ECOTOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY

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ECOTOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY

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Abstract

Ecotourism has mostly been considered as synonymous to nature-based tourism since inherently both nature-based tourism and ecotourism are natural resource dependent. This is particularly true in case of mountain areas where tourism is mostly nature-based. Absence of a precise definition and standard indicators for measuring the success of ecotourism at a specific site has encouraged a trend towards use of the word to gain competitive advantage. With its 32 wildlife sanctuaries, 2 nature parks, and 36 per cent land under forest, Himachal Pradesh – a small province in Indian Himalayas – also has great strengths to offer in nature-based tourism and ecotourism activities. With the popularity of the term ecotourism, the craze to call any nature-based area as ecotourism destination has spread in the state with many governmental agencies also falling prey to such a trend.

The paper addresses two prime concerns in ecotourism: defining ecotourism and developing indicators for evaluating ecotourism at a specific location. Adopting the Ross and Wall framework, the study evaluates the sustainability of ecotourism at Kufri-Chail-Naldehra area of Himachal Pradesh examining the impacts of ecotourism on the natural environment, its contribution to the local economy and conservation, extent of participation of the host community and its capacity to educate the stakeholders. It is argued that tourism in the study area is demand driven, has high environmental impacts, contributes little to the local economy, makes no contribution to conservation, does not elicit local community participation, and fails to educate the stakeholders. Thus, it does not qualify to be called as ecotourism in the true sense of the concept.

(Key Words: Ecotourism, Mountain Areas, Sustainability Indicators)
ECOTOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY

1. INTRODUCTION

As many developing countries have a comparative advantage in supplying natural resources such as biodiversity and wildlife (Sinclair 1998), tourism in developing countries, more so in mountain areas, is predominantly nature-based. It provides alternative economic activities to the people of remote mountain localities otherwise having very limited options. Therefore, often the trend is towards attracting more and more people into the area to boost the local economy. However, as the number of people approaches a threshold, the conflict between maintaining a good quality environment along with tourism development increases. The problem gets compounded by the fact that the mountain tourism is often demand driven (Batta, 2000), that is, people just show up at destinations on their own needing food and shelter and the infrastructure is then made to suit their needs. One important drawback of such a trend is that the area cannot develop a tourism product (niche) and there is often an indiscriminate development of tourism infrastructure: typical of mass tourism. Such a phenomenon is also called as “spearheading” (Brandon, 1996). Tourism development of this kind exerts a strain on planners and policy makers charged with the responsibility of developing sustainable tourism.

The term ‘sustainable tourism’ has often been equated with a number of terms like alternative tourism, green tourism, and ecotourism (Lane, 1990; Butler, 1991). Though closely associated with tourism to nature-based areas, ecotourism has mostly been confused with nature-based tourism. More often, it has been considered as synonymous to nature-based tourism since inherently both nature-based tourism and ecotourism are natural resource dependent (Priskin, 2001). Usually considered more than just tourism to natural areas, the recent definitions of ecotourism (Scace, 1992; Black, 1996; Ceballos- Lascurain, 1996) include aspects like the study of impacts on environment, contribution to conservation and community participation as essential components of ecotourism. However, uncertainty over the precise definition of the term has encouraged a trend towards use of the word ‘ecotourism’ to gain competitive advantage. Such a trend has also flourished in the absence of standard indicators for measuring the success of ecotourism at a specific site. Owing to this, there have been very
few empirical studies on the status of ecotourism at specific locations (Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996). Thus, alongside defining the concept, the real challenge lies in operationalizing the concept at specific locations as also developing indicators for evaluating the sustainability of ecotourism. This paper therefore addresses two prime concerns in ecotourism: defining what is ecotourism; identifying fundamentals of ecotourism to facilitate operationalising and evaluating the concept at a particular location. Based on the fundamentals identified after a review of literature, the paper presents a case study evaluating the success of ecotourism.

With its 32 wildlife sanctuaries, 2 nature parks, and 36 per cent land under forest, Himachal Pradesh – a small province in Indian Himalayas – has great strengths to offer in nature-based tourism and ecotourism activities. With the popularity of the term ecotourism, the craze to call any nature-based area as ecotourism destination has spread in the state with many governmental agencies also falling prey to such a trend. After reviewing the literature on ecotourism and indicators of sustainability relevant to it, the study evaluates the sustainability of ecotourism at Kufri-Chail-Naldehra area of Himachal Pradesh using the Ross & Wall (1999) framework. Endowed with natural beauty, a thick forest cover biodiversity and wildlife, the area has been projected as the ecotourism destination both by the government agencies and the private operators. Recently, the State Forest Department has constituted a society by the name of ‘Ecotourism Society’ to manage a nature park at Kufri. Through the five surveys, the study evaluates the sustainability of ecotourism at Kufri-Chail-Naldehra area of Himachal Pradesh examining the impacts of ecotourism on the natural environment, its contribution to the local economy and conservation, extent of participation of the host community and its capacity to educate the stakeholders.

The paper has four parts; part II gives definition and fundamentals of ecotourism, part III is devoted to the study of an ecotourism location with reference to the fundamentals already identified. Finally, part IV provides conclusions of the study. Based on the findings of the study, it is argued that tourism in the study area has high environmental impacts, contributes little to the local economy, makes no contribution to conservation, does not elicit local community participation, and fails to educate the stakeholders. Thus it does not contain the essential prerequisites of ecotourism evolved under Ross and Wall framework and hence is not ecotourism in the true sense of the concept.
2. ECOTOURISM AND SUSTAINABILITY

2.1 Defining Ecotourism

The notion of ecotourism was initially developed in 1987 by Ceballos-Lascurain who defined ecotourism as an experience of ‘traveling to relatively undisturbed areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals as well as any existing cultural manifestations found in these areas (Boo, 1990: pxi)’. The Ceballos definition confined the scope of ecotourism to the objective of traveling and the area traveled. World Tourism Organisation (WTO, 1993:23) defined ecotourism as, “tourism that involves traveling to relatively undisturbed natural areas with the specified objective of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural aspects (both of the past and the present) found in the areas.” As is obvious from these definitions, the focus is solely on visiting nature-based areas.

The later developments, however, included the impacts on the area visited as an important ingredient of ecotourism. Scace (1992:14) defines ecotourism as, “ecotourism is an enlightening nature travel experience that contributes to the conservation of the ecosystem while respecting the integrity of host communities.” The definition encompasses both values and resource-based perspective, implying a balance of benefits among the resources, the tourism industry, the local community, and the visitors. Black (1996) has gone a step further. He defined ecotourism (1996:4) as being “an experience with a focus on the natural and cultural environment, ecologically sustainable activity, an activity with a predominant educative and interpretative programme, and an activity that contributes to local community groups and projects and to the conservation of the surrounding environment.” Even the later definition by Ceballos-Lascurain, offered a wider scope. Ceballos-Lascurain (1996), defines the term as, “environmentally responsible, enlightening travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy 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 population”.

3
The nature-based tourism, on the other hand, has been defined as “tourism that features nature” (Priskin, 2001). It is thus a broad phenomenon which includes a range of tourism experiences like adventure tourism, ecotourism and aspects of cultural and rural tourism. Components and features of nature-based tourism are described by Weaver et. al. (1998) and by Weiler and Hall (1992). They argue that while destinations for nature-based tourism vary considerably, natural areas such as national parks and conservation reserves constitute the largest components. Since the nature-based tourism cannot be classified as a single activity, the nature-based tourist profile also varies from hard-core nature tourist to casual nature tourist. Contrary to broad spectrum of nature-based tourism, ecotourism is more specific. Considered as a subset of nature-based tourism (Priskin, 2001), ecotourism stresses on the appropriate use of resources, and community development to meet the economic, social, and cultural needs of the community. It has thus been accepted as a new approach to preserve fragile land and threatened wild areas and to provide people in host countries with opportunities for community based development.

2.2 Evaluating Sustainability

Attempts have been made in the recent past to develop indicators for assessing the success of ecotourism at a specific location. Notable contributions in this respect come from Brandon (1996); Ross and Wall (1999); Scheyvens (1999); Nepal (2000); and Loon and Polakow (2001). Brandon (1996) reviews the concept of ecotourism and identifies five key benefits that ecotourism should give to the area: a source of financing the parks; economic justification for park protection; economic alternative to the local people; constituency building; and impetus to private conservation efforts. The study concludes that in many cases nature-based tourism and ecotourism have not come up to the expectations. Similarly, dwelling on the premise that the ecotourism theory has often not been put into practice for various reasons, Ross and Wall (1999) identify the specific roles that ecotourism could play and then shortlist five essentials of ecotourism namely protection of natural environment and biodiversity, contribution to the protection area, economic benefits to the local economy, community participation and education of the stakeholders. Scheyvens (1999) gives empowerment framework (economic, psychological, social and political empowerment) to test the sustainability of ecotourism from the perspective of the host community. However, he admits that as the central concern in the framework is empowerment, it is useful only for evaluating the
contribution of tourism to local community. Nepal (2000) reviews ecotourism in the Himalayas but does not offer any framework for similar studies in other locations. Finally, the whole focus of the study by Loon and Polakow (2001) is on economic aspects. The paper provides a generalised model to evaluate the financial viability of investment in ecotourism ventures. Comparing the internal rates of returns from various forms of accommodations offered (campsites, lodges and chalets), the study concludes that campsite accommodations offer highest returns compared to lodges and chalets.

From the above it is clear that though Brandon (1996) made an early attempt to identify indicators of ecotourism, the model, however, is not comprehensive. It fails to include protection of natural environment and community participation as components of ecotourism framework which are identified as essential prerequisites in the definition of ecotourism. Similarly, the focus of other studies: Scheyvens (1999), Nepal (2000) and Loon and Polakow (2001), is rather limited. However, the framework offered by Ross and Wall (1999), is more comprehensive and covers all aspects of ecotourism included in the definition of ecotourism. Therefore, this paper adopts Ross and Wall (1999) framework to evaluate ecotourism in a mountain location in Himachal Pradesh, a small province in the Indian Himalayas.

2.3 Fundamentals of Ecotourism: The Ross and Wall Framework

The framework has been developed on the premise that while numerous attempts have been made to develop guidelines to promote ecotourism, standardized methods to identify the potential and gauge the progress of ecotourism at specific sites have not been developed. Ross and Wall (1999) present a model that can be used to develop ecotourism in a particular area and can also be used to evaluate ecotourism. Based on the fundamental functions of ecotourism, the framework highlights that the success of a site reflects the extent to which it satisfies the key requirements: preserve natural resources and biodiversity; generate money to finance conservation; contribute to the local economy; promote community partnership; and educate visitors and members of local communities. It has been advocated that in an ideal situation local residents, protected area and the ecotourism may benefit each other in a symbiotic relationship.

(a) Preserve Natural Resources and Biodiversity
As definitions of ecotourism indicate, natural resources (land, water, and forest) and biodiversity are essential components of the ecotourism experience. It can rather be said that they constitute the core of ecotourism product. The natural resource component is important for two reasons. First, the conversion of natural areas, in many cases, is an irreversible process and the damage once done becomes irreparable. Therefore, precaution at the stage of identification and development of a resort is necessary, as attempts made later may not yield desired results. Second, demand for undisturbed natural areas is gradually growing, thus representing future potential of ecotourism. Hence, the undisturbed areas are required to be protected and maintained for future recreational use.

Ecotourism, as other forms of tourism, is known to be hazardous to the natural environment, if not developed in a planned manner. Both civic (roads, drainage, and sewerage) and tourism specific infrastructural facilities (hotels, airports and parking) require land, which is often made available by clearing forests. The consequent deforestation results in substantial soil erosion and change in land use. Besides, increased activity and consumption may lead to rapid depletion of renewable and non-renewable natural resources like construction material, forests, water and animal life. Tourism led deforestation and degradation of forest are issues widely reported (Mieczkowski, 1995; Batta, 2000). Mieczkowski (1995), records that in the Himalayas one tourist uses 6.4 kg of firewood per day, which equals the daily needs of two Nepalese families. On account of this, the tree line in Nepal is lowered by several hundred feet (Mieczkowski 1995; Boo, 1990). Likewise, demand for timber for construction, and the very limited growing season accentuate the problem of forest degradation and deforestation. Furthermore, with increased construction activities and floating population, there is increased demand for water and the resultant depletion of water resources. All the above damages (to forest, water and land) get aggravated as more and more tourism companies enter the area after it gets popular as an ecotourism destination.

Biodiversity or biological diversity is used to describe the numbers, variety and variability of living organisms in a given assemblage (Pearce and Moran, 1995). It is often explained in terms of genes, species and ecosystems. The main reason for erosion of biodiversity is that there is an underlying disparity between private and social costs and benefits of biodiversity use and conservation (Dixon and Sherman 1990). Private costs
and benefits refer to the immediate losses and gains sustained by the users of the environment: tourists, tourism industry, and the local population. Social costs and benefits refer to the losses and gains that accrue to the society as a whole. Social and private interests often do not coincide: what is good for an individual may impose cost for the society. Though what is good for the society is also good for an individual, but unfortunately no institutions exist to capture the social value. Hence, the individual’s effort always is to maximize his gains even though it means a lot of cost for the society as a whole. This is the main cause for loss of biodiversity in tourist destinations. Both tourists and the tourism firms strive to maximize their private benefits and minimize private costs by overexploiting the resource and minimize expenditure on environmental management that results in destruction of biodiversity.

This disparity between private and social costs and benefits, coupled with the nature of property rights on these resources exacerbates the damage. In the context of the latter, a major threat to many of the natural resources lies in open access resources and water, forest, and places of scenic beauty are generally amenable to problems of open access resources. Free access to these resources generates two types of externalities (Tietenberg, 1998). One is contemporaneous externality, which is borne by the current generation. It arises when with the availability of a natural resource being free; there is a tendency to overly exploit the resources that causes problems of congestion and indiscriminate growth. This problem is very common in places of scenic beauty and fisheries. Then comes the problem of inter-temporal externality; it typically occurs when overexploitation results in sharp decline in the natural resource. Though these problems mostly appear to be arising out of market failure, in some cases these may have their origins in policy failures. For instance, under pricing of water resources, fixing nominal fees for extraction minerals and miner forest produce, grant of subsidies on deforestation and allocation of land to clear forest for farming are examples of policy failure. Hence, the need for government help in natural resource management and solving problems of externalities may be required.

(b) Generate Money to Finance Conservation

Ecotourism should be able to generate resources for the conservation of protected areas on which it thrives. For any protected area to be successful in the long run, it should satisfy two major conditions. A justification is first
needed to show that the benefits from conservation and preservation are greater than the total costs: establishment, operation, management cost and the opportunity cost or value of output foregone. Second, while computing benefits, social benefits may also be included which may not bring direct revenues, therefore, these private benefits, which accrue to the affected population, need to be encashed in the form of consumer surplus. This could be achieved through imposition of taxes by the government or realization of environmental values by the development agencies. Nature-based tourist areas are important avenues for conservation and preservation of the environment and biodiversity. Both the use and non-use values are potentially recoverable from tourist to finance the tourist area. However, due to lack of understanding of the magnitudes of these values, very often, the protected areas are dependent on government support. With the public resources diminishing day by day, the very existence of these areas and the quality of experience offered, are falling under threat. Studies have proven (Brandon, 1996; Dharmaratne, Sang and Walling, 2000; Batta, 2003) that while use values are often recovered, the non-use values are not recovered. In use values, it is generally seen (Dharmaratne, Sang and Walling, 2000) that the mechanism of recovery is inefficient as in most cases these are fixed on adhoc basis. Given the fact that the tourists spend a good amount of money to visit a site, even there is a potential to recover higher user fees from tourists visiting the conservation areas. Another advantage with the user fees is that these are even considered equitable (Brandon, 1996) as only people using the facility pay for it.

It is not only the use values that are relevant in conservation areas; the existence values or the non-use values may also be important. It is being argued (Dharmaratne, Sang, and Walling, 2000; Batta, 2003) that the recovery of non-use values could play an important role in providing funds for environmental causes. Individual willingness to pay for the preservation of unique species and the habitats in the world has been estimated to provide a huge new flow of finances (Pearce, 1994; Pearce and Moran, 1995). Furthering the argument, Tietenberg (1995), cites the example of world’s largest privately owned reserve system --- Nature Conservancy – which is managing 3.5 million acre of ecosystems and biodiversity throughout the world by receipt of liberal donations from people living in different parts of the world. Similar is the example of Saba Marine Park that could collect 9 per cent of its total revenue out of donations from its former visitors (Dharmaratne, Sang, and Walling, 2000).
(c) Contribute to the Local Economy

Protected areas and surrounding lands are often among the most remote and agriculturally marginal lands in many countries. One of the most important factors in community involvement is that the residents living in or adjacent to a protected area should be receiving economic and social benefits or compensations which will support or complement their livelihoods (Lindberg and Enriquez, 1994). The economic benefits often flow in the form of foreign exchange earnings, generation of incomes due to operation of multipliers and creation of employment opportunities. While foreign exchange earnings may benefit the country/region as a whole, the income and employment effects may have local benefits. Additional incomes are generated as tourist spending boost trade and business and create demand for local products and handicrafts. The most significant benefit for most rural communities from ecotourism is employment generated in a range of jobs. The type of employment generated is directly tied to the way in which tourism is managed and the level of local control. If local people lack the requisite skills, people from outside will grab the employment opportunities arising from ecotourism development.

While it is an essential pre-requisite for ecotourism development, it is possible that some ecotourism destinations do not actually generate incomes for the local people. The literature is replete with such studies where ecotourism has not given any direct economic benefit to the community living in the vicinity. Brandon (1996) states that a study of 23 protected areas with projects designed to generate local economic benefits found that while many projects promoted ecotourism, few generated substantial benefits for either parks or local people. However, there are some success stories too. Lindberg and Enriquez (1994) cite several examples of local earnings from tourism-related employment surrounding protected areas in Belize, Costa Rica and Australia. In Nepal as well, two third of Sagarmatha national Park’s resident families receive income from guiding, selling local goods and clothes, and providing accommodation for tourists (Wells, 1993). In addition to economic benefits, tourism may also contribute to improved intercultural appreciation and understanding both for host communities and for tourists. It may instill a sense of local pride to villagers (Cater, 1994) and may promote or strengthen cultural heritage (Brandon, 1996). Examples of such positive contributions have also been documented by Nepal, (2000) (for Annapurna, Nepal) and Grahn, (1991) (for Switzerland).
(d) Promote Community Partnership

For ensuring greater percolation of benefits, it is important for any ecotourism venture to work in harmony with the local communities. This in turn requires a greater control to be given in the hands of the local communities. One of the essential elements of true ecotourism is the participation and involvement of the local communities (Boo, 1990; Brandon, 1996; Ceballos-Lascurain, 1996). Broadly, the local participation has been defined as “the ability of groups of individuals to influence the direction and outcome of development’ programs that will affect them” (Drake, 1991). Local input may help to accomplish certain important objectives: maintenance of a dialogue to permit understanding of and address local needs and concerns; avoidance of decisions which may impact negatively on local residents; encouragement of a form of empowerment or decentralization which allows people some control over decision making that affects them; creation, encouragement of the development of sympathetic community leaders (spokespersons, trainees, supervisors, advisors); strengthening links between conservation and development goals with local benefits; facilitate the local distribution of benefits; and provide a local capacity to monitor and evaluate progress of projects (Brandon, 1996).

Basically, in a symbiotic relationship between local population and the protected area resources or biodiversity, local residents act as stewards of the natural resources and in return they benefit from protected areas through sustainable harvesting and water catchments. Often, the relationship between local communities and the resource use, particularly in the peripheral locations common to many ecotourism sites, is one sphere where owing to high dependence on resource exploitation; attempts to regulate or prohibit resource use without involving them may foster confusion and resentment on the part of local people accustomed to using such lands and resources (Ziffer, 1989). In such situations, local people may become opponents of tourism and undermine its operation. Such obstacles to the success of ecotourism can often be countered by involving local people in planning and management processes, whereby they have some control over and agreed-upon access to the resources they require.

(e) Educate Visitors and Members of Local Communities

Finally, there is the issue of educating visitors and the stakeholders. It is also referred to as ‘constituency building’ (Brandon 1996). One of the
often-overlooked ways in which ecotourism supports conservation is that eco tourists upon returning home act as the advocates of the area visited. This advocacy can help in many ways. First, eco tourists are likely to give more generously for the conservation of the area. Second, they can also donate their time for lobbying in favour of the policies that help conservation.

Thus contributions which ecotourism can make to the areas are as important as the potentially positive affects on adjacent communities. The provision of environmental education through enhancement of opportunities to appreciate nature is fundamental to the success of ecotourism. Biodiversity and natural areas can provide this service in return for economic revenues that can contribute to protected area conservation.

III

3. THE CASE STUDY

3.1 Introducing the Study Area

The study area, comprising of three hamlets known as Kufri, Chail and Naldehra, is located in the outskirts of Shimla town... These areas are projected as ecotourism destinations. Naldehra-Mashobra is one destination, Kufri-Koti is another, and Chail is the third destination.

(a) KUFRI

About 16 km from Shimla, at an altitude of 2633 meters, Kufri stands as a winter sports center of the Shimla circuit. It earlier had the distinction of being the winter sports capital of the state, but with the emergence of Solang nallah slopes in Kullu Manali area, it is relegated to the second place. Nevertheless, it has vast potential of developing winter sports to reduce the seasonality factor of the circuit. The skiing season commences from December and continues till the month of February coinciding with the major lean season of tourism in Himachal Pradesh. More than sixty per cent of the area is under forest. Among the species found here are Chil, Kail, Spruce and Deodar. There is a zoo in the nature park.
(b) NALDEHRA

About 22 kms from Shimla, at an altitude of 2078 meters, Naldehra offers a refreshing retreat into the woods of tall deodars and undulations of hilly terrain. A well-kept nine-hole golf course is an attraction for the visitors here.

(c) CHAIL

At a height of 2250 meters and about 45 Kms. away from Shimla, it is a small mountain resort with the splendor and elegance of princely preserve. The palace of 19th century and the pretty cottages are part of the Chail Holiday Resorts. It is also well known for its highest cricket pitch in the world. Chail has lovely walks and trails that meander through the dense pine forests- the home of barking deer, wild bear, pheasant and a variety of birds.

There are 16 hotels, 9 paying guesthouses, and 7 resorts with 467 rooms and 767 beds in the study area. There is only one travel agency operating in the area. 2 resorts in Naldehra, 4 in Kufri and 1 in Chail are under construction. Most of the upcoming accommodations are for relatively higher income people. In the recent past, there has been a spurt in construction of hotels in the area due to incentives provided by the Department of Tourism under the Incentive Policy (DOT, 2000). Under the policy, hotel units, especially the resorts, are eligible for luxury tax concessions and power tariff freeze for a period up to ten years.

There are two very distinct allied activities that have come up as a result of tourism in this area. These are Gift Shops and Mule/Yak operators. Gift Shops mostly store Handloom and Handicrafts items, art pieces, souvenirs and coke, chips, biscuits and sweets. Mule/Yak operators provide joy ride facilities up to the adjoining site seeing places at rates ranging from Rs. 10 per ride to up to Rs. 150. In Kufri, they are so much in number that they have a union of their own which regulates deployment of mules for the tourists. There are no guides because there are no museums/historical building in the area for which guide services would be required. However, outdoor photographers registered with the State Tourism Department, provide service to the tourists.
3.2 Methodology

Data for the study were collected through five surveys: the tourist survey, the tourism industry survey, the host community survey, the survey eliciting views of Panchayat representatives (formed for a group of Villages, Panchayat is an organ of local self government) and the survey of local development officers in the area. The tourist survey was conducted at Kufri, Naldehra and Chail between 12th to 20th June 2001, 10th to 18th October, 2001 and 20th to 28th December, 2001 to cover all seasons: summer, autumn and winter (Summer season in the State is between 15th of March till end 15th June, Autumn season is between 15th September till 15th November, and the Winter season is between 15th December till 31st January). 200 schedules were filled each time. The survey instrument included questions on various socio-economic aspects, impressions of the tourists about the strengths of the area, environmental impacts and willingness to pay for protection of environmental resources in these areas.

Since there were only 32 tourism units: hotels, resorts and paying guesthouses, the tourism industry survey covered all the units. Information on the profile of tourism industry included the type of the tourism unit (hotel, resort, paying guesthouse) number of rooms, total investment made by the unit, the number of persons employed, education level and area of belonging of the workers, the sourcing of raw material by the unit, and the willingness to pay for protecting the environment. This being the local area study, it basically focused on finding out leakages of tourism from the study area. Leakages have been worked out by finding out tourist expenditure, expenditure pattern of the hotels in the area and sourcing of raw material by the tourism units.

The approach adopted to study the host community was more or less akin to the socio-economic survey approach. The only difference however, was that in addition to the questions on socio-economic variables, respondents were quizzed on their perception about impacts of tourism development and the way tourism should be developed in the area. Out of about 18 villages in the study region, a sample of five villages has been taken for data collection. A random sample of 20 households in each village has been drawn to collect information. The survey instrument was divided in three parts. The first part covered information on socio-economic variables like size of the family, educational status, occupational pattern, composition of family assets, sources of fuel wood and fodder and the gender composition of collection
effort. The second part provided an hypothetical scenario to elicit willingness to pay. It was different from what was posed to the tourists and the tourism industry as the priorities of the households were expected to be different compared to tourists and the tourism industry. As per information available from the published data sources (like the Census Reports) and findings of other studies (Bon, 2000), the areas of concern for the local population are forest, water, fuel wood and fodder. Therefore the scenario included development of these things in the area. Finally, the third part included questions soliciting their views on the impacts of tourism on the rural economy and environment, extent of their participation in the process of decision-making and their suggestions on the tourism development in the area. The environmental effects are studied in three parts: effects on natural environment, built environment and the socio-cultural environmental (Hunter and Green, 1995).

For getting a more realistic picture it was important to consult the local institutions like Panchayats and the important functionaries in the area like Divisional Forest Officer and the Block Development Officer. Hence, these officials at the cutting edge were also interviewed to know their opinion on impacts of tourism development, level of public participation, and their attitudes towards public participation.

3.3 Findings

The success of ecotourism in the study area is analyzed in terms of its performance on the fundamentals of ecotourism discussed above (protection of natural environment, contribution to the local economy, ability to generate resources for conservation, host community reactions and education of the stakeholders).

(a) Impact on Natural Environment

Though no baseline data was available with reference to which the effect of tourism on the natural environment could be analysed, however, all the five surveys done during the study (tourist, tourism industry, host community, survey of Panchayat representatives and the survey of government officials) included questions on impacts of tourism on the natural, built and cultural environment. This was done to capture the impressions of the stakeholders derived out of changes seen in historical perspective. The results reveal that following negative impacts are quite visible and are attributed to tourism:
• Littering;
• Deforestation;
• Soil Erosion;
• Water scarcity and deterioration in water quality; and
• Unscientific disposal of solid waste.

About fifty five per cent of tourists noticed littering of bio non-degradable garbage in the open. Most of it comprised of disposable glasses, plates, cans and other packing material. Even the hoteliers also felt concerned over this problem. Results of the host community survey show that a considerable perception of negative impacts comes from the households. A large segment of the questionnaire was devoted to information on host population’s perception on environmental impacts of tourism. Table 1 gives the picture on the host community perception of impacts of tourism.

Table 1: The Impact Scenario

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Natural Environment</th>
<th>Built Environment</th>
<th>Socio-cultural Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Positive Negative No Imp.</td>
<td>Positive Negative No Imp.</td>
<td>Positive Negative No Imp.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naldehra</td>
<td>9 (45)*</td>
<td>2 (12)</td>
<td>8 (43)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mashobra</td>
<td>5 (13)</td>
<td>4 (23)</td>
<td>3 (64)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kufri</td>
<td>6 (52)</td>
<td>6 (32)</td>
<td>4 (16)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kothi</td>
<td>2 (9)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>8 (91)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chail</td>
<td>1 (56)</td>
<td>3 (13)</td>
<td>2 (31)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* figures in parenthesis give percentages.

Positive impacts on the natural environment are perceived to be afforestation and development of wild life sanctuaries. Therefore, the perception is positive where tourism includes a strong component of forest and wild life like at Naldehra, Kufri and Chail villages. Negative impacts are perceived to be cutting of forest for construction of hotels in the area. On the built environment, positive impacts are in the form of maintenance of roads and provision of civic amenities and the negative impacts are in the form of traffic congestion, water scarcity and crowding. The negative socio-cultural effects are in the form of increase in crime, prostitution and damage to cultural traditions. The positive effects in culture are in the form of projection to culture, development of hereditary properties and promotion of local handicrafts and arts.

A majority of households in Naldehra, Chail and Kufri feel that tourism has benefited the natural environment in the area. This is because of the government investment in Nature Park at Kufri and Chail and Golf Glade at
Naldehra. Only thirty two per cent households in Kufri feel that tourism has destroyed the natural environment due to construction of hotels in the area. In Mashobra the percentage of such people is twenty three per cent and thirteen percent in Chail. These areas have actually been favorite among the investors for construction of hotels. The situation is not the same in Koti. Ninety one per cent households in Koti find that tourism has made no impact on the natural environment. Their views are consistent with the facts on the ground as not a single hotel unit has come up in the area.

However, results of survey of Panchayat representatives present a dismal picture. Deforestation and soil erosion are the issues with Panchayat representatives. While the host population does not feel concerned over these, the representatives cite examples of tree felling by hoteliers working in the area. The Chairman of the Block Samiti (The highest body of Panchayat representative at the Block level) even pointed out specific sites where erosion had occurred due to large-scale cutting by the hotel units. As for water, both villagers and owners of tourism units feel concerned about the scarcity of water and deteriorating water quality in the area. Among the major reasons for problems in water quality are littering by tourists, unscientific disposal of solid waste, and the discharge of untreated wastewater by the hotel units. The Panchayat representatives cited a few locations where waste is being dumped in the open by the hotel units.

On the built and cultural environment, a larger number of households feel that no-impact has been made by the tourism industry in the area. Once again their perception matches the reality on the ground. Tourism industry came to the region when it already had infrastructural facilities like roads, drinking water and electricity. The only addition due to tourism is parking places in Kufri, Chail and Naldehra, which the local population rarely uses. The negative impact on the built environment noticed very often during the tourist season is crowding and traffic congestion. Since, there are no special cultural attributes of these areas (like fairs and festivals), no benefit is attributed to the tourism industry. Only Mashobra has two small local fairs, but these are still not exposed to the tourists as these are organized in remote hamlets where tourists generally do not go.

Therefore, while tourism has negatively affected natural resources and biodiversity in these areas, it has made no contribution to built and cultural environment.
(b) Economic Impacts of Tourism

On the economic impacts of tourism, the situation is not very encouraging. There is a total absence of backward and forward linkages of tourism with other sectors, which has resulted in high leakages from the local economy. A major problem with tourism in the study area is that a significant proportion of the revenue (30%) is generated and retained in the places of origin. The expenses made by the tourists in the study area are little, thus limiting income opportunities for the locals. Further, with there being no entertainment facility, the capacity of the tourists to spend in the area is further circumvented.

In order to find out the income effect, the study also looked into the expenditure pattern of the Hotel industry. The data on the expenditure pattern reveals that forty three per cent of the expenditure incurred by the hotel units is a clear-cut leakage as the interest (15%), dividend (10%) and taxes (18%) straightway go to the outside parties. Even the expenditure on account of water (2%), electricity (6%) and transport (3%) (Total 11%) is also a leakage as this it goes to the outside parties mostly government agencies, and nothing is ploughed back in the local economy. Therefore, fifty four per cent of the total expenditure incurred by a tourism unit goes outside the local economy. This leaves the unit with only forty six per cent of the total earnings. Of this twenty per cent is spent on raw material, nine per cent on wages and ten per cent on maintenance.

Another area important from the point of view of economic impact of tourism is purchase of raw material. If raw material is procured locally, the indirect and induced multiplier effects will be higher. This will imply greater overall economic benefits to the community. However, if raw material is procured from outside, the indirect and induced multiplier values will be low and the economic impact of tourism on the local community will be low.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Raw Material</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Resorts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruits &amp; Vegetables</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pulses</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beverages</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grains</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bread, Eggs &amp; Butter</td>
<td>Outside</td>
<td>Outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liquor</td>
<td>Outside</td>
<td>Outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>Local</td>
<td>Local</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the results of the tourism industry survey show, ninety per cent of the raw material is procured by the resorts from outside the study area while it is fifty per cent in case of hotels. Overall eighty per cent of the material is procured from outside the study area. Retail supplies like pulses, vegetables, meat and fresh fruits are imported from Shimla or even Chandigarh.

Even in the allied sector (shops, mule operators, photographers), the leakages are very heavy. In the shops, the survey has included gift shops only which are catering to the tourists exclusively. No Karyana shop has thus been included. As discussed earlier, most of these shops stack souvenir, gift items and handlooms and handicrafts items. Again not a single item is produced locally; all these are imported from outside. Handloom items come from Kullu, Ludhiana and Shimla town, while souvenir and gift items come from Delhi and Chandigarh. These shopkeepers are only able to retain their commission on sale. It is true for food items like Coke and Chips as all these are also procured from outside. However, mule/yak operators and photographers are locals and hence they retain their earnings.

Figure 1 gives a picture of leakages in the local economy. While expenditure by the tourists is the source of inflow, expenditure on interest and dividend, supplies and taxes by the hotel units and on purchases, taxes and interest by shops are leakages. The indirect earnings or the internal linkages are in the form of wages, earnings by Mule/Yak operators, earnings by hotels and guest houses and local purchases by hotels.

Another factor limiting the benefit to the local people is lack of linkages between the industry and the traditional sectors of the economy. Tourism relies on secondary, manufacturing industry for supply of much of its demand and the complete absence of this sector accounts for much of the leakages witnessed during the study. The most shaking aspect is non-orientation of the primary sector as well. Despite the many years of existence of tourism in the area, agriculture sector has not been able to cater to the needs of hotels even for vegetable and poultry products. In order to confirm the results as also know the reasons for such a high leakage, owner of a leading resort at Kufri was interviewed. While confirming the findings of the study, he commented, "government has not bothered to develop associated industries in the area. Not even a poultry farm has been set up despite more than 15 years of our existence. The area
does not even grow vegetables even though so many units have come up in this area over the past few years. We are therefore, forced to import everything from outside.” Whatever little tourist spends in the area in the form of purchase of souvenir items also goes to the manufacturers from outside as the souvenir items are also purchased from outside markets. Among hotels, resorts and paying guesthouses, hotels and paying guesthouses provide greater benefits to the local community compared to the resorts. However, it is not because the resort operations are inherently anti locals, but because these require a changed orientation of the local economy towards the needs of the resorts.

A total of 258 jobs in Kufri 96 in Chail and 118 in Naldehra are totally dependent on the tourism industry (only direct employment is included). Besides, about 839 full time jobs are created in the supporting services sector. Table 3 gives estimates of tourism related employment.
Figure 1: ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM IN THE STUDY AREA.
Table 3: Estimates of Tourism and Related Employment in the Study Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business</th>
<th>Number of direct jobs offered</th>
<th>Indirect Jobs created in allied sectors</th>
<th>Indirect employment as % of direct employment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hotels</td>
<td>Resorts</td>
<td>Paying Guest houses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kufri</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chail</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naldehra</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

8 hotels, 3 resorts, and 18 restaurants create a direct employment to 258 people and indirect employment to 609 people in Kufri area. The ratio of direct to indirect employment comes to 1:2.4, which is the highest in the study region. The reason for this high ratio is a large number of mule and Yak operators working in the area. As against this, the ratio is 1: 1 in Chail and Naldehra areas. The overall ratio of direct to indirect employment comes to 1: 1.9. The analysis of data on area of belonging of labour shows that while eighty five percent labour in indirect employment (taxi drivers, shopkeepers and yak operators) is local; the ratio of local people is very low and it is generally confined to junior positions, particularly waiters and receptionists. It is too gender specific limited to men only. Such a situation exists due to non-availability of trained manpower (again a fallout of ill-conceived linkages). This pattern of employment in hotels and resorts leads to heavy leakages, exploitation of labour, and lack of integration with the local community. Most of those employed in tourism units are untrained and low paid. Another important conclusion that can be drawn from the analysis of economic impacts is the difference in economic impacts of hotels and resorts. While hotels are owned by locals, employ untrained local staff, make purchases locally; the resorts are owned by the outsiders, employ trained manpower and import most of their requirements from outside.
(c) Resource Generation for Conservation

While there is no entry fee for nature park Chail, an entry fee of Rs.10 per head for adults and Rs 5 per head for children is being charged in Nature Park Kufri. Enquiries have revealed that during season the authorities get a receipt of Rs. 4000 per day which falls to Rs. 600-700 per day during the off season. Average annual generation of revenue on account of entry fees is Rs. 2.50 lakhs to Rs. 3 Lakhs, which is not even sufficient to meet the maintenance charges on account of diet of zoo animals. On an average, the Zoo authorities spend Rs. 7.50 Lakhs on food for zoo animals with expenses on account of salaries being in addition. Thus, for the rest, the zoo authorities have to be dependent on the government funding. Hence, at present, tourism in the area does not contribute to the conservation of natural resources.

Given the importance of environment to all the parties, the study attempted to know the willingness to pay of tourists, tourism industry and the local population. Using the contingent valuation method, a scenario was developed for soliciting values. The outcome is very interesting. Both tourists and the tourism industry have shown their Willingness To Pay (WTP).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bid Amount (in Rs.)</th>
<th>Domestic Tourists</th>
<th>Foreign Tourists</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>246(46)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>246(41)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up to Rs. 50</td>
<td>102 (19)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>102(17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>121(23)</td>
<td>12(18)</td>
<td>133(22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>45(8)</td>
<td>9(15)</td>
<td>54(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150</td>
<td>8(2)</td>
<td>25(38)</td>
<td>33(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td>12(2)</td>
<td>20(30)</td>
<td>32(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Respondents</td>
<td>534(100)</td>
<td>66(100)</td>
<td>600(100)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Value</td>
<td>Rs. 31.27</td>
<td>Rs. 140</td>
<td>Rs. 43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WTP of the Foreign tourists comes is Rs. 140 while it is Rs. 31 for the domestic tourists. The overall mean WTP is Rs. 43. This is an important
finding for three reasons. First, it is first study of its kind in the state. The methodology used here can be replicated and more such studies can be undertaken because environment is an important input in the tourism product in the whole state. Second, it gives an indication of realizing values from an important resource: forest and wildlife, having high use, option and existence values. If implemented, it will generate additional revenues for nature-based tourism.

Tourism units are equally interested in contributing their bit towards protecting the environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WTP Values (Rs.) per annum</th>
<th>Hotels</th>
<th>Resorts</th>
<th>Paying Guesthouses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td>7(77)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200</td>
<td></td>
<td>7(44)</td>
<td>2(23)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>250</td>
<td></td>
<td>7(44)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500</td>
<td>2(12)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5000</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7(100)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The mean WTP of a unit per month comes to Rs. 1250. Within the tourism units, resorts have the maximum WTP of Rs. 5000 followed by Rs. 200 of hotels and Rs. 100 of paying guesthouses.

Thus there is a potential of generation of resources for conservation of natural resources in the area.

(d) Host Community Participation

The inquiry into the community participation in tourism development included questions on the level of participation, and level of consultation of Panchayats by the local authorities while formulating tourism plans. Though the meetings of Gram Sabha (the village level tier of local self government) were being held four times in a year, the level of participation is low. So much so, completing quorum for the meeting is also a problem. To overcome the problem of participation below the numbers required as per law, the Government of Himachal Pradesh had to amend the Panchayati Raj Act to relax the quorum requirements. The low participation is attributed to lack of proper
delegation of powers to Panchayats. Participation by women is also negligible. On involvement of local bodies by the functionaries of the government, everybody felt that plans and programmes are being framed at the government level and the local bodies are not consulted. The response to the question on consultation of the village community in tourism development was also negative.

The opinion of the local officers on lack of public participation was different. Both Block Development Officer and the Divisional Forest Officer of the area felt that the public response in developmental process was very poor. The Block Development Officer substantiated his argument by quoting the problem of quorum in Gram Sabhas. The Divisional Forest Officer termed the relation of the public with forest as one way – demanding rights and benefits. Both felt that owing to this reason they could not consult the local community in formulation of developmental plans including tourism. However, there is a silver lining: the ecotourism society Kufri has included representatives of the local Panchayat, Mahila Mandals (women’s club), NGO’s and the hoteliers on its executive body. On the ways of participation, most people felt that the matter should be considered in Gram Sabha. Both host community and the Panchayat representatives complained that the village community is not consulted on policy making for tourism. The villagers offered different suggestions as to how tourism should be developed in the area and what should be done to make tourism more beneficial to the area. Even as a large majority (71%) felt that it should promote employment in the area, sixteen per cent were in favor of better water management to overcome the shortage of water and improve the quality of water in the area and thirteen per cent also favored the idea of developing recreational sites and parks in the destination area.

(e) Educating the Stakeholders

Tourism in the study area is also not in a position to educate the stakeholders. The tourist survey reveals that eighty five per cent of the tourists visiting the study area visit the area to see the scenic beauty and have no idea about the strengths of the area in terms of biodiversity and wildlife. There are no on site plaques also to educate the tourists. Even the tourism units in the study area have opted for the place for its scenic beauty and not due to its environmental strengths. The local community is equally ignorant about their endowments and the likely impacts of tourism in the area. This lack of knowledge is detrimental in three ways. First, a
community that becomes aware of its present situation and possibilities for tourism may plan albeit informally for tourism. This lack of knowledge therefore deprives them of this benefit. Second, awareness of impacts in turn affects unity. Unplanned flow of benefits often results in inequitable distribution of benefits and hence the dissensions among host community (a small hamlet near village Koti called ‘Dharbhog’ already faces this problem with village community divided into two groups: for and against tourism; based on the economic considerations). A unified community is likely to participate to a high degree for common interests (Mitchell and Reid 2001). Finally, community awareness about tourism opportunities is closely linked to tourism planning and development. It basically entails a process of community building by educating them about the benefits of promoting tourism. It also transfers control over tourism to the local community.

IV

4. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Ever since its introduction by Ceballos- Lascurain in 1987, ecotourism concept has undergone a sea change. As the priority for development of tourism shifted from only economic benefits in 1960s to environmental concerns and community participation in the 80s and 90s, ecotourism definitions have also included these new aspects. However, since it remains a sub set of nature-based tourism, there is a potential for confusion between other forms of nature-based tourism and ecotourism. The task of properly defining the two and evolving indicators for evaluation therefore gains importance. It is often argued that ecotourism is neither a simple concept to define nor a straightforward phenomenon to implement and evaluate (Ross & Wall, 1999). Owing to its dependence on the natural resources, ecotourism has to function in a manner that it not only protects the natural resources in the area but also contributes to strengthening the natural resource base of the area. One important way of doing so is to enlist the support of the local population by providing economic benefits. As in mountain areas, the dependence of local population on the natural resources is very high (due to subsistence farming and a higher section of population dependent on agriculture for livelihood), it will have double dividend property: it will dissuade the local population from natural resource over use by reducing their dependence and would provide additional disposable incomes to the local people. First, since the alternate avenues of income and employment are generally absent in mountain
areas, the high dependence on the natural resources (for instance land and forest) for livelihood accelerates the rate of exploitation of these resources. To curb such a trend, tourism has to offer an alternate avenue for income and employment. Second, the economic activities found in these areas have very high natural resource: value added ratio with high output elasticity of natural resource use (Karshenas 1994). For instance, the cottage and small scale units existing in the study area include three saw mills and one art gallery making wooden artifacts. Both are heavily dependent on forestry. The tourism development will reduce dependence on such activities by offering alternative remunerative avenues of employment and increasing disposable incomes.

Economic attractions very often become the starting point for a favourable host community disposition. For greater percolation of economic benefits the range of accommodation offered to the tourists and its location would be very material. It should include both on-site and off-site accommodations. On site accommodations may be relatively primitive, such as camping in remote areas or staying in the paying guesthouses in remote villages. These can be located inside the sanctuary area. Since these do not involve enough capital, locals can develop these very easily. Owing to its low capital requirements, it also offers a high internal rate of return and higher profits (Loon and Polakow 2001). With this, tourist will come in closer contact with the local population, use local products and can also taste local cuisines. This will generate local employment and integrate tourism with the local economy. Off-site accommodations, like the present resort areas, will be more comfortable for those taking day tours to the nature-tourism areas. The accommodations will focus on the internal aspects of management as well. Practices like efficient use and conservation of natural resources, waste disposal, and recycling, green-purchasing policies, locally produced food and goods, and sympathetic building and architecture can be adopted.

Having offered a reasonable economic package, another important task would entail involving local community in tourism planning and development. Tourism planning has to emphasize on host community oriented tourism promotion strategy to ensure that tourism is environmentally sensitive and guarantees that the members of the local community have a high degree of control over the activities taking place, and a significant proportion of benefits also accrue to them. In the context of the present study, owing to high leakages and low employment effects,
tourism remains divorced from the host community aspirations. While it utilizes and damages the local resources on which the local population depends heavily, it does not bring any benefit to the local people. A balance sheet of gains and losses to the host community due to tourism ultimately becomes the acid test. Needless to say, any attempt to develop ecotourism should enlist community participation at all stages: conceptualization, planning, development, marketing, and management of the area. Not only the local community, tourism planning should involve all stakeholders. Involvement of the stakeholders also ensures education of the stakeholders. Both in the process of participative management and later while doing things in that way, the stakeholders realize the strengths of the area and the value of maintaining the area for both present and future generations.

The study started with an agenda to verify as to whether the tourism in the study area is ecotourism as claimed by the governmental and private agencies or not. It has been verified from the data collected during the study that it is not ecotourism. Despite the fact that the area has all the features to be developed as an ecotourism destination: natural beauty, biodiversity and wildlife; it is the way in which tourism is developed in this area which makes all the difference. The importance of tourism planning and development can therefore not be undermined. Alongside, would be an equally important need to find out appropriate ways to develop ecotourism and evaluate it. The present study is therefore a humble effort in identifying a suitable framework for mountain areas and testing the same in a location in the International Year for Ecotourism and Mountain Areas.
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>T.K. Jayaraman, A Single Currency For The South Pacific Islands: A Dream Or A Distant Possibility?</td>
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