Prospects of Ecotourism in Hong Kong: A Case Study on Tung Ping Chau

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PROSPECTS OF ECOTOURISM IN HONG KONG: A CASE STUDY ON TUNG PING CHAU

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ABSTRACT

Hong Kong is actively developing ecotourism through its Global Geopark. A case study of the Geopark site on Tung Ping Chau, completed in conjunction with Dr. Hui Lai Hang Dennis and the Hong Kong Institute of Education, reveals that ineffective public consultation has led to frustration and skepticism among stakeholders regarding the future development of ecotourism. As a result of this case study, recommendations are made that might offer a more sustainable future for ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau with broader implications in Hong Kong.
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Ecotourism has been the fastest growing sector of the tourism industry worldwide since the early 1990s (The International Ecotourism Society, 2012). Ecotourism is defined as responsible travel that maintains environmental conservation, involvement of local community, benefits to the local economy, appreciation for the local culture and education of tourists about the area that they are visiting (The International Ecotourism Society, 2012; Lindberg, Furze, Staff & Black, 1998).

Ecotourism development in Hong Kong became prominent with the establishment of the Hong Kong Geopark of China in 2009. After this accomplishment, Chief Executive Donald Tsang stated in his 2009-2010 policy address: “Through the national geopark network, we can... foster the development of ecotourism...” and also stated in his 2011-2012 address: “[The Hong Kong Global Geopark] will establish a model for the coexistence of conservation and development.” (Information Services Department, 2009; Information Services Department, 2011). Both of these quotations highlight government intentions to develop ecotourism in Hong Kong.

Development towards ecotourism has been occurring at several locations within Hong Kong, including Tung Ping Chau, a small island in the northeast corner of the territory. Tung Ping Chau is protected by regulations associated with the Country and Marine Parks Systems, and is a part of the Hong Kong Geopark. The development of conservation efforts on the island has created some frustration amongst the local community who feel that they have not been consulted about these changes. Presently, the local community is protesting the recent development of the Geopark and displaying signs to publicize their unhappiness.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES
The goal of this project was to analyze the prospects of ecotourism development in Hong Kong, by performing a case study on Tung Ping Chau. These four objectives guided our data collection and analysis:

Identify the stakeholders of ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau: We conducted background research to identify common stakeholders of ecotourism. We also contacted many potential stakeholders to establish their roles.

Establish the interests of each stakeholder regarding ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau: We conducted interviews with members of the stakeholder groups that have the most direct interests: the local community, tourists, the Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong, and a representative of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China. Interviews with academics and other experts provided additional insight into the current situation.

Examine power relationships between stakeholders that affect the development of ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau: The balance of power between stakeholder groups was determined as interviews took place and a more comprehensive understanding of the roles of these stakeholders was realized.
Determine barriers and opportunities for development of ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau:
The barriers and opportunities were determined by considering stakeholder interests and power relationships in the context of the current state of ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau, from which conclusions and recommendations were drawn for Tung Ping Chau and, more broadly, for ecotourism in Hong Kong.

**INTERESTS OF PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS**
The four primary stakeholders of ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau are:

**THE LOCAL COMMUNITY OF TUNG PING CHAU**
The local community on Tung Ping Chau is interested in receiving water, electricity, and telecommunications infrastructure from the government. This interest is displayed on banners hung in and around villages on the island, expressing the opinions of the Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee, which consists of active community members. The local community also expressed concerns for deterioration of the island as a result of the growing tourist traffic, and the potential for unsustainable development that could occur on Tung Ping Chau if the provisions the community seeks are supplied.

**THE ASSOCIATION FOR GEOCONSERVATION, HONG KONG (AGHK)**
The AGHK was the driving force for the development of the Hong Kong Global Geopark. The primary interest of this Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) is to conserve geological features that are unique to Hong Kong. The Association is also interested in educating the Hong Kong public and foreign visitors about the region’s geology and how to protect it. The AGHK attempts to work with local communities to involve them in the Geopark. One member of the AGHK expressed concern that uncontrolled illegal development of land could occur on Tung Ping Chau if the government were to provide water and electrical infrastructure to the island. Preventing the abuse of this infrastructure requires support from and interaction with the local community. As part of the Geopark development, the AGHK strives to hold the Geopark to international standards and continue to be recognized as a Global Geopark by the United Nations Education, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

**THE AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT (AFCD)**
The AFCD is the governmental organization that oversees the Country Park, Marine Park, and Geopark Systems in Hong Kong. The primary interest of the AFCD is conservation. The AFCD is also putting resources toward education in the park systems. We learned, by talking with a representative of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China, that the Geopark Division of the AFCD also seeks to involve local communities in future development of the parks.

**TOURISTS**
Citizens of Hong Kong, as well as tourists from other countries, visit the island to get away from the busy city and enjoy the natural beauty that the environment on Tung Ping Chau has to offer. Their primary interest is to enjoy the environment, but not necessarily to conserve Tung Ping Chau or be educated about it.
**Power Relationships Among Stakeholders**

There is an imbalance of power between the primary stakeholders concerning ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau. The relative power among the AFCD, AGHK, local community, and tourists is shown in Figure ES.1 by the size of each circle. The thickness of the arrows between stakeholders represents the ability that each stakeholder has to influence the other, and the arrow’s direction signifies the source and recipient of that influence.

The most influential stakeholder on Tung Ping Chau is the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. Its power is embodied by ordinances that affect Tung Ping Chau. One stakeholder with influence of the AFCD is the AGHK, which was the driving force behind the development of the Hong Kong Geopark, according to Ms. Cindy Choi the publicity chair of the AGHK. The local community feels it has minimal influence on the AFCD and has resorted to protesting Geopark development with banners. The influence of tourists is not notably present on Tung Ping Chau, but they can earn government attention by collectively protesting significant private development, which has occurred elsewhere in Hong Kong.

![Figure ES.1 - Power Relationships Between Stakeholders](image-url)
**Barriers and Opportunities for Ecotourism Development**

The interests of stakeholders, combined with the power relationships between them, result in several barriers and an opportunity for growth of ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau and in Hong Kong:

The development of the Hong Kong Geopark on Tung Ping Chau lacked active involvement of the local community. The Geopark is simply a conceptual boundary within the pre-existing Hong Kong Country Parks System, and its designation does not directly affect the local community. However, the local community expresses grievances towards the Geopark and point to a lack of consultation by those developing the Geopark, which can be seen on the banners that are posted on the island.

Mutual skepticism concerning development intentions on Tung Ping Chau has led to mistrust between major stakeholders. Several experts postulate that if water and electrical infrastructure are provided, then uncontrolled illegal land development could occur as Tung Ping Chau, as is common in many rural areas of Hong Kong. Ms. Cindy Choi, the publicity chair of the AGHK, notes that the AGHK is concerned with the impacts of such illegal developments throughout Hong Kong, but is not against the development of water and electrical infrastructure. The continuous denial of such provisions by government, according to Tung Ping Chau resident Stanley So, has led the local community to distrust the government’s intentions regarding the future of the island. The local community does not trust the government to act in the community’s best interests, because it appears the government is currently acting only in the tourists’ best interests by enhancing accommodations aimed at visitors, but not landowners.

UNESCO requirements are positively guiding the development of the Geopark towards ecotourism. The UNESCO guidelines align closely with the principles of the International Ecotourism Society and include the involvement of local communities, education of visitors, benefit to the local economy, and environmental conservation. Through this comparison and the call for ecotourism during Chief Executive Donald Tsang’s policy address, it can be seen that with the development of the Geopark, ecotourism is a natural result.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

We provide recommendations for resolving the situation on Tung Ping Chau, and extend these lessons to greater Hong Kong. We also note aspects of the Hong Kong Geopark that may provide useful models for ecotourism development, and comment on the AGHK’s existing intentions to improve the education and management of the Hong Kong Geopark.

We recommend that the Geopark division more actively involve the landowners on Tung Ping Chau. The barriers for ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau present slightly different challenges than the more general opportunities for development in the rest of the Geopark. The local community of Tung Ping Chau is not actively involved in the same way that the villagers in two other Geopark locations, Kat O and Lai Chi Wo, were. This lack of active involvement is bilateral between the local community and Geopark developers.
A meaningful dialogue that clarifies each stakeholder’s intentions could establish a foundation of trust for future collaboration. The distrust that has surfaced regarding the local community and government development intentions must be addressed before effective ecotourism development can resume. Once a transparent dialogue has been established, it should lay a foundation for collaborative involvement between the stakeholders for further development.

Efforts to involve local communities and educate tourists are promising aspects of the Hong Kong Geopark as a model for ecotourism. The AGHK has helped to engage local communities to run Geoheritage Centers in Lai Chi WO, Kat O, and Tai Po. The AGHK will also be working to strengthen its education initiative.

The Recommended Geopark Guide (R2G) system could provide a model for wider ecotourism development, however it is currently underused. The R2G system is an accreditation system that guarantees the quality of guides through an interview and examination process, providing a way to ensure quality guide services for tourists in the Geopark. However, it was noted by several R2Gs and Ms. Choi that there are many cheaper mass tourism options for guiding services in Hong Kong which follow varying standards, and tourists often choose to use those rather than an R2G. There is potential to increase demand for R2Gs, which could involve improved advertising of the system in Geopark publications.

The Geopark division of the AFCD should consider extending the adaptive management process for the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China to other parks systems in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Global Geopark is being developed with the use of a master plan for its future, and modifies their management of each Geopark location according to their local characteristics, according to Ms. Cindy Choi of the AGHK. Arguments have been raised in literature that a system of adaptive management should be employed in the Country Parks (Lau, 2011). Adaptive management is a constantly iterative system, which focuses on anticipating change and the self-evaluation of success as compared to set goals, which would complement the other parks systems in Hong Kong as it does the Geopark.

We hope that the results of this case study might provide insight for ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau. We believe there may be a future for ecotourism on the island, but only after the local community and governing bodies begin to communicate and collaboratively plan for Tung Ping Chau’s future. We also hope this can serve a case study for ecotourism development throughout the rest of Hong Kong and that similar situations can be resolved more effectively in the future.
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- Representatives of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China
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AUTHORSHIP

Our team’s writing process was a highly collaborative effort. All sections were outlined during group meetings using writing tools such as Google Documents, which allowed all group members to view and edit the same file. Once a topic outline for a chapter was agreed upon by the group, each member contributed by writing different subsections within Google Documents as well, which would then be immediately read and edited by other group members after all subsections were compiled for a full draft. After initial drafts, editing was done by passing each full chapter around to each group member, using Microsoft Word to track changes made. Because of this, no single group member took the lead in drafting, writing, or editing of major paper sections.

Paul Gasper took the lead in researching and contacting R2G guides and in ensuring a cohesive flow throughout the paper.

Shuimiao Ge took the lead for the interviews that took place on Tung Ping Chau and organizing all the data that we collected.

Amy Loomis took the lead in terms of driving discussions, keeping the group on track and designing all of our presentations.

Shelby Miller took the lead on seeking out and scheduling interviews as well as compiling and formatting the final paper.
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LIST OF ACRONYMS

A2G – Accredited Geopark Guide
AFCD - Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department
AGHK – Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong
CEDD – Civil Engineering and Development Department
EPA – Environmental Protection Agency
EPD – Environmental Protection Department
GGN – Global Geopark Network
HKD – Hong Kong Dollars
HKIEd – Hong Kong Institute of Education
NGO – Non-Governmental Organization
R2G – Recommended Geopark Guide
SAR – Special Administrative Region
SCUBA – Self-Contained Underwater Breathing Apparatus
SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest
TIES – The International Ecotourism Society
TPC – Tung Ping Chau
TPCAC – Tung Ping Chau Affairs Committee
UNEP – United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNWTO – United Nations World Tourism Organization
WPI – Worcester Polytechnic Institute
WWF – World Wide Fund for Nature
WWF HK – World Wide Fund for Nature Hong Kong
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an increasingly important industry worldwide, but mass tourism poses a threat to cultural and biological diversity (Wood, 2002). In order to mitigate these threats, sustainable forms of tourism have been developed. One example of sustainable tourism is ecotourism, which attempts to reconcile tourism impacts with the benefits of sustainable development, while considering the interests of stakeholders. But improper development of ecotourism also risks the very culture and environment it intends to protect, and can cause as much damage as mass tourism.

As part of the effort to develop Hong Kong into ‘Asia’s world city’, containing business and natural attractions, the Hong Kong government has stated its intentions to develop ecotourism. As an initial step, the government has developed the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China, establishing it on the precedent of the Country Parks and Marine Parks systems in Hong Kong. For this project, we focus on Tung Ping Chau, an island located in the northeast of Hong Kong, a member location of all three park systems.

Tung Ping Chau is a popular destination for Hong Kongers, hosting about 57,000 visitors per year since 2001 (Out of Sight, 2006). However, even under the land use and marine protection associated with the three parks, Tung Ping Chau still faces sustainability problems. On the island, abandoned houses collect trash and threaten tourists’ safety and some popular geological formations have been vandalized with graffiti. In addition, displeased local villagers have posted signs to protest the parks, calling for the return of land rights, fishing rights and provision of water and electricity infrastructure by the government. Arguably, the principles of ecotourism have not yet been achieved on Tung Ping Chau. As such, the island could serve as an interesting case study to better understand how the situation developed, how it might be resolved, and what might be learned from it.

The goal of this project was to analyze the prospects of ecotourism development in Hong Kong by performing a case study on Tung Ping Chau. We achieved this goal by exploring the interests of the stakeholders relevant to ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau, establishing their power relationships, and determining barriers and opportunities in ecotourism development. Then, we made recommendations for improving ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau that have broader implications for the rest of Hong Kong.
2.0 BACKGROUND

In 2010, the tourism industry drew a record-number of tourists to Hong Kong, totaling 36 million visitors from around the world (Commerce and Economic Development Bureau, 2011). Utilizing sustainable development and the natural resources that are present in Hong Kong, the tourism industry has begun to move towards sustainable and nature based tourism. In this chapter, we begin by placing the development of the Hong Kong Global Geopark in the context of Hong Kong’s broader parks system, and show that the Hong Kong Geopark is being used to promote ecotourism by comparing the principles of ecotourism with the criteria the Geopark must meet. Finally, we turn to the specific case of Tung Ping Chau, one of the Hong Kong Geopark sites, which is a popular tourist destination already, where the local community has voiced complaints on the Geopark’s development.

2.1 HISTORY OF CONSERVATION EFFORTS IN HONG KONG

We begin this section by following the conservation efforts in Hong Kong. We will first describe the Country Parks, which were first established in 1976 to protect the freshwater reservoirs throughout Hong Kong (AFCD, 1976). We then describe the Marine Parks, which were established in 1995 in order to protect the natural marine habitats that thrive in Hong Kong (AFCD, 1995). Then we will discuss the movement towards sustainable ecotourism and describe the Hong Kong Global Geopark, which was established in 2009 to promote and conserve the unique geological features of Hong Kong. Figure 2.1 depicts these developments in the form of a timeline. All four major developments that have occurred were enacted by the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD).

FIGURE 2.1 – TIMELINE OF PARK SYSTEMS ESTABLISHMENT IN HONG KONG
2.1.1 The Country Parks System in Hong Kong

The first major step that the government of Hong Kong took towards conservation of the natural environment was the development of the Country Parks System in 1976. Since the Country Park Ordinance legislation was passed, 24 Country Parks have been established encompassing 440 km$^2$, approximately 40% of the total land in Hong Kong (AFCD, 2010). The parks also serve a recreational purpose. The parks allow visitors to enjoy fresh air, hike, and relax in the natural environment, yet remain close to the urban portions of Hong Kong.

There are several regulations in place for protection within the Country Parks and Special Areas. Some of the regulations include the protection of the wildlife, for example prohibiting hunting without a permit. Other regulations restrict certain activities that could harm the natural environment, such as restricting the fire usage within Country Parks (AFCD, 1977). The Country Parks Ordinance protects vegetation and soil within these areas.

2.1.2 The Marine Parks System in Hong Kong

In order to address the limited conservation of the water bodies and marine life that are important to Hong Kong, the Marine Parks system was developed. The Marine Park Ordinance became effective on June 1st, 1995 (AFCD, 1995). The AFCD was granted control of Marine Park designation and management. The Marine Park areas not only protect specific areas of the ocean, but also coastal areas that may need protection from certain marine activities or that have been noted to be of significant value. There are currently four areas that are protected under the Marine Park Ordinance.

Through the Marine Park Ordinance, the AFCD minimizes or prohibits activities that could cause degradation in the marine park areas. Recreational fishing by a single line-and-hook is only allowed in certain areas of the Marine Parks. The limitation of fishing protects the fish in the area and allows fish population to recover from previous overfishing. In Figure 2.2, a sign posted in the Tung Ping Chau Marine Park shows some of the banned activities, a demonstration of the efforts put forth by the AFCD to make these rules known. Infraction of regulations protecting the Marine and Country Parks can lead to fines up to $25,000 HKD or a year in prison.
2.2 Movements Toward Ecotourism in Hong Kong

While the Country Parks and Marine Parks in Hong Kong have a focus on conservation and recreation, the movement towards ecotourism in Hong Kong has begun. The first movement towards ecotourism was the development of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China. Then, in the 2009-2010 and 2011-2012 Policy Addresses, the government of Hong Kong stated its intentions to develop ecotourism, aiming to use the Geopark’s development as a model for future development.

The Hong Kong Geopark opened on November 3rd, 2009 (Ng & Choi, 2010). The Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong (AGHK), which drove the creation of the Geopark, intended that the Hong Kong Geopark be established as a National Geopark of China, and eventually be recognized as a Global Geopark by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) (D. Tang, personal communication, January 20, 2012; C. Choi, personal communication, February 7, 2012). The Hong Kong Geopark received national recognition in China in November, 2009 and became a Global Geopark in September 2011 (EPD, 2011b), and is now designated the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China.

The Hong Kong Global Geopark is not one continuous area, but rather is made up of two main regions, which are further broken up into four sites within each region. The locations of the eight different sites within the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China are shown in Figure 2.3.
Global Geoparks focus on tourism as a key aspect of local economic and social development. According to an article found on the UNESCO website, “A Geopark stimulates economic activity and sustainable development through geotourism. By attracting increasing numbers of visitors, a Geopark stimulates local socio-economic development through the promotion of a quality label linked with the local natural heritage” (Geoparks Secretariat, 2006, p. 2). UNESCO’s guidelines for the Global Geopark Network (GGN) state that “A geopark seeking to become a member of the GGN is an area with clearly defined boundaries and a large enough area for it to serve local economic and cultural development (particularly through tourism)” (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2010, p. 3).
Since the development of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China, the government of Hong Kong has been taking steps to promote the development of ecotourism. In the 2009-2010 Policy Address given by Chief Executive Donald Tsang, it is stated:

“Through the national Geopark network, we can gain relevant experience, preserve our valuable geological and topographical resources more comprehensively, raise the public’s awareness about geo-science, and foster the development of eco-tourism by adding new attractions” (Information Services Department, para. 73).

This statement shows that the government has intentions to apply the development and management of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China to the future development of ecotourism in Hong Kong. Then, in the 2011-2012 policy address, Donald Tsang stated:

“[The Hong Kong Global Geopark of China] will establish a model for the co-existence of conservation and development” (Information Services Department, para. 139).

These statements suggest that the government intends to use the Hong Kong Geopark as a model for future sustainability and ecotourism developments.

2.3 ECOTOURISM DEFINITIONS AND THE IMPORTANCE OF STAKEHOLDERS

To understand what is meant by the Hong Kong government’s interest in developing ecotourism through the Hong Kong Geopark, a definition for ecotourism should be established. Numerous definitions exist in literature and are linked to ecotourism development in other regions of the globe. Many of these definitions are linked to sustainable tourism. In this section, we will discuss the definitions of the different types of sustainable tourism and the subtle differences that separate them. Then, we will compare and contrast the principles of ecotourism and geotourism. Finally, we will discuss stakeholders and the role they have in the balance of ecotourism, particularly its development.

2.3.1 DEFINITIONS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

Sustainable tourism is a type of tourism, but it is also the development process that can be used by all forms of tourism when attempting to develop more sustainable practices. “Sustainable tourism development guidelines and management practices are applicable to all forms of tourism...” (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2012). In this section, we will discuss the definition and purpose of sustainable tourism.

With ever increasing attention on concern for the environment, the terms ‘sustainable’ and ‘sustainability’ are commonly encountered. Sustainable practices typically refer to the utilization of resources in a manner that does not deplete or damage the resource or its source. The Environmental Protection Agency defines sustainability as something that “creates and maintains the conditions under which humans and nature can exist in productive harmony, that permit fulfilling the social, economic and other requirements of present and future generations.” When relating sustainability to tourism, typically the term sustainable implies tourism practices that will not cause any additional damage or negative impacts.
According to author John Swarbrooke, “There is no widely accepted definition of sustainable tourism.” (p. 13). Even so, there are many common elements that different definitions contain. Sustainable tourism development involves “the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders” (Dodds, 2011; United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2012). In addition, sustainable tourism should utilize the environment in a way that does not degrade or harm the environment in any way (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2012; Neto, 2003). Sustainable tourism should also respect and protect the cultural heritage that exists at the destination. The long-term economic concerns of a tourism destination should also be considered for sustainable tourism. As stated by United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), these important factors of sustainable tourism can be used as guidelines to help all types of tourism practice in a more sustainable manner (2012).

“Ecotourism is a form of sustainable tourism – all forms of tourism can become more sustainable but not all forms of tourism can be ecotourism” (Dodds, 2011). This quote helps to exemplify that the key aspects of ecotourism and sustainable tourism are essentially the same. The difference is that ecotourism must involve the interactions with the environment, whereas sustainable tourism seeks to not harm the environment but does not need direct environmental interactions. Similar to sustainable tourism, ecotourism also does not have a universal definition, but there are many similarities among definitions. Many include three key aspects: the conservation of the environment, the care of the local people and their culture, and economic benefits for the local community (The International Ecotourism Society, 2012; Lindberg, Furze, Staff & Black, 1998; Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996; Ecotourism in America, 2012). Other definitions, such as Ecotourism Australia’s, only include one or two of those key aspects (Ecotourism Australia, 2011). Many definitions also include the involvement and consultation of all involved stakeholders (Boora, 2005). From the varying definitions, there are many things that ecotourism strives to accomplish. Figure 2.4 displays a word cloud, which represents the relative frequency of each word in three definitions that were found through research of ecotourism:

![Ecotourism Definition Word Cloud](image)

It is apparent from the word cloud that the primary concerns of most definitions of ecotourism are nature, also referred to as ‘environment’, as well as culture, economy, the local community, and the conservation of all of these.

**Geotourism** is one of the many specific forms of tourism that maintain similar ideas as sustainable tourism and ecotourism. Geotourism is defined by National Geographic as “tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place – its environment, culture,
aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents” (National Geographic, 2010). Geotourism can be supported by the presence of a geopark. According to the Hong Kong Global Geopark Visitor’s Center, geoparks are sites that “have precious and non-renewable natural geological heritage...” (Hong Kong Global Geopark Visitor’s Centre, 2009). The focal point of geotourism is the natural, and typically the unique geology of a particular location.

2.3.2 THE PRINCIPLES OF ECOTOURISM AND GEOTOURISM
Ecotourism and Geotourism both have international bodies that oversee the practices of these types of tourism, and maintain a set of principles that are meant to act as guidelines for the development and management of each. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) was formed in 1990 to use ecotourism as a tool for conservation and sustainable development (TIES, 2012). UNESCO formed the Global Geoparks Network as a compilation of all Geoparks that strive to meet global standards set forth by UNESCO.

TIES list six principles as key to ecotourism.

1. **Minimize the impact on the environment** - this is often achieved by governmental regulations and ordinances that help to enforce the preservation of the environment
2. **Build environmental and cultural awareness and respect** – this principle plays into the educational portion of ecotourism and can include signs, workshops, visitor centers and displays
3. **Provide positive experiences for both visitors and hosts** – this principle seeks a balance between the interactions of tourists and local communities
4. **Provide direct financial benefits for conservation** – this principle implies that profits from ecotourism should be put towards conservation efforts to continue to preserve the natural environment
5. **Provide financial benefits and empowerment for local people** – this principle states that the local community should be involved in ecotourism
6. **Raise sensitivity to host countries’ political, environmental, and social climates** – this principle also refers to the educational portion of ecotourism

In Guidelines and Criteria for National Geoparks seeking UNESCO assistance to join the Global Geopark Network, UNESCO outlines six general areas of criteria that a Geopark must meet. Global Geoparks are subjected to a periodical review every four years to ensure these criteria continue to be upheld (UNESCO, 2010, p. 10). The six general areas, and the criteria associated with them, are:

1. **Size and Setting** – Geoparks must display sites with geological, historical, ecological, and cultural value.
2. **Management and Local Involvement** – A Geopark must involve public authorities, local communities, private interests, and both research and educational bodies, in the design and running of the park.
3. **Economic Development** – A Geopark must foster environmentally and culturally sustainable socio-economic development which improves the quality of life for local communities, stimulates ‘pride of place’, and stimulates the creation of local enterprises.
4. **Education** – A Geopark must communicate knowledge of geology, conservation, and heritage through educational tools such as museums, trails, tours, and media, as well as educating and involving the local community in educating visitors.

5. **Protection and Conservation** – A Geopark must show best practices for conservation of significant geological features and heritage while abiding by local regulations and methods for conservation.

6. **The Global Network** – As part of the GGN, a Geopark must meet all previous criteria, as well as stimulate research in the park, contribute to the life of the GGN through collaboration with other Geoparks, and contribute to GGN newsletters, book, or other publications.

Table 2.1 compares the TIES principles with the UNESCO standards. Side-by-side comparison of the two sets of principles shows that both TIES principles and UNESCO standards consider environmental conservation and the minimization of impacts to the environment as a result of tourism activities. Both sets also include the involvement of the local community that is present at the tourism location. While the principles and standards share these two similarities, there are also two differences that set them apart. The most significant difference between the two is that the UNESCO guidelines are specific to Geoparks, whereas the TIES guidelines are much more general. Additionally, TIES principles note the need to fund conservational effort while, UNESCO standards focus on promoting scientific research of the geology of the area.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TIES</th>
<th>UNESCO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conserve the environment and manage environmental impact</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engage local community</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate tourists on conservation and local culture</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fund conservation efforts</td>
<td>✔</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promote scientific research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1 – Side by Side Comparison of TIES and UNESCO Principles

This comparison shows that the UNESCO guidelines form a definition of geotourism that is very similar to that of ecotourism. While ecotourism isn’t necessarily geotourism, the UNESCO guidelines outline a definition of geotourism that could be ecotourism. Hence, the development of the Hong Kong Global Geopark, which must follow the UNESCO guidelines, plays a direct role in the development of ecotourism in Hong Kong.

**2.3.3 The Importance of Stakeholders in Ecotourism**

Stakeholders are one of the important elements for successful ecotourism (Kruja & Hasaj, 2010) and the consideration of stakeholders can be found in many of the definitions of ecotourism. According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, a stakeholder is one who is involved in or affected by the course of an action (2012). The stakeholders of sustainable tourism and
Ecotourism are the people, organizations, or objects that affect or are affected by the development of ecotourism.

In the UNESCO guidelines for Global Geoparks, one of the criteria maintains that Geoparks must “involve public authorities, local communities, private interests, and both research and educational bodies, in the design and running of the park” (2010). Essentially, the Geoparks must involve all stakeholders in the design and management of the park. However, the list presented by UNESCO is not necessarily an exhaustive list of stakeholders, but some of the most common types of stakeholders.

Stakeholder types can be categorized by common role. Of the common stakeholders, government organizations often develop policies to protect and manage an ecotourism destination (Wood, 2002). Many ecotourism descriptions or definitions state that the local community should be encouraged to participate in the development stages of ecotourism by the government and any non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that may be involved. Figure 2.5 depicts common stakeholders in ecotourism compiled using different definitions of stakeholders.

![Diagram of typical stakeholders in ecotourism](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

FIGURE 2.5 – TYPICAL STAKEHOLDERS OF ECOTOURISM
2.4 THE ISLAND OF TUNG Ping Chau
The Hong Kong Global Geopark of China includes several sites that are home to a local community. One of these Geopark sites is the island of Tung Ping Chau. The local community is considered a stakeholder of ecotourism because any development that occurs may affect their lives. The Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department has conserved the island since the 1970s. Tung Ping Chau is a small island with an area of 1.1 km$^2$. The island is characterized by sedimentary rock formations, with many cliffs and wave-cut rock platforms. As shown in Figure 2.6, Tung Ping Chau is located in the northeast corner of the Hong Kong territory about 4 km from the coast of the Guangdong Province of Mainland China.

![Figure 2.6 - Location of Tung Ping Chau within Hong Kong (Wikimedia)](image)

2.4.1 TIMELINE OF DEVELOPMENT ON TUNG Ping Chau
Tung Ping Chau has a rich past, diverse in history and development. In the 1950s, there were about 1,500 people living on the island (Ngar & Chow, 2002). At the time, there were ten inhabited villages. The names and locations of these villages can be seen in Figure 2.7.
According to a history of the island written by Ngar and Chow, when the island was populated, villagers made their living by either fishing or farming. Farmers harvested peanuts and sweet potatoes as their main crops. Since there was no water or electricity infrastructure on the island, the villagers dug wells, cisterns and small reservoirs for water and ran generators for any electrical needs. While these measures provided for water and electrical needs, the practices were not sustainable. By the 1980s, the majority of the population had left the island, due to the difficulty of life on Tung Ping Chau and the allure of greater Hong Kong, leaving only a few people who continued to subsist (2002).

Between the 1950s and 1970s, according to Ngar and Chow, as interest in living on the island decreased, interest in the natural features of the island began to increase and actions were taken to protect the island. In 1978, Tung Ping Chau was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by the AFCD, indicating that the geological features on the island were of special interest to the government and to academic experts. Then, in 1979, Tung Ping Chau was added to the Plover Cove Country Park. In 2001, the Tung Ping Chau Marine Park was established, making it the fourth Marine Park in Hong Kong.

In 2008, the Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong (AGHK) initiated the development of a Geopark in Hong Kong. Due to its unique geological features, Tung Ping Chau was chosen as one of the locations for the Geopark. The Geopark was officially established in November of
2009. There are currently no new regulations or ordinances that affect Tung Ping Chau as a result of inclusion of the Geopark.

2.4.2 Present State of Tourism on Tung Ping Chau
Since the designation of the Marine Park at Tung Ping Chau, there have been approximately 57,000 visitors on Tung Ping Chau per year, up from 33,000 per year before 2001 (Out of Sight, 2006). To reach the island from Hong Kong, visitors and locals alike must travel one and a half hours by public ferry on the weekend or use a private boat to travel to and from Tung Ping Chau on weekdays. Once on the island, visitors can either stay for the day or overnight. There are a few campsites on the island and a few hostels that are run by villagers. These hostels also serve as restaurants for many people. In terms of facilities, there are several restrooms that are operated by the government. The government facilities have electricity powered by generators but do not have regularly running water.

There are many different travel agencies in Hong Kong that provide day trip and overnight options for visitors in Hong Kong. Many of these agencies offer trips to Tung Ping Chau and often charter their own boats to get to the island.

There is a 6 km trail around the perimeter of the island and several connector trails that allow hikers to cross the island. Visitors may also snorkel or SCUBA dive.

When visitors approach either inhabited village to the north or south of the ferry pier, several yellow banners come into view. The Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee hung these banners in December 2011. These signs state grievances that the local community members have about the Geopark. One of the signs displayed on Tung Ping Chau is shown in Figure 2.8.

![Figure 2.8 – Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee Protest Sign](image)

This particular sign, translated to English states, “Geopark has ruined my home and way of living, bringing lots of hardship!” There are many different signs that state more complaints,
such as a lack of public consultation during the development of the Geopark, the inability of villagers to fish with a net around the island, and calling for the provision of water and electricity by the government. There are also several signs posted in English. More signs can be found in Appendix B.

There are some potential environmental problems on the island as well. In our inspection of the island in January 2012, we found that from afar, the environment appeared to be in good condition. Upon closer inspection, some litter could be observed along some pathways and beaches, as shown in Figure 2.9. Several local community members also acknowledged a presence of litter throughout the island.

![FIGURE 2.9 – LITTER ALONG THE TRAIL, BY THE BEACH ON TUNG PING CHAU](image)

Remnants of the once bustling population that use to live on Tung Ping Chau can be seen along the pathways. There are many abandoned houses and other structures on the island. Over time, many of these buildings have fallen into disrepair and wooden roofing timbers have begun to decay. Figure 2.10 shows one of the villages and some of the dilapidated buildings just north of the pier near Tai Tong.

![FIGURE 2.10 – RUNDOWN VILLAGE ON TUNG PING CHAU](image)
Other environmental degradation such as painted and etched graffiti on the abandoned houses and on the rocks is apparent as well. Some graffiti is shown in Figure 2.11, photographed near Kang Lau Shek along the Ping Chau trail.

![Graffiti near Kang Lau Shek on Tung Ping Chau](image)

There are educational signs distributed along the trail that provide visitors with information about Tung Ping Chau in addition to maps and trail markers. These signs help to achieve the educational aspect of geotourism and inform visitors about the rock formations, the types of plants and animals present on the island and cultural history of the two small temples.

### 2.5 SUMMARY

By including Tung Ping Chau in the Geopark system, the Hong Kong government has effectively designated the island as a development site for ecotourism. However, our initial assessment of the island showed that some principles of ecotourism are not evident. In particular, the local community is expressing dissatisfaction with the Geopark and claims it was not consulted during Geopark development. How did this situation form? Does it reflect the prospects of ecotourism development in the Geopark system as a whole? Our study sought to address these types of questions.
3.0 METHODOLOGY

The goal of this project was to analyze the prospects of ecotourism development in Hong Kong by performing a case study on Tung Ping Chau. To accomplish this goal, we established the following four research objectives:

1. Identify the stakeholders of ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau
2. Establish the interests of each stakeholder regarding ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau
3. Explain power relationships between stakeholders that affect the development of ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau
4. Determine barriers and opportunities for development of ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau

In this chapter, we describe the methods we used to achieve these objectives.

3.1. IDENTIFY THE STAKEHOLDERS OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

We sought to understand the relevant parties involved in ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau, because ecotourism is developed by purposefully balancing interests of stakeholders. To understand how ecotourism has developed thus far on Tung Ping Chau, we explored the following research questions:

1. Who are the typical stakeholders involved in ecotourism development?
2. What stakeholders have a personal or historical stake in Tung Ping Chau?
3. Which government bodies influence Tung Ping Chau?
4. Are there outsider interest groups that can influence the development of ecotourism?
5. Who has a monetary stake in ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau?

As previously discussed, there are several categories of stakeholders commonly involved in ecotourism development. We used categories proposed in prior work to build a basis of groups that might be involved on Tung Ping Chau. We researched stakeholder groups involved in ecotourism development with similar context to our case study on Tung Ping Chau, specifically island-based ecotourism. We determined which, if any, Hong Kong governmental departments were relevant, and if any NGOs in Hong Kong would hold key roles. From this research, we compiled a list of interview candidates representing potential stakeholders, as well as academics and experts in ecotourism.

To learn more about the local community on Tung Ping Chau, we visited the island with the goal of speaking with any local villagers there to determine details of the community. We also visited several places, including the Hong Kong History Museum and the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China Visitor’s Centre, to learn if there were any stakeholders that were specific to Hong Kong that had not been identified in background material.
3.2. ESTABLISH INTERESTS OF ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

We sought to identify the interests of each stakeholder group regarding ecotourism development, to assess the current state of ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau and determine the prospects for further ecotourism development. We interviewed those we could access, and performed archival research to identify other interests from public documentation. We developed the following research questions to guide our work:

1. What interests do the stakeholders have with regard to the environmental concerns on Tung Ping Chau?
2. What are the economic interests of stakeholders that benefit directly from ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau?
3. What are the stakeholders’ cultural and social interests on Tung Ping Chau?
4. What are the stakeholders’ interests toward the educational element of ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau?
5. What are the future goals of each stakeholder regarding ecotourism, or otherwise, on Tung Ping Chau?

We developed interview protocols based on these research questions to understand interests regarding the environment, economic situation, social situation, education, and future goals. These interview protocols are documented in Appendix C. We interviewed three individuals via email, and six in-person, including government officials, academics, ecotourism experts and Geopark guides. During two visits to Tung Ping Chau, we conducted several semi-structured interviews. We spoke with eight residents of the island, eight tourist groups and a private tour guide. During both visits to Tung Ping Chau, we observed the physical state of the island, the presence and impacts of tourism and the presence and impacts of supporting a local community. Because we visited the island only twice, our frame of research directly involving tourists and local community members was limited. Additionally, we were not able to hold an in-person interview with a representative of the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department (AFCD). We tried to compensate for this by analyzing publicly available document from the AFCD.

3.3. EXAMINE POWER RELATIONSHIPS AMONG STAKEHOLDERS

We evaluated the relative amount of power that each stakeholder holds with respect to ecotourism development, because the stakeholder with the most power is likely to be the driving force for development. The following research questions helped us determine stakeholder power relationships.

1. What types of power does each stakeholder maintain in ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau?
2. To what extent, and in what ways, is each stakeholder using its power to influence ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau?

We answered these questions during the semi-structured interviews we conducted with the stakeholders who we were able to access in person or by email, as noted in the previous section. We asked specific questions relating to their role in development to gather an understanding for
how they perceived their own power and to help us understand the power relationships on Tung Ping Chau. For the stakeholders we could not contact directly, we sought documented examples of stakeholder interaction that exemplified their power relationships.

3.4. **REALIZE BARRIERS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT**

Our ultimate objective was to analyze stakeholder interests and power relationships with an eye toward determining specific barriers and opportunities for ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau, and lessons learned from Tung Ping Chau that could be applied to Hong Kong more broadly. The following questions drove the analysis of our data:

1. Where do stakeholders’ interests align or conflict?
2. What barriers need to be overcome to reconcile these conflicts?
3. What opportunities lie in aligning stakeholder interests?
4. How might the varying degrees of power among stakeholders allow or inhibit ecotourism development?
5. Are there broader implications for ecotourism in Hong Kong based on the barriers and opportunities for ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau?

To answer these questions, we analyzed stakeholder interests and power relationships. We compared the interests of each stakeholder with regard to the principles of ecotourism to seek conflicts and alignments. We evaluated stakeholders’ power to determine which have the strongest roles in ecotourism development and where barriers and opportunities of ecotourism development are rooted. Considering only the most significant barriers and the opportunities, we made an assessment on the future potential of ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau. This assessment consisted of conclusions about the current state on Tung Ping Chau as well as recommendations to aid future development.
4.0 FINDINGS

In this chapter we present the interests of the primary stakeholders and the power relationships between them. The Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong and the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department share essentially the same interests on Tung Ping Chau: the development of the Hong Kong Geopark. The AFCD is also the most powerful stakeholder involved on Tung Ping Chau, and the AGHK has some influence on the AFCD, as they drove the establishment of the Geopark. The local community is primarily interested in being treated fairly by the government, which, from their point of view, entails the provision of water and electricity infrastructure on Tung Ping Chau. The local community, however, feels powerless to change their circumstances. Tourists visit Tung Ping Chau because it is quite well known as a place to get away from the city and appreciate the beautiful scenery. Tourists do not affect other stakeholders significantly in this case.

We then present the barriers and opportunities of ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau. A stalemate between the local community of Tung Ping Chau and the AFCD and AGHK exists due to differing development interests and a lack of communication between these stakeholders. An opportunity exists for ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau and for Hong Kong in general because the AGHK and the AFCD are actively pursuing the UNESCO guidelines for Global Geoparks.

4.1 THE INTERESTS OF PRIMARY STAKEHOLDERS

There are a number of possible stakeholders involved in ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau. The complete list of stakeholders we considered can be found in Appendix A1. The four stakeholders with the most significant roles are:

1. Local community members of Tung Ping Chau
2. Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong
3. Agriculture Fisheries and Conservation Department
4. Tourists who visit Tung Ping Chau

In the following sections, we introduce the major interests of each of these primary stakeholders.

4.1.1 TUNG PING CHAU COMMUNITY

The local community on Tung Ping Chau is a primary stakeholder because it experiences the impacts from the existing parks systems and tourism development. 70% of the island is privately owned, but most of this land remains undeveloped. A zoning map from the 1980s, shown in Figure 4.1, displays the extent of land ownership as it was thirty years ago. Today, only five villages are recognized on the island: Chau Mei, Tai Tong, Sha Tau, Chau Tau, and Nai Tau. Only two, Tai Tong and Sha Tau, obviously support part-time and full-time residents. The location of these villages is highlighted in Figure 4.2.
FIGURE 4.1 - ZONING MAP OF TUNG PING CHAU FROM THE 1980S
COURTESY OF S.SO, PERSONAL CORRESPONDENCE, JANUARY 30, 2012

FIGURE 4.2 – MAP OF TUNG PING CHAU WITH INHABITED VILLAGES
COURTESY OF THE HONG KONG GLOBAL GEOPARK OF CHINA
The only economic activity on the island occurs in Tai Tong village, where three hostels can host a limited number of visitors, as well as provide meals to locals and tourists. The operators of these businesses explained that their primary residences and jobs are in other parts of Hong Kong, but that they return every weekend to run their businesses, as well as to simply enjoy their time away from the city with family and friends. According to villagers, Tai Tong is typically uninhabited on weekdays.

The other inhabited village, Sha Tau, contains a few elderly permanent residents who live in retirement and depend partially on supplies delivered by the public ferries. One old woman subsists primarily on resources from the island, cultivating 20 small vegetable plots; however, her son, who visits on weekends, also provides supplies for her.

The Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee represents some of the local community. Theoretically, five village heads lead the Committee, one from each remaining village. According to villagers, the body of the Committee comprises all individuals who own private property on the island. The Committee attempts to represent all of these individuals by advocating for their common interests. However, there is not much that the Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee can really do to bring change to the island. One local community member, Mr. Stanley So, said that “practically the committee [does] not work as [there are] no resources available” to them. According to community members, the Affair Committee posted the yellow banners in the inhabited villages to try to raise awareness of their concerns. Some of these banners are shown in Figure 4.3.

FIGURE 4.3 – COMPLAINT BANNERS ON TUNG PING CHAU
The most common interest posted on these banners and verbalized by individuals is the desire for water and electrical infrastructure. Tung Ping Chau has never had government-provided infrastructure, and the community feels that the government is providing for the tourism on the island through the creation of the Geopark but ignoring the community and its needs. Nearly all villagers that we spoke with shared this interest. However, one problem that might occur if electricity and water were provided would be the return of private land owners to Tung Ping Chau looking to profit by building on or selling their land, a concern that some community members acknowledged.

A more general extension of this interest is that villagers wish to live on Tung Ping Chau just as any other citizens in Hong Kong currently live. According to Mr. So, “All villagers wish to live at [Tung Ping Chau] as an ordinary Hong Kong citizen equally enjoying the same benefits of home owners in every district of Hong Kong”. Mr. So and other members of the Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee remark that they desire only the provisions of basic amenities, which they believe is within their rights as Hong Kong citizens. Mr. So believes that the government is deliberately avoiding any development that might improve the quality of life on Tung Ping Chau. He has lodged complaints to many different government offices in Hong Kong by personally contacting them through emails, but so far has been denied any requests for government provisions for community members on Tung Ping Chau. The local community also protested the designation of Tung Ping Chau as a Marine Park location, and their complaints were presented to the AFCD when considering the site (Environment and Food Bureau, 2001), but Tung Ping Chau was still designated as a Marine Park.

The second major complaint of these banners decried the limitations on fishing. In order to fish with more than a single-line single-hook method, a fishing license must be acquired. According to a community member, one Sha Tau villager was caught fishing with a net without a license, and if caught again within a year, will be imprisoned for three months. The concern for fishing rights was significant among Sha Tau villagers, but did not seem as important to Tai Tong villagers. Some Tung Ping Chau villagers believe that these licenses are awarded only to non-residents, but not to villagers themselves.

An interest not posted on these banners, but shared by several individuals from both villages, was a concern for the quality of the environment on Tung Ping Chau. According to the villagers, the amount of trash on the island has risen with the increase in the number of tourists. The owners of one of the hostels in Tai Tong also worry that their restaurant might not be able to provide for growing numbers of tourists given their current limited resources.

4.1.2 ASSOCIATION FOR GEOCONSERVATION, HONG KONG
The Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong (AGHK) is a non-governmental organization, formed in 2006 to protect and promote the natural geology present throughout Hong Kong. Its missions (Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong, 2012) are:

1. To preserve the landforms and rocks of Hong Kong
2. To disseminate scientific information of our earth
3. To promote sustainable geotourism and eco-tourism
4. To make Hong Kong a better place to live

The AGHK has been and intends to continue to be the major driver for geoconservation efforts in Hong Kong. The AGHK sought to initiate geoconservation efforts in Hong Kong by establishing a Geopark, which began with a preliminary study in 2007. In 2008, the Environmental Protection Department commissioned the AGHK to perform a feasibility study for Geopark’s inclusion in China’s National Geopark Network, during which three experts from the Chinese National Geopark Bureau performed a field study in Hong Kong (Ng, Fung & Newsome, 2010). Because of the positive results of both studies, the Chief Executive of Hong Kong introduced the idea of the Geopark publicly in the 2008-09 Policy Address (Information Services Department, 2008), and on November 9, 2009 Hong Kong National Geopark of China was opened to the public. The AFCD then applied to become a member of the UNESCO Global Geopark Network, and was accepted in September of 2011. With the speedy development of the Hong Kong Geopark, the AGHK shows its role as a significant stakeholder in ecotourism development in Hong Kong.

One of the AGHK’s interests is the sustainable development of the Hong Kong Geopark. The AGHK opposes the common view that geoconservation should ‘hide’ geographical wonders from visitors. On its official webpage, the Association argues “the only way to truly protect these areas in the long term is to invite people to experience the natural landscapes so that they can develop an appreciation of the landscape” (Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong, 2012).

Part of the interest for developing the Geopark is an interest in educating visitors and the greater public. Ms. Cindy Choi, the publicity chair of the AGHK, stated that protection by visitation is something that could be accomplished through education. She said the AGHK believes that educating people about the landforms, how they were created, why they are important and how to appreciate and treasure these valuable assets is the best way to preserve the geoheritage of Hong Kong. The development of education in the Hong Kong Geopark also must meet the UNESCO guidelines on education. Currently, the Hong Kong Geopark employs educational tools such as a Geopark Visitor Centre, trail signs, pamphlets, published materials, and online resources. The AGHK was involved in the creation of the Recommended Geopark Guide system. Another key area for education are the four Geoheritage centers that educate visitors about geology, geoconservation, and the area’s cultural heritage (Hong Kong Geopark, 2011b).

Another facet of the AGHK’s interest in developing the Hong Kong Geopark is the inclusion of local communities. According to Ms. Choi, the AGHK sought to educate local communities about the Geopark and involve them in its development and operation. Local community organizations run the previously mentioned Geoheritage centers. In the Tai Po area, boat tours can be chartered from local fishermen who were trained to give tours. The inclusion of local communities is also an important aspect of the UNESCO guidelines.
Ms. Choi, as well as several other experts, expressed the concern on the impacts of uncontrolled illegal development in Geopark locations, as illegal development in common in many rural areas of Hong Kong. This uncontrolled development was considered unsustainable by these sources, and contradicts the AFCD’s interest of promoting geoconservation on Tung Ping Chau.

4.1.3 AGRICULTURE, FISHERIES AND CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT

While there are several government departments that could affect development on Tung Ping Chau, the government department with the greatest stake is the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department. By designating Tung Ping Chau as a Country Park, Marine Park, and Geopark, the AFCD has shown its interest in conserving Tung Ping Chau as an area of environmental and geological importance.

The AFCD shares the same interest in the sustainable development of the Geopark as the AGHK. While the idea of the Hong Kong Geopark was pushed by the AGHK, the AFCD is responsible for making the Geopark a reality and continuing its development with further help from the AGHK.

As part of the shared interest in the development of the Hong Kong Geopark, the AFCD also has a strong interest in education. They aim “at leading visitors to understand rocks, [be] aware of geo-conservation and protect the environment”, rather than simply “attracting people to the Hong Kong Geopark to watch rocks and appreciate unique landforms” according to a representative of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China. This educational interest is represented on Tung Ping Chau and in other Geopark locations with educational signs placed on the island’s trails, as shown in Figure 4.4. This interest is also represented by the AFCD’s part in the creation of the Recommended Geopark Guide (R2G) system.

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**FIGURE 4.4 - EDUCATION TRAIL SIGN ON TUNG PING CHAU**
The Geopark division of the AFCD also has an interest in the inclusion of local communities in the Geopark, as well as the goal of meeting the UNESCO guidelines. During the development stages of the Hong Kong Geopark, “[consultations... were conducted with... various District Councils, rural communities and environmental groups”, according to a representative of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China, local communities were included during the planning stage of the Geopark by playing “a significant role in trail alignment, content and material selection”.

As a government department, the AFCD is not revenue seeking. There is no mention of an economic interest in any of the published materials by the AFCD, nor did the representative of the Geopark mention such an interest in an email interview. Dr. Lewis Cheung, a Provisional Recommended Geopark Guide with a PhD in ecotourism, also affirmed that the AFCD has no interest in the creation of revenue through the park systems.

**4.1.4 Tourists**

Tourists are an essential component of ecotourism, and their interests define a large part of the potential for ecotourism development. Among tourists interviewed, the most common interest was to enjoy the natural features of the island and to get away from the city. When asked how they learned about Tung Ping Chau, many said that the island is a popular destination to escape the city, and it is well known amongst the people of Hong Kong. Other people learned about Tung Ping Chau by reading about the Geopark.

There were also several tour groups visiting the island on January 29th, who came as part of an ‘island hopping’ tour and visited for only a couple of hours. The guides of these tours worked for private tour companies and were not Recommended Geopark Guides. They also used megaphones to communicate with their tour groups. Several people, including Dr. Lewis Cheung and Mrs. Denise Tang of the Civil Engineering and Development Department, expressed that this use of loud speakers or mega phones is common but is not good ecotourism practice as it disrupts the natural environment.

While several tourists expressed interests in having better accessibility to the island, few tourists mentioned trash or debris. Specifically, more frequent ferry service was noted as a change that would be well received. Overall, tourists seemed happy with the island and stated their intentions to return for another visit at some point in time.

Local experts and Geopark guides expressed the opinion that Hong Kong tourists do not truly value conservation or education. However, some tourists did mention that they would like to learn more about the local community and culture of the island.

Due to our limited time in Hong Kong, we were only able to observe tourists on the island during two weekends close to the Lunar New Year, which are less popular weekends for visitation according to local community members. These circumstances surely limited our ability to gauge interests of more individuals who make up the tourist and local community groups.
4.2 Power Relationships Among Primary Stakeholders

The most important stakeholders maintain different degrees of power over the development of ecotourism. In this section we present the power relationships that currently exist between the primary stakeholders of ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau. To help represent these relationships, Figure 20 illustrates the relative power of stakeholders and their influences on the others. We argue that the AGHK has an influence on the AFCD, because of their involvement in the establishment of the Geopark, and that the AFCD has the most direct influence on ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau due to the power it has over the local community and tourists, and the regulations it uses to conserve the natural environment.

In the power relationships map above, the size of each stakeholder circle represents the relative power that each stakeholder has in ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau. The thickness of the arrows between stakeholders represents the ability that each stakeholder has to influence the other stakeholders, and the arrow’s direction signifies the source and recipient of the influence.

The local community has very little power over the other stakeholders. Despite channels for the local community and tourists to express concern for a development situation, such as personally contacting government offices of their complaints, which Mr. Stanley So has done, many members of the local community assert that they feel powerless over their situation. The local community has resorted to posting signs, with additional plans to block...
private pathways, to attract the government’s attention. These actions could also affect tourists. This reaction reflects the community’s sense of powerlessness within the typical channels for earning attention, and general frustration toward the feedback system that exists. Private land owners on Tung Ping Chau, as indigenous villagers, do have the right to develop their land. Absent land owners developing their land would go against the development interests of the AFCD and the AGHK, and could potentially influence them.

The AGHK has influence over the AFCD because it has established itself as the key driver in the development of the Geopark, and has obligated the AFCD to maintain the Geopark to the standards set by the UNESCO guidelines. The AGHK will continue to support the AFCD sustain the Geopark by monitoring the Geopark’s development to meet these standards. By influencing the actions of the AFCD, the AGHK can indirectly influence the other stakeholders as well. In several Geopark locations, local communities worked with the AGHK and the AFCD to develop Geoheritage centers, which are run by the community. However, on Tung Ping Chau, the local community has not approached the AGHK to create a Geoheritage center, or vice versa.

The AFCD maintains the power to regulate all activities that occur within the Marine and Country Parks regions under the Country Park and Marine Park Ordinances. Nesting the Geopark sites within the existing park systems allows the AFCD to easily absorb the management of the Geopark under its jurisdiction. The AFCD has legislative and judicial power over the local community and tourists who interact with Tung Ping Chau, which is the most concrete power present in this situation.

The tourists have little say in the development process. It cannot be expected that tourists will actively support or protest Geopark development on Tung Ping Chau. However, tourists have impacted development in Hong Kong before. Hikers effectively halted private development and garnered government attention in the Tai Long Sai Wan area, near the Sai Kung East Country Park, in 2010 (Government Information Centre, 2010; O. Lam, 2010; T. Lam, 2010; Government Information Centre, 2011). However, this type of influence has yet to occur on Tung Ping Chau.

4.3 Stalemate on Tung Ping Chau
The barriers to ecotourism development we found from Tung Ping Chau can be summarized as a stalemate situation. In the following section, we explain the stalemate situation on Tung Ping Chau between the local community of Tung Ping Chau and those developing ecotourism: the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department and the Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong. This situation is a stalemate because these groups have differing interests, each group is skeptical of the others’ interests, and there is no communication or collaboration system in place to manage these differing interests.
4.3.1 Differing Development Interests Among Stakeholders
The interest of the AFCD and the AGHK, to continue development on the Hong Kong Global Geopark, is not aligned with the interest of the local community, which is to receive the provision of water and electrical infrastructure on Tung Ping Chau. Also, the local community and the stakeholders driving ecotourism are mutually skeptical of each other’s development intentions. This skepticism might be preventing these stakeholders from establishing a meaningful dialogue to manage their disparate interests.

R2Gs have expressed concern that the provision of water and electricity would directly result in illegal and uncontrolled land development on Tung Ping Chau. The AGHK is concerned with uncontrolled illegal development in Geopark areas because it is common in other rural areas of Hong Kong, but did not express the same concern as those from R2Gs. Some experts alluded to potential development similar to the current development occurring in the New Territories, resulting from indigenous villagers taking advantage of their right to develop their land. The local community members who we interviewed on Tung Ping Chau did acknowledge that if water and electrical infrastructure were to be provided, there may be an influx of landowners who return to capitalize on the situation by building on or selling their private land. However, no community members that we spoke to expressed a desire to develop or sell their own land if such infrastructure were provided to them.

The local community assumes the government is trying to develop the tourism industry around the villages, while ignoring their needs as Hong Kong citizens. The AFCD has advertised Tung Ping Chau as a Geopark site, resulting in increasing numbers of visitors to the island. The AFCD has built public restroom facilities supplied with water and electricity for the tourists, but the local community feels that they are being ignored, and that the government is not concerned with their quality of life. As translated from one of the Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee’s banners, “There was absolutely no consultation of locals for the Geopark; major administering officials rejoice in the grandiose deeds!”

The provision of water and electricity infrastructure would prove to be very costly, yet the local community feels their requests for provisions are being unfairly dismissed, then ignored as provisions are made to directly benefit tourists. The AFCD and AGHK maintain a justified concern about uncontrolled illegal development in Geopark areas, but this stalemate will not resolve by establishing whether or not the local community’s development intentions are wholesome or even realistic.

This mutual distrust between the local community and the AFCD presents a barrier for ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau, for it is unlikely that development goals can align when key stakeholders are skeptical of each other’s intentions.
### 4.3.2 Lack of Communication among Stakeholders

Preventing the alignment of stakeholders’ interests as well as any collaboration for ecotourism development is a lack of communication among stakeholders.

The dissatisfaction of the local community with communication is evident upon visiting Tung Ping Chau. The Tung Ping Chau Affairs Committee has posted bright yellow banners around the villages to express their unhappiness toward the Geopark’s development. According to one of the signs, there was “not even a little bit of enquiry [from the government to the local community]”.

The local community on Tung Ping Chau feels that it has not been involved actively in the development of the Geopark. According to Ms. Choi, there has not been communication between the AGHK and the Tung Ping Chau Affairs Committee in regards to the development of a Geoheritage center, however, the Tung Ping Chau Affairs Committee has not contacted the AGHK in the hopes of creating one either. Ms. Choi also notes that there has been other communication with the Tung Ping Chau community from the AGHK. According to the UNESCO guideline for the Global Geopark Network, “A Geopark shall involve public authorities, local communities... in the design and running of the Geopark and its .... activities.” While other Geopark locations in Hong Kong maintain local involvement in accordance with these guidelines, communication between those that manage the Geopark on Tung Ping Chau and the community seems to be minimal.

There are some channels of communication between the government and the community, however. According to a representative of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China, the local community on Tung Ping Chau did help plan the Ping Chau trail, which circles the island, so there has been some communication between these two stakeholder groups in the past. The Lands Department also attempts to communicate with the community by displaying notices that call for objections to development on the island. There were posted notices informing the community of plans to reconstruct pathways. These notices offer the opportunity for local community members to voice objections by mail within 14 days of the posting date on the notice. A photograph of one of these notices on Tung Ping Chau is shown in Figure 4.6. However, this form of communication is based on objections to already planned developments, which does not meet the requirements for the inclusion of local community in the development and management in a Global Geopark as detailed by the UNESCO guidelines.
FIGURE 4.6 – LANDS DEPARTMENT NOTICE ON TUNG PING CHAU
4.4 UNESCO GUIDELINES AS A FOUNDATION FOR ECOTOURISM

The Hong Kong Geopark became a member of the Global Geoparks Network in September of 2011, and in order to maintain this status the Geopark must continue to meet the UNESCO guidelines, which align with the principles of ecotourism. The Hong Kong Global Geopark meets many criteria currently, and the AGHK is aware of several areas that the Hong Kong Geopark needs to improve to meet the UNESCO guidelines, and is driving to improve the state of ecotourism in the Hong Kong Geopark.

Member parks of the Global Geopark Network are evaluated against the criteria in Table 4.1. An internal feasibility study of Hong Kong’s prospective geopark resulted in a score of 93%. These criteria cover all of the major sections of the UNESCO guidelines, considering more than just geology and conservation. This evaluation is both used as a self-evaluation upon application, and by international evaluators from UNESCO.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Weighting (%)</th>
<th>Self-Assessment</th>
<th>Evaluator's Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>I. Geology and Landscape</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1 Territory</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1.2 Geoconservation</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3 Natural and Cultural Heritage</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Management Structures</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Interpretation and Environmental Education</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>IV. Geotourism</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>V. Sustainable Regional Economic Development</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

Table 4.1 - Applicant’s self-evaluation form for National Geoparks seeking assistance of UNESCO to become member of the Global Network of National Geoparks

Still, Ms. Choi noted three areas for improvement that the Geopark must reach before its reevaluation in 2015:

1. Bettering the overall quality of the Hong Kong Geopark
2. Strengthen management to better the Geopark
3. Popularize education on geoconservation and earth science
These efforts to improve the overall quality of the Geopark, strengthen management, and popularize education serve as an opportunity to advance ecotourism in the Geopark and Hong Kong overall. Due to our limited expertise, we cannot evaluate the quality of the entire Hong Kong Global Geopark as compared to all of the UNESCO guidelines presented in Section 2.2.2. This leaves the other two points of improvement noted by Ms. Choi: enhancement of the educational component of the Geopark and the improvement of Geopark management.

**Enhancement of the Educational Component**

The AGHK and AFCD are already working to improve the educational component of the Geopark. The Geopark uses many different avenues to educate visitors. There is a Geopark-specific website (Hong Kong Geopark, 2011b) that supplies information regarding the Geopark in a “fun and engaging way” according to Choi. The Geopark publishes educational books and visitor guides, which are sold in bookstores in Hong Kong. Educational pamphlets can also be found at the Geopark Visitor Centre and the Geoheritage Centres. The Centres are also very important to the educational value of the Geopark, educating visitors about the geology of their respective sites as well as the area’s cultural heritage (Hong Kong Geopark, 2011a).

Another sign of commitment to the educational component of ecotourism is the Recommended Geopark Guide (R2G) system is a guide certification system which has been incorporated into the Hong Kong Geopark. According to the R2G system website, there are 39 accredited guides (Hong Kong Geopark, 2010). Dr. Lewis Cheung, a Provisional Recommended Geopark Guide, explained that the program intends to provide high quality tours that have significant educational value led by a person of expertise. A representative from the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China considered the high quality guides produced by the R2G system very important to the development of the Geopark, and by extension ecotourism. Still, according to Dr. Lewis Cheung and another R2G, the typical visitors to the Geopark do not seek to pay for such an ecotourism experience, even though a well-developed system is readily available. Private tour companies that are not certified by the R2G system still guide tours in the Geopark, and Ms. Choi expressed concern that competition for lower costs of tours is degrading the quality of the guided tour sector in Hong Kong.

Ms. Choi makes the case that it is difficult to create demand for educational value when visitors have previously visited simply for enjoyment, as we found on Tung Ping Chau. Existing educational tools provide information about Geopark sites and conservation, but not all visitors are interested. Targeted approaches are one way of instilling interest in different audiences, Choi notes. The marketing of the educational component of the Geopark is key to responsiveness.

**Improvement of Geopark Management**

The current management style is based upon the design of the park system as it existed in the 1970s. At that time, the purpose of the Country Park system was to conserve the ecology of the land and perhaps punish those who misuse it, which continues today. The AFCD’s management of the Country Parks is seen as very successful, according to Ms. Choi.

By following UNESCO guidelines, an effective management system can be established for the Hong Kong Geopark. In addition to the conservation provided by the Country and Marine Parks
systems, the management of the Geopark must also include local communities in the planning and management of the Hong Kong Geopark. These requirements have been reflected in the development of the Geopark thus far. According to a representative of the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China, local communities were included during the planning stage of the Geopark by playing “a significant role in trail alignment, content and material selection”. Ms. Choi also stated that the AGHK attempted to educate local communities on the Geopark sites and strived to involve them in its development. Local communities are involved in the management of the Geopark, with local community members operating Geoheritage Centres in the Tai Po, Lai Chi Wo, and Sai Kung areas, which are also part of the drive for education.

If the Hong Kong Global Geopark meets its goals for the improvement of its educational tools and the development of a Geopark specific management system, as well as improving the overall quality of the Geopark, it could set a precedent for future ecotourism development in Hong Kong.
5.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this chapter, we recommend actions that could ease the stalemate on Tung Ping Chau and aid in the continuing development of the Geopark. The stalemate on Tung Ping Chau can be addressed if the local community were recognized as a stakeholder and included in communication concerning future development intentions. The utilization of the Recommended Geopark Guide (R2G) system and the improvement of the management system for the Geopark will aid in the continuing success of the Geopark’s development.

5.1 RESOLVING THE STALEMATE ON TUNG PING CHAU

The current situation on Tung Ping Chau presents a barrier to ecotourism development on the island. The stalemate exists because the local community and the drivers of the Hong Kong Geopark have differing interests. Differing interests are natural, especially during development of a new industry such as ecotourism in Hong Kong. The situation on Tung Ping Chau is considered a stalemate rather than a simple disagreement because the differing interests will not align without interference. An active dialogue between the stakeholders will be helpful to the successful resolution of the stalemate. Once there is an active dialogue, the stakeholders can work together to develop a plan for future ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau.

5.1.1 SUMMARY OF THE STALEMATE SITUATION

Within the last ten years, the local community on Tung Ping Chau has requested several provisions including more frequent ferry service, a government-supplied public water supply, and infrastructure for telecommunications and electricity. According to community members, each request has been denied by its respective authoritative body. Recently, the community has renewed its requests for government-supplied water and electricity by posting banners in and around the inhabited villages. The local community feels that the government is ignoring their calls for attention, denying their access to a higher quality of life on the island.

The Geopark division of the AFCD has not responded directly to the arguments that the Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee has voiced using banners on the island. The government is building on more than thirty years of conservation efforts and is attempting to incorporate a sustainable tourism industry on Tung Ping Chau. According to several academic experts, the expense of the requested infrastructure development would be significant and may not be cost effective for the current level of activity on the island. There is also concern, which was expressed by several Geopark Guides, that the supply of infrastructure will bring unsustainable development by landowners. Under the Country and Marine Park Ordinances, Tung Ping Chau is heavily protected against unauthorized development and other damaging activities, yet the indigenous villagers’ right to develop land cannot be withheld.
5.1.2 Recognize the Need to Actively Involve Tung Ping Chau Landowners

We recommend that the Geopark division of the AFCD more actively involve the landowners on Tung Ping Chau. The landowners on Tung Ping Chau feel they have not been consulted or actively involved during Geopark development. Although the Geopark is simply a conceptual boundary within the Hong Kong Country Parks system, UNESCO guidelines emphasize local community involvement. The impacts of existing tourism activities affect the villagers as well; therefore, they should be more actively involved as the industry develops further. Ecotourism opportunities may improve on Tung Ping Chau if the local community is acknowledged as a possible contributor to ecotourism.

5.1.3 Establishing Communication and Collaboration Among Stakeholders

We recommend that the AFCD take the initiative to establish a proactive channel of communication with private landowners on Tung Ping Chau. Aas states that one group always needs to initiate stakeholder communication (2004). We feel that the group already driving the development of the Hong Kong Geopark should initiate communication with the community on Tung Ping Chau. Considerations for this channel of communication should include the fact that the local community may not all be present on the island at any given time, a potentially limiting factor in reaching the active community members.

We recommend that stakeholders engage in active conversation to understand each other’s development intentions and allow for collaboration regarding future development. From a foundation of trust for each other’s development intentions, the stakeholders should then lay out a plan for ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau. According to Bruyere, Beh, and Lelengula (2009), “the first step to develop mutual trust among protected area stakeholders is to engage in meaningful dialogue and share information.” If the local community continues to feel that the Geopark Division is not acting in its best interests and the Geopark Division continues to provide only for tourists’ needs, then uncertainty will remain a barrier for ecotourism development. An active conversation between stakeholders could clear the uncertainty about each other’s development intentions and provide foundation and trust for future collaboration.

We recommend that the dialogue between stakeholders include discussion of future scenarios of ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau. A case study in Uganda shows how this approach can be successful. The conflict in Uganda concerned deforestation, where a governing body decided to utilize a forested area but did not consult the local community that was present. In an attempt to resolve the situation, the two groups discussed future development plans for both parties, including the opportunity for ecotourism development in the area. Below, project officers Langoya and Long summarize the successful outcome of this case study where the local community and government had different intentions for the use of forest resources:

“"The first step in developing [ecotourism] was to meet and discuss with local people whether the development of ecotourism would be appropriate, and if so, how they would like to be involved in its development and management."
Consultation was carried out through a series of participatory village meetings and interviews with key individuals” (1997).

A similar approach that might involve meetings and consultation with stakeholders regarding the future of Tung Ping Chau could evolve into a more concrete plan for the future of the island that might be supported by all relevant stakeholders, including the local residents. Not only would a plan for ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau provide for ecotourism development there, but also serve as a transparent model for ecotourism development in Hong Kong.

5.2 IMPLICATIONS FOR ECOTOURISM IN HONG KONG
The AFCD is actively developing the Hong Kong Geopark to meet the UNESCO Guidelines and Criteria for Global Geopark Network (UNESCO, 2010), while the AGHK monitors the Geopark’s development to meet these guidelines. The prestige associated with the UNESCO Global Geopark designation may succeed in driving the development of ecotourism in Hong Kong. The development of the Geopark, if successful, can be used as a model for the development of other ecotourism sites in Hong Kong.

Before this can happen, though, the UNESCO guidelines need to be met. We hope that the situation on Tung Ping Chau can be improved with our previous recommendations, and also have drawn lessons from Tung Ping Chau which may have more general implications. We also consider two aspects of the Geopark which Ms. Cindy Choi of the AGHK also identified as needing improvement.

5.2.1 EARLY INVOLVEMENT OF RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS DURING ECOTOURISM PLANNING
We recommend that other potential ecotourism sites in Hong Kong follow the Geopark’s example of local community involvement with due attention paid to the uniqueness of each local community. While the AFCD has effectively included the local communities in Lai Chi Wo, Tai Po, and Kat O in the development phases of the Geopark and operation of Geoheritage centers, there was a disconnect with the inclusion of the local community on Tung Ping Chau. Even though the local community did not technically need to be included, it is evident that this lack of consultation has led to some resentment from the local community. To avoid this in the future, early consideration of any parties that may be affected should be considered.

The lesson learned from the case study on Tung Ping Chau is that the potential stakeholders for ecotourism must be carefully considered before development takes place. This lesson can apply to the rest of Hong Kong for future ecotourism development. Groups of stakeholders will be unique for each ecotourism circumstance. While the case of the Geopark’s consideration of stakeholders cannot be followed exactly, it might serve as an adaptable model of how to consider and approach each stakeholder appropriately.
5.2.2 Continued Development of the Geopark
There are areas within the Geopark system that require improvement to ensure that the Geopark meets the UNESCO standards upon the four-year review in 2015. These improvements will also continue to pave the way towards improved ecotourism development. The areas we are focusing on include the improvement of the Recommended Geopark Guides (R2G) system and the improvement of the management system for the Geopark.

Better Utilization of the Recommended Geopark Guides (R2G)
We recommend that the AGHK more actively promote R2G tours by marketing the network of guides in a more integrated fashion with the rest of the Geopark. Currently, there is little mention of R2Gs in promotional materials published by the Geopark and it is not easy to navigate through their supporting website. The existing system provides the high quality guide service that the AGHK is looking to build upon in further Geopark development. According to two R2Gs and Ms. Choi, most tourists do not participate in tours and those who do are rarely willing to pay the premium for an R2G tour. The lack of publicity and economic obstacle are hindering the Geopark’s ability to educate visitors by way of the R2G system. According to UNESCO guidelines for Global Geoparks, a geopark must “communicate geoscientific knowledge and environmental and cultural concepts to the public” (UNESCO, 2010). Education is an important aspect of ecotourism. If the popularity and economic accessibility of the R2G’s can be improved upon, the R2G system might provide for better educational aspects of ecotourism in the future.

Piloting Adaptive Management in the Geopark
The Geopark division of the AFCD should consider extending the adaptive management process for the Hong Kong Global Geopark of China to other parks systems in Hong Kong. The Hong Kong Global Geopark is being developed with the use of a master plan for its future, and modifies their management of each Geopark location according to their local characteristics, according to Ms. Cindy Choi of the AGHK. However, it has been suggested by Wilson Lau of Civic Exchange that while the Country Parks system in Hong Kong has successfully promoted passive conservation, its management system has done little to actively manage or improve the ecology of Hong Kong (2011).

In order to better manage the pressures of development and other systemic concerns, Lau suggests that the AFCD adopt strategic management plans and a system of adaptive management so that these plans might incorporate stakeholder values as well as societal goals in Hong Kong. Adaptive management incorporates these considerations in a constantly iterative system, which focuses on anticipating change and the self-evaluation of success as compared to set goals. According to Lau, “Adaptive management has become the core feature of international best-practice in park management planning...” The Geopark’s use of adaptive management could serve as a stepping-stone for developing adaptive management systems for ecotourism throughout Hong Kong.
5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
We believe that more research can build upon this study and produce more useful guidance regarding ecotourism development in Hong Kong. Specifically, the topics of land rights, environmental degradation, and interaction between the government and the local community came up in our research on Tung Ping Chau.

PUBLIC USAGE OF PRIVATE PROPERTY ON TUNG PING CHAU
The local community on Tung Ping Chau is concerned about the preservation of their land rights, particularly raising objections to Geopark development. We identified one situation that might constitute an infringement of residents’ land rights. The path through the Sha Tau village is on privately owned land. This is also the only path that allows one to walk around an eastern portion of the island during high tide, so it is heavily traveled by visitors. The local villagers mentioned blocking the path as their next action to spark government attention. The path around the island is advertised as a trail by the Hong Kong Geopark, but it is not mentioned in these materials that some of the land is private. An investigation for the future use of private pathways or the installment of public paths merits further research.

RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS VILLAGERS ON TUNG PING CHAU
Another issue concerning land rights is the indigenous villagers’ right to build on or sell their land. This right is the reason that experts we interviewed were skeptical of the development intentions of private land owners. Also, drivers of ecotourism elsewhere in Hong Kong may need to anticipate the potential impacts of this issue, depending on the location of ecotourism development. More research could be performed to understand the actual intentions of private landowners on Tung Ping Chau, and concerning the potential impacts of indigenous villagers’ development near protected land on Tung Ping Chau and elsewhere.

LONG TERM ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS ON TUNG PING CHAU
We did not systematically assess the environmental impacts of ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau. However, several local community members on Tung Ping Chau mentioned concern for degradation of the environment on the island due to the increasing numbers of visitors. Also, several experts we spoke to commented that the environment and geology of the island has been degraded in the last several decades. Therefore, we also recommend that more research be conducted on the long term environmental impacts of increasing tourism on Tung Ping Chau, and potentially other Geopark locations.

5.4 FINAL THOUGHTS
We hope that the results of this case study will improve the outlook for ecotourism development on Tung Ping Chau. It is our belief that there is a future for ecotourism on the island, but it will only be possible if the local community and the governing bodies come to some sort of agreement or understanding with one another. This will only be possible with open dialogue. We also hope that this can serve a case study for ecotourism development throughout the rest of Hong Kong and that similar situations can be resolved more effectively in the future.
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Out of Sight: Remote Tung Ping Chau, Hong Kong’s ‘most scenic location’, is at the mercy of tour firms which have a warped idea of eco-tourism. (2006, October 27). South China Morning Post. Retrieved from


APPENDIX A: STAKEHOLDERS AND THEIR INTERESTS

APPENDIX A1: COMPLETE STAKEHOLDER LIST

Agriculture, Fisheries, and Conservation Department (AFCD)
A government department that has legislative power over Hong Kong’s Country Park, Marine Park and Geopark management.

Hong Kong Geological Survey
Under the government department of Civil Engineering Development Department, advises HK Geopark on geological information.

Hong Kong Lands Department
Government department responsible for the administration of land within the Hong Kong.

Hong Kong Planning Department
Government department responsible for the preparation of various types of town plans to guide the proper use and development of land with the objective of making Hong Kong a better place to live and work in.

Hong Kong Tourism Board
A government-subverted body tasked to market and promote Hong Kong as a travel destination worldwide and to enhance visitors’ experience once they arrive.

Hong Kong Tourism Commission
Government organization that aims to enhance the tourism facilities and support the development of new attractions and events so that Hong Kong remains a premier tourist destination.

Hong Kong Town Planning Board
A statutory body that guides and controls the development and use of land.

Tai Po District Council
A council that reports Tai Po district’s issues to government and advises development plans.

Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee
A non-governmental organization claimed to represent all land owners on Tung Ping Chau, run by the heads of the five villages on Tung Ping Chau. The organization has organized a 100+ people protest and put banners in the villages to voice their opinion.

Tung Ping Chau Island
An island located in the northeast of Hong Kong territory, one of the Hong Kong Geopark sites. It is the natural resource for ecotourism development.

Recommended Geopark Guides (R2G)
Guides accredited by the Geopark’s Accredited Geopark Guide system, who lead educational tours in geo-areas. Affiliated with the AGHK.

Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong (AGHK)
A non-governmental organization that aims to promote geoconservation in Hong Kong. The association is the driving force of Hong Kong Geopark of China, and continues to advise the AFCD on development of the Geopark.

Designing Hong Kong
A non-governmental organization that undertake any and all lawful acts and deeds which are necessary and conducive to design a more sustainable Hong Kong.

World Wildlife Fund of Nature, Hong Kong
An non-governmental organization that deliver solutions for a living planet through Conservation, Footprint and Education programmes.

Tsui Wah Ferry Service Limited
A private company that operates ferry running from Ma Liu Shui Pier to Tung Ping Chau and other Hong Kong islands. Ferry to Tung Ping Chau only operate over the weekends.

HYFCO Travel Agency Limited
A private company that operates international and local tours, including ferry tours passing by Tung Ping Chau.
Tourists on Tung Ping Chau
Approximately 6000 tourists visit Tung Ping Chau per month, most of which come from Hong Kong, some go under private tour guides. Most visit Tung Ping Chau for leisure and fun.
### APPENDIX A2: STAKEHOLDER INTEREST MATRIX

This matrix summarizes interests of different categories for all stakeholders identified. The highlighted rows indicate the primary stakeholders chosen for analysis in this project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Stakeholders</th>
<th>Stakeholder</th>
<th>Environmental Interest</th>
<th>Economic Interest</th>
<th>Cultural or Social Interest</th>
<th>Educational Interest</th>
<th>Role in Management or Decision Making</th>
<th>Goal or Mission</th>
<th>Interest in Stakeholder Collaboration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government</strong></td>
<td>Agriculture, Fisheries, and Conservation Department (AFCD)</td>
<td>Significant interest to conserve the environment</td>
<td>No economic interest (they spend money not make it)</td>
<td>allow basic development of private land</td>
<td>Promoting knowledge by sponsoring fieldtrips for school children</td>
<td>Enforce regulation of Marine Park and Country Park Ordinances, enact Geopark development</td>
<td>Sustainability and conservation</td>
<td>Will try and consider local parties in their plans, but does not include them into discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>HK Geological Survey</td>
<td>Preserve unique geological elements in HK</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Promote education of the unique geology aspects</td>
<td>Advised creation of the Geopark, helped write the Expert Report on the Geology of the Proposed Geopark</td>
<td>Better conservation, better education of the geology, but must be driven by AFCD</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government</strong></td>
<td>HK Lands Department</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>advise, public consultation of land use</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Government</strong></td>
<td>HK Planning Department</td>
<td>Sustainability</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Encourage community involvement and support</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Provides development plans to TPB</td>
<td>“make HK an international city of world prominence”</td>
<td>Give advice to Town Planning Board</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Stakeholders</td>
<td>Stakeholder Name</td>
<td>Environmental Interest</td>
<td>Economic Interest</td>
<td>Cultural or Social Interest</td>
<td>Educational Interest</td>
<td>Role in Management or Decision Making</td>
<td>Goal or Mission</td>
<td>Interest in Stakeholder Collaboration</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>HK Tourism Board</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Maximize economic contribution from tourism to HK</td>
<td>Maximize social contribution from tourism to HK</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Recommendation to government on the range and quality of visitor facilities</td>
<td>Market and promote Hong Kong as a destination worldwide</td>
<td>Works with government, travel industry and other partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>HK Tourism Commission</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Keep tourists in HK for another day Leisure and business tourism</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Promote the development of tourism in HK</td>
<td>HK remains a premier tourist destination</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>HK Town Planning Board</td>
<td>Better for living</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Health, safety, convenience</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Decision on land use/planning</td>
<td>“promote the health, safety, convenience and general welfare of the community”</td>
<td>Accepts comments from public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>Tai Po District Council</td>
<td>Environmental improvement</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Promotion of recreational and cultural activities</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Advise the government on district issues</td>
<td>Overall improvement of Tai Po</td>
<td>Connect local community with government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Community</td>
<td>Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee</td>
<td>Protect the marine ecology, less trash</td>
<td>Supplemental income from running hostels and restaurants Land and fishing</td>
<td>Improving their quality of life (water, electricity); Maintain temples</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Can object through legal channels, protest</td>
<td>Get government provided electricity and water, ability to develop their land</td>
<td>They would probably like being involved more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Stakeholders</td>
<td>Stakeholder</td>
<td>Environmental Interest</td>
<td>Economic Interest</td>
<td>Educational Interest</td>
<td>Role in Management or Decision Making</td>
<td>Goal or Mission</td>
<td>Interest in Stakeholder Collaboration</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural</td>
<td>Tung Ping Chau Island</td>
<td>Environmental Conservation</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>No active role</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Accredited Geopark Guides (A2G) *affiliated with AGHK</td>
<td>Personal interests in environmental conservation</td>
<td>Supplemental (potentially main) source of income</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>More significant educational interest (it appears) during tours than others</td>
<td>No active role</td>
<td>continuation of the Geopark and conservation in Hong Kong (personal interest)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong (AGHK)</td>
<td>Geoconservation</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Local community involvement</td>
<td>HUGE: educate the public on geoconservation</td>
<td>Driving Geopark/AFCD</td>
<td>promote geo-conservation and arise public awareness on geology in HK</td>
<td>Yes! Support ecotourism through Geopark development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>Designing Hong Kong</td>
<td>Better living environment</td>
<td>Non-profit</td>
<td>Enhance the quality and sustainability of HK’s living environment</td>
<td>Educate and raise awareness among the community on the need to protect and enhance living environment</td>
<td>All lawful acts and deeds for sustainable living environment In HK</td>
<td>Sustainable living environment in HK</td>
<td>Yes, will form alliances among community with common interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of Stakeholders</td>
<td>Stakeholder</td>
<td>Environmental Interest</td>
<td>Economic Interest</td>
<td>Cultural or Social Interest</td>
<td>Educational Interest</td>
<td>Role in Management or Decision Making</td>
<td>Goal or Mission</td>
<td>Interest in Stakeholder Collaboration</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NGO</td>
<td>WWF of HK</td>
<td>Conservation, sustainability</td>
<td>Funding</td>
<td>Improve local sustainability</td>
<td>Educate the public</td>
<td>Manages Mei Po reserve</td>
<td>Sustainable future</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Company</td>
<td>Tsui Wah Ferry Service Ltd.</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Tourism on TPC nets them income</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Provide half-price ticket to local community</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private Company</td>
<td>HYFCO Travel Agency Ltd.</td>
<td>Monitor tourist behavior under regulations</td>
<td>Low profit through cheap mass tours, brings business to local community</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>More tourists, more profit</td>
<td>Unclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourists</td>
<td>Tourists on Tung Ping Chau</td>
<td>Protection, less trash</td>
<td>current price is fair, not too much spending</td>
<td>Noise pollution, curious about island history</td>
<td>Learn about geology, local culture, it’s interesting</td>
<td>no active role</td>
<td>fun and leisure</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A.1 – Stakeholder Interest Matrix
APPENDIX B: INITIAL VISIT TO TUNG PING CHAU

Approach local community members informally, asking for basic information such as local history, interesting places on the island, and their basic opinions on the Geopark. Also find out about the nature of the local community and whether they have any sort of organization or local government. Speak to as many people as possible and let the conversation flow naturally. Determine what sort of information they are comfortable speaking about, and who we can speak to on future visits. No interviews are recorded, and we will not ask for any identifying information.

Tung Ping Chau Trip 1 Findings – January 14th to the 15th
Paul Gasper, Shuimiao Ge, Amy Loomis, Shelby Miller

Summary
- We physically inspected the majority of the island, and spoke with 5 or 6 different local residents in order to get information. A couple of residents spoke to us several times. This included some police, a permanent resident, the operators of the hostel we stayed at, and their friends who were there. They were very willing to speak with us.
- Marine Park and Geopark seem to protect the environment and ecology of the island and surrounding waters effectively, minor issues with trash and defacing of a popular geological feature on the island
- Very nice government provided restroom facilities, footpaths, pier, and small shelters
- Everyone gets to the island by ferry with the exception of police, about 6000 people per month at the highest
- Local community is about 30-40 people, with maybe 5 permanent residents. Permanent residents are elderly people living off of savings, getting supplies by the weekend ferry. The rest run three hostels/restaurants on the island, but they leave during the week. These people are not financially dependent on the island, and not very business oriented.
- The local residents are very upset with the actions of the government and the creation of the Hong Kong Geopark. They have created a group, the Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee, which has displayed signs in the two main villages. These signs ask the government to supply them with electricity and water, and deplore their loss of freedom due to the Geopark.

Geopark Information
- Geological and ecological uniqueness of Tung Ping Chau (TPC) was well documented
- Restrictions set in place to protect the Geopark and Marine Park were clearly presented
  - Restricted collection of marine life, shells, restrictions on certain activities (Fig. 1 and 2)
  - Recreational one-line-one-hook fishing allowed in certain areas
  - No hunting or collecting plants, vandalism of government property, littering
  - Breaking of these codes can lead to a HKD $25,000 fine or one year imprisonment
Guidelines for good Geopark behavior also on a sign, found the same information on a Geopark pamphlet as well. General safety rules, no climbing, no defacing, no taking of rocks or fossils.

We found trash on some beach areas, seemed to be brought in by the ocean for the most part rather than littering on TPC. This was immediately noticeable upon arrival. We continued to see trash in certain areas, sometimes due to obvious littering. There was some very old trash in many of the abandoned houses. We did see two AFCD employees cleaning litter as well as plenty of trash disposal/recycling facilities. Also there was a community member cleaning up trash on one of the beaches.
Education signs on the geology and ecology of TPC were spaced around the island’s trails, probably about 10. Also a couple about local history, and cultural information signs near each of the two temples.

Along with trash, the only other negative environmental impact in the Geopark was graffiti on one of the most popular rock forms near Kang Lau Shek, as shown in Fig. 3 and 4. There are obvious signs telling visitors not to climb them but they are very easy to climb, and defacing of the geology is obviously not allowed and punishable by law. However, pictures of people on top of these rocks is a common picture on blogs (Chinese and European/American) so there is no real pressure not to. We think people aren’t supposed to climb due to safety, but while climbing it Paul (he noticed the graffiti while on top of it) did notice the shale could be broken in some places so the conservation of these rocks might be an issue as well.

While there are police on the island, there didn’t seem to be any enforcement for violating the minor rules. The island seems to be well environmentally and geologically conserved overall. We were impressed by the biodiversity and the geology of the island, as well as the presentation of the Geopark overall. Trails were well marked and well kept. Tourists, of whom there were about 30 on Sunday, seemed to respect all the major rules of the Marine Park and Geopark.

**Local History**
- Some of this information was presented on a Geopark educational sign, most from speaking with locals
People have been living on the island for at least 300 years. Some of the first settlement included a military camp first set up by the Qing Dynasty, which was to protect the shipping lane in between TPC and mainland China. The British also occupied the camp after the Second Opium War, but left it 1980s. It is still kept in good condition today, and has been modernized. It was surrounded by barbed wire fence.

We found many tombs on the island which were all very clean and seemed modern. They were mostly openly accessible. Other than the villages, these are the only use of land by the locals. Only native residents are allowed to use the land on TPC for tombs.

About 50 years ago, most people left they island for a better life, partly due to the lack of electricity or potable water. There used to be a sugar mill, and many fishermen, but it was a hard life. At one point at least 2000 people lived on the island, which was not sustainable. Because of this there are many deserted houses that are in disrepair or destroyed.

While under British rule, the government installed and powered some streetlights throughout the island, but did not power anything else. These streetlights are now all broken and their wires cut for safety. The British government also delivered them supplies.

Under British rule, they could fish anything and the land was all privately owned.

In the 1970s while the island was declining, the British government paid to have some of the workers on the island moved to jobs in France and Germany, maybe other places as well. These people still come back to visit on holidays.

After 1997, TPC was mostly ignored by the government, resulting in more people leaving the island. Islanders since then have had to deliver their own supplies by ferry.

Since then, more and more regulations have been placed on TPC due to the Marine Park and more recently the Geopark. The residents claim that the Geopark has taken away their ability to use the private land (potentially took away their ownership? It was unclear). Before the Geopark, 80% of the land was private.

Tourism Facilities

- TPC is advertised as having “a high carrying capacity for tourists and comprehensive tourism facilities” by a Geopark pamphlet
- Government provided facilities included two covered shelters, trash/recycling cans and stockades, a recently renovated pier (found source documenting EIA of construction process), and four newly renovated bathrooms (we know this because they looked very nice/new, as well as finding a source speaking of their new renovation as of September 2011). The main bathroom by the pier had electric lighting at least until midnight as well.
- The ferry to TPC runs on Saturdays at 9am and 3pm, and at Sunday at 9am. Return trips are at 5pm each day. The ferries are run by the Shui Wa (spelling unsure) company. They have a capacity of 320 or 330, and if there are a lot of people they will also have a smaller ferry (unsure on capacity) deliver a second load at the same time. Ferry tickets can be booked ahead of time, ensuring that local residents always have space, along with any of their friends or guests/customers of the hostels. There are about 6000 people per month visiting TPC, and all have to use the ferries.
- There were 3 hostels, each with its own restaurant, all in the same village, while there was one recently renovated house for tourists to rent at night in another village (which was populated by a small group of elderly villagers). The largest hostel had a capacity of 40 people for overnight, and the combined capacity of the restaurants was very large, likely several hundred people. One of the hostel/restaurants was closed for the winter as there are less overnight guests. All of these businesses were without government support.

Local Community

- The local community consisted of the owners/operators of the hostels and their friends, a small group of elderly people in the only other inhabited village, and the police officers. Almost everyone understands Mandarin, and several speak English. Only one very old lady could only communicate in Cantonese.
- The hostel owners and friends are part-time residents, i.e., they leave every weekend. Most grew up on the island. While they run the hostels, they are not very business oriented and none of them seem to be reliant on the income from tourism. They treat TPC as a sort of vacation home, inviting friends and family to join them on the island. There were about 10-20 total owners and friends on the island. They supply their own electricity and water.
- The elderly group in the other village is mostly people who have worked away from the island when they were adults and come back, living off of their savings, as they have become older. 3 or 4 out of these
people, who seemed to total about 10, are apparently permanent residents who live on the island during the week as well. They supply their own electricity and water

- The police are a large presence on the island. There is a fenced off police camp separate from the villages. We know by speaking with them that they run on several day shifts, and that they are always there. Their purpose on the island foremost is to control illegal immigration from mainland China, but they say they are also there to make Geopark tourists always feel safe. They patrol the shore on foot and in speedboats.
- The part-time and permanent residents of the island have created an organization called the Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee. About a month ago they posted large, durable signs in their villages as well as some handwritten signs protesting the Geopark, and blaming the Geopark for mistreatment of islanders. They have also gone to protest a government department (likely AFCD) in Hong Kong of this mistreatment but it did not result in anything. Some villagers seemed more upset about the issues presented than others, but all were willing to speak with us. The police were unwilling to present any opinion on the matter, which was expected but we did ask anyways. These signs are shown below along with English translations. The small black text in the bottom right of every sign says "Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee"

FIGURE B.6 – SIGN ON TUNG PING CHAU (A.)

Geopark; has ruined my hometown, ways to make a living have been lost suddenly; which brings hardships!

FIGURE B.7 – SIGN ON TUNG PING CHAU (B.)

[We] ask for concern on TPC, the supply of water and electricity, and the recovery of our freedom!

FIGURE B.8 – SIGN ON TUNG PING CHAU (C.)

Geopark; there was absolutely no consultation of locals, major administering officials; they rejoice in their grandiose deeds!
Geopark; whose officials show off their prestige, pity the residents; who can’t return to their homeland!

Three hazards attack TPC together, ruining the villages and exterminating our community where there is the most sorrow

Geopark does meaningless upgrades, why so eager to rejoice in grandiose deeds!

Main text: no consultations, same as earlier sign on consultation
Sub-text: [someone] caught fish to serve a meal, but got accused by the court.
Main text: three hazards text, same as earlier sign
Sub-text: There are already numbers of restrictions on the outskirts and the seacoast of the island, now the Geopark has been added?

Main text: they have lost their way of living, hardship has been brought suddenly
Sub-text: Fisherman can sell millions of fish, but island residents go to court for eating their catches!?

English signs suggest they want international tourists to understand their issues as well.

- The community is bringing up old issues (no electricity or water, but there never has been any) because they feel wronged by the government. They feel like they can no longer make use of their private land (either than or the government actually took it, we aren’t certain if that’s true) without any sort of compensation, and the government did not even ask them about any changes.
We did see two papers that were taped up on street lights by the government which describe new projects for the island by the government. One was for a water tank (but no description on if the water tank was for the community) and the other for an improvement to a pathway. The signs provided an address for the community to mail objections to within 14 days of the signs posting (they were posted Jan. 10th, 2012). We did not ask community members about these.
APPENDIX C: INTERVIEW PROTOCOLS

APPENDIX C.1: LOCAL COMMUNITY ON TUNG PING CHAU

Interviewer(s): Paul Gasper, Shuimiao Ge, Amy Loomis, and Shelby Miller
Interviewees: Local community on Tung Ping Chau
Date: Saturday, January 14th and Sunday, January 15th
Time: All weekend
Location: Tung Ping Chau

Economic Interest Questions:
1. Icebreaker: Why do you come to Tung Ping Chau?
2. Do you have property on the island? If so, how often do you go to there, and how much time do you spend when you do go?
3. What is your business on the island? How much does it rely on the tourism? How?
4. How is your business? When are the peak and low seasons around the year?
5. How satisfied are you with the income from your business on Tung Ping Chau?
6. Did the economic benefit of the tourist industry influence your decision to return to the island?
7. What are your hopes for your business in the future?

Environmental Interest Questions:
8. Do you go fishing on the island? Where do you go fishing? How’s the catch?
9. How do you feel about the Marine Park?
10. How important to you is protecting the environment of the island and reefs?
11. What parts of the environment on the island are being protected well?
12. Are there parts of the environment on the island that are not protected well?
13. How do you feel about the Country Park?
14. What do you know about Tung Ping Chau’s geology?
15. Do you welcome more tourists to visit Tung Ping Chau or are there too many people visiting already?
16. Do you have any concerns with how tourists or tour guides behave on the island?

Social/Cultural Interest Questions:
17. Are there places on the island that have important cultural or religious meaning to you or the broader community?
18. Is tourism affecting those places? If so, how?

Reaching better contacts:
19. What is the Tung Ping Chau Affair Committee? Who are the members and leader?
20. Does the TPC Affair Committee have a leader? Can we talk to them? If they exist, then how could we contact them?

Questions directed towards the Committee or their leader, if we can find them:
21. Can you tell us more about the concerns that are on the signs? How do they relate to the three parks on Tung Ping Chau?
22. Do you have concerns about how the environment of Tung Ping Chau is protected?
23. How important is it to educate visitors about Tung Ping Chau’s villages, history, and culture?
24. How important is it to educate visitors about Tung Ping Chau’s geology and environment?
25. Do you see the government responding positively to your current arguments?
26. How has the government reacted to any previous comments or concerns that you have expressed?
APPENDIX C.2: TOURISTS ON TUNG PING CHAU
Interviewer(s): Paul Gasper, Shuimiao Ge, Amy Loomis, and Shelby Miller
Interviewees: Tourists on Tung Ping Chau

Date: Saturday, January 14th and Sunday, January 15th
Time: All weekend
Location: Tung Ping Chau

1. Where did you come from?
2. How did you find out about Tung Ping Chau?
3. Why are you visiting the island?
4. Did you come alone, with family or friends, or with a tour guide?
5. What did you enjoy most about your visit here?
6. Does anything on the island bother you, or something that could be done better to make your trip more enjoyable?
7. What do you think about the number of tourists on the island?
8. Do you feel that your visit was a bargain, just right, or too expensive?
9. Will you come back to Tung Ping Chau again in the future? Are there any changes you’d like to see on the island?
APPENDIX C.3: CINDY CHOI – PUBLICITY CHAIR FOR THE ASSOCIATION FOR GEOCONSERVATION, HONG KONG

Interviewer(s): Amy Loomis and Shelby Miller
Interviewee: Ms. Cindy Choi, Association for Geoconservation Hong Kong

Date: Tuesday, February 7th, 2012
Time: 4:45 pm
Location: Chinese University of Hong Kong

1) What is the Association for Geoconservation Hong Kong?
   a. When was it started?
   b. Why was it started?
   c. How/who started it?
2) What role do you have at the Association for Geoconservation Hong Kong?
   a. How long have you been part of this association?
3) Are you familiar with the Hong Kong Global Geopark?
4) Did you participate in any of the planning or development of the Geopark?
   a. If so, please elaborate.
5) Have you/Do you currently have any work with the Geopark?
6) What were the goals (that you are aware of) of establishing a Geopark in Hong Kong?
7) Would you say that the Geopark has met those goals?
   a. If no, please elaborate.
8) In your opinion, has the Geopark been a success?
9) As an expert, do you have any concerns about the Geopark?
10) During development, were you in favor or weary of the Geopark?
11) Are you familiar with ecotourism? If so, what is your definition?
12) Are you aware of any ecotourism in Hong Kong?
   a. If so, please elaborate.
13) Do you think that Hong Kong has the potential to develop more ecotourism?
14) Are you familiar with sustainable development and sustainable tourism?
   a. If so, what has Hong Kong accomplished in terms of sustainable development and sustainable tourism?
15) In your own opinion, do you believe that Hong Kong has the potential to grow and be more successful in terms of sustainable development?
16) Are you familiar with the island of Tung Ping Chau?
   a. If so, what do you know about this island?
   b. Have you ever visited?
      i. If so, when?
      ii. What was your impression of the island?
17) Do you know anything about the history of Tung Ping Chau? (social, cultural, otherwise)
18) Can you provide us with any details about Tung Ping Chau with relations to the Geopark?
19) Based on your knowledge, do you think that Tung Ping Chau would be a good candidate for ecotourism development?
   a. Why or why not?
20) Based on our research, many ecotourism destinations are supported by Non-Governmental Organizations that monitor ecotourism progress and development. Are you aware of any NGOs that you think might have interest in sponsoring or supporting ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau and/or other potential areas in Hong Kong?
APPENDIX C.4: PROFESSOR PETER HILLS – POLICY EXPERT FROM THE KADOORIE INSTITUTE
Interviewer(s): Paul Gasper, Shuimiao Ge, Amy Loomis, and Shelby Miller
Interviewee: Professor Peter Hills

Date: Tuesday, January 31st, 2012
Time: 10:00 am
Location: The University of Hong Kong

1) What is the Kadoorie Institute?
   a. When was it founded?
   b. Why was it founded?
   c. Who started it?
2) What is your role at the University of Hong Kong?
   a. Specifically, what is your role at the Kadoorie Institute?
3) In terms of policy analysis relating to sustainability, do you or your colleagues analyze specific policies or any policy that could be related to sustainability?
4) Are you familiar with the Country Park Ordinance?
   a. If so, can you tell us about it?
5) Is there any way to determine if a particular area (in our case, the villages on Tung Ping Chau) was excluded from the Country Park?
   a. If they were excluded, what, if any, restrictions are they held to in terms of future development?
6) Are there benefits or negative effects, which you are aware of, from excluding an area from a Country Park?
7) Are you familiar with the Marine Park Ordinance?
   a. If so, can you tell us about it?
8) The most recent ‘sustainable development’ park that was created in Hong Kong was the Hong Kong Geopark. Are you familiar with the geopark?
9) Are you aware of any barriers that were encountered during the development of the Geopark?
10) Are there any policies that were created to govern, monitor or manage the Geopark?
    a. If yes, what are they?
    b. If no, are you aware of any legislation that is in the works that would be related to the Geopark?
       i. If no, do you think that there should be?
11) In terms of other sustainability policies, do you think that Hong Kong is meeting its goals for sustainable development?
12) In your opinion, do you think that the current policies in place are managing sustainability properly?
13) Being an expert in the area, do you think there is room for improvement or development?
14) Are you familiar with the process that the Hong Kong government utilizes when developing policies?
    a. If so, do you know whether or not there is room for opinions or objections to the legislation development? Do they consider the interests of the affected parties?
APPENDIX C.5: ANDY LEUNG – MARKETING FOR THE WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE HONG KONG

Interviewer(s): Shuimiao Ge and Shelby Miller
Interviewee: Mr. Andy Leung, Mai Po Nature Reserve

Date: Monday, January 20th, 2012
Time: 9:30 am
Location: Mai Po Nature Reserve

1. What does the WWF do in Hong Kong?
   a. How and when was it started?

2. What role does the Mai Po Nature Reserve have in the WWF Hong Kong system?
   a. How and when was it started?
   b. What is its main objectives?

3. What is your role at the Mai Po Nature Reserve?

4. Are you familiar with ecotourism?

5. Does the Mai Po Nature Reserve have any role with ecotourism?
   a. If so, what exactly do you do?
   b. Why do you consider it ecotourism?
   c. What made you start ecotourism based tours/projects?
   d. Does the Mai Po Nature Reserve have any interest in expanding its ecotourism options?
   e. Does the Mai Po Nature Reserve support ecotourism outside of the tours that are provided through your services?
   f. What other interests, if any, does the Mai Po Nature Reserve have related to ecotourism?
   g. As the Mai Po Nature Reserve began to develop ecotourism, are you aware of any barriers or conflicts that were encountered?
   h. Are there any groups (NGO or otherwise) or governmental organizations that the Mai Po Nature Reserve works with to support ecotourism?

6. Are you familiar with the island of Tung Ping Chau?
   a. If so, what do you know about this island?
   b. Have you ever visited?
      i. If so, when?
      ii. What was your impression of the island?

7. Based on your knowledge, do you think that Tung Ping Chau would be a good candidate for ecotourism development?
   a. Why or why not?

8. Based on our research, many ecotourism destinations are supported by Non-Governmental Organizations that monitor ecotourism progress and development. Are you aware of any NGOs that you think might have interest in sponsoring or supporting ecotourism on Tung Ping Chau and/or other potential areas in Hong Kong?

9. Are you familiar with sustainable development and sustainable tourism?
   a. If so, what has Hong Kong accomplished in terms of sustainable development and sustainable tourism?

10. In your own opinion, do you believe that Hong Kong has the potential to grow and be more successful in terms of sustainable development?
APPENDIX C.6: DENISE TANG – GEOTECHNICAL ENGINEER, HONG KONG GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

Interviewer(s): Shuimiao Ge, Amy Loomis, and Shelby Miller
Interviewee: Ms. Denise Tang, Hong Kong Geological Survey

Date: Friday, January 20th, 2012
Time: 10:00 am
Location: 11/F, Civil Engineering and Development Department Building
101 Princess Margaret Road, Homantin, Kowloon, Hong Kong

1) What is the Hong Kong Geological Survey? How and when was it started?
2) When did you join the Geological Survey and what is your role?
3) Are you familiar with the Hong Kong Global Geopark?
4) Did you participate in any of the planning or development of the Geopark?
5) Have you/Do you currently have any work with the Geopark?
6) What were the goals (that you are aware of) of establishing a Geopark in Hong Kong?
7) Would you say that the Geopark has met those goals?
8) In your opinion, has the Geopark been a success?
9) Are you familiar with geotourism? If so, what is your definition?
10) Would you define the Geopark as geotourism?
11) Are you familiar with ecotourism? If so, what is your definition?
12) Do you think that the Geopark has the potential to become an ecotourism site?
13) Are you familiar with sustainable tourism? If so what is your definition?
14) Do you know anything about the history of Tung Ping Chau? (social, cultural, otherwise)
15) Can you provide us with any details about Tung Ping Chau with relations to the Geopark?
16) Based upon your knowledge of geotourism, sustainable tourism and Tung Ping Chau, do you think that Tung Ping Chau has the potential to develop into a sustainable tourist destination?
APPENDIX C.7: THREE GEOPARK GUIDES

Lewis Cheung – Geopark guide and PhD in Ecotourism
Interviewer(s): Paul Gasper, Amy Loomis, and Shelby Miller
Interviewee: Mr. Lewis Cheung
Date: Friday, January 20th, 2012
Time: 2:30 pm
Location: City University of Hong Kong

Anonymous A – Part-time Geopark guide
Interviewer(s): Paul Gasper, Shuimiao Ge, Amy Loomis, and Shelby Miller
Interviewee: anonymous
*Email interview

Anonymous B – Part-time Geopark guide
Interviewer(s): Paul Gasper, Shuimiao Ge
Interviewee: anonymous

Date: Friday, January 6th, 2012
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Hong Kong Polytechnic Institute

1) How did you get involved with the Hong Kong Global Geopark?
2) What else do you do for employment besides a Geopark Tour Guide?
3) What are your feelings towards the Geopark?
4) If your position as a Tour Guide a volunteer position or a paid position? If paid, who pays you?
5) How frequently do you give tours?
6) Do you give tours in one specific area of the Geopark or do you rotate throughout the different locations/along different trails?
7) Do you monitor the actions of the visitors on your tours? (i.e. littering, graffiti, etc.)
8) Have you noticed diversity in the visitors on your tours? (i.e. coming from different countries, speaking different languages, etc.)
9) What type of training did you have to go through to become a Geopark tour guide?
10) What do you talk about during your tours? Would you be able to give us a basic overview of that?
11) Do you find that visitors often ask questions? If so, what types of questions are the most frequent?
12) Were you involved with the development of the Geopark? If so, were there any barriers that were encountered or any unanticipated challenges?
   a. If you were not involved, are you aware of any barriers or challenges that the Geopark faced either during development or after its completion?
13) Do you interact with the management or organizational system on a regular basis? If so, how?
14) Has the implementation of the Geopark changed the park areas?
15) Do you think all locations of the Geopark meet the standards and/or do you think that there are some locations that need improvement? Please justify.
16) Who cleans up and cares for the Geopark locations?
17) Are their local communities in the different areas of the Geopark?
18) If so, are the local communities involved in the Geopark in anyway?
APPENDIX C.8: REPRESENTATIVE OF THE HONG KONG GLOBAL GEOPARK OF CHINA

Interviewer(s): Paul Gasper, Shuimiao Ge, Amy Loomis, and Shelby Miller
Interviewee: anonymous

*Email interview

Concerning Development:
1) What was the driving force for developing the Hong Kong National Geopark?
2) How was the development of the Geopark undertaken? Was there a specific process involved during development?
3) How long did it take to develop the Geopark from conceptualization to implementation?
4) Have you encountered any problems during development such as economic, environmental, social, etc. barriers? If so, what were they and how were you able to overcome them?
5) Will there be further development of the Geopark, or is the Geopark going to remain as it is, without any adaptations or additions?
6) Are you aware of any future plans to further develop sustainable tourism in Hong Kong (i.e. expansion of Geopark, implementation of another type of sustainable tourism, etc.)?

Concerning the objects of the destinations:
7) We understand that some of the areas of the Geopark have local communities. In our research on ecotourism, the involvement of the local community is one of the key aspects for successful ecotourism. Were the local communities of the Geopark consulted or involved in the decision making processes during development?
8) Is there any profit produced from the Geopark? If so, who/what does that money go to?
9) Do you evaluate any impacts that the Geopark may be having on the local environment, communities or economies? If so, how is this process done? What is done with the information collected?

Concerning Management:
10) Are Geopark tour guides paid positions or are they volunteers? If they are paid, are they paid by the tourists participating in the tours or are they government-funded positions?
11) How do you maintain the quality Geopark?
12) How is the Geopark managed/what is the management structure? Are many of the positions in Geopark management paid or are they volunteer positions?
13) What is the overall goal of the Geopark?

Concerning Experience:
14) When tourists visit the Geopark now, and in the future, what impression are you hoping to send with them when they leave? What are you hoping they will gain from visiting the Geopark as opposed to visiting another geological area that is not designated part of the Geopark?

Concerning Changes in Park Designation:
15) We understand that many of the current Geopark locations were part of the Country Parks system before they were designated as parts of the Geopark. Are these areas, such as Tung Ping Chau, still Country Parks as well as Geoparks? Or did the change to a Geopark negate the title and legislature that applies to a Country Park?
16) For these areas, were new regulations added in addition to ones that already existed for the Country Parks or have the Geopark regulations superseded any Country Park regulations?
APPENDIX D: INTERVIEW SUMMARY

APPENDIX D.1: LOCAL COMMUNITY ON TUNG PING CHAU

Elderly male, retired resident:
- Has land property, returned to island with wife for retirement 4 months ago
- Is friends with all villagers and stores;
- Live on saving, get food supply from ferry;
- Land was taken by government with nothing in return;
- Land used for planting before being taken away;
- Participated in the 100+ villager protest last year;
- If government provide water, electricity and communication tools, more villagers will return to live on the island;
- If government return his land, he will use it for farming/planting vegetables as before;
- Regarding government’s protection on environment: BAD, lots of rats seen at night, trash, mosquitos;
- No future plan, will just enjoy peaceful retirement life;
- Regarding Marine Park: licenses only for outsiders, not for islanders due to the island as a marine park, resulting outsiders netting around the island, no big fish for islanders to catch, unfair.
- Regarding Country Park: land taken away, can’t plant vegetables anymore, has to live on import;
- Regarding tourists, the less the better, but tourists are not causing much damage;
- Culture: villagers donate to maintain the 2 temples 4 years ago, nothing done by government;
- Complaint on government: no lights on road and pier at night;
- There are currently 5 villages: Chau Mei, Tai Tang, Sha Tau, Chau Tau, Nai Tau
- All village heads and organizer of TPC affair committee are living at Tai Po, HK, who will meet weekly at Tai Po
- Government ignore broken water reservoir at village of Sha Tau;
- Original way of living is destroyed (fishing, farming, planting), ironic to government’s promotion of geopark;
- Future actions: will listen to the village head;
- See tourists taking the sedimentary rocks from the old houses, destroying the remains, tourists should be more responsible.
- Government has no reaction to their signs and protest.

Head of Sha Tau village, part-time resident:
If government has no reaction:
Block private road until gov provide basic facilities
If gov provide them; more villagers will return to rebuild their home and TPC, but more villagers will also produce more trash in addition to the ones provided by tourists.
Government’s action for environment: just trash cans which will be cleaned up by government sent people. (Before they have those trash cans, they just burn trash on the beach and throw into the water.

Husband of Ping Chau Store owner, part-time resident:
Marine Park: can’t fish, fought for more fishing areas
In 1960s, stores started being established on TPC;
Ping Chau store was started by his wife’s father, now passed to them who use it for fun and some business, family business where the earning is used for family’s extra leisure spending and the kids; store business is 100% relying on tourists, but they don’t live on the store, they have job for weekdays.
Now, only 3 stores are running(Ping Chau, Xin Chang (big smiling face), Seaview), others only rent beds.
- All 3 stores are located in the village of Tai Tang where business was good, the other stores that only rent beds are located in sha tau village.
- Why return: to keep the store running.
- Future goal: pass store to children.
- Yes, goes fishing at the 2 spots allowed on the regulation, the catch depends on weather.
- Regarding Marine Park: fishing issue, netting issue. Islanders want to protect the island’s ecology/environment since it’s something passed down from their ancestor.
Regarding Country Park: Now has to apply before using their own land.
Learned about island’s geology from local and family;
More tourists may damage the island, at peak time in summer, there are more than 1000 tourists each day, they produce trash, noise.
Mainlanders stealing their property and damage the buildings.
Look high on island’s culture, residents donated to fix/maintain the temples (there are signs mentioning about their donation near the temple which we didn’t have a chance to take picture of).
Tourists are no affecting old places.
5 villages compose the TPC affair committee.

Government has no reaction.
If there’s water, electricity, communication tools, will just l
[0x0]ive here more comfortably, not necessarily develop more business.

Stanley So, part-time resident:
- Stanley stated that, “[t]he government selected not to allow the island with telecommunication, water, electricity, food and fuel supply and public transportation and services except two public luxury toilets with a view to desert the island and to make all land without real or saleable value so we cannot sell or use the houses and land there. They also not release such real information to outsiders and told public that no body living there that make everybody believed.” – from email correspondence
- Land rights were not changed, it’s just the lack of basic infrastructures preventing land owners from further developing their land.
- Indigenous villagers’ basic rights like fishing should be protected under the basic law.
- “All villagers wish to live at the island as an ordinary HK citizen equally enjoying the same benefits of houses owner in every district of HK.” – email correspondence
- “Practically the committee not work as no resources available. However, the villagers heads often meet each other at the island on every Sunday while enjoying life there.” – email correspondence
- “In practice again, the committee is a puppet on the government string that makes every other believe the island has the same rights as outside.”
- Stanley has asked corresponding departments for the provision of water, electricity, telecommunication and postal service, which were all denied except postal service where mailboxes were installed at the Ma Liu Sui Pier.
- On Tung Ping Chau, one old lady survives by gardening for 20 pots.
- Some people (assumed to be from mainland China) stole from the old woman when she went back to mainland Hong Kong, including two generators, several heavy batteries
- The ocean washes lots of trash onto the island, but the government is not doing much to clean it up.
- 70% of Tung Ping Chau is privately owned land, the zoning map proves it.
- The government built some water reservoirs but left it to the villagers for maintena
[0x0]nce and operation.
- The fuel used to power villagers’ generators is only supplied by the ferry’s own leftover stores when it brings visitors to the island. It is expensive and is in limited supply. The fuel supply used to be carried onboard the ferry, but at some point in recent years, tourists complained about the danger of transporting it in that way, so the supply now must come from the ferry’s fuel tanks.
- The Tai Po District Office built the Tung Ping Chau generator house located in Sha Tau, and non-villager resources also supplied the two generators inside. Villagers must acquire the fuel to run them, though.
- Stanley indicated that there is a power plant across the bay on mainland China that supplies mainland Hong Kong, and wants to know how unrealistic it is for the government to lay power lines under the bay to supply Tung Ping Chau
APPENDIX D.2: TOURISTS ON TUNG PING CHAU

On the day of interview, there were about 150-200 tourists, which is relatively slow for Tung Ping Chau according to research and some local villagers. Most tourists came without a guide, in a group of 2-15 friends or family members. It appeared they were prepared for hiking and exploring and were not surprised by the terrain. More than 2 tour groups stopped by Tung Ping Chau, each with approximately 30 tourists, one of which was from Shenzhen, mainland China. The following table, Table 6, depicts the thoughts and opinions of the tourists.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tourist Group</th>
<th>Basic information</th>
<th>Source of information on TPC</th>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Environmental interest</th>
<th>Social/cultural interest</th>
<th>Economic interest</th>
<th>Future expectation for TPC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Group 1</td>
<td>From HK with friends; 2nd time visit; unguided;</td>
<td>Newspaper/web;</td>
<td>Like of rocks;</td>
<td>Geology; better preservation;</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>Ferry price is reasonable;</td>
<td>No change; will return;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Group 2</td>
<td>From Scotland with HK relatives; Unguided;</td>
<td>HK family</td>
<td>Enjoy the landscape;</td>
<td>Garbage is not appealing;</td>
<td>Not too many people are here;</td>
<td>Ferry price not too bad for tourists;</td>
<td>Leave landscape as it is, but clean up the area;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Group 3</td>
<td>From HK with friends;</td>
<td>family</td>
<td>Enjoy the views;</td>
<td>Views, rocks, sea (color);</td>
<td>Not bad number of tourists;</td>
<td>Ferry price a bit high;</td>
<td>No change; will return;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Group 4</td>
<td>From HK in a group; unguided;</td>
<td>Geopark</td>
<td>Fun time with friends;</td>
<td>Less trash; loud speakers would be annoying; like the air, sea rocks;</td>
<td>Better education for people on environment protection</td>
<td>Ferry price is okay, but is the most expensive comparing to others;</td>
<td>None;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Group 5</td>
<td>From HK; A family with 2 kids;</td>
<td>A book on HK sites, written by AFCD;</td>
<td>Visit, fun, leisure time with family;</td>
<td>Like the rocks; dislike having no electricity in public toilets;</td>
<td>Good amount of tourists;</td>
<td>Food price is good; ferry price is high;</td>
<td>Telescope on beach; ferry to mainland; lights in toilet; Will return;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Group 6</td>
<td>From HK with friends;</td>
<td>Geopark</td>
<td>Visit, fun, leisure;</td>
<td>Like the view and landscape;</td>
<td>Good amount of tourists;</td>
<td>Food price is good, ferry is cheap;</td>
<td>More flexible ferry schedule; will return;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Group 7</td>
<td>From HK, 2 high school students;</td>
<td>Research on tourism and class project;</td>
<td>Class project and survey;</td>
<td>Like the unique geology and the sea; Dislike he trash and lack of signs on tracks;</td>
<td>A bit too much tourists; more unique, island-related menu;</td>
<td>Food price is high; ferry price is good;</td>
<td>More educational signs; more local culture uniqueness; won’t return;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourist Group 8</td>
<td>From mainland China with HK college friends;</td>
<td>Friends;</td>
<td>To accompany friends;</td>
<td>Like the sea; dislike the trash and gravels on tracks;</td>
<td>Good amount of tourists;</td>
<td>Food price is good, ferry price is good;</td>
<td>Clean up tracks; Will return;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table D.1 – Interview Summary from Tourists on Tung Ping Chau
APPENDIX D.3: CINDY CHOI – PUBLICITY CHAIR OF THE ASSOCIATION OF GEOCONSERVATION, HONG KONG

- The AGHK is the only NGO (or otherwise) in Hong Kong that promotes geoconservation
- The government doesn’t care about geoconservation
- Professor Chen is the father of the Geopark in China, which began before the Global Geopark Network was created in 2004
- Traditional approach: don’t tell people that way no one will go there (geoheritage sites) and that will minimize the damage
- We want to promote awareness
- If people are interested and care, they will help with the conservation
- Geoheritage in Hong Kong scored a 93 out of 100 when geologists came to analyze the geology of Hong Kong
- We purposely put [the Geoparks] in with the Country Parks to avoid opposition from the people about land use
- Local communities involvement is very important
- Anti-graffiti programs
- In the past, most of the study and publications on Hong Kong geology has been conducted and documented in English; we are trying to promote geoconservation in a simple way that the common Hong Kong citizen can understand
- We have established Geoheritage Centers in different areas of the Geopark
- Involving the local people makes it more sustainable
- We employ the local community to be the tour guides to provide tours to the visitors
- We have trained the local fisherman to be the boat operators and trained them to be tour guides
- Managing the different stakeholders is very difficult – as can be seen by the demonstration on Tung Ping Chau
- The village heads on Tung Ping Chau have changed and there are conflicts of the village heads
- In Hong Kong, one of the major issues is that people just look at the very short term return; they want to turn them into small villas which is why they need water and electricity
- The geopark is very new so we are trying to figure out how to manage it
- In Hong Kong, it takes a very long time to set an ordinance
- We don’t really want a geopark ordinance. What about the other rocks in Hong Kong? We hope to establish a geoheritage ordinance
- We have a lot of work to do specifically with the management part and especially the educational aspects
- We originally sought to be part of the GGN because it has high standards for us to aim for
- 230 islands in Hong Kong
- I think this is good because there is a combination of good timing, government realization of the opportunity, and international recognition
APPENDIX D.4: PROFESSOR PETER HILLS – POLICY EXPERT FROM THE KADOORIE INSTITUTE

- I think what Hong Kong illustrates, even though you assume there will be enormous pressure, nature is very resilient and adaptable
- I think that ecotourism is a fascinating concept
- I suppose one of the guiding principles of ecotourism is that it is minimal impact, particularly in terms of the environment and it often goes in hand when it is government initiated with some sort of educational knowledge exchange
- You have got to somehow close the gap between what people say there values are and how they behave because they don’t usually match up
- Two-thirds of the visitors who come to Hong Kong come from Mainland China
- The Hong Kong government is very reactive but they are not proactive
- Inefficiency – tends to create more stakeholder groups who then gain some sort of legitimacy
- Building columbarium to make a large profit – it’s a good idea for those that are building however it is causing a lot of dispute
- Electricity is a private sector involvement in Hong Kong; there is no government involvement in power
- The Hong Kong government is a labyrinth
- The government recognizes that sustainability is important and should be guiding for development in the future but struggles to reconcile that with economic priorities
- One problem that we do have is that the current chief executive doesn’t care about the environment
- He remains very suspicious of the motives of people who, in his view, oversell the environment as an issue as a problem
- There are institutional barriers such as Guangdong but even those can be addressed
- Anything to do with land is ultra-sensitive
- This city is about money; it is about making money, it is about spending money
APPENDIX D.5: ANDY LEUNG – MARKETING FOR THE WORLD WIDE FUND FOR NATURE HONG KONG

- I believe that [WWF Hong Kong] is the #1 conservation organization in Hong Kong
- We have ecotourism on the weekends and on public holidays when we provide tours for the public
- Education is the largest portion of ecotourism that we have
- We also discuss and learn about heritage
- We also do drama style tours where the visitors go to the workers houses and see what it is like to be a fisherman
- I have been to Tung Ping Chau several times; some days in the summer, there are over 2,000 people on the island
- There is no capacity on the island
- If there are too many people, it can lead to severe damage
- The WWF works with the government on restricting the visitors who can enter the Mai Po Nature Reserve
- In terms of ecotourism, Hong Kong has potential
- In terms of sustainability, we need some policies to control, measure, and enforce sustainability
APPENDIX D.6: DENISE TANG – GEOTEchnICAL ENGINEER, HONG KONG GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

- The Geopark was actually done by the AFCD, but the HKGS consulted in the project, especially with matters relating to the geology
  - HKGS also helped with document preparations, especially when applying to UNESCO for global status
  - HKGS also helped with the informational panels that are placed along the hiking trail
- Original ambition was to be a Global Geopark
- Sites were chosen that were SSSI (Sites of Special Scientific Interest)
- The geopark development is trying to link up these SSSI sites together
- HKGS is in charge of geological education
  - Teacher training
  - Field trip coordination
- I see geotourism as leisure, so field trips and educational trips wouldn’t really count
- Use to go to the island as an undergrad (before Marine Park, about 1996/1997) and the island was peaceful and quiet; has noticed a significant increase in visitors and in the graffiti, etc.
- She said that she loves to see people go outdoors and enjoy the natural geology that Hong Kong has to offer, but that there needs to be restrictions about the number of people that can be on the island each day
- HKGS had some reservations at first about the geopark because it will attract more people which is nice but they don’t think proper measures are being taken for the protection of the environment; the AFCD needs to do something
- Denise has been to US National Parks and said that the conservation side is much better than in Hong Kong and the awareness of the visitors seems better
- She thinks there is definitely room for improvement in terms of conservation in Hong Kong; there needs to be a better method or records kept to track the effects that the tourists are having on the environment
- From 1996/1997, there have been major infrastructure improvements on the island. Now there are paved paths, signs and toilets. There weren’t back in the 90s
- Part of the development is good; it is getting people outside
  - More people are learning about Hong Kong’s geology which is good, but many still don’t realize the scientific importance
  - I think we should encourage people to go there but that there should be a limiting number
- She was not sure who should be cleaning up the abandoned buildings because she believes that they are not government owned but she said that the geopark should still take responsibility since they are representing the whole island
- Management problem for AFCD/Lands Department about what to do when there is privately owned places inside government owned areas
- Lots of problems with the system; government trying to control but they can’t… especially in remote places because they can’t watch them 24/7
- Believes that a compromise (in terms of land use anyways) between the government and the people will never be met because there is always clashes over land use since land is so precious in Hong Kong
- “I think there are lots of issues and room for improvement. Hong Kong people don’t really understand the concepts of enjoying the outdoors. Being quiet, not disturbing others, this happens in the US National Park systems but it is not in the knowledge of the visitors visiting the Hong Kong geopark system.”
- there needs to be more emphasize on how to interact (be responsible) with the environment. I think there is lots of room for improvement in Hong Kong
- I think we could have a better outcome if we try and tell them that being part of ecotourisms that they have to responsible to the environment and try to protect it.
  - Try to keep down your voice
  - not scratch on the rocks, etc.
- “I think involving local villagers could be helpful, but not sure it can be done in Hong Kong.”
- Education is the first key thing to address
- another very important issue will be the land clashing
APPENDIX D.7: LEWIS CHEUNG – GEOPARK GUIDE AND PHD IN ECOTOURISM

- The Geopark guide system is not associated with the government
- The chair of the group that runs the Geopark guide system is a friend of Lewis’s
- The group began to train in 2003
  - Criteria: some prior training in ecotourism, B.S. in one of the sciences
  - Interview process, probationary period
- Whole system is a collaboration between AFCD, AGHK, UHK, CUHK
- Tourism Industry Council
- As the Geopark guide system, guides provide local ecotour services that are aimed to set a standard for well-based tourguide system (on par with Australia’s system ideally) in Hong Kong
  - Ecotourism.org.au
- The option to choose non-accredited guides is obviously still there (and cheaper)
- Most popular destination in Hong Kong
- After designation of Marine Park, many more tourists
- Even more after Geopark designation
- Most secondary school students will visit Tung Ping Chau as part of their geography class
- Human impact on TPC is apparent
  - Rubbish
  - Local tour guides use loudspeakers
  - Scuba might be killing coral
  - Lots of snorkeling in the summer
  - Fossils being dug from their origins
- Management
  - Regulated by country, marine park ordinance
  - Very valuable – land & sea
  - Geopark stands atop both ordinances, but neither maintains any regulations about geological preservation
  - No new legislation
- ‘project group’ as part of his own research will hopefully result in recommendations for legislation to come soon for the Geopark – an ordinance of sorts
- Hard to take care of the trash because most comes from the sea, much from mainland, and people do their best, but cannot handle it all
- Tourist mentality is different – not clean-up oriented like in Australia, people come to relax not to actively conserve
- There is an organization that wants higher level tourism – ecotravel.hk
  - Government subsidizes 900 tours per year
  - Uses 3 NGOs and accredited tour guides
  - Tours take place in Tolo Harbor and Sai Kun
  - Primarily aimed toward environmental education rather than ecotourism
- Mainland china says that it focuses on ecotourism but main focus is honestly the economic benefits of tourism industry
- Can the concept of sustainable development apply to tourism effectively?
  - Depends on the context/countries involved
  - Really hard to accomplish with 100% satisfaction
  - Conveniently: Geopark priority is not economic gains
    - Geological conservation
    - Education
    - Use geological resources for sustainable development
- Goal is honestly conservation, sustainable development
  - Used lots of resources to promote it
  - Subsidizing for education
Still lacking academic research on the Geopark

- There will always be objections by stakeholders
  - In Sai Kung, there was some government support for fishermen to become geotour guides to make up for taking away their livelihood
- Land use – country park changed land use rights if anything – NOT the Geopark
  - How was TPC designated the Country park – find what land was designated and when. (use legislative notes and maps of boundaries of private land)
- If it wasn’t practical to provide electricity and water when there were 2,000+ people living on the island, why would they provide electricity and water now? Very expensive development - may even go against the ordinances of the parks
- Also suggested determining a carrying capacity for the geopark – there is no limit to the numbers of people (but perhaps to the numbers of cars that can fit)
- There is no urgency to set a capacity on TPC either because it is so remote
- In the development of the Geopark, it was convenient to use the UNESCO system to enforce management, rather than develop new legislation right away, because it would take so long to implement
  - New legislation is probably in the works
- Country park for tourism?
  - Directly for conservation efforts
  - Under British system – recreation, conservation, education, freshwater resources
- Geocoronservationists: DO NOT DEVELOP FOR COMMERCIAL INTEREST
- Hoi Ha marine park does have a ranger post
- There is desire for active management regulations
- Lewis pov on eot: local community should receive some economic benefit, the geopark is in mostly remote areas, land rights are sticky
- TPC is a hot destination – check out ecotours by travel agencies
- Is it in the gov’t’s interest to compromise with locals?
- People should not develop 5* hotels on TPC
- The community there should be satisfied with what they have and not be frustrated that the gov’t isn’t providing what they have never provided before
- The people should be allowed to rebuild their own buildings (even up to 3 stories? But the gov’t probably won’t support subsidizing construction and it’ll be really expensive)
- Succession of cities/development
  - TPC’s succession past its original death in the 80’s would not have occurred unless the Country park, Marine Park, and Geopark were developed
  - Development is probably as extensive right as it can get – tourists don’t want to see massive development either
- The idea of ecotourism development is a good thing
  - Little $ goes to the locals, generate employment
  - Conservation aspect is good for the environment
  - The tourist resource shouldn’t be the geopark as much as the ecology of the area should be.
- HK GOVT ideas when devising the geopark (probs)
  - Tourists see HK as a shopping/eating place
  - Ecotourism development could supplement the tourism experience
    - People might extend their stay by a day or two (spending more money to remain in the process) in order to participate in ecotourism
    - The ecological resources in HK really can attract people like other beautiful places – Kenya, Malaysia
APPENDIX D.8: ANONYMOUS A – PART-TIME GEOPARK GUIDE

1) How did you get involved with the Hong Kong Global Geopark?
I like hiking/appreciation of the natural environment since 1998. During this period, I went hiking to those areas weekly. HK National Geopark was opened in 2009 Nov. I applied the Geotour class in 2010 March. Afterwards, the “R2G” scheme was available for those Geotour class graduate to apply. Thus, I applied the R2G assessment/interview and successfully get the R2G qualification.

2) What else do you do for employment besides a Geopark Tour Guide?
I have a permanent job; the job title is “Logistics Specialist” of an American company.

3) What are your feelings towards the Geopark?
Hong Kong has 24 country parks & 4 marine parks. The total area of country parks is equal to 40% of our land. Comparing with other cities in the world, the conservative standard is over than average. We have full and complete laws and ordinance to protect these areas. HK Geopark is protected by Country & Marine Park Ordinance. Therefore the visitors can enjoy the natural scenery under the rules and regulations. For personal feelings; our Geopark has world class’ natural landscape. Parts of them are natural heritage since we can see a big eruption of a Cretaceous caldera, huge hexagonal rock columns etc…

4) If your position as a Tour Guide a volunteer position or a paid position? If paid, who pays you?
Paid. I am a part time guide of Earth Favorer (www.earthfavorer.com). I also have an experience; an organization sent a guide invitation at my R2G email, the organization paid the fee to me after the event. I represented myself for that trip.

5) How frequently do you give tours?
Can’t give you an exact data. I leded 4 trips in Dec 2011. Generally more than 1 trip per month.

6) Do you give tours in one specific area of the Geopark or do you rotate throughout the different locations/along different trails?
Mainly Sai Kung; routes depends on the organization’s guidance or special request by customers.

7) Do you monitor the actions of the visitors on your tours? (i.e. littering, graffiti, etc.)
Generally; the participants of ecotour are well educated and disciplined. Before the trip (on the boat), I explained the rules/codes to my tour participants. I never experience that my participants commit littering/graffiti in front of me. Even they do so, this breaks the law of country park/marine park.

8) Have you noticed diversity in the visitors on your tours? (i.e. coming from different countries, speaking different languages, etc.)
I mainly lead Cantonese tour (participants are Hong Kong local residents). I also have leading foreigners tour; English is the medium of communication during the tour. For Cantonese tour, there may have opportunity for 1-2 of non-Cantonese speaking guest’s participation. I do use English to describe the special terms after the main interpretation.

9) What type of training did you have to go through to become a Geopark tour guide?
There were workshops by AGHK, or self-study; to borrow the books from R2G Secretary. (Please refer to Q.1 for supplementary information)

10) What do you talk about during your tours? Would you be able to give us a basic overview of that?
Interpret the story of the geological formation, educate/share the experience of natural conservation, history of fishing village…

11) Do you find that visitors often ask questions? If so, what types of questions are the most frequent?
How the hexagonal rock columns formed…. How’s the Devil’s fist formation progress… etc
APPENDIX D.9: ANONYMOUS B- PART-TIME GEOPARK GUIDE

- The interviewee is a high school teacher working as a part-time geopark guide over the weekends. He takes tours approximately once a month. As a high school teacher, the interviewee teaches geology and the geology of Tung Ping Chau, so he has been frequently visiting Tung Ping Chau.
- R2G is a group of people who are interested in ecotourism, especially geology.
- There are totally more than 40 geopark guides, less than 10 of which are full-time guides.
- Geopark guides are valued more on their attitude than their knowledge.
- Each Geopark tour group is composed of only 10-20 tourists to reduce disturbance to the nature.
- Geotourism has a very small market due to the fact that geotours are more expensive than mass package tours that most people prefer, which results in the fact that it’s hard to a full-time geopark guide to make a living.
- Geopark’s impacts on Tung Ping Chau: good work on conservation; good amount of construction (only 2 fancy toilets); Government banned development plans of local villagers who wanted to build more hostels, food stores and other buildings. Some of the current stores are illegal. So villagers complain about government conserving on the nature but no on the local benefits on Tung Ping Chau.
- “There should be a balance between nature conversation and local benefits.
  o Ex. Visitors’ center at Sai Kong creates employment for local community
- Negative impacts on Tung Ping Chau due to tourists: small tours under travel agencies are irresponsible: tourists climb on towers, leave graffiti, destruction of geology due to frequent walking (Long-term damage!!)
- TPC is good for dive in winter. Due to the small amount of divers, the coral ecology is healthy.
- Geopark can be classified as ecotourism because,
  o Involves with local community, especially local culture, ex. Using local materials to build houses?
  o Tried to train local people to become tour guides, but failed due to their low level of education. Especially for TPC, it’s too remote to manage.
- Ecotourism development in HK: not enough to develop into the industry since people prefer free visiting of the parks than charged tour guides. However, free ecotourism where tourists are guided by books and notice boards could also work. Also, people don’t like hiking/walking around too much.
- Land issues in Hong Kong: Ma Shi Chau where disabuse of land use happened when land owners turned the park into commercial grave yards.
APPENDIX D.10: REPRESENTATIVE FOR THE HONG KONG GLOBAL GEOPARK OF CHINA

(1) Concerning Development:
A Geopark serves to conserve the unique landforms and landscapes in Hong Kong, through protecting the landform environment that provides natural habitat to many living things. Such an integrated conservation strategy is also a global trend. Therefore, we are establishing the geopark to promote landform and rock conservation.

The idea of establishing a geopark in Hong Kong emerged as early as in 2007. Hong Kong National Geopark was officially opened on 3 November 2009. Since then, we have been actively implementing management plans, and strengthening education, publicity and promotion in order to share the natural resources with the public and raise awareness of the need to preserve them.

Hong Kong’s application to Global Geoparks Network (GGN) supported by UNESCO was submitted through the Central People’s Government in December 2010. After the desktop review of our application, two assessors from GGN had been sent to conduct a field assessment in Hong Kong. Hong Kong Geopark has been accepted as a member of the Global Geoparks Network in September 2011.

Unlike other conservation initiatives, A Global Geopark is not only an area with a particular geological heritage of international significance, it is also with a sustainable development strategy involving local communities. The primary promotional focus of a Global Geopark is its geological heritage, but it is also essential that all other aspects of the area’s natural and cultural heritage are promoted in the context of their links to the area’s geological heritage.

One of the major challenges of developing a geopark is to promote this new concept of nature conservation. Global Geoparks should represent quality in everything they do including conservation, tourism, education, interpretation, development. The specified processes of evaluation and revalidation help ensure the maximum level of quality in our Geoparks. The status of each Geopark, of its management and performance, shall be subject to a periodical review within 4 years. We would continue to manage, operate and develop Hong Kong Geopark in accordance to the guidelines from GGN.

(2) Concerning the objects of the destinations:
Consultations on the Hong Kong Geopark project have been conducted with the Legislative Council, the Country and Marine Parks Board, Advisory Council on the Environment, various District Councils, rural committees and environmental groups. As part of department policy, the AFCD engages local communities in designing new facilities. The local communities played a significant role in trail alignment, content selection and material selection.

(3) Concerning Management:
Quality tour guides are essential to provide worthwhile tours for visitors. In Hong Kong, there are currently over 5,000 tourist guides, but the number of guides for geotours, or even nature tours, are still limited. To ensure high quality guided services are available to visitors, the Association for Geoconservation, Hong Kong took the initiative to set up the Recommended Geopark Guide (R2G) system, which ensures that guides can be qualified only after assessment of their caliber, in terms of education, experience, conservation notions, knowledge, language ability, professional ethics, risk cognition and management, skills, physical condition and personality.

To further enhance the R2G system and to provide appropriate recognition to geopark guides, a Geopark Guide Accreditation System has been established by the Travel Industry Council Hong Kong (TIC). Geopark guides accredited by the TIC are called Accredited Geopark Guides (A2Gs). Candidates who wish to be an A2G must undergo assessment by examination, compulsory training, continuous education and accruable guided experience, and will be reassessed once every three years. More information about R2G and A2G are available at http:\:\www.hkr2g.net.

In parallel with the existing management structure of the AFCD, a Geopark Division was set up in April 2010 to develop strategies and take the lead on geopark related duties. The division currently has twelve staff and it is responsible for developing strategies and carrying them out in the following areas in relation to the geopark: conservation planning, science popularization, production of publications, and visitor services and facilities. It is also responsible for tasks new to the protected areas in Hong Kong, such as networking with other geoparks, partnering with local communities, conducting scientific research, and knowledge building.

(4) Concerning Experience:
Instead of just attracting people to Hong Kong Geopark to watch rocks and appreciate unique landforms, we aim at leading visitors to understand rocks, aware of geo-conservation and protect the environment.

(5) Concerning Changes in Park Designation:
Hong Kong Geopark is situated inside existing country and marine parks. As such, it is protected by the existing Country Parks Ordinance, Marine Parks Ordinance and other ordinances related to nature conservation. No additional legislation is required to enact for the establishment of Hong Kong Geopark.