

Investigation And Study on Community's Developing and Protection Of Shilin Geopark, Yunnan, China

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Shilin Geopark is located in Shilin Ethnic Yi Autonomous County in eastern Yunnan province, which represents one of the world's most spectacular examples of humid tropical to subtropical karst landscapes occurred some 270 million years ago. The zone of Shilin Geopark for tourists covers an area of 20 km² and is surrounded by a much bigger buffer zone which covers an area of 330 km². There are 75 natural villages and about 67,700 people live in the whole Park. How to balance development of the local community and the protection of resources in the park is a big problem for the administrative organization.

Because of the strong limitation on natural resources using in the park, the contradictions between the needs of community's development and the constraints posing on Geopark conservation are becoming more and more serious. In order to evaluate the relationship between the community's developing and protection of Geopark, the administrative bureau undertook the research and study, and the result suggests that developing rural tourism can be considered as a good way to solve the problems. Developing rural tourism can improve the local community engagement to the tourism, and create a lot of jobs and career opportunities, help the local people reduce the dependence on the land and natural resources. Consequently, it can increase the tourism multiplier, and enrich the local people in a more sustainable way rather than depending on subsidy from government.