



Great Himalayan Trail

Preparatory Study



Netherlands
Development
Organisation



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Produced by SNV Nepal and ICIMOD
In collaboration with NTB and STN



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Himalayan region presents great opportunities for developing a model of pro-poor sustainable tourism that generates significant employment and income-generating opportunities for the poor; enhances the lives of rural communities through infrastructure development, social mobilization, training and education, and institutional development; show cases pro-poor sustainable tourism best practices; and at the same time provides rural communities with a powerful incentive to conserve their natural and cultural heritage.



To date, tourism demand in the mountain regions of Nepal has been concentrated primarily in three regions: Annapurna, Langtang, and Everest. Efforts to diversify the incomes and benefits that tourism could generate have been made at different levels: community, district, national, and regional. One of these initiatives is the Sustainable Mountain Tourism in the Himalayas (SuMiT) program, a collaborative initiative by SNV and ICIMOD that aims to contribute to poverty reduction and the sustainable use of natural and socio-cultural resources for communities in the Himalaya through the development of sustainable mountain tourism.

The concept for a 'Great Himalayan Trail' was outlined in the ADB/SASEC Tourism Development Plan. In Nepal, SNV and ICIMOD have taken the lead in developing this programme under the umbrella of SuMiT and in collaboration with the Nepal Tourism Board and the Sustainable Tourism Network. The intention is to exploit the significant potential for product and marketing synergies that exists within and between mountain districts in Nepal, as well as between Nepal and other Himalayan countries. The vision is that the proposed trail will help to attract more trekking tourists to mountain areas of Nepal, as well as encourage them to make repeat visits to the region and to explore different products and destinations. The intention is to help spread the benefits of tourism to the more remote and least developed parts of the Himalayas, where poverty is often the most acute.

In Nepal, the proposed trail starts in the Karnali (West Nepal) and continues through Mustang, Manang, Manaslu, Ganesh Himal, Rolwaling, Everest, and Kangchenjunga.

This document contains the summarised output of the first phase of development of the proposed Great Himalayan Trail: the Preparatory Study. It provides an overview of tourism assets, infrastructure, trails, and organisations active in tourism and other development activities along the proposed trail, and is intended as a resource to support the subsequent planning, development, and implementation of the Great Himalayan Trail programme.

The first section of this report presents the goal and specific objectives of the study, the methodology used to gather the data, and the most important challenges faced in developing the report. The second section contains an inventory (per district) of infrastructure, facilities, and the most important tourism resources available along the potential trail. This is followed by an overview of the organisations working in each of the districts, together with their work in tourism and/or other development activities. To make this data more easily accessible, it has been recorded in a digital database (geographical information system or GIS).

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACAP	Annapurna Conservation Area Project
ADB	Asian Development Bank
CBO	community-based organisation
CCODER	Centre for Community Development and Research
CIDA/CCO	Canadian International Development Agency/ Canadian Cooperation Office
Danida - Denmark	Danish International Development Assistance
DFID	UK Department for International Development
EC	European Commission
Eco Himal	Society for Ecological Cooperation Alps-Himalaya
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FINLAND	Embassy of Finland
GHT	Great Himalayan Trail
GTZ	German Agency for Technical Cooperation
HCDA	Humla Conservation and Development Association
HDI	human development index
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IDP	internal displaced people
ILO	International Labour Organization
INF	International Nepal Fellowship
(I)NGO	(international) non-governmental organisation
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Company
KEEP	Kathmandu Environmental Education Project
KMTNC	King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation
LEP	Langtang Eco-Tourism Project

NATO	Nepal Association of Tour Operators
NTB	Nepal Tourism Board
NVR	Nepal Village Resort
OHCHR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
OXFAM	Oxfam International
PPST	pro-poor sustainable tourism
RNE	Royal Norwegian Embassy
SASEC	South Asian Subregional Economic Cooperation
SC USA	Save the Children USA
SCN	Save the Children Norway
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SIDC	Snowland Integrated Development Center
SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation
STN	Sustainable Tourism Network
SuMiT	Sustainable Mountain Tourism in the Himalayas
TDH	Terre des Hommes
TMI	The Mountain Institute
TRPAP	Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Program
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WFP	World Food Programme
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature

