

Summary and Project Outcomes

This project, with its focus on local community development, has provided an overview of the nature and implications of tourism in the region, and it has, through the case studies, allowed us to make a number of inferences about how tourism can become a more important and focussed initiative in the region. The important aspects are as follow.

Information and Monitoring Systems

The urgency for information and monitoring systems has been felt during the research programme, in the entire Hindu Kush-Himalayan Region. The information for planning and developing tourism is extremely limited and government agencies in both states (Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh) have expressed concern about the lack of data for devising effective plans and monitoring the results of the tasks implemented.

One fundamental lacuna in India, and perhaps in all the countries of the region, is that most research is reactive or *post hoc* and, therefore, the various departments do not have a strong basis for planning. Further, the tasks of data collection and maintenance of statistics are with separate departments which often have no linkages or interactions with the various sectoral agencies. In areas such as tourism, which cuts across many economic sectors, this department's specific interaction is inadequate.

Information Needs

Information needs exist at various interfaces of the tourism process. The visitor requires information about tourist resources and the services available at different destinations and along different routes. The agencies and tour operators require information to fulfill this need.

The researcher and the planner need information to assess the carrying capacity of destinations and routes. They also require information on the nature of the current tourist inflow and the potential for attracting the particular type of tourist whose satisfaction levels would be higher for the existing tourist resources and services, and from whom the local people could benefit the most.

The Government and the private sector need information on the most attractive opportunities for investment in terms of economic and development returns.

Tourist Research Information Package Software

The necessity for an information base led the research team to develop a FOXPRO-based programme (Tourist Research Information Package) and incorporate the existing datasets for various destinations in the Uttar Pradesh Hills and Himachal Pradesh in the programme. The complete documentation of the programme and the initial dataset for the destinations are provided in an accompanying document. This software can be used on many levels, e.g., to provide information at Tourist Information Centres and for decision-makers involved in tourism development and management.

Data Needs for Continuous Assessment of Carrying Capacity

Data needs for continually assessing tourism carrying capacity vary according to ecological and tourism regions. Broadly, the structure of required information varies between areas in which tourism already exists and tourist assets exist, but where tourists need to be encouraged to visit, and areas in which tourist assets have to be developed. In order that, in each of these contexts, the local community development issues are focussed, an inventory of local resources for development has to be made, and the potential and constraints for development have to be assessed. A broad outline of such information has been developed on the basis of the specific case studies (Table 9.1). The methodology developed for the case studies can be adapted to various specific contexts.

Monitoring of and Feedback on Carrying Capacity

While the critical factors affecting carrying capacity may be stable for a long time, the limiting factors will change with the natural changes and human interventions in the region. For instance, any change in the regulation governing the traffic movement to the Badrinath Zone, which requires no physical infrastructural development, can immediately change the current carrying capacity. The changes that occur in the numbers and nature of tourist inflow into the region will establish a new limiting factor. This monitoring task has to include both those parameters that can be technically assessed as well as those which reflect the tourists' satisfaction and their acceptance by the local community.

Table 9.1: Checklist for Resource Inventory and Carrying Capacity Assessment

Resource Inventory Survey
<p>1. Physical Resources</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Land</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land ownership categories Current land use Land availability for various purposes Land productivity ● <u>Water</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Water sources' relationships to settlements Water quality at different sites/periods Current consumption at different periods ● <u>Forests</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area under different forest categories Rights and privileges of local communities Production and productivity ● <u>Existing Tourist Resources</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Temple and pilgrimage sites Trekking routes Skiing slopes Forests and floral habitats ● <u>Existing Infrastructure</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access and communication Housing and accommodation Water supply systems Sanitation and waste disposal Power and other energy supply systems Public distribution systems Market infrastructures

2. Human Resources

- Local Population
Location-wise distribution
Composition
Current occupations
Educational and skill status
- Regular Immigrants
Source regions
Duration of stay
Relationship with local communities

3. Cultural Resources

- Traditional Conventions and Norms
Community hierarchies
Roles and privileges of different groups
World-views : beliefs and customs
- Traditional Festivals
Periods/dates
Associations - nature, religious beliefs
- Arts and Crafts
Products
Association - communities, raw materials

4. Financial Resources

- Local Incomes
Agriculture
Animal husbandry
Income from tourists
Horticulture
- Government Investments
State line agencies
Development investments
Specific projects
- Private Investments
Local people
Outsiders

5. Institutional Resources

- Government
State line agencies
District agencies
Government corporations
Specific development authority
- Panchayat
Zilla parishad
Block/ village *panchayat*
- Traditional Institutions
Temple management committees
Community *panchayat(s)/gram samaj*
Bazaar committees/unions

6. ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL AND NEEDS

- Potential Tourist Resources
Temple and pilgrimage sites
Trekking routes
Eco-tourism trails
Skiing slopes
- Infrastructural Requirements
Transport
Accommodation
Water
Sanitation
Restaurants and eating places
- Training Needs
Communication skills
Tour operations
Hotel management
- Investments Needs
Infrastructure
Skill development
Management

One of the important inferences from the study has been the necessity for changing the notions regarding seasonality. Seasonality has been seen to be valuable in most cases so that ecological systems can recuperate. Therefore, all planning for tourism development has to consider the timespread available for tourist activities and develop optimal systems for that period.

Specific Recommendations for the Case-Study Areas

The following specific short-term recommendations have been made for Kinnaur district, keeping in mind the existing financial resources and the mandates of the leading agencies.

- 1) Accommodation being the critical limiting factor, it is necessary to focus on creating additional accommodation facilities. This could be best achieved by encouraging the local people to accommodate paying guests. Any large-scale construction by the Government, or its agencies, must be avoided.
- 2) Sanitation and sewerage systems must be fundamentally redesigned for specific destinations.
- 3) Parking facilities and bus stands are necessary to avoid traffic bottlenecks and localised pollution.
- 4) More options for alternative tourism should be created, for which there exists a wide scope.
- 5) Better support systems, for promoting and monitoring tourism and its impacts, must be established.

In the case of Badrinath Tourist Zone, the following recommendations have been made with similar considerations.

- 1) The Valley of Flowers must not be a sanctuary, as this is both detrimental to the local communities and to the promotion of tourism. This has also provided larger scope for illegal extraction as local communities are unable to monitor what is happening in the region. Simultaneously, the attempts to make a road up to Ghangaria must be stopped. The tourism department and the Uttarakhand Development Department should assume leading roles in tourism development in the region. The views of local people should also be given adequate weightage.
- 2) Sanitation facilities and foot-trails need to be improved in Mana Village. A marketing channel needs to be established to market the woollen garments and other items produced.

- 3) A thorough analysis of the Master Plan for Badrinath Town is required and settlement planning has to be carried strictly to preserve the traditional architectural styles and aesthetic quality.
- 4) As an immediate measure, the pending wages of the sanitation workers must be settled.
- 5) The *Panch Badri(s)* must be developed and marketed as a package, and this will enable a marginal extension of the timespread of tourism.

Follow-up Activities Initiated

A number of activities have been initiated, particularly in the Uttar Pradesh Hills, as a direct follow up of this research. These activities, which will lead to specific outcomes, have been initiated as a result of the two phases of the research programme. The efforts in Himachal Pradesh have been limited and, they will be resumed when some of the activities achieve stability. Some important follow-up activities among them are as follow.

- 1) A short tele-film of 12 minutes' duration was made. This is being extended into a 30-minute film on the tourism situation in the Garhwal Himalayas.
- 2) A two-part programme on Mountain Tourism has been accepted for telecasting by the country-wide classroom programme of the University Grants Commission.
- 3) The Uttarakhand Development Department of the Uttar Pradesh State Government seeks to plan community tourism circuits in the Chakrata *tehsil* of Dehradun District.
- 4) The Garhwal *Mandal Vikas Nigam* requested a short orientation programme on TRIP software. Senior officials were exposed to the software and opportunities for extending their efforts were highlighted.
- 5) A feasibility study for converting solid wastes into biofertilisers and/or energy is being carried out with the possible support of Garhwal *Mandal Vikas Nigam*.
- 6) A private sector agency wants assistance for environmentally-sound designing of tourist resorts in the region.
- 7) The state government wants to review the plans for promoting adventure tourism in the region.
- 8) The Garhwal *Mandal Vikas Nigam* has sought assistance in the preparation of its long-term corporate plan.