

# AGROTOURISM: IT'S IMPLICATION TO SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF BAGUMBAYAN MUNICIPALITY, SULTAN KUDARAT PROVINCE

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**Abstract:** Republic Act No. 9593 also known as “The tourism Act of 2009” states that, the state declares tourism as an indispensable element of the national economy which must be harnessed as an engine of socio- economic growth and cultural affirmation to generate investment, foreign exchange and employment. In the Philippines, Agrotourism is considered as one of the largest industries and the major contributor on the economy. The main purpose of this study is to investigate the implication of Agrotourism to the socio- economic development of the municipality of Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat. This study was descriptive evaluative in nature, with survey documentations, historical methods for data collection and survey questionnaires were incorporated with FGD to the key informants. Descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency and percent distribution were derived to present the necessary data. The result revealed that the respondents were agree to all statements on the implication of Agro tourism to social aspect with the overall mean rating of 2.90 and with the verbal interpretation of Agree. It was also found out that Agrotourism contributed much to the economic development of the community with the overall mean of 3.02 which received a verbal interpretation of “Agree”, Based on the result, it is further recommended that continuous research on how preserve and make innovative way of promoting Agrotourism since Bagumbayan is potential to Agricultural activity. Political leaders should support the programs of the government to develop a municipality into an Agro Industrial Community.

**Keywords:** Agrotourism, Bagumbayan, Socio- Economic Development, Sultan Kudarat Province.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

This paper evaluates current issues surrounding the role and development of agrotourism's in the socio- economic cultural implications in the municipality of Bagumbayan, Sultan Kudarat Province. Bagumbayan, is a 1st class municipality in the province of Sultan Kudarat with 19 barangays. It is known for its gold and copper deposits. It is a central Mindanao's new source for export-quality banana and pineapple. Super Green Agricultural Developers Corp. (Sugadco) and SUMIFRU Inc. developed 256 hectares of banana and pineapple plantations.

Agro- tourism or farm tourism is the process of attracting visitors and travelers to agricultural areas, generally for educational and recreational purposes (Lamb, 2008; Veeck et al. 2006).

Republic Act No. 9593 also known as “The tourism act of 2009” states that, the State declares tourism as an indispensable element of the national economy and the industry of national interest and importance, which will be harnessed as an engine of socio- economic growth and the cultural affirmation to generate investment, employment and to enhance sense of national pride for all Filipinos.

Globally speaking, agrotourism is a very important and increasing segment of travel industry. Nickerson, Black and McCool (2001) stated that the rural area is the basic resource for the development of agrotourism and that it relies on the city residents' need for peace and outdoor space for recreation. Agrotourism is used more conventionally for notions that are related to products and services, which are directly related to the agrarian environment, agricultural products and types

of farm-stay. Such activities involve staying in such environment, educational visits, recreational activities or selling agricultural and homemade products (Sznajder, Przezborska and Scrimgeour, 2009). As many other branches of tourism, agrotourism has certain impacts on local surroundings. It brings numerous consequences on the environmental, economic, social and cultural. The effect of agrotourism activities and events on attitudes and behavior of the locals was explained in several research papers. Some of the studies showed that residents think tourism helps the local economy (Ritchie, 1988; Choi and Sirakaya, 2005), affects the general increase of the life standard of a community (Var and Kim, 1989; Choi and Sirakaya, 2005), but also stimulates the entrance of foreign currency in a host country (Ahmed and Krohn, 1992). Furthermore, the studies have shown that tourism directly stimulates the opening of new jobs (Milman and Pizam, 1988; Var and Kim, 1989; Ahmed and Krohn, 1992; Tosun, 2002) and increases the income of numerous segments of local economy (Settina and Richmond, 1978; Tosun, 2002).

#### **OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:**

The purpose of the study was to determine the Agrotourism; its implication to socio-economic development of Bagumbayan Municipality of Sultan Kudarat Province.

### **2. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Descriptive survey method was applied for the study. A survey was conducted for data collection in promoting awareness on the local history and in the development of the study. The study was conducted in 19 barangays of the municipality of Bagumbayan, Province of Sultan Kudarat. The respondents of the study were the residents of Bagumbayan. The local government unit personnel, Municipal planning Development, Department of Agriculture, Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

A researcher-made questionnaire, review of records and Interview schedule to the key informants were made to determine the variables of the study. The written documents such as documents such as barangay file and municipal file were also used reviewed and validated to municipal officials and key informants. The profile of the respondents of the Municipality of Bagumbayan and the degree of awareness of the respondents contributed much to the Agrotourisms in terms of social and economic aspects.

To interpret the degree of Potentials of Agrotourism in the social and economic, the verbal scale was used: 3.26- 4.00 strongly agree, 2.51- 3.25 Agree, 1.76-2.5 Disagree and 1.0-1.75 Strongly Disagree. Descriptive Statistics such as frequency and percentage as well as qualitative analysis were used as statistical tools in this study.

### **3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The data were presented as statistical figure in the different tables. These figures have been analyzed and interpreted based on the primary objective of the study to find out the socio-economic implication of Agrotourism in the municipality of Bagumbayan. Presented the table are the implications of Agrotourism in the municipality of Bagumbayan perceived by the respondents.

One of the objectives of the study was to determine the socio-demographic profile of the respondents. It shows the distribution by age group, distribution by gender, by civil status, highest educational attainment and monthly income of the respondents.

The data indicated that while the respondents gave an overall answer of Strongly Agree to the statements in all the areas of the potential of Agrotourism namely Social and Economic. The area that garnered the highest mean rating was economic potentials with the mean rating of 3.38, followed by Social 2.90 which means that the respondents did not feel the potentials of Agrotourism to the social aspects as compare to its potential impact in economic aspect. From the result of the table, the study revealed that among the Social and Economic aspects, Agrotourism contributed much to the Economic development of the Bagumbayan community.

### **4. CONCLUSIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, it can be drawn that;

Agro-tourism is vital because:

As a result of the study, the major sources of income of the respondents rely on farming.

It increases spending in the community generated from visitors or tourism business and can directly promote the viability of local business and visitors' expenditure generates income for the local community.

## 5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are strongly recommended:

1. Local Government unit should give priority to the programs that will enhance the beauty of the natural resources of Bagumbayan.
2. Political Leaders should support the programs of the government to develop the municipality into Agro Industrial Community.
3. The government can take up projects to represent the indigenous capacities of our farmers to protect land, environment and ecology, among international tourists, in order to attract them which may enrich our agro-tourism industry in return.

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