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The Role of Tourism in Sustainable Development – A case study in Yunnan, China

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1. Introduction

This study intends to capture evidence of a successful eco-tourism development project implemented in Qinkou village in Yunnan province, Southwest China. It explains how the tourism is used as a way to move the village towards modernization in Yunnan, and examines the roles of three key stakeholders: the local communities, local governments and the architects/planners in tourism development practices. In particular, from the viewpoint of planners and architects, the study investigates the factors that influence the design and decision making in the design process about the villagers, livelihood, environmental and development problems.

Yunnan is one of the less developed provinces in the western regions in China. Compare to the developed east regions, the province had low levels of economic vitality, low information flows, underdeveloped transport facilities, poor infrastructure, and dependence on traditional industries (Zeng, 2004). Lack of development and development can both create environment problems. Many environmental problems are aggravated by poverty and lack of basic infrastructure. For example, the energy consumption in some areas in the province relies mainly on straw, firewood, and coal,

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which imposed great pressure on the environment, water resources and soil (Li *et al.*, 2005).

On the other hand, Yunnan is well known for a very high level of ethnic diversity. Among the country's 56 recognised ethnic groups, 25 are found in Yunnan. Around 38% of the province's population are members of minorities. In addition, its location at the southeaster extent of the Himalayas, allows it to supply watershed services to the countries of Southeast Asia. 94% of the land area of the province is mountainous, and 6% is flat plains in the valleys. With its varied geography, Yunnan historically has been called Kingdom of plants and Kingdom of animals. Its rich cultural heritage and varied geography has provided tremendous tourism potential.

These basic facts about Yunnan affect various actors differently. Following the opening up policies and the rapid economic growth, the provincial government seeks ways to move from the heavy reliance on traditional subsistence agriculture to a more diverse industry and service economy (Yah, 1991). One of the solutions to which is to identify tourism as a pillar industry for regional development in Yunnan. Responding to the policy of the provincial government, the local governments wish to develop the local communities through local owned small enterprises and for farm-based tourism to act as a vehicle for integrated rural development to raise income, and redistribute the economic role within the rural household (Zhou, 1998). The government not only directly participate in the tourism development by organising, providing funds and training for the local communities, but also put more emphasis on the marketing the region as a tourism destination.

The planners and other academics, supported by the provincial government policy of creating 'Great Ethnic Culture Province' (Yuan, 1998), seek ways to link the preservation of ethic culture and natural environment to the improvement of livelihoods in the promotion of eco-tourism. At the same time, to work with local governments, they are exploring the mechanisms for participatory development and develop processes for innovation to meet local needs.

2. Government policies

An important strategy in China since 2000 has been promoting the rapid development of the less developed western region of China to achieve a co-ordinated development among different regions and to reduce the development disparity between the eastern and western regions (Shi, 1998; Zhang *et al.*, 2000).

According to China Daily, from 2000 to 2004, a total of 850 billion Yuan (US\$ 100 billion), of which 400 billion (US\$ 49 billion) provided by the central government, was invested in the western regions for water conservation, communications, environmental protection, compulsory education and healthcare (Zeng, 2004).

During the time, because of the opening-up policies and strong economic growth, tourism in Yunnan grow rapidly and replaced other primary products of the traditional industries

including agriculture and mining as one of the fastest growing sectors in Yunnan's economy (Shao, 1999). The year 2000 saw 1 million international tourists, 38 million domestic tourist visiting Yunnan. In recent years, the number of overseas and domestic tourists visiting the province grew on 10.9 and 16.6 percent respectively each year (Yunnan Lüyou Ju, 2003).

As a result, the development of the key tourist destinations to fuel the economic growth in Yunnan was identified by the provincial government as part of the development strategy (CNTA/YPTA/WTO, 2001; Luo, 1996). Only in 2002, the government invested 3.15 billion Yuan for the poverty alleviation plans in association with tourism development including five large projects to improve the infrastructure facilities in the poor rural regions of Yunnan (Yunnan Lüyou Ju, 2003). In this new policy perspective ethnic cultures are seen as assets that can be used to fuel economic growth in the region.

To effectively manage the tourism, the provincial government has an administration system directly manage the tourism development through the tourism development policies. The Yunnan Province Tourism Administration (YPTA) includes Departments of Planning and Development, Policies, Law and Regulations, Personnel and Education and Tourism Enterprise Management. Under the provincial Tourism Administration there is a tourism administration department in each city, prefecture, and county. Their functions are to develop and manage the tourism at the local level. Their roles have been setting up regulations, providing funding, training tourist staffs and educating general publics. With the development of the tourism in Yunnan in recent years, provincial government has also put more emphasis on the role of the enterprise sector and marketing Yunnan as a tourist area within China and to compete with other destinations in Southeast Asia (Yin, 2000).

Following the provincial government's policies, many local governments in Yunnan have recognised that the successful policies and strategies are the important measures for encouraging the rapid development of tourism at regional level, where tourism not only stimulate economic activity, but also is a realistic alternative to low income agriculture (Zhou, 1998).

3. Local communities in Yuanyang County

Qinkou village belongs to the Yuanyang County within Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture. Yuanyang has been famous for its terraces of rice paddies on the Ailao mountains over the history. As early as 200B.C., Hani ancestors started their field farming after a long distance of migration. Those who lived in the south of Yunnan built dykes and banks on different kinds of topography and soils, draw flowing mountain springs into the terraces through irrigation channels and ditches. Where there were valleys with forest and cliffs, trenches were set up to make use of the water resources, as a Hani saying: "however high a mountain is, so is the water."

In the Ming Dynasty (1382 – 1398), Hani chief Wu Fengpo was appointed the first headman by the royal government because his achievement in building terrace of rice

paddies. Thereafter, Yuanyan became the Eastern Grain Barn by using the same method for irrigation. Eventually the area of terraced fields in Yuanyang has amounted to more than 11,000 hectare and composed of more than 3,000 ridges from the foot of a hill up to the top (People's Government of Yuanyang, 2005). In addition, water evaporated from the lowland river valleys forms dense fog and clouds staying in the valleys and above the terraces almost every night; together with the rice fields they formed splendid scenery in the region, attracting large numbers of tourists each year.

The number of tourists to Yanyang has increased fast since the 1990s. In 1999, there were 3000 tourists registered to five hotels in Yuanyang. The Yuanyang Tourist Administration confirmed a 25% increasing each year on tourists from 2000 to 2006 (Design and Research Institute of Kunming University of Science and Technology, 2001). In 2006, 2000 tourists visited Qinkou village along.

The majority villagers in Qinkou are farmers engaging in rice cultivation. Many families breed fish in ponds and raise pigs and buffalos. Buffalo is a capable assistant for cultivating terraces, and the Hani people have a long history of respecting buffalos.

Over the centuries, the Hani in the region lived a relatively quite life separated from the outside world. In recent years, with the rapid changes happening in the counties and towns around them, some farmers started to work as wage labours outside the villages when the roads in the province were constructed in the 1990s. They brought back money and different life styles. Among traditional mushroom houses in the village they built up new brick and concrete houses. The Hani people are good at singing and dancing. Some girls and young men walked out the villages to join the performance teams in the county. The villages in the region were rapidly changing their faces.

It was a different story for Qinkou. Despite the rapid changes around the region, the Qinkou village remained isolated from the outside due to its remote location. In 2000, when the architects first visited the village, villagers shunned away from the visitors. Many of them did not know what the camera was used for, and were curious when the architects took photos of the village. Compare to other adjacent villages, Qinkou maintained its traditional Hani life styles, settlement arrangements and architectural styles. Yet for the same reason, the village lacked basic infrastructure. The low income levels in the village made the villagers to view trees and other natural resources simply as sources of fuel, timber, food and income. These factors combined made it the idea place to be developed as a tourist attraction. The intention of the development was to raise income, build infrastructure and sustain Hani culture. In the process of the designing and planning, although the villagers were lack of experience of communicating with outsiders, when consulted with new ideas they expressed the desires to develop the village.

In 1999, the Tourism Administration of Xije Town where Qinkou belongs to applied to the People's Government of Yuanyang County to develop the village as a tourist attraction. The Yuanyang county government reported the application to the Yunnan Province Tourism Administration, who approached the Design and Research Institute of Kunming University of Science and Technology for evaluation and planning.

The provincial Planning Department has a system to evaluate the environment programs to standardize the requirements for projects within the province. Prior to future project approval in the province, an environment report is required, as well as a feasibility study and an evaluation from the consultant firm proposing the project. These three reports are assessed by a professional board. Once being approved, the proposals become the legal binding. Any future development in the area specified in the reports need to be implemented within the scope of the plan. In practice, many development plans have been approved but few were really implemented in the full scale. Qinkou village's development is a unique example that its development has been completed in the full scale in accordance with the development plan. After the evaluation of the village, the Design & Research Institute drafted the development plans and reports for Qinkou, and these plans and reports were approved in 2001.

4. Architects and planners

Following the economic growth in China since the 1980s, traditional houses and cities were rapidly demolished and transformed. In the 1980s, the architectural research in China mainly focused on recording the traditional buildings and city forms before their disappearances and exploring the local customs reflected on the traditional architecture. Scholars called for the government to preserve the cultural heritage, while the discussions within the professionals were concentrated on the definition of the 'spirit' (a general nature which appeals to people's senses or a nature related to social ethics and consequently to current politics) and the external 'form' of the traditional buildings, and whether to use the 'spirit' or the 'form' on the new buildings and planning schemes (Lu, 1991).

In recent years, with the increased environmental awareness in academic researches, along with a focus on people for development, particularly related to tourism is a shift on the academic research. There has been the movement away from the recording of the traditional architecture alone to focus on developing ways to enhance livelihoods and to a more inclusive viewpoint to include social, cultural, environmental and political aspects of the development process. Instead of treating traditional buildings and settlements as isolated material cultural forms whose value exist by virtue of their existence, academic scholars recognise that their value are related to the practices of livelihood, cultural transmission and social and cultural changes (e.g. Ohmagari *et al.*, 1997; Bielawski, 1996; Redclift, 1987). In this circumstance, in the regional development process in developing countries, rural tourism is increasingly being used for socio-economic regeneration, diversification for the local economy and tool for conservation, as well as socio-cultural development, including the revitalisation of local customs, cultural identities, and protection and improvement of both the natural and built environment and infrastructure (Telfer, 2002; Todaro, 1983; Sharpley, 2002).

In the process of development plan, this refers to the importance of involving local commercial interests in the overall policy and planning process of tourism. This requires the design institutes who undertake the development plans to be sensible and

understanding the local culture and local people's life. The developing process of the plan requires the continuous discussions between the architects and the local communities. Architects need to not only understand local communities' needs, but also interpret and materialise those needs into plans by making the best use of their professional knowledge and judgements.

In Yunnan, many famous architects and researchers from the eastern region, well known universities or other countries were engaged to carry out designs for the towns/cities in recent years. They were chosen largely because of their reputations for high quality contemporary designs, which seemed suitable to meet clients' requirement for designs with contemporary or international styles, although the concepts of 'contemporary' or 'international' may represent varied contents for different actors. In many cases, neither the architects nor the host communities fully appreciated the value of the local cultures and demanded the considerations of the local cultures and the involvement of the local communities in the brief and design processes.

As Stansfield Smith argued that "the key to a successful architectural profession is not only that profession's ability to represent quality and deliver high standards, but also its ability to represent the values and aspirations of the society it serves." (Stansfield, 1999). In the process of the planning for Qinkou's development, the brief given to the planning team was to develop Qinkou as a tourism village and to ensure continuous development in the future. In order to ensure the appreciation for the host culture in the plan, an anthropologist from Yunnan Ethnic University was involved as the consultant for the project. The architects and planners also established relationships with locals through prolonged and equal status interactions. The school teacher, some old villagers and the head of the village were people who could speak some Mandarin. They actively involved in the design and planning process for the project; the design proposal could not go through without their helps. In the village, the traditional Public House, the 'Dragon Forest', the temple and the directions of the villagers' houses all bear certain meanings in Hani culture. All these factors are specifically marked in the plan not to be changed in the development.

To ensure the continuous development in the village also implies the importance of providing opportunities for the local communities to be engaged in the design and management. The plan has put in many ideas for the villagers to use their knowledge innovatively in the tourism development and to encourage local people to adapt and develop specific and relevant skills.

5. Eco-tourism Development Plan for Qinkou Village

The Qinkou village covers an area of 5 hectare, located at the mid-rangeland of the Ailou Mountain, surrounded by the terrace of rice paddies. The layout of the village is free style and follows the slopes of the mountain. Villagers' Hani traditional mushroom houses assembled into groups on the both sides of the narrow and meandering roads. Like other traditional Hani villages, Qinkou has the village gate, the temple for ritual event, and the central square for festivals, as well as the 'Dragon Forest' - the sacred cemetery. Five

public wells scattered in the village, around which are the most popular places where women wash up and chat to each other, children play around and men clean their farm tools and have showers. Hani people wear colourfully dazzlingly embroidered outfits on a daily base. The whole village displays the strong Hani culture throughout.

On the other hand, when the architects first visited the village in 2000, they also experienced serious conditions in the village related to the lack of the basic infrastructure. Qinko had no public toilet or waste collecting point. Livestock such as pigs and buffalos were left wandering freely on the roads and their droppings caused serious hygiene problems. In addition, the villagers used woods as fuels for cooking and consumed large amount of trees in the mountains. Within the village, trees and grass were scarce; all the road surfaces were exposed with soil. Some electrical cables were connected into the village and were fixed on top of the thatch roofs randomly, which caused a number of fires in the village.

In 2001, after the survey the architects and planners set up the Development Plan (Design and Research Institute of Kunming University of Science and Technology, 2001) that firstly to urgently upgrade the village infrastructure in order to raise sanitary, security and living conditions, including water and electricity, waste management, and street paving and lighting.

Secondly, the Development Plan divides the village into five tourist areas for development. The details of the developments on these five areas are as follows:

5.1.1. Village gate

The original village gate was marked by two large trees, which were tied up by hempen rope. In the Development Plan, a designed wooden frame is set up by the trees to mark the entrance clearly in order to attract tourists in. At the entrance, car parking space and vehicle turning around space are planned, as well as a public toilet and a reception. In addition, a bus stop is added at the village entrance to allow Qinkou becoming part of a larger scale tourist attraction in Yuanyang. On the bus route Bada – Mali village – Qianfu Zhuan – Qikou village – Xije, all the stops are tourist attractions.

Adjacent to the village gate is the traditional Hani's Public House, where young people have opportunities to meet each other and find their girlfriends or boyfriends. It is a tradition to have a Public House in Hani and other ethnic people communities such as Dai villages. In the Development Plan, the Public House is rebuilt with the same form and facing direction.

5.1.2. Central square

From the entrance the uphill road leads to a flat area - the central square. It was surrounded by a small school building and a few houses. In the Development Plan, all the houses are refurbished. The old school was deteriorating and had only one classroom. It is to be demolished and replaced with a new two story building, which can house 100 students in 3 years. The facilities in the school are set up according to the standard

national primary school requirements. A basketball court is added at the back of the school.

The new central square is extended to cover a total area of around 1000 square meters, and is divided into the front and rear sections. The front section provides space to allow ambulance, fire engines and other maintenance vehicles to come in and turn around. The rear section is completed with three public buildings, a two story building with the Hani Cultural and History Gallery on the ground floor and the old people's relaxation room, a reading room and a young people entertainment room on the first floor. The other two buildings are the Village Management Committee building and a small grocery. An old fish pond is rebuilt with a rest pavilion. Lights are installed to make the square useful at night. The surface of the square is also repaved with stones.

5.1.3. Hani festival activities area

The fourth tourist attraction is called Hani Festival Cultural Activities Area where the Hani temple, swing and seesaw situated. The most famous Hani festival Kuzaza in June each year always attracts a large number of tourists to watch competitions on Hani swing and seesaw. During the festival, villagers put on their festival costumes and set up the swing and seesaw to play. They also hold ritual events in the temple to worship their ancestors. Other public events include sing antiphonal songs and banquet. The Hani banquet is where hundreds of people set up the tables all together on the street to have their meals at the same time. Their tables can extend from the village gate all the way up to the central square.

The Development Plan divides the Festival Activities Area into three small open spaces with the temple as their centre. Platforms are constructed by the fish ponds to allow tourists to fish, have barbeque and have camp fire parties at night. The fish ponds are owned and managed by the villagers who are encouraged to use local knowledge innovatively to attract tourists to their platforms. Where the land slopes, a mill house is built to make use of the waterfall. The new water mill is intended to be another tourist attraction.

It takes around an hour to walk from Qinkou to the next famous tourist village Mali village. The Plan identifies a hiking mountain route from Qinkou to Mali where the villagers can provide horse riding. A horse renting shelter is built in the Hani Festival Cultural Activities Area. On the route to Mali, a few stops are planned for resting, viewing, drinking and eating.

5.1.4. Road system

The fifth category is to build up road systems in order to allow emergency vehicles to drive into the village and to separate the buffalo lanes from the primary and secondary roads. The primary roads are the major tourist visiting routes, which contain lanes for pedestrians and vehicles respectively. The total width of the road is 5 meters wide, extending 1100m from the village entrance to the Central Square with signs for traffic and tourists. The new stone paving surface of the road from the village gate to the central square is suitable for the Hani street banquet during the festival season. Another section

of the main tourist road extends from the central square to the Festival Activities Area, which is 4 meters wide, 260 meters long.

The secondary road system is footpaths facilitating access to the major tourist scenes in the village, the 'Dragon Forest' and the terrace of rice paddies. The new footpaths follow the original small lanes in the village. All the damaged surface are repaired and steps are built on the sloping sections.

The third level of the road system is designed specifically for buffalos. The buffalo lanes connect to all the family houses and allow livestock to cross the primary and secondary roads but avoid walking on them.

5.1.5. Hani tourist accommodation centre

The Tourist Accommodation Centre is a new hotel in the village to provide accommodation for maximum 53 visitors. As the hotel is a new building, it is designed to be 150m away from the village gate in order to keep some distance from the traditional village environment. The hotel is to be funded by the private investment. Profits are shared between the village and the private owner. After the number of years agreed between the Village Management Community and the investor, the ownership of the hotel will be transferred to the village. Apart from the hotel, all the construction of the infrastructure is to be funded by the local government.

5. 2. Eight Tourist Scenes in the Village

The Development Plan identifies 4 primary visitor stops and 4 secondary stops in the village. Around the primary stops, trees, shelters, and pavilions are added, as well as walls decorated with relief highlighting Hani culture and history. The secondary stops are areas around public wells which will accommodate more trees, street furniture and stone paved resting space.

5.2.1. Ethnic cultural galleries

There are nine Hani cultural exhibitions planned in the village. Apart from the water mill, all the other exhibitions are displayed in villagers' houses. Those exhibitions include Hani people's costume, handcrafts, farm tools, articles made of bamboo, articles for entertainment and for everyday use, as well as music instruments. The villagers can not only organise and manage the exhibitions at their homes but also invite the tourists to manufacture, play instruments or buy souvenirs. Other activities can engage tourists are colour dying, weaving, embroider, making bamboo articles, husking rice in mortars, making tea and playing music instruments. The village houses with galleries in their ground floors receive funds from the local government for refurbishment with newly painted wall, new decorations and lights.

5.2.2. Family accommodation

Four families in the village can provide accommodations for tourists. These families all have extra rooms in their houses to rent, and their locations allow good views of the village or the terraces on the mountain. One of the families has four generations living in

the house. The 98-year old great grandfather is the oldest man in the village, and is respected by the younger generations.

5.3. Existing Houses' Refurbishments

65% of the existing houses in the village are Hani traditional mushroom houses. The Development Plan suggests all the mushroom houses to be kept and refurbished. Each house is to be surveyed and given the working plans, such as structure reinforcement, roof replacement, or light installation. 35% of the existing houses have flat roofs or galvanised roofs with brick walls. In order to keep the appearance of these houses to be in harmony with the environment, the Development Plan suggests adding mushroom roofs on the houses and repainting the walls to resemble the traditional rammed earth walls.

5.4. Waste Treatment

The Development Plan encourages villagers to build courtyards around their houses where there are extra space. It also provides technical information on the combination of biogas plants, animal barns and toilets, and the ecological chain of pigs, biogas, and fruits within the courtyards. The principle is to build 4 to 6 square meters septic tank for each family who have livestock or to allow 3 to 5 family to share one septic tank to provide biogas for cooking. It also provides information on the flowers, vegetables and herbs suitable for the courtyard planting.

Five public toilets are to be built in the village, which are connected to a centralised treatment unit. The Village Management Committee also divided villagers into a number of cleaning teams to clean the toilets and roads every week. Those teams are paid by the Village Management Committee from the funds generated from the tourism.

5.5. Electrical and Water Supply

An electrical cable from the village and a converter are connected to the adjacent tea factory to provide electricity to the village. All the electrical cables are built underground in order to prevent the fire. Telephone lines and facilities for receiving TV programme are also installed underground.

On the upstream of the village is a water main supplying water for Yuanyang County. Water pipes are connected to the main from the village and a new reservoir is built to supply water for the daily use and for the fire emergency. Fire hydrants are to be installed in every 120 meters.

5.6. Construction Phrases

This project has been used as a pilot project to explore the sustainable development in the county. The development is closely related to the villagers' livelihood in many critical aspects, the project is therefore designed to proceed in a careful manner. The implement of the Development Plan have been divided into 3 phrases from Dec 2000 to Dec 2004, so the following phase can learn from the previous ones and time was allowed to make modification to achieve the best possible results.

6. The Results

The village has changed enormously since the development plan was implemented. Before 2000 Qinkou was an isolated village seldom visited by outsiders, while in 2006, the village was visited by more than 2000 visitors a year and half of the villagers had TV and telephones at homes, and three families bought cars.

The development project has helped Qinkou village to achieve positive results in three aspects. First, the tourism development in Qinkou has enhanced the Hani ethnic culture. Hani people's religion, folk songs, dances, traditional handicrafts and vernacular architecture have been encouraged. Seeing tourists attracted and interested in their village and the rice field has made villagers particularly proud of their identity and more engaged in traditional folk customs. The villagers have organised their own dancing and singing teams for Hani performances when tourists visit the village. Those teams are paid by the funds received from the tourism.

To ensure the traditional village layout and traditional Hani houses' form to be maintained, the local government set up the rules that any new house to be built in the village needs approval from the Village Manage Committee, and the traditional Hani house form needed to be applied. These measures certainly have made Qinkou one of the most favourable places for shooting films and TV programmes in China. In recent years, the characters of many adjacent Hani villages have been totally transformed. Their traditional Hani houses are replaced with modern brick houses. Only Qinkou has constantly been introduced in TV and films as a typical Hani Village. In May 2007, the CCTV had special report about Hani's culture in Yuanyang.

Secondly, preserve the local natural environment by reducing the usage of trees as firewood and construction materials. Traditional energy consumption in rural households in Yuanyang relies mainly on straw and firewood. The Development Plan promoted the integrated utilization of biogas, such as in the ecological chain of pigs, biogas and fruits and the combination of biogas plants, animal barns and toilets in Qinkou village. One third of the families in the village now are using septic tanks and have rebuilt their kitchens and toilets. It is hoped that those families can establish trends for others to emulate. The benefits generated from the tourism have provided reasons for them to protect the nature environment, such as the terrace of rice fields and forest.

Thirdly, the development has improved local living conditions. In accordance with the Development plan, the local government has funded the construction of the infrastructure, the museums and the school as well as other public facilities in the village. The school now have 3 classes in 3 years with more than 60 students, all of whom are Qinkou residents. The hygiene standard is also improved in the village because of the newly built three road systems and the weekly clean up of the village.

Although some villagers have more benefits from the tourism than others because they have extra rooms to rent or they own fish ponds etc., it seems the income generated from the tourism were spent equitably in tourism events such as cleanups, Hani dance and

singing teams and horseriding. The Village Management Committee provided most tourism services through village cooperatives instead of individual family operations.

The development has assisted the local population in small business start. A growing interest in the region offers a strong market for traditional handicrafts and locally produced goods. When architects and planners first visited the village in 2000, some villagers showed them home made colourful embroidered garments. They did not want to sell those when asked because those garments were only made for their family members. In 2006 when the architects revisit the village, many villagers especially women were sitting in their small shops, often transformed from their ground floor bedrooms, selling handicrafts and local goods. Those hand made garments and cloth are widely collected by businessmen from other cities to sell in Kunming and Shanghai. Many villagers are actively engaged in the business of selling crafts and gifts or providing food and accommodation for the tourists. They also displayed their talents on learning some Mandarin quickly in order to communicate with visitors.

The local government continued with the development based on the project's initial success. In 2006, the local government engaged some artists added the sculpture and a public square at the village entrance to attract tourists in. The architectural and research team also explored the new plans to make use of the traditional external forms of the mushroom houses, but at the same time change the interior design to improve further the life qualities inside.

It also becomes clear that the ethnic culture related eco-tourism has affected not only the local communities but also other actors in the society. Because of the rich cultural heritage of the region, universities in Yunnan have had academic research and courses related to the ethnic cultures for many years. But the development of the tourism has helped to link the academic research with the practice. For example, in Yunnan Art Institute, students from different subjects were given projects to identify, package and promote a town or a village for a series of high quality nature and culture products. Their designs include souvenir, products, garments, tourist town and landscape planning. Some of those designs have been adopted by the manufactures to be made into products.

7. Conclusion

The success of the Qinkou development plan is to use tourism as a development strategy to engage the local communities and to build a platform for the villagers to be responsible for the daily management as well as the long-term development of the village. It also promoted the sustainable development in a way to take into account of the social, economic and cultural interests of the local communities so the sustainable concept can be well received by the public.

At the next stage, the main challenge to the future development potentially can be uncontrolled growth and development and how to develop and manage tourism in a sustainable manner. To secure tourism revenue by the villages and the county within the area, sustainability could be compromised in the absence of a coordinated approach

(Hassan, 2000; Li, 2004). There is a need to identify a uniform and systematic approach for the local communities, the local government and the architects/planners to the development of environmental regulations and standards for the development plans in the province.

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