

Need of Sustainable Tourism and Its Indicators for Environmental Management in India.

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Introduction:

Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing industry in the world. In 2019 globally 1.5 billion international tourists arrival were recorded. It was predicted by UNWTO that 3% to 4% growth will happen in 2020.

Similar pictures we noticed in India too. In 2018, 10.56 million and 2019 10.89 million (provisional) of foreign tourists visited in India. At the same time in 2018, 1.85 billion domestic tourists visited in different states and UTs in India. Tourism is highly dependent on natural resources. Development of tourism are possible through the presence of natural resources like land, water, forest, mountain, rivers, lakes etc. Without the support of these resources India couldn't have supported huge number of tourists visited in the country. But these resources are facing tremendous pressure due to unplanned development of tourism in a region. Hence, the sustainability of tourism activity, in near future is a big questions for all the stakeholders of tourism industry.

As tourism is a multisector activity, so the main objective of the sustainable development of the tourism is socio-economic benefit of the local communities that means inclusive growth of a particular region. It is also important to take care that, while planning for the socio-economic development we need to plan to sustain our physical, cultural and environmental resources for a longer period. So proper planning place an important role for the sustainable development of tourism.

Methodology: This paper is completed based on secondary information. To complete the paper all information have been collected from books, research papers published in different journals, government reports etc. After collecting the information and literature, content

analysis has been done. Number of visits of foreign and domestic tourists gathered from government reports and website then its tabulated and graphical representation is done.

Importance of Planning for Sustainable Tourism Management:

Planning is the act of researching, analysing, anticipating and influencing the change in our society. Basically planning is one of the most important function for any management process.

Gunn, Clare A, (1979) was one of the first to define tourism planning as a tool for destination and area development. According to him tourism planning is a concept of viewing the future and dealing with anticipated consequences is the only way that the advantages of tourism can be obtained (Gunn, 1979)

Andriotis,K (2000) explained tourism planning process involves with many components. According to him unplanned tourism, weakens the image of many tourist destination, hence these destination can attracts only low cost mass tourism. As a result the environmental problems emerged. (Andriotis, 2000)

Without the strategic planning of sustainable tourism cannot grow in our country. Following components plays an important role for the proper planning of sustainable tourism development. I) public participation ii) Socio-economic benefits of local people iii) environmental conservation iv) specialized tourism development etc.

Concept of Sustainable Tourism

In 1988, UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) defined ‘sustainable tourism as leading management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity and life supporting system’. In 1992 the Earth Summit in Rio established the triple principles of environmental, economic and social sustainability. Since then then principle of sustainable tourism have been adopted by the tourism industry worldwide.

According to ICOMOS (Indian Council of Monuments and Sites) ‘Sustainable Tourism refers to a level of tourism activity that can be maintained over the long term because it results in a net benefit for the social, economic, natural and cultural environments of the area in which it takes place’.

In simple words sustainable tourism implies minimizing the negative and maximizing the positive impacts of all types and activities of tourism on local communities, environment, inclusive economic growth and heritage.

There is no widely accepted definition of sustainable tourism worldwide. Still it is the responsibility of all the stakeholders of tourism industry like tourists, tour operator, local people, accommodator, central and state government, NGOs to share the mutual goals. These goals include the following.

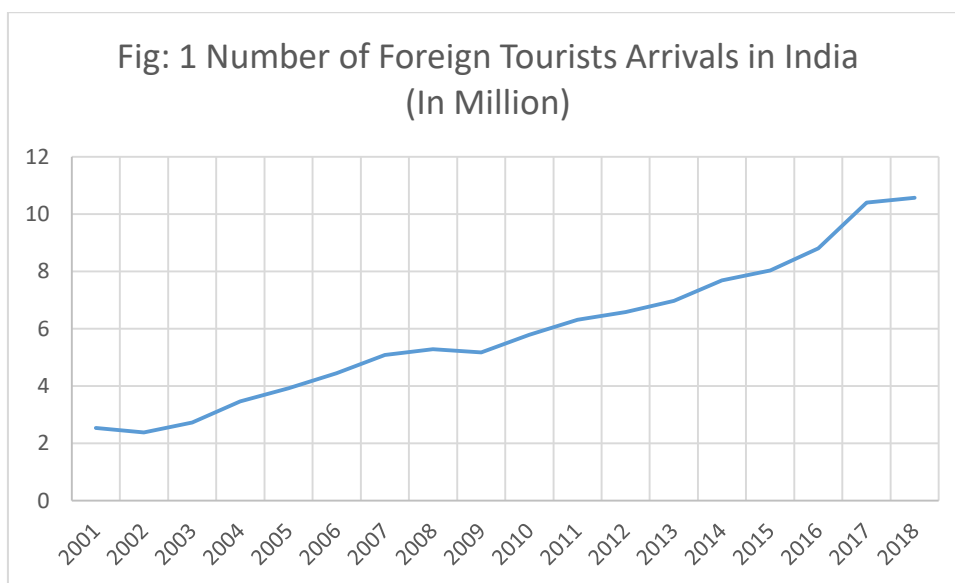
- i) To preserve the natural resources for future generation.
- ii) To improve the quality of life of host communities
- iii) To maintain the biological diversity and ecosystem
- iv) To maintain the cultural integrity of tourist destination
- v) To provide a high quality experience to the tourists.
- vi) To maintain the social equity
- vii) To increase the employment quality
- viii) To maintain the environmental purity.

UNWTO (United Nations World Tourism Organization) and UNEP (United Nations Environment Programme) specifically identified twelve aims for sustainable tourism like economic viability, local prosperity, employment quality, social equity, visitor fulfilment, local control, community wellbeing, cultural richness, physical integrity, biological diversity, resource efficiency and environmental purity. (UNWTO & UNEP, 2005)

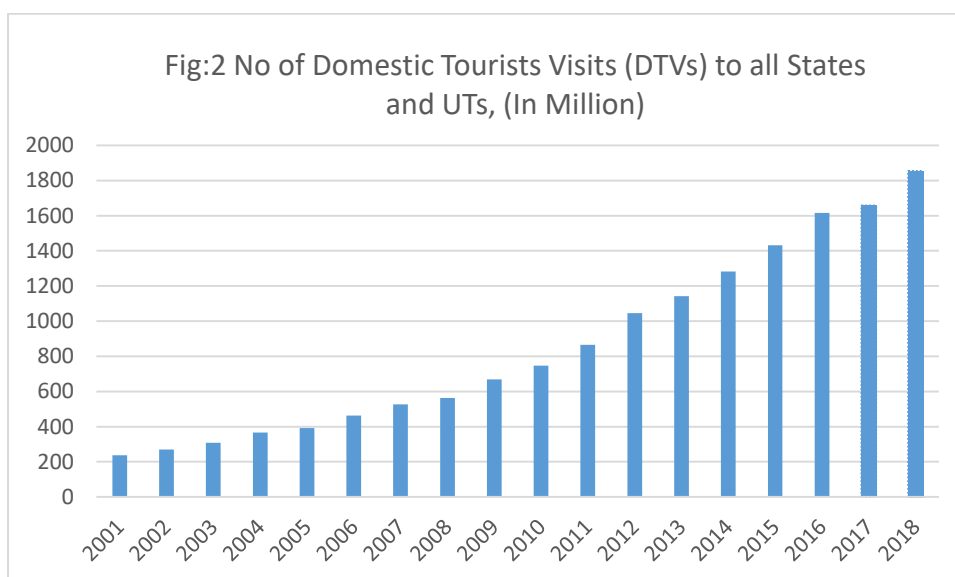
Need of Sustainable Tourism in India

India is extremely geographically diversified country. It is the seventh largest country in the world, covering 3,287,263 square kilometre area. The panoramic snow-capped Himalayan Mountain in the north and in extreme south the Indian Ocean present. India has a huge coast line of 7516 kms. World's largest mangrove forest Sunderban is located in the country. It has desert in the west and Bay of Bengal in the east. Many national forests, lakes, rivers, sanctuaries are present in the country. India is not only famous for the physical diversity, at the same time it is famous for cultural diversity too. The country has several monuments, archaeological site, world heritage site etc. These diversity attracts huge number of international tourists as well as domestic tourists in India. The following figure shows Foreign Tourists Arrivals (Fig:1) in India and Domestic Tourists Visits (Fig:2) in different States and UTs. According to ministry of tourism, Govt. of India total number of foreign tourists

increased from 2.54 million in 2001 to 10.56 million in 2018, where as total number of domestic tourist increased from 236 million in 2001 to 1.85 billion in 2018. The land is limited, forests and deserts are fixed but number domestic and foreign tourist are increasing in rapid rate in India. Hence environmental carrying capacity is a big question in many tourist destinations of India. Moreover to support these huge number of tourists unplanned hotel industries are booming, other infrastructural developments are happening, so in near future we need to face the scarcity of natural resources like land, water, energy, forest etc. Sustainable practice of tourism is the only way to grow the industry for a longer period.



Source: Tourism At A Glance, 2019, GOI



Source: Tourism At A Glance, 2019, GOI

Indicators of sustainable tourism for management of environment

Environmental management is the management of the human activities within the tolerable constraints with full consideration of ecological factors. Environment plays an important role for the development of tourism at the same time environment is facing threats due the growth of tourism industry. So to properly manage the environment and conserving natural resource following indicators need to follow by the host community.

- i) **To conserve water:** In all tourists destination, supply of water and consumption of water by tourists should be recorded. Periodic inspection of all water line should be done. If possible rainwater harvesting should be installed and laundry load should be reduced. In the hotels, guest houses, water should be provided to the tourist in metal glass rather than paper glasses. Frequent training should be provided to the personnel in water conservation.
- ii) **To conserve energy:** Monthly consumption of energy by tourists need to be recorded. Need to plan to reduce consumption of energy in every alternate year. Solar power, solar heater should be used in hotel room, kitchen, and laundry purposes. Investment is required in energy saving equipment's like LED/CFL lights etc.
- iii) **To reduce solid waste:** Solid waste is a major problems in almost all tourist destination. To practice sustainable tourism solid waste management plan to be incorporated in all tourists places. Need to keep a record of total waste generated by each hotel every day. Need to figure out waste segregation systems are present or not. Record should be maintained for volume of waste increasing or decreasing. Waste recycling and compost system should be installed.
- iv) **To conserve bio-diversity and wildlife:** No wildlife should be kept inside the hotel premises. Importance of bio-diversity and wildlife conservation should be informed to all the tourists by host community. So, environmental education should be promoted.
- v) **To maintain purity of air:** Reduction of emission of greenhouse gasses is a major responsibility for all stakeholders in tourist destinations. Year wise progress in reduction of greenhouse gas should be followed. To be monitored number of

vehicles entering in the tourist destination and tourist's parking lot .This will help to get an idea about level of pollution from vehicle.

The above are few of environmental indicators of sustainable tourism development. If all stake holders follow the social, economic and environmental indicators, then only holistic development of sustainable tourism is possible.

Conclusion: Today the environmental crisis we are facing throughout the world due to increasing number of tourists, must be addressed by the government. While planning of sustainable tourism, opinion of the local communities should be respected. Government of India and different expert stakeholders was constituted in 2010, STCI (Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India) and indicators. But various published sources, research work show that in India there is a missing link between the concept of sustainable tourism and implementing it in practice. Hence, before starting any major tourism project, integrated social, environmental and economic planning analysis should be done. Throughout all stages, like operation, development, monitoring and assessment of tourism activity should be conducted regularly to maximise the usage of natural resources and minimize the negative impact on environment.

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