

## **Abstract**

Tourism in tropical areas represents the fastest-growing branch of tertiary sector. The Balikpapan Bay (Eastern Kalimantan, Indonesia) is partly covered by mangroves and remains of primeval tropical forest that are extraordinary for their unique biodiversity. To avoid over-exploitation of described destination, detailed analysis of the evolving tourism and implementation of its sustainable form – ecotourism is necessary. The submitted project builds on one of the latest topics of longitudinal research running by Stanislav Lhota, PhD. in this area. Supervisor of this thesis, Radek Trnka, PhD. also joined the research in its beginning in 2005. Description and evaluation of current condition of ecotourism in Balikpapan Bay area is the main goal of the diploma thesis. Therefore, activities of organizations acting on natural tourism field, and which are connected with ecotourism, were analyzed in depth. The semi-annual field research was done in the area of Balikpapan Bay, while a combination of several qualitative techniques, especially participant and non-participant observation and semi-structured interviews as well as document analysis marginally, was used for data collection. The research brought several main findings. Concept ecotourism is perceived as an educative nature-based tourism by inspected stakeholders in Balikpapan Bay. Despite of a high potencial of ecotourism due to local natural conditions mainly, the current activities of Balikpapan Bay nature-based tourism cannot be classified as ecotourism in terms of this thesis. The Balikpapan Bay area is not prepared for ecotourism in legislative nor human resources sphere for the time being. An urgent change in approach of main stakeholders is necessary to achive ecotourism as a successful tool to conserve native environment of Balikpapan Bay.

## **Key words**

Balikpapan, Balikpapan Bay, East Kalimantan, ecotourism, Indonesia, nature-based tourism, point of tourist attractiveness, sustainable tourism development.