CHAPTER 4
RESULTS

The results of this research of "The Potential for Nature-Based Tourism Development in Amphur Muang, Changwat Suratthani and Amphur Khanom, Changwat Nakhon Srithammarat" would be presented by the descriptions and tables. Data analysis was computed by using SPSS 11.0. In accordance with the objectives of the study, the detailed evaluation of this research included two sections as follows.

4.1 A SWOT analysis of possibility and potentiality on NBT development in both clusters (Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat)

4.2 The perspectives of stakeholders to NBT development

Although at the initial stage for implementation of the NBT development has already been considered to be beneficial, the development may directly affect to different types of stakeholders that were characterized into three parties: tourists, providers and regulators. Therefore, a distribution of 400 questionnaires to both domestic and international tourists, in-depth interviews with 35 accommodation entrepreneurs and 5 related officer groups were carried out in total of 440 sets. As consequences, 400 questionnaires of domestic and international tourists and 5 in-depth interviews of related officer groups were available for data analysis but only 30 in-depth interviews of accommodation entrepreneurs were obtained. The data analysis, therefore, was conducted by 435 respondents. Importantly, the data from the research instruments were divided for statistical and phenomenological analysis.

4.1 A SWOT analysis of possibility and potentiality on NBT development in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat

The two clusters, Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat, have mutually shared the benefit exploitation of tourism resources, physically the cultural, historical and natural tourism resources that significantly provide opportunity for development of new tourism products and activities. They are evidently found to be in the different level of readiness and potential on tourism development.

The situation facing the NBT development in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat can be evaluated by a detailed consideration of strengths and weaknesses of its operations and form the environmental influences for opportunities and threats. The conclusion is a SWOT analysis as detailed in Table 4.1, which reviews the possibility and potentiality for NBT development as a single destination:

Table 4.1 A SWOT analysis of possibility and potentiality on NBT

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Joint and multi-destination resources - Promotion of NBT circuits - Rich in historical, cultural and natural features - Gateway to other southern provinces (TAT, 2004) - Resting area to Gulf of Thailand and Andaman clusters (TAT, 2004)	- Insufficient communication in collaboration - Poor marketing to support the alternative tourism on land (TAT, 2004) - Declination in some destinations - Conflict of unlimited tourism development and implementation of action plan - Poor standard of basic infrastructures and services - Poor community participation - Shortage of human resources (TAT, 2004)
Opportunities	**Threats**
- Collaboration on NBT development - High growth rate of tourism industry development - Strong governmental promotion-Southern Seaboard Development Program (TAT, 2004) - Tourism marketing trends in NBT	- Unclear policy to support the multi-destination tourism - Lack of collaborative policy of two clusters - Lack of integrated tourism cooperation among the stakeholders - Crisis affecting to tourism brand image (TAT, 2004) - Competitiveness of other regional NBT destination

4.1.1 Possible and potential strengths

1. The abundant amount and high potential of joint resources, especially the natural tourism resources: attractions of regions have certain elements, which represent good points of strengths.

2. This area has high potential destinations where are able to be promoted as multi-tourism circuits linking with the same type of natural attractions.

3. The area of these clusters is rich in the diversity of cultural and historical heritages and natural phenomena. These phenomena may be characterized as an enhanced tool in the process of new products and activities development. For instance, there are certain types of tourism activities that depend on such given physical features including swimming, snorkeling, farm staying, trekking, natural park visiting as well as traditional annual events.

4. The area of Suratthani significantly acts as the gateway to other southern provinces as tourism brand image of "Green between Seas". The image emerges itself as a fertilized area of mangrove and rain forest as well as Gulf of Thailand and Andaman Sea. With the ecological system, the outstanding image represents a good point of its diversity of destinations.

5. Suratthani is the transportation hub of the upper southern part and the resting area for tourists traveling to other attractions. This is allowed the new activity, particularly in form of camping grounds developed for a new tourism market segment.

4.1.2 Possible and potential weaknesses

1. The participation between accommodation enterprises and local authority is an inefficient approach because of insufficient communication in collaboration. Both sectors

need the sufficient participation of tourism development but the conflict of communication causes the points of weaknesses.

2. The reputation of attraction is one of the major parts of marketing mix. Most tourists know the famous attraction - namely Koh Samui which leads the other destinations, importantly on land fall in marketing promotion to support the alternative tourism.

3. Some destinations have declined in their environmental problems or deterioration of attractions, even areas with poor atmosphere.

4. Accordance to the unlimited tourism development, the implementation of action plan could not be implemented by its strategies. The tourism resources have been declined and polluted, especially water pollution and fresh water drought, by the inadequate tourism planning management.

5. The destinations face poor standard of basic infrastructures and services affect the promotion and operation of tourism in the areas, especially the lack of standard public transportation which causes tourists feel unconfident to their security and safety.

6. The low participation between local community and local officials, especially in the decision making on tourism activities and controlling the areas is very crucial.

7. Both Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat are facing the shortage of highly trained and qualified persons who can carry out well the cooperative marketing.

4.1.3 Possible and potential opportunities

1. Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat are seeking the collaboration on tourism development in order to enhance the tourism in the regions. When they have exploited the connecting tourism resources to create the multi-tourism

circuits, this will be the significant opportunity for tourism development.

2. The growth rate of tourism industry development in the nearby attractions is quite high. Therefore there is a high possibility to exchange tourist flows and develop as a single destination. Moreover, it may exceed the new niche market segment.

3. The government has a strong tourism promotion by representing tourism projects as Unseen in Thailand, Happiness on Earth and Southern Seaboard Development Program, etc. With a respect to the Southern Seaboard Development Program, most businesses concerned in this government project involved with the tourism are absolutely in Suratthani. This leads the opportunity to develop sustainable tourism related to the project.

4. The current tourism trends are mainly based on health and nature. Therefore there is a high possibility to develop and promote the NBT as a new tourism marketing trend in this area.

4.1.4 Possible and potential threats

1. The tourism policy to promote and support in the multi-destination tourism is less serious in commitment and unclear. Some tourism plans are not available for the operation.

2. The tourism-related organizations do not have the collaborative policy of sustainable tourism promotion between Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat.

3. To promote and solve the tourism problems can be achieved through partnership of various sectors of the society. However, the tourism development lacks of integrated tourism cooperation among the stakeholders. For instance, the Chamber of Commerce has a weak role in the integrated operation.

4. The crisis affects to the tourism brand image, e.g. bird flu crisis, terrorism in the three southernmost provinces, unstable political entities and natural disaster-Tsunami.

5. The competitiveness of other regional NBT destination around these two provinces is quite high because it has indifferent geographical phenomena. Besides, the nearby areas still have the outstanding attractions where most people have accepted them to be the well-known destinations such as Kho Samui, Kho Pha-gnan, Kho Tao and etc.

4.2 The perspectives of stakeholders to NBT development

In relation to the study of the evaluation of local tourism industry development in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat, quantitative and qualitative research techniques were implemented to achieve the objectives of the study. The primary data was gathered from questionnaires and personal in-depth interviews about tourism industry's perspective towards the NBT in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat. The opinions of the key informants were investigated to examine and assess the potential and readiness in tourism development of Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat and the effective processes that could facilitate the new tourism product development and tourism destination marketing in the regions.

The survey of primary data disclosed the evaluation of three groups of the samples of this study including tourists, providers and regulators. Respectively, the comprehensive results of data analysis were explained in descriptive presentation as follows:

4.2.1 Group of tourists

The information gathering from the tourist can be separated into domestic tourists and international tourists. The information collected from domestic tourists and international tourists by sampling especially, in Suratthani using questionnaire in Appendix E. The detail of each point is described as follows:

4.2.1.1 Tourists' demographic characteristics profile

The demographic characteristics of tourists as shown in Table 4.2 were individually analyzed into number and percentage. General information of demographic characteristics of entrepreneurs including gender, age and education was investigated. Personal data of information sources used for the study was explained in the following details:

1.) Gender

The survey showed that most domestic tourists were male tourists - 103 in total representing 53.1% of the sample, and 91 female tourists representing 46.9%.

On the other finding, the majority of the international tourists was male, representing 56.8% or 113 respondents and followed by female making up 43.2% or 86 respondents.

2.) Age

The findings of the survey showed that the 95 respondents of 21-30 year olds were the largest group of domestic tourists who traveled to the surveyed area, representing 48.7% of the sample. The 42 respondents of 10-20 year olds were the second largest age group and amounted to 21.5%, and the smallest group was 5 respondents of 51-60 year olds who totaled 2.6% respectively.

The other findings found that the majority of the international tourists who visited the studied area were in the range of 21-30 years old, representing 57.6% or 114 respondents. The 47 respondents of 31-40 year olds were the second largest group of respondents and amounted to 23.7%, followed by the 6 respondents of over 51 year olds who totaled 3.1% respectively.

3.) Education obtained

The survey found that 97 domestic tourists or 51.3% of the sample had a level of education lower than a Bachelor degree, followed by 87 respondents or 46.1% with Bachelor degree, and 5 respondents or 2.6% with a level of education higher than a Bachelor degree.

On the other result, the majority of international tourists education obtained was Bachelor degree at 44.2% or 87 respondents and followed by 65 respondents or 33.0% with a level of education higher than a Bachelor degree, and 45 respondents or 22.8% with a level of education lower than a Bachelor degree.

Table 4.2 Tourist demographic characteristics profile

Demographic Characteristics	Domestic Tourists		International Tourists	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1. Gender				
Male	103	53.1	113	56.8
Female	91	46.9	86	43.2
Total	**194**	**100.0**	**199**	**100.0**
2. Age				
10-20 years	42	21.5	23	11.6
21-30 years	95	48.7	114	57.6
31-40 years	39	20.0	47	23.7
41-50 years	14	7.2	8	4.0
51-60 years	5	2.6	5	2.6
More than 60 years	0	0	1	0.5
Total	**195**	**100.0**	**198**	**100.0**
3. Education obtained				
Less than bachelor's degree	97	51.3	65	33.0
Bachelor's degree	87	46.1	87	44.2
Higher than bachelor's degree	5	2.6	45	22.8
Total	**189**	**100.0**	**197**	**100.0**

Regarding residence of origin, the findings of Table 4.3 found that the majority of the domestic tourists were those who lived in the South, representing 68.4% of the sample or 134 respondents, and followed by 44 respondents who stayed in the Central, making up 22.4%.

Most of international tourists were those who came from Europe, representing 67.0% of the sample or 132 respondents. The 26 respondents who were from America were the second largest group and amounted to 13.2%, followed by the 10 respondents totaled 5.1% from Asia respectively.

Table 4.3 Residence of origin

Hometown	Number	Percentage
1. Domestic tourists		
North	7	3.6
North Eastern	11	5.6
Central	44	22.4
South	134	68.4
Total	**196**	**100.0**
2. International tourists		
Europe	132	67.0
America	26	13.2
Australia	13	6.6
Africa	12	6.1
Asia	10	5.1
Middle East	4	2.0
Total	**197**	**100.0**

According to main objective of traveling**,** the findings of the survey showed that most domestic tourists arrived in the surveyed area for main purpose of traveling representing 61.5% or 120 respondents. The second objective was for business operation and amounted to 15.9% or 31 respondents, and followed by 30 respondents who traveled for visiting friends/cousins, making up 15.5% respectively.

The other findings found that the majority of international tourists arrived in the studied area for traveling representing 74.5% or 146 respondents. The second objective was for visiting friends/cousins and amounted to 13.8% or 27 respondents, and followed by 12 respondents who traveled for business operation, making up 6.1% respectively.

Table 4.4 Main objective of traveling

Main objectives of traveling	Domestic Tourists		International Tourists	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Traveling	120	61.5	146	74.5
Visiting friends/cousins	30	15.5	27	13.8
Seminar/Conference	3	1.5	3	1.5
Business operation	31	15.9	12	6.1
Others(holiday, leisure, marriage)	11	5.6	8	4.1
Total	**195**	**100.0**	**196**	**100.0**

As stated to traveling experiences in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat**,** the tourists' traveling experiences as shown in Table 4.5 were individually analyzed into number and percentage. Information sources of traveling experiences were investigated and explained in the following details:

1.) Staying in these regions

The finding showed that 82.0% of the domestic tourists or 164 respondents have ever been in Muang, Suratthani, and 101 respondents have ever been in Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat, representing 50.5% of the sample. The 14 respondents have never been in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat and amounted to 7.0%.

The 148 international tourists have ever been in Muang, Suratthani, representing 74.0% of the sample, and followed by the 19 respondents who have been in Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat and amounted to 9.6%. The 44 respondents who totaled 22.0% have never been in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat.

2.) Traveled accompany

The 95 domestic tourists have been in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat with friends, representing 48.5% of the sample and followed by the 87 respondents who have been in these regions with family/cousin and amounted to 44.4%. The 14 respondents individually traveled to these areas, making up 7.1% respectively.

The 111 international tourists have been in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat with friends, representing 61.0% of the sample and followed by the 51 respondents who have been in these regions with family/cousin and amounted to 28.0%. The 20 respondents individually traveled to these areas, making up 11.0% respectively.

3.) Destination access

Most domestic tourists traveled to these regions with their own cars, representing 70.8% of the sample or 138 respondents. The 48 respondents took the mass transportation, making up 24.6%, and then the 9 respondents took the tour agency services and amounted to 4.6% respectively.

The majority of international tourists took the mass transportation, representing 60.5% of the sample or 115 respondents, followed by the 58 respondents who took the tour agency services and amounted to 30.5%, and the 17 respondents traveled with their own cars, making up 9.0% respectively.

This finding indicated that most domestic tourists preferred to travel by their own cars, however, most international tourists preferred to travel by mass transportation.

4.) Overnight staying

Most domestic tourists have ever stayed over night in these regions, representing 61.4% of the sample or 116 respondents, followed by 73 respondents who have never stayed over night here and amounted to 38.6%.

Most international tourists have never stayed over night in these regions, representing 54.0% of the sample or 108 respondents, followed by 92 respondents who have ever stayed over night here and amounted to 46.0%.

5.) Accommodation stayed

The majority of domestic tourists stayed in town, making up 70.6% of the sample or 96 respondents, and followed by the 26 respondents who stayed in the protected area amounted to 19.1%. 3 respondents who totaled 2.2% stayed in the farm stay respectively.

The largest group of international tourists stayed in town, representing 58.4% of the sample or 59 respondents. The 21 respondents who stayed in somewhere in the natural attraction were the second largest group and amounted to 20.8%, followed by the 6 respondents who stayed in farm stay totaled 5.9% respectively.

Table 4.5 Tourists' traveling experiences in Suratthani and Nakhon Srithammarat

Traveling Experiences	Domestic Tourists		International Tourists	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
1. Staying in these regions				
No	14	7.0	44	22.0
Yes in Muang, Suratthani	164	82.0	148	74.0
Yes in Khanom, Nakhon Srithammarat	101	50.5	19	9.6
Total	**278***	**N/A**	**211***	**N/A**
2. Traveled accompany				
Family/Cousin	87	44.4	51	28.0
Friends	95	48.5	111	61.0
Only oneself	14	7.1	20	11.0
Total	**196**	**100.0**	**182**	**100.0**
3. Destination access				

Own car	138	70.8	17	9.0
Mass transportation	48	24.6	115	60.5
Tour agency/Tour operator	9	4.6	58	30.5
Total	**195**	**100.0**	**190**	**100.0**
4. Overnight staying				
No	73	38.6	108	54.0
Yes	116**	61.4	92**	46.0
Total	**189**	**100.0**	**200**	**100.0**
5. Accommodation stayed				
In town	96	70.6	59	58.4
Protected area	3	2.2	8	7.9
Farm stay	3	2.2	6	5.9
Somewhere in the natural attraction	26	19.1	21	20.8
On the beach	8	5.9	7	6.9
Total	**136****	**100.0**	**101****	**100.0**

Remarks: * The total number on the last line does exceed 200 due to each respondent
could respond more than one answer.
** The total number on the last line does exceed 116 for domestic tourists and
92 for international tourists due to each respondent could respond in multiple
answers.

Regarding impression of the region destination, the findings of the survey in Table 4.6 revealed that most of the domestic tourists, i.e. 102 or 52.3% of the sample impressed their arrivals much, followed by 65 or 33.3% with the impression of neutral midpoint. The 1 respondent assumed the less impression to their arrivals, making up 0.5% respectively.

Specifically, the majority of international tourists impressed their arrivals much, representing 42.8% or 83 respondents. The two groups of international tourists who impressed their arrivals very much and neutral midpoint amounted to 21.6% or 42 respondents. The 8 respondents with very little impression totaled 4.2% respectively.

Table 4.6 Tourists' impression of the region destination

Impression of arrivals	Domestic Tourists		International Tourists	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Very much	17	8.8	42	21.6
Much	102	52.3	83	42.8
Neutral midpoint	65	33.3	42	21.6
Little	1	0.5	17	8.8
Very little	0	0	8	4.2
No comment	10	5.1	2	1.0
Total	**195**	**100.0**	**194**	**100.0**

4.2.1.2 Tourists' perspectives towards tourism current circumstances in Suratthani

The tourism current circumstances in Suratthani as shown in Table 4.7 (domestic tourists) and Table 4.8 (international tourists) were individually analyzed into number and percentage. Information sources of accommodation and tourism environment were investigated and explained in the following details:

1.) Convenience of accommodation

The 102 domestic tourists were the largest group who considered that the convenience of accommodation in Suratthani was good, representing 56.0% of the sample. However, the 53 respondents considered that it was neutral midpoint, making up 29.1% and followed by the 6 respondents who purposed that it was poor totaled 3.4% respectively.

The majority of international tourists considered that the convenience of accommodation in Suratthani was good, representing 38.4% of the sample or 68 respondents. The 52 respondents thought that it was midpoint, making up 29.4%, and the 4 respondents who purposed that was unacceptable totaled 2.3% respectively.

2.) Room rate

The 88 domestic tourists were the largest group who considered that the room rate was neutral midpoint, representing 48.6% of the sample. The 70 respondents purposed that it was good, making up 38.7% and the 8 respondents who pointed that it was excellent totaled 4.4% respectively.

The majority of international tourists considered that the room rate was good, representing 35.6% of the sample or 63 respondents. The 58 respondents purposed that it was neutral midpoint, making up 32.8% and the 4 respondents who pointed that it was unacceptable totaled 2.3% respectively.

3.) Food and beverage price

The 87 domestic tourists were the largest group who considered that the food and beverage price was good, representing 46.8% of the sample. The 76 respondents purposed that it was neutral midpoint, making up 40.9% and the only 1 respondent who pointed that it was unacceptable made up 0.5% respectively.

The majority of international tourists considered that the food and beverage price was good, representing 37.2% of the sample or 67 respondents. The 52 respondents purposed that it was neutral midpoint, making up 28.9% and the 2 respondents who pointed that it was unacceptable totaled 1.1% respectively.

4.) Friendliness of local people

The 69 domestic tourists were the largest group who considered that the friendliness of local people was good, representing 37.9% of the sample. The 60 respondents purposed that it was neutral midpoint, making up 33.0% and the only 1 respondent who pointed that it was unacceptable made up 0.5% respectively.

The majority of international tourists considered that the friendliness of local people was good, representing 35.6% of the sample or 64 respondents. The 55 respondents purposed that it was excellent, making up 30.5% and the 6 respondents who pointed that it was unacceptable totaled 3.3% respectively.

5.) Standard of transportation system

The 78 domestic tourists were the largest group who considered that the standard of transportation system was neutral midpoint, representing 42.4% of the sample. The 72 respondents purposed that it was good, making up 39.1%, and then the 16 respondents who pointed that it was excellent totaled 8.7% respectively.

The majority of international tourists considered that the standard of transportation system was neutral midpoint, representing 35.0% of the sample or 63 respondents. The 56 respondents pointed that it was good, making up 31.2%, and the 6 respondents who purposed that it was unacceptable totaled 3.3% respectively.

6.) Environmental and natural sources

The 83 domestic tourists were the largest group who considered that the environmental and natural sources were good, representing 45.4% of the sample. The 56 respondents purposed that they were neutral midpoint, making up 30.6% and the 8 respondents who pointed that they were poor totaled 4.4% respectively.

The majority of international tourists considered that the environmental and natural sources were neutral midpoint, representing 36.6% of the sample or 66 respondents. The 55 respondents purposed that they were good, making up 30.6% and the 9 respondents who pointed that they were unacceptable that totaled 5.0% respectively.

7.) Diversity of tourist attractions

The 77 domestic tourists were the largest group who considered that the diversity of tourist attractions were good, representing 41.8% of the sample. The 63 respondents purposed that they were neutral midpoint, making up 28.8% and the only 1 respondent who pointed that they were unacceptable made up 0.5% respectively.

The two largest groups of international tourists equally considered that the diversity of tourist attractions were good and neutral midpoint, representing 34.0% or 61 respondents in each group and then the 8 respondents who pointed that they were unacceptable totaled 4.5% respectively.

8.) Cleanliness of tourist destination

The 86 domestic tourists were the largest group who considered that the cleanliness of tourist destination was good, representing 47.0% of the sample. The 66 respondents purposed that it was neutral midpoint, making up 36.1% and then the 15 respondents who pointed that it was excellent totaled 8.2% respectively.

The majority of international tourists considered that the cleanliness of tourist destination was neutral midpoint, representing 39.4% of the sample or 71 respondents. The 52 respondents purposed that it was good, making up 28.9% and the 7 respondents pointed that it was unacceptable totaled 3.9% respectively.

9.) Security of tourist destination

The two largest groups of 74 domestic tourists equally considered that the security of tourist destination was good and neutral midpoint and amounted to 40.2% of the sample. The only 1 respondent who purposed that it was unacceptable made up 0.5%.

The majority of international tourists considered that the security of tourist destination was neutral midpoint, representing 39.3% of the sample or 70 respondents. The 61 respondents purposed that it was good, making up 34.3% and the 5 respondents pointed that it was unacceptable that totaled 2.8% respectively.

Table 4.7 Opinions of domestic tourists on tourism current circumstances in Suratthani

Accommodation and Tourism Environment	**Assessed levels**										**Total***
	Excellent		**Good**		**Neutral midpoint**		**Poor**		**Un acceptable**		
	N	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	**N**	**%**	
1. Convenience of accommodation	21	11.5	102	56.0	53	29.1	6	3.4	0	0	182
2. Room rate	8	4.4	70	38.7	88	48.6	15	8.3	0	0	181
3. Food and beverage price	7	3.8	87	46.8	76	40.9	15	8.0	1	0.5	186
4. Friendliness of local people	35	19.3	69	37.9	60	33.0	17	9.3	1	0.5	182

5. Standard of transportation system	16	8.7	72	39.1	78	42.4	18	9.8	0	0	184
6. Environmental and natural resources	36	19.6	83	45.4	56	30.6	8	4.4	0	0	183
7. Diversity of tourist attractions	45	24.5	77	41.8	53	28.8	8	4.4	1	0.5	184
8. Cleanliness of tourist destination	15	8.2	86	47.0	66	36.1	16	8.7	0	0	183
9. Security of tourist destination	16	8.7	74	40.2	74	40.2	19	10.4	1	0.5	184

Remarks: * The total numbers on the last column do less than 200 due to some
respondents have no comments on the elements.

Table 4.8 Opinions of international tourists on tourism current circumstances in Suratthani

Accommodation and Tourism Environment	**Assessed levels**					**Total***
	Excellent	**Good**	**Neutral midpoint**	**Poor**	**Un acceptable**	