ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates Singapore's potential for meeting ecotourism needs both within its geographical confines and in the immediate adjoining region accessible within one day's return travel by vehicle or ferry. An overview of ecotourism's evolution is provided, and existing ecotourism definitions analysed to isolate the defining characteristics, arising from which a definition suited to the Singapore context is formulated and adopted for use throughout this dissertation. This is followed by an assessment of worldwide and regional ecotourism demand, from which current and future prominent generating and receiving regions are distinguished. In determining Singapore's ecotourism potential, 54 nature sites that could be attractive to ecotourists are evaluated, and tourism industry stakeholders' views on ecotourism development solicited. Singapore's potential as an ecotourism destination and an ecotourism gateway into the wider Asia Pacific region is finally concluded, with appropriate recommendations made.

Keywords: Singapore, ecotourism potential, natural resource base, ecotourism development, ecotourism destination, ecotourism gateway.