

Sustainable Tourism through Coexistence with Natural Capital - the example of Hokkaido

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Abstract

This study explores the potential for sustainable tourism through coexistence with natural capital, using Hokkaido as a case study. Natural capital refers to the resources and services provided by nature (e.g., clean water, fertile soil, biodiversity, etc.), which are essential to our lives and economic activities. However, these natural capitals are often undermined by excessive tourism activities. This study will examine methods for assessing natural capital, strategies for sustainable tourism, and the roles of local communities and tourism operators. Through the case study of Hokkaido, we will also understand the relationship between natural capital and tourism, and propose concrete steps toward achieving sustainable tourism. As a specific case study, we will focus on the town of Biei-cho in Hokkaido. Biei-cho is known for its spectacular natural scenery and its seasonal changes in flavor, attracting many tourists. However, its beautiful scenery has the potential to change due to the impact of tourism. We will evaluate the status of natural capitals in this town and investigate how tourism activities affect these capitals. Analyze the structure of websites related to the town of Biei, as well as tourist reviews on social media. Positive and negative information will be extracted from tourists' emotional expressions toward natural capital to evaluate natural capital and its use. As a result, we believe that we can provide a new perspective on how tourism can harmonize with natural capital and contribute to the sustainable development of local communities.

Keywords: Biei-cho; Emotional expressions; Impact of tourism; Local communities; Social media analysis