CESTOUR
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STATUS-QUO REPORT

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN INDIA

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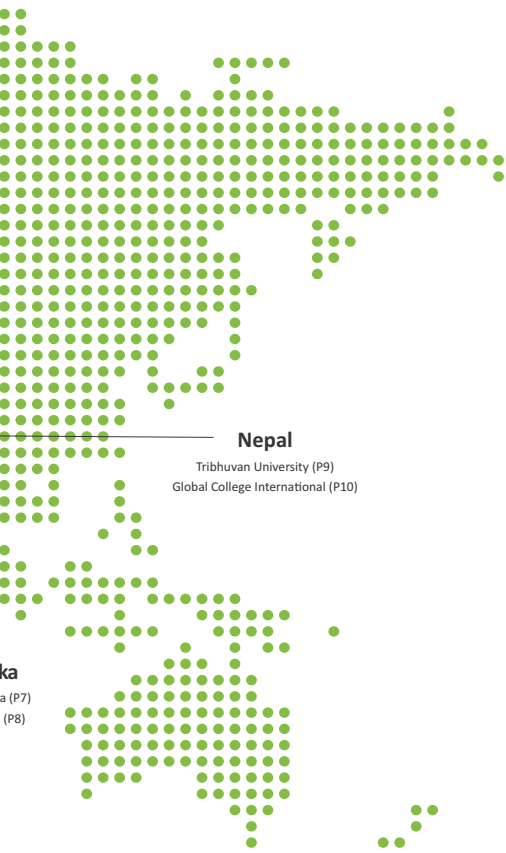## STATUS-QUO REPORT

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN INDIA

"Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists, and host regions while protecting, and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems."

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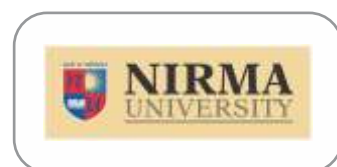Italy

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List of Abbreviations

ATTO	Association of Tourism Trade Organizations, India
CBT	Community-Based Tourism
CAGR	Compound Annual Growth Rate
CBT	Community Based Tourism
DMC	Destination Management Companies
FEE	Foreign Exchange Earning
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHG	Global Greenhouse Gas
GSTC	Global Sustainable Tourism Council
HRACC	Hotel and Restaurant Approval Classification Committee
IITTM	Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management
ITDC	India Tourism Development Corporation
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
KEDB	Karnataka Ecotourism Development Board
MWBP	Mobile Web Best Practices
NITI Aayog	National Institute for Transforming India
NTAC	National Tourism Advisory Council
PIDDC	Product Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits
PPC	Public, Private, and Community
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PSDS	Public Service Delivery System
SAP	Swachhta Action Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SEG	Sustainable Economic Growth
SCP	Sustainable Consumption, and Production
STCI	Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India
STR	Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve
SVTC	Sustainable Tourism Value Chain
TRT	Tax Refund for Tourists
SUOM	Sustainable use of oceans, and marine resources
UNWTO	United Nation World Tourism Organisation
U.S	United States
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly
UNF	United Nations Foundation
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme

Executive Summary

Tourism is a critical economic activity in the global economy at present and will create a multiplier impact on India's socio-economic growth through infrastructure development, job creation, and skill development, amongst others. Equally, it strongly relates to the socio-cultural, ecological, and economic development contexts of many parts of the globe. The purpose of this report is to provide a comprehensive insight into the sustainable tourism development context in India. It aims at identifying the need-gap of sustainable tourism development in India in order to guide the effective implementation of the project named 'Centres of Excellence in Sustainable Tourism to boost economic development and enhance university-business cooperation in Southern Asia' (CESTour).

The report is divided into different sections, among which the first section covers the discussion based on understanding Sustainable Tourism. Keeping in mind the UNWTO's perspective, the global trends, and the challenges were discussed with small case studies which reflect the good practices, and initiatives taken in India. An extensive literature was analyzed to understand Sustainable tourism in India, followed by the comprehensive discussions conducted with an expert group to elucidate sustainable tourism need-gaps in the Indian context. The later part of the report elaborates on the prospects, and potential of sustainable tourism development, followed by the conclusions. The purpose of this is to unveil the opportunities, challenges, issues, and best practices in sustainable tourism initiatives and implementations in India. Overall, the report provides an inclusive insight into the status quo of sustainable tourism context, development priorities, issues, challenges, and opportunities in India to guide the implementation of the CESTour project.

Acknowledgment

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Chapter

01

Sustainable Tourism

1. Sustainable Tourism

In any country-level context, tourism has different expressions based on the identity and scope of the region or country. In an attempt to develop a common language, UNWTO defined Tourism as- "a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents), and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure" , which included tourists of all forms i.e. domestic, inbound, and outbound. As we know, UNWTO is the sole agency of the United Nations which is responsible for promoting sustainable and responsible tourism.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines it as "Tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social, and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, and the environment, and host communities." "Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic, and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and a suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee long-term sustainability . Thus, sustainable tourism is conceptualized as efforts towards :

1. Making optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes, and helping to conserve natural heritage and biodiversity."

2. "Respecting the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserving their built, and living cultural heritage, and traditional values, and contributing to inter-cultural understanding, and tolerance."

3. "Ensuring viable, long-term economic operations, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed, including stable employment, and income-earning opportunities, and social services to host communities, and contributing to poverty alleviation."

Tourism has several possibilities to be linked with sustainability as it wields tremendous social, environmental and economic development which draws a necessity for the nations to have a sustainable vision and approach towards fostering mankind development. "According to data by UNWTO, tourism has witnessed an over 56-fold increase in international tourist arrivals from 25 million in 1950 to 1.5 billion in 2019." This is expected to be increase over the years, indicating a forecast of 2030 (Figure 1). "On the specific outcome of sustainable tourism, the ecotourism industry worldwide was estimated at 181.1billion U.S. dollars in 2019. The sector was forecast to reach 333.8 billion U.S. dollars in 2027, registering a CAGR of 14.3 percent ."

[1]   UNWTO. (2021, March 15). Glossary of Tourism Terms. Retrieved from World Tourism Organization: https://www.unwto.org/glossary-tourism-terms
[2]   Giulia Carbone (UNEP),and Eugenio Yunis (WTO). (2005). Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide to Policy Makers, UNEP,and WTO, 2005, Pg. 11,and 12. Retrieved March 17, 2021, from United Nations Environment Programme:
      https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/8741/-
      Making%20Tourism%20More%20Sustainable_%20A%20Guide%20for%20Policy%20Makers-2005445.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y
[3]   Giulia Carbone (UNEP),and Eugenio Yunis (WTO). (2005). Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide to Policy Makers, UNEP,and WTO, 2005, Pg. 11,and 12. Retrieved March 17, 2021, from United Nations Environment Programme:
      https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/8741/-
      Making%20Tourism%20More%20Sustainable_%20A%20Guide%20for%20Policy%20Makers-2005445.pdf?sequence=3&isAllowed=y

"A social, cultural, and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents), and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure"

The COVID-19 pandemic is an extreme scenario of risk which has affected the world and has forced us to face a global health, social, and economic crisis. The tourism industry is one of the most severely hit sectors due to the direct impact on industry actors and the restrictions on travel. According to the UNWTO data dashboard, about 1.0 billion fewer international tourist arrivals are registered, over 120 million direct jobs related to tourism are at risk and there is a loss of US$ 1.3 trillion in total export revenues from international tourism. The impact specific to South Asia is devastating, as some of the economies have a very heavy dependence on the tourism sector. In terms of 'Tourism as a percentage of total exports', is six percent, only considering the international category, while the numbers for countries like Sri Lanka and Nepal with 24 and 33 percent respectively, have a much higher dependence. Both Sri Lanka and Nepal are severely affected not just in terms of foreign exchange but also in terms of production of goods, services and employment.

Figure1: Growth, actual, and forecast, in the number of tourists in the world from 1950-2030.
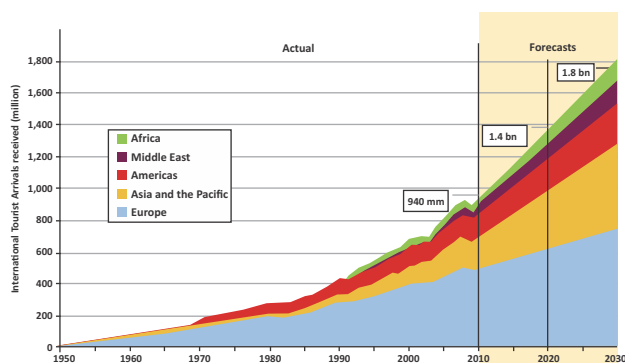
Source: UNWTO[5]

For many countries, tourism is the powerhouse of the economy. As per UNWTO data, it contributes to about 10% of the world Gross Domestic Product, approximately 30% of services exports, and 1 out of every 10 jobs, and 1 out of every 4 new jobs in the global average and is the third-highest world category in export earnings in 2015, Given the impact of the sector on the economy, none can be far from national tourism agenda, with special focus on sustainable tourism agenda. This data shows the magnitude of the impact this industry has on the lives and livelihood of millions of people.

"This industry has the potential to contribute, directly or indirectly to all of the Sustainable Development Goals; however, it has direct influence as targets in SDG- 8, SDG- 12, and SDG- 14 on inclusive, and sustainable economic growth (EG), sustainable consumption, and production (SCP), and the sustainable use of oceans, and marine resources (SUOM), respectively. National priorities are aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (2015) since India is a signatory, thus sustainability is at the core of a nation's development policy prioritizing local traditions, resources, and residents."

1.1 Context, and National Priorities

The National Tourism Policy guides the governance, and operations of the tourism sector in every country. The national priorities are clearly aligned with the economic as well as the social interests of the country. A country that is a signatory of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) must align its policies to meet the development metrics of the same. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), comprising 169 SDG targets, set up by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2015, and to be achieved by 2030, expect the country-level policymaking to respond to the development goals. Out of these 17 SDGs, 3 SDGs namely SDG-8, SDG-12, andSDG-14 are specific to sustainable

Figure 2: UN Sustainable Development Goals intended to be achieved by 2030

tourism. In addition, SDG-9, SDG-11, and SDG-13 (Figure -2) are very influential goals for the sustainable tourism sector. This strengthens the idea for the introduction of sustainable policies and practices in tourism for a better-paced and more inclusive growth of this massive sector.

The conceptual and policy understanding of Sustainable Tourism varies from country to country based on the social, economic, cultural, environmental and ecological mapping of the country. Influenced by such factors, and national priorities, the policy of the country emphasizes the responsibility of the tourists to adapt to infallible practices which improve the well-being of host communities, leaving a positive impact on culture and heritage while generating substantial economic benefits. Sustainable Tourism is closely associated with the concepts of responsible tourism, ecotourism and community-based tourism. The definition of sustainable tourism by different agencies and institutions is mapped to observe the regional priorities and policy influences.

The global tourism sector has not remained indifferent to the challenges of sustainability over the past years. Today, trade organizations, governments, academic institutions and international development agencies have acknowledged that without prioritizing sustainability, a development benefitting all the stakeholders is not possible. National and local bodies across the world have been adapting to the tools, and policies considered effective in making tourism more sustainable in the long run as the need for it is imperative for the survival of the industry as a whole.

Also, given the importance of this idea, and the opportunities it brings, the UNGA declared the year 2017 as "The International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development." This declaration was made to raise awareness regarding the potential of the travel & tourism industry to lead social inclusion, economic growth and environmental and social preservation. All the efforts reiterate the importance of tourism being well planned and well managed.

Table 1: Sustainable Tourism, and allied definition portfolio

SN	Term	Organization	Definition	Eco	Soc	Env	Cul	Ecol	SDG Mapping
			Sustainable Tourism Definition Portfolio	Dimensions (Economy, Social, Environmental, Cultural, Ecology)					SDG
1	Sustainable Development	The United Nations (UN)	"Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	8
2	Sustainable Tourism	Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC)	"Sustainable Tourism refers to sustainable practices in , and by the tourism industry, it is an aspiration for the impacts of all forms of tourism – all forms of tourism should be sustainable."	Y	Y	Y			-
3	Sustainable Tourism	United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO)	"Tourism that takes full account of its current , and future economic, social , and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment , and host communities."	Y	Y	Y	Y		8, 13, 14
4	Sustainable Tourism	UNEP & UNWTO, 2005	'Sustainable tourism' or 'tourism in the green economy has been defined as tourism activities that can be maintained indefinitely in their environmental, social, economic , and cultural contexts, and despite their effect on these areas of life.	Y	Y	Y			8, 13, 14
5	Sustainable Tourism	ILO	The ILO's definition of sustainable tourism is, that it is "composed of three pillars: social justice, economic development, and environmental integrity. It is committed to the enhancement of local prosperity by maximizing the contribution of tourism to the destination's economic prosperity, including the amount of visitor spending that is retained locally. It should generate income, and decent employment for workers without affecting the environment , and culture of the tou rists' destination , and ensure the viability , and competitiveness of destinations , and enterprises to enable them to continue to prosper , and deliver benefits in the long term".	Y	Y	Y			8, 13
6	Sustainable Tourism	German Forum on Environment, and Development	"Sustainable Tourism has to meet social, cultural, ecological, and economic requirements. Sustainable tourism holds a long -term view, for the present, and future generations, ethically , and socially just , and culturally adapted, ecologically viable, and economically sensible, and productive"	Y	Y		Y	Y	8,14

#	Name	Source	Definition						Ref
7	Responsible Tourism	The 2002 Cape Town Declaration	"Responsible Tourism is tourism which: 1. Minimizes negative economic, environmental, and social impacts 2. Generates greater economic benefits for local people, and enhances the well-being of host communities 3. Improves working conditions, and access to the industry 4. Involves local people in decisions that affect their lives, and life chances 5. Makes positive contributions to the conservation of natural, and cultural heritage embracing diversity 6. Provides more enjoyable experiences for tourists through more meaningful connections with local people, and a greater understanding of local cultural, social, and environmental issues 7. Provides access for physically challenged people 8. is culturally sensitive, encourages respect between tourists, and hosts, and builds local pride, and confidence"	Y	Y	Y	Y		8, 14
8	Ecotourism	International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)	"Ecotourism is environmentally responsible travel, and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, to enjoy, study , and appreciate nature (, and any accompanying cultural features – both past , and present), that promotes conservation, has low visitor impact and provides for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local populations"	Y	Y	Y	Y		8, 11
9	Ecotourism	Global Ecotourism Network	"Ecotourism is responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and creates knowledge , and understanding through interpretation , and education of all involved (visitors, staff, and the visited) "	Y	Y	Y			8, 12
10	Ecotourism	UNWTO	"Ecotourism refers to forms of tourism which have the following characteristics: 1. All nature-based forms of tourism in which the main motivation of the tourists is the observation, and appreciation of nature as well as the traditional cultures prevailing in natural areas. 2. It contains educational, and interpretation features. 3. It is generally, but not exclusively organized by specialized tour operators for small groups. Service provider partners at the destinations tend to be small locally owned businesses. 4. It minimizes negative impacts upon the natural and socio-cultural environment. 5. It supports the maintenance of natural areas which are used as ecotourism attractions by: 6. Generating economic benefits for host communities, organizations, & authorities managing natural areas with conservation purposes; 7. Providing alternative employment, and income opportunities for local communities; 8. - Increasing awareness towards the conservation of natural, and cultural assets, both among locals, and tourists."	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	4, 8, 12
11	Geo-Tourism	UNWTO	"Geo-Tourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place – its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents."		Y	Y	Y	Y	8, 12
12	Cultural Tourism	IGI Global	"An economic activity that is related to events , and organized trips, and directed to knowledge , and leisure with cultural elements such as monuments, architectural complexes or symbols of historical nature, as well as artistic/cultural/religious, educational, informative events or of an academic nature"	Y	Y		Y		8, 9
13	Community Based Tourism	UNWTO	"Community-Based Tourism (CBT) is defined by The Mountain Institute, and Regional Community Forestry Training Centre as a visitor -host interaction that has meaningful participation by both, and generates economic, and conservation benefits for local communities, and environments."	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	8, 13
14	Religious Tourism	Travel Earth	"Religious tourism, which is also known as faith tourism, is the type of tourism whereby people of faith travel individually or in groups for reasons related to religion or spirituality in their quest for meaning. It could be for pilgrimage, missionary, or leisure purposes."	N	N		N	N	8

Source: Source: Author's contribution. (Sharma, Veenu and Rahul Singh, 2021)

4   Lock, S. (2021, March 19). Sustainable tourism - statistics & facts. Retrieved March 24, 2021, from Statista:
    https://www.statista.com/topics/1916/green-tourism/
5   World Tourism Organization. (2014). UNWTO Tourism Highlights, 2014 Edition. Retrieved March 17, 2021, from UNWTO Elibrary: https://www.e-
    unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284416226
6   World Tourism Organization, WTO. (2015). EU Guidebook on Sustainable Tourism for Development. Retrieved March 22, 2021, from UNWTO:
    https://www.unwto.org/EU-guidebook-on-sustainable-tourism-for-development

Figure 3: Key pillars of sustainable tourism, and sector capability mapping
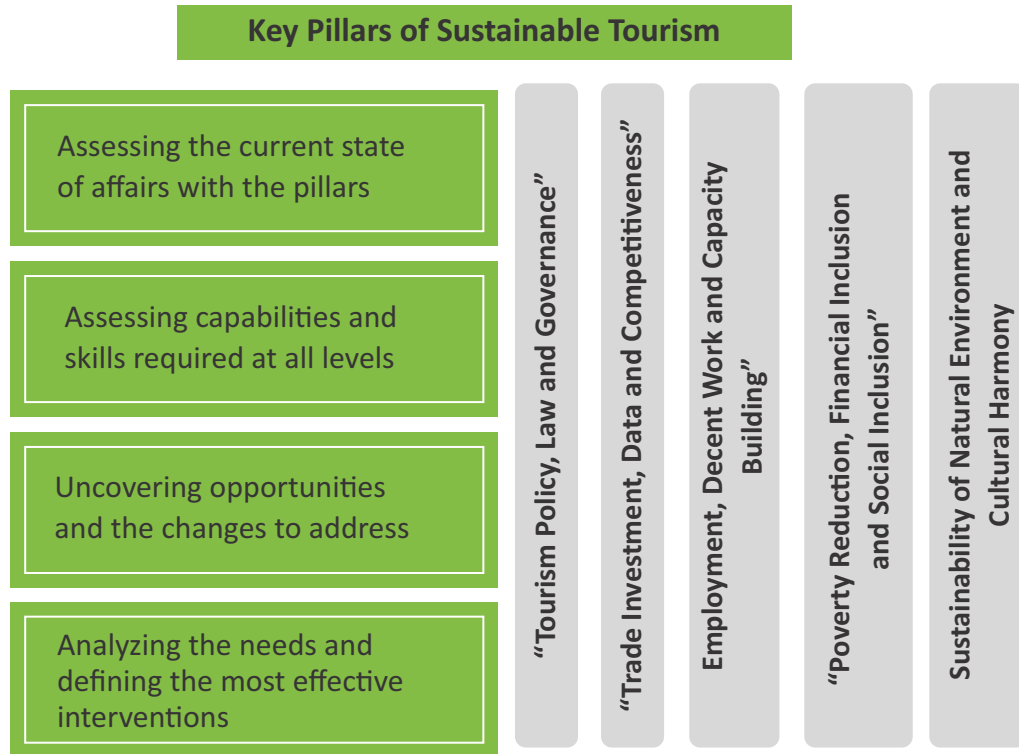
Source: Pillars of Sustainable Tourism

The mammoth tourism industry has a huge role to play in making the world more sensitive, empathetic, responsible, inclusive and sustainable. The sector has the potential to be a catalyst to an impactful and positive change. However, global and national policies need to stress upon the risk management and resilience of the sector in extreme social and catastrophic events such as the global COVID-19 pandemic.

1.2 Sustainable Tourism – Principles, and Pillars

The ecosystem developments and the implementation of policies and programs for sustainable tourism are based on predominant principles, practices, and approaches. These principles should be governance reassuring, economic model supportive and stakeholders friendly in order to accelerate the growth of the sector which is already ingrained with the inherent excellence of sustainability. The guiding concepts and principles may be mapped as below in Figure-4.

The application of sustainability is governed by the stakeholder approach adopted in the relevant territorial and social context. Thus, stakeholders´ implication in the design of sustainable tourism vision and models, inquiry of challenges and designing process is vital for sustainable tourism development. In addition, understanding the impact of the critical dimensions of sustainable tourism completes the value chain, and sustenance of the business model, and industry.

- **Economic Development:** Travel and Tourism have been one of the biggest employment generators, and contribute significantly to the global GDP. India is a gold mine as far as tourism is concerned, and we are yet to take benefit of this fact to its fullest- one of the speakers had stated. Skilling of stakeholders is also very important to make the overall experience more pleasant. Sustainable Tourism is a good instrument for creating jobs and helping flourish the local economy. Seamless connectivity between tourism destinations should be supported with sustainable means of transportation. Product-based tourism, encouraging local artists and the handicraft industry is not being utilized to its full potential. It is also observed that the current demand-supply shock created due to pandemic COVID-19 needs to be countered by creating a safe, responsible, and sustainable environment for tourists, and supply stakeholders, it will also accelerate the growth of inbound, and domestic tourism in the country.

- **Community Vision:** Public, Private and Community (PPC) participation has been a strong partnership in any sector's development which when missing at large develops a weaker sector. The indulgence of local communities in the idea of sustainable tourism is very critical for its success. Reports observed that the tourism industry in India is fragmented, and

Figure 4: Sustainable Tourism Principle, and Practices mapping

Source: Making Tourism More Sustainable, UNEP, and WTO Report, 2005.

Figure 5: Economic, social, and environmental aims of sustainable tourism

Economic Viability	Local Prosperity	Community Wellbeing	Cultural Richness
Employment Quality	Local Control	Physical Integrity	Biological Diversity
Social Equity	Visitor Fulfilment	Resource Efficiency	Environmental Purity

Source: Making Tourism More Sustainable, UNEP, andWTO Report, 2005.

BOX CASE- Tourism as a threat vs Tourism as an opportunity in the Mediterranean

The Mediterranean is one of the most important biodiversity hotspots on the earth. It is also the world's leading tourism destination in terms of domestic as well as international tourists. Many unsustainable practices associated with mass tourism in the region have threatened the local ecosystem and biodiversity. The introduction of sustainable tourism practices brings numerous opportunities for the region (as shown in the example). It not only ensures a sustained livelihood for the local communities but also benefits the environment in which they live.

Table2: Impact Assessment of Sustainable Tourism

Economic Impact		Social, and Cultural Impact		Environmental impacts	
Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
Foreign Exchange Earnings	Economic Leakage	Preserving Local Culture	Social Change	Increased Awareness	Depletion of Natural Resources
Contribution to Government Revenues	Infrastructure Cost	Strengthening Communities	Globalization and the Destruction of Preservation and Heritage	Reduces Carbon Footprint	Increase of Heavy Infrastructure and Carbon Footprint
Employment Generation	Increase in Prices	Provision of Social Services	Loss of Naturalness and Authenticity	Optimized Management of Waste	Ignorance to Resources
Contribution to Local Economies	Dependence of Local Community	The commercialization of Culture and Art	Standardisation and Commercialisation	Promotion of Rural and Natural Living	=
Development of Private Sector	Foreign Ownership and Management	The revitalization of Culture and Art	Culture Clashes	Support to the Government and Policy Initiatives	=
Increased Incremental Trade	=	Preservation of Heritage	Increase In Crime, Gambling and Moral Behaviour	Implementation of Water Conservation	=
Regional Infrastructure Development	=	Benefits to Women	=	=	=
=	=	Support to Artisans and inclusivity	=	=	=

Source: Author's contribution. (Sharma, Veenu and Rahul Singh, 2021)

there is a lack of a centralized voice to represent the community stakeholders of the industry.

- **Sustainability Vision:** Ensuring sustainability is not just the function of the government; the participation of the associated industries and community is also crucial. However, while it exerts some pressure on all the stakeholders, the holistic development of the industry is ensured. The federal-level and state-level policies support and encourage SMEs, proper waste management, efficient energy management, encouraging sustainable architecture, systems to meet the commitment to United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to develop inclusive social, and cultural ecosystems attaining sustainability.

The Economic, Social and Environmental are fundamental dimensions of sustainable tourism. Since the emphasis of this report is a holistic view on sustainable tourism's wider benefits and challenges to develop the sector, it is important to recognize that there are trade-offs too. The tourism policy attempts to develop the tourism sector most progressively, however, if it is poorly planned, tourism will have a negative bearing on community, people, cities, parks, rivers and historic monuments, and put severe pressure on local infrastructure, environment, regional culture and resources.

1.3 Advantages of Sustainable Tourism

Sustainable tourism focuses not only on creating better places to travel but also aims at creating better places to live. In a nutshell, it is about visiting a place and trying to create a positive impact on its economy, society and environment.

In terms of concrete benefits, there are some key points to be mentioned:

1. **Helps in preserving natural resources (Environmental benefits):** If humans wish to prosper during their life on this planet, they have to save the earth and understand that optimal consumption is the need of the hour. Sustainable tourism aims at exactly the right thing by handling the primary threats associated with climate change and environmental depletion. The reduction in CO_2 emissions and energy consumption add huge potential to the process and can result in great payoffs for the planet as well as the coming generations. A tourist interacts with various stakeholders in different stages of their travel, and some responsible practices in the journey can reap extraordinary results.

Sound management of the natural resources while providing tourism facilities is the direction that could lead towards a significant improvement in environmental management. Research states that tourism accounts for over 8% of the total emissions of greenhouse gases. Through sustainable practices and approaches in tourism, the industry can raise awareness about the needs and issues in our environment which will further lead to the systematic and waste-free use of temporal resources in the form of travelling green, conserving water, using renewable energy and reducing waste .

2. **Stimulating growth in the economy (Economic benefits):** A tourist contributes to the overall economic growth of an area in terms of sales, income, tax revenue and jobs. Sustainable tourism dictates buying domestically produced goods, which directly impacts the economic growth of the workers, manufacturers and traders. The money from tourism and travel is directed to the local community, as opposed to large corporations, part of which promotes the development of new businesses and employment in the tourism sector.

It indeed requires a monetary investment, but more than that it is about the vision that is developed in the stakeholders which provides an opportunity that should be harnessed as quickly as possible. Investing in the practice of the key players can prove to be a turnaround in the long run as it creates an atmosphere of change in the ecosystem resulting in more sustainability-oriented plans, and policies.

3. **Harnessing the socio-cultural authenticity (Social benefits):** Sustainable tourism holds the potential to revive the standard of life of the residents drastically. Travel & Tourism is settled on the thought of exploration which makes it important for the destination to have competitiveness to provide diverse options to the tourists in the market. The growth is derived from different parameters such as employment, income, respect for the culture, personal development and increased public participation in sustainable activities. The responsible consumption by the stakeholders results in the preservation of the destination which then improves prospective investment opportunities by the government and corporate

sectors, and also encourages diversification by integrating the local economy.

Infrastructure development in India has been a critical concern of the tourism sector. Sustainable Tourism thrives on the concept of neutralizing the negative impacts of irresponsible tourism activities and it requires infrastructural development at par to ensure that there is capacity to support the initiatives. It conserves the living traditional values and cultural heritage, and contributes to inter-cultural comprehension.

1.4 Sustainable Tourism Industry- Economic Case

Travel and Tourism is a known employment generator, with over 330 million jobs to its name, and is also a key ingredient to the economic growth; contributing over US\$ 9.2 trillion to the world GDP. Many developing countries with significant native populations have emerged as attractive tourism destinations for international tourists in the last few decades, and with this, sustainability has come out as an important tool to support the rapidly changing local ecosystem.

One such example is an island country in the central Atlantic Ocean, the Republic of Cabo Verde, where the international tourism arrival stood at more than 758,000 in 2019 against the native population of 550,000 . Another report by the International Trade Administration under the Department of Commerce, USA, states that the same country welcomed close to 820,000 tourists in 2019, up from just 145,000 in 2000. In the same year, tourism accounted for at least 24% of the GDP, and 10% of the employment in this African nation .

Natural and man-made catastrophes in the recent past have made us firmly believe that the issues of global warming, climate change, irresponsible consumption, drinking water scarcity, etc. must be dealt with promptly. This calls for sustainability to become a part of our lifestyle, practice and policy across industries, and tourism has a very concrete role to play in the process in more ways than we can imagine. Islands remain a popular tourism destination among millions of travellers each year but they are becoming increasingly exposed to the effects of climate change from rising water levels to devastating storms.

The CO_2 emissions related to transport in the tourism industry remain a colossal challenge. It is estimated that the emission will rise from 1,597 million tons in the year 2016 to 1,998 million tons in 2030, a staggering increase of 25%. In the same duration, domestic as well as international arrivals are expected to reach 37 billion with an almost two-fold increase in domestic tourists from 18.8 billion to 35.6 billion, followed by a growth in cosmopolitan arrivals from 1.2 billion to 1.8 billion .

Similarly, one of the largest revenue and employment drivers of the tourism industry, hotels and other means of accommodation, are very energy-exhaustive and accounts for about 2% of the total 5% CO_2 released by the tourism industry globally . The demand is majorly driven by the consumers, but by increasing the efficiency and cost-saving measures, the whole industry can be redesigned.

According to a digital research company, First Insight Inc., the cohort of buyers typically 22 years of age and under is inclined to pay more for sustainable brands. 54% of Generation Z stated that they are prepared to pay an incremental 10% on products that are sustainable with fifty percent of the millennials stating the same.
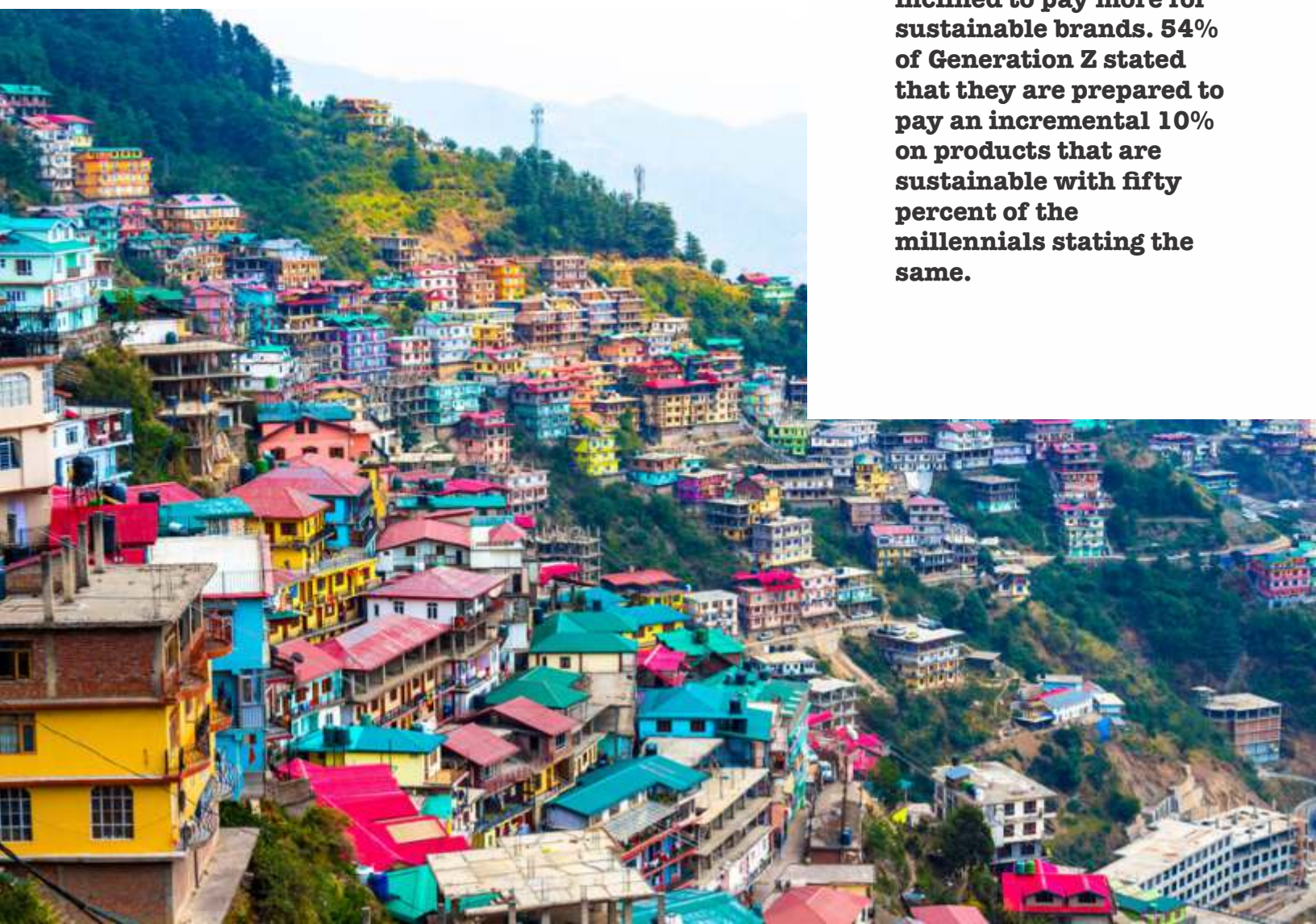
Figure 6: Major milestones supporting Sustainable Tourism Industry
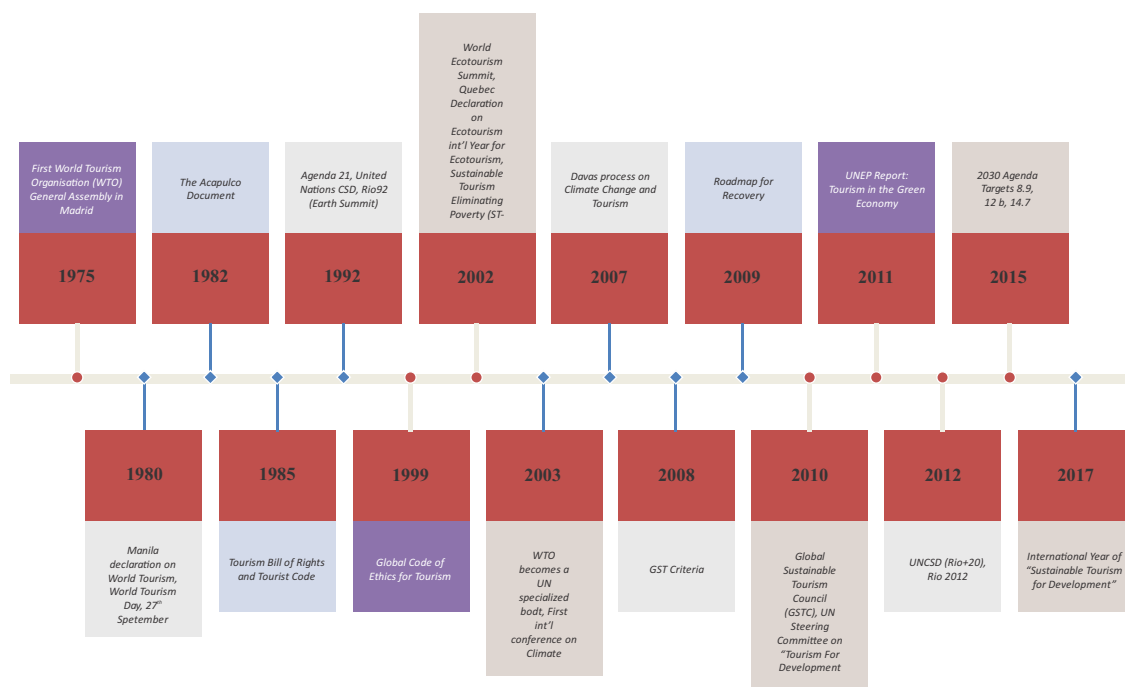
This, in turn, will eventually positively benefit the customers at large. Despite agreeing on the fact that sustainability in tourism has a remarkable part to play in the coming times, the commitment shown by most of the relevant stakeholders has so far been shallow.

The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) provides accreditation for Sustainable Tourism Development Bodies. It also controls the GSTC Criteria which are global standards for sustainability in travel and tourism. To create a common language for sustainability in tourism, the GSTC Criteria are laid out in the following four pillars :

1. Sustainable management

2. Socioeconomic impacts

3. Cultural impacts

4. Environmental impacts (this includes conserving biodiversity and landscapes, consumption of resources and reducing pollution)

Research published in 2021 shows that more than 50% of tourists are now inclined to pay for sustainable hotel services . As per a survey of US adults conducted by MMGY Global, 37% of the respondents believed that overcrowding is a serious problem. 32% of respondents are even willing to pay 10% more to environmentally responsible travel service providers .

According to a digital research company, First Insight Inc., the cohort of buyers typically 22 years of age and under is inclined to pay more for sustainable brands. 54% of Generation Z stated that they are prepared to pay an incremental 10% on products that are sustainable with fifty percent of the millennials stating the same. This compares to 23% and 34% for Baby Boomers and Generation X, respectively. In 2015, a Nielsen report found that 73% of millennials are inclined to pay an additional amount for sustainable products .

The ecosystem of Sustainable Tourism is observed to be receiving increased attention. There are new business models with innovative approaches in the sustainable tourism industry engaging economic entity stakeholders, policymakers, communities and international partners. Government initiatives and new policy introductions are supporting successful models and creating new synergy- such as the establishment of ecotourism Development Boards. This report will present the status quo of the Sustainable Tourism industry of India with observations on progress and growth pathways, challenges, policy changes, and programs and initiatives by the government to support the ecosystem.

Caselet 1. Spiti Ecosphere

Caselet 1. Spiti Ecosphere: Spiti, a tranquil valley in Himachal Pradesh at an average altitude of 3600 meters is home to around 10,000 Buddhists. Ecosphere is a social enterprise that is a collaborative effort of the local community of Spiti and professionals from diverse backgrounds, with a wide spectrum of skills, and experience, effectively spanning the bridge from the

7   Melissa. (2020, March 11). The Benefits Of Sustainable Tourism On The Environment,and Beyond. Retrieved March 25, 2021, from Tashi: https://tashi.travel/blog/2019/the-benefits-of-sustainable-tourism-on-the-environment-and-beyond

8   The World Bank. (2019). International tourism, number of arrivals - Cabo Verde. Retrieved March 27, 2021, from World Bank Open Data: https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/ST.INT.ARVL?end=2019&locations=CV&name_desc=true&start=2019&view=bar

9   International Trade Administration. (2020, September 10). Cabo Verde - Country Commercial Guide. Retrieved March 27, 2021, from International Trade Administration: https://www.trade.gov/country-commercial-guides/cabo-verde-tourism

10   World Tourism Organization (UNWTO),and the International Transport Forum (ITF). (2019, December 04). TOURISM'S CARBON EMISSIONS MEASURED IN LANDMARK REPORT LAUNCHED AT COP25. Retrieved April 08, 2021, from UNWTO: https://www.unwto.org/news/tourisms-carbon-emissions-measured-in-landmark-report-launched-at-cop25

Figure 7: Example of companies necessary to achieve the circularity of providing tourist services

Source: Sustainable Industrial Development, and Decoupling Strategies, UNIDO, 2011.

general to the niche. The aim is to create sustainable livelihoods that are linked to nature, and culture conservation, and thus address the triple-bottom-line of conservation, development, and economies, which also form the very foundation of their genesis. The focus is also to preserve, and exp, and the legacy of the Himalayas for the future generations with a commitment of not only to the development of the place, people, and resources of the Himalayan region but also to the outside world with whom these rich naturals, and cultural heritage, and the traditional knowledge of healing, and health are being shared.

This social enterprise provides an opportunity to all, to become active participants in giving back to the region through a range of activities, and products that enhance local economies, link up to nature & culture conservation, and overall development of the region. These include the following:

1. Eco Travel takes us close and personal with the mighty Himalayas, and the nature & culture of Spiti. It is an initiative to promote ecotourism in the region. Eco Travel offers various options to the discerning traveller ranging from a Spiritual Sojourn of the monasteries to the Pugmarks where one gets to track the elusive snow leopard and the Himalayan wolf amid this treasure trove of biological diversity.

2. Organics – Spiti's unique ecosystem is richly endowed with various indigenous species. Ecosphere has streamlined the process for extracting, and sourcing these rare Himalayan herbs including Sea Buckthorn popularly known as the "Wonder Berry"

3. Conservation – Mountain ecosystems, and economics share a symbiotic relationship, and maintaining the balance with the environment is critical to the sustainability of livelihoods. Muse, Spiti Sea Buckthorn Society, and Spiti Trans-Himalayan Action Group have been working in the region on the issues of climate change, promoting renewable energy, waste management, and the Dhangkar initiative. Dhangkar, originally called Dhakkar meaning 'citadel on a cliff, was the erstwhile capital of Spiti. The Dhangkar Monastery is one of the five major monastic centres in Spiti and belongs to the Gelug–pa sect of Vajrayana Buddhism. It is a heritage conservation site in a state of despair listed in the 'World's Hundred Most Endangered Sites by the World Monuments Watch Program.

Ecosphere is a part of The Green Circuit, a unique initiative that brings together the best eco-trips from across the Indian subcontinent into a single "greener" circuit wherein one enjoys amazing overall, and eco-adventures that are linked by responsible tourism, and connected by ground transport to cut carbon emissions.

Achievements

1. **L'Oréal Paris Femina Women Awards 2013:** For her environmental work, Ishita Khanna, the founder of Ecosphere, was honored with the Femina Women Award. The award honors "women of worth" who have stood up for a cause they care about, and whose efforts have impacted the lives of many.

2. **The Sierra Club's 'Achievement Award for Green Energy, and Green Livelihoods' - 2009:** Ecosphere's efforts in developing sustainable livelihoods for the local community, and linking them to nature, and culture conservation have been recognized. The award honors community initiatives that promote green economic development, renewable energy adaptation, and grassroots environmental campaign organizational leadership.

3. **Responsible Tourism Award for BEST IN A MOUNTAIN ENVIRONMENT in 2010:** Responsible Travel is an activist travel company based in the UK offering responsible holidays. The awards were founded in 2004 to celebrate the very best innovations, and practices in responsible tourism globally. Ecosphere was honored with this award for their efforts of making the villages in Spiti valley self-sustained, and for their carbon reduction program in the mountains. This award was sponsored by the Oman Ministry of Tourism.

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[12] Global Sustainable Tourism Council. (2008). GSTC Criteria Overview. Retrieved March 30, 2021, from Global Sustainable Tourism Council, GSTC: https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/

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[14] Nelson, K. M., Partelow, S., Stäbler, M., Graci, S., & Fujitani, M. (2021). Tourist willingness to pay for local green hotel certification. Plos one, 16(2), e0245953.

[15] Leposa, A. (2020, January 09). Stats: 32% Willing To Pay More For Sustainable Vacations. Retrieved April 20, 2021, from Travel Agent Central: https://www.travelagentcentral.com/your-business/stats-32-willing-to-pay-more-for-sustainable-vacations

[16] Petro, G. (2020, January 31). Sustainable Retail: How Gen Z Is Leading The Pack. Retrieved April 22, 2021, from Forbes: https://www.forbes.com/sites/gregpetro/2020/01/31/sustainable-retail-how-gen-z-is-leading-the-pack/?sh=9b9c0e2ca31a

SURVEY OF EUROPEAN NATIONAL TOURISM ORGANISATION ON STATUS QUO

European National Tourism Organisation (NTOs) demonstrated a positive attitude, and openness towards sustainable tourism: 97% participants agreed that sustainable tourism represents a key factor of destination competitiveness. The awareness and image of destination was understood to be the factor contributing most to the destination competitiveness, together with the destination's safety, and security. For a minor subset of NTOs (7%), strategic marketing was entirely based on sustainability issues, and their destination brand values revolved around sustainability principles. for those NTOs that had defined a destination management plan (About 50 %), sustainability was highly prioritized. Greater than a third of the combined NTOs had developed formal sustainable tourism programs for their country.

The distinct attention atoned by the NTOs to evolve tourism in an environmentally accountable manner was further underlined by the aid provided to existing, and new eco-labelling schemes, and to minimum sustainable standards at local, and international levels for tourism attractions, and suppliers. Almost one third of NTOs promoted best practices in sustainable tourism (e.g. EDEN initiative). The development and promotion of special interest sustainability products was common to almost half of the NTOs. Only a small number of organizations (11%) had not implemented any type of sustainable tourism initiative.

Chapter

02

Sustainable Tourism in India

2.1 Indian Tourism Industry

The Indian tourism and hospitality industry has been contributing significantly to the growth of the service sector in India. Rich cultural and historical heritage, diverse ecology, attractive natural beauty and developing infrastructure are factors that portray a very promising growth picture of the Indian tourism industry. Tourism also contributes significantly to employment generation and bringing foreign exchange into the country. With a diverse geography that further diversifies significantly into many microcosms of cultures, art, architecture and heritage not only across the length and breadth of the country but even beyond its borders, India offers a wide range of tourist attractions for all classes of travellers. India hosts geographical diversity, 37 world heritage sites, 100 bio-geographic zones and a long list of attractive coastline beaches. India could be referred to as the cultural capital of the world with an assorted list of cultural heritage sites, and home to a historically diverse community. India was home to the oldest universities of the world like Nalanda, Vikramshila and Takshila (now in Pakistan) which brought scholars from around the world.

According to the report on 'India Tourism Statistics 2020' published by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, the tourism sector accounted for 39 million jobs in FY20, which was 8.0% of the total employment in the country. By 2029, it is expected to account for about 53 million jobs. The year 2019 was a notable year for India as it witnessed more than 10.93 million foreign tourist arrivals, recording a 3.5% growth over the previous year. During the same period, the foreign tourist arrival at the world level grew by 3.6%. India's rank in terms of Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE) during the year 2019 was 12th in the world as compared to 37th in the year 2003.

In another report by WTTC, India ranked 10th among 185 countries in terms of travel & tourism's total contribution to GDP in 2019. During 2019, the contribution of travel & tourism to the GDP was 6.8% of the total economy, ~ Rs. 13,68,100 crore (US$ 194.30 billion). In 2019 alone, nearly 4.2 crore jobs were created in the tourism sector, which is 8.1% of total employment in India.

By 2028, international tourist arrivals are expected to reach 30.5 billion, and generate revenue of over US$ 59 billion. In November 2014, the government introduced an e-Tourist Visa to facilitate the arrival of nationals from 43 countries. As of March 2021, the e-Tourist Visa facility was extended to citizens of 171 countries. The rising middle class and increasing disposable income have helped domestic as well as outbound tourism grow in India. Domestic expenditure on tourism has grown significantly. According to the WTTC report on Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2019, it is expected to reach US$ 405.84 billion by 2028 from being at US$ 199.63 billion in 2018. International hotel chains are increasing their presence in the country, accounting for roughly 47% share in the tourism and hospitality sector of India by 2020, which is expected to increase to 50% by the year 2022.

In November 2018, India attained the third position in the world tourism sector after China and the US. This signifies India's growing share in the global travel and tourism industry.

Another unique thing about the Indian tourism industry is that it also thrives on its unique inheritances of biodiversity, forests, rivers and its rich culture and heritage. The challenges in this industry lie in successfully preserving these in their original form and making them accessible to domestic as well as international travellers, together with safeguarding the economic interest and heritage of local communities. In 1998, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India recognized the significance of sustainable tourism by holding extensive discussions with various stakeholders of the industry and formulated 'Ecotourism in India – Policy and Guidelines' that included the Ecotourism definition, Ecotourism resources of India, Policy and planning, Operational guidelines for (i) government (ii) developers, operators and suppliers (iii) visitors (iv) destination population / host community and (v) NGOs/scientific & research institution, and an Environmental pledge.

Around that time, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP, and UNWTO brought out a publication entitled "Making Tourism More Sustainable – A Guide for Policy Makers". This lists the following aims of an agenda for sustainable tourism:
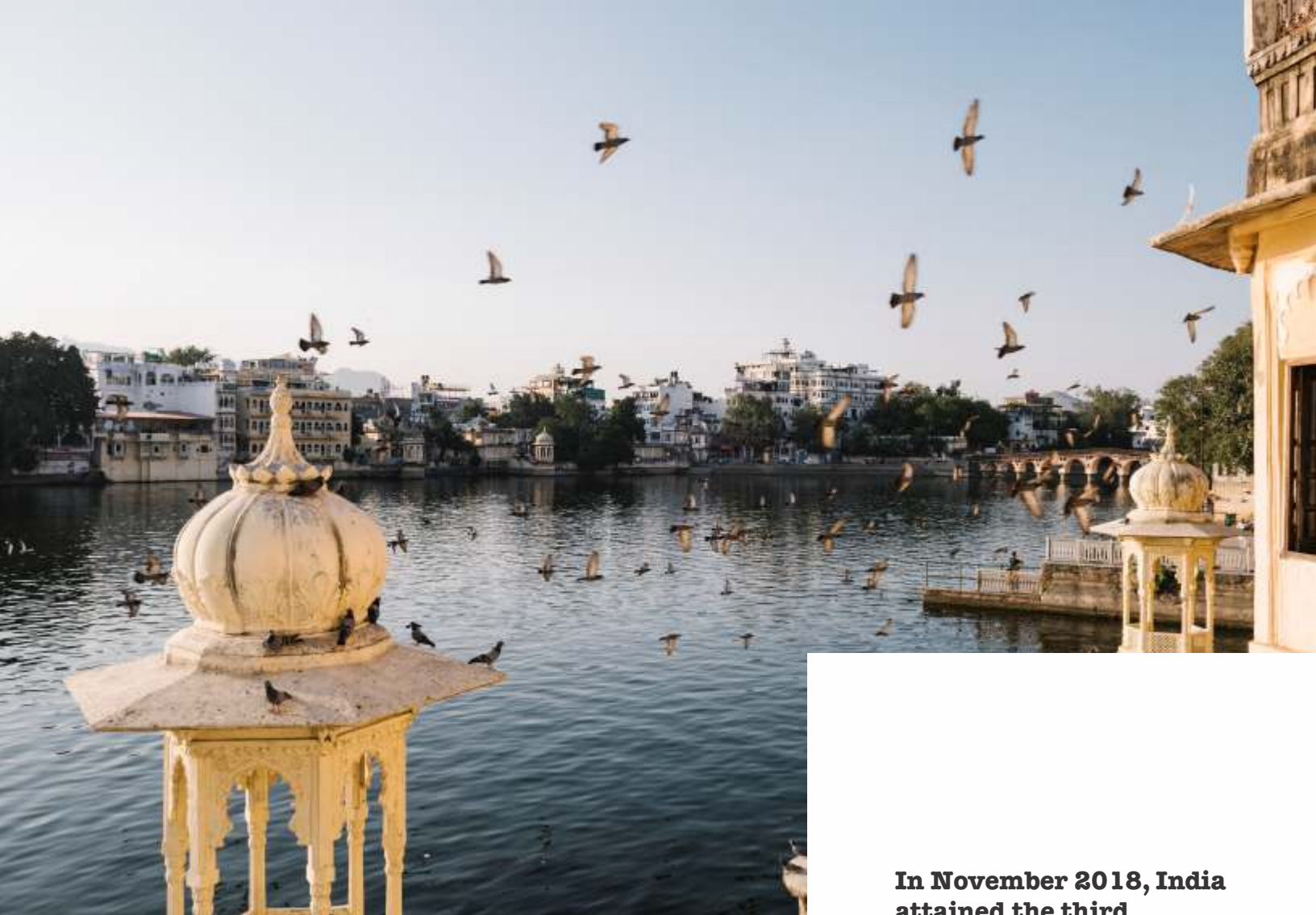
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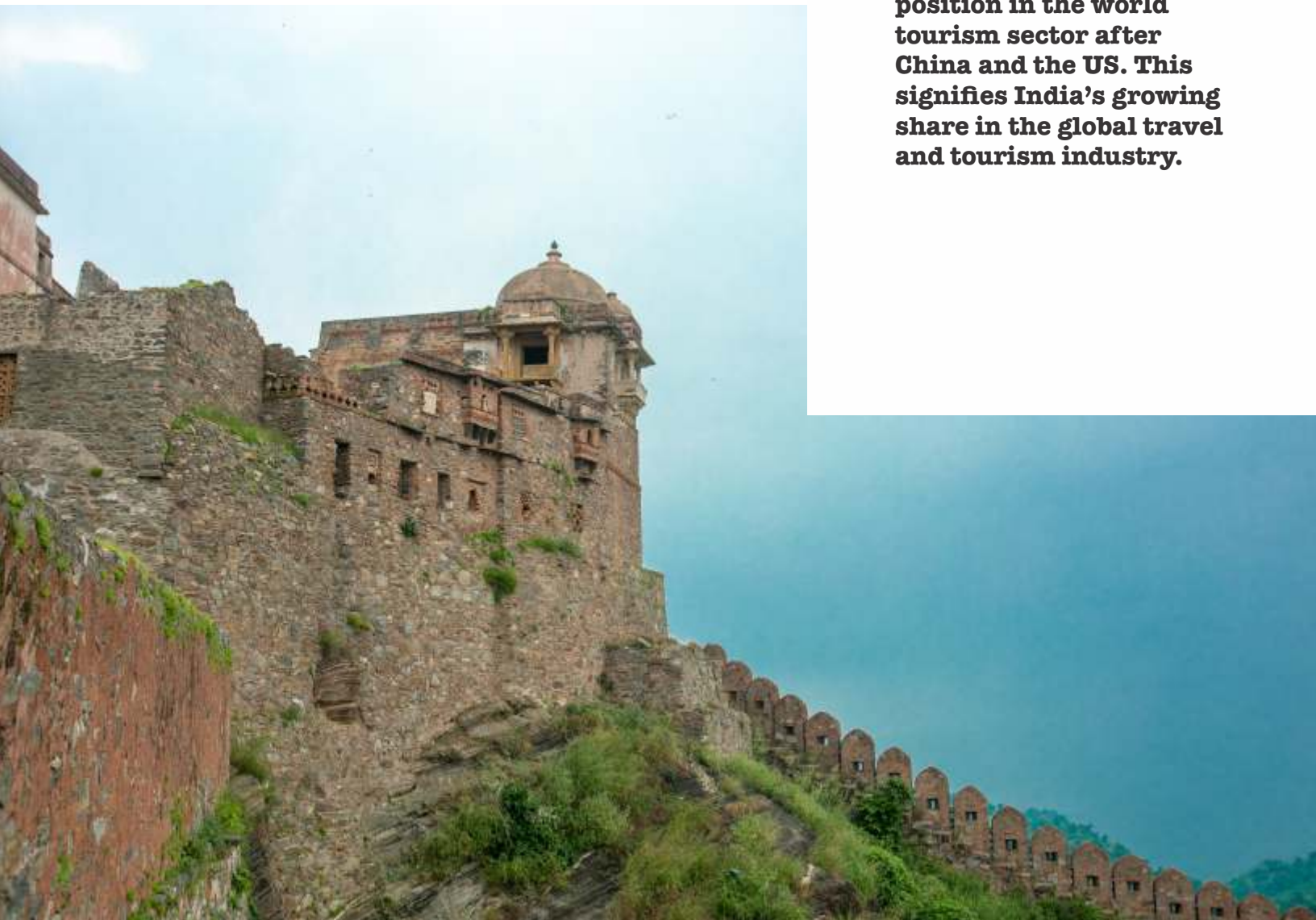
Figure 8: Evolution of Indian Tourism and Hospitality Sector

Pre-1990	1990-2000	2000-05	2015 onwards

- The National Tourism Policy was announced in 1982
- The Government formulated a comprehensive plan in 1988 to promote tourism.

- Various stated in India declared tourism as an industry
- The Government stressed on private-public partnership in the sector
- Government policies give a fillip to the hotel industry.

- A national policy on tourism was announced in 2002, focusing on developing a robust infrastructure
- Online travel portats & lowcost camier airlines gave a boost to domestic tourism.

- The Government has undertaken various marketing initiatives to attract tourists
- In November 2018, India attained third position in the world tourism sector after China and US.
- e-Tourist Visa was launched; a total of 2.93 million foreign tourists arrived on the e-Tourist Visa in 2019 registering a growth of 23.6%
- Travel and tourism sector accounted for 8.0% of total employment opportunities in 2019

Source: India Br, and Equity Foundation (IBEF)

Figure 9: Foreign Exchange Earnings from Tourism in India from 2000-2020
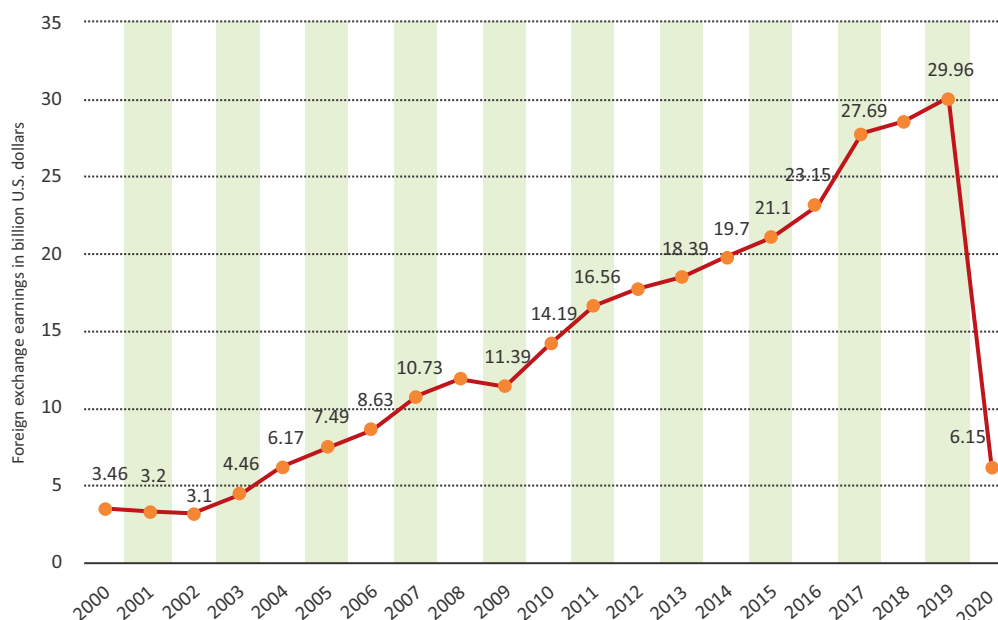
Source: Statista 2020

Figure 10: Month Wise Foreign Tourist Arrivals for 2018-2020

| Month | Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India | | | | |
| | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 (P) | Percentage (%) Change | |
				2019/18	2020/19
January	10,45,027	11,11,040	11,18,150	6.3	0.6
February	10,49,259	10,90,516	10,15,632	3.9	-6.9
March	10,21,539	9,78,236	3,28,462	-4.2	-66.4
April	7,45,033	7,74,651	0	4	-100.0
May	6,06,513	6,15,136	0	1.4	-100.0
June	6,83,935	7,26,446	0	1.9	-100.0
July	8,06,493	8,18,125		1.4	
August	7,85,993	8,00,837		1.9	
September	7,19,894	7,51,513		4.4	
October	8,90,223	9,45,017		6.2	
November	10,12,569	10,92,440		7.9	
December	11,91,498	12,26,398		2.9	
Total (Jan-June)	51,51,306	52,96,025	24,62,244	2.8@	-53.5@
Total (Jan-Dec)	1,05,57,976	1,09,30,355		3.5	

P. Provisional, @ Growth rate over January-June of previous year.
Source: (i) Bureau of Immigration, Govt. of India, for 2018, 2019 & 2020

a. Economic Viability
b. Local Prosperity
c. Employment Quality
d. Social Equity
e. Visitor Fulfilment
f. Local Control
g. Community Wellbeing
h. Cultural Richness
i. Physical Integrity
j. Biological Diversity
k. Resource Efficiency
l. Environmental Purity

In 2007, the "Partnership for Global Sustainable Tourism Criteria'' was initiated by the Rainforest Alliance, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Foundation (UNF) and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), together with a coalition of 32 prominent partners in the tourism industry. The Global Sustainable Tourism Council published the global standards for sustainable travel and tourism, known as the GSTC Criteria.

In July 2010, the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, convened a National Workshop on Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India wherein a sub-committee chaired by the Joint Secretary (Tourism), Government of India and comprising expert stakeholders was constituted in 2010 for defining Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI) and indicators for the accommodation sector and tour operators sector. This was a notable step in India towards sustainable tourism.

2.2 Tourism Governance Framework in India

The Ministry of Tourism is the nodal agency to formulate national policies as well as programs for the development and promotion of tourism. In India, the Ministry of Tourism was founded in March 1967, and the first National Tourism Policy was announced in the year 1982. Thereafter, the government formulated a comprehensive plan in 1988 to promote tourism in India. Over the decade from 1990 to 2000, various states in India declared tourism as an industry. During this period, the government stressed public-private partnerships in the tourism industry intending to increase the flow of tourists in India. In year 2002, a new national policy on tourism was announced focusing on developing a robust infrastructure, harnessing the direct, and multiplier effects of tourism for employment generation, economic development, and providing impetus to rural tourism. This was the time when increasing access to technology and the emergence of online travel portals and low-cost carrier airlines gave a boost to domestic tourism in India.

The Ministry of Tourism is headed by the Union Minister of State for Tourism (Independent Charge). The administrative head of the Ministry is the Secretary (Tourism). The Secretary also acts as the Director General (DG) Tourism. The office of the Director-General of Tourism {now merged with the office of Secretary (Tourism)} provides executive directions for the implementation of various policies, and programs. Directorate General of Tourism has a field formation of 20 offices within the country, and 14 offices abroad, and one subordinate office/project i.e. Indian Institute of Skiing, and Mountaineering (IISM)/ Gulmarg Winter Sports Project. The overseas offices are primarily responsible for tourism promotion,

and marketing in their respective areas, and the field offices in India are responsible for providing information service to tourists and monitoring the progress of field projects.

2.2.1 Executional Arms of the Government
The Ministry has a strong liaison with the executional / functional arms which are under the aegis of different Ministries. These include Organisations, Authorities, Bureaus, Partnerships, Corporations, and Undertaking like Archaeological Survey of India(ASI), Bureau of Immigration (BOI), India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), Indian Convention Promotion Bureau (ICPB), Port Trust of India, Tourism Finance Corporation of India (TFCI), Experience India Society, etc.

2.2.2 Industry Associations
The Ministry of Tourism is in constant dialogue with Industry associations namely - the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce, and Industry (FICCI), PHD Chamber of Commerce & Industry (PHDCCI), Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Travel Agents Association of India (TAAI), Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), Indian Tourist Transport Association (ITTA), Association of Domestic Tour Operators of India (ADTOI), Adventure Tour Operators of India (ATOI), Federation of Hotel & Restaurant Association of India (FHRAI), Hotel Association of India (HAI), Indian Heritage Hotel Association (IHHA), Federation of Associations of Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH) and All India Resort Development Association (AIRDA), etc.

2.2.3 Constitution of Tourism Task Force
Based on the recommendations of the Sectoral groups of Secretaries (SGoS) on the Tourism Sectoral Plan, a Task Force has also been constituted under the chairmanship of Secretary (Tourism), with representatives from other Ministries including Ministries of Home Affairs, Civil Aviation, Railways/IRCTC, Road Transport & Highways, Environment & Forests, Shipping and Sports to address various issues related to tourism. These would include Air, Rail and Road Connectivity identifying tourist destinations for airport development, international and domestic routes including North Eastern region, airports at tourist destinations which require setting up of custom, and immigration facilities, unused and underused airports located in tourist destinations, the introduction of tourist trains connecting important tourist destinations/sites including pilgrimage sites and up-gradation of the railway station, road connectivity of tourist destinations, Development and promotion of cultural and heritage sites including monuments and museums, Promotion of niche tourism segments including cruise tourism, adventure tourism, etc.

2.2.4 National Tourism Advisory Council
The National Tourism Advisory Council (NTAC) serves as a think tank of the Ministry of Tourism. The present NTAC was constituted on 27th October 2016 under the chairmanship of Hon'ble Minister (Tourism) with a tenure of 3 years. The committee consists of important Ministries, individual experts in the field of travel and tourism management and Ex-officio members from industry associations. Two meetings of the council were organized during 2019-20. The first meeting was organized on 12th April 2018 in

Delhi and the second meeting was held on 21st February 2019 in Gujarat. The third meeting of the NTAC was held on 4th October 2019 at VIP Lounge, Paryatan Parv, Rajpath Lawns, New Delhi.

2.3 Roles
The activities of this Ministry revolve around promoting internal tourism, i.e. both inbound as well as domestic tourism, in India. This is necessary to harness the direct and multiplier effect of tourism on employment and poverty eradication within the country. The other major objectives of the Ministry pertain to projecting the country as a 365 days' tourist destination, sustainably promoting tourism by the active participation of all segments of the society, assuring quality standards amongst tourism service providers, etc.

The Ministry of Tourism functions as the nodal agency for the development of tourism in the country. It plays a crucial role in coordinating and supplementing the efforts of the State/Union Territory Governments, catalyzing private investment, strengthening promotional and marketing efforts and in providing trained manpower resources. The functions of the Ministry in this regard mainly consist of the following:

1. **All Policy Matters, including:**
   1.1. Development Policies
   1.2. Incentives
   1.3. External Assistance.
   1.4. Manpower Development
   1.5. Promotion & Marketing
   1.6. Investment Facilitation.

2. **Planning Coordination with other Ministries, Departments, State/UT Governments Regulation:**
   2.1. Standards
   2.2. Guidelines

3. **Infrastructure & Product Development.**
   3.1. Guidelines

4. **Human Resource Development**
   4.1. Institutions
   4.2. Setting Standards and Guidelines

5. **Publicity & Marketing:**
   5.1. Policy
   5.2. Strategies
   5.3. Coordination

6. **Research, Analysis, Monitoring and Evaluation International Co-operation and External Assistance**
   6.1. International Bodies
   6.2. Bilateral Agreements
   6.3. External Assistance
   6.4. Foreign Technical Collaboration

7. **Legislation and Parliamentary Work, Establishment matters, Vigilance matters, Implementation of official language policy, Budget coordination and related matters, Plan-coordination and monitoring.**

The Functions of Attached Office viz. Directorate General of Tourism are as given below [The office of DG (T) has now been merged with the office of Secretary (Tourism)]:

1. **Assistance in the formulation of policies by providing feedback from the field offices. Monitoring of Plan Projects and assisting in the Plan formulation & Regulation:**
    1.1. Approval and classification of hotels and restaurants
    1.2. Approval of travel agents, inbound tour operators and tourist transport operators, etc.

2. **Inspection & Quality Control**
    2.1. Guide service
    2.2. Complaints and redressal

3. **Infrastructure Development:**
    3.1. Release of incentives.
    3.2. Tourist facilitation and information.
    3.3. Field publicity, promotion & marketing
    3.4. Hospitality programs
    3.5. Conventions & conferences

4. Assistance for Parliamentary work

5. Establishment matters of Directorate General of Tourism

2.4 Government Initiatives for Sustainable Tourism

2.4.1 The Draft Tourism policy

The draft tourism policy of the Government of India lays immense emphasis on sustainable tourism. It talks about India's enormous opportunities which can be leveraged globally as an emerging superpower. India's strong brand value and the Government's commitment to promoting the tourism industry sustainably assume importance as we step into the 21st century with major disequilibrium and instability emerging around the globe.

The draft policy highlights the Incredible India brand and the applicability of the draft policy while sketching the mission, vision, as well as short and long-term goals. The draft policy also classifies the destinations across various important brackets while drawing out a directory of tourist circuits and destinations. The policy also details the destination management organizations and the tourism development plans. The draft reports the nine key strategic pillars and the two cross-cutting themes. These strategic pillars include sustainable and responsible tourism in a major way. Other important strategic pillars include welcoming the pillar, seamless connectivity and transport infrastructure, development and management, business development and investment promotion, development and diversification of tourism products, skill and market development, quality assurance and standardization as well as governance, institutional linkages and stakeholder management.

The overarching theme of the draft Policy is to promote sustainable and responsible tourism, which will cut across all the strategic pillars to achieve the vision of the policy to make India a topmost destination for sustainable and responsible tourism. The draft policy also commits India to UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030. Goal 8 is related to sustainable tourism, which reads as "by 2030 devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products". Goal 12 further provides for "develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and product.

Additionally, the impacts of global warming and climate change started exacerbating through frequent natural calamities not only causing damage to life and property but also proving detrimental to the tourism industry globally, including many developing and underdeveloped regions where tourism constituted a major share of the GDP. However, this also put the spotlight on tourism value chains' increasing share in GHG emissions and other indices negatively impacting the environment, including accommodation units, tour operators, MSME providers of visitor services, transporters and nature tour outfitters.

Various levels of discussions between stakeholders and the observation evolving after interactions of government agencies with the direct and indirect stakeholders felt a strong need to bring the sustainability 'fit' to make it broader-based and acceptable to domestic as well as foreign tourists.

Talking about collaborations between government, industry and academia, Government agencies acknowledge that they existed only superficially and a lot of work needs to be done to make the Triple Helix platform work for promoting the Tourism industry. As we are aware, the government, due to its prime mover status, is also designated to provide the support required to promote it. Special Policy is available to develop the Tourism Ecosystem across India but more fine-tuning might well be required along with support given the current downturn of events especially the COVID which has had a very adverse impact on tourism especially after the end of 2019. Given the situation, it is evident that the Government needs to play a more proactive role to support the industry which is reeling under crisis due to the continuing COVID pandemic. Some of the important points which come out based on a literature review and discussion with close stakeholders of tourism regarding the role of government and their current work focus include:

a) Focused Government Policies to support industry is required more than ever
b) The government role to create an overall ecosystem for ST is more important than ever which it should not shy from taking over
c) Government should look at providing support to Start-ups with grants, subsidies from the industry
d) An integrated approach from all the stakeholders is needed to develop the ecosystem but the government has a prime role to facilitate
e) Take measures to preserve the indigenous practices while promoting ST.
f) Formulating guidelines for Tourists to maintain the sanctity for sustainable tourism.

Figure 11: Segments of tourism, and hospitality

Tourism and hospitality		
	Accommodation	• Accommodation could be hotels & motels, apartments, camps, guest houses, lodge, bed & breakfast establishments, house boats, resorts, cabins & hotels. In addition, tourists also require catering facilities, which includes include hotels, local restaurants, roadside joints, cafeterias & retail outlets serving food & bevarages.
	Transportation	• Comprises airline companies, cruise services, railways, car rentals & more. A tourist's choice of transport would depend on the travel budget, destination, time, purpose of the tour & convenience to the point of destination
	Attractions	• Another major component of the travel & tourism industry is 'attractions' such as theme parks & natural attractions including scenic locations, cultural & educational attractions, monuments, events & medical, social or professional causes
	Travel agents	• A fragment sector with several independent travel agents & many online business. They also sell associated products such as insurance, car hire & currency exchange • Business travel agencies specialise in making travel & accommodation arrangements for business travellers & promoting conference trades
	Tour operations	• Offer customised tours, including travel, accommodation & sightseeing

Source: Dun, and Bradstreet's Report on tourism in India July, 2021

2.4.2 Government Initiatives

The need for Sustainable-Tourism increased due to the impact of increased human activity on the climate and environment. It helps to increase the positive impact of tourism activities. Indian Govt asked service providers to practice sustainable tourism as part of their business plans. Recently Government has taken several steps to provide a further boost to the sector such as :

- Efforts were taken by the Government of Gujarat to create a tribal support circuit around the Sardar Sarovar project and the Sardardham. The Statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, also known as the 'Statue of Unity', was inaugurated in October 2018. It is the highest-standing statue in the world at a height of 182 meters. It is expected to provide the tourism sector with a boost and put the region on the world tourism map.

- The Indian Government has also realized the country's potential in the tourism industry and has taken several steps to make India a global tourism hub. Major initiatives of the Government were also to improve the Indian brand as a safe, clean and healthy tourist destination for national as well as international tourists.

- India's Swachh Bharat Mission (Clean India mission) was an initiative in that direction to ensure India is a clean and green destination.

- Initiatives by the Indian railways to improve the cleanliness and hygiene in the railways through clean trains, clean platforms and clean tracks by the provision of bio-toilets

across all trains goes a long way in improving the visibility of India as a clean destination.

- Indian Railways has also been running specialized Tourist trains for International and priority domestic customers to promote several important tourist routes through world-class Tourist service Trains.

- The Ministry of Tourism has undertaken the Swachhta Action Plan (SAP) for the year 2018-19 implemented by the Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM) at 180 sites /places (540 activities) in selected 29 States/UTs all over the Country. The SAP activities involve awareness of cleanliness amongst tourists, school/college students and tourism stakeholders. These activities under SAP are also undertaken by Central and State IHMs across the country.

- In addition, the setting up of several small airports for tertiary cities across India under the UDAAN scheme and up-gradation of major airports into international specifications to handle more than 10 million footfalls every year.

- Some of the major initiatives of the Government of India to boost the tourism and hospitality sector includes developing the best tourism framework or infrastructures. The Swadesh-Darshan plan was initiated by the Government for promoting tourism through improving infrastructure in the tourism hotspots. All identified projects aim to develop world-class facilities to benefit the cultural heritage and to attract tourist attention, for which 27 or more projects for Rs 2261cr were allocated for 21 States.

- The Integrated Development of identified pilgrimage destinations is being undertaken under the 'National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD) Scheme launched by Govt for the development of pilgrimage /spiritual sites was another important initiative. A total number of 24 projects have been sanctioned to date for an amount of Rs.727.16 crore under this Scheme Under Budget 2020-21, the Government of India has allotted Rs. 207.55 crore (US$ 29.70 million) for the development of tourist circuits under the PRASHAD scheme.

- In addition, the Indian Government is working to develop and implement tourism-related Mobile Applications to assist better engagement between various stakeholders in an effective way. The Ministry has developed a mobile application known as Swachh- Paryatan in February 2016, which allows people to report any hygiene issues at various tourist places.

- It has also set up a specialized Tourist Helpline to assist tourists. The Ministry of Tourism gave a 24×7 Toll-Free Tourist Helpline in many languages in February 2016 that can be accessed on Number 1800-11-1363. It doesn't only include Hindi and English languages but it also has 10 other international languages.

- To promote the North-Eastern states, an International Tourism Mart is also organized every year intending to highlight the tourism potential in these regions. Under Budget 2020-21, the Government of India has allotted Rs. 1,200 crore (US$ 171.70 million) for the development of tourist circuits under Swadesh Darshan for eight Northeast states.

- Promotional operations in tourist-generating markets outside of India through India Tourism Offices abroad, including active participation in travel fairs and exhibitions, Road Shows and "Know India" seminars and workshops.

- 725 homestay owners from Darjeeling, Kalimpong, andthe foothills of Dooars were trained in marketing, sales and behavioral skills through government efforts.

Caselet: Responsible Tourism Practices: An Empirical Case Study of Yelagiri, Tamil Nadu

Tourism in India is a happening sector with a massive GDP and total employment. Nonetheless, sustainability is evolving out to be one of the major factors to be considered while developing and promoting Indian destinations, and each stakeholder must be conscious about their actions, and impacts on the destination. In this regard, 'responsible tourism' offers an important instrument in identifying and addressing local issues. This case study used an empirical analysis that tries to assess the extent to which responsible tourism practices are followed by different stakeholders at Yelagiri, and accordingly, highlighting the sustainability of the destination. The qualitative and quantitative data collected through questionnaires, field notes, and participant observation are analyzed using statistical tools to further reinforce the findings. The findings of the study revealed positive economic benefits to the host community notwithstanding negative social, and environmental impacts on the destination; thus, pointing towards unsustainable development.

Source: Rajamanickam, Hemachandran; Mohanty, Priyakrushna; Chandran, Anu (2018), "Assessing the responsible Tourism Practices for Sustainable Development – an Empirical Inquiry of Yelagiri, Tamilnadu", Journal of Hospitality Application & Research, Vol. 13 Issue 2, p1-29.

03

Report Design and Methodology

3.1 Report Design, and Methodology

To examine the main aspects related to sustainable tourism, and the plan of India, the status-quo analysis of the sustainable tourism industry is studied. This report is designed to provide a detailed understanding of the context on the topic, to provide better planning, and management of the industry, and the ecosystem. This section presents the design, structure, and methodology of the report.

The status quo report is based on the industry principles, practices, and limitations of the sustainable tourism sector. The outline of basic understanding of the domain is framed as,

- Insight into the concept of sustainable tourism
    - What is the common understanding of the concept of sustainable tourism?
    - How can sustainable tourism be measured and credibly demonstrated?
    - Stakeholder mapping

- Market systems and the competition
    - What are market systems and processes of delivery?
    - What is the relation between sustainable tourism and market competitiveness?
    - How can sustainability issues be integrated into the holistic management of a destination?
    - How do government programs, schemes, and initiatives support the making of industry

- Identifies the Factors - including the supporting mechanisms (policies, strategies, and approaches) as well as the major challenges (Need-Gap analysis of industry)
    - Critical review on policy, market practices, pricing, and sustainability factors
    - How do government programs, schemes, and initiatives support the making of industry
    - What are key performance indicators
    - What are common challenges faced when putting forward sustainable tourism initiatives

3.2 Literature Review

A historical, cultural, and economic perspective is needed on Sustainable Tourism to build the context of the country, and map the development. The natural beauty, cultural, and spiritual prominence, knowledge, and commerce network, and other means of alliances have been the purpose of travel, and tourism in India from the global map, and also from domestic space.

A deep insight through literature review is a must to present the past, and present, and map the scenarios for the future. The research team has identified more than 200 research papers, reports, news, conference proceedings, and other presentations. A descriptive view of the research is presented below in Table -3.

3.3 Focus Group

The Focus group is designed to collect the expert view on the status quo and to assess the need gap of the industry. The discussion is guided, monitored, and recorded by a researcher (moderator or facilitator). Focus groups seem to allow finding ideas, and solutions aimed at facing specific problems.

In the following paragraphs we underline the main aspects to be taken into consideration:

Purpose of Focus Groups

Focus groups are used for identifying the needs, constraints, and opinions of different individuals (independent or experts in the field of tourism, and its sustainability). This technique enables the generation of ideas with open answers, well-structured, and with an additional qualitative component. It is based on collective views, and it can capture the complexity of a given context, and analyze how participants (Annexure I - List of participants) in the group value, and define key concepts in their own words.
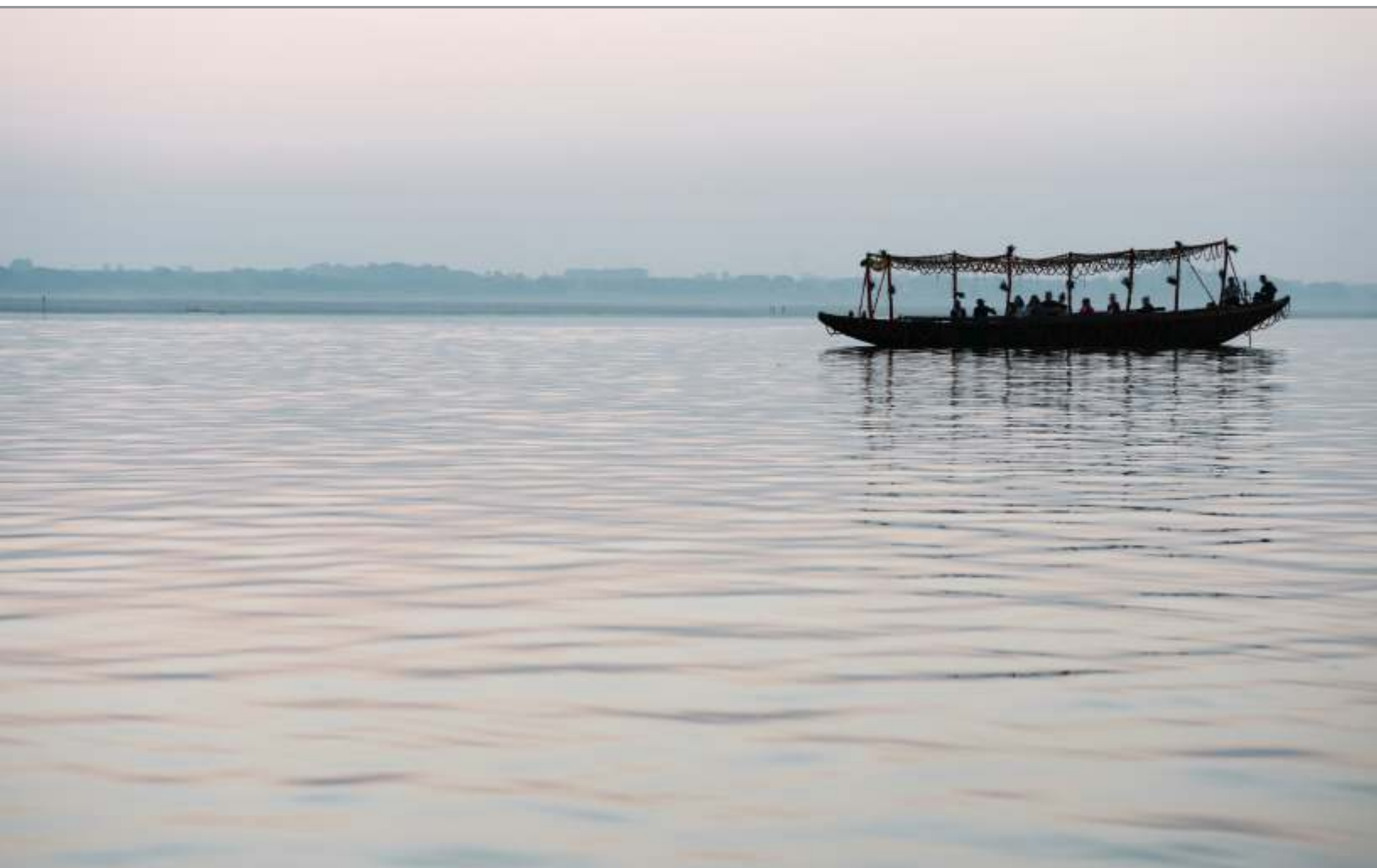
What are the criteria for using focus groups?
- For research relating to group norms, meanings, and processes;
- Aiming at:
  - Exploring tourism sustainability in the partner countries, and collecting group language or narratives to be used in later stages of the project;
  - Clarifying, extending, qualifying, or challenging data collected through other sources;
  - Giving feedback results to research participants.

Conducting focus groups: group composition, and size
The composition of a focus group needs great care to get the best quality of discussion. There is no 'best' solution to group composition, and group mix will always impact the data, according to things such as the mix of ages, gender, and social professional statuses of the participants.

What is important is that they may interact with each other before the focus group proceeds. Interaction is the key to a successful focus group.

The optimum size for a focus group is six to eight participants (excluding researchers).

To ensure a genuine process of discussion, a group of 5 to 8 participants in the focus group is a good idea. It should be a diverse group with participants with different backgrounds, primarily covering stakeholders. All participants should have some experience with the topic to be able to participate in the discussion. The relatively small number of respondents used in a focus group study makes it important that the sample is properly selected (Market Research Society R&D Subcommittee, 1979), but it should not be assumed that the limited numbers in any one group preclude the use of scientifically drawn samples. It is recommended to include stakeholders from the following areas:

- Tourism companies such as hotels, tourism operators, or other tourism service providers;
- Tourism association representatives;
- Representatives of other connected sectors which might influence and/or depend on the tourism sector;
- Representatives from governmental organizations dealing with tourism management.

Focus Group Discussion/ Interview
A focus group discussion generally starts with more general to more specific questions. Question order should be relative to the importance of issues in the research agenda. Usually, less than a dozen predetermined questions are needed and, as with research interviews, the moderator will also explore, and enlarge on issues according to the evolution of the discussion. Focus group discussions will give qualitative data to analyze; they not only generate narrative data but there is a lot of observational data one can gather as well.

Following Characteristics for a focus group discussion/interview to be considered:
- Participants (Carefully recruited, 5-8 people per group, Same field, Repeated Group)
- Environment (Comfortable, round Table, Tape recorded)
- Time (usually 120-150 minutes)
- Moderator (Skilful, uses predetermined questions Establishes permissive environment)
- Analysis, and Reporting (Systematic analysis, Verifiable procedures, Appropriate reporting)

After the presentation of the moderator, the participants, the projects, and the aim of the focus group, an introduction to the main concepts will be carried out.

SECTION 1 - Introduction to the Purpose, declaration of data policy
A presentation to be made to ensure the context setting (the presentation may be common however not missing the national context, should be modified for any change to meet contextual settings).

SECTION 2 - Discussion
Discussion 1- The conceptual, and market context within which sustainable tourism is defined, developed, and reacted to three dominant paradigms: economic development, a community vision, and a sustainability vision OR group can discuss evolution on its understanding, and scale.

Discussion 2 - SWOT analysis of sustainable tourism. Factors of the market, organizations, customers, and community are important quadrants in identifying SWOT factors; it may consider the value of tourism to the community, economically, socially, politically, culturally, and environmentally.

SWOT analysis can reveal with following aspects:
- Key issues regarding the industry, players, and social and economic factors.
- Finding a way to connect SDG with Sustainable Tourism for - strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, and how their impacts may balance or exceed each other.
- The overall social impact - generally positive or negative?
- The government and political structure of the area, which can help determine possible points of negotiation and feasibility of negotiation between the community and the national authorities.

Discussion 3 - Who are the major stakeholders, their Responsibility, and how can we measure their influence, and impact in the sustainable tourism ecosystem? Can we draw the ecosystem of the ST of the country covering demand, supply, and legal verticals?

Discussion 4 - Need Gap assessment - Identifies the Factors - including the supporting mechanisms (policies, strategies, and approaches) as well as the major challenges (Need-Gap analysis of industry)
- Critical review on policy, market practices, pricing, and sustainability factors
- How do government programs, schemes, and initiatives support the making of industry – major issues
- What are key performance indicators – met or not
- How is data management happening for reporting and monitoring

Discussion 5 - What are common challenges faced when putting forward sustainable tourism initiatives? Do we have some immediate attempts at solutions? Are we engaging in long-term solutions? What are some new and bold initiatives?

The literature review mapping to sketch the background, and scenarios, and focus group discussion to achieve need gap analysis developed the theoretical, and practice foundation for the study, and provided sufficient data, reaching the data sufficiency level, to present deep insight into the Sustainable Tourism market, and policy report.

Tourism is a highly diversified industry that requires the support, and coexistence of all the stakeholders involved in the process. The plans, and policies framed for the holistic growth, and development of the social, economical, and environmental arrays can only yield positive outcomes when there is a smooth flow of activities with proper awareness maintained.

04

Stakeholder Mapping

4.1 Stakeholder Mapping

Tourism is a highly diversified industry that requires the support, and coexistence of all the stakeholders involved in the process. The plans, and policies framed for the holistic growth, and development of the social, economical, and environmental arrays can only yield positive outcomes when there is a smooth flow of activities with proper awareness maintained. Stakeholder participation and alignment is the key element while developing a potential to tackle existing challenges and issues in the tourism sector.

Stakeholder categories can vary as per the different segments of Policy, Dem, and, and Supply which segments the industry in a relevant manner. The tourism sector needs to align a common understanding among all the participatory bodies to successfully achieve its sustainability imperatives.

Each stakeholder has its distinct yet vital impact on the sustainable tourism ecosystem. The key requirement for sustainable tourism is to align various stakeholders for working effectively in the overall management, and execution of plans, and policies. The stakeholders cannot be considered individually but the relationships between them should be understood to successfully link the economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects of sustainability, and minimize adverse impact on the environment.

In recent years, there has been significant growth in the contribution of the tourism industry towards economic and social development, especially in developing nations like India where it confers over 7% of GDP annually. The European Union, other international bodies, and governments have also been actively identifying and implementing interventions in sustainable tourism.

Despite the continuous efforts from the bodies at national, and international levels, there are several challenges and disparities at the stakeholder's end whether it is Policy, Dem, and or Supply-side. In the focus group discussion with the industry stalwarts, there were several key aspects highlighted towards which are being addressed, and need to be addressed.

The gap analysis on the global level will consist of several key factors that crop a major challenge in terms of implementation, and execution of plans, and policies but it can vary with the nation as the goals of a country, and set timelines are different at the local level. The inferences stated here are somewhat taken from the discussion with the relevant stakeholders in the industry. Stakeholder initiatives of sustainability reside majorly on the Policymaking and Dem, and side of the mapping which includes the management bodies, and the end consumers. They need to be well aware of the recent trends, potential, and requirements as per the geographies, and demographics of the nation.

The segmentation of the stakeholders is as follows:

POLICY - These policy-making bodies are responsible for creating tourism plans, and policies to successfully dictate good practices, rules, and requirements. This includes

- Government (National, and State)

- Ministries-Ministry of Tourism, Ministry of Commerce, and Industry, and others

- Tourism Organizations- Indian Tourism Development Corporation, Association of Tourism Trade Organizations, India (ATTO), etc.

- Regulators- Ministry of Tourism, National Tourism Policy 2002, Tourism Finance Corporation of India, City Administration, Law Enforcement

- Local Authorities

- Resource Management Bodies

- Government delivery agencies

These stakeholders ensure the development, and implementation of tourism policy, and strategy, management, and building of local infrastructure, and relating tourism to wider plans, and policies.

DEMAND - These stakeholders form the key source of income to the sector, these are:
- Consumers/Tourists
- Individual and Group travellers
- Families
- Couples
- Businessmen
- Consumer networks, clubs, and societies

Dem and side actors form an ecosystem that ultimately executes all the directives formed in the policies through behaving responsibly, and communicating opinions fairly, and accurately to others.

SUPPLY - The bodies within this vertical reflect the operational and social movements in tourism
- Tour Operators
- Local Communities-Local citizens, Local Govt. officials, Roadside vendors, Local Retailers and workers, Architect
- Small and Medium-sized enterprises
- Waste Management Agencies
- NGOs (International, Regional and Local)
- Volunteers & Interest Groups
- Infrastructure Companies
- Financial Institutions (Banks or NBFCs involved in funding/financing of tourism associated projects or ventures)
- Transportation & Logistics Companies
- Trade Associations & Labour unions- ATTOI (Association of Tourism Trade Organizations)

- Employees and related bodies
- Educational & Training institutions

4.2 Sustainable Tourism Value Chain

A value chain can help in increasing the overall efficiency of any industry. It portrays the relationships among several key elements involved in the process of entire value creation and also connects different functions for fluid understanding, and experience.

Tourism is one such industry that requires inclusive and continuous participation among various stakeholders. Through the Sustainable Tourism Value Chain (STVC), we can understand, and various stages of value creation, and add along with the interrelationships governing them in a much better sense. These interrelationships help various elements of the whole tourism ecosystem in providing a thorough and accurate understanding of the Status Quo, and the Need Gap.

"Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam", this ancient phrase (Meaning: "The world is one family") resembles India's spirit when it comes to the subject of inclusive and sustainable development. As one of the fast-paced economies which draws inspiration from its longstanding heritage, and traditions, India's development agenda is replicated in the Sustainable Development Goals. Hence, the Travel, and Tourism industry has an integral part to play in India's journey to becoming a more inclusive economic superpower.

Figure 12: Segmentation of the Stakeholders

Figure 13: Proposed Sustainable Tourism Value Chain for India

Renewable energy companies							
Support Institutions: Ministry of Tourism , and Culture; Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change; Chamber of Commerce; TFCI, IRCTC, FAITH, ITDC, IATO, ITTA, IHMs, Banks & other financial institutions , etc						Direct emissions /outputs	
	Customs office		Artists (Painters, musicians, etc)		Waste Management companies		GHG emissions (tCO2e)
		Agricultural, and Aquaculture Suppliers: textile, wood, food			Clean Energy Companies		
		Recycling plants	Books, CDs & DVDs		Trade companies	Air pollution (Sox/Nox)	
	Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways	Constructors & real estate					
		Organic Farming	Site signals		Wholesalers and single suppliers	Wastewater (litres/m3)	
Ministry of Tourism and Culture	Ministry of Road Transport & Highways	Furniture and equipment					
		Shops (in accommodation)	Food factories and rural areas	Manufacturers	Restoration	Technology shops/imports	Food waste (tonnes)
Promotional activities		Waste food processing					
		Maintenance	Storage & distribution	Management	Digital Marketing	Industrial factories	Packaging waste (t)
Communication, press & media	Bureau of Immigration	Marketing & Sales	Food suppliers	Handicrafts suppliers	Maintenance	Brochures / Oil Station	Other solid waste (t)
Travel organization and booking	Transportation	Accommodation	Food & Beverage	Handicrafts	Tourism assets in destination	Leisure, excursions, and tours / Support services	Chemical wastes (t/l)
In origin / In transit destinations	Car/Bike Rental	Hotels	Bars and Restaurants	Handicraft shops		Shows / Information centres	
							L, and use (hectares)
Internet / Travel agent	Public/Private Buses	Apartments	Night clubs	Craftsmen	Cultural assets: archaeology communities, ethnics, museums, tourism attractions, intangible cultural assets (music, dance, legends, etc.), festivals, etc	Tourist guides organizations / Grocery shops/retail outlets	
	Indian Railways						Biodiversity loss
Call centres / Airline companies	Taxi companies	Guesthouses	Fast food	Handicrafts workshop		Independent tourist guides / Laundry	
	E- Vehicle						Noise & odor nuisance
Tour operators & wholesalers	River ferry	Youth hostels	Street & Itinerant food shops		Built Assets such as airports etc	Tourism packages / Security and bank services	
	Informal transportation				Natural assets: lakes, rivers, reefs , and mountains, forests, species of flora & fauna, National Parks, Reserves, etc.		
From origin to destination	In destination	Homestays, Boat stays	Kiosks			Transports guides and escorts / Internet cafes	
							Environmental impacts
		Food souvenirs		Watchdogs & Conservationists	Wellness, and SPAS / Value Chain Phases		
					Spiritual/Healing centres / Planning		
Waste	Construction materials	Energy	Water	Training	Education	Communications	Public security and health / Development
Infrastructural Support							Operations
							Proposed

The lower half of the STVC accommodates all the activities that are directly associated with the tourism industry, and hence cause the direct economic impact while the upper half consists of all the indirectly linked activities, and impacts the economy indirectly.

All the elements and the stakeholders of the STVC can be fundamentally classified among the following categories:

- Travel Organization, and Booking: Huge amount of information is available digitally for making informed decisions regarding travel, and tourism. The tickets can be booked, and reservations can be made in a completely online manner. Generally, this reduces the need for carrying hardcopies of receipts, itineraries, maps, and tickets saving space, money, and paper.

- Transportation: This includes all the formal and informal modes of transportation. Indian Railways is now focusing more on comfort, safety, and overall experience of the passengers than ever, encouraging tourists to travel via public means of transport. The various subsidy and incentive schemes by the Government for local electric vehicle manufacturers, and purchasers are also key motivators. Several public and private enterprises are already in the process of developing e-vehicle associated infrastructure including charging stations to promote citizens to adapt to electric vehicles. Seaplanes have reduced the dependency on traditional aviation infrastructure which may harm, and disturb the local ecosystem.

The Indian Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways plans to reduce the carbon footprint and save travel time with the RoPax ferry services across the country's vast inland and coastline waterways. These services will provide more flexibility to the tourists, daily commuters and goods carriers.

Put into service in November 2020, this ferry service reduced the travel time from 10 to 12 hours by road to just 4 hours by sea. The service aims to reduce annual fuel consumption by 33.13 lakh liters, and CO2 emission by approximately 8653 MT per annum. Sustainable Transportation can be directly associated with SDGs, majorly SDG 7, 9, 11, 12, and 13.

- Accommodation: With the emergence of the sharing economy, people are now more open to providing, and availing the services of homestays. This enhances the overall experience of the tourists and makes them experience the local culture in a much better sense. Traditional means including some hotels and resorts have taken initiative to become infrastructurally more sustainable. Youth hostels are becoming a hit among millennials, and Gen Z values tourists. Houseboats are also a source of attraction to various tourists.

- Food & Beverage: Wastage of food is one of the key areas of concern when it comes to achieving sustainability in the food, and beverage sector. Wastage of prepared food accompanied with the pollution caused by the packaging, and the plastic cutlery items have been affecting the environment negatively. Sometimes, the methods employed in farming, and preparing & obtaining raw materials for food are far from Sustainable. The indirect elements of the value chain such as Waste management plants, water, and plastic recycling plants, organic farming techniques, etc. can make the sector more sustainable, hygienic, and inclusive.

- Handicrafts: Artisans are an integral part of the rural, non-farming Indian economy. Small Scale and Cottage industries can be a good way of tackling socio-economic challenges.

- Tourism Assets in Destination: This category not only includes the natural and cultural assets but also includes their maintenance, preservation, conservation, and management. Destination Management Companies (DMCs) can be a good example of a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) in the tourism industry.

- Leisure, Excursions & Tours: Guides, escorts, spa, and spiritual wellness centres, physical wellness centres, etc. fall under this category among directly associated stakeholders. Indirect activities include advertising & marketing, planning & organizing among many.

- Support Services: Support Services does not have very direct involvement in the tourism activities per say, but these services are elementary to the cause of sustainable tourism. These services take into account the waste management companies, renewal or clean energy suppliers, research institutions, BFSI companies, IT support, research, training, and academic institutions, etc. which are essential for creating awareness, reducing waste, skill development, information gathering, finance, and financial risk management, energy, and other demand fulfilments, etc.

4.3 Challenges, Barriers, and Drivers

As discussed above, sustainable tourism is an industry that is still at a nascent stage of development globally. It requires adequate research, and development to be implemented, and executed successfully while keeping the factors varying with every nation in mind. Thorough understanding of the latest developments and marketing them in the right direction will help in creating awareness, and developing an understanding among the key stakeholders regarding the need for sustainable tourism.

The tourism industry in India is a major economic supporter but the performance, and impact of the sector has not been identified, measured, and analyzed in comparison to the other developing nations. Some major challenges across the way are required to be bridged while reducing the margin of incompetencies globally and shaping the future of the upcoming generations.

The key challenges identified are as follows:

1. **Social awareness, and inclusion in the best practices for sustainability**
   - The collective push from all stakeholders to adopt sustainable practices of tourism is one of the biggest challenges faced due to varied reasons. Some experts define it as the lack of initiative from the bodies in branding and promoting the cause among people, others

Caselet : Environmental Conservation and Sustainable Development: A Case Study of Andhra Pradesh: ecotourism is nothing but environmentally sustainable tourism. The main focus of ecotourism is on experiencing natural areas that appreciate environmental nexus, and nurture its conservation, and cultural understanding. The beauty of sustainable ecotourism is that it can create awareness among the locals, and tourists alike in educating, and understanding the cultural, and natural significance of an area. The relationships between the tourism business and the local community are better understood in sustainable tourism as it has the potential to provide a stable economic flow into local areas.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh (AP) has taken several initiatives including partnerships with the private sector to promote ecotourism that is yielding excellent results. Andhra Pradesh is a Southern State of India that has been abundantly gifted by nature in the form of hills, and valleys of the Eastern Ghats. The State has rich cultural, and religious traditions, and because of the presence of some of the holiest shrines like Tirupati (eg: Temple tourism), the state receives the largest number of domestic tourists. As part of promoting sustainable ecotourism, Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation took the initiative of identifying potential ecotourism spots in the state and implemented several popular ecotourism projects by involving the local community at Belum caves, revamping of Borra caves and an exotic jungle destination (Jungle Bells at Tyda in Visakhapatnam District). These initiatives yielded exceptional results.

These projects supported rural livelihoods and provided ample opportunities for tourists to interact with the local communities while understanding the indigenous knowledge about primitive culture, and traditions, and biodiversity in the area. The ecotourism initiatives opened opportunities to the local tribal youth, ethnic minorities, and women who participated in operating the ecotourism projects on a community basis and sharing the benefits. Essentially all ecotourism projects are rural-based, and tourists know about the environmental assets of the rural communities, ethnic cuisine, local traditions, and art forms. Andhra Pradesh is encouraging community-based ecotourism in convergence with various stakeholders from the government departments, and the community, and identified new ecotourism destinations, namely at Maredumilli (East Godavari District), Nelapattu (Nellore District), Mamandur, Talakona, Nanniyal (Chittoor District), Balapalli (Kadapa District), Ettipotala (Guntur District), and Kambala Konda (Visakhapatnam District).The operation model followed in these ecotourism projects generally would involve nature treks, wildlife tourism, and jungle stays, etc. Local Forest Protection Committees will provide accommodation, guide services, security, and food. The AP Forest Department will provide infrastructure under Community Forest Management (CFM), and help in managing eco-camps. All these new initiatives are yielding the most encouraging results in both conserving the environment and improving rural livelihoods.

Source: Jitendra Singh, and Saurabh Munjal (2015), Sustainable Ecotourism: A Case Study from India-Andhra Pradesh, in Environmental Conservation, and Sustainable Development, Edited by Dr. Surendra Singh Chauhan Dr. T.I. Khan Dr. Pankaj Kumar Jain Ms. Prama Esther Soloman, Lenin Media Pvt. Ltd.

conclude it to be the sole responsibility of each citizen who is aware of the fact. Though different opinions might arise at different platforms, one thing that remains intact is that it is required to be done at a faster pace than what we are moving to right now.

- The government and other statutory bodies need to reach out to a set of people who may have the capabilities to influence people for such a cause. Ultimately, when a consumer becomes aware of the nuances, it will impact the overall value chain because the consumption patterns and demand might change. In terms of India, sustainability, and tourism are not well-researched and made a part of the curriculum unless opted as a specialization, this fact decreases the possibility of awareness in the younger generation who are ready to write the future after us.

2. **Lack of alignment between the stakeholders**
   - The aforementioned stakeholder map dictates a holistic view of the key stakeholders in the tourism industry. The tourism sector is said to be one of the biggest employment creators in the world, and India which means there is a need for a structured plan of action to be followed for the betterment of the industry. In the context of tourism, stakeholder analysis, and alignment is a complex task that requires a detailed assessment of all the prospects, and entities involved.

   - There have been several instances where improper execution of the plans and policies has sharply trimmed the experience of the end customer. The net value derived from the overall experience comes from a holistic approach from all ends of the journey, and when these multidisciplinary bodies develop conflicting relationships, it creates a long-term negative impact on the value.

3. **Policy, Implementation, and marketing**
   - This factor is undermined when it comes to the challenges faced by the tourism industry in context to sustainability. A roadmap should inhibit all the phases, and actors of the process, and it must be promoted in a way that creates widespread awareness. Sustainable tourism is a term that is unclear to a major chunk of the population in India which poses a critical threat to its implementation. Word of mouth creates much more awareness than any form of marketing, and this requires an aggressive approach towards putting out the concept in public and responsible organizations.

   - The government needs to be on its toes, and present the idea proactively among the industry stakeholders to make it happen sooner. A long-term vision and clear roadmap with effective promotion strategies, ranging from offline to online in terms of reach to make the message clear among people.

4. **No formal organization for monitoring collaborative efforts central, state, and local bodies**
   - A single authority to guide organizations, and perform audits of the performance levels can bring a vital change if transparency is maintained. The natural phenomenon of irresponsible behaviour by the stakeholders can occur at various levels of the roadmap which will be required to be treated and rectified.

- Government should identify a body of experts who can look over the execution part of the process, and take necessary steps to improve the overall performance. This will not only ensure collaborative efforts but also will make sure that the set timelines are being followed.

5. **Poor infrastructural development, and connectivity discouraging domestic travel**
   - India's domestic travel has seen exponential growth in the last few years. In 2019, over 2.3 billion domestic tourist visits were made across the nation. Our nation has a huge potential to generate decent revenue from domestic travel itself. Improper connectivity and poor infrastructure support have vanished the hopes of several local manufacturers, traders, and organizations.
   - Sustainable tourism goals can only be met when we prosper our domestic trade, and tourism facilities. It needs to be aligned with the long-term vision of making people more aware of the kind of materials used in manufacturing, and ways of supply, and sell in the market.

4.4 Key Trends, and Factors affecting Sustainable Tourism in India

1. The pandemic due to COVID 19 has a very direct and severe impact on the Travel, and Tourism industry. By reducing the number of cases, easing restrictions on the lockdown, availability of modes of transportation, mass vaccination programs, and following COVID appropriate behaviour, if people remain vigilant enough, the industry must bounce back, and get on its growth trajectory sooner than later.

2. Tourists are now more aware of hygiene and safety than ever. They have become more conscious about their choices.

3. Indian Prime Minister's vision for 'Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas' meaning 'Collective Efforts Inclusive Growth' may have a tangible positive impact on the folk artists, painters, craftsmen, and other artisans.

Figure 14: Tourism Value Chain
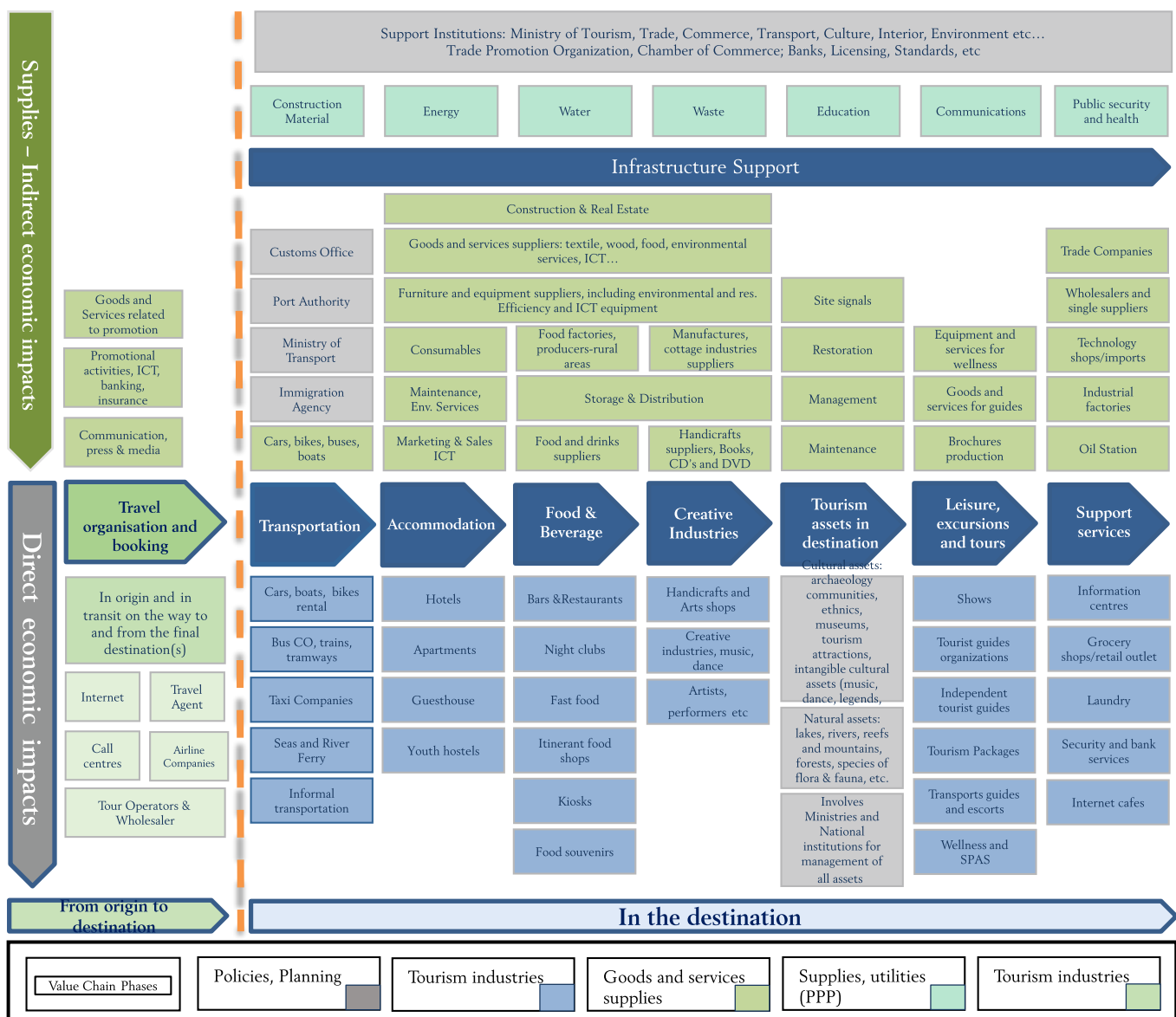
4. Goals initiatives and projects such as UDAAN, BHARATMALA, SAGARMALA, High Speed/Bullet Trains, etc. are meant to reduce the rural-urban divide and will help in making India a more tourist-friendly destination.

5. Development and promotion of niche tourism products in India. These products may include sports, adventure, spiritual wellness, medical, and Meetings Incentives Conferences & Exhibitions (MICE), film, and rural tourism among many. This will help India in becoming a 365 days tourism destination.

6. India's commitment to reduce carbon emission as per Paris Agreement is also helping the country in adopting more sustainable practices across industries.

7. Gen Z, and Millennials will drive consumption in this era. These aware and digitally literate consumers are changing the tourism landscape in the country already.

8. Circular economy and Sharing economy are shaping the landscape Indian economy. Ola, Uber, Zoomcar, Airbnb, OYO, etc are some of the many companies working on the concept of sharing economy.

**Caselet: Sustaining Ecotourism Destinations:** A Case of Social Entrepreneurship at Mangala Jodi Ecotourism Trust: Currently 'ecotourism' and 'sustainable development' are widely discussed topics in the tourism industry. In India, the majority of the population lives in rural areas, and therefore the Government faces a lot of challenges in protecting the rural livelihoods dependent on natural ecosystems. Sustainable ecotourism destinations can be developed with the adequate involvement of stakeholders and sharing their incentives. Mangalajodi Ecotourism Trust (MET) is a community-owned and managed ecotourism facility promoted by the Royal Bank of Scotland, and Foundation India (RBSFI) in partnership with Indian Grameen Services (IGS), and local government bodies. MET tourism projects are based on the principles of community ownership, and key stakeholders for ecotourism destination development. The participatory framework and descriptive case study analyzed the various key stakeholders' involvement in the development of the Mangalajodi ecotourism destination. The findings resulted in developing a destination development system model that embodies the various stakeholders including local organizations, tourism enterprises, local communities, and tourists with specified roles to promote and sustain the destination.

Source: Kumantha, Harshavardhan Reddy (2020), Stakeholders involvement towards sustaining ecotourism destinations: The case of social entrepreneurship at Mangalajodi Ecotourism Trust in India, GeoJournalofTourism, and Geosites, Vol. 29 Issue 2, p636-648

In India tourism as an industry has significant potential for growth and its contribution to economic development. The country's rich heritage culture, diverse ecology, beautiful terrains, and places of natural beauty have received decent attention from both national as well as international travellers.
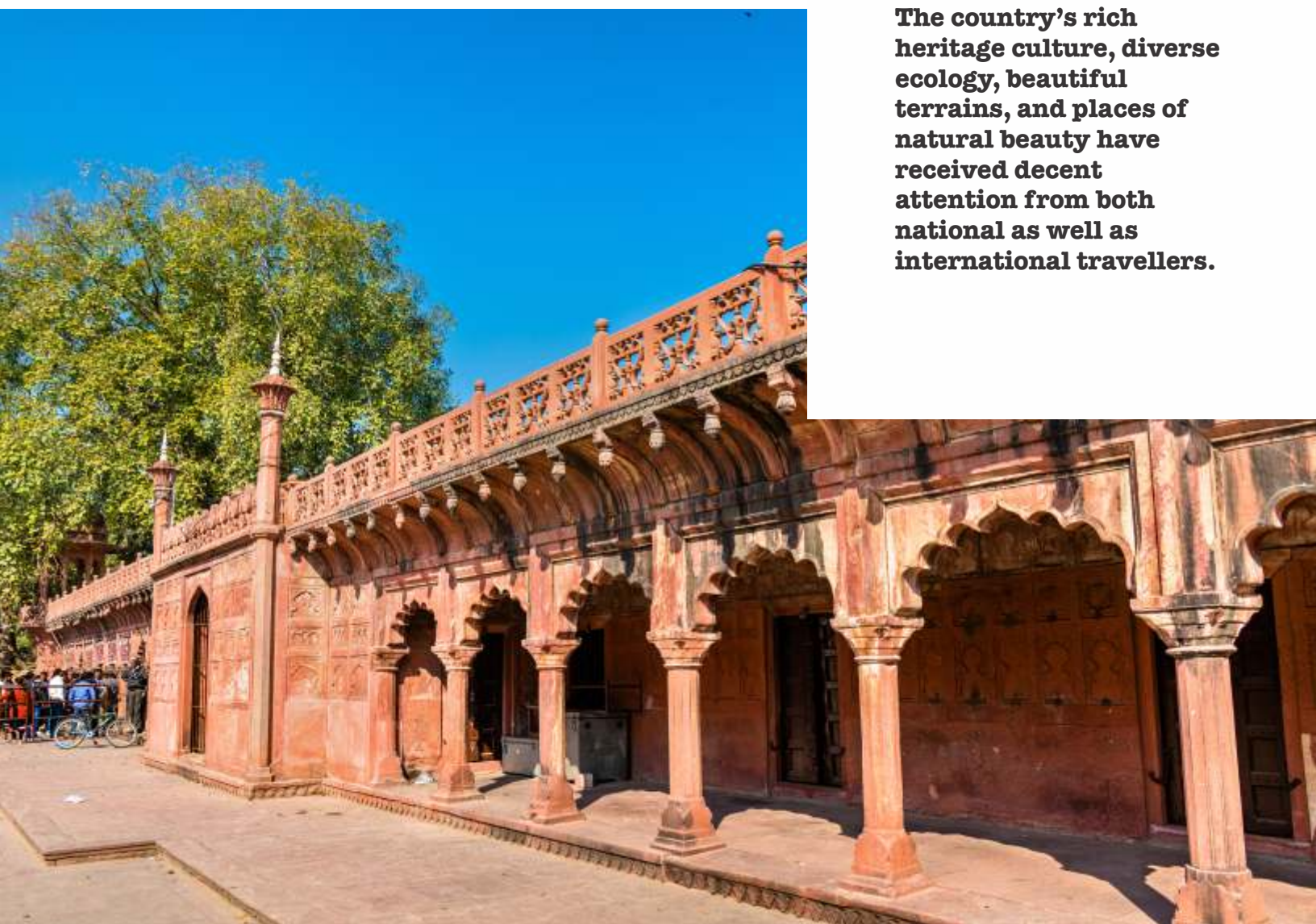
Sustainable Tourism: Initiatives and Opportunities

5.1 Introduction

In India tourism as an industry has significant potential for growth and its contribution to economic development. The country's rich heritage culture, diverse ecology, beautiful terrains, and places of natural beauty have received decent attention from both national as well as international travellers. The tourist expenditure on tourism allied services like transport, accommodation, food, recreation forms a significant part of its contribution to the GDP of the Indian economy.

The growing impact and stimulus created by the tourism sector position its place as an economic powerhouse, and its potential as a tool for growth are irrefutable. The tourism sector, while heading for growth, contributes to the creation of diverse, and large-scale employment. By understanding various heritages, cultures and lifestyles, tourism acts as a means for building peace in the world.

Recognizing the prominence of achieving sustainable development (SD) by 2030 as per the UN Member States commitment, the Indian tourism sector has been embracing the SD concepts and supporting environmental protection, and economic development thereby augmenting sustainable livelihoods across all walks of society. In India, the tourism industry provides opportunities for not only big tourism enterprises but also for medium, and small-scale business enterprises, which is mostly important in sustaining rural communities, and their livelihoods.

India is known for its diverse culture with a harmonious blend of art, religion, and philosophy. The tourists get attracted and acquainted with this culture, customs, and conventions. The mode of living of the local people at tourist destinations helps tourists to strengthen the bonds of friendship, cross-cultural understanding, and cooperation.

The tourism industry in India majorly contributes to:

• Increase in national income

• Generation of foreign exchange

• Rising of Tax revenue

• Transformation of the regional economy

Indian tourism is attracting the world's attention day by day and the salient aspects of India's Tourism Sector are:

• The World Economic Forum (WEF)' as per the Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index of 2019, ranked India to the 34th position from 40 in 2018, and 52 in 2017.

• India accounts for the bulk of South Asia's travel and tourism (T&T) GDP and thus, remains the sub-region's most competitive T&T economy.

• According to the Travel and Tourism Competitive Index, 2019 of the WEF, India is the only lower-middle-income country in the top 35.

• The Government of India is striving towards realizing a 1% share in the world's international tourist arrivals by 2020, and a 2% share by 2025.

• India has a 7500km coastline, 74% of the Himalayan Mountains and has the only living desert in the World.

• India has the sixth-largest number of world heritage sites in the world

• India is the birthplace of four major religions in the world.
• Of the 38 World Heritage Sites located, India is home to 30 cultural sites, 7 natural sites, and 1 mixed site.

• 10 bio-geographical zones and 26 biotic provinces are also located in India.

5.2 Sustainable Tourism: Various Forms

Generally, people like to travel for various reasons. They may like to travel for recreation/leisure/ vacation/visit friends, and relatives. People also travel for business and professional engagements, for health treatment or to undertake religious and other pilgrimages, or to pursue more personal motives of interest. Based on the type of activity the tourism can majorly be classified as presented in Table. 4.

Table 3: Classification of Tourism activities

Classification	Coverage
Sport, physical activities	Non-professional active participation in all kinds of sport and outdoor and indoor activities, e.g. golf, tennis, skiing, skating, swimming, rowing, sailing, surfing, other water sports, jogging, cycling, walking, hiking, trekking, climbing, mountaineering, horse riding, pony trekking, fishing, angling, shooting, hunting
Attending events (including sports), spectators & participants	Theatre, concerts, festivals, opera, ballet, circus, cinema, recreation parks, theme parks, amusement parks, ballroom, discotheque, dancing, casinos, gambling, betting, other entertainment, sports events.
Education, heritage, nature	Education, studying (not connected to the profession), visiting museums, exhibitions, historical sites and buildings, botanical and zoological gardens, nature reserves.
Health activities	Spas, fitness, health resorts, other treatments and cures.
Religious activities	Attending religious events, pilgrimages, Zion Christian Church (Moria City, Limpopo, South Africa) and many others around the country
Sightseeing	Sightseeing by group trips, touring, cruising, landscape or cityscape by walking, cycling or by taking a motorized drive
Shopping	Visiting stores, shops, arcades in search of merchandise, or simply window shopping.
Meetings, and conventions	Attending meetings, conferences, congresses, conventions, seminars, trade fairs and exhibitions, incentive weekends.
Passive leisure	Relaxing, sunbathing, eating and drinking.

Source: Authors compilation from the literature

5.3 Government Initiatives

The Ministry of Tourism is the nodal agency in India for formulating national policies, and programs. The Ministry coordinates the activities of various Central and State Government Agencies, Union Territories as well as the private sector for promoting the development of tourism in the country. India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC) is the only public sector undertaking under the charge of the Ministry of Tourism responsible for promoting tourism. The Ministry also has autonomous institutions viz; (i) Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM) (ii) National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT) and the Institutes of Hotel Management (IHMs) (iii) Indian Culinary Institute (ICI).

• The Ministry takes care of all policy matters that include development of policies; planning; coordination with other ministries, departments, States/Union Territory Administrations; regulation, standards and guidelines; infrastructure and product development; research, analysis, monitoring and evaluation, international cooperation and external assistance; legislation, etc. Besides, the Ministry has other functions such as assistance in the formulation of policies by providing feedback from the field offices; monitoring of plan projects and assisting in the plan formulation; coordinating the activities of the field offices and their supervision; regulation; approval and classification of hotels, restaurants, Incredible India Bed and Breakfast (IIB&B); approval of travel agents, tour operators and tourist

transport operators, etc. The Human Resource Development ministry supports developing HRD Institutions and setting standards and guidelines and all other establishment matters of the Ministry of Tourism. A National Policy on tourism was drafted in 2002, highlighting the importance of the tourism sector and the objectives of tourism development in the country. The policy aims for harnessing the direct and multiplier effects of the tourism sector for employment generation and poverty eradication in an environmentally sustainable manner. The government of India thus takes several steps from time to time for the development of the tourism industry. The government is working to gain 1% of the global international tourist arrivals pie by 2% by 2025.

In line with this growth strategy, some major government initiatives and schemes that are being aimed at catapulting tourism-based employment and income are:

5.3.1 Swadesh Darshan Scheme

It is launched by the Ministry of Tourism, for integrated development of theme-based tourist circuits in India and is envisioned for positioning the tourism sector as a driving force for economic growth, a major engine for job creation, building synergy with various sectors, etc. 'Dekho Apna Desh' webinar series was launched to promote domestic tourism, and educate people on various destinations and showcase the sheer depth and expanse of the Indian culture and heritage. People were urged to visit 15 domestic tourist destinations by 2022.

Under this scheme, fifteen thematic circuits have been identified for development, namely: North-East India Circuit, Buddhist Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, Coastal Circuit, Krishna Circuit, Desert Circuit, Tribal Circuit, Eco Circuit, Wildlife Circuit, Rural Circuit, Spiritual Circuit, Ramayana Circuit, Heritage Circuit, Tirthankar Circuit & Sufi Circuit. In pursuant of this scheme in 2018-19, and2019 -20, the Ministry has framed 'Development of Iconic Tourist Destinations Scheme', a Central Sector Scheme for the development of nineteen identified iconic destinations in the country.

5.3.2 Pilgrimage Rejuvenation, and Spirituality Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) Scheme

This scheme helps in identifying and developing pilgrim sites across the country and enriches the religious tourism experience. This scheme allows Public-Private Partnership (PPP) and runs under the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) model. Twelve cities that are being developed under the PRASAD are; Ajmer (Rajasthan), Amaravati (Andhra Pradesh), Amritsar(Punjab), Dwaraka (Gujarat), Gaya (Bihar), Kamakhya (Assam), Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu), Kedarnath (Uttarakhand), Mathura(Uttar Pradesh), Puri (Odisha), Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), and Vellankani (Tamil Nadu).

5.3.3 SAATHI (System for Assessment, Awareness & Training for Hospitality Industry)

SAATHI was introduced by partnering with the Quality Council of India (QCI) in October 2020. The initiative will effectively implement Covid-19 guidelines/SOPs for safe operations of hotels, restaurants, and other units.

5.3.4 New Destinations
- In 2020, the Government of India added four new tourist attractions in Gujarat—Arogya Van, Ekta Mall, Children's Nutrition Park, and Sardar Patel Zoological Park/Jungle Safari.
- In October 2020, the government of India added four new tourist attractions in Gujarat—Arogya Van, Ekta Mall, Children's Nutrition Park and Sardar Patel Zoological Park/Jungle Safari.

5.3.5 Branding, and Marketing Initiatives

The government of India's aggressive major branding and marketing initiatives like- 'Incredible India!' and 'Atithi Devo Bhava' aim to provide a focused impetus to growth.

5.3.6 Issuance of Medical Visa

A fresh category of medical visa (M visa) has been released by the Indian Government to encourage medical tourism in the country.

5.3.7 Tax holiday for hotels around UNESCO World Heritage sites

A five-year tax holiday has also been offered for all the 2, 3, and4 starred hotels located around UNESCO World Heritage sites in India, except in Delhi and Mumbai.

5.3.8 Incredible India 2.0 campaign

Launched in 2017 this campaign aims for promoting various destinations, and tourism products of India in important, and potential source markets worldwide, such as spiritual, medical, and wellness tourism. Further, the 'Incredible India Mobile App' was launched in 2018 to support travellers and showcase their major experiences travelling in India.

5.3.9 Tax Refund for Tourists (TRT) Scheme

The Union Budget in 2019-20 introduced a Tax Refund for Tourists (TRT) scheme in countries like Singapore to encourage tourists to spend more in India and boost tourism.

5.3.10 Public Service Delivery System (PSDS)

A web-based portal was created by the Ministry of Tourism to provide all the applicants for approval of hotel projects and track their applications online on a real-time basis through a single-window clearance system. Besides these initiatives, the Government of India identified the following Niche Products under the Ministry of Tourism for development, and promotion i.e. 1. Cruise, 2. Adventure 3.Medical, 4. Wellness, 5. Golf, 6. Polo, 7. Meetings Incentives Conferences, and Exhibitions (MICE), 8. ecotourism, 9. Film Tourism, 10. Sustainable Tourism, 11. Rural Tourism.

5.4 Sustainable Tourism Initiatives

Globally, recognizing the impacts of climate change and global warming on causing damage to life and property, and its detrimental influence on the tourism industry where tourism constituted a major share of the GDP, many developed, developing, and underdeveloped regions embarked on sustainable tourism initiatives. The GHG emissions caused by tourism value chains caught major attention by all as they contribute negatively to the existence of fragile ecosystems. Recognizing this challenge to create a sustainable balance between tourists and their eco-friendly behaviours and heritage conservation, the government of India is constantly working to provide policy mechanisms to guide the industry towards sustainable use of resources thereby mitigating negative impacts on the environment and society. In 1998, the Ministry of Tourism extensively pondered with the industry and other stakeholders, and came up with "ecotourism in India – Policy and Guidelines", covering: ecotourism definition and ecotourism resources of India; Policy and planning, and operational guidelines for Government, developers, operators, and suppliers, visitors, destination population/host community and NGOs/scientific & research institutions. As part of these initiatives, various parameters were introduced including the polluter pays principle, regulatory issues, environment care, sustaining heritage, carrying capacity, and inclusive economic growth, etc.

The Government of India also constituted the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) in 2010 and the Ministry developed GSTC criteria for sustainable tourism in the Indian context. Thus, sustainable tourism concepts were integrated proactively into the policy framework in the 12th Five Year Plan, with a major focus on the 'Atithi Devo Bhavah' initiative, and involving schools, NGOs, industry associations, etc. in carrying out sustained cleanliness drives at important tourist destinations through 'Swachh Bharat

Mission By setting up of way-side amenities, biodegradable toilets, etc. In 2016, the Ministry of Tourism launched the Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI) in association with Ecotourism Society of India (ESOI), a non-profit organization formed in 2008 with the sole aim to promote and ensure environmentally responsible and sustainable practices in the tourism industry.

To sustain tourism, India with its diverse climate, hospitality, uniqueness has developed innovation in tourism by welcoming various types of tourist packages viz., rural tourism, adventure tourism, medical tourism, heritage tourism, luxury tourism and ecotourism and pilgrim packages to both national and international tourists (Fig 16).

5.4.1 Rural Tourism
The aim is to develop concern in heritage and culture, and encourage visits to village settings to experience and live a relaxed and healthy lifestyle.

5.4.2 Adventure Tourism
Adventure sports are covered with specialized packages for activities that include mountaineering, trekking, bungee jumping, mountain biking, river rafting & rock climbing.

5.4.3 Medical Tourism
Medical tourism is gaining attention in India because of its competency and cost-effectiveness. India is also known for various forms of medical treatments like Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy (AYUSH) besides its world-class expertise in allopathy. Tourists visit India seeking specialized medical treatments, mainly ayurvedic, spa and other therapies. The key intention of this kind of tourism is achieving, promoting, or maintaining good health and a sense of well-being. In recent times many conferences, and conventions have been taking place in India and the country has become an ideal location for medical tourism.

5.4.4 Heritage Tourism
Tourists visit India mainly to appreciate its vast and unique cultural heritage in various cities. The country's rich heritage is wholly reflected in religious monuments, museums, art galleries, temples, majestic forts and gardens in urban as well as rural sites.

5.4.5 Luxury Tourism
The luxury travel market in India is likely to grow at a rate of 12.8% during 2015-25, the highest in comparison with any other BRIC country.

5.4.6 Pilgrimage Tourism
India is known as a religious hub for different cultures and attracts many tourists arrive here on pilgrimage every year. Some well-known pilgrim destinations that attract a massive number of tourists in South India are: Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Mysore, Mahabaleshwar, Rameshwaram, Sabarimala, Kanyakumari, Hyderabad, Goa, Pondicherry, and in other parts of the country viz.,

Figure 15: Types of Sustainable Tourism
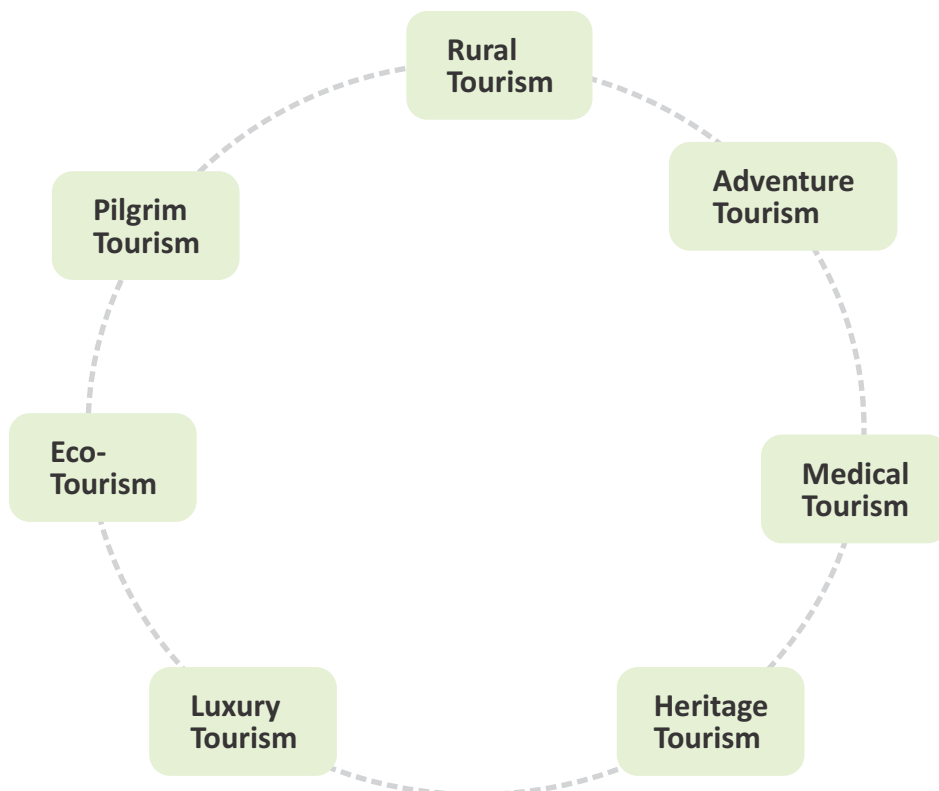
Aurangabad, Delhi, Agra, Jaipur, Jhansi, Nalanda, etc. Haridwar, Ujjain, Shirdi, Varanasi, Allahabad, Puri, Ajmer, Amritsar, Vaishno Devi, Badrinath, Kedarnath, etc. are some other places of religious importance. Srinagar, Kullu, Manali, Dehradun, Nainital, Darjeeling, Ooty, etc. are also famous tourist destinations. These tourist destinations are also famous for their handicrafts, fairs, folk dances, music, and people's hospitality.

5.4.7 Ecotourism

Ecotourism is gaining a lot of attraction amongst tourists as it involves visiting fragile, and relatively untouched natural areas, and is intended as a low-impact alternative to conventional commercial mass tourism. Ecotourism consciously makes earnest efforts to preserve the naturally gifted beauty of the region and conserves wildlife in their natural habitat. In the process, ecotourism glorifies offbeat places, their rich culture, and traditions. A vast variety of flora and fauna in various states of India is a major factor behind the growing popularity as tourist eco destinations. The Ministry recognized fundamental principles for the development of ecotourism such as; involving local communities that contribute to the overall economic development of the region and identifying conflicting exploitation of local resources that negate the interests of local inhabitants, and their livelihoods. The type and scale of ecotourism should be compatible with the socio-cultural characteristics of the local community, and the environment. The strategies for ecotourism development should be integrated with the overall development of the region with ample scope for expansion of public services. To this extent the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Government of India has prepared 'Policy for ecotourism in Forest, and Wildlife Areas', and the Ministry of tourism has extended support to this Policy.

In Himachal Pradesh Community-Based Ecotourism (CBET) has been practiced. Participatory Forestry Management for the development of forests has been initiated. They have been generating revenue by exercising these initiatives. Ecosphere, an organization has been working for bio-reserve conservation, and bringing into the limelight the hidden beautiful tourism destinations in the state.

The state of Karnataka is one of the popular ecotourism destinations in India. Jungle lodges, heritage sites and resorts make Karnataka a popular ecotourism destination in the country. Karnataka Ecotourism Development Board (KEDB) in association with the National Tiger Conservation Authority has developed ecotourism policies to attract both public and private investments. To meet the growing supply, various demand generating programs like creating more awareness at the tourist hotspots and facilitating ambitious activities to attract tourists are also planned. Eco-friendly stays by Jhari Ecostay, Silver Oak Resort, and Chukki Mane are the major attractions.

The state of Kerala is another ecotourism destination. Here, the beauty of ecotourism lies in their hospitality towards travellers. It is a place for nature lovers and these Western Ghats are among the top biodiversity destinations in the world. There are many tourist activities available for people to connect with nature, such as nature walks and treks in gardens, hill stations, tea estates, boating in the backwaters, etc. Thenmala Ecotourism Project is a prominent development in South India that works towards the development of the Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary Reservoir, and the Deer Rehabilitation Centre. Most of the resorts in Kerala follow ecotourism guidelines.

In the capital state of New Delhi Ecotourism Society of India has been practicing sustainable tourism activities related to reducing carbon footprints and jointly working with enterprises in the tourism sector to create awareness on the ecotourism practices, and identifying new farm stays, tourism destinations apart from the existing well-known places.

In order to showcase the cultural diversity in the State of Uttarakhand, the tourism department has introduced village treks for tourists to experience the real lifestyle of Kumaoni villagers. Homestay is another example of successful execution of ecotourism. Additionally, the State Bird Spring Festival is a tourist attraction that has enhanced tourism in recent years.

The state of Arunachal Pradesh is home to another popular Northeast Indian ecotourism destination. NGOs like 'Future Generations Arunachal' and 'Green Pastures' have been working for the development of ecotourism, homestays, showcasing the tribal culture and on nature protection. Various nature protection activities have been taken up by the Apatani Plateau Initiative, Ziro, and Tangsa Community Conservation Reserve activity in the State of Arunachal Pradesh.

Assam is another state that has been attracting ecotourism with their beautiful sights, the native tribes, and their exciting traditions. The Ecotourism Society of India and the Assam Tourism Development Corporation are jointly creating awareness on responsible tourism. The deprived youth are motivated to set up eco-camps in these regions.

To protect the beautiful environment, wildlife in Sikkim, a region in the northeast, sustainable tourism and eco-friendly measures have been developed by the Directorate of Ecotourism in collaboration with the Department of Forest, Sikkim.

5.5 Promotion of Sustainable and Responsible Tourism

The Ministry of Tourism has developed Comprehensive Sustainable Tourism Criteria (STCI) after discussions with the various stakeholders for major sections of the tourism industry viz; accommodation, backwaters, lakes, tour operators, beaches and river sectors for the entire country. The Ministry has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Responsible Tourism Society of India (RTSOI) which was earlier known as Ecotourism Society of India (ESOI). The main objective of RTSOI is to create awareness and educate all stakeholders in the tourism industry about the significance of sustainable and responsible tourism practices and safeguarding the interests of local communities.

As part of ecotourism promotion, several eco-friendly measures are to be adopted by the hotels, and tour operators were also suggested. The Ministry of Tourism has set guidelines for authorizing hotel projects and issued guidelines for the classification of hotels under various categories. In accordance with these guidelines, it is mandatory to integrate various eco-friendly measures like waste management systems, Sewage Treatment Plant (STP), rainwater harvesting system etc. Once the hotel is operational the Hotel and Restaurant Approval Classification Committee (HRACC), through physical inspection, ensures that proper measures for categorization under eco-hotels, including measures for energy and water conservation, pollution control, installation of non-CFC equipment for refrigeration and air conditioning, are also undertaken by the hotel. It has also been recommended that the architecture of the buildings, especially in ecologically fragile and hilly areas, should bear in mind sustainability criteria as far as possible to conform to local ethos.

5.5.1 Salient Ecotourism Initiatives in India

The first planned ecotourism destination 'Thenmala' in India is in Kerala. Ecotourism is designated as a 'thrust industry' in states such as Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir as well as Uttaranchal. The government has announced a good range of incentives for ecotourism projects such as resorts, spas, hotels, entertainment/ amusement parks and ropeways.

5.5.1.1 Major Initiatives for Ecotourism Development in India

- The development of Horsley Hill in the Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.

- The development of Satkosi in Orissa.

- Ecotourism project in Morni-Pinjore Hills, and Sultanpur National Park in Haryana.

- The project on integrated development of tribal circuits, with a focus on ecotourism in Himachal Pradesh.

- Expansion of Wayanad in Kerala.
- Development of Tourist Circuit (Western Assam Circuit) Dhubri Mahamaya-Barpeta-Hajo.

- Expansion of Mechuka destination in Andhra Pradesh.

- Development of tourist destination in Khensa in Nagal, and Circuit

- Udhyamandalam-Madumalai-Anaimalai, Tamil Nadu.

- Jungle Lodges and Resorts, Karnataka.

- Private initiative in Kerala-Casino Group of Hotels, Tours India Ltd. adopted 2 tribal villages in Periyar Tiger Reserve.

- GEF Project-Gulf of Mannar, Tamilnadufor developing ecotourism as an alternative method of livelihood and preservation of biodiversity in the region.

- Sikkim Biodiversity and Ecotourism Project.

- Corbett–Binsar–Nainital Ecotourism Initiative in Uttarakhand.

- Great Himalayan National Park, HP – Eco-Development Project.

5.5.1.2 States' Initiatives under Ecotourism

- Andhra Pradesh partnered with UNWTO to promote sustainable tourism Coastal Tourism Circuit in Sri Potti Sriramulu, Nellore under Swadesh Darshan Scheme.

- A Community-based ecotourism development has been taken up at Bairutla and Pacharla in the Nallamala forest.

- The Assam government encouraged the 'Majuli Sustainable Tourism Development Project' to encourage a carbon-free tourism experience on the island.

- Chhattisgarh made provisions to promote ecotourism, rural tourism, adventure tourism and tourism advancement through Special Tourism Areas/Zones. A tribal tourism circuit has also been identified for development under the Swadesh Darshan Scheme.

- Gujarat introduced a homestay policy.

- Himachal Pradesh announced HP Ecotourism Policy 2017 and took up projects under the Infrastructure Development Investment Program for Tourism (IDIPT).

- Karnataka Declared "2017 – Year of the Wild.'' Jungle Lodges and Resorts is a Joint Venture of the Department of Tourism, and the Department of Forest Karnataka Ecotourism Development Board (KEDB).

- Kerala government is rebranding Kerala as 'Land of Adventure', and introduced Coracle Ride as part of the Seethathode - Gavi Popular Tourism (SGPT) project.
- Madhya Pradesh government announced the Madhya Pradesh Forest (Entertain-ment and Wildlife experience) Rule 2015 and established Madhya Pradesh ecotourism Development Board.

- Mahabhraman Scheme Signed MoU with Airbnb to promote unique experiences Pustaka sheGaon (village of books) in Maharashtra.

- Odisha implemented Ecotourism Policy 2013 and developed 42 ecotourism facilities across 23 forest divisions.

- Sikkim implemented Ecotourism Policy 2011. Sikkim Ecotourism Council introduced Sikkim Himalayan Home Stay Program.

- Tamil Nadu Vehicle Safari at Sathyamangalam Tiger Reserve (STR) introduced Tree-Top Rest Houses and promoted Mangrove Ecotourism at Karankadu.

Caselet - Himalayan Ark: A unique travel company that empowers local women is based in Munsiyari, Uttarakhand, in the Gori River Valley, directly across from the snow-capped peaks of Panchachuli and close to the trijunction of India, Nepal, and Tibet. Around 25 homestays, or rooms in the homes of local villagers, are available through the Himalayan Ark. The homestay program allows visitors to experience high-altitude village life, as well as organize treks, and birding hikes with knowledgeable local guides, as well as kayaking, and customized river trips from glaciers to the Kali or Saryu. Slow down, take in the fresh mountain air, watch colorful butterflies, and birds, eat simple but delicious local Kumaoni food, such as bhang ki chutney, go on scenic hikes, and slightly challenging treks to sacred forest ponds through oak, and rhododendron lined trails, sleep in rustic rooms in the homes of local villagers, and wake up to the view of majestic snare ponds.

Local women have been helped by the social enterprise Himalayan Ark to open homestays, some in charming and old Kumaoni homes, and others in aspirational houses with big glass home windows overlooking the hills. Throughout the homestays, the warmth of the experience remains consistent. Although many women in rural India rarely have land ownership legal rights or independent income to run their homes. Himalayan Ark's method has enabled Munsiyari's females to directly profit from their homestays while also allowing them to leave the kitchen to educate as trekking and bird watching guides. Himalayan Ark also offers mountain treks, and explorations, using local guides, sourcing local produce, and providing environmentally conscious insights into this relatively unknown region. Every year in May, the one-of-a-kind Himal Kalasutra festival showcases a different side of this region, with high-altitude marathons, yoga workshops, photography workshops, bird watching, a traditional carnival celebration, and aboriginal cuisine.

Achievements
* Since 2016, the Indian Responsible Tourism Awards (IRTA) have honored and rewarded champions of ethical travel all over the country. The awards honor, and recognize champions of ethical travel from all over the country. The goal is to motivate and inspire the local community, to highlight replicable RT models, and to spread the word online, and in print.

The International Responsible Tourism Association (IRTA) is a regional partner of the prestigious World Travel Market (WTM) Responsible Tourism Awards, which are annually in London. The awards, which have so far delivered global acclaim to approximately 400-holiday providers, are known for their strong line-up of judges, and a comprehensive, and transparent judging process. There are branches of the awards in Africa, India, and Latin America.

* Telangana state promoted Samskruthika Sarathi Integrated Development of Ecotourism Circuit in Mahabubnagar District and Tribal Tourism Circuit in Warangal District.

* Uttarakhand drafted Uttarakhand Tourism Policy 2017 and established Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board (UTDB)

5.6 Sustainable Tourism: Major Challenges
Some of the major challenges that need attention for the promotion of sustainable tourism in India are:
* A Cumbersome Process for Visa Facility: Several visitors in India find the e-visa facility, the process of applying for a visa, cumbersome one. Low awareness of the e-visa facility makes the entry process rather difficult for tourists. Also, a limited number of repeat visits and the number of accompanying persons are permitted under medical e-visa, which affect the entry process of tourists to the country, impeding the tourism sector in India.

* Infrastructure and connectivity: There are several drawbacks in infrastructure like living facilities, hotels, sanitation, etc., and inadequate connectivity obstructs tourist visits to heritage sites.

* Capacity Building and Skills Upgradation: There is a dearth of qualified individuals in the tourism and hospitality sector which frustrates visitors providing a world-class experience.

* Advertisement and Marketing: India's marketing strategy is major distress for tourist places. The Existing campaigns for the places need aggressive management strategies as marketing majorly affects the tourism industry of the region.

* Safety: There are instances of tourists being mugged and robbed or cheated in India, and returned to their home countries with no proper channels for seeking justice.

* Sanitation and Health: Lack of good hygiene and sanitation in rural areas and in cities affects health care.

* Access: The continued lack of electricity and access to proper rest houses are major concerns in certain areas of the country. Gaining access to important travel related information can even prove tough for domestic travellers, foreign travellers are hence not at ease.

* Environmental damage: Tourism has also caused a lot of environmental concerns in the beaches, hills and forests across the nation.
* Bank and ATM facilities: Most tourist spots do not have Bank and ATM facilities.

* Environmental pollution: Widespread environmental pollution is another major issue that has adverse effects on India's tourism.

* Social Communication: With India being known for its linguistic diversity and the variety in dialects, communicating with locals can serve to be a big challenge due to the language barriers.

* Packages: Cost-effective packages to cater to the needs of people of all strata based on the demography of the country is another issue as travel is still considered a luxury by the common people till date.

5.7 Smart Tourism Initiatives

5.7.1 Introduction

The United Nations (UN) has designated the year 2017 as the "International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development", in the context of the 2030 Agenda for achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This has made all the stakeholders in the tourism industry (particularly public administrations, private businesses and knowledgeable agents, including researchers in universities) integrate their existing business operations as well as their new business ventures with sustainable tourism. The role of tourism has taken a paradigm shift and started working towards 'smart tourism' entangled with inclusive growth. The concept of a 'smart city' is one of the sustainable development approaches that have gained considerable attention in the last few years (Buhalis and Amaranggana, 2014, 2015). The same conceptual approach is tailored in the tourism sector under 'smart destination' (Yoo and Gretzel, 2016; Dos Santos Júnior, et al., 2017) as a part of sustainable development.

This concept of smart tourism is a novel incitement that has evolved with a technology-centric approach to meet the growing demand for tourism destinations. It's a part of the smart city development initiative. The process of transforming the existing tourist destinations into technology-enabled ones comes under the preview of smart tourism. Smart tourism is a social phenomenon that has emerged from the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) with tourism services (Hunter et al. 2015). The capacity of ICT to support tourism has been discussed and developed in many parts of the world for quite a long time (Gretzel 2011). The European Capital of Smart Tourism defines a smart destination as 'a destination facilitating access to tourism and hospitality products, services, spaces and experiences through ICT-based tools. It is a healthy social and cultural environment, which can be found through a focus on the city's social and human capital. It also implements innovative ICT-enabled solutions, and fosters the development of entrepreneurial businesses and their interconnectedness.

The new ways of conducting tourism through ICT applications and improving the long-term sustainability of the business may be considered as 'smart tourism'. Smart tourism is an amalgamation of various ICT practices which form a part of smart cities.

Tourists are considered as one of the demand driving factors for the growth of smart tourism principles in tourism destinations. Tourism may be viewed from different dimensions like market competition, creativity in conducting business by providing more accessibility to the tourist destinations through a citizen-centric approach.

Development of 'state-of-art technology tourism destinations in urban, semi-urban and rural areas coupled with hybrid eco-system through the application of ICT in tourism operation, governance and service delivery would be a unique model in the tourism sector for its long term sustainability. It might be a shift towards a society with an ever-increasing focus on ICT vectors. These smart city destinations would become the preferred choices for domestic and international tourists shortly.

5.7.2 ICT Applications in Smart Tourism Destinations

The adaptation of innovative technologies in the smart tourism destination approach like online applications, social media platforms, QR codes, complex algorithms, cookies, hashtags, geo-tagging and the websites by tourist operators for giving first-hand information on the destinations, availability of accommodation, reservation of hotels and travel bookings have been adopted in the tourism sector and continuously trying to improve their sustainability and competitiveness. These innovative technologies in the tourism sector may be called iTour practices. These practices may spread out new business models and markets, and develop different perspectives on value creation and competition (Table 5).

Adapting to the new demand response, notwithstanding the existing operational changes in the tourism domain, the application of advanced technologies would help in enhancing enterprise competitiveness. Some of the technological applications to increase competitiveness would be customer relationship management systems (CRM), business intelligence systems and competitive intelligence, marketing systems (B2B, B2C) and central reservation systems (CRS), content management systems, integration with social networks and positioning.

However, the involvement of local stakeholders and community awareness is very much needed for the successful integration and implementation of the iTour practices. Growing interest among travellers towards ecotourism destinations and the integration of technology into tourism is paving the way for the growth of eco and sustainable tourism in the long run. Smart tourism practices need to strike a balance between environmental, economic and socio-cultural issues of its habitat for improving the quality of the tourist experience.

Table 4: ICT applications in Smart Tourism Destinations

Tourism Applications	Utility Function	Destination components	Smart tourism destinations
Virtual reality (VR) and Augmented reality (AR) help to experience the digital environment of tourism sites	Interpretation	Attraction	Smart people, smart mobility
Vehicle tracking and monitoring system for getting real-time information and location of vehicles	Planning	Accessibility	Smart living, smart mobility
Energy-efficient green hotels for reducing consumption of electricity and pollution green travel.	Sustainability	Amenities	Smart environment
Applications for showing available tour packages, translation of languages and providing guidance to the tourists on the visit.	Guiding	Available packages	Smart people, smart mobility
Access to information about nearby attractions to visit, visiting hours through mobile devices.	Marketing	Activities	Smart mobility
Generating direct and quick feedback from tourists through ICTs regarding service quality and required demands.	Generating Feedback	Ancillary Services	Smart living

Source: Buhalis, D., & Amaranggana, A. (2014) Smart tourism destinations. In Z. Xiang & I. Tussyadiah (Eds.), Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism (pp. 553–564). Dublin: Springer.

5.7.3 ICT Perspective and Smart Tourism Initiatives in India

Smart Tourism initiative is not an independent concept. It is embraced with technology as a core factor. Firstly, it includes the governance, and ICT application, followed by innovation in tourism destinations and finally sustainability (Chourabi et al., 2012), with public and private participation. The Smart Tourism Destination project is categorically associated with community participation besides the application of ICTs.

In India, the evolution and development of smart tourism destinations mostly depend on technology, innovation, accessibility and sustainability.

- **Technology:** As mentioned earlier, the application of ICT into governance and tourist value chain [1] is the means through which tourist destinations may be transformed into smart and sustainable destinations at great speed. The development of these new landscapes coupled with ICT is not only for tourists but also ensures a better lifestyle for the local stakeholders.

- **Mobile Apps:** Internet usage through mobile devices like smartphones or tablets is the first successful step in the Indian technological revolution. This has led to the launching of mobile apps like MakeMyTrip, clear trips, redbus, Indian Railways Catering, and Tourism(IRCTC), tripigator, tripoto,

audio compass, TravelKhana, in the tourism sector to handhold the tourists in gaining unforgettable experiences in their trips. This mobile app connectivity network would integrate the tourist with their required destination at any time from any part of the world.

The mobile apps would also connect tourists to the Information Exchange Centres (IEC) with the help of artificial intelligence, cloud computing, IoT etc., and share the travel information to the tourists, tourism destinations, and tourism enterprises, and allow them to access the necessary information. These multicultural and multilingual mobile applications would allow global tourists to interact with the tourist destination and collect a lot of information on the particular destination for hassle-free travel. Hence, Indian tourism bodies are encouraging these types of applications and employing them successfully.

- **Free Wi-Fi:** A free wi-fi connection with reasonable bandwidth at all tourist destinations is the most important service that helps tourists use tourism-related mobile applications and geo-locations to pinpoint all the places with augmented virtual reality. The importance that the Indian tourism bodies place on these types of solutions is reflected in the Apps' technology, created to encourage the implementation of these types of applications.

- **QR Codes:** The usage of QR [2] codes has been introduced into the tourism sector. These QR codes allow immediate and smart communication between tourists and the destinations, providing information related to the billing process, easy money transactions for payments, shopping, nearby hospitals and many other tourism-related services which further enhance ease and transparency.

- **Big Data:** Data related to different fields like governance, security, healthcare and tourist preferences, hotel tariffs, public transport facilities, safety, nearby banks, hospitals, food courts are provided on big data platforms. This technology with large data and high update frequency provides an efficient solution for the management, maintenance and analysis of the information generated. The use of CCTVs, infra-red sensors and Wi-Fi provides data on people's mobility in private vehicles, vehicle traffic. This helps in regulating people's mobility under safe and secure measures, traffic control, parking allotment, video monitoring in tunnels, subways and unsafe areas, location sensors and crowd control at large events and shows. Thus, big data is one of the notable aspects of furthering smart destinations.

- **Innovation:** Today, innovation coupled with technology is vital for improving productivity in the tourism sector. Technological innovation linked with ICT and digital media is prominently used both from demand and supply perspectives. Therefore, tourism-centred innovation could be thought over in place of traditional tourism practices. The tourism destinations may adapt to the changing scenario by bringing alterations in the existing business models that can intervene in products and services, which requires a rethinking of the entire tourism sector to generate socio-economic, environmental and human value. Smart tourism treats tourists as heroes since their degree of spending depends purely on loyalty and value creation. Innovation also helps to create value for their customers by augmenting promotion, distribution and marketing of services, design of new products based on changing demand levels. Therefore, innovation in the tourism sector is seen as a knowledge-based ability to generate value i.e., value for companies, value for tourists and value for destinations.

Another trait of smart tourism is that the sector is service-driven. The majority of the enterprises operating here are resorts, hotels, food courts, travel agencies, car rental companies and entertainment companies that provide different services. Many of these are small and medium-sized enterprises, start-ups, family businesses, etc., with moderate investments. Though innovations in this sector do not require huge R&D investments, small initiatives towards helping services in meeting the growing demand and supply can improve productivity. Hence, the sustained success of an enterprise depends on the futuristic vision, long-term planning and techno-innovative outlook to meet the changing demands of the tourists.

- **Accessibility:** The concept of "Tourism for All" has gained importance in the tourism sector. The basic idea of travel in the mind of a traveller starts from the assessment of the accessibility of a particular destination. This aspect is more important for travellers with many challenges on account of their physical challenges such as illness, pregnancy, age and infants in a group. These groups try to evaluate the accessibility based on infrastructure facilities, transport, ICT enabled technologies like international protocols, among which are the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0 (WCAG 2.0), the Mobile Web Best Practices (MWBP) and W3C Mobile Web Application Best Practices (World Wide Web Consortium). Thus, smart destinations would position themselves as socially responsible in the tourism sector.

A smart tourist destination ideally provides necessary information on digital platforms and social media networks. The destinations focus more on improving urban infrastructure viz., airports, ports, train, and bus stations, museums, all public buildings, parks and other public spaces to become accessible. Awareness campaigns on the use of technology augment, to a larger extent, with more attention on visual aids. The more accessible the destination the higher its popularity among tourists, as there is a direct correlation between accessibility and the number of visits.

- **Sustainability:** The World Tourism Organization (WTO) defines sustainable tourism as that which satisfies the present needs of the regions and the tourists, protecting and improving upon future opportunities. Accordingly, greater attention is placed on conserving biological diversity, keeping cultural integrity and protecting life support systems through a life cycle balance approach. The involvement of enterprises operating in the tourism sector through their economically sustainable business models, community stakeholders in local regions by showcasing their culture, traditions and history plays a vital role in sustainable development.

Ecotourism and sustainable tourism are the two pillars of smart tourism. Ecotourism is involved in reducing the carbon footprint by adopting environmentally friendly approaches and taking into account the host communities and their needs by the tourist agencies and the tour operators. Sustainable tourism contemplates different aspects viz., waste minimization technology, energy-saving techniques, less water consumption methods, increased quality of public transportation through open tourism data, creation of green accommodation with good spaces, etc. These technology interventions in turn increase socio-economic and environmental efficiencies and boost up productivity in the tourism sector. This kind of ecotourism model, proposed by Polese et al. (2018), is called "Smart Service Ecosystem", which is quite suitable for the tourism sector. This model is focused on value creation with long run sustainability with a transition from innovation to social innovation.

The technological dimension to achieve energy efficiency, sustainable management of water resources and waste treatment are being achieved by following various sustainable energy saving measures like:

i. Hydraulic, wind, biomass and solar projects for electricity and heat generation are in place.

ii. Application of LED technology in street lighting and decorating the historical monuments.

iii. Sphygmomanometers to measure soil moisture in parks and gardens to install smart irrigation practices.

iv. Efficient waste management and waste treatment and recycling techniques.

v. Measurement of water quality, air pollution, noise pollution, etc.

vi. Generation of kinetic energy on roads and pavements for traffic lights, street lights.

vii. Use of movement sensors to gauge the light intensity required in public spaces.

viii. Video surveillance and sensor systems at traffic movement places, tourist destinations and in people gathering areas to ensure safety.

Thus sustainable tourism can be achieved by transforming the existing tourism models into a global pioneer model through the integration of technology and innovation for easy accessibility of the destinations. The interests of the stakeholders who provide investment for these transformations need to be protected. Therefore, sustainable tourism must influence all dimensions of smart destination management practices for public-public and public-private cooperation, entrepreneurs and innovative enterprises.

5.7.4 Application of Smart tourism Initiatives in India

In India, smart tourism is in the nascent stage and needs collaborative efforts from the government and all the tourism stakeholders for development. The outbreak of COVID-19 brought the travel plans to almost a standstill. In this situation, the smart tourism concept has been developing as a motivational idea for safe travel. The growing pandemic has had a cascading effect on tourism. Travellers are looking for tourism service providers who can offer more sustainable travel options. As an example, in the present global pandemic, Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board has planned to resume its tourist movement by following safety precautions, and adopting safety operations through Uttarakhand Smart City's online portal.

5.8 Sustainable Tourism, Rural India

5.8.1 Introduction

Tourism is one of the fast-growing sectors in the present competitive environment. In the current times, it is the most resilient socio-economic sector. It provides both direct and indirect employment to millions of people, and also gender empowerment. However, these enhanced benefits of tourism have been limited to urban and coastal areas leading to unequal distribution of socio-economic opportunities. This has resulted in overcrowding, unsustainable demand natural and cultural resources where risk is involved.

Against this backdrop, the focus of tourism has shifted from regular tourism visits to different tourism forms like rural tourism, religious, and cultural tourism, nature tourism, adventure tourism, ecotourism and medical tourism. The movement of tourists from their normal place to a new destination to spend long hours in recreational activities in a rural environment on a farm, ranch, country home, or the surrounding areas may be considered as rural tourism. A Rural Tourism destination is a place where their life, art, culture and heritage are very well displayed to develop interaction between tourists and the locals for the purpose of providing the tourists with diversified rural experience.

Rural tourism is a niche tourism market that provides scope for income generation apart from farming by developing rural enterprises with major contributions from women. Therefore the success of rural tourism lies in bringing changes in the lifestyle of rural people by providing employment opportunities. It provides forward, and backward economic linkages to empower rural communities especially women.

Rural tourism shares a rich tourism experience compared to urban tourist destinations, and the tourists would actively participate in understanding the rural lifestyle and enjoy delicious cuisine, music, art and dances. Rural tourism has meshed with various seasonal events like festivals, socio-economic lifestyles, arts and crafts, traditions, natural environment, agriculture, biodiversity, flora, and fauna, in the particular area. In many developing countries like India, the ecotourism and cultural-tourism destinations are very close to rural areas. Therefore the development of rural tourism helps to create new ways of livelihood for the rural communities and contributes to the growth of the village economy. Rural tourism also helps in providing employment opportunities and preventing rural migration. Rural tourism is one of the potential sectors through which the development of agrarian societies is possible with active community participation. Hence, the real tourism experience lies in travelling to the grassroots and discovering the soul of that particular place.

Tourists interested in visiting rural areas want to be able to enjoy the natural countryside and the activities it offers. These needs are to be satisfied to the maximum extent in order to generate more demand in future. Normally, people visit rural tourist destinations with friends and relatives to spend their leisure time in an eco-friendly environment. These people are the key market segment that needs to be attracted. The numbers for the same lie around 25% in several parts of the country and is expected to grow over the coming years (Figure 18).

The concept of sustainable rural tourism is in line with SDGs, especially with SDG 12 which deals with "sustainable consumption and production" and SDG 16 concerning "sustainable societies." The idea that rural tourism contributes to improving the quality of

life of rural communities and acts as a catalyst for economic development has been often highlighted by many experts (Andereck and Nyaupane 2011; Petrovi´c et al. 2018; Su et al. 2018; Martínez2019). Travellers to rural areas look to enhance their mental and physical well-being due to the soothing and healing powers of nature (Sharpley and Roberts 2004; Sims 2009; Kumar 2020). Many people have been attracted to this tourism model to escape from densely populated areas with too much industrialization and urbanization (Liu et al., 2020). Particularly during the pandemic (COVID-19) period, rural tourism is sought as one of the stress-removing experiences by urban residents where they can participate in healthy activities like early morning long walks and practice yoga in the open-air. In one of the recent studies conducted in China by Zhu and Deng (2020), 412 valid samples confirmed that health-related risks like pneumonia would influence behavioural willingness to accept and prefer rural tourism as a way to relax over the weekend.

Tourism is also an easy access sector for micro and small enterprises, and for the self-employed, who make up a significant part of the tourism sector, and community level entrepreneurship in general. In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has triggered a rising interest from tourists looking for new experiences based around natural and rural areas with open air, far from congested settings. This, combined with the already rising demand for more authentic experiences that offer stronger engagement with local communities, their culture and products, as well as demand for a greener approach in all stages of the travel experience opens up immense opportunities for the economic, social and environmental revitalization of rural areas through tourism.

Harnessing the power of tourism to drive rural development also enhances the sector's contribution to achieving other SDGs viz; Goals 1 (No Poverty), 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work, and Economic Growth), 10 (Reduced Inequalities) 11 (Sustainable Cities, and Communities), 12 (Responsible Consumption, and Production), 15 (Life on Land) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), as well as the implementation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.

5.8.3 Sustainable Benefits of Rural Tourism

The current COVID 19 pandemic crisis emphasized the importance of building resilience among communities in those rural areas which rely on tourism. This implies better social protection and

Figure 15: Principles of Sustainable Rural Tourism
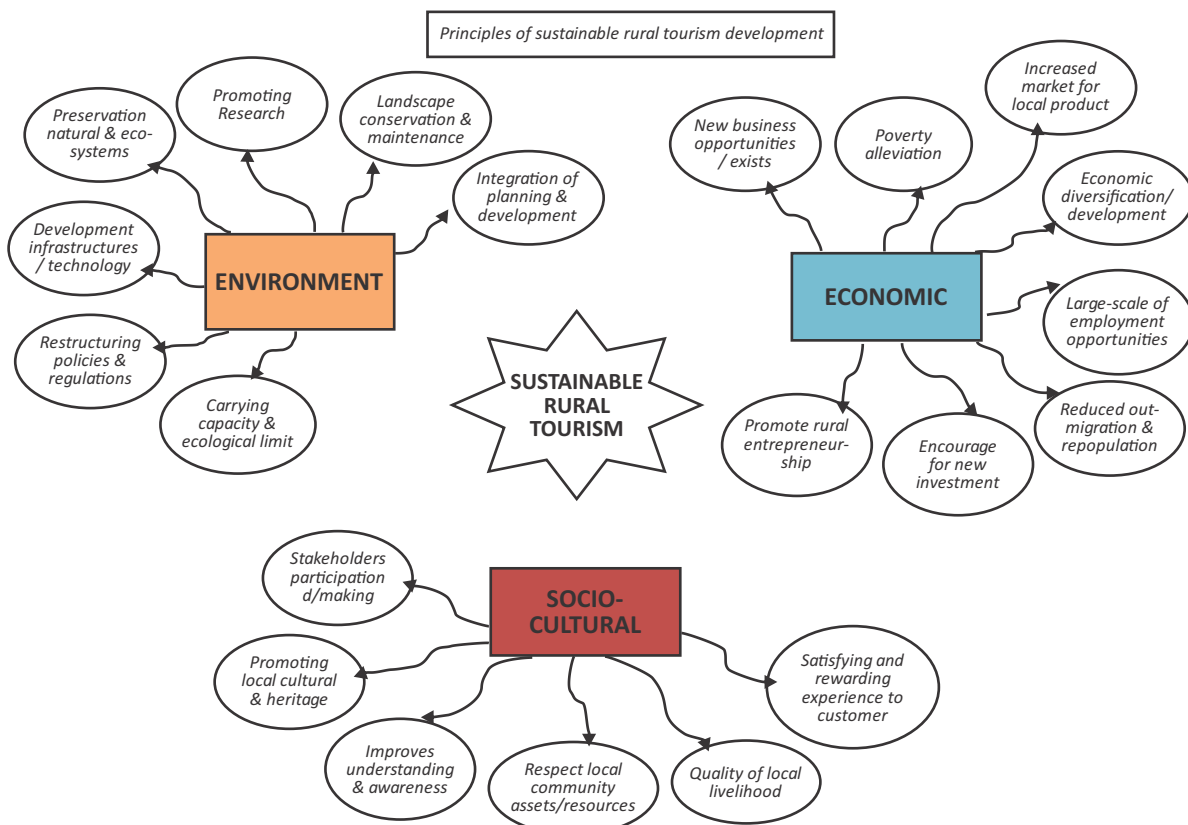
Source: *Dwyer & Edwards (2010); Pierret (2012)*

benefit-sharing among communities, as well as economic diversification and the broadening of tourism products and markets through added value experiences. However, investment, skills development, access to finance, infrastructure development, digital transformation, sustainable development, impact assessment, improved governance and women's empowerment should be placed at the heart of the recovery plans for tourism in rural communities. These initiatives support them as they navigate through the crisis and emerge stronger. Nevertheless, creating new job opportunities and economic activities in rural areas through tourism requires a holistic approach that engages all other sectors and activities in the tourism value chain and promotes Public Private-Community (PPC) partnerships.

5.8.3.1 Environmental Benefits

The major driving forces in travelling to rural areas are the calm and noise-free environment and surroundings, which relieve the stress of the travellers and aids in the relaxation of body and mind. Many travellers enjoy this environment, keeping themselves away from the monoculture of urban living. Hassle-free transport and communication facilities, local food and different models of homestays in rural destinations have been attracting many travellers. The concept of green living has been attracting many tourists towards rural tourism. This would bring human beings closer to the environment. Economic and social barriers could be overcome by travelling to rural areas and understanding their style of living. Moreover, people feel that rural tourism is very cost-effective.

5.8.3.2 Economic Benefits

Employment generation

• Local communities get employment opportunities in the process of serving the national and international tourists by way of running local homestays, working as local tourist guides, selling handicrafts, engaging themselves in learning and promoting arts and culture. Women's workforce can be engaged in various tourism service delivery processes. Therefore, rural tourism also helps in women empowerment

• Sustainable Livelihoods: Rural tourism is a year-round activity and communities are engaged in earning income for their families. This could hence be considered as a sustainable livelihood for rural communities.

• Developing New Skills: Once the travellers start visiting village destinations the people in those areas are motivated to learn specific skills that are required to cater to the needs of the tourists like cooking, extending good hospitality, better communication in other languages, housekeeping work, driving, etc. This inculcates entrepreneurial skills among the rural people which in turn converts them into entrepreneurs in the fields of hotels, travel, garments, traditional craft, etc. and aids in improving their standard of living.

5.8.3.3 Socio-Cultural Benefits

Local tradition and cultural exchange

Generally, tourists visit rural areas to experience authentic rural settings. Hence, tourism provides economic incentives to preserve cultures and traditions. With increased urbanization and globalization, people are adopting global products leaving behind the local tradition. Rural tourism encourages local communities to revive and practice their traditions, crafts, traditional festivals, architecture and other unique practices. This would also enable them to learn new cultural practices from tourists.

Quality of Life

Once rural tourism kicks off, many people from various parts of the world would visit the rural tourist destinations. This creates demand for developing the infrastructure for facilities like roads, transport services, electricity, hospitals and toilet facilities. Due to global exposure, the local people also learn to practice clean and good habits, hospitality, and more so availability of good infrastructure helps in improving the quality of life.

5.9 Rural Tourism in India

In India, almost half of the population still lives in rural areas. Even though urbanization has gained momentum there are still more than 600,000 towns in India. Rural tourism in India is an added dimension of sustainable tourism.

The government of India provided funds to the local destinations for the development of possible rural activities. While developing the policy, the government has emphasized building up both hardware (tourism infrastructure) and software (capacity building). Thirty-six rural sites are also supported by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) towards capacity-building programs.

Indian village life also features a unique scenario that enables the tourists to experience the history of the Vedic period in places like villages of Rajasthan, Varanasi and Maharashtra. A town named Morachi Chincholi in Maharashtra is promoted and developed for agro-tourism. In Madhya Pradesh, the village of Orchha in the Tikamgarh district was identified for the promotion of historical and adventure tourism. Pipli village in Puri district of Odisha is identified for the promotion and development of appliqué work.

The Shaam-e-Sarhad Village Resort that is located in the Kutch area of Gujarat attracts global tourists from October to March every year. The resort has been designed in Gujarati style and is managed by the local communities. It is one of the initiatives of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and is sponsored by the UNDP. The travellers witness the pristine excellence of the national heritage and its rich culture, conventions and people's way of life. It serves as a good opportunity for local communities in search of new livelihood and improving standards of living.

India being a land of diverse climatic conditions and various terrains, the plethora of rural tourist destinations across all corners of the country helps to boost rural tourism with different kinds of entrepreneurial approaches.

Thus, rural tourism has a lot of potential to transform and develop a rural economy into a modern economy by utilizing the local resources to their fullest potential. Governments and all stakeholders including the local communities and the relevant institutions in a country need to work together so that the utilization, development and management of tourist areas could be given serious attention.

5.9.1 Stakeholders of Rural tourism in India

In the process of rural tourism development, multiple stakeholders like the State Government; local panchayats; local communities; religious, and social groups; businesses; tour operators; travel agencies and tourists play a key role. There are various governmental and non-governmental organizations that are working to promote rural tourism, for eg; Grass Roots; Rural Tourism Network Enterprise (RTNE); DHAN Foundation; Travel another India; Culture Aangan compete; Village Ways, and Eco Login. These organizations are creating necessary infrastructure in rural tourism destinations and marketing the concept of rural tourism and are also developing capacities to attract global tourists.

5.9.2 Key Central Government Schemes for Promotion of Rural Tourism

The Government of India has taken several initiatives and introduced policies to propagate rural tourism.

• Promoting Village Tourism: The Ministry of Tourism released a Rural Tourism Infrastructure Development Component, which is part of the Product Infrastructure Development for Destinations and Circuits (PIDDC) Scheme. In this scheme 100 percent Central Assistance is provided to showcase rural life, art, culture and heritage in villages which are known for indigenous core competence in handloom, textiles, art and craft, and natural environment. Central Financial Assistance (CFA) is provided for both infrastructure development and capacity building. These schemes support the improvement of village surroundings and village connectivity within the panchayat limits (does not include major roads which connect the village), solid waste management and sewerage management, village illumination, tourism-related activities such as procurement of equipment and providing tourist accommodation. The State governments identify the regions suited for the promotion of rural tourism and are also responsible for seeking convergence of other schemes and allocations for the broader development of the local regions to benefit local communities.

• Scheme for Organizing Fair, Festival and Tourism Related Events: The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India provides financial assistance to State Governments to organize fairs and festivals, and tourism-related events such as seminars, conclaves and conventions.

• Hunar Se Rozgar Tak (HSRT): This scheme offers courses in hospitality trades of food production, food and beverage service, housekeeping, and bakery and patisserie. Apart from those courses to get tourist escorts, tourist facilitators, event facilitators, security guards, tour assistants, transfer assistants and office assistants have also been set up. This program is delivered by Institutes of Hotel Management, Food Craft Institutes and State Tourism Development Corporations, amongst others.

• Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY): This is a flagship outcome-based skill training scheme aimed at benefiting youth across the country. A monetary incentive is provided to trainees upon assessment and certification. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) implements this scheme and involves the Sector Skill Councils to identify job roles for which training could be imparted through the PMKVY. Candidates who complete the courses are awarded a Skill Card. The trainees are trained for various job roles such as guide, driver, cook, housekeeping and hospitality to the locals, etc.
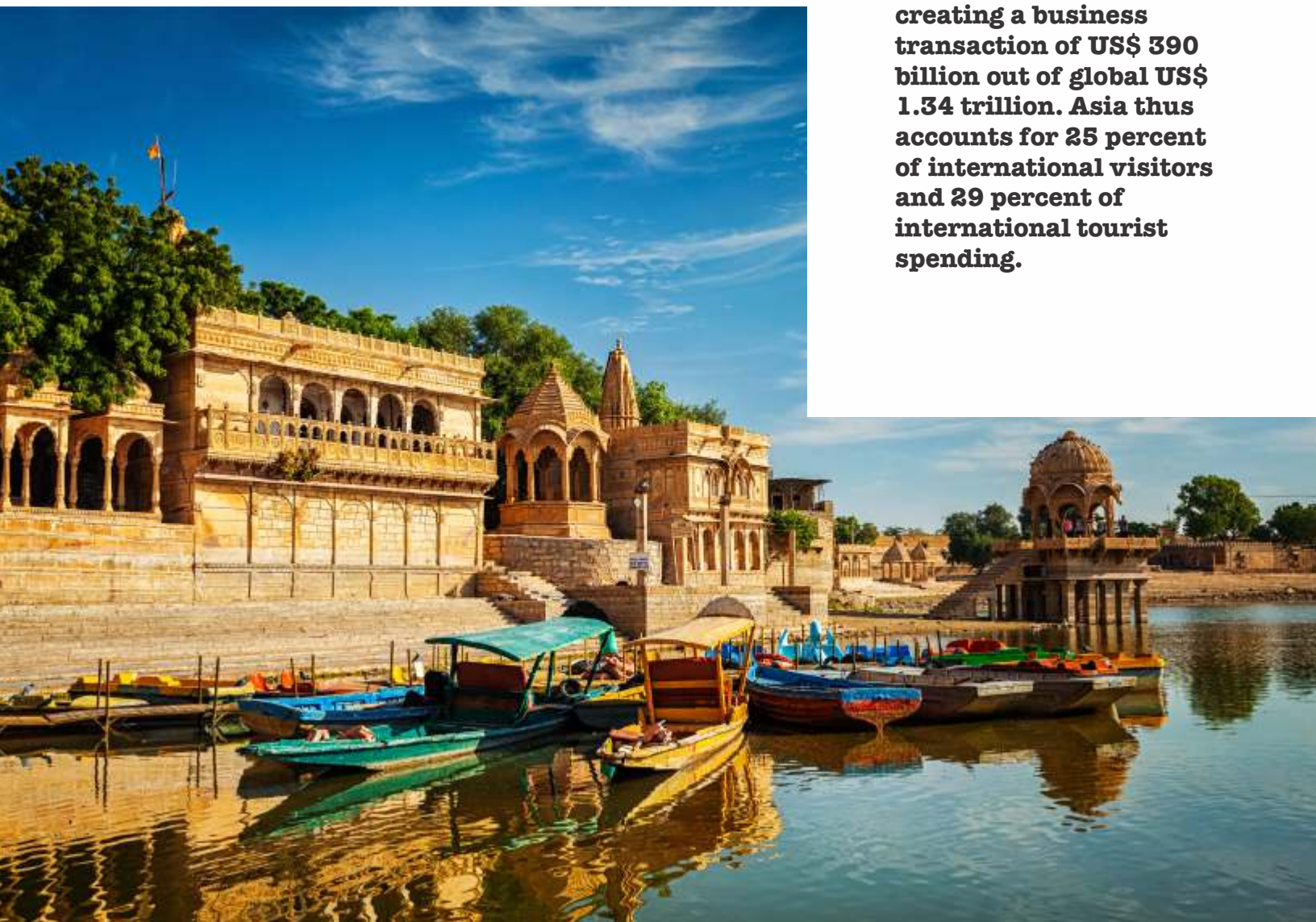
SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN INDIA

In business terms, 1.4 billion visitors who traveled foreign destination in 2018, 343 million went to Asia creating a business transaction of US$ 390 billion out of global US$ 1.34 trillion. Asia thus accounts for 25 percent of international visitors and 29 percent of international tourist spending.

06

Prospects and Conclusion

Sustainable tourism is not new concept and is practiced in many countries for decades as tourism product or service. With increased attention to sustainability, the tourism sector is sentitised with demand and supply stakeholders to develop philosophy, principles, models and culture of tourism with sustainability focus. Policies at state, national and multi-latral level are evolving to create a better ecosystem which is more than only commercial.

Sustainable Tourism, much like agriculture, is a force of transformation of communities to livelihood and economic prosperity. Policymakers are modelling principles and execution norms which helps promoting sustainable tourism. In India, it is in the national development priorities and features in major national strategy documents in domains like ecological, economic, infrastructure, digital and socio-cultural aspects of tourism.

In business terms, 1.4 billion visitors who traveled foreign destination in 2018, 343 million went to Asia creating a business transaction of US$ 390 billion out of global US$ 1.34 trillion. Asia thus accounts for 25 percent of international visitors and 29 percent of international tourist spending. The focus of SDGs towards development of society has found several engagement models in sustainable tourism like waste and water management, alternative energy, environment friendly constructuion, destination management which include heritage, natural and others, responsible production, responsible investment and other economic, social and environment factors. It's required to educate the community about SDGs and ensure how to empower the society staholders to contribute to reduce the ill effects of carbon heavy tourism and orient towards socially responsible economic model. This need to emerge from policy, industry practices, government norms, community engagement and school and university education.

The impact of Covid-19 was completely unprecedented and the travel and tourism industry has been severely impacted due to the restriction of movement, flights being canceled, suspension of visas, and fear of traveling due to health concerns. The industry was influenced badly and affected a large population of beneficiaries along with business sectors like airline, food and processing, hotel etc. the new approaches and tourism models are expected to be more sustainable towards SDGs idenfied goals including Health.

India is still on the way in tourism and related infrastructure development and still has the potential and opportunity to start fresh following sustainable approaches and guidelines in its future development endeavors. The National Tourism Poilicy 2002 presents comprehensive reworking to engage sustainability and community, and Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2030 presents a promising action plan in wake of the global developments. Ministry of Tourism's approach on sustainable tourism recognises the domain and presents tourism that can act as driver of inclusive community development, contributing to resilience, inclusivity, and empowerment while safeguarding natural and cultural resources. Therefore, sustainable initiatives and sustainability-driven development are the best fit for India, and implementation and continuous progress review to ensure the expected goals are met is invertible.

Based on primary research with the help of focus group discussion and comprehensive literature review, it is conclusive that India has tremendous potential in sustainable tourism sector, and to succeed, it requires the combined effort of the host community, tourists and private and public institutional actors. To achieve a sustainable tourism model, tourist satisfaction is a priority along with prioritizing the environment, community, and the economy. Each dimension of sustainable tourism requires close liaison between the community, private and public sectors.

The challneges to realise full potential are also identified and includes ineffective government policy/ies, lack of coordination and communication between private industries and government agencies, lack of focused government programs regarding sustainable tourism, inadequate capacity building of the sector, lack of investment and appropriate benefits of investment and other issues related to waste, water and environment. The draft tourism policy of the Government of India lays immense emphasis on sustainable tourism, but it needs to address issues in ecosystem and systems thinking manner and not by offering solution to a specific problem. It talks about India's enormous opportunities which can be leveraged globally as an emerging superpower.

One of the biggest challenege of India is to leverage the brand and develop a communication staretegy in the domain, which will not happen only due to tourism but cased by many eocno,ominv think tanks and networking platform activities. India's strong brand value and the government's commitment to promoting the tourism industry assume importance as we step into the 21st century and learn global dynamics better.

The draft policy highlights the Incredible India brand and the applicability of the draft policy while sketching the mission, vision, as well as short and long-term goals. The draft policy also classifies the destinations across various important brackets while drawing out a directory of tourist circuits and destinations. The policy details the destination management organizations and the tourism development plans. The draft reports the nine key strategic pillars and the two cross-cutting themes. These strategic pillars include sustainable and responsible tourism in a major way. Other important strategic pillars include welcoming the pillar, seamless connectivity and transport infrastructure, development and management, business development and investment promotion, development and diversification of tourism products, skill and market development, quality assurance and standardization as well as governance, institutional linkages, and stakeholder management.

Adapting to the new demand response, notwithstanding the existing operational changes in the tourism domain, the application of advanced technologies would help in enhancing enterprise competitiveness. Some of the technological applications to increase competitiveness would be customer relationship management systems (CRM), business intelligence systems and competitive intelligence, marketing systems (B2B, B2C) and central reservation systems (CRS), content management systems, integration with social networks, and positioning.

However, the involvement of local stakeholders and community awareness is very much needed for the successful integration and implementation of the iTour practices. Growing interest among travellers towards ecotourism destinations and the integration of technology into tourism is paving the way for the growth of eco and sustainable tourism in the long run. Smart tourism practices need to strike a balance between environmental, economic, and socio-cultural issues of its habitat for improving the quality of the tourist experience. It is evident that a strong tourism resilience plan should be developed to face any critical distress in the future to assist the sustainability of the industry, safeguarding the interest of the stakeholders and retain them in the industry.

In future, technology will play a critically significant role in the global tourism industry; smart cities and smart tourism applications with more online transactions, the adaptation of artificial intelligence, online reservations, virtual promotions will be in high demand than ever before. Indian Govt asked service providers to practice sustainable tourism as part of their business plans. Hence, the government, community and industry stakeholders should take the necessary steps to upgrade their functioning and systems to address the growing trends in the market. Economic performance and competitiveness will be based on technology transformation. Further, it is essential to empower the community to start their ventures and small and medium businesses to strengthen sustainability. Thus, investing in sustainable tourism also requires balancing out the differences in planning horizons of various stakeholders involved.

We are expecting high dynamism in suastainable tourism and heavy focus of community, environment, health and economic SDG factors in new policies and strtaegies of governments at federal and state level to evolve this important industry of economy.

Annexure-I

Focus Group Participants

S. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Anil Parashar	Chairman (Tourism Committee), PHDCCI, and President Interglobe Technology Quotient
2.	Rajan Sehgal	Co-Chairman (Tourism Committee), PHDCCI, Chairman, TAAI-NR (Travel Agents Association of India) President, IGTA
3.	Vinod Zutshi (Retd. IAS)	Former Secretary - Tourism, Government of India
4.	Nasir Zaidi	Partner, Pacific Travels
5.	Ashwani Khurana	President, Karma Lakelands
6.	Jatinder Singh	President, PHDCCI, Resident Representative, Climate Scorecard, USA
7.	Sulagna Ghosh	Deputy Secretary, PHDCCI
8.	P C Pnadey	Board of Trustees, UN World Food Programme Trust, Resident Representative, Climate Scorecard, USA
9.	Amlan Bhushan	CEO, Bhushan Consulting, Bhushan Consulting
10.	Onkareshwar Pandey	Indian Observer Post
11.	Sudhit Sobti	Delhi Tourism, Public Relations Council of India
12.	Mridula Tangirala	Head - Tourism, Tata Trusts, Mumbai
13.	Ram Nath Prasad	Director, Centre of Entrepreneurship Development, Industries Commissionorate, Govt Of Gujarat, Ahmedabad
14.	Chennam Reddy	Director, National Institute of Travel and Hospitality Management, Hyderabad
15.	Abhinav Singh	Consultant, Sustainable Tourism, Market Management, Jaipur
16.	Colonel Shashidhran	Tour Director, TIBRO, Mumbai
17.	Saikat Chakroborty	Consultant, LEA Associates South Asia Pvt. Ltd, Kolkata
18.	Ashwini Awasthi	Professor, Researcher, Tourism aficionado, IM- Nirma University, Ahmedabad
19.	Tanya Roy	Entrepreneur -ST, Founder, Spitti Sattva, Tibet House, Lahaul, Spitti
20.	Devender Singh	CEO and Founder, WLFLO, Kolkata
21.	Rajashree Ajith	Director, Kerala Institute of Tourism and Travel Studies (KITTS),Trivendrum (Thiruvananthapuram)
22.	Sarah Hussain	Associate Professor & Head Department of Tourism and Hospitality Management, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi
23.	V Balachandran	Professor, Dean & HoD, School of Business & Management Studies, Central University of Kerala
24.	Chinnam Reddy	Director, National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management (NITHM), Hyderabad
25.	Rupesh Kumar	State Responsible Tourism Mission Coordinator,Department of Tourism, Trivandrum
26.	S Vijay Kumar	Secretary, District Tourism Promotion Council, Ernakulum
27.	Yugabrata Kar	Managing Director, Desia Eco Tourism Camp, Koraput,Odisha
28.	Joyatri Ray	Director, Equations, Bengaluru Director, Equations, Bengaluru
29.	Ashok Hemrajani	Group Vice-President / President, Minerva Group of Hotels / President of Hotels & Restaurants Association of Telangana State (HRATS)
30.	Vatsala Subramanian	Founder & CEO,Vatsala Tourism Academy, Chettiyaragaram, Chennai, Tamila Nadu

Focus Group Faculty Participants

S. No.	Name	Designation
1.	Rahul Singh	Professor, and Area Chair, Strategy and Innovation, Birla Institute of Management Technology, India
2.	Veenu Sharma	Assistant Professor, Marketing, Programme Coordinator - PGDM Retail Management,Birla Institute of Management Technology, India
3.	Abha Rishi	Chairperson - Centre for Innovation & Entrepreneurship DevelopmentAssociate Professor of International Business & Entrepreneurship
4.	Raghav Rathee	Student, Birla Institute of Management Technology, India
5.	Sachin Gupta	Student, Birla Institute of Management Technology, India
6.	Parag Rijwani	Associate Professor, IM- Nirma University, Ahmedabad
7.	Punit Saurabh	Assistant Professor, IM- Nirma University, Ahmedabad
8.	Ram Kumar Mishra	Senior Professor, Finance & Economics, Institute of Public Enterprises, Osmania University, India
9.	Ch Lakshmi Kumari	Associate Professor of Economics, Institute of Public Enterprise, Hyderabad, India
10.	P S Janaki Krishna	Professor, and Head for Centre for Sustainable Development (CSD), Institute of Public Enterprise, India

SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN INDIA

Editorial Committee Profile

Prof. Rahul Singh

Prof Rahul Singh is Professor and Chair of Strategy and Policy, Birla Institute of Management Technology, INDIA. Recipient of AICTE – Dr Pritam Singh Award 2021, Ministry of Education, India, Rahul has published in top journals and received many 'Best Research Paper' awards. He has contributed in policy bodies of state and federal government in Inida, received large funding for various researches and sit in the Boards of universities, companies and industry chamber.

Prof. Ram Kumar Mishra

Dr RK Mishra, Institute of Public Enterprise, is a graduate of International Management Programme, SDA Bocconi, and Milan, Italy. He was a Fellow of British Council and Commonwealth Secretariat and had research stints at London Business School and Maison Des Sciences De L' Hommes. He has taught at the University of Bradford and was a visiting Professor at Maison Des Sciences De L' Hommes. He was a member of the UN Task Force on Standards of Excellence in Public Administration.

Dr. Veenu Sharma

Dr. Veenu Sharma is an Assistant Professor of Retail and Marketing at BIRLA Institute of Management Technology, Greater Noida. She is also on the editorial board of the South Asian Journal of Business and Management Cases and a regular reviewer of reputed International journals. She has published one edited book on Cases in Operation and Strategic Management. Dr. Sharma has been invited by EMLV - Leonard de Vinci Business School, FRANCE for a special lecture during "De Vinci International Week 2021". Dr. Sharma take regular sessions with the industry, recently covered Guest sessions on Grocery Retail with Coca-Cola, India. She is a recipient of the BIMTECH-STOUGH Young Scholar Award (2014). Earned Best Case Award from The Case Centre UK (2017). GD Sardana Young Scholar Award (2018) and SAGE Best Case Award (2019). Apart from her contribution to society through teaching and research, she writes regularly on recent trends in the retail domain at platforms like Business World, Business Line, and Franchise India.

Dr. Punit Saurabh

Dr. Punit Saurabh, a doctorate from IIT-Kharagpur, and Research Fellow (DSIR) he is presently serving Nirma University with the Institute of Management as an Assistant Professor. His area of teaching and research includes Entrepreneurship development, and family business practices. He has research papers in leading journals with presented papers in domestic, and International conferences. He also contributes articles on strategic and geopolitical affairs for Nikkei Asian Review, US Naval Institute, Defense News, Taiwan Times, etc.

Dr Ch Lakshmi Kumari

Ch. Lakshmi Kumari is an Associate Professor in economics at the Institute of Public Enterprise, Hyderabad. She has been associated with the institute in various activities such as teaching, training, research and consultancy assignments. Dr. Kumari has worked on several projects for at the national and international levels and has published many books. Her areas of interest include economics, environmental impact analysis, sustainable development, public enterprises, privatisation strategies, restructuring and turnaround management issues, and financial performance analysis. She is currently coordinating the Centre on Sustainable Development at the institute.

Dr. Parag Rajwani

Dr. Parag Rijwani has more than 15 years of experience as a teacher, trainer and researcher in Accounting and Finance. He holds a Ph.D. in Management, a M.Phil. in Commerce and a master degree in Commerce. Currently, he is working as an Associate Professor of Accounting and Finance at Institute of Management, Nirma University Ahmedabad. He has published in national and international referred journals and conferences. Sustainable Businesses Practices is area of his research interests.

Prof. P S Janaki Krishna

P S Janaki Krishna is Professor and Head for Centre for Sustainable Development (CSD) at the Institute of Public Enterprise, India. She has been involved in executing, monitoring and evaluation of both national and international projects. She published several articles and books and presented many papers in national and international forums. She is deeply involved in the programmes relating to science, technology and society, climate change and sustainable development, capacity building and public private partnerships.

Dr. Abha Rishi

Presently, she is the CEO for the Atal Incubation Centre (funded by the Government of India), and the Chairperson for the Centre for Innovation, and Entrepreneurship Development (CIED) at Birla Institute of Management Technology. She has 24 years of experience in the field of entrepreneurship, and international trade. She is among the few Indians who hold both a Chevening (Chevening Rolls Royce Science, and Innovation Leadership Programme- 2014 scholar from Said Business School, University of Oxford, UK) and a Fulbright scholarship (Fulbright Research Fellow from India at Rutgers University, Newark, USA for 2009-10).

About the Project

Centers of excellence in sustainable tourism to boost economic development and enhance university-business cooperation in Southern Asia

- **Programme:** Erasmus+ Capacity Building in the field of Higher Education

- **Duration:** 36 Months

- **Aim:** CESTour aims to build the concept of sustainable tourism on a regional and national level in Nepal, Sri Lanka, and India.

- **Number of partners:** 10

Project objectives:

- Analysis of the current status of the tourism industry and identification of sustainable tourism efforts in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka

- Capacity building of experts on sustainable tourism and sustainable tourism development through attractive training creation and implementation.

- Multiplication of knowledge gained within capacity building training during the training.

- Technical development of the centers of excellence for sustainable tourism in each of the seven HEIs in India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

- Implementation and operation of 7 centers of excellence for sustainable tourism.

- Development of cooperation HEI-Company and students learning experience by developing innovative sustainable tourism case studies.

- Development of collaboration network among EU and Asian HEIs

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