

**THE 15TH UNWTO/PATA FORUM ON
TOURISM TRENDS AND OUTLOOK**

**RURAL TOURISM STRATEGIES IN
MALAYSIA'S NATIONAL TOURISM
POLICY 2020 - 2030**

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Content of Presentation

- A retrospective of rural tourism strategies contained in Malaysia's National Tourism Policy 2020 – 2030
- From the perspective of the author as the lead consultant



Rural Tourism Augmentation Strategies in National Tourism Policy 2020 - 2030

- Malaysia's National Tourism Policy contains 6 transformative strategies to deliver long term outcomes of competitiveness, sustainability and inclusiveness
- Rural tourism included as product augmentation strategies



01
Strengthen
Governance
Capacity



02
Create Special Tourism
Investment Zones



03
Embrace
Smart
Tourism



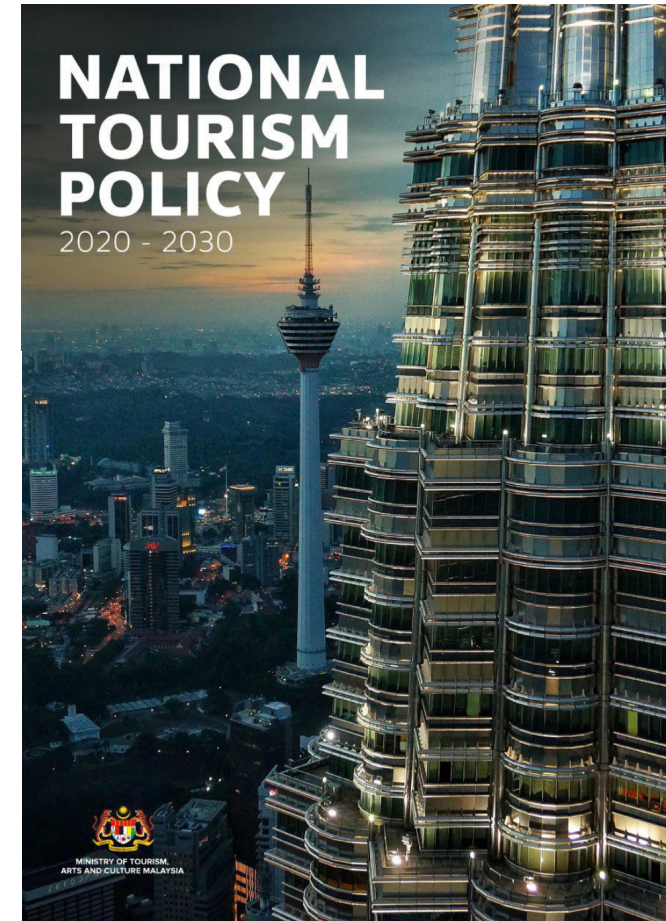
04
Enhance Demand
Sophistication



05
Practise Sustainable
and Responsible
Tourism



06
Upskill
Human
Capital



Rural Tourism Augmentation Strategy

Upscale agritourism by adding value to agriculture as a rural economic sector through related projects and programmes to supplement the income of rural communities and encourage the development of rural tourism entrepreneurs

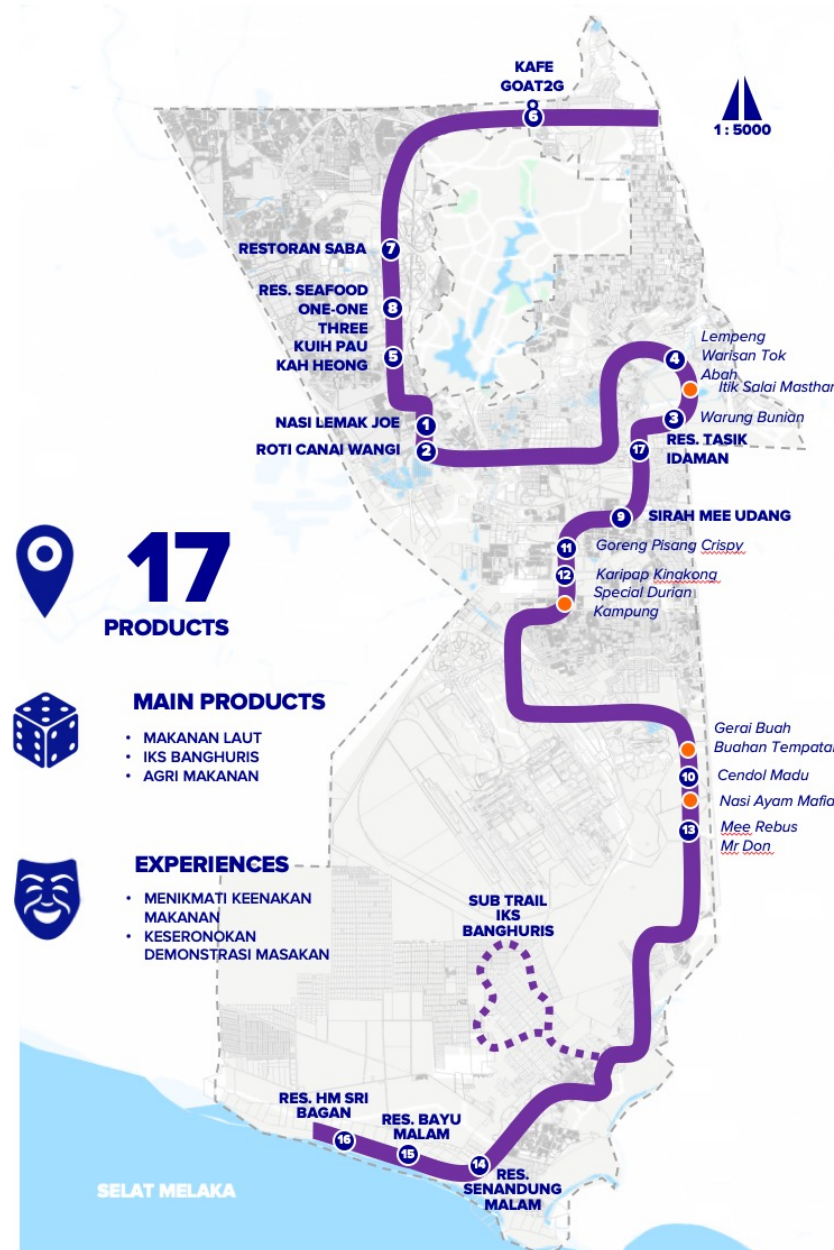
- Rural tourism, agritourism and even community based tourism used interchangeably in practice
- Previous Rural Tourism Master Plan prepared by UNDP in 2001
- Inadequate 'buy in' hence lack of implementation



Strategic Action 1

Develop agritourism corridors with specific themes based on their Unique Selling Proposition (USP)

- Encourage micro-clustering
- Enhance economies of scope
- Especially diagonal clustering that promotes specialization of rural tourism products/services
- Wayfinding essential



Strategic Action 2

Facilitate the setting up of mini visitor centres at agricultural farms to foster the growth of community driven agritourism corridors

- Micro credit and grants
- 'Handholding' to improve story telling
- Sponsoring local youth for training as local guides



Strategic Action 3

Create and promote gastronomy trails by encouraging local food operators to operate rustic restaurants overlooking the idyllic rural landscape

- Gastronomy trails as part of scenic routes
- Importance of food safety and hygiene standard
- Site planning essential to optimize panoramic views



Strategic Action 4

Provide training for local youth to establish tourism startups to develop and sell innovative rural tourism products

- Engage industry veterans to assist in content development
- Harness use of digital technology
- Create a career path



Strategic Action 5

Organise and promote community based events related to rural tourism

- Focus on authentic events that showcase the local culture and values
- Partner the private sector to ensure financial sustainability
- Include community events in formal calendar of events



The Paddy Music Festival, Selangor, Malaysia

Conclusions

- Demand for rural tourism expected to increase in a post COVID-19 tourism landscape
- Tourists increasingly attracted to the spaciousness of rural areas
- Increasing the depth of the rural tourist experience is essential
- Need to transform tourism from income supplement to major source of livelihood in rural areas



An Asian Perspective of Responsible Rural Tourism?

- Responsible rural tourism based on the Asian philosophy
- Harmony between humans and nature
- Rural tourism policy should optimise rural tourism supply chains and Asian values
- Avoid 'tourism that takes place in rural areas'

