

The Sustainability of Dolphin Watching as an Ecotourism Industry in Bais City, Negros Oriental

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Abstract

One of the tourism activities under the category of coastal and marine tourism is dolphin or whale watching. Dolphin watching is also an example of an ecotourism activity and is present in Bais City, Negros Oriental, Philippines, where it is increasingly gaining national and international recognition. The dolphin watching tour is promoted as a package composed of three activities: dolphin watching in Bais Bay, recreational swimming in Lag-it Beach, and a hike in Talabong Mangrove Forest. There is a need to study this ecotourism activity with regards to its efficiency as well as its adherence to Philippine environmental laws and to guidelines in ecotourism. To assess its impact to the community of Bais City, it is also important to consider the human-environment interactions occurring between the various actors of the said industry as well as the relationships between these actors. In this -vay, the perceptions and the roles of these actors towards the industry and its success in terms of sustainability will be determined. Keywords: dolphin watching, ecotourism, sustainability, Tanon Strait, Bais City.