



**NITI Aayog**

# Report of Working Group II Sustainable Tourism in the Indian Himalayan Region



Contributing to  
Sustainable Development in Indian Himalayan Region

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**NITI Aayog, August 2018**

**Cover photo:** Ladakh Region, Jammu & Kashmir, India

# Contents

Preface	ii
Acknowledgments	iv
Acronyms and Abbreviations	v
Executive Summary	vi
Chapter 1: Background	1
Chapter 2: Methodological Approach	5
Chapter 3: Framework for Analysis and Actions	6
Chapter 4: Tourism Sector Trends and Development Paradigms	8
Chapter 5: Analysis of Supporting Policies and Plans	21
Chapter 6: Transboundary Tourism Aspects	29
Chapter 7: Building on Cultural Paradigm	32
Chapter 8: Best Practices	34
Chapter 9: Recommended Sustainability Needs in IHR	38
Chapter 10: Actions for Impacts	45
Chapter 11: Summing-up	52
References	54
Annexure 1: Policy Format Analysis	55
Annexure 2: Area Wise Policy Assessment of IHR States	58
Annexure 3: Best Practices	62
Annexure 4: Sustainable Tourism Actions in the Indian Himalayan Region	70
Annexure 5: Sustainable Tourism and Associated Actions	73
Annexure 6: Action Agenda	81

# Preface

Mountains cover around 27% of the Earth's land surface and contribute to the sustenance and wellbeing of 720 million people living in the mountains and billions more living downstream. In other words, over half the human population depends on mountains for water, food, and clean energy. Yet mountains are under threat from climate change, land degradation, overexploitation, and natural disasters, with potentially far-reaching and devastating consequences, both for mountain communities and downstream populations. In fact, one out of three mountain people in developing countries is vulnerable to food insecurity and faces poverty and isolation. The challenge is to identify new and sustainable opportunities that can bring benefits to both highland and lowland communities and help to eradicate poverty without contributing to the degradation of fragile mountain ecosystems (FAO, 2018). With a similar set of threats in the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) and its adjoining landscapes, existing non-climatic issues are becoming complex as multi-faceted problems such as human-wildlife conflicts, water insecurity due to drying of natural springs, land degradation and resultant socio-demographic changes (out-migration), and environmental problems such as solid waste and air pollution are pertinent. On the other hand, there is the issue of in-migration — since labour for infrastructure development and farming is contracted from outside. As climate change has affected the Himalayan region, warning signals in the form of shrinking glaciers, increasing temperatures, water scarcity, changing monsoonal patterns, and frequency of severe disasters are obvious. The cumulative impact of the above-stated problems is leading to ecological and cultural degradation as the “Natural and Sacred Legacy” of the IHR is fast deteriorating.

The maintenance of the ecological health of the IHR is imperative. The IHR stretches about 2,400 km across the northern border of India, covering an area of about 500,000 sq km. It affects climate, water security, and livelihoods in the region — both upstream and downstream. The IHR extends from the Indus River in the west to the Brahmaputra River in the east. The mountain ranges and river basins share transboundary connectedness. Six countries in the Hindu Kush Himalayan region share borders with India.

Many countries are looking at tourism to generate income and strengthen the national economy. As one of the world's largest industries, tourism is responsible for more than one in ten jobs globally and constitutes over 8% of domestic economic activity. For the IHR, ‘tourism’ in a broader sense of the word has existed for a very long time — in the form of pilgrimage trips to Hindu religious sites and river sources which are located high up in the mountains. With the arrival of the British in the 19th century, summer resorts, the so-called ‘Hill Stations’, were established. Examples of these are Darjeeling, Nainital, Mussoorie, and Shimla, which are today major tourism destinations.

The Himalayan region has an important spiritual meaning for Hindus as a “sacred space”. To Hindus, it is not just a collection of natural features or beautiful landscapes, but a representation of the divine. Pilgrimage tourism, therefore, has been a feature of the IHR for centuries. Until the middle of the 19th century, the number of pilgrims who went on the arduous trek to Badrinath was relatively low — after 30 days of walking, about five to ten thousand pilgrims reached Badrinath each year. With the expansion of roads and improved accessibility, by the middle of the 20th century, Badrinath could be reached from Rishikesh within one and a half day by bus.

Since then, the number of pilgrims and vehicles arriving in Badrinath and the whole IHR has increased dramatically. In 2016, approximately 0.62 million people visited the holy shrine (badarikedar.org).

Apart from pilgrimage tourism, “modern” tourism in the IHR region, which is represented by mass tourism, largely limited to sightseeing and visiting major tourism hubs, is also putting severe stress on the ecology and ecosystem services of the Himalaya as well as on local social structures. This form of tourism requires ever-expanding road networks, hotels, related infrastructure, and institutional capacities and puts huge demands on the water and natural resources of this fragile region. Over the years, trekking, mountain climbing, and nature-based tourism in the IHR have been gaining popularity. These are round-the-year activities need to be encouraged and promoted responsibly.

While tourism is one of the main development sectors for the Himalaya and can be the engine that drives future development in the region, this will only be possible if it is developed and implemented following principles of sustainability. This report lays out an action-oriented path for the development of sustainable tourism in the Himalaya, which can enhance economic and livelihood opportunities while maintaining the ecology and cultural values of the region.





# Acknowledgements

As Convener of the Working Group SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE INDIAN HIMALAYAN REGION set up by NITI Aayog, I would like to thank all individuals and institutions who participated in several stakeholder meetings in 2017 for their valuable contributions and inputs for drawing up recommendations and actions while preparing this report.

I am indeed extremely indebted to Dr V K Saraswat, Honourable Member, NITI Aayog, for taking up the important task of convening the Working Group under his invaluable guidance and support. He has been a source of inspiration to all the members of the Working Group.

I am grateful to Dr Ashok Kumar Jain, Adviser, NITI Aayog, who provided motivation and support for taking up this initiative. I thankfully acknowledge his suggestions and guidance, provided during the stakeholder meetings and several other follow-up meetings. I am also thankful to his colleagues, especially members of the NITI Aayog.

I am thankful to all the member institutions of the Working Group for responding to my request and participating in the deliberations, and sharing their immense knowledge on the subject. A number of other institutions and individuals who have been contributing to sustainable tourism work were also requested to provide inputs and participate in the stakeholder meeting. I am extremely thankful to all the members of the drafting team for their useful inputs and contributions.

I would particularly like to express my heartfelt appreciation to Dr Rajan Kotru of ICIMOD who did a splendid job coordinating the drafting team, seeking inputs from the team and other stakeholders, and developing a report.

I would also like to express my gratitude to members of the Working Group, including representatives from the the Ministry of Tourism and the Uttarakhand Tourism Department; Dr Sejal Worah, WWF India; Moe Chiba, UNESCO; Mridula Tangirala, TATA Trust; Tshering Uden Bhutia, Khanchendzonga Conservation Committee (KCC); Deepika Lohia Aran and Ananya Bal of the Niti Aayog; and, Govind Ballabh Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development, for their critical inputs and review.

I wish to thank all the working group members and colleagues at the NITI Aayog who provided their valuable inputs for the completion of this report.

**Vikram Singh Gaur**

New Delhi  
12 February 2018

# Acronyms and Abbreviations

ANCA	Api Nampa Conservation Area (Nepal)	LCA	Life Cycle Approach
CBA	Cost benefit analysis	LEDEG	Ladakh Ecological Development Group
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility	Lts	Litres
EPI	Environmental Performance Index	M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development	MoT	Ministry of Tourism (GoI)
FEE	Foreign Exchange Earnings	MT	Metric tonnes
FTAs	Foreign Tourist Arrivals	MSW	Municipal solid waste
GBPNIHESD	Govind Ballabh Pant National Institute of Himalayan Environment and Sustainable Development	NER	North East Region
GDP	Gross Development Product	NGT	National Green Tribunal
GHG	Global Greenhouse Gas	NP	National Park
GoI	Government of India	PES	Payment for Ecosystem Services
GSDP	Gross State Development Product	PRASAD	Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive
HIMAP	Himalayan Monitoring and Assessment Programme	SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
HKH	Hindu Kush Himalaya	SNA	System of National Accounts
IBM	Incentive based mechanisms	STCI	Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development	TCC	Tourism Carrying Capacity
IGOs	International organizations	TDGVA	Tourism Direct Gross Value Added
IHR	Indian Himalayan Region	TSA	Tourism Satellite Accounts
ISFR	Indian State of Forests Report	UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
J&K	Jammu and Kashmir	USP	Unique Selling Point
		WTO	World Tourism Organization
		WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council

# Executive Summary

With its towering peaks, majestic landscapes, rich biodiversity and cultural heritage, the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) has long drawn visitors and pilgrims from the Indian sub-continent and across the world. The IHR attracts those who seek vistas, adventure, cooler climates in the summer, sport, spiritual solace, peace, and the many cultural assets of mountains. These dynamics have turned tourism into a key driver of socio-economic development. For local mountain people, tourism provides valuable economic and business opportunities and jobs, and for state governments and private entrepreneurs it brings revenues and profits. The 11th Five-Year Plan of India's Planning Commission states, "Tourism is the largest service industry in the country. Its importance lies in being an instrument for economic development and employment generation, particularly in remote and backward areas (e.g., in IHR)". Tourism and hospitality sector directly contributes about US\$ 71.5 billion to the GDP ([www.ibef.org](http://www.ibef.org)). Moreover, the 12th Five-Year Plan clearly recognizes pro-poor tourism for inclusive growth.

The IHR encompasses several sensitive and fragile human-environment systems and ecological carrying capacities are a critical factor for tourism development. Tourism development and promotion in the IHR should therefore be built around the principles of sustainable tourism as opposed to mass tourism. The prevailing model of tourism in the IHR is viewed as a source of environmental damage and pollution, a threat to socio-cultural heritage, a heavy user of scarce resources, and potential cause of negative externalities in society. These internal tourism development dynamics, coupled with the impacts of climate change, are important drivers of change affecting sustainable tourism development in IHR.

Specific negative impacts linked to the current form of tourism in the IHR include the replacement of traditional eco-friendly and aesthetic architecture with inappropriate, unsightly and dangerous construction, poorly designed roads and associated infrastructure, inadequate solid waste management, air pollution, degradation of watersheds and water sources, and the loss of natural resources, biodiversity and ecosystem services. Cumulatively, these are affecting long-term tourism development prospects in the IHR.

While there is great potential for tourism growth in IHR, it must be managed so that it is inclusive (focusing also on marginalized areas and groups) and sustainable (ensuring jobs, promotion of local culture and tourism products) and contributes to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly SDGs 8 and 12. However, the mounting challenges in the IHR link to many other SDGs (e.g. SDGs: 1,13,15). On the other hand, sustainable aspects of tourism development in the IHR, including the carrying capacity of potential destinations, do not find enough resonance in planning long-term investments.

A desk-analysis was conducted to develop a "Framework for Analysis and Actions" for sustainable tourism. The application of this framework allowed us to review current tourism and key cross-cutting policies, tourism plans and best practices in the IHR, existing assessments on socio-economic status and environmental threats, and finally to build a basic understanding of enabling and disabling trends due to



tourism in the IHR. Barring a couple of mountain states (Sikkim and Himachal Pradesh), the environmental performance index of the IHR is very low. Corroborating this finding, a World Bank survey in 2015 using criteria such as “Ease of Doing Business” and “Environmental Compliance” found that none of the IHR states figured in the first 10. This suggests that the conditions may not necessarily be favourable for tourism businesses in the IHR, and that despite the fragility of the IHR environmental compliance may have been compromised.

Socio-economic development and conservation of the IHR is increasingly challenged by the mass-tourism scenario, which has also a cross-border connect and faces massive climate change related challenges, as well as the conventional problems of huge fiscal deficits, gaps in environmental compliance and very minimal investments to promote sustainable tourism. These problems can get worse if the envisaged tourist load of 240 million by 2025 becomes a reality. Even states with best practice in tourism (like Sikkim) are equally threatened by mass tourism and its fall-outs, apart from losing forest cover to development.

While some of advanced states in the IHR are already implementing state-of-the-art policies and selected few actions, mainstreaming and cross-sectoral coherence is yet to be achieved. Given below are the primary set of actions recommended based on six categories emerging from the 27 June 2018 meeting at the NITI Aayog: 1) Institutions and Processes, 2) Capacity Building, 3) Research/Science and Technology, 4) Finance and market, Planning, 5) Implementation and Monitoring and 6) Policy and Regulations.

According to the analysis and the endorsement of the all-state meeting held on 27 June 2018, the conceptual, operational, and impact-orientation aspects of sustainable tourism that keep the increasing trends of tourist flow, management challenges, and associated investments in the IHR key action agenda points in alignment with the stated categories are:

- The State Planning Commissions must ensure and oversee convergence within the tourism departments and between different sectors to assess and guide a plethora of sustainable tourism aspects and related information viz. capacity building, marketing and promotion including product development, standards, certification and guidelines, data management and research, and integrated destination and infrastructure planning and implementation.
- Updated capacity building packages and follow-up systems promoting sustainable tourism and its packages (homestays, rural tourism, heritage management) need to be blended within the curriculum and delivery design of trainings/education institutions (e.g. vocational centres, universities, schools) serving a host of actors and public/private sectors.
- IHR specific awareness and sensitization package are important for different actors and sectors, including all key service providers and producers. There is a need to unleash this information through a proactive media campaign and existing travel related websites. All-inclusive tourism satellite accounts for the IHR must be made available as “one window on-line information” (e.g. information on number of hotels/rooms, tourist sites, parking places, traffic surveillance, waste quantum, number of tour guides, expenditures/impacts made on promoting sustainable tourism).

- Introduction of a “green cess” based on eco-certification and in the form of payments from service consumers/state should contribute to increased tax revenues and equitable sharing of that revenue. Payments for environmental services (PES) such as charging entrance fees might also offer a valuable long term solution within the tourism industry, as tourism relies heavily on the existence of sound natural environments.

Multi-year destination strategy and associated business plans (e.g. land use plans with landscape zoning concepts, carrying capacity assessments and environmental auditing of tourism service providers) must be made mandatory and should include a focus on sustainability and sustainable tourism that consists of environmental, economic, social, cultural, quality, health, and safety issues.

This is extremely important as tourist destinations in the IHR are also increasingly known for very disturbing trends such as drug abuse among youth, prostitution, exploitation of labour and uncontrolled land sales, despite states having put in stringent norms for outsiders.

The implementation strategy should be IHR state specific and must be based on business plans that clearly relate to eco-labelling parameters, investment planning, monitoring and evaluation.

The integrated implementation of above business plans and the performance on composite sustainability indicators could then be used to assess the performance of IHR states and incentivize them accordingly. These business plans must also serve as the basis for outscaling and upscaling the learning harnessed from best practices.

# Chapter 1

## Background

The present-day tourism sector is closely linked to development and often encompasses a strategy that aims to cover as many new destinations as possible. In the Indian Himalayan Region (IHR) tourism has experienced continued growth and increasing diversification over the last few decades to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in India. This status is in line with predictions for the sector, which is expected to grow at an average annual rate of 7.9% from 2013 to 2023.

Ladakh is a classic example of how tourism has grown even in the remotest and highest areas of IHR. Ladakh was opened for tourism in 1974; 527 tourists arrived that year, 27 of them Indian. It increased gradually to 55,685 Indians in 2010, according to data obtained from the district's tourism department. In 2011, the number shot up to 1.42 lakh people. India ranks third among countries with the fastest growing tourism industry over the next decade. India also has a large medical tourism sector which is expected to grow at an estimated rate of 30% annually to reach about Rs.95 billion by 2015 (Jaswal, 2014).

With its towering peaks, majestic landscapes, and rich biodiversity and cultural heritage, the IHR has attracted visitors and pilgrims from the subcontinent and across the world. The IHR has attracted those who seek vistas, adventure, cooler climates in summer, sport, spiritual solace, peace and the many cultural assets of mountains – built to take advantage of the natural grandeur it manifests. These dynamics have turned tourism into a key driver for economic growth. For local mountain people, tourism means valuable economic and business opportunities and jobs, and for state governments and private entrepreneurs it brings revenues and profits. In the 11<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan of India's Planning Commission: "Tourism is the largest service industry in the country". Its importance lies in being an instrument for economic development and employment generation, particularly in remote and backward areas (e.g. in IHR). Moreover, the 12<sup>th</sup> Five-Year Plan clearly recognizes pro-poor tourism for inclusive growth.

According to the United Nations, issues such as climate change, effective resource management, poverty reduction and inclusive growth need to be at the centre of tourism development. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which are now recognized as a universal 17-goal plan of action for people, the planet and prosperity for all countries require all stakeholders to act in collaborative partnerships. Apart from several other SDGs, mountain specific tourism is directly included as a target in Goals 8 and 12:

- **Goal 8** on the promotion of "sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth", full and productive employment and decent work for all includes as Target 8.9 "By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products".
- **Goal 12** aimed to "ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns" includes as Target 12.b to "Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products".



The critical aspect within the SDG Goals above relevant to tourism in IHR is that tourism development should be sustainable. As sustainable cities and communities (SDG 11) gain attention and investment in India, strengthening efforts to protect and safeguard our cultural and natural heritage is becoming inevitable. Further, social and environmental securities, and consumption behaviour are increasingly challenging Himalayan landscapes so the linkage to other SDGs needs to be integrated (e.g. SDGs: 1, 6, 13, 15). For the IHR, this aspect should be non-negotiable as the region has several sensitive and fragile human-environment systems. This means that carrying and human capacities are critical factors that define certain forms of tourism. Tourism development and promotion in IHR should therefore be built around the principles of sustainable tourism as opposed to mass tourism. This should not be seen as a factor limiting the role of tourism in the economic development of the IHR as sustainable and eco-tourism is one of the fastest growing tourism markets that generates higher economic benefits per visitor with a lower ecological footprint.

The current model of tourism in the IHR range is viewed as a source of environmental damage and pollution, a threat to the socio-cultural heritage, a heavy user of scarce resources, and a potential cause of negative externalities in society. These internal tourism development dynamics, including impacts of climate change, are important drivers of change affecting sustainable tourism development in the IHR.

Les Carlisle, conservation manager of Climate Change Africa once said: "Tourism is like fire: it can cook your food or it can burn your house down". In the IHR, we can see examples of both kinds: on the one hand are "under-cooked" destinations where one marvels at the rich natural/historical/cultural heritage and wonders why such wealth has not been a sustainable engine of growth for the communities around. On the other hand, one sees the "ravaged remains" of the over-crowded tourist spots that have choked the very heritage that gave birth to it.

Issues of general concern to IHR environments are growing in magnitude and becoming challenging, such as loss or degradation of mountain landscapes and biodiversity, with unsustainable tourism contributing to these problems. Some of the impacts of the current models of tourism in the IHR include replacement of traditional eco-friendly and aesthetic architecture with inappropriate, unsightly, and dangerous construction; poorly designed roads and associated infrastructure; inadequate solid waste management; air pollution; degradation of watersheds and water sources; and loss of natural resources, biodiversity, and ecosystem services. Cumulatively, these negative impacts will affect the long-term tourism development prospects of the IHR.

In the context of SDGs 8 and 12, the prospects for tourism growth in the IHR may be great but managing such growth so that it is inclusive (focusing on marginalized areas and stakeholders (e.g. also in the north-east) and sustainable (ensuring jobs, promotion of local culture and tourism product) is a challenge. On the other hand, sustainable aspects of tourism development in the IHR, such as carrying capacity of potential destinations, do not find enough resonance in planning long-term investments.

All mountain states have developed tourism/eco-tourism policies and master plans but not all of them address these challenges and harness opportunities that change brings. Moreover, tourism development policies may not necessarily be synergised with ecotourism policies and least with other cross-sectoral policies. Apart from this, the heterogeneity is not only limited to geographical spread/coverage (of different mountain states) but also the contexts and stages of tourism development history, which has dictated the scope (strategic direction) of policy and plan formulation. These policies and plans, although driven by a common goal (often not linked to sustainable tourism), are driven by different state level tourism development imperatives. For instance, the history of tourism development in North East Region (NER) is recent, compared to the Western Himalaya e.g. Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh. Isolation and economic seclusion of the past are two of the underlying factors that the states of NER aim to emerge from, through a tourism development policy that focuses heavily on creating enabling environment for strengthening state and interstate linkages. It is only in the last few years that the Government's very appreciative "Go East Policy" is trying to break the barriers to socioeconomic development of NER.

## 1.1. Rationale

The impacts of mass-tourism and disregard for carrying capacity in the tourism development trajectory of the IHR has led to serious concerns among policy makers, residents and visitors. While there is great potential to harness the tourism assets of the region, there is an increasing realization that the tourism development pathway going forward needs to be different and build on sustainable development principles. On a positive note, there are some promising cases from IHR states on solid waste management, controlling visitor flow (e.g. to Rohtang Pass in Himachal Pradesh), controlled number of pilgrims (e.g. Vaishno Devi, J&K), community-based tourism, and tourism policies embracing sustainability principles (e.g. Sikkim). However, these good cases often remain context specific and are usually not scaled up. Therefore, concerns and risks associated with tourism development and loss of ecological values and cultural heritage in IHR demand:

- Minimizing the negative impacts of tourism on communities and the environment in IHR,
- Maximizing tourism's positive and creative contribution to IHR local economies, the conservation of natural and cultural heritage, and the quality of life of hosts and visitors, and
- Harnessing opportunities and innovative actions to make tourism sustainable.

It is in this context that in a national level consultation on 7 April 2017, NITI Aayog, in association with some key national institutions and ICIMOD, set up an Action Agenda for "Sustainable Development of Mountains of Indian Himalayan Region (IHR)", in which "Sustainable Tourism in IHR" was selected as one of



the key themes. Based on the deliberation, the working group concluded that there are relevant policies and best practices in place. Similarly, each mountain state in the IHR has tourism development plans, and the problems of negative social and environmental impacts are widely known. The working group agreed to suggest a conceptual framework that allows further consolidation of knowledge on existing policy gaps, planning and implementation deficits, and challenges due to climate change, so that the IHR can benefit from a set of actions and recommendations for sustainable tourism in the region. Based on the consultation, there was agreement to design a draft framework for analysing the existing tourism policies and plans and other supporting policies and suggest key actions so that policy gaps, planning deficits and climate change issues are addressed.





## Chapter 2

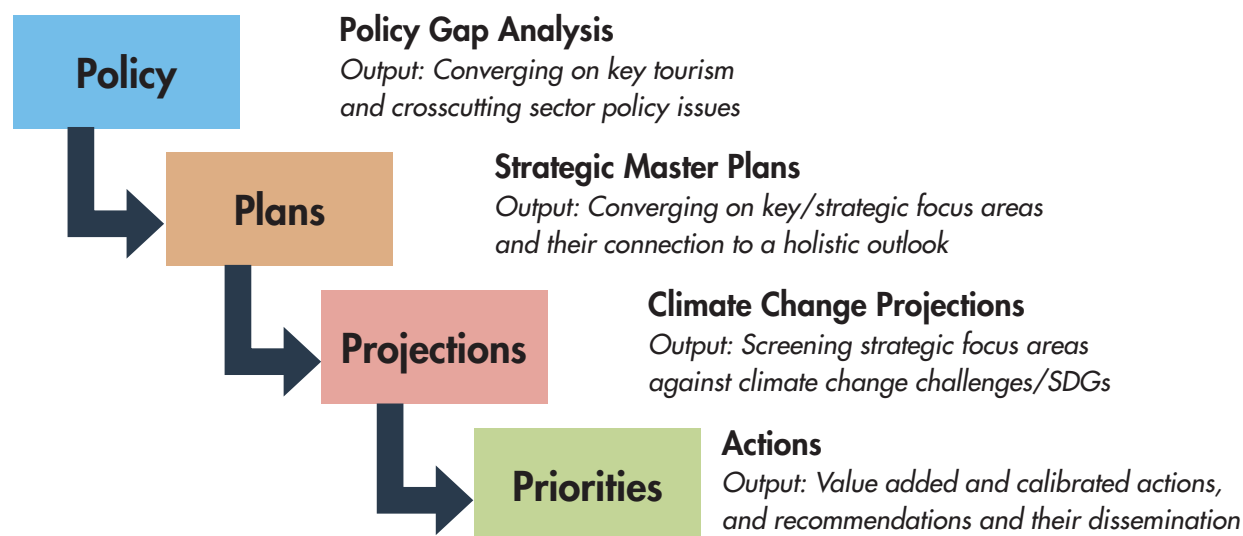
# Methodological Approach

The key action points outlined to form the basis of a methodological framework are:

- Review current tourism and key cross-cutting policies and plans of IHR.
- Identify gaps and best initiatives (policy and practice) related to sustainable tourism.
- Convene state level dialogues (multi-sector and multi-stakeholder).
- Explore/promote/update integrated sustainable tourism policies in key states.
- Identify policy, financial and institutional incentives that will support sustainable tourism development.
- Develop a regulatory framework for minimizing impacts and monitoring mechanism at state and regional level.

Following the above action points, the working group on “Sustainable Tourism in IHR” held its first meeting under the chairmanship of Mr. Vikram Singh Gaur, Joint Secretary, NITI Aayog (Vertical Tourism). Based on the deliberations, the working group concluded that each mountain state in the IHR has tourism development plans as well as, in some cases, ecotourism policies and plans. Mountain states also have best practices (private and state-promoted), and examples of negative social and environmental impacts. The working group agreed to suggest a conceptual framework that allows further consolidation of existing policy gaps, planning and implementation deficits, and the emerging challenges of climate change so that the IHR can benefit from a set of actions and recommendations that make sustainable tourism a priority. The draft framework for recommended actions is presented below (Figure 1):

Figure 1: **Framework for Analysis and Actions: 4 Ps Model**



# Chapter 3

## Framework for Analysis and Actions

**a. Policy gap analysis:** This involved a cross-cutting analysis of selected IHR state tourism policies, and other closely connected policies (forest, environment, industrial, infrastructure development) for converging on key deficits such as contradictory cross-sectoral policy statements as well as unsustainable actions and incentives. It also looked into key policy instruments that have yielded positive/negative impacts. Apart from this, it looked into forward and backward linkages in selected tourism value chains in terms of how new policy recommendations may influence these.

**b. Plans:** Analysis of key tourism and other conservation and development oriented master plans to scope out strategic areas of focus that currently are defining intervention areas, investments and impacts. Here analytical focus was also on the governance of tourism value chain and institutional deficits (e.g. services sector's capacity to deliver sustainable tourism, equitable benefit sharing) and monitoring mechanisms that allow holistic implementation of plans. Focus was also on analysing selected best practices to determine what is up- and out-scalable.

**c. Projections:** Given the country's commitment to SDGs and climate change agreements, current policy and plan deficits as well as dividends were screened against the current and projected changes in socio-demography and climate, and the expected impacts (e.g. on water security, hydropower, carrying capacity of destinations, health and hygiene). The projections also take into account long term impacts on the ecological security of the region. This analysis was crucial as apart from sector governance and institutional capacities, climate change projections will influence key corrective actions and recommendations.

**d. Priorities:** This element of the framework for analysis and actions used the analysis of the first three framework elements as per the accessible and available information from web sources and proposes IHR oriented recommendations to address above-mentioned key action points (e.g. regulatory framework for minimising negative impacts, monitoring mechanism and collaborative framework to harness emerging opportunities) and recommendations for policy, practice, and future research. The priorities were crafted based on further consideration of existing conclusions and recommendations made by numerous government and other non-government documents aiming promotion of sustainable tourism in the IHR.

**Note:** However, while analysing and interpreting the policies and practices of the IHR, conclusions are drawn in a generic way and not necessarily described according to framework elements outlined. Moreover,

not all states are on the same level of socio-economic development and exposure. Lastly, not all state level documents could be analysed as some of these were not in the public domain. Few business sector related documents were consulted. Interpretations have been made also based on self-observations in the IHR by the group of contributors to this document.

## Process for concluding

The working group worked as a team based on task allocations as per institutional strengths and experience. However, given the vast spread and heterogeneity of IHR the magnitude of the analytical task was huge. The working group proposed that ICIMOD take a lead in making the first draft analysis according to the identified framework and share the draft document with group members. The process adopted was as follows:

- Delivery of draft concept note to NITI Aayog by ICIMOD
- Refinement of the draft by the working group and delivery of the final draft
- Draft analysis according to agreed framework for analysis and actions and as per task distribution amongst working group members
- Draft refinement/finalisation
- Circulation of the draft document to mountain states
- National IHR level presentation and consultation for firming up the agreed upon actions together with other WGs (To be organised by NITI Aayog)

Table 1: **Tourist arrival trends in the IHR states (2011-2015)**

Indian Himalayan States	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	Total	Five Years Average (Rounded off)
Arunachal Pradesh	237,980	322,378	136,307	341,178	357,772	<b>1,395,615</b>	279,123
Assam	4,355,885	4,528,950	4,702,165	4,848,239	5,516,565	<b>23,951,804</b>	4,790,361
Himachal Pradesh	15,089,406	16,146,332	15,129,835	16,314,400	17,531,153	<b>80,211,126</b>	16,042,225
Jammu & Kashmir	13,143,124	12,505,924	13,703,247	9,525,021	9,203,584	<b>58,080,900</b>	11,616,180
Manipur	135,083	135,290	142,581	118,268	149,429	<b>680,651</b>	136,130
Meghalaya	672,307	685,567	698,042	725,133	759,192	<b>354,0241</b>	708,048
Mizoram	62,832	64,993	64,177	69,124	67,403	<b>328,529</b>	65,705
Nagaland	27,471	38,404	38,942	61,092	67,385	<b>233,294</b>	46,658
Sikkim	576,055	585,027	608,447	611,593	743,502	<b>3,124,624</b>	624,924
Tripura	365,561	369,626	371,439	387,935	398,058	<b>1,892,619</b>	378,523
Uttarakhand	26,070,907	26,951,884	20,038,811	22,093,281	29,602,820	<b>124,757,703</b>	24,951,540
West Bengal	23,470,238	23,949,815	26,792,530	50,405,330	71,682,950	<b>196,300,863</b>	39,260,172
<b>Total</b>	<b>84,206,849</b>	<b>86,284,190</b>	<b>82,426,523</b>	<b>105,500,594</b>	<b>136,079,813</b>	<b>494,497,969</b>	<b>98,899,593</b>

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India

## Chapter 4

# Tourism Sector Trends and Development Paradigms

As a first step to understanding the extent of tourism intensity in the IHR, data on visitor arrivals was analysed (Table 1). India's share in international tourist arrivals in 2015 was only 0.68% of world arrivals. In 2016, 8.89 million foreign tourists visited India. In 2015, foreign exchange earnings (FEE) from tourism were US \$ 21.07 billion as compared to US\$ 20.24 billion in 2014, registering a growth of 9.6%. However, not many of these tourists visit IHR as none of the 11 states of IHR figured among the top states in India visited by foreigners. Only West Bengal, with 1.49 million foreign tourist arrivals figures in the list – and here too, not many of them go to Darjeeling, the only noteworthy mountain district in this state.

In 2015 India had 1,432 million (P) domestic tourist visits as compared to 1290.12 million in 2014, with a growth rate of 11.6 %. (India Tourism Statistics 2015, Market Division 2015). In terms of number of domestic tourist visits, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, and Karnataka were the top five destination States, accounting for 61.3 % of total tourist visits in 2016. As shown in Table 1, on average approx. 100 million of these domestic tourists visit IHR. It is important to note here that the human population of IHR is approximately 60 million, so the much higher floating population and overall impacts on IHR is expected to be high and not fully understood.

Hence, tourism in India and in the Himalaya has become one of the fastest growing sectors in terms of economic activity and industry transects. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council in 2016 this sector in India contributed 9.6% of GDP creating 40.343 million jobs and 9.3% of total employment. This shows the potential for achieving SDG targets 8 and 12 through tourism.

Tourism in the IHR has shown a persistent upward trend over many decades despite several natural disasters and political unrest. That tourist arrivals can be strongly affected by disasters is visible from Uttarakhand data in 2013 (20 million) when numbers dropped to an all-time low in the five year period. Similarly, J&K clearly shows a decrease in tourist arrivals over the past few years due to unrest. It is obvious that seclusion and lack of focus on the northeast is also reflected in lower number of visitors here with Nagaland lowest in the rank (46,658). Although West Bengal is amongst the highest visited (39 million) segregated data on how many of these come to hills and how many go to the rest of sites was not available or was unclear. Pilgrimage, spirituality, adventure, summer and winter delights have become the predominant attractions for tourists to visit Himalayan destinations.

Data for the last five years on tourist arrivals shows unprecedented growth in the IHR. The total number of tourist arrivals from 2011-2015 were 494 million which is 8.42% of the total national arrival (5,870,256,562). Further, it is expected that by 2025 (Figure 1) tourist footfall in IHR will increase multi-fold (estimated 240 million). This is evident from the Uttarakhand Master Plan on tourism which aims to attract

65 million tourists by the year 2025 (against the current 27 million). Also, GoI has set a goal to increase India's share in world tourist arrivals from the present 0.68% to 1% by 2020, and further increase it to 2% by 2025.

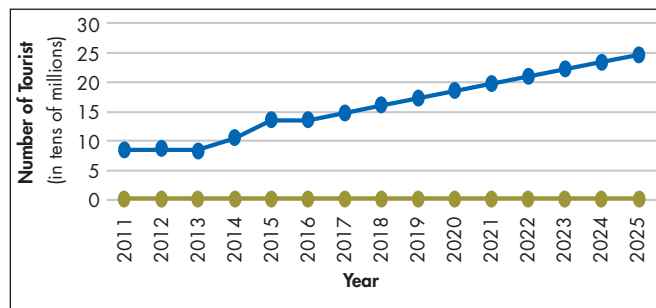
As per the latest World Tourism Barometer of the United Nation's World Tourism Organization (December, 2017 edition), international tourist arrivals touched 1.2 billion in 2016, 46 million more than in the previous year, though the growth rate of 3.9% was lower than in 2015 (4.6 per cent). As per the provisional data of the Ministry of Tourism (MoT), Government of India (GoI), FTAs (Foreign Tourist Arrivals) during 2017 were 10.2 million, with a growth of 15.6 %, while, the FEEs from tourism were US\$ 27.7 billion, with a growth

of 20.8% over 2016. Various initiatives have been taken by the Government to promote tourism. Recent measures include the introduction of the e-Visa facility under three categories – Tourist, Medical and Business – for the citizens of 163 countries; launch of Global Media Campaign for 2017-18 on various international TV channels; launch of 'The Heritage Trail' to promote the World Heritage Sites in India; Celebration of 'Paryatan Parv' with three components, namely 'Dekho Apna Desh' to encourage Indians to visit their own country, 'Tourism for All' with tourism events at sites across all states in the country, and 'Tourism and Governance' with interactive sessions and workshops with stakeholders on varied themes. FTAs on e-Tourist Visa grew by 143 per cent to 10.8 lakh in 2016, and further grew by 57.2 per cent to 17.0 lakh during 2017 (Economic Survey 2017-18, Volume 2). This promising development in FTA only shows that in addition to increasing domestic tourist numbers to IHR, challenges to sustainable tourism are only going to be greater and more complex if innovative efforts and best practice cases are not converged and scaled up.

A visitor satisfaction survey in Dharamsala, a major tourist destination in Himachal Pradesh, revealed that hygiene, waste, lack of safe drinking water, and poor transport and communication were amongst some of the living aspects of the town that were rated very negatively (Singh and Hietala 2014). It can be safely said that things are not totally different even in smaller mountain states. In the India Today ranking of the best states (2015-16) comprising parameters, inter alia, environment and cleanliness, inclusive development tourism, governance and agriculture (Exclusive Annual Survey, 27.11.2017), Himachal Pradesh has been assessed as the overall best state.

The number of domestic tourists in India is steadily increasing as the country's economic performance improves and society gets increasingly mobile. This trend challenges policy makers, planners, and researchers to deal with the situation (e.g. preparedness and management) given available limited resources and services potential, increasingly unavertable natural disasters, and landscape degradation (e.g. waste, unplanned urbanization, migration). On the other hand, for the development of tourism infrastructure in the country, the MoT introduced a scheme in 2014-15 namely Swadesh Darshan –

Figure 2: **Tourist arrival forecast in the IHR states by 2025**



Source: Compiled based on the Tourism Master Plans of the IHR States

supporting the integrated development of tourist circuits around specific themes with a vision to develop theme based tourist circuits on the principles of high tourist value, competitiveness, and sustainability in an integrated manner by synergizing efforts and focusing on needs and concerns of all stakeholders to enrich tourist experience and enhance employment opportunities. However, it must be added that there is a gap in terms of planning and actual release of financial resources by the Tourism Finance Corporation of India Ltd. for entrepreneurship development and investments do not match the needs of the growing tourism sector in the IHR.

The five years tourist arrival average (left) reflects the position of IHR state. Nagaland ranks lowest with a five year average of 46,658. States like West Bengal, Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir and Assam are in the top five. Although West Bengal tops with the maximum number of tourists per annum, only 1.2% (2014) are estimated to have visited Darjeeling, the main hill/mountain district. Accessibility is clearly one of the key factors for substantial number of visitors as collectively the three western IHR states have higher number of tourists than the NER put together.

Under the Swadesh Darshan scheme, among 15 thematic circuits, a few are closely related to IHR such as the North-East (NE) India Circuit, Himalayan Circuit, and Spiritual Circuit. However, while funds planned for promoting the NE Circuit (e.g. Sikkim) were Rs. 98 crore only Rs. 19 crore were released (2014-15). Eco circuit for Uttarakhand was envisaged with a budget of Rs. 80 crore but only Rs. 16 crore was released. This trend of low-fund release looks to be improving as data from 2016-17 (for eight IHR States, MoT) shows that against the sanctioned amount approximately up to 50% of the planned fund was released to most of the states with fund release still around 25% for Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim. Mizoram in 2016-17 had the highest released

Table 2: State rankings on tourist arrival based on five years average

States	Average of five years (2012-2016)	Ranking
Nagaland	46,658	12
Mizoram	65,705	11
Manipur	136,130.2	10
Arunachal Pradesh	279,123	9
Tripura	378,523.8	8
Sikkim	624,924.8	7
Meghalaya	708,048.2	6
Assam	4,790,360.8	5
Jammu & Kashmir	11,616,180	4
Himachal Pradesh	16,042,225.2	3
Uttarakhand	24,951,540.6	2
West Bengal	39,260,172.6	1

Table 3: Number of classified hotels in IHR as on 31st December, 2016

States	Total Hotels	Total Rooms
Arunachal Pradesh	4	106
Assam	29	1,039
Himachal Pradesh	67	669
Jammu & Kashmir	6	127
Manipur	1	59
Meghalaya	1	51
Mizoram	1	45
Nagaland	1	19
Sikkim	18	432
Tripura	1	101
Uttarakhand	17	224
West Bengal	35	3,024
<b>Total</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>5,896</b>

Source: Ministry of Tourism, Government of India



amount of 75% of the sanctioned amount (94 crore). Hence it is also concluded that fast promoted/ growing tourism in IHR is not necessarily backed up with consistent flow of financial resources or by the immediate response of states which receive and use the fund. In the 'National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual, Heritage Augmentation Drive' (PRASHAD) launched by the MoT with the objective of holistic development of identified pilgrimage destinations in 2017, Rs.100 crore was allocated and Rs. 412 crore provided for promotion and publicity (Press Information Bureau release for January, 2018). However, only three mountain states figured in the planned budget (i.e. J&K, WB and Uttarakhand). Due to the tough ecological conditions, uneven terrain, vulnerability to disasters, and narrow road network the required time duration for execution of a project in the hill and mountain districts is comparatively more than in the plains, due to which allocated budget is not utilized within stipulated time and hence the funds lapse.

Additionally, the movement of Indian tourists is increasingly becoming individualistic as standards of living have gone up and people travel to IHR landscapes as and when they want. As a result, traffic congestion and air and noise pollution, overbooked hotels, non-availability of parking places, and local water and energy security are becoming recurrent problems, even in smaller towns such as Dharamsala. Even trials of control mechanisms to restrict the number of visitors to very fragile sites (e.g. Rohtang Pass from Kullu-Manali or Amarnath Yatra), have not yielded desired results as people find alternative routes and means to reach such sites. Even Sikkim, which has good experience with ecotourism, is increasingly challenged by mass tourism. According to KCC (Sikkim), homestays are increasingly challenged by degradation or destruction of trekking routes, and maintenance/restoration investment in a time-bound manner is difficult.

When we compare the number of tourist arrivals with the number of government approved hotels (government hotels) and the total number of rooms available (2015) there is an absolute mismatch. It is evident that north eastern states are bereft of hotels and most tourists are being accommodated in private hotels. It is safe to assume that tourists are largely catered to by private hotels and guest houses whether approved, registered, or unregistered. Nevertheless, it speaks volumes about the necessity of engaging with the private sector in much more constructive and productive ways in shaping policy and practice to support responsible tourism in the IHR with responsible investments.

In general, the aim of tourism development cannot be only to create jobs and increase economic output but also to do it sustainably and not to destroy the natural resource base on which the tourism depends to a large extent. The report on sustainability in Himachal Pradesh (TERI and Metroeconomica, 2013) indicates that tourism adds to environmental pressures. These need to be minimized and the State has a responsibility to establish regulations that keeps such pressures to a minimum. The main problems identified in similar studies in other states in the country include water supply and wastewater disposal, solid waste disposal, and congestion in sites of special value and interest. More funds need to be spent by the government to address some of these increased pressures, in particular with regard to planning of infrastructure (including for tourism) to manage these pressures in a sustainable way. Furthermore, it will need a separate and focused analysis on how the business sector can complement government efforts for investments and in return, how the business sector can be more responsible in the IHR.

## 4.1 Enabling and disabling trends due to tourism

Financial aspects of investments (Table 4) made by States in the tourism sector – with an ever increasing number of tourist arrivals – become a very significant parameter in assessing whether increasing demand is being met by the supply side. Thus revenue receipts in Uttarakhand – which tops as IHR top earner – are worth approximately Rs. 49 crore annually, with Nagaland having the lowest income. However, what is significant is the percentage of the total state expenditure that each state is ploughing back into the development of the tourism sector. Accordingly, as a generic statement, it is safe to say that states are hardly investing in tourism despite the potential and earnings from the sector. Sikkim accounts for the highest investment in the sector i.e. 1.9% of the total state expenditure. All other states invest less than 1%. West Bengal, which had the highest tourist arrival numbers, invests a mere 0.0001% of the total state expenditure on promoting tourism. Uttarakhand which stands second in tourist arrival invests a miserly 0.15% in the sector. To some extent such low investments can be explained by the fiscal deficits IHR states are trying to address. Sikkim has low fiscal deficit for 2016-17 (Rs. 6 billion). Both West Bengal and J&K have whopping fiscal deficits of over Rs.100 billion. With both central government funds flowing into states in trickles, and IHR states more interested in generating revenue than spending on the promotion and sustenance of tourism, it is going to be very challenging to manage the expected 240 million tourists by 2025 without seriously affecting the carrying capacity of IHR.

Table 4: IHR state budget on tourism

States	Revenue Receipts from Tourism (2016-17)	Expenditure on Tourism (2017)	Total State Expenditure	Fiscal Deficit 2016-17 Billion
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	10500 (Thousands)	870067 (Thousands) (0.77703%)	111973195 (Thousands)	3.7
<b>Assam</b>	73.88 (Lakhs)	870 (Lakhs) (0.01012534%)	85,923 (Crores)	66.7
<b>Himachal Pradesh</b>	19300 (Thousands)	250 (Lakh) (0.00698675%)	35782 (Crores)	40.8
<b>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</b>	460 (Lakhs)	1473 (Lakhs) (0.03017268%)	48819 (Crores)	116.1
<b>Manipur</b>	–	–	–	7.5
<b>Meghalaya</b>	1000 (Thousands)	2300 (Lakhs) (0.0591287%)	3889819 (Lakhs)	9.9
<b>Mizoram</b>	220.50 (Lakhs)	732.19 (Lakhs) (0.11465172%)	638621.04 (Lakhs)	0.2
<b>Nagaland</b>	0.37 (Lakhs)	1301.42 (Lakhs) (0.12821945%)	1014994.18 (Lakhs)	5.4
<b>Sikkim</b>	45000 (Thousands)	1180622 (thousands) (1.89754%)	62218255 (thousands)	6.0
<b>Tripura</b>	–	992.35 (Lakh) (0.06114763%)	1622875.76 (Lakhs)	17.5
<b>Uttarakhand</b>	489170 (Thousands)	623004 (Thousand) (0.15591861%)	39957 (crores)	60.7
<b>West Bengal</b>	25000 (Thousands)	500000 (Thousands) (0.0001285406%)	115765150000 (thousands)	193.6

Source: State Budgets and Reserve Bank of India

A recent assessment in Ladakh by LEDEG is quite revealing in the context of increasing number of tourists in IHR. It mentions that the average use of water by a local resident is 25 lts/day whereas each tourist consumes 75 lts/day. Similarly there are hotels which consume up to 5,000 lts of water per day and each year 20 to 25 such hotels are being registered in the Ladakh region (<https://india.mongabay.com/.../tourism-in-ladakh-worsens-water-availability>: Karthikeyan Hemlatha, 2018). Ladakh is a water deficit area and mostly dependent on snow/glacial melt and Indus River flow. With the exponential increase in the number of tourists since the shooting of the Bollywood film “Three Idiots”, sustainable tourism investment needs in this vulnerable landscape have grown drastically.

## 4.2 Contribution of tourism to the state economy

Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) is taken as one of the parameters to further understand the contribution of tourism to the state economy. Trade, hotels, and restaurants are considered as contributing factors. The data in Table 5 shows that tourism has been contributing more than 10% to the GDP in states such as Uttarakhand, West Bengal, Tripura, Assam, and Meghalaya. The lowest contributions are in states like Arunachal Pradesh (3-4%), Sikkim (2-3%) and Nagaland (3-4%).

Table 5: **Gross state domestic product (GSDP) at factor cost ‘trade, hotel and restaurants’ (current price)**

State	GSDP (Rs. in Lakh)				
	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	34,867 (3.86%)	41383 (3.84%)	46,525 (3.93%)	47,891 (4.04%)	54,621 (3.50)
<b>Assam</b>	149,1371 (13.23%)	1,756,799 (13.95%)	1,992,811 (14.39%)	2,182,985 (13.68%)	2,411,535 (13.12%)
<b>Himachal Pradesh</b>	612,649 (12.71%)	740,072 (12.88%)	811,392 (12.49%)	898,233 (12.18%)	990,264 (11.99%)
<b>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</b>	390,640 (6.72%)	503,024 (7.37%)	571,420 (7.42%)	628,827 (7.18%)	589,389 (6.70%)
<b>Manipur</b>	67,560 (7.39%)	80,728 (7.28%)	90,060 (7.09%)	100,421 (7.01%)	–
<b>Meghalaya</b>	154,202 (10.57%)	178,162 (10.35%)	182,938 (9.62%)	205,957 (9.39%)	231,962 (10.28%)
<b>Mizoram</b>	58,489 (9.15%)	60967 (8.84%)	71,116 (8.50%)	82,954 (8.05%)	–
<b>Nagaland</b>	48,672 (4.13%)	54,250 (3.91%)	61,427 (3.91%)	69,898 (3.93%)	79,614 (3.96%)
<b>Sikkim</b>	19,569 (2.64%)	27,475 (3.08%)	30,781 (2.93%)	35,199 (2.84%)	–
<b>Tripura</b>	249,606 (13.96%)	266,690 (13.35%)	310,700 (13.68%)	388,375 (14.48%)	–
<b>Uttarakhand</b>	1,939,254 (23.09%)	2,375,533 (24.27%)	2,550,948 (23.56%)	2,840,372 (23.11%)	3,056,268 (22.03%)
<b>West Bengal</b>	7,774,500 (16.86%)	8,498,352 (16.08%)	9,541,111 (15.81%)	10,654,559 (15.07%)	11,348,331 (14.17%)

Source: Reserve Bank of India

However, there are also focused methods that have been used to assess Gross Development Product (GDP) contribution through tourism. Thus, estimates using TSA (Tourism Satellite Account) methodologies indicate that the contribution of inbound tourists (foreign and domestic) to Himachal Pradesh's GDP may be as high as 26%, with the specific contribution of foreign tourists in the State estimated to be the largest at over 20%. The current contribution of domestic tourists from within HP to the State's GDP is estimated to be a little over 1%. It is quite likely that the estimates given above for the total contribution of tourism to the State's GDP are on the higher side compared to the official estimate of 8-10% for basic contribution of tourism to the state's economy. Therefore a major drawback of applying all-India tourist expenditure assumptions to the States is that they may not correctly reflect the high proportion of low budget foreign tourists (backpackers) coming to IHR. There are no official data on numbers and expenditure of low budget tourists in the States. TSA is a unique tool developed in extensive international co-operation as a result of which the UN, WTO (World Tourism Organization), OECD, and EU approved a recommendation on tourism satellite accounting in 2000. TSA is called a satellite account because it is not a part of the core national accounts.

TSA aims to provide macroeconomic aggregates which describe the size and the economic contribution of tourism, such as tourism direct gross value added (TDGVA). The main focus of the use of the TSA has been in the national context and the application of these to the regional economy is much less developed. These accounts assess the economic importance of tourism in regional/national economies and highlight tourism within the national accounting framework. It is an accounting procedure designed to measure goods and services associated with tourism in an objective way, according to internationally agreed standards, concepts, classifications, and definitions. It focuses on the economic dimension of tourism trips, mostly through expenditure by visitors or by others for their benefit. TSA can be used by policymakers to benchmark tourism with other economic sectors based on comparable concepts like employment, GDP and wages, the multipliers (changes in income and employment resulting from a change in expenditure) and the leakages (proportion of tourist expenditure that does not get covered). The TSA is also consistent with the System of National Accounts (SNA) approach for measuring an economic sector.

When it comes to financing, all conservation initiatives in India depend on miniscule state support. Six hundred and sixty eight Protected Areas (including 120 National Parks) have been provided Rs. 350 crore, with the highest amount to individual institution nearing Rs.10 lakh. Given that the global adventure and natural heritage tourism (ANHT) is worth \$430 billion and is expected grow to \$1 trillion in the next decade, India's nature and adventure tourism is still in a nascent stage with barely 3% of the 668 PAs getting tourism of any significance. Though it is difficult to open the protected areas for high-end tourism but with strict norms and enforcement, forest departments could build business partnerships to finance such tourism with clear benefits for local people and ecosystems.

### 4.3 Potential repercussion

Barring Sikkim, all mountain states show slightly decreasing contribution of tourism to GSDP of the state. To some extent this may be related to fresh impetus given by central government to multi-sectoral investments in the NER. It also shows that some of the remotest states of the NER like Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, and Manipur will take some time to benefit from the current "Go East Policy" of the central

government and then contribute to GSDP through tourism. However, decreasing trends of GSDP are noticed for western Himalayan states. With very heavy religious and spiritual tourism in Uttarakhand, tourism contributes to over one-fifth of the GSDP (2014-15). It is also evident that contribution to GSDP does not necessarily become the basis for priority investments in this sector. With this it can also be assumed that tourism promotion is largely in the hands of private sector as tourists still come and are served.

#### 4.4 Building the waste argument

With upward trends in tourist numbers to the IHR, it is likely that environmental and social trends and standards will be subjected to change. Apparently these developmental trends and activities in the IHR have direct or indirect causes and effects such as pollution, overexploitation of natural resources, food insecurity, ill planned urbanization, traffic congestion, loss of indigenous culture, natural disasters, and so on. As per the available data (2009-2012) IHR states are accumulating 22,372 metric tonnes (MT) of municipal solid waste per day.

It is logical that these figures for 2017 have increased substantially given that the number of tourists to the IHR has gone up by a huge margin (Table 1) and waste collection, segregation, disposal and recycling are



not organized. In exceedingly urbanized cities (e.g. Shimla, Darjeeling, Srinagar, Nainital, Kohima) there are waste collection mechanisms but the waste ends up in the open landscapes including in forests across the IHR. However, there are good practices and examples such as ‘Waste Warriors’ in Dharamsala Town, which need to be backed up with a meticulous plan to up-scale and out-scale.

Similarly, there have been trials of controlling visitor related waste on the Kullu-Rohtang Pass route, but such good practices are often person-specific ‘Champion Initiatives’ and with the shift of the person from the site, such ideas suffer and even revert to the business as usual approach. On the other hand, Sikkim is a model state for promoting ecotourism products and infrastructure, solid waste management concepts and capacity building efforts but is hugely challenged by the emerging and threatening aspects of mass tourism, human-wildlife conflict, landslides, and climate change induced fires. In other words, even if an IHR state is making progress as a sustainable tourism destination, emerging challenges as experienced in Sikkim can have upsetting impacts in the future.

To a great extent this also shows that eco-consciousness and the overall preparedness of a tourist to IHR needs a massive awareness campaign and capacity building of private sector actors (e.g. sensitisation of hotel staff and tour operators investing time and resources to educate its next group of clients travelling to IHR) before embarking on a IHR journey.

Given the fact that compilers of this document are frequent visitors to pilots in IHR, it is endorsed that waste management is a huge challenge in IHR and will become much more threatening as the number of tourists grows. Table 6 highlights that Mizoram has the highest per capita solid waste generation of 4.34gm per day followed by Jammu & Kashmir (0.14gm), West Bengal (0.13gm), Tripura and Meghalaya (0.09gm), Uttarakhand (0.07gm), Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh (0.06gm), Himachal and Manipur (0.04gm), and Assam (0.03gm). Certainly, the waste is not primarily generated by tourism and its allied sectors but it

**Table 6: Municipal solid waste generation in IHR states**

IHR States	Population (2011 Census) (% of population of India)	MSW Status MT/day (2009-2012)	Solid Waste Generation Per Capita (gm/capita/day)
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	1,382,611 (0.11%)	93.802	0.06
<b>Assam</b>	31,169,272 (2.58%)	1,146.28	0.03
<b>Himachal Pradesh</b>	6,864,602 (0.57%)	304.3	0.04
<b>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</b>	12,548,926 (1.04%)	1792	0.14
<b>Manipur</b>	2,721,756 (0.22%)	112.9	0.04
<b>Meghalaya</b>	2,964,007 (0.24%)	284.6	0.09
<b>Mizoram</b>	1,091,014 (0.09%)	4742	4.34
<b>Nagaland</b>	1,980,602 (0.16%)	187.6	0.09
<b>Sikkim</b>	607,688 (0.05%)	40	0.06
<b>Tripura</b>	3,671,032 (0.30%)	360	0.09
<b>Uttarakhand</b>	10,116,752 (0.84%)	752	0.07
<b>West Bengal</b>	91,347,736 (7.55%)	12,557	0.13

Source: ENVIS

reflects on waste generation and disposal as a key focus area for sustainable tourism. It also needs underlining that due to different microclimates and inaccessibility, waste disposal or decomposition in the mountains is either long term or it drains into rivulets endangering aquatic life and quality of regulatory services (e.g. drinking water quality) downstream. On the other hand, waste collection and management could be an economically viable option in the IHR and a future area of investment. In this context, local ideas need to be converted to up scaled models of mountain economy. Engaging youth in the “Waste Warrior Model” could be part of such economic activity.



## 4.5 Condition of forests as key elements of landscape aesthetics

Further, forest area loss in IHR states is a matter of concern as most tourist/pilgrim sites are located within or near to forest lands (barring alpine and very remote areas). Inappropriate forms of tourism development may add to deforestation. For instance, tourism in Uttarakhand has the highest contribution to its state GDP but conversely, the state lost 268 sq.km of forest in a span of two years. Mizoram reports the highest loss of forest area in comparison to the other Himalayan states, while positive changes have been reported from J&K (450 sq.km), West Bengal (23 sq.km) and Manipur (4 sq.km). As shown in Table 7, forest cover shrinkage in Northeast India is common and, to a great extent, related to the practice of shifting cultivation. It is also true that forest cover increase is mostly due to afforestation efforts, often monocultures, while natural forest cover and dense canopy forest (with higher value) is decreasing.

Give the combination of some of the most significant degradation factors such as loss of good forest cover, mounting solid waste, forest fires, uncontrolled mass tourism, the fallouts of tourism are very much reflected in a Judgement of the National Green Tribunal (NGT) in the matter of Sher Singh Vs State of HP dated 06/02/2014 regarding tourism impacts on satellite spots of major tourist destination at Manali in the north-western Himalaya which are mostly spread in snow (environment) and include Rohtang Pass, Marhi,

**Table 7: Change in forest area (2013-2015)**

States	Geographical Area (sq.km)	Total Forest in the year 2013 (sq.km)	Total Forest in the year 2015 (sq.km)	Change (sq.km)
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	83,743	67,321	67,248	-73 (-0.10%)
<b>Assam</b>	74,438	27,671	27,623	-48 (-0.17%)
<b>Himachal Pradesh</b>	55,673	14,683	14,696	13 (0.08%)
<b>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</b>	222,236	22,538	22,988	450 (1.99%)
<b>Manipur</b>	22,327	16,990	16,994	4 (0.02%)
<b>Meghalaya</b>	22,429	17,288	17,217	-71 (-0.41%)
<b>Mizoram</b>	21,081	19,054	18,748	-306 (-1.60%)
<b>Nagaland</b>	16,579	13,044	12,966	-78 (-0.59%)
<b>Sikkim</b>	7,096	3,358	3,357	-1 (-0.02%)
<b>Tripura</b>	10,491	7,866	7,811	-55 (-0.69%)
<b>Uttarakhand</b>	53,483	24,508	24,240	-268 (-1.09%)
<b>West Bengal</b>	88,752	16,805	16,828	23 (0.13%)

Source: Indian State Forest Report, 2015

Kothi, and Salang Nala apart from other spots. Heavy tourism, besides being a boon to the economy of Himachal Pradesh, is also the cause for adverse impacts on ecology and environment of the State. The NGT order states that “The State Government has neither formulated nor issued any specific guidelines – statutory or otherwise – on prevention and control of environmental degradation and damage in relation to the glacier of Rohtang Pass valley”. It needs to be mentioned that Himachal Pradesh is considered to be one of the leading mountains states and yet it is not able to halt environmental damage due to increasing tourism and despite its updated policies and development master plans.

The recent ISFR 2017 not only repeats the scenario of forest cover loss in most of the NER states (as shown for 2013-15 above) but also shows that forest cover loss is more severe (e.g. Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Meghalaya). All the states that show a positive change in forest cover attribute it to plantations which are mostly monocultures and aesthetically inadequate. The loss of forest cover is related to shifting cultivation practices and now also increasingly to development investments in the NE region.

### 4.6 Environmental performance index (EPI) 2012

The global level EPI uses outcome-oriented indicators demonstrating environmental sustainability aspects of policies and implemented development, then working as a benchmark index that can be more easily used by policy makers, environmental scientists, advocates, and the general public. In 2014, at the global level, India ranked very low at 155 among 178 countries. Hence, it can be concluded that even if states have the best formulated and inclusive policies and programmes, their application and results on the ground counts. This index used at the national level is guiding as it combines categories such as air pollution, water, forest, waste management and climate change as defining criteria of India states (Maximum Ranking Score: 1) to assess their environmental performance index. Barring Sikkim (Rank 2) and Himachal Pradesh (Rank 3) none of the IHR states figure among the top ten states with good performance (Table 9). It should be noted that water and air pollution were among the criteria for the above ranking and as per the current situation in urban centres, both are becoming huge issues (erratic and reduced timings for water supply, and air pollution) due to increasing traffic load in the IHR.

In a World Bank survey in 2015 which used criteria such as “Ease of doing Business and Environmental Compliance” none of the IHR states figured in the top 10. This indicates that the environment for tourism business is not necessarily favourable in the IHR and that despite the fragility of the IHR landscape, environmental compliance may have been compromised. It also needs to be seen if the range of restrictive and complicated regulatory norms are hindering investments in sustainable tourism. It also opens up discussion on which norms will govern private sector engagement if the private sector needs to be engaged with a clear focus to invest in promoting tourism in the IHR. If tourism in the IHR is to meet SDGs 8 and 12.

Since the EPI also has climate change as a criteria, it is important to get an overall picture of climate projections across the Hindu Kush Himalaya to which the IHR belongs. The findings of The Hindu Kush Himalayan Monitoring and Assessment Programme (HIMAP, 2018, forthcoming), coordinated by ICIMOD are now available.

Table 8: Forest cover change in hill districts of selected states

Forest cover change in hill districts of selected states of IHR in sq.km (ISFR 2017)			
States	Change	States	Change
Arunachal Pradesh	-190	Mizoram	-531
Assam	+100	Nagaland	-450
Himachal Pradesh	+393	Sikkim	-09
Jammu & Kashmir	+253	Tripura	-164
Manipur	+263	Uttarakhand	+23
Meghalaya	-116	West Bengal	-11

Table 9: **Environment performance index (EPI) of IHR states**

State	Air Pollution		Water		Forests		Waste Management		Climate Change		Final Environmental Performance Index 2012	
	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank	Score	Rank
<b>Arunachal Pradesh</b>	0.3333	33	0.3333	32	1.0000	1			0.4885	6	0.4310	31
<b>Assam</b>	0.929	12	0.6536	19	0.4993	18	0.7643	12	0.3658	18	0.6426	21
<b>Himachal Pradesh</b>	0.8939	15	0.9843	1	0.6531	10	0.8550	5	0.3208	20	0.7414	3
<b>Jammu &amp; Kashmir</b>	0.8571	20	0.6758	11	0.5783	13	0.4161	28	0.2139	26	0.5483	22
<b>Manipur</b>	0.9048	12	0.6667	12	0.4601	23			0.3740	15	0.4811	28
<b>Meghalaya</b>	0.8939	15	0.6544	18	0.4355	25	0.8718	4	0.4061	14	0.6524	10
<b>Mizoram</b>	1.0000	1	0.6667	12	0.5071	17	0.4220	27	0.6280	2	0.6448	12
<b>Nagaland</b>	0.9608	7	0.6458	22	0.3677	28	0.4679	23	0.0378	31	0.4960	26
<b>Sikkim</b>	1.0000	1	0.6399	9	0.6230	11	0.9333	2	0.4892	7	0.7478	2
<b>Tripura</b>	0.5881	31	0.6667	12	0.7851	8	0.4008	29	0.3713	17	0.5624	20
<b>Uttarakhand</b>	0.7850	25	0.5948	28	0.8280	5	0.4283	26	0.4351	12	0.6142	16
<b>West Bengal</b>	0.7425	29	0.5739	30	0.4009	26	0.4567	24	0.4909	5	0.5330	25

Source: Planning Commission of India

Accordingly, current assessment of climate change impacts project a precarious moment for the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH), which includes the IHR. It concludes as follows:

1. Environmentally, socially, and economically, there is no single likely future for the HKH. Between now and 2080 the HKH may run downhill, or the region may continue doing business as usual and muddling through, or it may advance toward prosperity.
2. Evidence-based actions to reduce disaster risk, to mitigate and adapt to climate change, and to adopt good governance, are central to ensuring prosperity in the HKH.
3. The participatory visioning process identified collaboration among state and non-state actors as crucial for prosperity in the HKH in 2080. Two potential pathways – large-scale investment with regional cooperation, and bottom-up investment with local and national cooperation – involve substantial collaboration at different levels (regional, national, or sub-national).

This analysis of HIMAP only illustrates the uncertainty of climate change impacts. Hence the design of future tourism policies in IHR must embed strategies, plans, and investments that sustain the quality of the sector as well as emphasize the responsibilities of populations and stakeholders (states upstream-downstream) living in the IHR and those that come as tourists.

Seasonality is a major factor governing the tourism sector in the IHR and is dictated by weather patterns. With tourist activities highly dependent on climatic conditions, the sector generates temporary livelihood opportunities and hence is not able to curb/reverse migration. The situation is likely to aggravate with climate change and induced risks. Roads are often the only means of transport (both for locals and tourists) to a majority of the destinations. The road network is vulnerable to natural disasters like landslides and cloud bursts and disruptions have negative consequences on the tourism industry. Better road infrastructure and alternative means of transportation is one of the priority actions.



# Chapter 5

## Analysis of Supporting Policies and Plans

Sustainable tourism has been widely debated in sustainable development discourse as a panacea to mass tourism and environmental degradation after the Brundtland Commission report of 1987. Further, the Rio Earth Summit, 1992 added another chapter to sustainability by binding agreements on biological diversity, climate change, and combating desertification. Both these global events were able to create significant consensus among tourism stakeholders around the world. Hence, different forms of tourism around the world have evolved on the principles of sustainable tourism such as ecotourism, nature tourism, green tourism, and rural tourism, among others. Based on it, countries around the world have sought to reform existing policies and plans and analyse potential gaps to achieve sustainable tourism outcomes.

In the IHR, many states have been making efforts to bring sustainable tourism into the mainstream development agenda through policies but are unable to implement them fully. This research has tried to analyse policies in the IHR associated with sustainable tourism. Policies and plans that were analysed include tourism policy, tourism plan, ecotourism policy, forest policy and industrial policy (Note: only those documents that were available in the public domain). A total of 12 IHR states were considered for this purpose: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu & Kashmir, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, and West Bengal. It is interesting to note that almost all IHR states have industrial policy and tourism plans. However, forest policy and ecotourism policy is restricted to some key states and usually those that figure among well-developed states such as Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, and J&K.

Table 10: States policies and plans in the IHR

Tourism Policy	Tourism Plan	Ecotourism Policy	Forest Policy	Industrial Policy
Assam	Arunachal Pradesh	Arunachal Pradesh	Assam	Arunachal Pradesh
Himachal Pradesh	Assam	Himachal Pradesh	Himachal Pradesh	Assam
Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu & Kashmir	Jammu &Kashmir
Manipur	Manipur	Mizoram	Meghalaya	Manipur
Meghalaya	Meghalaya	Sikkim	Nagaland	Meghalaya
Nagaland	Mizoram	Tripura	Sikkim	Mizoram
Sikkim	Nagaland		Uttarakhand	Nagaland
Uttarakhand	Sikkim			Sikkim
West Bengal	Tripura			Tripura
	Uttarakhand			West Bengal
				Uttarakhand

To understand the extent to which these 12 Himalayan states are able to address sustainable tourism practices and key features of development related to tourism (see earlier analysis), twelve core areas of current policies and plans were assessed ((total number of indicators/aspects assessed in Annexure). These areas of assessment are:

(1) Disaster Management (2) Pollution Control (3) Visitor Control (4) Tourist Traffic Management (5) Crisis Management (6) Waste Management (7) Natural Resource and Ecology Management (8) Quality Standard/Control Mechanism (9) Tourism Enterprise Development Governance (10) Energy (11) Gender, and (12) Marketing and Branding.

The above assessment is adapted from a draft UNESCO Checklist for Sustainable Tourism Strategy that aims to preserve pristine natural environments that form the basis of tourism and ensure that these assets are protected and remain healthy.

The selected policies and plans were ranked as per 12 core areas:

Table 11a: **Scoring and weightage of policies and plans**

Grade	Score	Weightage
<b>A:</b> Clearly visible in policy and planning documents and M&E mechanisms outlined	75-100%	3
<b>B:</b> Visible in policy documents but plans only make marginal reference to M&E Systems	50-75%	2
<b>C:</b> Policy hardly makes reference to the subject and M&E mechanisms not defined	<50%	1

Table 11b shows most of the indicators as per 12 criteria that are in ‘C’ meaning that these are very marginally addressed (or not at all) in policy/plan documents. It also emerges that barring Sikkim in NER, only western Himalayan states have elaborate and inclusive policy and plan documents. Similarly, the tourism policies of Nagaland and West Bengal have very marginal reference to the above indicators. It also appears that forest policies of IHR states are sector centric and do not have aspects relating to a cross-cutting set of policies and plans. Commonly, industrial policy is lacking content that supports linkages with other sectoral policies and plans in all IHR states. A much focused assessment of whether policies/plans focuses mention key areas of assessment is given in Annex 2. It is encouraging to see that waste management, marketing, and branding and tourism enterprise development (governance) are largely represented. However, based on the ground evidence captured by the environmental index ranking (see table), it is safe to say that the content of policies/plans are not realized on the ground to a great extent and funds/mechanisms to promote good practices are inadequate. A common challenge is that while policy documents are often state-of-the-art, their implementation and strategies for implementation are not fully backed by integrated planning and investments on the ground, so the desired impacts are often invisible (e.g. on SDG 8, 12, 15).



Table 11b: Frequencies of different plans and policies

State	Frequency			State	Frequency		
	A	B	C		A	B	C
<b>Tourism Policy</b>				<b>Tourism Plan</b>			
Assam	5	11	19	Arunachal Pradesh	10	14	11
Himachal Pradesh	4	12	19	Assam	14	12	9
Jammu & Kashmir	10	6	19	Jammu & Kashmir	14	7	14
Manipur	10	9	16	Manipur	9	10	16
Meghalaya	11	9	15	Meghalaya	14	10	11
Nagaland	2	10	23	Mizoram	5	16	14
Sikkim	15	12	8	Nagaland	7	7	21
Uttarakhand	20	5	10	Sikkim	17	11	7
West Bengal	6	5	24	Tripura	13	4	18
				Uttarakhand	33	2	-
<b>Ecotourism Policy</b>				<b>Forest Policy</b>			
Arunachal Pradesh	13	7	15	Assam	6	8	21
Himachal Pradesh	4	7	24	Himachal Pradesh	3	1	31
Jammu & Kashmir	8	8	19	Jammu & Kashmir	1	-	34
Mizoram	4	10	21	Meghalaya	6	3	26
Sikkim	11	5	18	Nagaland	5	6	24
Tripura	1	9	25	Sikkim	4	2	29
				Uttarakhand	4	11	20
<b>Industrial Policy</b>							
Arunachal Pradesh	1	1	33	Mizoram	3	-	32
Assam	2	5	28	Nagaland	1	1	33
Jammu & Kashmir	3	1	31	Sikkim	2	-	33
Manipur	2	1	32	Tripura	2	-	33
Meghalaya	2	4	29	West Bengal	6	3	26
				Uttarakhand	3	2	30

## 5.1 IHR State policies match-up with sustainable tourism indicator areas

In 2004, the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) published 'Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations: A Guidebook' with 13 key sustainable tourism indicators (see Table 13). A policy match up against the sustainable tourism indicators for IHR states reveals that except West Bengal a majority of the state policies match (in content) the sustainable tourism indicator areas.

Table 12 highlights IHR policy areas of assessment that satisfy or match different sustainable tourism indicators. It is evident that only West Bengal is lagging behind in some principles such as in sustaining cultural assets, tourist satisfaction, and sustainability of tourism operations and services.

Table 12: Policy match-up with sustainable tourism indicator areas

S N	Sustainable Tourism Indicator Areas	AS	AR	HP	JK	MN	ML	MZ	NL	SK	TR	UK	WB
1	Wellbeing of host communities												
2	Sustaining cultural assets												
3	Community participation in tourism												
4	Tourist satisfaction												
5	Health and safety												
6	Capturing economic benefits from tourism												
7	Protection of valuable natural assets												
8	Managing scarce natural resources												
9	Limiting impacts of tourism activities												
10	Controlling tourist activities and levels												
11	Destination planning and control												
12	Designing products and services												
13	Sustainability of tourism operations and services												

Source: United Nations World Tourism Organizations (2004) Abbreviations: AS-Assam, AR-Arunachal Pradesh, HP-Himachal Pradesh, JK-Jammu & Kashmir, MN-Manipur, ML-Meghalaya, MZ-Mizoram, NL-Nagaland, SK-Sikkim, TR-Tripura, UK-Uttarakhand and WB-West Bengal

From assessments related to policies and plans of IHR states, it is reiterated that climate change brings a common denominator to challenges that states are trying to meet for evolving and sustaining good practices of tourism. But given that IHR has a typical bio-physical context (e.g. fragility, marginality, and inaccessibility), it is also clear that there are cross-border contexts such as upstream-downstream linkages of cultures, ecosystem services, trade and markets, and services sector. Hence, the key policy messages for the whole HKH (of which IHR is an integral part) as distilled in the HIMAP document, need to be considered for planning and promoting responsible tourism:

1. To avert the downhill scenario for the HKH in 2080, institutional mechanisms must confront the main challenges and resolve conflicts at various levels, and among various social groups. Globally, actions towards climate change mitigation and adaptation are urgently needed. Regionally, actions for sustainable livelihoods and economic growth should consider maintaining and improving the diversity and uniqueness of transboundary HKH natural assets, socio-cultural richness and ecosystem services, as well as improving political collaboration and information sharing.
2. If decision-makers, governments, institutions, and communities in the HKH continue with a business as usual approach, the HKH will face significant risks. Strategic action must be taken to address environmental protection, the suboptimal use of water and biodiversity resources, the unplanned urbanization in the HKH, and, the failure to adequately reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Table 13: **Criteria to match IHR state policies with sustainable tourism indicators**

Sustainable Tourism Indicators	IHR Policy Areas of Assessment
Wellbeing of host communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Enterprise Development Governance</li> <li>• Gender</li> </ul>
Sustaining cultural assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality Standard/Control Mechanism</li> </ul>
Community participation in tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Enterprise Development Governance</li> <li>• Gender</li> </ul>
Tourist satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality Standard/Control Mechanism</li> </ul>
Health and safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pollution Control</li> <li>• Crisis Management</li> </ul>
Capturing economic benefits from tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourism Enterprise Development Governance</li> </ul>
Protection of valuable natural assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality Standard/Control Mechanism</li> </ul>
Managing scarce natural resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural Resource and Ecology Management</li> </ul>
Limiting impacts of tourism activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Waste Management</li> <li>• Pollution Control</li> </ul>
Controlling tourist activities and levels	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tourist Traffic Management and Visitor Control</li> </ul>
Destination planning and control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disaster Management</li> <li>• Pollution Control</li> <li>• Visitor Control</li> <li>• Tourist Traffic Management</li> <li>• Crisis Management</li> <li>• Waste Management</li> <li>• Natural Resources and Ecology Management</li> <li>• Quality Standard/Control Mechanism</li> <li>• Energy</li> </ul>
Designing products and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Marketing and Branding</li> </ul>
Sustainability of tourism operations and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Quality Standard/Control Mechanism</li> </ul>

3. To achieve prosperity in 2080 it is important to consider two potential pathways for the HKH – large-scale investment with regional cooperation, and bottom-up investment with local and national cooperation. Both paths critically presuppose cooperation and coordination. Large-scale investment would rely on high-level decisions, made across national boundaries, to capitalize on emerging and unique economic opportunities in the regional market. Bottom-up investment would mobilize local and national investments and development initiatives, managed across various levels of society and government and with the collaboration of multiple stakeholders.
4. The two paths to prosperity in the HKH are not mutually exclusive – both can be integrated. Decision makers may combine elements of either path at various stages, making trade-offs between the benefits and risks associated with different actions at different levels.

With this it can be concluded that socio-economic development and conservation of the IHR linked to the tourism sector is bound to face massive climate change related challenges as well as the conventional

problems of huge fiscal deficits, gaps in environmental compliance and very minimal investments to promote sustainable tourism. These challenges are already more than visible and can only be expected to get worse if the envisaged tourist load of 240 million by 2025 becomes a reality.

Similarly, the future of tourism in the IHR will depend on how well different sectors such as forest and tourism synergise while planning and implementing any form of tourism, and in particular “ecotourism”. Hence preparing a local eco-tourism plan can benefit from such a cooperation while assessing the carrying capacity of a primary tourism destination site.

## 5.2 Opportunities and paradigms of the tourism sector

India ranks 15<sup>th</sup> in the world in terms of International Tourism Receipts, with a share of 1.62%. India registered 8.03 million foreign tourist arrivals in 2015, an annual growth of 4.5% over the previous year. As per the data available, it is the third highest foreign exchange earner, after gems, jewellery, and garments (Economic Survey of India, 2018). India aims to create 100 million jobs through tourism and attract 40 million foreign tourists annually in the next five years (Union Minister K J Alphons on 23 October 2017). At present, 14.4 million international tourists visit India annually. Observing that there is a shortage of two lakh rooms across the country in the Rs.2,000 (per day tariff hotels) and below segment, Alphons highlighted the need for massive investment by the sector. Besides, he said, the government and the industry will work together to ensure the availability of skilled professionals for the hospitality sector. “Even though things have been made much easier at the Centre by the Government of India, they (industry) feel that things are still complicated at the state level. You need about 70 permits for a hotel to be opened, this is outrageous. We need to bring down the number of permits which are required to operate a hotel down to the minimum,” he said. However, in the IHR, due to environmental fragility (e.g. ban on green felling) tourism is not necessarily an investment friendly for the private sector. The reform efforts made by the Government are:

**Tax Incentives:** An investment-linked deduction under Section 35 AD of the Income Tax Act is in place for establishing new hotels in the 2-star category and above across India, thus permitting a 100% deduction in respect of the whole or any expenditure of a capital nature excluding land, goodwill and financial instruments incurred during the year.

**State Incentives:** Incentives offered by state governments include subsidized land cost, relaxation in stamp duty, exemption on sale/lease of land, power tariff incentives, concessional rate of interest on loans, investment subsidies/tax incentives, backward areas subsidies and special incentive packages for mega projects; Incentives are provided for setting up projects in special areas – the North-east, Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

**Incentives from the Ministry of Tourism:** Assistance in large revenue-generating projects; Support to Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) in infrastructure development such as viability gap funding; Schemes for capacity-building of service provider.

Similarly, the tourism and Hospitality Sector (including travel and hospitality services such as hotels and restaurants) has been universally recognized as an agent of development and an engine for socio-

economic growth. According to World Travel and Tourism Council's (WTTC) India Benchmarking Report 2015, every USD 1 million in Travel and Tourism spending in India generates USD 1.3 million in GDP. During 2014-16, the Government undertook various initiatives through policy interventions and by enabling infrastructure development to make 'Incredible India' a 'must revisit, must experience' destination. As a result of these initiatives, the sector has registered a phenomenal growth in domestic tourism, foreign tourist arrivals, foreign exchange earnings, and employment opportunities. The above responses by the Government have paid off since as per the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2015 of the World Economic Forum (WEF), India's rank climbed up 13 places to 52 in 2015 from 65 in 2013. Given the limited number of foreign tourists coming to IHR, it will rely on domestic tourism to bring dividends to local people.

A mobile application called Swachh Paryatan was launched in 2016, which lets citizens report any hygiene issues at various tourist destinations across the country. The Ministry of Tourism launched the 24x7 Toll Free Multi-Lingual Tourist Helpline in 12 languages in 2016 and it can be accessed on toll free numbers.

Even though things have been made much easier at the Centre by the Government of India, the industry feels that things are still complicated at the state level. Moreover, Alphons (2017) said, that the tourism industry feels that it is extremely expensive to set up hotels in India because the land cost is extreme. Therefore, the initiatives such as 100% FDI permission through automatic route for all construction development projects such as construction of hotels and resorts, recreational facilities, city and regional level infrastructure will have gestation period before these are felt in IHR as norms and regulations for mountains are tougher. Similarly, facilitation for the e-Tourist, Business, Medical Visa (eTV) is a big scheme since 2014 so the number of foreign tourist is bound to increase.

The above account is indicative of the fact that several promising initiatives from Gol ultimately need to have IHR-wide implementation and long term ownership to make tourism more sustainable. Additionally, it is incumbent that the business sector take a much more responsible role in promoting sustainable tourism than mere profit orientation and standalones limited to CSR. This will require an enabling environment in IHR states for the business sector to make green and inclusive investments as well as rigorous monitoring mechanisms to see if the sector is abiding by standard practices and client orientation to behave differently in IHR.

### *Business sector perspectives*

The Indian tourism and hospitality industry has emerged as one of the key drivers of growth among the services sector in India. Tourism in India has significant potential considering the rich cultural and historical heritage, variety in ecology, and terrains, and places of natural beauty spread across the country. Tourism is also a potentially large employment generator besides being a significant source of foreign exchange for the country. India's Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEEs) increased 20.4 per cent year-on-year between January-November 2017 to US\$ 24.655 billion.

Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India increased 14.4% year-on-year to 1.005 million and the number of FTAs on e-tourist visa increased 56.2% to 214,000 in November 2017, as per the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India.

India is expected to move up five spots to be ranked among the top five business travel markets globally by 2030, as business travel spending in the country is expected to treble until 2030 from US\$ 30 billion in 2015. With this, international hotel chains are likely to increase their expansion and investment plans in India, and are expected to account for a 50% share in the Indian hospitality industry by 2022, from the current 44%. The direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP is expected to reach US\$ 147.96 billion by 2027 (IBEF, 2018/[www.ibef.org](http://www.ibef.org)). The World Travel and Tourism Council forecasts that the Indian tourism sector will grow at an annual average growth rate of 7% over the next 10 years. This means that the projections for number of tourist arrivals in IHR states will be part of the high growth of the sector. In other words, business sector with large investments and profits at stake need to be part of any tourism strategy for IHR in the long run.





## Chapter 6

# Transboundary Tourism Aspects

In an increasingly mobile world and with improving living standards in the IHR and its neighbouring countries, traditional transboundary pilgrimages (e.g. Kailash in Tibet, Muktinath in Nepal, Char Dham in Uttarakhand, India) are now witnessing continuous and increasing flow of tourists from neighbouring countries. This is apart from inter-state tourist/pilgrimage traffic within IHR – e.g. in one day, more than 50,000 pilgrims visiting Vaishno Devi during Navratras (peak season) and thousands flock to Kedarnath in the summer. Hence IHR has a clear transboundary and strong inter-state context as visitors and tourism actors (South Asia) are coming from beyond the borders, with different understanding of standards of responsible tourism and awareness of delicate socioecological and cultural contexts and sensitivities. As a classical example of the solid waste challenge (only non-biodegradable measured), 27 tonnes of waste was assessed along the Parikrama Route (53 km) of Kailash in 2013 (in the Tibet Autonomous Region, China), which has far less visitors (mostly Indians) compared to some of the above mentioned key tourist/pilgrim sites of the IHR. This does not consist of the assessment of qualitative impacts on local ecosystem services through biodegradable waste, such as through open defecation at higher altitudes.

In a different but very significant context, these IHR sites are significant for their transboundary protected areas connect (e.g. Askot-ANCA on the Indo-Nepal border of the Kailash and Kangchenjunga landscapes between India, Nepal, and Bhutan with 19 protected areas). These IHR sites are therefore also part of shared water bodies such as rivers or lakes, and perhaps even shared underground aquifers, where an important earth feature such as a mountain or a glacier contains national or sub-national boundaries, e.g., Mount Kanchenjunga (India, Nepal, China). A natural ecological system that straddles one or more boundaries needs to be managed as a single ecological unit in order to preserve essential species, communities, and ecological processes, such as snow leopard which moves across the HKH in winter – summer ranges, or local communities and indigenous peoples in natural areas linked across boundaries by shared ethnic or sociocultural characteristics. There is need to cooperate against common threats to ecosystems and their integrity, e.g., fire or invasive alien species. A common name across the border as in the case of Royal Manas National Park (Bhutan) and Manas National Park (India) is effective, or a joint name that appears coupled repeatedly under some larger umbrella. This binds the protected area staff and local people on both sides of the border and creates fresh economic avenues for landscape-level tourism.

Good transboundary cooperation will result in capturing the economic benefits and unifying effects of joint development and production of common materials for education and information. These present and interpret the natural and cultural values of the whole area, across the boundary. A common map, brochures, exhibits, and audio-visual material not only present this holistic view, but give economies of joint production (as attempted in the Kailash Landscape between India, China, and Nepal). As an example the two-language booklets (French and Italian) produced by Mercantour and Alpi Marittime, such as



“Mountains without Frontiers,” are good examples. A joint approach to visitation and tourism can yield beneficial dividends. Costs are reduced for any joint marketing or work with the tourism and travel industry. A shared visitor information centre on or close to the boundary has great appeal to visitors and may replace two separate facilities. This has been done across boundaries to promote stewardship between countries. (Proceedings of the 11th Conference on Research and Resource Management for Bavarian Forest National Park (Germany) and Sumava National park (Czech Republic).

Tourism’s relationship to political boundaries as “Transboundary Tourism Circuits” has caught the attention of researchers only recently (the case of the Bothnian Arc), even though on a more general level the academic study of borders attracts considerable interest. A topic that has been explored only superficially concerns the obstacles inhibiting tourism’s development in a cross-border setting and, particularly, the tensions arising when the respective national interests of the two neighbouring countries do not coincide

with the mutual benefits to be derived through close trans-frontier collaboration at the regional level. An emerging key question is what forces dominate within the region straddling the border between two countries (e.g. India – Nepal or India – Bhutan) those dictated by the respective national interests of each country, or those benefiting the transboundary region itself? A detailed investigation in this context is still missing for IHR but is needed to design the planning process that can help in development and marketing of the region's tourist products. Among the issues that could be discussed are attempts on the part of all stakeholders to establish a unifying identity for the region, which will set it aside from other destinations in South Asia. The focus could be on some of the most important challenges in terms of developing and marketing this cross-border region as a single destination. However, such a cross-border arrangement for win-wins should not mean that the border in this region has effectively disappeared, but should focus more on the obstacles that remain to be overcome for achieving mutual regional benefits.

Planning for tourist destinations as "Cross-border Circuits in IHR" is attractive and managing such cross-border tourism is an emerging field and typically will need to see the development of a full-fledged tourism industry in the development and consolidation stages, leading to the establishment of various types of demand-supply chains. This is important as even a tourism best practice (in Sikkim) in its saturation and decline stages, will annoy and antagonize communities (e.g. mass tourism). Typically, if the local economy has been transformed completely during these stages, with mostly agrarian or rural economies turning into a hybrid economy merged with tourism, it should set the stage for reverse migration as avenues of local economy resurface for youth (e.g. the Alps). Thus responsible tourism initiatives in IHR that seek to develop and sustain local supply chains may find it difficult not only to break the prevailing deficient supply chain relationships but also to prepare a relatively gentrified destination community with a fast disappearing agrarian economy to form an effective supply chain to service the tourism industry. It is here, that IHR need to reinvent and brace for an expected 240 million visitors for 2015. In this context, Ministry of tourism is promoting specific tourism circuits (Buddhist, Spiritual, Himalaya) and transboundary circuits could be connected accordingly. In other parts of the world, such transboundary tourism circuits have become a symbol of inter-country cooperation for cross-border socioeconomic development as well as for long term peace and stability (e.g. Alpine, Carpathian group of countries/conventions).

# Chapter 7

## Building on Cultural Paradigm

IHR has been an abode of wellbeing for human kind from time immemorial. No other mountain range anywhere in world has affected the life of people and shaped the destiny of a nation as the Himalayas have with respect to India. With the loftiest mountains on the planet, the Indian Himalayan Region embodies the highest human ideals and aspirations of India and the continent. Apart from its physical grandeur and natural splendour, and prime heritage values of culture, aesthetic beauty and sacredness, these mountains are Asia's Water Towers and also known as the "Third Pole". Hence judicious management of, inter alia, tourism in the IHR is critical not only for the Himalayan states, but also for the flow of goods and services for one third of the global community residing downstream (e.g. water, irrigation downstream). However, there are some key concerns in the IHR:

**Socio-demographic disincentives:** Lack of sustained economic opportunities, adoption of generic development paradigm (e.g. such as for plains of India) and inadequate outreach to local communities has brought enormous disincentives and resulted in migration of youth and men. This has further eroded the cultural and social fabric of collectivism in the mountains. Climate change is only adding to this problem, manifested in the "Ghost Villages of Uttarakhand" and predominantly women headed households.

**Stewardship degradation:** Adoption of management concepts including for tourism and technologies (for road and infrastructure, construction) that are appropriate for plains has led to degradation of ecosystem services and problems such as human-wildlife conflicts, forest fires, drying of springs and land degradation through waste accumulation (see previous points). These are challenging local institutions as communities become less resilient and also as natural resource management is increasingly feminized with the outmigration of men.

**Security and national sovereignty:** As the natural and cultural legacy is fast deteriorating, depopulation from border and remote areas to greener pastures in the urban centres is bringing a sense of social-demographic alienation with the rest of the population of 60 million. Thus sensitiveness of situation is visible in the border borders as Illegal trade, wildlife trafficking etc. is increasing and cross-border connect to cultural linkages is further leading to inter-country polarization .

**Synergy deficits:** As mentioned earlier, development investments and interventions made in IHR are not harmonized or synchronised so there is a lack of convergence among a host of planning and implementing institutions and networks which often leads to stand-alone and unsustainable models of tourism development, apart from not yielding value for money of numerous sustaining ecosystem services.

Given the above scenario of IHR, sustaining the natural and cultural legacy of IHR is a massive challenge as mountain states plan to have 240 million tourists by 2025. Although Ministry of Culture, Gol is pursuing



inclusion of ancient knowledge and wisdom in providing tourism services, maintaining the cultural and natural assets of the region is a challenge. Sangeet Natak Akademi (SNA), an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Culture is the National Academy of Music, Dance and Theatre and also majorly channelizes work on the Folk and Tribal Performing Arts and Puppetry traditions of the country. It organizes national level festivals in various parts of the country with the sole purpose to promote cultural exchange viz-a-viz performing arts; rejuvenate and promote cultural diversity and presentations of diverse traditions; provide avenues for field documentation and research; and facilitate transmission of traditional knowledge through various training programmes. The showcasing of festivals, folk and tribal performing art traditions of various states of the country on the lines of cultural exchange as consolidated also by the “Ek Bharat Shreshth Bharat” initiative is an innovative way to add heritage value to tourism in IHR and revive local contexts for benefiting from tourism sector business. These festivals witness a coming together of local public, students, and tourists who attend and also interact with the visiting performing artists. However, it is yet to be assessed how such events are benefiting local communities and the overall socio-economic security of fast transforming rural societies in IHR.



## Chapter 8

# Best Practices

A concept related to sustainable tourism best practice is Tourism Carrying Capacity (TCC). It is defined by the World Tourism Organisation as “the maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time, without causing destruction of the physical, economic, socio-cultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors’ satisfaction” (PAP/RAC, 1997). There has been much theoretical debate on the definition given in the ‘Making Tourism More Sustainable’ guidelines by the WTO (WTO & UNEP, 2005): “Sustainable tourism is tourism that takes full account of current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities. It is not a special form of tourism; rather, all forms of tourism may strive to be more sustainable”. In its component parts sustainable tourism should: Make optimal use of environmental resources that constitute a key element in tourism development, maintaining essential ecological processes and helping to conserve natural resources and biodiversity; Respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values; and contribute to inter-cultural understanding and tolerance; Ensure viable, long-term economic operations; providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are fairly distributed; including stable employment and income-earning opportunities and social services to host communities; and contributing to poverty alleviation (WTO & UNEP, 2005).

The UNEP report, ‘Tourism in the Green Economy’ (WTO & UNEP, 2012), makes an economic case for investing in the greening of tourism and provides guidance on how to mobilize such investments. It highlights the challenges of the growth of tourism including the sector’s contribution to, global greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, excessive water consumption compared with residential water use, discharge of untreated water, the generation of waste, the damage to local terrestrial and marine biodiversity and the threats to the survival of local cultures, built heritage and traditions. Although there are looming environmental threats due to uncontrolled growth of the tourism sector, it remains the world’s largest industry i.e. it is responsible for more than one in ten jobs globally, contributing over eight percent of domestic economic activity. It is obvious that IHR states must target tourism to generate more income for their state economy.

However, barring a few states, promoting eco-tourism will need defining contributions to sustainable tourism. Sustainable tourism has been defined by the World Tourism Organization as “satisfying current tourist and host community needs, while protecting and improving future opportunities. Given the upcoming challenges as elaborated in the above data analysis, managing all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be met, while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems” is very difficult. Making a reality of sustainable tourism entails adopting “best practices,” namely, corrective or improved measures implemented in every area of tourist business management and operation. These actions are aimed at ensuring that the least possible impact is



caused, that tourist product quality and image are improved, that business development becomes more efficient, and therefore, social and economic development does as well. The selected set of best practices have been given in Annexure 3.

Commonly, it can be said that best practices have mixed environmental demands of a destination with socio-cultural and economic opportunities in a balanced way while applying a value chain approach. Therefore, it is obvious that best practices have: mixed diversity of development sectors appropriately (e.g. local food and crafts with local music, linked local communities with fair and equitable benefits from tourism), customized local landscape based tourism with the overall carrying capacity of the tourism destinations, and prepared and implemented codes of conduct for sector services.

In order to be successful, each IHR state has formulated tourism strategies (policy, plans) that identify and justify strategic objectives, priorities, and targets. In designing a competitive tourism experience, states have often overlooked the questions: How do tourists select and book destinations? How to collect critical market information from visiting tourists? With the spread of the internet, tourists are increasingly doing comparison shopping and booking online. It is here that several best practices across the globe have done very well.

It is hoped that the list and short account of best practices made here will be useful to IHR states for revisiting their tourism strategies while implementation of policy and plans are carried out based on set standards/code of conducts.

In the IHR, a credible socio-economic and environmental cost–benefit tool for tourism products has been lacking, despite many significant potential values, the huge impact of tourism products IHR-wide, and the increasingly successful application of such tools in other sectors. Jaiswal (2014) describes development and trial of a prototype tool in Himachal Pradesh for holiday products that could determine the circumstances in which overall benefits of tourism outweigh burdens. Use of the prototype tool indicates that many current flight-based holiday products may have a net negative impact, but significant positive difference could be achieved through choosing shorter-haul or flight-free holidays, hotels with less leakage from the local economy and less non-recycled waste, and fewer but longer holidays with increasing daily discretionary spend. Further development could produce a robust cost–benefit tool for tourism products that could help the industry with ‘choice editing’ and identifying sustainability issues requiring closer attention.

Analysing a Case for Preparation of Tourism Accounts for Himachal Pradesh, TERI and Metroeconomica (2013) suggest introduction of a special tourist tax. International experience with such taxes has been mixed. There have been legal challenges (e.g. in the Balearic Islands in Spain and in Sardinia where the tax had to be rescinded). Other regions, however, have managed to collect a modest tax in the form of a service fee for the provision of high quality environmental services to visitors. As long as these services are genuinely supplied, tourists seem to be willing to pay for them. However, the issue needs a detailed study across IHR. The capital city of Himachal Pradesh, Shimla had introduced a ‘green tax’ in 2012 that was being charged at the rate of INR 100 for two-wheelers, INR 200 for cars and jeeps, INR 300 for mini-trucks and similar vehicles and INR 500 for trucks and buses at four entry points to generate revenue of INR 6-crore annually that would have been used to promote a cleaner and greener Shimla. However in March 2013, the Himachal Pradesh High Court restrained the Shimla Municipal Corporation from levying this green tax.

Cost benefit analysis (CBA) is a systematic process that may be used to calculate and compare costs and benefits of a policy, project, or decision, generally from the perspective of society as a whole. TERI and Metroeconomica (2013) used CBA to calculate and compare the environmental and socioeconomic costs and benefits of a decision to take a holiday. CBA involves comparing the total expected cost of each option against the total expected benefits, to see whether the benefits outweigh the costs, and by how much. When used to compare options a separate calculation is made for each and the relative net costs or benefits compared. We all make cost–benefit calculations for every decision we make, although for small decisions the process is largely intuitive. As a defined concept the technique apparently dates back to the mid-19th Century (Dupuit, 1848), and was formalised in subsequent works by Marshall (e.g. Marshall, 1881). It is now commonplace in government and the commercial sector. The above CBA analysis used TSA assessment to unravel sustainable tourism issues (See Table 14 below).

Though methodology for assessment of sustainability of tourism is a developing field, TSA has a role to play as an essential building block in this assessment in combination with other datasets (such as environmental accounts) and methodologies (especially input-output frameworks and CGE models). The key potential contribution of TSA data is as part of the assessment of some environmental impacts of tourism, e.g., data from TSA can be used in estimating waste management requirements and water demand resulting from increased tourist visitor numbers or changing trends in tourist consumption activities. It should be noted, however, that TSA tables developed for the state or regional level, such as for Himachal Pradesh, generally provide data at the total state level and do not provide data in enough detail for use in analysis at the level of specific local tourist destinations. TSA data is also less useful in assessing some social sustainability issues such as access to resources and property rights. The above study concludes that it may not be feasible to make quantitative estimates of environmental impacts of tourism using the more sophisticated approaches, such as use of environmental accounts suggested by Jones & Munday (2007). Therefore, it may be more practical to use available TSA data and environmental data (or informed assumptions for Preparation of Tourism Accounts for Himachal Pradesh impact coefficients) to provide ‘order of magnitude’ estimates of some environmental impacts for current and future scenarios for tourism development in Himachal Pradesh. This would inform the understanding of the relative significance of different environmental issues in overall sustainability of tourism under different future scenarios in IHR. In turn this would aid policy makers in prioritizing programmes and measures to address these issues.

Sources of revenue can be developed for the State alongside the tourism programme. A number of countries have a tourism tax (e.g. Bhutan) and in some locations PES schemes offer financial incentives for local actors to provide a wide range of ecosystem services untouched by normal market transactions. PES schemes are designed to stimulate transactions in which a well-defined environmental service is bought by at least one user from at least one provider. The payments involve a positive incentive to the provider, and are conditional on performance. Whether incentives are conditional on measures of the service or the actions of providers depends on the feasibility and cost of monitoring. Because of the difficulty in measuring many environmental services directly, payments may be based on either the actions of the service providers or on indirect ecological indicators.

Table 14: Possible uses of TSA in assessment of sustainable tourism issues

Sustainability Issue	Description of issue	Possible use of TSA in analysis
<b>Economic</b>		
Contribution of tourist sector to state economy	Overall GDP contribution of tourism (direct and indirect)	Use of TSA production accounts and input-output tables to provide estimates of tourist contribution to GDP
Economic impact of policies	Assessment of economic impacts of changes in tourism expenditure resulting from policy scenarios or domestic or international shocks	Use of TSA data with CGE modelling tools
Supply of tourist consumption	Issues of domestic supply of tourist consumption and income leakage to operators outside the local economy	TSA tables for total internal consumption with information on origin of supply of goods and services.
<b>Environmental</b>		
Water consumption	Tourist water demand and local capacity for provision of safe water	Use of TSA data on visitor numbers per type of tourist and consumption coefficients to estimate current and future water demand (e.g. TERI study of Goa)
Solid waste management	Tourist waste generation and sustainability of local waste management options	Use of TSA data and waste generation per visitor estimates to estimate infrastructure requirements and impacts of lack of infrastructure (e.g. TERI study of Goa)
Carbon footprint	Assessment of GHG emissions directly associated with tourist accommodation	Use of TSA data and GHG emission data per visitor (e.g. TERI study of Goa)
	Assessment of GHG emissions directly associated with tourist transport	Use of TSA data on fuel expenditure to estimate GHG emissions
	Assessment of GHG emissions directly and indirectly associated with tourism	TSA data and GHG emission data per sector with input-output framework (e.g. Jones & Munday, 2007) and CGE models
	Overall impacts on GHG emissions of different policy and economic scenarios in the tourism sector	TSA data and GHG emission data used in CGE modelling
<b>Social</b>		
Employment	Employment trends in tourism sector and other sectors including absorption from traditional livelihoods	Use of TSA and other data on employment to identify trends by tourist related sector

## Chapter 9

# Recommended Sustainability Needs in IHR

The potential and forecasted footprint of both international and domestic tourists in the IHR can be estimated. Even if a set of state-of-the-art policies and plans are in place the magnitude of challenges including that of climate change forecasts described earlier raise questions about whether the aims of such strategic and action-oriented documents will be met. In the Indian context, it is expected that the IHR will receive 240 million tourists by 2025. The dire need of implementing sustainable tourism must also emerge from the fact the Indian Himalaya now has a population of 60 million. With India sharing borders with 6 countries, transboundary tourism circuits are bound to experience much more intensive tourist traffic. Further, Pulan County in the Tibet Autonomous Region (China) is envisaging an International Tourism Cooperation Zone, including for Kailash Sacred Landscape, and China is also rolling out the “Belt and Road Initiative”. Considering the general concept of sustainability, we need to embrace two, integrated, elements of the sustainability of tourism:

- The ability of tourism to continue as a key development activity in the region, ensuring that the enabling conditions to unfold its employment, revenue and GDSP potential are right; and
- The ability of IHR communities and the environment to absorb and equitably benefit from the impacts of tourism in a sustainable way.

Hence, recommendations need to be articulated in alignment with economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts that need to be achieved. Even if some of the above policy/strategic documents/plans are good vision documents, or have well-formulated intentions and actions lined up, given the current scenario in IHR it is unlikely that most of these will be implemented. This assumption is already made at this stage and hence some of the recommendations made below may be well known to mountain states, and while a few actions may have been initiated, these need to be mentioned so that upscaling and out scaling best practice learning and evidences can be pursued. For ensuring that actions under each sustainable tourism indicator/aim are harmonized and consolidated, so that these are not repetitive, some of these have been merged and presented accordingly.

The Criteria set by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council are the minimum, not the maximum, which businesses, governments, and destinations should achieve to approach social, environmental, cultural, and economic sustainability. Since tourism destinations each have their own culture, environment, customs, and laws, the Criteria are designed to be adapted to local conditions and supplemented by additional criteria for the specific location and activity. Annex 4, provides a selected set of measures that can be associated with each of the above indicators keeping the IHR context in view.

A detailed account of individual actions under each sustainable tourism criteria is given in Annexure 5. A detailed account of sustainability criteria is provided below in the context of discourses made so far. These are broadly customised as:

- Economic connect
- Social inclusiveness
- Environmental sustainability
- Visitor Fulfilment
- Monitoring and Evaluation

## 9.1 Economic connect

**Economic Viability:** *To ensure the viability and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises so that they are able to contribute to and sustain local prosperity and deliver benefits in the long term.*

Successful tourism businesses are vital if the sector is to deliver tangible benefits to host ever increasing populations. Despite growing global and mountain tourism markets, many enterprises struggle and there is a considerable rate of business turnover in the sector. Many of the businesses in the IHR are micro and small enterprises (MSEs) and eventually informal (not registered) businesses (e.g. street food or souvenir vendors) with limited marketing and hospitality skills and market access.

**Resource Efficiency:** *To minimize the use of scarce and non-renewable resources in the development and operation of tourism facilities and services.*

Tourism is a significant user of resources in IHR. Ensuring that it uses resources efficiently is important both for the wellbeing of the local environment and host community and in maintaining global resources. Efficient use of resources, notably energy derived from fossil fuels, is also important in the reduction of polluting emissions. Sustainable tourism implies being clean and energy efficient.

Resource efficiency in tourism will be achieved largely by changing the consumption patterns of tourists and tourism enterprises. Enterprises should be encouraged to establish environmental management systems to minimize impacts and drive a process of continual improvement.

Sustainable tourism should cater to optimal use of local commodities and resources and be appropriate in scale to optimize local ownership and opportunities. These processes bring down the cost for operating tourism industry and are therefore feasible even in a rural and remote mountain set up. Energy sustainability can also be weighted in terms of viability of economic gains to all stakeholders, and for long-term engagement opportunities created within a locally promoted nature/heritage based tourism. Innovative, low-cost energy solutions such as improved cook stoves, solar panels for heating, lighting, and charging are already being used, albeit usually on small scales in many tourism dependent mountain areas of India. Good practices in the region should be identified and up-scaled.

**Employment Quality and Social equity:** *To strengthen the number and quality of local jobs created and supported by tourism, including standardized skill and entrepreneurship development, the level of pay, conditions of service and availability to all without discrimination based on gender, disability or in other ways.*

Providing employment is one of the major ways in which tourism can contribute to the quality of life in host communities. This could be a key entry point to retain youth in the IHR and use their potential for development on site. However, in spite of the importance of human resources in tourism and the sector's contribution to the IHR economy, tourism jobs are often quite lowly paid, with poor conditions, little security of employment (seasonality factor and family business) and linked to external investments. Part-time and often family-based employment, often leads to service industry jobs that are non-professional or just casual work with limited skills (tour guides). There is a very high turnover of workers in some sectors of the industry. Improved conditions for workers can lead to better performance, increased staff retention, and greater efficiency and productivity. The resulting change in staff customer relationships can lead to greater satisfaction with the overall holiday experience. The tourism sector is particularly vulnerable to many kinds of crisis—including disease, natural disasters, economic downturn, conflicts and terrorism—that can occur without warning and have an immediate effect (e.g. J&K). Many workers including, but not only, the high numbers of part-time or casual workers may have no right to benefit or support when jobs are withdrawn.

In a region as vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters such as the IHR, many local communities are engaged in tourism work in harsh, unpredictable conditions that sometimes result in terrible mishaps. Governments and businesses have often been caught unprepared to deal with such events (Uttarakhand disaster of 2013). Hence improving financial security in the event of mishaps/unemployment such as through higher medical insurance, better compensation for loss of life, unemployment allowance could pave the way for inclusive and sustainable development. This could be overcome by introducing contracts that require adequate provision for advance notice of termination of employment, and severance pay. Government policy on social security support for people made redundant is also relevant here.

Tourism policies concerned with social equity should seek to benefit disadvantaged people by delivering economic and social benefits to them. A particular focus should be on tackling poverty, an aim that is manifested in SDG 1. For example, in the IHR, communities can be said to be historically disadvantaged, and there is often a need to improve the position of women and the income earning options open to them. This applies strongly to providing opportunities for unemployed rural youth. There are many reasons why tourism is well placed to reach disadvantaged people, mainly because it is a labour intensive service industry with relatively low entry barriers and an activity that takes place in situ within communities. In addition to bringing income, the interaction it entails between people can bolster dignity and self-esteem. However, this is also true that faster socio-demographic changes are taking place and rural economies and populations are under stress (e.g. due to migration of youth, work load increase the women, labour deficit).

## 9.2 Social inclusiveness

**Local Prosperity:** *To maximize the contribution of tourism to the economic prosperity of the host destination, including the proportion of visitor spending that is retained locally.*

Ensuring that economic benefits are secured at the place where costs are incurred is an important principle of sustainable development. As local communities have to meet a number of external costs associated with



tourism, it is important that policies seek to maximize the economic returns to the local community. This is partly about securing reliable tourism growth, but equally about processes to maximize visitor spending per head locally and to reduce leakages, as well as developing long term linkages in the local economy. The fact that tourists, and the enterprises that serve them, make a very large number of purchases from a range of suppliers (tour operators, food and drink producers, transport services, and guides) means that there are often many opportunities to increase the level of income retained locally. Local prosperity means ensuring that tourism is well integrated within the local economic interests and is developed alongside other sectors. It is also important to avoid over-dependency on tourism, while ensuring that it can provide a consistent and reliable source of income. Moreover, tourism projects that engage local communities directly in their planning and implementation are much more likely to be successful in delivering local benefits and to be sustained over time. Policy in this area is not, however, just about engagement through consultation processes, it is also about empowering communities to influence decisions about the developments and activities that will affect their future while enabling the needs of other legitimate interests to be taken into account. Arts/folk arts can be engaged for public sensitization towards pressing local issues like environment. For example, cities like Jaipur have been promoting folk art through display of art on hoardings, bus shelters, buses, autos, etc. This also creates income opportunities for artists. West Bengal Govt. has a scheme called Lok Prasar Prakalpo (LPP) in which folk artists are engaged in public campaigns and paid a fee/stipend for it. Customisation and mainstreaming of such models with local unemployed youth to sensitise and entertain tourists/visitors upfront has good potential.

**Community Wellbeing:** *To maintain and strengthen the quality of life in local communities, including social structures and access to resources, amenities and life support systems, avoiding any form of social degradation or exploitation.*

Tourism can impact the social wellbeing of communities in many ways, both positively and negatively. As well as providing jobs, the additional investment and spending brought by tourism can support a wide variety of amenities that add to the quality of local people's lives. These include essential services such as water and energy, roads and transport services, health services, shops, leisure and entertainment facilities, and outdoor amenities. Conversely, the presence of visitors can put pressure on facilities and services, adding to the cost of their provision and maintenance, reducing the enjoyment of them by local people and making access to them difficult or even impossible.

Tourism developments and activities also sometimes interfere with other sources of livelihood and disrupt access to them. Tourism can be socially disruptive in other ways. It may stimulate an abnormal rise in house and land prices and in the general cost of living. Visitors may cause noise and general disturbance, leave litter and on occasion may be the source of crime. Forms of behaviour that may be alien to host communities can lead to unacceptable social practices amongst tourists and local people, such as an increase in prostitution and drug use. Local Prosperity + Social Equity: Often, tourism alone will not be a powerful enough engine to drive growth in a community and to drive all the changes that need to take in the eco-system to maintain it. As the tourism touches the newer regions, interactions with living, thriving communities that are a model of an integrated concept of sustainability would have the potential to create the Unique Selling Point.

**Cultural richness, integration and mutual understanding:** *To respect and enhance the historic heritage, authentic culture, traditions, and distinctiveness of host communities. Respect for and understanding of cultural diversity between nations and peoples is a key principle of sustainable development.*

Tourism can be a considerable force for the conservation of historic and cultural heritage and can stimulate arts, crafts and other creative activities within communities. By providing a source of income based around local culture and arts and handicrafts, tourism can encourage communities to value their cultural heritage more highly. However, it is important to guard against the falsification and degradation of culture and heritage in the way they are promoted to tourists.

Tourism's role in strengthening intercultural understanding and mutual respect cannot be understated, primarily because the idea of sustainable tourism is intrinsically linked to community vitality taking into account culture and tradition, indigenous knowledge systems, and heritage. For example, cultural tourism, which is often also cross-border, allows tourists to understand, appreciate, and experience first-hand their host community's uniqueness. Tourists may interact with the communities to get a more intimate picture of the place, its culture, and history. Such interactions between guests and hosts would mean opportunities for intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding (e.g. foreign tourists) and also long term peace and stability.

The IHR has rich intangible cultural heritage and it is important to explore ways to link tourism to the region's rich intangible cultural heritage. Religious destinations attract millions of pilgrim-tourists. It is tourists like these who often act as cultural ambassadors of the place to the outside world. However, promoting responsible use of cultural assets for tourism is crucial so that tourists are not seen as unwanted intruders or trespassers, but as guests who have come to experience and appreciate a culture different from their own.

### 9.3 Environment sustainability

**Physical Integrity:** *To maintain and enhance the quality of the environment of the IHR, both rural and remote, and avoid the physical and visual degradation of the environment.*

It is an intrinsically important aim from the environmental perspective and affects the wellbeing of local people. It is also critically important for the long term health of the tourism industry as the physical attractiveness of destinations is a key element of their appeal to visitors.

Land erosion is a particular area of concern as far as physical degradation is concerned. This may be caused, for example, by changes in vegetation cover as seen in the loss of forest cover in several states and heavy infrastructure and road building in the IHR. Credible ecolabels promote sustainable consumption patterns by providing concise and accurate information to consumers to help them identify those products and services which incorporate a credible level of environmental performance.

In relation to visual impacts, most attention in the past has been paid to the quality of rural landscapes and how they affect, and are affected by, tourism. However, there should be equal concern for the integrity and aesthetic quality of built as well as natural environments in rural and urban areas.

**Mountain Biological Diversity:** *To mainstream mountain biodiversity conservation in responsible tourism planning.*

All ecosystems and in particular mountain ecosystems have their own special sensitivities which need to be considered when planning for tourism activities. On the other hand, income from tourism has proved to be a critically important component of funding for conservation in many national parks, reserves and other protected areas. As with physical integrity, preventing destruction of biodiversity not only by tourism itself but also by other activities can be very important in maintaining the visitor appeal of many rural destinations

**Environmental Purity:** *To minimize the pollution of air, water, and land and the generation of waste by tourism enterprises and visitors.*

Maintaining environmental purity means reducing waste and harmful emissions to the environment in order to preserve the quality of the air, water and land that sustain life, health and biodiversity. Actions should address all aspects of pollution prevention and control throughout the lifecycle of tourism development, during and after the use of facilities, as well as the impacts of tourists themselves. Although local impacts on the environment, such as local air and water quality, are the most immediately apparent to local communities and to visitors, the tourism industry also has global and (regional) environmental impacts.

IHR governments need to recognize the responsibilities towards both the national and the local mountain environment that are inherent in maintaining environmental purity. There is a need for a profound change in the way we generate and use energy and in other activities that release greenhouse and other gases into the atmosphere. Air and other types of pollution may also impact many local destinations through the consequences of climate change. As with promoting resource efficiency, waste and pollution control will be achieved largely by changing the consumption patterns of tourists and tourism enterprises. This should be a key component of individual environmental management systems within enterprises.

**9.4 Visitor fulfilment:** *To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, disability or in other ways.*

The social dimension and equity principles associated with sustainable development should apply to tourists as well as to the host community. The great recreational and educational benefits of tourism should be respected and made as widely available as possible without discrimination. This implies viewing visitor satisfaction and fulfilment as an aim in its own right, rather than simply as a means to economic benefit. It is also about the responsibilities that destinations have towards the wellbeing of their guests. Assessment of visitor fulfilment needs to be incorporated across the travel and hospitality sector as it can be used with the dual purpose of recognizing and awarding good practices, as well as to provide the basis for corrective actions and processes that may be needed to achieve this target. Such database can be also used to measure the trends in maintaining the sustainable tourism features of a given destination. The information on socio-cultural and environmental sensitivities, and the required behavioural response from consumers and producers alike could be added to generate an early response by one and all. Such a web portal could jointly be operated/financed through public-private-partnership.

**9.5 Standards and monitoring and evaluation:** *To design and implement eco-labelling standards and monitor these for measuring changes and performance to initiative timely corrective policy and practice actions.*

Though GoI has already initiated several actions and types of standards, and a few states have gradually followed this up, it is more than obvious that maintaining sustainable tourism standards in the IHR is a long drawn challenge. This is not only due to the fact that tourists, tour operators, hotels and other services providers are least sensitized regarding socio-cultural and environmental fragilities of the IHR but also because climate change impacts will burden any positive steps toward sustaining the IHR in general. The migration of youth, drying of springs, forest fires, natural disasters and degradation of natural and cultural sites are early indications of massive transformation happening in the IHR landscape.

Hence any scale of investment and its impacts will need to be evaluated on regular basis to ensure that good practices are incentivized and bad practices are dis-incentivized. In this context, it is opportune time that a Performance-oriented incentive mechanism is prepared to support sustainable tourism practices. Such a system should take some key parameters into account: visible actions and results of sustainable tourism, maintenance of certification standards and inclusive development norms, fiscal commitment adherence of mountain states, corporate social responsibility, community benefits, and management of tourism destinations as per the carrying capacity. Last but not least, such an evaluation must be entrusted to a standard third party institution. Monitoring and evaluation results should facilitate the performance ranking of all IHR states when it comes to sustainability criteria fulfilment and GoI should provide benefits to states according to good or bad performance. As shown earlier, private sector investments are going to provide the engines of tourism growth and hence standards on processes and products need to be set and applied so that business can complement government efforts rather than undermining or harming them.

# Chapter 10

## Actions for Impacts

Discussions on different state policies and plans reveal that there is potential to contribute key actions. These actions are proposed with the intention that the potential of tourism in the IHR can be harnessed as a vibrant economic avenue in a very environment-friendly way. This can be done by promoting investments in green infrastructure and matching the available potential with updated skill and entrepreneurship development.

At this stage, it needs to be mentioned that indicator values for a few enabling factors in the IHR states are favourable. As per the UN, the Human Development Index (HDI) for India in 2016 was 0.624 (0.586 in 2014). Among the IHR states, Himachal Pradesh's HDI exceeds the national average at 0.652. In terms of literacy rate Assam, J&K and Arunachal Pradesh are below 75% so that from the human resource angle and their capacities, actions for impacts suggested below have a good platform for the launch.

Further, if we are to plan for the next few decades, the geographic location of IHR bordering six neighbouring countries must be kept in view. Here apart from already existing transboundary tourism circuits, it would be logical to factor in future investments China is promoting its Belt and Road Initiative as well as the historical Silk Road.

To ensure that tourism in IHR maintains its significance it is important that markets are continually harnessed through branding that follows standards and safeguards integrating sustainability criteria. However, it is obvious that there are differences in the development status of IHR states as seen from the analysis in Chapter 4. Some of the more advance states are already implementing policies and selected actions, but mainstreaming is yet to be achieved. Hence, even better-off states (Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim) are faced with challenges that are universal to all states. For this purpose a unique set of actions based on what must be taken on board on priority/urgency basis (short term), what can be developed and applied in medium term, and actions that can be gradually taken up in the short and medium term and mainstreamed in the long term are presented in Annex 6. Following the analysis and endorsement at the all-state meeting held on 27 June, conceptual, operational and impact-orientation aspects of sustainable tourism, as well as management challenges and associated investments in IHR, the key action agenda points in alignment with above categories are:

1. Institutions and processes
2. Capacity building
3. Research/science and technology
4. Finance and market
5. Planning, implementation and monitoring
6. Policy and regulations

## Action agenda for states:

### 10.1 Institutions and processes

1. Create separate divisions within tourism departments to look after the key aspects of tourism and related information viz. capacity building, marketing and promotion including product development, standards, certification and guidelines, data management & research, and integrated destination and infrastructure planning and implementation with other departments (e.g. see Sikkim Eco Tourism Policy). State Planning Commissions must oversee the convergence and performance.
2. Each IHR state must promote inclusive community-based management models in each state-district based on local/indigenous economic principles of fair and equitable sharing. The engagement of local communities in various forms needs to be highlighted/reinforced in promoted efforts of PPP.
3. Active monitoring and public reporting of environmental, economic, social, cultural, tourism, and human rights strategies, milestones and issues must be done at state levels and reported to Gol annually in sync with SDG Targets and Indicators.
4. Investments must be made for advancing databases and technology to provide “live statistics” as universal information system (e.g. carrying capacity at the destination, hotel rooms, parking places, road blocks, traffic jams). It must include all other emerging data sets onsite and state wide with the passage of time.
5. A network of support system of experts from hospitality professionals/accountants/legal experts/volunteers who ensure good operational protocol and processes can be established. To ensure quality control (guest managers) or marketing support (social media champions) capacity of local enablers must be boosted through branding/marketing inputs, skills development.

### 10.2 Capacity building:

1. Design and deliver an IHR specific Awareness and sensitization package of different actors and sectors, including all key service providers and producers and unleash this information through a proactive media campaign and existing travel related websites and tourism information centres. (e.g. hotel staff are engaged in waste management, development and implementation of the sustainability management system and receive periodic guidance and training regarding their roles and responsibilities in its delivery).
2. The updated capacity building packages and systems promoting sustainable tourism and its packages (homestays, rural tourism, heritage management) need to be blended within the curriculum and delivery design of trainings/education institutions (e.g. vocational centres, universities, schools) serving the host of actors and public/private sectors. This should be accompanied with periodic “follow-up” assessments and ToTs.



3. Rapid crash courses on education for sustainable development (ESD) should be introduced in primary and secondary school curriculum and teachers training. Any non-compliance must be responded to with non-renewal of permissions needed for operational procedures and investments.
4. The organizations (hotels, business sector etc.) must be actively made to support initiatives for local infrastructure (e.g. signages, hoardings) and community development. Examples of initiatives include education, training, health and sanitation, and projects which address the impacts of climate change and contribute to SDGs.
5. Professionally certified trainings of all travel trade industry service providers must be introduced on mandatory basis for every group of tourism service providers such as hotels, tourist guides, porters, cooks, and drivers. Certified training programmes need to be offered by selected recognized institutions (occupational standards). Any non-compliance must be responded to with non-renewal of permissions needed for operational procedures and future investments.

### 10.3 Research/science and technology

1. Prepare Tourism Satellite Accounts for IHR: The TSA should show all aspects and types of databases and their collection procedures that show number and types of visitors and their contribution to the State's development through their expenditures. Subsequently a "One window On-line Information" on number of hotels, rooms available, tourist sites, parking places, traffic surveillance, quantum of waste, number of tour guides, and tour operators could be collated. Similarly, information on expenditures made on promoting sustainable tourism could be added (e.g. public schemes, private sector investments etc.).
2. A detailed survey of tourists should be carried out in the near future to elicit visitor perceptions on what services they are looking for and identifying the gap areas, which then becomes part of future planning and implementation plans for consumer/producer satisfaction.
3. Specific strategy for marketing off-season events and attracting year-round visitors should form a part of visitor services. Accordingly, demand-supply of natural resources can be planned.
4. Promote new opportunities and technologies to widen the spectrum of entrepreneurship and associated skills (digital technologies and local data management and use, agro-enterprise and link to tourism VC, waste management and local economy, local heritage conservation, destination carrying capacity, planning and monitoring, public safety and security during disasters and rapid reliefs and rescue, and community based ToT).
5. Support veterans from the Indian army, Assam Rifles and ITBP to establish adventure tourism based entrepreneurship. These veterans are specially trained to be deployed in difficult terrain (e.g. high altitude areas) and have specialized skills (e.g. mountaineering and jungle survival). These skills could help to promote safe adventure sports tourism in the country.

6. Document best practices on sustainable tourism especially from the aspects of sustained entrepreneurship, skill development and social security to develop or strengthen tourism circuits that focus on adventure sports, heritage, wildlife, religious/spiritual, wellness/ yoga/ aroma therapy/ naturopathy, handicrafts and handloom, and cultural festivals.

## 10.4 Finance and market

1. Make an assessment of all the relevant public schemes and business investments in the IHR and how these could be leveraged for sustainable tourism and maintenance of best practices (MGNREGA, CAMPA, GIM). This include proposals approved in the area of built heritage conservation/revival of heritage area/heritage walk/tourism app under 'SMART CITIES' programme of Ministry of Urban Development-Gol.
2. Working with communities on the sensitive presentation and promotion of culture and traditions using "Incentive based mechanisms (IBM)" (e.g. for good stewardship/waste management) needs to be designed based on tested eco-labelled or any other feasible sites.
1. Introduction of a "Green Cess" in the form of payments from service consumers should contribute to the increased tax revenues that tourism brings but in part it will have to come before the increased revenues materialize.
2. Payments for environmental services (PES) based on eco-certification and charging entry fees (as described above) might also offer a valuable long term solution for conservation of the site as tourism relies heavily on the existence of sound natural environments. The green bonus or "IBM" could be invested for development of eco-tourism, associated livelihoods and cultural conservation in the region.
3. Explore new tourism circuits and packages (e.g. high value-low volume, Mahabharata trail, agro/rural tourism brands, adventure, local cuisine, arboretums and cultures) to offer diversified destinations and for de-congestion of mass tourism sites.
4. On the pattern of smart cities "smart mountain tourism destination" business plans could be prepared and the private sector could be invited to invest in responsible tourism based on a PPP-bidding process.
5. Market/State instruments for entrepreneurship and start-ups (e.g. adventure tourism, sports equipment, waste management technologies) must be encouraged by facilitating access to credit and low interest loans.
6. Gol must get third party "end line surveys" done on the funds provided for promoting sustainable tourism and rank states and link subsequent quantum of funding on performance. Composite indicators can be built to assess the ranking of IHR states in sustainability performance (e.g. EPI, poverty and inclusiveness, fiscal performance on tourism investments (public and private).

## 10.5 Planning, implementation, and monitoring:

1. All IHR states must link their tourism related plans and investments according to envisaged state growth models that integrate targeted private sector investments for promoting in-situ job opportunities and local community partnerships. While preparing such state growth models key private sector actors must participate and articulate their interests and planned complementary investments.
2. Multi-year destination strategy and associated business plans must be made mandatory and should include a focus on sustainability and sustainable tourism that covers environmental, economic, social, cultural, quality, health, and safety issues. It should include:
  - ◇ Public participation
  - ◇ Holistic plan and implementation strategy
  - ◇ Political commitment

The above strategy must include:

- ◇ A system to monitor and publicly report visitor satisfaction, and, if necessary, to take action to improve visitor satisfaction.
  - ◇ Install a visitor management system for sites that includes measures to preserve, protect, and enhance natural and cultural assets.
  - ◇ Have published and provided guidelines (also as signage and hoardings) for proper visitor behaviour at sensitive sites. Such guidelines are designed to minimize adverse impacts on sensitive sites and strengthen positive visitor behaviours.
3. Given that increased development investments are an ongoing phenomena in the IHR, it is an the opportune time to assess opportunities and challenges this might bring in promoting inter-state and transboundary tourism (and other economic connects) and overall populating of high altitude areas of the IHR affected by depopulation.

## 10.6 Policy and regulations:

1. Promote zero waste destination by enforcing The Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, and The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016 of the GOI. Make use of best practices in sustainable waste management in tourism destinations in IHR. Seek convergence with Swachh Bharat Mission.
2. Destinations must have a system to encourage enterprises to reduce, reuse, and recycle solid waste. Any residual solid waste that is not reused or recycled must be disposed of safely and sustainably and 'polluter pays' principle must be enforced.
3. At least one prime destination in each state of IHR must be prepared in the next three years to test and upscale a concept of eco-labelling in line with a universal certification system and customized through Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI).

4. All key services providers must be made to follow international and national good practices and locally agreed guidance for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites in order to minimize adverse impacts and maximize local benefits and visitor fulfilment.
5. Given the uncontrolled influx of tourists, service providers and other organizations must implement a policy against commercial, sexual or any other form of exploitation or harassment, particularly of children, adolescents, women, minorities and other vulnerable groups.
6. It could be made mandatory that IHR states create a basis for conservation-based investments to raise much needed funds for protection and conservation outside strictly protected areas. This also means that state forest departments genuinely work in partnership with adventure and eco-tourism sector actors.
7. Laws or policies to mitigate climate change need to be reviewed at state level and innovative technologies and inclusive awareness programmes (for hotels, government offices, restaurants etc.) to mitigate climate change must be initiated or updated to change public behaviour towards environment protection.
8. The Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India and Indicators recently announced by the Ministry for accommodation sector and tour operators should be taken up for ratification by the industry associations in the entire IHR. This will ensure consistent quality of service, safety of tourists, enhance the reputation of the tourism destination and greater visitor satisfaction. For example 'green' standards and certification schemes aim to make tourism operations more sustainable by providing participating businesses with an action plan for improvement which is linked to market incentives.

**Note:** The GSTC Criteria serve as the global baseline standards for sustainability in travel and tourism. The criteria are used for education and awareness-raising, policy-making for businesses and government agencies and other organization types, measurement and evaluation, and as a basis for certification.

They are the result of a worldwide effort to develop a common language about sustainability in tourism. They are arranged in four pillars:

1. Sustainable management
  2. Socioeconomic impacts
  3. Cultural impacts
  4. Environmental impacts (including consumption of resources, reducing pollution, and conserving biodiversity and landscapes)
9. Given that the IHR has borders with six countries, the enhancement of existing cross-border and interstate circuits of tourism can help in diversifying and decongesting tourism demands. Cross-border tourism can also be subjected to standardized regional norms so that a harmonized set of responsible tourism norms and rules are established and practiced.

10. Protected areas and national heritage sites should be opened up for limited number of tourists with low impact and high income (Bhutan the example) with environmental standards strictly followed (e.g. waste, decibel levels, number of tourists).
11. Laws and regulations regarding property acquisitions for tourism destinations exist, and states need to ensure that these are enforced, compliant with community and indigenous rights, ensuring public consultation, and do not authorize resettlement without prior informed consent and/or reasonable compensation. This should be matched with compulsory registration of all tourism sector related enterprise or initiatives.
12. Given that Himalayan destinations have their own limited natural and heritage resources and infrastructure to carry out tourism development management of Destination Carrying Capacity becomes vital (getting the balance right in the volume, timing and location of visits and for reducing congestion and ensuring socio-environment compliance). Control mechanisms need to be local context specific but are inevitable to ensure that the destination carrying capacity is not exceeded. Each State can develop its standard set of norms to define carrying capacity based on guidelines for sustainable tourism once on short term basis the concept is tested in pilots.
13. Physical infrastructure such as hotels, restaurants, and road and trail networks in forest areas must be ecologically friendly. Clear zoning of landscape (Land Use Plan based on maps and stakeholder interests) will allow customised infrastructure development which will ensure that unfair and negative trade-offs are avoided. Additionally, such a zoning will assist monitoring and guide site specific interventions if and when required.
14. Environmental auditing of tourism service providers based on environment efficiency and carbon generation and certification can enhance application of environmental safeguards in the tourism industry.
15. While there is no environmental law that governs the tourism sector as such, including tourist activities in the air, water, noise and environment pollution control laws can control environment pollution from tourism to some extent. A common certification scheme for tourism ventures in line with environmental parameters will help to reduce pollution.
16. Safety and security of tourists should be emphasized, and synergy between local bodies for search and rescue should be a priority.

# Chapter 11

## Summing-up

Based on the key principles outlined for sustainable tourism by World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), numerous actions have been proposed and the implementation of actions could contribute to sustainable tourism in the IHR.

Overall, this requires improved access to existing national and state funding streams so that actions are implemented in a timely manner. It is important that revenues made from tourism are ploughed back in the development of this sector and a ceiling can be fixed by each state based on key recommended actions. It is important that enabling conditions are created for the business sector to invest in conservation and in inclusive tourism business with local stakeholders as key partners. Funding must be ensured to develop and implement standard sustainable tourism norms. Identification and development of new activities and destinations, and throughout the year pursuits like rural/heritage tourism and farm tourism, have the potential to enhance associated livelihoods and reverse migration. Also, projects in the hills and mountains take time to implement, due to which the allocated budget is not utilized within stipulated time and hence lapses. IHR states need more time for implementation vis-à-vis states in the plains.

The existing institutional and governance landscape in IHR needs to be updated and oriented to the possibilities for developing IHR in the long term. As men and youth migrate and there is increasing feminization of local landscape management, an updated capacity development programme is needed that not only mentors future policymakers and practitioners from public and private sector but also enables local economic and entrepreneurship avenues through sustainable tourism. This would require that mountain specific vocation centres are in place and updated with modern facilities and knowledge on the subject.

Federal Ministries of Tourism and Culture must join with Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change, mountain states (East and West) and few business sector institutions (CII, ATOAI) to design or refine generic IHR specific code of conduct/certification standards for tourism products and services (with international organizations, national and regional development agencies, community representatives, private investors, and financing corporations). STCI can guide this effort.

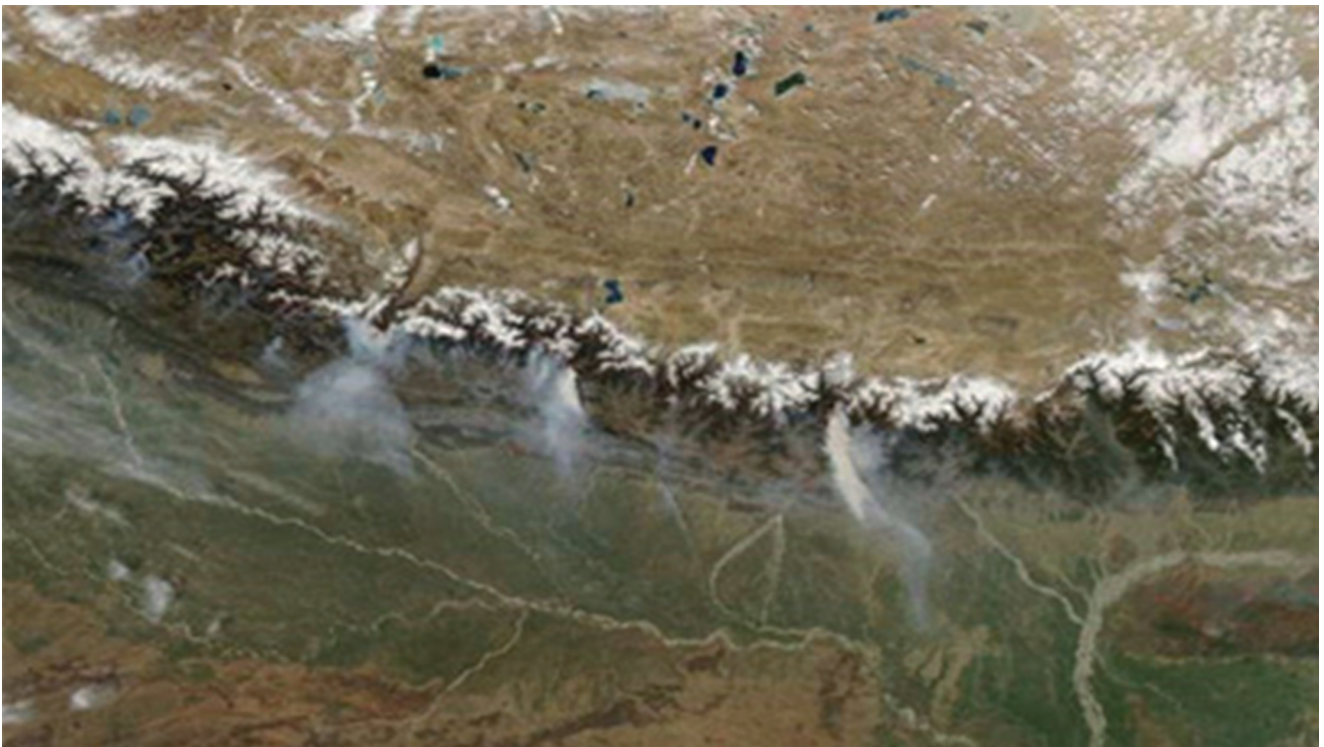
As an outcome of this comprehensive analysis, based on secondary data from public domain of Government of India and the IHR states, we have added interpretations based on regular observations made by compilers of this report in IHR. There is a clear indication that at policy and practice levels all mountain states are very much on the spot when it comes to documenting, understanding and planning for sustainable tourism. There are key best practices in each state and especially in some leading mountain states such as Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, J&K and Uttarakhand. Similarly, there are ongoing public and private initiatives and schemes that have lots of potential for being upscaled and outscaled. However, in real terms, things on the ground are of great concern. This is evident from the strong directives that NGT



has sent to mountain states (e.g. Himachal Pradesh on Rohtang Pass, J&K on Vaishno Devi). Tourist destinations in IHR are reporting disturbing trends of drug abuse amongst youth, prostitution, exploitation of labour, and uncontrolled land sales despite states having put stringent norms for outsiders. All these issues are related to mass tourism/pilgrimage that is grossly harming IHR. This also underlines that our country is marketing the natural and cultural glory of the Himalayas at a very low premium and allowing development in IHR as we do for the plains of India.

If the list of actions suggested here are incorporated into the current tourism development plans and implemented, there is a likelihood that they will contribute to conservation and development of IHR landscapes and improve the wellbeing of people. The implementation strategy should be IHR state specific and must be based on business plans that clearly relate to eco-labelling parameters, investment plans, and monitoring and evaluation. The integrated implementation of the above business plans and the performance on composite sustainability indicators could then be used to assess the performance of IHR states and incentivize these accordingly. These business plans must also serve as the basis for outscaling and upscaling the learning harnessed from best practices.

Based on the analysis and policy and practice gaps, it is clear that in the next five years we must also assess the opportunities and respond to challenges that are emerging due to economic growth related investments and partnerships planned or ongoing in the neighbourhood of 6 border countries. Lastly, it is crucial that climate change mitigation and adaptation actions are reflected in state and national policies and strategic plans and investments for sustainable tourism in the IHR.



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# Annexure 1

## Format Policy Analysis

Area of Assessment	Core Indicators	Tourism Policy			Tourism Master Plan			Ecotourism Policy			Forest Policy			Industrial Policy		
		A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C	A	B	C
Disaster Management	Disaster vulnerability (including Climate Change) of the area is assessed and monitored regularly.															
	Mitigation plan is part of annual activity plan and funding.															
	Adequate resources in the destination scale are in place to manage sudden disasters.															
Visitor Control	Mechanism to track the # of visitors every year is available and operational.															
	Maximum limit of visitors/year for environment protection is assessed and defined.															
	Policy, strategy and mechanism to control the # of visitors is available and operational.															
Tourist Traffic Management	Mechanism to forecast and manage vehicular traffic in the destination and site scale are available.															
	Regulation to use energy efficient, space efficient and environmentally efficient transport in the destination scale instead of cars/buses.															
Crisis Management	Technologies to advance alert untoward disasters for tourist en-route to destinations are available.															
Waste Management	Strategy and mechanism is in place for waste management.															
	Annual budget is allocated for waste management.															
	Local NGOs participate for solutions and people's sensitization.															

Pollution Control	Mechanism to regularly track the degree of pollution (air + water) generated in tourist destination is available and operational.																
	Mitigation strategy is part of annual activity plan and funding.																
	Regulations for polluting industries are in place and monitored.																
Natural Resource and Ecology Management	Mechanism is adhered to assess the current water demand of tourism sector and to identify current and future challenges.																
	Regulation is in place to restrict type and number of trees that may be cut annually + areas where logging is permitted.																
	Mechanism is in place and operational to monitor the above regulations.																
	Mechanism is available for coordination among concerned public authorities (Forest, Industry, PwD....).																
	Concerned public authorities operate as per single vision and work plan.																
	Mechanism are placed to conserve biology and restore ecology in order to better management of natural resources including biodiversity.																
Quality Standard/ Control Mechanism	Parameters for quality standards are defined for accommodation and restaurants.																
	System to regularly monitor the quality of tourism service sectors exists and operational.																
	Mechanisms are placed to conserve cultural, religious and natural assets																
	Private actors including tour operators, hotels, homestays etc. are monitored on the maintenance of responsible tourism norms and regulations																
	Tour operators and local agencies are prepared on the ethics of responsible tourism in the destination and site scale																
	Inclusive Planning and equitable sharing mechanisms are in place.																

Tourism Enterprise Development Governance	Policies and strategies on enterprise or skill building in place.																
	Local NGOs working for tourism enterprise and capacity building programs.																
	Strategies to promote handicraft sector through training, investment and marketing.																
Energy	Clear energy action plans are in place to reduce energy consumption at tourist destinations.																
	The use of renewable energy sources at various tourist destinations are introduced.																
Gender	Greater gender equality and the empowerment of women are well represented across all level of employment and community involvement.																
Marketing/ Branding	Annual marketing plans and strategies to promote existing and new destinations are budgeted and planned.																
	Branding strategies are developed to ensure a better market position and to cope with global economic crises.																

### Scoring and weightage

Grade	Score	Weightage
A: Clearly visible in policy and planning documents and M&E mechanisms outlined	75-100%	3
B: Visible in policy documents but plans only make marginal reference to M&E Systems	50-75%	2
C: Policy hardly makes reference to the subject and M&E mechanisms not defined	<50%	1

## Annexure 2

### Area Wise Policy Assessment of IHR States

Area of Assessment	States Addressing the Areas	Up to What Extent?	Which Policy/Plan Speaks?
<b>Disaster Management</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Arunachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Ecotourism Policy
	Jammu & Kashmir	Some Extent	Tourism Policy
	Meghalaya	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Tripura	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Master Plan
<b>Pollution Control</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Industrial Policy
	Arunachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Himachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Tourism Policy
	Jammu & Kashmir	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Ecotourism Development Plan and Industrial Policy
	Manipur	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Meghalaya	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Master Plan
	Mizoram	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Nagaland	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
	Sikkim	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Ecotourism Policy, Forest Policy
	Tripura	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Industrial Policy
	West Bengal	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Industrial Policy
<b>Visitor Control</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Arunachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Jammu and Kashmir	Some Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Development Plan
	Manipur	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Meghalaya	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Mizoram	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Nagaland	Some Extent	Tourism Policy
	Sikkim	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Tripura	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	West Bengal	Some Extent	Tourism Policy



Area of Assessment	States Addressing the Areas	Up to What Extent?	Which Policy/Plan Speaks?
<b>Tourist Traffic Management</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Arunachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Himachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Tourism Policy
	Manipur	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Meghalaya	Some Extent	Tourism Policy
	Mizoram	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Nagaland	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Sikkim	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Ecotourism Policy and Forest Policy
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Master Plan
<b>Crisis Management</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Arunachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Ecotourism Policy
	Jammu & Kashmir	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Meghalaya	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Sikkim	Some Extent	Tourism Policy
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Master Plan
<b>Waste Management</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Ecotourism Policy, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	Arunachal Pradesh	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Jammu & Kashmir	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Ecotourism Development Plan and Industrial Policy
	Manipur	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Meghalaya	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
	Mizoram	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Nagaland	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
	Sikkim	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Ecotourism Policy and Forest Policy
	Tripura	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Master Plan
	West Bengal	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Industrial Policy
<b>Natural Resource and Ecology Management</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	Arunachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Himachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Ecotourism Policy
	Jammu & Kashmir	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Ecotourism Development Plan, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	Manipur	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Meghalaya	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	Mizoram	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Nagaland	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
	Sikkim	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Ecotourism Policy and Forest Policy
	Tripura	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
	West Bengal	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Industrial Policy

Area of Assessment	States Addressing the Areas	Up to What Extent?	Which Policy/Plan Speaks?
<b>Quality Standard/Control Mechanism</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	Arunachal Pradesh	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Himachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Jammu & Kashmir	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Development Plan
	Manipur	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Meghalaya	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	Mizoram	Some Extent	Ecotourism Policy
	Nagaland	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Sikkim	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Tripura	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
<b>Tourism Enterprise Development Governance</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	Arunachal Pradesh	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Ecotourism Policy and Industrial Policy
	Himachal Pradesh	Large Extent	Tourism, Ecotourism Policy and Forest Policy
	Jammu & Kashmir	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Manipur	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Industrial Policy
	Meghalaya	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	Mizoram	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan, Ecotourism Policy and Industrial Policy
	Nagaland	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	Sikkim	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Ecotourism Policy and Industrial Policy
	Tripura	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan, Ecotourism Policy and Industrial Policy
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	West Bengal	Some Extent	Industrial Policy
<b>Energy</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Forest Policy
	Arunachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Himachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Ecotourism Policy
	Jammu & Kashmir	Some Extent	Ecotourism Development Plan and Industrial Policy
	Manipur	Some Extent	Tourism Policy
	Meghalaya	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan, Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	Mizoram	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Nagaland	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
	Sikkim	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Tripura	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Industrial Policy
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy and Industrial Policy
	West Bengal	Some Extent	Tourism Policy and Industrial Policy

Area of Assessment	States Addressing the Areas	Up to What Extent?	Which Policy/Plan Speaks?
<b>Gender</b>	Assam	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
	Arunachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Himachal Pradesh	Some Extent	Forest Policy
	Jammu & Kashmir	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Development Plan
	Manipur	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Meghalaya	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
	Mizoram	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Nagaland	Some Extent	Forest Policy
	Sikkim	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Tripura	Some Extent	Tourism Master Plan
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
<b>Marketing &amp; Branding</b>	Assam	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Forest Policy
	Arunachal Pradesh	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Himachal Pradesh	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Ecotourism Policy
	Jammu & Kashmir	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Development Plan
	Manipur	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Industrial Policy
	Meghalaya	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Mizoram	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Industrial Policy
	Nagaland	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	Sikkim	Large Extent	Tourism Policy, Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Tripura	Large Extent	Tourism Master Plan and Ecotourism Policy
	Uttarakhand	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Tourism Master Plan
	West Bengal	Large Extent	Tourism Policy and Industrial Policy

# Annexure 3

## Best Practices

### 1) The Blue Yonder, India

– *“Creating better places for people to live and for people to visit”*

Nila Foundation was started as a non-profit organization in 2004. Then, in order to develop “responsible tourism” in a village in Central Kerala, India, a travel company called The Blue Yonder (TBY) was established. Out of the idea to promote sustainable development with tourism, TBY initiated creative travels along Nila in Kerala, India. The river, which nurtured the old civilization of Kerala, is now trying to bring back its past wonders from the deteriorating and drying-up predicament. In 2011, TBY had vigorous development in South Africa, which is another new market. Since 2012, TBY has been forming partnerships to help promote Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, and Bhutan. Because of its roots from the local area, TBY has a great understanding of the problems related to the river and uses tourism as an approach to solve challenges of development. Besides that, TBY has a strong belief in and is also trying to help “the people, culture, heritage, lifestyle, livelihood and the future of the community”.

#### Culture

Program of musical trail since 2006.

- Showcase traditions of music along the River Nila, with musicians from Mulayankaavu, in collaboration with Njaralathu Hari Govindan.
- Created regular “music campus” as a stage for music learning, which is part of the trips for the TBY tourists.
- Produced ‘Sacred Science’, a music piece, in collaboration with ‘Dewarists’, a TV Program of the country. Collaboration with Vayali, the folk group since 2006.
- Financially supported 40 plus volunteers of the folk group.
- Archived and advocated traditional art forms.
- Attracting responsible tourists from other countries and creating stage for folk artists from the area to help restore the traditional art forms.
- Promoting the development of folk group with TBY’s network around the world. Collaboration with community potters and craftsmen of Bell Metal.
- Train local artists and sponsor “pottery and craftsman workshop” for tourists.
- Artists are given money to train younger local artists to make bell metal crafts and to help maintain the traditional art.

## Community

Emphasizing that all partners of tourism activities maintain their jobs to secure their steady income while involving in such activities. Support for Institute of Palliative Medicine (IPM). Attracting volunteers from other countries to partner with IPM. Vayali is a leading example for volunteer in “palliative care” in Thrissur. “Musical trail Initiative”. Featuring local musicians by media helps improve local musician’s social ranking and change their working situations.

## Commerce

“Folk group of Vayali” generate sufficient additional income for the members to continue their pursuit of folk art through workshops and tourism. Growing potential tourist market and souvenir business to generate more income for local craftsman and artists.

## Conservation

Building different eco-initiatives to promote “sustainable waste management and ecorestoration” through planting varieties of native trees as Travellers’ forest.

“Musical Trail, Folk expressions, Thoni Cruise, Traveller’s Forest,” all of the projects by TBY are featured with the “theme of ‘River Nila’”. It has been the brand for the area and the residents there in the last 8 year. Meanwhile, River Nila has been made the case study for more than 30 international conferences. TBY has been awarded and recognized internationally.

Sources:

<http://theblueyonder.com> *The Blue Yonder*

<https://www.pinterest.com/theblueyonder/> *The Blue Yonder on Pinterest*

Photograph courtesy of *The Blue Yonder* official website

## 2) Hungary

The Living Tisza Trademark, The Alliance for the Living Tisza Association registered the Living Tisza trademark as the symbol of an organic and integrated Tisza Region.

The Tisza River connects five countries – Ukraine, Hungary, Slovakia, Serbia and Romania. The Living Tisza Association aims to improve the living conditions of those inhabiting the watershed of the Tisza, to increase their flood security and environmental safety, to preserve and enrich the ecological values of the river, and to provide an adequate quality of life for the people of this region.

The regions on the watershed of the River Tisza are very diverse from cultural, ecological, economic and social aspects, though they have a lot in common. The trademark helps the producers and the customers to find each other, and also to boost rural tourism.

It offers a great opportunity to link the retail of local products with touristic services and cultural programs (e.g. rural, incentive or eco-tourism). Rural accommodation providers, restaurants, bike rentals, organizers of cultural program, bakers, fishermen and other local producers may cooperate and join the trade mark system together.

The user has to fulfil a set of criteria and gets the license for using the trademark on their products or services for one year. The parties may re-enter into contract at once after expiring.

### *Why the case study was chosen:*

This trademark is a good example for a trademark with sustainable criteria. It covers a whole region, the basin of the river Tisza. The trademark is a symbol of belonging to the same region and sharing the same values.

More information:

[www.elotisza.hu](http://www.elotisza.hu)

## **3) Poland**

### *Carpathian sheep transhumance*

Dreamed up by one person, the transhumance became a massive event with shepherds wandering with their sheep through five Carpathian countries and festivals organised to promote traditional foods and crafts.

The crossing of shepherds with Carpathian sheep (redyk) lasted in 2013 from May 11 to September 14. The route led through mountain areas of Romania, Ukraine, Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic, and was approximately 1400 km long. During the crossing festivals and local events took place presenting pastoral traditions, live music, traditional products and regional food, exhibits of folk arts and crafts. Local people and tourists attended the events.

Transhumance 2013 was inspired and founded by a shepherd Peter Kohut from Koniaków village in the Silesian Beskids, Poland. The crossing was organised to celebrate the migration of Wallachian shepherds that led to the settlement of the Carpathians and the creation of a common, high-altitude pastoral culture. Their pastoral heritage connects communities in mountains, and it is reflected in music, dance, clothing, rituals, architecture and the ways of farming.

Local inhabitants and stakeholders strongly supported the idea. Many meetings were held with the involvement of the general public, local NGOs, local authorities, media and sponsors. This built mutual trust and endorsement.



### *Why the case study was chosen:*

The transhumance shows that inhabitants of the Carpathians are able to unite under the common idea and act towards sustaining tradition. The main lesson that can be learned from this example is keeping projects simple and as close to tradition as possible, and having a charismatic leader from the region.

### *More information:*

[www.facebook.com/RedykKarpacki2013](https://www.facebook.com/RedykKarpacki2013)

[www.redykkarpacki.pl](http://www.redykkarpacki.pl)

## **4) Czech Republic**

### *A model village*

Thanks to environmental projects and the beauty of the White Carpathians, Hostetín became a popular destination for visitors. It is also becoming a model sustainable rural community.

The village Hostetín is located in the White Carpathian foothills, a scenic cultural landscape with a mosaic of largely deciduous forests, brilliant flowering meadows and fruit orchards. The area is included in the White Carpathian Protected Landscape Area, which was declared a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve in 1996. Since the beginning of the 1990s, a series of environmental projects have been undertaken in the village, implemented both by the municipality itself as well as civic associations, particularly by local members of the Czech Union for Nature Conservation (CSOP). The environment has been a priority for the local government of Hostetín since its establishment in the early 1990s.

In 2000, a small juice factory was established, producing high quality juice made from apples gathered in local orchards, as well as a biomass heating plant fuelled by wood chips from nearby forests and sawmills. In 2006, the Centre for Sustainable Rural Development was constructed in the village – a place for interested people to learn, gain experience and inspiration on how to promote environment-friendly alternatives in their villages or households.

Thanks to these and other activities (e.g. the Apple Festival, accommodation services, hiking and cycling trails) the village of Hostetín is becoming a model sustainable rural community. Why the case study was chosen:

Hostetín is a model community of sustainable development in the Czech Republic. It shows that responsible approach to environment can be a key factor of social and economic development of a region.

### *Further information:*

<http://hostetin.veronica.cz>

## 5) Botswana

### *National Eco-Tourism Strategy (NES)*

Throughout the 1990s, Botswana's tourism industry adopted a "high value-low volume" approach to lessen the negative impact of tourism on its environment. This policy resulted in the region developing only a few major tourist attractions, like the Okavango Delta. Most of the tourism revenue was siphoned off in payments to external agents and absorbed in import leakage, leaving few financial benefits for the Botswana economy. In 2001, the Government of Botswana recognized that its tourism industry was dependent upon its abundant wildlife. To diversify, it decided to open up areas less known, such as the parks in the centre and south of the country, and add new products like cultural, historical, and archaeological attractions. The challenge was to diversify in a manner that protected the environment, provided local multiplier effects, and decreased leakage.

Botswana chose to develop a National Eco-Tourism Strategy (NES) with the help of a number of different stakeholders, namely, the Department of Tourism under the Ministry of Environment, Wildlife and Tourism, the European Union, Botswana Tourism Board, and the Regional Tourism Organization of Southern Africa (RETOSA). The NES emphasized community development through tourism by stressing that host communities needed to be actively involved so that the people of Botswana had a voice in managing their country's valuable resources responsibly. New products developed in the community had to meet the social, cultural, economic, and environmental needs of its people by:

- Minimising negative social, cultural, and environmental impacts.
- Maximising the involvement in, and the equitable distribution of economic benefits to, host communities, and citizen entrepreneurs.
- Maximising the revenues for re-investment in conservation.
- Educating both visitors and local people as to the importance of conserving natural and cultural resources.
- Delivering a quality experience for tourists.

Every stakeholder featured these five points in their promotional materials so that all tourism development, planning, and management promoted and rewarded the use of eco-tourism best practices. With these yardsticks in place, the NES educates both visitors and local communities about the importance of conserving natural and cultural resources. As most new developments will take place in remote areas, the NES should benefit local communities by creating employment and income. This in turn should stem the socioeconomic disparities among the country's different areas. There should be an increase in the percentage of senior positions in tourism businesses held by Botswana employees, and an increase in the number of citizen-owned and operated tourism businesses. Since implementing Botswana's NES, further construction of tourist accommodation (including five star hotels and resorts), airfields, and road infrastructure has grown hand in hand with an annual increase in selected wildlife species. The number of visitor arrivals, available beds in hotel rooms, and the occupancy rate has increased; and the total fees generated from parks and game reserves rose from US\$10.8 million in 1998 to US\$21.1 million in 2000. By 2001, tourism was the second largest contributor to total GNP.

The NES has also led to the growth of Community Based Tourism (CBT) ventures. CBT are community-owned projects, or joint ventures with the private sector based on equitable community participation. These projects use only natural resources in a sustainable manner to improve the community's standard of living in an economic or viable way. To date, there are over 50 community-based organizations in Botswana at various stages of development.

For example, in western Botswana the revenue from a growing number of international visitors buying Bushmen handicrafts and culture (i.e., traditional dancing, storytelling, and guided hunting and gathering trips) is flowing directly back to the participants and producers in the community. Craft production is an important source of income for women in remote areas of Botswana, and increased bigger demand for their products has encouraged these artists to produce more.

To ensure quality service, Department of Tourism officials inspect the premises of tourism operations prior to granting and renewing licenses in order to ensure that standards are met. Failing inspection, a license is withheld to give the proprietor time to rectify the situation or else the license is revoked. Botswana tourism standards have been developed through the Botswana Bureau of Standards (BOBS) and the Department of Tourism for hotels and accommodations.

## 6) Bulgaria

### *National Tourist Council*

Bulgaria established the National Tourist Council (NTC) in 1997 as a consultative body to assist the government implement its national policy for tourism. Chaired by the Ministry of Economy, the NTC representatives are from central administration, state commissions, agencies dealing with tourism, tourism associations, and chambers of commerce. NTC's functions include:

- Presenting the annual state budget to the Minister of Economy.
- Adopting a national tourism advertising program before submitting it to the Minister of Economy for approval.
- Overseeing the implementation of the national tourism advertising programme.
- Submitting an annual report to the Executive Director of the Executive Agency for National Tourist Advertising and Information for approval.
- Submitting concepts and programmes for tourism development.
- Delivering its opinion on draft normative acts and making proposals for their amendment, supplementation, or repeal.
- Discussing issues related to the construction and maintenance of tourist infrastructure and attracting foreign investments.
- Coordinating and assisting in the implementation of national and regional projects.

The NTC is an excellent example of a functioning public-private partnership, representing with both the public and private interests of Bulgaria's tourism industry.

## 7) The Gambia

### *Redistribution of resources (pro-poor and responsible tourism)*

Although The Gambia is a popular winter sun destination, its people weren't benefiting from those tourists. The government initially marketed The Gambia to packaged tour operators (mainly from Britain), expecting more foreign exchange earnings and foreign direct investment to flow into the economy from this type of marketing approach. But the vast majority of the revenues generated stayed in the countries of origin, leaving a legacy of debt and poverty.

The situation reached crisis proportions when the British Foreign Office advised British citizens not to travel to The Gambia after the 1994 violent coup attempt. Management personnel in a number of hotels brought The Gambia's situation international attention by establishing the Gambia Tourism Concern (GTC). The GTC made a linkage with a Gambian organization in Britain, which in turn led to linkages with similar groups interested in promoting fair trade in tourism and eradicating poverty. Working with the British High Commission, a 1999 workshop concluded that small organizations needed to work together to improve earning capacity. This led to the development of the Association of Small Scale Enterprises in Tourism (ASSET) in 2000.

Through ASSET, further linkages were developed between small-scale enterprises and mainstream tourism to enhance the multiplying effect. In addition, the UK Department for International Development (DFID), funded through its Tourism Challenge Fund (TCF), began a 20-month project to improve the linkages between the informal and the formal sector in The Gambia and identify what barriers needed to be overcome to increase revenues and the informal sector's success.

Industry's goal was to develop a collaborative style of work where partnerships between government, the private sector, and the informal sector (represented by ASSET) would prosper. There have been a number of win-win stories for fruit sellers, juice pressers, licensed guides, and craft markets resulting in increased earnings for these workers. For example, fruit sellers no longer hawk their fruit baskets on the beach and hassle the tourists because a Code of Conduct was developed covering their relationships with each other, the hotels, and the tourists. Fruit sellers work together as a society and each contribute a small amount to a communal fund. With assistance from some of the hotels (in the form of paint, labour, some cash, and materials) as well as funding from TCF, the 26 women have a new stall with a high quality image to sell their fruit.

To ensure success, Codes of Conduct have been adopted for the various players. For example, if licensed guides do not follow the Code of Conduct, or participate in minor infringements, the consequences are suspensions, taking their uniforms away, or withdrawing licenses depending upon the seriousness of the offence.

## 8) Trinidad and Tobago: Trinidad & Tobago Tourism Industry Certification Programme

The Trinidad & Tobago Tourism Industry Certification (TTTIC) programme was established in 2001 as a mechanism to improve the quality of tourism products and services. It is based on the tourism standards developed by the Trinidad & Tobago Bureau of Standards (TTBS) to ensure quality delivery. It is a joint initiative of TTBS, the Tourism and Industrial Development Company of Trinidad and Tobago (TIDCO), and the Tobago House of Assembly (THA), with the Trinidad & Tobago Hospitality and Tourism Institute (THTI) as the recognized body for hospitality and tourism training.

Industry buy-in was secured by (a) having all tourism operators agree on the need for operational standards, and (b) linking the programme to marketing initiatives that offer Approved Tourism Operators (ATO) the following benefits:

- Promotion in TIDCO's and THA's websites and brochures.
- Preferential rates from banks and insurance companies (subject to TIDCO's negotiations).
- Advice on training, human resource development, financing, and marketing, including workshops to further advance the products and services of ATOs.
- Use of the brand logo – a mark of quality assurance.
- Benefits from TIDCO's promotional projects such as trade shows and cooperative advertising.

Before the cycle of audits started for each type of tourism operator, public workshops were held to present and explain the TTTIC process. The TTTIC process involves a self-assessment using a checklist designed from the standard. A scheduled audit exercise is conducted once an application is received from the tourism operator. Upon completing the joint-audit exercise (TTBS and TIDCO in Trinidad, and TTBS and THA in Tobago) the operator receives a report from TTBS. If TTBS verifies that the tourism operator meets the requirements for an ATO, a certificate is issued. The process flow-chart is seen below. In order to ensure the integrity of the process, stakeholders were involved in the development of the standards but not in the development of the TTTIC certification programme. The TTTIC programme takes the agreed-to standard and audits tourism operators against that standard. TTTIC auditors are trained in-house, with TTBS and two consultants from Ireland and Jamaica providing the initial training programme. All TTBS and TIDCO staff members are required to sign a conflict of interest agreement annually. To date, over 120 audits have been conducted and over 40 percent of those tourism operators have been certified. An ATO receives approval if they ensure all new staff members or subcontractors meet the requirements for operation.

# Annexure 4

## Sustainable Tourism in the Indian Himalayan Region

The Criteria set by Global Sustainable Tourism Council are the minimum, not the maximum, which businesses, governments, and destinations should achieve to approach social, environmental, cultural, and economic sustainability. Since tourism destinations each have their own culture, environment, customs, and laws, the Criteria are designed to be adapted to local conditions and supplemented by additional criteria for the specific location and activity.

<b>Sustainable destination strategy</b> The destination has established and is implementing a multi-year destination strategy that is publicly available, is suited to its scale; that considers environmental, economic, social, cultural, quality, health, and safety, and aesthetic issues; and was developed with public participation.	Multi-year destination strategy that includes a focus on sustainability and sustainable tourism and includes environmental, economic, social, cultural, quality, health, and safety issues. It should include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public participation</li> <li>• Political Commitment</li> </ul>
<b>Destination management organization</b> The destination has an effective organization, department, group, or committee responsible for a coordinated approach to sustainable tourism, with involvement by the private sector and public sector. This group is suited to the size and scale of the destination, and has defined responsibilities, oversight, and implementation capability for the management of environmental, economic, social, and cultural issues. This group's activities are appropriately funded.	The destination planning and management must start with the assessment of existing carrying capacity. This can be value added by assessing the current trends in the local development and growth apart from what climate change impacts will bring. In case of IHR, it is already known that there will be huge challenges of food-water and energy security and expected natural disasters that might strike frequently.
<b>Monitoring</b> The destination has a system to monitor, publicly report, and respond to environmental, economic, social, cultural, tourism, and human rights issues. The monitoring system is reviewed and evaluated periodically.	Active monitoring and public reporting of environmental, economic, social, cultural, tourism, and human rights issues.
<b>Tourism seasonality management</b> The destination dedicates resources to mitigate seasonal variability of tourism where appropriate, working to balance the needs of the local economy, community, cultures and environment, to identify year-round tourism opportunities.	Specific strategy for marketing off-season events and attracting year-round visitors. However also demand-supply of natural resources can be planned accordingly.
<b>Climate change adaptation</b> The destination has a system to identify risks and opportunities associated with climate change. This system encourages climate change adaptation strategies for development, siting, design, and management of facilities. The system contributes to the sustainability and resilience of the destination and to public education on climate for both residents and tourists.	Laws or policies to mitigate climate change and encourage technologies to mitigate climate change.  Program to educate and raise awareness among the public, tourism enterprises, and visitors about climate change and expected behaviour of public.
<b>Planning Regulations</b> The destination has planning guidelines, regulations and/or policies that require environmental, economic, and social impact assessment and integrate sustainable land use, design, construction, and demolition.	Planning or zoning guidelines, regulations and/or policies that protect natural and cultural resources. However, the missing link so far has been an Integrated and inclusive Land Use Planning that sets the sustainability bars and framework for M&E.
<b>Access for all</b> Where appropriate, sites and facilities, including those of natural and cultural importance, are accessible to all, including persons with disabilities and others who have specific access requirements.	Here an updates atlas of such sites and all specific information for access to all need to be available and communicated through all possible media channels (data portals, Web-Info, Tourist Information Centres).



<b>Property acquisitions</b> Laws and regulations regarding property acquisitions exist, are enforced, comply with communal and indigenous rights, ensure public consultation, and do not authorize resettlement without prior informed consent and/or reasonable compensation.	This will be IHR state specific and must be implemented in open and accountable way following principles of good governance.
<b>Visitor satisfaction</b> The destination has a system to monitor and publicly report visitor satisfaction, and, if necessary, to take action to improve visitor satisfaction.	These feedbacks must find use in improving the services and also planning and implementation system.
<b>Safety and security</b> The destination has a system to monitor, prevent, publicly report, and respond to crime, safety, and health hazards.	As part of holistic approach to local development security and safety standards should be profiled and regular capacity building must be undertaken to keep services providers up to data and ready for any such events.
<b>Crisis and emergency management</b> The destination has a crisis and emergency response plan that is appropriate to the destination. Key elements are communicated to residents, visitors, and enterprises. The plan establishes procedures and provides resources and training for staff, visitors, and residents, and is updated on a regular basis.	Here an awareness package with robust communication mechanism will define the outreach, understanding and ownership to provide support in case of crisis and emergency events. A regular update and capacity building intervention to key stakeholders will need consistency.
<b>Economic monitoring</b> The direct and indirect economic contribution of tourism to the destination's economy is monitored and publicly reported at least annually. To the extent feasible, this should include visitor expenditure, revenue per available room, employment and investment data.	Significance here lies in monitoring whether economic benefits are fair and equitable and keeping especially local communities in view. Moreover economic benefits at the costs of loss of local socio-cultural values need to be timely discouraged.
<b>Local career opportunities</b> The destination's enterprises provide equal employment, training opportunities, occupational safety, and fair wages for all.	Training programs that provide equal access to all, including women, youth, disabled people, minorities, and other vulnerable populations.
<b>Public participation</b> The destination has a system that encourages public participation in destination planning and decision making on an ongoing basis.	System for involving public, private, and community stakeholders in destination management planning and decision making.
<b>Visitor management</b> The destination has a visitor management system for attraction sites that includes measures to preserve, protect, and enhance natural and cultural assets.	Administrative mechanism responsible for implementing visitor management plans and operations.
<b>Visitor behaviour</b> The destination has published and provided guidelines for proper visitor behaviour at sensitive sites. Such guidelines are designed to minimize adverse impacts on sensitive sites and strengthen positive visitor behaviours.	All tour organisers and state has responsibility to provide first-hand information and on-line awareness packages on how to behave and act responsibly in IHR. Even rating and rewarding of services providers based on set indicators must be based on how clients have behaved, and should be easily measurable.
<b>Protection of sensitive environments</b> The destination has a system to monitor the environmental impact of tourism, conserve habitats, species, and ecosystems, and prevent the introduction of invasive species	IHR is extremely sensitive environmentally and is full of natural hazards. Hence all possible measures need to be in place to inform visitors and generate their automated response to protect environment.
<b>Solid waste reduction</b> The destination has a system to encourage enterprises to reduce, reuse, and recycle solid waste. Any residual solid waste that is not reused or recycled is disposed of safely and sustainably.	Solid waste management plan that is implemented, and has quantitative goals to minimize, and ensure safe sustainable disposal of waste that is not reused or recycled.

The criteria for Destinations are enlisted below:

Similarly, the criteria for Hotels and Tour Operators are listed:

<b>Legal compliance</b> The organization is in compliance with all applicable local, national and international legislation and regulations including, among others, health, safety, labour and environmental aspects.	All states must use and seek refinement of such legal norms firstly. However, these will need to be applied and M&E system in place must enable that.
<b>Staff engagement</b> Staff are engaged with development and implementation of the sustainability management system and receive periodic guidance and training regarding their roles and responsibilities in its delivery.	Here all services providers are responsible to have state-of-the-art awareness packages that demand proactive responses by their staff that can be measured and rewarded.
<b>Customer experience</b> Customer satisfaction, including aspects of sustainability, is monitored and corrective action taken.	A customer feedback system is in place, together with analysis of the results. Negative feedback and responses made to this are recorded. There is evidence of corrective actions taken.
<b>Impact &amp; Integrity</b>	Site selection, design and access have taken account of visual amenity, landscape, cultural and natural heritage. Site selection, design and access have taken account of the protection of biologically sensitive areas and the assimilative capacity of ecosystems. The integrity of archaeological, cultural heritage, and sacred sites has been preserved. The integrity and connectivity of natural sites and protected areas has been preserved. Threatened or protected species have not been displaced and impact on all wildlife habitats has been minimized and mitigated. Impact assessment (including cumulative impacts) has been undertaken and documented as appropriate.
<b>Community support</b> The organization actively supports initiatives for local infrastructure and social community development. Examples of initiatives include education, training, health and sanitation and projects which address the impacts of climate change.	The organization engages with the local community in identifying needs and opportunities for support and evaluating their potential benefit/impact. The level and nature of contributions made to schemes in the local community is recorded. The local community is offered the opportunity to access the tourism facilities and services provided.
<b>Local entrepreneurs</b> The organization supports local entrepreneurs in the development and sale of sustainable products and services that are based on the area's nature, history and culture.	Using all possible existing local skills as well as possibilities to add value on the above skills, through skills and entrepreneurship packages so that local economic avenues are created and sustained.
<b>Cultural interactions</b> The organization follows international and national good practice and locally agreed guidance for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites in order to minimize adverse impacts and maximize local benefits and visitor fulfilment.	IHR is a citadel of natural and cultural legacy. Hence all such information and its value need to be profiled and made available to one and all who live or visit IHR. Similarly, indicators of performance on cultural front can be used to assess and reward good practices.
<b>Local employment</b> Local residents are given equal opportunities for employment and advancement, including in management positions	Given the context that migration is ongoing and women are a big target group in IHR, in the long term we need to ensure that tourism creates local economic avenues so that youth can make choices.
<b>Exploitation and harassment</b> The organization has implemented a policy against commercial, sexual or any other form of exploitation or harassment, particularly of children, adolescents, women, minorities and other vulnerable groups.	Socio-demographic data, knowledge on principles of responsible tourism and expected behaviours of services providers and clients will be the key to contribute to counter exploitation and harassment of any kind.

# Annexure 5

## Sustainable Tourism and Associated Actions

The adapted aims for sustainable tourism and associated actions in the IHR region are given as follows:

**1. Economic viability:** *To ensure the viability and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises, so that they are able to sustain prosperity and deliver benefits in the long term.*

### *Actions:*

1. Understand and project the markets of future and readiness of IHR to match these including for cross-border circuits
2. Invest in sustaining the quality and attractiveness of mountain destinations (e.g. jobs maintained and even increased on inclusive basis! Growth of green infrastructure maintained)
3. Ensure that plan outlay of tourism sector is timely and fully invested as business plan
4. The above business plans must have quality “Carrying Capacity” and “Cost-benefit analysis” included to show that SDGs are addressed (e.g. 8, 12, 15) and corrective actions are proposed 5. Ensure that prime destinations have a back-up plan to monitor and maintain these as best practices

**2. Local prosperity:** *To maximize the contribution of tourism to the economic prosperity of the host destination, including the proportion of visitor spending that is retained locally.*

### *Actions:*

1. Reducing leakages and make community interfaces transparent and equitable benefit sharing basis
2. Strengthening links between businesses to converge financial investments mitigating sustainability concerns
3. Influencing levels of visitor spending and its outreach to destination communities
4. Incubation funding: often, the initial few months/years require staying power. The initial losses need to be sustained to stay the course and states must support here
5. Local control / diversity: this would need to be ensured through tourism enterprise development governance which would also ensure the quality of employment for local population especially involvement of under-represented sectors of society
6. Engage and empower local communities (e.g. indigenous and traditional communities, both in NER as well as in Western Himalayas) in planning and decision making about the management and future development of tourism (linked to their livelihoods and culture) in their area, in consultation with other stakeholders

7. A support system of networked volunteers / flexible consultants that are specifically mentored to ensure quality control (guest managers) or marketing support (social media champions). While some local enablers exist, they need to be given a boost by networking, branding/marketing inputs.
8. Operational integrity: A support system of experts: hospitality professionals / accountants / legal experts who ensure good operational protocol and processes. In today's world compliances are multi-dimensional and if we want IHR to come out of the "great intentions but zero implementation phase", then we would need to create enablers for this.

**3. Employment quality and social equity:** *To strengthen the number and quality of local jobs created and supported by tourism, including standardized skill and entrepreneurship development, the level of pay, conditions of service and availability to all without discrimination by gender, disability or in other ways.*

**Actions:**

1. Revisit skills and entrepreneurship deficits and link to potential opportunities
2. Arrange for public schemes and customized vocation training that fill the gaps of skills deficits especially for young and women entrepreneurs
3. Ensure employment safeguards through improved norms and unemployment allowance mechanisms (e.g. based on voluntary contributions such as Provident Funds, Part time bonus)
4. Adopt inclusive VC approach to seek a widespread and fair distribution of economic and social benefits from tourism throughout the recipient community, including improving opportunities, income and services available to the poor. (Pro-poor tourism)
5. Utilizing income from tourism to support local capacity building programmes (Hospitality, cookery, local architectural skills etc.) and for local investments.
6. Link service sector to local youth and women through standard set of cooperation norms (targeted reservation e.g. engaging x % of local employees)
7. Revisit norms of private sector engagement and create certification systems for business sector (e.g. CSR approach for tour operators, Hotels).

**4. Visitor fulfilment:** *To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, disability or in other ways.*

**Actions:**

1. Improving in-advance destination information pertaining to responsible tourism responsibilities for future visitors, tour operators and other service sector actors
2. Set the IHR standards and monitor implementation of these standards for tour operation service providers toward clients and government norms on responsible tourism

3. Documentation of various facets of the IHR heritage; a vision of showcasing the same in the most inspired manner, possible ways of bringing it to potential clients/visitors by involving historians/social researchers/artist groups etc.
4. Initiate and use visitor feedback intensively and in organized way for improving tourism sector systemically (e.g. as open accessible database)

**5. Community wellbeing:** *To maintain and strengthen the quality of life in local communities, including social structures and access to resources, amenities and life support systems, avoiding any form of social degradation or exploitation.*

#### **Actions:**

1. Build in the concept of “Destination Carrying Capacity” for getting the balance right in the volume, timing and location of visits and for reducing congestion and ensuring socio-environment compliance
2. Careful planning and management of tourism enterprises and infrastructure
3. Bring in the concept eco-auditing in private as well public sector services and management across IHR  
Forward thinking in the layout and design of tourist destinations and in the provision of services can make a significant difference to the impact on communities. Relevant approaches include:
4. Planning the scale, design and siting of new tourism development, to take account of the overall amenity of the destination and the location of residential areas and other activities within the community. Ensure Social Inclusiveness and Benefit Sharing
5. Planning the development of infrastructure, including transport, water and energy supplies, which should be designed to meet the combined needs of visitors and the community keeping the projections in view that give an idea what may change with climate and socio-demography.
6. Local community representatives as well as experts on the IHR’s ecology, history, economy, and culture should be especially involved in the design of road infrastructure. Roads are the key to access, and are the strongest harbingers of change. Everything else, including access to markets, educational and employment opportunities, new materials and luxuries, follows road construction.
7. Roads construction in IHR that is insensitive to the local landscape (its natural and cultural aesthetics and ecology) has done irreparable harm to the region’s tourism potential. Alongside the planning of sensitive road construction, these stakeholders should also brainstorm on how to best preserve the authenticity and integrity of their local natural and cultural heritage, so that the losses to the tourism potential of the region are mitigated, while enjoying the positive outcomes of road access (such as improving the goods and services available to tourists). In this context, an authentic inventory and mapping of such information need to be visibly disseminated
8. Where appropriate, encouraging tourism enterprises and their visitors to minimize water and energy consumption.
9. influencing the behaviour of tourists towards local communities (e.g. under CSR and eco-auditing of tour operators involving pre-service delivery information to potential clients)

## Vehicular Management

10. Vehicles operating in the IHR destination scale must compliance with environmental and pollution control acts. Heavy vehicular movement in Eco sensitive destination should not be allowed and the number of total vehicle a destination can manage must be in place to keep the tourist traffic and parking space into account.
11. Managing a database that provides instant information on the current status of carrying capacity at the destination (e.g. on hotel rooms, parking places, road blocks, traffic jams) before visitor or transport enters the landscape of IHR.

**6. Cultural richness, integration and mutual understanding:** *To respect and enhance the historic heritage, authentic culture, traditions and distinctiveness of host communities. Respect for, and understanding of, cultural diversity between nations and peoples is a key principle of sustainable development.*

Policies in this area should focus on:

- Conserving historic and cultural heritage features by involving local communities/tourism actors and by planning annual investments at local/state levels
- Effective visitor management. This can include a range of techniques such as spreading and deflecting demand, physical site management, etc.
- Securing more money from visitors for conservation/through Eco-Cess / Heritage Cess
- Integrate mandatory traditional architectural design, materials, and skills into the construction of tourism-related buildings
- Introduce vocational trainings at school level and offer advance courses post high school
- Seeking ways to benefit local communities living close to heritage sites through local value addition in value chains. This can in turn help towards conservation as well as improving local livelihoods/job sector
- Working with communities on the sensitive presentation and promotion of culture and traditions based “Incentive based mechanisms” (e.g. for good stewardship)

Greater respect and understanding for local cultures can be achieved through improved information for guests and hosts and interaction between them. However, in all these activities, sensitivity is required and commodification or devaluing of local culture must be avoided.

**7. Physical integrity:** *To maintain and enhance the quality of IHR, both rural and remote, and avoid the physical and visual degradation of the environment.*

### **Actions:**

1. **Tourism Destination Carrying Capacity Management:** It is quite evident that each Himalayan destination has its own limited natural and heritage resources and built and support infrastructure to carry out tourism



development in a day. Over use or pressure on these have greater environmental impacts which can negatively affect vegetation, soil, water and wildlife resources. It also leads to low-quality visitor experiences. Hence, advance technology based visitor information system must be created that can clearly delineates online and real time site specific details to tourists at his/her origin before travelling to the destination. It must include the number of visitor that are allowed to a site in a day, availability status of hotels, home stays and camp sites and other onsite information such as weather, traffic and transport system. Control mechanisms need to local context specific but are inevitable to make “Carrying Capacity Concept” tick.

**2. Infrastructure:** Physical infrastructure such as hotels, restaurants and road and trail networks in forest areas must be built on environment supportive and ecofriendly nature. Clear zoning of infrastructure development has to be mapped in each destination scale. Therefore, policy and planning framework must be designed to monitor such development.

**3. Resource Consumption:** Resources such as water and power consumption at destination scale must be optimal. There sources of origin and consumption pattern has to be regularly monitored.

**4. Eco-labelling:** Eco-labelling of tourism products and services offered by small, medium and large enterprises has to be in place. Credible ecolabels promote sustainable consumption patterns by providing concise and accurate information to consumers to help them identify those products and services which incorporate a good level of environmental performance.

**5. Waste Management:** As per the study the amount of solid waste those are being generated in the Indian Himalayan Region is a matter of great concern. Solid wastes generated in the higher elevation areas have to be treated with utmost care. Therefore green practices in both the destination and site scale must be put in place to base on the principle reduce, reuse and recycle. Even waste management practices those are being practiced in other mountain areas of the world such as the concept of ‘waste to gold’ can be implemented. Similarly, waste water in the higher or lower elevation tourist destinations must be treated effectively. Non-adherence to Standard norms must be punished/fined.

**6. Activity Control:** Strict regulatory actions must be in place to control tourist activities such as vegetation destruction, wild life disturbance and congestion. Therefore, both the self-organized and pre-arranged tourists must be briefed by the government officials or tour operators before entering into destinations.

**8. Mountain biological diversity:** *In relation to visual impacts, most attention in the past has been paid to the quality of rural landscapes and how they affect, and are affected by, tourism. However, there should be equal concern for the integrity and aesthetic quality of built as well as natural environments in rural and urban areas.*

### **Actions:**

Ensuring that new tourism development is appropriate to local environmental conditions (also permissible tourism zones)

1. Minimizing the physical impact of tourist activity, physical degradation of the environment can result from the actions of tourists. This can arise from all types of tourism but is most specifically associated with certain recreational activities. Particular problems to address include:
  - ◇ Erosion resulting from over-use of sites. This can be a significant issue with popular hiking trails, especially where surfaces are fragile.
  - ◇ Environmental degradation caused by dropping of litter.
  - ◇ Willful damage, such as graffiti.
  - ◇ Product Diversification and Destination Branding
2. Maintaining high quality rural and mountain landscapes as a tourism resource
  - ◇ Maintenance of physical integrity and attractive landscapes may partly be achieved through extending and strengthening protected areas and how they relate to tourism. This is covered in more detail under Aim 11: Biological Diversity. However, the overall aim is relevant to all areas and policies and actions should not be restricted to places with protected status.
3. Working with national parks and other protected areas
  - ◇ The designation and management of all types of protected area provide an opportunity to strengthen the protection from the negative impacts of tourism, and to focus on sustainable tourism that increases visitor awareness and support for conservation.
4. Promoting development and management of ecotourism
  - ◇ It is being pursued in IHR but needs standardization/or common certification norms according to which it is organized, management and monitored. This segment is particular important in the mountain areas.
5. Using tourism to encourage landholders to practice sustainable land management
  - ◇ In many districts/states of the IHR, rural landholders (smallholders, farmers or communities engaged in an agriculture on communal lands) can earn additional income from tourism, either directly or indirectly. This may involve providing accommodation or other services on the land, income from the sale of produce into the tourism supply chain, or income from engagement in tourism off the land (e.g. acting as guides). Tourism can stimulate more sustainable land management by providing a new income source (as an alternative to unsustainable practices such as logging or slash and burn agriculture) and can encourage landholders to conserve wildlife or produce organic food, as these are valued by visitors. Policies should seek to develop support, advice and other incentives to encourage landholders to manage their land more sustainably.
6. Minimizing damage to natural heritage from tourism
  - ◇ Careful control of tourism development is particularly important in order to avoid damage in areas of high landscape value or where biodiversity may be especially vulnerable. Guidelines for an agreed development planning process that will deliver such control are set out in the Convention on Biological Diversity. Policies and actions should also seek to minimize damage to habitats and disturbance of wildlife by visitors.

7. Raising visitor and enterprise awareness of mountain biodiversity
  - ◇ Providing tourists with a better appreciation and understanding of the natural heritage of the places they visit should help to prevent adverse impacts and encourage support for conservation, as well as enhancing their enjoyment.
  - ◇ It is not many tourism enterprises recognize the importance of ongoing conservation activity to the visitor experience; others should be encouraged to do so. Norms and standards of certification could be introduced that encourage enterprises to support biodiversity, through maintaining habitats on their own properties and supporting local conservation initiatives, in cash or kind. Financial support for conservation activity can also be raised from tourists and is providing an increasingly important source of income. Tourists can also become engaged in practical ways, for example through participating in conservation holidays.

**9. Resource efficiency:** *To minimize the use of scarce and non-renewable resources in the development and operation of tourism facilities and services.*

#### **Actions:**

1. Taking account of resource supply in the planning of tourism development, and vice versa.
  - ◇ An integrated planning approach is required to ensure an equitable balance between the needs of local communities and the growing tourism industry. Growth of tourism in mountain may be seriously limited by the availability of land, water, energy or other resources. Equally, predicted growth in demand from the tourism sector must be taken into account when planning provision of water and energy supplies in key destinations and enroute stations.
2. Minimizing water consumption by the tourism sector.
  - ◇ Fresh water is a vital resource and consumption of water by the tourism sector is high. In many HKH countries it has been found that per capita daily use of water by tourists can be as much as 10 to 15 times greater than by local residents. Much tourism demand occurs in places and at times when water is very scarce. In many tourist destinations new sources of water would be difficult to establish, costly and bring their own environmental problems.
3. Minimizing consumption of energy from non-renewable resources
  - ◇ Policies on energy use should seek to influence both sources of supply and consumption.
4. Ensuring the efficient use of land and raw materials in tourism development
  - ◇ In some HKH destinations land may be in short supply. It is therefore important to select sites for tourism development carefully, taking account of alternative uses and the needs of the local community. Although use of local materials can add to quality and distinctiveness, the design and construction of tourism facilities should avoid profligate use of naturally occurring materials such as timber, stone, sand and gravel, and should take account of the capacity of local supply and competing demands.

**10. Environmental purity:** *To minimize the pollution of air, water and land and the generation of waste by tourism enterprises and visitors.*

**Actions:**

1. Promoting the use of more sustainable transport (by road and by plane)
2. Promoting a reduce, reuse, recycle mentality and behavior
  - ◇ In general, tourism enterprises should be encouraged to be efficient in all their use of materials. This is equally true for their use of resources and generation of waste.
  - ◇ Resource efficiency: Solutions and services in action to ensure energy conservation, pollution control, natural resource and ecology management Simple “plug-and-play” solutions need to be available for them to be used by the multitude.
3. Avoiding the discharge of sewage to forests, farms, river, lake (and aquifer) environments
4. Minimizing waste or design a waste management plan (at national and local level)
5. Influencing the development of new eco-tourism facilities

# Annexure 6

## Action Agenda

### 1. Short Term (2018-21)

Given the urgency of some of the problems that need immediate attention a few actions are suggested on a short term basis. These actions are as follows:

#### *Economic connect*

- 6) The updated capacity building packages and systems promoting sustainable tourism need to be blended within the curriculum and delivery design of trainings/education institutions (e.g. vocational centres, universities, schools) serving the host of actors and public/private sectors.
- 7) Rapid Crash Courses on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) should be introduced in primary and secondary school curriculum and teachers training.
- 8) **Prepare Tourism Satellite Accounts for all the IHR:** The TSA should show all aspects and types of databases that show number and types of visitors and their contribution to the State's development through their expenditures. Subsequently a **"One window On-line Information"** on number of hotels, rooms available, tourist sites, parking places, waste quantum, number of tour guides, tour operators could be collated. Similarly, information on expenditures made on promoting sustainable tourism could be added (e.g. public schemes, private sector investments etc.).
- 9) All IHR states must link their tourism related plans and investments according to envisaged state growth models that integrate targeted private sector investments for promoting in-situ job opportunities and local community partnerships. While preparing such state growth models key private sector actors must participate and articulate their interests and planned complementary investments.
- 10) Multi-year destination strategy that includes a focus on sustainability and sustainable tourism and includes environmental, economic, social, cultural, quality, health, and safety issues. It should include:
  - ◇ Public participation
  - ◇ Holistic Plan
  - ◇ Political Commitment

#### *Social inclusiveness*

- 9) Make an assessment of all the relevant public schemes and business investments in the IHR on how these could be improved for contributing to sustainable tourism and maintenance of best practices. This include proposals approved in the area of built heritage conservation/revival of heritage area/heritage walk/tourism app under 'SMART CITIES' programme of Ministry of Urban Development.

- 10) Design and deliver an IHR specific Awareness and sensitization package of different actors and sectors, including all key service providers and producers and unleash this information through a proactive media campaign and existing travel related websites and tourism information centres. (E.g. Hotel Staff are engaged with development and implementation of the sustainability management system and receive periodic guidance and training regarding their roles and responsibilities in its delivery.

### *Environmental sustainability*

- 17) Build in the generic concept of “Destination Carrying Capacity” across different tourism sites of IHR for getting the balance right in the volume, timing and location of visits and for reducing congestion and ensuring socio-environment compliance.
- 18) Promote zero waste destination by enforcing “The Solid Waste Management Rules, 2016, and The Plastic Waste Management Rules, 2016” of GOI. Make use of best practices in Sustainable waste management in tourism destinations in IHR. Seek convergence with Swacch Bharat Mission.
- 19) Destinations must have a system to encourage enterprises to reduce, reuse, and recycle solid waste. Any residual solid waste that is not reused or recycled is disposed of safely and sustainably.
- 20) At least one prime destination in each state of IHR must be prepared in next three years to test and upscale a concept of eco-labelling in line with a universal certification system that gets customized from Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI).

### *Visitor fulfilment*

- 1) A detailed survey of tourists should be carried out in the near future to elicit visitor perceptions on what services they are looking for and identifying the gap areas.
- 2) Specific strategy for marketing off-season events and attracting year-round visitors should form the part of visitor services. Accordingly, also demand-supply of natural resources can be planned.

### *Monitoring and evaluation*

- 6) Tourism sector standards must be established and maintained through coordination between departments, skill development, marketing, infrastructure planning as coherent institutional structures thereof must oversee these critical issues.
- 7) Improve the present system of collection of tourism related live-statistics which includes a digital atlas of all key tourism sites and the ones that are under planning.
- 8) Create separate divisions to look after the key aspects of tourism and related information viz. Capacity Building, Marketing and Promotion including product development, Standards, Certification and Guidelines, Data Management & Research, and Destination and Infrastructure Planning (e.g. see Sikkim Eco Tourism Policy).
- 9) Active monitoring and public reporting of environmental, economic, social, cultural, tourism, and human rights strategies, milestones and issues must be done at state levels and reported to GoI annually.

## 2. Medium Term (2022-25)

The medium term actions can be built from short term gains of above actions and prepare for a set of consolidated actions that will define the long term milestones to be addressed to reach sustainable tourism as shown by some of the best practices of the world. The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) establishes and manages global sustainable standards, known as the GSTC Criteria. There are two sets: Destination Criteria for public policy-makers and destination managers, and Industry Criteria for hotels and tour operators. These are the guiding principles and minimum requirements that any tourism business or destination should aspire to reach in order to protect and sustain the world's natural and cultural resources, while ensuring tourism meets its potential as a tool for conservation and poverty alleviation. In medium term, it is inevitable that IHR's tourism mainstreams sustainability elements at policy and planning levels on one hand, and equally is adopted by service industry.

They reflect certification standards, indicators, criteria, and best practices from different cultural and geo-political contexts around the world in tourism and other sectors where applicable. Potential indicators were screened for relevance and practicality, as well as their applicability to a broad range of destination types.

### *Economic connect*

- 1) A support system of experts from hospitality professionals / accountants / legal experts who ensure good operational protocol and processes can be established. Today world compliances are multi-dimensional and if we want IHR to come out of the "great intentions but zero implementation phase", then we would need to create enablers for this.
- 2) Working with communities on the sensitive presentation and promotion of culture and traditions based on "Incentive based mechanisms (IBM)" (e.g. for good stewardship) need to be designed based on the tested eco-labelled or any other feasible sites.
- 3) However, in all activities, sensitivity is required and commodification or devaluing of local culture must be avoided. Utilization of Green bonus or "IBM" could be invested for development of eco-tourism and associated livelihoods in the region.
- 4) A support system of networked volunteers/flexible consultants that are specifically mentored to ensure quality control (guest managers) or marketing support (social media champions) must be introduced. While some local enablers exist, they need to be given a boost by networking, branding/marketing inputs, skills development (e.g.IT).
- 5) All key services providers must be made to follow international and national good practices and locally agreed guidance for the management and promotion of visits to indigenous communities and culturally or historically sensitive sites in order to minimize adverse impacts and maximize local benefits and visitor fulfilment.

### *Social inclusiveness*

- 1) Each IHR state must promote inclusive community-based management models in each state-district based on local/indigenous economic principles of fair and equitable sharing. The engagement of local



communities in various forms needs to be highlighted/reinforced. Therefore a capacity building programme for local communities should be given a priority.

- 2) The organizations (Hotels, Business sector etc.) must be actively made to support initiatives for local infrastructure and social community development. Examples of initiatives include education, training, health and sanitation and projects which address the impacts of climate change.
- 3) The services and other organizations must implement a policy against commercial, sexual or any other form of exploitation or harassment, particularly of children, adolescents, women, minorities and other vulnerable groups and must be periodically monitored against this.

### *Environmental sustainability*

- 1) Green practices in both the destination and site scale must be linked to the concept of 'waste to gold' implementation and showcased that waste can be linked to local economy. Similarly, waste water in the higher/lower elevation tourist destinations must be treated effectively.
- 2) Non-adherence to Standard norms must be punished/fined.
- 3) It could be made mandatory that IHR states create basis for conservation-based investments to raise much needed funds for protection and conservation outside strictly protected areas. This also means that state forest departments genuinely work with adventure and eco-tourism sector actors in a partnership.
- 4) Decisions on annual parks fee and tax discussions in collaboration with local area committees should be conveyed to business sector in-advance so that it can plan for such changes and in turn future investments also.
- 5) Laws or policies to mitigate climate change need to be reviewed at state level and based on the needs innovative technologies and inclusive awareness programmes (for hotels, Government offices, Restaurants etc.) to mitigate climate change must be initiated or updated to change public behaviour towards environment protection.

### *Visitor fulfilment*

- 1) Professional Certification of all travel trade industry service providers on mandatory basis must be introduced for every group of tourism service providers such as tourist guides, porters, cooks, drivers, etc. Certified training programmes need to be offered by selected recognized institutions.
- 2) The destination must have a system to monitor and publicly report visitor satisfaction, and, if necessary, to take action to improve visitor satisfaction.
- 3) The destination must install a visitor management system for attraction sites that includes measures to preserve, protect, and enhance natural and cultural assets.
- 4) The destination must have published and provided guidelines for proper visitor behaviour at sensitive sites. Such guidelines are designed to minimize adverse impacts on sensitive sites and strengthen positive visitor behaviours.

## Monitoring and evaluation

### 1) Standards & Certification for Accommodation Sector & Tour Operators

The Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India and Indicators recently announced by the Ministry for accommodation sector and tour operators shall be taken up for ratification by the industry associations in the entire IHR.

**Note:** The GSTC Criteria serve as the global baseline standards for sustainability in travel and tourism. The Criteria are used for education and awareness-raising, policy-making for businesses and government agencies and other organization types, measurement and evaluation, and as a basis for certification.

They are the result of a worldwide effort to develop a common language about sustainability in tourism. They are arranged in four pillars:

5. Sustainable management
6. Socioeconomic impacts
7. Cultural impacts
8. Environmental impacts (including consumption of resources, reducing pollution, and conserving biodiversity and landscapes)

## 3. Long Term (2025)

### Economic connect

- 1) Introduction of a “Green Cess” in the shape of payments from service consumers should contribute to the increased tax revenues that tourism brings but in part it will have to come before the increased revenues materialize.
- 2) Payments for environmental services (PES) such as based on eco-certification and charging entrance fees to tourists (as described above) might also offer a valuable long term solution within the tourism industry as tourism relies heavily on the existence of sound natural environments.
- 3) Given that IHR has borders with 6 countries enhancement of existing cross-border and interstate circuits of tourism can help in diversifying and decongesting tourism demands. Cross-border tourism can also be subjected to standardized regional norms so that harmonized set of responsible tourism norms and rules are established and practiced.
- 4) Given that development investments in IHR and surrounding states is ongoing, it is opportune time to assess opportunities and challenges this might bring in promoting inter-state and transboundary tourism (and other economic connects) and overall populating of high altitude area of IHR affected by depopulation.
- 5) Protected areas and national heritage sites should be opened up for limited number of tourist with low impact and high income (Bhutan example) with environmental standards strictly followed (e.g. waste, decibels, number of tourists).

- 6) Laws and regulations regarding property acquisitions for tourism destinations exist, and states need to ensure that these are enforced, complied with communal and indigenous rights, ensuring public consultation, and do not authorize resettlement without prior informed consent and/or reasonable compensation.

### *Environmental sustainability*

- 1) Given Himalayan destinations have their own limited natural and heritage resources and infrastructure to carry out tourism development management of Destination Carrying Capacity becomes vital. Control mechanisms need to be local context specific but are inevitable to make “Carrying Capacity Concept” tick. Each State can develop its standard set of Norms to define Carrying Capacity based on guidelines for sustainable tourism once on short term basis the concept is tested in pilots.
- 2) Physical infrastructure such as hotels, restaurants and road and trail networks in forest areas must be built on ecologically friendly nature. Clear zoning of landscape (Land Use Plan based on maps and stakeholder interests) will allow customised infrastructure development which will ensure that unfair and negative trade-offs are avoided. Additionally, such a zoning will assist monitoring and guide site specific interventions if and when required.
- 3) Sustainable tourism criteria also need to be developed for rural tourism, homestays and other tourism service sectors customized to IHR in PPP mode. Eco-labelling of tourism products and services offered by small, medium and large enterprises has to be in place.

### *Social inclusiveness*

- 1) The destination’s enterprises must provide equal opportunity for employment, training, occupational safety, and fair wages for all.
- 2) The destination must have a system that encourages public participation in destination planning and decision making on an ongoing basis.

### *Visitor fulfilment*

- 1) Promote Standards and Certification for the Tourism Industry: Tourism standards and certification can help ensure a consistent quality of service, safety of tourists, enhance the reputation of the tourism destination and lead to greater visitor satisfaction. For example “Green” standards and certification schemes aim to make tourism operations more sustainable by providing participating businesses with an action plan for improvement which is linked to market incentives.
- 2) MoT has recently announced the Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India (STCI) and its indicators. It is now imperative that the tour operators and accommodation industry in the IHR adopt the STCI through their various associations and also take visible steps for its implementation.
- 3) Environmental Auditing of Tourism Service Providers: Environmental auditing based on Environment Efficiency and Carbon generation and certification can enhance application of Environmental safeguards in the tourism industry.

- 4) As part of holistic approach to local development security and safety standards should be profiled and regular capacity building must be undertaken to keep services providers updated and ready for any such events.
- 5) The destination must have a functional crisis and emergency response plan that is appropriate to the destination. Key elements must be communicated to residents, visitors, and enterprises. The plan establishes procedures and provides resources and training for staff, visitors, and residents, and is updated on a regular basis.

### *Monitoring and evaluation*

- 1) Though in short term basis investments must be made on advancing databases and technology on providing “Live statistics” as universal information system ( e.g. carrying capacity at the destination (e.g. on hotel rooms, parking places, road blocks, traffic jams), it will be ongoing phenomena. (It must include all other emerging data sets onsite and state wide with the passage of time).
- 2) While there is no environmental law that governs tourism sector as such, including tourist activities in the paradigm of air, water, noise and environment pollution control laws can control environment pollution from tourism to some extent. A common certification scheme for Tourism ventures in line with environmental parameters will help to reduce pollution.





**Photo credits:** Prakash Rout - 15;  
Nawraj Pradhan - cover, vii, 20, 28, 30, 33;  
Sanat Chakraborty - 4

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