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# Chapter 1

## Introduction: Social Entrepreneurship and Social Innovation in Eco-Tourism



Muhammad Khalilur Rahman, Mohammad Mainul Hossain,  
and Noor Raihani Zainol

**Abstract** This chapter sets the conceptual foundation for the book. It provides a background on the development of thought around social innovation, as well as eco-tourism. After introducing various definitions and concepts of social innovation and social entrepreneurship, it then goes on to develop a definition of eco-tourism social entrepreneurship. An analysis of the current state of the environment and tourism leads to the discussion of how eco-tourism and social entrepreneurship can transform the industry for the better. The chapter then describes how social entrepreneurship can effectively make changes to the economic and social systems that are no longer working in the world and tourism. The status of eco-tourism social entrepreneurship in industry, academia and education are then discussed. The final section of the chapter lays out the book's contents.

### 1.1 Introduction to Social Development in Eco-Tourism

Tourism is the third-largest contributor to Malaysia's GDP, after the manufacturing and commodities sectors. A report from the Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM) released that the total revenue of tourism sectors in 2019 was 15.9% (DOSM, 2020). A couple of years ago prior to the COVID-19 contagion, the Southeast Asian tourism sector had experienced a significant development stage, therefore, Malaysia initiated the "Visit Truly Asia Malaysia 2020" program which aimed to attract 30 million tourists and achieved tourists' revenue of RM100 billion in 2020 (Chin et al., 2021). The COVID-19 epidemic, however, had a significant negative impact on Malaysia's travel and tourism sector, which caused the campaign to be abandoned. Wijesinghe (2021) mentioned that The National Tourism Policy (NTP) 2020–2030 was subsequently announced by the government on December 23, 2020, to secure the nation's tourism sector and boost Malaysia as a top tourist spot internationally.

Effective tourism marketing salvage based on new rules, enhancing productivity, inclusive and environmentally friendly tourism development, and catastrophic risk management are important strategies for achieving the NTP's agenda. The development of digital technology has impacted the way public travel which has changed how tourism-related businesses operate. Tourism has been a major growth industry