



# Examining Opportunities For And Global Environmental Challenges In Nature-Based Tourism: Sustainable Tourism In A Changing World.

Paramjeet Kumar<sup>1\*</sup>, Sunita Boro<sup>2</sup>, Wallamkumar Dkhar<sup>3</sup>, Rajesh Kuma<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1\*</sup>(Research Scholar) North Eastern Hill University Shillong, Paramjeetchoudhary35@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup>(Research Scholar) North Eastern Hill University Shillong, boro\_sunita@rediffmail.com

<sup>3</sup>(Research Scholar) North Eastern Hill University Shillong, wallamdkhar@gmail.com

<sup>4</sup>(Research Scholar) National Institute of Technology Agartala, rajeshseco@gmail.com

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## ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT

This research explores the complex relationship that exists between modern environmental dynamics in nature-based tourist locations and sustainable tourism. In the context of an unstable international environment, the study traverses the complex terrain of possibilities and difficulties related to promoting sustainable tourism practices. This inquiry evaluates the complex interactions between ecological, social, and economic aspects that shape the tourist environment via the use of a broad analytical framework. The analysis is conducted by means of a lens that examines the intricate dynamics of biodiversity protection, climate change, and resource management, clarifying their significant consequences for the long-term viability of nature-based tourism. Using a variety of empirical data, the research clarifies creative approaches and flexible solutions that travel locations may use to reduce environmental hazards while also taking advantage of chances for increased resilience and profitability. By combining theoretical viewpoints with empirical data, this study adds to the body of knowledge in academia by providing a sophisticated understanding of the complex interplay between environmentally turbulent times and sustainable tourism. Consequently, this investigation functions as a tactical roadmap for interested parties, decision-makers, and professionals managing the intersection of worldwide environmental issues and prospects in natural tourist locations.

**Keywords:** Policy frameworks, social implications, economic advantages, environmental difficulties, sustainable tourism, destinations rooted in nature, and community empowerment.

## 1. Introduction:

In order to maintain a balance between the economic, social, and environmental aspects of tourism growth, it is necessary to place an emphasis on sustainable tourism. National parks, wildlife refuges, marine sanctuaries, and cultural heritage sites are all examples of natural regions that provide the conservation of biodiversity as well as the opportunity to experience something really unique (Li, 2023). The rapid growth of these areas, on the other hand, has led to an increase in concerns over the adverse consequences that the sector may have on the local population, cultural heritage, and delicate ecosystems. Inadequate tourism practices have the potential to put these assets in jeopardy by contributing to pollution, the deterioration of ecosystems, the loss of biodiversity, and the exploitation of cultural traditions (Adam I, et.al. 2017). In light of the fact that these areas are vulnerable to environmental disturbances and the impacts of climate change, it is essential to implement tourist practices that are sustainable.

The rules and management strategies for sustainable tourism development are universally applicable to all types of tourism in diverse locales, encompassing both mass tourism and specialized tourist sectors. Tourism development involves the consideration of environmental, economic, and socio-cultural factors in order to achieve sustainability (Cai et.al. 2020). In order to ensure the long-term viability of the tourism industry, it is crucial to establish a proper balance among these three components.

Therefore, sustainable tourism needs to aim to:

1. Optimise the use of environmental resources, which play a crucial role in the expansion of tourism, to safeguard important ecological procedures and contribute to the conservation of natural heritage and biodiversity.
2. Demonstrate a reverence for the socio-cultural genuineness of the communities that are accommodating you, safeguard their constructed and living cultural heritage as well as their customary principles, and contribute to the comprehension and acceptance of diverse cultures.
3. Ensure the long-term viability and sustainability of economic operations, providing socio-economic gains that are equitably dispersed among all stakeholders (Alazaizeh et al. 2019). The advantages include stable employment and opportunities for financial gain, together with social services provided to the areas hosting the organisation, so aiding in the alleviation of poverty.

For sustainable tourism to be achieved, it is necessary to include all key players who are knowledgeable about the subject. Additionally, strong political leadership is needed to ensure broad involvement and encourage the establishment of consensus (Chandran et al. 2021). Achieving sustainable tourism is an ongoing endeavor that necessitates regular monitoring of consequences and the implementation of appropriate preventive or remedial actions as needed. Furthermore, sustainable tourism should strive to deliver a superior level of visitor contentment and guarantee that tourists enjoy a significant encounter (Araña et al. 2016). Furthermore, sustainable tourism should augment the consciousness of sustainability concerns among travelers and advocate for the adoption of sustainable tourism practices by visitors.

### **1.1 The Goals of Sustainable Tourism**

In 2005, the World Tourism Organisation and the United Nations Environment Programme put out twelve key objectives for the conservation of tourism as a sustainable sector (Baloch et al. 2022). In order to demonstrate how sustainable tourism may address the current challenges faced by the global tourism industry, the following examples would be helpful:

1. **Economic Viability:** to guarantee that tourist locations and businesses are self-sufficient, competitive, and capable of achieving success over the course of a lengthy period of time.
  2. **Local Prosperity:** The aim is to guarantee that tourism actions effectively contribute to the economic development of local communities and that a substantial share of the economic benefits remains within the community.
  3. **Employment Quality:** Increasing the amount of local employment that is generated in the tourist sector while also ensuring that the conduct and working conditions are equitable, safe, and provided to workers without prejudice is the goal of this initiative (Lu et al. 2021).
  4. **Social Equity:** The objective of this initiative is to ensure that tourism enhances the distribution of economic and social benefits among local communities, therefore boosting all facets of life.
  5. **Visitor Fulfillment:** The aim is to provide guests a holiday experience that is safe and pleasurable, devoid of any kind of insight based on their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, or any other criteria.
  6. **Local Control:** The objective is to empower local people to actively engage in the planning and decision-making procedures related to tourism within their own regions.
  7. **Community Wellbeing:** Ensuring equitable access to resources and preventing the exploitation or disrespect of local groups in the context of tourism, with the aim of improving their quality of life and general well-being.
  8. **Cultural Richness:** In order to demonstrate respect for the cultural heritage, customs, genuineness, and uniqueness of the communities that are accommodating us.
  9. **Physical Integrity:** The objective of this initiative is to safeguard all types of landscapes, including urban and rural areas, and ensure that tourist activities do not result in any physical or visual deterioration of these locations (Centobelli et al. 2017).
  10. **Biological Diversity:** The objective of this undertaking is to conserve natural habitats, fauna, and unique ecological systems by protecting them and assuring their non-detrimental treatment.
  11. **Resource Efficiency:** in the process of developing and operating tourist facilities and services, to make use of resources that are sustainable and renewable wherever it is practicable to do so.
  12. **Environmental Purity:** with the purpose of preventing pollution, littering, and other forms of trash from being produced by tourist enterprises or visitors, as well as protecting the land, air, and water.
- There are numerous instances of sustainable tourism; however, the most significant thing you need to do when you plan a vacation that is sustainable is to make sure that you have done your homework (Hasana et al. 2022). Despite the fact that one facet of a vacation could seem to be environmentally friendly, it is important to take into account the vacation as a whole before making any decisions. A resort that is an instance of "sustainable tourism" is the "Six Senses Fiji resort". This resort is powered entirely by recycled rainwater, solar energy, operates on a model that generates a limited amount of trash, and makes use of handicrafts such as artwork and furniture that are made by local villages (Ahmad et al. 2022). Nevertheless, it is patently evident that this is a high-budget kind of event. Are you looking for something straightforward? How about planning a camping vacation that is self-sufficient and selecting locations that can be reached by rail or bicycle? Alternatively, if you are seeking for something that is more focused on wildlife, you may consider searching for a sustainable conservation programme in another country.

- **Rural tourism**

One kind of tourism that is environmentally responsible is rural tourism, which is a topic that is discussed in further depth in our open step by Coventry University. It is required to take place outside of an urban setting and has a tendency to concentrate on actively engaging in a rural way of life (Akadiri et al. 2019). Tourism in rural areas often involves visitors staying with locals, gaining an understanding of their way of life, and even contributing to the completion of hard tasks.

Due to the nature of the activity itself, rural tourism is frequently rather sustainable, even if it is more of a subset of ecotourism (Bai et al. 2022). This is a result of the fact that it supports the local population, emphasises the rural environs, and avoids having a huge number of visitors congregate in one region at one time.

- **Community tourism**

As a further illustration of sustainable tourism, community tourism may also be an exceptional example of this kind of tourism. Since it is on the other end of the spectrum from mass tourism, this is the reason (Li et al. 2022). Local inhabitants and communities often extend invitations to visitors to visit with them, and they may offer a variety of activities, events, and experiences for those who want to do so.

Despite the fact that this could be comparable to “rural tourism”, it does not necessarily have to centre on the natural surroundings. Rather, the objective of “community tourism” is to provide “local communities” with the ability to organise, execute, and take responsibility for tourist activities in their own home places (Choi 2021). In addition to the economic advantages, travellers will have the opportunity to participate in genuine experiences.

### **Benefits of Sustainable Tourism Development?**

Despite the fact that tourism may pose a danger to local economies, cultures, and landscapes, it also has the potential to bring about tremendous advantages. The most important thing for individuals who work in the tourist business is to develop a model that is sustainable (Breitung 2000). This can be accomplished by maximising the benefits, minimising the downsides, and making sure that the demands of today are not prioritised above the requirements of our future. Through the growth of sustainable tourism, persons working in the business have the opportunity to become a positive influence.

Sustainability in tourist development may give people who work in the travel industry with the chance to attract customers who are interested in sustainable travel, which is one of the most significant rewards of this kind of tourism development (Kunjuraman et al. 2022). The market for this product is increasing, mainly as persons become more conscious of the effects of climate change and the ways in which they personally contribute to the issue (Espoir 2022). The Sustainable Tourism Worldwide Research Report published by Statista reveals that more than eighty percent of travellers throughout the world consider sustainable tourism to be significant, which indicates that they are prepared to embrace sustainable travel habits and incentives.

The findings of research indicate that consumers have a preference for purchasing goods and services from firms that are socially responsible and are ready to pay a higher price for such services (Brida 2020). It is possible that the business may lose clients if it does not behave appropriately, but if it does behave correctly, it is quite unlikely that any travellers or tourists would be turned off by its conduct.

Additionally, persons working in hospitality management, hotel management, and other industries that are comparable may profit from sustainable tourism development since it can provide additional value (Das et al. 2019). One way to look about this is that if two firms that are linked to tourism produce items that are comparable to one another at prices that are comparable, then sustainability may function as a competitive differentiation.

Businesses who are able to respond to the challenge of providing sustainable travel goods and services are likely to reap further advantages as the level of societal pressure continues to climb and more people want them (Hosseini et al. 2021). You may, for instance, showcase your company as a good example on websites, blogs, travel agencies, publications, and social media channels that specialise in environmentally responsible travel.

The creation of sustainable tourism initiatives may also contribute to the establishment of a reciprocal connection between companies and the clients they serve. A dynamic that works in both directions is one of the most fascinating developments in the hotel industry. Nevertheless, it is also being seen in other sectors of the travel and tourist business, such as the transportation sector.

There is a growing awareness among individuals about the food they consume, the things they purchase, and the manner in which they travel (Casado-Aranda et al. 2021). When businesses decide to participate in the development of sustainable tourism, they may do so with the knowledge that a sizeable portion of the market is actively studying sustainable travel and seeking for ways to reward responsible businesses.

Because the tourist sector and local communities sometimes have different agendas, there is the potential for conflict between the two. Nevertheless (Jeyacheya et al. 2022), tourism leaders and travel management have the ability to foster greater conversation between enterprises and local people via the implementation of sustainable tourism development (Debbarma 2022). This will result in a relationship that is more mutually beneficial and characterised by respect.

Through the establishment of this sort of interaction, tourist firms are able to contribute to the support of the local community (Hosseini et al. 2021). This, in turn, may improve the experience of its visitors, as they will be

aware that they are providing financial support to a responsible company(Holzner. 2011). While this is going on, it is probable that workers will have a higher sense of pride, and the community will be able to reap the benefits of the increased number of employment and the increased amount of money that will be invested in the local economy.

One of the other significant advantages that comes with the growth of sustainable tourism is the enhancements that are offered to the local infrastructure(Heshmati et.al. 2022). It is necessary to make investments in transport in order to handle an increase in the number of visitors visiting a particular location. For instance, sustainable development would concentrate on alternatives such as trains in order to cut down on emissions(Dutta et.al. 2020). Consequently, this is beneficial not only for the people who live in the area but also for those who are visiting the region.

The possibilities that are made available to businesses in the area have the potential to assist in the improvement of connections between tourist enterprises and the community that they serve. During the same time period(Liu et.al. 2022), firms that relocate to the region have the potential to capitalise on the demand for products and services, and these enterprises also have the ability to supply local residents with employment opportunities of a high quality.

In light of these challenges, the objective of this study is to investigate the intricate dynamics of sustainable tourism in locations that are based on nature, with the intention of elucidating the primary objectives, techniques, data insights, and findings(Erdal et.al. 2020). The purpose of this study, which employs a multidisciplinary approach, is to give a inclusive understanding of the complex links that exist between local communities, tourism, and the environment in a world that is undergoing rapid change.

## **2. Objective:**

One of the primary objectives of this research is to conduct an in-depth analysis of the concept of sustainable tourism in areas that are surrounded by natural environments. The following are some more specific goals:

- Evaluating the positive and adverse consequences that tourism has on the environment, society, and economy in establishments that are rooted in nature, as well as the effects that tourism has on these aspects of the environment.
- Investigating the extent to which the regulations and protocols that are currently in place for sustainable tourism are able to reduce the impact of negative consequences and encourage positive outcomes.
- Identifying the primary challenges that nature-based tourism faces, as well as the opportunities that exist for such tourism to become more resilient and sustainable, while taking into consideration the many stakeholders.
- Providing recommendations and strategies that have the potential to be implemented in order to assist local communities, industry stakeholders, and lawmakers in advancing sustainable tourism practices and meeting long-term development and conservation goals.

## **3. Methods:**

The achievement of these objectives has been accomplished via the use of a mixed-methods approach, which combines “qualitative and quantitative” research methods. A comprehensive analysis of the existing body of research on sustainable tourism, case studies of initiatives that have been successful and unsuccessful in nature-based destinations, and expert interviews with important stakeholders, including government officials, tour operators, environmentalists, and members of the local community, are some of the qualitative methods that are utilised. The intricacies and complexities of sustainable tourism practices and concerns are examined through the lens of these qualitative perspectives, which provide illuminating perspectives.

The qualitative analysis is supplemented by quantitative techniques, which provide empirical facts and statistical support. This is done in order to buttress significant findings and conclusions brought about by the qualitative research. Primary data must be gathered and analysed via the use of methods such as questionnaires, interviews, and field observations in particular natural regions in order to accomplish this goal. In addition, the use of secondary data sources, such as tourist statistics, environmental indicators, and economic indicators, is utilised in order to analyse the trends, patterns, and connections that are relevant to sustainable tourism.

## **4. Data finding:**

A number of archives, including academic journals, government documents, industry publications, and internet databases, were used in order to collect the necessary information for this research. Primary data collection activities include the administration of surveys to tourists, people, and businesses in certain nature-based sites. The purpose of these surveys is to get a better understanding of the perspectives, attitudes, behaviours, and preferences of these individuals. Through conducting interviews with key informants, it is possible to get in-depth qualitative information on the challenges, opportunities, and best practices in the management of sustainable tourism.



In addition to looking at historical visitor statistics, environmental indicators, and economic metrics, secondary data analysis also involves looking at these things in order to identify patterns and trends that have developed over time. Evaluating changes in tourist arrivals, spending habits, resource utilisation, and environmental quality indicators is a necessary step in the process of assessing the sustainability performance of nature-based destinations and providing input for future policy and management decisions.

## 5. Result:

Through the examination of the data and the conclusions of this research, a number of significant insights about sustainable tourism in locations that are surrounded by natural settings are obtained:

### 5.1 Environmental Effects:

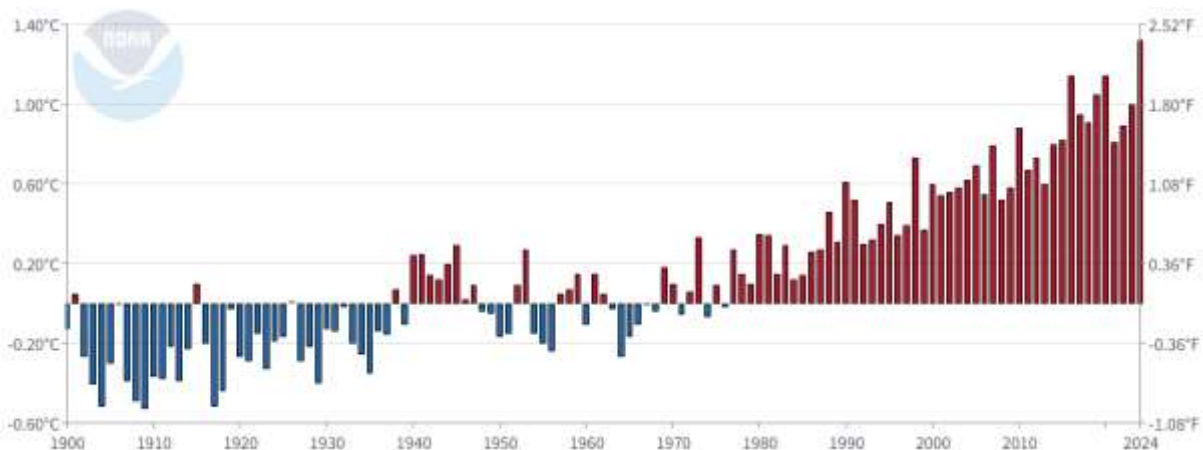
The tourism business has the potential to contribute to environmental issues such as the development of waste, pollution, the destruction of habitat, and the depletion of resources within the environment. However, some examples of sustainable tourism practices include ecotourism, wildlife viewing that is conducted in an ethical manner, and leisure activities that have a minimal effect.

Over the past century, there has been a substantial rise in air temperature, particularly in Asia and Europe. This increase can be attributed to the high population and extensive use of fossil fuels in these regions. In order to address environmental challenges, nations have endeavoured to develop and enforce a range of environmental policies, including the Paris Agreement, “Kyoto Protocol, Montreal Protocol, and Vienna Convention on the Protection of the Ozone Layer”. Nevertheless, these agreements have under scrutiny for their lack of effectiveness, particularly following the withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Agreement in 2017.

Tourism and travel services play a vital role in the service industry, contributing to revenue generation, employment opportunities, cultural interchange, and overall well-being improvement. The value of international tourism has surged from 522.2 billion in 1995 to around 1.86 trillion in 2019, underscoring the significant role of tourist services in producing income and fueling economic growth recovery.

Revitalising sustainable economic growth is a crucial matter, and the implementation of ecotourism, also known as sustainable tourism, can assist nations in enhancing their environmental protection policies. Ecotourism is a highly effective method for preserving the environment and enhancing the welfare of local communities. It plays a crucial role in promoting green economic growth and fostering sustainable development.

Developing nations possess a greater number of pressing concerns compared to industrialised economies, as they frequently encounter financial challenges and lack sophisticated environmentally-friendly technologies. Encouraging ecotourism in poor nations is crucial for managing and decreasing greenhouse gas emissions. Nevertheless, the presence of bureaucratic procedures, exorbitant expenses, and a dearth of market openness may result in greenwashing, which has the potential to detrimentally affect the future trajectory of the ecotourism sector.



**Fig. 1:** Surface temperature, °C, 1910–2021

Source: [https://www.noaa.gov/access/monitoring/climate-at-a-glance/global/time-series/globe/land\\_ocean/1/4/1900-2024](https://www.noaa.gov/access/monitoring/climate-at-a-glance/global/time-series/globe/land_ocean/1/4/1900-2024)

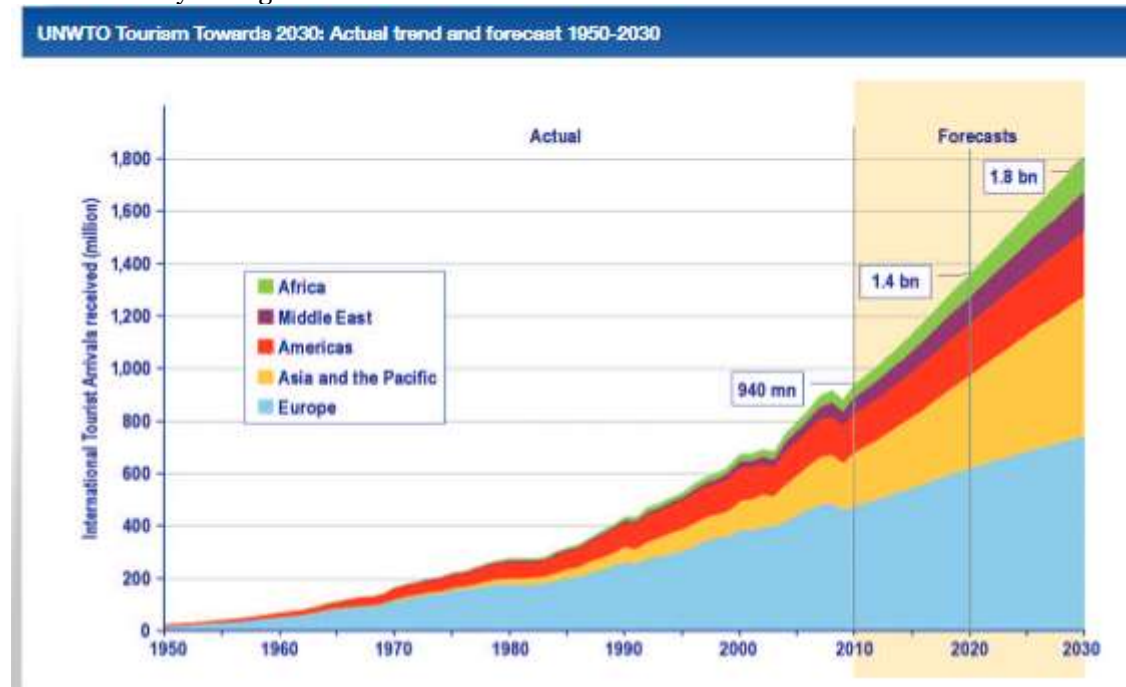
### 5.2 Social Impacts:

There are a number of possible effects that might result from tourism, including cultural commercialization, social instability, and alterations to traditional ways of life. In addition to fostering cultural awareness and social cohesion, community-based tourism initiatives also contribute to the empowerment of communities that are economically disadvantaged.

### 5.3 Economic effects include:

- Improved socioeconomic well-being, increased economic resilience, and less dependency on international markets are all potential outcomes that may be achieved via the implementation of sustainable tourism practices.
- There is a possibility that the benefits of increased tourism will not necessarily be distributed in an equitable manner.

Sustainable tourism plays a vital role in ensuring the future of our planet, since it accounts for 80% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and provides employment for 12% of the workforce. Tourism is the third largest economic sector in Europe, projected to attract 1.8 million tourists by 2030, which is twice the number of travellers from a few years ago.



**Figure 2** Growth forecast of the number of tourists in the world between 2014 and 2030.  
Source: UNWTO

### 5.4 Governance and Policy:

In order to encourage environmentally responsible tourism in areas that include a significant amount of natural heritage, it is necessary to have robust governance structures and legislation in place.

## 6. Conclusion

With the help of these benchmarking categories, attaining sustainability in the tourist sector is not only a rhetorical aim; rather, it is a concrete objective that offers quantifiable advantages and the possibility of economic savings to those enterprises who work to improve their day-to-day performance. Businesses have the ability to participate in sustainable development while simultaneously enjoying the practical and economic rewards of internal changes if they begin to benchmark their operations.

The premise of the study was founded on the idea that the sustainability of ecotourism is dependent on the financial feasibility of the corporate interests in addition to the protection and preservation of natural ecosystems, which also includes ethical justice to the socio-cultural environment of the community that is hosting the ecotourism activities. The phenomena known as ecotourism is one that makes a contribution to the preservation of the environment by means of destination management that is well-planned and cautious, and which is able to strike a balance between the competing goals of economic development and environmental preservation. The contradiction between tourism and the environment argues that the viability and continued existence of both types of tourism are contingent upon the thriving mode of the other. The quality of the environment and the sustainability of the bio-ecology encourages the entrance of visitors, which in turn leads to overtourism that exceeds capacity. This is accompanied by irresponsible behaviour on the part of tourists, which has a negative impact on the environment and causes damage to the natural ecosystem. Ecotourism is not necessarily sustainable unless it is both economically sustainable and ecologically maintainable, in addition to being acceptable from a sociocultural perspective. When we talk about ecotourism that is socio-culturally unpleasant, we are referring to activities that do not serve locals and the values that they hold socio-culturally. According to the findings of the research, ecotourism must be able to foster a constructive relationship between the economy, the environment, and culture without putting any of these factors at a disadvantage. The pursuit of sustainable ecotourism is not an end in providing the modest conveniences of the corporate interests; rather,

it is a means to address the sustainability challenges that have been generated as a result of poorly designed tourist development and uncontrollable expansion.

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