



## TOURISM INDUSTRY AND ECO-TOURISM with special reference to Andaman and Nicobar Islands

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### Abstract:

*There is no doubt that tourism industry is a limitless industry with immense growth potentials. In Andaman and Nicobar Islands there is no any major industrial undertaking because of shortage of raw materials. In order to develop the regions and generating employment for local people and to contribute to the economic growth of this Union Territory. Tourism business which is considered to be the backbone of Andaman because of its scenic beauty. There is a growing need for developing these islands as Ecotourism and sustainable tourism attractions without disturbing the ecological balance. To this end it endeavor to promote eco- tourism to protect the fragile eco system, project a tourist friendly image to the domestic market and the world at large as one of the best island tourism destination in the world.*

### KEYWORDS:

Tourism Industry, Eco-Tourism, Sustainable Tourism, Andaman and Nicobar Islands

### .INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in the world with a sustained annual growth rate of more than 5% over the last 15 years. Globally, domestic tourism is about 10 times greater than international tourism inflows wherein India's share of international tourism inflows wherein India's share is around 4.6%. However, India's share of international tourists is much less a mere 0.38%. Given the beautiful nature of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, located in the east of the Indian mainland geographically, floating in splendid isolation in the Bay of Bengal. Once a hill range extending from Myanmar to Indonesia, these picturesque undulating islands, islets, numbering around 572, are covered with forests and endless varieties of exotic flora and fauna. Under water marine life, coral, crystal clear water and mangrove-linked creeks offer a rare view of the precious bounties of nature. Sandy beaches around 86% of the area is still covered by dense forests with innumerable species of orchids, ferns, exotic flowers and also home to many endemic birds. The wild life includes spotted deer, wild boar, gecko and crab-eating Macaque and python in southern islands. The limited scope for industrial activity in the islands due to non availability of local raw material, skilled manpower and ready markets. The wood based industry, which was providing some direct and indirect employment is also on decline due to environmental considerations. Considering the natural beauty of the islands tourism business has been identified as thrust sector for economic development and employment generation in the islands. Keeping in view the fragile ecology and limited carrying capacity of the islands the need of the hour is to strike a harmony between environment and tourism industry.

### Tourism Industry

The comprehensive definition for tourism is given by the World Tourism Organization (WTO)

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defined as “the set of activities of a person travelling to a place outside his or her usual environment for at least one night, but less than a year and whose main purpose of travel is other than the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited”. Benecker defined tourism as the “sum of the relations and services connected with a temporary and voluntary change of residence for non-commercial or non-professional reasons. Tourism is travel for recreational, leisure or business purposes”.

The Tourism Industry is often defined as those enterprises and organizations involved in facilitating travel and activity such as Hotels and Restaurants, Airlines, Cruise ships, Tour operators and travel agents, taxis, rental car agencies, gift shops and attractions and events. The tourism industry represents one of the main sectors in the global economy, often referred to as the world's largest industry. It is basically the service industry and highly labour intensive calls for an increase in education and training of the local people in this field, enhancing professionalism and providing many job opportunities.

#### **Eco Tourism and Sustainable Tourism**

There is a growing problem due to the overwhelming growth of tourism that increases pollutions and destroys the bio-diversity or that leads to disappearances of local human cultures and values. Eco-tourism which promotes environment friendly travel and seeks to ensure that visitors do not disturb or spoil the bio-diversity of flora and fauna, nor do they leave behind rubbish and hazardous materials which can disrupt the delicate ecosystem. The latest trend in the tourism industry is called “ecotourism” which refers to travel that combines preserving the bio-diversity and sustaining the well being of the human cultures. Tourism business offers to these nations an opportunity for earning foreign exchange at low social costs by wooing both domestic and international tourists. It stimulates the rate of growth of the overall economy. "Sustainable tourism 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, [bio-diversity](#) and life support systems." ([World Tourism Organization](#)) [Sustainable development](#) implies "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." ([World Commission on Environment and Development](#), 1987).

The tourism industry and regional development are closely linked, as tourism industry, as a service sector contributes to economic development and job creation. Tourism is a major job generator, including alternative employment opportunities for women, young people, highly qualified and also unskilled people, fostering regional development (WTO overview, 2002) which undergoes sustainable development with immense growth potential.

Bio-diversity is an asset for tourism industry and fundamental to its sustained development and healthy ecosystem forms the cornerstone of tourism enterprises worldwide. As large economy develops industry, sustainable tourism has an important role and responsibilities in managing and conserving biological natural resources. Tourism can generate significant revenues for conservation and community development and help to raise awareness of bio-diversity issues. Tourism industry and eco- system are interlinked, inter dependent and co-exist with each other in a level playing field.

#### **Challenges**

“The desire for a greater share of resources which can create problem for environment is the result of man wish to live in greater number and making standard of living considerably higher than that enjoyed by these forbearers.”

Tourism should be planned for controlled development, so that it does not generate any serious environmental or socio-cultural environmental or any socio-cultural problems and is used as a means for environmental conservation.

Tourism development should be integrated into the overall development plan of A&N Islands and country with strong linkage.

#### **Some causes of tourism impact on Bio-diversity**

- oDeforestation
- oLoss of natural resources
- oConstruction of roads and settlement
- oChanges in land used
- oMigration of small and poor present population

#### **Future trends**

The tourism industry requires the rational management of the resources which makes up tourism. There is abundances of wild-life particularly the tigers , elephants , other animals ,birds , parks and forests developed for tourist attraction, accommodation, roads, transport system. Tourists were considered to be

more aware of conservation that the traditional inhabitants who lost their traditional rights with their traditional occupation and habits. Conservation is to be understood as the preservation of some level of bio-diversity that is essential to the functioning of the eco system and the survival of the man-kind. Environmental parameter are often threatened due to increase in the nature based tourism as this kind of tourism is very close to environment. Development of tourism is promoted by government to gain economic profit which results in enhancement of tourism business.

#### **Managing The Environmental Impact**

Reviewing and managing overall activities also benefit bio-diversity and also help in reducing costs. The energy used to heat and light accommodation should be conferred by not leaving the light and other appliances on. Conserving energy reduce co2 emission considered responsible for increased rate of climate change which affect the eco system and habits of species. Creating awareness along people society can legal conservation of natural resources and the diversity of every individual is linked and affected by this issue. "Every contribution of an individual leads to contribution of masses .An early example of ecotourism occurred in Kenya in the 1970's when Kenya Government began to collect fees from tourist to support conservation and park maintenance in the Wildlife reserves.

#### **Benefits**

Bio-diversity in tourism industry represents a new and dynamic partnership. Conservation offers enormous benefits conducted in a sustainable manner. Good and efficient management of bio-diversity leads to better business for Tourism industry. Tourism industry can improve the quality service enhance their reputation and goodwill and became recognized sector among other industries promotes publicly and save cost and increase revenue will significantly contribute in making tourism sustainable and securing the livelihood of the people who work of one benefited from the tourism industry new land in the future. Eco-tourism has the potential to help preserve and enrich local indigenous cultures not only in the short-term but also from a trans-generational long term perspective. Indeed the development of a sustainable tourism model could play a valuable role in the development of more sustainable societies worldwide.

#### **Conclusion**

Tourism industry that cuts across virtually all other sectors is highly dependent on the natural and ecological resources and also needs to work hand-in-hand with those in the environmental agencies. There is however significant risks involved in any ecotourism initiative. When developing an ecotourism strategy the vulnerability of the natural or cultural resource being promoted must be carefully assessed to ensure that only planned activities do not threaten or undermine it. Furthermore, it is absolutely necessary that local community in their struggle for sustainable livelihoods be involved in integrating eco-tourism activities into self-reliance projects that benefits both the local community and the natural environment.

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