



Research Paper

Development Ecotourism Destinations in Madhya Pradesh

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ABSTRACT: *There has been a significant growth in nature tourism are over the world. Tourism has attained new records with half a billion tourist arrival all over the world in spite of the recession in the previous years. Madhya Pradesh (M.P.) with its landscape, bio-diversity, heritage sites and adventure sites has got tremendous potential in terms of promoting Ecotourism. In this paper out of the five identified circuits, i.e. Panna, Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Pachmarhi the first three were chosen as they were found to be representative of the area. A total of 31 sites (existing and newly identified) were assessed for ecotourism potential.*

KEYWORDS: *ecotourism, destinations, madhya pradesh,*

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I. INTRODUCTION

Ecotourism is derived from two words – ‘Ecosystem & Tourism’. Ecosystem is the system in which we live – the system which include the earth, the water, the sky and of course the living and the nonliving objects in all these system. It is a dynamic complex of plant, Animal and micro-organism communities and their non-living environment interacting as a functional unit Tourism means – the practice of travelling for pleasure thus a tourism which contains a visit to an Ecosystem is known as Eco-tourism. But, that is not all. Ecotourism is not only travelling to such Ecosystems, but also conserving them. Basically Eco-tourism means –

“Tourism involving travel to areas of natural or ecological interest, typically under the guidance of a naturalist, for the purpose of observing wildlife and learning about the environment and at the same time focus on wildlife and promotion of understanding and conservation of the environment.”

Ecotourism, a unique subset of the tourism industry, is focused on the enhancement or maintenance of natural systems through tourism. Ecotourism means different things to different people. To some, it is the general term that encompasses nature based, adventure, soft adventure and cultural tourism. The term ecotourism was coined in 1988 by Hetor Ceballos Laseurain a Mexican environmentalist, and was initially used to describe nature – based travel to relatively undisturbed areas with an emphasis on education. Ecotourism guarantees the sustainable use of environmental resources, while generating economic opportunities for the local people.

Fundamentally, eco-tourism means making as little environmental impact as possible and helping to sustain the indigenous popular, thereby encouraging the preservation of wildlife and habitats when visiting a place. This is responsible from of tourism and tourism development, which encourages going back to natural products in every aspect of life. it is also the key to sustainable ecological development any disturbance in the natural environment will be challenging for the local population as its revival back into the same shapes is virtually impossible.

ECOTOURISM IN MADHYA PRADESH

There has been a significant growth in nature tourism are over the world. Tourism has attained new records with half a billion tourist arrival all over the world in spite of the recession in the previous years.

Madhya Pradesh (M.P.) with its landscape, bio-diversity, heritage sites and adventure sites has got tremendous potential in terms of promoting Ecotourism.

Most of the Ecotourism under whatsoever name has been practiced in M.P. has invariably been practiced in the protected Area. Madhya Pradesh recently announced state Biodiversity strategy and action plan 2002, which underlines the need of ecocodevelopment in the state to conserve its Biodiversity heritage. The government of Madhya Pradesh had also announced its new Eco and adventure tourism policy (2001-2002). These policy initiatives provide a consistent frame work to explore possibilities in the Ecotourism sector. Ecotourism has become very important for the areas having rich cultural and biological heritage.

Out of the five identified circuits, i.e. Panna, Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur and Pachmarhi the first three were chosen as they were found to be representative of the area. A total of 31 sites (existing and newly identified) were assessed for ecotourism potential.

Most of the sites that were evaluated had good Ecotourism potential like Panna National Park, Bhopal, Mandu which had a blend of both cultural and Natural resources and also had opportunities to develop a good interpretation and educational programmes which become an integral part of Ecotourism, only a few had lower potential due to their susceptibility to impacts and lack of proper infrastructure, e.g. Maihar which is subjected to high pressure from the religious tourism. It was also found that adventure aspect of Ecotourism is completely lacking in the state baring a few sites like Bhopal.

It was also found that there is a need to increase coordination between the forest department and the tourism department for enhancing ecotourism activities such that the forest department manages all the natural resources and the tourism department does all the marketing associated to it.

IMPORTANCE OF ECOTOURISM IN MADHYA PRADESH

1. Ecotourism is a source of direct and indirect employment of Madhya Pradesh. Thus, it is a creator and provider of job. The problem of seasonal unemployment and disguised unemployment could be effectively solved by tourism industry.
2. The money spent by tourists supports not only the tourism industry but also helps indirectly to support numerous other industries, which supply goods and services to the tourism industry.
3. Foreign tourists arrivals in Madhya Pradesh were recorded at 2.6 lakhs in 2011 and this number went up to 2.81 lakhs in 2013. During the same period, domestic tourist visits surged from 4.4 crore to 6.3 crore, posting a 43% increase in a matter of two years.

UPCOMING DESTINATIONS IN MADHYA PRADESH

Upcoming destinations in Madhya Pradesh are given below:

1. Anwalia Khandwa

The forests situated at the junction of Khandwa, Harda and Betul districts are arguably most dense and diverse teak forests of the state. There the Korku, Bhil and Gond tribes inhabit forests. These forests are very well preserved and totally unexplored by tourists and offer a great outdoors opportunity for the resident of Indore, Khandwa, Burhanpur, Harda and Betul among others. Forest department has developed at Anwalia on the Khandwa-Betul road, which is a base station for launching ecotourism operations in the area. The area is rich in wildlife with occasional tiger and panther still making foreign into the area, besides the usual ungulates and smaller carnivores.

2. Daulatpur – Dwas

This forest is situated on the Indore Bhopal highway close to the industrial town of Dewas. The board is developing this forest as an ecotourism destination by developing the basic infrastructure adjoining the forests. Being situated on a busy highway, this forest offers a great business opportunity as the income from ecotourism visiting the forests can be supplemented by selling refreshments to the travelers on the road.

3. Delawali – Ratapani Wildlife Sanctuary Obaidullaganj

One of the finest teak forests in the state, and situated very close to the capital Bhopal, Ratapani offers an excellent window to the great wilds of M.P. The sanctuary houses the ancient Bhim Bathika cave paintings. Some dating back to 25000 years ago, recently declared a world Heritage site. The sanctuary offers excellent opportunities for trekking camping and biking.

4. Karmajhri – Pench National Park

Rudyard Kipling would be smiling in the heavens if he could hear that where Mogli et.al, lived their thrilling lives, is now a national park and a tiger reserve. The park is situated only about 100 km from Nagpur International Airport and is one of the fast upcoming parks in India.

5. Kuno – Palpur Lion Sanctuary – Shepr

This sanctuary rose to fame as the proposed venue for the reintroduction Asiatic lion and cheetah. The sanctuary is situated nearly 50 km from Shivpuri, 100 km from Ranthambhare and 150 km from Gwalior in the north of

the state. The sanctuary supports an excellent density of ungulates and carnivores like leopard, bear, state. The sites of the 24 villages relocated for creating wildlife habitat have turned picturesque grasslands teeming with wild animals. The sanctuary is dominated by an ancient forest situated on the bank of the river Kuno from which the sanctuary derives its name.

6. Narmada Herbal Park – Hoshangabad

Narmada Herbal park is situated at Hoshangabad district headquarter. It comprises of 3 acres area partially planted with herbal medicinal plants and bamboo. It comprises of guesthouse and diverse terrain is its strengthening feature it is situated on the bank of river Narmada.

7. Orchha Wildlife Sanctuary Tikamgarh

Situated across the Betwa river from the ancient temple town of Orchha, is a beautiful forest patch, on way to Khajuraho and Panna. The forest is bounded by the Jamuni and Betwa Rivers on all sides M.P. Tourism has already started river rafting facilities on the Betwa River. The Board is in the process to develop it as a major camping, trekking, biking and bird watching destination.

8. Ralamandal Wildlife Sanctuary – Indore

It is a small (235 ha) wilderness, dominated by the Ralamandal hill, housing a royal Shikargarh, just outside the famous commercial centre Indore. Ralamandal is a major get way for the people of Indore and the Board is planning to develop this sanctuary as a major nature education and recreation centre in the near future. Preparations for installing a ropeway to connect the Ralamandal Hill with an adjoining hill called the Deoguradia are already under way.

9. Raneh Fall – Khajuraho

Ken Gharial Sanctuary is one of the three crocodile sanctuaries of the state, Raneh falls is a very attractive location on the Ken River where. It enters a gorge framed by beautiful rock formations. Raneh falls is only about 17 km from the internationally renowned temple town of Khajuraho and is one of the must see elements of the visit to Khajuraho.

10. Hinota – Panna National Park

Hinota is one of the entry gate for Panna National Park situated 18 km from National Highway 75, Hinota welcomes both foreign and domestic nature enthusiasts who frequently visit Panna for sighting wildlife and exploring magnificent forest. It is proposed to develop a nature camp at the Hinota gate for promoting Ecotourism in sensitizing tourists towards forest and wildlife conservation.

11. Payali – Seoni

Situated on the border of Jabalpur and Seoni District, destination provides the picturesque view of back waters of Bargi Dam and magnificent teak forest payali is 30 kms from Jabalpur and can be approached from Mandla Jabalpur Highway or Jabalpur National Highway, River facing forest rest house with 4 rooms is the major attraction of Payali.

12. Tamia – Patalo – Chhindwara

Tamia Hills are around 45 km from Chhindwara. The steep hills, dense forests and big winding ghats have all combined to make Tamia a beauty spot and a tourist place. A forest rest house is picturesquely situated on a steep hill commending an extensive view of the deep forests and mountainous ranges of Satpura Notably Hamadeo and Choura Pahad in the background. The view from the rest house is noted for its constantly shifting natural scenery which is inspiring to visitors.

BENEFITS OF ECOTOURISM IN MADHYA PRADESH

There are some benefits from ecotourism in Madhya Pradesh as follows :

1. Economic Benefits

Benefits of Community:

- Continued tourist purchases, direct and indirect employment, foreign exchange income of country
- Preservation of the Natural environment employment
- Guide services, entertainment, hotels and restaurants, local tour operator, suppliers, educating tourists, local skills, crafts, security at destinations.

2. Social Benefits

- Improved infrastructure
- Improved facilities
- Varied Employment Opportunities
- Improved transport and services
- Improvement in quality of life
- Stronger community feeling
- Community Partnership in Policymaking
- Indigenous knowledge registration

- Consensus and decision making
- Providing entertainment, handicrafts
- Souvenirs educating, publicizing etc.

3. Environmental Benefits

- Conservation of Natural resources
- Protects areas of outstanding natural beauty
- Erected structures are ecofriendly
- Contribution in developing social change through conservation habits
- Increasing awareness on nature conservation

4. Benefits for preserving culture and Heritage

- Appreciation to preserve culture for perpetuity
- Heritage sites and structures to be restored and preserved
- Education and awareness

II. CONCLUSION

There is a great treasure of untapped and unexplored charm of ecotourism in the nature-gifted state Madhya Pradesh only there is need to identify and explore this treasure. If the rights steps could be taken for uplifting this form of tourism. Government should provide incentives to the locals for promoting ecotourism as a mean of motivation.

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