

## Urban Ecotourism Development in Borderlands: An Exploratory Study of Xishuangbanna Dai Autonomous Prefecture, China

**Authors :** Min Liu, Thanapauge Chamaratana

**Abstract :** Integrating ecotourism into urban borderlands holds significant potential for promoting sustainable development, enhancing cross-border cooperation, and preserving cultural and natural heritage. This study aims to evaluate the current status and strategic measures for sustainable ecotourism development in the border urban areas of Xishuangbanna, leveraging the unique opportunities and challenges presented by its policy and geographical location. Employing a qualitative research approach, the exploratory study utilizes documentary research, observation, and in-depth interviews with 20 key stakeholders, including local government officials, tourism operators, community members, and tourists. Content analysis is conducted to interpret the collected data. The findings reveal that Xishuangbanna holds significant potential for ecotourism due to its rich biodiversity, cultural heritage, and strategic location along the Belt and Road Initiative route. The integration of ecotourism can drive economic growth, create employment opportunities, and foster a deeper appreciation for conservation efforts. By promoting ecotourism practices, the region can attract environmentally conscious travelers, thereby contributing to global sustainability goals. However, challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, limited community involvement, and environmental concerns are also identified. The study recommends enhancing ecotourism development in urban borderlands through integrated planning, stakeholder collaboration, and sustainable practices. These measures are essential to ensure long-term benefits for both the local community and the environment. Moreover, the study underscores the importance of a holistic approach to ecotourism development, which balances economic, social, and environmental priorities to achieve sustainable outcomes for urban borderlands.

**Keywords :** ecotourism, sustainable tourism, urban, borderland

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