

HO CHI MINH NATIONAL ACADEMY OF POLITICS

TU THI THANH MY

**DEVELOPMENT OF ECOTOURISM
IN THE AREA OF LONG XUYEN QUADRANGLE**

ABSTRACT OF DOCTORAL THESIS

MAJOR: POLITICAL ECONOMY

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**The thesis will be defended before the Dissertation Grading
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Academy of Politics**

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**The thesis can be found at the National Library
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INTRODUCTION

1. The urgency of the topic

Theoretically, there are quite a lot of research on ecotourism and environmental development but mainly approached from the perspective of tourism management, environmental resources or product development. Many core issues such as the relationship of interests between participants, the mechanism of allocation and use of resources, the role of institutions and policies in the development of environmental protection have not been fully explained. On the other hand, the theoretical basis for the role of environmental protection in the development of production forces in rural areas and specific ecological areas with specific difficulties has not been paid attention to research. The research on the topic of regional environmental development not only contributes to supplementing and perfecting the theoretical system of environmental development in the socialist-oriented market economy, but also clarifies the relationship between economic development, environmental protection, ensuring the interests of actors and sustainable development of regional linkages in the new context.

In practical terms, the Long Xuyen Quadrangle is a socio-economic region in the Mekong Delta. In fact, the development of regional environmental protection in recent years has not been commensurate with the existing potential and advantages. Regional environmental protection products are still monotonous; infrastructure and service facilities serving regional environmental protection are still limited; planning, policies and management are still inadequate; promotion and promotion activities have not been very effective; the linkage between subjects participating in the development of environmental protection and the association and cooperation between localities in the region have not been paid attention and focused. On the other hand, the regional environmental protection area is currently suffering from the increasing impact of climate change, saltwater intrusion and ecological resource depletion. These problems not only directly affect agricultural production but also affect the socio-economic life of the population in the region. In that context, the development of regional natural resources to effectively exploit ecological resources, create sustainable livelihoods for the population, protect the environment and contribute to climate change adaptation for the region is an inevitable direction.

Stemming from the theoretical and practical urgency mentioned above, the author chooses the issue "***Development of ecotourism in the***

Long Xuyen quadrangle" as the topic of his doctoral thesis in Political Economy.

2. Research objectives and tasks

2.1. Purpose of the study

- *Theoretically*: On the basis of systematically synthesizing and supplementing relevant theoretical issues, the thesis forms a theoretical framework on the development of cultural heritage and the development of regional cultural heritage.

- *Practical*: Analyzing and evaluating the current situation of ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle. Thereby, proposing directions and solutions to contribute to the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region in the new context.

2.2. Research tasks

Firstly, an overview of research works related to the thesis topic, presentation of research results, research gaps and thesis issues that need to be further clarified.

Secondly, systematize and supplement theoretical issues on the development of the ecotourism and the development of the regional ecotourism. Develop a theoretical framework for the content, evaluation criteria and lessons learned on the development of the regional ecotourism. *Thirdly*, analyze the current status of ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region in the period of 2020 - 2025 based on the results of surveys, surveys, primary and secondary databases. Evaluate the achievements and limitations, clarify the causes of limitations and problems posed to the development of ecotourism in the regional Long Xuyen quadrangle over the past time.

Fourthly, forecast the new context, propose directions and solutions for the development of ecotourism in the regional Long Xuyen quadrangle to 2035, with a vision to 2045.

3. Object and scope of research

3.1. Research objects

The project focuses on in-depth research and development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle, approaching from the perspective of Political Economy.

3.2. Scope of the study

- *Content*: The thesis researches theoretical and practical issues related to the development of regional ecotourism, focusing on 03 main content groups: (1) Planning, policies and organization of management and development of regional ecotourism development; (2) Product

development and promotion of regional ecotourism; (3) Linkage and cooperation in regional ecotourism development. Evaluate the development of regional ecotourism in the region according to five groups of criteria: (1) Validity; (2) Effectiveness, (3) Cooperation, (4) Fairness; (5) Sustainability.

- *Spatio*: The research project within the Long Xuyen quadrangle, including An Giang and Kien Giang provinces (before the merger) accounts for about 97% of the total region, the rest of Can Tho city accounts for about 3% of the total region. Therefore, the thesis only mainly analyzes the current situation of ecotourism development of An Giang and Kien Giang provinces.

- *Regarding time*: The project studies the current situation of ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle from 2020 to 2025; proposes directions and solutions for the development of ecotourism in the regional Long Xuyen quadrangle until 2035, with a vision to 2045.

4. Theoretical basis and research methods

4.1. Theoretical basis

The thesis is based on an interdisciplinary approach and research, focusing on the perspective of political economy. On the basis of the theories of Marxism-Leninism and Ho Chi Minh Thought; the undertakings, lines and views of the Communist Party of Vietnam expressed in the Documents through the congresses; policies and laws of the State and documents and policies of provinces and localities in the regional Long Xuyen quadrangle; theories and views related to the development of the ecotourism and the development of the ecotourism as a theoretical basis for the thesis.

4.2. Research methods

The thesis uses dialectical materialism and historical materialism as the foundation. Specific methods include: (1) Scientific abstraction methods, historical and logical methods, analytical and synthesis methods to build a theoretical framework for regional ecotourism development; (2) Methods of data collection, comparison and comparison used to analyze secondary documents and statistics of reports, data and legal documents in the period of 2020 - 2025 to assess the current status of ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle; (3) Methods of investigation and survey; descriptive statistical methods are combined and used to analyze and evaluate the practical situation of development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area; point out achievements, limitations and causes of limitations; identify problems posed and serve

as a basis for proposing directions and solutions for ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle in the new situation.

5. New contributions of the thesis

5.1. Theoretically New Contributions

Firstly, the thesis constructs the concept of ecotourism development and regional ecotourism development. Three groups of contents for regional development have been identified, including: (1) Planning, policies and management organization of regional ecotourism development; (2) Product development and promotion of regional ecotourism (3) Linkage and cooperation in regional ecotourism development.

Secondly, the thesis develops five evaluation criteria corresponding to three main content groups, including effectiveness, efficiency, cooperation, fairness and sustainability.

5.2. New contributions in terms of practice

Firstly, the thesis analyzes the current situation of Long Xuyen quadrangle region development in the period of 2020 - 2025 based on the content and evaluation criteria that have been determined in the theoretical basis. At the same time, it can evaluate the achieved results, the remaining limitations and analyze the causes of limitations.

Secondly, the thesis proposes a number of orientations and three groups of solutions, mainly contributing to the completion of ecotourism development in Long Xuyen quadrangle region to 2035, with a vision to 2045.

6. Structure of the thesis

The thesis is implemented including the introduction, conclusion, list of references and appendices. In which, the content section is structured into 4 chapters and 10 periods.

Chapter 1

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY RELATED TO THE THESIS TOPIC

1.1. RESEARCH WORKS ON TOURISM, ECOTOURISM AND DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL ECOTOURISM

The thesis summarizes the results of the overview of research works related to the development of ecotourism and regional ecotourism in the following directions:

Firstly, research works on the concept, characteristics and role of tourism, ecotourism and ecotourism development.

Secondly, research works on the content, evaluation criteria, factors affecting tourism development, ecotourism and regional ecotourism development.

Thirdly, research works on the experience of ecotourism development and regional ecotourism development.

Fourthly, research works on the current situation and solutions for ecotourism development and regional ecotourism development.

1.2. THE SCIENTIFIC VALUE OF THE OVERVIEW WORKS AND THE THESIS ISSUES THAT NEED FURTHER RESEARCH

1.2.1. Scientific value of the general works

Theoretically, the studies have gradually clarified the concept, characteristics and role of the regional ecotourism; many works have built and perfected the theoretical system on sustainable development of ecotourism; identified a relatively large number of factors affecting ecotourism development; mentioned the content and criteria for ecotourism evaluation and researched lessons learned for ecotourism development.

In practical terms, the studies have assessed relatively generally the potential and current status of ecotourism development in many different ecological regions; pointed out successful models of ecotourism development associated with nature conservation and community livelihood development; clearly identified limitations and challenges in ecotourism development in some location; proposed a system of solutions for ecotourism development and regional ecotourism development.

1.2.2. Research gaps

Firstly, there have been very few studies approaching regional tourism from a regional perspective; *Secondly*, there have been no projects that have developed a system of content and criteria for evaluating the development of regional tourism in terms of effectiveness, efficiency, cooperation, fairness and sustainability; *Thirdly*, there are still very few research works on the development of regional ecotourism heritage products; *Fourthly*, there are not many research works on the issue of fairness in the distribution of benefits among participants; *Fifthly*, there is a lack of research from the perspective of political economy on regional tourism development.

1.2.3. Thesis issues that need further research

In terms of theory, the thesis needs to supplement and introduce the concept of ecotourism development and regional ecotourism development of; clarify the basis, conditions and principles of regional ecotourism development. Thereby, developing contents, evaluation criteria and

factors affecting regional ecotourism development. At the same time, an overview of lessons learned on regional development of environmental protection for the region.

In terms of practice, the analysis and assessment of the current situation of ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region in the period of 2020 - 2025 is based on three main content groups: (i) Planning, policies and organization of management of regional ecotourism development; (ii) Product development and promotion of regional ecotourism and (iii) Linkage and cooperation in regional ecotourism development. Evaluate the process of regional ecotourism development through the following criteria: effectiveness, efficiency, cooperation, fairness and sustainability. Overview of achievements, remaining limitations and causes of limitations. Analyze the new context, directions and propose a number of solutions to promote the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region to 2035, with a vision to 2045.

Chapter 2

THEORETICAL BASIS AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE ON REGIONAL ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

2.1. SOME THEORETICAL ISSUES ON ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND REGIONAL ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

2.1.1. Definition, characteristics and classification of ecotourism

Firstly, about the concept of ecotourism.

On the basis of synthesizing the research results of scholars on the development of ecotourism and the development of ecotourism from the perspective of Marxist-Leninist political economy, the author of the thesis said that *ecotourism is a tourism activity based on nature and the value of local cultural identity in order to create economic value, and at the same time ensure the harmony of interests among the participants, associated with environmental conservation and towards sustainable development.*

Secondly, about the characteristics of ecotourism.

Firstly, ecotourism is associated with nature and local culture. Secondly, ecotourism is associated with conservation and sustainable development. Thirdly, ecotourism creates a sustainable source of income for local residents, helping people improve their livelihoods and reduce pressure on the ecological environment.

Thirdly, about the classification of ecotourism.

Ecotourism products basically have the common characteristics of tourism products, but there is a difference in that it depends more on the

exploitation of the values of local natural resources and culture, associated with environmental protection and sustainable development. In tourism, the boundaries between types of ecotourism are only relative due to the diversity and flexibility of ecotourism activities. Therefore, within the scope of research, the thesis summarizes the basic types of ecotourism as follows: (1) Forest and nature ecotourism; (2) Exploration and mountaineering ecotourism; (3) Cultural and spiritual ecotourism; (4) Community ecotourism, craft villages and (5) ecotourism for sea and island resorts.

2.1.2. Concept of ecotourism development

On the basis of assessments from research perspectives, the author raises the following concept: *Ecotourism development is to increase natural tourism activities associated with cultural identity values to ensure the benefits of the local population, the needs of tourists, and at the same time protect natural resources and balance the ecological environment.*

2.1.3. Definition of region, forms and conditions of regional association

Firstly, the concept of region.

From the perspective of research, the concept of a region can be summarized as follows: *A region is a defined socio-economic space, formed on the basis of social division of labor and specialization by territory, in which economic actors have linkages, cooperation and allocation of resources in order to exploit comparative advantages, create added value and promote sustainable development.*

Secondly, the forms and conditions for regional linkage.

Theoretically, regional linkages need to be considered from the following angles: (i) Vertical linkages between the central government and ministries and localities that are governments and departments in localities; (ii) Horizontal links between localities in the region (intra-regional) with forms of polar linkage, development centers with the rest of the region or clusters, regional networks and regional links (inter-regional); (iii) Links between subjects performing activities, this is the link between enterprises and enterprises, enterprises with the population and with other economic organizations.

The conditions for regional linkages are as follows: (1) Comparative regional advantages play an important role in the formation of the system of division of labor and specialization, thereby forming regional linkages; (2) The scale of the impact spills over to other regions through the use of resources and resources; (3) Consensus on institutions and social groups sharing common interests, including local development interests; (4)

Synchronization of policy mechanisms, legal frameworks and regional governance; (5) Synchronous and modern infrastructure systems with different types of infrastructure.

2.1.4. Concepts and principles of regional ecotourism development

Firstly, the concept of regional ecotourism development.

From the perspective of political economy research, the author offers the concept of regional tourism development: *Regional tourism development is the process of increasing tourism activities based on natural resources and typical cultural values of a certain territory, in order to rationally exploit natural and cultural resources to serve the needs of tourists to visit and experience. At the same time, it contributes to improving the lives and benefits of local populations, preserving ecosystems, sustainably using resources and maintaining environmental balance throughout the region.*

Secondly, the principles of regional ecotourism development

Principle 1: Allocate ecotourism space based on the comparative advantages of each locality.

Principle 2: Ensuring the harmony of interests in the organization of regional ecotourism development space.

Principle 3: Ensure scale efficiency, product diversification and expansion of the regional tourism market.

2.2. CONTENTS, EVALUATION CRITERIA AND FACTORS AFFECTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF REGIONAL ECOTOURISM

2.2.1. Contents of regional ecotourism development

2.2.1.1. Formulation of plannings, policies and organization of management of regional ecotourism development

Firstly, the regional ecotourism development planning can be developed separately or in combination according to the development planning of each locality in the region or based on the national planning.

Secondly, regional policies need to prioritize infrastructure investment in accordance with ecological characteristics, ensuring sustainability and environmental friendliness; at the same time, capital support, preferential credit, tax reduction and promotion of public-private cooperation, associated with upgrading transportation and developing ecotourism accommodation services.

Thirdly, the organization and administration in regional management need to have a regional coordinating agency, this agency needs to have a clear decentralization, clearly stipulate the functions, tasks and powers of all levels, avoid overlapping or contradictory situations in the process of operation.

2.2.1.2. Product development and promotion of regional ECOTOURISM

Firstly, the development of ecotourism products needs to ensure a balance between exploitation and conservation, connecting businesses with the population and limiting impacts on the ecosystem. Accordingly, it is necessary to develop ecotourism programs that diversify activities and destinations, properly assess the potential of resources to form typical products of each locality and typical products of the region, link product development with improving management efficiency, training human resources, and meeting the interests of participants.

Secondly, the promotion of regional tourism should aim to organize regional-scale investment activities, develop and unify strategies and contents with the identity and characteristics of regional tourism, diversify modern forms and tools, and link local events and festivals into a series of regional ecotourism events.

2.2.1.3. Associations and cooperation in the development of regional eco-tourism

Firstly, regional linkage aims to ensure the harmony of interests for participating entities and localities in the linked region.

Secondly, linking resources and developing infrastructure for regional ecotourism development.

Thirdly, linking the exploitation and development of regional ecotourism in a sustainable direction.

2.2.2. Criteria for assessment of regional ecotourism development

The thesis identifies 5 criteria for evaluating the development of regional tourism, including: validity, effectiveness, cooperation, fairness and sustainability.

(1) *Validity* reflects the State's organizational and regulatory capacity, the degree to which regional ecotourism development objectives are achieved through the development of mechanisms and implementation of plannings, plans, policies and ecotourism development management.

(2) *Effectiveness* reflects the level of achievement of regional ecotourism development objectives through the mobilization, allocation and rational use of resources to bring efficiency to ecotourism development in the region.

(3) *Cooperation* reflects the degree of linkage, cooperation and sharing of responsibilities among entities participating in the development of regional ecotourism.

(4) *Equity* reflects the rational allocation of benefits, opportunities

for participation and responsibility among actors in the development of regional ecotourism, in order to ensure that development achievements are not concentrated on one group but contribute to improving the common welfare.

(5) *Sustainability* reflects the degree to which the harmony between economic growth, conservation of ecological resources and cultural values, improvement of community life and strengthening of regional management capacity.

2.2.3. Factors affecting the development of regional ecotourism

Firstly, the Party's viewpoints, guidelines, and policies and laws of the State. The Party's views and guidelines play a role in strategic orientation, while the State's system of policies and laws creates a legal and managerial foundation to ensure the promotion of ecotourism in an effective and sustainable direction.

Secondly, natural conditions, geographical location, tourism resources and regional socio-economic and political conditions.

Natural conditions and geographical location directly affect the development of ecotourism, specifically contributing to the regulation of natural and cultural characteristics of ecotourism objects. Ecotourism resources play a particularly important role in the development of ecotourism and have a direct impact on the formation of ecotourism products, types of ecotourism and the organization of ecotourism areas. Socio-economic conditions have a direct impact on the development of people and communities. Political conditions are factors related to the political system, local policies, and the stability of security and order of ecotourism.

Thirdly, tourism infrastructure and service facilities for the development of regional ecotourism. Tourism infrastructure and service facilities can be mentioned as transportation systems, communications, accommodation services, and systems of auxiliary service facilities,... These factors have an important position and role in promoting regional tourism.

Fourthly, the subjects participating in regional ecotourism . Ecotourism participants are key factors in promoting regional ecotourism and are closely linked to each other, including direct service providers such as guides, staff of the ecotourism area and residents; human resources for management and policy making including state agencies, management boards of protected areas and localities; training and research institutions; businesses and investors.

Fifthly, the linkage, cooperation and benefit mechanism in the

development of regional ecotourism. Linkage and cooperation are important foundations for determining the effectiveness of regional ecotourism development, contributing to creating resonance and improving long-term competitiveness. The benefit mechanism is the mechanism for transforming the interests of subjects from individual motivations into cooperative motivations, thereby promoting participation, linkage, investment and resource conservation, creating a foundation for sustainable ecotourism development for the linked region.

Sixthly, digital technology, international integration and tourism development trends in the world . Digital technology is an important tool contributing to the development of ecotourism. International integration and tourism development trends in the world are having a strong impact on the development of regional ecotourism, both opening up opportunities for cooperation, attracting investment and access to management experience, and setting requirements to improve competitiveness.

2.3. EXPERIENCE IN REGIONAL ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT AND LESSONS FOR THE LONG XUYEN QUADRANGLE

2.3.1. Experiences in ecotourism development of some regions in the world

Firstly, the experience of Northeast Thailand

Secondly, the experience of the Okavango Plain (Botswana)

2.3.2. Experiences of some regions in the country on regional ecotourism development

Firstly, experience in developing ecotourism in the Northwest region

Secondly, the experience of developing ecotourism in the Central Highlands.

2.3.3. Lessons for the Long Xuyen quadrangle in the development of regional ecotourism

Firstly, to complete the planning, policies and management organization in the development of regional ecotourism

Linked regions need to build a synchronous, stable and long-term oriented institutional framework; region-level spatial planning to avoid overlapping; improve mechanisms and policies to encourage investment through tax incentives, access to credit, and promulgation of a set of regional ecotourism standards.

Secondly, product development and promotion of regional ecotourism

The linked region needs to prioritize building separate ecotourism products based on the typical ecosystem of the region. The promotion and

promotion of ecotourism must shift from discrete to regional communication based on digital platforms, digital maps, short films on the ecosystem, and joint communication campaigns between provinces in the region.

Thirdly, to promote linkages and ensure the harmony of reasonable interests among economic entities participating in the development of regional ecotourism development

Establish a cohesion mechanism between the government, enterprises and the population, ensuring a harmonious benefit sharing mechanism between parties; promote linkages and cooperation in the development of transport infrastructure, convenient connection between residential areas and points of the ecotourism region; focus on linking to improve the quality of human resources in association with practical requirements; Lessons from environmental protection measures, natural resource conservation and preservation of historical and cultural values also need to be carried out in each step of implementation.

Chapter 3

CURRENT STATUS OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE AREA OF LONG XUYEN QUADRANGLE

3.1. POTENTIALS AND ADVANTAGES OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE LONG XUYEN QUADRANGLE

3.1.1. Geographical location and natural conditions of the Long Xuyen quadrangle

Firstly, the geographical location of the Long Xuyen quadrangle

Secondly, the natural conditions of the Long Xuyen quadrangle

3.1.2. Overview of tourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle

The period of 2020 - 2025 is a landmark period for tourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region. After the COVID-19 recovery period, the provinces in the region have achieved many achievements in increasing the number of visitors and revenue for tourism. In 2025, the total number of visitors to the region is estimated to welcome 24,135,521 visitors, of which international visitors are estimated to welcome more than 1.9 million, with a total revenue of about VND 67,684 billion. On the basis of the achievements, the Long Xuyen quadrangle region continues to orient to promote tourism development into depth, quality, professionalism, sustainability, branding, building high-end resort

ecotourism products, health care tourism, agricultural tourism and seasonal products.

3.1.3. Potential for ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle

(1) Regional ecotourism in Long Xuyen quadrangle is characterized by high diversity and ecological transition; (2) Regional ecotourism is closely associated with the function of maintaining resources and biodiversity; (3) Regional ecotourism is imbued with community and the life of the population; (4) Regional ecotourism is strongly dominated by hydrological conditions and natural environmental fluctuations; (5) Regional ecotourism is highly cohesive and inter-regional, both within the Mekong Delta and in relation to Cambodia and the Gulf of Thailand. It can be seen that the Long Xuyen quadrangle has many potentials and favorable conditions in the development of regional ecotourism.

3.2. CURRENT SITUATION OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE LONG XUYEN QUADRANGLE IN THE PERIOD OF 2020 - 2025

3.2.1. Planning, policies and organization of management and development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle in the period of 2020 - 2025

Firstly, in the period of 2020 - 2025, in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region, there are many plans and plans developed and implemented. The basic plans and schemes show effectiveness in promoting the advantages of resources in the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region.

Secondly, the implementation and concretization of central and local policies in promoting ecotourism in Long Xuyen quadrangle region are implemented quite flexibly, in accordance with practical conditions.

Thirdly, in terms of organization and administration in each locality and between localities in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region, always closely follow the guidelines, policies and laws of the Party and the State, the direction and administration of superiors.

3.2.2. Current situation of product development and promotion of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle in the period of 2020 - 2025

Firstly, about the current situation of eco-tourism product development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

The level of association and cooperation in the development of ecotourism products in the region is no longer single but is gradually connected into routes, points and product chains according to the ecological space and experience journey. At the same time, ecotourism

products in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region have been paid attention to and invested in development, initially forming typical ecotourism products.

Secondly, the current situation of ecotourism promotion and promotion in the Long Xuyen quadrangle . The current situation of linkage and cooperation between localities in the promotion and promotion of ecotourism is also paid attention to. In addition, ecotourism promotion activities in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region are actively implemented.

3.2.3. The current situation of linkage in the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle in the period of 2020 - 2025

Firstly, the current situation of ensuring harmonious interests in the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

(1) The current situation of association and cooperation between subjects (local governments, enterprises and residents) to ensure the interests of the parties involved.

On the side of the local government, the role of management in the development of tourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region has been shown through the promulgation and implementation of tourism development plans in the direction of sustainability and integrating community benefits. *On the business side*, many important achievements have been obtained through ecotourism activities . *On the side of the people*, they are both the owners of resources and the direct beneficiaries of ecotourism activities. Over the past time, the Long Xuyen quadrangle region has created obvious economic benefits for the community through expanding jobs, creating new sources of income and forming a market for consuming ecotourism products and services on the spot.

(2) The current situation of linkage in ensuring interests between localities in the Long Xuyen quadrangle. The Long Xuyen quadrangle region basically forms inter-regional routes, points and ecotourism products to create conditions for localities to participate in the ecotourism value chain, thereby expanding the ability to attract visitors, mobilize investment and increase revenue.

Secondly, the current situation of linking the mobilization of resources and tourism infrastructure for ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle

(1) The current situation of linkage to mobilize investment capital for ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle.

Regarding the level of regional linkage, the Long Xuyen quadrangle region uses support from the state budget, combined with local budgets

and other mobilized capital sources to invest in infrastructure development in a synchronous, focused and focused direction. At the same time, proactively receive and effectively use capital from central programs and projects related to tourism and ecotourism, promote the role of the budget of units in the region and rationally allocate capital resources to promote sustainable ecotourism.

(2) The current situation of linkage in human resource development for the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area.

Regarding the linkage of human resource development, the Long Xuyen Quadrangle region has paid attention to implementing many human resource training and fostering programs for tourism development, gradually forming coordination between state management agencies, training institutions and enterprises. In terms of operational efficiency, local authorities in the region organize many refresher courses, training and training in tourism and ecotourism skills for students who are civil servants and public employees in the culture, sports and tourism sectors; training and professional improvement classes for people participating in ecotourism and ecotourism human resources in key destinations.

(3) The current situation of linking the construction of tourism infrastructure and service facilities for ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

Regarding the linkage in building regional transport infrastructure, this is identified as a breakthrough in improving competitiveness and promoting regional Long Xuyen quadrangle cooperation, focusing on construction and development investment.

Regarding the linkage in the development of service establishments to serve the development of regional ecotourism, over the past time, the Long Xuyen quadrangle region has promoted the mobilization of social resources to build and develop service facilities for ecotourism development, as a result, in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region, many ecotourism projects, quality accommodation facilities, and standard resorts.

Thirdly, the current situation of linking the exploitation and development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle in the direction of sustainability

Local governments in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region have issued many plans, schemes and policies to contribute to promoting the development of ecotourism in a sustainable direction, focusing on the conservation of resources and biodiversity in the process of exploiting tourism products. At the same time, focusing on the preservation of

cultural heritage, management and organization of festivals, restoration and embellishment of relics for the development of ecotourism.

3.3. ASSESSMENT OF THE CURRENT SITUATION OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE LONG XUYEN QUADRANGLE IN THE PERIOD OF 2020 - 2025

3.3.1. Results achieved

Firstly, the planning, policies and management of ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area are increasingly being improved

(i) Regarding planning and planning, ecotourism is gradually integrated into economic development planning and sectoral planning.

(ii) In terms of policies, step by step develop and complete policies to promote ecotourism on the basis of harmony between the goals of economic growth, ecotourism and ensuring progress and social justice.

(iii) Regarding the organization of the management apparatus for the development of ecotourism, initially paid more attention and attention to the requirements of ecosystem conservation, control of exploitation activities and enhanced the responsibilities of participants, thereby gradually establishing a development order in line with sustainable development goals.

Secondly, product development and promotion of regional ecotourism have achieved many efficiencies

(i) Regarding the development of ecotourism products in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region

Ecotourism products in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region are increasingly rich in types, many ecotourism products have been gradually associated with the goal of conserving ecological resources and improving people's incomes, some ecotourism products are connected into routes, points and regional product chains.

(ii) Regarding the promotion ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

The promotion of ecotourism in the region is becoming more and more diverse and of higher quality, there have been many innovations in both content and form. Ecotourism promotion does not only stop at introducing a single destination but is gradually associated with the strategy of sustainable ecotourism development.

Thirdly, the achievements of linkage in the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

(i) Ensuring benefits for entities participating in ecotourism development

For the government, ecotourism has brought many benefits to localities in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region. First of all, budget revenues are improved through tourism growth, in line with the policy of localities on identifying tourism as an important economic sector.

For businesses, the interests of businesses are gradually ensured through an increasingly favorable investment environment and policy mechanisms. In practice, many ecotourism products have been gradually associated with the goal of maintaining ecological resources, increasing revenue for businesses and improving income for people.

For residents, the benefits are significantly improved through direct participation in the ecotourism value chain. People in Long Xuyen quadrangle not only benefit from land lease, accommodation, catering, transportation services, but also participate in building homestays, on-site guides, supplying local craft village products and agricultural products.

(ii) Attracting investment capital and resources for regional development

In terms of attracting investment capital, the Long Xuyen quadrangle region has taken advantage of the support from the budget and attracted many non-budget capital sources to invest in a number of ecotourism areas with development potential and advantages. Capital from the central budget, along with provincial budget capital and other mobilized capital sources, focuses on infrastructure investment in a synchronous and focused direction.

Regarding human resource development, policies are proposed to optimize human resources in the tourism industry, including ecotourism, through training, fostering and career development programs for ecotourism human resources.

Regarding the development of tourism infrastructure and service facilities for regional ecotourism. Over the years, the region's transport infrastructure has been invested and built, road traffic has had many important improvements, the system of national highways and provincial highways of provinces in the region has been upgraded and expanded, gradually improving the access to ecotourism areas and points. Service facilities for ecotourism have been invested, built and upgraded with increasing quality.

(iii) Regarding the linkage of sustainable exploitation and development of ecotourism

The work of environmental protection and resource embellishment in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region always increases the area of natural ecosystems, restores and ensures integrity; biodiversity is preserved and

used sustainably to contribute to socio-economic development in the direction of a green economy and proactively adapt to climate change. Regarding the promotion of cultural values, practice shows that the Long Xuyen quadrangle region has interest and investment in conservation associated with the development of biodiversity.

3.3.2. Limitations and causes of limitations

3.3.2.1. Limitations

Firstly, there are still many inadequacies in the planning, policies and management of ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

Planning lacks synchronization and regional cooperation, some planning is still formal, the quality of forecasts is not high and lacks a long-term vision. The implementation of policies is not synchronous and overlapping. There are still many inadequacies in the state management of ecotourism in the region, some activities are ineffective.

Secondly, on product development and promotion of regional ecotourism

Regional ecotourism products are not diverse and unique and lack of regional linkage products. The promotion of ecotourism has not brought high efficiency, many activities are still overlapping between localities, and promotion activities lack close coordination between units in the region.

Thirdly, the association and cooperation in the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region still have many limitations

Over the past time, the level of linkage and cooperation in the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle has not been high, leading to the results of attracting resources that are not suitable for the advantages of the region; human resources of ecotourism in the region are still limited in quantity and quality; transportation connecting to ecotourism points is not synchronous; nature conservation, environmental protection and promotion of traditional values lack investment resources. In addition, in some places in the region, ensuring the harmony of interests for participating subjects is still not really satisfactory.

3.3.2.2. Causes of restriction

First, the mechanism and coordination of regional linkages are not strong enough. In fact, the development of planning, policies and regional management organization are not synchronous. Planning still lacks multi-sectoral integration and regional spatial cohesion, mainly stopping at each locality, leading to the dispersion of resources and duplication in the development of ecotourism products.

Secondly, development resources are still scattered, while regional linkage investment requirements need to be large-scale. The Long Xuyen quadrangle region lacks resources to support regional ecotourism development, including investment capital, quality human resources and technical infrastructure for regional ecotourism development.

Thirdly, there is a lack of linkage and cooperation in the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region. The lack of linkage and cooperation between localities in the region leads to a decrease in the competitiveness of typical products and promotion of regional ecotourism. At the same time, the lack of linkage and cooperation between ecotourism participants (local governments, enterprises and residents) in the region will lead to a mechanism for distributing benefits in the linkage that is not really effective, especially the population, an important subject of ecotourism but has not really benefited proportionately and actively participated.

Fourthly, there is no effective and fair benefit distribution mechanism in the development of regional ecotourism. Benefits from regional linkages have not been allocated commensurate with the level of contribution, responsibility and cost that each locality, business and community participates. The mechanism for recognition and sharing of benefits for indirectly participating entities is not clear, which gives rise to disparities in benefits between subjects, reduces the motivation for cooperation, thereby limiting the ability to form harmonious interest relationships and sustainable regional linkages.

Fifth, the cognitive thinking and capacity to participate in linkages of local governments and local populations are slow to innovate. The thinking and awareness of regional linkages of local governments are still poor, still inclined to manage according to administrative boundaries and prioritize the interests of each locality, have not shifted strongly to the thinking of cooperation, sharing resources and harmonizing interests in the ecotourism development.

Thus, the limitations in the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region have both subjective and objective causes, in which the factors of institutions, resources, markets, linkages and guarantee of benefits are prominent. In addition, one of the important reasons is that the knowledge and practical experience of the region is still very little, most provinces in the region have only carried out individual development, have not changed their thinking from "ecotourism points" to "ecotourism areas", which greatly affects the process of linking Long Xuyen quadrangle regions.

Chapter 4

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTIONS AND SOLUTIONS

ECOTOURISM IN THE LONG XUYEN QUADRANGLE TO 2035, WITH A VISION TO 2045

4.1. NEW CONTEXT AND DIRECTIONS FOR ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN THE LONG XUYEN QUADRANGLE TO 2035, WITH A VISION TO 2045

4.1.1. New context affecting the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle

4.1.1.1. World context and forecast of global tourism development

Global tourism is facing many challenges such as political instability, economic recession, natural disasters and epidemics, constantly affecting ecotourism development. After COVID-19, the trend of shifting from mass tourism to safe, environmentally friendly and rich local experience models is becoming more and more pronounced, in which ecotourism has become an inevitable direction. In the long term, ecotourism needs a flexible adaptation strategy, effective risk management, strengthening the role of the community and promoting sustainable linkages for stable development in the context of volatility.

4.1.1.2. Domestic context

Vietnam's tourism is moving into a recovery phase associated with restructuring after the profound impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and at the same time is clearly affected by the process of international economic integration, digital transformation and changes in tourist consumption behavior. The context of domestic tourism development is also affected by more and more natural disasters and sustainability requirements. In addition, in the context of arranging and streamlining the state apparatus to implement the two-level government, it is an institutional lever to help strengthen regional cooperation, reduce fragmentation in planning, investment and promotion, thereby forming a regional ecotourism product chain and brand. However, this process also poses challenges in policy coordination, institutional adaptation, and control of conflicts of interest and environmental risks.

4.1.2. Orientations for ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle to 2035, with a vision to 2045

4.1.2.1. General direction

In the period of 2025 - 2035, tourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region, including ecotourism, will become an important economic sector of the Long Xuyen quadrangle region, with a high and stable growth rate,

forming a branded sea-island-eco-cultural-agricultural tourism ecosystem in the region. The Long Xuyen quadrangle region needs to identify ecotourism as a sustainable economic sector, ecotourism development needs to ensure harmony between conservation and exploitation, taking the local population as the center, ecology as the foundation, associated with digital transformation and innovation. At the same time, strengthening regional cooperation and international cohesion, especially with Cambodia and Thailand, in order to form cross-border ecotourism routes.

4.1.2.2. Specific directions

Specific directions focus on key issues such as developing plannings and plans for regional ecotourism development to 2035, with a vision to 2045; improving institutions and policies and improving the efficiency of regional ecotourism management; focusing on mobilizing resources and effectively using resources for regional ecotourism development; developing products and promoting ecotourism in the region to 2035, with a vision to 2045; linking training and development of human resources for ecotourism in the region; linking to promote the development of tourism infrastructure and service facilities for ecotourism; ensuring the harmony of interests among subjects in promoting ecotourism and optimizing the efficiency of natural resources conservation and promoting cultural and historical values in the region.

4.2. SOLUTIONS TO DEVELOP ECOTOURISM IN THE LONG XUYEN QUADRANGLE AREA BY 2035, WITH A VISION TO 2045

4.2.1. Group of solutions to improve planning and policies to promote ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

4.2.1.1. Solutions to complete the planning for the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

This group of solutions focuses on reviewing and synchronizing the planning for the development of ecotourism areas in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region, optimizing the efficiency of implementing the regional planning for the development of ecotourism areas and strengthening the management of regional planning for development of regional ecotourism. Specific solutions are proposed to adjust and supplement the system of legal documents related to regional ecotourism planning; comprehensively review the previously developed planning system to ensure consistency with current plannings to consider adjusting or supplementing the planning in a flexible direction.

4.2.1.2. Solutions to improve policies to promote ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

In order to improve the policy to promote ecotourism in the region, it

is necessary to actively study and promulgate preferential policies in a key direction; promote the role of the state in providing timely and transparent information on policies related to ecotourism; develop market development policies based on the review of key and potential markets; continue to improve the investment environment in the direction of openness and transparency, and at the same time promote the reform of administrative procedures. The thesis proposes orientations to supplement and adjust policies to promote the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region by 2035, with a vision to 2045 with specific contents, roadmaps and implementation objectives.

4.2.2. Group of solutions for product development and promotion of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

4.2.2.1. Solutions to develop ecotourism products in the area of Long Xuyen quadrangle

Focusing on solutions to increase uniqueness, product diversity and linking regional value chains, developing ecotourism products on the basis of linking spiritual, ecological and environmental tourism; developing ecotourism products on the basis of combining traditional historical values, ethnicity and craft village tourism. Especially, increasing the participation of businesses and residents in the process of building and operating regional ecotourism products.

4.2.2.2. Solutions to promote ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

The solution is mainly aimed at building an inter-regional and long-term ecotourism promotion strategy, strongly transforming the promotion method from traditional to digital, innovating promotional content in the direction of connecting local stories and destinations. In addition, improving the digital promotion capacity for local governments, businesses and residents, especially it is necessary to promote the role of people in the promotion and promotion of regional ecotourism.

4.2.3. Group of solutions to promote linkages in ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

4.2.3.1. Regional linkage solutions to ensure the interests of entities participating in the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

This solution focuses on building a mechanism to harmonize the legitimate interests of each entity participating in the development of ecotourism regional. For the population, regional linkages need to be designed in the direction of creating conditions for local communities to

participate more deeply in the regional ecotourism. For businesses, regional linkages should aim to build a more unified institutional environment among localities, reduce administrative barriers and create favorable conditions for businesses to participate in investment and business in regional ecotourism. For local governments, it is necessary to build a strong enough regional coordination mechanism to create consensus among localities in planning, infrastructure investment, product development and promotion of regional ecotourism.

4.2.3.2. Solutions to link resource mobilization and infrastructure development for ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle area

This is a group of solutions focusing on linking investment capital mobilization, human resource development and linking the construction of tourism infrastructure and service facilities for the development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region. The solutions focus on strengthening regional linkages and cooperation to promote effective capital investment attraction, developing quality human resources and building a synchronous infrastructure system for regional ecotourism, the solutions also propose linkage directions for each period and specific goals.

4.2.3.3. Regional linkage solutions for sustainable exploitation of ecotourism products

This solution aims to link and strengthen nature conservation, environmental protection and promote traditional cultural values in the development of regional ecotourism. The main solution mentioned in the thesis is that localities in the region need to coordinate in developing planning and creating mechanisms to promote nature conservation, environmental protection and promotion of cultural heritage in association with the orientation of regional ecotourism development. In particular, the Long Xuyen quadrangle region needs to establish a mechanism for sharing benefits from the exploitation of ecotourism natural resources and traditional cultural values, which is a practical solution to preserve the ecosystem and promote cultural heritage.

CONCLUSION

Through the study of the current situation of rural development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region in the period of 2020 - 2025, the thesis has first summarized the theory of ecotourism, ecotourism development and regional ecotourism development on the basis of inheriting previous views and research. The thesis has developed a

theoretical framework on regional ecotourism development in the direction of sustainability, with the contribution of the people and ensuring the interests of the participants. *Secondly*, the thesis has analyzed and evaluated the current situation of ecotourism development in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region in the period of 2020 - 2025 in the following basic aspects: (1) The development of planning, policies and management of regional ecotourism development; (2) Development of ecotourism products and promotion of regional ecotourism and (3) Linkage and cooperation in regional ecotourism development; pointing out outstanding achievements and remaining limitations. *Thirdly*, the thesis basically shows the role and level of participation of economic actors in promoting regional ecotourism, including local authorities, businesses and local residents. *Fourthly*, the thesis has proposed synchronous solutions to enhance the efficiency of ecotourism activities in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region; *Fifthly*, the thesis has made a practical contribution, providing scientific theories for managers in formulating policies and orientations to promote the development of environmental protection in the Long Xuyen quadrangle region in association with the implementation of progress and justice in society.

In addition to the achieved results, the thesis also points out a number of remaining issues that need to be further studied: (1) The coordination and linkage mechanism in the development of regional ecotourism has not been fully clarified in terms of organizational models, competence and operation methods in the condition that the regional ecotourism area has the participation of many localities; (2) The mechanism of distribution and harmony of benefits between local governments, enterprises, communities and between localities still lacks specific quantitative criteria to determine the contribution level and benefit rate of each subject; (3) The economic, social and environmental efficiency of the regional ecotourism linkage models has not been fully evaluated in the long term, especially the ability to transform resource advantages into added value and sustainable income for the community; (4) The role of digital transformation and artificial intelligence in the management of sustainable regional ecotourism development.

LIST OF PUBLISHED SCIENTIFIC WORKS OF AUTHORS RELATED TO THE THESIS

1. Tu Thi Thanh My (2025), "*International experiences on ecotourism development and lessons for the Long Xuyen quadrangle*", Journal of Economics and Finance (Issue 2 - October 2025), pp.172 - 175.
2. Tu Thi Thanh My (2025), "*Development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle – Potential, advantages and challenges*", Journal of Economics and Finance (Issue 3 - October 2025), pp.281 - 284.
3. Tu Thi Thanh My (2026), "*Development of ecotourism in the Long Xuyen quadrangle to 2030, vision to 2045*", Journal of State Management, February 2026.
4. Tu Thi Thanh My (2025), "*Factors affecting the development of ecotourism along the Cai Lon - Cai Be riverside*", Scientific workshop "Collecting opinions on the set of criteria and tools for building an ecotourism model along the Cai Lon - Cai Be river", Kien Giang University.