

# **On the Change of Ruyuan Yao nationality's economic development pattern from the aspect of man-land relationship evolution**

## **--Taking the Eco-tourism Development of Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County in Guangdong for example**

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**Abstract:** *At present International Society widely focus on the problem of climate change, which essentially is problem of man-land relationship. After a long period of exploration, the contemporary people tend to fulfill harmonious coexistence of human and nature by building ecological civilization in terms of the interrelationship between human society and natural environment. The paper takes the Eco-tourism Development of Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County in Guangdong for example, authors discover by fieldwork method that economic development patterns of Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County have been changing among developing of human civilization—from the old slash-and-burn of primitive civilization to mountain farming of agricultural civilization and to return the grain plots to forestry of ecological civilization by developing of eco-tourism. It is response that regional man-land relational evolution reacts to climate change of the earth. Yao ethnic of Ruyuan have turned "hunters" and "loggers" in the past into "green makers" and "defenders" at present.*

**Key words:** *Man-land relationship, Change of developing pattern, Eco-tourism, Yao ethnic of Ruyuan, Guangdong province*

Man-land relationship is the relationship between human society and natural environment, which is a problem must be faced directly during current social development as an everlasting proposition for human to know the world. After a long period of exploration, the contemporary people tend to fulfill harmonious coexistence of human and nature by building ecological civilization in terms of the interrelationship between human society and natural environment. This paper takes the economic development pattern change of Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County in Guangdong for example, inquiring into how local Yao nationality response to regional man-land relationship evolution through changing economic development pattern by fieldwork method.

### **1 Man-land relationship and its development**

Man himself is the product of nature. People live on the earth are closely related to natural environment. Thus, man-land relationship is an objective relationship existed since the origin of man. Man can't live without the earth environment to exist. The man in man-land relationship includes both the man in nature and the man of social attributes or human

society. The land refers to the natural environment that closely related to man activities on the earth, which is a complicated system consists of lithosphere, atmosphere, biosphere and hydrosphere, supplying man with material and energy, including the man-man relationship set up during the process that man demand from and return to nature.

### **1.1 The conception and level of man-land relationship**

This paper considers man-land relationship is the interaction formed in the process of earth environment change caused and adapted to by man's enlarging, changing and using the earth environment to live as human society keeps developing. Its essence is the relationship that man exchange substance and energy with nature through human labor. In man-land relationship, man is the subject, providing land use and production with manpower resources. The earth is the object, providing production development with a certain amount and quality of land. The relationship between man and the earth environment in the process of land use and production can be defined as the man-land relationship in a narrow sense. The relationship between economic development of human society and evolution of the earth resource environment can be defined as the man-land relationship in a broad sense. There are three essential meanings of different levels in man-land relationship. The first one is the basic level. It's the relationship between the amount of population and available land area, the relationship between population and land for short, which is the basic level shared by traditional man-land relationship since ancient times and contemporary man-land relationship. The second one is the middle level from the perspective of the relationship between population and resources and the relationship between population and food, considering man-land relationship is the relationship between population consumption and land productive forces, the relationship between population and food supply for short, which is the population bearing capacity studied by economists and geoscientists at present. The third one is the comprehensive level. It's the relationship between the development of human social economy and the earth's resource environment, which is a coordinated relationship between population-resources-environment and social economy, the man-land relationship from the perspective of sustainable development for short.

### **1.2 The development and problem of man-land relationship**

The history of man's survival and reproduction is also the history created by human society and nature's interaction, mutual development and constant evolution. In the long process of historical evolution, man's influence to environment and man-land relationship keeps deepening and developing. When human's ancestors just evolved from apes, the main human activities were gathering, fishing, hunting and local regional slash-and-burn cultivation, because the population was too small, the productivity was too low, and there was no other skills except primitive hunting. In the long primitive civilization period, human's influence to environment was very weak, so human did not have a significant impact on the earth's environment. Animal husbandry and agriculture came into being as tools improved and fire could be used. Human's life was better ensured. The amount of population increased and the quality improved significantly. The living needs were mainly ensured by agricultural production, instead of merely depending on nature's gifts. Although human could not completely get rid of the situation that they had to live rely on the weather, they separated themselves from the environment gradually, and they became a basic independent subject, existing as the opposite

of environment, which started the process of transforming nature. As agriculture civilization developed, agricultural planting area gradually expanded, and productive technology constantly improved, the biodiversity decreased due to the expansion of farmland, increasingly causing a simple and vulnerable ecosystem. Besides, some unreasonable cultivation, irrigation and grazing methods had destroyed the earth's local ecological environment. Along with the science and technology developed by leaps and bounds and its applications in production, the earth's mysterious veils were uncovered one after one by science. The brilliant industry civilization was created as the unprecedented prosperity had been brought by human's large-scale and high-intensity transformation to nature. Human's abilities to transform nature grow constantly. Human activities get more and more resources and energy from the environment, and release more and more waste to the environment. Man-land relationship appears fully uncoordinated. Resource shortage and environmental deterioration gradually expand from local to global. Almost every place and every ecosystem on the earth is directly or indirectly being influenced by human activities. With the regional influence of man-land relationship expands constantly, the connections among different regions become more and more close.

Especially, the information technology and the globalization of economy develop rapidly, regional optimization of man-land relationship has fundamentally gone beyond the scope of national sovereignty. Any country does not have enough power alone to deal with the global threats the whole man-land relationship suffers from. Climate change, global warming, population leap, and unbalanced development of the North and the South all influence human's short-term and long-term fundamental interests and national and regional local interests. To solve these problems, we need to establish global consciousness and set up new values, that is, values of common interests based on the global consciousness. Only by strengthening regional cooperation and ensuring the common interests can we avoid doing harm to a neighbor so as to obtain the harmonious interregional relationship and build a global partnership.

At present, man-land relationship embodies in three dimensions. The first one is in global dimension, such as climate change, ozone layer destruction, sea pollution, global warming and so on, which endangers the existence of mankind. The second one is in the national dimension, such as remote diffusion of air pollution, acid rain, water pollution, race for all kinds of resources and so on, which is the primary cause that leads to national or regional conflicts. The third one is in the dimension of local region, such as environmental pollution, fresh water and food shortage, poverty and so on, which seriously restrict the region's progress and development. So regional response to global change is increasingly valued. Now it is realized that human activities not only can keep changing a region's or a nation's environment, but also the global environment. Man-land relationship in three dimensions interact as well. Turner et al. (1991) divided the kind of change into system change and cumulative change. The former refers to the global change occurs in natural system, such as the atmosphere change, which obviously affects local and regional environment. The latter refers to local or regional change, but the cumulative effect of this kind of change has a global meaning, such as tropical rain forest destruction, or desertification expansion caused by overexploitation in fragile environment. The earth's environment is a mirror that can clearly reflect human civilization. Ecological civilization is the advanced stage of human

civilization. To solve the ecological environment problem, people's development in an all-round way must be promoted in certain scale. Man's all-round development depends on the virtuous circle of ecological environment, which needs good ecological environment to ensure. The harmonious symbiosis of human and nature is the only way for the development of future world.

## **2. The economic development mode change in Guangdong Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County**

Yao nationality is one of the typical mountain ethnic groups live scattered in China. Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County is located in the north of Guangdong, 31 kilometers away from the west of Shaoguan city, bordered by Wujiang District to the east, and by Yangshan County to the west, and by Yingde to the south, and by Lechang to the north, and by Yizhang County to the northwest. The total area of the county is 2227 square kilometers. The total population is 211,000 in 2010, among which there are 200,000 rural people. There are 24,000 Yao nationality people, which makes up 12.2 percent of the county's population. There are nine towns under Ruyuan County's jurisdiction, including Rucheng, Bibei, Guitou, Yiliu, Dabu, Daqiao, Youxi, Luoyang, Dongping.

There are 115 village committees and 1082 natural villages. Mountain land covers 90 percent area of the county. There are 102 high mountains with an elevation of over 1000 meters.<sup>①</sup> The mountain ridges stretch long and the mountain ranges crisscross, forming mountains beyond mountains. The main parts of Nanling mountain are Wuzhishan, Pingtouzhai, Dadongshan, Yaoshan, Laopotou mountain and so on. Since ancient times, these mountains have formed natural barrier, cutting off the Yao nationality from residents in plain region and making Yao's economic development pattern fixed. The Ruyuan Yao region belongs to karst landform. The Yao Autonomous County is featured by old, ethnic autonomous, mountainous, remote and poor. The county has long been subjected to two poor titles of national poverty-stricken county and national poorest county. Now there are still 2926 households, 13124 people living in dilapidated buildings of extremely cold area or limestone area.<sup>②</sup> The relatively closed geographical environment greatly restricts the flow of resources, severely limiting the local economic development.

### **2.1 The old slash-and-burn cultivation development pattern of primitive civilization of Yao in Ruyuan**

Slash-and-burn cultivation is the initial agricultural production method in the development of human primitive civilization. In productive practice, people found that if plant seeds fell upon the land that had been burnt by natural fire, they could grow strong and produce big fruits. So human adopted the burn method. It's a historical phase experienced by all primitive peoples that use tools like wood and stone to conduct slash-and-burn cultivation. Ruyuan is in the mountainous area and limestone area in the north of Guangdong, where the geographical

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<sup>①</sup> Jian Ruigang. Overview of Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County[M]. Beijing: Ethnic Publishing House, 2008, 1st edition.

<sup>②</sup> Wang Qianwen, Li Xiaowen. "Thoughts on Poverty Alleviation through Development in Guangdong's Ethnic Regions" from Ma Jianzhao. Guangdong Ethnic Research Series(14)[M]. Beijing: Ethnic Publishing House, 2010.

environment is poor with high mountains and steep slopes. For hundreds of years, Ruyuan's Yao compatriots generation after generation have had the slash-and-burn cultivation development pattern that move to another mountain after the former one being used up. Yao's slash-and-burn cultivation had continued to the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, causing part of the biodiversity in mountainous area destroyed. In the early 1950s, the Chinese government carried out land reform in the Yao region, and productive materials such as land and tools were distributed to the Yao people. So far, Ruyuan Yao nationality basically stopped the primitive slash-and-burn cultivation method. The ecological environment recovered gradually in Yao region.

## **2.2 The mountain farming development pattern of agricultural civilization of Yao in Ruyuan**

After the founding of new China, our country basically belongs to an agricultural country. Under the influence of agricultural civilization, Yao people mainly took farming mountain for a living, bringing up their strong adaptability to natural environment in mountainous area. Under the influence of the ecological environment of the mountainous area, the Yao people accumulated rich production experience in mountainous area. They overcome natural condition restriction, and adapt to natural environment, and struggle with nature by building terraces along the hillside. To solve the labor shortage of single household, people conduct collective farming and help each other, usually rely on the power of dozens of people like friends and relatives and neighbors during the "burn the mountain" period and dry land food crops planting in early spring and rice planting in early summer. The close connection between the Yao nationality and nature has formed the Yao's ethnic characters like advocating nature, letting nature take its course, loving peace and freedom. They make the best of each situation to adapt to nature and deal with the pressure of nature in their own way as long as they can exist. The living condition in the Yao region is very poor. Most paddy fields are terraced fields. It's hard to ensure the source of water. Irrigation becomes the decisive factor that restricts rice production. So most of the Yao people plant dry rice. Dry rice is resistant to drought and barren, and it has wider adaptability. In the circumstances of global population expansion, climate warming and shortage of water, the development and utilization of dry rice is of special significance to ensure global food security.

## **2.3 The reform and opening-up promotes economic development pattern's shift to ecological civilization in Ruyuan**

Since the reform and opening-up, Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County has unswervingly carried out a series of policies in rural area to change poverty and backwardness of Ruyuan, and carried out the household contract responsibility system in the county since 1981. In 1993, Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County put forward the "Four Developments Four Drives" strategy to get Ruyuan's economy out of trouble. That is, to vigorously develop small hydropower to drive the county's industry. To develop the three high agriculture to drive rural economy. To develop tourism to drive the third industry. To develop export-oriented economy to drive the whole county's economy. In 2003, Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County put forward five development strategies of "industrial county, agricultural county, tourist county, scientific and educational county and green Ruyuan", since when the constructions of all aspects in Ruyuan have got on a rapid development route. In 2006, Ruyuan further put forward four

strategic focuses of "green economy,ethnic characteristics,strong tourism county, civilized and governed by law,which reflects people's development value has shifted to green ecological civilization.Ruyuan's economic and social development has moved to a healthy fast lane.

### **3 The remarkable achievements of eco-tourism development in Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County**

Eco-tourism is a tourist system based on natural environment and cultural environment,and based on natural landscape and folk customs of local characteristics,to realize tourist's return to nature,and to promote the social economic development of the tourist destination,and to establish tourist's consciousness of protecting ecology through tourism,forming a coordinate interest distribution among eco-tourism stakeholders.In the face of Yao nationality region's economic difficulty, tourism as a smokeless industry is undoubtedly an important means of developing Yao nationality region's economy.Eco-tourism of sustainable development is the preferred choice for minority nationality areas to maintain ecological environment and get out of poverty.Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County has natural advantages to develop eco-tourism,such as strong ethnic style and high-quality tourist products based on superior natural environment.For example,natural ecological tourism includes the natural barrier--Guangdong grand canyon,Ruyuan hot spring,West Lake of the north of Guangdong--Nanshui Lake, the highest peak of Guangdong--Shikengkong.Cultural ecological tourism includes millennium Yunmen Temple,Bibei Yao Village and so on.Besides,tourism industry can hold a number of surplus rural labor as the third industry,so developing eco-tourism is an effective mode for Ruyuan's government to drive economic development and bring up local industry,and to autonomously develop economy as well.

To deal with climate change and build Guangdong's green ecological barrier,Guangdong Yao region not only has changed the traditional custom of slash-and-burn cultivation,but also has returned farmland to forests and closed the land for reforestation,and they get rid of poverty and become better off by planting cash crops and developing eco-tourism.As a result,local ecological diversity has gradually recovered as the greening of the mountainous area becomes better.Since the Reform and Opening-up,especially since the Tenth Five-year Plan,Ruyuan County has set up the development strategy of "prosperous tourism county" and "strong tourism county",highlighting four tourist themes of natural ecology,Yao nationality customs,Buddhist culture and hot spring leisure.To build "Great Nanling Mingdao ecological cultural tourism area" and set up the brand of "high mountain,grand canyon,the source of Yao nationality".To change the closed situation and help local people get rid of poverty and become better off by developing eco-tourism.More and more Yao people begin to study Mandarin and Cantonese,and use words of courtesy.They has developed simple folk customs and enhanced the consciousness of development,and their overall quality has improved.They have turned "hunters" and "loggers" in the past into"green makers" and "defenders" at present.The new eco-tourism image of "green hills and blue water" in Ruyuan Yao mountainous region has been set up by advocating civilization and environmental protection.In recent years,Ruyuan Yao's ethnic and eco-tourism has obtained remarkable achievements,forming "Ruyuan pattern" of Ruyuan's characteristics.

Ruyuan pattern is the one focused on and led by the improvement of people's life,and the one let industrialization drive urbanization.It's the pattern for economy,politics,culture and

ecology to achieve coordinated development.It's a pattern that stick to people oriented and poverty relief and common prosperity.It's the pattern that attaches importance to ecological protection and tourism development.It's the pattern that vigorously promote national culture and national harmony.Besides,it's the pattern for all peoples to achieve common unity and progress, and common prosperity and development.<sup>③</sup>

### **3.1 The superior natural eco-environment resources in Ruyuan**

Natural sceneries are rich and colorful, beautiful and spectacular,and diversity of species is good,and the climate is pleasant in Ruyaun.The county has rich forest resources in the mountainous area,and it is the only eco-tourism county that has two national forest parks in South China.The county is rich in plant species.There are 27 families of ferns,8 families of gymnosperms,143 families of angiosperms.There are 178 families of higher plants,1158 kinds,taking up 80 percent of tree species in Guangdong mainland.There are 25 kinds of trees have been listed into national protected tree species,taking up 37 percent of 67 kinds in China.Ruyuan provides wild animals with nice habitats as there are numerous high mountains and abundant rainfall and evergreen trees. There are 76 families,196 genus,275 kinds of amphibians,reptiles,birds and beasts animals.9 kinds of animals has been listed into national first-class protected animal.42 kinds has been listed into second-class protected animal,among which 10 species belong to international first-class endangered species and 15 species belong to second-class endangered species.The average temperature in Ruyuan mountainous area is 17 degree to 19 degree,and the rainfall distribution is even with a yearly average rainfall of 1400mm-1600mm.The county's geologic structure is mainly sedimentary like limestone,sandstone,shale and so on.The oldest rock has a 700-million-year history in Ruyuan.The special geologic structure has brought up colorful canyon and rock and hot spring landscapes in Ruyuan.In 2007,Guangdong Great Canyon,Nanling Park were rated one of the top ten destination for self-driving tour in Guangdong by Guangdong Self-driving Tour Association.Ligong international tourist resort,Tianjingshan Xianren Bridge,Yunmen Temple Buddhist culture ecology reserve,Guangdong Great Canyon,Nanling National Forest Park have been awarded as "2010 top ten tourist spots in Shaoguan city",taking up half of the whole city.<sup>④</sup>(for details see the list)

#### **List of natural eco-tourism in Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County**

High mountains and a sea of forests	The biggest oasis on the Tropic of Cancer--Nanling National Forest Park,the highest peak in Guangdong--Shikengkong,Yangxihe Forest Park,Tianjingshan Forest Park,the South Taxus Forest Park
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<sup>③</sup> Data source: National ethnic committee held meeting to promote Ruyuan's scientific development experience in Ruyuan, <http://www.mzzjw.gd.gov.cn/zwxw/ShowArticle.asp?ArticleID=4487>.

<sup>④</sup> Data source:Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County government public information network, <http://www.ruyuan.gov.cn/zwgk/shownews.asp?muid=000000050003&id=11816>.

Lakes and streams	West Lake in North Guangdong--Nanshui Lake,the first drift in Ruyuan--Yunmen Gorge drift,Quanshui reservoir,Yangxi reservoir,Datan River
Canyon and rocks	Natural barrier in plain area--Guangdong Great Canyon,Xishuangbanna of Guangdong--Tianjingshan Xianren Bridge,the first cave of China--Tongtianluo underground forest,Jingfeng cave,Fenggangling karst cave,swallow rock,Guogong rock
Hot spring	Ruyuan hot spring,Cheganshui hot spring,Daqiao hot spring,Qinggang hot spring,Dongfen hot spring,Huangcun hot spring,Xinan hot spring

Data source: Ruyuan travel network

### 3.2 Ruyuan is the birthplace of Guoshan Yao culture around the world

Ruyuan County is one of the settlements of Bibei Yao nationality,and the birthplace of Yao compatriots who sojourn in Thailand,America,France,Burma,Laos.Ruyuan Yao compatriots mainly settle in Bibei Town, Youxi Town,Dongping Town.Bibei Yao Village is a main destination for people to know Guoshan Yao's culture.The Yao people there are good at dancing and singing.They are hospitable that they treat visitors with sweet Yaoshan tea,nice bamboo rice and home-made Yao liquor.Tourists can have free access to bark house,bamboo house and the suspended building along hillside,singing and dancing in Yao style with Yao people,and enjoy the charming landscapes there,and have a taste of the mysterious ethnic customs. Especially, the "Shiyuechao" festival or the "Shiyueshe" festival from October 1<sup>st</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> of the lunar calendar is more popular.This festival is held as a harvest celebration to thank the cattle's contribution.On the other hand,this festival let birds find food without constraints on their beaks.During the festival Yao nationality traditional sports competition will be held,including arm wrestling,wrestling,Chinese Qigong,climbing knife ladder and Chinese martial arts and so on.Besides,glutinous rice cake and tofu will be made in each family.People put glutinous rice cake on the horns,singing songs.There are a variety of existing folk arts and crafts in Ruyuan, including embroidery cross-stitch,tie-dye,carving,long drum and flower drum production,silver ornament production,bamboo weaving,thread knit,paper-plastic lion,palm fiber weaving and so on. The "Yao nationality embroidery" has been included in the national non-material cultural heritage protection list,earning a reputation as "China's home of Yao nationality embroidery".Besides,the millennium ancient Yunmen Temple built in the Five Dynasties(A.D.923) is a key national temple as the birthplace of "Yunmen sect",one of the five Chinese Zen Buddhism.Moreover,Ruyuan's cultural eco-tourism resource includes the ancient Xijing road,Donghua Temple relics,Shuangfeng Temple relics,Huanglong scenic



spot and so on.<sup>⑤</sup>

### 3.3 The remarkable achievements of eco-tourism in Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County

Ruyuan is one of the three minority autonomous counties in Guangdong, located in the northern mountainous area of Guangdong, southern part of Nanling mountain. Ruyuan County was set up in 1167, and it has a long history. Ruyuan is named for its abundant stalactite in the caverns. In 1963, the establishment of Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County was approved by the State Council, subordinate to Shaoguan city of Guangdong Province. Ruyuan has been hailed as "the world's home of Guoshan Yao" and "the world's home of taxus". In recent ten years, Ruyuan county party and local government attach great importance to the development of ethnic eco-tourism, promoting cultural characteristics according to the position of Great Nanling ecological cultural tourist area and intensifying integrated development of tourism resources so as to build a strong tourism county. In July of 2008, Ruyuan passed the provincial acceptance of building a strong tourism county, becoming the tenth county of strong tourism in Guangdong. In 2010, Ruyuan with its profound history and rich culture, superior natural eco-tourism resources, strong ethnic characteristics and unique tourism culture, was awarded the title of "the Best Ethnic Eco-tourism County in China" and the board of "the Best Ethnic Eco-tourism Destination in China" on the "2010 China International Competitive Tourism Products Promotion" held by the International Tourism Management Committee, China International Brand Association and China County Economy Association in Beijing International Hotel. On January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2011, Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County was honored as "Guangdong Tourism Comprehensive Reform Model County" in the provincial tourism work conference, and Ruyuan was the only county to obtain this honor of the whole city.<sup>⑥</sup>

With more and more money being invested to eco-tourism and the promotion activities being intensified, especially tourism promotion activities in various forms every year in the Pearl River Delta, the Red Delta, Hong Kong and Macao regions and the cities along the line of Wuguang, good reputation of Ruyuan's tourism has improved constantly, and the number of tourists and income have increased significantly (see the table below for details). Especially in 2010, after Ruyuan was awarded as "China's Best Ethnic Eco-tourism County", the tourist number was 1.8624 million, increased by 32.22 percent year on year, and the income was 1.1621545 billion yuan, increased by 50.67 percent year on year.

Table of 2004-2011 Ruyuan County's tourist number and tourism income<sup>⑦</sup>

year	Tourist number (million)	Year-on-year growth	Tourism income (million yuan)	Year-on-year growth
2004	0.55	——	93.5000	——
2005	0.61	10.91%	137.6160	47.18%
2006	0.7337	20.28%	172.9347	25.66%
2007	1.0168	38.59%	428.0000	147.49%

<sup>⑤</sup> Data source: Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County government public information network, <http://www.ruyuan.gov.cn/zwgk/shownews.asp?muid=000000050003&id=11816>.

<sup>⑥</sup> Data source: Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County government public information network, <http://www.ruyuan.gov.cn/zwgk/shownews.asp?muid=000000050003&id=11816>.

<sup>⑦</sup> Data source: Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County Tourist Administration

2008	1.1586	13.95%	545.4600	27.44%
2009	1.4086	21.58%	771.3032	41.40%
2010	1.8624	32.22%	1162.145	50.67%
2011	2.2345	19.98%	1605.0000	38.11%

Now Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County's transportation is more convenient, and its eco-tourism supporting facilities are better. The Beijing-Zhuhai highway passes through about 60 km in the county. There are three exits in Ruyuan county, Dongpingdongtain and Daqiao Town. The Guangle Highway is being planned and built, sets two entrances and exits in Guitou Town of Ruyuan, 2.5 hours to Guangzhou. National road 323 and provincial road 248, 249, 250, 258 goes through the county. The roads from the county center to nine towns have all finished hard bottom construction. 100% of the villages have been connected by road, where hard bottom rate reaches 73%. All classes of highway and road make up a convenient highway transport network. The main cities in the Pearl River Delta can reach Ruyuan safely and quickly all by highway. It takes 2 hours from Guangzhou to Ruyuan, and 3.5 hours from Shenzhen to Ruyuan. The Beijing-Guangzhou railway and Shaoguanliu railway pass through the county. Shaoguan station of Wuguang high speed passenger railway is 15km away from the east of Ruyuan, which takes only one hour to Guangzhou. The Shaoguan Airport in Guitou Town is about to conduct reconstruction and get ready to operate. The Beijiang trade terminal that is 35km away from the county can go straight to Hong Kong and Macao. Ruyuan's transport condition is better than any other county in Shaoguan city. The roads from Ruyuan County to all tourist spots have finished hard bottom construction, and all villages are connected by roads. There are now eight high-class star hotels in Ruyuan like Ligong International Tourism Resort, Baiyuntianyuanlin Hotel, Fangyuan Ethnic Mineral Spring Hotel, Island Hotel and so on. There are over sixty middle and lower level hotels. There are more than 3000 beds. There are dozens of entertainment places and three travel agencies and two big tourism shopping centers, which can basically meet the need of Ruyuan to develop eco-tourism.<sup>®</sup>

In conclusion, man-land relationship is an eternal proposition for man to know the world. Human's history of existence and procreation is the civilized history that human society and nature's interaction, common development and constant evolution. Research on regional response to interaction mechanism between social development and material foundation of nature and study on regional coordinated development of population, resources, environment and economy and study on environmental protection have become world issues. As to the ethnic minority regions in China, it requires not only the rapid economic development and great improvement of people's life quality, but also respect and protection to the ecological environment and ethnic customs and culture in order to obtain stability, coordination and sustainable development in ethnic minority regions. The objective of developing eco-tourism is to realize coordination of ecology, economy and society and realize maximized comprehensive benefits. Thus, Ruyuan Yao Autonomous County's ethnic

<sup>®</sup> Ruyuan County's standing committee of the NPC special investigation group. To accelerate green development and promote Ruyuan's leap-forward development of eco-tourism, <http://www.ruyuan.gov.cn/zwgk/shownews.asp?muid=00000005000100020007&id=11726>.

eco-tourism development mode is positive in aspects of economy,society,culture and ecological environment to Guangdong's and even China's ethnic minority regions,which helps them get out of poverty and backwardness.

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