

## Chapter 55

# WilTMapp (Wildlife Tourism Mobile Application)

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### Abstract

Wildlife tourism (visit destinations to observe and interact with local fauna) is growing rapidly and become demanded products as UN World Tourism Organization in 2017 estimates that 7% of tourism products related to wildlife. World Wildlife Fund also reported that 93% of all natural heritage site support recreation and tourism and generate 91% of jobs, besides the main aims of protecting the natural habitat and support conservation. In Malaysia, the interest to visit wildlife tourism is slowly growing, yet many tourists have little exposure to the destination and activities could be performed. By having WilTMapp (Wildlife Tourism Mobile Application), it will enhance tourist's knowledge and experience on wildlife destination and activities towards conservation. WilTMapp consists of wildlife attractions accompanied with basic information details such as maps and locations, entrance fees, activities including voluntary, donations and accommodation nearby. Indeed, it provides interesting conservation facts that encourage people behavior to support towards wildlife sustainability. The novelty of this mobile application is it is one stop station in one platform that suitable for all generation from kids to adult for every wildlife places in the region of Malaysia with one touch. It allows people to make choices rather than only one destination. The uniqueness of WilTMapp is when donations are allowed even without visiting the destination. With tagline "Strive for Wildlife", WilTMapp does fit towards the conservation for our world beloved living fauna.

**Keywords:** WilTMapp, conservation, wildlife destination, wildlife sustainability

### Introduction

Wildlife tourism defined as tourists travel to the animals' natural habitat or in a man-made habitat and the activities they can do such as observe the animals, take photos, and feed the animals (Yuan, Wei & Xiaodong, 2004). Wildlife tourism has bring many beneficial impacts. UN World Tourism Organization in 2017 estimates that 7% of tourism products related to wildlife have contributed toward most of the countries of Sub Saharan Africa such as Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania which uses safari as the primary methods of wildlife watching tourism. World Wildlife Fund also reported that 93% of all natural heritage site support recreation and tourism and generate 91% of jobs and benefits especially local people community, besides the main aims of protecting the natural habitat and support conservation. Indeed, Ranaweera, Ranjeewa and Sugimoto (2015) found that in some country like Sri Langka and Thailand which is the wild Asian elephant populations are considered symbol of pride to a country and the flagship of tourism resulted in increasing number of foreign tourists arrivals and conservation programs. For Malaysia, Tourism Malaysia (2017) indicates that wildlife tourism is one of the sustainability tourism approach and niche tourism products. Thus, to achieve sustainability tourism which have interconnection between wildlife tourism, good interaction between visitors and wildlife populations need to be prioritized and maintained in order to achieve great contribution towards nature fauna (Rodger, A. Moore, & Newsome, 2009). It is very important to enhance the knowledge and exposure of people towards wildlife destination area in Malaysia to encourage the market growth of wildlife tourism in this country also beneficial towards sustainability tourism. World Wildlife Fund (2016)

mentioned by the director for Latin America and the Caribbean of WWF, “Conserving the environment does not hurt economic opportunities, it allows us to build sustainably on these irreplaceable assets”.

### **Problem Statement**

Willmore (2017) listed the best destinations for wildlife tourism that can be found in Malaysia included Kuala Gandah Elephant, Royal Belum State Park for Malayan Tigers and Kuala Gula Bird Sanctuary. However, due to little exposure and knowledge about those destinations as well as people still wondering what kind of activities they can perform resulted to undergrading wildlife tourism in Malaysia. The central problem for this situation is the lack of people interests and awareness towards the wildlife conservation itself. In accordance with a study by Shafie, Mohd Sah, Abdul Mutalib and Fadzly (2017) describing the level of awareness of current wildlife and conservation issue in Penang Island, only 37.2% of local community show their interest and willingness to join future conservation program. Unlike in international country such as Africa, 80% of the annual sales of trips to that country is represented by wildlife watching (UNWTO, 2015). One of the reason to the great market of wildlife tourism in Africa is the willingness of rural Africans to collaborated with stakeholders to keep the priority in conserving wildlife and its habitat (African People & Wildlife, 2016). As Shafie et al. (2017) mentioned that establish a conservation to connect between people with nature and wildlife is not easy, an innovative way such as mobile technology needed to be create. T. Al-Hariri and A. Al-Hattami (2016) stated that the use of technology can create a good environment that facilitate learning and knowledge gaining, and WiltMapp is designate to develop people interests towards wildlife attraction in Malaysia from the younger age to adult. It assist people in finding basic needs for wildlife tourism included other additional features. This mobile application can be simply to be used for every type of mobile based and suitable for different level age of people.

### **Content**

This section briefly describes the project development concept, features, novelty, usefulness and commercialization potential of WiltMapp mobile application for wildlife tourism. Nowadays, people are more into technology usage since most of everyone has their own gadgets in order to stay connected and communicate with others.

Features of mobile application

#### **a. Background of WiltMapp**

WiltMapp will be the first mobile application in Malaysia for wildlife attraction activities. The WiltMapp mobile application conceive of location of the wildlife destination in every region like East Coast, Northern, Southern, Sarawak and Sabah of Malaysia. Other than that, this mobile application provides information about the entrance fees, types of activities allowed to perform, online donations, location of nearby accommodation for sleep over and interesting facts about the wildlife destination. These features are very suitable for all generation and can help to increase demand, expose and enhance tourists' knowledge and experiences for wildlife tourism in Malaysia.

#### **b. Novelty**

WiltMapp mobile application is the first mobile application for wildlife tourism in Malaysia. It is a combination application provided with GIS (Geographical Information System), This mobile application is a one stop station in one platform that suitable for all generation from the youngsters to grown-up's people. It allows users to make their own choice of destination from the various wildlife destinations provided in the application. The most unique about WiltMapp mobile application is user can perform online donation to the specific wildlife destination without visiting the place.

#### **c. Usefulness**

WiltMapp mobile application allows users to know about the location of wildlife attractions on every region in Malaysia. This information will give ideas about the destination for the users who wants to visit. Other than that, this mobile application will make the users life easier where the users can look for resting area or sleepover place after the visit. Besides that, this WiltMapp mobile application

allows users to perform online donation without visiting the place. This product will benefit users to explore more about wildlife tourism as leisure activities with family and friends. It also includes additional tools for the users to gain more knowledge on wildlife tourism for their general knowledge. By using this mobile application, users manage to save time and hassle free since all important features has included in one application.

d. Impact

With this WilTMapp mobile application, the wildlife tourism industry can help to increase tourist arrival locally and internationally. Other than that, wildlife tourism industry manage to gain funding for conservation and preservation of wildlife tourism. Indirectly, this could increase job opportunities for the local people. Besides that, users manage to increase level of knowledge and experiences after visiting the wildlife destinations. It also can build positive image of country as inline with Sustainable Development Goal SDG 15 which to protect wildlife animal (Tourism and Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030, 2018). Finally, the importance of development of this mobile application will deliver benefits to the society, youngsters, grown-ups and wildlife tourism industry because this mobile application encounters to the current trend where people nowadays prefer to use a gadget instead of the old ways such as brochures and flyers for their leisure and recreation activities.

e. Commercialization Potential

WilTMapp mobile application has a great potential to be develop in Malaysia since there is wildlife tourism mobile application that available in other countries yet as compared to other established wildlife tourism application such as Kansas Wildlife and Kenya Wildlife Park mobile applications, WilTMapp focusing on the wildlife destination area in each of regions in Malaysia so this will give tourist opportunities to make comparison on which destination they might prefer to visit . Besides that, tourist use WilTMapp for searching and go trough on information for few places via one platform only, they do not need to go trough for lots of websit for digging information on every places. The places that have been focused trough the WilTMapp will gain attraction from tourist that keep coming in to visit the places and this arrival will contribute in term of economic values toward local community there. By utilizing this application, wildlife tourism industry can enhance its attraction as Special Interest Tourism (SIT) destination, which can inspire more tourists to come visit wildlife destination in Malaysia since as tourists have chance to get to know the interesting information on the selected wildlife destination area before they went for a real visit to the place . Other than that, WilTMapp allowed tourists to access this application even in an offline mode due to low coverage in most of the rural area. In the future, this mobile application can be expanded by focusing on other wildlife destinations area that available in Asian countries.

## Conclusion

Malaysia has a lot of wildlife destinations that can be visited by the tourists locally or intentionally but not many people aware the existence of the destination as well as the activities they want to perform. As for other countries, wildlife tourism is playing a significant influence that contribute to their economy profit. As in Malaysia, this mobile application will be a potential to boost wildlife tourism market in the country. WilTMapp consists of wildlife attractions accompanied with basic information details such as maps and locations, entrance fees, activities including voluntary, donations and accommodation nearby. Indeed, it provides interesting conservation facts that encourage people to support towards wildlife sustainability. These information's can be displays trough one main platform by one touch screen. Thus, this mobile application can be an essential needs or platform to give exposure and information about wildlife destination in Malaysia.

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