

Cultural heritage conservation and sustainable development - Case study of Tien Yen, Quang Ninh, Vietnam

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Abstract

Tien Yen, Quang Ninh is a locality with a favorable geographical position, a place of convergence and connection of ethnic groups in the Northeast of Vietnam. This region has a large and diverse natural area, and a unique history and culture. Those advantages make Tien Yen a valuable cultural heritage. From the perspective of heritage conservation, this study is conducted to understand the cultural heritage system of Tien Yen. This study is to answer the question which potentials Tien Yen cultural heritage system have that contribute to the sustainable development goals of Tien Yen locality. We discuss strategies to handle those cultural heritages, which balance between preserving historical values and traditional cultural identities of the locality, while also ensure integrating and developing sustainably. The main methods used in the research are field survey, document research, synthesis, and analysis. The results have shown many potentials of cultural heritage in Tien Yen. In this paper, multiple approaches, and model of preserving and utilizing Tien Yen cultural heritage to meet the goal of sustainable development are also discussed.

Key words: Cultural Heritage, Sustainable Development, Historic Town, Heritage Conservation

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1. Introduction

Currently, sustainable development has become an urgent global need as well as an inevitable trend of the development process, and Vietnam is not an exception to that trend. Tien Yen is a district with a low starting point and the economy following the model of Agriculture-Forestry-Fisheries, specially based on agriculture with backward farming methods. The per capita incomes of ethnic minorities is significantly lower than those of general population. Thus, poverty still exists. Despite these challenges, Tien Yen has advantageous geographical location. Tien Yen is Quang Ninh's second-largest land of seas, hills and plains with rich natural ecosystems. In addition, Tien Yen is also a locality with rich historical and cultural traditions, a place of convergence and connection of ethnic groups in the Northeast with many unique traditional cultural values [1]. These advantages have brought Tien Yen rich and diverse cultural heritage resources. Faced with such a situation, many questions have been raised: What must be done, how can the locality's traditional cultural identities and historical values be preserved while simultaneously integrating and developing sustainably? Where should sustainable development start? What is the most appropriate and effective strengths for sustainable development?

From the perspective of heritage conservation, this study is conducted with the goal of understanding the cultural heritage system of Tien Yen, identifying their potential to contribute to sustainable development. On that basis, the author discusses how to conserve and exploit cultural heritage to reach the goal of sustainable development.

2. Research Methods

In this study, the author used the following main methods: (1) Field survey in Tien Yen; (2) Document research (3) Synthesis, and analysis the characteristics of cultural heritage, compare with the content and objectives of sustainable development to identify the potential of cultural heritage of Tien Yen. These methods are basis for discussing about the models and approaches to conserving and exploiting cultural heritage, thereby reaching sustainable development goals.

3. Research results

3.1 Sustainable development

"Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" [2]. The United Nations Summit on Sustainable Development has emphasized 7 priority areas for sustainable development including employment; energy; city; food security and sustainable agriculture; country; ocean and disaster preparedness [3]. In 2015, the United Nations adopted 17 Sustainable Development Goals. The issue of resource conservation including cultural heritage is mentioned as follows: Intensify efforts to protect and conserve the world's cultural and natural heritage to achieve the goal of making cities and human settlements become inclusive, secure, resilient and sustainable (Goal 11.4); Conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (Goal 14); Protect and develop forests sustainably, conserve biodiversity, develop ecosystem services, combat desertification, prevent degradation and restore land resources (Goal 15).

The "sustainable development in Vietnam" strategy has been implemented since 2002. Basically, Vietnam's sustainable development goals coincide with the set goals of the United Nations [4]. To realize the common goal of the country, Tien Yen district has determined that "Promoting potentials and comparative advantages of natural resources and geographical location, setting Agriculture-Forestry-Fisheries as the foundation, Commercial Services as the "breakthrough" for a rapid development step". The economic structure determined by 2030 is Agriculture 30%, Industry-Construction 25% and Services 40% (including Trade, Tourism and Transport Services) [1].

3.2 Cultural Heritage in Tien Yen

Heritage means something inherited, a part of a culture that is passed on from one generation to the next. It may include monuments, buildings or natural landscapes. Existing cultural heritages of Tien Yen include:

3.2.1 Historical and cultural relics

The amount of ranked historical and cultural relics in Tien Yen remains modest. At provincial level, there are Khe Tu historical site, Khe Giao historical site, Dien Xa victory historical site on 4th street, An Long pagoda, Tien Lang commune and Dai Vuong Temple (Temple of Monsignor Hoang Can).

3.2.2. Architectural heritage

The architectural heritage of Tien Yen includes 2 main kinds (1) Western-style architecture - the works of the French built during the invasion of our country (Now only a few typical works remain, e.g. Headquarters of Tien Yen District Party Committee, Tien Yen High Fort, Tien Yen Church); (2) Eastern-style architecture comprising religious architecture (Linh Quang Pagoda; Dong Dinh Communal House; Tree Si Temple; Quan Am Pagoda)) and residence architecture (Houses of the Chinese, Vietnamese, and ethnic minority)

3.2.3 Urban Heritage.

Along with historical-cultural relics and architectural heritages, Tien Yen has heritages associated with the formation and development of urban areas. Due to the lack of proper attention, most of urban heritage in Tien Yen disappeared, but still only a few mainly located in the center of Tien Yen town. For instance, the archaeological site of Hon Ngo on Dong Hai commune is footprint of human life in Tien Yen; Con Chim, Ben Chau, and Old Street, the famous trading areas of the North East in the past, are the mark of the feudal urban area foundation in Tien Yen. The old hand-drawn ferries given by modern bridges; works with architectural and cultural characteristics of France (bridges, ferries, roads, forest rangers, churches, warehouses, hospitals, prisons, water towers, harbors, blockhouses, graveyards) and Chinese housing are the urban legacies of Western colonial domination periods. [6].

3.2.4. Scenic spots

Due to topographical features, most of the mountainous communes of Tien Yen are situated around streams, including hot streams. Streams form many waterfalls such as Pac Sui, Ca Nhay waterfall, Khe Luc mi waterfall, Khe xom waterfall. The system of winding rivers and streams surrounding the hills and mountains creates charming and poetic scenes. With the advantage of a 35km long coastline, Tien Yen also has scenic spots such as Mui Pagoda Port, Mui Long Vang, and Loc Vang Island. The diverse vegetation system (evergreen forest; mixed forest; mangrove forest, tidal flats and riparian mud flats) associated with rich species of flora and fauna has increased the value and attractiveness of the natural landscape here [7].

3.2.5 Intangible cultural heritage

Along with the tangible cultural heritages, Tien Yen has a diverse and rich system of intangible cultural heritages. They are Traditional Festivals (Long Tong Festival of the Tay, Le Cap Sac (maturity ritual) of the Dao, Le hoi Cau mua (Soil and grain ceremonies) of the San Chi, Dai Phan festival of the San Diu); Performing arts (Batting, call-and-response singing, San Co, playing bronze trumpets of the Dao Thanh y and the Dao Thanh phan, Soong co of the San Chi, Then



Figure 1: Ranked Historical and Cultural Relics of Tien Yen [5]

singing of the Tay, and Soong co of the San Diu); Traditional cuisine (Tien Yen chicken, Nodding cake, Five-color sticky rice, etc...) [5].

3.3 Assessment of cultural heritage potential for sustainable development of Tien Yen.

Based on the content and objectives of sustainable development presented in Section 3.1 and the significance of the heritage characteristics presented in Section 3.2, the author assess the potential of Tien Yen heritage in sustainable development process as follows (See Table 1).

4. Discussion

Research results in sections 2 and 3 show that the diversity of Tien Yen's cultural heritage brings a lot of potential to make a major contribution to the sustainable development of locality. Typically, natural heritage with wild beauty and untouched landscapes is somewhat more prominent in quantity and quality with landscapes. The architectural and construction heritages are of small scale, but sparsely scattered as well; thereby, not really typical values. Relics recognized and ranked at the provincial level account for a small percentage of the total. However, according to the author's opinion, the unrecognized heritage resources have great potential to contribute to the socio-economic development and sustainable development of Tien Yen. To convert the potential into reality, it is necessary to have appropriate strategies, policies and solutions, with the participation of relevant sectors.

4.1 Conservation approach.

In the history of heritage conservation, there are many different perspectives, philosophies and approaches. The most common are the material factors-based approaches, heritage values-based approaches and approaches to living heritage. The traditional approaches focus on the protection of monuments, individual structures and their surroundings. The contemporary approaches consider heritage in a broader context and is closely related to urban planning and architecture. In the context of Tien Yen, cultural heritage should be seen as an important component of sustainability. Therefore, the approach to living heritage is considered appropriate. With this approach, heritage is seen

as an essential component of life. Treating heritage is not only focused on the past but is articulated with the needs and aspirations of modern life. The needs and opinions of the people are carefully considered to promote new value, taking people as the center and focusing on collective governance. Communities together with experts determine the values, meanings and protect and exploit the heritage. Heritage is approached comprehensively, holistically and integrated across fields and aspects, in the interaction between the city and its people. Cultural heritage conservation is integrated in the sustainable development strategy, urban planning and design [13,14].

4.2 Some models of conservation and promotion of cultural heritage values of Tien Yen.

4.2.1 Preservation of status quo

Preservation of the status quo means keeping the original state and image, reflecting the meanings and contents that the heritage contains along with the history of its existence and development. This model covering the identification, valuation, protection, preservation, restoration, and maintenance of heritage can be applied to ranked heritages and relics (According to the law on heritage conservation) and monuments, landscapes under local management (According to regulations of local).

4.2.2 Heritage adaptive conservation model

It is a conservation model in which the value of heritage is inherited and perfected in the development process. The heritage is preserved the original value and simultaneously provided with new functions and new values, aiming at ensuring its sustainable existence in the contemporary community and society. This model can be applied to heritage sites not governed by the Law on Cultural Heritage.

4.2.3 Cultural heritage conservation model through tourism development.

This model aims to make heritage live with social life through linking heritage with tourism economic activity. Heritage is exploited as an asset, bringing benefits to all parties involved. The benefits obtained from tourism activities will influence back to the activities of the heritage, thereby creating conditions for the heritage to exist and sustainable development. As a result, the value of cultural heritage is continuously increased, and at the same time brings great benefits to the resident community as the owner of the cultural heritage. To possibly conserve cultural heritage through tourism development, it is necessary to develop a system of solutions as follows:

In terms of institutions and policies, it is necessary to supplement regulations on the roles and interests of the community in heritage conservation and tourism development. Decentralization of heritage management to local authorities and communities is consistent with practice. In addition, it is necessary to build policies on socialization of heritage and relic conservation activities.

Regarding the construction and development of resources for tourism, it is necessary to ensure the essential elements of infrastructure such as convenient transportation, tourism facilities, services for guests, health and safety and Human Resources, etc..

Regarding planning, it is necessary to conduct planning of tourist routes and spots in accordance with the actual situation and potential and then encourage the development of tourism types associated with community culture, respecting cultural diversity and combining tangible and intangible cultural heritage:

Planning by topic.

- Ecotourism is a business activity promoting natural resources, which is considered the biggest advantage of Tien Yen town, including river cruises; visit the coastal mangrove



Figure 2: Architectural heritage [5]



Figure 3: Some typical urban heritages (Old Town, Ben Chau, Hon Ngo) [5]



Figure 4: Scenic spots [5]

forest, visit the sand dunes, parrot tiger beach, Mui yellow heart, Loc Vang Island, etc...

- Cultural and historical tourism in the center of Tien Yen town, the old quarter, the walking street, the historical - cultural relics and the experience of intangible cultural heritage.

- Travel to experience, explore agricultural and aquaculture production activities.

Planning by route, point.

The routes and points that have been approved for use today have not really exploited the existing heritage of Tien Yen. Some places where many types of heritage can be added for exploitation are:

Dai Duc Commune is a mountainous commune with over 90% of the San Chi ethnic group, and the convergence of a diverse and rich heritage system comprising many large and small streams coming from above to form waterfalls such as Nam Vam waterfall, Co Bay waterfall, Khe Luc My waterfall, A Chu Lan waterfall; Con Rong Stream known as Tuyet Tinh Coc on the mountain; Hot spring located in Khe Lac village. Besides streams, Dai Duc has many famous mountains and hills such as Love hill, a area of more than 200 hectares of pine forest; Thong Chau peak with full of myrtle flowers and cornflowers at an altitude of nearly 1,500m, where we can observe the whole Dai Duc commune and Dam Ha area; terraces and housing of the San Chi. Dai Duc is also a place to maintain many types of intangible cultural heritage such as crafts of forging, carpentry, wickerwork, bamboo and rattan; traditional cuisine with many popular folk delicacies; traditional ceremonies such as the Soil and Grain Ceremonies, Soong Co call-and-response singing as one of the most famous and attractive cultural features in the cultural life of the San Chi. The habit of residence of the San Chi is also an attractive content for tourists. To increase the

attractiveness of the site, it is possible to study the restoration of a few villages with traditional houses of the San Chi just for sightseeing and accommodation in the form of Homestay.

Phong Du Commune is a commune where many ethnic minorities live, of which the Tay account for 40%. The heritage system of Phong Tu is also diverse, including Dinh Dong communal house relic - where the Dong Dinh communal house festival is held (In essence, it is the Long Tong festival, in which the Tay come down to the fields to pray for a good harvest in the new year) with typical Tay rituals such as "Lau Then" ceremony, incense offering ceremony, god worshipping ceremony and the festival such as stick push, tug of war, crossbow shooting, cake wrapping contest, national costume performance contest. The Tay ethnic culture and sports area has been built with 49 Tay ethnic households here, which is a favorable condition for organizing attractions to experience the resident culture, Then singing – the standard cultural features, etc. Besides, Phong Du also has many beautiful natural landscapes such as the terraced field area, Khe xom waterfall, etc.

Yen Than Commune is a commune with outstanding potential attracting tourists including Ngau Vo Leng Peak (Trau Dam Peak), Pac Sui Waterfall, Dao ethnic culture house, resident population of 39 Dao households in Pac Soi village. Additionally, it owns intangible cultural heritage such as Le Cap Sac (maturity ritual), call-and-response singing, singing on the wedding day, brocade embroidery and traditional cuisine.

Along with holding independent tourist sites, it is necessary to plan to connect tourist sites of communes and districts together to form inter-commune and inter-district tourist routes, especially, for adjacent localities with great tourism potential such as Binh Lieu, Dam Ha to increase the quality and effectiveness of tours.

Table 1: Potential of Tien Yen cultural heritage [8,9,10,11,12].

	Heritage Potential.	Contribution content	Contribution method
Economy	Transform livelihoods, ensure growth, employment, and income; Promote economic investment and tourism; Capacity building, local innovation and entrepreneurship.	Eradicate hunger, alleviate poverty and promote sustainable agricultural development (Goal 1.2); Ensure sustainable, inclusive, and continuous economic growth (Goal 8).	Through economic development, especially tourism development. Tourism development makes a breakthrough in local economic development
Society	Improve quality of life; Increase the welfare of all parties involved in the heritage; Meet the need for emotional exchange and be in a community group; be creative, shining and recognized as successful person.	Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for people of all ages (Goal 3)	Development of investment and tourism projects. Encourage the community to participate in cultural heritage conservation and operation activities.
	Maintain the identity and cohesion of the community; Preserve memories, create urban images and symbols; Strengthen social inclusion, develop dialogue and recognize cultural diversity.	Promote peaceful, civilized society, make access to justice for all; Effectively build institutions. (Goal 16)	Cultural Heritage Conservation as a core locality and regional component.
Environment	Provide tangible records and information, knowledge about climate change; Experience in responding to environmental and climate hazards and disaster risk management; Create jobs for ethnic minorities.	Sustainable and resilient urban and rural development; reasonable distribution of population and labor by region. Timely and effective response to climate change and natural disasters (Goal 11.13)	Through strategies and planning of urban development, socio-economic development and tourism development.
	Maintain marine ecosystems; Anti-corrosion, erosion, landslide; Limit damage caused by high tides and sea level rise.	Conservation and sustainable use of oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development (Goal 14)	Rational exploitation of marine ecosystems, development of agriculture and aquaculture.
	Natural heritage, vegetation, forest ecosystems are still relatively intact and unspoiled.	Protection and sustainable development, biodiversity conservation, anti-desertification, prevention of degradation and restoration of land resources (Goal 15)	Forestry development, forest protection and exploitation. Develop ecosystem services

5. Conclusion.

The cultural heritage system in Tien Yen is a part of the present built from the past, a part of the living culture passed down from generation to generation. The system is diverse, rich in both number and form. Its presence strongly contributes to the quality of life, enhances the sense of identity, promotes a sense of pride and patriotism, and improves social cohesion. The heritage system also encourages urban and community resilience. These cultural heritages contribute to local sustainable development

goals with outstanding potentials, including economic potential, social potential, and environmental potential. To effectively utilize the potentials and strengths of this cultural heritage system, local authorities need to have appropriate strategies, orientations, models, and approaches for each type of heritage. Examples of effective strategies are status quo, adaptive conservation, conservation through tourism development. With appropriate preservation and utilization, Tien Yen's cultural heritage will be a strong driving force for the sustainable development of the locality./.

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