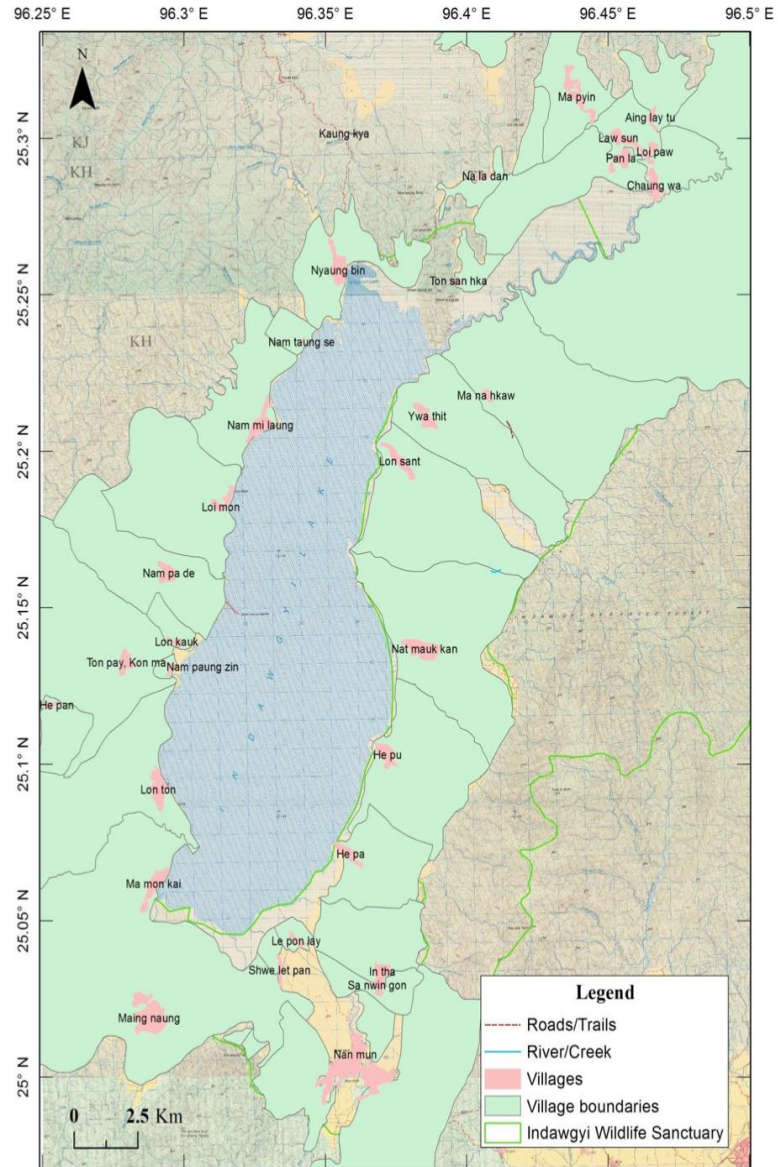


# Community-involved Ecotourism in Indawgyi

Barbara Schott

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# SWOT analysis

<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Strengths</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Government support for conservation</li> <li>• IWLS is ASEAN Heritage Park &amp; Ramsar site, prepare for further accreditation</li> <li>• Outstanding scenery, wildlife and birds</li> <li>• The largest lake in Myanmar and SE Asia</li> <li>• Off the beaten track / unspoiled</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Weaknesses</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor accessibility</li> <li>• Lack of basic infrastructure</li> <li>• Lack of tourism infrastructure</li> <li>• Lack of tourism-related knowledge and skills</li> <li>• Limited number of activities and products</li> <li>• No risk management procedures</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Opportunities</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Growing demand for 'emerging tourism destinations' in Myanmar, including IWLS</li> <li>• Myanmar Ecotourism Policy (2015)</li> <li>• Tourism begins to provide income for a small groups of local entrepreneurs</li> <li>• Tourism may result in better infrastructure and community development in the future</li> <li>• Community-involved ecotourism may increase local villagers participation in environmental and conservation work</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Threats</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Political instability in Kachin State - the safety and security of visitors cannot be guaranteed when hiking or mountain-biking in some areas</li> <li>• Environmental threats: illegal gold mining, extraction of timber, fuelwood and bamboo overfishing, unsustainable waste disposal</li> <li>• Unsustainable tourism development plans can damage the local social fabric, creating conflicts among stakeholders and local communities</li> <li>• Little community engagement, e.g. hotel zone</li> </ul>

What techniques and processes can be used to empower local communities?

## What do the locals really think about tourism?

*“In Indawgyi we want a form of tourism that develops according to sustainable principles, focuses on the protection of the environment and the improvement of infrastructure, is locally owned, community-involved and changes minds towards a peaceful life.”*

# Strategic Objective 1: Sustainable tourism management & regulation

- Plan and manage tourism development, based on bio-diversity zones
- Training with local communities on conservation and facilitate tourism innovations created by local communities themselves
- Initiate steps to set up 'Ecotourism Committees' in villages, later establish 'tourism environmental task force' Indawgyi
- Advance environmental education programmes for local schools
- Set up **meaningful stakeholder consultation process** for tourism development proposals (e.g. hotel zones)
- Introduce entrance fee to Wildlife Sanctuary – Who collects? How to distribute – conservation / township / communities?



## Strategic Objective 2: Sustainable infrastructure development

- Develop Indawgyi B&B accommodation plan
- Improve and secure electricity and (drinkable) water supply
- Establish communication systems
- Improve transportation system
- Introduce waste and waste water management systems and regulation
- Improve health facilities and introduce (disaster) risk management procedures

## Strategic Objective 3: Human resource development

- In-depth consultations with local communities on what community-involved ecotourism will mean in practice
- Support to community groups and civil society – build capacity
- Capacity building with local government and support ecotourism planning for township development planning
- Tourism awareness, conservation and gender trainings
- Business development and support for MSMEs in tourism supply chains, in particular entrepreneurship training (with focus on youth and women)



## Strategic Objective 4: Marketing Indawgyi as *the* ecotourism destination

- Design Indawgyi ecotourism brand
  - ★ New Product Development
- Develop Indawgyi ecotourism marketing strategy
  - ★ jointly create a community-involved ecotourism map for Indawgyi, plus pamphlets and other marketing material including merchandise
- Community-Involved Eco-Tourism Website

## Strategic Objective 5: Improving the Visitor Experience

- Tourism and environmental information centre
- Signage and “information boxes”
- Develop sustainable handicrafts and assist local artisans
- Develop and diversify outdoor tourism activities
- Create linkages to other regions

# What are the challenges now?

**Who supports how?**

Finance and Accountability?

**Who is managing the process so that local  
communities benefit?**

How to balance benefits vs. conservation?



# Thank you.

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