4 Waste Wise, Tourism Wise: Enhancing sustainable waste management in Malaysia's oil palm plantations

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This chapter explores the intersection between sustainable waste management and responsible tourism in Malaysia's oil palm industry, with a focus on Sabah. It examines the environmental challenges posed by waste generated from oil palm plantations, such as empty fruit bunches (EFBs), palm oil mill effluent (POME), and palm kernel shells (PKS). Using the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB), the chapter delves into the role of attitudes, social norms, and perceived behavioural control in promoting sustainable waste management practices. Additionally, it highlights how these practices can enhance the tourism experience by reducing the environmental impact and creating opportunities for agro-ecotourism.

Introduction

There have been considerable economic gains brought about by the rapid growth of the palm oil sector in Malaysia; nevertheless, this growth has also resulted in the generation of enormous volumes of trash, which has led to serious environmental concerns. It is estimated that Malaysia produces millions of tonnes of garbage annually from its oil palm plantations and mills. This waste includes empty fruit bunches (EFBs), palm oil mill effluent (POME), and palm kernel shells (PKS) (Khayriyyah *et al.*, 2021). Malaysia is one of the leading producers of palm oil in the world. The improper management of this waste can have significant effects, such as the pollution of water, the degradation of soil, and the production of greenhouse gases, which pose a threat to the delicate ecosystems of Sabah, a state in East Malaysia that is well-known for its abundant biodiversity and natural beauty (Yusoff, 2021).