

# **SUSTAINABLE TOURISM SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT OF TOUR OPERATOR AND ITS DETERMINANTS: A Case of Thailand**

Rugphong Vongsaroj

Graduate School of Tourism Management,

National Institute of Development Administration, Thailand

rugphong.v@nida.ac.th

## **ABSTRACT**

This research aims to measure the awareness and the implementation of tour operators (TOs) regarding to sustainable tourism supply chain management (STSM) and to explore the internal factors of TOs affecting their STSM implementation. The qualitative data obtained from interviewing with stakeholders and quantitative data collected from the survey of 130 tour operators in Chiangmai and Phuket provinces were utilized to answer the research objectives. The results reveal that the tour operators have awareness to STSM and implementation at high and rather high level, respectively, showing that there is an awareness gap. In addition, the study found the statistically significant difference between their awareness and implementation level regarding to STSM, indicating that there is an implementation gap. In addition, the value of profit margin earned is the variable that has significant effect on TOs' STSM performance.

Keyword: Tour Operator, Supply Chain, Sustainable Tourism Development

## **INTRODUCTION**

Tourism industry has played crucial role for Thailand economic development; contribution to job creation, export revenue generation, and the engine of local development. However, it is broadly acknowledged from the tourism development in the past that those gains have normally imposed cost to society in several aspects; for example, environmental erosion and radical change in local community ways of living. Thus, the tourism industry needs thoughtful planning and managing its developments in the ways that win-for-all at all-the-time.

The World Tourism Organization (2001) has defined the sustainable tourism development (STD) as *“Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”* To attain the STD, the collective