Cultural Landscape and Ecotourism in Bali Island, Indonesia

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Abstract

This paper describes the role of ethnoecology in supporting tourism. We conducted a case study on the island of Bali (Indonesia), the famous tourism destination. We review the culture, nature and ecotourism prospects of Bali and then extend our discussion to examine the role of indigenous philosophies in building the destination's image. Bali has a rich culture and natural resources that have been utilized and managed through an indigenous philosophy called Tri Hita Karana. Ethnoecology is widely applied and appreciated in the society and has produced Balinese cultural landscapes that have become significant tourism attractions. There has been a recent increase in tourist desire to explore genuine Balinese culture, so ethnoecology has a significant role in the quest to preserve and conserve such indigenous cultural landscapes. Ethnoecology is a key to ensuring and sustaining the images and authenticity of Bali Island. In this paper, we considered the landscape of rice paddies as a cultural landscape and resource for tourism. The structure and function of paddy terrace landscapes is based on the ethnoecology of Tri Hita Karana; therefore, in order to understand nature and ecotourism in Bali Island, knowledge of indigenous philosophy is indispensable. Cultural landscapes that link human and natural systems are not only places of natural beauty but also provide background information about the history of human adaptations to nature.

Keywords

Authenticity; Bali Island; Cultural ecology; Ecotourism; Ethnoecology; Sustainable development

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InterContinental Bali Resort’s unique brand concept ‘In the Know’ invites guests to visit the cultural landscape of Bali and delve into the extraordinary agrarian organisation behind it. The island’s irrigated padi fields are achieved through an ancient and complex system of aquatic engineering, uniquely managed by the farmers through village cooperatives known as ‘Subak’. Irrigation is critical to Balinese wet-rice agriculture because of the long dry season that extends from April to October, while the substance of rural life is dependent on the accuracy of the water flow as it is diverted Lovina Beach and North Bali also offer a range of cultural and historical attractions, such as a Balinese sea shrine that neighbours a magnificent Chinese temple at the old Singaraja seaport, a large Buddhist monastery with a mini replica of Borobudur temple, and the royal palace of the late raja of Singaraja. This is one of the lesser-known museums in Bali, perhaps due to its far-flung location on Bali’s north-western tip of Gilimanuk. Buyan and Tamblingan Lake. Nature lovers and landscape photographers will love the scenic upland views that the central and northern Bali region has to offer, especially with its three lakes, of which Beratan is the most developed and popular. The other two - Buyan and Tamblingan - are protected sites, but welcome campers and trekkers.