

Park Guiding – The Way Forward

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Abstract

The special characteristics of a national park, as generally accepted IUCN's definition, visitors are allowed to enter, under special conditions, for inspirational, educative, cultural and recreative purposes. It implies obligation and responsibilities on the part of park wardens or park managers to regulate and control the impacts of visitation on the natural environment – one of the approaches is by implementing the Park Guiding System. The natural resources - land, the forest, soil, water and wildlife actually do speak silence words to us and we unconsciously always ignoring them. A professional park guide is the medium through which the land can speak to all people and bring silence words of natural resources to life. He must be conversant with and fully aware of the current product knowledge and deliver it in an engaging way to visitors in a manner calculated to produce a behavioural change. Such interpretation in long term can create numerous take-home messages and help changed visitors' behaviour toward achieving more positive awareness on conservation. The Controller of the National Parks and Nature Reserves of the State of Sarawak is empower under Regulation 8 of the National Parks and Nature Reserves Regulations, 1999 to issue, renew and revoke Park Guide Licence, and to prescribe courses and training for persons to undergo and successfully complete before they can be licenced. This paper outline a park guide training and licencing system that is simple and industry friendly, and will enhance the quality of park guiding in National Parks and Nature Reserves of Sarawak while fostering park authority and tourism industry to cooperate effectively in accomplishing their common goals.