

Chapter 5

Conclusion and Discussion

5.1 Conclusion

The study examined the characteristics, behavior, and attitudes of Thai and foreign tourists toward in relation to the quality of coral reefs changes at Coral Island, Phuket.

It was expected that tourists would pay more for viewing healthy coral reefs. However, it did not effect on one's WTP even though Thai and non-Thai tourists were able to identify healthy coral reefs correctly and the same as unhealthy coral reefs. One possible explanation is that the use of photographs in this contingent study did not yield the impact stimuli, as it would have in the real world. The usage and the choice of photograph would need to consider more carefully in further research.

The study determined the potential-use value of coral reef as approximately USD 31.40 per visit per year for Thai tourists and approximately USD 28.84 per visit per year for non-Thai tourists. The interesting point is that Thai tourists value the coral reef quality higher than non-Thai tourists, even the income level of Thai tourists is low.

To conclude the study, that it estimated the total potential-use value of coral reefs at Coral Island to be USD 970,991.20, which is approximately 39,000,000 bahts.

5.2 Discussion

In order to achieve the objectives, the study applies the contingent valuation method. In CVM, the questionnaire was utilized with photographs. Responders were asked to identify the quality of coral reef. More than a half of Thai and foreign tourists were able to identify its quality level, however the result indicated that the quality of coral reef does not have much effect on one's decision making whether he/she would be willing to take the given hypothetical one-day package tour. Therefore, the perceptive idea may not be important for tourists' decision making. It also indicate that showing photographs in contingent study needs to be done with great attention.

Both Thai and foreign tourists indicate the attractiveness of Phuket as its beach and scenery, which shows clearly that environment is taking a significant role to tourism industry. Therefore, local people should be aware of this matter of fact. As the public awareness raise, it will lead better environmental management, and finally it will lead the sustainable tourism.