

THE EDUCATION UNIVERSITY OF HONG KONG  
FACULTY OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

**Research Output/Impact/Knowledge Transfer Prize**  
**for the Dean's Research Fund 2018-19**

**Brief Introduction of Awardee's**  
**Research/KT Publication/Study/Output and Future Research/KT Development**

**Awardee (Dept):** Dr. Cheung Ting On Lewis, Associate Professor (SSC)  
**Publication Title/KT project:** Ecotourism planning and management

- A. *Briefly introduce your research/KT publication/study/output for which you have received the prize.*

This summary describes the impact of *Ecotourism in protected areas* related research carried out by Dr Lewis Cheung of the SSC Department in the past few years (2014 – 2018 onwards). He has been an active researcher in the field of ecotourism and his articles have been cited 314 times since 2013 and the h-index is 11 (figure from Google Scholar Citations). Lewis has published 1 book chapter and 23 journal articles (18 articles indexed in SSCI/SCI) on the ecotourism related topics. Lewis is the first author and/or corresponding author of 20 of these published articles. Lewis' articles have been accepted and published by top-tier international referred journals. 15 of them were published in rank A or above journals (Scimago Journal and Country Rank).

As a result of Dr Cheung's expertise in sustainable tourism with particular emphasis on nature-based tourism in protected areas, environmental education, and environmental conservation, he was commissioned in 2014 by the Development Bureau of the HKSAR government to lead, as Principal Investigator, a 20-month research project on the sustainable tourism development for the Wolong National Nature Reserve in Sichuan, China, as part of its support for reconstruction of earthquake stricken areas. The project was administered by Ocean Park, Hong Kong.

The aims of the project, involving researchers from EdUHK, University of Hong Kong and Chinese University of Hong Kong, were to: (1) investigate the ecotourism resources of the Wolong National Nature Reserve, (2) formulate an ecotourism development guideline for the nature reserve, (3) provide a series of trainings and public forums for local residents and government officials and (4) design two ecotourism accreditation systems for tourism businesses and ecotour guides. The project was completed in June 2016. Dr Cheung was principal investigator, responsible for the study design, from data collection to formulation of the developmental guidelines and ecotourism accreditation systems. The team conducted a household survey to assess residents' post-quake situation. It organised two forums to introduce the ecotourism development plan and certification systems, and glean local views for the ecotourism development guidelines.

The project began with an evaluation of the potential impacts of tourism development and environmental conservation in an ecologically sensitive site. It used various visitor management, protected areas planning and management, ecotourism and sustainable tourism theoretical frameworks as the research backbone for tourism development of the heritage site. For the certification systems, the Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria, which are arranged in four pillars, namely Sustainable Management, Socioeconomic Impacts, Cultural

Impacts, and Environmental Impacts, were developed to become the Ecotourism Accreditation and Certification System for the Wolong National Nature Reserve. Information and data from the project informed academic journal articles. Several articles investigating the impacts of relocation of local residents; their resilience on natural disaster; and views on ecotourism development have been published in leading refereed journals. The findings offer insight on relocation strategies of local residents that can help their preparedness for future natural disaster. Other research identified the preference and supportiveness of local residents on post-disaster ecotourism development. The success of the project resulted in Dr Cheung being awarded the President's Award for Outstanding Performance in Knowledge Transfer (Individual Award) in 2016/17 and being invited by various local international and local organisations to take up different advisory roles on sustainable tourism.

*B. How you used/will use your prize and perhaps its usefulness to your research/KT development?*

The funding of this prize will be used for a preliminary data collection to support my research in the protected areas in China. The data can support my further development of GRF proposal in the coming round.

*C. Expected research/KT outcomes/outputs/impacts arising from this prize.*

Data collected by using the funding of this prize is essential for my development of GRF proposal. I would like to develop a GRF proposal for submission in 2020/21 round.