



**“The Contribution of Community based Tourism  
to Community Empowerment and Capacity Building:  
Lessons learned from Ban Huay Hee Community,  
Mae Hong Son Province, Thailand”**

**The Responsible Ecological Social Tours Project  
(REST)**

Presented at

**The 3<sup>rd</sup> Global Summit on Peace through Tourism,  
Royal Cliff Resort, Pattaya, Thailand, October 2-5, 2005**



# The Hill Tribes of Thailand



## Unique:

Lifestyles

Cultures

Customs

Languages

Aspirations...



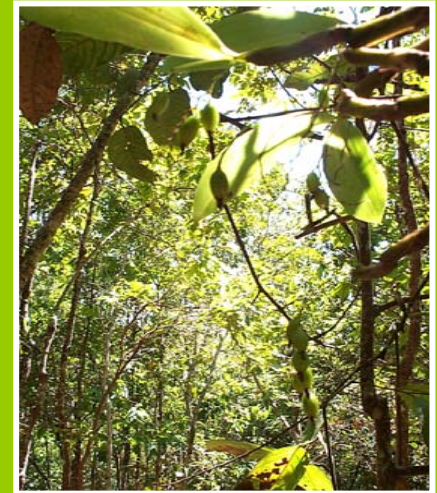
# The Hill Tribes and Central Thailand



**Power & Policy**



# Hill Tribe Communities and Natural Resource Management



- **Understanding:** Hilltribe Farming techniques are all ‘Slash and Burn’
- **Perception:** “People and the Forest Can’t Live Together Sustainably”
- **Action:** 90% of Mae Hong Son – Protected Area
- **Process:** Top Down - Low Participation / Consultation
- **Outcome:** Local Knowledge Not Recognized / Integrated into Policy
- **Reality:** Thousands of small scale Farmers live in this area
- **Result:** Alienation, Conflict with Authorities



## What's the Background of CBT Development in Huay Hee?

- Local NGO: Project For Recovery of Life & Culture...
    - Working with Karen Hill Tribe communities to develop models of 'Community based Natural Resource Management' (CBNRM)
      - Huay Hee Village – Successful Model
- Challenge:** The Community Wanted to Communicate Their Success...How do we invite the world to see?

### Tourism?

REST – Experience in Social Development & Tourism...

Partnership: REST / PRLC / Ban Huay Hee



# The CBT Development Process in Huay Hee

## *Introduced CBT to the Community*

- *Positives / Negatives /*
- *Challenges of Tourism*
- *(Study Trip to Chiang Mai)*

*Needs & Expectations  
- Is CBT Suitable  
for the Community?*

- *Community Study, - Community  
Evaluates it's Strengths & Weaknesses*





# The CBT Development Process in Huay Hee

## *Prepare the Community for CBT*

- *What Good Things Do We Have?*
- *Group Forming*
- *Participatory Vision & Objectives*
- *Action Plan*
- *Direction for Organizational Management*



**The CBT Guides of Ban Huay Hee**



# The CBT Development Process in Huay Hee

## *CBT Training & Development*

- Assist the Community to Identify, Plan and Develop Activities*
- Raise Issues from Experience (E.g. Community Fund, Rotation Carrying Capacity)*
- Train Interpretive Guides & local resource people*
- Pilot CBT Trip*



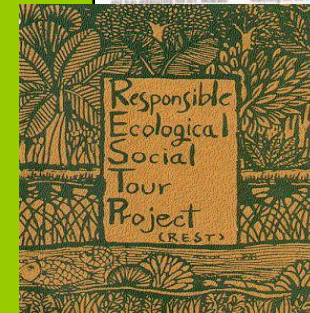
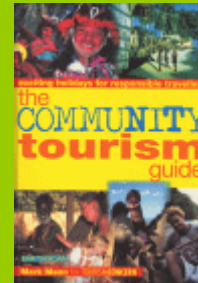
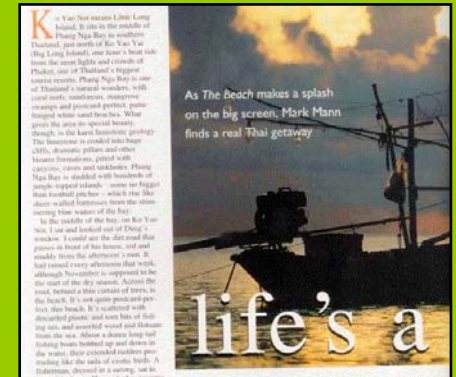
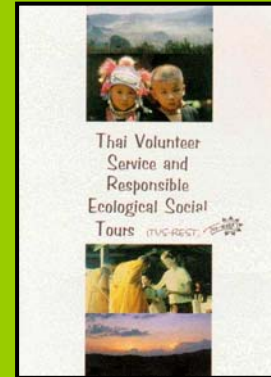




# The CBT Development Process in Huay Hee

## REST's On going Assistance to Community

- **Appropriate Marketing: Promoting, screening, Educating**
- **Develop pre-departure Cultural Material for CBT Travelers**
- **Follow Up - Monitoring, Evaluation, Further Training, Solving Problems**
- **Promote the successes of the community to outside world to prove...**



...part of a worldwide growth in community tourism, an alternative form of travelling.

We'd arrived on the island just after sunset, after a one hour boat ride from Phuket. While the rest began to relax, we got our bearings to James Bond Island (the beach is often in The Man With The Golden Gun) and other famous spots on the bay, not a boat in sight on the water.

...because a boat in sight on the water means an end to the development of the island.

...the offer visitors to visit and to visit the island in a responsible way.

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**"Mae Hong Son's Karen Communities Can Live with Forrest... And Participate in Tourism Planning & Management ..."**



## CBT: Social & Cultural Contributions

- Cultural Exchange, Learning and Sharing
- Admiration from Outsiders stimulates Pride
- Human Resource / skills Development
- Empowerment: Confidence & Advocacy
- Participatory Process - Shares Knowledge
- Opportunity for Women & Men to Share Labor / Reward





## CBT: Environmental Contributions

- Increased Environmental Awareness among Guests and Hosts, E.g. Replanting w/ Guests
- Lessons Learned Network: Local Knowledge For Community Based Natural Resource Management
- Natural Resource Mapping: increased awareness of NR
- Provides Funds for Conservation Activities
- Develops new markets for 'Sustainable' products





## CBT: Economic Contributions

- New Supplementary income as guides, homestay hosts, handicraft \$300 Year Huay Hee
- Funds support community groups, institutions, seed funding
- Fair Distribution Tourism of \$income Reduces potential conflict

But...

- Tourism isn't reliable (9/11, Bird Flu, SARS)



- CBT is best as a support tool, not as a new profession



## CBT for CBNRM: Movement and Replication

1997: Huay Hee

1999: Huay Hee Mentors 3 More Communities

2002: Huay Hee Mentors 11 Communities

2005: Integration / Stakeholder Partnership

## ...Government Support

*"Mae Hong Son CBT for Community based Natural Resource Management Network..."*

# What were the Key Obstacles and how were they dealt with?

- Demand for Standards Without Reference to Nature of Community: Organic and Dynamic
- Price – Who Pays for Preparation / M & E?
- Misunderstanding of CBT Concept:  
E.g.: Top Down Follow Up from Government

# What lessons were learned from your project/program?

- Need, Participation, Ownership
- CBT is a tool for Community Development
- Holistic Approach
- Dynamic
- Product and Marketing
- Takes time for stakeholders develop understanding



# What Can Huay Hee Contribute to an Agenda for Peace through Tourism for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?



**CBT is a bridge for people from different cultures to get to know each other and an open door for the voices of the voiceless**