

# Sustainably Managing the Bimbia Slave Trade Village – The Public Sector Role

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## Abstract

Tourism is a global industry therefore good practices in sustainable tourism management at destinations tends to be applicable internationally; this therefore means that it is possible to learn from the experience and development in the sustainable destination management taking place in any particular country and try to adapt the techniques to your culture. A destination needs to be managed properly to achieve its aim and this sustainable partnerships in tourism development means there must be a joint negotiation and acceptance on the approach to be carried out in which case the goals are mutually defined and endorsed and the techniques of designed agreed and are jointly operated. In order to meet the needs of the future depends on how well we balance social, economic, and environmental objectives when making decisions today. The Bimbia slave port has a great cultural, historic and touristic importance to Cameroon and that is why the government as well as United States Embassy in Yaounde has been put in a lot of money to help preserve its collective cultural memory.

**Keywords:** Destination; Sustainable tourism; Tourism; Tourism development

## Introduction

Sustainable tourism has been identified as an important issue by national governments and they tend to treat this from the point of view of policies and planning at the national, regional and local levels. This planning, promotion and policies are felt from the macro analysis of the economic, social and cultural impacts. Most tourism policies are therefore handled from the top and it is possible to work downward [1].

Effective management of a tourism destination cannot take place without forms of partnership between the actors concerned in marketing the products, those who produce them on the ground and those who are responsible for the local implementation of statutory planning and regulatory powers [2].

## Background of the study

Bimbia was an independent state of Isubu people of Cameroon, in 1884 annexed by the Germans and incorporated in the colony of Kamerun. It lies in South West Region, to the south of Mount Cameroon and to the west of the Wouri estuary. Bimbia is situated at the East coast of the Limbe III sub division and consists of three villages: Dikolo, Bona Ngombe and Bona Bille. The slave trade village site located deep down the Bimbia sea front and is yet to have that UNESCO recognition. The former Ministry of Culture on the 11/09/2012 said that no trespass into the slave trade village in Bimbia, Limbe III sub-division as it now declared 'National land' and that she did not come to seize people's land but to let people know that the slave trade village is now State property. Mrs Ama said people and partner need to work hard to make this a World Heritage value, a place of universal value held and recognised by the UNESCO World Heritage Committee [3,4].

The restoration of the Bimbia slave trade port has preserves the history of how slaves were captured and it also heals the past and paves the way forward. The Government and its development partners are lobbying United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) to name the port a World Heritage Site [5].

## Literature Review

Sustainable tourism is probably the most important idea that has

entered tourism management in the last twenty years, it focuses on the ecology and how to empower and involve the local communities in tourism management. The sustainable development of destinations should be done in such a way that tourism should not degrade the environment and the local cultures and societies [3].

It is the development of tourism that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of the future generations to meet their own needs; it implies improving the quality of human life for the entire world's population while living within the overall renewable carrying capacity of the supporting ecosystem. There must be a state of equilibrium in which human activities coexist in broad harmony with their natural, social and the cultural environment [1].

Tourism development should not only be driven by one particular need, without fully bearing in mind the future influences; an example will include the changes in the global climate ensuing from our dependence on fossil fuel-based energy sources.

## Research Methodology

For this research work, the researcher used only secondary data that was information collected from the bulletins, magazines and websites [6].

## Analysis and Findings

The government in an attempt to rescue Bimbia slave trade village from dereliction and neglect through its Ministry of Culture in declared this area State Land or property. This is to stop the indigenous

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Received September 22, 2016; Accepted October 13, 2016; Published October 23, 2016

Citation: Abam EN (2016) Sustainably Managing the Bimbia Slave Trade Village – The Public Sector Role. J Bus Fin Aff 5: 217. doi: [10.4172/2167-0234.1000217](https://doi.org/10.4172/2167-0234.1000217)

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people from entering the land. The government has transformed the Bimbia slave trade village into an attractive place to live, work and visit. It supports a diverse economy ranging from agriculture to numerous tourists enterprises which together provide employment to the local people.

It is important to note that the sustainable development of the Bimbia slave trade village as a cultural heritage site is a collaboration of both the Government of Cameroon and the United State Embassy in Yaounde -Cameroon. The United States Embassy through its Department of State Bureau of Education and Cultural Affairs in 2012 approved \$76,400 (FCFA 40 million) in funding for a cultural preservation project to preserve and partially restore the remains of the Bimbia slave trade port, the cultural preservation project is entitled “Documentation and restoration of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century Slave Port in Bimbia”. The project will document the site with signage, providing historic facts and information and it will also collect, catalogue and display the few remaining artifacts [6].

## Conclusion

Good sustainable tourism practices can only be achieved when the private sectors that are most of the time developers work hand in hand with the public sector that is the law marker. Those leaving around the sustainable tourism area must be educated on the importance of conserving the tourism potentials and should also be involved in the day to day management of this area. It is only in doing this that there can be effective sustainable management of tourism potentials.

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