

Stakeholder collaboration in sustainable urban tourism development: The case of Hue City, Vietnam

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Abstract

In 2018 international tourism generated 1.4 billion international arrivals and grew at an annual rate of 6% from 2016 (UNWTO, 2019). Urban tourism has been at the centre of much of this growth because cities are not only appealing destinations in themselves but also 'gateways' to surrounding areas (Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017). Cities face significant challenges in managing this tourism growth – with the broader sustainability of the industry now a focus of many urban tourism strategies in both the developed and developing world. If urban tourism is to develop in a more sustainable fashion it is clear that the various stakeholders who are engaged with the industry in some way must collaborate effectively to reach common goals (Zamfir & Corbos, 2015; Paskaleva-Shapira, 2001).

Medium-sized cities in developing nations have received relatively limited attention in the literature on urban sustainable tourism. This thesis investigates stakeholder collaboration in sustainable urban tourism development using the case of Hue City (Hue) – a mid-sized city in Vietnam with a vibrant and growing tourism economy. The study aims to gain a deeper understanding of stakeholders' perspectives on sustainable tourism development, existing levels of stakeholder collaboration, and barriers that influence the implementation of sustainable urban tourism development in Hue. The study also aims to provide recommendations that may enhance stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue.

Qualitative methods based on a case-study inquiry were adopted to address these aims. Twenty-nine semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with key stakeholders from the supply-side in Hue City's tourism industry including interviewees from local government authorities, tourism enterprises, professional associations and tourism experts. The data were thematically analysed and categorised to highlight shared and differing viewpoints between respondents.

The research reveals that the awareness and understanding of sustainable tourism and its implementation in Hue City among government authorities and tourism experts is quite high and more broad-based than their counterparts from the private sector. The

private sector, including large, small and medium enterprise owners, have relatively limited knowledge of the concept of sustainable urban tourism beyond the notion of sustaining enterprise profitability and revenue. Nevertheless, a number of participants from the private sector are paying greater attention to environmental conservation and local community development.

Most participants believe that tourism development in Hue has been relatively sustainable in terms of socio-cultural and environmental dimensions, but that the level of economic sustainability is quite poor. Although all the respondents thought that the tourism sector's use of the environment in Hue is relatively sustainable, several issues require more attention to prevent pollution and environmental degradation in the city. Moreover, participants felt that the lack of sustainable income being generated by tourism businesses in the city may well have a negative impact on community quality of life and job security.

The research shows that stakeholder collaboration in the Hue tourism sector is not strong and can be enhanced. Participants suggested that the main barriers to enhanced stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism implementation in Hue were the differing perspectives of stakeholders, ineffective communication between key groups, weak leadership and a lack of a common vision, asynchronous administration systems and limited budgets for tourism development.

The thesis provides important insights into the challenges facing sustainable tourism development in a mid-sized Vietnamese city. As such it provides both academic and applied research insights that resonate well beyond the city itself. The study will be of value to those sites elsewhere in Vietnam and Asia where there is a need to better understand how to implement visions for sustainable urban tourism - in particular to enhance and manage stakeholder collaboration.

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List of Abbreviations

ATF	ASEAN Tourism Forum
AUTEC	Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee
DMO	Destination management/marketing organisation
DSHC	Department of Statistics of Hue City
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GOV	Government of Vietnam
GSOVN	General Statistics Office of Viet Nam
HCPC	Hue City People's Committee
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
MONRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NTSC	National Tourism Steering Committee
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
SC	Steering Committee
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SMEs	Small and medium-sized enterprises
SUT	Sustainable urban tourism
TAB	Tourism Advisory Board
TTHDT	Thua Thien Hue Department of Tourism
TTHPPC	Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee
UN	United Nations
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
USD	United States Dollar
VNAT	Vietnam National Administration of Tourism
VND	Vietnam Dong (exchange rate = 23,000/1 USD in 2018)
WCED	World Commission for Economic Development
WEF	World Economic Forum
WTTC	Travel and Tourism Council
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

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 (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), 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.

Hoang Thi Hue

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“Our greatest weakness lies in giving up. The most certain way to succeed is always to try just one more time.”

—Thomas A. Edison—

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Rationale

Tourism is a vital sector of the global economy. In the last decade, the world's economy gradually recovered from the global financial crisis of 2007–2008 and tourism has been an integral part of that recovery. Tourism has been one of the most dynamic global economic sectors, with 1.4 billion international tourist arrivals being recorded in 2018, representing an annual increase of 6% from 2017 and an increase well above overall global economic growth (3.7%) (United Nations World Tourism Organisation, 2019).

Asia and the Pacific region enjoyed many advantages from this development in tourism and contributed to global growth significantly. In 2018, this area welcomed 343 million international arrivals (up 6% over 2017) and accounted for nearly a quarter of the global market (UNWTO, 2019). The region received 390 billion USD of international tourism receipts during 2017, which was nearly a third of the global share in 2017 (UNWTO, 2018). Of all Asia's sub-regions, South-East Asia is the fastest expanding one with many tourist destinations such as Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia and Vietnam showing significant international visitor growth.

Tourism is also considered to be an important tool in the search for sustainable economic development. In 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development of the United Nations (UN) presented 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). In the list of 17 SDGs, Goal 11 focuses on sustainable cities and communities. The UN (2015) states that cities are hubs of economic, scientific and cultural activity and cater to an ever-growing part of the world population. Rapid urbanisation has raised concerns over

increasing pollution and shortages of resources for residents (UNWTO, 2018). Therefore, making cities inclusive, safe and sustainable for residents is a clear and necessary goal of sustainable development (UN, 2015).

From the perspective of sustainable tourism development, the urban setting is one of particular importance. From 2007 to 2014, city trips dramatically increased by 82% to account for a 22% share of all holidays (IPK International, 2016, p. 8). By 2050, it is forecast that 70% of the global population will live in urban areas and these places will contribute more than 30 trillion US dollars to the international economy (Dobbs, Remes, Manyika, Roxburgh, Smit, and Schaer, 2012). This growth in urban areas will be mirrored by an increasing role for tourism as a major economic force in global cities, one that could have a significant impact on the environment and resident quality of life (UNWTO, 2012).

Tourism is a multi-sectoral activity, which means that collaboration between different stakeholder groups is an essential element to ensure sustainability and success of urban destinations. Stakeholders must aim to develop and target common goals of sustainable tourism development. Finding any form of consensus may be challenging due to the many groups involved, including destination marketing organisations, private sector interests, and broader policy-making and planning actors (Palmer & Bejou, 1995; Scott & Cooper, 2010). It is essential to examine and understand the nature of collaborative activity and what enables stakeholders to be engaged with urban tourism policy development that targets the benefits of sustainability (via Timur & Getz, 2009).

Despite the need for a greater understanding of the dynamics and sustainability of urban tourism development, this area is characterised by relatively limited research in smaller

or mid-sized cities with scholars paying most attention to large 'global' cities that are also often found in the developed world (Maxim, 2016; Ashworth & Page, 2011; Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017).

1.2 Research setting

Vietnam is an emerging economy with a wide range of resources and favourable conditions to develop tourism. The country has nearly 332,000 square kilometres of land area and 3,200 kilometres of coastline. Moreover, a wide range of natural resources provide beautiful environmental experiences for tourists. Also, the unique indigenous cultures found in Vietnam provide tourists coming to the country with the chance to explore various traditional values rooted in the nation's long history.

Tourism has become one of the most important industries in Vietnam and has created positive social impacts in the country such as supporting the upgrading of public infrastructure, underpinning cultural heritage preservation, and of course creating jobs for residents (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2016, 2017). Vietnam has become an emerging destination with the highest growth rate in international tourist arrivals in South-East Asia and has recently been ranked at the fourth fastest growing tourist destination in the world in 2017 (UNWTO, 2018).

In 2017, Vietnam ranked 67th globally in tourism and travel competitiveness (World Economic Forum, 2017) (Figure 1.1). The diagram reveals that despite Vietnam's growth, tourism is still not prioritised as an economic sector at a national level and there are also real concerns about the current state and protection of the nation's environment and what this might mean for the industry.

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Figure 1.1 Vietnam's Tourism and Travel Competitiveness Index of 2017

Source: World Economic Forum (2017), Tourism and Travel Competitiveness Index 2017, p. 342

According to various delegates in the Vietnam Travel and Tourism Summit 2018, the industry must also deal with many issues such as insufficient infrastructure, strict tourist visa regulations, low marketing budgets, and poor stakeholder collaboration (VnExpress, 2018a). Clearly there are various obstacles to the country continuing to generate economic benefits while also preserving the natural and cultural resources in the long term.

In Vietnam, the term 'sustainable tourism development' first began to be used in tourism policies and laws during the 1990s, and its use has become increasingly popular in the past decade. For Hue City and Thua Thien Hue province, sustainable tourism is seen as an important development goal (Thua Thien Hue Department of Tourism, 2017).

Hue City is located at the centre of Thua Thien Hue Province in the North Central Coast of Vietnam (See Figure 1.2). The province is located on the north-south axis of roads,

railways, airways and sea routes. The convenient transportation system helps Hue connect with major cities in Vietnam and countries on the East-West economic corridor.

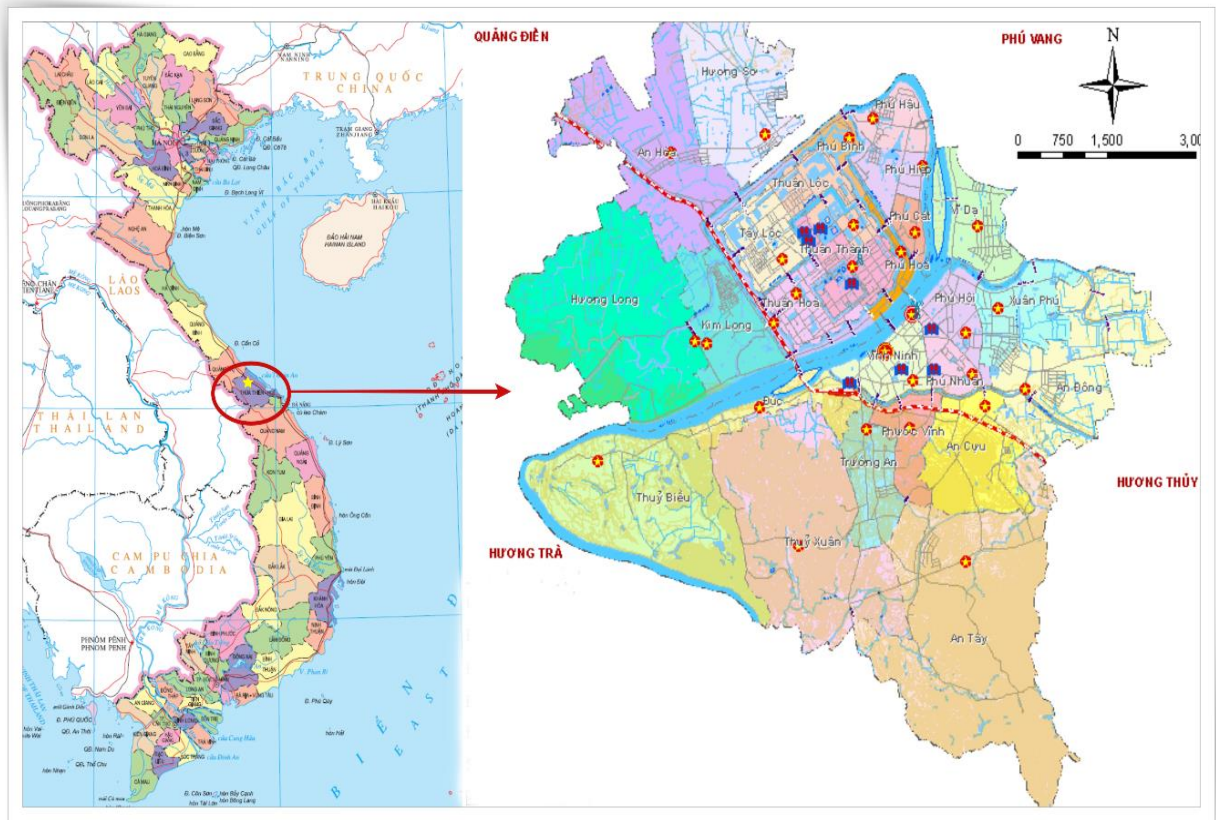


Figure 1.2 Location and map of Hue City

Source: Centre of Survey and Mapping Data (2018) and Hue City People’s Committee (2018)

Hue City is a very well-known tourist destination in Vietnam with two UNESCO world heritage sites (Hue Complex of Monuments and Royal Court Music) and a range of unique and traditional cultural tourism products. As the major urban centre of Thua Thien Hue province, Hue City is conducting many key tourism projects to develop the tourism industry as a primary economic sector in a manner that creates sustainable development outcomes (TTHPPC, 2017).

Hue City is an urban tourism destination that has a complex environment, including a wide range of tourism resources from cultural to natural attractions, and from tangible

to intangible heritage. Thus, sustainable tourism development in the city requires collaboration between stakeholders from both the public and private sector (TTHPPC, 2017).

1.3 Research objectives

The primary research question guiding this thesis is: “How can stakeholder collaboration be understood and strengthened to develop more sustainable tourism in Hue City?”

To answer this overarching question, the following questions provide the focus for discussions:

- What are the supply-side stakeholder perspectives on sustainable tourism in Hue City?
- How do stakeholders collaborate in planning, managing and solving any tourism issues in the city?
- What are the barriers preventing stakeholders from participating more actively in tourism development in the destination?
- How can the collaboration of stakeholders in the tourism sector in Hue City be strengthened?

The thesis provides a deeper understanding of the urban sustainable tourism development in Hue City and contributes a valuable new case to the literature on sustainable urban development.

1.4 Thesis structure

The next chapter reviews relevant literature related to the concept of sustainability in tourism and urban tourism. The chapter then addresses stakeholder-focused approaches to understanding tourism and specifically the role that stakeholder collaboration plays in sustainable urban tourism development and management.

Chapter 3 presents the methodological approach and research design that underpin this thesis. The chapter goes on to review data collection processes and in particular to provide details on the organisation and completion of interviews. The approach taken to data analysis is outlined, followed by a brief discussion of ethical dimensions related to the research.

Chapter 4 highlights key features that characterise and define the case study setting. A review is presented of the recent development of the tourism sector in Vietnam and Hue City. The chapter draws largely on secondary sources of information and provides various statistics, research and information drawn from Vietnam government authorities, international organisations and previous research (both academic and consultancy).

Chapter 5 presents information gathered from the semi-structured interviews conducted with key stakeholders in the Hue tourism sector. Thematic analysis is used to draw out patterns across the interviews' content and highlight noteworthy opinions of stakeholders. This chapter discusses the differing perspectives of stakeholders in relation to the term sustainable tourism development, the current level of tourism sustainability in the city, and recent efforts to implement sustainable tourism in Hue.

Chapter 6 focuses on the role that collaborative relationships between key stakeholders play in the implementation of sustainable tourism in Hue City. This chapter presents and discusses the level and nature of collaborative activity that is currently being undertaken and the barriers that exist to stakeholder collaboration and its support of sustainable urban tourism. The chapter also presents a series of recommendations to assist stakeholders in overcoming challenges that currently prevent greater collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City.

Chapter 7 summarises the main findings and contributions of the thesis. The thesis provides a deeper understanding of current supply-side stakeholder collaboration in Hue's tourism development and also identifies the perspectives held by various stakeholders towards the concept of sustainable tourism development in their city. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of a possible future research agenda that can build on the work of this thesis.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

Stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development is a multifaceted topic. This chapter reviews relevant literature related to the concept of sustainability in tourism and urban tourism, stakeholder-focused approaches to understanding tourism, and specifically the role that stakeholder collaboration plays in the implementation of sustainable urban tourism.

2.1 Sustainable tourism in urban areas

2.1.1 Sustainable tourism

The origin of sustainable tourism is rooted in concepts of sustainability and sustainable development. Throughout history, development has been seen as an essential progression for societies. There is a focus on upgrading human quality of life by allowing people to achieve not only basic needs but also affluence, pleasures, and an awareness of their ability to accomplish self-esteem and well-being (International Union for Conservation of Nature, United Nations Environment Programme & World Wildlife Fund, 1991, p. 18). It is, however, a challenging process to fulfil the growing and diverse demands of people with limited resources while also maintaining a balance in resource use for the long term (Hall, Gössling, & Scott, 2015). This then leads to the concept of sustainability.

Romeril (1997, p. 3.4, as cited in Miller and Twining-Ward, 2005) defines sustainability as "maintaining that valued quality of life while at the same time having regard to our impact on the world beyond our immediate shores". Meanwhile Miller and Twining-

Ward (2005) note that sustainability has much in common with the term 'balance'. Sustainability is still a debated concept due in large part to the challenges in managing the differing perspectives and expectations of a wide range of stakeholders, and the need to find some common ground in terms of 'balance' and 'wise use' of natural and cultural resources (Gallie, 1955; Mercer, 2000).

The necessity of achieving sustainability in development is discussed and emphasized in the 1987 Brundtland Commission Report for the World Commission for Economic Development (WCED). Sustainable development is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (WCED, 1987, p. 43). The report stresses that each country must deal with the threat of environmental damage related to development and economic progress. Rapidly degrading ecological resources cannot support sustainable development and environmental protection will not be accomplished if progress fails to factor in the cost of environmental damage.

The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) (1995), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (2005) all concur that sustainable development should be based on three crucial dimensions: economic, social and environmental sustainability. While the economic goal of sustainable development is to generate sustained economic development for communities and nations, the social dimension of this term focuses on issues of equity in opportunities and the fair distribution of benefits across communities, regions and nations. Quality of life and cultural assets must also be protected and sustained. Environmental sustainability requires, among other things, reductions in waste and pollution and the protection of biodiversity through effective management. In the

process of development, these dimensions may support each other or compete. A balance between the three main 'pillars' of sustainable development should be maintained to achieve sustainability (UNWTO & UNEP, 2005; Hall, Gossling, & Scott, 2015).

As with other industries it is crucial for tourism to develop in a way that utilises and manages resources sustainably (Casagrandi & Rinaldi, 2002; UNWTO, 2011; Weaver, 2012). Stankovic (1979, p. 25) states that: "It is a characteristic of tourism that it can, more than many other activities, use and valorise such parts and elements of nature as are of almost no value for other economic branches and activities". At the same time Zierer (1952) emphasised many decades ago that that tourism should not contribute to nature's devastation in any way (as cited by Cohen, 1978). The growth of tourism, especially the untrammelled development of mass tourism, creates worrying impacts on the environment (Wheeller, 1991; Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005). Tourism is also identified as one of the leading agents of global climate change (Hall et al., 2015).

Hall et al. (2015, p. 1) state that: "Sustainable tourism is a tourism system that encourages qualitative development, with a focus on quality of life and well-being measures, but not aggregate quantitative growth to the detriment of natural capital". From an ecological perspective, Hall and Wouters (1994) claim that sustainable tourism means protecting the constructive foundation of the physical environment by maintaining the purity of natural resources and creating tourism goods without destroying other bases. The UNWTO (1998, p. 20) provides one of the most holistic definitions:

Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to the 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.

There is a noteworthy gap between theory and the application of sustainable tourism in real life (Hall et al., 2015). McCool (2013) notes that the notion of 'sustainable tourism' encourages innovations in thinking, which lead to positive results in benefiting society and protecting the environment in many situations. However, Sharpley (2009, p. 537) claims that there is "limited evidence of its implementation in practice" and Butler (2013) doubts that sustainable tourism will ever contribute significantly to solving climate change and related issues. Wheeler (2012) argues that sustainable tourism will remain a "theoretical white elephant" unless it is addressed in "wider social contexts riddled with greed, power, economic short-termism, racism and hypocrisy" (as cited in Budeanu, Miller, Moscardo, & Ooi, 2016, p. 287). Meanwhile, McCool (2013) notes that the concentration on tourism in isolation rather than as an element of a complicated social-ecological system hinders the application of 'sustainable tourism' in practice.

Butler (2013, p. 224) emphasises that although sustainable tourism is an important pathway for the planet's well-being, "the concept, has become distorted, expanded, politicized and changed beyond general recognition". Rather than focusing on the complex concept of sustainable tourism, it may be more effective to promote and raise awareness of a basic common understanding of conservation and wise resource use (Butler, 2013). It is also essential to remember that sustainable tourism implementation still requires the collaboration of a wide range of stakeholder groups with differing

practices, beliefs and knowledge of the underpinning tenets of sustainability (Budeanu et al., 2016; Mihalic, 2016).

2.1.2 Urban tourism development

By 2050, it is forecast that 70% of the global population will live in urban areas and these places will contribute more than 30 trillion US dollars to the international economy (Dobbs et al., 2012). This growth will impact considerably on tourism as a major force, not only in the urban economy but also the development of cities in general (UNWTO, 2012). From 2007, city trips dramatically increased by 82% to account for 22% share of all holidays in 2014 (IPK International, 2016, p. 8). The remarkable development of urban tourism reflects the critical role of cities as appealing destinations and as 'gateways' for tourists to explore surrounding areas (Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017).

The UNWTO (2002) defines urban tourism as trips by travellers to cities or areas with high population density. The last 30 years have witnessed a noticeable increase in the amount of literature on urban tourism (Hall et al., 2015; Timur & Getz, 2009; Miller, Merrilees, & Coghlan, 2015; Maxim, 2017). However, this growth is still relatively limited and disproportionate to the development of urban tourism itself (Önder, Wöber, & Zekan, 2017). Ashworth and Page (2011, p. 1) state that due to the lack of attention from scholars to urban tourism, the term has continued to be unclearly defined and demarcated with "little development of a systematic structure of understanding".

Ashworth and Page (2011) point out that although tourists visit urban areas for various purposes and use a broad range of facilities, cities are rarely 'constructed' for visitors (see also Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017). Also, it is something of a paradox that metropolitan areas with the largest and most diverse economies often gain the most significant

benefits from tourism, while cities with economies heavily focused on tourism may actually get fewer benefits (Ashworth & Page, 2011).

Urban tourism creates various positive impacts on many dimensions of cities. Urban tourism contributes to local income and creates jobs for residents (UNWTO, 2012) and can be a primary economic engine of urban areas (Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017). Urban tourism also promotes the maintenance of infrastructure and the provision of public services (UNWTO, 2012; Ashworth & Page, 2011). Moreover, tourism may play an important role in preserving cultural heritage with visitors' spending helping to fund conservation initiatives (Nasser, 2003). Also, the stream of new ideas and experiences that accompany tourist flows make a destination city more vibrant and dynamic and may also lead to longer-term migration of residents and businesses (Choong & Hedrick-Wong, 2014; Griffin & Dimanche, 2017)

A growing focus on urban tourism's negative impacts is, however, argued by some to mark the end of cities 'honeymoon' period with tourism (Novy, 2014). In some top urban destinations such as Venice, Barcelona and Amsterdam, there are debates and protests from the streets about the impacts of 'over-tourism' on urban quality of life (García-Hernández, de la Calle-Vaquero, & Yubero, 2017). These movements are a reaction by city dwellers to the negative effects of tourism on environmental pollution, congestion, overcrowding and poor visitor behaviour (Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017). The influx of tourists can also increase housing costs and distort the local economy to focus primarily on providing products and services for tourists (Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017; Ashworth & Page, 2011). Cities are also at risk of losing some degree of authenticity due to the standardisation and globalisation of tourism products and services (Önder et al., 2017; Rogerson, 2012).

Ashworth and Page (2011) note that cities, and in particular world cities (largest metropolises), are focal points in tourists' itineraries and gateways that lead to their countries' broader visitor experiences. While globalisation promotes connection between world cities, deep integration into international networks can also lead to world cities disconnecting from their national urban structures (Maitland & Ritchie, 2009 cited in Ashworth & Page, 2011).

While large cities, especially world cities, have good international linkages with each other, small and mid-sized cities may face various problems related to a lack of connection and support from gateway-destinations in their countries, and harsh competition may arise with other urban destinations. Although world cities have become a research focus for urban tourism scholars (Maitland & Newman, 2009; Maxim, 2006, 2007), it is important to note that small and middle-sized cities have received relatively less attention.

2.1.3 Sustainable tourism in urban destinations

In developing urban tourism destinations, a balance must be achieved between environmental, societal and economic outcomes and impacts. In particular, the broader relationships between the local community, tourists and tourism industry must be considered (Önder et al., 2017). While urban tourism development may aim to contribute to the well-being of local communities, the tourism industry and tourists, negative impacts can prevent destinations from developing in a sustainable fashion that benefits all groups (Timur & Getz, 2009; Miller et al., 2015; Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017).

For many years, the research topic of sustainable tourism implementation in urban areas was largely neglected by the academic community (Timur & Getz, 2009; Maxim, 2016).

Aydin and Emeksiz (2018) state that Sustainable urban tourism (SUT) pertains to the sustainability of environmental, socio-cultural and economic resources in cities that are within the context of tourism development. SUT can also be considered as a development strategy and a product. In the European Project - Sustainable Urban Tourism Governance - Paskaleva-Shapira (2003, p.3) states that SUT is seen as a "holistic, equitable, and future-oriented development strategy". SUT is considered to be a constant development strategy that supports the balance between present community's needs and those of future generations.

Scott and Cooper (2010) examine sustainable urban tourism as a product. They argue that tourists choose destinations offering sustainable tourism activities and services due to their particular interest in more sustainable consumption. For example, visitors may choose alternative services or products such as electric vehicles or environment-friendly accommodation to reduce negative impacts (Scott & Cooper, 2010). According to Scott and Cooper (2010), sustainable tourism development can be considered as having both 'front room' and 'back room' dimensions. An urban destination can use 'front room' sustainability to appeal to tourists via a number of clearly visible initiatives such as green maps, encouraging local transportation usage, advancement of cycle and walking trails, conservation of cultural values (Hayes & MacLeod, 2007; Hayllar & Griffin, 2005; Henderson, 2005, as cited in Scott & Cooper, 2010). 'Back room' sustainability dimensions include reducing and recycling initiatives and the use of environment-friendly energy (Scott & Cooper, 2010; Miller et al., 2015).

Savage, Huang, and Chang (2004) note that sustainable urban tourism pursues harmony among tourists, local communities and the environment by reducing negative tourism impacts on the environment and residents' life. Sustainable urban tourism helps to

protect natural values in cities, reduce pollution from transportation, and fosters attitude and value shifts that encourage pro-environmental behaviours of both locals and tourists (Higham & Lück, 2002). Besides the environmental dimension, SUT also reinforces the conservation of cultural heritage for future generations of residents and tourists (Savage et al., 2004).

In 2015, the United Nations (UN) presented 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Sustainable development is a challenging and complex concept, so the set of SDGs is considered as a broad blueprint that can lead countries to achieve specific targets by 2030. In the list of 17 SDGs, Goal 11 focuses on sustainable cities and communities. The UN (2015) states that cities are hubs of economic, scientific and cultural activity and cater to an ever-growing part of the world population. Rapid urbanisation has raised concerns of increasing pollution and shortage of resources for residents (UNWTO, 2018). Therefore, making cities inclusive, safe and sustainable for residents is a clear and necessary goal of sustainable development (UN, 2015).

Achieving SUT development is a complicated process and must be guided by an array of specific goals. Several researchers such as Hinch (1996), Paskaleva-Shapira (2001) and Law (2002) have adapted various dimensions of sustainable tourism development into urban-specific contexts. Timur and Getz (2009) synthesised the literature and established a set of SUT goals laid out across four dimensions (Table 2.1). These authors imply that if urban destinations focus attention on environmental and sociocultural issues of tourism development, they can also raise levels of visitor satisfaction which, in turn, leads to a vibrant, higher yield and economically sustainable tourism industry. However, if urban destinations concentrate purely on economic 'bottom-line'

dimensions and visitor arrival growth it will be harder to balance destination objectives and outcomes in the long term (Timur & Getz, 2009).

Table 2.1 Sustainable urban tourism goals – key dimensions

Economic	Environmental	Socio-cultural (community issues)	Experiential
Providing long term business profitability	Maintaining and considering re-use of old buildings in downtown areas	Providing long term and well-paying employment opportunities	Ensuring visitors' experiences are memorable
Continuing to grow <city's> tourism industry	Preserving all of <city's> remaining natural areas	Ensuring residents have control over tourism development decision-making	Securing health and wellness of visitors
Ensuring <city's> tourism marketing budget is sustained and increased	Restricting private car movements by tourists to control air pollution and congestion in <city>	Developing a sustainable industry where all businesses practise green operations	Providing strong motivators for visiting <city>

Source: Timur and Getz, 2009, p. 225

The World Tourism Organization (1993) identified three major partners for sustainable tourism development: the tourism industry, environment supporters and community/local authorities. Each group may focus on distinctive goals and has different priorities.

Although all of these groups may concentrate on different outcomes, they can share several goals of sustainability (Figure 2.1). For example, Timur and Getz (2009) note that the tourism industry and local authorities can share the economic goals of creating business opportunities and jobs for residents, while local authorities and environment supporters and also community share the goals of protecting natural resources. Without consensus over the destination's tourism development goals, key stakeholders will not

participate actively in the planning and policy-making process, and there may be problems in achieving more sustainable tourism development outcomes (Timur & Getz, 2009). In other words, sustainability can only be achieved if differing stakeholder groups collaborate and work towards shared goals and interests.

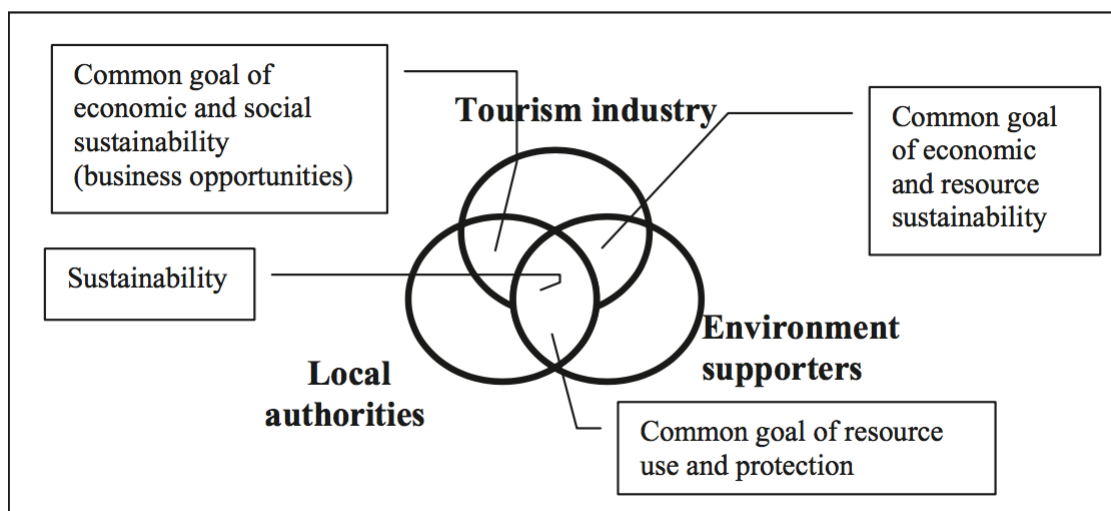


Figure 2.1 Sustainable goals of main stakeholder groups.

Source: Timur and Getz, 2009, p. 222.

2.1.4 Sustainable tourism and urban heritage

Heritage helps to create the 'sense of place' (Nasser, 2003), which is an essential dimension of building sustainable urban areas and strengthening community identity (Beatley & Manning, 1997). Although tourism can create negative impacts on urban heritage precincts, Nasser (2013) notes that, if managed well, it can support sustainable development. The author notes that the benefits from tourism should be maximised in areas such as financing heritage protection and management, and in creating equitable forms of economic benefit for local communities. At the same time, negative impacts

should be minimised through approaches such as reducing waste produced by tourism and establishing and managing carrying capacity.

Petrova and Hristov (2016) investigate the importance of collaboration between different stakeholders in managing and planning urban heritage tourism in Plovdiv, a cultural heritage city in Poland. The findings show that there was a lack of a shared-vision and established structures for communication, coordination and collaboration between key stakeholders. This state of affairs hindered the development of sustainable urban tourism. The authors noted that in this case, the local authority, which was the most prominent and influential stakeholder in heritage tourism management, needed to accomplish and promote collaborative networks in the tourism field. Interestingly, this research did not focus directly on stakeholders from the private sector due to what was perceived to be their relatively minor role in shaping heritage tourism.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (2013), on the other hand, argues that entrepreneurs and other private organisations are essential in building strategic alliances with public authorities to conserve and develop urban heritage destinations. Similarly, Houghton and Stevens (2011) emphasise that to protect heritage, it is vital to adopt a proactive approach to partnerships and stakeholder collaboration.

Maxim (2017) notes that the sustainable development of heritage-based urban tourism in larger world cities also faces various challenges such as overcrowding, high crime rates, and intense competition from other economic activities that wish to access scarce resources. The author argues that government actors need a deeper knowledge about the complex local context in which significant stakeholders connect and collaborate.

These stakeholders must in turn be engaged in tourism planning and management and solving common problems jointly with government and communities to achieve more sustainable urban development outcomes.

Paskaleva-Shapira and Besson (2006) investigate cultural tourism in several small and mid-sized cities in Europe and address issues from the perspective of governance. These researchers argue that smaller cities have comparative strengths over their larger counterparts such as a better quality of environment, a greater degree of authenticity (due to a lack of exposure to, and integration within, global networks), and high levels of locally specific creativity in the provision of cultural experiences (European Travel Commission, 2005). The authors also argue that in smaller scale cities it may be easier to engage local residents in providing services, products and activities related to the tourism sector (Paskaleva-Shapira & Besson, 2006).

Paskaleva-Shapira and Besson (2006) do, however, indicate various challenges for small and mid-sized urban destinations in developing sustainable urban tourism with a cultural/heritage focus. Firstly, these urban centres often lack financial resources and strategic guidance to apply good governance to tourism development. Moreover, in many European small and mid-sized cities, there is a shortage of reliable data about tourists' expenditure, motivation and satisfaction (Paskaleva-Shapira & Besson, 2006). This means that local authorities and businesses, plus other stakeholder groups, often lack essential information to inform evidence-based plans and decisions.

In general, cultural cities that boast heritage sites must face many and diverse challenges to conserve their cultural values and develop tourism sustainably. Because sustainable tourism development involves a broad range of partners, ranging from the tourism

industry and public agencies through to the local community, it is essential for cultural cities and other urban centres to understand stakeholder collaboration in tourism development.

2.2 Stakeholders in sustainable urban tourism development

2.2.1 Stakeholders in destinations

A significant body of literature has investigated the stakeholder concept, since the book “Strategic Management: A Stakeholder Approach” (Freeman, 1984) was first published. Freeman defines stakeholders as groups or individuals who are able to affect, or are affected by, the objectives and achievements of the organisation. He highlights that stakeholders are important elements of an organisation's environment. Researchers have since substantiated and applied stakeholder theory in a number of circumstances (Roberts, 1992; Donaldson & Preston, 1995; Frooman, 1999; Friedman & Miles, 2002).

In the tourism context, Waligo, Clarke, and Hawkins (2013) use the term stakeholder to describe groups or persons who can affect or are affected by decisions and actions relating to tourism development initiatives. From a stakeholder perspective, a tourism destination can be considered as a network of organisations that are integral to the system (Baggio & Cooper, 2010) or an open social scheme of multiple interdependent stakeholders (d'Angella & Go, 2009).

Waligo et al. (2013) synthesise previous studies and determine six significant clusters of stakeholders in tourism: tourists, local community, industry, special interest groups, government and educational institutions. The groups are involved in many aspects of

tourism development, covering demand and supply, regulation and management, research and training (Waligo et al., 2013).

In the tourism industry cluster, there is a particularly important party – the destination management/marketing organisation (DMO). This organisation often takes responsibility for destination marketing, promotion, planning and development (Timur & Getz, 2009). It may also play a role in improving coordination and collaboration between stakeholders involved in tourism at all levels (Dwyer & Kim, 2003). In other words, DMOs can mediate the inter-relations between stakeholders and often play a principal role in tourism destination governance (Pechlaner, Volgger, & Herntrei, 2012). The forms of DMOs are diverse, ranging from multi-level government bodies, tourism boards, and agencies through to associations of public organisations and private firms (Sainaghi, 2006; Saftić, Rafajac, & Trošt, 2010).

Based on the tourism literature, this research establishes a simple model of key stakeholders in an urban tourism destination (Figure 2.2) – the framework presented covers the demand side, supply side and community.

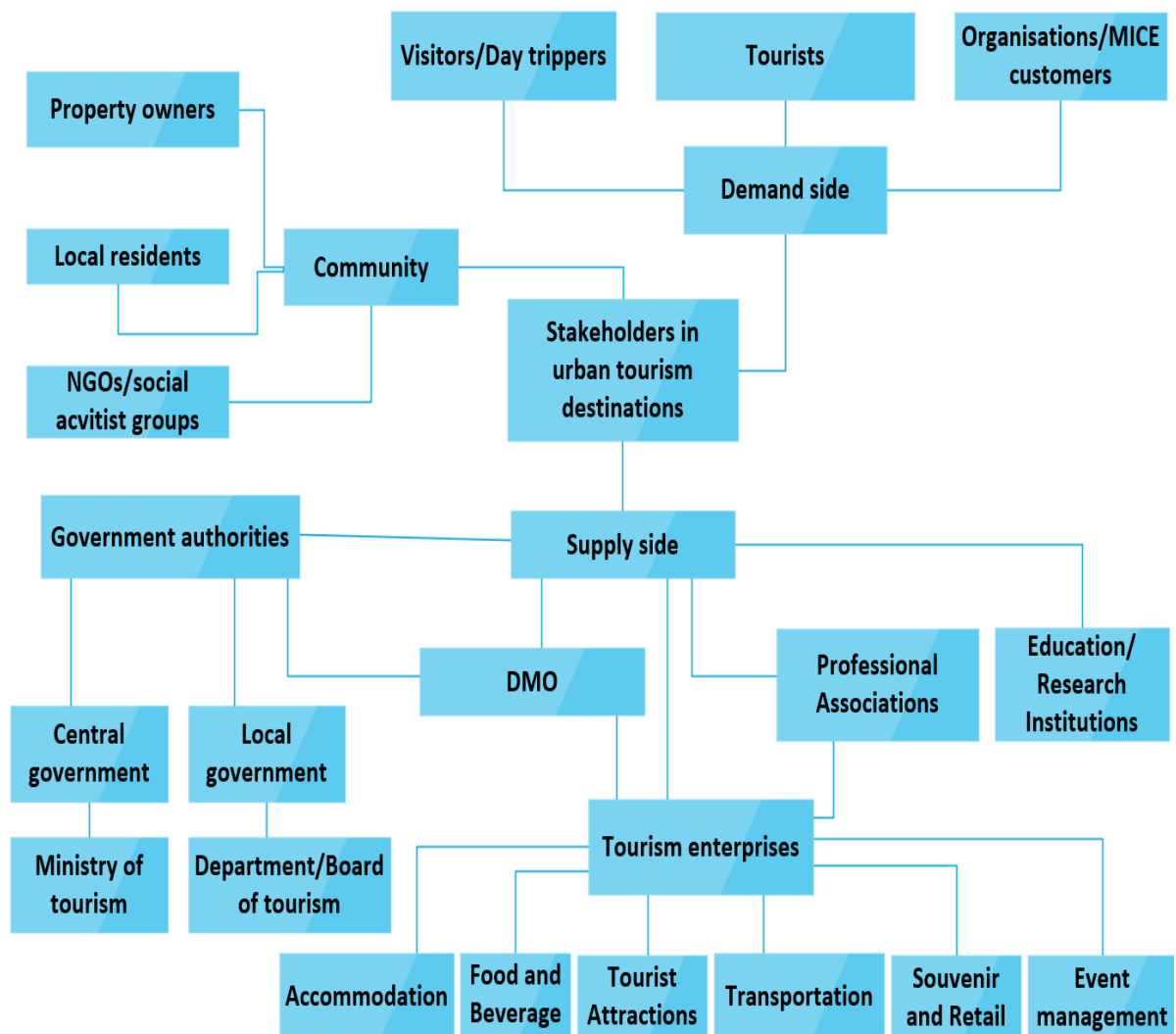


Figure 2.2 Model of stakeholders in urban tourism destinations

The demand side includes tourists (overnight visitors) and visitors (day trippers) (Ashworth & Page, 2011). They visit cities for various purposes, often for short periods (Ashworth & Page, 2011; Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017). The second group is the host community which includes residents (including, of course, resident business owners), property owners (who may or may not be permanent residents), and locally active NGOs/social activist groups (including environmental and social justice groups) (Timur & Getz, 2009). This stakeholder group makes use of the urban facilities and infrastructure and also funds them through their taxes (Ashworth & Page, 2011). The overlap of host activities with

those of tourists may create conflicts in urban precincts (Hayllar, Griffin, & Edwards, 2008; Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017).

The supply side comprises diverse stakeholders, including government authorities, DMOs, tourism firms, tourism professional associations, and education/research institutes. Because of the significant role of MICE in cities (Weber & Chon, 2002; Paskaleva-Shapira & Besson, 2006), event centres/event management companies are also essential stakeholders in urban destinations (Nguyen, 2017). One of the most significant actors in the stakeholder network is the government (Timur & Getz, 2009), which not only manages the tourism sector but also provides public services and facilitates economic development in the urban area. As noted above, another vital stakeholder is the DMO (Dwyer & Kim, 2003), which may often be funded only partially by government and will have a variety of relationships and links to the private sector.

Another stakeholder group is professional associations, these gather many firms into networks of similar businesses, and for example a hotel association or tour operators lobby group (Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017). Universities and training institutions also appear in the supply-side grouping, providing human resource development and also delivering research that may inform decision-making processes.

2.2.2 A stakeholder approach to sustainable tourism development

Sustainable tourism development is complex and difficult to achieve (Hall et al., 2015; Sharpley, 2000) and requires active participation and alliances across a range of destination stakeholders (Welford, Ytterhus, & Eligh, 1999; Hall, 2007). Because of the diversity of stakeholders, differences in perspective between parties can lead to

conflicts and difficulties in implementing sustainable tourism (Timur & Getz, 2008; Hatipoglu, Alvarez, & Ertuna, 2016; Maxim, 2016; Waligo, Clarke, & Hawkins, 2013).

In research conducted in three cities in Canada and the USA, Timur and Getz (2009) argue that three main stakeholder clusters (host environment, tourism industry and local government) in each city perceived sustainable urban tourism in quite different ways. These groups rarely shared the same viewpoints about implementing sustainable tourism, and engagement with the triple bottom line approach across the stakeholders was relatively limited (Timur & Getz, 2009). Moreover, only a quarter of those interviewed for the research defined sustainable development as including all three pillars (economic, social, environmental) with most just stressing the economic dimension. The findings highlight a variety of perceptions among tourism stakeholders, which can create conflicts and difficulties in implementing sustainable urban tourism approaches.

Given the critical role of central government and local authorities in urban tourism (Waligo et al., 2013; Timur & Getz, 2009) it is important to note that power imbalances and different perspectives between government agencies and across different scales of government (e.g. from local to national) can also negatively affect sustainable tourism development. For example, in the case of Thrace, Hatipoglu et al. (2016, p. 316) argue that the central government has a critical role in implementing development projects and that this reflects the "state-centric perspective" dominant in Turkey. In this case, the most powerful leaders of state government prevent local governments from operating effectively and hinder the engagement of stakeholder participants in the destination development process (Hatipoglu et al., 2016).

Government and DMOs will often find themselves charged with not only developing and marketing tourism but also creating collaborative structures and encouraging inter-stakeholder engagement. DMOs in three European cities adopt quite distinct approaches to promoting sustainable tourism and stakeholder collaboration (d'Angella 2007). Barcelona's DMO focuses on new product development and places less emphasis on facilitating stakeholder engagement. Berlin's DMO engages destination stakeholders more actively in institutional structures and tourism product development. In the case of Vienna there is considerable emphasis placed on developing collaborative systems and approaches such as meetings and workshops, so stakeholders can share viewpoints about tourism development plans (d'Angella 2007). Research by Beritelli, Buffa and Martini (2015) in six areas in Europe also showed that DMO play important but highly in coordinating stakeholder groups.

Buckley (2012) highlights a number of approaches to achieving urban sustainability on the part of the private sector, including joint social responsibility, eco-certification, self-regulation, destination marketing, and de-marketing. Researchers note, however, that tourism industry networks may also actively lobby to avoid government regulation of the environment and promote self-regulation in a way that hinders SUT (Nunez, 2007; Buckley, 2010). There will often be an inherent gap between the short-term economic goals of business and longer-term sustainable tourism development perspectives. Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) owners with their relative lack of capital, expertise and available time may find it particularly difficult to embrace the broader concepts of sustainable tourism development and incorporate them into their day to day operations (Budeanu et al., 2016).

To develop effective management strategies for SUT, the participation of stakeholders is crucial (Newman, Marion, & Cahill, 2001; UNWTO, 2004). However, the capacity of stakeholders to take part in sustainable tourism development depends on their awareness, empowerment and knowledge of sustainability (Byrd, Cárdenas, & Greenwood, 2008). Stakeholders should be encouraged and facilitated to broaden their knowledge of the planning process (Wray, 2011; Hatipoglu et al., 2016). This view is supported by Frisk and Larson (2011) who write that one of the essential tools to manage stakeholders in sustainable tourism implementation is communication and learning. In the same vein, Parson and Clark (1995) note that social learning should be promoted to share both implicit expertise and information (internal organisation) and explicit knowledge within each stakeholder group and between multiple groups.

Budeanu et al. (2016, p. 288) conclude that while the vital role of stakeholder engagement and collaboration in implementing sustainable tourism, "is routinely included in descriptions of sustainability, treated as self-evident" it is then given little real attention or support by practitioners or researchers. Research focusing on a stakeholder-driven perspective is therefore necessary if we are to understand and prevent conflicts, create evidence-based strategy, and advance SUT policy implementation and coordination (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999, as cited by Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005).

2.3 Stakeholder collaboration in sustainable urban tourism development

Collaboration reflects the relationships between multiple partners working together to achieve shared objectives. Gray (1989) argues that collaboration is a process that encourages relevant parties to combine strengths, share information, seek mutual

solutions and agree to solve common problems. Moreover, emphasis is placed on the different perspectives and distinctive goals of players; Gray (1989, p. 5) provides a sensible and still relevant viewpoint that “Collaboration is a process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their limited vision of what is possible”.

Partners in a collaborative network can receive numerous benefits. Collaboration offers a better groundwork for stakeholders to address problems rather than ‘isolated’ decision-making modes (Gray, 1989). Collaboration provides a broad approach for parties to solve matters rooted in a lack of shared vision and purpose (Hall, 2000; Fyall & Garrod, 2005). Stakeholders can avoid the cost of tackling conflicts with other partners (Healey, 1996) and the existing coordination of related activities and policies may be improved and enhanced through the collaborative process (Bramwell & Sharman, 1999).

Successful collaboration between specific parties may not occur, however, without the broader participation of other stakeholders. If some relevant parties do not take part in collaborative activities, their needs and point of views will not be incorporated and reflected. This leads to a lack of alternatives and consensus, excluded parties may reject propositions, in the longer term this state of affairs could lead to a breakdown in trust (Gregory & Keeney, 1994).

The power imbalance between stakeholders is an obvious issue that can obstruct the collaborative process. Gray (1989) defines collaboration as a framework where parties share responsibilities and power. Nevertheless, she also notices that in the real-life context, if potential partners are aware of power imbalances in the network, they may

be unable or unwilling to join the collaboration. Gray (1989, p. 24) writes, "When one party has unchallenged power to influence the domain, collaboration does not make sense." This implies that without good leadership the dominance of powerful stakeholders may prevent the active participation of weaker partners in the collaborative activity. Similarly, Clegg and Hardy (1999) state that power imbalances can make collaboration become a formalistic notion rather than a healthy groundwork for stakeholders.

The more powerful parties may get benefits from "the manipulation of and capitulation by weaker partners" (Clegg & Hardy, 1999, p. 678). Bramwell and Sharman (1999) emphasise that collaboration is always affected by power imbalances between stakeholders which are also entrenched in society. However, some argue that it is possible for collaborative activities to overcome power inequalities by encouraging all stakeholders to be involved in the process and opening up opportunities for meaningful engagement (Reed, 1997).

More so than many industries, tourism involves the embracing of official and unofficial partnerships and networks, indeed, collaboration is essential to provide the final visitor product and experience (Baggio & Cooper, 2010). In a tourism destination, each stakeholder needs various resources such as information, capital, and human resources to achieve their goals while at the same time they do not often possess or have easy access to some or all of these sources (Fyall, Garrod, & Wang, 2012). Stakeholders can exchange values and access necessary resources by working together to meet opportunities and develop more sustainable outcomes (Lazzeretti & Petrillo, 2006; Ford, Wang, & Vestal, 2012). It requires efforts from every stakeholder to establish and promote collaboration in the tourism sector.

In the tourism literature, collaboration across diverse stakeholder groups is widely identified as being critical if sustainable tourism development is to be achieved (Timur & Getz, 2008; Hall, 2007; Lemmetyinen & Go, 2005; McComb, Boyd, & Boluk 2017). Strong interrelations and cooperation between stakeholders are necessary for planning and managing tourism (Keogh, 1990; Jamal & Getz, 1995) and to promote more effective resources use and the balancing of interests between different parties (Timur & Getz, 2008).

A collaborative stakeholder process can be used to encourage parties to consider the economic, natural and socio-cultural dimensions in sustainable tourism development (Bramwell & Lane, 1993). Brooker and Burgess (2008) also argue that stakeholder collaboration contributes to establishing a sustainable destination brand. In research for The Cornwall Sustainable Tourism Project, Waligo et al., (2015) show that strong leadership is also vital in creating effective stakeholder collaboration and will, in turn, underpin the achievement of sustainable tourism outcomes.

There are many challenges that need to be solved to strengthen collaboration and cooperation between stakeholders. The diverse nature of tourism stakeholders makes the collaborative process complicated (Waligo et al., 2013; Gray, 1989; Raffay, 2007). Stakeholders may find that it is challenging and time consuming to confer with their partners before making important decisions (Gomes-Casseres, 1994; Bramwell & Lane, 2000). As a result, numerous conditions such as active institutional structures, broad vision, financial support, and good leadership are required to achieve sustainable tourism through active stakeholder collaboration (Elkington, 2011; Farrell & Twining-Ward, 2005). A city can only develop as a sustainable tourism destination when key

tourism stakeholders collaborate and play an important role in urban tourism management (Zamfir & Corbos, 2015; Timur & Getz, 2008; Paskaleva-Shapira, 2001).

Timur and Getz (2008) applied network analysis and stakeholder perspectives to investigate the inter-relationship for sustainable tourism development in three cities in Canada and the United States. The results show that in all three cities, DMOs are located at the centre of stakeholder networks. They are seen as the most influential stakeholders in these destinations, with industry actors' depending on them and viewing them as key guiding forces. The authors argue that the DMO plays a vital role in connecting stakeholders and promoting collaboration within destinations. However, Kaurav, Baber, Chowdhary and Kapadia (2015) argued that although DMOs lead and coordinate tourism activities, they do not control those activities – they gather resources and expertise together to enable their operations.

Timur and Getz (2008) also show that local governments, hotels and tourist attractions are particularly central to networks. However, the authors pointed out a lack of links between the three clusters examined (government, industry and community) in these cities. They suggested that the stakeholders who are central to networks can play significant roles in communication with other parties, raising awareness of sustainability issues, and facilitating stakeholder collaboration to achieve common goals in destination development (Timur & Getz, 2008).

Nguyen (2017) investigated stakeholder cooperation in tourism networks in Danang City - an urban tourism destination in central Vietnam. This research indicated that the level of collaboration between stakeholders in this city was not stable, with many actors leaving networks due to weak links being developed and sustained with key

stakeholders. Nguyen (2017) also argues that accommodation, food and beverage, tour operator and transportation play critical roles in the destination network but the centrality of the role of the DMO is not seen to be as great as in the cases outlined by Timur and Getz (2008). The work of d'Angella (2007) in three European cities highlights the role that tourism business, especially hoteliers play in SUT and also stresses the essential roles of DMO due to their overarching understanding and contribution to destination management.

Nguyen (2017) and Timur and Getz (2008) claim that each destination has a unique structural network so that the interactions between stakeholders will be highly context specific. Thus, sustainable urban tourism development will be distinct in every destination because of "historical patterns of development, the nature of their industry, and governmental and institutional culture" (Timur & Getz, 2008, p. 457). Both studies highlight the location and role of stakeholders in tourism networks but do not investigate in any depth the difficulties/challenges facing stakeholders in developing and sustaining collaboration processes or reasons why they do not participate more actively in the network to implement sustainable tourism.

Even when stakeholders in cities have an awareness of the importance of collaborative processes, there may be numerous challenges preventing them from strengthening collaboration and cooperation with other parties in the destination (Paskaleva-Shapira & Besson, 2006; d'Angella, 2007). Table 2.2 outlines the key elements identified in the literature that may act as barriers to collaborative activity focused on SUT.

Table 2.2 Barriers to stakeholder collaboration in SUT implementation

Barriers Cities	Collaboration	Management/Policy	Interest/ Finance	Information /Expertise/Vision	Complexity
Several European small and mid-sized cities (Paskaleva-Shapira & Besson, 2006)	-The needs of collaborative approaches -“Loose” relationships	-Leadership is often unclear -Management matters are unsettled	-Trade-offs -Less sharing of potential risks	-Unequal distribution of planning and management expertise -Conflicts in priorities	
Victoria (Canada), Calgary (Canada), San Francisco (US) (Timur & Getz, 2009)	-Lack of coordination -Lack of government support	-Lack of leadership	-Various and conflicting interest of stakeholders	-Lack of expertise and information exchange -Lack of awareness	-The complexity of tourism with many stakeholders involved
Barcelona (Spain), Berlin (Germany), Vienna (Austria) (d’Angella, 2007)	-The need for effective collaboration between DMOs and stakeholders	-Independence risk: delegation of power and activities (booking, promotion, permission to host events)	-Financial risk: fees, equity, annual financial contributions	-Knowledge sharing risk: information (operative and performance indicators)	
London (UK) (Maxim, 2016, 2017)	-Lack of stakeholder cooperation and effective partnerships.	-Lack of leadership -Lack of policies and strategies -Controlling number of visitors	-Economic-bias -External fund and budget cuts -Unequal benefits distributions	-Lack of knowledge and understanding of the industry -Tourism is not a priority	-Lack of resources -City is a complex environment

Source: Adapted from Paskaleva-Shapira and Besson (2006); Timur and Getz (2009); d’Angella (2007) Maxim (2016, 2017).

In many destinations one key challenge is the lack of an established structure to support effective collaboration (Hatipoglu et al., 2016). One of the main barriers to sustainable tourism implementation is ineffective governance (Maxim, 2017; Farmaki, 2015; Ruhanen, 2013). Timur and Getz (2009) point out that in three cities Victoria, Calgary and San Francisco, there are several problems such as a lack of coordination, government support and leadership which lead to a lack of direction and management. In the case of London, Maxim (2016) notes that although several stakeholders have a significant awareness of the necessity of sustainable tourism, only a few government authorities apply sustainability principles in their policy-making and practice process. Several studies also indicate that local government authorities play an important role in identifying the leaders and actors needed to establish cooperation or collaboration for tourism in an urban context (Barcon, 2003; Paskaleva-Shapira, 2001; Le Galès, 2003, as cited in Paskaleva-Shapira & Besson, 2006)

Conflicts of interest are also noticeable barriers facing stakeholders wanting to implement sustainable tourism. Timur and Getz (2009) point out that the differing interests of each party may hinder the ability of parties to collaborate to get more extensive benefits. Financial concerns about equity, fees and annual financial contributions prevent stakeholders in Barcelona, Vienna, and Berlin from participating effectively in DMO's activities (d'Angella, 2007).

Poor communication represents another important barrier to sustainable tourism implementation in urban areas. Timur and Getz (2009) emphasise that there is a shortage of communication and discussion among the major stakeholders in the North American cities they investigated. The authors claim that without an understanding of

each party's viewpoint about sustainable tourism, it is difficult to balance their needs due to conflicts of interest.

To solve these problems, it is essential to enhance communication between stakeholders and promote a structure that facilitates the sharing of information and expertise. For example, d'Angella (2007) points out that the more stakeholders are aware of the advantages and limited costs and risks of engaging with DMO's activities, the more they are eager to collaborate. Hatipoglu et al., (2016) also note that the stakeholders, who are more engaged in the tourism planning process and have better knowledge of sustainable tourism development, are more likely to advocate for local participation and to recommend and support more representative models of governance. The authors argue that a model promoting expertise and information exchange between different stakeholder clusters can help enable isolated groups to engage in plan development and also avoid possible conflicts of interest among different parties. Wray (2011) similarly emphasises that it is necessary to establish functional structures that facilitate self-learning abilities and information sharing.

To achieve SUT it is necessary to create 'sustainability networks' that various stakeholders can participate actively in, and which allow policy-makers to actively consider a range of concerns. The collaborative process enables interaction of different groups of stakeholders with divergent interests and goals in the implementation of sustainable urban tourism (Timur & Getz, 2009). Effective stakeholder collaboration in an urban destination supported by approachable and reasonable policies can clearly improve the chances that more sustainable forms of urban sustainable tourism development can be achieved.

Chapter 3 Methodology

Chapter 3 presents the methodological approach, research design, data collection, analysis process, and ethical dimensions that underpin this research. The discussions specify the process followed in this research to achieve the aims and objectives introduced in Chapter 1.

3.1 Qualitative Research Approach

A qualitative approach, based on case-study inquiry, was adopted in this research to explore and examine stakeholders' perceptions of urban sustainable tourism and related collaboration in Hue City. The qualitative research approach is popular in tourism studies and draws on a long tradition in social sciences (Silverman & Patterson, 2015). Van Maanen (1979, p. 520) described qualitative research as "an umbrella term covering an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world". Similarly, Denzin and Lincoln (2011, p. 3) note that the qualitative approach is "a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible". In other words, researchers use this approach to understand the way people acknowledge and experience the world (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Qualitative research can be distinguished from quantitative research in several ways (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016). The main difference is that the former approach focuses on analysing the richness of content in words while quantitative research analyses numeric data to produce quantified findings (Clarke & Braun, 2013; Phillimore &

Goodson, 2004). The distinctiveness of qualitative and quantitative research is summarised in Table 3.1

Table 3.1 Characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research

Point of Comparison	Qualitative Research	Quantitative Research
Focus of research	Quality (nature, essence)	Quantity (how much, how many)
Philosophical roots	Phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, constructivism	Positivism, logical empiricism, realism
Associated phrase	Fieldwork, ethnographic, naturalistic, grounded, constructivist	Experimental, empirical, statistical
Goal of investigation	Understanding, description, discovery, meaning, hypothesis generating	Prediction, control, description, confirmation, hypothesis testing
Design characteristics	Flexible, evolving, emergent	Predetermined, structured
Sample	Small, non-random, purposeful, theoretical	Large, random, representative
Data collection	Researcher as primary instrument, interviews, observations, documents	Inanimate instruments (scales, tests, surveys, questionnaires, computers)
Primary mode of analysis	Inductive, constant comparative method	Deductive, statistical
Findings	Comprehensive, holistic, expansive, richly descriptive	Precise, numerical

Source: Merriam and Tisdell (2016, p. 20)

These distinct characteristics lead to some strengths and weaknesses in both qualitative and quantitative research. The qualitative approach has been seen by some commentators as a 'soft', 'non-scientific' and inferior approach, which is often used as a precursor to quantitative methods (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, as cited in Phillimore & Goodson, 2004). The results produced in qualitative researches can be biased because researchers import their worldviews into the research, which shapes the process and

outcomes (Creswell, 2012). Moreover, the qualitative data is typically collected from a limited number of subjects (individuals, places or organisations) so the research findings cannot be generalised (Veal, 2018).

Nevertheless, the importance and value of qualitative research approaches have been increasingly recognised in tourism and leisure research (Riley & Love, 2000; Veal, 2018). Silverman (2011) points out that qualitative research can provide in-depth understandings of reality based on socio-cultural meanings while quantitative research cannot always deal with the social structures in place. The main strength of qualitative research is supporting researchers in examining complicated phenomena through the discovery of rich details in a real context (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Silverman, 2011).

This research examines complicated and multifaceted concepts, including urban tourism, sustainability, sustainable tourism, and stakeholder collaboration. Qualitative methodology is the most suitable approach for this research because it allows the researcher to collect and analyse rich and diverse data, which is mainly shaped by the socio-cultural situation of the destination.

3.2 Case-study approach

This research adopts a case study approach, which is one of the most widely used methodological approaches in qualitative research (Stake, 2000). The case study approach is used to investigate a wide range of matters that relate to a specific group's situation (Gray, 2014) or a real-life context (Yin, 2009). The major advantage of this study approach is that it allows the researcher to generate a comprehensive range of information and gain in-depth understanding based on various data sources (Eriksson &

Kovalainen, 2016; Stake, 2000). According to Silverman and Patterson (2015, p. 10), the case study approach is grounded on the hypothesis that “extreme or exceptional examples of a phenomenon yield the most textured data for qualitative analysis” (p.10). Another benefit of adopting this approach is that participants can help to increase the accuracy of information and reduce the researcher’s bias (Jennings, 2010).

Nevertheless, the case study approach may create some disadvantages such as a lack of emergent focus at the beginning, and bias in data collection and analysis, particularly - the inability to generalise findings due to the distinct of each case (Jennings, 2010). The advantages and disadvantages of the case study approach are summarised in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Advantages and disadvantages of case studies

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In-depth empirical materials are collected on a single case or multiple cases • Evidence is grounded in the social setting being studied • Study members can check the empirical materials • Member checking may remove researcher selectivity • Methodological triangulation is used (Yin, 2009) as well as other triangulation types (Stake 2006) • Crystallisation processes are considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research focus is emergent and not clearly stated at the start • The research process is subjective as opposed to objective • Evidence maybe denied for reproduction based on the use of member checking • The research may not act ethically and consequently empirical material collection, analysis and findings may result in appropriately interpreted/(re)constructed understanding • Findings are specific to the case study • Findings are not able to be generalised to other cases.

Source: Jennings (2010, p. 186-187).

The case-study approach is widely used in tourism research (Beeton, 2005) and in particular for work relating to sustainable urban tourism development (Timur & Getz, 2009; Maxim, 2017). Each local area features unique characters, specific situations and issues so there is not one set of solutions that can be generalised for all tourism destinations in the world. Development strategies or initiatives designed to promote sustainable tourism need to be differentiated to fit each location's context by identifying the suitable factors that can assist in solving local problems (Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005).

This research employed a case-study approach to allow deeper insights into stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City. The choice of Hue City was made for several reasons. Firstly, the city is a well-known mid-sized tourist destination in Vietnam. Second, the city has been actively focusing on developing sustainable tourism (TTHPPC, 2017). Finally, the city is familiar to the researcher and this enables personal experiences and networks in the tourism industry to be leveraged for the study where appropriate.

3.3 Data collection

In this research, the main research method chosen for primary data collection is the semi-structured interview.

3.3.1 Sampling strategy and recruitment process

This research applied a purposive sampling method to recruit interview participants. Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p. 22) state that this sampling strategy is popular in qualitative research and allows researchers to choose suitable individuals, groups or settings where

“the processes being studied are most likely to occur”. Moreover, the purposive sampling method also requires researchers to select the criteria used to select participants that have the desired features for research (Silverman, 2011).

In this research, participants were chosen based on their work experiences and positions in order to ensure that they were able to provide a range of rich and relevant information. The researcher targeted potential participants who are representatives of key stakeholders’ groups on the supply side of Hue City's tourism industry. These participants included senior staff or managers working for local government, industry associations, tour operators, hospitality firms, tourism-related services, and tourism researchers and academics. The group featured considerable experience and extensive knowledge of the Hue City tourism industry and also the surrounding economy. This experience means that opinions and inputs help the researcher gain a deeper understanding of the situation of the tourism industry in Hue City.

The researcher collected contact details of potential participants via their organisation's websites or other publicly available means. They were invited to participate via email and phone calls, with the Participant Information Sheet and Consent Form also being sent (Appendix 1 and 2). The information not only helped to convince potential participants to participate in the project but also created a good connection between the researcher and interviewees and laid a good groundwork for the interviews (Kitchin & Tate, 2013).

Potential participants had two weeks to consider the invitation and respond. A total of 29 interviews were conducted. This number of interviews was determined by the researcher’s resources (network, time and financial budget) and the availability of

participants (Saldana & Omasta, 2018; Tashakkori, Teddlie, & Teddlie, 1998). At the same time the researcher was careful to review whether responses were showing signs of saturation.

According to Stake (2000), the required size of the sample for qualitative research varies for each research project and the complexity of the sample is the key thing that supports the researcher in collecting 'thick data'. Thus, the researcher tried to have a good spread of respondents across a variety of groups in order to get a multi-stakeholder perspective without significant bias being placed on any specific grouping.

The majority of participants in this research are male (23 – 79%) while only six females participated (21%). This disparity can be explained by the fact that although some women are working as senior staff and managers in Hue's tourism industry, these positions remain dominated by males. Indeed, the full list of potential participants, which was based on contact details from public information sources, shows that 71% (27 out of 38 people) are male.

Figure 3.1 illustrates the age groups of those stakeholders participating in the interviews. Most are aged over 40 years old (69%) while 27.6% of respondents are in the age group between 30 and 40. Only one interviewee is under 30 years old. This distribution can be explained by the fact that managers and senior positions in organisations and companies are usually occupied by people who are older and have a longer length of work experience.

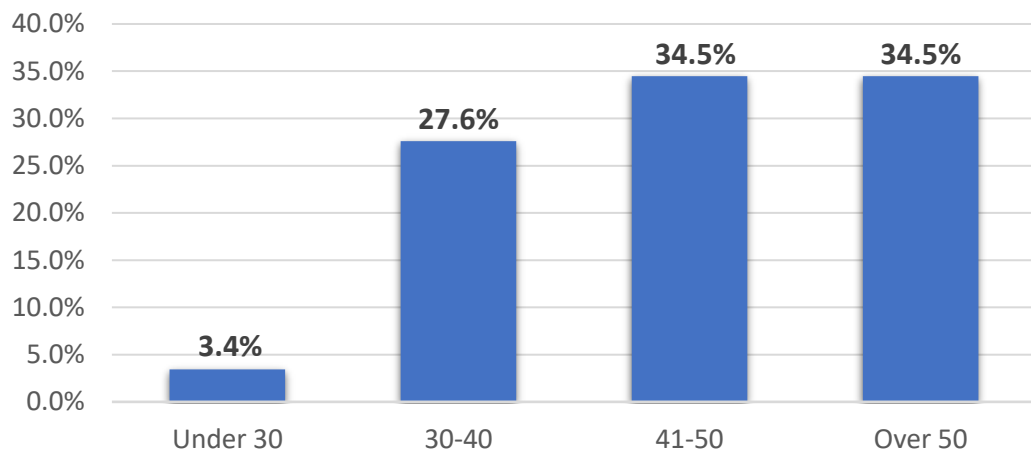


Figure 3.1 Age groups of respondents

Most of the correspondents have worked long-term in the Hue tourism sector, with more than one third of interviewees having over 20 years of work experience in the city, and a further 58.6% having worked there for 10–20 years. Only two individuals taking part in the interviews had less than ten years of work experience in Hue’s tourism industry (See Figure 3.2). All participants have spent most of their career in the city with a few people working for short periods in other provinces or cities. This means that the respondents generally have a deep knowledge and rich experiences regarding the tourism sector in Hue City.

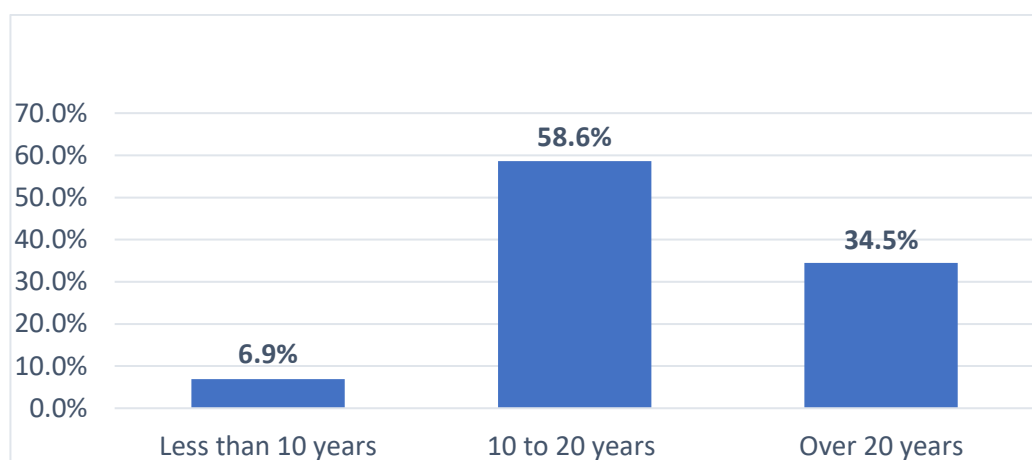


Figure 3.2 Years of work experience of respondents in Hue tourism industry

Senior positions in organisations such as directors, deputy-directors, managers, lecturers and researchers usually require individuals to have high levels of educational qualification. More than half of the participants had graduated from university and college. One third have post-graduate qualifications (See Figure 3.3). Only 6.9% of interviewees ceased education at a certificate and diploma level for vocational training, while the same percentage of participants graduated from high school. Many of the latter group own and operate businesses.

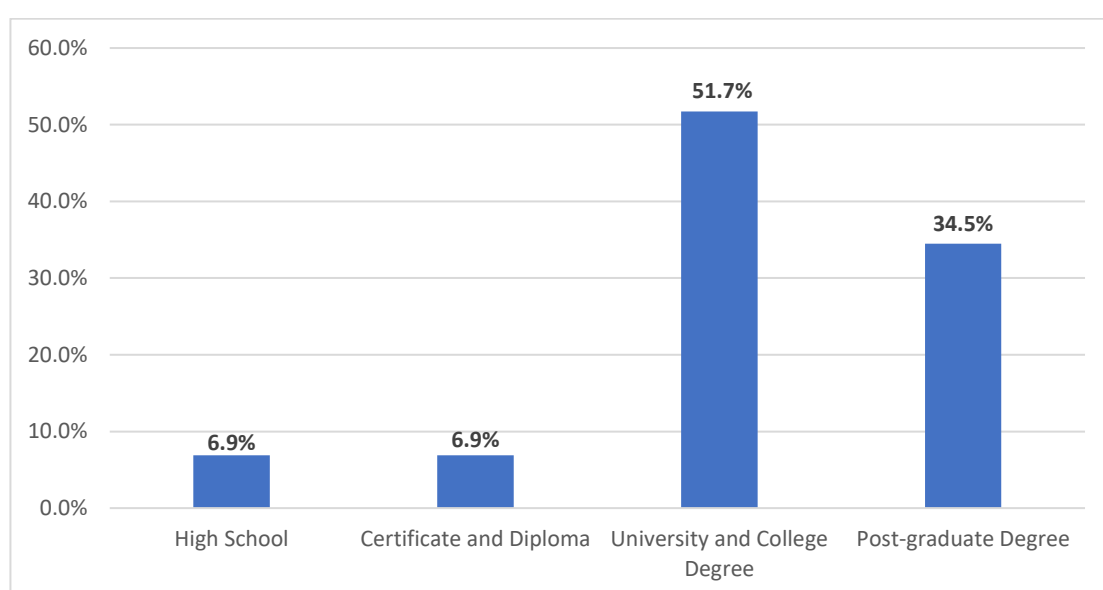


Figure 3.3 Levels of educational qualifications of respondents

Figure 3.4 shows the distribution of participants based on their occupations within the tourism sector in Hue City. There are five respondents working in multiple-roles in different companies and organisations, so they belong to different stakeholder groups. For instance, one representative of the Thua Thien Hue Tourism Association is also a senior manager in a hotel. A large proportion of participants are from the private sector, which includes tourism services such as accommodation, food and beverage, tour operators, transportation and tourism-related services like souvenir and retail and event

management agencies. The highest proportion of respondents (31%) is accounted for by individuals working for accommodation enterprises ranging from 2 to 5 stars.

Nearly one in five (17.2%) of the interviewees are senior staff in government agencies and are engaged in important responsibilities in managing the tourism sector. Tourism experts who are educators and researchers account for a further 13.8% of participants.

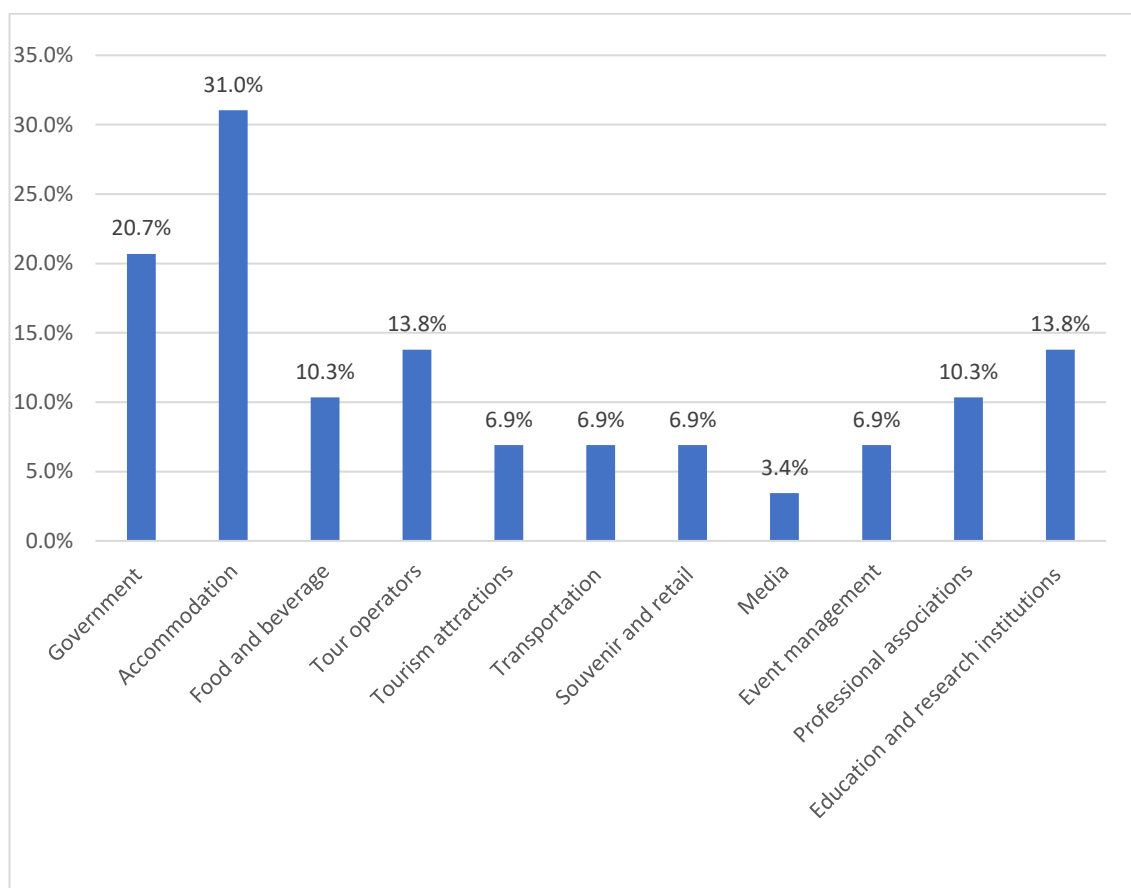


Figure 3.4 Occupations of stakeholders

In an effort to support tourism development in Thua Thien Hue, the provincial government has established a Steering Committee (SC) for tourism development and also a Tourism Advisory Board (TAB). Five participants of this research are members of the SC and/or TAB and, as a result, play vital role in developing the tourism sector in Hue City and the whole province. The research also received significant support from

educators and researchers – including academic staff at the School of Tourism and Hospitality, Hue University.

3.3.2 Semi-structured interviews

Qualitative methods are suitable for investigating social and cultural implications in tourism because they enable researchers to comprehend the human dimensions in depth and from a base of sometimes limited prior research (Phillimore and Goodson, 2004). One of the popular methods in qualitative research is interviewing. A research interview is not a normal conversation but one that has a structure and a purpose (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015). Rapley (2004) notes that interviews are co-produced by the collaboration of interviewers and interviewees. The interviewers are active participants who lead and control the conversation by deciding to give more follow-up questions or to start or finish a topic in the interviews (Silverman, 2011; Rapley, 2004). However, interviewees are not simply “vessels waiting to be tapped” (Holstein & Gubrium 2004, p. 515). They, in turn, interact with interviewers to produce the data. There are three main types of interviews: structured, semi-structured and open-ended/unstructured. Rapley (2004) argues that no one interviewing type is the best, so the decision by researchers on which one to use really depends on the specific nature and context of each research situation.

In this study, the semi-structured interview was adopted as the primary tool to gather data because it can generate rich and detailed data while emphasising the interviewees’ experiences and enabling some degree of comparison and consistency across core themes (Bryman, 2016). Eriksson & Kovalainen (2016) state that the major strength of this type of interview is producing systematic and comprehensive materials from

relatively informal conversations. This qualitative method helps to gather in-depth information on participants' perspectives on complex terms and concepts, including urban tourism, sustainable tourism, and stakeholder collaboration in sustainable development.

The research participants in this study are key stakeholders within the Hue tourism industry who hold important positions in their respective organizations. Given the nature of their work and time availability, it was most convenient for them to participate in an individual semi-structured interview rather than coordinating with others to participate in methods such as group interviews or focus group discussions. The one-on-one semi-structured interview enabled both the researcher and the participant to find suitable windows of opportunity for discussions while also ensuring their confidentiality and avoiding responses being influenced by other stakeholders. This method also enabled the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of participant opinions, focus on a diverse array of stakeholder specific issues and gain clear perspectives that could be contrasted and compared with others.

Semi-structured interviews are usually guided by pre-designed topics and questions to ensure that the dialogue covers the main themes of the research and produces necessary information (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016). However, keeping the discourse close to the pre-designed topics can sometimes restrict other valuable topics raised by interviewees (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016). Therefore, it is important for interviewers to give follow-up questions that depend on the dialogue flows and to encourage the participants to share more information beyond the limitation of any pre-designed questions. In general, the semi-structured interview offers the participants more flexible

spaces to express and explain their viewpoints and experiences without being bound by the imposed framework of less flexible approaches (Veal, 1997, 2018).

The data collection process can be affected by researcher characteristics and interviewing skills in addition to the broader research context (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Bryman, 2016) so good preparation before the field research begins is crucial (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 107). Before the fieldwork, the researcher underwent a range of class-based and one-on-one training to prepare for the interviews. This training involved practising interview skills, learning various tips, and also raising awareness of the challenges in this process. A pilot interview was also conducted with a willing local tourism expert, and this helped to fine-tune the approach and adjust several questions to make them more approachable to the local stakeholders.

The interviews were conducted in Hue City from 19th June to 9th August 2018. The researcher conducted one-on-one participant interviews at convenient sites in Hue City. Interviews ranged in length from 30 to 150 minutes with an average of approximately 50 minutes. Hard copies of the Consent Form were handed to participants to sign before the interview. Informants were invited to retain a copy for their own records. The interviews were recorded with the agreement of participants and the researcher took notes of the discussion.

The interviews started with questions about the participants' background, work experiences and position, and general knowledge of the tourism industry in Hue City (see Appendix 3). These 'icebreaker' questions helped to stimulate the conversation and create a friendly environment between the interviewer and interviewees. The interviews then focused on questions covering two major themes: perceptions of

sustainable tourism development in general and perspectives on collaboration among stakeholders in sustainable tourism development in Hue City in particular. The interview structure could be changed by switching the order of pre-designed questions due to the specific situation. Specific follow-up questions were used where needed to encourage the interviewees to give more detailed information or to elaborate on specific themes.

The researcher and participants used Vietnamese to converse during the interviews. Using the same language as the participants helped the researcher conduct interviews smoothly because language and communication skills are essential for this process (Gillham, 2005). In addition to generating interview notes in Vietnamese an English version was also generated. After the interviews, participants received the Vietnamese version of the notes taken during their interview to review before data analysis began. They could give feedback to add more information or take some material out, depending on their viewpoints. Most of the interviewees confirmed the interview note-taking without change and a small number requested some minor changes or points of clarification.

3.4 Data analysis

Data analysis is an integral part of qualitative research but also represents a challenging task for researchers (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This stage includes organising the data, reducing unnecessary information, selecting the meaningful and relevant material and then coding them into themes, interpreting and representing the data in a useable form (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Creswell & Poth, 2016). Flick (2014, p. 5) defines the data analysis process as “the classification and interpretation of linguistic (or visual) material

to make statements about implicit and explicit dimensions and structures of meaning-making in the material and what is represented in it”.

According to Jennings (2005, p. 101), in semi-structured in-depth interviews, the findings can be expressed as “depthful and thick descriptions”. Hence, the researcher used content analysis and thematic analysis to analyse the primary data and used NVivo software to manage and code the data. These methods allowed the researcher to highlight the common and distinct viewpoints of participants. Content analysis was used to analyse the key patterns to emerge across the interviews (Myers, 2013). The thematic analysis helped to group and categorise the information into deeper-level themes rather than surface-level codes (Eriksson & Kovalainen, 2016; Bryman, 2012).

The researcher sought emergent themes from the research questions (Veal, 2018) and coded information into suitable main themes and sub-themes. As noted by Gibbs (2007), coding is a process of indexing or categorising information to “establish a framework of thematic ideas about it” (p. 38). This process gave the researcher more time and space to consider and explore data carefully to ascertain which themes emerge (David & Sutton, 2011; Fielding & Warnes, 2009).

3.5 Challenges and limitations

To conduct this research, the researcher had to deal with a number of challenges. Time management was the main challenge for the researcher. Because all of the participants worked in important positions in their organisations, they had busy schedules, and it was sometimes difficult to arrange a suitable time for interviews. Moreover, the interviews were designed to last from 45 to 60 minutes; however, some interviews had to be shortened due to a participant’s busy schedule while others extended well beyond

the expected time frame. If a shortened time frame affected the content, there were opportunities through follow-up emails to cover ask any questions/issues that had not been covered due to the truncated schedule. The participants were also encouraged to add more material that they had not mentioned in their initial answers.

Although most of the participants were friendly and enthusiastic about sharing their viewpoints, there were some who were less forthcoming and welcoming. To tackle this problem, the researcher tried to create a friendly environment with correspondents, explaining carefully the value of the work and stressing the anonymity and confidentiality of the outcomes.

On rare occasions interviewees tried to avoid some questions that were sensitive - in particular, inquiries relating to conflicts and/or disagreement among stakeholders. Sometimes they gave unclear answers or tried to switch the topics. In such instances the researcher carefully led the participant back to the main topic without making them feel uncomfortable and again stressed themes of confidentiality.

The data conducted by semi-structured interviews in this research can be challenging to analyse. Although the format of the interviews is systematic to a certain extent, there can be unpredictable content produced by the flexibility of the conversations. Therefore, in some situations, it was difficult to analyse and compare 'facts' across interviews (Eriksson and Kovalainen, 2016). In the data analysis process, the researcher tried to link the relevant information, and created and connected many sub-themes crossing major themes to work out the relationships among data units. Moreover, the researcher made efforts to avoid the effect of personal bias viewpoint in the interview and data analysis process. The researcher aimed wherever possible to investigate the

information objectively, avoiding imposing personal thoughts on the opinions of the respondents.

There are several limitations of this research. The research is based on a single case study approach, which provides a limited foundation for generalisation (Yin, 2009). Therefore, the findings and knowledge perceived may be hard to generalise to other settings (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). However, Gerring (2007, p. 1) notes that in some situations, “in-depth knowledge on an individual example is more helpful” as it contributes to a “better understanding of the whole by focusing on a key part”. Throughout the thesis there is care taken to ensure that unrealistic generalisations are not presented.

Another limitation is that due to the researcher focus on stakeholders from the supply-side of the tourism industry there is a lack of perspective provided from the broader community and from tourists themselves, both of which are important stakeholder groups. Due to the limitations of time and resources, this research could not cover all stakeholders and a decision was made to focus on the groups outlined above. The research provides a useful baseline and backdrop for future research endeavours that may emphasise the demand side of the SUT equation in Hue City.

Another potential limitation is the lack of available, accurate and reliable statistical data about tourism development in Vietnam and Hue City. As an interviewee commented, “incorrect and inaccurate statistical data impede the research, operation and management of the tourism industry”. Wherever possible, the researcher made an effort to gain adequate and exact information from reliable official sources and cross-checked these between different sources.

Finally, the research was conducted in Vietnamese and English, so there can always be dangers of elements being 'lost in translation'. To reduce the impact of these challenges, the researcher coded data in Vietnamese because it is easier and more accurate to categorise and connect information in the original language. Then, the main points and quotes were translated into English to further discuss the findings.

3.6 Ethics

An ethics application for the research was approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC) under application number 18/181 filed on 30/05/2018. All participants were informed clearly about the research aims and themes, the methods used to conduct the interviews, security of personal information, and their rights and benefits when participating in this project. The researcher strived to ensure that the well-being, privacy, security and rights of research participants were maintained at all times. During all the stages of the research, no ethical issues relating to the participants or other parties were raised or gained the attention of the researcher or the nominated representative of AUTEC.

In the interviews, the researcher guided the conversation by making inquiries of the participants and listening to their answers without giving any comments, judgements or suggestions that may influence their answers. In data analysis and resultant discussions, the researcher also respected the participants' perspectives, ensuring the accuracy and multidimensionality of the data while also comparing the findings with relevant previous research and secondary information resources. Maintaining a neutral position in the study allowed the researcher to avoid making biased judgments that can lead to inaccurate or misleading results. Reliability and validity are therefore enhanced by strict

adherence to ethical regulations at all stages of the research process (Hannes et al., 2010).

Chapter 4 The Vietnam and Hue context

This chapter highlights key features relating to the recent development of the tourism sector in Vietnam and Hue City. The chapter's content is primarily based on statistics, and information provided by Vietnam government authorities, international organisations and previously published research (both academic and consultancy). Some of the interview data are also presented where they add insight into the recent situation and context of sustainable urban tourism development in Hue City.

4.1 Tourism development in Vietnam

Since the early 2000s, Vietnam has been developing rapidly as a tourism destination with the highest growth rate of international tourist arrivals in South-East Asia and ranking as the fourth fastest growing tourist destination in the world in 2017 (UNWTO, 2018). The country also won the award of "Asia's Leading Destination" at the World Travel Awards in 2018 (VNAT, 2018). Tourism development is now portrayed as a priority area in the national development strategy and is seen as a key driver of Vietnam's economy (Politburo, 2017).

Figure 4.1 illustrates the growth of both domestic and international tourists to Vietnam in the last ten years. The country welcomed over 15.5 million international arrivals in 2018, climbing by 20% from a year earlier and tripling in numbers from 2008 (VNAT, 2019). Most foreign visitors to Vietnam came from North Asia, West Europe and Russia, North America and Oceania. Besides the noteworthy rise of international visitors, the number of domestic tourists also had an impressive growth from 23.5 million in 2008 to 80 million by 2018 (VNAT, 2019). This rise is a result of the fast-developing economy and

a growing middle class. Annual growth GDP rates have consistently been more than 5% over the past decade and this has helped many Vietnamese to achieve higher income and living standards which in turn enables them to travel more frequently.

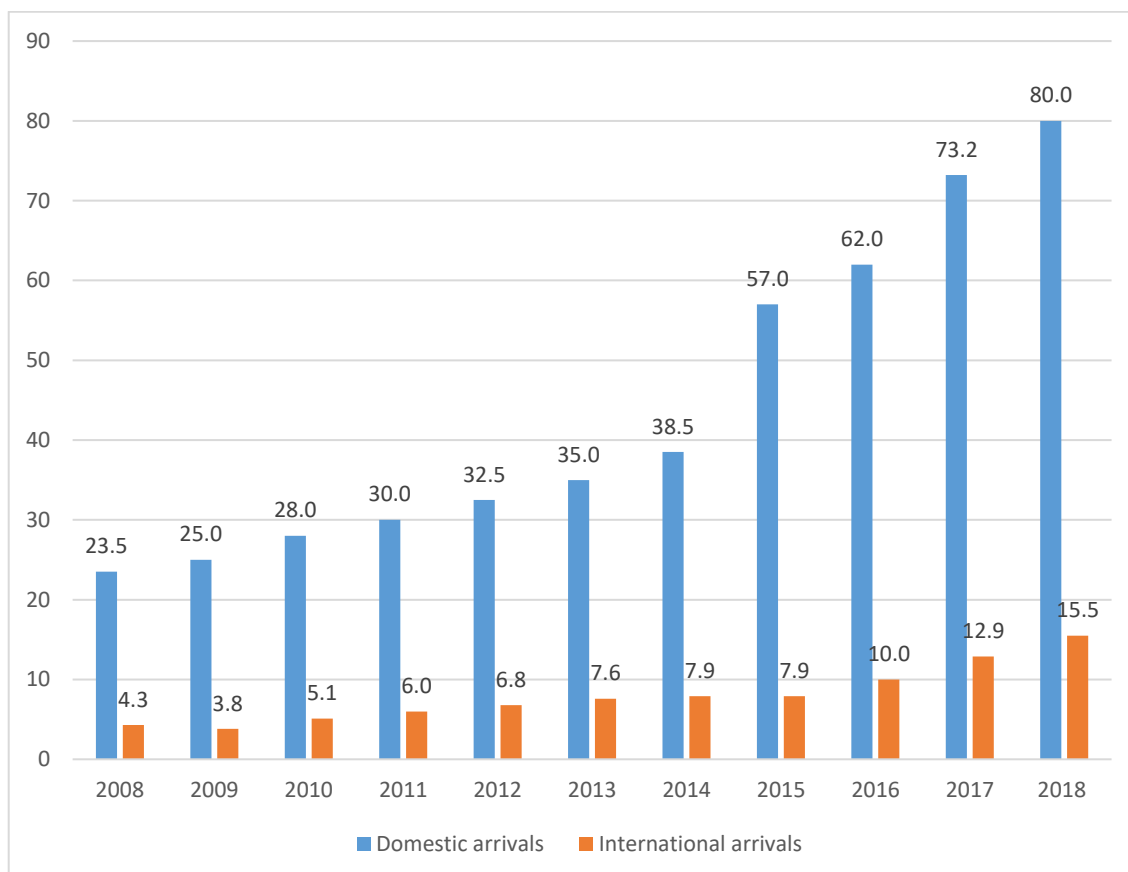


Figure 4.1 Domestic and international tourists to Vietnam from 2008 to 2018.

Source: Adapted from VNAT (2019)

The tourism sector plays a vital role in Vietnam. The total revenue from international and domestic tourists in 2018 was approximately 620 trillion VND (equal to 26.8 billion USD), which represented an increase of 20.6% from the previous year. In 2017, the tourism industry made a direct and indirect contribution to the national economy of 7.9% and 12.5% of GDP respectively (VNAT, 2018). The development of the tourism industry also offers considerable employment opportunities for Vietnamese – creating 2.5 million direct jobs and 4.1 million total jobs in 2017 (WTTC, 2018, p. 1). The

Vietnamese tourism sector is expected to earn 45 billion USD revenue and account for more than 10% of national GDP and generate 6 million jobs by 2025 (Government of Vietnam, 2017b). The growing revenue from tourism has helped to improve host resident and national income levels (VNAT, 2018).

As a consequence of tourism's rapid growth, the number of hotels and resorts, restaurants and entertainment complexes has grown considerably. In 2018, there were over 2000 international tour operators and 23,000 certificated tour guides in the country (VNAT, 2019). The number of accredited accommodation operations was listed at 26,000 including 900 hotels and resorts (3 to 5 stars with 102,000 rooms) by the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT, 2019). Additionally, homestays and Airbnb have grown in significance – offering a wider range of services and reduced prices for tourists.

Table 4.1 illustrates Vietnam's Tourism and Travel Competitiveness Index from 2013 to 2017 as evaluated by the World Economic Forum (WEF). In five years, Vietnam's global competitiveness rank rose by 13 places to 67th place in 2017. In 2017, the country ranked 35th globally in price competitiveness (WEF, 2017) because it has been well known as a budget-friendly destination where the cost for products and services are affordable for many tourists. Also, the stable political situation with low crime rates helps tourists feel safe during their visit. Another factor facilitating tourism development in Vietnam is the exceptional progression of ICT infrastructure and capacity in recent years. The Internet has become more popular nationwide, with 54.7% of the Vietnamese population using the Internet in 2018, and the figure predicted to reach 75% by 2023 (Statista, 2019). The increased online presence of Vietnam helps tourists, especially foreign visitors, to access more information on the destination and what it has to offer.

Table 4.1 Vietnam’s Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index

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It is in the areas of infrastructure and environmental sustainability that Vietnam receives some of its lowest competitiveness scores. Many sub-indexes reveal extremely poor performance such as lax environmental regulation (115th), limited water treatment (107th), high levels of emissions (128th) and deforestation (103rd) (WEF, 2017). The organisation suggests that to increase national tourism competitiveness, Vietnam should focus on solving environmental matters to maintain sustainability.

It is also important to note, however, that the WEF reviewers also feel that tourism is not highly prioritised at a national level when it comes to effective policy formulation and integration into broader economic, environmental and social policy. Reflecting these themes, the recent Vietnam Travel and Tourism Summit (2018) saw delegates including authorities, businesspeople and experts, pointing out the major problems facing Vietnamese tourism. These included insufficient and, in some cases, ageing infrastructure, strict tourist visa regulations, the relatively low budget allocated to promotion, and weak stakeholder collaboration (VnExpress, 2018a).

In response to these pressures the Vietnam Government has made steps to develop Vietnam tourism as a key economic sector through a number of action plans and strategies that range from national to local in scale. Strict visa regulations are gradually being loosened and in 2018 Vietnam allowed residents from 45 countries to use electronic visas, and travellers from 24 nations were exempt from needing a visa (VNAT, 2018). The challenge of limited resourcing for tourism promotion activities has been met in part by the establishment in 2018 of the Vietnam Tourism Development Fund. This fund supports tourism planning, market research, product development and promotional activities. The fund receives contributions not only from the state government but also the private sector and other organisations. This initiative also

highlights the fact that the government sees the need to foster (and leverage from) greater stakeholder collaboration in tourism development (VOV, 2018). Despite these initiatives it is clear that Vietnam lags behind several of its regional neighbours in terms of tourism competitiveness, including in the important area of environmental sustainability (WEF, 2017)

4.2 Towards sustainable tourism in Vietnam

While the tourism sector is becoming a greater priority area in the development strategy of Vietnam, various efforts are also being made to ensure that Vietnam tourism does not just focus on untrammelled growth but also moves toward more sustainable forms of development.

In its national development strategy, the Vietnamese Government highlights the necessity of integrating cultural-social development and environmental conservation into tourism advancement in order to maintain sustainability for the whole nation (Vietnam Agenda 21, 2004; GOV, 2017a). Resolution 08 was launched by the Politburo in 2017 to show a strong determination to turn Vietnam tourism into a spearhead economic activity with a goal to “develop sustainable tourism; preserve and promote good cultural and traditional values of the nation; protect environment and nature; solve effectively issues relating to labour, employment and social security (Politburo, 2017, p. 2). The ‘National Tourism Development Strategy to 2020’ also emphasises the need to develop eco-tourism and green tourism and link tourism activities to protecting natural resources and conserving biodiversity (GOV, 2017b). Cultural tourism is also encouraged to develop in a way that preserves traditional culture and indigenous customs (GOV, 2017b).

There are, however, apparent contradictions between economic growth and sustainable development goals in several of these strategies. For example, the national government has set a target to welcome 30–32 million international tourists and 130 million domestic tourists to the country by 2025 (GOV, 2018). In other words, in the next six years, the number of foreign visitors to Vietnam will double while the number of domestic travellers will grow by more than 60% over 2018 levels. Efforts to reach this ambitious goal without effective management will undoubtedly put pressure on local resources and yet there is no clear strategy in place to provide a framework for managing this scale of visitor growth. Recently Vietnam has witnessed the shortcomings and environmental restrictions caused by the dramatic growth of mass tourism (Tseng et al., 2018). Indeed, there are growing concerns related to over-tourism and resultant unsustainable development outcomes for destination and regions.

Policies and institutional frameworks have been changed recently, such as the launch of Vietnam's Tourism Law 2017 which enacts provisions for managing the tourism industry more tightly and preventing organisations or individuals from creating negative impacts on the environment and society (National Assembly of Vietnam, 2017). However, the application and implementation of the policies and legislation in practice must deal with many difficulties due to the lack of detailed standards, poor monitoring systems and a lack of strict and enforceable sanctions.

The Vietnam National Environmental Report (2010–2015) showed that tourism created significant negative impacts on the environment at a national scale. In various tourist destinations in Vietnam, environmental pollution and social disturbances have occurred (Politburo, 2017; VNAT, 2018). The dramatic increase of tourists has led to the growing demand for natural resources and the release of increasing amounts of garbage, sewage

and other hazardous substances into the environment (MONRE, 2016). In recent years, pollution has been reported in many tourist sites from nature reserves to coastal urban cities. This state of affairs reflects growing challenges with uncontrolled waste disposal, transport and business emissions, and inappropriate and non-compliant construction of tourism infrastructure (Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, 2017; Nhan Dan, 2018).

According to the World Bank, Vietnam loses at least 69 million USD income from the tourism industry each year in its efforts to mitigate the negative environmental impacts caused by poor waste treatment systems (cited by MONRE, 2017). The change in natural biodiversity and the increasing number of solid wastes, especially plastics, has made tourists and beaches less visited by tourists (MONRE, 2017).

The recent environmental degradation relating to tourism activities has been a result of a limited management system without a specialised agency in charge of environment management and no detailed guidelines. Limited collaboration between stakeholders also creates a problem, as there is a need to take an interdisciplinary approach to environmental management in tourism destinations. Vietnamese law stipulates that tourism business projects must undertake environmental impact assessments and must comply with the law on environmental protection and biodiversity conservation. However, in recent years, several tourism projects have been completed and created negative impacts that stemmed from weak regulatory activity by local authorities. These have, in several cases, led to strong opposition being expressed by local communities, associations and researchers, such as the case of Son Tra Peninsula in Da Nang City in 2017 (VnExpress, 2017).

In terms of economic and socio-cultural aspects, tourism has created numerous benefits for local communities in Vietnam such as helping to preserve cultural heritage, fostering civic pride, generating employment opportunities, poverty alleviation and improving residents' living standards (Pham, 2012; Adongo, Choe, & Han, 2017; VNAT, 2018). However, tourism has also created social disturbances that have hindered sustainable development in several tourist destinations in the country. For instance, the research by Pham and Lam (1999) points out that tourism growth has caused breakdowns in traditional social and familial structures in Sapa. Furthermore, commercializing of culture has led to a loss of traditional lifestyles and culture among ethnic communities (Pham and Lam, 1999). Other negative impacts of tourism are the disruption of rural labour markets (Le & Rinraij, 2015; Pham & Lam, 1999) or increasing pollution and inflation (Suntikul et al., 2016).

Growing numbers of conferences, workshops and training courses focused on sustainable tourism development are taking place at local, regional and national scales in Vietnam. These events are efforts of the Vietnamese government and local authorities to raise awareness of the importance of sustainable development of tourism among communities and the private sector. However, the conflict between sustainable use of resources and tourism growth again raises its head on occasion. For example, in December 2018, the First National Summit on Travel & Tourism was organised with two main topics: 'Potential Opportunities and Strategic Planning for Sustainable Development' and 'Making Tourism a Spearhead Economic Sector of Vietnam'. This was the largest national event ever to concentrate on sustainable tourism development with the participation of stakeholders in the tourism industry including government representatives, leaders of relevant ministries, researchers, experts and domestic and

foreign entrepreneurs. Nevertheless, a review of the conference content shows that most of the summit's discussions still revolved around issues relating to economic impacts and finding solutions to enhancing business profitability, rather than on the broader dimensions of environmental and cultural sustainability (VnExpress, 2018a). This highlights the fact that although awareness of sustainable tourism has been growing, economic return remains the focus of many key stakeholders at the national scale.

There have been several initiatives, such as 'green' labels or certificates designed to encourage tourism businesses to embrace the concept of sustainability, but their effectiveness is limited and has not proven to be long lasting. For instance, in 2012, The Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism issued a sustainable tourism certificate called 'Green Lotus Label' for tourism enterprises, which met a set of standards on environmental protection. Until 2015, only 33 accommodations had been granted this label (VNAT, 2015) and there has not been any progress of this programme since 2016. Instead, the Vietnam Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism has been training and encouraging tourism enterprises to meet the unified ASEAN green standard system that exists across Southeast Asian countries. In 2018, Vietnam won 14 prizes based on the sustainable development criteria of the ASEAN Tourism Forum (ATF) and notably Hue City won the award 'ASEAN Clean Tourist City'.

4.3 The case of Hue City

Hue City is located at the centre of Thua Thien Hue Province in the North Central Coast of Vietnam. The province has a significant location on the North-South axis of roads, railways, airways and sea routes. A convenient transportation system helps Hue to easily

connect with major cities such as Hanoi (675 km to the north) and Ho Chi Minh City (1,060 km to the south) and nearby key economic zones, for instance, Chan May-Lang Co, Chu Lai Open Economic Zone and Dung Quat Industrial Park. Furthermore, Hue is a key part of the 'Middle World Heritage Road', which also includes Hoi An-Quang Nam, Da Nang and Quang Binh, and is designed to promote tourism in Vietnam's central coast. Thua Thien Hue Province also has convenient links with several provinces in Thailand, Laos and Myanmar along its East-West economic corridor. Therefore, many tourists from neighbouring countries travelled to Hue City via road networks (TTHPPC, 2018).

In addition to its strategic location, Hue City also boasts diverse landscapes with all types of terrain from mountains to plains, and rivers to lakes, which spread over a small area of 70.67 km² (Department of Statistics of Hue City, 2018). A set of natural attractions including Huong River, Vong Canh Hill, Thuy Tien Lake and Ngu Binh Mountain, are located close to the city. The combination of beautiful natural scenes and ancient architectural works creates the city's special attractiveness, which is rare in Vietnam.

Weather and climate are also important factors affecting tourism development in the region. The climate in Thua Thien Hue province is tropical monsoon, a transition from equatorial Asia to the inland monsoon, created by the transitional climate between the North and the South of Vietnam. The province has a hot and dry season and a cooler and wet rainy season. From August to October, typhoons often appear and create many difficulties for residents' and tourism activities (HCPC, 2010).

In the history of Vietnam, Hue (also as known as Thuan Hoa or Phu Xuan) was an important place where many significant events occurred and where many cultures

intersected. Therefore, Hue's culture to this day is the synthesis of many layers of cultural influences through various historical periods.

From 192 AD to the end of 12th century, the province was part of the Lam Ap kingdom and then Champa kingdom. In the middle of the 16th century, the region was renamed Thuan Hoa (which includes three provinces of Thua Thien Hue, Quang Tri and Quang Binh today). In the 17th century, the capital of Dang Trong, which had the name Phu Xuan, was established along the Perfume River's banks. The construction of this urban central is considered as the first step for the urbanisation of modern-day Hue City. Under the last feudal regime of Vietnam, the Imperial City (The Citadel) was established on the north bank of Perfume River. The Nguyen monarchy constructed a complex of monuments including not only the Citadel but also emperors' tombs, temples, and palaces both in the city centre and also surrounding areas. Based on their outstanding global cultural values, the Hue complex of monuments and Hue Royal Ceremonial Music were received World Heritage Status from UNESCO in 1993 and 2008. This rich heritage is a key tourist attraction in the city (Bui, 2016).

During the French colonial period (1858–1945), the southern river bank area was developed as a new urban area, with various French architectural influences remaining to this day, such as An Dinh Palace and Morin Hotel, Trang Tien Bridge and villas. Hue therefore represents an intersection of Western and Eastern cultures and architecture and this has created several unique features of the city. Hue also retains a wide range of historical sites such as monuments of the Vietnam War and religious architecture. The city is also well known for its local cuisine, folk music, traditional handicraft villages and various festivals.

Today Hue is a mid-sized city in Vietnam with a population of nearly 356,000 people and a population density of 5040 people per km² (Department of Statistics of Hue City, 2018). Although the city has changed due to economic development, the people of Hue are still trying to keep their cultural heritage and way of life alive. Sophisticated hospitality, unique culinary arts and a gentle lifestyle are valuable cultural values to be preserved (TTHPPC, 2013). The reasonable population density in a medium urban space, relatively slow lifestyle, friendly residents and low crime rate help Hue maintain the image of a peaceful ancient capital. Tourists visit the city not only for the world cultural heritage but also for a unique sense of place which is different from many busier urban tourism experiences in Vietnam.

4.4 Tourism and economic growth in Hue

Thua Thien Hue province is not only a cultural centre but also a key economic zone of Central Coastal Vietnam. Since 2014, the annual gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of the province has increased steadily at just under 8% (TTHPPC, 2019). Over a ten-year period GDP per capita in the province more than doubled, rising from 705 USD in 2008 to 1,750 USD in 2018 (TTHPPC, 2019). Although it is a significant improvement, this number is considerably lower than the average GDP per capita of Vietnam, which was estimated to be 2687 USD in 2018 (GSOVN, 2019). In 2017, the competitiveness of the province was placed at 29th out of 63 provinces and cities nationwide (Malesky et al., 2018) and over the past ten years there has been no significant improvement in this ranking. In its quest to improve the economy of Thua Thien Hue, the local government has made efforts such as upgrading infrastructure systems and offering more incentives to encourage private businesses to develop, and also attract external investment (TTHDT, 2019).

Thua Thien Hue Province's economy is mainly based on the service sector which accounted for 50.2% of total economic activity in 2017 (Department of Statistics of Thua Thien Hue Province, 2017). In the service sector of the province, tourism is the most important industry, and one of the main generators of provincial economic growth. Figure 4.2 illustrates that tourist arrivals to Thua Thien Hue Province have increased gradually over the last five years. During this period, there was no dramatic increase in domestic tourists, but the number of international tourists increased significantly over three, years by 85% from 1,052,952 arrivals in 2016 to 1,951,461 arrivals in 2018. According to the Department of Tourism of Thua Thien Hue Province (2019), 2018 was a successful year with many ground-breaking achievements. The total number of international and domestic tourists marked a new record to reach 4.3m arrivals, an increase of 14% over the same period. However, only 50% of the 2m international visitors in 2018 stayed overnight in the province.

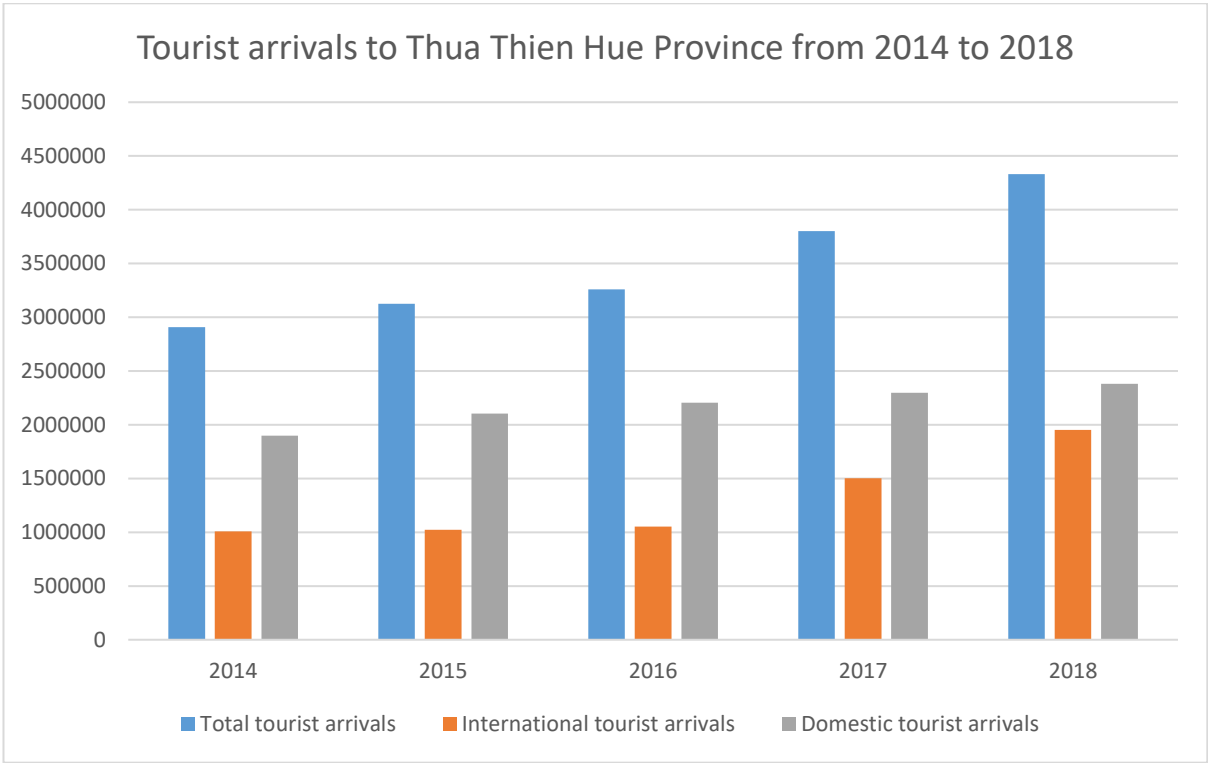


Figure 4.2 Tourist arrivals to Thua Thien Hue Province from 2014 to 2018.

Source: Adapted from Department Tourism of Thua Thien Hue Province (2019)

A decade ago, most of the tourists visiting Hue came from Western Europe and the United States. In recent years, there has been a big shift in the market share of international visitors with the Northeast Asian tourist market, including South Korea and Japan, increasing quite rapidly. In 2018, South Korea became the largest market of Thua Thien Hue province, accounting for 29.3% of arrivals, followed by France 9%, Thailand 6.6%, United Kingdom 6.1%, the United States 5.9%, Germany 5.3%, and Australia 4.3%. The direct revenue from international and domestic tourism was estimated at 4,473 billion VND in 2018 (up 65% within five years), and the sector directly contributed 11.3 trillion VND to the provincial economy in 2018 (TTHDT, 2019). The tourism industry also created over 12,500 direct jobs for residents in 2017 and contributed to improving their living standards throughout the province (TTHDT, 2018).

Hue City is the centre of tourism activities and the core of economic development in Thua Thien Hue Province. International tourism featured quite early in Hue City under the French colonial period. International tourism activities started in Hue in the early 20th century. The Vietnam War stopped tourism activities from 1957 until 1975 when the country gained independence and unity. Soon after, Thua Thien Hue Tourism Company was established in 1976 and later became a core state-owned enterprise guiding tourism development in Hue. A turning point for the growth of Hue tourism was when UNESCO recognised the Hue complex of monuments as a world cultural heritage site in 1993. Hue City, as a key hub for cultural heritage, attracted increasing numbers of international and domestic tourists and connected them to other parts of the

province via a range of tours. With its unique cultural-historical values and beautiful natural landscape, Hue became one of the most popular tourist destinations in Vietnam.

Despite the fluctuations of the world economy and Vietnam, Hue City tourism has maintained a pattern of stable growth for a long time. In 2018 the total number of visitors to Hue City was estimated at 2.6 million, an increase of 10.6% over 2017. Tourism contributed 2,750 billion VND to the city in 2018, up 18.5% over 2017 (HCPC, 2019). In accommodation and food services alone, there were 292 businesses in 2016, with 5460 employees. Tourism has created various job opportunities for Hue City locals in related services such as transportation, and communication. Besides positive economic impacts, tourism also has contributed to cultural preservation in Hue City by supporting the recovery, restoration and conservation of cultural heritage (Bui, 2016). In the last two decades, Hue city has organised many major cultural events including the Hue Festival and Hue traditional craft festival to promote the city's traditional heritage to tourists.

Chapter 5 Towards Sustainable Tourism Development in Hue City

To investigate the role of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable urban tourism development, it is first necessary to understand stakeholders' awareness of, and efforts to implement, sustainable development policies and approaches in the city. This chapter presents the perspectives and opinions of key stakeholders in the Hue tourism sector who took part in the research interviews.

5.1 Stakeholder awareness of sustainable tourism development

This section presents and discusses stakeholders' awareness of the general concept of sustainable tourism and also outlines their opinions on the current state of sustainable tourism development in Hue City. The practical engagement of their organisations in sustainable tourism development processes is also discussed.

Interviewees were asked to provide their understanding of 'sustainable tourism development' and were not given any guidance as to the meaning of the term. Table 5.1 provides a simple summary of how stakeholder groups differed in their views. While the group of people from the public and academic sectors had a relatively homogeneous perspective, participants from the private sector exhibit a more diverse array of opinions.

Table 5.1 Perspectives of stakeholders on sustainable tourism development

	Number of interviewees	Could not give a clear answer	Environment emphasis	Economic emphasis	Social-cultural emphasis	Mention three * dimensions
Tourism enterprises (Private sector)	19	2 (11%)	4 (21%)	9 (47%)	3 (16%)	4 (21%)
Local authorities (Public sector)	6	0	0	0	2 (33%)	4 (67%)
Educators and researchers (Academic sector)	4	0	0	0	1 (25%)	3 (75%)

Note: * Participants could have mentioned all economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable tourism but only emphasised one or two dimensions. Therefore, the total percentage of each sector might add up to more than 100%.

Those working in public and academic sectors tended to have a deeper and more holistic awareness of sustainable tourism development than the participants from the private sector in Hue City. A more limited awareness and a focus on economic dimensions characterised the information provided by a number of enterprises – both large and small. Nevertheless, there was a significant number of participants from the private sector paying attention to the need for environmental protection and the importance of increasing beneficial outcomes for local communities through sustainable tourism development.

Among the private sector participants, there were considerable differences in viewpoints and awareness levels. A manager of a three-star hotel commented that:

“Awareness of sustainable tourism development among many enterprises in Hue tourism sector is still vague.”

There were two participants (11% of participants working in the private sector) who could not give definite answers and admitted that they were not at all knowledgeable of what the term ‘sustainable tourism’ means. An emphasis on the economic aspect of sustainable tourism development was quite common among most of the interviewees from the private sector. Nine people (48% of interviewees working in tourism enterprises), described sustainable tourism development as a strategy to achieve longer term business success, maintain their companies’ brands by providing high quality service and products to tourists over time, and offering a stable and secure income for employees. The owner of a hotel group stated:

“For our company, sustainable tourism development means maintaining the business’ reputation, long-term benefits and stable income for our staff. As long as the employees are loyal to the company, we can achieve long-run success together.”

The director of a food-related business stated that:

“Sustainable tourism development is building a house from the foundation, step by step, firmly and for the long term. Our business appreciates each group of tourists and aims to provide good quality products to sustain a stable source of long-term custom.”

Four respondents (21% of total participants working in the private sector) emphasised the importance of environmental resource protection in defining sustainable tourism development. Stressing the need to manage resources for both tourists and future generations of locals, an events company director noted that:

“Sustainable tourism development is using all of the resources at a destination to develop tourism without creating negative impacts on

future generations. It is necessary to protect limited resources and ensure environmental protection.”

Similarly, the owner of a tour operation said:

“It is essential to protect, reinvest, nurture our resources and not exhaustively exploit them. The goal of sustainable tourism development is to keep these resources growing, maintain heritage so that the next generations can enjoy the destination’s resources.”

There were, however, three participants in this environmentally aware group who admitted that although sustainable tourism development was one of their business goals, this was not a priority and profit was still their most important target when it comes to business performance. They revealed that environmentally friendly policies were applied in their organisations, but only if it did not impact negatively on their bottom line. As the general manager of a hotel said:

“Sustainable development is protecting the environment and tourism resources. In our hotel, the sustainable development goal is important, but our profit target is still placed at the top.”

There were three interviewees (16%) from the private sector who emphasised the socio-cultural dimensions of sustainable tourism development with a focus on increasing local community well-being and creating profits for residents. The general manager of a four-star hotel stated that:

“Sustainable tourism development means using a destination's resources reasonably to develop tourism and especially help local communities have better livelihoods without suffering from negative tourism impacts.”

A small tour operator added that:

“More than anyone else, locals are the ones who understand deeply and bond closely to their homeland so that they can develop tourism well in the long-term. Sustainable tourism needs to create opportunities for residents to participate in the value chain and benefit from it.”

These opinions reflect a possible shift in the orientation of stakeholders in the private sector. Bui (2009) found that no tourism enterprises in Hue City, when asked to express their understanding of sustainable tourism development, focused on socio-cultural dimensions and the local community. Indeed, none of the respondents in his research mentioned improvements in other stakeholders' well-being (Bui, 2009).

Only four respondents (21% of participants working in tourism enterprises) mentioned all three pillars of sustainable tourism development (economic, environmental and socio-cultural dimensions) when discussing their interpretation of sustainable tourism development. These interviewees all stated that sustainable tourism development was prioritised within their enterprises' broader development plans. The diversity of stakeholders' perception of sustainable tourism development is understandable given the complexity and breadth of the concept (McKercher, 2003). Hardy and Pearson (2018) argue that an individual stakeholder's attitude towards sustainable tourism development may not align with their broader stakeholder group. These differences in awareness and attitudes can lead to different actions and create conflicts even between stakeholders that share many characteristics in common (Hardy & Pearson, 2018).

Among the government officers, educators and researchers taking part in this study, most participants had a relatively holistic perspective on sustainable tourism development. There were four governmental authorities (67% of the public group), and three researchers/educators (75% of the academic group) who described sustainable tourism development as a long-term development strategy that maintains the destination's sustainability based on three intertwined pillars: economy, society-culture and environment. A chief officer of a local government body noted that:

“Sustainable tourism is a combination of many different factors based on the three main pillars of environment, culture-society and economy. This is a long-term development strategy for a destination to satisfy the needs of tourists and the community in a way that will not affect future generations.”

Interestingly, a tourism researcher and a governmental officer both actively outlined the five key areas of sustainable tourism development suggested by the UNWTO (see UNWTO, 2017, p. 5):

1. Inclusive and sustainable economic growth
2. Social inclusiveness, employment and poverty reduction
3. Resource efficiency, environmental protection and climate change
4. Cultural values, diversity and heritage
5. Mutual understanding, peace and security.

There were two governmental officers (33% of participants working in public) and one researcher (25% of the academic group) who emphasised the importance of protecting and supporting local communities in tourism development. One senior staff member of a governmental department stated that:

“Sustainable tourism must help to protect natural, cultural and living resources for locals. Visitors should be educated to raise their awareness of their potential contribution to the development of the local community, support residents’ lives and help to preserve the heritage of the destination.”

All participants working in the public sector confirmed that sustainable tourism development was the priority for their organizations’ activities and that their organisations had made many efforts to promote it.

Overall, although there are differences in their perception of the term ‘sustainable tourism development’, all the participants agreed that sustainable tourism is important

and necessary for the development of Hue City. As a respondent working in public sector commented:

“I think everyone in this industry has an awareness of sustainable development at certain levels and want to foster sustainable tourism. However, there are many factors of the macro and micro environment that lead stakeholders to have different opinions on the concept and how to achieve it.”

5.2 Stakeholders and sustainable tourism development in Hue City

This section presents the interviewee feedback on the status of sustainable tourism development in Hue and outlines some of the actions taken by stakeholders to implement sustainable urban tourism. The challenges facing stakeholders aiming to promote sustainable tourism in Hue City are also outlined.

The researcher asked interviewees to evaluate the current sustainability of tourism in Hue City on the scale from 1-very unsustainable to 5-very sustainable. Figure 5.1 shows the responses from the 26 interviewees who responded to the question. Overall, the sustainability of Hue City's tourism receives a mean score of =3.7. The participants from the public sector evaluated the level of sustainability in Hue tourism as high (mean=3.9) and believed that this was largely related to the implementation of suitable development strategies. Participants from the private sector and academic sector were slightly less positive in their evaluations (means of 3.7 and 3.6 respectively). It is important to note that 20 participants (77% of interviewees who answered the question) thought that sustainability of environmental and social-cultural dimensions is stronger than for the economic elements.

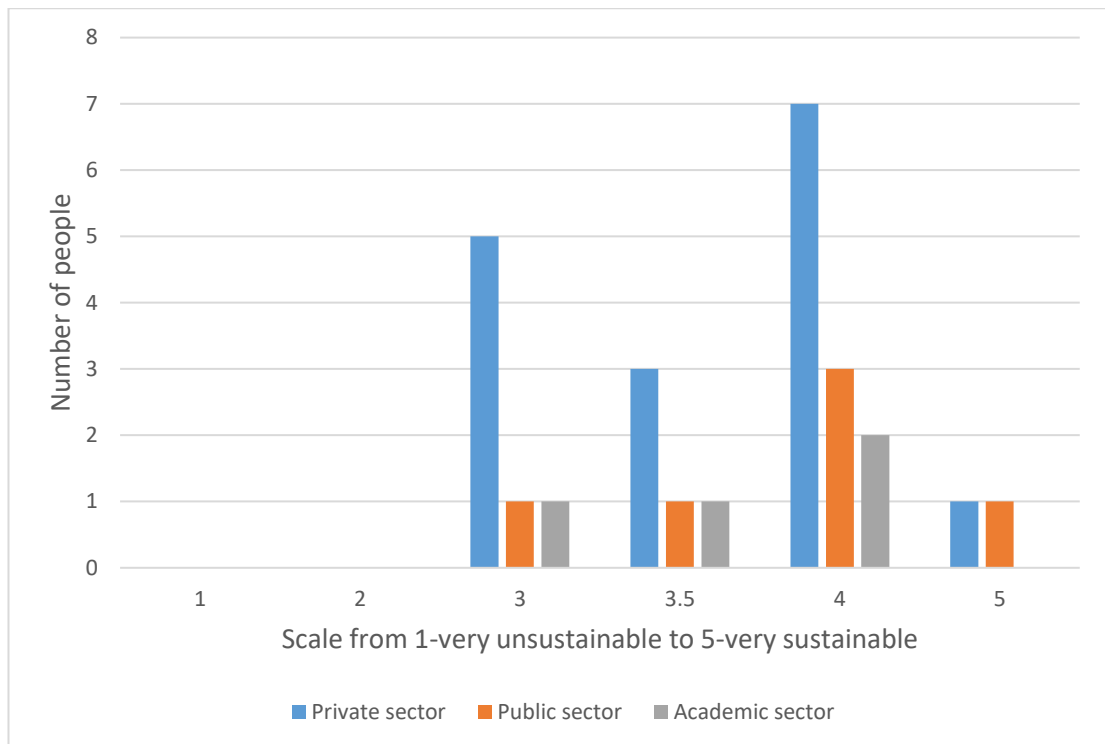


Figure 5.1 Stakeholders' evaluation of the sustainability level of tourism in Hue City

Three interviewees stated that they could not give a specific numeric rating to answer this question because, in their opinion, sustainability is too complicated a concept to be summarised in just one number. Nevertheless, they shared broader views stating that the sustainability of Hue tourism on environmental and socio-cultural dimensions is relatively good, but the economic sustainability of the destination is not strong.

It is noteworthy that participants generally emphasised the environmental and cultural sustainability of Hue City. Some interviewees showed their pride in Hue's reputation as a green tourism city and as a major cultural centre in Vietnam. One of the participants from the provincial government proudly stated that:

"In comparison with other tourist destinations in Vietnam, Hue is the best city in cultural preservation and environmental protection."

All of the respondents from the public sector and education sectors mentioned international titles and awards that Hue City had received as evidence of its sustainability. For example, in 2014, the city won the “ASEAN Environmentally Sustainable Cities Award”. Two years later, Hue was the first city in Vietnam to be recognised as a “National Green City” by WWF after passing many stringent requirements. As a member of the programme, Hue pledged to reduce by 20% carbon emission levels by 2020, (from 2011 levels). To achieve the Green City Pledge, the city has adopted seven specific action plans focusing on: greening urban areas, developing green tourism, providing sufficient water and waste treatment, installing smart public lighting systems, increasing use of renewable energy, and prioritising and incentivising use of environmentally friendly construction materials (VnExpress, 2016). Recently, Hue city received the title of “The Clean Tourism City of ASEAN in 2018” (Thua Thien Hue Newspaper, 2018).

All of the participants from government and also tourism experts pointed to a clear vision toward sustainable tourism that is presented in various development plans of the city. In 2010, with an advisory group of international tourism experts, Hue City’s People’s Committee established a plan entitled “Planning Sustainable Development of Hue Tourism to the year 2020” (HCPC, 2010). After that, there was the “Master plan for Thua Thien Hue Tourism Development: 2013-2020” (TTHPPC, 2013) developed by the provincial government. The latter is backed up by the “Action plan for Hue-Green City by 2020” (TTHPPC, 2015). These plans focus on developing environment-friendly tourism such as ecotourism and green tourism along with broader solutions to protect traditional culture in Hue City.

A tourism researcher commented that:

“Hue tourism is following a well-planned development strategy. As a result, the city's landscape and environment are protected well.”

Various participants working in the public sector emphasised that Thua Thien Hue provincial government has an adequate vision and determination to develop Hue into a green urban destination and promote a sustainable tourism destination. For instance, a former leader of the provincial government asserted that:

“Sustainable tourism has been the priority in development strategies of Hue City and Thua Thien Hue province for a long time. Environmental protection must be associated with tourism development.”

The interviews indicate that government authorities in Hue have a relatively good understanding of sustainable tourism and are making efforts to promote it through institutional frameworks and relevant development strategies.

5.3 Stakeholders and environmental sustainability

Several interviewees from the public sector mentioned that central and local government have various regulations in place to prevent tourism stakeholders from creating negative impacts on the urban environment. For example, regulations exist on the density of construction in urban areas, the maximum height of buildings near heritage sites, and the proportion of green space in tourism projects (Thua Thien Hue Department of Culture, Sport and Tourism, 2013). A participant working for a government agency also confirmed that:

“Every tourism development project proposed must conduct environmental impact assessments. We are really careful in reviewing tourism projects to avoid approving those that can negatively affect the environment.”

Similarly, an interviewee working for the Thua Thien Hue Department of Tourism asserted that:

“We will not trade off environmental sustainability for economic benefits by letting the tourism industry grow out of control.”

Within the private sector, all the participants stated that their firms strictly abide by legal provisions on environmental protection as well as following other guidelines and policies set by the government. Fourteen participants (74% of respondents working in the private sector) said that their businesses always try to work to improve or protect the surrounding environment – saving energy, reducing and treating solid waste and wastewater, and also ensuring they meet the requirements of authorities and are prepared for their periodic inspections.

Three respondents (16% of participants from the private sector) pointed out that while their own enterprises comply with regulations on environmental protection, many other firms (in their opinion) either do not abide by the law or make ‘deals’ with local authorities. A participant gave an example that some hotels only pay attention to environmental performance when local authorities are about to visit to check their accommodation. These respondents expressed their doubt about the government’s environmental regulations and, most particularly, their implementation. They also highlighted the inequity they saw in the enforcement of regulations. A general manager of a four-star hotel noted:

"My hotel always strictly complies with the laws and spends a lot of money on building a waste treatment system following the legal regulations. It is unfair when several hotels do not follow the laws, but they still operate normally and compete with us."

Similarly, a manager of a small hotel shared worries about the lack of fairness in the implementation and regulation of sustainable tourism practices because his business seriously applies sustainable tourism practices while:

“...some enterprises make deals with government authorities and use the term “environment protection” as an advertising trick instead of turning it into a core value of the business.”

This reflects the findings of Nunez (2007) and Buckley (2012) that tourism businesses, driven by a simple profit motive may advocate and lobby to avoid government regulations on environmental protection. It is clear that in some cases this advocacy and lobbying may even be construed to be corrupt in nature.

Seventeen participants (89% of interviewees from the private sector) stated that their firms adopt environmental initiatives effectively and engage in training or educational programmes. They stated that they take part in programmes initiated by government or professional associations to raise awareness of environmentally sustainable tourism practices such as “Action Month on the Environment”, “Earth Hour” and a recently instituted campaign to collect garbage in common spaces such as parks within the city. Several participants working in big hotels said that initiatives like “Earth Hour” help them to save a certain amount of operating cost and were also good for their reputation, so they are eager to join such actions.

Most of the tourism enterprises in Hue City are small and medium in size, and some respondents stated that limited resources, especially financial and time, are a major factor hindering SME from promoting sustainable tourism and pursuing environmental actions. In a similar vein, Budeanu et al. (2016) state that small and medium-sized enterprises often lack capital, expertise and time and this hinders them from improving their performance in adopting and maintaining sustainability initiatives. Nevertheless, there were four participants from small enterprises that stated their firms had actively adopted environmentally friendly practices, even when this had created a negative impact on short term profitability.

For instance, the manager of a small hotel shared that:

“My hotel is trying to replace plastic bags by products made from environmentally-friendly materials. The cost of alternative containers is higher than plastic bags’, so we have had to sacrifice a portion of our profit.”

In another example, a director of a small tour operator shared that he convinced an international non-government organisation (NGO) to give his firm financial support to install solar-panels at many houses of locals who are running home-stays at an area in Hue City. This project aims to promote using renewable energy in tourism services. This example shows that even when a small-scale business is lacking money, there may be other funding options available to help in finding opportunities to improve enterprises based environmental sustainability initiatives.

An owner of another local tour operator also shared that her company contributed financial support to environmental preservation, and in the future, she wants to help the local community financially by funding for more public toilets and rubbish bins to reduce environmental pollution. She stated that:

“We will keep promoting environmental preservation and sustainable development as much as our capacity allows. I believe that if we start to ignite the fire of enthusiasm, others will come to help spread it in the community.”

These findings appear to contradict the results of Bui’s research (2009), which showed that smaller enterprises in Hue tourism industry are unlikely to pay attention to environmental issues and are far less likely to do so than their larger counterparts. They are consistent, however, with the argument of several researchers that small business firms may indeed have a strong sense of commitment to the destination’s future as long-term community members (Swarbrooke, 1999; Post, 1993). These operators may be

focused on sustaining local community and surroundings rather than simply maximising their business profit (Ateljevic & Doorne, 2000; Getz & Carlson, 2000; Dewhurst & Thomas, 2003).

Seven interviewees (24% of total participants) highlighted negative environmental and socio-cultural impacts specifically related to tourism and discussed the low level of economic sustainability in Hue tourism. As one government official said:

“Thua Thien Hue Province and Hue City have many development plans and strategies, but their success is limited because they lack specific guidelines and implementation plans in the short term.”

Meanwhile, another government officer also gave a critical comment that:

“The city has master plans for sustainable tourism development but cannot master all of the resources to implement those plans.”

This particular interviewee explained that the challenge lies in the fact that Hue City stakeholders on their own lack the financial budgets, robust information, implementation techniques, and human resources to achieve long-term sustainable tourism outcomes. Each stakeholder needs varying types and levels of resources to achieve their goals and will not usually have the ability or means to possess or access all types of these resources (Fyall et al., 2012). This is the reason why stakeholder collaboration is so vital for the sustainable development of tourism destinations (Liburd, 2018).

Although 90% of the participants commented that current environmental conditions in Hue City are “quite sustainable”, there is a rising concern about environmental pollution and degradation. A tourism expert stated that:

“The process of urbanization is taking place quickly while the population density and construction work also increases rapidly. This issue combined with the increase in tourist numbers is creating more pressure on Hue City’s environment.”

It is clear to see that with the rise in numbers of both residents and tourists, the demand for resource use also surges. The amount of solid waste, wastewater, emissions and other physical impacts on the destination environment is also growing. A participant from the public sector shared their concerns about the rising air and dust pollution rooted in the growth of traffic and construction activities and in particular that they can cause negative impacts on ancient structures and important cultural heritage. There were also concerns expressed about a recent issue affecting Hue City’s environment with a key waste treatment plant in the city now overloaded and creating increasing local pollution while a new factory is still under construction (VnExpress, 2018b). A director of a tour operator argued that:

“The amount of waste has become a rising worry when there is not a proper waste classification and treatment system. Also, communities have not been well educated about sorting the waste while several residents and visitors also lack consciousness in this respect.”

Several participants also expressed their worries about the significant amount of rubbish found in, and on the banks of, the Huong River. Some highlighted the impact of tourists dropping their flower lanterns provided by local tour companies into the river, which are made of materials that do not degrade and that cause environmental pollution.

5.4 Stakeholders and socio-cultural sustainability

All of the respondents shared the same opinion that the socio-cultural dimension of Hue tourism is relatively sustainable because of the well-preserved culture and heritage and the inherently stable and resilient nature of society in the city. They asserted that tourism

created many positive impacts societal and cultural benefits and was only rarely associated with negative impacts on society in Hue City.

Respondents pointed to a range of ways in which tourism helps the city to conserve traditional culture for future generations. They argued that tourism can promote local culture to domestic and international tourists, raise levels of civic pride, strengthen harmony and unite the community, generate employment, and increase living standards of residents. In other words, tourism supports the long-term welfare and prosperity of the community in Hue. These results are in line with those of previous studies that review perceived impacts of tourism in heritage cities (Nasser, 2003; Beatley & Manning, 1997; Petrova and Hristov, 2016; Surinach & Wober, 2017).

Tourism can help to preserve not only tangible cultural heritage but also intangible values such as the Hue Royal Court music and Hue folk music. These cultural values have been presented and promoted well via various events and festivals such as the Hue Festival, Hue Handicraft Festival and Lotus Festival. A manager of an event agency said:

“Hue Festival is an important event which not only introduces local culture to tourists but also gives residents opportunities to learn from other countries’ cultures.”

In other words, these cultural events offer activities and entertainment for both tourists and residents by providing a public space for social communication and cultural exchange. Tourism enterprises also take advantage of these events to offer several tours to visitors.

Seven interviewees (24% of total participants) specifically noted that because heritage and cultural values are fundamental to tourism development in the city, this demand

would actually help to shape more sustainable outcomes than other forms of tourism.

As a manager of a tourism attraction said that:

“Hue tourism is developing toward a sustainable orientation **because** its core is culture and heritage tourism.”

A director of a tour operator further explained that:

“The majority of tourists come to Hue city for culture and heritage tourism, so they respect cultural values and behave well without creating disturbances for local society and residents.”

The director of a large hotel also commented that:

“Hue is well-known as a destination that preserves its traditional values and identities. One of the main reasons is the ‘conservative’ characteristic of Hue people. It helps them protect and maintain their traditional culture, lifestyle and landscape of the city.”

Although many respondents believed that tourism does not currently create significant social disturbances and cultural problems, five interviewees (17.2% of total participants) pointed to several difficulties and challenges, especially in the area of heritage conservation. A lack of financial support and human resources is hindering Hue City from preserving and promoting key monuments and heritage sites effectively.

Tourists to Hue City spend much of their time visiting the UNESCO world heritage site complex of Hue monuments. A large amount of the ticket fee is used to restore ancient structures. However, due to the large scale of this complex, with many palaces, tombs and buildings, the heritage conservation centre still requires more financial support from the central government, international non-government organisations and also foreign governments (such as Korea, Japan, Poland, Germany).

Many local residents live illegally in some areas within the Hue Citadel. According to a government officer these illegal ‘squatters’ have been impacting negatively on the heritage system by creating environmental pollution and encroaching upon the citadel's protective wall. In early 2019, Thua Thien Hue provincial government launched a programme to move these residents to a new site in order to protect the Hue Citadel (VOV, 2019). It is too early to judge the impact or response to this initiative but clearly it has impacted on local lives in a significant way.

Hue City boasts many other historical buildings and other tourist resources. The local government has just established a list of ancient buildings to prepare for a plan to restore them. However, the preservation of these buildings is difficult because some of them are private property or under the management of companies or non-government organisations. Therefore, to protect and promote this heritage asset, financial support and engagement of different stakeholders will be necessary. As a participant working for the government noted:

“Tourism creates many challenges for cultural heritage preservation. The connection between government, tourism enterprises and the local community are essential to protect and maintain tourism resources.”

5.5 Stakeholders and economic sustainability

Among the three pillars of sustainable development, participants evaluated that the economic dimension of Hue tourism was the least sustainable. Many interviewees, especially those from the private sector, shared the outlook that tourism in Hue City has not yet created sustainable income for enterprises or for residents.

Although Thua Thien Hue in general and Hue City in particular, have made noticeable gains in tourism there are questions about the long-term success of the industry. Many

key stakeholders who were interviewed in this research commented that the Hue tourism industry has developed steadily with minor improvements, but there has been a lack of a “breakthrough revolution” to drive greater success. Twenty-one participants (72% of total interviewees) expressed their concerns that Hue recently has been left behind due to harsh competition with other nearby tourist destinations in the region. In 2018, both Da Nang and Hoi An, which are nearby cities, welcomed more tourists than Hue and these visitors also had a longer average length of stay and generated higher income for the local economy when compared to Hue City (VNAT, 2019).

Interviewees presented many reasons to explain the current situation facing Hue tourism including poor tourism products, lack of capital, a shortage of information for both visitors and industry, overall tourism management system inconsistencies, and weak stakeholder collaboration.

A tourism expert pointed out that:

“Until today, basically Hue tourism has been based on the exhibition of natural and cultural resources, it has not created significant added value yet.”

This statement reflects the fact that the core of Hue tourism is still a simple form of visiting urban landscapes and cultural heritage for a short period of time and then moving on again. Although Hue is one of the earliest destinations to develop tourism in Vietnam, there has been little significant innovation in tourism services. According to 76% of participants (22 people), the city lacks high-value and creative tourism products that can drive long-run value added economic development. A director of a tour operator stated that:

"Hue has a large heritage system but lacks additional value added experiences to provide guests. New forms and activities of tourism should be created to help visitors interact with heritage, communicate with local people and create memorable and emotional experiences."

Nearly two thirds of participants (18 people) mentioned the shortage of entertainment activities and nightlife in the City. In an effort to improve this situation, Hue City has recently established a new 'pedestrianised' street. However, this project received mixed reactions from those interviewed. Four respondents (14% of total participants) said that the walking street is one of the most significant changes in the city because there are otherwise few opportunities for local residents and tourists to interact in pleasant outdoor spaces during the evening. They believe that street art performances and good food availability on this road could not only help the city attract more tourists but also create greater links to the local street economy. On the other hand others interviewed felt that the initiative had created a crowded and messy evening environment in a street that had now lost some of its traditional atmosphere.

Another initiative designed to spread the economic benefits of tourism is the attempt to extend tourism activities from the urban centre to peri-urban areas. A government officer stated that Hue is developing community-based eco-tourism in the suburbs of the city, including Luong Quan-Thuy Bieu and Phu Mong-Kim Long. This strategy is designed to enhance the benefits of tourism by generating local employment in areas that have suffered from 'under tourism' and to help the residents generate income from their own property such as houses and gardens, but in a way that they can control and manage. Beside creating livelihoods for locals, the owner of a tour operator that is operating tours in these areas, said this kind of product helps residents preserve their ancient garden houses and also encourages tourists to use bikes to avoid negative environmental impacts. This finding corroborates the ideas of Kusakabe, Shrestha, Kumar and Nguyen

(2015) who suggested that developing garden houses as tourist attractions can help to create jobs for locals and reduce the greenhouse gases in Hue city. The findings also reflect the work of (Nguyen, 2015) which highlighted the potential of tourism to help maintain and preserve some of the architecture and economic heritage of the village of Phuoc Tich which is located on the outskirts of Hue City.

In efforts to link tourism's economic benefits more directly to local communities, and deepen visitor experiences, three directors of tour operations shared that they have made various efforts to offer community-focused tours which bring tourists into direct contact with some of the poorer areas of the city. They shared their hope to engage residents in the tourism value chain in order to help them generate some income and improve living standards. In cooperation with one tour operator, the residents can offer home-stays and traditional food for tourists. Other operators offered tourists local tours within the city to visit garden houses and learn how to cook traditional cuisine in local homes.

All of the interviewees from local government noted that the shortage of investment capital and funding for tourism promotion was a real problem in trying to achieve economic sustainability for Hue City tourism. One provincial government official stated:

“Most of the tourism enterprises in Hue are small and medium-sized, so the shortages of many sources such as finance and human source are hindering the tourism development in the city. Local government also has a limited budget. Therefore, Hue needs strategic investments with the financial ability to develop key tourism development projects and promote tourism more actively.”

The Thua Thien Hue provincial government has recently begun to work proactively to connect local companies and foreign investors to the development of projects that can

enhance sustainability of the urban economy. A respondent from the local government noted:

“Although we have called for many investors and received many positive responses, we (the Provincial government) are aiming to process all of the project proposals carefully to ensure that we choose the best ones that promote sustainable tourism in Hue.”

This statement shows the strong influence of local government in tourism development. However, it also shows that government is under increasing pressure to generate more local benefits from tourism for economic development and to improve people's living standards. Careful consideration is essential to ensure the tourism sector in the destination can develop in such a way that local people are not removed from the economic benefits it generates and, therefore, simply carry the heavy load of negative environmental and societal impacts

Sustainable tourism is a long-term strategy, but it requires immediate and concrete actions to make it come true. Individual stakeholders can hardly achieve broader sustainable tourism goals alone without the help and support of others. The following chapter now moves on to explore in more detail collaborative activity in Hue City tourism.

Chapter 6 Stakeholder Collaboration in Sustainable Tourism Development in Hue City

This chapter presents and discusses the level and quality of collaborative activities being undertaken in the arena of sustainable tourism development in Hue City. The chapter also examines the barriers that may hinder stakeholder collaboration in support of sustainable tourism goals. Several solutions are then drawn from the research that may assist stakeholders to overcome these difficulties and challenges and strengthen stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City.

6.1 Stakeholder collaboration in the Hue tourism sector

Interviewees were asked to evaluate the general level of stakeholder collaboration in Hue tourism development on a scale from 1-very weak to 5-very strong. Of the 26 participants who responded to this question, most chose points ranging from 2 to 3. The mean score is 2.63.

Figure 6.1 shows how assessments of the level of collaboration differed by broad stakeholder groupings. The participants from the academic sector evaluated the level of stakeholder collaboration relatively high (mean=3.4), and none of them chose a score lower than 3. In contrast the mean score from the private and public sectors was only 2.6. The results reveal that stakeholder collaboration in the Hue tourism sector is not perceived to be strong and many participants expressed doubt about the ability to form and sustain collaborative relationships with other actors in the industry.

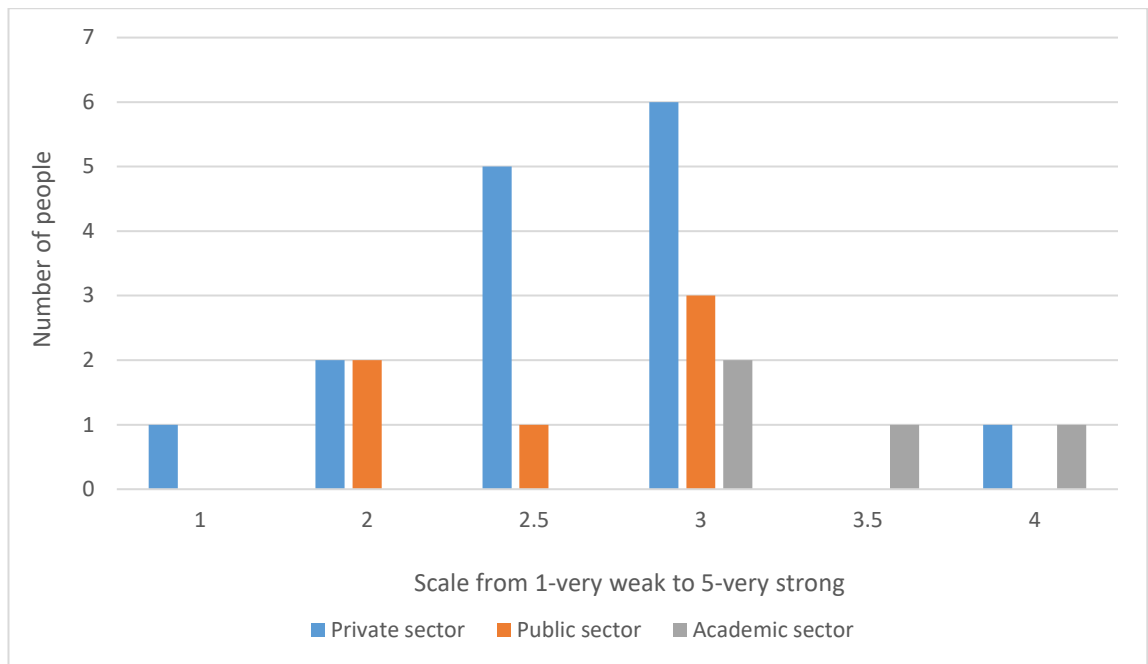


Figure 6.1 Stakeholders' evaluation of collaboration in Hue City

6.1.1 Collaboration in the public sector

Governmental authorities are powerful actors who play important roles in developing sustainable tourism in a destination (Waligo et al., 2013; Timur & Getz, 2009). Figure 6.2 illustrates the tourism administration structure influencing Hue tourism - ranging from the central government to the City's local committee. The Figure has been developed through secondary information and also details that emerged from the interviews. The tourism industry in Vietnam is controlled by a top-down management system with multi-level and cross-sectoral authorities involved. Under the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism (VNAT) plays the crucial role in state management by taking responsibility for policy making, strategic planning, promotion, managing state-owned enterprises and tourism training institutions (GOV, 2018).

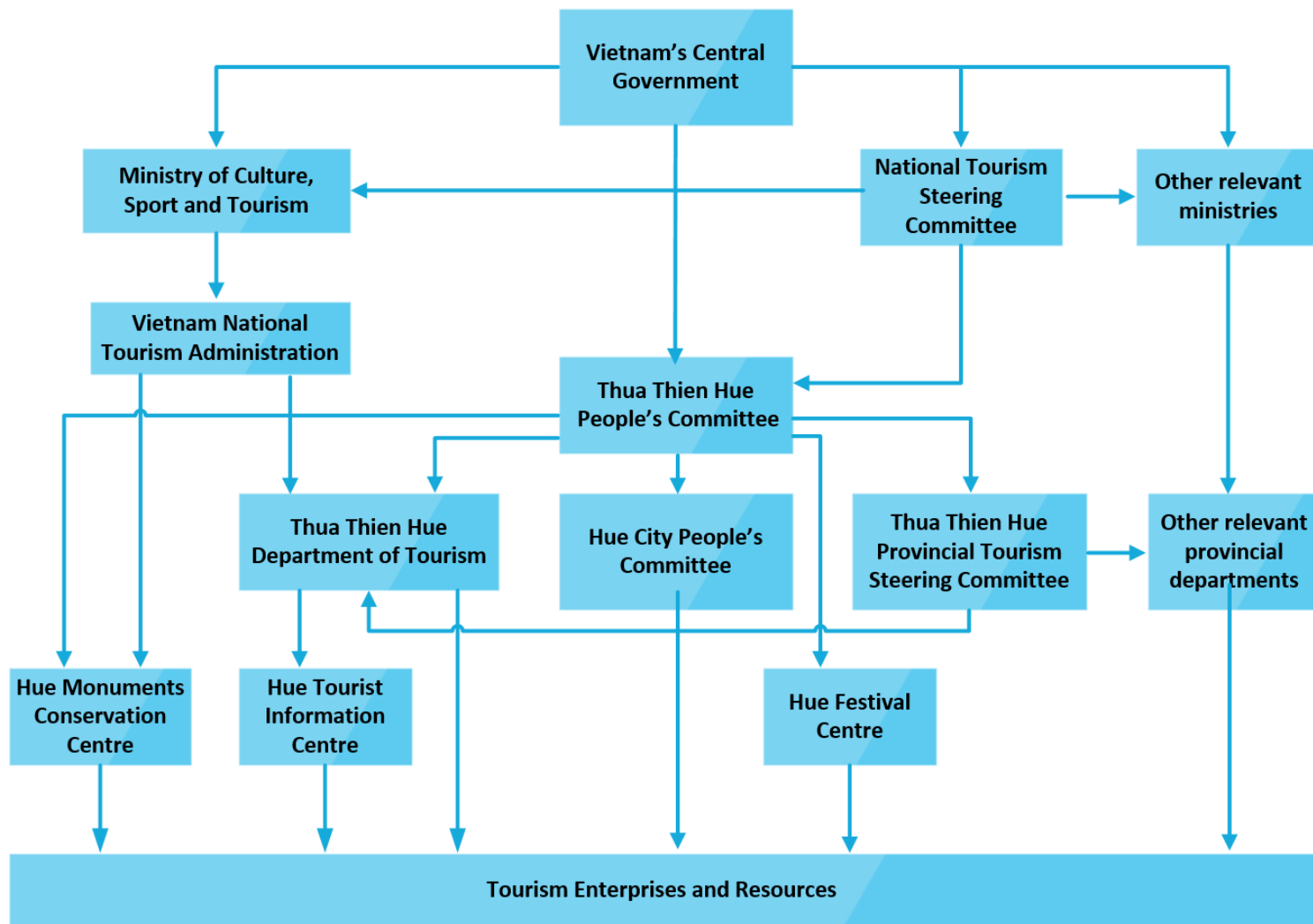


Figure 6.2 Tourism administration structure from Vietnam's central government to Hue City's local government

Tourism is a crosscutting sector with a wide range of national ministries and departments involved in managing tourism resources and enterprises. Leaders of relevant ministries are members of the National Tourism Steering Committee (NTSC), which is headed by the Deputy Prime Minister. This committee directs the coordination of these ministries and governmental authorities in 58 provinces and five municipalities around Vietnam. The NTSC is in charge of proposing tourism strategies and policies to the government, and for formulating and organising various national programmes on tourism development (GOV, 2008). Although the central government has tried to strengthen the collaboration of different actors across the public sector, the complexity associated with the crosscutting nature of tourism creates many difficulties.

Four interviewees (14% of total participants) stated that the way the governance system is coordinated from the national to the local level is inadequate. This leads to several challenges for stakeholder collaboration and tourism development. As a government officer commented:

“There are several limitations in the operation mechanism of the national tourism regulatory system which prevent stakeholders from effectively cooperating. The weak collaboration among governmental agencies across national and local scales is one of the main obstacles facing Vietnam’s sustainable tourism development.”

In Thua Thien Hue, the provincial government also oversees a tourism regulatory system including a wide range of authorities (See figure 6.2). In this structure, government bodies have various complicated connections and interactions with many public authorities. A third of participants (9 people) argued that an elaborate and asynchronous tourism management scheme creates several challenges for stakeholder collaboration around the development of sustainable tourism practices and outcomes in Hue City.

In Thua Thien Hue province and Hue City, the foremost authority in the tourism sector is the Department of Tourism. It has multiple functions such as administrative management, policy development and promotion of the destination (TTHDT, 2016). The department was merged into the Department of Culture, Sports and Tourism in 2008 and then separated and re-established as an independent department of the Provincial People's Committee in 2016. The recent changes in structure have created several difficulties for the department, as one government official pointed out:

“Since the day the Department of Tourism was re-established, we have not had a permanent official office yet and lack facilities. We are also unable to recruit more staff; a small number of officers are responsible for a large and diverse workload.”

For a long period (from December 2016 to March 2019), the Department of Tourism was led by a deputy director without an official director. A government staff member noted: “It was tough to find a suitable individual for this important position”. Various participants from both private and public sectors expressed their concern during the interviews about the absence of a public sector leader of the tourism sector who has a strong vision and the ability to lead stakeholders towards more sustainable tourism development. Both Paskaleva-Shapira and Besson (2006) and Timur and Getz (2009) note in their research that that unsettled management structures and a lack of leadership can be significant barriers to achieving sustainable tourism development.

Another public agency involved in tourism development is the Hue Monument Conservation Centre, which is under the control of the provincial committee and National Cultural Heritage Department (a part of the Ministry of Culture, Sport and Tourism). This Centre is in charge of managing, conserving and promoting the values of Hue monuments, Hue court music and other historical and cultural heritage (HMCC,

2017). Consequently, the centre plays an influential role in the sustainable tourism development of Hue tourism.

The process of preservation and restoration of Hue's cultural heritage by the Centre is supported by the Scientific Advisory Council. The Centre also collaborates with other public agencies in Thua Thien Hue province and Hue City in administrative management and tourism development. One interviewee from the Centre noted:

“Our centre is very active in cooperating with tourism enterprises, cultural and scientific organizations and related government agencies such as the Department of Tourism. Thanks to this collaboration, the Hue complex of monuments is preserved and promoted sustainably, becoming a good model of heritage conservation in the Asia – Pacific region.”

The Hue Monuments Conservation Centre also manages tourists and associated revenue related to visitors to the Citadel and several monuments in Hue City and other districts of the province. It is in this area of tourism management and revenue generation that further issues around collaboration were raised by interviewees. For example, a participant from the Department of Tourism mentioned the different opinions between his Department and the Centre about the fees charged for visiting the monuments:

“We did recommend that Hue Monuments Conservation Centre should have a clear roadmap to increase ticket prices and inform stakeholders at least six months earlier to prepare. But recently the official information about the fare adjustment was announced only one month before the change and this created several difficulties for other stakeholders, especially travel agencies, who then had to adjust tour package prices.”

In this situation, differences in opinions and ineffective communication limit stakeholder collaboration in tourism. According to Gray (1989), collaboration is a progression in which parties who hold different points of view get over their limited visions to find suitable solutions to tackle a problem. Several interviewees noted that the public

authorities in the Hue tourism sector should enhance communication to enable and strengthen collaboration.

Hue City People's Committee is also a critical agency in developing tourism within the city. An officer working for the Committee stated that the organisation actively collaborates with other governmental bodies in planning, policy-making, managing and promoting tourism development. However, the officer also mentioned that the provincial government and the city committee sometimes have significant disagreements which hinder some tourism development programmes. This finding is consistent with the research of Hatipoglu et al. (2016), who found that the power imbalances and different perspectives between government authorities operating at different levels and scales adversely impacted the process and outcomes of sustainable tourism development.

Several participants emphasised that the overlaps and inadequacies found in the tourism regulatory system in Thua Thien Hue province have hampered stakeholder collaboration in attempting to achieve sustainable tourism development in Hue City. Five participants (17%) discussed the degradation of the quality of 'ca Hue' (a traditional classical music), and also dragon boat services on the Huong River, because too many state agencies are involved in the management, and that the inevitable overlap in responsibilities means that no one is fully responsible.

While the local committee controls the wharf, the dragon boats are managed by a small co-operative, and the river police monitor the traffic activities on the river. The performances of the 'ca Hue' artists used to be managed by an organization and management centre under the Department of Culture and Sports of the province, but

this agency was dissolved in 2018. At the moment, there is no agency currently responsible for controlling the quality and price of this service. An interdisciplinary inspection team including representatives of various government agencies has been set up to inspect and supervise this service, but a government official noted in the interview that this new force is not strong enough or funded well enough to monitor on a regular basis.

These findings remain consistent with the earlier research of Bui (2009) on industry responses to sustainable tourism development initiatives in Hue's tourism sector. Bui argued that overlapping functions between governmental bodies led to ineffective destination management and outcomes. It appears that this particular issue has not improved greatly over the past decade.

Because tourism is a crosscutting sector, in 2017, Thua Thien Hue provincial government established the Steering Board for Tourism Development made up of directors of various Departments relevant to tourism development including: Tourism, Planning and Investment, Culture and Sport, Environment and Resource Management and Finance. The establishment of this board is an effort to develop a coordinated management mechanism that can enable different provincial authorities to collaborate. However, a government official who is a member of the board stated that to date it had mainly addressed broader issues of public administration rather than actively considering and promoting the notion of public agency collaboration.

Many interviewees working for government bodies pointed out that collaboration was still weak because provincial departments operating in different sectors are not often very aware of tourism and its broader significance. There is a lack of understanding

about tourism as a multi-disciplinary activity and the resultant responsibilities relating to supporting tourism development. Many public agencies only focus on their specific tasks and benefits and are not overly enthusiastic in coordinating with others to promote sustainable tourism or in seeing the ‘bigger picture’.

A shortage of financial resources is a noteworthy barrier to stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City. A respondent working for the Department of Tourism stated that:

“Public agencies are committed to cooperate to do tasks which are planned from the previous year. If there is an unusual occurrence, it will be difficult for the governmental bodies to participate in any collaboration because they must sacrifice part of their existing budgets. Although there are still agencies that try to flexibly to adjust their budgets to meet unexpected costs for these affiliate activities this remains a challenge.”

Previous research has identified a lack of financial resources as one of the main obstacles precluding stakeholder collaboration in urban tourism (d’Angella, 2007; Maxim, 2016, 2017). For the government agencies in Hue City which are under control of a strict and inflexible financial management mechanism, the budget for collaboration in tourism development is even more difficult. Therefore, some of them have to find external financial support. As one government official in Hue City People’s Committee noted:

“The city government often call for funding from domestic and international organizations to support The Hue Monument Conservation Centre in areas such as heritage preservation. If this is not available, we would have to give up financial support for other development goals such healthcare or education.”

It is not easy for the government to have enough budget to meet the demands of the sustainable development goals of the city, so they have to decide which the priority areas are at any given time. As Önder et al. (2017) pointed out, urban destinations must always

consider carefully the trade-offs involved in maintaining the balance of environmental, social-cultural and economic goals.

6.1.2 Collaboration in the private sector

Many of respondents (12 people – 63% of participants from the private sector) said that their business actively cooperated with various partners in the tourism industry and that this was important in sustaining profitability. For instance, all five participants working in the tour operations sector stated that they are collaborating well with other services suppliers such as accommodation providers, restaurants and transportation.

In another case, a participant from a transportation company shared that his enterprise has signed memorandums of understanding with several hotels and restaurants. He noted, however, that these MOUs were not formal contracts, so he relied heavily on the development of a trusting relationship with his partners.

In terms of environmental dimensions of sustainable development, there were some interview participants from hotels who noted that tour operator partners had required them to reduce using plastic bags for laundry and packaging of toiletries due to consumer and economic pressure. This is one small but concrete example of stakeholder collaboration that can contribute to broader sustainable tourism development in Hue City.

Collaboration also links into the socio-cultural sphere of sustainability. For example, the owner of a local tour operator discussed during the interview that her company collaborates with several young entrepreneurs to run a campaign to support members of the Cyclo Drivers Union by giving them a budget to maintain vehicles and also access

uniforms and hats. She has also joined with other enterprises to give training and advice to locals who are running small homestay business and provide foot bath services to tourists. This interviewee and several others felt that the cooperation of small companies in the tourism industry could be a valuable way to support local communities. Such collaborative activity could help locals to increase their income, have greater job security and generate a higher standard of living. Interviewees argued that business and tourists would also benefit by supporting and improve the welfare and wellbeing of the surrounding community.

Running counter to the stories of the positive outcomes of stakeholder collaboration for sustainable tourism, there were also some interviewees who highlighted barriers to inter-enterprise collaboration. Among all the participants from the private sector, only two (11%), said that their enterprises do not cooperate with other tourism businesses, and this was largely because of the unfair distribution of benefits from tourism and a lack of trust. The first is an owner of a small hotel that has cut off most of the relationships with other tourism enterprises and agencies, and that choose to sell rooms on their own Facebook page. He explained that:

“Some tour operators forced me to lower our accommodation prices, so my profit rate decreased. Moreover, a company delayed their payment to me after their tourists used our services, so I decided to finish the cooperation.”

The second interviewee is the owner of an enterprise producing handicrafts as souvenirs for tourists. He shared that some retailers want to stock his products but only pay him after they sell them to customers. The participant stated that this is unfair because the retailers do not want to share the risk with his enterprise, so he refused to cooperate. He also shared that The Thua Thien Hue Craftsmen Club, of which he is a member, has

repeatedly asked local authorities to assist in providing a place to display and introduce products of the members but for many years but this issue has not been resolved while other sectors have been supported. Therefore, it is still difficult for him and other craftsmen to access the market. Paskaleva-Shapira and Besson (2006) state that if stakeholders do not share potential risks, it is difficult for them to cooperate. In the same vein, Guia (2018) notes that if the risk of collaboration is significant, the stakeholders likely do not want to contribute their resources to joint actions.

Another challenge facing private sector stakeholder collaboration in tourism relates to professional ethics and 'keeping the faith'. Some participants talked about the failure, some years ago, of an alliance of various tour operators to operate and sell similar tour packages at the same price. Some enterprise owners expressed their disappointment that a number of members broke the alliance's rules and sold tours at lower prices, and this had a negative impact on business and Hue city as a whole. One tour operator noted that:

"This is unfair competition. And they make us lose confidence in the alliance and do not enhance collaboration with other tour operators."

Several interviewees (8 people – 28% of total participants) also discussed the challenge that comes from tourism products being relatively easy to replicate and also difficult to protect in terms of intellectual property. The 'copy-cat' mentality exhibited by many businesses was argued to work against the development of trust and close relationships both within and also across sectors.

This result reflects the work of Hjalager (2018), who suggested that cooperation is more likely to appear in long-term alliances based on trust. Belief is a thing that is easy to lose but difficult to regain. So once the faith breaks down, it is problematic to collaborate

again. This also has implications for broader urban sustainability because initiatives related to sustainable tourism often require an 'all of the industry approach' and the breakdown of trust can therefore be a major impediment to achieving broader goals.

Nearly two thirds (65%) of participants (19 people) noted that one of the reasons preventing tourism enterprises from collaborating in the Hue tourism sector is an overly cautious attitude towards business management and development. It was argued that people in Hue City are well known for being self-contained, conservative, and above all cautious. This is reflected in the fact that the industry is not very responsive to changing consumer demand and competitive environments and tends to be risk averse. A Hue cultural expert stated that:

“Hue people intend to defend more than attack. These characteristics derive from the cultural front and based on the character and history of several feudal dynasties that were in place in this land over a long time.”

The manager of a hotel noticed that tourism enterprises in Hue City are reluctant to cooperate with other business in the destination because they are afraid of the risk of revealing important business information and expertise. The participant said that because of this characteristic, tourism enterprises in Hue instead of cooperating well, remain fiercely competitive with each other, and will try to gain market share by reducing prices. They want to attract more customers but overall this drives down the revenue of the whole industry and creates lower value and less sustainable economic and quality of life outcomes for the people of the city. These findings reflect research presented by Le, Dinh, and Hoang (2017), which show that three quarters of 120 two and three-star hotels in Hue City focus on a strategy of lowering price when compared to competitors.

Some participants (5 people – 25%) mentioned that recently a group of hotels in Hue City have started a new network to try and keep prices more stable. Similarly, Le et al., (2017) pointed out that hotels owners and managers were paying more attention to cooperation in Hue City. The authors suggest that stakeholders' awareness about collaboration should be enhanced, and a 'cooperation and competitor' strategy should be applied to help enterprises compete and in a way that ensures benefits flowing to all partners.

A senior manager of a tour operator commented that there are enterprises in Hue City who are aware of the need to promote sustainable tourism development and take specific actions to guarantee sustainability. However, these organisations are not well linked and coordinated and are still relatively small in number.

6.1.3 Collaboration between the public and private sectors

The researcher asked interviewees which stakeholder is at the centre of the tourism network in Hue City. Most of the participants identified the local government as the central actor, with the Department of Tourism being seen as the most important. This result reflects previous research by Timur and Getz (2008) and Nguyen (2017), which shows that local government is often seen to occupy a core position and to play a critical role in tourism destination networks, including in connecting and coordinating other actors (Ruhanen, 2013; Waligo et al., 2013).

In 2015, the Thua Thien Hue Provincial People's Committee issued a decision to establish Thua Thien Hue Tourism Association by merging the Tourism Association and the Hotel Association. The association plays an active role in connecting tourism enterprises, representing the rights and legitimate interests of members, and also protecting and

providing legal support for them (Thua Thien Hue Online Newspaper, 2015). The association has three sub-groups for hotels, tour operators and tour guides.

According to a representative of the Association, there are currently 60 members, including hotels and tour operators who voluntarily contribute resources in the form of a membership fee. The number of members accounts for approximately 10% of the total accommodation, tour operators and travel agencies in Thua Thien Hue (TTHDT, 2018). There are some participants working in 4 and 5 star hotels that said their business occasionally contributes finance and take part in several events organised by the Association. However, they do not want to be official members because they do not always see significant benefits from full time membership.

The Thua Thien Hue Tourism Association also plays an essential role as a bridge between tourism enterprises and state management agencies (Thua Thien Hue Online Newspaper, 2015). As a representative of the association stated:

“The local governmental authorities consider our association as their extended arm in tourism administration.”

The Tourism Association regularly coordinates with the Department of Tourism, Department of Natural Resources and Environment, and Hue City People Committee to implement environmental protection initiatives with the participation of many stakeholders. Various interviewees who are managers of tourism enterprises confirmed that their businesses actively take a part in many efforts to support environmentally sustainable tourism. In order to reflect the value placed on improved sustainability of business in 2018, the Department of Tourism established the "Thua Thien Hue Tourism Awards" to honour local tourism businesses that make significant achievements. According to an officer of the Department of Tourism, in order to promote sustainable

tourism development, the criteria system of this award includes many requirements for enterprises to abide by government regulations in areas such as environmental protection and waste management.

The Tourism Association works as a communication channel for local authorities to reach businesses and it also aims to communicate the aspirations and opinions of its members to policy makers and regulatory and tourism development agencies. The responsibilities of the association are listening to, reflecting, and connecting with the different stakeholders in the private and public sectors. Several government officers said that the Thua Thien Hue Tourism Association contributes significantly to the development of collaboration in the tourism sector. During the monthly meeting of the Association, tourism experts and local government representatives were invited to attend and share information openly. The director of an event and media company noted that:

“Enterprises have opportunities to raise their voice and present their opinions directly to the local authorities.”

Evidence of public-private collaboration in sustainable tourism development is also seen in the launch of Thua Thien Hue Tourism Advisory Board in March 2018. This was the first Provincial Tourism Advisory Board in Vietnam with the participation of experts from both government bodies in tourism administration and private firms such as tour operators, accommodation, aviation and media. The board has been established to advise local government leaders on issues related to tourism strategies and to ensure movement towards more sustainable tourism development (TTHPPC, 2018).

Because of the key role ascribed to local government, most of the participants consider the absence of an official director of Department of Tourism for more than two years as

creating a serious vacuum in leadership for the whole tourism sector. As a participant noted: “If we consider the tourism sector as a boat, we lack a captain.” Many respondents pointed out that the absence of a real leader is one of the main reasons that stakeholders are not as focused as they should be on achieving sustainable tourism development in Hue.

Another major barrier to the effective collaboration of public and private sectors in the Hue tourism sector is an asynchronous administration system. Many respondents from the private sector commented that due to the complexity of the tourism industry and the urban environment in Hue City, there are many public authorities involved in tourism administration and that several of their duties overlap. A number of interview participants noted that businesses are confused about which government body to contact and work with first.

When the researcher asked participants whether their opinions are listened to by the authorities, most of them answered that they do have opportunities to express their opinions. But several participants were concerned that their viewpoints were not appreciated and made little impact. A participant from the private sector stated:

“Local governments often call for comments from stakeholders on their drafts of tourism policies, development strategies and plans. However, after enterprises give their opinions, they do not receive feedback from authorities about whether their opinions were valued or not. Sometimes the authorities used enterprise’ opinions without expressing gratitude so business people feel like their opinion is not useful and they do not give opinions anymore.”

A tourism expert agreed that the feedback process used by public authorities to gather inputs from stakeholders is problematic. This interviewee feels that government bodies

should show more clearly that the inputs they receive are respected and how, in turn they are used (or why they are not).

In contrast, a participant from the government felt that the tourism private sector in Hue is not willing to share opinions on important tourism development issues. He stated that:

“Public agencies organize various conferences and forums to offer opportunities for stakeholders to discuss and exchange ideas. However, participants from the private sector rarely offer their opinions during the discussion sessions and only talk about things in the hallway.”

Five participants noted that the cautious and discreet personality of Hue people makes them tend to avoid giving opinions directly and candidly. These respondents believed that this is an issue hindering cooperation between stakeholders. On the other hand, two participants from the private sector said they did not feel their opinions were valued by the authorities, so they were not eager to raise their voices.

These findings reveal that stakeholders from the public and private sectors in Hue City do not engage in very effective communication, and this presents several obstacles to their collaboration. According to Blichfeldt (2018), communication is not only giving and sending but also sharing information and creating and advancing expertise in a collaborative process of meaning-making. The research presented in this chapter shows that the latter requires considerable work in the case of Hue.

In some cases, private sector participants argued that information was deliberately withheld from them by public authorities. For instance, 4 interviewees (accounting for 21% of the private sector participants) shared that they were not given information regarding several investment opportunities but other enterprises in the city received

information and advance notice of tenders. One of these, who is a hotel manager, stressed that:

"There is not transparency in disclosing information about investment opportunities to all businesses. There are signs of unequal benefit sharing in society. I hope in the future that the news on investment opportunities will be publicly available to ensure fairness for all businesses."

In a collaborative relationship, the lack of transparency on the part of one party can make the counterpart lose faith, and when they do not trust each other, they may not establish or be able to retain collaboration. Several previous studies highlight the role that unequal distribution of benefits related to tourism can play in actively hindering and eroding stakeholder collaboration (Dwyer & Lund-Durlacher, 2018; Maxim, 2016, 2017; d'Angella, 2007).

Another focal point connecting stakeholders from both public and private sectors in the destination's promotional activities is the Hue Tourism Information and Promotion Centre, which is a functional division under the Department of Tourism. This government body functions as an information provider to tourists and is in charge of destination promotion. Due to the limited budget of Thua Thien Hue province for promotional activities, the centre often calls for the contributions from the private sector.

An interviewee who is an officer of this centre commented that tourism enterprises have differing perspectives on promoting the destination and exhibit different levels of participation in promotional activities. In this interviewee's opinion, large enterprises have a higher awareness of the importance of destination promotion than small businesses, and they also have more budget to allocate. Thus, large companies tend to participate in, and contribute more, to promotional activities. Some enterprises are not

aware of the necessity of promoting the destination, so they have no desire to participate.

This interviewee also added:

“Although the past two years, businesses have become more aware of participating in the general activities for the destination. In Hue City, sharing is challenging because tourism enterprises still concentrate on achieving their own benefits first.”

This finding can be explained by the fact that most tourism enterprises in Hue City are small and medium-sized businesses and have limited resources (Bui, 2009), so they find it difficult to contribute to destination promotion. Also, if they are not aware of the benefits of destination promotion, they will not sacrifice their short-term profits to contribute to promotional activities that generate only promised longer-term benefits.

The interviews also raised interesting differences among stakeholders in terms of what type of international tourist that should be attracted to the City by marketing and promotional efforts. Much of this discussion coalesced around the potential to grow the Chinese market. The Chinese market remains quite small in Hue City and several stakeholders stressed the fact that government and industry attempts to grow this market might meet with growing resistance from groups that would prefer what they consider to be higher yield and longer stay visitors. They are concerned because nearby destinations such as Da Nang and Hoi An have struggled to cope with an influx of Chinese visitors and have not yet reaped expected economic rewards.

The Hue Festival Centre, which is a functional body of the provincial government, also plays a role in connecting many stakeholders through its efforts to mobilise different groups to run the event. This Centre raises funding for the festival with contributions

drawn from many companies. An interviewee from the Centre pointed out that in the 2018 Festival some hotels refused to sponsor accommodation services for delegates which was a marked departure from previous years. The Hue Festival Centre interviewee commented:

“Hue Festival is an important event attracting a huge number of tourists to Hue, this increases revenue significantly for the destination. Nevertheless, several tourism enterprises only focused on their own benefits, not on cooperating and sharing difficulties with Hue Festival organizers. They did not think about the fact that the success of this event aims to ensure the long-term success and sustainable development of the tourism industry of which they are all beneficiaries.”

Jamal and Stronza (2009) argue that the task of implementing sustainable tourism is inherently a long-term process and that the sustained and reliable participation of many stakeholders is important if goals are to be achieved, Unfortunately the long term nature of the STD process can inevitably mean that relationships and partnerships may break down and slow or even halt progress (Russo, 2002).

In another example of the importance of collaborative activity in developing more sustainable forms of tourism, over half (55%) of participants (16 people) raised the example of the fact that Hue lacks a good range of quality local souvenirs. Most of the handicraft production establishments in Hue are small in scale. They lack capital and technology and are not responsive enough to meet market demand. A tourism researcher interviewed said that some of Hue's typical handicraft products have potential, but their packaging is not attractive, and unsuitable sizes and weights of products make them difficult for tourists to transport. It was argued by interviewees that strong support from both the state and larger, more formal private sector enterprises (hotel, tour operators) is needed to help small handicraft production establishments and villages to improve the access of their products to visitors.

Table 6.1 provides a summary of the main barriers to stakeholder collaboration identified in throughout this chapter. This summary will be used to guide the discussion in the following section on the suggested approaches presented by those interviewed to strengthening stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City.

Table 6.1 Barriers to stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City

Barriers Stakeholders	Institutional framework	Financial Sources/ Benefits distribution	Awareness/ Perspective	Information/ Expertise/ Communication	Human resource/ Leadership
Public authorities collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Complex and unstable administrative structure - A lack of policies and strategies - Top-down structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Only focus on the agency's benefits - Limited financial budgets - Inflexible financial mechanism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Differences in perspectives - Not aware of multidisciplinary of tourism - Conflicts in priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of high-quality research - Ineffective communication - Limited information sharing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of high-quality human resources - Lack of leadership
Tourism enterprises collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional associations are not effective - Lack of support from the tourism association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Financial contribution to the association: fees, equity, annual financial contributions - Unequal benefits distribution - Limited financial sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Profit-oriented perspective - Lack of awareness of collaboration - Unfair competitive attitude - Lack of trust - Cautious attitude 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Risk of losing expertise, experience and information - Copy ideas and products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of high-quality human resources - Lack of leadership
Private-Public Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cumbersome administrative procedures - Asynchronous management system - Late updated legal framework and policy mechanism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of transparency in benefits distribution - There is no tourism development fund - Lack of strategic investor with strong financial sources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Priorities conflicts - Self-interest - Lack of awareness of collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of a common information system - Lack of effective communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of leadership

6.2 Strengthening stakeholder collaboration

Although there were many barriers and challenges identified by interviewees that hinder the development of collaborative relationships between actors in the Hue tourism sector, a quarter of total participants (7 people) did stress that collaboration had been improving in recent years. The director of a local tour operator argued that in the last two years, stakeholders in Hue City have been more eager to collaborate with other parties and to learn from each other.

A partnership with the involvement of diverse stakeholders is widely recognised as vital for sustainable tourism development in Hue City and elsewhere (Dodds, 2007; Lemmetyinen & Go, 2005). Two tourism experts strongly suggested that the most critical way to gain further engagement and collaboration was through the establishment of a Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Thua Thien Hue province. A DMO would take dedicated responsibility for leading destination marketing, management, and the facilitating of coordination and collaboration between stakeholders involved in tourism at all levels (see Dwyer & Kim, 2003).

To order to establish a DMO it was suggested that the province must change the current institutional framework and build a mechanism such as a public-private partnership which allows different kinds of stakeholders from both private and public sectors to collaborate efficiently. Such an approach would free the Department of Tourism from several responsibilities so that it can focus on a few core functions such as administration, research and policy-making. Under the control of a DMO, it was felt that budgetary resources could be used more effectively, and that real leadership could be developed for the push towards sustainable tourism development.

Flowing from this is the need to strengthen the tourism administrative management apparatus. Most of the participants in this research criticised the asynchronous management system of tourism, saying that it constrains the development of sustainable tourism in Hue City. It was argued by both government and private sector interviewees that changes need to be made to unify and improve the local government apparatus. It is necessary to reassign the functions and tasks of each relevant department and functional body to guarantee they do not overlap and create conflicts and confusion.

While the City has long-term strategies for sustainable tourism development in association with the preservation of cultural heritage and environmental protection, several participants from the public sector argued that they lack short-term plans with clear concrete steps that can help to engage SMEs in particular. It was argued that a system of specific tasks should be set up and assigned to relevant stakeholders so that they can best apply their capabilities and resources, and efficiently and transparently cooperate with parties to achieve common goals.

Some of those interviewed suggested that a tourism development fund should be set in place to pay for critical issues that face the sustainable development of tourism in Hue City. Revenue for the fund could be generated from a 5 to 10% surcharge on ticket revenue to visit public monuments, plus there could be a contribution (voluntary or otherwise) from private tourism enterprises. Interviewees stressed that it is necessary to ensure fairness and transparency when allocating these funds in order to avoid the loss of 'buy-in' from disenchanted stakeholders. The mechanism, objectives and ways to use this fund should be developed through broad discussion with key stakeholders and widely publicised.

Several interviewees also stressed that the City authorities should consider strategic investors with strong financial backing to help the destination have a stronger footing in world tourism. The local government must, however, consider new tourism projects carefully to ensure they will not adversely impact the environment and culture of the destination. Some participants from local SMEs also pointed out that it is necessary to be cautious in licensing strategic investors to develop in Hue as they may not rely on local economic supplies and human resources. It is necessary to ensure that investment from outside the province creates benefits for local people, not just for owners and shareholders. It is also important to make sure that the playing field is level for both outside and local investors.

Miller and Twining-Ward (2005) suggest that people's awareness, expertise and vision must be expanded in order to achieve broader sustainable development goals. Interviewees highlighted the City committee, Department of Tourism and the Tourism Association as groups that could develop more activities to raise the awareness of businesses about the cooperation and collaboration needed to achieve long-term environmental, economic and cultural objectives. Public 'clean-ups' of urban green space, training or other team building programmes should be organised regularly so that those involved can interact, connect, and establish relationships that can provide the basis for future collaboration.

People are at the core of sustainable development (UN, 2015, p.1) so to develop sustainable tourism in Hue, it is necessary to look carefully at human resource development and related training programmes. It is vital to train the current generation of tourism workers and to prepare future generations for the opportunities and challenges that come with new ways of doing business in tourism.

Currently, knowledge of sustainable development has only been taught as a supplementary subject for a few majors in the tourism sector at universities and vocational colleges in Hue. Therefore, to improve the quality of human resources, it is necessary to expand and enhance compulsory modules relating to sustainable tourism development at all levels from vocational training to academic education. Short-term training courses on sustainable tourism development for private and public sector stakeholders should also be organised regularly. In this respect, one participant who is the Chief Officer of a government department stated:

"Many people think that Hue tourism is slow to develop, and stakeholder collaboration is fragile because of the complex and inefficient mechanism we have in place. However, the mechanism is man-made, so before changing the mechanism, we first need to change people's perceptions and actions through education and training".

Interviewees felt that the collection of stakeholder viewpoints on policies, strategies, plans and laws of the state should be more effectively organised so that all businesses can contribute their opinions in a way that encourages further feedback and engagement. For example, in an advisory conference, the facilitator needs to introduce the content, the targets, and how the discussion will occur, so all the participants can understand the system and will be eager to share information. Interviewees stressed that at the end of the session, the comments should be summarised and presented to every attendant. After that, experts with excellent professional skills will analyse and synthesise the key ideas generated. Finally, thank-you letters, or emails should be sent to all stakeholders who participated in the consultation along with a summarised of key points and how they will, or will not, be acted on. It was stressed on numerous occasions

that dissemination and communication are central to achieving private sector engagement in consultative activity.

Several participants noted that the Hue tourism industry currently lacks practical information and knowledge from quality research studies to serve as a basis for decision-making, policy generation and strategy development. People felt this was a missed opportunity as Hue City is an important centre of training and research on tourism and the economy. Therefore, many interviewees felt that authorities and businesses should make more use of local research strengths to provide a better evidence base for future tourism development decisions. The process of research and its dissemination was also seen as an additional tool to bring stakeholders together.

Chapter 7 Conclusions

Sustainable tourism has received significant attention in academic research over the past 40 years, and the concept has been integrated into practical fields in business and governance since the late 1980s (Hall, 2011). However, there are gaps between the theory and application of this term (Hall et al., 2015).

Because of the critical role of cities as tourist destinations and as 'gateways' for visitors to explore surrounding areas it is vital to explore dimensions of sustainable tourism development in urban environments (Pasquinelli & Bellini, 2017). One of the challenges in developing more sustainable forms of tourism in urban environments is the inherent complexity of the tourism industry and the need to engage a wide range of stakeholders (Timur and Getz, 2009; Maxim, 2016). Effective collaboration between these diverse stakeholder groups is required if progress is to be made towards achieving sustainable tourism development (Timur & Getz, 2019).

This thesis has focused on investigating stakeholders' perceptions of sustainable tourism development in Hue City, a mid-sized tourism-oriented city in Vietnam. The study's objectives are to:

- Understand stakeholders' perspectives on sustainable tourism development in Hue City.
- Study the nature and levels of current stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City.
- Identify the barriers that against the development of collaboration between key stakeholders in Hue tourism's industry as they attempt to develop sustainable tourism outcomes for the city.

- To present possible approaches to enhance and sustain stakeholder collaboration in tourism development in Hue City.

In order to address these objectives, the thesis adopted a qualitative research methodology based on a single urban case-study. The data was collected from 19th June to 9th August 2018 by conducting 29 semi-structured interviews with representatives of key stakeholders from Hue City's tourism industry. These stakeholders included: local government, public organisations, tourism enterprises, professional associations and tourism educators/researchers.

7.1 Research Findings

The research reveals that there are considerable differences in how the term “sustainable tourism development” is perceived by the stakeholders interviewed. Awareness levels of the concept among government authorities and tourism experts in Hue City were quite high and generally holistic in terms of incorporation of economic, environmental and socio-cultural dimensions. Their counterparts from the private sector tended to place a greater emphasis on economic dimensions of sustainability, especially in regard to their own business performance. Levels of awareness and understanding of the general concept of sustainable tourism development did not vary greatly between those representing large and smaller businesses. However, there were differences when it came to practical engagement in STD. Larger businesses were more likely to engage in environmental protection and to be interested in increasing well-being for local communities through sustainable tourism development. This was largely a factor of time and financial constraints restricting the ability of SME to engage in a meaningful manner.

Despite these differences between and within stakeholder groups it is important to note that virtually all of the participants felt that the broad concept of sustainable tourism and its underlying principle of inter-generational equity were important and necessary for the future development of tourism in Hue City.

Most interview participants believed that recent tourism development in Hue has been relatively sustainable in nature, especially in terms of socio-cultural and environmental dimensions. The socio-cultural dimension was seen to be based on well-preserved culture and heritage resources and a stable society. Tourism was seen as creating many positive societal impacts and only rare negative impacts, although there was clearly awareness of tourism leaving a less positive legacy in nearby competing destinations such as Da Nang and Hoi An. Although all of the respondents thought that the environment in Hue City could be sustained in the face of tourism development and that the industry was doing a reasonable job on this front, several issues were highlighted as needing more attention to prevent future degradation of the environment.

There was less confidence expressed about the economic sustainability of the industry, with several participants feeling that the level of performance in this area was quite poor. Most participants felt that Hue City has not yet created sustainable income for enterprises and residents from tourism and that this, in turn, leads to some level of uncertainty and insecurity.

The results reflect that stakeholder collaboration in the Hue tourism sector is not strong and many participants have doubts about the future development of collaborative relationships with other actors. Tourism is a cross-cutting sector, and a wide range of governmental bodies manage tourism resources and enterprises. The complexity and

multi-scalar nature of the tourism sector creates many difficulties for government agencies in their attempts to collaborate and coordinate approaches. Many participants emphasised that the overlap and inadequacies characterising much public sector engagement in the tourism industry hampers stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City. There was also a strong feeling that government was not showing strong leadership in this space.

In the private sector, the research found that although there are several enterprises taking specific actions to implement sustainable tourism, these activities are fragmented, and not widely replicated across the industry. Therefore, it is necessary to solve the lack of cooperation between tourism businesses to create a fundamental shift in changing the consciousness and action of the industry towards sustainable tourism. Differences in opinions, ineffective communication, self-interest and unfair competition were noteworthy barriers that were identified to stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City.

While the Thua Thien Hue Tourism Association plays an essential role as a bridge between tourism enterprises and state management agencies by conveying information and holding common events to promote sustainable tourism, there was a feeling that far more needs to be done to strengthen the links between public and private sector stakeholders. Many respondents pointed out that weak leadership, ineffective communication, an asynchronous administration system and a limited budget for tourism development are key reasons that stakeholders are making less than optimal progress in achieving sustainable tourism development in Hue.

Although there are barriers and challenges that hinder collaborative relationships between actors in the Hue tourism sector, several participants noticed that collaboration had been an increasing in the industry. The interviewees highlighted a range of important ways whereby collaborative activity could be improved.

One of the most urgent suggestions to enhance stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development is the establishment of a DMO as a form of Public-Private Partnership (PPP). Members from both the public and private sectors felt this organisation could create a more flexible and effective cooperation mechanism to link stakeholders, coordinate resources and provide clear leadership.

The establishment of a DMO, would free other government agencies to focus on inspection, monitoring and policy-making functions. The functions and tasks of each agency in the administrative management system should be arranged more appropriately, and avoid overlap, which can create confusion and difficulties for tourism activities.

There was also a clear message that the tourism development policies of Hue City which aim to develop sustainable tourism must be based on robust evidence and data and be able to be measured through effective indicators. Policies and strategies must not only be reviewed but also changed as necessary given the rapid changes found in the tourism market place. It is necessary to regularly update and adjust existing guidelines and policies to reflect trends in tourism and sustainable development thinking (see also Edgell 2016).

In terms of the environment dimensions of sustainable tourism development, there was clearly a feeling among the interviewees that there is a need for the coordinated and

active involvement of many stakeholders. Although some voluntary waste collection activities on the river and in other public spaces have been organised at weekends, there was a feeling that a broader range of approaches is needed. It is also important that any regulations on environmental impacts be regulated effectively and fairly, but this requires clear and enforceable penalties for behaviour that runs counter to sustainable tourism development goals.

The provincial and city management agencies and associations need to raise awareness about the importance of environmental protection for businesses, communities and tourists. Suggestions were made that competitions could be organised with attractive prizes on offer for businesses or organisations that make a strong impact on the sustainable development front. Some research participants suggested that small booths should be arranged in fairs, events or public spaces in Hue City, so that tourists and locals alike can participate in prize-winning puzzles and games with the message of tourism aiding environmental protection. These competitions could combine music and art to create interest among potential participants. Such an approach could also generate sponsorship opportunities from the private sector or other organisations.

Several tour operators shared their efforts to collaborate with the local residents to offer community-based tours that bring tourists to poorer areas to support the economy. Some hotels are also trying to replace plastics with environmentally friendly materials and to also reduce energy consumption where possible. These cases should be widely recognised and promoted by local government and community to encourage other tourism enterprises to follow. It was felt that more should be done to reward businesses and individuals who have made great efforts in sustainable tourism development in Hue

and that the government could perhaps set up some form of mentoring that could reveal to others an effective way forward.

Sufficient and reliable financial flows are necessary to promote sustainable tourism development in Hue City and there was clear interest expressed in the implementation of a tourism development fund. It is important that this fund is managed and used transparently to retain the trust and collaboration of stakeholders.

The Thua Thien Hue Tourism Association was generally seen as a useful asset in attempts to develop more sustainable tourism outcomes in Hue. However, a number of participants stressed that the Association should hold more practical activities such as training courses, workshops and 'famil trips'. It was also felt that new tools and platforms should be developed to easily share necessary information, knowledge and skills with the industry. The Association needs to show that it can add value to the industry and highlight the practical benefits it brings to businesses including enhancing cooperation and networking between the public and private sectors.

Strengthening leadership is also necessary to improve stakeholder collaboration and promote sustainable tourism. The leaders of the tourism industry, both in the public and private sectors, must be highly qualified, professional and forward-thinking. It is vital for leadership to embrace the ideas of sustainable tourism development, generate the trust of stakeholders and exhibit ethical leadership in encouraging individuals and organizations to work together for the sustainable development of Hue.

Educational institutions and research institutes are also seen to play a larger role in promoting sustainable tourism development. Vocational training schools and universities and colleges need to be encouraged to provide courses that relate directly

related to sustainable tourism development. Government agencies and tourism enterprises should also coordinate with research activities and work on prioritising research areas so that they can conduct good quality research to inform planning and decision-making for business and the overall development strategies of destinations.

According to Gray (1989), collaboration is a progression in which parties who hold different points of view look beyond their limited visions to find suitable solutions to tackle a problem. It is, therefore, vital for clear communication mechanisms to be developed in order to strengthen stakeholder collaboration. It was suggested by some interviewees that a user-friendly information system for all stakeholders in the Hue tourism industry could be developed using a core website, with an online forum also being created. This would provide a space for stakeholders to share information and discuss important industry topics. Since businesses are busy, this platform may help strengthen collaboration among stakeholders.

7.2 Research Contributions

The thesis makes a number of contributions to both the academic environment and to those who plan and develop Hue tourism.

In the context of Vietnam, research on stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development is rare. Although Hue City is a well-known tourist city and has received some attention from researchers, there is still a lack of literature on the area of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development. This research provides an important platform for those who wish to better understand the interface between stakeholder collaboration and sustainable tourism development in Hue and also other cities in Vietnam. The thesis also makes a useful contribution to the literature by

focusing not just on a developing Asian country, but also a medium sized city – the type of urban environment that is so often ignored by researchers who would generally focus attention on global mega cities.

The thesis has added important new data to support broader findings that have emerged from the literature from other sites around the world. In addition to reinforcing the importance of understanding stakeholder collaboration as a vital ingredient in attempts to successfully develop and implement urban sustainable tourism, this thesis has also delved more deeply into the differing perspectives of stakeholders on the concept of urban sustainable tourism. The thesis has outlined the benefits, challenges and constraints associated with building and sustaining collaboration and, perhaps most importantly, it has provided insights into how these challenges may be overcome.

In particular, the thesis has emphasised the importance of trust and relationship development in underpinning collaborative structures. This highlights the need for governments and the private sector to strive for transparency in the way in which tourism activities are regulated and the manner in which benefits are distributed.

The thesis has also reinforced a critical finding in the literature – there remains a central role for government in the planning and development of coordinated efforts to achieve sustainable tourism development. All stakeholder groups, including the private sector, stressed that a common vision and strong leadership is needed to move a destination forward and participants all felt that a DMO was the best type and scale of organisation to achieve this goal. They clearly saw however that the role of a DMO needed to extend beyond marketing, to developing awareness of sustainability and facilitating collaborative activity.

The thesis has also provided useful insights for policy makers in Hue and elsewhere in Vietnam. The thesis has shown the value of addressing issues through qualitative research rather than the typically favoured approach in Vietnam of running surveys. The work has uncovered a series of important themes and insights that can help guide key stakeholders as they attempt to move Hue City along the long and complex road to developing more sustainable forms of urban tourism.

7.3 A Future Research Agenda

All research is constrained by limits to budget and time. Chapter 3 outlined some of the challenges and trade-offs that faced the researcher from a methodological perspective. While the research provides important information on stakeholder collaboration in Hue City tourism it has had to place an emphasis on supply-side perspectives from governmental bodies, tourism enterprises, educators and researchers. The thesis could not cover every stakeholder group and in particular was not able to address the tourists themselves or to gain deeper insights from the host community. It was also impossible to conduct any time series analysis; however, the work has put in place an important baseline that others can work with in the future, allowing insights into how collaborative activity and stakeholder perceptions shift over time.

The thesis sets a platform for this researcher and others to continue to investigate the important issues raised – but from different perspectives and over different spatial scales and temporal periods. Some of the key future research directions for researchers to explore include:

- In this research, many interviewees mentioned the important role of residents in sustainable tourism. Therefore, it is necessary to research collaboration between the

local community and the tourism industry and local government in more detail. Such research will provide an additional perspective into the challenges and outcomes of sustainable tourism development in Hue City.

- Tourists are also important stakeholders. However, in Vietnam and Hue, there is limited research investigating the reality of tourists' experiences in the city or how they are shaped by initiatives to implement sustainable tourism at enterprise, community and urban-wide scales.
- While the semi-structured interview approach was suited to this initial exploratory work there are certainly opportunities to incorporate other methodological approaches in the future. In particular, mixed-method approaches could add real value by enabling emergent themes and insights to be tested on a broader scale through survey research or with the integration of approaches such as focus groups. Such approaches can build on the findings of this thesis to provide a broader view of stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue and urban areas more generally.
- Given the focus on a DMO as a potential champion and leader for sustainable tourism development. It would be valuable to explore in more detail just what type of model would work best and how it would be supported by different stakeholder groups. In this respect, it is necessary to look more closely at regional and global best-practice examples of DMO operation and how they could be applied to the unique context of Hue City.
- A further area for future research is to see how measures of the effectiveness and nature of collaboration could be developed in such a way that they could feature alongside other mainstream indicators of sustainable tourism development in urban areas. Given the clearly identified importance of collaboration in supporting

sustainable tourism development initiatives and outcomes, it is important that we find future ways to trace performance in this area over time.

This thesis has shown that any attempt to understand the complex nature of sustainable tourism development in urban settings must embrace the concept of stakeholder collaboration, not shy away from it. Researchers, industry and government must take to heart the African quote spoken by a research participant during one of the interviews: “If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.”

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Participant Information Sheet

Date Information Sheet Produced:

15/05/2018

Project Title

Stakeholder collaboration in sustainable urban tourism development: The case of Hue City, Vietnam.

An Invitation

Kính chào quý vị,

My name is Hoang Thi Hue, and I am a postgraduate student at the Auckland University of Technology, School of Hospitality and Tourism. I am undertaking this research as part of my thesis for the Master of International Tourism Management degree. I am also working at Hue University, Faculty of Hospitality and Tourism as a lecturer and research officer.

I would like to invite you to participate in this research to share your thoughts regarding stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City. With your wide range of experience and extensive knowledge about the local tourism sector, I hope you will be able to provide insights about the cooperation of stakeholders in the city's tourism industry and related impacts on sustainable development.

What is the purpose of this research?

The primary aim of this research is to provide a deeper understanding of the role of stakeholder collaboration in achieving more sustainable tourism development in urban destinations - concentrating on the medium-sized city of Hue. In particular, the research aims are to explore stakeholders' perspectives on the current interrelationships in Hue City's tourism industry, barriers to stakeholders in cooperating with each other, and

recommendations to enhance stakeholder collaboration to develop the tourism industry in a more sustainable way. This research is being conducted as part of my Master of International Tourism Management degree at Auckland University of Technology.

This research is funded by New Zealand ASEAN Scholarship Awards.

How was I identified and why am I being invited to participate in this research?

You have been identified from publically available sources as belonging to an organisation with links to the tourism industry. You have been invited to participate in this research as someone having relevant knowledge and long-term experience in Hue City's tourism industry and working as a manager/senior staff in your organisation.

How do I agree to participate in this research?

If you agree to be a participant of this study, please respond to this invitation to me via email hue.hoang@aut.ac.nz or phone (+84) 1649 825 899. Please check the Consent Form in the attached file. The hard copies will be handed to you to sign in before the interview.

The participation is entirely voluntary (it is your choice) and you are able to withdraw from the study at any time. If you choose to withdraw from the study, you can have a choice whether to have your information removed or let it continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of your data may not be possible.

What will happen in this research?

This research involves a series of interviews with several representatives of key stakeholders from the supply side in Hue City's tourism industry. They will take part in semi-structured interviews.

If you agree to participant in this research, you will be invited to take part in an interview with the researcher for approximately 40 to 60 minutes, in a suitable public place near your workplaces. I will take notes during our discussion. You will receive a copy of the notes from your interview to review before data analysis begins. You can choose

whether or not for the interview to be recorded by ticking in the relevant option box in the Consent Form.

What are the discomforts and risks?

You may feel nervous about notes being taken and being audio taped. You can participate in the interview without being recorded if you want. You will not be required to answer any question or topic that you do not feel comfortable or on which you hold no views. Your identity will not be disclosed in the findings. You can withdraw from the interview at any stage.

What are the benefits?

This research will provide valuable practical knowledge for those planning and developing Hue's tourism by investigating stakeholder's perceptions of existing collaboration and their perspectives on sustainable tourism development in the city.

The research will also include recommendations to strengthen stakeholder collaboration in sustainable tourism development in Hue City. The participants, who are representatives of key stakeholder groups, can use the research results as reference materials to enhance the participation of their organisations in collaboration for sustainable tourism.

Thirdly, this research will add a new case to the literature on sustainable urban development, which other researchers could refer for their future studies.

Finally, this research will help me to broaden my knowledge about tourism in general and the research topic in particular. It will also help me to complete my master's degree and may be used in academic publications or presentations.

How will my privacy be protected?

Your details will be confidential and not distributed to anyone. The results will be presented in aggregate and no individual or organisation will be identified.

What are the costs of participating in this research?

There is no cost to participate in the research apart from 40 up to 60 minutes of your time.

What opportunity do I have to consider this invitation?

You will have time to consider the invitation before accepting – approximately 2 weeks. If you agree to be a participant in this study, please response to this invitation via email by 10/06/2018.

Will I receive feedback on the results of this research?

Yes, you will receive a summary of the research findings upon completion of the research.

What do I do if I have concerns about this research?

If you have any concerns or questions about this research, please feel free to contact the researcher or the project supervisors at any time. Relevant contact details are provided below.

Any concerns regarding the nature of this project should be notified in the first instance to the Project Supervisor, *Prof. Simon Milne, simon.milne@aut.ac.nz, +64 (9) 921 9245 or Dr. Carolyn Deuchar, carolyn.deuchar@aut.ac.nz*

Concerns regarding the conduct of the research should be notified to the Executive Secretary of AUTECH, Kate O'Connor, *ethics@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6038.*

Whom do I contact for further information about this research?

Please keep this Information Sheet and a copy of the Consent Form for your future reference. You are also able to contact the research team as follows:

Researcher Contact Details:

Hoang Thi Hue, *hue.hoang@aut.ac.nz, +84 1649 825 899*

Project Supervisor Contact Details:

Primary supervisor: Prof. Simon Milne, *simon.milne@aut.ac.nz*

Secondary supervisor: Dr. Carolyn Deuchar, carolyn.deuchar@aut.ac.nz

Approved by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee on 30/05/2018
final ethics approval was granted, AUTECH Reference 18/181.

Translation of Participant Information Sheet

Phiếu thông tin dành cho người tham gia phỏng vấn

Ngày thực hiện phiếu thông tin:

15/05/2018

Tên của đề tài nghiên cứu

Hợp tác giữa các bên liên quan trong phát triển du lịch đô thị bền vững: Trường hợp của thành phố Huế, Việt Nam.

Lời mời

Kính chào quý vị,

Tôi tên là Hoàng Thị Huế, hiện là sinh viên của Khoa Du lịch, Đại học Công Nghệ Auckland. Tôi đang thực hiện một nghiên cứu khoa học cho đề tài tốt nghiệp chương trình thạc sĩ Quản trị Du lịch Quốc tế. Tôi hiện cũng đang là giảng viên và cán bộ nghiên cứu tại Khoa Du lịch-Đại học Huế.

Tôi xin trân trọng kính mời quý vị tham gia vào nghiên cứu này bằng cách chia sẻ quan điểm của quý vị về chủ đề phát triển du lịch bền vững tại thành phố Huế. Với kinh nghiệm phong phú và sự am hiểu sâu sắc đối với du lịch tại địa phương, rất mong nhận được những ý kiến đóng góp xác đáng của quý vị về sự hợp tác giữa các bên liên quan trong ngành du lịch Huế và các tác động liên quan tới phát triển bền vững.

Mục đích của nghiên cứu này là gì?

Mục đích chính của nghiên cứu này là nhằm cung cấp hiểu biết sâu sắc hơn về sự hợp tác giữa các bên liên quan trong phát triển du lịch bền vững tại các khu vực thành thị - tập trung vào Huế - một thành phố quy mô vừa. Cụ thể hơn, nghiên cứu hướng đến việc tìm hiểu quan điểm của các bên liên quan về mối quan hệ liên kết hiện tại trong ngành

du lịch Huế, những rào cản đối với các bên liên quan trong việc hợp tác với nhau và một số đề xuất nhằm nâng cao sự hợp tác này để phát triển du lịch một cách bền vững hơn. Đề tài này là một phần trong chương trình Cao học Quản lý Du lịch Quốc tế tại Đại học Công nghệ Auckland.

Kinh phí thực hiện nghiên cứu này được hỗ trợ bởi học bổng New Zealand-ASEAN.

Lý do và cách thức quý vị được mời tham gia nghiên cứu này?

Thông tin liên lạc của quý vị được xác định qua các nguồn thông tin công khai liên quan đến cơ quan/doanh nghiệp chủ quản với những mối liên hệ trong ngành du lịch. Quý vị được mời tham gia nghiên cứu này vì sự am hiểu và kinh nghiệm làm việc lâu năm trong lĩnh vực du lịch tại Huế với tư cách là quản lý/nhân viên cấp cao trong cơ quan/doanh nghiệp mình.

Quý vị đồng ý tham gia nghiên cứu này bằng cách nào?

Nếu đồng ý tham gia nghiên cứu này, xin hãy xác nhận bằng cách liên hệ với tôi thông qua địa chỉ email hue.hoang@aut.ac.nz hoặc số điện thoại (+84) 1649 825 899. Xin hãy đọc mẫu Giấy Chấp thuận tham gia phỏng vấn trong file đính kèm. Bản in của mẫu này sẽ được trao tận tay để quý vị ký xác nhận trước buổi phỏng vấn.

Quyết định tham gia đề tài này là hoàn toàn tự nguyện (đây là lựa chọn của quý vị) và quý vị có thể rút khỏi nghiên cứu ở bất kì thời điểm nào. Nếu quyết định không tham gia vào nghiên cứu này nữa, quý vị có quyền lựa chọn giữa việc loại bỏ các thông tin mà mình đã cung cấp hoặc tiếp tục cho phép nhóm nghiên cứu tiếp tục sử dụng chúng. Tuy nhiên, một khi các kết luận của nghiên cứu đã được thực hiện, dữ liệu của quý vị sẽ không thể bị huỷ bỏ.

Điều gì sẽ xảy ra trong nghiên cứu này?

Nghiên cứu này bao gồm một chuỗi các cuộc phỏng vấn với đại diện các bên liên quan chính từ phía cung của ngành du lịch Huế. Họ sẽ tham gia vào các cuộc phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc.

Nếu đồng ý tham gia vào nghiên cứu này, quý vị sẽ được mời tham dự một cuộc phỏng vấn với tôi-người nghiên cứu trong thời gian khoảng từ 40 tới 60 phút, tại một địa điểm

công cộng phù hợp gần nơi làm việc của quý vị. Quý vị có thể cho phép ghi âm cuộc phỏng vấn hoặc không bằng cách đánh dấu và các lựa chọn thích hợp trong Giấy chấp thuận tham gia (tham khảo mẫu trong file đính kèm). Tôi sẽ thực hiện việc ghi chép lại nội dung cuộc hội thoại trong quá trình thực hiện. Quý vị sẽ nhận được bản ghi chép này trước khi việc phân tích dữ liệu được tiến hành.

Những bất tiện và rủi ro là gì?

Quý vị có thể cảm thấy lo lắng về việc ghi âm và ghi chép cuộc phỏng vấn. Quý vị có thể yêu cầu không ghi âm đoạn hội thoại nếu mình không muốn. Quý vị không cần phải trả lời bất kỳ câu hỏi hay chủ đề nào mà mình cảm thấy không thoải mái hay không có ý kiến. Danh tính của quý vị sẽ không được tiết lộ trong kết quả nghiên cứu. Quý vị có thể rút khỏi cuộc phỏng vấn ở bất kỳ thời điểm nào.

Những lợi ích của nghiên cứu này là gì?

Nghiên cứu này sẽ cung cấp những thông tin hữu ích cho các nhà hoạch định chính sách và phát triển du lịch Huế bằng cách phân tích quan điểm của các bên liên quan đối với mối liên hệ hợp tác và việc phát triển du lịch bền vững tại thành phố này.

Nghiên cứu còn bao gồm các đề xuất nhằm tăng cường sự phối hợp giữa các bên liên quan trong phát triển du lịch bền vững tại thành phố Huế. Những người tham gia, là đại diện của các nhóm chủ chốt, có thể tham khảo các kết quả của nghiên cứu này để nâng cao sự tham gia của cơ quan/tổ chức mình vào mối liên hệ hợp tác trong ngành nhằm thúc đẩy phát triển du lịch bền vững.

Thứ ba, nghiên cứu này sẽ đóng góp một trường hợp mới vào chủ đề nghiên cứu du lịch đô thị bền vững mà các nhà nghiên cứu khác có thể tham khảo cho các đề tài trong tương lai.

Cuối cùng, nghiên cứu này sẽ giúp tôi nâng cao kiến thức của bản thân về du lịch nói chung và chủ đề nghiên cứu này nói riêng. Đề tài còn giúp tôi hoàn thành chương trình Cao học và có thể được sử dụng cho các xuất bản mang tính học thuật hoặc các bài thuyết trình.

Thông tin cá nhân của quý vị sẽ được bảo vệ như thế nào?

Thông tin cá nhân của quý vị sẽ được bảo mật và không cung cấp cho bất kì ai. Kết quả nghiên cứu sẽ được tổng hợp và trình bày sao cho không có cá nhân hay tổ chức nào bị tiết lộ danh tính.

Chi phí của việc tham dự nghiên cứu này là gì?

Sẽ không có bất cứ phí tổn khi tham gia nghiên cứu này ngoại trừ khoảng thời gian từ 40 đến 60 phút dành cho buổi phỏng vấn.

Thời gian để cân nhắc lời mời này là bao lâu?

Quý vị có khoảng hai tuần để xem xét chấp nhận lời đề nghị này. Nếu quý vị đồng ý tham gia, xin vui lòng trả lời email trước ngày 10/06/2018.

Quý vị sẽ nhận được phản hồi từ kết quả nghiên cứu này không?

Có, quý vị sẽ nhận được một bản tóm tắt kết quả nghiên cứu khi đề tài được hoàn tất.

Quý vị sẽ làm gì nếu có bất cứ thắc mắc nào về nghiên cứu này?

Nếu quý vị có bất cứ băn khoăn hay câu hỏi nào về nghiên cứu này, vui lòng liên hệ người nghiên cứu hoặc các giảng viên hướng dẫn bất kỳ lúc nào. Các thông tin liên lạc liên quan được cung cấp ở bên dưới.

Bất kỳ thắc mắc nào liên quan đến bản chất của đề tài này nên được thông tin tới các giảng viên hướng dẫn là Giáo sư Simon Milne, simon.milne@aut.ac.nz, +64 (9) 921 9245 hoặc Tiến sĩ Carolyn Deuchar, carolyn.deuchar@aut.ac.nz

Những mối quan tâm về việc thực hiện nghiên cứu nên được thông báo tới Thư kí Điều hành của Hội đồng Đạo đức của Đại học Công nghệ Auckland, bà Kate O'Connor, ethics@aut.ac.nz, 921 9999 ext 6038.

Ai là người quý vị có thể liên hệ để biết thêm thông tin về nghiên cứu này?

Xin vui lòng giữ lại phiếu thông tin này và một bản sao của mẫu chấp thuận tham gia đề tài này cho các vấn đề liên quan trong tương lai. Quý vị cũng có thể liên lạc với thành viên nhóm nghiên cứu như sau:

Thông tin liên lạc của người nghiên cứu:

Hoàng Thị Huế, hue.hoang@aut.ac.nz, +84 1649 825 899

Thông tin liên lạc của giảng viên hướng dẫn đề tài:

Giảng viên hướng dẫn thứ nhất: Prof. Simon Milne, simon.milne@aut.ac.nz

Giảng viên hướng dẫn thứ hai: Dr. Carolyn Deuchar, carolyn.deuchar@aut.ac.nz

Được chấp thuận bởi Hội đồng Đạo đức Đại học Công nghệ Auckland vào 30/05/2018
mà bản đăng ký đạo đức cuối cùng được thông qua, AUTC số tham chiếu 18/181

Appendix 2: Consent Form

**Project title: Stakeholder collaboration in sustainable urban tourism development:
The case of Hue City, Vietnam.**

Project Supervisor: Simon Milne and Carolyn Deuchar

Researcher: Hoang Thi Hue

☐ I have read and understood the information provided about this research project in the Information Sheet dated 15/05/2018.

☐ I have had an opportunity to ask questions and to have them answered.

☐ I understand that notes will be taken during the interviews.

☐ I understand that the interviews will be audio-taped.

☐ I understand that taking part in this study is voluntary (my choice) and that I may withdraw from the study at any time without being disadvantaged in any way.

☐ I understand that if I withdraw from the study then I will be offered the choice between having any data that is identifiable as belonging to me removed or allowing it to continue to be used. However, once the findings have been produced, removal of my data may not be possible.

☐ I agree to take part in this research.

I wish to receive a summary of the research findings (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 type the date on 30/05/2018 which the final approval was granted AUTC Reference number type the AUTC reference number 18/181.

Note: The Participant should retain a copy of this form.

Translation of Consent Form

Tên đề tài: Hợp tác giữa các bên liên quan trong phát triển du lịch đô thị bền vững:
Trường hợp của thành phố Huế, Việt Nam.

Giảng viên hướng dẫn: Simon Milne and Carolyn Deuchar

Người nghiên cứu: Hoang Thi Hue

- ☐ Tôi đã đọc và hiểu các thông tin được cung cấp về đề tài nghiên cứu trong Phiếu Thông tin ngày 15/05/2018.
- ☐ Tôi đã có cơ hội để hỏi và được họ trả lời.
- ☐ Tôi đã hiểu rằng việc ghi chép sẽ được thực hiện
- ☐ Tôi đã hiểu rằng cuộc phỏng vấn sẽ được ghi âm
- ☐ Tôi đã hiểu rằng việc tham gia nghiên cứu này là tự nguyện (lựa chọn của tôi) và tôi có thể rút khỏi đề tài này ở bất cứ thời điểm nào mà không gặp trở ngại gì.
- ☐ Tôi đã hiểu rằng nếu tôi rút khỏi nghiên cứu này thì tôi có quyền chọn lựa giữa việc yêu cầu loại bỏ các thông tin mà mình cung cấp ra khỏi nghiên cứu hoặc cho phép nhóm nghiên cứu tiếp tục sử dụng chúng. Tuy nhiên, một khi các kết luận của nghiên cứu đã được thực hiện, việc xóa bỏ dữ liệu của tôi có thể không thực hiện được.
- ☐ Tôi đồng ý tham gia nghiên cứu này.

☐ Tôi muốn nhận được bản tóm tắt kết quả nghiên cứu (Vui lòng đánh dấu tích vào một lựa chọn): ☐ Có ☐ Không

Chữ ký của người tham gia:

.....

Tên của người tham gia:

.....

Thông tin liên lạc của người tham gia (nếu thích hợp):

.....

.....

Ngày:

Được chấp thuận bởi Hội đồng Đạo đức Đại học Công nghệ Auckland vào ngày điền ngày 30/05/2018 mà bản đăng ký đạo đức cuối cùng được thông qua, AUTECH số tham chiếu, điền số tham chiếu 18/181.

Lưu ý: Người tham gia nên giữ một bản sao của mẫu này.

Appendix 3: Example of Indicative Interview Questions

1. Please tell me about your background. How long have you been working in this organisation? What are your responsibilities?
2. What are your organisation's major activities?
3. How has the tourism industry performance in Hue City in the last 5 years? Why?
4. In your opinion, what is sustainable tourism?
5. Do you believe that sustainable tourism development can be achieved in Hue City? Why? How?
6. What are the difficulties for Hue City in developing more sustainable tourism?
7. What is your organisation doing to be a more sustainable tourism enterprise/organisation?
8. How is your organisation participating in sustainable tourism development in Hue City?
9. What are the barriers facing your organisation in undertaking sustainable tourism initiatives?
10. How can your organisation/company participate more actively in sustainable tourism development in Hue?
11. Do you think that stakeholder collaboration is an important thing in tourism development? Why?
12. What other stakeholders does your organisation work with? How does your organisation collaborate with the other stakeholders in Hue City's tourism industry?
13. What are the challenges and opportunities for your organisation in cooperating with stakeholders in the city's tourism industry? Why?
14. What solutions could enhance collaboration between stakeholders in the destination to develop more sustainability?
15. How do you think about tourism's future development in Hue City? Do you believe that tourism can be a sustainable form of development for Hue in the long term?

Appendix 4: Ethic approval

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC)

Auckland University of Technology

D-88, Private Bag 92006, Auckland 1142, NZ

T: +64 9 921 9999 ext. 8316

E: ethics@aut.ac.nz

www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics 30 May 2018

Simon Milne

Faculty of Culture and Society

Dear Simon

Re Ethics Application: **18/181 Stakeholder collaboration in sustainable urban tourism development: The case of Hue City, Vietnam**

Thank you for providing evidence as requested, which satisfies the points raised by the Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee (AUTEC).

Your ethics application has been approved for three years until 29 May 2021.

Non-Standard Conditions of Approval

1. Inclusion of an option box concerning the audiotaping on the Consent Form.

Non-standard conditions must be completed before commencing your study. Non-standard conditions do not need to be submitted to or reviewed by AUTEC before commencing your study.

Standard Conditions of Approval

1. A progress report is due annually on the anniversary of the approval date, using form EA2, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>.
2. A final report is due at the expiration of the approval period, or, upon completion of project, using form EA3, which is available online through <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>.

3. Any amendments to the project must be approved by AUTECH prior to being implemented. Amendments can be requested using the EA2 form: <http://www.aut.ac.nz/researchethics>.
4. Any serious or unexpected adverse events must be reported to AUTECH Secretariat as a matter of priority.
5. Any unforeseen events that might affect continued ethical acceptability of the project should also be reported to the AUTECH Secretariat as a matter of priority.

Please quote the application number and title on all future correspondence related to this project.

AUTECH grants ethical approval only. If you require management approval for access for your research from another institution or organisation then you are responsible for obtaining it. If the research is undertaken outside New Zealand, you need to meet all locality legal and ethical obligations and requirements. You are reminded that it is your responsibility to ensure that the spelling and grammar of documents being provided to participants or external organisations is of a high standard.

For any enquiries, please contact ethics@aut.ac.nz

Yours sincerely,



Kate O'Connor

Executive Manager

Auckland University of Technology Ethics Committee

Cc: hue.hoang@aut.ac.nz; Carolyn Deuchar