**INTRODUCTION**

**1. Rationale**

Economic corridor is a special form of our country’s territorial organization. The economic corridor of Lang Son - Hanoi (based on the main traffic axis running through Lang Son, Bac Giang, Bac Ninh and Ha Noi) is a part of two important corridors: Lang Son - Ha Noi - Ho Chi Minh - Moc Bai and Lang Son - Ha Noi - Hai Phong - Quang Ninh, both of which are along 1A National Highway. The distance between Lang Son - Ha Noi is 180 km long. Since the 1A expressway was completed, tourists from Ha Noi have easily accessed interesting places of Bac Giang, Bac Ninh and Lang Son, at the same time, a large number of visitors from China have been attracted to Viet Nam through the Lang Son border gate and then radiate to other tourist attractions of our countries. The economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi is potential for tourism development but the efficiency is low due to spontaneous development. Therefore, in order to develop tourism effectively, increase tourists’ staying days, increase tourism revenue, improve sustainable development... localities have to cooperate, develop according to economic corridors.

Nowadays, cooperation has become an important factor in economic development in general and tourism development in particular. So far, cooperation in tourism development has not been adequately researched. How can cooperation utilize tourism potential of each locality on economic corridors? So, what is tourism development on the economic corridor? What factors affecting tourism on economic corridors? How can evaluate the effects of tourism development on economic corridors?... These issues have been vigorously debated.

This is the reason why "Tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor of Lang Son – Ha Noi" has been chosen as the topic of my doctoral dissertation in the field of geography.

**2. Purposes and responsibilities**

***a. Purposes***

**-** Clarify basic theoretical issues on tourism development on the economic corridor which are used in studying Vietnam’s current situation towards sustainable development.

- Propose orientations and solutions to improving the effectiveness of tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi on the scientific background.

***b. Responsibilities***

- Build the theoretical foundation for the dissertation research (in developing theoretical foundation, the author will conduct an overview of the relevant studies to see how other scholars studied this problem, what for inheriting and what for continued studying?).

- Evaluate the current status of tourism development on the Lang Son – Ha Noi economic corridor in the period of 2005 - 2016 (identify strong points, weak points and reasons of weaknesses).

- Suggest solutions to tourism development on Lang Son - Ha Noi economic corridor in effective and sustainable ways until 2025.

**3. Objects and scope of the study**

***a. Objectives***

Tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor of Lang Son - Ha Noi

***b. Scope of the study***

- In terms of time: The current situation of tourism development from 2010 to 2016, forecasting to 2025.

- In terms of space: The study of tourism development on Lang Son – Ha Noi route is linked with regions along 1A National Highway from Lang Son to Ha Noi. We pay more attention to big and nuclear cities such as Lang Son, Hanoi, Bac Ninh and Bac Giang; Indirectly influenced regions include one central city (Ha Noi) and three provinces (Lang Son, Bac Giang, Bac Ninh).

- In terms of science: The study is in every aspect: both theory and practice, both current status and future tourism development. In the process of studying, the author will analyze the tourism development of all localities along the economic corridor in relation with the tourism development of the country as well as that of Northern Midlands and Red River Delta.

***4. New contributions of the thesis***

***a. In terms of theories and academics:***

The thesis has clarified the concepts and implications of tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor, indicated factors affecting the tourism development; proposed approaches and indicators to evaluate results and effectiveness of tourism development and then apply to Viet Nam.

***b. In terms of practices:***

+ The thesis has pointed out strengths, weaknesses and their causes in the tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi. The thesis has also indicated the role of travelling companies and providing service systems (hotels, restaurants, entertainment service providers...).

+ The thesis has proposed solutions to tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi until 2025 and recommended some key issues that the local authorities have to solve.

+ The thesis has provided scientific basis for localities along the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi to coordinate, link and act in order to promote the tourism potential in the most effective way.

**5. Theoretical framework, approaches and research methodology.**

***a. Theoretical framework, approaches and research methodology.***

*i) Theoretical framework of the thesis: The thesis is sketched according to the diagram:*

Proposing theories on tourism development in accordance with economic corridors

Proposing orientations and solutions to tourism development on the economic corridor Lang son-Ha Noi

Studying theories on tourism development, economic corridors

Practical experience on tourism development of Vietnam and other countries

Analysing tourism potential on economic corridors and territories

Analysing the current situation of tourism development on economic corridors and forecasting the ability to attract tourists

***Diagram 1.1: Theoretical framework of the thesis***

*(Source: The author)*

*ii) Approaches and research methodology.*

- From theories to practice: Analyze and evaluate the role of the corridor for tourism development, the development of tourism on the corridor, factors affecting the development of tourism on the corridor. Then re-examine the development practice, efficiency of tourism development on the corridor.

- From macros to micros: approach the economy as a whole to the tourism sector later; approach from large regions to corridors, as well as approach from economic activities to tourism activities.

- Cross - sector and inter - regional approach: Consider the relationship between tourism and industry, agriculture, trade, services...; examine the relationship between tourism development in the Northern Midlands, the Red River Delta and other parts of the country as well.

- Cause and effect approach: all results have their causes, thus causes of limitations and weaknesses have to be pointed out.

***5.2. Research methodology***

In order to accomplish the thesis, the author has used a combination of traditional and modern research methods in the principle of assuring synthesis, systematization, modernity and relevance: Analytical methods system; Sociological investigation method; Statistical analysis method; Comparative method; SWOT method; Map method and geographic information system (GIS) (the author has developed four maps in chapters 2, 3, 4) ...

**6. Proposed thesis structure**

Apart from the introduction, the conclusion and the reference; the thesis comprises 4 chapters:

Chapter 1: Overview of previous researches related to tourism development in accordance with economic corridors.

Chapter 2: Literature review of tourism development in accordance with economic corridors.

Chapter 3: The current situation of tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi in the period 2010 - 2016.

Chapter 4: Recommendations and solutions to promoting tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi.

**CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF PREVIOUS RESEARCHES RELATED TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECONOMIC CORRIDORS**

* 1. **Related researches and studies on economic corridors**

In the world, issues concerning economic corridors are often mentioned in general studies of economic space and some specific researches. Based on these studies, the author found that other scholars considered the development of economic corridors as an important form of territorial organization in the socio - economic space organization. Basically, in order to form economic corridors, it is necessary to have traffic lines connecting developing poles, nuclear centrals and some large regions along the route. The issue of tourism development in accordance with economic corridor has not been mentioned.

In Viet Nam, scholars have affirmed that the development of economic corridors will bring about great benefits in corporation and socio - economic development of localities on the route... but no authors have fully evaluated influences of economic corridors on tourism development or localities’ cooperation to develop tourism… Most of the authors have only evaluated the potentials, current state and proposed recommendations for tourism development in separated localities; cooperation has not been paid much attention. However, these studies have provided a variety of ways for looking at and solving problems. The author has selectively inherited and applied the scientific basis of economic corridors to the thesis.

* 1. **Related researches and studies on tourism development, tourism development in accordance with economic corridors**

In general, there are many researches on tourism, the organization of tourism territories, and tourism development in the world. These studies are greatly significant to the tourism development of the country in general and of each region in particular. In Vietnam, there are a variety of studies, documents, articles on tourism development, tourism value chain... However, the problem of cooperation to develop tourism has not fully mentioned, especially the tourism development on an economic corridor. Up to now, there have not been any studies on cooperation between localities for tourism development.

**CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW OF TOURISM DEVELOPMETN IN ACCORDANCE WITH ECONOMIC CORRIDORS**

**2.1. Theoretical background**

***2.1.1. Economic Corridors in relation to tourism development***

From domestic and international findings, the author has supposed: “Economic corridors are formed on the basis of an important arterial road and there is the existence of urban-economic centers with economic and travelling activities; economic entities cooperate to develop; As a result, economic activities will be more efficient and more sustainable”.

***2.1.2. Tourism development in accordance with economic corridors***

From domestic and international findings, the author has supposed:

“***Tourism development*** is the implementation and development of activities to serve tourists, to meet the tourists’ higher demand & quality. In other words, tourism development is implementing tourism activities or providing services with high - quality products and thereby bringing about efficiency to the whole society and tourism enterprises”.

"***Developing tourism in accordance with economic corridors”*** is the organized tourism development on an economic corridor, which is based on the cooperation between service providers and urban centers. The cooperation between tour operators, hotel owners, restaurants, cultural and art suppliers, trade centers, traditional craft villages... and urban centers - tourism on economic corridors aims to meet tourists’ demand.”

***The nature of tourism development in accordance with economic corridors***

(i) Promote values; take advantage of potentials of economic corridors not only in tourism but also in trade, industry and culture…

(ii) Combine tourism activities on economic corridors in order to create high -quality services, to meet visitors’ increased demand.

(iii) Tourism activities in accordance with economic corridors will bring about higher efficiency, higher productivity, higher profits and more contribution to the overall development of the region.

***The conditions of tourism development in accordance with economic corridors***

(i) A vibrant arterial traffic should be available.

(ii) There are existing urban and tourist centers on the arterial traffic which serve as economic development kernels and tourism development centers of those territories.

(iii) The two ends of the corridor are centers of great attraction and economic development in general and tourism in particular.

(iiii) There should be cooperation between centers in tourism activities (travel services, hotels, restaurants, entertainment, medical treatment, information services, security and safety), which helps increase the number of tourists, tourists’ staying days, tourism revenues and tourism efficiency.

***2.1.3. Factors affecting tourism development in accordance with economic corridors***

The tourism development in accordance with economic corridors is affected by many factors which complement and link together to create a strong tourism development. The author would like to present three basic elements in detail: economic benefits (profit); Tourism development policy and political determination of authorities; Travelling business enterprises and some other important factors (geographic location and tourism resources; technical infrastructure for tourism development; market demand; living standards; visitors’ high - quality product requirements)

***2.1.4. The efficiency of tourism development in accordance with economic corridors***

2.1.4.1. Criteria assessing the results and effectiveness of tourism development in accordance with economic corridors

*(1) The increased rate of tourists due to tourism development in accordance with economic corridor* (**T1**)

**T1 = (K1: K0 )x 100 (%)**

The equation:

- K1: The increased number of tourists due tourism development in accordance with economic corridors (calculated by taking the number of tourists after developing tourism according to economic corridors minus the number of tourists before developing tourism according to economic corridors).

- K0: the number of tourists before developing tourism according to economic corridors

*(2) The increased rate of tourism revenue due to tourism development in accordance with economic corridors* (**T2**)

**T2 = (D1: D0 )x 100 (%)**

The equation:

- D1: The increased revenue portion due tourism development in accordance with economic corridors (calculated by taking revenues after developing tourism according to economic corridors minus revenues before developing tourism according to economic corridors).

- D0: revenues before developing tourism according to economic corridors

*(3) The increased rate of productivity due to tourism development in accordance with economic corridors* (**T3**)

**T3 = (N1: N0 )x 100 (%)**

The equation:

- N1: The increased productivity portion due tourism development in accordance with economic corridors (calculated by taking productivity after developing tourism according to economic corridors minus productivity before developing tourism according to economic corridors).

- N0: productivity before developing tourism according to economic corridors

*(4) The contribution rate of the tourism industry to GRDP of the localities along economic corridors* (**T4**)

**T4 = (G: GRDP) x 100 (%)**

The equation:

*-* G: is the value added of tourism when developing tourism in accordance with economic corridors (calculated by taking revenues multiplied by the value-added rate,; specifically about 46-48%).

- GRDP: Gross Regional Domestic Products

*(5) Average expenditure of one tourist on economic corridors* (**T5***)*

**T5 = D : K (VNĐ/per visitor)**

The equation:

- D: the total tourism revenues when developing tourism in accordance with economic corridors

- K: the total tourists when developing tourism in accordance with economic corridors.

2.1.4.2. Criteria reflecting causes and effectiveness of tourism development in accordance with economic corridors

*(6) Proportion of investment capital for tourism in total social investment (***T6***)*

**T6 = (VDL: V) x 100 (%)**

The equation:

- VDL: Direct investment capital for tourism industry of localities along economic corridors.

- V: Total social investment

(*7). Value added portion of tourism in total tourism revenues (***T7***)*

**T7 = (G: D) x 100 (%)**

The equation:

- G: Value added portion of tourism of localities along economic corridors.

- D: The total tourism revenue of localities along economic corridors.

**2.2. Practical background**

***2.2.1. From other countries’ practice***

Economic corridors which have been established and developed in many countries and in over the world have become an important factor promoting the development of economic trade, especially tourism development of localities along the routes. From the 90s of the 20th century, in Asia, the concept of developing economic corridors was proposed by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in the regional economic conference (East Asia, ASEAN). In addition to countries in Southeast Asia, East Asian countries like China and South Korea wondered how to set up economic corridors to drive economic development… However, tourism which has only been considered as an aspect of the service sector has not been fully studied.

***2.2.2. From Vietnam’s practice***

The idea of building and developing economic corridors was proposed by many domestic researchers in the 1990s of the twentieth century. However, this idea only really flourished when the 8th Mekong Region Ministers Meeting was held in Manila in September 1998 by the Development Bank Asia (ADB).

Nowadays, many leading economic corridors are established as follows: (1) Lao Cai - Ha Noi - Hai Phong - Quang Ninh and Lang Son - Ha Noi - Hai Phong - Quang Ninh , (2) Lang Son - Ha Noi - Ho Chi Minh - Moc Bai, (3) East - West Economic Corridor ...

The economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi is essentially one section of two routes because its parts belong to two important routes: Lang Son – Ha Noi - Ho Chi Minh City - Moc Bai and Lang Son - Ha Noi – Hai Phong. Thus, this corridor has great potential for tourism development. However, localities’ spontaneous tourism development leads to low efficiency. Therefore, in order to develop tourism effectively, the only way is to cooperate, develop in accordance with economic corridors.

From domestic and international practices, the author supposes that the cooperation in tourism development will be obtained only if tourism is developed in accordance with economic corridors. The cooperation between localities allows exploiting the advantages of tourism resources, physical infrastructure, technology, human resources; as a result, competitive tourism products are created to attract investors and tourists.

***2.2.3. Lessons for tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor Lang Son – Hanoi***

- Firstly, tourism development must be based on economic corridors and the cooperation between service providers (travel enterprises, hotels, restaurants, cultural and art suppliers, workshops, trade centers, traditional craft villages ...).

- Secondly, the tourism development on economic corridors must be regulated by the state and tourism authorities, which control and adjust tourism activities in accordance with Vietnam’s laws.

- Thirdly, build and develop a network of tourism service providers, especially travel agents; create favorable conditions for tourism service providers. At the same time, market development, tourism promotion is also very important.

- Fourthly, respecting for economic benefits (corporate profits) will create tourism value chains. Profits are equally divided for participants in the tourism value chain. More local communities are encouraged to participate in the tourism value chain.

**CHAPTER 3: THE CURRENT SITUATION OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ECONOMIC COORIDOR LANG SON – HA NOI IN THE PERIOD 2010 – 2016**

**3.1. The evaluation on the potential, strengths and factors affecting tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi**

***3.1.1. The evaluation on the potential for tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi***

3.1.1.1. Overview on the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi

The economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi (running through Ha Noi, Bac Ninh, Bac Giang, Lang Son), based on the existence of the arterial traffic running through 4 localities along 1A National Highway and Ha Noi - Lang Son railway. This route is very important to localities such as Lang Son, Bac Giang, Bac Ninh and Ha Noi. This is also a link between South China provinces and Vietnam, a section on the Trans - Asia route. There is Huu Nghi international border gate with a considerable volume of imports which is one of the main contacts with China.

3.1.1.2. Overview on comparative advantages and constraints between the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi with other northern economic corridors

Based on the SWOT model, the author has identified the limitations and disadvantages, comparative advantages to develop tourism on the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi, set the research area in relation with other routes: Lao Cai - Ha Noi, Quang Ninh - Ha Noi.

***3.1.2.Advantages of tourism development in the economic corridor Lang Son – Hanoi***

3.1.2.1. Characteristics for tourism development

The total population of the studying areas is about 11.2 million in 2016, of which 4.4 million are urban residents (accounting for 39% of the population). Only about one third of the population of four provinces and cities participating in tourism has about 4 million. The higher GRDP / person is, the higher traveling demand is. In four provinces the author carries out the study, two centers Hanoi and Lang Son occupy a larger proportion of economic size and population. These two cities maintain important positions in the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi.

3.1.2.2. Socio - economic infrastructure

The economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi is 180 km long, along 1A National Highway. Each city on the route is one center. In order to develop tourism on the economic corridor, these cities must be linked together to form an "urban chain" and have influences on nearby areas. The two most important tourism cities are Ha Noi and Lang Son, other neighboring areas have their own potentialities, strengths and comparative advantages.

3.1.2.3. External combining capabilities

- Lang Son can easily connect with Nanning of China, Guangzhou and Guizhou. When going to Guangzhou, tourists can enjoy beautiful sceneries, delicious cuisines.

- From Ha Noi, it is convenient for tourists to travel to beautiful sceneries in Ha Long, Hai Phong, Ninh Binh, Thanh Hoa ...

3.1.2.4. Market demand

The north of Viet Nam (from Thanh Hoa province) has about 35 million people. If only 10% of them go travelling, there are about 3.5 - 4 million tourists. Every year, Hanoi welcomes about 3 million international visitors. If 30% of this number participates in the tour Lang Son – Ha Noi, there will be 1 million international tourists. Lang Son is a border province with Dong Dang gate, with many interesting natural sceneries, many human and spiritual resources. Lang Son’s neighboring province is Guangxi (China) with the population of about 46 million. If 10% of them participate in the tour Lang Son – Ha Noi, there will be 4 million international tourists through Lang Son border gate to our country in general and to the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi in particular.

***3.1.3. The evaluation on factors affecting tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi***

3.1.3.1. Low profits due to the lack of cooperation

On the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi, there is a lack of cooperation, so tourism efficiency is low. In general, this corridor’s tourism activities have contributed about 33-35% to four localities’ tourism revenues. The rate of tourist has not been commensurate with their potential. Many indicators have been low in comparison with the whole country.

3.1.3.2. The legal system, mechanisms and policies have not yet met and facilitated the tourism development on the economic corridor

Thanks to policy renovation of the Party and the State, four localities on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi have achieved positive results on tourism activities. However, the State has not given legal documents and policies on tourism development on economic corridors.

3.1.3.3. Travelling businesses have not built attractive and unique tours

According to the survey results, only 37.0% of travelling businesses have developed and organized tours on the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi many times, 65.9% have not yet. 84% of travelling companies have not met conditions which are necessary for tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi; 87.9% of tourists do not like to organize tours on the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi because of boring tourism programs; 80.2% of visitors say that tourism promotion is limited.

**3.2. The current situation of tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son - Hanoi**

***3.2.1. Tourists***

The total number of tourists of studying regions increased significantly from 14,556 thousand visitors in 2010 to 21,905 thousand visitors in 2016 (increasing by 7,349 thousand visitors), the average annual growth rate was 7.0% (lower than that of the whole country). From documents provided by four Departments of Culture, Sports and Tourism (Ha Noi is the Department of Tourism) and from actual data, the thesis author determined the number of tourists on the economic corridor was about 15% in 2010, about 21% in 2015, about 27% in 2016 compared to the total tourist in the studying regions. This proves that the number of guests travelling on the economic corridor has increased since the corridor has come into existence; however, the increase is not remarkable.

***3.2.2. Tourism revenues***

When tourism is developed on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi, tourism revenues have become higher and tended to increase: from 9,244 billion in 2010 to 59.057 billion in 2016 (according to current prices) at the growth rate of 26.2%. This figure demonstrates that the tourism development on the economic corridor is more and more effective. According to the author's calculation and documents provided by four Departments of Culture, Sports and Tourism: The total tourism revenues on the economic corridor accounted for approximately 16% in 2010, about 23% in 2015 and about 29% in 2016 compared to the total revenue in the studying regions.

***3.2.3. Tourism employees***

In general, the number of employees in the tourism industry on the economic corridor Lang Son-Hanoi increased by 9.8% from 2010 to 2016, from 88,000 employees in 2010 to 153,800 employees in 2016. However, most of employees are unskilled and nonprofessional; as a result, productivity is not high. Since tourism on the economic corridor was developed, the number of employees in the tourism sector has been increasing. Employees’ professional qualifications and foreign languages have not satisfied tourists’ demand yet. At present, Ha Noi is the center of tourism universities which provide tourism employees for Lang Son, Bac Giang and Bac Ninh.

***3.2.4. Infrastructure & Technical facilities for tourists***

3.2.4.1. Accommodation facilities

In general, the hotel system of four provinces on the economic corridor is unsatisfactory in terms of quality and quantity. The total number of hotels and guesthouses increased by 12.5%, from 853 hotels in 2010 to 1.924 hotels in 2016. Tourists’ staying days are low (average 2 days 1 night), no special rooms is available for different tourist classes. According to a survey of 80 accommodations, it is believed that the number of tourists will increase by 10% when tourism on the economic corridor is developed; 86.7% of interviewees suppose that the tourism development effect will be higher.

3.2.4.2. Restaurants

The number of restaurants in the studying regions increased by 14.7%, from 148 restaurants in to 337 restaurants in 2016. Restaurants’ services are improved because of new construction, renovation and repair. Some other issues are: there are no restaurants specializing in serving religious tourists; staff’s quality is not high; staff find difficult to serve a large number of customers. According to survey results, in 90 restaurants surveyed, 95.2% said that the tourism value chain development would produce higher profits in restaurant sector in particular and tourism in general.

**3.2.5. Investment in tourism development**

In fact, there have been many investment projects for tourism development in 4 localities on the economic corridor. More cooperation is needed in order to exploit all strengths, potentials for tourism development on the economic corridor, minimize unnecessary costs. However, in comparison with the total investment capital for the whole society, the investment capital for tourism is still small, accounting for a small proportion (2.4%). Most of capital is allocated to technical tourism infrastructure (59%). According to the survey, most experts said that the only way to develop tourism on the economic corridor was investing in tourism.

***3.2.6. The analysis on advantages and disadvantages of tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi***

The author uses the SWOT model whose results show strengths, weaknesses and constraints of tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son - Hanoi. These results have provided scientific background for the planning, orientation of tourism development on this economic corridor.

**3.3. Causes of limitations in tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi**

There are a lot of causes, but it must be noted that the tourism development has not been organized on a large scale. The economic corridor Lang Son - Hanoi has many factors to develop tourism, but these factors have not been promoted. As a result, the profit is not high, the average expenditure of each tourist is still low, travelling enterprises’ quantity and quality is unsatisfactory, the legal framework for tourism development is not available… Therefore, the tourism development is spontaneous and ineffective; the cost of tourism remains high and noncompetitive. The urgent problem is developing tourism in accordance with the economic corridor and value chain in order to maximize the comparative advantage of each locality.

**CHAPTER 4: RECOMMENDATIONS AND SOLUTIONS TO PROMOTING TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE ECONOMIC CORRIDOR LANG SON – HA NOI**

**4.1. The context of tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor Lang Son – Hanoi**

Intensive integration into the international economy will be an opportunity, a driving force, but a new challenge to Vietnamese economy in general and tourism in particular. Therefore, in 2009, Viet Nam signed an agreement with ASEAN on mutual tourism (MRA-TP) allowing skilled tourism workers in the tourism industry - restaurants and hotels from ASEAN countries to work in Viet Nam and vice versa.

In Viet Nam, annual GDP has been increasing; the economy has been rapidly changing to the socialist - oriented market economy; Infrastructure is increasingly being developed; the material and spiritual life of the people has been improved; travelling awareness has been changing in a positive direction; people's demand for tourism has been increasing considerably; the cancellation of VISA for citizens of some ASEAN countries and Japan, the opening of more flights Vietnam – US & Viet Nam - Korea... also help attract more tourists to Viet Nam; The introduction of legal documents, resolutions, planning, strategies... aims to facilitate tourism development.

**4.2. Viewpoints on tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi**

(1) Consider efficiency (short - term and long - term) as the highest and most important criterion for tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi.

(2) Consider linking, co-coordinating and developing the tourism value chain as an effective way of tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi.

(3) Modernize tourism on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi.

(4) Consider tourism development in an organized way as the most important mission.

(5) Develop tourism on a sustainable economic corridor, harmonize the economic development with the environment, and ensure the national security as well as the safety of entities on the economic corridor.

**4.3. Forecasts about developing targets of localities along the economic corridor**

***4.3.1. Population and economic development potential of the studied regions***

The north of Viet Nam (from Thanh Hoa province) has about 35 million people, of which 12 million live in midlands, mountainous areas and 23 million people in the Red River Delta. It can be said that there is a relatively large tourism market in the near future for the tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi. GRDP/person in 2025 will be about 158 million VND (about 1.96 times in 2017 and about 7210 USD). At this income level, people will be willing to pay for tourism activities.

***4.3.2. Forecasts about tourists and tourism revenues***

The total number of tourists and tourism revenue in the studying regions will be higher in the coming time: the number of tourists was 21,905 thousand in 2010, reaching 59,057 billion, the number of visitors will be 35,700 in 2025, reaching 155,026 billion. According to the author’s calculation and documents provided by four Departments of Culture, Sports and Tourism, the number of tourists traveling on the economic corridor was 27% in 2016, 40% in 2020 and 65% in 2025 respectively; tourism revenues accounted for 29% in 2016, 45% in 2020 and 20% in 2025.

***4.3.3. Selections of options for tourism development***

Based on forecasted turnover and tourists of the studying regions, the economic development forecast of Highway No. 18, the economic development forecast of the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi - Ho Chi Minh City - Moc Bai, interviews with experts, travelling businesses, hotels, restaurants... the author has given forecasts as follows:

**Table 4.4: Forecasts about tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Provinces | Units | 2016 | 2020 | 2025 |
| PA1\* | PA2\*\* | PA3\*\*\* |
| **1. Number of tourists** | **1000 visitors** | **5.914,4** | **10.224** | **26.580** | **28.627** | **23.245** |
| Lang Son | “ | 707 | 1.180 | 3.068 | 3.682 | 2.057 |
| Bac Giang | “ | 126 | 238 | 634 | 683 | 478 |
| Bac Ninh | “ | 167 | 312 | 832 | 896 | 579 |
| Ha Noi | “ | 4925,4 | 8.494 | 22.046 | 23.366 | 20.131 |
| **2.Tourims revenues** | **Billions VND****(**Current prices**)** | **17.126** | **39.864** | **106.303** | **116.933** | **108.518** |
| Lang Son | “ | 694,6 | 1.652 | 4.310 | 4.742 | 4.465 |
| Bac Giang | “ | 97,2 | 220 | 603 | 663 | 606 |
| Bac Ninh | “ | 372,2 | 870 | 2.370 | 2.607 | 2.386 |
| Ha Noi | “ | 15.953 | 37.122 | 99.020 | 108.921 | 101.061 |
| **3.Average expenditure/per tourist** | **VNĐ/per tourist** | **2.895.840** | **3.899.906** | **3.999.360** | **4.084.710** | **4.676.649** |

*Source: The author’s proposal*

*Note: \* PA1: According to the forecast about economic development of the economic corridor Highway No. 18 \*\* PA2: According to the forecast about economic development of the economic corridor Lang Son - Hanoi - Ho Chi Minh City – Moc Bai \*\*\* PA3 The author’s suggests*

**4.4. Orientation for tourism on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi**

***4.4.1. Orientation for tourism product development***

On the economic corridor, it is necessary to develop high - quality tourism, aiming at attracting high - paying tourists with long staying days, paying special attention to cultural and ecological tourism development. Priority should be given to high - quality tourism products. One of the key directions has to be identified is the creation of linked products.

***4.4.2. Orientation for the development of tourism value chain***

The tourism value chain is essentially connections and mutual interactions between the following objects: travelling companies, hotels, restaurants, transportation, shopping centers, tourism information, travelling agencies. The tourism value chain is shown in the following diagram:

**Diagram 4.1: The map of tourism value chain activities on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi**

**State management agencies**

**Tourists arriving**

**Tourists departing**

**Airline services - railway – car services**

**Hotel associations**

**Travelling associations**

**Homestay**

**Tourism services centers**

**Tourism destinations**

**Resorts, ecological destinations**

**VISA issuing agencies**

**Resort hospitals**

*Source: The author suggests following diagram 2.2 of chapter 2*

Travelling companies play a key role in shaping the tourism value chain. If there are many travelling companies in the area, the Tourism Association will be "organizers". Participants in the value chain share benefits and risks in providing services to tourists. In the author’s opinion, the key issue of tourism value chain formation is equal benefits, risks and responsibilities.

**Table 4.9. The matrix in the tourism value chain of the economic corridor Lang Son – Hanoi**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Tourism centers** | **Travelling agencies** | **Hotels** | **Restaurants** | **Shopping malls** | **Entertainment centers** | **Tourism destinations** |
| Lang Son | \* | \* | + | + | \* | + |
| Bac Giang | + | + | + |  |  | + |
| Bac Ninh | + | + | + |  |  | + |
| Ha Noi | \* | \* | + | + | \* | + |

*Note: \* Keep the key role in the coordinating process;*

*+ Perform the coordinating role*

*(Source: the author’s proposal)*

The coordination to develop tourism on the economic corridor Lang Son - Hanoi must take place both vertically and horizontally:

- Vertically (specialized field): it is the coordination between tourism service providers (travelling companies are linked together, hotels are linked together, of entertaining centers are linked together...)

- Horizontally (between tourist centers): In each locality, tourism service providers are linked together in the tourism value chain. Tourism service providers are synchronously linked together to serve in the best way and obtain the highest efficiency.

***4.4.3. Orientation for connecting tourism between localities***

It is necessary to determine cooperation issues of 4 provinces such as: building and diversifying tourist products, investing in transport… In order to make more effective cooperation between the four regions, the author would like to submit proposals for the tourism development between Hanoi with three localities as follows: (1) Forming tours; (2) Training and developing tourism human resources, (3) Cooperating and exchanging experience in tourism management.

**4.5. Solutions to improving the efficiency of tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son - Hanoi**

***4.5.1. Investment for tourism development***

Investment plays a very important role in tourism development. In order to develop effective and sustainable tourism on the economic corridor, it is necessary to increase investment capital for tourism development. Direct investment capital for tourism development is divided according to each period, each item; however, compared with the total investment capital for socio-economic development, and capital for tourism is not significant. According to the author’s calculation and documents provided by four Departments of Culture, Sports and Tourism: Total social investment capital in the period 2011 - 2016 accounted for 67% and 70% in the period 2017 - 2025.

***4.5.2. Tourism cooperation and development***

Tourism services providers and localities on the economic corridor should have specific policies to coordinate and associate to form tours connecting beautiful sceneries and exploit the maximum advantages 4 localities. Some suggested programs: tours from Hanoi to Bac Giang, Bac Ninh, Lang Son and tours from Lang Son to Bac Giang, Bac Ninh, Ha Noi; tours for international visitors from Ha Noi to Bac Giang, Bac Ninh, Lang Son; Chinese tourists, tours between China and Viet Nam, tours for tourists from South East Asia, South Korea, European countries ...

***4.5.3. The formation of tourism associations in four localities***

The purpose of tourism associations is to link, cooperate and support each other in economic, technical and service business, stabilize the market, improve products, tourism products’ quality, domestic and international competitiveness; Protect legitimate rights and interests of members. In order to encourage the establishment of associations, local governments should support 15-20% of the operational costs of these associations.

***4.5.4. The accomplishment of tourism infrastructure system***

In order to improve tourism development on the economic corridor, priority should be given to the following tasks: Finishing the Hanoi - Lang Son Expressway; Finishing a highway section from Bac Giang to Lang Son; Finishing highways linking highways with sceneries and resorts on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi; Spending approximately 50% of the total tourism investment capital for building tourism infrastructure along this corridor.

***4.5.5. The development of high-quality tourism human resources***

The following solutions should be put forward: ensuring human resources’ quality and quantity, balancing sector structures and training standards to meet the requirements of tourism development and international integration; developing a network of tourism training, technical infrastructure, teaching equipment; standardizing the quality of lecturers; standardize training framework; promulgating national framework in the field of tourism...

***4.5.6. The accomplishment of mechanisms and policies for the State’s tourism development***

In the form of territorial groups, there are no legal documents, no regulations and policies for organization and operation, causing difficulties in coordinating and development. In order to carry out the tasks and targets developing economic corridors, there should be comprehensive and synchronous mechanisms and policies. At the same time, the mechanisms and policies must create driving forces for economic development in general and tourism in particular: (1) perfecting the guideline for tourism development on the economic corridor; (2) Perfecting policies for tourism development on the economic corridor.

***4.5.7. Determining the list of priority tourism development projects towards efficiency and sustainability.***

Incentives for tourism projects should be taken into consideration such as: Extending the lease period to 70 years; Charging no fees for non-profit projects; simplifying administrative procedures; supporting clearance compensation; providing corporate income tax incentives (at least equal to the highest current level); free entry visa for international tourists in certain regions under specific mechanisms; permitting investors to reside permanently, along with investment projects.

**4.6. The evaluation on the effectiveness of tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi to 2025**

\* Calculating background: results of some general indicators of tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi to 2025 by the author; References from two projects by the Development Strategy Institute in 2007 and in 2010 of developing the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi – Hai Phong (effective coefficient of 1.79 times) and the corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi - Ho Chi Minh - Moc Bai (with an efficiency coefficient of 2.3 times).

\* Calculating method: According to formulas in Chapter 2.

The efficiency of tourism development on the economic corridor is a combined effect because this development has produced socio - economic benefits for all participants of the economic corridor. It consists of three aspects: economic efficiency, social efficiency and environmental efficiency. If orientation is successfully implemented, the result will be significantly improved. Therefore, the development of tourism on the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi is very necessary and feasible.

**CONCLUSION**

1. The thesis "***The tourism development in accordance with the economic corridor Lang Son - Ha Noi***" has firm theoretical and practical backgrounds. Up to now, there have not been any researches fully and comprehensively studying the tourism development on the economic corridor.

2. The thesis has clarified many theoretical and practical issues on economic corridors and the tourism development on economic corridors. The tourism development is based on the association of tourism activities. The thesis has identified three main factor groups affecting tourism development on the economic corridor and some other important factors... in the context of Vietnam, at the same time the set of 7 main indicators is identified to analyze the results and efficiency of tourism development on the economic corridor.

3. The development of the economic corridors Lang Son - Ha Noi is based on the arterial traffic along 1A National Highway, Ha Noi - Lang Son railway; Lang Son and Ha Noi are two poles of the economic corridor with good development and a long history… However, tourism has not developed corresponding with its potential, strengths and comparative advantages; The efficiency is not high, the average expenditure/ per tourist is low, travelling businesses’ quantity and quality are low, the legal framework for tourism development is not available. Localities have not reached open development (despite they have intended to cooperate on a large scale). Under this circumstance, it is urgent to develop tourism in accordance with the economic corridor and tourism value chain.

4. The thesis has proposed viewpoints, orientations and solutions to the tourism development on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi to 2025 with a vision to 2030. The orientations and solutions are based on the viewpoints and objectives of the Party and State, each locality along the economic corridor. The thesis has clearly demonstrated the development of specific tourism products on the economic corridor, tourism value chain, tourism connection between localities. In order to obtain effective development, it is necessary to implement seven solutions: *Firstly*, tourism development should be heavily invested. *Secondly*, tourism cooperation should be improved. *Thirdly*, tourism associations in four localities should be established. *Fourthly*, infrastructure for tourism development should be fully completed. *Fifthly*, high quality human resources should be developed. *Sixthly*, mechanisms and policies for tourism development on the economic corridor should be made perfect. *Seventhly*, a list of priority projects for tourism development towards efficiency and sustainability should be built.

5. The authorities of the four localities are suggested to closely cooperate with tourism companies to organize a conference on tourism development along economic corridor; the authorities should formulate a program on tourist development on the economic corridor up to 2025 with a vision to 2030. At the same time, they should establish relevant associations to develop tourism and support investment budget for technical infrastructure development, organize a conference to promote tourism investment development for four localities.

The objectives, responsibilities of the thesis have been fully achieved. The author would like to have conditions for further studying and expanding the tourism value chain development to larger regions. The author is willing to receive the opinions from both domestic and international experts for making the thesis more perfect. Hopefully, the research results of the thesis will attract attention from travelling business, local governments... on the economic corridor Lang Son – Ha Noi for current and future tourism development.