



**UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA**

***THE IMPACT OF THE 50 YEARS FLOOD ON LOCAL BUSINESS AT  
KUALA TAHAN NATIONAL PARK, PAHANG***

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**A Project Report Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Bachelor of Park and Recreation Science in the  
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## **DEDICATION**

**THIS THESIS IS SPECIALLY DEDICATED TO**

**MY BELOVED MOTHER**

**ZAHARIAH BTE LEMBAK**

**AND ALL MY SUPPORTIVE FRIENDS**

**With grateful appreciation of their encouragement, love and sacrifices.**

**Thanks you very much.**

## ABSTRACT

Kuala Tahan National Park is located close to the river bank of two major rivers – Tembeling and Tahan Rivers. The area had witnessed several major floods in 1926, 1971 and as recent as 2014. Of these, the 2014 flood was the most severe has destroyed much of the infrastructure such as roads, landslides, damaged bridges, in addition to destroyed homes, property, livestock and farm produce as well. This study was aimed at investigating the impact of such traumatic event on local business in at Kuala Tahan. This study was also designed to examine the socioeconomic characteristics of local business during and after major floods of 2014. Moreover this study is to determine the relationship between acceptance local business during major flood and implication of local business after the major flood. As the result, the result shows that the mean for impact of socio-economic during and after the major flood to local business. The current devastation that has to be faced in Malaysia was the 2014 flood. The impacts left by this are mainly damages caused by the physical contact of floodwaters with materials and are therefore related to the materials which are declining physically

## **ABSTRAK**

Taman Negara Kuala Tahan terletak berhampiran dengan tebing sungai dua sungai utama - Tembeling dan Tahan. Kawasan ini telah menyaksikan beberapa banjir besar pada tahun 1926, 1971 dan paling terbaru adalah pada tahun 2014. Banjir 2014 adalah yang paling teruk kerana sebahagian besar prasarana seperti jalan raya, tanah runtuh, jambatan rosak, rumah musnah, harta, ternakan dan ladang mengalami kemusnahan. Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesan peristiwa traumatik pada perniagaan tempatan di di Kuala Tahan. Kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengkaji ciri-ciri sosioekonomi perniagaan tempatan semasa dan selepas banjir besar tahun 2014. Selain itu kajian ini adalah untuk menentukan hubungan antara perniagaan tempatan penerimaan semasa banjir besar dan implikasi perniagaan tempatan selepas banjir besar. Kesimpulannya, hasilnya menunjukkan bahawa min bagi kesan sosio-ekonomi semasa dan selepas banjir untuk perniagaan tempatan.

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## APPROVAL SHEETS

I certify this research project report entitled “**The Impact Of The 50 Years Flood On Local Business At Kuala Tahan National Park, Pahang**” by Muhamad Zulwaqa Bin Muhamad Zamri has been examined and approved as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Park and Recreation Science in the Faculty of Forestry, Universiti Putra Malaysia.

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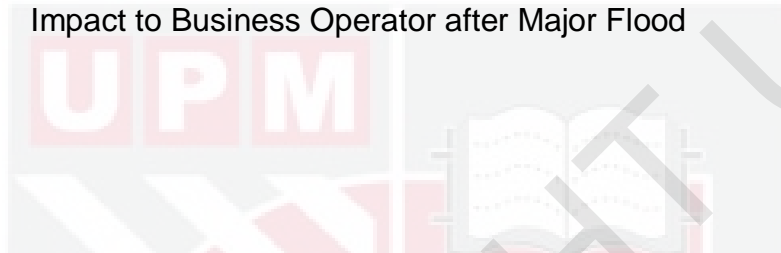
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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Research Background

Ecotourism emerged in English language academic literature as a hyphenated term (ecotourism) by Romeril (1985) through an article. Tracing the history of the ecotourism Weaver (2008) mentioned that it is a term used by Mexican ecologist Hector Ceballos -Lascurian in Spanish language ecotourism even one decade earlier(Boo 1990) than Romeril. According to Fennell (2003), the national forestry service in Canada was marketing the concept of an educational “ecotour” along the Trans-Canada Highway as far back as 1973. Hence, the existence of ecotourism as a concept and practice was seen before the word ecotourism was brought as a term in tourism industry in the mid-1980s.

Thompson (1995), Boo (1990) have disclosed the origin of the word ecotourism having consistency when they clearly mentioned the name of Ceballos-Lascurain as the first writer who coined the word ecotourism in early 1980s. According to Weaver (2008), Elizabeth Boo had given much of the credit for the dissemination of the term ecotourism because of her book *Ecotourism: The Potentials and Pitfalls* (1990). Boo (1990) mentioned the definition of ecotourism as defined by Ceballos-Lascurain “tourism that consists in travelling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objectives of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural

manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas.(Ceballos - Lascurain)".

According to Nelson (1994), the concept of ecotourism is an old one and originated itself in late 1960s and early 1970s. It was a concern generated and brought into light by the researchers who found that the tourists in different natural areas were making the inappropriate use of natural resources. Nelson (1994) further argued that the term „eco-development“ was brought into existence, which was then used in reduction of improper use of natural resources for ecological development. In course of time the awareness towards sustainability of environment and its overall development was mentioned, discussed and written in a variety in different pieces of literature leading to the development of ecotourism. In modern era, ecotourism is defined as “... a form of tourism that fosters learning experiences and appreciation of the natural environment, or some component thereof, within its associated cultural context, it is managed in accordance with industry best practice to attain environmentally and socio-culturally sustainable outcomes as well as financial viability.” (Weaver, 2008).

In Malaysia, Kuala Tahan National Park, be one of the well-known ecotourism destinations in the country. Established in 1939 and covers a total area of about 4,343 sq. km, it occupies three states on Peninsular Malaysia that is Pahang, Kelantan and Terengganu. Due to its huge and unique area, it is said to contain some of the most diverse species in the world (Primack & Hall 1992). Prior to the park establishment location of Kuala Tahan as

entrants to National Park, the tourism industry is a major industry that generates employment and income opportunities for the local business in Kuala Tahan.. Most of the local people work as boatman, nature tour guide, tourism agents, recreation facility operator, restaurant operator, accommodation operator and retailing.

Kuala Tahan National Park is also located close to the river bank of two major rivers – Tembeling and Tahan Rivers. The area had witnessed several major floods in 1926, 1971 and as recent as 2014. Of these, the 2014 flood was the most severe and has destroyed much of the infrastructure such as roads, landslides, damaged bridges, in addition to destroyed homes, property, livestock and farm produce as well.

A flood can be defined as any high water flow that dominates the natural or artificial banks in any part of the river system. Therefore, when a river bank is overtopped, the water extends over the flood plain and generally becomes hazard to the society.

When floods occurred, it has terrible impacts on people as it disrupts their day to day activities and the impacts can last for a week in the coming years, climate change is likely to make the situation even more challenging (NFRA, 2011).Flooding is a natural event, and no matter how hard a government or society tried to minimize or to stop it completely (FRMP 2012).

The most devastating natural disaster experienced in Malaysia is flood. Throughout Malaysia, including Sabah and Sarawak, there is total of 189 river basins with the main channels flowing directly to the south china sea and 85 of them are prone to recurrent flooding (89 of the river basins are in Peninsula Malaysia, 78 in Sabah and 22 in Sarawak). The estimated area vulnerable to flood disaster is approximately 29,800 km<sup>2</sup> or 9% of the total Malaysia area, and is affecting almost 4.82 million people which is around 22% of the total population of the country (DID, 2009).

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Floods in Malaysia have been classified in two categories by the Malaysian Drainage and Irrigation Department, i.e. flash flood and monsoon floods (DID, 2000a). Based on the hydrological perspectives, the clear difference between these two disasters is the period taken by the river flow to recede to the normal level. Flash floods take only some hours to return to the normal water level, while monsoon flood can last for a month.

The floods of 2014 were higher than the 1971 flood but almost equal to the great flood of 1926 in the Lembah Tembeling. 2014 flood has destroyed much of the infrastructure such as roads, landslides, damaged bridges, in addition to destroyed homes, property, livestock and farm produce as well. In Kuala Tahan a major economy is tourism. Tourism economy in Kuala Tahan destroyed by the floods. Kuala Tahan severely affected by this flood. Electricity and water supplies cut off.

Ecotourism, a component of sustainable tourism, has caught the attention of many professionals and community leaders throughout the world. Although it is difficult to look for silver linings in the light of the overwhelming tragedy worldwide in tourism industry, there have been some rays of hope and tremendous stories of human endeavor. According to Parks (2009), trends are shifting from mass tourism to smaller groups and participative authentic tourism. These trends are emerging as a result of changing consumer preferences for vacations.

One of the principal components of ecotourism is the 'economic benefits for local community'. While this is quite evidence in Kuala Tahan, only a handful of related research has been conducted in the area. Benefits for locals include new opportunities for businesses; the area has seen thriving local businesses since 1990s. Such businesses include those restaurants, lodgings, caterings, boat operations, nature guides, souvenirs and other auxiliary services for ecotourists at the park. Suffice to say, the ups and downs of ecotourism activities in the area is closely related to the overall wellbeing of the locals.

Therefore, it would be interesting to find out how much changes (physical and psychologically) among the locals as the consequences of the said severe flood. This study has been designed and carried out to examine this issue. Findings from this study could prove to be beneficial for the locals in order to decide the best support for their operations and to sustain the ecotourism industry in the area.



### **1.3 Research Objectives**

This study will be carried out to investigate the impact of local business in Business Centre Kuala Tahan after the major flood 2014. Specifically, this research aims to

- i. Examine the impact on local business during and after the major flood 2014 at Kuala Tahan National Park
- ii. Examine the socioeconomic of local business during and after the major floods of 2014 at Kuala Tahan National Park



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