ABSTRACT

Managing visitors and their activities in a destination is an indispensable function of destination management and marketing and the same is given more impetus to associate and ascertain impact studies for sustainable tourism development. Most ecotourism spots are environmentally fragile and need intensive attention and care by all stakeholders. This chapter is an attempt in a Tsunami-affected ecotourism site, Pichavaram, and surrounding in Tamil Nadu where the source of income was found in either agriculture or marine resource collections. The search for eco-tourists is a challenging task along with the activities for which they travel. Considering the review of literature for the same areas around the world, the detailed activities have been studied and all possible have been added for the survey. The findings of the study are a contribution to the visitor management strategy in this bio-geographic region.

INTRODUCTION

The conventional socio-economic growth and development has resulted in many unsustainable practices around the world. Though relatively new, tourism industry is not exception to that. Traditional institutionalized form of tourism or mass tourism
Visitor Management for Ecotourism

has many adverse socio-economic and cultural impacts on ecology and stakeholders. As a result, the opinion and practices recommended by environmental economists and environmentalists are incorporated to resist adverse consequences of so-called traditional development. Now, environment and ecology, along with socio-economic and cultural issues are increasingly addressed to ensure development with dignity. Tourism in the 21st century will not only be the world's biggest industry, it will be the largest by far that the world has ever seen (Page and Dowling, 2001). As it grows the tourism industry will need to embrace greater responsibility for its impacts, be they economic, social or environmental. The World Tourism Organization indicates that tourists of the 21st century will be travelling further afield on their holidays. China will be the world's most popular destination by the year 2020, and it will also become the fourth most important generating market. Agriculture, the primary means of livelihood for millions of people in India still is in a very bad shape. Though billions of rupees are spent through various mega projects for alleviating poverty, it continues to be very acute. The growth of Indian population is unsustainable along with its agricultural and industrial practices. A broadest estimate (Utsa Patnaik's study) using NSS data vis-à-vis the calorie intake prescribed by the ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research) has shown that around 70 percent of the Indian population are living below the poverty line. Many such other problems are social and gender inequalities, malnutrition, illiteracy, improper and inadequate health facilities, unplanned urbanization, environmental degradation etc. But, from the Himalayas in Kashmir to the seacoasts of Kanyakumari and from the Kutch in Gujarat to the humid forests of the northeast, India displays her wealth of diversity in cultures, religious fairs and festivals. Indeed, India follows unity in diversity. The country extends up to 3200km from south to north and 3000km from east to west covering 32,87,263 sq.km. In the global scenario, India has a prime position in the field of tourism among world's Top 50 (Fifty) tourist destination countries. In India, tourism sector is the second largest net foreign exchange earner. This is a country with second largest human resources of the world. The country has a large treasure of natural beauty, archaeological and architectural monuments. All the hill stations beaches, mountains, lakes, river basins etc. comprise separate bio-geographic regions which are ecologically fragile and socio-culturally vulnerable. Almost hundreds of these regions need an immediate attention for awareness, management and sustainable development. Considering the attraction features, ecotourism vary from one destination region to another.

Marine biology is the scientific study of organisms in the ocean or other marine or brackish bodies of water.

About the Site: The second largest mangrove forest in the world Pichavaram is located near Chidambaram in Cuddalore District, Tamil Nadu, in South India. The nearest railway station is Chidambaram from where it is accessible by road. The
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