

# Thoughts and Planning on Tourism Recovery and Reconstruction after the "5.12" Earthquake in Wenchuan City, Sichuan Province

Xie Jing<sup>1</sup>, Shi Dongdong<sup>2</sup>

1. School of Civil Engineering and Architecture, Southwest University of Science and Technology, Mian yang City, Sichuan Province, 621010, Email: 1099465814@qq.com

2. Urban Science and Technology College of Chongqing University, Yongchuan District, Chongqing City, 402160, 1600756547@qq.com

Summary: This article firstly sorts out the tourism and disaster planning in recent years, and then shows the current situation of the integrated development of disaster planning and tourism planning, and finally points out the importance of paying attention to disaster planning strategies in tourism development. Then this article takes the tourism recovery and reconstruction plan after the "5.12" Wenchuan Earthquake in Sichuan as an example, discusses the planning process, content framework, and the scope and time limit, loss assessment, project selection, and fund allocation combined with the author's practical experience in participating in this plan. Finally the article discusses the pioneering contribution of this plan to the preparation of unconventional tourism planning in terms of framework system, theoretical basis, emergency rescue system, etc.

Key words: travel plan; Disaster planning; Wenchuan "5.12" Earthquake; Restore and rebuild;

## 1 Introduction

In recent years, with the abnormal changes of the global environment, various sudden disasters have occurred frequently, causing great damage to the global society and economy, especially the losses caused by earthquakes and hurricanes (including tropical storms) [1]. The frequent occurrence of natural disasters and the huge losses caused have made more and more countries and people aware of the importance of strengthening disaster prevention, rescue and recovery. In this context, how to formulate scientific disaster prevention strategies and implement effective post-disaster reconstruction plans to help the disaster-stricken areas embark on a normal development track has become the focus of attention from all walks of life.

# 2 Research progress of tourism and disaster planning

Generally speaking, tourism is accompanied by a happy vacation and has nothing to do with natural disasters. However, tourism is the industry most vulnerable to natural disasters, because the areas where natural disasters frequently occur are mostly tourist resource-rich areas<sup>[2]</sup>. Therefore, how to prevent the damage caused by disasters to tourism and how to form a set of effective tourism emergency rescue measures have become the key content for scholars to discuss the relationship between tourism and disaster planning. The damage and losses brought by disasters have not been given due attention, and the integrated development of tourism planning and disaster planning has not yet become an inevitable content of community tourism management<sup>[3]</sup>. However, as tourism has become a major part of local economic development, the destination area should formulate special plans for tourism disaster prevention, post-disaster mitigation and emergency rescue to ensure the safety of tourists and the sustainable development of local tourism.

# 3 Wenchuan Earthquake and Tourism Recovery and Reconstruction Plan

On May 12, 2008, the Wenchuan Earthquake, a strong earthquake of magnitude 8.0 on the Richter scale, struck Sichuan Province in western China. The Wenchuan earthquake affected 417 counties in 10 provinces and cities including Sichuan Province, Gansu Province, Shaanxi Province, Chongqing and Yunnan Province, causing serious casualties and property losses<sup>[4]</sup>. The hardest-hit area of this earthquake is the Longmen Mountain area, which is not only an important tourist resource gathering area, but also a relatively developed area in Sichuan Province. The earthquake not only caused a lot of damage to the tourism resources in the region, but also brought devastating damage to the tourism infrastructure and service facilities in the region. It not only affected the disaster-stricken area and the tourism market in Sichuan Province, but also affected the national tourism market.

The impact of disasters is a long-playing process. The moment the disaster occurs is only a part of the impact of the disaster, while the post-disaster recovery and reconstruction is a long process that reflects the impact of the disaster<sup>[5]</sup>. As an area rich in tourism resources and the worst-hit area in the tourism industry, the restoration and reconstruction of the tourism industry in Longmenshan area has received unprecedented attention from the country. In this reconstruction plan, the tourism recovery and reconstruction plan, as a special plan under the framework of the post-disaster reconstruction master plan, was incorporated into the national master plan for the first time. This fully highlights the important position of tourism in the reconstruction after the Wenchuan earthquake.

# 4 The process of tourism planning

# 4.1 Planning the start-up phase

The planning start-up phase has already begun after the end of the post-disaster rescue. The central government specially established the National Post-disaster Reconstruction Planning Committee, and issued an overall plan for post-disaster reconstruction<sup>[6]</sup>. This is the first time that the country has included the preparation of post-disaster reconstruction plans as an inevitable procedure for post-disaster reconstruction. As a special plan in the productivity layout and industrial adjustment plan, the tourism recovery and reconstruction plan has received great attention<sup>[7]</sup>. The National Tourism Administration and the Sichuan Provincial Tourism Bureau jointly established the "Leading Group for the Tourism Reconstruction Planning Work after the Wenchuan Earthquake".

## 4.2 Planning and inspection phase

The planned inspection phase is from June 1st to June 7th. Members of the planning team of each area went to the hardest-hit areas for on-site inspections. The inspections included detailed understanding of tourism loss data in cities and counties, on-site inspections of tourist attractions, tourist villages, tourist facilities, and collection of disaster pictures, video data, and original information. After the inspection, the district planning team handed in the planning inspection report and the related materials collected<sup>[8]</sup>.

#### 4.3 Planning stage

The planning stage is the most important which directly determines the effectiveness of the post-disaster tourism recovery and reconstruction. The preparation time is relatively long, which can be divided into three stages: outline preparation, first draft formation, and final draft completion. The outline preparation phase starts on June 8th and ends on the 12th<sup>[9]</sup>. The planning team will report on the first draft plan, and will further improve it based on the extensive solicitation of opinions from relevant departments, experts, officials, and the public to make it more operational and effective. After the planning is completed, it will be reviewed by experts and reported to the provincial government

and the National Tourism Administration to form a legally effective post-disaster tourism recovery and reconstruction program.

# 5 Focus issues in planning

Generally speaking, there are two types of post-disaster reconstruction: one is the post-disaster reconstruction with routines to follow, and the other is the post-disaster reconstruction with no routines<sup>[10]</sup>. Therefore, there is a certain degree of flexibility in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction. However, earthquakes, tsunamis, hurricanes, etc. belong to the unprecedented post-disaster reconstruction. These disasters happen suddenly in a short time and have strong destructive power, which always cause huge loss of life and property to the local and people. If the action is delayed, it will cause incalculable consequences. Since it is an exploration and lacks a fixed standard model, there will naturally be some focus of controversy during the compilation process.

#### 5.1 Focus one: the scope and time limit of restoration and reconstruction

Combining the spirit of the country's documents and the actual situation of the plan, the planning team decided that this plan is only for Sichuan Province, and the post-disaster reconstruction plans of other provinces are carried out with reference to the tourism planning system of Sichuan Province. Because different planning time limits involve different project settings, this will affect the allocation and flow of funds to a large extent. In fact, the post-disaster reconstruction plan is mainly an emergency plan, which is to solve the planned project arrangement and fund allocation problems in the shortest time. Therefore, the most important problem that needs to be solved is to plan for the projects that need to be restored and reconstructed after the disaster, and to obtain funds so as to lay the foundation for the recovery of the tourism industry. Therefore, according to this principle, the time limit for this plan is determined from 2008 to 2010, which is a three-year restoration and reconstruction period.

#### 5.2 Focus Two: Basic data and Standards for Disaster Loss Assessment

The first thing to do in the recovery and reconstruction plan is to evaluate the disaster losses that have been caused, so as to provide basic data for the country to implement recovery and reconstruction. But the tourism industry is different from other industries. It has the characteristics of the simultaneity of production and consumption. The process of production is the process of consumption. Therefore, the loss of tourism includes both the loss of production capacity and the loss of consumption demand. At present, the earthquake disaster loss in China is mainly assessed according to the National Standard of the People's Republic of China "Earthquake Field Work Part 4: Assessment of Direct Disaster Loss" (GB/T18208-2000). The purpose of the standard is to comprehensively assess the overall damage in the disaster area, including casualties, damage to houses, and damage to infrastructure, public service facilities, industrial and agricultural production facilities, and commercial circulation facilities, ecological environment, natural and human resources. According to this standard, the assessment scope of tourism disaster losses is limited to the losses in infrastructure of tourism production while the losses in production capacity and consumption demand cannot be evaluated, so the estimated loss will not be in line with reality. The infrastructure of the tourism industry includes tourist attractions facilities, hotel facilities, local tourism administrative agencies, travel agency facilities, and tourist service facilities in tourist towns. The data evaluated for these facilities will be assessed with the statistical data of the disaster loss assessment carried out by the earthquake department. There is a certain overlap. Therefore, the disaster assessment of the tourism industry needs to combine its own characteristics with the basis of national standards. After a comprehensive discussion, it was finally decided that the disaster losses in the tourism industry should only be calculated as direct losses, and indirect losses will not be included. The direct losses of the tourism industry are mainly based on the investigation and evaluation of the basic conditions of production and the direct damage to the production capacity of the tourism industry. According to this standard, the tourism loss evaluation formula is derived, that is, the direct economic loss of the tourism industry caused by the earthquake = the direct loss of the tourism industry on the

day of the earthquake + the production capacity loss of the tourism industry from May 12 to 31 + the investment cost of the tourism industry for earthquake relief According to this formula, the direct losses of Sichuan tourism from the earthquake disaster amounted to 54.8 billion yuan.

# 6 The pioneering significance of the preparation of the post-disaster tourism recovery and reconstruction plan

## 6.1 Establishing a framework system for unconventional tourism planning

Tourism restoration and reconstruction planning is an unconventional plan, as well as an emergency rescue plan to deal with sudden natural disasters, which is different from conventional tourism planning. Regular planning focuses on tourism resource analysis, market research and destination market analysis and service and reception facilities, tourism input and output analysis, etc.; Unconventional planning focuses on disaster loss assessment, adjustment of tourism spatial layout, tourism image marketing, policy guarantees, etc. Conventional planning emphasizes strategy and focuses on the development and improvement period of the tourism industry; Unconventional planning emphasizes reality and focuses on the recovery and reconstruction period of the tourism industry. The Sichuan Tourism Recovery and Reconstruction Plan is China's first industry plan for major natural disasters. It basically establishes the framework of my country's unconventional tourism planning.

## 6.2 Forming the theoretical basis for unconventional tourism planning

As an unconventional plan, the tourism restoration and reconstruction plan also adopts some useful international planning theories as a guide in its compilation process. The first is the theory of community construction, which believes that restoration and reconstruction is not only the restoration of physical facilities, but also a movement to continuously improve the living environment with the goal of safety and security, welfare and health, and the charm of the landscape. The plan pays special attention to the individualization and diversified choices of tourist village buildings, the configuration of public activity spaces and public service facilities, and the aesthetic value of rural trails. The second is the resilience theory of scenic spots. The resilience of scenic spots comes from the theory of urban resilience. Scenic spots are like human bodies, with good or bad physical conditions, strong or weak tolerance to disasters, and quicker and slower resilience after disasters. Based on this theory, the planning team has paid more attention and attention to those scenic spots that have a faster recovery capacity and good basic conditions in the restoration and reconstruction. The third is the theory of industrial optimization. Different regions have different basic resource conditions, which are the foundation of a region's economic development. The earthquake disaster has made people aware of the importance of public safety. The restoration and reconstruction plan specifically highlights tourism emergency rescue and risk reduction projects, and highlights the promotion of public safety knowledge, so that more service personnel and tourists can understand emergencies.

# 6.3 Highlighting the important position of the tourism emergency rescue system

Sudden natural disasters are an important test for the tourism emergency rescue system. The earthquake exposed the fragility and imperfections of emergency rescue measures in China's tourism industry. Therefore, it is very important for the construction of the tourism emergency rescue system to protect the life safety of tourists and improve the anti-risk ability of tourism. In the recovery and reconstruction plan, disaster prevention and mitigation and emergency rescue projects are specially planned. For example, in important mountain tourist attractions, helicopter landing sites are set up, and each important scenic area is equipped with maritime satellite phones, emergency rescue car radios, medical assistance stations and other facilities, so that the hardware and software of tourism emergency rescue are relatively complete, forming complete safety emergency system. Therefore, in the event of a major disaster, the safety of tourists can be guaranteed to the greatest extent and the economic loss of tourism can be reduced.

# **References:**

- [1] Hu Yizhi. Post-disaster reconstruction planning theory and practice: Taking the reconstruction of New Orleans as an example, and discussing the reference to the post-disaster reconstruction of Wenchuan earthquake [J]. International Urban Planning, 2008, 23 (4): 66-70.
- [2] Allen B L. Environmental Justice, Local Knowledge, and After-disaster Planning in New Orleans [J]. Technology in Society, 2007, 29:153-159.
- [3]Emma C, Kate L.Sun, Sea, Sand and Tsunami:examining disaster vulnerability in the tourism community of Khao Lak, Thailand[J]. Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography, 2008, 29 (3):288-306, 19.
- [4]Cioccioa L, Michaelb E J.Hazard or Disaster:tourism management for the inevitable in Northeast Victoria [J]. Tourism Management, 2007, 28 (1):1-11.
- [5]Bruce P.The Need to Use Disaster Planning Frameworks to Respond to Major Tourism Disasters:analysis of Australia's response to tourism disasters in 2001 [J]. Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 2003, 15 (4):281-298, 18.
- [6] Gaddisa E B, Milesa B, Morsea S, Lewisa D.Full-cost Accounting of Coastal Disasters in the United States: implications for planning and preparedness[J]. Ecological Economics, 2007, 63 (2-3):307-318.
- [7] Johnston D, Becker J, Gregg C.Developing Warning and Disaster Response Capacity in the Tourism Sector in Coastal Washington, USA[J]. Disaster Prevention & Management, 2007, 16 (2):210-216, 7.
- [8] Huana T Ch, Beamanb J, Shelby L.No-escape Natural Disaster:mitigating impacts on tourism[J]. Annals of Tourism Research, 2004, 31 (2):255-273.
- [9] Huang Y Ch, Tseng Y P.Crisis Management Planning to Restore Tourism after Disasters:a case study from Taiwan[J]. Journal of Travel&Tourism Marketing, 2007, 23 (2-4):203-221.
- [10] Murphy P E, Barley R. Tourism and Disaster Planning [J]. the Geographical Review, 1989, 79 (1):36-46.