

Sustainable Tourism Development in Can Gio District, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam: Challenges and Opportunities

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Abstract: Can Gio is a district of Ho Chi Minh City that holds considerable potential for tourism development, owing to its extensive coastline, internationally recognized natural landscapes, and a rich collection of cultural and historical relics. These distinctive assets provide Can Gio with a strong foundation to emerge as a leading destination for tourism and resort development in the region. This article, *Sustainable Tourism Development in Can Gio District, Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam*, aims to elucidate key issues concerning the sustainable development of tourism in Can Gio. It examines both the achievements and ongoing challenges faced in the development process, while drawing on relevant experiences from other countries in the region. Based on this analysis, the article offers a set of strategic recommendations to support the advancement of sustainable tourism in Can Gio today.

Keywords: Can Gio, development, sustainable tourism, Ho Chi Minh City

INTRODUCTION

Vietnam's tourism development strategy has emphasized that sustainable tourism must be closely associated with the preservation and promotion of national cultural values, the protection of natural landscapes and the environment, and the safeguarding of national defense, security, and social order. This integrated approach forms the foundation for establishing tourism as a key economic sector, to transform Vietnam into a country with a developed tourism industry by 2030. In recent years, sustainable tourism has attracted growing attention from both tourists and tourism operators. As a nation rich in cultural heritage and natural landscapes, Vietnam has increasingly recognized the importance of sustainable tourism development. Given the sector's reliance on environmental resources, it is essential to implement practices that minimize ecological impact, support biodiversity conservation, utilize renewable energy, and promote both natural and cultural heritage. The development of environmentally friendly tourism products is therefore regarded as a necessary and timely direction in the current context. Can Gio is a coastal district whose history is deeply intertwined with the 300-year development of Saigon – Ho Chi Minh City. Known as the land of *Rung Sac* (Sac Forest), it was one of the earliest settlement areas for Vietnamese pioneers during the southward expansion. Can Gio has witnessed several significant historical events: it was the site where Emperor Gia Long was defeated by Tay Son forces at That Ky Giang during his retreat; it marked the location of the first French warship's invasion of southern Vietnam; it served as a base for *Binh Tay Dai Nguyen Soai Truong Dinh*. In the renovation era, Can Gio has been designated as a strategic area with multiple functions: "to protect the southeastern gateway of Ho Chi Minh City and the international maritime route to Saigon Port; to supply exports, food, fuel, and raw materials for the city; and to serve as a region with a fresh climate, natural environment, and unique landscapes, integrated with the historical tradition of the *Rung Sac* base thereby contributing to the enrichment of the city's and the nation's tourism network" (Can Gio District Party Executive Committee, 2014, p. 279). This raises the central question of how to develop tourism in Can Gio in a truly sustainable manner transforming it into a destination that honors its historical legacy while promoting marine conservation, eco-tourism, heritage tourism, and traditional craft villages, all while ensuring social welfare for local communities. Doing so would support the construction of a fast-growing, green, clean, and modern Can Gio. It is therefore essential and timely to conduct research that clearly defines the concept of sustainable tourism development, provides an objective assessment of Can Gio's progress in this field, and proposes practical, strategic solutions to guide its sustainable tourism development in the years ahead.

Research Methodology

Research on sustainable tourism development is an increasingly relevant direction that has attracted the attention of many scholars in the current context. Studies on sustainable tourism have been conducted from various perspectives, primarily in the fields of economics, cultural studies, and sociology. This article is based on a direct review of previous relevant works and the practical resolution of issues related to national rights in Vietnam in the early 20th century. In conducting this study, the author applies the dialectical materialist methodology, emphasizing a concrete and comprehensive historical perspective. A systems approach is employed alongside the inheritance of findings from previous research to refine the theoretical and evaluative foundations. Additionally, the author integrates various interdisciplinary methods commonly used in social science research, such as analysis and synthesis, historical and logical methods, as well as statistical and comparative methods, to fulfill the research tasks and achieve the proposed objectives.

Research Content And Discussion

Sustainable tourism development and emerging issues in Can Gio's sustainable tourism

Since the end of World War II, global tourism has experienced rapid growth, with an average annual increase of 6.93% in tourist arrivals and 11.8% in revenue, becoming one of the world's most important economic sectors. In Vietnam, according to a March 2016 report by the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), tourism contributed 6.6% to the country's GDP, ranking 40th out of 184 countries in terms of direct contribution to GDP and 55th in total contribution. Specifically, tourism's combined direct, indirect, and induced contributions (including public investment) reached VND 584.884 trillion, equivalent to 13.9% of tourism-related GDP, and generated over 6.3 million jobs (direct and indirect) (Vietnam National Administration of Tourism, 2013). Vietnam's Tourism Development Strategy to 2020 with Vision to 2030 set the goal: "By 2020, tourism will have fundamentally become a key economic sector with professionalism, relatively modern and synchronous infrastructure, high-quality and diverse tourism products with nationally branded identity, capable of competing with countries in the region and the world. By 2030, Vietnam aims to become a country with a developed tourism industry" (Prime Minister of Vietnam, 2013). However, in addition to these positive contributions, tourism also presents several limitations, such as environmental pollution, public order and safety issues, and challenges in preserving heritage. These concerns have been widely discussed in the agendas of many countries around the world. Therefore, it is essential to develop tourism models that are not only efficient but also address these shortcomings and orient towards sustainability. The concept of sustainable development emerged from the environmental protection movement in the early 1970s. Since its inception, the term "sustainable development" has sparked a new wave of discourse in the scientific community. Economic pressures have led to unsustainable growth patterns even within the "smokeless industry" of tourism. As a result, studies evaluating sustainable tourism development have drawn increasing scholarly attention. Sustainable tourism is defined by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) as: Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems. Alternatively, it can be understood as: "Sustainable tourism is a form of tourism that meets the needs of current tourists, the tourism industry, and host communities without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is economically viable but does not destroy the resources on which the future of tourism depends, especially the natural environment and the social structure of local communities" (Antonio, 2003). According to Vietnam's Law on Tourism (2006), "Sustainable tourism is tourism development that meets current needs without compromising the ability to meet the tourism needs of future generations" (National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2006). Thus, sustainable tourism development must achieve the following core objectives: Contribute to environmental and landscape protection; Foster continuous economic growth and development; Ensure social equity; Avoid infringing upon the multifaceted interests of both present and future generations; Lay the foundation for comprehensive social development. Accordingly, sustainable tourism development involves the managed

exploitation of natural and cultural values to satisfy the diverse needs of tourists. This type of tourism development must consider economic benefits while also ensuring contributions to the conservation and enhancement of resource values. Can Gio is the only coastal district of Ho Chi Minh City, located in the southeast, about 50 kilometers from the city center by road. It resembles an isolated island, surrounded on all sides by rivers and the sea: to the north, it is separated from Nha Be District by the Soài Rạp River; to the south, it borders the East Sea; to the west, it is separated from Can Gioc and Can Duoc districts of Long An Province and Go Cong Dong District of Tien Giang Province by the Soài Rạp River; to the northeast, it is separated from Nhơn Trạch District of Đồng Nai Province by the Lòng Tàu River; and to the southeast, it borders Phu My Town of Ba Ria – Vung Tau Province, with the Thị Vải River as the boundary. With its geographical location and historical development, Can Gio has identified tourism as a key driver of its socio-economic development. Along with the formation of communities primarily dependent on fishing and the exploitation of natural resources through agricultural, forestry, and salt-making activities, the cultural and spiritual life of the local people has become increasingly rich and diverse. Their traditions are both distinctive and deeply rooted in national identity. A prominent example is the annual Nghinh Ông Festival, held on the full moon of the eighth lunar month, which honors the Whale God, as well as traditional rituals of worshiping the God of Agriculture and paying tribute to those who made contributions to the village and the nation. These festivals are accompanied by a variety of cultural and artistic activities such as folk music, poetry, and chanting, which reflect strong elements of traditional folklore. The Can Gio Mangrove Biosphere Reserve has been recognized by UNESCO as a World Biosphere Reserve. The Rừng Sác Revolutionary Base was designated as a national historical site in 2004. In 2013, the Traditional Fishermen's Festival of Can Gio was listed by the Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism as a national intangible cultural heritage. The district also features traditional craft villages, including salt-making, aquaculture models, swiftlet farming, and fruit orchards. According to the Master Plan for Vietnam's Tourism Development to 2020 with Vision to 2030, Can Gio is identified as a key tourism development area of the country (Prime Minister of Vietnam, 2013). In 2017, Ho Chi Minh City's tourism sector experienced strong growth and achieved significant results. In 2018, the city continued its efforts to become a smart tourism city, applying information technology to tourism management and developing intelligent software for tourists. The city's tourism industry also aimed to continuously renew traditional tourism products and explore new potentials to develop appealing offerings for visitors. Strengthening tourism development and considering it a strategic advantage has become a key directive. The city has set out to develop Can Gio into an ecological tourism destination featuring diverse flora and fauna, rich cultural and historical heritage, and a balanced natural environment. This direction is intended to enhance the district's appeal to visitors and contribute significantly to the overall development of Ho Chi Minh City's tourism sector (People's Committee of Can Gio District, 2005).

Achievements and Challenges in the Sustainable Tourism Development of Can Gio

In alignment with the orientation of developing tourism in a sustainable manner preserving national cultural identity, protecting the environment, maintaining ecological balance, and ensuring public order and social safety Can Gio has made significant progress. The local government has promoted the socialization of tourism, raised community awareness, and mobilized resources for tourism investment. Efforts have been made to improve the quality and diversity of tourism products and services and to create distinctive, competitive offerings that appeal to tourists. The goal is to enhance the reputation of Can Gio's ecotourism not only within Ho Chi Minh City and across the country but also internationally. The aim is to gradually transform Can Gio from a simple stopover into a unique, attractive, and hospitable destination. Simultaneously, there is a vision to develop Can Gio into an ecotourism hub with rich biodiversity and cultural heritage balancing ecological preservation with tourism appeal, and contributing significantly to the city's tourism sector. Tourism is expected to serve as a tool to improve the material living standards of local residents, create jobs, and attract labor to participate in environmental protection, afforestation, aquaculture, and tourism services. Accordingly, the city and district authorities have issued numerous strategic policies for planning and developing this region. To unlock the potential of Can Gio, the Ecotourism Development Master Plan for 2020, approved by the Ho Chi Minh City People's

Committee, outlines the district's ecotourism development across three main functional zones: Coastal Ecotourism Zone: This is the primary tourism area related to the sea, focusing on leisure, relaxation, conferences, beach activities, water sports, shopping, and entertainment. It also serves as the logistical base for the entire region. The zone is located along the coastal areas of Can Thanh – Long Hòa and includes Thạnh An island commune and Giồng Chua hill. It benefits from favorable terrain and relatively complete infrastructure, making it suitable for tourism infrastructure development and easy access for tourists via both land and waterways. Can Thach Ecotourism Site: Located in Can Thach town, this site boasts a concentration of unique cultural and religious relics. Long Hòa Ecotourism Site: In addition to major sites like the Can Gio Biosphere Park and the 30/4 Beach, Long Hòa also features archaeological sites, traditional communal houses, villages, and local fruit orchards. Thanh An Island and Gong Chua Hill: These sites are ideal for beach holidays, outdoor recreation, fishing, boating, kite flying, hiking, and visiting historical monuments. In recent years, cultural and religious tourism has been a focus for investment and improvement. Notably, Can Gio has progressively upgraded its Traditional Fishermen's Festival, which now attracts approximately 50,000 visitors annually. Forest Ecotourism Zone (42,000 hectares): This zone spans the communes of Long Hoa, An Thoi Dong, and Ly Nhon. The mangrove forest is the core ecotourism feature of Can Gio, offering nearly all-natural elements in a pristine, unspoiled setting. Major ecotourism sites in this zone include: Can Gio Biosphere Park (514 ha) in Long Hoa commune; Rung Sac Ecotourism Site in Long Hoa commune; Đông Bắc Cầu Dền Xây Ecotourism Area (50 ha) in An Thoi Dong commune; Vam Sat Ecotourism Area (500 ha) in Ly Nhon commune; An Binh Ecotourism Area (200 ha) in An Thoi Dong commune; Each year, the Rung Sac historical site alone attracts approximately 123,000 visitors. Agricultural Ecotourism Zone (28,710 hectares): Located across the communes of Binh Khanh, An Thoi Dong, Tam Thon Hiep, and Ly Nhon, this zone combines relaxation with educational and research experiences, including aquaculture models, aquatic species breeding methods, forest product processing, and exploration of religious and cultural traditions. Key sites include: Cholimex Farm Ecotourism Area; Duyen Hai – Go Vap Farm Ecotourism Site; Riverside Resorts along the Long Tau River; Ecotourism Sites along the Soai Rap River In practice, Can Gio has steadily affirmed its development in the right direction. Tourism revenue has continuously increased. In 2016, the number of tourists to Can Gio rose by more than 53.5% compared to 2015 and exceeded the planned target by 22%, reaching over 1 million visitors. Tourism revenue in 2016 reached over 400 billion VND, a 53% increase from the previous year (Thuan Hai, 2017). In 2020, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, Can Gio welcomed approximately 1.6 million visitors, a decrease of 37.7% compared to 2019 (Phuong, 2021). As such, the Can Gio District People's Committee has expressed its desire to receive technical and professional support from the Ho Chi Minh City Department of Tourism and other relevant city agencies, aiming to gradually establish Can Gio as a top tourist destination in both the city and the country. It is noteworthy that visitors to Can Gio not only come for sightseeing and relaxation but also for scientific research, conferences, and more. Foreign tourists account for about 10%, primarily from Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, the United States, and Germany. Over the past five years, the average annual growth rate in tourist arrivals has reached 15.94%, surpassing the original target (10–15%). In recent years, the district has placed great emphasis on maintaining public order, providing rescue services, and ensuring environmental hygiene meeting the "green and clean" standards at tourist sites and routes. This has created a sense of safety, friendliness, and peace of mind for visitors. Tourism businesses and service providers have also improved both the quality of their products and their customer service. Investments in infrastructure (roads, electricity, telecommunications, etc.) have increasingly met the needs of tourism development. In addition to the aforementioned achievements, the development of tourism in Can Gio still faces numerous difficulties and challenges: The slow implementation of the district's master plan, socio-economic development plans, and sector-specific plans has hindered the rollout of tourism investment and service development projects. While Can Gio has great potential in forest and marine resources, these advantages remain largely untapped. One of the main reasons is the lack of a dedicated pier, making it impossible for waterway vehicles to dock, and thus hindering the exploitation of river-based tourism routes. The success and sustainability of the tourism model in Can Gio heavily depend on the local community. For community-based tourism to thrive, it requires the active participation of all

stakeholders. However, in reality, this participation remains limited in Can Gio. There are many historical relics, archaeological sites, and religious and spiritual facilities, but these have not been effectively utilized to serve tourists. For example, sites like the Giong Ca Vo archaeological site, temples, shrines, and especially the Traditional Fishermen's Festival of Can Gio held annually during the Mid-Autumn Festival have yet to receive adequate investment to become major tourist attractions. The preservation and restoration of cultural heritage, including traditional heritage, have not been given sufficient attention. With the current pace of development and the process of industrialization and urbanization, this is one of the most concerning issues and the most vulnerable aspect in ensuring the sustainable development of tourism in Can Gio. Alongside economic and tourism development, Can Gio has become increasingly polluted in recent years due to waste from rivers washing ashore and the growing negative human impacts on the peninsula. Located at the mouth of two major rivers the Lông Tàu and Soai Rap Can Gio has essentially become a "waste collector" for these rivers, while the steadily rising number of visitors has significantly affected the environment of this UNESCO-recognized biosphere reserve. Various types of waste, including household and marine debris, have accumulated along the wave-breaking embankments in Can Thach commune. This is a pressing concern that threatens the sustainable development of Can Gio (Mai, 2002). A study evaluating the sustainable development of the community-based tourism model in Can Gio, aimed at identifying unsustainable aspects and proposing improvement solutions, has drawn several conclusions: First, the tourism model in Can Gio is a relatively successful model with a high potential for sustainability, though it does not fully meet all sustainability criteria. In the development of Can Gio tourism, it can be said that economic and socio-cultural factors have achieved a potential level of sustainability, and efforts to improve sustainability are being considered both in the short and long term. Second, some elements still fall short of sustainability requirements, such as the economic contribution to the preservation of human heritage and the risk of losing or neglecting authentic cultural values, which are often overshadowed by short-term economic interests—making these aspects less sustainable in the long run. Third, building on the achievements and addressing the shortcomings in the pursuit of sustainable tourism development in Can Gio requires a multidimensional perspective and the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders.

Lessons learned from sustainable tourism development in some regional countries and orientation solutions for sustainable tourism development in Can Gio today

Assessing the current situation and recognizing the difficulties and challenges facing Can Gio allows us to conclude that Can Gio is not an isolated case. Globally, as countries undergo industrialization, modernization, and urbanization inevitable trends in national development they also encounter similar problems. The experiences of other countries in the region regarding sustainable tourism development offer practical models that Can Gio can consider. These lessons show that sustainable tourism development does not have to be an obstacle to industrialization and urbanization, nor does economic growth have to come at the expense of nature conservation and the preservation of traditional cultural values. In Myanmar, the government clearly identifies which cultural heritages should be preserved statically or dynamically. For example, in the city of Bagan, where over 2,000 Buddhist temples and stupas remain, static conservation is implemented. This means the structures are preserved in their original condition, with residents relocated away from the temple preservation zones. These religious structures are maintained as they were built between the 9th and 13th centuries, and the surrounding environment including trees and landscape is also preserved intact. Foreign tourists must purchase tickets to enter Bagan, much like visiting a museum (Minh Thai). In contrast, in other cities, cultural sites such as temples and stupas are maintained through dynamic conservation: the local people voluntarily invest time and resources in restoring, maintaining, and overseeing these heritage sites. In South Korea, the government has developed a legal framework for sustainable tourism development that emphasizes the preservation of traditional cultural heritage such as ancient villages and architecture. Every year, projects are carried out to conserve and restore these cultural assets. However, before government funding is granted for conservation, research studies and workshops are conducted to address the central question: "How can heritage preservation and tourism development align for sustainable tourism?" (Vinh, 2013). In Japan, sustainable tourism development is highly valued and receives significant attention from both the

government and local communities. Before any cultural site is designated for preservation, the government supports surveys and research, followed by the formulation of restoration plans. Throughout the entire process from investigation to implementation the participation of local residents is crucial, and their consensus plays a decisive role in the quality of heritage preservation. Lessons from neighboring countries such as Thailand and Malaysia show that conservation should not be a closed or static effort, but rather a living/dynamic process. This means ensuring that local people the custodians of cultural heritage remain actively involved in conservation. This approach helps preserve both the physical heritage and the traditional lifestyles of the local communities. In Thailand and Malaysia, many mountain villages have developed sustainable livelihoods through farming, commercial activities, and home-garden models while maintaining traditional cultural values such as architecture, clothing, cuisine, festivals, and customs. These villages are integrated into community tourism, homestay programs, and experiential tourism initiatives. Based on an evaluation of Can Gio's achievements and challenges in sustainable tourism development along with the valuable lessons learned from neighboring countries the following solutions are proposed to promote sustainable tourism development linked with ecological conservation and the preservation of traditional culture in Can Gio under current conditions: *First, there needs to be appropriate mechanisms and policies that promote the proactive and positive role of the tourism sector in coordinating tourism development in Can Gio.* Research on the current situation allows us to conclude that the tourism sector in Can Gio is still in its infancy. Although the district has applied Geographic Information System (GIS) technology to develop tourism maps and an electronic Can Gio tourism guidebook, promotion and publicity efforts remain limited. In reality, Can Gio's tourism products do not match its potential and are not truly attractive. The connectivity between tourism sites and transportation routes to Can Gio is unreasonable specially since riverboat travel times are long, and services and activities on board are lacking. Rest stops such as Đồng Hòa fishing port and Cho Lồng market are still simple and makeshift. For the unique features of Can Gio the only district of Ho Chi Minh City with a long coastline, a complex system of rivers and canals, a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, and traditional craft villages to reach both domestic and international tourists, it is clear that the City and the District need a broader strategy to widely promote Can Gio's products. Local authorities should adopt flexible investment attraction policies and strengthen connections with businesses. The direct management units (the District People's Committee, with direct coordination by the Management Board of the 30/4 Tourist Area, Can Gio Ecotourism Company, Hon Ngoc Phuong Nam Ecotourism Area, etc.) should implement diverse programs to promote Can Gio's ecotourism. They must affirm the district's tourism strengths and potential and develop a tourism strategy that aligns with preserving Can Gio's natural ecological values. Moreover, Ho Chi Minh City's tourism sector needs to assist, support, and share resources and experiences with Can Gio's tourism. It is recommended that the Party Committee and city government continue to establish policies, strategies, mechanisms, and appropriate regulations to develop the sector in general and Can Gio tourism in particular at a higher level, ensuring professionalism and modernity aimed at sustainable development.

Second, diversify tourism products. Continue maintaining the area of fruit gardens: Support farmers with knowledge and cultivation techniques to improve the quality of products for visitors. At the same time, implement policies to encourage and assist farmers in developing Home-Garden tourism, homestay tourism, and experiential tourism. From there, select some households as pilot models and organize study tours to learn about management, development, and building Home-Garden tourism models as done in other countries. The district's departments should coordinate with city agencies to research mango varieties that bear fruit off-season from January to April each year, increasing farmers' income and extending the Home-Garden tourism season. Additionally, it is necessary to build strong brands for Can Gio mango, fermented shrimp paste, dried catfish, etc., to become famous specialties in Ho Chi Minh City and nationwide. River tourism: Take advantage of the district's strength with rivers and canals accounting for 31.49% of its area, winding through the mangrove forest and connecting Ho Chi Minh City with neighboring provinces (Dong Nai, Ba Ria - Vung Tau, Long An, Tien Giang), creating favorable conditions for river tourism development. Strengthen inter-sectoral coordination in planning and developing feasible projects for river tours and routes. Emphasize proper management of drainage and

waste disposal from residential clusters, production facilities, and swiftlet farming areas located near riverbanks. Continue developing policies to encourage investment and create a favorable environment to effectively exploit the unique potential of river tourism, producing competitive tourism products for growth. Enhance promotion of Can Gio river tourism products to attract more visitors and stabilize the market for enterprises operating in this field. Collaborate with the City's Department of Culture, Sports, and Tourism and local travel businesses to survey and identify the most feasible river tourism routes for development. Religious tourism: Leverage the district's longstanding culture with rich cultural and spiritual heritage, including archaeological sites such as Giong An, Giong Phet, Giong Ca Vo, and numerous religious cultural relics like communal houses, temples, shrines, and especially the historical Rung Sac war zone and the traditional Can Gio Fishermen's Festival. Focus on researching and developing religious tourism. Invest in the restoration and upgrading of religious sites such as Lăng ông Thủy Tướng (Shrine of the Sea General), upgrade the Traditional Fishermen's Festival, and maintain temples and communal houses recognized as cultural relics in the district. After restoration, these sites should be connected with travel companies to develop tours and routes visiting religious relics, contributing to a rich and diverse tourism product offering. Develop traditional craft villages serving tourism: Maintain and develop characteristic local traditional craft villages such as fishing villages (Thanh An commune), salt-making villages (Ly Nhon commune), and swiftlet farming villages (Tam Thon Hiep commune). Utilizing these unique local features for tourism is an important factor in diversifying tourism products. Create tours that combine visits to mangrove forest ecotourism models with learning about the lives of forest-guarding households; agricultural ecotourism with garden-pond-tourism models combined with visits to craft villages. Develop experiential learning tourism: When combining tourism with experiential learning, trips are not merely recreational but become opportunities for study and experience. This approach meets the demand for learning through practice. The tourism-experiential learning model has gained attention and popularity among educators in Vietnam as a way to elevate the quality of education. Although not new in Vietnam, this tourism type is increasingly popular because the human desire to learn and explore is boundless. It offers a fresh, engaging way for learners to gain knowledge through actual visits and practical skill training. Therefore, Can Gio could collaborate with educational institutions, especially universities offering tourism majors, to link local authorities, businesses, and schools, solving multiple challenges and unlocking Can Gio's potential. Develop resort tourism: Can Gio has ideal conditions for resort tourism and the formation of high-quality resort areas. It offers a good ecological environment and quiet garden houses. Moreover, Can Gio is not far from the city center. In recent years, the number of tourists coming to Can Gio for resort stays has increased. After the Covid pandemic, focusing more on resort tourism is believed to be a suitable direction to attract visitors. *Third, building and developing the tourism human resources of the District* Human resources are the most important factor in the business production process. Therefore, ensuring sufficient quantity and improving the quality of human resources is very important for tourism development in Can Gio. The proportion of tourism labor in Can Gio accounts for a very low percentage of the social workforce. The quality of human resources also has many limitations. A part of the cadre and civil servant staff, tourism workforce, and local residents do not clearly understand the importance of tourism development, lack awareness of protecting Can Gio's ecosystem, and do not know how to properly interact with tourists. To overcome this situation, it is necessary to develop a plan for building and developing the district's human resources and strengthen the attraction of human resources for the district through various forms. Enhance training, standardize human resources, encourage and create favorable conditions for companies and enterprises to proactively participate in training, regularly organize workshops, training sessions, share information, and exchange experiences on building tourism models and sustainable tourism development for tourism workers in the district. In addition to the above solutions, sustainable tourism development in Can Gio also requires attention to ensuring the tourism environment, such as: strengthening education and raising awareness in the local community about preserving and protecting the environment; overcoming negative impacts on the natural environment and socio-cultural environment; preventing social evils in tourism business establishments; effectively managing green parks to create aesthetics and ensure environmental sanitation in central areas and residential neighborhoods; encouraging tourism

companies to design tours that include programs for guests to participate in tree planting and caring for green trees. Raising knowledge about the natural environment thereby fostering awareness and participation in conservation efforts and tree development; disseminating and propagating the Environmental Protection Law, Tourism Law, and building programs promoting civilized and polite lifestyle habits among residents; organizing measures to prevent harassment of tourists. Establish and build tourist protection forces to ensure a safe and friendly environment for visitors; organize training courses on tourism resources and environmental management for tourism businesses.

CONCLUSION

Can Gio is currently an attractive destination for ecological tourism in Ho Chi Minh City an interesting rendezvous for nature lovers Tran Nguyen Minh Hai, a senior expert at the Asian Economic Research Institute, stated, "Compared to the top entertainment paradise in the region, Pattaya in neighboring Thailand, Can Gio is by no means inferior in natural conditions, from the quality of beaches to the area of forests, rivers, and mountains... In fact, Can Gio even holds many advantages in terms of geographic location, being only 50 km from Ho Chi Minh City" (Thin, 2018). Sustainable tourism development in Can Gio has recently achieved promising results. With the city's efforts alongside the consensus of the local government and people of Can Gio, implementing a series of coordinated solutions to realize the policy of developing Can Gio toward sustainable tourism is certainly not only a goal but also a necessity for the country's sustainable development today.

The tourism development potential of Can Gio holds great value not only for the lives of the people in the city but also for the nation and the region. It is precisely the historical, cultural values and the economic potential of this coastal area that have formed an important endogenous strength, helping Can Gio overcome the flames of war, the devastation and destruction caused by colonialism and imperialism, to stabilize and develop sustainably as it does today. Although challenges and difficulties are unavoidable in the development process, identifying and grasping movement trends and anticipating risks are necessary conditions to formulate policies that both build Can Gio into a dynamic locality in the city's socio-economic development and develop a uniquely sustainable tourism sector in the current context.

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