

# Mother Earth: Services Without Benefits



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**T**he Environment and Mother Earth..... The environment is air, noise, water, forests, mountains \_\_\_\_\_ everything around man including himself.

But man's environment is being polluted and gradually destroyed, ironically, by man himself.

Man creates and man destroys. Man is cruel. Although man does not create his natural surroundings, he is directly responsible for their destruction.

Mother Earth..... Man benefits immensely from natural resources, yet, is there anyone who realizes that man is deeply indebted to nature ? Man gets free services from Mother Earth and he owes her so much that he can never expect to pay her back.

## Services Without Benefit

The services..... By providing her services, Mother Earth gets nothing in return. She does not belong to any organization or company, although man claims that he owns her and deserves her services. Man wants nice weather, clear sky, cool breezes, pure air, unpolluted water, and clean environment, and man demands all these services from Mother Earth.

If the scope is narrowed down with a focus on Thailand only, there is no doubt that the country's natural resources, i.e., the scenery, the beaches, the breezes, the sunshine, the mountains and the rivers, claim the country's top rank in terms of revenue they have brought in. The question is, who is entitled to claim

ownership of such resources and who actually benefits from these services of Mother Earth ?

The answer is the agents. Those who sell natural surroundings to tourists. Travel agencies, as well as the Tourism Authority of Thailand, sell the country's natural resources to visitors through effective advertising campaigns and good public relations. Tourists are drawn to the lovely beaches of Cha-am and HuaHin to enjoy the pleasures of nice clean air and clear water. Similary, they are attracted to Doi Suthep and to the tranquil natural charms of Chiangmai.

As a result, these travel agencies cash in on natural resources that have been made tourist attractions. Through excellent selling strategies, persuasive advertisements, and effective public relations measures, Thailand is now world famous for her beautiful beaches, her cool breezes and the bright sunshine - a paradise for tourists. Even a T.V. series televised in the U.S. a few years ago, "The Life Style of the Rich and Famous", was once filmed in Phuket, then dubbed as a paradise island on earth.

### **Excellent Services**

With the great success of such selling tactics, reports are proudly written, stating the travel industry as the country's top income earner. Figures and tables illustrating impressive figures-the number of prospective visitors who will come and appreciate the country's natural charms. Meanwhile, more and more visitors are invited to visit Thailand and make full use of the services of nature.

Benefits gained from this exploitation of natural surroundings are confirmed by a marked increase in the revenue brought in by tourism industry. It is even further anticipated that, based on the criteria of the World Bank, between 1990 and 2000, Thailand will be classified as an upper middle income country, rising from the present status of lower

middle income country.

### **Man: The User of the Services**

Man has always benefited from nature. Mother Earth has been giving man her services without expecting anything in return. The services are given in the form of beautiful, refreshing, and pleasant environment. Her resources are offered to man so that he can ease his tension, lessen his anxiety, and heal his pain. Man lets nature give him her magical therapy. He gets his pleasure from nature.

But what about Mother Earth ? What does she get in return ? In spite of her faithful services, is she being well taken care of ? Or is it that she is giving man his environment—the lovely scenery, the sea, the breezes, the sunshine, etc. at her own expense ?

Evidently, man seems to be repaying her by selfishly polluting the environment and gradually ruining it, by his inconsiderate destructive means :

Trees in the forests are cut down, affecting the earth's atmosphere, resulting in changing climate and rising temperatures on a global scale.

Highrises, tall buildings which block natural views and create other environmental problems, are pretentiously regraded as the sign of progress.

Beaches are dotted with rubbish and other wastes, left by visitors who go there for a small dose of medicine from nature, to give themselves a good rest and peace of mind. Recouperating and ready to fight whatever is bothering them again, they depart, leaving behind them traces of dirtiness and thoughtlessness, the things that expedite the destruction of our beloved nature.

The sea water, once crystal clear and clean, is now polluted because of wastes from fac-

tories, under the false assumption that these factories are leading Thailand to the status of an industrial country. Factories dump a large amount of sewage into the canals, the rivers, and the sea, either because of the lack of proper water treatment systems or from negligence, both of which eventually result in water pollution.

The breezes and the wind that used to bring pure and refreshing air - the ozone - now blows in air pollution and bad odors of factory wastes as well as toxic fumes and smoke from automobile exhaust.

If man continues to pay no attention to his mean and thoughtless behavior, how much longer can Mother Earth continue to offer her services? Man is shamefully exploiting and abusing her.

#### **Dear Mother Earth: Thank You for the services You that Have Been Giving Us.**

- Dear Mother Earth.....
- Thank you for the services you have been giving us.
- But please....please stop giving yourself to selfish man who abuses you for only his own benefits.
- Please give man another lesson.... As you once did with the Gay-typhoon in Thailand, the earth quakes in San Francisco and Russia, and, the devastating cyclone in Bangladesh.

- And dear Mother Earth, thank you for those few lessons.... for your kind warnings.

#### **Comparison of Prospective Visitors Entering Thailand Between 1989 and 2000**

Year	Projected Number of Visitors		
	(1) C.U.'s Figures	(2) E.I.U.'s Figures	(3) Six National Plan
Average	-	-	-
Growth	-	-	-
Data	-	-	-
Average	9%/year	9%/year	12%/year

#### **Note :**

- (1) From the study jointly conducted by the Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University and CSN & Associates CO., Ltd. (Presented to the TAT, 1990).
- (2) From the.....
- (3) The target for tourism industry as stated in the sixth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1987-1991).  
\*\* Revised Target, 3rd Revision (March 1989).

#### **Reference**

Tourism Authority of Thailand. **Information and significant data on tourism from the Tourism Authority of Thailand, up to March 1990.** Bangkok : Tourism Authority of Thailand, 1990.