ISSN: 2054-7404
Archives of Business Research; Vol. 14 No. 11 (2026) (38-64)
https://doi.org/10.14738/abr.1411.12624

Green Tourism Development in Hanoi in the Current Period

Le Hoang Anh, Tran Thi Hien, & Nguyen Quang Sang

Academy of Finance, Hanoi, Vietnam

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Against the backdrop of climate change, the depletion of natural resources, and environmental pollution, which are increasingly becoming challenges to socio-economic development, green and sustainable tourism development has attracted growing attention worldwide. Green tourism aims to minimize the negative environmental impacts of tourism activities, promote the economical and efficient use of resources, encourage the adoption of renewable energy, conserve biodiversity, and enhance the value of natural and cultural heritage. At the same time, green tourism emphasizes strengthening the responsibilities of tourism businesses, visitors, and local communities, thereby ensuring a balance among economic, social, and environmental interests. Therefore, green tourism development is not only a trend responding to changes in market demand but also an important orientation for achieving sustainable tourism development.

Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam and the country's political, economic, and cultural center, is also one of Vietnam's major tourism hubs. In recent years, the tourism industry in Hanoi has experienced significant growth, establishing the city as a leading destination nationally and regionally. In 2025, Hanoi welcomed 33.7 million tourist arrivals, an increase of 20.87% compared with 2024. Of this total, international arrivals exceeded 7.82 million, while domestic arrivals exceeded 25.88 million. Total tourism revenue was estimated at more than VND 134.46 trillion (Hanoi Department of Tourism, 2025). This growth has contributed to economic development, job creation, higher incomes for local residents, and the promotion of Hanoi's image among domestic and international visitors.

However, alongside these achievements, tourism development has placed increasing pressure on natural resources, the environment, and infrastructure, particularly in areas with high concentrations of visitors. Issues such as traffic congestion, waste generation, air pollution, noise, wastewater, and the risk of landscape degradation at tourist destinations highlight the need to transform the existing tourism development model. The focus must shift from expanding the scale of tourism to improving its quality, efficiency, and sustainability.

Well-known tourist areas and attractions, such as Hanoi's Old Quarter, Hoan Kiem Lake, Duong Lam Ancient Village, Ba Vi National Park, and Bat Trang pottery village, are facing considerable pressure from waste generation, noise pollution, domestic wastewater, and visitor overcrowding. Furthermore, tourism market demand is changing, with customers increasingly inclined to choose environmentally friendly services and seek experiences that bring them closer to nature and local communities. As the world moves toward carbon neutrality and sustainable development, green tourism is becoming an increasingly essential trend. Developing green tourism would help Hanoi reduce environmental impacts and improve destination quality; enhance its competitiveness with other tourism cities in the

region, such as Bangkok and Singapore; and respond to the increasingly diverse and demanding expectations of modern tourists, particularly international visitors and younger generations.

RESEARCH OVERVIEW

Tourism can generate employment, income, and opportunities for small businesses. However, poorly managed tourism development can also increase the cost of living, exacerbate traffic congestion and tensions within local communities, and contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, ecological disruption, and waste generation. These impacts depend partly on the type and scale of tourism activities (Thullah & Abdulai Jalloh, 2021).

Green tourism, often discussed alongside sustainable tourism and ecotourism, is understood as a form of responsible tourism to natural areas that prioritizes environmental conservation and the well-being of local communities (Hedrick, 2020; Tyagi & Tyagi, 2025).

Green tourism involves the participation of multiple stakeholders, including tourists, hotels, tourist attractions, destination managers, and travel businesses, who share the common goal of protecting the environment through green consumption (Meghana, 2018).

The core philosophy of green tourism is to minimize the negative impacts of tourism activities, such as carbon emissions and the degradation or destruction of natural habitats, while promoting cultural conservation and community empowerment (Lau & Tsang, 2025; Maniktala & Sharma, 2024; Tyagi & Tyagi, 2025).

Green tourism development refers to the planned growth and management of tourism to minimize environmental harm, support local livelihoods and cultural traditions, and maintain economic viability. It is not limited to nature-based trips or “ecotourism”. Accommodation, transportation, food services, tourist attractions, and destination planning can all adopt greener practices.

In line with global tourism trends, Vietnam's tourism industry is also moving toward green tourism development. The Vietnam Tourism Development Strategy to 2030, approved by the Prime Minister on January 22, 2020, establishes specific orientations for developing tourism in accordance with green growth and sustainability objectives (Trang, 2023).

Hanoi, Vietnam's capital with a thousand-year-old cultural heritage, has experienced rapid development across various sectors and has increasingly become an attractive destination for domestic and international tourists (Hội & Kết, 2010). The city has considerable advantages for green tourism development, owing to its diverse tourism resources, rich network of traditional craft villages, and extensive complexes of spiritual and ecological heritage sites (Đỗ Hải Yến, 2025). Nevertheless, tourism activities in Hanoi have exhibited several signs of unsustainability in ecological, socio-cultural, and economic terms (Hội & Kết, 2010). The city also faces numerous challenges, including pressure on tourism infrastructure, the risk of overcrowding at destinations, environmental pollution, declining resource quality, and increasingly high visitor expectations for green and environmentally friendly services.

These issues have prevented Hanoi from fully realizing its existing tourism potential and have affected the sustainability of its tourism development. Therefore, researching “Green Tourism Development in Hanoi in the Current Period” is both necessary and urgent.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Green Tourism Development

In recent years, green tourism has attracted increasing attention and emerged as an important development direction in many countries worldwide. Various scholars have approached the concept from different perspectives, reflecting its multidimensional nature.

Furqan et al. (2010) define green tourism as a range of environmentally friendly tourism activities encompassing different priorities and meanings. Chengcai et al. (2017) distinguish between narrow and broad interpretations of the concept. In the narrow sense, green tourism refers to tourism activities that emphasize the conservation of natural resources and the protection of the ecological environment, generally at the micro level and in connection with tourism product development. In the broader sense, it represents a regenerative approach to tourism economic development that seeks to achieve economic, social, and environmental benefits through green practices in tourism products, consumption, and management.

From another perspective, Nguyễn Văn Đính (2021) describes green tourism as a form of tourism based on natural and cultural resources that incorporates environmental education, contributes to conservation and sustainable development, and encourages the active participation of local communities. Sanjaya (2023) further notes that green tourism is sometimes understood as synonymous with ecotourism or sustainable tourism.

Against the backdrop of increasingly urgent sustainability requirements, green tourism development has become an inevitable trend in Vietnam and the global tourism industry. This development approach emphasizes the responsible use of tourism resources, environmental protection, the preservation and promotion of local cultural values, and greater accountability among stakeholders. Accordingly, green tourism development is regarded as an important means of achieving sustainable tourism objectives while generating long-term economic, social, and environmental benefits for destinations and local communities (Thư, 2024).

Fundamentally, green tourism development can be understood as a process of transforming the tourism sector in accordance with green growth principles, whereby tourism management, business operations, and consumption practices are organized in an environmentally responsible manner to support sustainable development. This approach involves improving resource efficiency, conserving energy, prioritizing renewable energy sources, creating employment opportunities, enhancing local livelihoods, and contributing to the development of a green economy. These efforts collectively support the long-term sustainability of tourism activities (Anh & Hoài, 2015).

Effective green tourism development requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach involving all relevant stakeholders, including government authorities, tourism enterprises, local communities, and tourists. It is essential to balance economic, social, and environmental objectives by reducing greenhouse gas emissions, promoting efficient resource use, protecting natural ecosystems, and preserving cultural heritage. Through such coordinated efforts, green tourism development can contribute to the broader goal of sustainable tourism development (Hồng, 2023).

Current Status of Tourism Development in Hanoi during 2015–2025

Accommodation Facilities

Table 1: Number of Accommodation Establishments in Hanoi, 2015–2025

Year	Number of establishments	Growth (%)	Number of rooms	Growth (%)
2015	2,871	–	45,769	–
2016	3,447	20.06	62,258	36.03
2017	3,546	2.87	70,160	12.69
2018	3,523	-0.65	65,139	-7.16
2019	3,499	-0.68	60,812	-6.64
2020	3,500	0.03	61,000	0.31
2021	3,722	6.34	69,954	14.68
2022	3,650	-1.93	64,800	-7.37
2023	3,756	2.94	70,218	8.36
2024	3,760	0.11	71,246	1.46
2025	3,761	0.03	71,256	0.01

Source: Compiled by the authors from tourism statistics and official publications of the Hanoi Department of Tourism for 2015–2025.

Table 1 shows that Hanoi's accommodation system developed through several distinct phases, reflecting the expansion of the tourism industry, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the recovery observed in recent years. Overall, both the number of accommodation establishments and the number of rooms tended to increase over the study period, although fluctuations occurred in certain years.

The period from 2015 to 2017 was characterized by strong growth in accommodation capacity. In 2015, Hanoi had 2,871 accommodation establishments with 45,769 rooms. By 2016, the number of establishments had risen to 3,447, representing growth of 20.06%, while the number of rooms reached 62,258, an increase of 36.03%. These were the highest growth rates recorded for the respective indicators during the study period, reflecting substantial investment in accommodation services in response to the rapid growth of domestic and international tourist arrivals. In 2017, the accommodation system continued to expand, reaching 3,546 establishments and 70,160 rooms, increases of 2.87% and 12.69%, respectively, compared with 2016. This expansion indicates a considerable improvement in Hanoi's accommodation capacity, providing an important foundation for the development of tourism in the capital.

During 2018–2020, growth in the accommodation sector began to slow. In 2018 and 2019, the number of accommodation establishments declined slightly, from 3,523 to 3,499, while the number of rooms fell from 65,139 to 60,812. By 2020, the number of establishments had stabilized at approximately 3,500, with 61,000 rooms. This period also coincided with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, which reduced demand for accommodation and forced many establishments to scale back their operations or temporarily suspend business.

In 2021, Hanoi had 3,722 accommodation establishments and 69,954 rooms, representing increases of 6.34% and 14.68%, respectively, compared with 2020. However, in 2022, the number of establishments fell to 3,650, a decrease of 1.93%, while the number of rooms declined to 64,800, down 7.37%. These decreases reflected the continuing difficulties

faced by the accommodation sector, as many businesses had not yet fully recovered from the pandemic, despite the gradual reopening of tourism activities.

The period from 2023 to 2025 marked the recovery and stabilization of Hanoi's accommodation system. In 2023, the number of establishments increased to 3,756, up 2.94% from 2022, while the number of rooms reached 70,218, an increase of 8.36%. This growth reflected the strong recovery of domestic and international tourism markets and the associated rebound in demand for accommodation. In 2024 and 2025, both indicators continued to rise, but at very low rates. By 2025, Hanoi had 3,761 accommodation establishments and 71,256 rooms, figures that were almost unchanged from the previous year. This suggests that the accommodation sector had entered a period of relative stability in terms of scale, with greater emphasis shifting from quantitative expansion toward service quality and operational efficiency.

Overall, between 2015 and 2025, Hanoi's accommodation system expanded considerably. The number of establishments increased from 2,871 to 3,761, a rise of approximately 31%, while the number of rooms grew from 45,769 to 71,256, an increase of approximately 55.7%. This expansion reflects the enhanced capacity of the city's accommodation sector to serve tourists and meet the development needs of the capital's tourism industry. However, from a green tourism perspective, expanding accommodation capacity should be accompanied by improvements in service quality and greater adoption of green hotel standards, energy-saving practices, emissions reduction, waste management, and environmental protection. These priorities will be important for strengthening the competitiveness of Hanoi's accommodation sector while advancing the city's green and sustainable tourism objectives.

Food and Beverage Establishments

In recent years, food and beverage establishments in Hanoi have developed rapidly and become increasingly diverse. They range from restaurants serving international cuisines, including Thai, Japanese, and Korean food, to bars, cafés, and fast-food outlets operated by major international chains such as KFC and Lotteria. These establishments cater to the substantial culinary demand of both tourists and local residents. European and Asian restaurants, cafés, and bars have also improved their facilities and services. In recent years, the city has piloted the development of Tong Duy Tan Food Street to showcase Vietnamese and Hanoi culinary traditions.

However, the development of Hanoi's restaurant and food service sector remains insufficiently planned. Many establishments operate on a small scale and lack essential infrastructure, such as parking facilities and well-designed surrounding spaces. In addition, environmental sanitation and service professionalism at some establishments have not been adequately controlled or maintained to ensure that visitors' needs are consistently met.

Tourism Transportation Facilities

Tourism transportation services in Hanoi are relatively convenient and diverse, encompassing several modes of transport.

Road Transport:

Hanoi's road network consists of radial interprovincial highways connecting the capital with surrounding regions, as well as urban roads, including ring roads, major urban routes, and local streets. The city has numerous major transport corridors connecting it to other regions and provinces through highways and national roads. These include Ring Roads 1, 2, 2.5, and 3, as well as Ring Road 4, which was under accelerated construction and was expected to be completed in 2027 according to the source text.

From Hanoi, travelers can reach eastern and northeastern provinces via National Highway 5 and the Hanoi–Hai Phong and Hanoi–Lang Son expressways. Northern and northwestern destinations can be accessed through the Hanoi–Lao Cai and Hanoi–Thai Nguyen expressways, as well as the Lang–Hoa Lac Expressway, which connects to the route toward Hoa Binh, now part of Phu Tho Province. The Phap Van–Cau Gie Expressway and National Highway 1A provide connections to provinces in the Red River Delta and southern areas. These interprovincial transport links are important for tourism development because they connect Hanoi with neighboring destinations such as Ninh Binh, Hai Phong, Quang Ninh, and the northwestern region, thereby expanding opportunities for interregional tourism.

Within the city, Hanoi has also developed a diverse bus network serving its wards. The introduction of electric buses and the gradual expansion of public transport have provided residents and tourists with additional travel options, helping reduce reliance on private vehicles and promoting environmentally friendly mobility. These developments create favorable conditions for green tourism.

Nevertheless, Hanoi's transport system continues to face several limitations. Traffic congestion remains common in central areas and at the city's gateways, particularly during peak hours, public holidays, and the Lunar New Year. Congestion increases travel times and negatively affects tourists' experiences. Furthermore, public transport connections to some ecotourism sites, traditional craft villages, and peri-urban destinations remain inconvenient. Green transport infrastructure, including dedicated cycling lanes, public parking facilities, and vehicles powered by clean energy, is also limited. These shortcomings constrain the effectiveness of tourism development, particularly green tourism, and highlight the need to further improve transport infrastructure in a modern, integrated, and environmentally friendly direction.

Rail Transport:

Hanoi is an important hub in Vietnam's national railway network, with Hanoi Railway Station serving as a central station connecting the capital to numerous provinces and cities nationwide. From Hanoi Railway Station, tourists can travel to well-known destinations such as Lao Cai, Hai Phong, Hue, Da Nang, and Ho Chi Minh City through the North–South railway and interregional rail routes. Rail transport offers advantages in terms of safety, reasonable fares, and opportunities to enjoy the scenery along the journey. It is therefore an option for domestic and international tourists, particularly those interested in experiential and exploratory travel.

In addition to the national railway network, Hanoi has put the Cat Linh–Ha Dong urban railway line into operation, contributing to the gradual improvement of the capital's public transport system. This urban railway serves residents' travel needs and helps tourists

access visitor attractions. It can also ease pressure on road traffic and reduce greenhouse gas emissions. These characteristics make rail transport a potential contributor to green tourism and to Hanoi's image as an environmentally responsible destination.

However, Hanoi's railway system still faces several limitations. The national railway network has not been modernized comprehensively, operating speeds remain relatively low, and journey times are longer than those of road and air transport. Meanwhile, only one urban railway line has entered operation, limiting connections to tourism areas and attractions. An integrated network linking urban rail with other modes of transport has also yet to be fully established. To improve the contribution of rail transport to tourism and green tourism, Hanoi needs to continue investing in urban railway expansion, strengthen connections to tourism destinations, and improve passenger transport services.

Air Transport:

Noi Bai International Airport is a major aviation hub in northern Vietnam and one of the country's principal international gateways. Located approximately 30 kilometers from central Hanoi, the airport is connected to the inner city through Vo Nguyen Giap Road, Nhat Tan Bridge, Vo Van Kiet Road, and various public and private transport services, including buses, premium bus services, taxis, and ride-hailing vehicles.

In recent years, Noi Bai International Airport has undergone continuous infrastructure investment and upgrading, including terminal expansion and the development of domestic and international flight networks. These routes connect Hanoi with major economic and tourism centers across Vietnam, as well as numerous countries and territories worldwide.

Noi Bai International Airport has facilitated the arrival of international and domestic tourists in Hanoi and strengthened the capital's connectivity with tourism destinations in Vietnam and abroad. However, the rapid growth in passenger numbers has also placed pressure on the airport's operational capacity, particularly during peak tourism periods and public holidays.

Inland Waterway Transport:

Hanoi has seven major rivers flowing through its territory, with a combined length of 556 kilometers. These include extensive river systems such as the Red River, Duong River, Da River, and Cau River. The section of the Red River passing through the capital extends for 163 kilometers.

In recent years, the city has identified and planned four river tourism corridors: the Red River tourism corridor; the Day River tourism corridor; the To Lich River tourism corridor; and a corridor associated with the Cau, Ca Lo, and Tich rivers. The city has identified these routes and corridors as priority areas for attracting investment and promoting tourism development in the coming period.

Hanoi currently offers river tourism experiences along the Red River, including visits to traditional craft villages and temples situated along the riverbanks. These products provide visitors with distinctive experiences and create opportunities to diversify the city's tourism offerings.

Recreational and Sports Facilities

Shopping is an important leisure activity for tourists and an integral component of tourism products, particularly in urban destinations such as Hanoi. The growing number of domestic and international visitors to the city, combined with strong local consumer demand, has stimulated commercial development and attracted investment in this sector. Hanoi currently has 15 major shopping malls, nearly 100 supermarkets, and hundreds of retail stores offering a wide range of goods to meet the diverse needs of local residents and visitors.

In addition, the development of craft village tourism and shopping is one of Hanoi's tourism development priorities. Traditional handicrafts, including ceramics, embroidery, brocade, lacquerware, mother-of-pearl inlay, and oil paintings, are popular among tourists as gifts and souvenirs. Hanoi's tourism authorities have encouraged investment in product design and retail networks, alongside the preservation, upgrading, and development of traditional craft villages as tourism destinations that attract visitors interested in sightseeing and shopping.

Nevertheless, the city's shopping service network remains fragmented. Many shopping streets selling goods and souvenirs have developed spontaneously, while the range and attractiveness of products and services remain limited. These shortcomings affect urban management and reduce the effectiveness of shopping services as a component of the tourism experience.

Hanoi also has several major recreational and leisure facilities that support tourism development, including Bao Son Paradise Park, West Lake Water Park, Thu Le Park, Bach Thao Park, and Thong Nhat Park. The city has continued to pay attention to the development of recreational facilities. However, existing facilities have not yet fully met the needs of residents and tourists, and Hanoi has yet to develop a recreational complex comparable in scale and quality to major facilities elsewhere in the region.

Tourism Business Performance

International Tourist Arrivals:

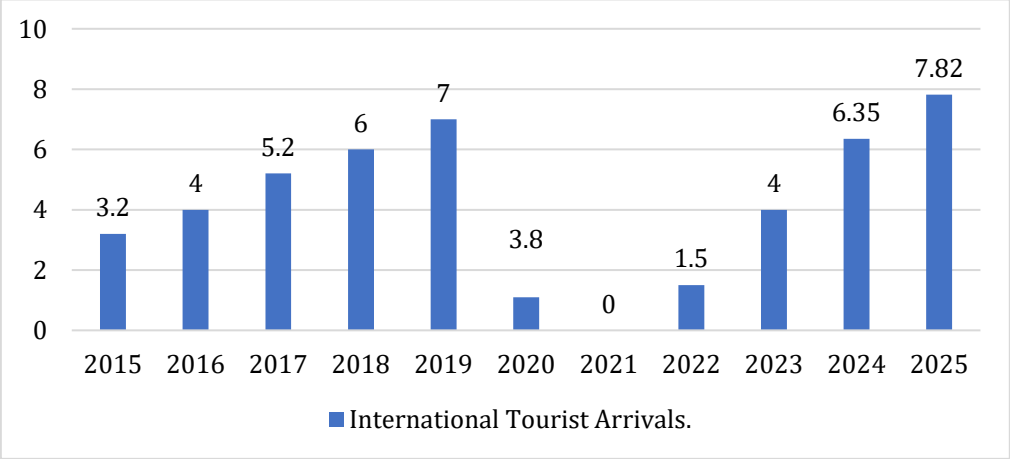


Figure 1: Number of International Tourist Arrivals in Hanoi, 2015-2025 (million visits)

Source: Compiled by the authors from tourism statistics and official publications of the Hanoi Department of Tourism for 2015–2025.

Figure 1 illustrates substantial fluctuations in international tourist arrivals to Hanoi between 2015 and 2025.

The period from 2015 to 2019 was characterized by sustained growth in the international tourism market. In 2015, Hanoi welcomed 3.2 million international visitors. By 2019, this figure had increased to 7 million, more than doubling over five years. This growth reflected Hanoi's increasing attractiveness as an international tourism destination.

However, the period from 2020 to 2021 saw a severe decline due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2020, international arrivals fell to 3.8 million, a decrease of nearly 46% compared with 2019. In 2021, international arrivals fell to almost zero as Vietnam implemented border closures and entry restrictions to control the spread of the pandemic. This was one of the most difficult periods for Hanoi's tourism industry in several decades.

Following Vietnam's full reopening to tourism in 2022, the international market recovered rapidly. Hanoi received 1.5 million international visitors in 2022 and 4 million in 2023, an increase of 166.7% over the previous year. Arrivals rose further to 6.35 million in 2024, an increase of 58.8%, and reached 7.82 million in 2025, up 23.1% from 2024. Notably, by 2025, international arrivals had not only recovered to pre-pandemic levels but also exceeded the 7 million recorded in 2019.

These results demonstrate the strong recovery of Hanoi's tourism industry following the pandemic and the capital's growing appeal to international travelers. This performance has been supported by expanded tourism promotion and marketing, improvements in tourism product quality, and diversification into areas such as cultural tourism, night tourism, and meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) tourism. Hanoi's repeated recognition by international organizations as an attractive destination in the region and worldwide has also contributed to its appeal.

Domestic Tourist Arrivals:

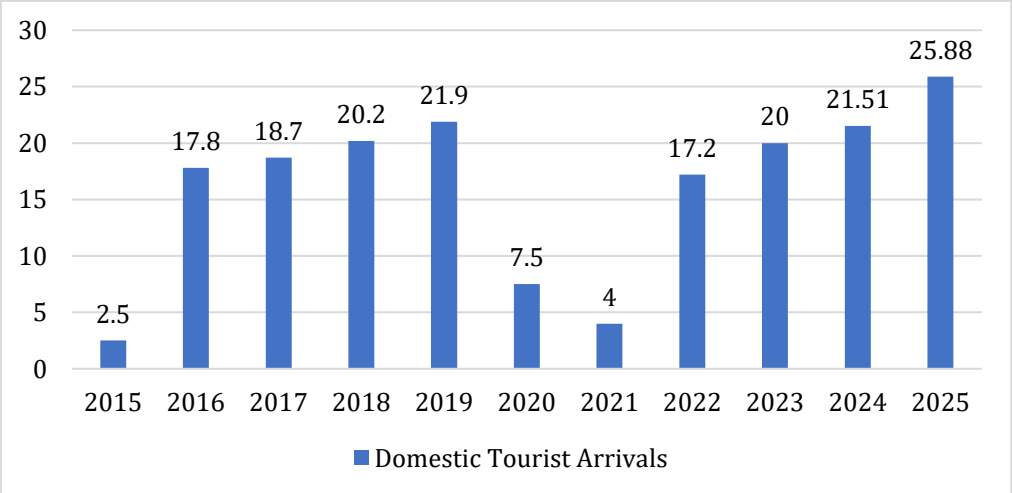


Figure 2: Number of Domestic Tourist Arrivals in Hanoi, 2015-2025 (million visits)

Source: Compiled by the authors from tourism statistics and official publications of the Hanoi Department of Tourism for 2015–2025.

Domestic tourists have consistently accounted for a substantial proportion of total tourist arrivals in Hanoi and have played an important role in maintaining the stability of the city's tourism industry.

Between 2015 and 2019, domestic tourist arrivals increased from 2.5 million in 2015 to 21.9 million in 2019, reflecting growing demand for domestic travel.

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the domestic tourism market. In 2020, domestic arrivals fell to 7.5 million, a decline of approximately 66% compared with 2019. The figure decreased further to 4 million in 2021. The main causes were social-distancing measures, travel restrictions, and the prolonged closure of tourism sites and attractions.

Following the restoration of tourism activities, domestic arrivals increased rapidly. Hanoi received 17.2 million domestic visitors in 2022, more than four times the 2021 figure. Arrivals then reached 20 million in 2023, 21.51 million in 2024, and 25.88 million in 2025.

Although domestic tourism growth was lower than international tourism growth during the post-reopening recovery period, the domestic market continued to play a vital role in sustaining the stability of Hanoi's tourism industry. The increase reflects growing demand for domestic travel, as well as the effects of tourism stimulus programs, the development of new tourism products, and stronger regional tourism linkages promoted by the city.

Tourism Revenue:

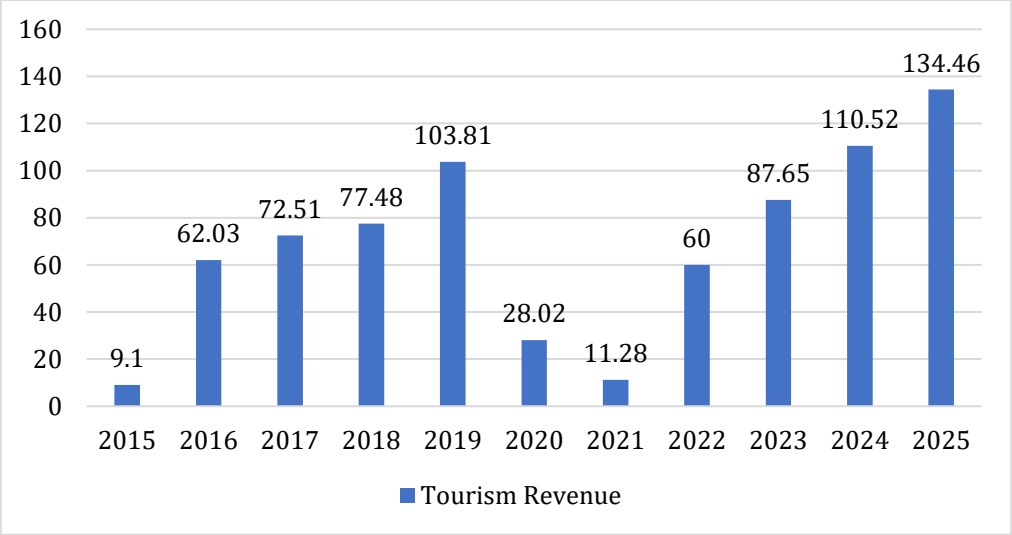


Figure 3: Total Tourism Revenue, 2015-2025 (VND trillion)

Source: Compiled by the authors from tourism statistics and official publications of the Hanoi Department of Tourism for 2015–2025.

Chart 3 shows that tourism revenue in Hanoi fluctuated in a pattern broadly similar to tourist arrivals during 2015-2025.

During 2015-2019, tourism revenue increased steadily from VND 9.1 trillion in 2015 to VND 103.81 trillion in 2019. This growth reflected the strong expansion of the tourism market and the development of tourism services.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism revenue fell sharply to VND 28.02 trillion in 2020 and declined further to VND 11.28 trillion in 2021. This downturn resulted from the severe reduction in tourist arrivals, the temporary suspension of operations by many tourism businesses, and the prolonged closure of visitor attractions.

Following the reopening of tourism activities, revenue increased substantially. In 2022, tourism revenue reached VND 60 trillion, more than five times the 2021 figure. It rose to VND 87.65 trillion in 2023, an increase of 45.5% over the previous year, and reached VND 110.52 trillion in 2024. In 2025, revenue climbed to VND 134.46 trillion, representing growth of 21.5% compared with 2024.

Overall, the 2015-2025 period captures three distinct phases in Hanoi's tourism development: strong growth before the pandemic (2015-2019), a severe downturn caused by COVID-19 (2020-2021), and recovery followed by renewed expansion after reopening (2022-2025). International arrivals, domestic arrivals, and tourism revenue all reached their highest reported levels in 2025, indicating that Hanoi's tourism industry had regained momentum and continued to consolidate its position as one of Vietnam's leading tourism centers.

Alongside the expansion of the tourism market, Hanoi has focused on renewing and diversifying its tourism products. Tourism promotion, digital transformation, and cooperation with other localities have also been strengthened, contributing to the city's attractiveness and competitiveness as a destination.

ASSESSMENT OF GREEN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN HANOI

Current Status of Green Tourism Product Development

With its rich natural resources and extensive cultural heritage, Hanoi has gradually shifted in recent years from traditional tourism products toward greener offerings associated with natural resource conservation, cultural promotion, and sustainable development. Green tourism products have continued to diversify in terms of their types, geographical coverage, and experiential content.

In 2022, Hanoi's tourism sector focused on developing agricultural tourism, rural tourism, and tourism associated with ethnic cultures to introduce new products and support the industry's recovery following the pandemic. This represented an important shift toward capitalizing on the advantages of suburban areas such as Ba Vi, Soc Son, Quoc Oai, and My Duc. Activities included agricultural experiences, visits to rural villages, exploration of local culture, and ecotourism-based relaxation. These products helped diversify Hanoi's tourism offerings, create livelihood opportunities for local communities, and increase the value of rural resources.

In 2023, Hanoi continued to expand its range of green tourism products by combining cultural preservation with tourism experiences. The city introduced 15 attractive night-tourism products that made a positive impression on visitors, including the "Quintessence of Tonkin" outdoor performance in Quoc Oai District, the Hoa Lo Prison night tour, and the

"Decoding the Imperial Citadel" night tour at the Thang Long Imperial Citadel site. At the same time, Hanoi continued to develop culinary tourism, MICE tourism (tourism associated with meetings and events), and wellness tourism. The city also developed and implemented new tourism models linked to its distinctive tourism products. Examples included ecotourism in Ba Vi Commune; night-tourism products based on cultural and historical spaces; experiences connecting the Old Quarter, West Lake, and the Red River; and a western tourism route linking the city center, Quoc Oai, and Tay Phuong.

In 2025 and early 2026, Hanoi's green tourism products continued to be refined and developed in a more professional direction. The city prioritized cultural tourism, urban tourism, agricultural and rural tourism, community-based tourism, and river tourism. New products were designed to highlight local characteristics and enhance visitor experiences, beginning to attract both domestic and international markets.

Examples include the "Sac Hoa Tuong Phieu" tourism product in Phuc Tho, which introduces visitors to the rural landscape of the Doai region through a slower-paced experience featuring flower gardens, ornamental plants, and seasonal fruit orchards. Another example is the "Path of Scholarship" tourism product in Ha Mo, which focuses on the educational and heritage values of the former Thang Long region. Sites such as the Temple of Literature and Van Hien Temple provide opportunities to explore Vietnam's traditions of scholarship and its historical figures. Through these visits, tourists can gain a deeper understanding of how respect for learning, the pursuit of knowledge, and reverence for teachers have become important elements of Vietnamese culture.

Alongside product diversification, Hanoi has developed several representative green tourism models. Ba Vi has been developed toward ecotourism, relaxation, and wellness, offering activities such as trekking, herbal bathing associated with the Dao ethnic community, wellness retreats, and visits to K9 and Ba Vi National Park. Suoi Hai, Yen Bai, Soc Son, Huong Son, and Quoc Oai have developed agricultural tourism and experiential products, including farming activities, tea picking, fishing, local cuisine, and traditional cultural experiences. These products help utilize natural resources more effectively, preserve cultural identity, and improve local community incomes.

In addition to products based on natural resources, Hanoi has gradually developed environmentally friendly tourism activities, including cycling tours, electric motorbike tours, and smoke-free tourism tours. The city has also encouraged reductions in single-use plastics and greater environmental awareness among tourism stakeholders. These developments are consistent with international market demand and can help strengthen Hanoi's competitiveness as a tourism destination.

Despite these positive developments, several limitations remain in the development of Hanoi's green tourism products.

First, green tourism products remain fragmented and insufficiently interconnected. Many are developed independently by individual localities or businesses, without forming complete value chains linking destinations, accommodation establishments, tour operators, and supporting services.

Second, many products have not been developed in line with their full potential. Although areas such as Yen Bai, Ba Vi, and Duong Lam possess considerable natural and cultural resources, product development continues to be constrained by the lack of

comprehensive planning, uneven investment, and inadequate service quality. In Duong Lam Ancient Village, in particular, tensions between heritage conservation and economic development have affected the authenticity and value of the tourism product.

Third, some green tourism products have not attracted large numbers of visitors. Cycling tours, for example, are environmentally friendly, but their operational effectiveness remains limited because transport infrastructure does not fully meet their needs. Dedicated cycling lanes are lacking, and connections with other tourism products remain inadequate. These shortcomings reduce product attractiveness and competitiveness.

Fourth, green tourism product development is not yet closely integrated with the establishment of a broader green tourism ecosystem. The adoption of technology, development of green accommodation, expansion of green transport, waste management, and communication about green tourism remain limited. Consequently, visitors do not yet experience a consistently green approach throughout their entire journeys.

Current Status of Green Tourism Destination Development

In recent years, in line with the orientation toward green growth and sustainable tourism, Hanoi has gradually shifted from developing individual attractions toward establishing a citywide network of green tourism destinations. This approach emphasizes not only the use of tourism resources but also the conservation of natural resources, preservation of cultural identity, environmental improvement, and enhancement of destination management quality.

One notable achievement has been the expansion of Hanoi's tourism geography toward a greener and more balanced distribution between the inner city and suburban areas. Previously, tourism activities were concentrated primarily in central locations such as Hoan Kiem Lake, the Temple of Literature, the Thang Long Imperial Citadel, and Hoa Lo Prison. The city has since promoted additional ecotourism, community-based tourism, and craft village destinations in areas such as Ba Vi, Huong Son, Phu Xuyen, Thuong Tin, Dong Anh, and Soc Son. Expanding the geographical scope of tourism helps distribute visitor flows more appropriately, reduce pressure on the inner city, and make more effective use of the natural and cultural resources of suburban areas.

Alongside geographical expansion, destination quality has gradually improved. Hanoi has paid greater attention to landscape improvement, environmental protection, and the conservation of cultural and heritage values at major tourism sites. In particular, the city has been implementing plans to conserve, restore, and rehabilitate the Huong Son historical and cultural complex, with the aim of developing it sustainably and establishing Huong Son as a representative green destination in the capital. In Ba Vi, greater attention has been paid to conserving natural forests, the local climate, ecosystems, and the cultural heritage of the Dao community. These resources provide a foundation for developing distinctive ecotourism, relaxation, and wellness destinations.

Another notable achievement has been the gradual integration of environmental considerations into destination management. Hanoi has implemented various initiatives to improve the tourism environment, including campaigns to reduce plastic waste, roadmaps for phasing out single-use plastic products at accommodation establishments and tourism sites, and the development of "smoke-free tourism" models at historical and cultural sites

in Hoan Kiem District. The city has also strengthened environmental communication and encouraged community participation in destination management. These initiatives contribute to a more civilized, welcoming, and safe destination image.

At the same time, Hanoi has paid attention to the use of technology in destination management. The city aims to develop smart destinations through digital transformation, improve visitor-flow management, strengthen monitoring of tourism activities, and minimize adverse environmental impacts. These measures are considered important for improving destination management efficiency and advancing green tourism in the context of digital transformation.

To date, Hanoi has established a network of more than 133 tourism destinations, including 54 destinations and tourism areas recognized at the municipal level. Many sites have gradually modernized their management approaches, strengthened resource conservation, and improved service quality. These include the Temple of Literature, the Thang Long Imperial Citadel, Hoa Lo Prison, Huong Pagoda, and Ao Vua. This network provides an important foundation for developing a greener, higher-quality, and more sustainable destination system in the coming years.

Nevertheless, green tourism destination development in Hanoi continues to face several limitations.

First, the network of green destinations has not yet been developed in a coordinated manner. Although the city has many areas with significant ecological and cultural potential, the number of destinations that genuinely meet green tourism criteria remains limited. Development has mainly concentrated in areas such as Ba Vi and Huong Son and at selected craft villages, while other localities have not received investment commensurate with their potential.

Second, destination management lacks a unified set of assessment criteria. Hanoi has not yet issued a dedicated set of criteria for green tourism destinations to serve as a basis for assessment, recognition, and monitoring. As a result, implementation across localities lacks consistency, making it difficult to improve destination quality systematically.

Third, investment resources for green destination development remain limited. Improvements in environmental infrastructure, landscapes, green transition initiatives, and technology adoption continue to depend heavily on public funding, while the ability to mobilize private and other social resources remains limited. Many suburban destinations also lack integrated infrastructure, which constrains their capacity to serve tourists.

Fourth, management capacity and coordination among stakeholders remain insufficient. According to the Hanoi Department of Tourism, some management authorities do not yet have a comprehensive understanding of green tourism. Coordination among sectors, local authorities, and businesses is also insufficiently close, reducing the effectiveness of resource conservation, environmental management, and sustainable destination development.

Current Status of Green Tourism Enterprise Development

In Hanoi, the development of green tourism enterprises is gradually taking shape. Some businesses, particularly large accommodation establishments, have proactively

incorporated sustainability principles into their operations. At several major hotels, greening initiatives have involved changes to service procedures and everyday products. For example, room key cards are made of wood, toothbrushes, razors, and combs are manufactured from sugarcane bagasse, and products provided to guests have been replaced with alternatives intended to reduce the use of conventional plastic materials. These changes indicate that businesses are gradually incorporating environmental protection considerations into their operational processes and service provision.

At Novotel Hanoi Thai Ha and Novotel Suites Hanoi, the green transition reportedly began in late 2022, with sustainability considerations being integrated into operational activities. However, this process has also presented challenges, particularly in terms of transition costs and supply availability. Replacing disposable products with more environmentally friendly alternatives can substantially increase costs and require adjustments to operating budgets and transportation expenses. In addition, businesses have encountered difficulties in finding domestic suppliers whose products meet both safety requirements and environmental objectives. Consequently, cooperation with local suppliers, including efforts to improve product availability and production processes, has become important for supporting the transition.

Hanoi has more than 3,700 accommodation establishments. According to Hanoi Online, hotels rated four stars or above have a reported green-transition rate of 70–90%, whereas green-transition efforts among accommodation establishments rated below three stars remain more limited (Thùy Linh, 2025). This reported figure suggests that green practices have gained traction among higher-rated hotels. However, the report does not specify the assessment criteria or methodology used to calculate the rate. It should therefore be interpreted as a reported green-transition rate rather than the proportion of hotels holding formal green certification.

Alongside businesses' own initiatives, government authorities and professional organizations have implemented activities to encourage enterprise participation in green tourism development. In 2025, the Hanoi Department of Tourism collaborated with the Hanoi UNESCO Travel Club to organize a tourism survey and cooperation program promoting tourism development and environmental protection at Duong Lam Ancient Village in Son Tay. The program aimed to promote green tourism and raise awareness of environmental protection and landscape conservation among tour operators, tourists, local communities, and residents. It also provided Hanoi-based tour operators with opportunities to survey destinations and connect with local service providers to develop new tours and tourism routes. Such activities can support cooperation between tourism businesses and destinations and encourage the development of tourism products associated with environmental protection.

The growing attention to Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) practices in the tourism, hotel, and resort sectors is also reflected in the Top 10 Green ESG Enterprises in Vietnam 2026 - Tourism, Hotel, and Resort Sector ranking. The ranking was announced by Viet Research in collaboration with Finance–Investment Newspaper as part of a research and recognition program on ESG commitments and practices in Vietnam's key economic sectors (Viet Research, 2026). The ten enterprises listed in this category are BenThanh Tourist, Flamingo Holdings, Hanoitourist, Hong Ngoc Ha Travel, Saigontourist Group, Sun Group, TTC

Hospitality, Vietluxtour, Vietravel, and Vinpearl. Hanoitourist is a major tourism and travel enterprise based in Hanoi.

The ranking indicates growing institutional and business attention to ESG commitments in Vietnam's tourism sector. However, inclusion in the ranking should not be interpreted as equivalent to receiving a government-issued green certification or as conclusive evidence that every listed enterprise has achieved a specific level of environmental performance.

Overall, the development of green tourism enterprises in Hanoi involves both individual business initiatives and cooperation across the tourism sector. Some major accommodation establishments have modified their products and operational procedures to reduce conventional plastic use, while cooperation between tour operators and destinations is being encouraged to develop green tourism products. Nevertheless, the transition continues to face challenges, including high investment and operating costs, difficulties in sourcing suitable domestic supplies, and disparities in the adoption of green practices among accommodation establishments. These issues require continued attention as Hanoi seeks to promote greener and more sustainable tourism businesses.

Current Status of Local Community Participation in Green Tourism Development

Local communities are important stakeholders in green tourism development because residents participate directly in service provision while also helping preserve the natural resources, landscapes, and cultural values of tourism destinations. In Hanoi, community participation has emerged in several areas, including Bat Trang, Duong Lam, Huong Son, Hong Van, and Ha Mo. Residents are involved in tourism activities through accommodation, food services, sightseeing, transportation, product sales, and experiential activities.

One positive development is that communities in some localities have gradually shifted from seasonal tourism participation toward tourism models based on ecological resources and experiences available throughout the year. In Huong Son, My Duc, some households have developed green ecotourism models intended to reduce seasonality and attract visitors at different times of the year. This example illustrates how community participation in tourism activities suited to local conditions can help diversify livelihoods and extend the period during which tourism activities take place.

In terms of environmental protection, communities have begun undertaking practical activities associated with green tourism. In Co Loa, local authorities and tourism businesses have encouraged tree planting, guided residents in reusing plastic bottles to make portable waste bins, and encouraged visitors not to litter. These activities illustrate how residents can contribute not only to tourism service provision but also to landscape conservation, waste reduction, and environmental awareness at destinations. However, environmental and landscape protection awareness remains limited among some community members, and participation in green tourism is still uneven across localities.

Community capacity and awareness also remain constraints on green tourism development in Hanoi. For example, in Duong Lam Ancient Village, many residents have not yet obtained sufficient economic benefits from tourism development. This situation has been associated with less professional interactions with visitors and limitations in the quality

of services provided by local residents. It suggests that the community has not yet become a fully integrated participant in the tourism value chain.

This limitation is particularly significant for green tourism because residents directly use local resources, provide services, and help maintain destination landscapes. When tourism benefits are not distributed equitably, or when residents lack adequate knowledge and skills, their incentives and capacity to participate in resource conservation and environmental protection may be weakened. Therefore, strengthening community participation requires not only environmental awareness but also appropriate training, improved service capabilities, and a fairer distribution of tourism-related benefits.

Current Status of Digital Transformation in Green Tourism Development

As digital transformation becomes increasingly important in the tourism industry, Hanoi has identified it as a means of improving management efficiency, developing tourism products, and building smart, modern, and sustainable destinations. Digital technologies can enhance visitor experiences while supporting more efficient resource use, reducing paper consumption, and improving destination management.

To promote digital transformation, the Hanoi Department of Tourism and the Hanoi Department of Information and Communications signed a cooperation agreement for the 2021–2025 period to strengthen the application of modern technologies in tourism information and communication. The initiatives described in the original manuscript include the Hanoi Tourism Information Portal, tourism applications for smart devices, digital tourism maps, and social media communication platforms. These tools are intended to help visitors access information about destinations, tourism products, services, accommodation establishments, restaurants, transportation, and tourism events. Digital promotion can also expand market reach, including access to international tourists, and reduce reliance on traditional promotional methods. These activities should be assessed alongside evidence of their implementation and effectiveness when drawing conclusions about their contribution to green tourism development.

Beyond digital promotion, Hanoi has gradually adopted digital technologies in destination management and heritage interpretation. One representative example is the Temple of Literature–Quoc Tu Giam, where digital initiatives have been introduced to support heritage conservation and visitor services. The site has developed digital heritage resources, including three-dimensional (3D) digitization of doctoral steles and architectural spaces, and has used digital communication channels to present the site's historical and cultural values to the public (Hanoi Department of Culture and Sports, n.d.).

Another important development is the introduction of electronic ticketing at the Temple of Literature–Quoc Tu Giam. The electronic ticketing system was introduced in May 2022 and subsequently upgraded in 2023 to incorporate electronic receipts and QR-code-based ticket verification. These functions facilitate online ticket purchases and visitor-entry procedures, helping reduce reliance on conventional paper tickets and improve ticket management (Hanoi Department of Culture and Sports, 2022, 2023; Ministry of Industry and Trade, 2023).

These initiatives demonstrate how digital technologies can support heritage interpretation, improve visitor access, and reduce paper use in tourism operations. They

are relevant to green tourism development because they can improve operational efficiency and reduce certain resource requirements. However, the available sources do not establish the scale of any resulting reduction in greenhouse gas emissions or confirm that the electronic ticketing system collects and analyzes all visitor characteristics, such as length of stay and consumption patterns. Such claims would require additional evidence.

Overall, digital transformation offers opportunities to support green tourism development in Hanoi through digital promotion, improved visitor services, heritage digitization, and more efficient ticketing processes. These applications can contribute to resource conservation and improve the management of tourism destinations. Nevertheless, digital transformation in Hanoi's green tourism sector continues to face several limitations. Information technology infrastructure remains uneven across some destinations; data digitization among management agencies, businesses, and tourism sites is fragmented and lacks interoperability; and many tourism businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises, have limited resources for substantial digital investment. In addition, there is a shortage of personnel with digital skills, while awareness of digital transformation among some businesses and workers remains insufficient to meet the sector's evolving requirements.

Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Tourism Development in Hanoi Today

Opportunities

Hanoi has considerable opportunities to develop green tourism through the combination of natural resources, cultural heritage, traditional craft villages, the scale of its tourism market, and the city's development orientation.

First, the combination of natural resources and cultural heritage creates opportunities to develop distinctive green tourism products.

Second, the system of traditional craft villages and agricultural landscapes provides opportunities to develop green tourism linked to local communities.

Third, the city's development orientation and the attention of local authorities create favorable conditions for the green transition.

Fourth, the expansion of the tourism market and changes in tourist demand provide incentives for the development of green tourism products.

Fifth, advances in technology and tourism collaboration create opportunities to improve the organization and promotion of green tourism. Digital technologies enable businesses to introduce new destinations, connect visitors with local service providers, and support visitor-flow management and more efficient resource use.

Challenges

Despite its considerable resource advantages and relatively clear orientation toward green tourism development, Hanoi continues to face challenges in translating this objective into practice.

First, the pace of urbanization and growing environmental pressures are affecting the quality of the spaces available for green tourism development.

Second, pressures arising from resource exploitation and shortcomings in spatial management pose challenges to the conservation of landscapes and cultural heritage.

Third, tourism infrastructure and facilities remain insufficiently integrated, particularly at destinations in suburban areas.

Fourth, businesses' capacity to undertake the green transition and the quality of tourism products remain limited.

Fifth, the quality of the tourism workforce does not yet fully meet the requirements of green tourism development.

Sixth, stakeholders' awareness remains uneven and does not consistently meet the requirements of green tourism development. Green tourism requires changes in the awareness and behavior of all relevant stakeholders, including businesses, local communities, and tourists.

Seventh, translating green development orientations into practical action continues to require coordinated efforts across multiple sectors and local authorities.

Policy Recommendations for Green Tourism Development in Hanoi

Improving Institutional and Policy Frameworks

Improving institutional and policy frameworks is a foundational measure for ensuring that green tourism development in Hanoi is implemented in a coordinated and strategic manner, with clear directions and specific criteria for evaluation.

The city should review and refine its policy framework for green tourism development to ensure consistency between tourism planning and urban development, transport, land use, environmental protection, and heritage conservation plans. Decisions regarding tourism development areas should be based on the characteristics of local resources, destination carrying capacity, and the conservation requirements of each area. In locations with significant ecological and cultural value, such as Ba Vi, Soc Son, Huong Son, Duong Lam, and traditional craft villages, the city should clearly define the boundaries of tourism activities, the types of development permitted, and the requirements for landscape protection.

Priority should be given to developing and implementing a set of green tourism assessment criteria tailored to different categories of tourism businesses and destinations across the city. Accommodation establishments, tour operators, and tourist attractions should be assessed against requirements appropriate to their operational characteristics and investment capacity. These criteria should be introduced progressively and accompanied by technical guidance, periodic assessments, and public disclosure of results. Such an approach would encourage substantive improvements in environmental performance and help prevent green tourism claims from being used primarily as promotional tools without corresponding changes in business practices.

Hanoi should also consider introducing support policies that enable businesses, particularly small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), to access financing, technology,

and consultancy services for their green transition. Support could focus on energy-efficient facility upgrades, waste-treatment equipment, environmentally preferable materials, and workforce training. Public support should be linked to specific commitments and measurable implementation outcomes to ensure that public resources are used effectively.

In addition, coordination among the agencies responsible for tourism, environmental protection, transport, culture, and local administration should be strengthened to improve the inspection and monitoring of tourism activities. For each green tourism development programme, the lead agency, participating organizations, required resources, implementation deadlines, and evaluation indicators should be clearly specified.

Developing Green Tourism Products

Developing green tourism products is a direct means of making effective use of tourism resources, enhancing destination appeal, and responding to the increasingly diverse experiential preferences of visitors.

Hanoi should develop distinct categories of green tourism products based on the resource characteristics and competitive advantages of individual areas. In the inner city, priority should be given to cultural and heritage tourism products that incorporate walking, public transport, and experiences of traditional cultural spaces. Sightseeing routes connecting the Old Quarter, Hoan Kiem Lake, West Lake, and historical sites could be designed to link nearby attractions, reduce reliance on private vehicles, and extend visitors' engagement with the destination. In suburban areas, priority should be given to ecotourism, agricultural tourism, community-based tourism, and nature-oriented retreats associated with resource conservation in Ba Vi, Soc Son, Huong Son, and areas characterized by agricultural landscapes and traditional craft villages.

Particular attention should be paid to transforming ecotourism from sightseeing-oriented activities into experiences that incorporate environmental education. Where local conditions permit, destinations could offer activities such as ecosystem interpretation, environmentally responsible farming experiences, landscape conservation activities, and learning opportunities focused on sustainable resource use. Such activities should be designed in accordance with the ecological characteristics and management capacity of each destination, avoiding visitor experiences that could adversely affect the natural environment.

For craft-village tourism, sightseeing should be combined with opportunities to experience production processes, understand cultural values, and purchase local products. Destinations such as Bat Trang, Van Phuc, and Duong Lam could develop themed experiences that support the preservation of traditional crafts, reduce waste generated by tourism services, and increase the use of products supplied by local communities.

Beyond developing individual products, Hanoi should strengthen connections among destinations to establish themed green tourism routes with clearly defined identities. Tour operators could collaborate with accommodation providers, transport operators, and local communities to design itineraries combining heritage visits, craft-village experiences, agricultural tourism, and ecotourism. Each itinerary should specify practical requirements relating to transport, service-provider selection, waste management, and visitor

responsibilities. In this way, green tourism product development would not only create new visitor experiences but also contribute to building a more responsible tourism supply chain.

Developing Green Infrastructure and Tourism Facilities

Infrastructure and tourism facilities are essential determinants of destination accessibility, service quality, and environmental performance. Hanoi's tourism sector has experienced an expansion of accommodation and tourism services; however, infrastructure remains insufficiently integrated in some suburban destinations. Public transport connectivity, waste collection and treatment systems, and visitor amenities also require further improvement. Investment in green tourism infrastructure should therefore be prioritized according to the specific needs of each area, in line with planning requirements and local resource conditions.

The city should prioritize improving transport connections to major tourism areas and attractions, particularly routes linking central Hanoi with Ba Vi, Soc Son, Huong Son, and destinations associated with craft villages and agricultural tourism. In addition to upgrading road infrastructure, the city should consider expanding public transport services in line with tourism demand, establishing convenient transport interchanges, and encouraging transport operators to adopt lower-emission vehicles. In the inner city, where cultural heritage sites are concentrated, stronger connections should be established between public transport and walking routes, cycling routes, and other environmentally friendly modes of travel.

Investment should also prioritize environmental infrastructure at tourism areas and attractions, including public sanitation facilities, waste collection and sorting systems, wastewater treatment, clean water supply, and visitor information facilities. In ecologically sensitive areas, infrastructure development must comply with landscape conservation requirements, minimize excessive paving and concrete construction, and avoid degrading the natural assets that underpin green tourism products.

For accommodation establishments, restaurants, and other tourism-related facilities, Hanoi should encourage renovation and investment that improve energy efficiency, reduce water consumption, limit single-use plastics, and use materials appropriate to local environmental conditions. Businesses should progressively introduce procedures for managing energy, water, and waste while prioritizing suppliers that demonstrate environmental responsibility. Investment in green facilities should be assessed in terms of both initial capital expenditure and long-term operational performance. This would help prevent an overly superficial approach that emphasizes architectural appearance or equipment upgrades without changing underlying resource-management practices.

Promoting Digital Transformation and the Green Transition

Digital transformation and the green transition should be pursued in parallel to improve governance, visitor experiences, and the management of tourism's environmental impacts. In Hanoi, digital technologies can serve not only tourism promotion, marketing, and visitor information provision but also resource management, visitor-flow regulation, service-quality monitoring, and more efficient resource allocation.

The city should accelerate the development of a shared tourism data ecosystem that integrates information on destinations, accommodation establishments, tour operators, transport services, tourism products, and visitor feedback. Hanoi's tourism data systems should be capable of connecting with national tourism databases and digital platforms to improve consistency and support coordination across relevant sectors.

On this basis, the application of technologies such as electronic ticketing, automated audio guides, digital maps, multilingual tourism assistants, and destination information platforms should be expanded. At attractions that face potential overcrowding, time-slot booking systems and visitor-flow monitoring could be considered to support the management of visitor numbers. At heritage sites and craft villages, virtual reality, augmented reality, and the digitization of documentary materials could broaden visitor experiences, improve access to information, and reduce pressure from direct use of certain heritage spaces.

Alongside digital transformation, the green transition should be promoted among tourism businesses and destinations. Accommodation providers, restaurants, and tour operators should progressively adopt practices that reduce single-use plastics, conserve energy and water, sort waste, and prioritize reusable products. Businesses with appropriate resources and operating conditions could also consider renewable energy, energy-efficient equipment, and digital technologies for resource management.

In particular, Hanoi should select a number of suitable destinations or clusters of businesses to pilot green tourism models linked to the circular economy and emissions-reduction objectives. Each pilot should be supported by baseline data, specific targets, and transparent evaluation methods. Relevant indicators could include electricity and water consumption per visitor or overnight stay, the volume of plastic waste generated, the proportion of waste sorted, and the use of locally produced goods. These indicators would provide a basis for assessing actual performance before scaling up successful models, rather than relying solely on commitments or promotional communications concerning the green transition.

Improving Tourism Workforce Quality

Human resources play a decisive role in tourism product quality, management effectiveness, and the long-term viability of green tourism models. Green tourism development requires workers to possess not only occupational knowledge and professional skills but also an understanding of environmental protection, resource efficiency, cultural conservation, and responsible visitor services. Hanoi should therefore establish workforce development programmes that reflect the requirements of the green transition and the specific characteristics of different groups involved in tourism activities.

First, the city should assess the training needs of businesses, service providers, and local communities in key tourism areas and destinations to develop appropriate capacity-building programmes. For managers and employees of accommodation establishments and restaurants, training should focus on energy and water management, waste management, environmentally preferable materials, and responsible business operations. Tour operators and tour guides should receive additional training in green itinerary design, environmental education activities, and ways to encourage responsible visitor behaviour.

For workers involved in community-based tourism, craft-village tourism, and agricultural tourism, short courses should emphasize practical skills, including guest reception, communication, interpretation, food hygiene and safety, management of small accommodation establishments, and landscape protection. Training content should be compatible with local production activities and residents' daily lives. It should also encourage the use of indigenous knowledge, traditional craft skills, and local understanding of natural environments as integral components of visitor experiences.

Furthermore, collaboration among public authorities, tourism businesses, and tourism education and training institutions in Hanoi should be strengthened. Universities, colleges, and vocational training institutions could work with businesses to develop internship programmes, workplace training, and specialized courses on green tourism. Training should be aligned with actual labour-market needs and combine professional knowledge with digital skills, foreign-language proficiency, and the ability to organize responsible tourism activities. Curricula should provide more specialized coverage of the green transition, while training effectiveness should be assessed according to how successfully participants apply their knowledge in practice.

Strengthening Local Community Participation

Local community participation is essential to ensuring that green tourism development supports resource conservation and delivers social benefits. In Hanoi, many destinations with advantages in culture, traditional crafts, agriculture, and natural landscapes are closely connected to the living and working environments of local residents. Communities should therefore be regarded not merely as tourism service providers but as active participants in product development, destination management, resource protection, and the distribution of tourism benefits.

Local residents should be involved from the initial planning stages of tourism development and product design. Local authorities and destination management organizations should consult communities on the scale of tourism activities, operational arrangements, potential impacts, and benefit-sharing mechanisms. In craft villages, agricultural tourism areas, and community-based tourism destinations, residents should be encouraged to provide services suited to their household resources and capabilities, including accommodation, food services, guided experiences, and the production and promotion of handicrafts.

Stable partnerships should be established between local communities, tour operators, and other tourism service providers. These partnerships should clearly define responsibilities, service-quality requirements, and benefit-sharing arrangements, thereby reducing the risk that residents participate only in activities with limited value added. Where conditions are appropriate, community-based tourism initiatives could consider establishing cooperatives or service-provider networks to strengthen bargaining capacity, standardize service quality, and coordinate environmental protection efforts.

Beyond economic benefits, community awareness and responsibility for tourism resource conservation should be strengthened. Awareness-raising and training programmes should address specific local concerns, such as waste sorting, water-source protection, landscape conservation, heritage preservation, and the maintenance of civil and

environmentally responsible public behaviour. Residents could also be encouraged to participate in community monitoring groups and report activities that cause pollution or damage tourism resources.

In particular, the role of local residents in destination interpretation and promotion should be enhanced. Artisans, farmers, and residents with knowledge of local history and culture could receive training that enables them to act as guides, share local stories, and organize visitor experiences directly.

Strengthening Promotion, Marketing, and the Green Tourism Brand of Hanoi

Tourism promotion, marketing, and brand development are important for increasing destination recognition, expanding market reach, and differentiating Hanoi's green tourism products. However, promotional activities should reflect the actual quality of tourism products, destinations, and services. Green tourism claims should not be used without an adequate basis for assessment or before relevant environmental requirements have been met.

Hanoi should develop a green tourism communication strategy that combines the capital's distinctive assets, including cultural heritage, traditional craft villages, cuisine, urban green spaces, and suburban ecological areas.

Rather than promoting individual attractions in isolation, the city should develop clearly themed product groups that connect cultural and natural experiences with responsible travel practices. Potential priorities include heritage tours using environmentally friendly transport, craft-village experiences, agricultural tourism, and community-based tourism.

Promotion methods should also be modernized through greater use of digital technologies, multichannel communication, and information tailored to different market segments. Green tourism products should be promoted through the city's official tourism information systems, businesses' digital platforms, themed communication campaigns, and partnerships with media organizations and tour operators. Promotional content should clearly explain the experiences visitors can enjoy and the contributions they can make, such as learning about traditional crafts, purchasing local products, participating in environmental protection activities, and supporting community livelihoods.

At the same time, Hanoi should expand destination familiarization programmes and strengthen connections between tour operators, local service providers, and communities. Familiarization trips (FAM trips), press trips, and promotional events should prioritize products that demonstrate reliable quality, have the capacity to serve visitors consistently, and incorporate identifiable environmental protection practices.

In the longer term, the development of Hanoi's green tourism brand should be supported by assessment criteria and mechanisms for verifying information. The city could prioritize the promotion of destinations, businesses, and products that have been assessed against appropriate criteria, while making information about their environmental practices publicly accessible to visitors. This would enable the green tourism brand to be built on product quality and credibility rather than relying primarily on promotional slogans.

Strengthening Public–Private Partnerships and Regional Cooperation

Green tourism development requires substantial investment and the involvement of multiple stakeholders. However, public budgets alone may not be sufficient to meet all needs relating to infrastructure development, facility upgrades, and service-quality improvement. Strengthening public–private partnerships and regional cooperation is therefore important for mobilizing resources, leveraging business capabilities, and expanding the geographical scope of green tourism development in Hanoi.

The city should establish a portfolio of priority projects to attract investment in green tourism. These projects should focus on transport infrastructure connecting tourism destinations, waste-treatment systems, environmentally responsible service facilities, and ecotourism and community-based tourism models that are appropriate to local conditions. For each project, the responsibilities of public authorities and investors, environmental protection requirements, operational arrangements, and monitoring mechanisms should be clearly defined. Project selection should take account of long-term economic, social, and environmental performance, avoiding large-scale investments that place excessive pressure on natural resources or disrupt local cultural environments.

The role of capable tourism businesses in investing in and managing destinations, developing products, and helping smaller businesses participate in green supply chains should be strengthened. Larger companies could connect local providers with markets, transfer management expertise, support training, and establish common service-quality and environmental requirements for their suppliers. At the same time, opportunities should be maintained for SMEs, household businesses, and local communities to participate, preventing tourism supply chains from becoming disconnected from the local economy.

Regarding regional cooperation, Hanoi should strengthen its role as a hub connecting destinations in the Red River Delta and the northern midland and mountainous regions. Building on its market scale, transport infrastructure, and network of tour operators, the city could collaborate with neighbouring localities to develop interregional itineraries combining culture, heritage, ecotourism, agriculture, and community experiences. Cooperation should extend across product design, transport connectivity, service standards, and market promotion. This would help increase the value of the overall visitor journey while reducing unnecessary duplication among destinations.

Finally, cooperation among public authorities, tourism associations, businesses, and education and research institutions should be expanded to implement green tourism models. Collaborative activities could include market research, product development, workforce training, technology adoption, and the evaluation of environmental performance.

CONCLUSION

This study, entitled “Green Tourism Development in Hanoi in the Current Period,” examines green tourism development in Hanoi over the period 2015–2025. The authors hope that the findings will contribute to promoting green tourism development in the city, helping tourism become a key economic sector and contribute to the country’s broader socioeconomic development. Despite the efforts made in conducting this research, the study has certain limitations due to constraints in time and the authors’ knowledge. Green tourism development is a broad and multifaceted subject; therefore, within the scope of this study,

the authors have proposed general solutions to promote green tourism development in Hanoi. More specific issues and corresponding solutions require further investigation in future research.

REFERENCES

Anh, N. T. T., & Hoài, Đ. T. T. (2015). Tăng trưởng xanh: Kinh nghiệm quốc tế và hàm ý chính sách cho Việt Nam [Green growth: International experiences and policy implications for Vietnam]. Tạp chí Quản lý Kinh tế, (73), 3–13.

Đính, N. V. (2021). Bảo tồn và phát triển du lịch xanh Việt Nam [Conservation and development of green tourism in Vietnam]. Tạp chí Môi trường, (1).

Đỗ Hải Yến. (2025). Đẩy mạnh nguồn lực du lịch xanh ở chùa Hương [Strengthening resources for green tourism at Huong Pagoda]. Tạp chí Quản lý Nhà nước, (351), 106–110. https://doi.org/10.59394/qlnn.351.2025.1159

Furqan, A., Mat Som, A. P., & Hussin, R. (2010). Promoting green tourism for future sustainability. Theoretical and Empirical Researches in Urban Management, 5(8), 64–74.

Hà, V. H., & Vũ, Q. K. (2010). Du lịch Hà Nội: Hướng tới phát triển bền vững [Hanoi tourism: Toward sustainable development]. VNU Journal of Economics and Business, 26(3). https://js.vnu.edu.vn/EAB/article/view/893

Hedrick, L. W. (2008). Ecotourism sustainability. University of Nevada, Las Vegas. https://doi.org/10.34917/1688406

Hồng, N. T. N. (2023). Phát triển du lịch xanh tại các cơ sở lưu trú ở Việt Nam [Green tourism development in accommodation establishments in Vietnam]. Journal of Trade Science, (176), 51–61. https://doi.org/10.54404/JTS.2023.176V.05

Lau, C. M., & Tsang, H. Y. (2025). Sustainable tourism and environmental stewardship: Strategies for the future. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, Hospitality, and Management, 12(4). https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15964208

Maniktala, J., & Sharma, A. (2024). Demand for green practices: Inception of sustainable tourism. In A. Sharma (Ed.), International handbook of skill, education, learning, and research development in tourism and hospitality (pp. 649–658). Springer Nature Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-97-4318-6_43

Meghana, V. P. (2018). Green tourism for sustainable development. Asian Journal of Multidimensional Research, 7(12), 206–213.

Sanjaya, D., Arief, M., Setiadi, N. J., & Heriyati, P. (2023). Research on green tourism intention: A bibliometric analysis. Journal of System and Management Sciences, 13(6). https://doi.org/10.33168/JSMS.2023.0610

Tang, C., Zheng, Q., Qin, N., Sun, Y., Wang, S., & Feng, L. (2017). A review of green development in the tourism industry. Journal of Resources and Ecology, 8(5), 449–459. https://doi.org/10.5814/j.issn.1674-764x.2017.05.002

Thư, P. T. A. (2024). Du lịch xanh dưới tác động của toàn cầu hoá trong bối cảnh hiện nay [Green tourism under the impact of globalization in the current context]. In Kỷ yếu Hội thảo Quốc gia "Du lịch xanh gắn với phát triển bền vững trong bối cảnh toàn cầu hoá" [Proceedings of the National Conference on Green Tourism and Sustainable Development in the Context of Globalization].

Thullah, A., & Abdulai Jalloh, S. (2021). A review of the economic, social and environmental impacts of tourism development. American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Business, 7(2), 39–46. https://doi.org/10.11648/j.ajtab.20210702.12

Trang, N. T. (2023, July 13). Phát triển du lịch xanh ở Việt Nam: Thực trạng và giải pháp phát triển bền vững [Green tourism development in Vietnam: Current situation and sustainable development solutions]. Tạp chí Công Thương. https://tapchicongthuong.vn/phat-trien-du-lich-xanh-o-viet-nam--thuc-trang-va-giai-phap-phat-trien-ben-vung-107192.htm

Tyagi, S., & Tyagi, M. (2025). Emerging trends in tourism: Fostering sustainability through special interest travel. In M. Valeri, S. H. A. Shah, & B. M. Al-Ghazali (Eds.), Redefining tourism with AI and the metaverse (pp. 301–315). IGI Global Scientific Publishing. https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-8482-4.ch009

Viện Nghiên cứu Phát triển Du lịch. (2021, November 12). Hội thảo "Đánh giá kết quả phát triển du lịch Thủ đô Hà Nội giai đoạn 2016–2020, định hướng giai đoạn 2021–2025 và những năm tiếp theo" [Conference on evaluating Hanoi tourism development during 2016–2020 and orientations for 2021–2025 and beyond]. https://itdr.org.vn/tin-tuc-chung/hoi-thao-danh-gia-ket-qua-phat-trien-du-lich-thu-do-ha-noi-giai-doan-2016-2020-dinh-huong-giai-doan-2021-2025-va-nhung-nam-tiep-theo/