

## IMPACT OF TOURISM ON INDIGENOUS BOTE COMMUNITY OF CHITWAN NATIONAL PARK

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**Abstract:** Tourism acts as an economic incentive that improves the livelihood of an indigenous community residing enclosed in protected areas, helps to mitigate existing park people conflict and paves a path towards sustainable biodiversity conservation. However, it is essential to monitor and evaluate the benefit of tourism to different aspects of such indigenous communities. This paper explores the socio-cultural, economic and environmental impacts of tourism on the indigenous Bote community residing within the buffer zone area of Chitwan National Park. The study used mixed method for an in-depth tourism impact analysis on the Bote community. This study indicates that there is no socio-cultural impact on the indigenous Bote community. However, a weak positive impact on the economic and environmental aspects of the indigenous Bote community was found. This community is incapable of reaping a significant amount of potential tourism benefits despite their area having a strong destination image within Nepal's tourism industry.

**Keywords:** Tourism impact, Indigenous Bote community, Chitwan National Park

### Introduction

The tourism industry has an exceptional impact on global economics and has evolved into one of the largest and highest growth industry in the world. The chronological revenue growth of international tourism is US\$ 2 billion in 1950, to US\$ 104 billion in 1980, and US\$ 1,220 billion in 2016. The direct contribution of travel and tourism to Gross Domestic Product in 2016 was US\$ 2,306 billion and is forecasted to rise by 4.0% per annum from 2017 to 2027 (World Tourism Organisation, 2017). The tourism industry has a tendency to create both positive and negative impacts on host communities and visitors (Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Shepherd, & Wanhill, 2000). Thus, the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological diversity (2004); Leung, et. al. (2015); Eagles, et. al. (2002); Weaver and Lawton (2002) emphasise the need to evaluate the positive or negative impacts of tourism on local communities for sustainable tourism development, and the formulation of action plans and policy accordingly.

The formulation of the National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act 1973, which led to the establishment of the Chitwan National Park, imposed a measure that would prove austere for the livelihood of an indigenous community (Nepal & Weber, 1993). Jana (2008) portrays a persistent conflict between the Park authority and the people in areas near Chitwan National Park. Significant literature emphasises tourism as an antidote to mitigate park people conflict by assisting the livelihood of local communities and reducing their excessive dependence on natural resources (Beaumont, 2001; Gerald, 2000; Kiss, 2004; Stone, 2013; Ross & Wall, 1999). However, the tourism industry in Nepal is controlled by tour operators from the capital city – Kathmandu. They retain most of the revenue generated from industry (WWF, 2013) and thus the

economic benefit of tourism to indigenous communities residing nearby Chitwan National Park is negligible (Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation, 2015). Wells (1993), Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation (2015), identify the lack of a comprehensive framework and institutional mechanisms to monitor the impact of tourism in Chitwan National Park. Furthermore, Acharya (2010) identifies the lack of adequate research regarding the livelihoods of Majhi and Bote. To address this issue, the objective of this study is to examine the socio-cultural, economic and environmental impacts of tourism on the Bote community of Chitwan National Park.

## **Literature Review**

### **Indigenous Bote of Chitwan National Park**

The Botes are an indigenous people abundantly settled within a river premise of the Rapti River adjacent to Chitwan National Park in the southern lowland of Nepal. Such phenomena of settlement within premises of rivers have made them highly dependent upon a river in terms of cultural and livelihood activities (Sharma, Poudyal, & Heeramani, 1985). Initially, the establishment of Chitwan National Park in 1973 held a stereotypical perspective on indigenous Bote people regarding them as a source of biodiversity degradation within a region. Hence, the Royal Nepalese army (later renamed the Nepalese army under the Ministry of Defence) in 1975 were deployed in the region to enforce the National Park and Wildlife Conservation Act 1973, which incorporated the oppressive notion of ‘Command and Follow, Fine and Fences’ approach (Baral, 2013; Wright, Aryal, Poudel, & Wagle, 2017). Moreover, the park entirely neglected traditional systems of governance, management practices on resource management and ancient ecological knowledge of the indigenous Bote (Nepal & Weber, 1993). This alienated them from their customary rights, traditional livelihood and access to resources.

Such regressive measures on resources, dependent poor and minority groups created a serious livelihood crisis amongst the landless Bote population (Paudel, Adhikari, & Paudel, 2007). At present, Botes usually seek an alternative livelihood following non-traditional ways of living, such as wage labour and employment in various sectors (Subba, 1989; Acharya, 2010). The National Foundation for Development of Indigenous Nationalities (NFDIN), affiliated to the Ministry of Local Development, Government of Nepal, has classified the indigenous Bote people as a highly marginalized group.

### **Tourism in Chitwan National Park**

The pristine natural ecosystem of Chitwan National Park is a major attractive destination of Nepal’s tourism industry. The protected area, consisting of significant endangered species, is a landmark destination for nature tourism, wildlife tourism, bird watching activities, etc. So far, the National Park has been able to generate NPR 1,93,70,84,286 revenue from the tourism industry since its establishment (Chitwan National Park, 2016).

Tourist arrival numbers are growing steadily, particularly in the Sauraha region as it is the main entrance to the park. Being a focal location of the tourism industry in CNP, Sauraha accommodates more than 70% of tourists visiting the park (Department of National Park and Wildlife

Conservation, 2015). However, Pandit (2012) claims that non-native people own 86% percent of the hotels in Sauraha. Thus, the economic benefit of tourism to local indigenous people is limited in form to low paying employment such as nature guide, boat man, kitchen helper, gardener, etc. (Paudel, 2016). The tourism benefits to indigenous people in other regions are non-existent. To address this issue, Chitwan National Park has recently created a Conservation and Eco-tourism Promotion Fund to provide soft loans to user committee members who are interested in being involved in the ecotourism business (Department of National Park and Wildlife Conservation, 2015). Nevertheless, there is an inadequacy of proper strategic tourism plans and policies to ensure equal distribution of tourism benefits among the indigenous population.

### **Sustainable Tourism in the Protected Area**

Beaumont (2001) and Stone (2013) highlight tourism as a sustainable livelihood option for local communities in and around protected areas which reduces poverty levels and over dependency on natural resources. In addition, Salafsky and Wollenberg (2000) emphasise the necessity of a strong direct linkage between socio-cultural, economic and ecological aspects for the sustainable development of a region. However, Kiss (2004) and Novelli and Scarth (2007) demonstrate the mixed results of such attempts, due to limitations of financial investments, proximity of tourism benefits, fluctuating support from development agencies, attitudes of the local communities, and the lack of direct involvement of local people. Nevertheless, Eagles (2002) asserts that for sustainable tourism to thrive in protected areas requires long-term commitment from multiple stakeholders and the recognition of stakeholders' perceptions of tourism benefits.

Sustainable tourism development in protected areas can be executed through guidelines formulated in the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism in Protected Areas (Europarc Federation, 2010), Global Sustainable Tourism Council Destination criteria, Guidelines on Biodiversity and Tourism Development (Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity, 2004), Tourism and visitor management in protected area (Leung, Spenceley, Hvenegaard, & Buckley, 2015) and, Sustainable tourism in protected area (Eagles, McCool, & Haynes, 2002). More importantly, the Larrakia and Quebec declarations embrace the principles of the United National Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples to empower development of indigenous tourism in sustainable manner.

### **Socio-cultural, Economic and Environmental Impacts of Tourism**

#### **Socio-cultural Impacts of Tourism**

Wall and Mathieson (2006) identifies the social impacts of tourism which contribute to changes in value systems, individual behaviour, family structure, relationships, collective lifestyles, safety levels, moral conduct, creative expressions, traditional ceremonies and community organizations. Moreover, Butler and Pearce (1998), Inskip (1991), Wall and Mathieson (2006) identify the positive social impacts of tourism as an increment of awareness among host community towards the preservation of cultural heritage sites, unique arts and crafts and improvement in intercultural understanding. In addition, Nyaupane and Poudel (2011) suggests tourism enhances self-esteem and capacity building amongst host communities. However, tourism can have negative characteristics which bring serious threats to host communities, e.g., commercialisation of sacred practices, a xenophobic attitude of host communities towards tourists, the emergence of local

elites, crime, prostitution, and displacement of local residents, (Wall & Mathieson, 2006; Eagles, McCool, & Haynes, 2002).

### **Economic Impacts of Tourism**

Similar to socio-cultural impacts, tourism possesses both positive and negative characteristics in relation to its economic impacts on society. The key objective of tourism development is to ensure that the positive economic impacts are maximised, and the tourism industry is sustainable. Among the positive impacts: tourism contributes to improvements in foreign earnings for host nation (Le Quesne & Calversy, 1998), acts as catalyst for regional and national development through the multiplying effect (Pillay & Rogerson, 2013), increases the income of host population (Mochechela, 2010) by providing employment to local communities (Van Harsel, 1994), and works as an alternative to exploitative use of environmental resources (Beaumont, 2001; Ross & Wall, 1999).

In similar manner, the negative economic impacts of tourism are identified as: economic leakage resulting in no improvement in reducing poverty amongst communities (Blake, Arbache, Sinclair, & Teles, 2008; Cooper, Fletcher, Gilbert, Shepherd, & Wanhill, 2000; Sandbrook, 2010), unpredictable source of income which is highly influenced by external factors (Boo, 1993) resulting in the risk of high reliance on a single industry for livelihood (Page, 2005; Page & Connell, 2006). In addition, tourism gentrification can lead to price inflation within host communities (Gotham, 2005) resulting in the migration of local populations because of the lack of local employment caused by unregulated tourism in host communities (Mochechela, 2010).

### **Environmental Impact of Tourism**

Tourism has the potential to create beneficial effects on the environment by contributing to environmental protection and conservation. A balance between economic, social and natural capital leads to a healthy ecosystem, a vibrant regional economy, social equity and empowerment (Flora, Flora, & Fey, 2004). Furthermore, Stone (2013), Nyaupane and Poudel (2011) emphasises tourism as a sustainable livelihood option for local communities and has the potential to uplift or drop biodiversity conservation efforts. Sunlu (2003); Rabbany, et. al. (2013) and Eagles and McCool (2002) identify the direct environmental impacts of tourism such as: water, air, and land quality, noise pollution, sewage wastage, littering, habitat alteration, trampling on vegetation and aesthetic pollution.

### **Methodology**

**Research design:** The study is conducted through a mixed research approach.

**Population:** The target population was the Bote community of Chitwan National Park.

**Sample:** A sample of 150 local Bote community resident was considered for the sampling. Out of 150 sample, 127 respondents gave their consent to participate in the survey.

**Sampling technique:** Convenience sampling was used to obtain quantitative data. Purposive sampling was used for collecting qualitative data.

**Instrumentation:** For the quantitative data a questionnaire with 21 opinion statement was formulated to measure residents' attitudes towards tourism impacts. The questionnaire was translated into Nepali for comprehension by community members. A validity test was performed with consultation with experts and a pilot test for internal consistency in questionnaire, and reliability test was employed by Cronbach's alpha (0.652) for reliability concerns.

For the qualitative data structured interviews with key informants were conducted indigenous (i.e., community, park authority and representative from tourism industry).

## Results

**Respondents Profile:** Of the 127 respondents, 52% were female and 48% male. The majority of the respondents were below 25 years old (44.9%), followed by the 25-35 age group (37%). The education level of the majority of respondents were below school level (86.61%), followed by college level (11.81%). The marital status shows that 62.99% of respondents as unmarried and 36.22% as married.

### Bote Community Perceptions of the Socio-cultural Impacts of Tourism

The results presented in Table 1, the overall mean value of 4.0 demonstrates a slight agreement of respondents towards the positive socio-cultural impacts of tourism on Bote community. Other perceived positive impacts include appreciation of local culture and sacred sites by tourists, which have mean values of 5.15 and 5.11 respectively. To the contrary, there is disagreement about the participation of the indigenous Bote community in the decision-making process while formulating tourism policy. This statement has the lowest mean value of 2.07. The perception is similar for access to tourism education programmes and information about tourism plans and policy, with mean values of 2.35 and 2.43 respectively.

**Table 1: Bote Community Perceptions of the Socio-cultural Impacts of Tourism**

Sl. No	Opinion Statement	Mean	SD
1	Tourism practice appreciates our local culture	5.15	0.900
2	Tourism practice appreciates our sacred sites	5.11	1.028
3	Tourism has generated positive awareness towards preservation of local culture among community	4.44	1.572
4	Tourism has generated positive awareness towards preservation of sacred sites among community	4.43	1.540
5	I have access to information about tourism plans & policy	2.43	1.793
6	I have access to tourism education programmes	2.35	1.711
7	I have access to conservation education programmes	4.41	1.743
8	I participate in decision making process while formulating tourism policy	2.07	1.564
9	Tourism has not contributed in the increasing rate of crime in our area	5.65	0.540
<b>Socio-cultural impacts</b>		<b>4.00</b>	<b>0.743</b>

### **Bote Community Perceptions of the Economic Impacts of Tourism**

The results indicate that the lowest mean value of 2.28 in Table 2 indicates that the Bote people disagree with statement on tourism activities supporting their local business. Furthermore, the mean value of 2.33 indicates that tourism business has not practiced corporate social responsibility activities within the region. In the context of employment, the mean value of 3.03 indicates that the Bote people slightly disagree with the statement on significant numbers of Bote people being directly employed in the tourism industry. In conclusion, the overall mean value of 3.05 shows that the sample population slightly disagrees that tourism has brought positive economic benefits to the community.

**Table 2: Bote Community Perceptions of the Economic Impacts of Tourism**

<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Opinion Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	There is significant number of people from Bote community directly employed in tourism	3.03	1.821
2	Tourism activity in CNP supports local business operated by our community members	2.28	1.552
3	The economic benefits from tourism practices in CNP is not limited within few people	4.55	1.693
4	Proportion of profits made by tourism businesses in CNP are used to improve local development	2.33	1.653
<b>Economic impacts</b>		<b>3.05</b>	<b>1.042</b>

### **Bote Community Perceptions of the Environmental Impacts of Tourism**

The results as shown in table 3 show an overall mean value of 5.21, indicating that the Bote community agrees with the statement about the positive environmental impact of tourism. The mean value of 5.37 indicates that sample population agrees that tourism has not contributed to air, land and water pollution within their locality. The Bote community agrees that tourism has not contributed to traffic congestion, overcrowding or shortage in water supply, as the mean values show (5.32 and 5.53 respectively). The lowest among the list with mean value of 4.64 is an opinion statement on tourism's contribution to strengthen the community's effort towards bio diversity conservation.

**Table 3: Bote Community Perceptions of the Environmental Impacts of Tourism**

<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Opinion Statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	Tourism has not contributed in air, land and water pollution within our locality	5.37	0.998
2	There is no high traffic congestion and overcrowding due to presence of tourists	5.32	0.941
3	The increased water consumption by tourist businesses has not led to shortages in water supply for our community	5.53	0.824
4	Tourism development has strengthened community's effort towards bio diversity conservation	4.64	1.461
<b>Environmental impacts</b>		<b>5.21</b>	<b>0.564</b>

**Bote Community Perceptions of Tourism Activity**

The result as presented in table 4, the sampled population from the Bote community agrees that there is tourist movement and tourism activities occurring in their village premises. This opinion statement has the highest mean value of 5.01. Furthermore, with mean value of 4.87, the community agrees that their village has a strong tourist destination image. On the contrary, the lowest mean value of 2.27 was a major disagreement by the Bote community on the tourism policy formulated by the Chitwan National Park incorporating preservation of their socio-cultural aspects and ensuring tourism economic benefits.

**Table 4: Bote Community Perceptions of Tourism Activity**

<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Opinion statement</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>SD</b>
1	There are tourist movement and tourism activities operated by tour companies in our village	5.01	1.414
2	Elements for tourism products such as attraction, accommodation, accessibility and amenities are available in our village	4.12	1.947
3	There is strong tourist destination image of our village	4.87	1.722
4	Tourism policy of CNP addresses in preservation of our socio – cultural, economic and environment aspects	2.27	1.726
<b>Tourism activities</b>		<b>4.07</b>	<b>1.037</b>

**Regression Analysis**

The correlation analysis (Table 5) indicates no correlation between tourism activities and socio – cultural changes as value of R is 0.148 ( $p > 0.05$ ). However, there is weak correlation between tourism activities and, economic and environmental aspects as value of R is 0.245 ( $p < 0.01$ ) and 0.211 ( $p < 0.05$ ), respectively. The R-square value of 0.022, 0.060 and 0.044 denotes that only 2.2%, 6% and 4.4% of change in socio-cultural, economic and environmental variance (due to

tourism activity) has been explained. Table 5 reflects the regression model between socio-cultural and tourism model is not statistically significant as sig. p-value  $0.097 > 0.05$  ( $\alpha$ ). The regression model between economic, environmental and tourism activity is statistically significant as sig. p-value of both is  $0.005, 0.017 < 0.05$  ( $\alpha$ ). The  $\beta$  coefficient according to Table 5 indicates that 1-point increase on tourism activities would lead to 0.106, 0.246 and 0.115 unit increase in socio-culture, economic and environmental aspect of Bote community.

**Table 5: Regression Analysis**

Model	R	R sq	St. error	F	P value	Beta	t	p
Socio-cultural	0.148 <sup>a</sup>	0.022	0.063	2.795	0.097 <sup>b</sup>	0.106	1.672	0.097
Economic	0.245 <sup>a</sup>	0.060	0.087	7.993	0.005 <sup>b</sup>	0.246	2.827	0.005
Environment	0.211 <sup>a</sup>	0.044	0.048	5.811	0.017 <sup>b</sup>	0.115	2.411	0.017

**a. Predictors:** (Constant), Tourism activities

**b. Dependent Variable:** Socio – culture, economic and environment

## Interview Findings

### Bote Community Perceptions of the Socio-cultural Impacts of Tourism

**Respondent ‘B’:** *‘The tourist movement is controlled by hotel industry and travel agents. Since, there is minimum interaction between tourist and Bote community we are not sure about their perception on our culture, traditional lifestyle and religion.’*

**Respondent ‘C’:** *‘There is lack of tourism activities that relates with indigenous people in Kasara. The purpose of visiting the place is for jungle safari. We need to have divergent tourism activity related to local community to understand visitor perception towards culture and religion of Bote community.’*

The opinion of respondents in this section indicates that there is weak socio-cultural impact of tourism among the Bote community in the Chitwan National Park. Such a notion may be due to the small amount of interaction between tourist and indigenous Bote people.

### Bote Community Perceptions of the Economic Impacts of Tourism

**Respondent ‘A’:** *‘There is not much involvement of Bote community in tourism sector but some of them are employed as nature guide, boat man, jungle guide etc in hotels and resorts. In Meghauri there are big resorts that prioritise local employment for business operations and tourism activities.’*

**Respondent ‘B’:** *‘National park and hotel industry are the only ones that reap benefits from tourism business; the industry has not provided any benefits to our community. This is due to both tourism business and activities being controlled by few limited number of individuals and not by community organisation.’*



The perspective of respondents in this section indicates that there is no significant economic impact of tourism among the indigenous Bote people of the Chitwan National Park. The respondent claimed that few Bote people who are employed in the tourism industry are limited to low paying menial work. The Bote community shows strong resentment towards the tourism industry as it fails to provide substantial economic benefits to the community.

### **Bote Community Perceptions of the Environmental Impacts of Tourism**

**Respondent ‘A’:** *‘There are few home stays in Amaltari, Madi region which is invested by indigenous Tharu, Bote ethnic people. The involvement of such resource depended people in tourism activities has improved bio diversity conservation of CNP.’*

**Respondent ‘B’:** *‘Bote are animistic in religion so our traditional rituals and culture are centred towards ecosystem around us. We worship plants and animals depending upon our ancestral lineage. Crocodile, Rhino, Bot tree plays significant role in our religious belief. The livelihood of Bote has proved to be sustainable throughout ages, so even without involvement of Bote in tourism industry, the ecosystem will still be preserved by community member. But yes, we will be less depended upon use of natural resources.’*

To summarise this section, respondents have mixed opinion regarding the environmental impacts of tourism. One of the respondents claimed that involvement of indigenous people in tourism industry has improved bio-diversity, whereas other respondent claimed that community members will preserve eco-systems even if they are not involved in the tourism industry.

## **Discussion**

### **Socio-cultural Impacts**

The finding of this research shows an absence of positive tourism impact on socio-cultural aspects of the Bote community. Therefore, this research is consistent with Simpson (2008) who asserts that communities that are subjected to an external pressure, government and stakeholder, undermines the potential benefits of the tourism sector. This research shows weak representation of the Bote community at the decision-making level of both the tourism sector and the National Park. Thus, the potential benefit of tourism is unavailable to the beneficiary community.

The Bote community has a cohesive perspective towards the preservation of culture, sacred sites, art and crafts, and traditional lifestyle as sources of attraction for the tourism industry. Thus, the findings show positive social empowerment of tourism as contemplated by Nyaupane and Poudel, (2011) and Wall and Mathieson, (2006). The research further agrees with Sebele, (2010) and Tosun, (2006) who posits capacity building and participation of local people as significant factor that generates positive attitudes towards tourism development. The inadequacy of both factors among the Bote community has resulted in an attitude of resentment towards the tourism industry.

### **Economic Impacts**

This research corroborates the studies of Pandit (2012) and WWF (2013) as the tourism industry in Kasara region is controlled by non-native foreign investors who receive large portion of tourism

benefit (Bookbinder, Dinerstein, Rijal, Hank, & Arup, 1998; Wells, 1997). The economic impact analysis shows the tourism industry is not supporting businesses operated by local people and so also supports the studies of Blake et. al. (2008) and Page and Connell, (2006) who argue that the high leakage of the tourism economy fails to reduce poverty among local communities. According to the research finding, the multiplier effect of the tourism industry has not been able to resolve poverty among the Bote community as the industry is ineffective in stimulating the economy of the local area (Rusu, 2011). Furthermore, as indicated by Wells (1997), the Bote community has a strong resentment against hotel groups and foreign tour operators who benefit from the park resources of their areas but hardly contribute towards the social and economic development of the local community.

In regard to employment, the research substantiates the study of Park and Stokowksi, (2009) which emphasises non-local residents getting employment in high paying tourism jobs. Thus, this research validates the findings of Paudel, (2016), while the local indigenous Bote community is limited to menial tourism employment and is deprived of significant benefits. The lack of proper education and skill development training on tourism activities has been depriving the Bote community of higher paying jobs in the tourism industry, which supports the assertion by Wells, (1997). This research therefore acknowledges Lamsal, (2012) who recommends affirmative action in providing skill development and income generating opportunities to minority tribes for capacity building of community.

### **Environmental Impacts**

Sunlu, (2003) describes the depletion of water resources in host destinations due to tourism. However, the finding of this research shows that the Bote community have adequate access to water resources for daily purposes. This finding indicates that the tourism industry has not contributed to air, water or land pollution.

Gorhan, (2000) maintains that tourism has the potential to contribute to local economic development and the sustainable conservation of protected areas. The research finding supports those of Baral, (2013), who found a positive correlation between tourism benefits obtained by local communities and their support for biodiversity conservation. However, the findings of this research indicate that community members, despite not being involved in the tourism industry, are still willing to preserve biodiversity of an area as it is interlinked with their culture and religious aspect. Thus, this particular finding strongly contradicts that of Nyaupane & Poudel, (2011) who state that local communities marginalised from tourism development will tend to withdraw their support for biodiversity conservation.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study shows that the tourism industry has no socio-cultural impact on the indigenous Bote community. The study further indicates that tourism has a weak positive impact on the economic and environmental aspects of the indigenous Bote community. In conclusion, this community is incapable of reaping a significant amount of potential tourism benefits despite their area having a strong destination image within Nepal's tourism industry. The limited benefit of tourism has resulted in a lack of resolution of park-people conflict and extreme poverty within the Bote

community. Poverty has become a major barrier for the community to reap the significant potential of tourism benefits, as the community lacks sufficient knowledge, skills and capacity to be involved in tourism development activities. Furthermore, lack of participation in decision making processes and tourism policy formulation in order to create strong linkages between socio-cultural, economic and environmental aspects of the Bote community has worsened the situation. The findings and conclusions of this study suggest the following recommendation for the encouragement of sustainable tourism development within this area.

#### Tourism Plans and Policies:

- Establish an institutional mechanism to monitor tourism impacts within an area.
- Formulate separate annual tourism management plans and strategic action plans for implementation.
- Incorporate visitor management systems in strategic tourism plans to address the issue of extreme tourist pressure in Sauraha.
- Ensure equal distribution of tourism benefits for the indigenous communities within an area.
- Incorporate international declarations on indigenous tourism such as Larrakia and Quebec declarations.
- Incorporate internationally approved principles, guidelines and ethical code of sustainable tourism for protected areas (as formulated by CBD, IUCN-WPCA, TAPAS, and GSTC, etc.) in a legal framework, policies and tourism master plans.
- Consult with indigenous community members during the formulation of tourism development plans and policies. Acknowledge the principle of Free Prior Informed Consent right.

#### The Role of the National Park, Private and Development Agencies:

- Establish indigenous museum and culture learning centers.
- Establish Sustainable Destination Management Organisation to manage tourism destination site.
- Assist community member to establish community-based ecotourism to enhance socio-cultural and economic status of an indigenous community.
- Promote niche tourism markets such as indigenous tourism, ethnic tourism, and tribal tourism.
- Constantly provide training on technical skills and education on tourism entrepreneurship to engage indigenous people in the tourism business.
- Coordinate with an indigenous community to set up local businesses such as souvenir shops, livestock farm and agriculture farm. Encourage the tourism and hotel industries to buy agricultural and livestock products from local businesses. This will reduce economic leakage from the area. Furthermore, diversification of economic activities is necessary to reduce dependency on the tourism industry.
- Establish mechanisms to provide indirect incentives to indigenous communities from tourism revenue, including scholarships, healthcare, infrastructure development, etc.
- Prioritise employment of women, disabled people and families suffering from wildlife casualties in the tourism industry.

- Provide economic incentives to private companies running ecotourism projects.
- Encourage tourism operators to develop environment-friendly tour activities by providing sustainable tourism certification and eco-labels.
- Establish a Conservation and Eco-tourism Promotion Fund that provides soft loans to user committee members interested in establishing an ecotourism business.
- Foster tourism research collaboration with academics and research institutes.
- Create a network of alliances between multiple tourism stakeholders such as community organisations, protected area manager, local government representatives, tourism businesses and development agencies.

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