3
OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY-BASED TOURISM
From history to evaluation framework

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3.1 Introduction

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) (2012), the number of international tourist arrivals increased worldwide from 435 million in 1990 to 940 million in 2010 and is expected to reach 1.8 billion by 2030. The revenue from international tourism in 2017 was estimated at US$1,340 billion, and tourism accounted for approximately 30% of global exports of services, 10% of the world’s gross domestic product (GDP), and 10% of employment in the world (UNWTO, 2018). On the other hand, this abrupt expansion concurrently had several negative impacts on tourist destinations around the globe (Kuvan, 2010). Furthermore, it is doubtful whether international tourism has genuinely benefited the people, especially those in developing countries (Mitchell & Ashley, 2010). In these circumstances, community-based tourism (CBT) has appeared as an attempt to directly deliver the fruits of tourism to the local communities in developing countries (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009).

In simple terms, CBT can be defined as tourism “managed and owned by the community, for the community” (Asker et al., 2010, p. 2). It rests on the idea that because it is the local community that creates tourism opportunities and is affected by its development, its members should be involved in the decision-making processes of tourism development and should be able to better manage the impacts of tourism based on their concerns (Murphy, 1985; Milne, 2006). By operating CBT, the community is said to receive a wide variety of benefits, including economic, socio-cultural, and environmental ones (Armstrong, 2012). Since its advent, CBT has expanded while winning widespread backing from external donors, such as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and international aid agencies (Mitchell & Ashley, 2010; Goodwin, 2011). Nowadays, CBT projects can be seen all over the world.

Nevertheless, it is also true that CBT attracts a great deal of criticism. It has been made clear that successful CBT cannot be achieved easily (Rocharungsat, 2008) and that there is a divergence between the theory and practice of CBT (Trejos & Chiang, 2009; Rodrigues & Prideaux, 2018). The current evaluation frameworks of CBT are open to argument, and expectations for the new roles of CBT are increasingly growing in the recent literature. Thus, it appears to be essential to reconsider the concepts of CBT now. For this reason, this chapter aims to give an overview of CBT and broadly examine its history, definition, central idea, implementation, and evaluative framework from diverse perspectives.
3.2 History of CBT

The concept of CBT has a long history, and its origin can be traced back to the 1960s/1970s when the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the World Bank, the United Nations (UN), and other aid agencies started to embark on small-scale community development projects in developing countries (OECD, 1997; Sebele, 2010). Later on, the participation of the local community gradually emerged as a new model of community development (OECD, 1997), and it became one of the main themes in community development throughout the 1990s (Ellis & Biggs, 2001). Simultaneously, the 1970s witnessed the rise of community-based natural resource management (CBNRM) founded on the idea that local communities’ backing is critical for environmental conservation in developing countries (Kiss, 2004; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009). In CBNRM, it was believed that community members would more highly appreciate and better manage the environment by controlling their surrounding natural resources on their own and by gaining profit through the conservation of those resources (Campbell & Vainio-Mattila, 2003). This paradigm shift to participatory development and CBNRM represented a turnabout of rhetoric, both in development studies and in environmental studies, from a top-down to bottom-up approach (Chambers, 1994a; Ellis & Biggs, 2001; Stone, 2015).

On the other hand, it was in the 1980s, when the negative impacts of tourism became more and more conspicuous, that the tourism industry began to demand the participation of communities (Hardy et al., 2002; Goodwin, 2011). In the literature, Peter E. Murphy is regarded as one of the pioneers of CBT (Richards & Hall, 2000; López-Guzmán et al., 2011; Mayaka et al., 2019). His seminal work of 1985 has exerted a vast influence on the development of CBT research (for example, Simmons, 1994; Okazaki, 2008). In his book, Murphy (1985) considered tourism ‘a community industry’ and called for the participation of local communities in the decision-making and planning processes. Some points can be raised regarding the necessity of the participation of the community in tourism decision-making. First, tourism is created not only by the people in the tourism industry but also by the people living in tourist areas (Murphy, 1985; Haywood, 1988; Simmons, 1994). Second, it is the community that is affected by tourism development and receives both the positive and the negative effects of tourism (Murphy, 1985; Haywood, 1988). However, the case studies taken up for discussion in those days were mostly communities in developed countries, and it should be noted that the context of developing countries was not often taken into deep consideration in the literature of participatory tourism development (Timothy, 1999; Tosun, 2000).

CBT has gained popularity since the mid-1990s (Asker et al., 2010) and was adopted as a practical method for community development (Ellis & Sheridan, 2015; Reggers et al., 2016), environmental conservation (Campbell & Vainio-Mattila, 2003; Lepper & Goebel, 2010), and tourism management which seeks to maximise the positive impacts and minimise the negative impacts of tourism (Haywood, 1988; Timothy, 1999). The Netherlands Development Organisation (SNV) started supporting CBT and CBT-related projects around the same time. It was involved in several initiatives in developing countries throughout the world (Rozemeijer et al., 2001). In addition to SNV, other international development agencies have given similar assistance to developing countries in regions including Africa (Manyara & Jones, 2007), South-East Asia (Harrison & Schipani, 2007; Flacke-Neudorfer, 2008), Latin America (Mowforth & Munt, 2009), and Oceania (Farrelly, 2011).

Additionally, opposing mainstream international tourism, alternative tourism stemming from the ‘counterculture’ movement of the 1960s began to gain prominence in the 1980s...
The primary purpose of alternative tourism was to bring changes to the consumerist society and economies through tourism (Lanfant & Graburn, 1992). In alternative tourism, it was assumed that local people and tourists could have more significant opportunities for fruitful mutual communications by providing tourism compatible with the community’s socio-cultural environment (Eadington & Smith, 1992). However, since the notion of alternative tourism was abstract, several new types of tourism were branded as aspects of alternative tourism (Isaac, 2010). Currently, CBT is regarded as one of the alternatives to mainstream tourism (Lanfant & Graburn, 1992; Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Mitchell & Ashley, 2010; López-Guzmán et al., 2011).

As Pansiri (2005) points out, tourism research is composed of a large number of academic fields, which allows each scholar to view tourism from their perspective, based on their own theoretical backgrounds. Those include a wide variety of disciplines such as sociology, psychology, economics, anthropology, environmental studies, and development studies (Holden, 2005; Jafari, 2005; Telfer, 2009). Therefore, CBT is no exception to this. The history of CBT can be looked at from several perspectives, and it would not be surprising if one were to find that CBT has no clear definition in the literature (Flacke-Neudorfer, 2008).

### 3.3 Definitions of CBT

CBT has become “an umbrella term” (Mitchell & Ashley, 2010), and it “means different things to different people” (Kiss, 2004, p. 232). However, it is broadly agreed that the participation of the local community is the central idea of CBT (Mitchell & Ashley, 2010; Lucchetti & Font, 2013; Telfer & Sharpley, 2016). The simplest definition of CBT seems to be that of Asker et al. (2010, p. 2), which is tourism “managed and owned by the community, for the community.” In the same vein, Goodwin and Santilli (2009, p. 4) define it as “tourism owned and/or managed by communities and intended to deliver wider community benefit.” In these definitions, the community is described as a single agent who has full control over tourism. On the other hand, Spenceley (2008, p. 288) offers a definition that sets a different level of participation. In essence, tourism “located within a community” and “owned [or managed] by one or more community members.” In this definition, CBT is not premised on control by the whole community. Furthermore, some researchers assume the involvement of external actors in the ownership and management of CBT (Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016; Dodds et al., 2018). From this point of view, CBT can include “a joint venture between a community [or its members] … and an outside business partner” (Ping, n.d., p. 6). Consequently, CBT has been implemented differently according to the project. These include programs owned entirely by the community, initiatives managed by a community cooperative or association, businesses privately run by individuals in the community, and enterprises shared with outsiders (Zapata et al., 2011; Lucchetti & Font, 2013; Dodds et al., 2018).

The difference in definitions of CBT is also distinctive in regard to the goals of CBT. For example, Page and Connell (2006, p. 470) attach great importance to economic benefits and state that CBT is tourism which “provides a mechanism for ensuring as much economic benefit as possible remains in the host community,” while Kiss (2004, p. 232) emphasises the environmental aspect of tourism and defines CBT as “a means of supporting biodiversity conservation, particularly in developing countries.” Moreover, Dernoi (1988, p. 89) attaches great importance to the socio-cultural aspect of tourism and maintained that “CBT is a privately offered set of hospitality services and features, extended to visitors, by individuals, families, or local community…to establish direct personal/cultural intercommunication…
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and understanding between host and guest.” These definitions share a common viewpoint in the sense that CBT is pursued to achieve a specific goal. On the other hand, Flacke-Neudorfer (2008, p. 246) proposes a more comprehensive definition: tourism with “criteria that make it economically sensible as well as socially, culturally and ecologically compatible with the communities in which it takes place.”

Hence, CBT has shouldered a great variety of tasks, and those comprehensively include the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental aspects of tourism (Armstrong, 2012). In the literature, through CBT, it is said that the local community members can increase their income and livelihood options (Lapeyre, 2010); develop the community’s educational, health, and social welfare facilities by using collective income (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009); strengthen the community’s cohesion (Giampiccoli & Kalis, 2012); boost a feeling of self-worth about their own culture and traditions (Ping, n.d.); enhance their appreciation of the natural environment (Rozemeijer et al., 2001); gain opportunities for cross-cultural communication between tourists and community members (Dernoi, 1988); and provide tourists with educational opportunities about the local culture and environment (Lucchetti & Font, 2013). Practically, CBT products take a wide variety of forms, from accommodation services including village homestay programs and community lodge stays (Giampiccoli & Kalis, 2012) to activities based on natural resources, such as boat trips, cycling, trekking, and birdwatching (Trejos & Chiang, 2009), and cultural attractions, such as traditional arts and crafts, local religious ceremonies, and cultural dances (Asker et al., 2010).

3.4 Central concept

As previously stated, the participation of the local community is the central idea of CBT. One of the principal advocates of participatory development is Robert Chambers (Williams, 2004). According to him (Chambers, 1994a, p. 953), a participatory development is an approach “to enable rural people to share, enhance, and analyse their knowledge of life and conditions, to plan and to act.” In other words, participation means handing over the ‘authority’ to control the development process from external actors to the local community so that community members can determine their own future (Chambers, 1994b). Similarly, emphasising ‘citizen control,’ Arnstein (1969, p. 216) described participation as “redistribution of power that enables the have-not citizens, presently excluded from the political and economic processes, to be deliberately included in the future” and produced a useful scale: ‘non-participation’ to ‘tokenism’ to ‘citizen power.’ The ladder has been adopted by many researchers in the literature of CBT (for example, Okazaki, 2008; Mayaka et al., 2019).

Cole (2006) interpreted the highest rung of the ladder as the situation wherein the local community members are empowered. In addition to the above-mentioned Chambers, numerous scholars have attached a great deal of importance to empowerment in the process of participation (Ellis & Biggs, 2001). For them, participation was an attempt to achieve empowerment by helping local community members – especially socially disadvantaged people such as women, the poor, and people with disabilities – build the capacity to make decisions and take actions towards their own development (Paul, 1987; Chambers, 1994b). That is to say, participation is tied to empowerment (Wearing & McDonald, 2002), and CBT is also said to place great emphasis on empowerment (Scheyvens & Biddulph, 2018).

From the viewpoint of emphasising empowerment, participation has to be seen not as a means but as an end (Moser, 1989). Participation as a means refers to ‘passive participation,’ where the initiative is taken by outsiders to achieve prearranged aims, and the participation
itself is not of primary importance, lasts briefly, and fails to provide local control (Oakley & Marsden, 1984; Oakley, 1991). On the other hand, participation as an end involves ‘active participation,’ where the aim is to empower the local people, and their involvement in the process for their own development lasts permanently (Oakley & Marsden, 1984; Oakley, 1991). From this standpoint, local people should actively participate in decision-making, and participation is meaningless until they gain the necessary power to control decisions regarding matters which affect them (Paul, 1987).

Currently, there is a sharp dichotomy with regard to approaches to CBT in the literature: namely involving the top-down and bottom-up with regard to the management of CBT (Sakata & Prideaux, 2013; Mtapuri & Giampiccoli, 2016; Dodds et al., 2018). In the top-down approach to CBT, community members are thought to participate passively (Tosun, 1999). The decision-making and implementation processes are not controlled by the local community but by external actors, and the local context is often ignored (Zapata et al., 2011). In contrast, in the bottom-up approach, community members actively participate, and CBT is controlled by the local community (Tosun, 1999; Zapata et al., 2011). In this case, because CBT is formed and implemented based on a certain degree of agreement among community members, it is thought to have fewer possibilities of bringing negative impacts of tourism and socio-cultural confusion to the community (Salazar, 2012). Thus, bottom-up is often perceived as an appropriate approach (for example, Dixey, 2005; Manyara & Jones, 2007; Zapata et al., 2011), and achieving a high level of participation is seen as crucial in the CBT literature (for example, Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Asker et al., 2010; Armstrong, 2012). As a result, CBT achieving the highest levels of participation and community control is regarded as ideal (Mayaka et al., 2019).

### 3.5 Implementation of CBT

Although conceptual models have been intensely researched, the development of practical models of CBT has been limited in studies in the field (Rodrigues & Prideaux, 2018). There is a divergence between theory and practice in CBT (Trejos & Chiang, 2009; Dangi & Jamal, 2016). To use the words of Ping (n.d.), CBT, owned and managed by the community as a whole, is “the purest model” of CBT. However, this type of CBT can scarcely be seen these days (Scheyvens, 2002).

In practice, it is difficult for the local community to initiate and develop CBT on their own without support from external actors because CBT often requires a lot of financial and technical resources, which local communities in developing countries generally lack (Harrison & Schipani, 2007; Trejos & Chiang, 2009). It is external actors that bring access to the resources required for the development of CBT (Jones, 2005), and therefore, communities are recommended to work together with various actors from different sectors (Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009; Asker et al., 2010). Possible actors in CBT include the local community, government organisations, international aid agencies, NGOs, the tourism industry, other businesses, and academics (Sproule, 1996; Hamzah & Khalifah, 2009). In concrete terms, collaboration with the private sector is said to bring ‘business and marketing skills’ and ‘a client base’ (Asker et al., 2010). In a similar vein, it is expected that collaboration with the non-profit sector will bring tourism funding, knowledge, and technical support (Jones, 2005; Asker et al., 2010), and that collaboration with the public sector will bring ‘policy and legal’ frameworks and infrastructure development (Dixey, 2005) as well as supervision and ‘higher-level’ assistance (Asker et al., 2010). Consequently,
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CBT projects involving many external actors are thought to be more likely to succeed (Häusler & Strasdas, 2002).

However, external actors are usually diverse in character, capacity, scope, and thought (Zapata et al., 2011), and possibly have complicated problems, such as the existence of conflicts among group members in their own organisation and competition with other stakeholders (Hall, 2013). Additionally, it is an undeniable fact that their actions are not necessarily motivated by humanitarian concerns but by their own self-interests (Brecher et al., 2000). As is often the case, the interests of community members are not necessarily the same as those of external entities (Carbone, 2005). External actors may not necessarily address local priorities (Manyara & Jones, 2007). In the worst case, the difference of interests around CBT might bring about conflicts between the community and external actors (Stone, 2015).

It has been alleged that CBT projects are often implemented in a top-down way and driven by external organisations (Dixey, 2005; Dodds et al., 2018). In reality, many CBT projects have failed in support of donors’ finished (Mitchell & Muckosy, 2008). Zapata et al. (2011, p. 727) admit that although CBT was initially directed towards small-scale projects for community development and environmental conservation, it was later expanded to a variety of projects, and as a consequence, “CBT has turned out to be, somewhat paradoxically, a top-down development model.” In response to this situation, the current approach to CBT is often criticised in the literature for having deprived CBT of self-reliance of the community, which it connoted in its original concept (Giampiccoli & Kalis, 2012).

As mentioned previously, participation is the distribution of power. In the literature of CBT, it is widely agreed that the unequal power balance between the local community and external actors is the root cause of insufficient participation (Sakata & Prideaux, 2013). Some literature stresses facilitating collaboration among actors involved in CBT as a factor which enhances the participation of the community through the distribution of power (for example, Jamal & Getz, 1995; Okazaki, 2008). However, doubts are being expressed as to whether collaboration truly has an effect. For instance, Reed (1997) asserts that the mechanism which distributes power among actors in CBT through collaboration has not yet been clarified and there should be opposition from the people in power in facilitating community participation. Stone (2015) reported a case where collaboration among actors in CBT did not necessarily lead to the transfer of authority from the government to the local community.

Considering the fact that the level of participation of the community in tourism often falls under ‘tokenism’ (Murphy, 1985), it might have to be accepted that the achievement of the highest rung of the ladder of participation is somewhat unrealistic in the case of tourism (Tosun, 2000; Murphy & Murphy, 2004). Joppe (1996) reported that, even in CBT projects that look successful, the local community often does not have control over decision-making. In recent years, there has been an argument that CBT with the current level of participation which is ‘far from perfect,’ can also bring acceptable benefits to the community (Reggers et al., 2016). Dodds et al. (2018) concluded that more emphasis should be placed on actual outcomes of CBT rather than the level of community control.

3.6 Evaluative framework and future of CBT

For CBT to surely bring economic, socio-cultural, and environmental benefits to the community, the development of indicators to evaluate CBT projects is critical (SNV and University of Hawaii, 2007). Nevertheless, sufficient efforts have not been made in the literature (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006). Existing evaluative frameworks used to assess CBT vary from
those that simply weigh the impacts of tourism (Asker et al., 2010) to those that measure the implementation process (Lucchetti & Font, 2013): for example, the ‘degree’ and ‘equity’ of participation (Park et al., 2017), opportunities for education and training (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009), and how to allocate profits (Sakata & Prideaux, 2013).

The evaluative framework of CBT has become a controversial issue in the literature. For example, although CBT is regarded as an alternative to mass tourism, as stated above (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Isaac, 2010; Mitchell & Ashley, 2010; López-Guzmán et al., 2011), conventional criteria, such as ‘high occupancy rate’ and ‘high visitor number,’ have been still used as bases for judgment in CBT (Manyara & Jones, 2007). Mitchell and Muckosy (2008) labelled CBT as a failure, using data which showed that the occupancy rate of most CBT lodges surveyed was only 5%. On the other hand, although a CBT lodge in Papua New Guinea had only 4.2% occupancy, Sakata and Prideaux (2013) held that the project was successful. Hence, under the existing circumstances, the criteria used to evaluate CBT are chosen in the local context, considering the aims of the project, requests from the actors, and the availability of the resources (SNV and University of Hawaii, 2007). Different communities are in different situations, which has given legitimacy to the existence of context-specific frameworks for CBT (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006). However, it is also pointed out that this does not mean that there is no need for the development of a framework that includes issues which should be tackled in all destinations (Roberts & Tribe, 2008).

In line with the current pattern of expanding globalisation, the ‘local community’ has been increasingly recognised as a place where the local and the global meet (Richards & Hall, 2000). However, tourism taking place at the local level often fails to incorporate issues discussed at the global level (Torres-Delgado & Saarinen, 2014). At the local level, because focal points of tourism are usually on local matters such as ‘community development,’ ‘community survival,’ and ‘local benefit,’ agendas set in the global context do not necessarily become objectives or incentives in local projects (Dangi & Jamal, 2016). Recent studies revealed that, in many cases, CBT does not necessarily lead to the empowerment of the socially disadvantaged (Stone, 2015; Knight & Cottrell, 2016). Dangi and Jamal (2016) criticise conventional CBT studies for failing to encompass crucial issues discussed at the global level, such as ‘equity,’ ‘fairness,’ and ‘justice.’

In 2015, UNWTO publicly announced that it “welcomes the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and reiterates its commitment to work towards the implementation of the Goals” (UNWTO, 2015). SDGs are a set of goals adopted by the UN in 2015 that require every country in the world to urgently take actions for sustainable development (UN, n.d.b.). They consist of 17 goals to achieve by 2030 with the aim to “leave no one behind,” addressing comprehensively global issues such as poverty, inequality, climate change, environmental degradation, ‘prosperity,’ and ‘peace and justice’ (UN, n.d.a). Historically, there have been people in the world who are left behind from the benefits of development because of their ‘poverty,’ ‘ethnicity,’ ‘gender,’ and ‘age,’ and due to ‘disability’ (UNDP, n.d.). As the essence of SDGs, Scheyvens and Biddulph (2018) insist on the importance of paying attention to those people and of intentionally incorporating them in tourism development post-2015.

Although tourism can provide a wide variety of benefits at various levels, such as the international, national, regional, and local ones, those outcomes are neither easily nor automatically achieved. Therefore, tourism projects have to be appropriately planned and implemented to accomplish their goals (Saarinen & Rogerson, 2014). As Ndivo and Cantoni (2016) indicate, given that CBT is sure to empower the socially disadvantaged and people excluded from development, new approaches to CBT might have to be sought. Concerning
environmental conservation, in the literature, it is reported that there were CBT projects which led to a reduction of waste, including plastic bags and Styrofoam containers (Dinkoksung & Nejati, 2017), and achieved a decrease in carbon emissions (Matarrita-Cascante et al., 2010). These examples likely prove that CBT can also address the issues discussed at the global level. In the growing trend toward initiatives that enable tourism to contribute to the achievement of global goals (Higham & Miller, 2018), it seems to be essential to reconsider the roles and possibilities of CBT forthwith.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of CBT by reviewing some critical issues in the discussions surrounding it. As discussed above, although CBT can be seen from a wide variety of perspectives and has historically been imparted diverse tasks, the participation of the community in tourism has been the central idea of CBT. However, considering the current situation, participation might have become an ‘empty buzzword’ in CBT (Wearing & McDonald, 2002). As many researchers have admitted, achieving high community participation and control through CBT might not be realistic. Nonetheless, this does not mean that the voice of community can be undervalued. Recently, a significant number of researchers and practitioners have emphasised the importance of giving priority to the creation of liveable places for residents rather than attractive places for visitors in the tourism development process (for example, Goodwin, 2011). In the closing remarks of the first research conference on Tourism and the SDGs, Scheyvens (2019) referred to the importance of creating “a great place to live, a great place to work and a great place to visit.”

Here, a question arises: although CBT has been developed all around the world and a large number of CBT case studies can be found in the literature, how much attention has been paid to the perspectives of the local community members in CBT studies? It has been made clear that there are remarkable gaps in perceptions of CBT among actors involved, for example, between experts and organisers (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009) and between tourists and community members (Mano et al., 2017). However, there has been a lack of research which views CBT from the perspectives of the local community members and prioritises their intentions (Ngo et al., 2018; Palmer & Chuamuangphan, 2018). As pointed out in the literature, evaluative frameworks of CBT are often based not on local community members’ perspectives but on external actors’ perspectives (Sakata & Prideaux, 2013). CBT researchers and practitioners have to always bear in mind the point that tourism initiatives standing on capitalistic grounds could potentially fall into a development paradigm that lacks the views and intentions of the local community (Harrison & Schipani, 2007). Although it is crucial to develop tourism so that it can help “create better places for people to live in and for people to visit” (Goodwin, 2011, p. 117), ‘better places’ should not be defined only from outsiders’ perspectives.

Furthermore, in the new era of international development post-2015, it is also critical to view CBT from broader viewpoints to address the complicated issues happening around the world. Although both globally set agendas and the locally oriented projects aim to achieve sustainable development, they will not bring satisfactory results if they are implemented separately, and efforts to achieve sustainability will pay off only when global initiatives and local initiatives are combined (Dangi & Jamal, 2016). Because there are a wide variety of actors in CBT, some might emphasise community-oriented issues, while others might stress different aspects, including those discussed at the global level. In this sense, CBT seems to be the approach that exhibits these local-global relations of tourism the most. In other words, CBT
might be a place where interests and objectives of different actors join together, sprout, and bear fruit, as integrated outcomes which may encompass both community goals and global goals. Thus, CBT still has excellent potential for further growth, and our future research will be able to open up new prospects for it.

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