

## PRESERVING AND ENHANCING THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF KAMPUNG SANTUBONG, THROUGH ECO-VILLAGE APPROACH

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### ABSTRACT

*This article attempts to discuss a comprehensive design of landscape conservation for Kampung Santubong, Kuching Sarawak. The purpose study is by preserving and enhancing the cultural landscape of this village through eco-village approach. Major issue of the village is lack sense of personalization, damage of significant building, loss of traditional practice and loss of estuary mangrove ecosystem. As to encounter the issues, this study come out with the aims to revive the memory of Kampung Santubong by preserving and enhancing the local distinctiveness of Kampung Santubong through Eco-village approach. The methodology used in this project is by preparatory study from National Park Service (NPS) Guidelines for evaluating and documenting rural historic landscape and comparative study that reveals several design guidelines. Subsequently, the implications of the analysis and synthesis mapping is used to translate a complementary intervention proposed by the conceptual plan before developing a master plan. Based on this study, the sustainable design approach is used such as reef ball, river treatment, regreening, bio-pores and human and crocodile conflict management. The finding of the project is by preserving all the significant of Kampung Santubong through the identity and history of the village by interpreting the design with a sense of place while achieve balancing vernacular landscape. Hence, this study of cultural heritage village and design program as to sustain the cultural landscape at Kampung Santubong.*

**Keywords:** *Landscape conservation; vernacular; eco-village; sustainable design approach*

### INTRODUCTION

This study is focussing on the historic vernacular landscape at Kampung Santubong, Kuching Sarawak. Historic Vernacular Landscape is a landscape that evolved through use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped that landscape (Taylor, 2002). Through social or cultural attitudes of an individual, family or a community, the landscape reflects the physical, biological, and cultural character of those everyday lives (Agnoletti, 2006). The function plays a significant role in vernacular landscapes. They can be a single property such as a farm or a collection of properties such as a district of historic farms along a river valley. Examples include rural villages, industrial complexes, and agricultural landscapes (NPS,1994).

The Puteri Santubong was known for her weaving skills because she made the most beautiful clothes in the Kayangan. Puteri Sejinjang was known for her rice pounding. All the rice she pounded became the tastiest rice. The King sent Santubong to Pasir Kuning and Puteri Sejinjang was sent to Pasir Putih to bring peace. However, their friendship did not long lasting. But none caught the princesses' hearts until they met Putera Mahkota Serapi. Both princesses felt in love with the prince at the same time and start quarrel. Sejinjang took a pounder and hit Santubong's cheek till it cracks. Santubong hit back using her Belidak, a tool for her to weave clothes. The Belidak hit Sejinjang's head. Because of the heavy and

sharp tool, Sejinjang's head broke into million pieces and scattered in the sea to become small islands (Suai & Jantan 2005).

The king was angry with both of them for fighting over a mere mortal. He cursed them to become Mount Santubong and Mount Sejinjang. The village is located on the hillside of Mount Santubong caused the area called Kampung Santubong. The village of Santubong, located at the mouth of the Santubong River, is small and quiet. The village is located in Kampung Santubong sub-locality, Kuching locality, Bahagian Kuching District, Sarawak which extending from the position Latitude: 1.721921° and Longitude: 110.316741°. It has some superb natural attractions centred on the rainforested slopes of Mount Santubong, its mangrove forests, rivers, near shore waters and mudflats. Kampung Santubong, a well-kept Malay village at the foot of Mount Santubong, is an interesting coastal villages (kampungs) in the Santubong Peninsula (Baring-Gould, 2014).

## RESEARCH AREA

This study highlights on the key words which are preserving, enhancement, cultural landscape. The term Preservation is defined as the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity, and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. (Leach & Wilson, 2014).

New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project (NPS,1994). Based on the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), Enhancement is the process of managing change to a significant place in its setting in ways that will best sustain its heritage values, while recognising opportunities to reveal or reinforce this values for present and future generations.

According to National Park Service (1994), a cultural landscape is defined as "a geographic area, including both cultural and natural resources and the wildlife or domestic animals therein, associated with a historic event, activity, or person or exhibiting other cultural or aesthetic values." There are four general types of cultural landscapes, not mutually exclusive: historic sites, historic designed landscapes, historic vernacular landscapes, and ethnographic landscapes.

The aim of this paper is to revive the memory of Kampung Santubong by preserving and enhancing the local distinctiveness of Kampung Santubong through Eco-village approach. To support this aim, there are three (3) objectives which are to conserve and improve the functional and structural style of vernacular physical built form through planning and design treatment. Second objective is to enhance the quality of natural environment which rehabilitate the natural setting of village uses sustainable planning and treatment, to protect the richness of biodiversity inside existing surrounding ecosystem. The third objective is to promote sustainable society through healthy lifestyle cultural activities, social economic within Kampung Santubong and increasing the interest and participant of local activities through cultural tradition.

## PROBLEM STATEMENT

The problems that have been identified in this village is derived from 3 perspectives which are built form, environmental quality, socio-economic problems. These problems have impacts towards the livelihood of the villagers in Kampung Santubong. The existing cultural landscape of the village is highly depending on environment, cultural and also economic aspects. Uniqueness of every civilization that they have something they can be proud of. It is called Genius Loci that strengthen the community surround that makes it different from others. Lack of personalization loses speciality and loss identity of certain place or community just like major village in Malaysia (Peterson et al. 2010). It is important

the place must have significant buildings. Buildings can be landmark, pin pointing, or historical facts to greet the past as a mark of how the community been built. Vanishing of house compound and historic buildings make the real community and surrounding of past cannot be identified.

The reason of losing the traditional practice is because the young generation did not have an interest to inherits the traditions from their ancestors. Young generation likely migrates and likes modern life at the city nearby that offers various occupation and salary. In addition, soil erosion makes their local activities disturbed and reduce their source of daily income. (Douglas & Douglas, (1999), Riguccio, et al (2015)). The threat focuses on the natural environment that is slowly degrading due to the poor waste management around the fisherman village and critical of coastal erosion. The human activities also have been affected the river ecosystem, and threatening the vernacular landscape of the village. The unsanitary condition of fisherman village can attract the predator to come and disturb their area. It has become a major problem to the overall sustainability of the ecological balance (Samah et al. 2011).

## **METHODOLOGY**

A comparative study was conducted between case and reference studies base on the identified domains in literature study: i. site location and context; ii. conceptual development; iii. design goal and objectives; iv. concept and design programming; v. cultural activities through master plan; and vi. design components. The chosen sites were located in Malaysia base on cultural activity's establishment and successful design interpretation (Boon, 1982).

The comparative study resulted domains to be considered during the inventory and analysis stages in Kampung Santubong, Kuching Sarawak (Schaich, Bieling et al. 2010). In accordance to National Park Service (1984), there are 11 characteristics has been developed for reading a vernacular landscape and for understanding the natural and cultural forces that have shaped it. Landscape characteristics are the tangible evidence of the activities and habits of the people who occupied, developed, used, and shaped the land to serve human needs; they may reflect the beliefs, attitudes, traditions, and values of these people (Burgi et al. 2013).

Based on 11 characteristics of the rural landscape, there have been identity that 10 of the characteristics can be applied in evaluating the characteristic of Kampung Santubong, Kuching Sarawak. The characteristics are: i. Land use; ii. Land activities; iii. Cultural tradition; iv. Response to natural environment; v. Circulation networks; vi. boundary demarcation; vii. Vegetation related to land use; viii. Pattern of spatial organization; ix. Buildings, structures and x. small scale elements.

For primary data, a site observation and field study has been conducted at Kampung Santubong. All data has been compile as an existing condition through site observation use 10 of landscape characteristics (NPS). Afterward, an evaluation stage such as defining significant, assess historic integrity and select boundaries had been done for the next treatment stage. The treatment stage is by specify stewardship of preservation, rehabilitation, restoration or reconstruction.

Afterward, for the last stage is conceptual and design development. In this stage consists of conceptual development, concept and design programming, master plan development, enlargement plan area, supportive details, and design detail.

## RESEARCH OUTCOME AND DISCUSSION

This study focuses in Santubong Peninsula, Kuching Sarawak which is located at Kampung Santubong. The purpose of this study to revive the memory of Kampung Santubong by preserving and enhancing the local distinctiveness of Kampung Santubong through Eco-village approach. Data is collected mainly through site inventory and analysis. It includes the study area, a collection of images of human level and background of sight. Then gathered data transferred in organized manner where the information presented as structured data. From the field observation, there are few major concerns found throughout opportunity and threat analysis: An understanding of significance is paramount. It is necessary. First to determine whether a rural property meets the National Register criteria, and second is to guide decisions about the aspect of historic integrity. So, for a rural property meets or possessed National Register, it at least one NR Criteria (Criteria A, B, C and D) and NR Criteria Consideration (A, B, C, D, E, F and G).

### National Register Criteria

Criteria A: Association with events and activities Since 16 centuries, the events and activities interaction of fisherman at estuary of Santubong River and along Tekoyong River simultaneous with settlement existence. Kampung Santubong settlement that monopolies by Malay-Melanau and surrounding by natural landscape retain in term of historical, cultural and natural elements here. Criteria A established the strongest evindence for the establishment of a rural village landscape.

Criteria B: Association with the lives of persons significant in our past.

- a) Sultan Tengah/Sultan Ibrahim Ali Omar Shah Reliable that Sultan Tengah settle at this village during his journey back to Kuching from Matan. His royal tomb can be seen until today and located at the main entrance of Kampung Santubong.
- b) Rajah Puteh/James Brooke James brooke who founded and ruled the Kingdom of Sarawak. His lodge that located at the high ground of Brooke Hill in Kampung Santubong nearby Santubong River.

Criteria C: Distinctive Physical Characteristic of Design Construction and Form. Kampung Santubong is locally significant example of malay vernacular built form and it can be seen by their original design nation until today. This physical characteristic is important because it is a main contribution to the sense of place of Kampung Santubong. The design of the house we can see through the pillar, elevated boardwalk, roof, material construction and its surrounding by nature features.

### National Register Criteria Consideration

National Register Criteria Consideration require some rural properties to meet additional standards. These include properties owned by fisherman settlement, nature features, activities, ordinarily cemeteries, graves of historical figures, reconstructed historic building, and properties that have achieved significance within the past 50 years will qualify as a consideration criterion in Kampung Santubong.

## Quality of Integrity

The overriding presence of the settlement, natural features and activities and the seven qualities called for in the National Register criteria are applied to rural village landscape in special ways. Kampung Santubong remains as the rural landscape village because the location, setting, material and overall feeling are intact. The rest of consideration and dramatic loss during the development nowadays. The evaluation of the element of this site by NR Criterion Consideration present strong evidence that this site can be categorized as a rural village landscape.

## Master Plan Development

All the information gathered in a series of mapping in conceptual plan using over layering techniques that resulted the design rationalization or synthesis. There are divided into 2 spatial during mapping programming as the aspect categorized by Spatial 1; Fishing village which is more focussing on preservation treatment. The Spatial 2 is at Brooke's Hill and its vicinity which more focussing on rehabilitation treatment (Figure 1).

- a) Spatial 1: Traditional fisherman settlement near Tekoyong River. The river as the major character defining features of Kampung Santubong. The traditional livelihood of the village depends on the river and mangrove swamps. Aligned with the current situation, injecting the sustainable design approach with; creating active space, propose market- place and provide protection along the riverbank can revitalize this area.
- b) Spatial 2: Wallace Point – A centre of researchers and Scientists. Sarawak Minister of Tourism announced an initiative to revisit the State's tourism master plan, he recalled the project to establish a "Wallace Centre" in Santubong, based on a rehabilitation of ex-Government rest house.



Figure 1: Proposed Master Plan for Kampung Santubong



Most of the house in fishing village area are built of a special kind of woods, which make them resistant to the influence of seawater (Figure 1). The local used to live mainly of fishing. Tourist are welcome and free to stroll about the wooden piers. Hence, they can get a read of sense of everyday life that is far removed from the town.

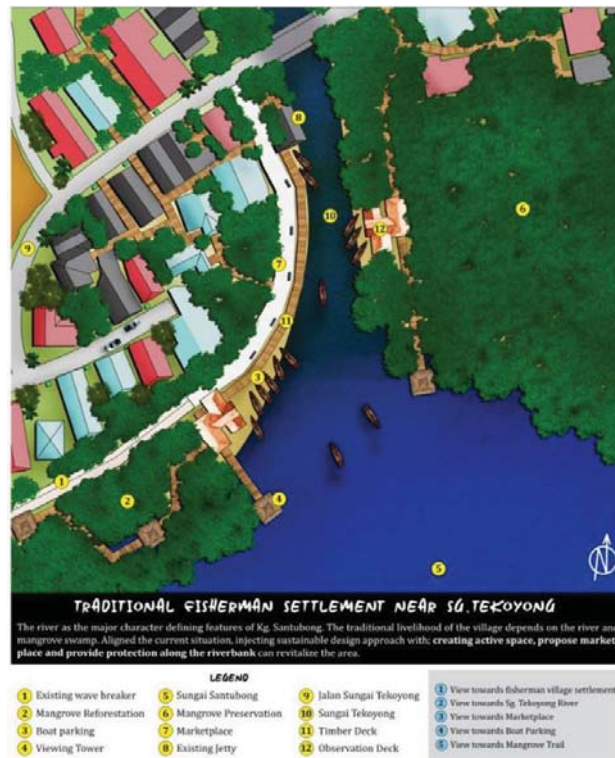


Figure 2: Traditional fisherman settlement near Tekoyong River

Living Historic Tourist Attraction and Homestay. Along the Jalan Sungai Tekoyong and fishing village area, there are variety types of native plants planted and potted that create sense of welcoming and beautification for the village (Figure 2).

## CONCLUSION

It is clear that the cultural landscape in Kampung Santubong extinction and required cultural treatment such as preservation, and rehabilitation. This project was a 'protection by development', meaning that in order to survive, heritage landscape should adapt to changing circumstances. Development of Kampung Santubong as a cultural village has few preservations at significant area that have to secure as valuable tangible tradition resources, such as Malay traditional fishing houses. 'Eco-village of Kampung Santubong' imply that rural cultural landscape is the first thing that comes to the mind when people think about heritage. The values of rural cultural landscape are varied because it depends on what people looking into. By exploring the idea of Kampung Santubong development, to gain a first impression of the types of rural landscape that might have heritage values at national scale. Hence, revitalization and landscape conservation of Kampung Santubong Cultural Fishing Village need to be protect to interpret the site concurrently for recent development direction of the village. The richness of the cultural and natural biodiversity of the village have a big potentiality as an economic source as to prolong the occupation of the villager.

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