hierarchical government has changed its powerful, dominant role from “administration” to “service” in the rural tourism development.

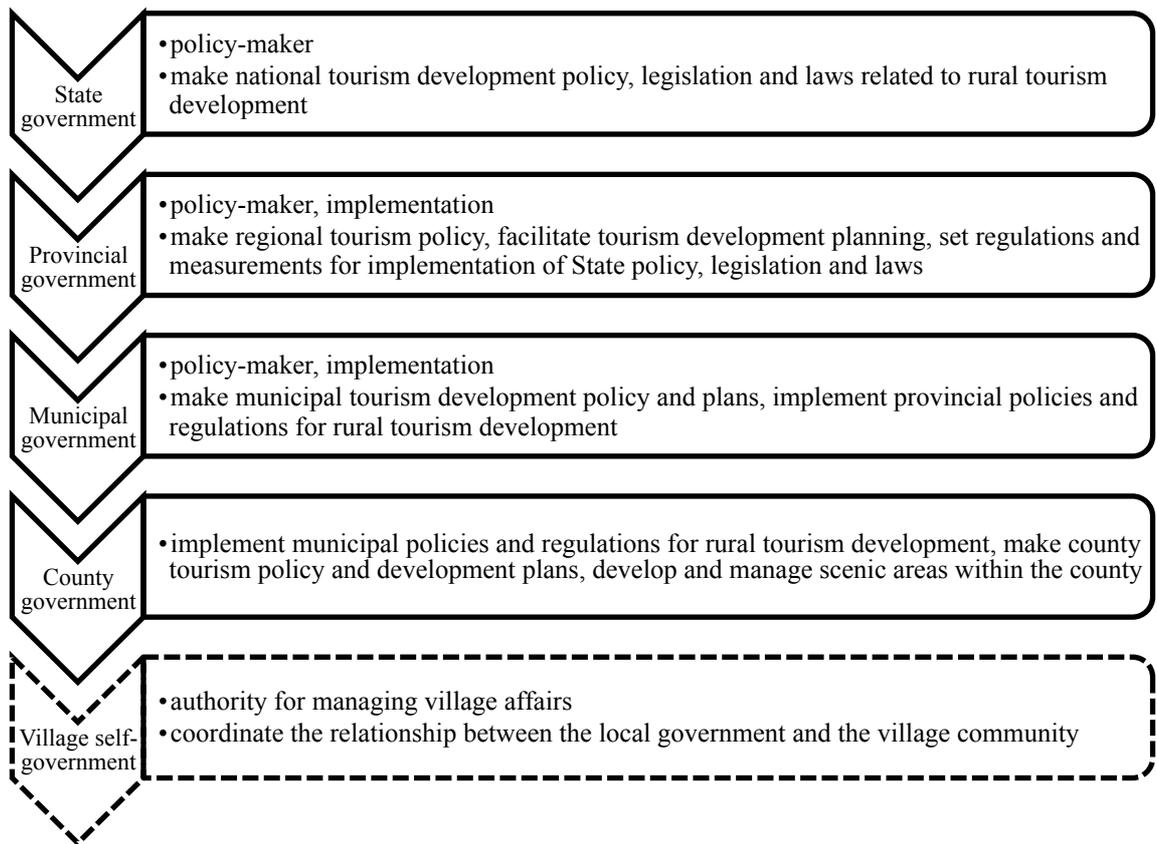


Figure 21: The role of hierarchical government in governing rural tourism destinations

In the horizontal dimension, multiple functional departments of the hierarchical government have been involved in governing rural tourism development in the villages, as shown in Figure 17, on page 322, and Figure 18 on page 323. These departments usually have the functions and duties of public management, i.e. industrial and commerce, taxation, price, public security and tourism administration, as well as department-related resource management, i.e. agriculture and forest, land, water, transportation, etc. These functional departments jointly comprise the destination management committee to manage rural tourism destinations.

As it is the tourism management authority of the rural tourism destination, the management committee take the responsibility for coordinating the functional department of local government to make tourism development plans, compose tourism

policies and regulations, and supervise the implementation of the plans, policies and regulations within the destination. It confirms the report prepared by Western organisations or researchers that the Chinese hierarchical government displays less of a pattern of pyramid structure (OECD, 2005; Smith, 2010). However, the division of duties and functions, and cooperation between the departments and levels, are still significant challenges for the Chinese hierarchical government in governing rural tourism destinations.

9.2.1.2 The village as a whole

In this research, “the village” is identified as a principal actor in the governance of rural tourism destinations in Hebei Province. In initiating rural tourism development programmes and managing tourism commons in these villages, it was commonly observed that “the village as a whole” rather than the village community operated as the actor of governance. As an actor of governance, “the village as a whole” is different from the “village community”.

The term “community”, usually defined in geographical or political terms, refers to a group of people who may share the same social ties, commons goals or opinions, and take joint actions in a certain geographical location or setting (MacQueen et al., 2001).

Tourism academics have argued that people who live in the same place may have different opinions and group into various communities; therefore, they prefer to define a community as a group of individuals who share common goals or beliefs (Williams & Lawson, 2008). The term “village community”, in the context of rural China, combines the geographical and political perspectives. As discovered in this research, the “village

community” refers to all the villagers who are registered as rural residents with a Hukou of the village. Therefore, the village community emphasises individual peasants who share the same social ties with each other. Comparatively, “the village” refers to the unity of the whole village and integrates the village self-government, the village party committee and the village community in the exploitation of natural and social-cultural resources to develop the rural tourism programme, with the aim of improving the overall sustainable well-being of the village.

The village self-government consists of the villagers committee, the villager assembly, the villager small group, the villager representatives and the village monitoring groups. When the village self-government has well-established villagers organisations, the villagers committee can more effectively mobilise the village community to participate actively in the decision-making about village affairs, i.e. the initiation of rural tourism programmes, and the use and the maintenance of the commons in the village, as was the case in Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villages. Otherwise, disorder and conflicts can be observed in the village community, which consequently degrades the image of the rural tourism destination, e.g. as was the case in Wangjiashai village. However, village self-government is under the leadership of the village party branch that has the absolute power in the decision-making about village affairs.

Also, village elites are active participants in rural tourism destination governance. They contributed significantly to the initiation and the management of rural tourism in the villages. What the village elites have in common is that they hold the power of capital, information, personal connections, technology or skills for the development of rural

tourism programmes in the destinations. These elites are usually the villagers who were migrant labourers in the major cities but returned to the village with their cutting-edge knowledge and skills to develop rural tourism programmes. Also, the villagers who have gained urban Hukou or work in the cities are often respected as the village elites. They do not live in the village but keep social ties with the villagers and often provide some sort of help, e.g. technology, information, advice, etc., to their relatives or neighbours in the village. Therefore, they have left the village but still play dynamic roles in village self-governance.

The research finding noted above shows that “the village as a whole” is different from the concept of “village community” in general. Many tourism researchers recommend that the community is, ideally, the governance actor of community-based tourism destinations. Hence, community governance is an effective approach to “good” governance in both the developing countries (Hensel et al., 2013) and the developed countries (Beaumont & Dredge, 2009; Wesley & Pforr, 2010). However, this is not always the case of the villages studied in Hebei Province. Despite the villages having applied the self-government system as the grassroots democratic practice, the village community of Wangjiashai indicated that it had little intention of managing village affairs, because of the disputes and conflicts between different villager groups with competing interests in rural tourism development. By comparison, the Zhelaying village community demonstrated strong willingness and commitment to initiating rural tourism programmes and managing rural tourism commons. Through constant comparative analysis of the patterns of the village communities’ participation in rural tourism

development, it seems that the governance of rural tourism destinations can be more effective when the whole village acts as an integral unity.

9.2.1.3 The rural tourism market

In rural tourism destinations, outside capital that is invested in tourists and tourism businesses can involve participants who are active in the initiation and management of rural tourism programmes. Despite the villagers usually seeing these tourists and tourism businesses as “outsiders” that do not belong to the village community, both tourists and outside investors can powerfully influence the village decision-making. Especially when local government or the village accepts outside capital to initiate rural tourism programmes and attracts joint ventures to invest in resorts on the village’s collectively owned lands, the outside investment can significantly change the decisions of the village. Some returning tourists to the village are also involved in the governance of rural tourism destinations through their stable, long-term relationships with the host families. This was particularly the case in Zhalaying village where community-based rural tourism programmes developed over more than 20 years. Some tourists and their hosts cooperatively operated farmhouse/horse-riding club businesses in the village while some tourists bought farmhouses as the second homes in the village.

To summarise, these cases have demonstrated typical patterns of coexistence of various stakeholders and their interactions with the destinations that have shaped the governance models of rural tourism destinations. Multiple stakeholders act as the governors of rural tourism destinations. While the local government dominates the policy-making of rural tourism development and the village party organisation

dominates the leadership in the village, the village as a whole and rural tourism businesses are also actively involved in governing rural tourism destinations. Therefore, all of the villages show patterns of a hybrid structure of actors with multi-centres of governance networks. This confirms the commonly accepted assumption of the governance concept: that governing society goes beyond the responsibility of the State and that both the society and the market have prominent roles in governing society (Stocker, 1998). However, the villages have also shown that the coexisting stakeholders usually compete for the cooperation and collaboration of “the village” rather than the “village community”. That means their cooperation and collaboration with the “the village as a whole”, which consists of the villagers, their surroundings and their interactions with their environment. It is different from the concept of “community participation” or “community-based governance” in existing Anglo-American-dominated research, where the emphasis is on the power and influence of “individual choice”. In these cases, the “individual’s choices” are made based on the “village’s choice”. In other words, in China, it is “the village” that collectively acts as the governor of the rural tourism destination. Therefore, the village and its coexisting stakeholders are the actors in rural tourism destination governance. With various governing instruments, the interactions between or among these actors shape the models of rural tourism destination governance.

9.2.2 Instruments for governing rural tourism destinations

In governing rural tourism destinations, multiple governors employ various instruments to fulfil their interests in rural tourism development. The hierarchical government most

commonly uses government instruments, i.e. tourism policy, tourism planning, direct and indirect investment, legislation and regulations, and media propaganda, to intervene in the development of rural tourism destinations. Corresponding to government intervention, the village integrates external regulations with village situations to develop village statutes, village conventions, working rules, social capital and the boundaries of the commons to manage rural tourism development in the village. The rural tourism businesses and tourists usually influence the rural tourism programmes because of the information they have about the tourism market, and their knowledge, technology, investment and consumption in rural tourism destinations. This shows that different actors employ various instruments in governing rural tourism destinations, depending on the governance actor's social position, in relation to the interactive governance assumptions (Kooiman et al., 2008; Mahon, 2008).

9.2.2.1 Tourism policy

Tourism policy has been one of the critical factors that have shaped rural tourism development in the villages. In making rural tourism development policies, the State and provincial governments employ a “pro-poor” strategy to promote rural tourism as an approach to the “construction of a new socialist countryside” nationwide. As discussed in Chapter 3, public holidays policy and media propaganda were employed to mobilise investment and the market to engage in rural tourism; simultaneously, the provincial government adopted pro-growth economic policies, e.g. financial subsidies and technique assistance in rural tourism development planning, to push rural tourism

development in the villages. Direct investment in scenic areas or resorts, where the villages are located, was the most common policy used by county-level government.

With direct and indirect investment in rural tourism programmes, tourism development planning and boundaries for the scenic areas were used as additional instruments to intervene in rural tourism development programmes in the villages. Tourism planning programmes, i.e. the regional tourism development plan and the village-specific rural tourism development plan, were powerful intervention instruments for facilitating or regulating rural tourism programmes in the villages. Regional tourism development planning also enabled the county government to attract private investment to the tourism businesses in the scenic areas or resorts that, often, have been clearly defined by physical or administrative boundaries. The boundaries were then used as instruments of government intervention in rural tourism development within the area.

The boundary of a scenic area can be used as one of the criteria to assess a village's eligibility for rural tourism development; hence, it can accelerate social exclusions in the rural tourism destinations. The local government designated some of these villages to develop community-based rural tourism programmes, which would be tourist attractions in the Scenic Area. In addition to government financial and technique assistance in the initiation of rural tourism programmes in these villages, local government also sponsored the village to make specific plans for rural tourism development in the village. For instance, Wangjiazhai Folk Village is a representative government-initiated, rural, community-based tourist attraction in Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. Villages beyond the boundary are ineligible to develop rural tourism and,

consequently, are excluded from rural tourism development planning, e.g., Dongtianzhuang holiday resort programme. Therefore, the boundary of the Scenic Area has been an administrative force to offer some villages opportunities to develop rural tourism programmes but deprive other villages of such opportunities. Similar social exclusion is observed in financial services in urban areas (T. Li, Wang, Wang, & Tan, 2010); this implies that social exclusion caused by government policy is not rare in China.

Moreover, the hierarchical government employs specific planning programmes to facilitate the villages to develop rural tourism more sustainably. It mobilises the independent tourism planning agencies to make specific rural tourism development plans for the villages within the boundary. The provincial tourism administration programme initiated and coordinated specific rural tourism planning programmes with special financial subsidies and technique assistance for the villages involved in this research. Also, the provincial tourism administration held a forum to mobilise the villages and local governments to develop rural tourism through “scientific” and “rational” exploitation of tourism resources in the villages. At the forum, the villager representatives and the tourism planning agencies communicated and negotiated regarding the planning programmes in the villages. The municipal and county tourism administration officers supported the tourism planning programmes with policy assistance and coordination between the villages and the planners in the field. This confirms that tourism planning is an integrated approach to sustainable tourism development (Araujo & Bramwell, 1999; Colin Michael Hall, 2007; Inskip, 1991;

Reed, 1997). The existing tourism literature also proves that tourism planning is an efficient instrument of tourism destination governance for Western societies (Jordan et al., 2013; Wray, 2011). However, such specific development planning programmes, without extensive village community participation, easily changed to be the government interference in village affairs.

The village, in this case, failed to implement the specific rural tourism development plans, due to the lack of community participation in the planning process. The planning programme involved only the village leaders and a few village elites; the village community was not informed of this planning programme or of the specific plans. This indicates that, without cooperation between the hierarchical government, the village, the tourism planners, etc., tourism planning cannot facilitate the village to have access to information and technology for sustainable rural tourism development. The success of tourism planning greatly depends on the village's community participation in making and implementing the plans; this confirms the research findings of the gap between tourism planning and implementation in other tourism destinations in China (Lai et al., 2006; Ying & Zhou, 2007) and the lack of social representatives in the process of tourism planning (Moscardo, 2011).

9.2.2.2 Institutions

Rural tourism destination governance involves both formal and informal institutions. The formal institutions deliver government intervention to the village self-government system, shape the pathway of village self-governance and impact the village community's self-governance capability. The national and provincial governments use

tourism legislation to promote rural tourism development as a strategy for rural development. These institutions, however, are formulated and enforced by outsiders of the village and implemented in the village by State authority. The municipal government and the county government also use “official documents” to guide or to intervene in rural tourism programmes in the villages. All this legislation and these regulations are used as village external regulations made by higher-level government.

In managing rural tourism development programmes in the village, the villagers committee combines the external regulations, e.g. laws, tourism policies, regulations, etc., with village conventions in order to develop village statutes. As reported in Chapter 8, usually, the village statutes are written formal rules used as the village’s operational rules in managing rural tourism development programmes and tourism commons in the village. In daily practice, however, the villagers often abandon the village statutes, particularly when they find the purpose of the village statute is to fulfil the tourism policies that are made by higher-level government but are inappropriate or unsuitable to the changing situation in the village. In this circumstance, the villagers develop their working rules in coping with the problems of tourism commons or other community issues in the village.

To summarise, in these villages, various instruments were employed by different actors in governing rural tourism destinations. These intervention tools, including legislation, tourism policies, tourism planning programmes, financial subsidies/assistance and technical support, etc., were employed most often to interfere with or intervene in rural tourism development in these villages. This was an example of government interference

or intervention, depending on the interactions between the hierarchical government and the village. When there is a lack of participation in the interactions by the village community, government intervention can easily be turned into government interference. Moreover, information on the rural tourism destination and the tourism market, as well as social capital, e.g. community relationships and host–guest relationships, is often employed by the rural tourism businesses and tourists to influence the development of the rural tourism destination. These research findings reflect the interactive governance perspective, in which the governing system consists of three components: the actors of governance (State, market, civil society), the elements of governance (images, instruments, action) and the order of governance (Kooiman, 2013). Therefore, it can be concluded that, with a focus on the interactions between the social and natural systems in rural tourism destinations, the study of a governing system can start from the questions: Who are actors of governance? What instruments do they use? What actions do they employ for managing the rural tourism destinations?

9.2.3 Governance models for rural tourism destinations

From investigation of the initiation of rural tourism programmes and management of rural tourism commons, this research observed three different governance models, i.e. bureaucracy governance, commune governance and community-based governance, at various stages of rural tourism development. It was discovered that these models formed through intensive interactions between or among various governance actors, i.e. local government, the village, tourists, tourism businesses, etc., in dealing with the issues of rural tourism development in the villages. To a large extent, however, government

intervention and village self-governance capability are determinants of the rural tourism destination governance model. As reported in Chapters 6 and 7, in initiating and managing rural tourism programmes, these villages showed different patterns of interaction with local government and, hence, generated different models of destination governance. This explains why these Hebei villages presented different performances in sustainable rural tourism despite the fact that they shared similar socio-economic-political conditions as reported in Chapter 5.

9.2.3.1 Bureaucracy governance

The bureaucracy model of rural tourism destination governance is observed in the Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages, which were examples of government interference in rural tourism development. As reported in Chapter 6, the top-down tourism development programmes in Dongtianzhuang and Wangjiazhai put these villages into a “being developed” situation. In this model, as shown in Figure 12: Bureaucracy governance, on page 257, the local government instructed the village party cadres to initiate and implement rural tourism projects in the villages. Without the village communities’ participation in the decision-making process of rural tourism development, the local government interfered directly with rural tourism development in the villages and generated the bureaucracy model of destination governance. Excluding the village communities from the village decision-making processes inherently deprived the villagers of their rights to development choice. The village communities could only passively accept the local government’s arrangement of rural tourism development programmes. The villages were “being developed” into rural

tourism destinations. In such “being developed” situations, the information asymmetry problem was significant in interactions between the local government and the villages, as well as in communications within the villages. As a result, the rural tourism programmes aroused disputes and conflicts among the various actors in destination governance. Such a bureaucracy model of destination governance, therefore, explains why Wangjiazhai and Dongtianzhuang villages faced dilemmas after the local government withdrew its support from the rural tourism development programmes in these villages.

9.2.3.2 Commune governance

Commune governance was observed as a failed model of rural tourism destination governance in Wangjiazhai village, where a top-down development programme was designed as a community-based rural tourism programme. The programme was implemented with both the village collectives’ investment and individual villagers’ private investment but managed as a commune, with “four unified principles”, by the villagers committee. The plurality of property rights with unclear responsibilities and obligations in managing tourism resources generated tensions between the village collectives and the private investors of the rural tourism programme. In dealing with these issues, insufficient communication within the village community increased the number of disputes between different governance actors, especially between the villagers committee and the village party branch, and between the village community and the tourism businesses. As conflicts grew in the village, the rural tourism

development programmes were stuck in the dilemma of “no one managing them” and lost their priority position in the rural tourism market.

9.2.3.3 Community governance

A community governance model was observed in the initiation of Zhalaying rural tourism programmes where the village community dominated the decision-making process of rural tourism development. This shows that the village community actively interacted with the village “outsiders”, i.e. local government, experts in the major cities, the State and private investors, tourists, media and other sectors of the society, etc. In cooperation with these various sectors, a loose stakeholder network formed in the initiation of Zhalaying rural tourism programmes. The focus of the stakeholder network was the host–guest relationship, which enabled the villagers and tourists to create rural tourism activities cooperatively in the village. In this model, the stable and long-term host–guest relationships were developed through their intensive interactions in rural tourism activities. Finally, some tourists even became investors and engaged actively in the governance of the rural tourism destination. In this model, the villagers and tourists cooperatively developed rural tourism programmes in the village, without government interference, but with government intervention in the regional tourism development plan and tourism policy. It indicates that the success factors of the Zhalaying rural tourism development may include: the destination stakeholder network; cooperative host–guest relationships; community-based rural tourism products and services; extensive participation of the village community in rural tourism development; and sufficient communication within the village community and between the village and outsiders,

such as local government and the experts in the decision-making processes of rural tourism development, etc.

The research findings above show that different models of destination governance are observed in various stages of rural tourism development in the villages. The governance models formed as the interactions occurred between various governance actors when they took action to manage rural tourism programmes with shared or contradictory goals. However, these governance models resulted in different performances regarding rural tourism destination development. In the bureaucracy governance model, the village passively implements the top-designed rural tourism development programme, but interactions between the local government and the village encountered the information asymmetry problem and this resulted in the failure of the rural tourism programmes in the village. In addition to these issues, the commune governance model is observed to involve a plurality of property rights that generated ill-defined obligations and commitments of collective and private investments in managing tourism commons. Consequently, this situation aroused disputes about the uneven and unequal distribution of tourism benefits within the village community. By comparison, the community governance model with active and intensive interactions between governance actors demonstrated more efficient delivery of a sustainable performance for the rural tourism destination.

According to the interactive governance theory, governance interactions are analysed with a focus on the interaction between the governing system and the system-to-be-governed. The three different interaction modes, i.e. interference, interplay

and intervention, at the action level of governance, correspondingly generate three types of governance models, i.e. self-, co- and hierarchical models (Kooiman, 2013). These three types of governance model are observed in the studied villages, as reported in Chapter 6 and discussed above. Constant comparison of these cases reveals that integrated hybrid structures of governance models are found in the villages. The coexistence of hierarchical governance, cooperation governance, and self-governance models within a rural tourism destination depends on the type and scope of the “issue”, “project”, “programme” or “system-to-be-governed”.

To summarise, rural tourism destination governance involves various actors, including the village, the village community, the local government, the tourists, the tourism businesses and other societal actors. In these rural tourism destinations, the local government and the villages have been involved in seesaw games; hence, the governance models, to a large extent, have been determined by government intervention and village self-governance capability. Just as existing tourism literature has reported, many instruments are employed as government intervention in destination governance. For instance, tourism policies and regulations, i.e. economic incentives for tourism firms to undertake voluntary environment management (Blanco et al., 2009), are the most popular instruments used by State or local governments in governing tourism destinations. Also, the local governments employ financial subsidies and technique assistance in promoting rural tourism development in villages. However, this research finds that direct government interference in the initiation of rural tourism programmes, placement of physical boundaries to define scenic areas, and restrictions on tourism

business licensing are widely used in governing rural tourism destinations in China.

Therefore, the interaction between government intervention and village self-governance, plus the dynamic situation of rural tourism resources in the village, comprise the core components of governance for rural tourism destinations in China.

9.3 Village self-governance capability

A village's self-governance capability is identified as the internal determinant of the patterns of village decision-making and, consequently, the villagers' collective choice.

Constantly comparing the governance models of tourism commons shows that the village's self-governance capability is a key determinant of effective governance of tourism commons. Facing the challenges of tourism commons in the villages, Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villagers developed their working rules to solve the problems but Wangjiazhai villagers failed to do so and fell into serious disputes within the village. On the other hand, Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villages demonstrated relatively high degrees of ability in self-governance for governing rural tourism destinations.

Further scrutiny of formulation of and changes to working rules for managing tourism commons discovered that village self-governance capability may hinge on the village's internal resources: a well-established organisation of the village community; a well-functioning villagers committee; effective communication within the village community; the conservation of real traditions of folk culture and customs; the villagers' willingness about and attitudes towards rural tourism programmes in the village; and the characteristics of the tourism resources, etc. All of these internal factors are grouped

into two categories, i.e., village self-regulation and village self-organisation, which can be discussed under the concept of village self-governance capability.

9.3.1 Village self-organisation

The village community's self-organisation capability determines the pattern of village decision-making and hence the performance of tourism commons management. This study found that self-organisation, e.g. well-functioning village self-government, well-established organisations in the village community, and close and stable neighbourhood relationships, can contribute to the ability of the village to self-govern. Otherwise, as discussed in Chapters 5 to 7, paralysed village committees may result in the attitude that "no one cares about village affairs".

9.3.1.1 Well-functioning village committees

Cooperation between the two village committees is a great contributor to the unity of the village. As analysed in Chapter 8, the law defines the villagers committee as the self-organised group which administers village affairs but institutionalises the leadership of the party committee in the village. It hence leaves the two committees to compete for the decision-making power in the village and this may result in conflict between the two committees and finally paralyse the village self-government, e.g. non-government in Wangjiazhai village during the downturn of its rural tourism development. The competition between the two committees might be moderated by cooperative relationships between the heads of the two committees, such as in the cases of Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villages. Substantial cooperation is observed between the two committees that were elected democratically by the village community strictly

following the normative procedures for voting. The fact that the two committees cooperate well lays the foundation for a village decision-making process that has relatively more transparency and openness.

9.3.1.2 Village community organisation

The organisation of the village community is another contributor to the village self-governance capability. In Dongtianzhuang and Zhalaying villages, after the villages applied the system of self-government, the commune production bands transformed to small villager groups. Accordingly, the former team leaders of the commune production bands became the villager representatives in village self-government. The villagers monitoring group consisted of older villagers who had good reputations of fair-mindedness, righteousness and enthusiasm for public well-being in the village. Based on the well-established villagers' organisations, communication channels within the village communities were recognisable and transparent and so the village community was able to communicate effectively with the village self-government and the village's external actors. Also, the well-established villager organisations reinforced one other so the village could act as a whole in managing village affairs. Therefore, the village could achieve consensus to make collective choices in governing rural tourism destinations more effectively.

9.3.1.3 Village neighbourhood relationships

Stable and close neighbourhood relationships were observed in the villages with better performances of sustainable rural tourism development, e.g. Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villages. In these villages, both the tourists and the villagers very much

appreciated “having close personal connections”, “knowing each other well for more than two generations”, “sharing common folk customs and conventions” and “helping each other” in the village. All these patterns are categorised into “stable and close neighbourhood relationships”. They enabled the villagers to develop and establish mutual trust and reciprocity in the intensive interactions required when dealing with village issues. Hence, they were core components of rural tourism resources in these villages. In contrast, the conflicts between the villagers in Wangjiazhai village, for example, caused mutual distrust that can be reproduced over generations. Such problems, as Ostrom (1999, p. 173) pointed out, “may be intractable from ‘inside’ the situation” and external intervention is necessary. In this study, the town government cadre acted as the village party branch secretary but had never eased the conflicts within the village community. This indicates that, without well-established villagers’ organisations, “outsiders” could not offer their help to improve the village self-governance capability for managing village affairs.

9.3.2 Village self-regulation

Village self-regulation capability is another component of the capacity for village self-governance. This research observed that the local government issued a formal regulation for the standards for accommodation services in the villages but the villagers did not follow the standards. Another phenomenon observed in the villages was that similar policy and regulations for the use of the common lands was accepted and followed in villages of Zhelaying and Dongtianzhuang but provoked numerous disputes in Wangjiazhai. Further comparative analysis of the institutions for managing tourism

commons found that Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villages showed comparatively higher degrees of self-regulation capability than did Wangjiazhai.

In managing tourism commons, all the villages integrated formal and informal institutions to develop village statutes for the fulfilment/implementation of government regulations. Such village statutes are written and formal rules issued by the village self-government for managing village affairs. However, when the village statutes were not suitable for the changing situations in daily practice, Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villagers successfully developed unwritten but working rules to deal with the problems. By comparison, Wangjiazhai villagers showed no potential to achieve a consensus for resolving the problems in the village. This confirms that rules and regulations have rationality, legitimacy and acceptability, and can be used successfully, only when the rules provider and the user have the same identity (Ostrom, 1999). Therefore, it can be concluded that village self-regulation capability is a key component of the capacity for village self-governance.

Village norms, as village informal rules, contribute significantly to village self-regulation capability. As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, the characteristics of the three village communities were different. Tourists and villagers frequently tagged Zhalaying with “friendly relations and cooperation with neighbours and tourists”, “hospitality”, “openness”, etc. Similarly, tour guides and tourists praised Dongtianzhuang villagers’ “egalitarianism”, “political sensitivity”, “economic orientation”, etc. These characteristics of villagers were cited as village norms and written in the village statutes. However, tourists complained that the Wangjiazhai

villagers were “hospitable” but “prudent” while the village cadres admitted that some of their villagers were “righteous and aggressive, thinking only of their businesses, worldly wise, making themselves safe”, etc.

The research findings above indicate that village self-governance capability has a significant impact on the performance of tourism commons governance in the villages; this has been accurately observed in managing tourism commons in Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villages, as reported in Chapters 7 and 8. The success of those villages in developing working rules for coping with the problems of tourism commons management indicated that their relatively strong self-organisation and self-regulation capacities allowed for effective village self-governance. This illustrates that positive factors for self-governance capacity can be, specifically: 1) the internal organisation of the villagers, i.e. social ties, inherited collective organisational structures from the commune period (e.g. from brigade and squad of the people commune to villager groups) and regularly convened villagers meetings; 2) well-conserved traditional folk customs and habits of villagers, e.g. a preference for being outgoing, being keen to conduct oneself well in the village community, being eager to learn, being open to the outside world, etc.; 3) well-established village rules and regulations that are the villagers’ social norms; 4) close and stable neighbourhood relationships and harmony in the village community.

In contrast, the case of Wangjiazhai village showed that village self-governance capacity could be depreciated by some negative factors. In particular, such negative factors may include: 1) villagers’ preferences for rural tourism as a tool for generating

more income; 2) different interest groups competing for the use of rural tourism resources; 3) struggles between the different interest groups causing conflicts within the village community and tensions between the village and the local government; 4) unclear divisions of functions and authority between the village party branch and the villagers committee that also contribute to the difficulty of village decision-making. All these negative factors inherently weaken the village self-governance capacity.

9.3.3 Village decision-making process

This research specifically analysed the village decision-making process to identify further the determinants of village self-governance capability. The villages showed a similar pattern in that a practical procedure coexists with a normative procedure in the village decision-making process. The normative procedure was designed by the local government for the application of village self-government systems in the villages according to the law and regulations, as shown in Figure 15: Normative operation of village public affairs in Anxin County, on page 311. In practice, the village communist party committee competed with the villagers committee for the power of final decision-making. The villager representative assembly and the villager assembly were often under the control of either the villagers committee or the village party branch. In this situation, the villagers had little say in the decision-making process of village affairs. Their concerns and their willingness to be involved in rural tourism development were often “interpreted” rather than “represented” by their “agents”: e.g. the head of the village party branch or the villagers committee. This situation was more typical when the village negotiated with the external actors: higher-level government,

local tourism authorities, tourism industry, investors, neighbouring villages, etc.

Therefore, a gap between the normative procedure and the practical procedure was often observed in the village decision-making process and has inherently impeded the implementation of village self-governance in rural tourism destinations.

With the awareness of this problem, the interviewed villagers and village leaders in Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villages declared that they completely understood the formal procedures of village decision-making but they perceived these regulations to be inappropriate in the circumstances of those villages. Therefore, they adapted the normative procedure enacted by higher-level governments to develop their practical decision-making procedures in managing village issues related to rural tourism development. The field studies discovered that, when the practical procedure of the village decision-making process involved the villagers, each village developed particular working rules based on the village's physical and social conditions, i.e. types of resource for rural tourism programmes, the leadership and organisation of the village, neighbourhood relationships, etc. In this circumstance, the villagers committee's decisions regarding tourism commons could be well accepted and effectively implemented, once the majority of the villagers based their individual choices on the information shared in the village community, such as was the case with the working rules for managing tourism commons in Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villages.

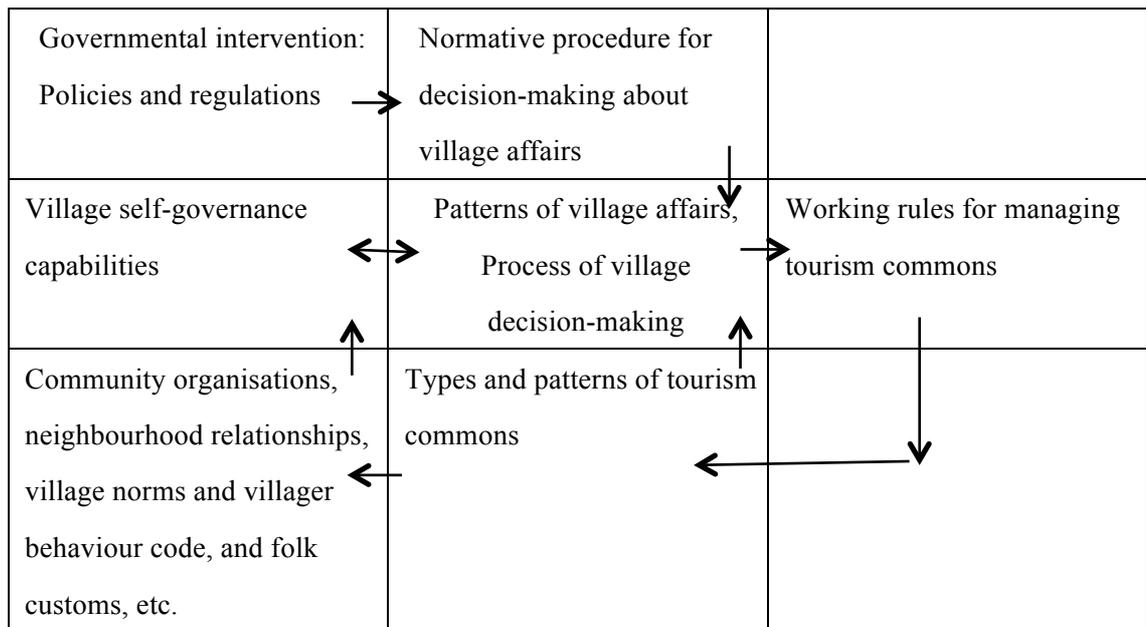
It seems that the village community with self-governance capability played a dominant role in formulating and implementing the working rules for managing rural tourism commons, but only when the majority of villagers actively participated in the

decision-making process. At this point, the entire village, the village self-government and the village community, acted as the maker of rules for managing village affairs. In this circumstance, the village decision was made by the entire village and accepted as the village's collective choice. The maker and the user of the rules have the same identity. The decision-making process undergoes three levels of collective choice, i.e. those who are eligible to make the rules, what the rules are and how the rules are to be implemented (Ostrom, 1999). Otherwise, the rules for managing tourism commons are frequently broken by the individual villagers, who, consequently, are soon abiding by new working rules instead. For instance, as reported in Chapter 8, Zhalaying and Dongtianzhuang villages established a sound mechanism for village collective decision-making and successfully developed working rules for managing tourism commons. Apparently, the performance of tourism commons management greatly depends on the patterns of the village decision-making process, which are generally determined by the village self-governance capability and are significantly affected by external forces such as governmental intervention.

To summarise, based on constant comparison of data from field studies in the villages, this research detected the factors that determine or affect village self-governance capability. To put it simply, the formulation of working rules for governing tourism commons in Chinese rural tourism destinations can be shown in Table 11, on page 388. As shown in Table 11, these factors may include: the organisational structure of the village community; the communication channels in the village community; the decision-making procedures for village collective issues; the villagers' willingness and

preferences regarding rural tourism development; the village folk customs and villagers' habits and conduct in the village; and the neighbourhood relationships, etc. In addition, village self-governance capability is also affected by government intervention, such as tourism development policies.

Table 11: Formulation of working rules for governing tourism commons



9.4 Theory generated from this study: Hybrid governance of rural tourism destinations in China

The above analysis integrates research findings regarding the initiation and implementation of rural tourism development programmes, the problems for tourism commons, and the working rules for governing tourism commons into a whole picture to show the real situation of rural tourism destination governance in China. This whole picture presents the patterns of hybrid governance and shows that multiple governance models coexist in the development of rural tourism destinations, showing different performances of sustainable governance. The governance model depends on the patterns of the village decision-making process, which is fundamentally determined by the

village self-governance capability and significantly affected by government intervention and market forces. Therefore, cooperative governance that involves government, village and market in the development of rural tourism destinations is pivotal in the dynamic interactions between the social and natural systems; hence, it contributes to the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations. Moreover, comparing Chinese experiences of rural tourism destination governance with that reported in existing literature confirms that the social-cultural context significantly affects the patterns of community-based governance so that complicated hybrid governance is widely observed in rural tourism destinations in China.

9.4.1 Obstacles in sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations

This research found two key obstacles to sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations in China: inadequate working rules for governing rural tourism destinations and insufficient village self-governance capability.

9.4.1.1 Insufficient working rules for governing rural tourism destinations

As a complex of dynamic interactions between the political, social and natural systems, rural tourism destination governance involves many rules, including both formal and informal: village internal or external rules. When the existing rules are not appropriate to the dynamic situation, working rules are developed. It is suggested from the study of the management of tourism commons in rural tourism destinations that, after the village develops as a rural tourism destination, the village natural and social resources are changed to become the rural tourism resources that are essential production resources of the villagers. Those villagers are reliant on those resources for their rural livelihoods;

hence, they naturally manage these resources within the available formal regulations and informal rules for using and maintaining tourism resources in their daily practices. Therefore, the mechanism for managing tourism commons is a microcosm of the institution of rural tourism destinations in China despite the fact that the institutions for rural tourism resources management are imperfect. At this point, it seems that formal and informal institutions simultaneously play a role in governing rural tourism destinations. However, it is difficult to say which is more efficient or more dynamic. The actual situation is that sometimes the formal and informal institutions are complementary but sometimes they are mutually exclusive. When the two are complementary, the institutional system is active and both the formal and the informal rules are in use; when the two are inconsistent, the intrinsically formulated informal rules play a substantial role. Moreover, it is often observed in the villages that the existing formal and informal rules are not appropriate for the changing situations of the tourism commons. In this situation, villages with self-governance capabilities can develop working rules to solve the problems of the tourism commons.

The analysis of the formation and effect of operational rules in tourism commons management suggests that working rules play a vital role in solving the problems of tourism commons in the villages. The working rules are subject to intrinsic village incentives and extrinsic influencing factors. Intrinsic incentives consist of the patterns of the village tourism commons, the process of village decision-making, the village community organisation, neighbourhood relationships, the villagers' knowledge of the properties of the tourism commons, and the procedure for communication and

negotiation relating to the utilisation of the tourism commons, etc. These intrinsic incentives can be grouped into three categories: organisation, values and communication; they form the three elements of the internal rules of the village, i.e. village statutes, village norms and village folk customs. Accordingly, extrinsic influential factors correspond to the impact of the government, the market and the society. Influential governmental factors include policies and regulations from all levels of government, such as the land contract system, tax policy and various tourism development policies. Market factors that are influential refer mainly to tourists' purchasing power, tourist preferences, competition in the rural tourism industry, etc. Influential social factors include the flow of information and the means of communication, the differences between urban and rural lifestyles and values, etc.

Based on such discussions, it can be said that the impact of financial issues on the internal rules reflects the impact of the extrinsic influential factors on the intrinsic incentives for tourism commons management in the rural tourism destinations. The development of rural tourism enabled and facilitated access to village investment, information and technology from the cities. As rural tourism developed in the villages, it became more convenient for villagers to access knowledge and information from urban people. As a result, villagers acquired new knowledge and changed their values and norms. Consequently, the village community shifted from being a traditional "acquaintance society" to an "acquaintance plus market trading society". In the former, villagers developed close relationships with their neighbours and friends so that acquaintances make things easy (Fei, 1992). In the latter, the village community still

preserved close neighbourhood relationships to maintain the traditions of the acquaintance society in daily life but changed its approach to organising production with the newly formulated regulations and norms, i.e. money-based community rules for commodity and labour exchange in the village, and personal-relationship-based rules for monitoring the use of tourism commons and for punishing violations.

9.4.1.2 Inadequate village self-governance capability

It is an observable phenomenon in the development of rural tourism destinations in China that, as the joint owners of rural tourism resources in the village, villagers usually have no choice but to accept the government's arrangements, policies and rules for the use of the village collective lands. In these circumstances, the villages with more self-governance capabilities can use village resources actively to participate in rural tourism services and interact with village outsiders to gain more opportunities to develop rural tourism in the area. Therefore, both internal and external factors work together to formulate the mechanisms of rural tourism destination governance, i.e. working rules for managing tourism commons. However, the efficiency of this mechanism is often constrained by poor village self-governance capabilities in rural China.

In China, the laws empower peasants with the rights of autonomy in managing village issues by the democratically established village self-government system. In reality, however, the peasants have limited power or capability for self-organisation or self-regulation for their self-governance. Instead, villages in rural China are still bound under the powerful bureaucratic government and by disorderly market rules. In most

circumstances, rural residents can only passively accept the established institutions at the operational level. In compliance with these institutions in their daily practices, they have to make individual choices about whether or not to comply, how to meet the rules, and whether or not to violate the system, what the benefits and costs of violating the system are, etc. As a result, they are weak in compliance with the formal rules and regulations. Nevertheless, informal institutions such as village norms, which were similar to the laws, no longer work in villages. In this circumstance, neither formal nor informal institutions are in use currently in rural tourism destinations in China.

Therefore, village self-governance capability has a critical role for the village community in developing working rules to cope with various problems involved in the development of rural tourism destinations. Village self-governance capability, therefore, determines the performance of rural tourism destination governance. It seems that the village with stronger self-governance capability is more likely to be dominant in the process of decision-making for tourism commons management and, hence, is more likely to be successful in governing rural tourism destinations.

Here, the village's final decisions can be seen as the villagers' collective choice. The different models of village collective choice consequently generate the different models of rural tourism destination governance, i.e. bureaucracy, commune and community-based governance. For rural tourism destinations, villages with self-governance capabilities can make the collective choice to match the governmental direct and indirect intervention on rural tourism development; that way, the village can adopt the policy advantages in the exploitation of tourism resources. Also, with

self-governance capability, the village collective choices can match the tourism market environment so that the village can produce rural tourism products and services to satisfy tourists and, hence, accurately position itself in the rural tourism market. Therefore, it can be concluded that only when the village collective choices match government policy and the market environment to form a tripartite collaboration (between government, village and market) can effective governance of the rural tourism destination be realised. In short, sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations relies heavily on the collaboration between the village, the local government and the tourism market.

9.4.2 Cooperative governance system

Cooperation between the government, the market and the village is pivotal in governing the dynamic interactions between the destination stakeholders and the relationships between humans and nature. The research findings from the field studies in North China confirm the theories of CPRs governance in existing literature; that is, village self-governance capabilities determine the performance of CPRs governance. Also, this research extends to identify the components and determinants of village self-governance capability in governing tourism commons of rural tourist destinations in the Chinese context. It points out that the determinants of rural tourist destination governance are not limited to the village self-governance capability but are extended to the village decision-making process. Moreover, the core of the village decision-making process is the whole village, which consists of the village self-government and the village community. In the Chinese context, the village decision-making process is usually

under the strong intervention of local government and other external forces. Therefore, sustainable development of rural tourism destinations relies very much on the hybrid governance that enables the cooperation between the village, the local government and the village's positioning in the rural tourism market.

9.4.2.1 Changing the role of the government: From interference to intervention

It has been suggested that the Chinese government change its role further from interference to intervention. The government should support rural tourism destination development with instruments such as regulatory systems and policy arrangements, social and economic incentives, etc., to create an efficient operating mechanism that can activate the efficiency of rural development. A further suggestion is that it uses institutional rules for regulating and adjusting the macro-investment structure, to guide local government and the increasing market investments to the countryside, and to activate the development of rural markets. Besides, the government should play an important role in encouraging rural communities to establish village cultural mechanisms, mobilise rural residents' intrinsic development initiatives and improve their development capacities. Moreover, the government should increase its investment in education in the countryside to improve the governance structure of rural society and the mechanisms of community-based governance to promote a positive function for the government in rural development. In one sentence, the primary role of the government is to provide more financial support for public services and social security in rural communities in order to sustain and protect the basic development needs of rural residents.

9.4.2.2 Integrating the market force to facilitate rural tourism destination development

The market mechanism is a necessary force to solve the underlying problems in rural society of rural tourism destinations. The one fundamental element of the intrinsic incentives for rural tourism development is the peasants' desire to have fair market opportunities. Therefore, it is necessary to address the three resistance problems in order to use market forces to facilitate rural tourism destination development. First, it is essential to eliminate social exclusion in rural tourism development. Tourism authorities should open the tourism market to all peasants with equality and fairness so the labourer can have relatively fair employment and income opportunities in the tourism industry. Second, the local government must open the countryside to market mechanisms. The current rural land ownership and village governance structures are not conducive to investment in the rural market, because unclear property rights and dispersion of rural properties have increased transaction costs significantly. Third, there is also the social responsibility of the market mechanism. A sound market mechanism is not only pursuing efficiency but also contributing to efficient, equitable development in rural society. Investments in the rural market need to follow the principles of fairness and social responsibility.

9.4.2.3 Mobilising the community cultural mechanism to strengthen the village self-governance capability

From the constant comparison of tourism commons management in rural tourism destinations, this research found that village self-governance capability determines the model of tourism commons management and thereby affects the effectiveness of

destination governance for sustainable rural tourism development. The determinant factors contributing to village community self-governance capability are detected as the organisational structure of the village community, the communication and decision-making procedures of village collective affairs, villagers' willingness and preferences regarding the development of rural tourism programmes, village folk customs and villagers' habits of conduct in the village, and neighbourhood relationships in the village community. Therefore, it is suggested that the village mobilise the mechanism of the village cultural community to solve the fundamental problems through coordinating and integrating the functions of various village organisations.

Besides government intervention and market forces, which help to address some issues of rural development, the final resolution of the problem in rural tourism development is inseparable from the natural endogenous power that builds the village's self-governance capabilities. It is imperative that the cultural mechanism to stimulate the endogenous power of the village community is used. The village needs to re-establish its values and village norms and move from seeking to "get rich" to valuing "harmony" and a "beautiful countryside" in the village community. Also, it is recommended that village communities convert their rural development experiences and rural cultural characteristics into unique and irreplaceable tourism resources. Such a mechanism of rural culture discovery can motivate the village community to integrate internal village resources for rural tourism development and to develop benefit-sharing relationships within the village.

In short, there is no unilateral force that can solve the problems in rural tourism destination governance in rural China. Instead, the solution relies on good cooperation between the government, the market and the village. Therefore, it calls for a cooperative mechanism to activate and coordinate the three forces in rural tourism development and to constitute mutually reinforcing efforts.

9.5 Comparison of Chinese experiences with governance theories

9.5.1 Comparison with interactive governance theory

Interactive governance is defined as “the whole of interactions taken to solve societal problems and to create societal opportunities; including the formulation and application of principles guiding those interactions and care for institutions that enable and control them” (Kooiman & Bavinck, 2005, p. 17). From the perspective of social interaction, governance is the aggregate of governing activities carried out by societal actors in response to public needs and visions (Kooiman et al., 2008). Therefore, interactive governance emphasises the governing roles of State, market and civil society. The quality of governance of a social or natural system, hence, can be analysed through study of the three components of interactive governance. These three components are observed and examined in this research but show patterns that are different from those in Kooiman’s findings on the governance of fisheries.

In this research, the constant comparative analysis of various patterns of actors and their actions in governing rural tourism destinations generated a group of factors that facilitate or impede the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations. These factors are grouped into external factors and internal factors of the villages. Further,

constant comparative analysis of these factors generated a set of variables that are identified as the components of sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations. The correlations between these variables produced a general conceptual framework for the study of the governance systems of rural tourism destinations in China. Such constant comparative analysis, as reported in Chapter 8, is focused on the interactions and interrelationships between the elements involved in tourism commons management in rural tourism destinations. A set of the key variables is identified as contributing to the failure or success of governing tourism commons. These variables include the types and status of tourism resources in the village, the village self-governance capability, government intervention and the rural tourism market environment. Based on the above analysis, all these factors contribute to shaping the governance model for rural tourism destinations. These are similar to the components of interactive governance but the governance of rural tourism destinations in China includes more characteristics of complexity and diversity.

First, rural tourism resources show a high degree of complexity and diversity, and are unpredictably dynamic, with a blurred existence regarding the scope of the resource. Rural tourism destinations can be governed only with reference to the complex and dynamic interactions and interrelationships between the government, the society and the natural environment. Multiple stakeholders are involved in managing this complex and dynamic system; they are the State, local government, tourism professionals, village self-government and the village community, village external capital, rural tourism operators, tourists, etc. Despite the fact that government interventions are widely

observed in the process of rural tourism development in the rural tourism destinations, “the whole village” acts as the legitimate governor of rural tourism development programmes rather than the familiar terms of the public–private partnership, community, network or hierarchy. Therefore, it seems rational to argue that, in the cases of rural tourism destinations in China, the performance of rural tourism destination governance largely depends on the interactions between the village internal factors and the village external factors.

As identified in the villages, government intervention is one of the village external factors that strongly affect the initiation of rural tourism development programmes and tourism commons management. This confirms the research findings that many instruments are employed as government interventions in destination governance (Moscardo, 2011; Sofield & Li, 2011; Ying & Zhou, 2007). In the case of Chinese rural tourism destination governance, the State and local governments usually use tourism policies and regulations to promote rural tourism development. In addition to tourism planning, the government more frequently uses financial subsidies and technique assistance to facilitate village tourism. However, this research also observed direct government interference in the initiation of rural tourism programmes with the boundaries imposed on scenic areas and restrictions on tourism business licensing, which caused social exclusions in rural tourism development. Therefore, it is argued that interactions between the village self-governance system and government intervention in the dynamic situation of rural tourism resources comprise various

governance models coexisting in the development of rural tourism destination in China, presenting apparent patterns of hybrid governance.

Moreover, using the Grounded Theory approach, this research identified three variables, i.e. attributes of rural tourism resources, government intervention and village self-governance capability, as the key components of sustainable governance for rural tourism destinations in China. The village self-governance capability is a fundamental factor that determines the patterns of interaction between the village's internal and external factors that affect or influence rural tourism destination governance. Therefore, these three components shall be integrated into the theoretical framework of governance studies.

9.5.2 Comparison with institutional analysis framework of governing CPRs

As discussed above, this research finds that the village self-governance capability determines the model and performance of tourism commons management and thereby affects the effectiveness of destination governance for sustainable rural tourism development. Moreover, “the whole village” rather than the “village community” acts as the principal governor of rural tourism destinations. In addition to “information symmetry” and “transparency” that have been emphasised by classic theories on CPRs governance (Ostrom, 1990, 1999, 2010), other factors such as “order” and “harmony” are identified as determinants of effective governance in Chinese rural tourism destinations. It is believed to be affected by the traditions and values of Chinese culture. These research findings, therefore, challenge the conventional argument that “individual choice determines the collective decision” in institutional analysis of CPR governance.

Hence, it can be pointed out that Chinese individual choice is determined and affected by the process and the results of collective choice. In essence, the governance of tourism commons under the values of collectivism shows different models and characteristics from those shown under the culture of individualism. In the culture of individualism, the individual choice of operational rules determines and affects the villagers' collective choice. Under the values of collectivism, conversely, the decision-making process and the pattern of villagers' collective choice determine and affect the villager's individual choice of operation rules.

As discussed above, tourism resource governance in rural tourism destinations involves many people, with the problems and opportunities of coordination. Traditionally, rural tourism destination governance approaches economic governance with a focus on objective efficiency standards for resource allocation among stakeholders of tourist destinations. Specifically, in discussing the governance of common resources, the core concepts such as trust and control of the size of transaction costs are adopted from New Institutional Economics. Such discussion on governance issues, in fact, put the villagers' collective choices under the objective efficiency standards that override all other considerations of community development. Hence, the community members have to allocate public resources under such objective efficiency standards. Obviously, these objective standards of efficiency are likely to be imposed on the community members from outside and imply a top-down approach to destination governance. Such a phenomenon is widely observed in tourist destination planning, particularly in Chinese rural tourism destinations.

Comparatively, Ostrom's theory of CPRs governance stresses the community self-organising and emphasises community self-governance. The core concept is that people do not have to rely on external objective standards of efficiency in making a collective decision; the more important thing for the community is to identify its criteria of efficiency. As long as community governance establishes its suitable rules, then it is the supreme efficiency (that is, the use of public resources is sustainable) for that community. In this way, Ostrom's theory is a bottom-up analysis. It presumes that people can form collective agreements at a local level. It is possible for the same people who formed these agreements to enforce them so members of a community are able to trust each other. Hence, the problem for governance of common resources is not trust and control but, rather, the efficacy of communication and formation of village institutions. Therefore, relationship networks within the community and with external stakeholders (stakeholder networks) become the efficient channels for institutional formation and communication in the community.

Ostrom uses case studies and experiments to show how the governance problems of collective resources can be resolved through ad hoc bottom-up institutions of rule formation (Ostrom, 1990, 1999, 2009, 2010; Ostrom & Field, 1999). Similar case studies on tourism commons in rural tourism destinations are adapted in my research but with a focus on the reality in rural China. The primary data collected from the villages in North China show that the villages were not observed to have any self-governance according to Ostrom's concepts. Moreover, in the initiation of rural tourism programmes in these villages, stakeholder networks were identified that do

facilitate communications between tourists, rural tourism businesses and the destination community. However, no evidence shows that stakeholder networks play an active role in institution formation (land acquisition, tourism planning, taxation regulation, development policy, and so on) in these villages. There is evidence that village communities do not have independent price-bargaining power. All transactions in rural tourism destinations, i.e. land acquisition, farmhouse businesses, food supply, transportation, etc., are carried out according to the rules of transaction costs that are set by the urban people. Only the money has the final say.

Comparing the research findings with existing literature that applied Ostrom's theory of CPR management, it is demonstrated that Ostrom's theory should be an elaboration of her research paradigm (framework, theories and models). For example, the institutional analysis and development framework (Ostrom, 2010) is more of a mainstream Western paradigm heritage, which emphasises a comprehensive, socio-economic, IAD interdisciplinary framework. The core of the Ostrom paradigm is individualism, which embodies the characteristics of individualism according to the rules outlined in the text. This PhD research on rural tourism commons emphasised the impact of multi-agent coordination on resource utilisation and scalability. Compared to the Ostrom paradigm of individualism, China certainly has a different scenario, where individuals do not have real choice. Therefore, this research illustrates that considering public resource governance issues in this scenario does need a Grounded Theory approach.

To sum up, this study on tourism commons management is based on the real-world situation in rural China; it does not apply Ostrom's theory to analyse it. Ostrom's

framework of governing CPRs is borrowed to expand my exposition of rural tourism commons governance. Such a theme, whether in China or the United States, must involve many elements in common, such as the main interests of common resources, the governance model, the formation of rules, and so on. Therefore, this research firstly explored the rural tourism commons issues based on the Chinese socio-economic and cultural background, then extended further to the governance of rural tourism destinations. Theoretical concepts and frameworks formed in the field studies in the villages are used actually and directly to analyse China's situation. Therefore, this thesis is based on China's real-world situation, using the methods of Grounded Theory, and presented a Chinese narrative on rural tourism destination governance. Here, the important thing is that the starting point of my discussion is tourism commons management in rural tourism destinations, rather than Ostrom's theory as discussed above. Therefore, to end this thesis, I would claim that the original contribution of this research is that it unveils the reality of governance in rural tourism destinations in China and reveals the critical efficacy of village community self-governance for the sustainable development of China. No doubt, this is the core issue for Chinese rural development in future.

Chapter 10 Conclusion

This PhD research is based on the real-world situation of rural tourism development in China. As introduced in Chapter 1, the research question is: Why does the overall performance of rural tourism successfully satisfy the stakeholders, and why are the tourism resources are sustainable in some villages but not in others? This question is answered through field studies using Grounded Theory methods in theoretically selected Hebei villages in China. Based on constant comparative analysis, three themes of rural tourism destination governance emerged: governing the initiation of rural tourism programmes, problems of governing tourism commons and working rules for governing tourism commons.

These three themes are reported in Chapters 6, 7, and 8 respectively. Chapter 6 analyses the actors and their actions in the initiation of rural tourism programmes. Field studies in the villages found that these villages shared similar socio-economic and political environments and had similar rural tourism resources, but they developed different governance models and presented different performances of sustainability for rural tourism development. Through constant comparative analysis, three models of rural tourism destination governance, i.e., bureaucracy governance, commune governance and community-based governance, were determined at various stages of rural tourism development.

How and why? These questions are answered by investigating the management of tourism commons in these villages. The research findings of factors that may determine,

affect or influence the sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations were reported in Chapters 7 and 8. Chapter 7 analysed the tourism commons as a complex and dynamic societal-natural system and identified the problems in managing tourism commons in rural tourism destinations. Further, Chapter 8 analysed the causes of and solutions for these problems. It was recognised that formal and informal institutions and working rules were used in managing tourism commons. All these research findings are discussed in Chapter 9, with some recommendations for the practice of rural tourism destination governance in China, and a reflection on the existing theories related to tourism destination governance.

The above chapters demonstrate that this research has provided the material to answer the research question that was generated from the real-world situation of rural tourism development in China. The villages that have the same socio-political-economic background in the same era, with similar rural tourism resources, but which adopted different rural tourism development models and presented different governance models, have demonstrated completely different performances with regard to sustainability.

How and why? The existing literature shows that the governance model could be a critical factor for the viability of rural tourism destinations. Therefore, this research aimed to find out what is good governance in the circumstances of Chinese rural tourism destinations and, further, to explore the interrelationship between sustainability and governance. Specifically, this research focused on the study of development models and governance models of rural tourism destinations to gain some insights into the essential components of sustainable governance of rural tourism destinations.

Although there are many discussions on governance in both a broad context of social sciences and on destinations governance in the tourism discipline, there are limited discussions on governance of rural tourism destinations in China. Moreover, in the broad context of social sciences, the discussion on governing the commons or governing tourism destinations is based mostly on the theoretical framework of Western individualism. For example, Ostrom has established the institutional analysis diagram of coping with governing the commons but it is [more likely] an elaboration of the theoretical framework of her research. To a certain extent, it is inherent in the mainstream of the Western paradigm. Her institutional analysis diagram emphasises the interdisciplinary integration of social and economic research. However, the core of this paradigm is individualism, which is embodied in her discussion of constitutional and operational rules that focus on individual choices.

In this research, the governance of rural tourism destinations has similar themes to those of Ostrom's discussion on governing the commons. In this research, however, the investigation of tourism commons is focused on the utilisation of resources in the village and the scale of its impacts, and, hence, the necessity for coordination of multi-actors of governance. Therefore, this study on governance of rural tourism destinations discussed the issues of governance of public resources in the circumstance that individuals have no rights or power over their choices. The attributes of rural tourism resources strengthen this point. With the methods of Grounded Theory, this research adopted the theme of tourism commons to investigate the proper governance of

rural tourism destinations, rather than apply Ostrom's paradigm to the study of the problems of managing tourism commons in the villages.

This research explored the governance of rural tourism destinations in China. It has similar themes with those of the issue of governing a CPR, where there have been many discussions. However, the existing theories or frameworks are unable to be used directly to analyse the same issues in China's situation. Therefore, this research tackled the problems in the real world of China, and presented a Chinese narrative on rural tourism destination governance. The research findings can help the governors of rural tourism destinations to identify the problems in their practice of governing the tourism commons and the rural tourism destinations to improve their governing approach towards sustainable governance. It can also help Western societies to gain a better understanding of the reality, the success factors and the constraints of Chinese practices of sustainability and governance.

In investigating Chinese practices in governing rural tourism destinations, this research adopted Grounded Theory methods for data collection and analysis. From field studies in the villages of Hebei Province, the process of initiating rural tourism programmes and the situation of tourism commons in those villages were investigated. The actors involved in destination governance and the problems of rural tourism commons were identified. The research then extended to scrutinise further the institutions for managing tourism commons in the villages. Based on the study of the formulation and evolution of the rules for managing tourism commons, the villages were investigated as rural tourism destinations and governance models are formulated. The constant comparative

analysis discovered three themes for the study of rural tourism destination governance: the governing of a rural tourism destination as a complex and dynamic system; the governing system comprising multiple actors and diverse instruments involved in tourism destinations; and governance models formulated through interactions between the governing system and the complex social and natural system of the rural tourism destination. Further analysis of the process of village decision-making and the patterns of village collective choices discovered that government intervention and village self-governance capability are the core components of effective governance of rural tourism destinations in the Chinese context.

Appropriate government intervention with policy support and financial/technique assistance in the development of rural tourism programmes in the villages can facilitate sustainable development of rural tourism. However, direct government interference, to some extent, can result in the social or regional exclusion of rural tourism development and, hence, may arouse conflicts within the village community and between the village and local government. However, the effects of government intervention or the impact of government interference largely depends on the village self-governance capability. This research discovered that the village with a high self-governance capability achieved a better performance in the sustainable development of rural tourism. This is attributed to the processes or patterns of village decision-making involving collective choice. The village collective choice can be seen as the result of village decision-making; hence, the governance model is one of the results of village collective choices.

This research also found that village community participation in the village collective decision-making process significantly affects the results of the village collective choices. In the decision-making process, the higher the level of villager participation, the more likely the village decisions are to be recognised and accepted by the village community; then, village rules formed by that collective decision-making can be more consistently and efficiently implemented. That is, the process and results of collective choice affect the result of individual choice regarding operational rules. This is completely different from the existing theories of collective choice based on the individualism paradigm.

Furthermore, as discovered in this research, the village collective decision-making process is affected by both internal factors within the village and external factors from outside the village. The external factors are government policy, i.e. indirect government intervention, direct government investment, etc., as well as the market conditions, i.e. the tourism market, the tourism industry, etc. The internal conditions are: the attributes and situation of tourism commons, and their provision and appropriation mode; the village self-organisation and self-regulation regarding the use and maintenance of the tourism commons; and the system for formation and implementation of working rules for managing the tourism commons.

For the villages that share similar external physical, social and economic environments, the conditions within the villages are significantly different. Specifically, the villages are distinct from each other in the following aspects: the self-organisation of the villages, the decision-making processes for managing village affairs, the villagers' role in making rules, and the villagers' acceptance and implementation of the rules. It involves

the implementation level of individual choice. Many factors contribute to the harmony of the neighbourhood in the village, such as: the entire collective establishment; an efficient communication mechanism within the village community; real folk culture and conventions; the villagers' preference for fairness, hospitality and generosity; the villagers' sense of justice, etc. With these, the village would demonstrate more patterns of sustainability for the rural tourism development. Where the village has various interest groups competing for the economic benefits of rural tourism development, these may deconstruct the village collective establishment. The disparity of advantages from rural tourism development may accelerate the power struggles between villagers and the result can be the paralysis of village self-government, e.g. in the case of Wangjiazhai village. Therefore, village self-governance capability is a determining factor for the proper governing of a rural tourism destination.

In a detailed analysis of external factors, government intervention or direct interference illustrates the top-down decision-making process of Chinese rural tourism destination governance. The development issues, i.e. whether or not to develop rural tourism, how to promote rural tourism in the village, etc., cannot be decided upon by the village alone. Only when the village collective choices meet the government top-down decisions, can the village fully exploit the advantages of rural tourism development. Moreover, the village collective choice needs to consider the tourism market; only when the village as a whole provides rural tourism products and services to meet tourist demands, can the village position itself accurately as a rural tourism destination in the tourism market. Therefore, the proper governance of rural tourism destination in China not only depends

on the village self-governance capability but also relies on active cooperation between the government, the tourism industry and the village.

To summarize, this research confirmed the existing theory that village self-governance capability is a core component for the proper performance of managing rural tourism destinations. It further stated that good governance of a rural tourism destination is a process of constant interaction between the village, government intervention and the market to form a tripartite collaboration. Based on the investigation of the real world situation of rural tourism that has been used by Chinese central government as a poverty alleviation strategy since the 1990s and thousands of villages have been transformed into rural tourism destinations. This research examined the success/failure factors of China's rural tourism development and gained insight into empirical Chinese practices. With qualitative methods of exploring the governance dimension between rural tourism stakeholders in three Hebei Province villages, it found that multiple governance approaches coexist; these are not all equally successful at producing sustainable tourism. Further induction of data generated a substantive theory of "hybrid governance" – successful governance will depend largely on the village decision-making process, which itself is determined by the village self-governance capability mediated by government intervention and market forces. The overall conclusion is that achievement of sustainable rural tourism is not magic; it occurs when co-operation between government officials, village leaders, and market representatives successfully resolves the dynamic interactions between social and natural systems. The grounded theory methods enable this theory is generalizable. It can be applied too assess the

sustainability of tourism in the village destinations across China. Further research can be done to examine and analyse the effective governance of destinations in any context of rural.

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Forms of ethics



MEMORANDUM Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

To: Charles Johnston
From: **Madeline Banda** Executive Secretary, AUTEC
Date: 20 March 2008
Subject: Ethics Application Number 08/22 **From mass to sustainable tourism: a stakeholder network approach for rural tourism development in China.**

Dear Charles

I am pleased to advise that the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) approved your ethics application at their meeting on 10 March 2008, subject to the following conditions:

1. Provision of a revised response to section B.9 of the application that engages more carefully with the issues of cultural and social sensitivity involved;
2. Clarification of the claims about substantive theory and formal theory in the response to section C.4.3 of the application and how this will be achieved using quantitative and qualitative data collection;
3. Provision of a revised response to section C.4.5 of the application, identifying the methodological justification for how the qualitative data will be analysed and the statistical justification for how the quantitative data will be analysed;
4. Provision of revised responses to section E.4 of the application, providing a reconsidered evaluation of the potential risks to and discomforts for the participants and identifying how these will be mitigated;
5. Amendment of the Information Sheet as follows:
 - a. Insertion of the name 'New Zealand' after 'AUT' at the end of the first sentence in the section titled 'An Invitation';
 - b. Simplification of the information provided in the Information Sheet;
 - c. Inclusion of the International Code in the telephone number for the Executive Secretary of AUTEC.

You are required to contact Dr Philippa Gerbic to discuss issues in relation to social and cultural sensitivity in research and the inappropriate tone of some of the responses in the application. AUTEC considered that the size of the population samples is too large for this study and recommends that the researcher and applicant reconsider this aspect of the research.

I request that you provide the Ethics Coordinator with a written response to the points raised in these conditions at your earliest convenience, indicating either how you have satisfied these points or proposing an alternative approach. AUTEC also requires written evidence of any altered documents, such as Information Sheets, surveys etc. Once this response and its supporting written evidence has been received and confirmed as satisfying the Committee's points, you will be notified of the full approval of your ethics application.

When approval has been given subject to conditions, full approval is not effective until *all* the concerns expressed in the conditions have been met to the satisfaction of the Committee. Data collection may not commence until full approval has been confirmed. Should these conditions not be satisfactorily met within six months, your application may be closed and you will need to submit a new application should you wish to continue with this research project.

When communicating with us about this application, we ask that you use the application number and study title to enable us to provide you with prompt service. Should you have any further enquiries regarding this matter, you are welcome to contact Charles Grinter, Ethics Coordinator, by email at charles.grinter@aut.ac.nz or by telephone on 921 9999 at extension 8860.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Madeline Banda', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Madeline Banda
Executive Secretary
Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: Zhifang Wang zfang.wang@yahoo.com, Phillipa Gerbic

Participant Information Sheet



Date Information Sheet Produced:

18 January 2008

Project Title:

From Mass to Sustainable Tourism: Stakeholder Network Approach to Sustainable Rural Tourism Development in China

An Invitation

This is Zhifang Wang, a doctoral student at School of Hospitality and Tourism, Auckland University of Technology (AUT), New Zealand. I would like to invite you to participate in a research project. This project aims to explore various stakeholders' perceptions on and practices in sustainable rural tourism in China. The research result will be used for writing a thesis that will contribute to my PhD qualification. It is appreciated if you could accept this invitation for an interview. However, your participation is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw from the research at any stage prior to the completion of data collection.

What is the purpose of this research?

In this project, I propose to examine how stakeholder networks have developed at different rural destinations located outside of Beijing. The key questions of my research are: Who are the primary stakeholders of rural tourism destinations in China? What are their most important concerns and perceptions on rural tourism development? How various stakeholders interact with each other and how stakeholder networks emerge and evolve in the process of rural tourism development? And, how stakeholder networks have influenced and shaped the development of sustainable rural tourism in China?

How was I chosen for this invitation?

In answering these questions, a field study is designed to conduct at villages where rural tourism has been promoted as a strategy for rural development and poverty elimination. Based on literature survey and field inspection in Hebei Province, four villages were identified as sites for field study. At each village, I will firstly obtain the permission of doing research in this village. Then, some people would be interviewed. The interview would be started from the village leader or someone else. After an interview, the interviewed people would lead me to the next informant. So, now XXX introduced me to you for an interview on this topic.

What will happen in this research?

In this research I will be interviewing tourists, tour guides, rural householders, tourism business owners, village leaders across the selected villages. It is extremely appreciated if you are able to accept the invitation for an interview. I am interested in anything you know about rural tourism development in this village. Some key questions are listed and attached to this information sheet.

What are the discomforts?

This interview may last about 1 hour. It will be recorded as part of the data for this research project.

How will these discomforts be alleviated?

You may ask for a summary of the findings by post or email. If you have any enquires or wish to know more details about this research project, please contact me, or my supervisors.

What are the benefits?

Through participating in this research, you may have a better understanding on how important sustainable rural tourism is to the rural destinations. The research findings of how stakeholders' network may help the destination management to find a pathway toward sustainable development. It may also have theoretical contribution to stakeholder network theory and sustainable tourism. Definitely, it will be the core of my PhD dissertation.

This version was last edited on 3 December 2007

How will my privacy be protected?

Please be assured that all personal details will remain strictly confidential. You are under no obligation to accept this invitation, your participation is voluntary and you are free to stop, or withdraw at any time. If you decide to participate, you have the right to: [1] Decline to answer any particular question; [2] Ask any questions about the study at any time during participation; [3] Provide information on the understanding that your name will not be used in any publications resulting from this study; [4] Be given access to a summary of the project findings when it is concluded.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

In participating in this research, your cost may be nothing more than an hour of time.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

This field study is designed for my PhD research project and it is planned to be completed before September 2008. I would be grateful if you could accept a face-to-face interview now. If you are unable to accept it now, please contact me via email or phone whenever you are available for an interview.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

A Consent Form will be provided to you to complete before we start the interview.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

The findings will be available in late 2008. You may ask for a summary of the findings by post or email.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, Dr. Charles Johnston, charles.johnston@aut.ac.nz, telephone: +64-9921-9999 ext: 5120.

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary, AUTEK, Madeline Banda, madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz, +64-9921-9999 ext 8044.

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

If you have any enquiry or wish to know more details about this research, please contact me, or my supervisors.

Researcher Contact Details:

Zhifang Wang, Doctoral Candidate, School of Hospitality and Tourism, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand, Email: twn2763@aut.ac.nz, work phone: +64-9921-9999 ext: 8415. Mobile: +86-13910689293.

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Dr. Charles Johnston, Senior Lecturer, School of Hospitality and Tourism, Auckland University of Technology, Email: charles.johnston@aut.ac.nz, work phone: +64-9921-9999 ext: 5120.

Professor Charles Crothers, School of Social Science, Auckland University of Technology, and Email: charles.crothers@aut.ac.nz, work phone: +64-9921-9999 ext 8428.

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 20 March 2008, AUTEK Reference number [Ethics Application Number 08/22](#).

参与者信息表



信息表制定日期: 2008 年 1 月 18 日

项目名称: 从大众旅游到可持续旅游——从利益相关者关系网络视角探索中国乡村旅游可持续发展路径

邀请信:

我, 王志芳, 奥克兰科技大学饭店与旅游管理学院博士候选人。我想邀请您参加一个研究项目。这项研究旨在探究中国乡村旅游发展的利益相关者所关注的问题, 以及他们对乡村旅游可持续发展的认识和实践。我将就此项研究撰写博士学位论文, 这将有助于我获得博士学位。

这项研究的主要目的?

在这个研究项目中, 我想进一步深入研究北京周边的乡村旅游目的地的利益相关者关系网络。这项研究的主要问题是: 谁是乡村旅游目的地的主要利益相关者? 他们最关心的问题是什么? 他们如何看待乡村旅游发展? 各种不同的利益相关者之间如何相互影响? 在乡村旅游发展过程中, 利益相关者关系网络是如何产生和演化的? 在中国, 旅游目的地利益相关者关系网络如何影响并塑造了乡村旅游可持续发展?

我是如何被选为邀请对象的?

回答上述问题时, 我将在那些把乡村旅游作为农村发展和扶贫战略手段的村庄进行田野研究。在文献研究和实地考察的基础上, 河北省的四个村庄被选作田野研究地点。为了理解利益相关者对于乡村旅游可持续发展的认识和实践, 在这些选定的村庄里, 我首先获得村里的同意在这个村庄进行调查研究, 然后邀请那些影响了乡村旅游发展或者被乡村旅游影响的人们接受访谈并参与这项研究。访谈可能从村长或者村里的某个人开始, 一个访谈结束之后, 受访者会推荐我访问下一个。现在, XXX 介绍我对您进行访谈。

在这个研究中将会发生什么?

在这个项目的研究过程中, 我将对所选村庄的旅游者、农户、旅游经营者、村干部们进行访谈。我也对县政府和省府负责旅游开发与管理的官员以及旅游专业人士进行调查访谈。在这些访谈中, 我关心的是您的日常生活中与这个村庄的乡村旅游相关的活动, 以及你对这个村庄乡村旅游发展过程中的关系网络的一些认识和看法。我很乐意邀请您参加一个访谈, 如果您能接受这个邀请我将不胜感激。

这个研究项目会带来什么不便?

这个访谈大约需要 1 个小时左右的时间。访谈内容将被录音并作为数据的一部分用于这个项目研究。研究结果会在 2008 年底出来, 可能会以英文或中文出版。

如何消除这些不便?

您可以通过电子邮件来要一份研究结果的摘要。如果您有任何疑问或者想更多地了解这个研究项目, 请您与我或者我的导师们联系。

这项研究有和好处？

通过参加这项研究，您将进一步了解旅游可持续发展对于乡村旅游目的地是何等重要。这个项目关于利益相关者关系网络的研究成果将有助于旅游目的地的管理者探索出一条通向可持续发展的道路。其研究成果也将发展利益相关者理论，当然，这个项目的研究发现将是我的博士论文的核心内容。

如何保护个人隐私？

请确信所有个人信息都被严格保密。您不能被强迫接受这个邀请，您自愿参与这个访谈并且可以随时停止或退出。如果您决定参加这个访谈，您有以下权利：[1]拒绝回答某个问题；[2]在参与这个项目的过程中，可以随时就这项研究提问；[3]您所提供的信息是基于这样的前提，即您明白您的名字不会出现在此项研究成果的出版物上，[4]这个项目完成之后，会给您一份研究结果的综述。

参与这个研究的花费是多少？

这个访谈大约持续 1 个小时。所以，参加这个研究项目的成本不过 1 个小时的时间。

我有什么机会来考虑接受这个邀请？

这个田野研究主要是为了我的博士研究课题而设计的。这项田野研究计划在 2008 年 9 月份完成。我非常感谢您现在能够接受面对面访谈。如果现在您不便于接受这个邀请，您可在您方便的时候通过电子邮件或者电话跟我联系。

我如何表示我同意参与这项研究？

非常感谢您参与这项研究。在我们开始访谈之前，我会请您填写一张‘同意参加访谈’表。

如果我对这个项目有所顾虑或者关心这个项目，怎么办？

关于这个研究项目的任何疑问应该首先知会我的导师，查尔斯·庄士敦博士（Dr. Charles Johnston）。他的电子邮件：charles.johnston@aut.ac.nz, 电话：+64-9921-9999 ext: 5120。

关于这个项目的研究行为问题应该首先知会奥克兰科技大学学术道德委员会总秘书长马德莱尼·班达(Madeline Banda), 电子邮件：madeline.banda@aut.ac.nz, 电话：+64-9921-9999 ext 8044。

如果我想进一步了解这项研究的信息，我联系谁呢？

如果你想进一步了解这项研究，请您与我或者我的导师联系。

研究者的具体联系方式：

王志芳，博士候选人，奥克兰科技大学饭店及旅游管理学院。电子邮件：tw2763@aut.ac.nz, 办公电话：+64-9921-9999 ext: 8415. 移动电话：+86-13910689293。

研究项目导师的具体联系方式：

查尔斯·庄士敦博士（Dr. Charles Johnston），高级讲师，新西兰奥克兰科技大学饭店及旅游管理学院。电子邮件：charles.johnston@aut.ac.nz, 工作电话：+64-9921-9999 ext: 5120。

查尔斯·克劳瑟斯教授，新西兰奥克兰科技大学社会科学学院。电子邮件：charles.crothers@aut.ac.nz, 工作电话：+64-9921-9999 ext 8428。

此调研项目经由奥克兰理工大学人类道德伦理委员会于 2008 年 3 月 20 日审核（编号为 [Ethics Application Number 08/22](#)）为一项低风险的调研活动，并同意授权调研人及其导师开展该调研活动。

Consent Form

For use when interviews are involved.



Project title: From Mass to Sustainable Tourism: Stakeholder Network Approach to Sustainable Rural Tourism Development in China

Project Supervisor: Dr. Charles Johnston, Senior Lecturer, School of Hospitality and Tourism, Auckland University of Technology, Email: charles.johnston@aut.ac.nz, work phone: +64-9921-9999 ext 5120.

Professor Charles Crothers, School of Social Sciences, Auckland University of Technology, and Email: charles.crothers@aut.ac.nz, work phone: +64-9921-9999 ext 8428.

Researcher: Zhifang Wang, Doctoral Candidate, School of Hospitality and Tourism, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand, Email: twn2763@aut.ac.nz, work phone: +64-9921-9999 ext 8415. Mobile: +86-13910689293.

- I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 18 January 2008.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.
- I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews and that they will also be recorded by a digital recorder.
- I understand that I may withdraw myself or any information that I have provided for this project at any time prior to completion of data collection, without being disadvantaged in any way.
- If I withdraw, I understand that all relevant information including audio record, or parts thereof, will be destroyed.
- I agree to take part in this research.
- I wish to receive a copy of the report from the research (please tick one): Yes No

Participant's signature:

Participant's name:

Participant's Contact Details (if appropriate):.....

Date:

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 20 March 2008, AUTEC Reference number Ethics Application Number 08/22

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

同意参加访谈表



课题名称: 从大众旅游到可持续旅游——从利益相关者关系网络视角探讨中国乡村旅游可持续发展途径

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- 我已阅读信息单, 并得到详细的说明, 我满意相关的回答。
- 明白我可以在将来进一步提出问题
- 明白本次访谈将用数码录音机录音。
- 明白可以随便停止和收回我的信息。
- 明白可以随便停止和收回我的信息。那么, 相关信息包括录音将被销毁。
- 我同意参加这项调研。
- 我希望受到一个有关结论的复印件 (请选择): 是 不是

参与者姓名: _____

参与者签字: _____

参与者联系电话: _____

日期:

此调研项目经由奥克兰理工大学人类道德伦理委员会于 2008 年 3 月 20 日审核 (编号为 **Ethics Application Number 08/22**) 为**一**项低风险的调研活动, 并同意授权调研人及其导师开展该调研活动。

注意: 参与者应保留一个复印件

Appendixes

Appendix 1: Informants list

Informants of Hebei rural tourism development – professionals				
	Name	Occupation	Place	Date
1.	D. H. Huo	Director, Department of Finance and Planning, Hebei Province Tourism Bureau	Telephone, email interviews, face-to-face interviews during and after panel meetings of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding, Kuancheng, Chengde	April–August 2007, 14–17, 26–28 May 2008
2.	M. H. Di	Research Fellow, Institute of Tourism Studies, Hebei Social Science Academy	Face-to-face interviews during and after panel meetings of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding	14–16 May 2008
3.	Z. Lu	Panel member, rural tourism development planner, professor of Tourism Department, Hebei Normal University	Panel meetings of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Kuangcheng, Chengde	26–28 May 2010
4.	A. C. Qin	Professor, School of Ecotourism, Hebei University	Between panel meetings of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding	14–18 May 2008
5.	Y. C. Wang	Panel member, professor, rural tourism development planner, Tourism Research Centre, Hebei University	Between panel meeting of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding, Chengde	14–18 May, 27–28 May, 2008
6.	Y. F. Shi	Rural tourism planner, associate professor of a tourism vocational-tech school in Shijiazhuang, Hebei	Panel meetings of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding, Chengde	15–16 May 2008, 27–28 May 2010
7.	Z. X. Wang	Associate professor, rural tourism development planner, Tourism Research Centre, Hebei University	Panel meeting of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding	17–18 May 2008
8.	L. Zeng	Rural tourism development planner, Director of Tourism Research Centre, Hebei University	Between panel meetings of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Chengde	14–18 May 2008

9.	L. B. Wang	Tourism planner, lecturer at Tourism Department, Hebei Normal University	Between panel meetings of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding	17 May 2008
10.	S. Qin	Tourism planner, lecturer at Tourism Department, Hebei Normal University	Between panel meetings of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding, Chengde	17 May 2008, 28 May 2008
Informants of Zhalaying rural tourism development				
	Name	Identity	Place	Date
11.	G. Z. Cao	Deputy Director of Chengde Municipal Tourism Bureau	Panel meeting of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Chengde	28 May 2008
12.	S. Q. Li	Panel member, Deputy Director of Chengde Municipal Tourism Bureau	Panel meetings of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Kuancheng, Chengde	27–28 May 2008
13.	Z. P. Zhang	Office administrator of Fengning County Tourism Bureau	Face-to-face conversation, at his office, follow-up telephone interview	28 June 2008
14.	W. D. Bai	Director of Fengning County Tourism Bureau	Face-to-face conversation, at his office	28 June 2008
15.	G. Chen	Officer of Fengning County Tourism Bureau	Face-to-face conversation	26–28 June 2008
16.	H. L. Chang	First-time visitor, social researcher, lecturer at a university in Beijing	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	26–29 June 2008, October 2009, May 2010
17.	G. H. Hou	Secretary of village party branch	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	26–29 June 2008, October 2009, May 2010
18.	D. Sun	Director of villagers committee	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	26–29 June 2008, October 2009, May 2010
19.	Mr Luo	Member of villagers committee, grocery shop owner, accountant	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	26–29 June 2008, October 2009, May 2010
20.	J. H. Li	Tour guide/agent, farmhouse owner	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	18–19 June 2007, 26–29 June 2008
21.	Mr Xiao	Herdsman	Face to face, focus group	26–29 June 2008
22.	S. B. Zhang	Farmhouse owner	Face to face, observation	18–19 June 2007, 26–29 June 2008

23.	Old Lady Cui	Older villager	Face to face	18–19 June 2007, 26–29 June 2008
24.	L. Cui	Born and raised in the village, works as a tour representative of the village in Beijing, fiancé of a riding club owner, sister of a farmhouse owner	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	18–19 June 2007
25.	H. S. Liu	Frequent visitor, joint-venture investor	Face to face, follow-up telephone interview	18 May 2007, June 2008
26.	H. B. Zhang	Frequent visitor	Face to face	18–19 June 2007
Informants of Wangjiazhai rural tourism development				
	Name	Identity	Place	Date
27.	Yi. Li	Director of general affairs office, Baoding Municipal Tourism Bureau	Panel meeting of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding	14–18 May 2008
28.	J. H. Yan	Deputy Director of Baoding Municipal Tourism Bureau	Panel meeting of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding	14–18 May 2008
29.	Ya. Li	Director of general affairs office, Anxin County Tourism Bureau	Panel meeting of Assessment of Rural Tourism Planning Programme, Baoding, trip to Wangjiazhai village	17–18 May 2008
30.	D. Wang	Manager of Wangjiazhai Folk Village, farmhouse owner, businessman	Face-to-face interview, field observation	17–18 May 2008
31.	E. G. Wang	Farmhouse owner, D. Wang's wife	Face-to-face interview	17–18 May 2008
32.	S. T. Wang	Secretary, Wangjiazhai village party branch, D. Wang's father-in-law	Face-to-face interview	17–18 May 2008
33.	Boatman Zhao	Elder boatman	Face-to-face interview	Face-to-face interview
34.	W. D. Wei	Ex-secretary, Wangjiazhai village party branch, farmhouse owner	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	17–18 May 2008, 26 June 2010
35.	L. S. Wang	Ex-manager of Wangjiazhai Folk Village, villagers committee member	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	17–18 May 2008, 26–28 June 2010, 28 September 2012

36.	S. Wang	Housewife, L. S. Wang's wife	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	17–18 May 2008, 26–28 June 2010, 28 September 2012
37.	J. Wang	Housekeeper, working at resort hotel in the Grand Lotus Garden, Baiyangdian, L. S. Wang's daughter	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	17–18 May 2008, 26–28 June 2010, 28 September 2012
38.	X. L. He	Farmhouse owner	Telephone, face-to-face interview, focus group	26–29 June 2010
39.	Z. C. Xin	Farmhouse owner, sewer	Telephone, face-to-face interview, focus group	26–29 June 2010
40.	X. F. Xin	Ex-accountant of villagers committee, farmhouse owner, Z. C. Xin's father	Face to face, focus group	26–29 June 2010
41.	D. S. Wei	Older boatman, fisher, W. D. Wei's brother	Face-to-face interview	17–18 May 2008, 26–28 June 2010
42.	D. Y. Wang	Older boatman, fisherman	Face-to-face interview, focus group	17–18 May 2008
43.	L. H. Ma	Frequent visitor, Beijing resident, manager of catering at a university in Beijing	Face-to-face interview, focus group	26–28 June 2010
44.	Z. D. Tian	Frequent visitor, office manager of a telecommunication company, Beijing resident	Face-to-face interview, focus group	26–28 June 2010
45.	X. C. Li	Frequent visitor, chief engineer of a telecommunication company	Face-to-face interview, focus group	26–28 June 2010
46.	Q. W. Zeng	First-time visitor, university student	Face-to-face interview, focus group	26–28 June 2010
47.	X. W. Tang	First-time visitor, receptionist of a media company	Face-to-face interview, focus group	26–28 June 2010
Informants of Dongtianshuang rural tourism development				
	Name	Identity	Place of interview	Date of interview
48.	S. M. Han	Born and raised in a Baiyangdian village, now a Beijing resident, working as a journalist of the Xinjing Newspaper, an environmentalist, owns a private travel agency in	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews, online chatting, e.g. WeChat, QQ, etc.	14–23 June 2007, 26–29 June 2008, 24 December 2009

		Baoding, part-time tour guide in Baiyangdian area		
49.	G. Q. Tian	Village party branch secretary	Face to face, focus group, follow-up telephone interviews	21–23 June 2007
50.	D. B. Tian	Owner of the fish restaurant in Dongtianzhuang village	Face-to-face, focus group	21–23 June 2007
51.	W. G. Tian	Chef of fish restaurant in Dongtianzhuang village	Face-to-face, observation	21–23 June 2007
52.	D. Y. Tian	Older villager, fisherman	Face-to-face, observation	22 June 2007
53.	D. S. Tian	Older villager, boatman	Face-to-face, observation	22 June 2007
54.	Villager 1	Older man, neighbourhood watcher	Face-to-face, observation	22 June 2007
55.	Villager 2	Older man, neighbourhood watcher	Face-to-face, observation	22 June 2007
56.	W. Tian	Village woman in her 30s, reed mat weaver, housewife	Face-to-face, observation	21–22 June 2007
57.	H. Tian	Village man, cultivating reeds and lotus, reed mat weaver	Face-to-face, observation	21–22 June 2007
58.	S. F. Gao	Frequent visitor, manager of an ad. company	Face-to-face, participant observation	21–23 June 2007
59.	Tourist 1	First-time visitor, Gao's female colleague	Face-to-face interview, participant observation	21–23 June 2007
60.	Tourist 2	First-time visitor, Gao's female colleague	Face-to-face interview, participant observation	21–23 June 2007
61.	H. X. Yu	First-time visitor, an English–Chinese translator working in a Germany company in Beijing	Face-to-face interview, participant observation	21–23 June 2007
62.	S. F. Liu	Frequent visitor, driver of the tour group	Face-to-face interview, participant observation	21–23 June 2007
63.	Y. Zhang	Frequent visitor, driver's wife	Face-to-face interview, participant observation	21–23 June 2007

Appendix 2: Zhalaying village interview data

Below are accounts from interviewees of Zhalaying village; some villagers, i.e. village cadres, farmhouse owners, herdsman, grocer shop owners, farmhouse chefs and older villagers who are non-participants of tourism businesses but have witnessed the development of rural tourism in Zhalaying village.

1. J. H. Li: farmhouse owner, tour guide, travel agent

This informant is the village tour guide. He left the village to seek jobs in Beijing in the mid-1980s but returned to start his family businesses of farmhouses in the early 1990s. Since then, he has been using his personal connections to recruit and take Beijing guests to Zhalaying. He insisted that Zhalaying rural tourism started after the First Grassland opened despite the fact that Zhalaying tourism activities were not in the government tourism development plan.

a. Opening of the First Grassland

Media broadcasted the opening of the First Grassland, then some Beijing people came for sightseeing at the weekend. Soon after, tourists knew the place as Fengning Bashang Grassland rather than the officially named Jingbei First Grassland Resort. (J. H. Li, 17 May 2007, personal communication)

b. Initiation of horse-riding services in Zhalaying village

The First Grassland Resort Hotel was built on the grassland that was collectively owned by Zhalaying village. In return, the village was allowed to organise a troop of riding horses to provide services to the guests of the Resort Hotel. When the guests rode horses and passed by the

village, they often curiously asked to visit the herdsman's home. These guests were entertained by our hospitality with courtesy and warmth. They found our local food, such as steamed naked-oat rolls and potatoes, simple but tasty. They saw that our rural lifestyle was unique and peaceful: totally different from their urban life. Some tourists even asked to stay in the herdsman's home for a couple of holidays. In return for the herdsman's hospitality, these guests left some extra money for the hosts for the bed and food, in addition to the pay for riding and racing horse service. Gradually, these guests became the host's friends and now they regularly visit the host's home, weekly, once a fortnight, or two to three times during the summer. They often bring their family and friends and even other tourists they met on the way to the host's home. In this way, the word of mouth spread; Zhelaying rural tourism businesses grew rapidly in early 1990s. (J. H. Li, 17 June 2007, personal communication)

c. Preventing neighbouring village herdsmen free-riding on the riding tracks in Zhelaying village

We (Zhelaying villagers) know almost everyone in the village, as well as people in our neighbouring villages. It is too embarrassing for us to stop a neighbour using the riding track or common pasture or impose a fine on him... It is too often that horsemen guide their guests riding horses to our village, but the guard or the villager knows the horseman is a relative of one of our villagers. For the tourists, you know, we usually call them guests. It is too rude for our villagers to stop a guest or a relative from using the common pasture. (J. H. Li, 19 June 2007, personal communication)

d. Villagers' habits

Do "not care about the common issues", "be obedient to the local governors", as well as "jealous of the richer neighbours".

My neighbours are jealous of me because my family has earned more money than they have. I do not know how to solve this problem. Villagers do not care about the living environment. In their opinion, you are the farmhouse owners and you run a tourism business, so you are responsible

to clean the street and keep the living environment clean because all the tourists are your guests, not theirs. (J. H. Li, 19 June 2008, personal communication)

e. Farmhouse business owners do not think they should take on more duties

I do not think we should take on more duties or pay more money for the village collective affairs since we run our business on our private residential properties and my family pays for water and power. We do not cost or use a cent of the village collective fund or accumulations, nor use the collective lands to run my farmhouse business. Our guests ride horses on the common grasslands that are collectively owned by all the villagers, even though there are no tourists, the grassland are not in use by the villagers. (J. H. Li, 19 June 2008, personal communication)

2. G. H. Hou: village party branch secretary, farmhouse owner

a. The first tourist-invested farmhouse in Zhalaying village

Jun Zhao is a Beijing guy. He is a frequent visitor to our village. He has fun riding horses and often comes to our village at the weekend. He and his host Zhanjun Wang became good friends and they jointly developed the first holiday resort in our village in 1993. Jun Zhao invested about 60,000–70,000 Yuan to build the farmhouse on Zhanjun Wang's residential land that the villagers committee allocated to him. They named this holiday resort "Caoyuan Zhi Ying" (The Eagle of the Prairie). After Zhao completely earned back his investment from the farmhouse operation, he transferred the ownership and operation of the farmhouse completely to Zhanjun Wang. (G. H. Hou, 28 June 2008, personal communication)

b. Funding for wetlands protection

Soon after rural tourism businesses increased in our village, the villagers committee spent money to fence the wetlands in order to prevent tourists from walking into the wetlands. This is for the safety of both the tourists and the wetlands. The villagers committee also hired a guard to watch the

wetlands and grassland, to monitor the numbers of horses on the fenced wetlands, but it is a big financial burden for our village since the village only has a small amount of collectively owned funds to spend on village public affairs. The farmhouse owners welcome the investment into the protection of wetlands and grasslands since they have tourism businesses and they know their guests come to our village for our natural landscape of grassland. But, other villagers, particularly those do not have tourism businesses, complain about the villagers committee spending on fencing wetlands. Fencing the wetlands costs money but also degraded the natural scenic view of our village. (G. H. Hou, 28 June 2008, personal communication)

3. Accountant Luo: retired teacher, grocery shop owner, villagers committee member

a. Free-riding of common pasture

Another reason for the villagers and guards not stopping or punishing the free-riding tourists or horsemen is that none would like to displease neighbours or acquaintances in the village. The guards are Zhalaying villagers. They took the job for the payment rather than for the security of the common pasture and preventing it being used by horse riders from other villages. The villagers do monitor the use of the common pasture, but they often turn a blind eye to the offenders. To the villagers, the common pasture is collective: owned by the whole village rather than being an allotment for an individual household. Everyone knows it is his or her duty to protect common pasture from over-grazing but, on a specific occasion, it is not his or her turn to stop the offenders.

(Accountant Luo, 28 June 2008, personal communication)

b. Wetlands protection funding

Since our village is located in the reserve of wetlands that are the main part of Jingbei No.1 Grassland Conservation Zone, the village spends about 20,000 Yuan per year on the protection of the wetlands, fencing and watching the wetlands. Once a year, the Forest Department of Fengning

County allocated our village 2,000 Yuan for watching the wetlands. That was the only money we had from the local government for wetlands watching. Now the village is short of funds to watch the wetlands because the salary for a guard would cost about 10,000 Yuan a year. (Accountant Luo, 28 June 2008, personal communication)

c. Solutions to protect the wetlands from access or invasion by tourists and horses

We used to fence the grassland and wetlands to prevent tourists from entering them. But some tourists ride horses and jump over the fences to pick up wild flowers or take photos in the reserved areas of the wetlands. We also asked all the villagers, including the riding trainers and guides, as well as the horsemen and farmhouse owners, to tell their guests not enter into the fenced grassland or wetlands. In our village's collectively owned grassland, we do not allow tourists to pick up wild flowers; they are not allowed to enter into the fenced grassland. If they were allowed to do so, the natural and beautiful summer landscape would disappear very soon and our rural tourism would lose its basic resource. That will not be our "authentic" rural tourism. (Accountant Luo, 29 June 2008, personal communication)

d. County government neglected wetlands protection

Obviously, the county government neglects its contribution for grassland tourism in county development, despite grassland tourism bringing greatly improved awareness of Fengning County in North China and bringing the flow of investment and economic growth. For example, Datan Town was an open window to outside investors and a channel for Fengning County accessing outside financial and technique assistance. However, the Fengning county government offers no policy support or financial assistance for rural tourism development. Rural tourism development in our village lacks the local government's support. (Accountant Luo, 29 June 2008, personal communication)

e. The farmhouse owners should pay more for the use of public resources

If there were no tourists to the village, then it would not have added fences to the pastures around the village. This also indicates that the more reception of tourists in the village, the more consumption and use of public resources; consequently, the farmhouse owners should pay more for public resources management fees and royalties. (Accountant Luo, 29 June 2008, personal communication)

f. Complaints on the government officers' performances

All the officers are keen to have a bigger GDP growth to show their performance as leaders. Fengning county government stressed the mining industry but they do not care about the future generation. After the mining is run out, what does the next generation live for? They care only about the good life for themselves but at the cost of next generation.

(Accountant Luo, 28 June 2008, personal communication)

4. H. S. Liu: frequent visitor to Zhalaying village

The fun of riding horses – the manager of a property management company in Beijing

Some of the horse riders prefer the low rate of guest rooms and meals at the farmhouses, but most of them are attracted by the Zhalaying villagers' simple and unique lifestyle and their manners of hospitality. The villagers are friendly, frank, unsophisticated; they keep very close relationships with their neighbours and relatives. They are also very hospitable to their guests. Staying-in-farmhouses is something like going back to visit relatives and friends in the hometown. It is not only a weekend for horse riding but also a holiday to meet relatives and friends here. (H. S. Liu, 17 June 2006, personal communication)

5. Zhalaying focus group, 29 June 2008

This focus group involved village cadres discussing government support in Zhalaying rural tourism development. It also included a herdsman, a farmhouse chef, an older

Lady Cui in her 70s, whose children's families were all operating farmhouse hotels in the village, and the village party branch secretary's wife who looked after all the guests in her house.

a. Initiation of Jingbei First Grassland tourist zone

In those days, Fengning was a poverty-stricken county. Except for a few villagers raising horses for sale, most rural households lived on cultivating lands; no other source of income was available for peasants. The living conditions were so poor that most rural households had to rely on government relief for basic food and clothes. In 1984, the local government started to seek opportunities for poverty reduction. The county government consulted experts from the State Forestry Administration and the Water Resource Ministry that managed forests and wetlands surrounding the riverhead of Luanhe River and Chaohe River to protect the source of Beijing drinking water. After several investigations into resources that could be exploited, the Fengning County Tourism Bureau was set up in 1987 and soon the Jingbei First Grassland tourist zone was opened. Since then, tourism has been developed in our area. (G. H. Hou, Accountant Luo, & D. Sun, 29 June 2008, personal communication)

b. Initiation of food and bed services in Zhalaying village

It was in the early 1990s, when Zhalaying rural households used spare rooms to accommodate visitors from Beijing in summer. In those days, most of our guests were horse riders. They used to stay in the First Grassland Resort Hotel. The room rate was about 150 Yuan per night at that time. It was quite expensive. When the horse riders visited our village, they were invited to eat meals with the host families. The farmers and herdsman's hospitality attracted these guests. Soon the guests and the hosts found that the village could provide room and meal services at a very low cost (about 10 Yuan per person a day for bed and food) to the visitors, and the visitors could stay with the host family and experience

the rural lifestyle. Hence, the farmhouse accommodation services emerged and attracted more guests from Beijing and other cities. (Accountant Luo, D. Sun, & G. H. Hou, 29 June 2008, personal communication)

c. Village reserve cultivated lands

With a population of 644 villagers, the village collectively owned a total of 4,500 mu of cultivated lands and about 6,000 mu of pastures. When the people's commune was disassembled in the early 1980s, the village's cultivated lands were allocated to rural households on a per capita basis; only about 900 mu of cultivated lands were kept as the village reserve lands.

The village reserve lands were managed by the villagers committee and leased to Zhalaying villagers or farmers from other villages, but the rented reserve land had to be used only for agricultural production, e.g. growing vegetables or fruit according to the village planning, which planned about 800 mu for fruits and the remaining 100 mu for vegetables. Rentals for these cultivated lands were collected by the villagers committee and used for village public affairs. In leasing the village reserve lands, the villagers committee adopted a pro-poor policy for villagers who had no capability to own or work for rural tourism businesses since they were trapped in economic disadvantages. These villagers had the priority in bidding for the reserve lands and pay rentals at a lower rate. The annual rental for vegetable land was up to 200–300 Yuan per mu and about 100 Yuan per mu for grain fields for Zhalaying villagers, but 150 Yuan per mu for the outsiders. Moreover, to ensure farmers' incomes from the rented reserve lands, the minimal amount of rented cultivated land was 40 mu, at the rental of 60 Yuan per mu per year, in a term of three years, since Zhalaying cultivated land had a very low yield and grew only one crop in a year. If a peasant grows crops on 1–2 mu cultivated land, he would earn nothing from the land. (Accountant Luo, G. H. Hou, & D. Sun, 29 June 2008, personal communication)

d. Rentals of village collective's wastelands to the tourism investors

The first privately owned farmhouse in Zhalaying village was the Beijing People's Home, developed by an investor from Beijing in the late 1990s. A total of 30 mu of wastelands was rented with a term of 40 years. The rentals were about 80 Yuan per mu per year. A total of 100,000 Yuan was paid as rental for the wastelands by the Beijing People's Home to our village. (Accountant Luo, 29 June 2008, personal communication)

e. Land rentals of the First Grassland Resort

The land rentals of resort hotels built on Zhalaying collectives' barren lands were divided between the village and the township government. For example, the Resort Hotel outside the village used 56 mu of the barren lands of Zhalaying village. The land rental was about 15,000 Yuan per year, but it was divided between the township government and the village, according to the land lease contract. The village claimed about 67 per cent of the rental, while the township government withheld the other 33 per cent. Since 1993, when the resort hotels were developed on the barren lands of Zhalaying village, the township government had been collecting 33 per cent rentals from the hotels. (Hou, G. H., 29 June 2008, personal communication)

f. Absence of local government in village infrastructure improvement

The county "governor" does not realise how the rural tourism development in Zhalaying village has benefited Fengning County in economic growth and social development. (G. H. Hou, the secretary of the village party branch, 29 June 2008)

The secretary's statement is supported by the governmental subsidy funds for planting trees in the village. Accountant Luo detailed the case like this:

In fact, in the past years, the Land Planning Bureau of Fengning County had received many benefits from Zhalaying village since tourism was initiated in the late 1980s. In addition, the village borrowing money from the banks also benefited the local government. The county government

does not realise this fact and has no intention of adding any investment to Zhalaying village. There are so many issues I cannot understand or explain clearly. For example, the Forest Administration Bureau (FAB) initiated a tree-planting programme. We applied for funding of 20,000 Yuan for planting trees in and around our village but received only 10,000 Yuan from the FAB. In the end, this programme cost a total of 20,000 Yuan and the village had to pay for the gap with the collective funds. (Accountant Luo, 29 June 2008, personal communication)

Appendix 3: Wangjiazhai village interview data

With theoretical sampling methods, informants were identified and interviewed to find out how Wangjiazhai rural tourism developed the way it did. These informants include the Folk Village manager, farmhouse owners, villagers committee members, the local tour guide, local tourism authority officers, returning tourists, villagers and village cadres of another village in the Baiyangdian area.

1. Initiation of Wangjiazhai Folk Village

a. The village former accountant, X. F. Xin, told me the following story

In the autumn of 2001, the secretary of the village party committee Wudai Wei had successfully raised funding of 500,000 Yuan from the county government to construct infrastructure, including power and tap-water supply, a telephone line and a concrete sealed road in the Folk Village. He introduced and explained the Wangjiazhai rural tourism programme to the villagers committee and tried to persuade the village cadres to approve the programme. The village cadres voted for this programme. Despite a few village cadres voting against, more than half of the cadres agreed to implement this programme. Then, Wudai Wei started to recruit investors to join this programme and, during that winter, every day he broadcasted

the development plan to the village. He even visited households one by one to advertise the Folk Village programme. However, only he himself and his daughter-in-law signed the agreement to join in this programme during the winter of 2001. (X. F. Xin, 28 June 2010, personal communication)

b. A villager joined this programme “not for any political purpose” but for his son

I joined this programme not for any political purpose but for my son. My son was of the age when he was going to be married and a new house was a must for his wedding but there was no more space to build any new rooms in the old courtyard. Therefore, we believed that joining this rural tourism project was a good deal since the property land is free and the roads, power lines and pipe water are collectively constructed with subsidies from the county government. Even if nothing is earned from rural tourism, at least this can solve the problem of my son’s wedding and marriage. (X. L. He, 28 June 2010, personal communication)

c. The location of Wangjiazhai Folk Village

Wangjiazhai Folk Village is located at the edge of the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area, next to the other tourist spots. The Scenic Area is strictly inspected and monitored by the “law enforcement team” of the Scenic Area administration committee. The local villagers can have exemption from the entrance fee, but not their relatives or guests. For tourists, there is no way to evade paying the entrance fee. There are many checkpoints in the Scenic Area. Without tickets sold by the government-operated ticket office at the tourist pier, no tourist can pass the checkpoints; boats without licences or Tourism Administration Committee’s permission are not allowed to take tourists to the Scenic Area. (L. S. Wang, 18 May 2008, personal communication)

Many tourists to the Grand View Lotus Garden would like to visit our Folk Village but most of them immediately turn away when they learn that a 10-Yuan ticket is charged for the visit. (W. D. Wei, 18 May 2008, personal communication)

d. Close relationship between the village and local government

The former manager of Wangjiazhai Folk Village was very proud of the “priority” of the only “community-based tourist attraction” in Baiyangdian Scenic Area. He attributed this priority to the close relationship between the village and local government.

We are close to the tourist pier and most of those tourist spots are developed on our village’s collectively owned reed beds and lotus wetlands. With the county government’s coordination between the developers and our village, the developers rented Wangjiazhai village’s collectively owned reed beds and wetlands and constructed parks and gardens as tourist attractions, such as Grand View Lotus Garden and the Chinese Duck Island Resort. Hence, our village has developed very close relationships with the local government and developers of the Scenic Area. In return, we had priority for developing the tourism businesses based on the Folk Village. (L. S. Wang, 19 May 2008, Ya. Li, 16 May 2008, personal communication)

2. Regulate the tourism market and improve the destination image of Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area

Yi. Li, city tourism authority officer

There is no physical boundary in nature. Actually, there are innumerable small channels connecting villages, reed beds, lotus plant water areas, and the lakes in the Baiyangdian Area. Through these channels, people can boat easily into Lake Baiyangdian. After the opening of the Scenic Area, many local villagers and even local urban residents engaged in tourism businesses, such as boating, farmhouse accommodation or selling local special products, such as duck eggs, lotus seeds, etc. However, some unqualified vendors or business owners often sell fraudulent products to tourists or cheat tourists; some farmhouse owners and boatmen even ripped tourists off by charging high prices but giving cheap services. Such

unwanted behaviours of tourism businesses disordered the tourism market and devalued the destination image of Lake Baiyangdian. In this context, designating tourist spots and licensing tourism businesses is actually a hedge against the unregulated tourism industry in Anxin Baiyangdian. (Y. Li, 16 May 2008, personal communication)

Appendix 4: Dongtianzhuang village interview data

1. S. M. Han: tour guide

a. Why was Dongtianzhuang kicked off the Scenic Area?

Travel agencies like to bring tour groups to Dongtianzhuang since it has the capability to accommodate more than 100 guests a day, with the standard service of bed and food, and more authentic Baiyangdian folk customs. It takes only about 30 minutes boating from Duanzhen Pier to Dongtianzhuang. However, the local government does not permit this since Duanzhen Pier and Dongtianzhuang village are located outside of the boundary of the Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area. It takes about five or six hours by motorboat from the tourist pier to Dongtianzhuang village. Therefore, it is not easy for the Tourism Administration Committee to collect fees or inspect tourist activities in this. This is why its rural tourism businesses lost the local government's support. (S. M. Han, 23 June 2007, personal communication)

b. The only public transport is the tour ferry between tourist spots

The villagers are prohibited from boating tourists to the lake. That means, if the village is not listed as one of the tourist spots of the Baiyangdian Scenic Area, it will be excluded from the ferry lines and so tourists cannot access it the tour ferry. For this reason, "black boats", that is, boats without permission of the tourist service, are often in service to these villages. (S. M. Han and G. Q. Tian, 20 June 2007, personal communication)

2. D. B. Tian: fisherman, restaurant owner

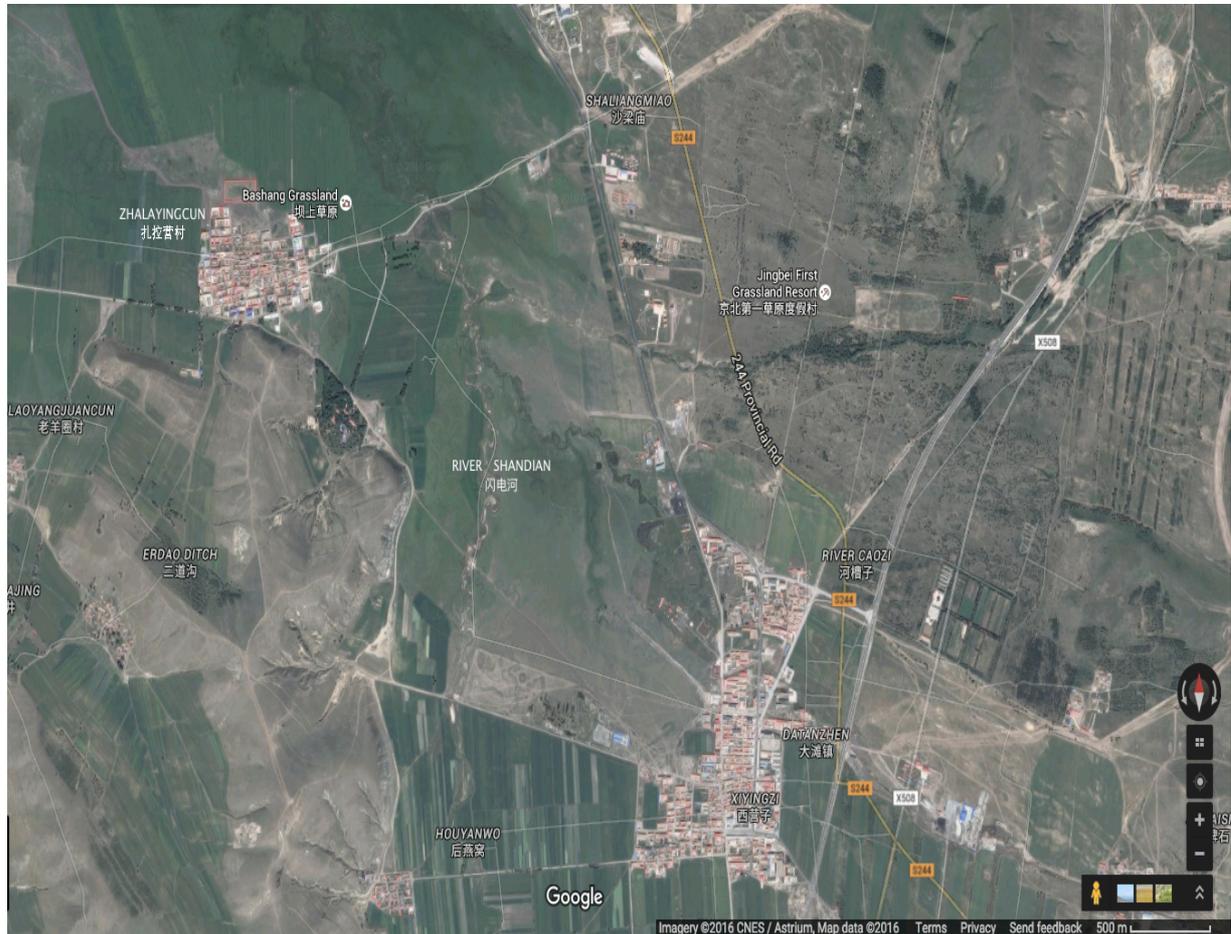
How did Dongtianzhuang ecotourism survive the past years?

The tour guides and the boatmen usually know the channels that can avoid the patrol police. When tourist boats are unfortunately caught by police, the tour guide or the boatman usually negotiates with the police to pay a small amount of entrance fee without a ticket or receipt. In this way, the tour guides often successfully bring tour groups to our village. The tourism business owners in our village, therefore, make every effort to cooperate actively with the travel agencies and tour guides to maintain the tourist flows to the villages. Of course, at the same time, we also have to be careful to develop good personal relationships with the local government officers to keep them turning a blind eye on our tourism businesses. (D. B. Tian, 22 June 2007, personal communication)

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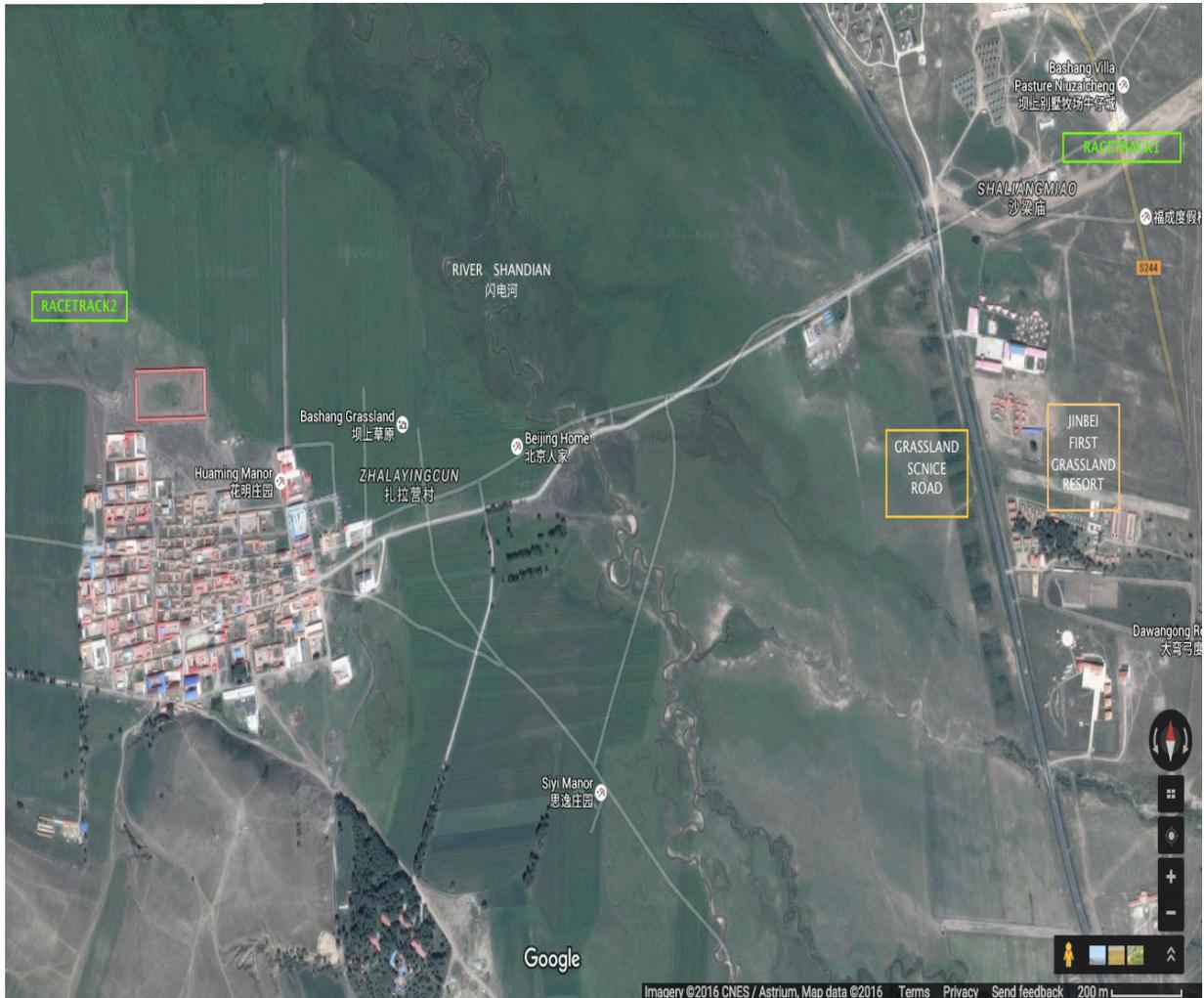
Appendix 5.1 Satellite map of Zhelaying Village, Datan Town



Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 29 February 2016 from

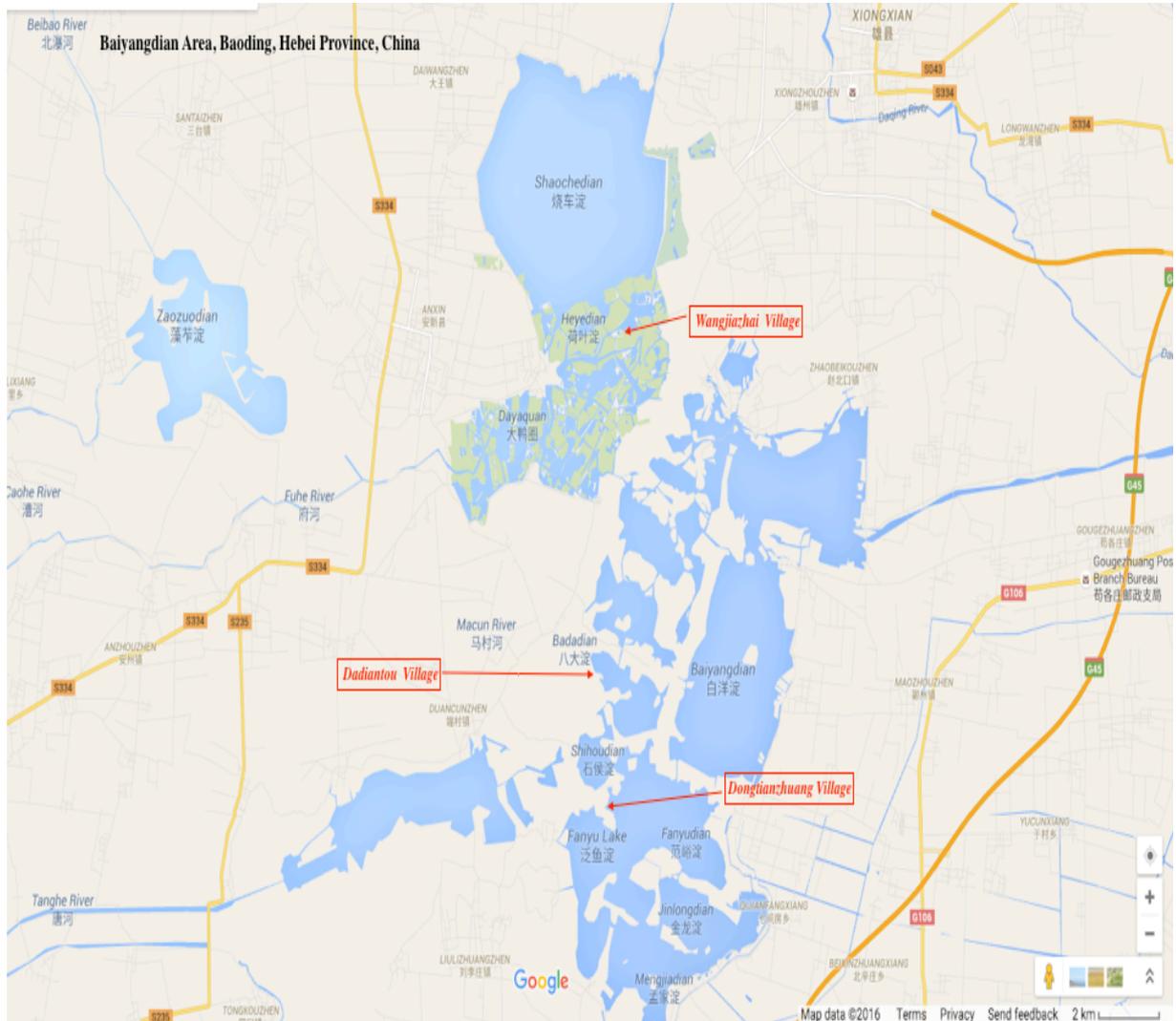
<https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@41.5899356,115.9982101,4773m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Appendix 5.2: Zhelaying Village topography and tourism facilities



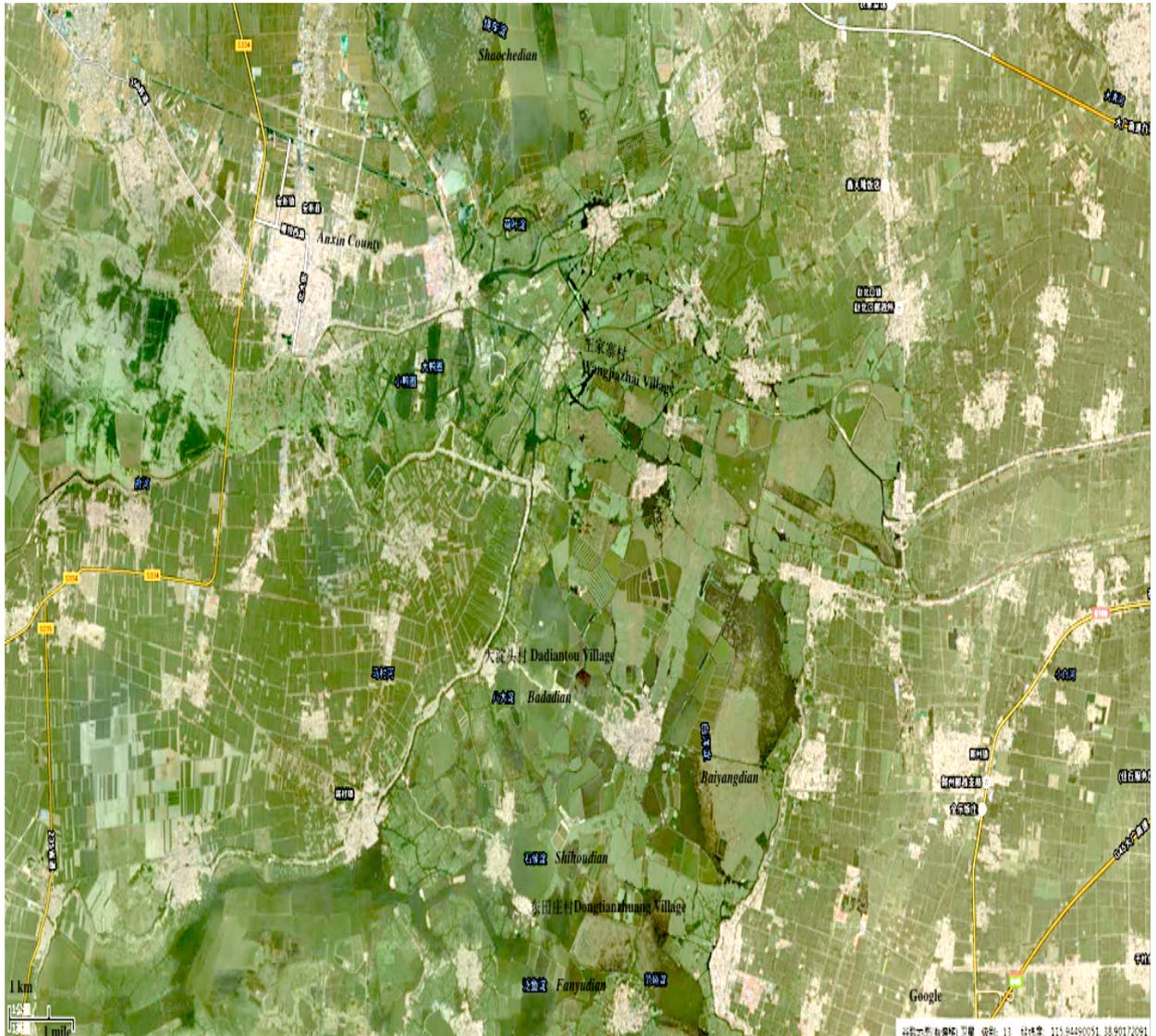
Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 26 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@41.5991414,115.9859274,2142m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Appendix 5.3: Map of Baiyangdian Area, Baoding, Hebei Province, China



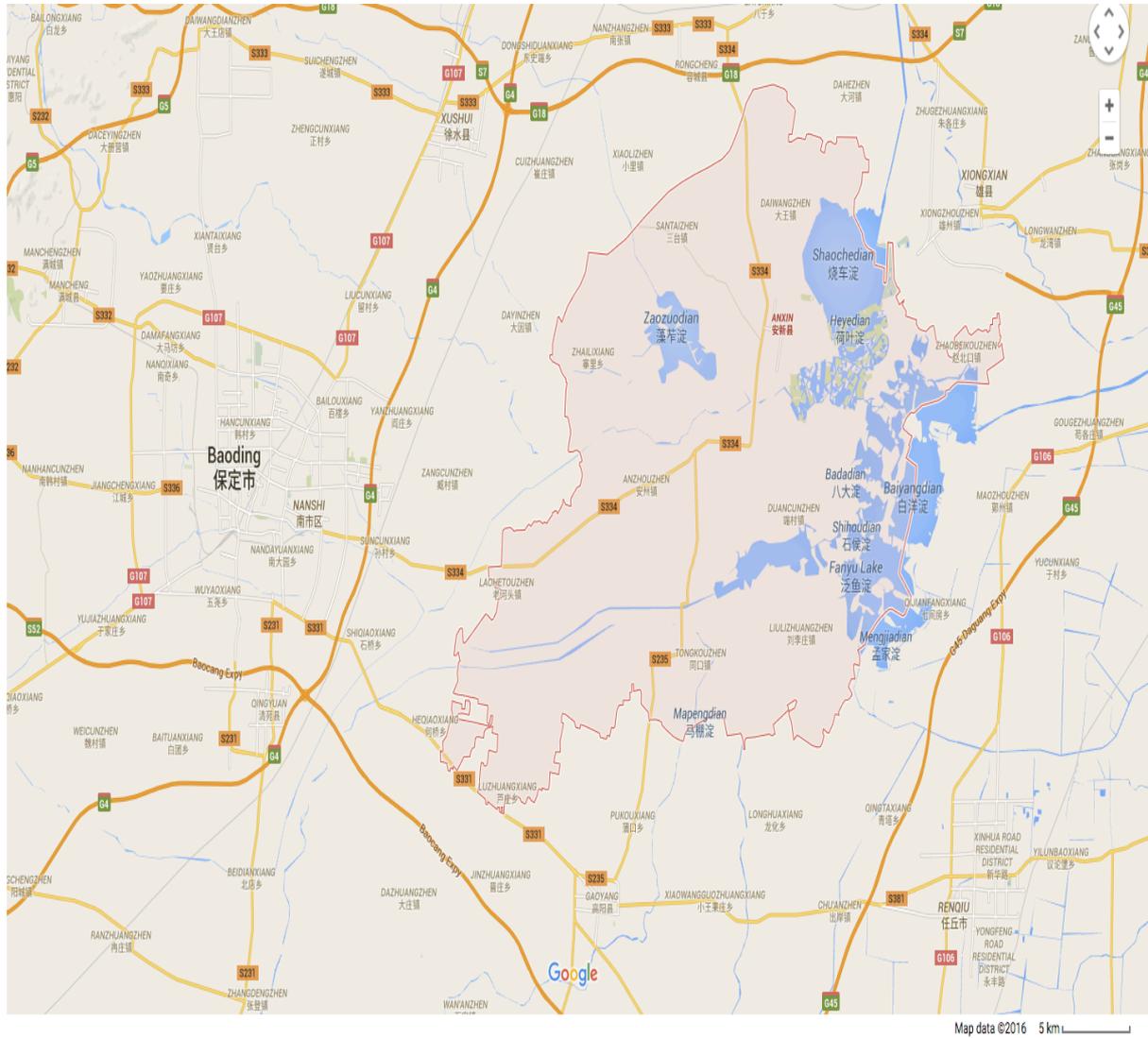
Source: Map adopted from Google Maps, retrieved on 26 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@38.9022012,115.9771246,12z?hl=>

Appendix 5.4: Topography of Lake Baiyangdian area



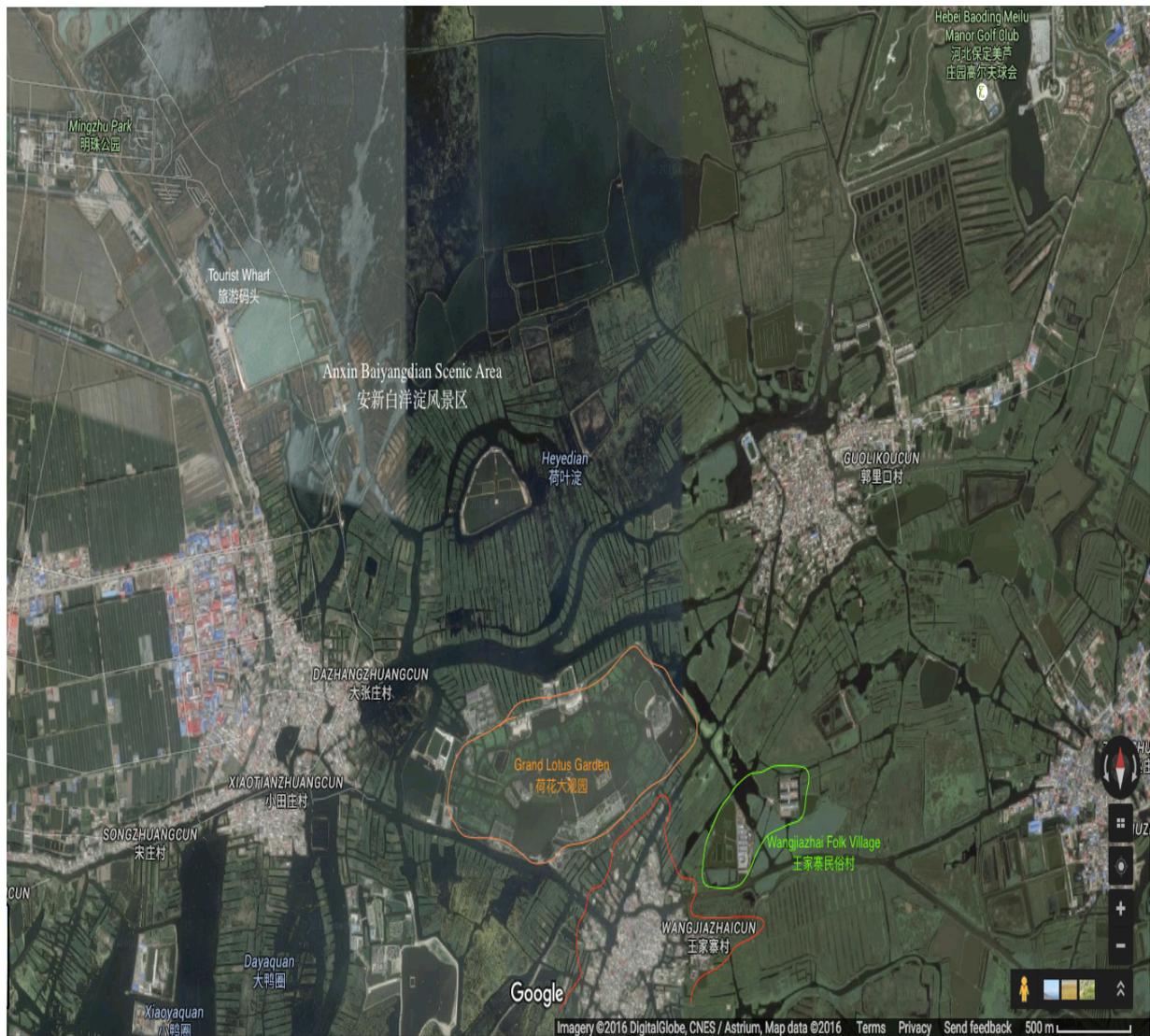
Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 26 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@38.8955724,115.9767298,8041m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Appendix 5.5: Anxin County jurisdiction and Lake Baiyangdian area



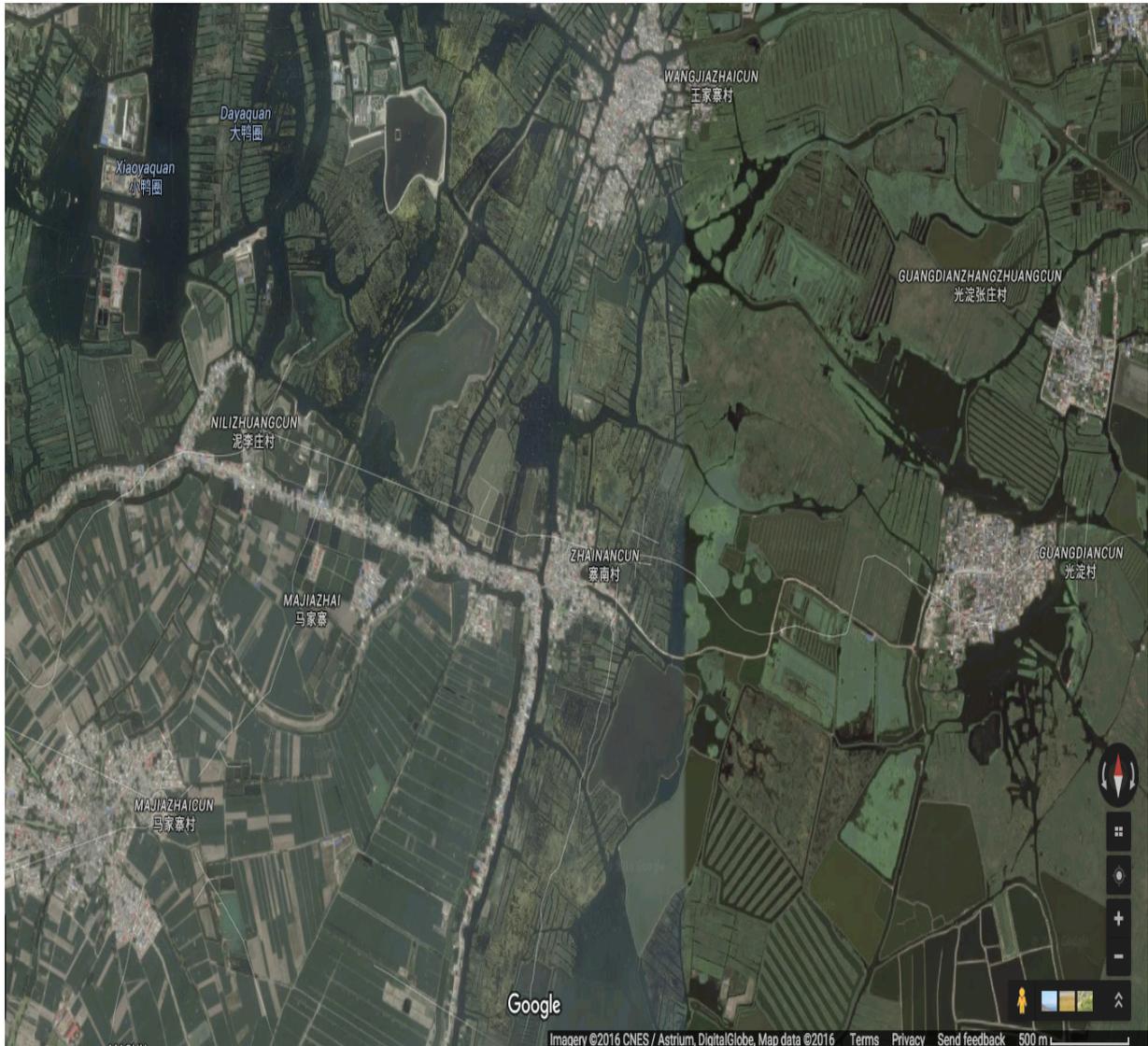
Source: Adopted from Google Map, retrieved on 29 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/search/Anxin+County/@38.863642,115.7557981,11z?hl=en>

Appendix 5.6: Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area satellite map 1



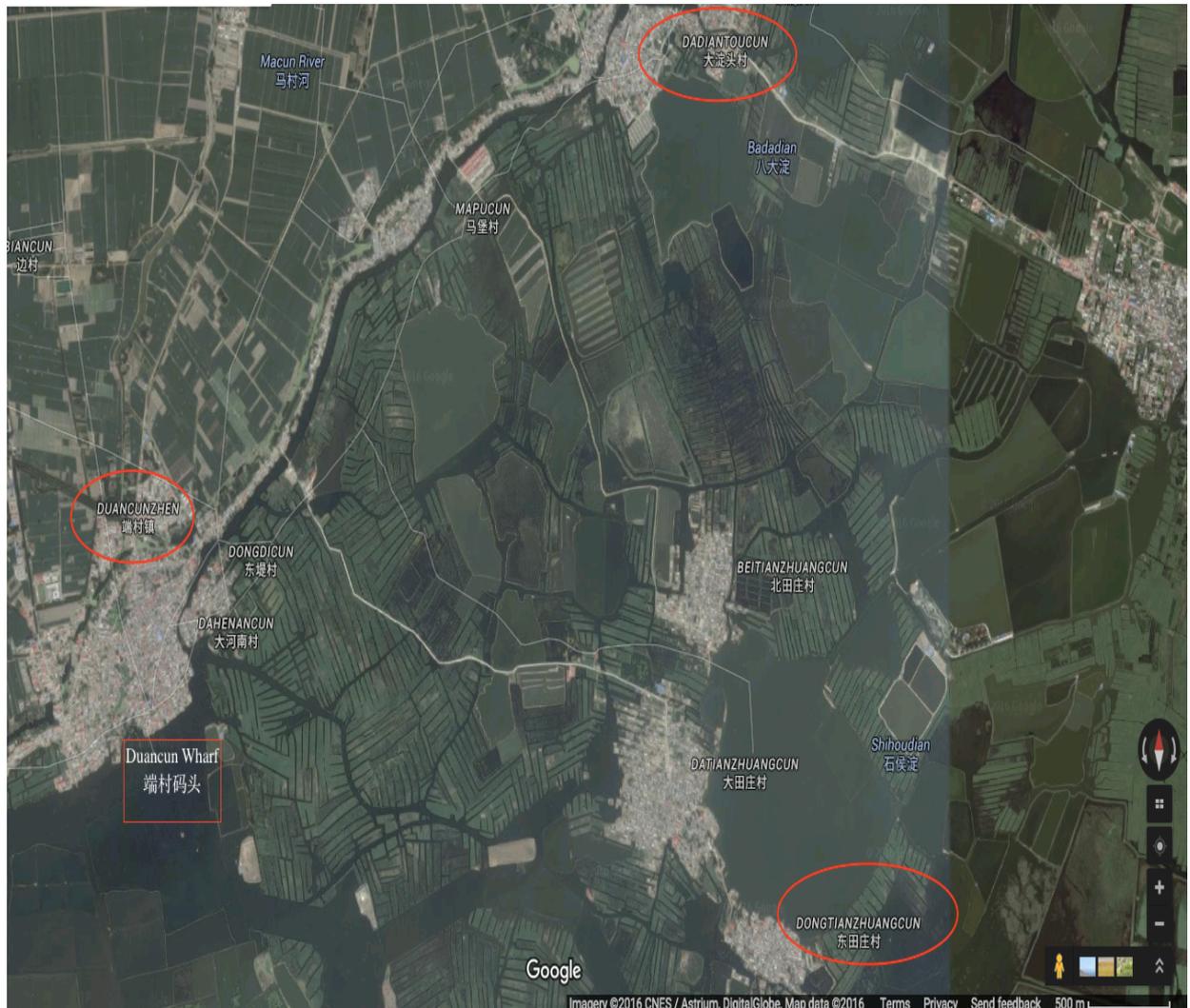
Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 29 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@38.9325183,115.9908544,4804m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Appendix 5.7: Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area satellite map 2



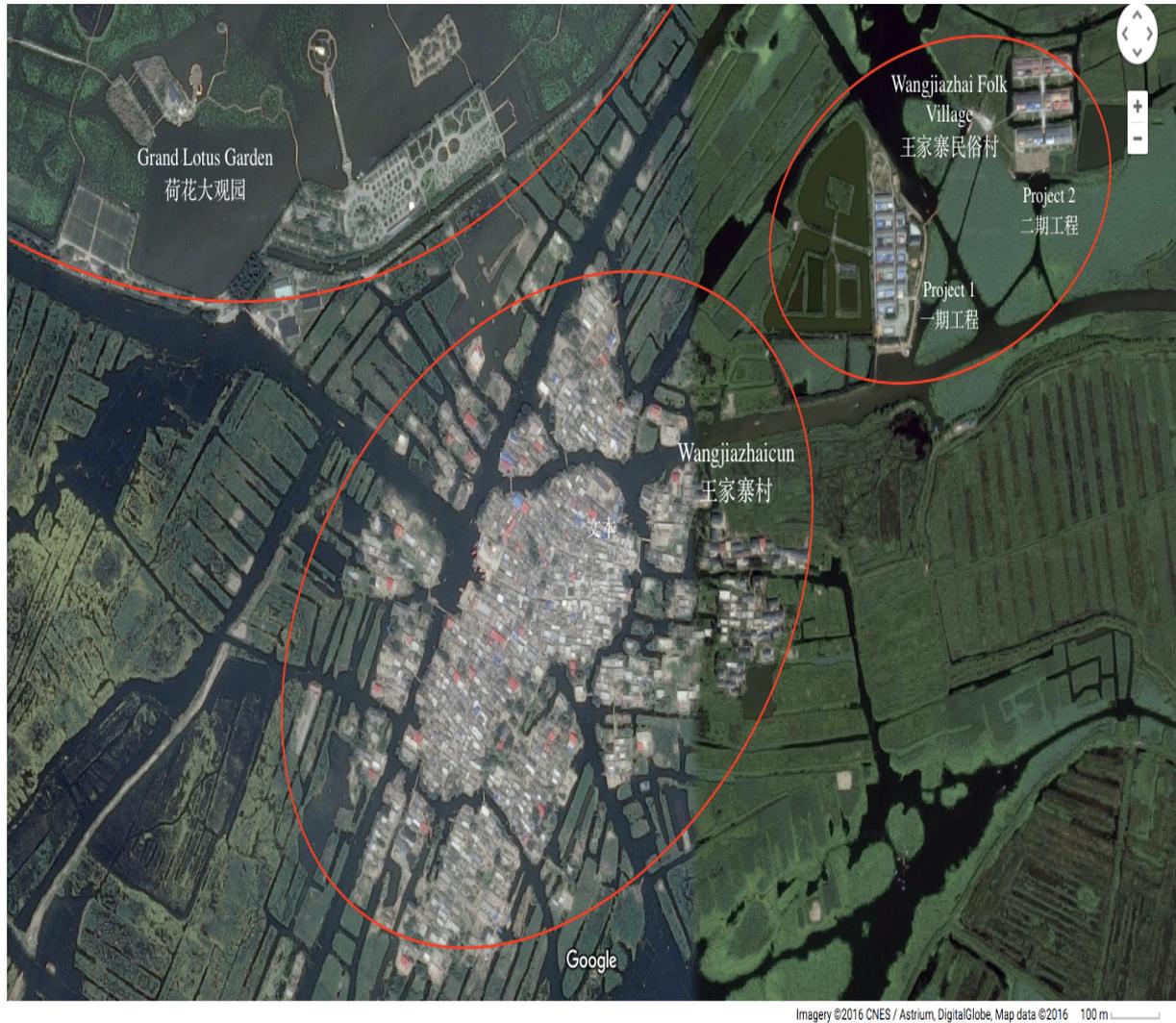
Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 29 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@38.9325183,115.9908544,4804m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Appendix 5.8: Anxin Baiyangdian Scenic Area satellite map 3



Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 29 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@38.8563574,115.9743615,4527m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Appendix 5.9: Wangjiazhai Village satellite map



Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 29 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@38.9156739,115.9998561,1395m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>

Appendix 5.10: Dongtianzhuang Village satellite map



Source: Adopted from Google Satellite Map, retrieved on 29 February 2016 from <https://www.google.co.jp/maps/@38.8376885,115.9866096,1236m/data=!3m1!1e3?hl=en>