



SUSTAINABLE ECOTOURISM AND REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN UTTARAKHAND: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

Ecotourism has emerged as a vital driver of sustainable development in Uttarakhand, a Himalayan state known for its ecological diversity and cultural richness. This paper explores how ecotourism contributes to regional economic growth while addressing environmental sustainability and community empowerment. By analyzing secondary data from research reports, government policies, and academic studies, the paper highlights the dual impact of ecotourism: generating employment, enhancing local entrepreneurship, and boosting Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP), while also raising concerns about ecological fragility and over-tourism. The study emphasizes the role of eco-friendly infrastructure, community-based tourism models, and policy interventions in promoting responsible travel. It also identifies challenges such as inadequate waste management, carrying capacity issues, and the need for greater stakeholder participation. The findings suggest that with strategic planning, Uttarakhand can leverage ecotourism as a model for sustainable regional development.

KEYWORDS: Ecotourism; Sustainable Development, Regional Economy, Uttarakhand, Community Participation

INTRODUCTION

In its purest form, sustainable tourism is a sector of the economy that seeks to minimise its negative effects on the environment and local culture while promoting job creation, income generation, and ecosystem preservation. It represents culturally and environmentally conscious tourism carried out responsibly. For tourism to remain sustainable, governments must address the many challenges brought about by tourism's contribution to development in a thorough, methodical manner. Policy-making, planning, management, and stakeholder participation—including the involvement of the private sector—need to be analyzed in terms of actionable opportunities and potential roadblocks that may require coordinated efforts to overcome (Negi Singh Chatar Dr., 2019)

Within this broad framework, **ecotourism** has emerged as a widely accepted form of sustainable tourism. Ecotourism refers to environmentally conscious travel to natural areas that preserves ecosystems while enhancing the well-being of local populations. It is recognised for its ability to contribute to the preservation of natural areas, raise living standards, and foster cultural and traditional practices within local communities (Kala Prakash Chandra, 2013)

Sustainable ecotourism therefore encompasses practices that minimize ecological footprints, respect local cultures, and ensure that economic, social, and environmental benefits are equitably distributed. In mountain regions like Uttarakhand, this model offers potential not only to generate employment and income for rural communities but also to reduce out-migration, preserve fragile ecosystems, and foster resilience to climate change.

However, realising the promise of sustainable ecotourism in Uttarakhand is not without challenges. Geographic constraints, fragile eco-sensitive zones, limited infrastructure, regulatory gaps, seasonal fluctuations in tourist flows, and environmental risks—such as landslides, floods, and biodiversity loss—complicate tourism planning and development. Moreover, ensuring that local communities are genuinely empowered, rather than merely exploited, and that ecological integrity is maintained amidst growing tourist numbers remains a central concern. This paper explores the opportunities and challenges inherent in pursuing sustainable ecotourism as a path for regional economic development in Uttarakhand. It examines relevant policies, community initiatives, infrastructure development, and conservation schemes, while also identifying obstacles that must be overcome for ecotourism to deliver inclusive growth, environmental protection, and cultural vitality. In doing so, it highlights how Uttarakhand can balance the twin imperatives of economic development and ecological sustainability.

The current global understanding of ecotourism is “responsible travel to areas of nature that involves interpretation and education, preserves the environment, and supports the well-being of the local people” (The International Ecotourism Society [TIES], 2015). At its core, ecotourism is a form of tourism that emphasizes environmental sustainability by encouraging travel to natural areas in ways that protect ecosystems, enhance community well-being, and create opportunities for education and interpretation. Between 2022 and 2030, the global ecotourism market is expected to grow by an average of 15.2% annually, reaching a projected economic worth of \$665.20 billion by 2030. This rapid growth underscores the increasing importance of ecotourism in both environmental preservation and economic development.

The goals of ecotourism are twofold: to protect the environment and to strengthen local economies. It allows visitors to live in an environmentally conscious manner by engaging with the natural world while reducing the negative impacts of travel on ecosystems. Popular ecotourism activities include snorkelling, hiking, trekking, and visiting wildlife sanctuaries. The term itself was first coined in 1983 by environmentalist Héctor Ceballos-Lascuráin. Today, ecotourism is considered one of the fastest-growing sectors of global tourism, generating significant discussion about its role in conservation and community development (**Lad Ramdas, 2020**)

Uttarakhand, an integrated part of the Himalayas, is recognised as a globally significant ecotourism destination due to its rich biodiversity, unique forest landscapes, and diverse climatic zones ranging from the plains to the snow-capped Himalayas. These variations support a wide range of floral, faunal, and avifaunal resources. Tourism is a major service industry in the state, ranked 12th globally, and contributes approximately 52% of Uttarakhand's Gross State Development Product (SGDP). Various forms of tourism—pilgrimage, adventure, natural, and eco-tourism—are practiced, though pilgrimage, adventure, and natural tourism dominate. Ecotourism, while still in its infancy, has immense potential for expansion due to the state's forest landscapes and favorable climatic conditions (**Sati Prasad Vishwambhar, 2021**).

Ecotourism, by promoting travel to pristine natural areas with minimal environmental impact, supports biodiversity conservation, generates employment opportunities for local populations, and enhances the cultural and ecological legacy of host communities. It is essential for preserving biological and cultural diversity by safeguarding ecosystems. Moreover, ecotourism sustains the environment in an ethical manner, upholds community welfare, and provides locals with both financial benefits and a sense of self-determination (**Lad Ramdas, 2020**). Unlike other forms of tourism, which often prioritize financial gains at the expense of environmental integrity, ecotourism fosters respect for regional traditions, raises ecological awareness, and integrates conservation with economic development. Although still at a nascent stage in Uttarakhand, ecological tourism is poised to play a significant role in the state's economy, with activities such as trekking, hiking, camping, and wildlife tourism already gaining momentum.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1. **Kumar Rajnikant (2025)** The study examines the economic impact of the tourism sector in Uttarakhand. It highlights tourism's contributions to GDP growth, employment creation, and revenue generation. The research also assesses how tourism fosters regional development and infrastructure improvement. Despite these benefits, the study acknowledges challenges such as seasonality, environmental concerns, and limited infrastructure. The overall conclusion emphasizes the need for sustainable tourism practices to ensure the industry's long-term viability while protecting the state's natural and cultural heritage.
2. **Lohani, Nirmala (2024)**. The study examines the role

of ecotourism as a tool for sustainable development in Uttarakhand's Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs). It analyses the potential, challenges, and policies associated with balancing tourism development and ecological preservation in these areas. The research highlights the importance of community involvement, proper planning, and sustainability to ensure that ecotourism in these sensitive regions is successful.

3. **Singhal Neeti, Agrawal Shalu (2024)** examine the challenges and opportunities of the tourism industry in the Kumaon region of Uttarakhand. Based on a descriptive analysis of secondary data, the research concludes that while the region faces several obstacles, it is possible to capitalize on its tourism potential through thorough planning and specific improvements. It highlights the importance of tourism for generating national income, creating jobs, and fostering social and cultural exchange.
4. **Pandey Kumar Manoj, Singh Akhilesh (2023)** This study examines the potential and challenges of ecotourism in Nainital, Uttarakhand, highlighting the need to balance tourism growth with environmental protection and community involvement to ensure long-term sustainability.
5. **Gautam Sadhana, Tyagi Madhav, Tyagi Mahima, Gautam Shubham, Gupta M. K. (2021)**. This study has shown that tourism requires sustainable development and that tourism and the environment are significantly more closely linked than they are in other sectors. This study aims to quantify the relationship between ecological tourism and ecological sustainability and suggests strategies for improving current ecotourism operations. The study also examined the causes of ecotourism's birth and growth, as well as its definition, goals, types, and impacts on the environment, society, and economy. It also examined the relationship between ecotourism and environmentally friendly development as well as the examination of various ecotourism strategies in India.
6. **Sati Prasad Vishwambhar (2021)**. This study analyses the potential for ecotourism development as well as the ecotourism resource base in order to look at trends and potential for ecotourism in the Uttarakhand Himalaya. The main findings of the data analyses show that the Himalayan region of Uttarakhand has an abundance of ecotourism resources, including a diverse range of flora, fauna, and birds. This study makes policy recommendations for the development of ecotourism in the Uttarakhand Himalaya, including the establishment of ecotourism parks, ecotourism circles, and sufficient infrastructure for lodging, transportation, institutions, and communication.
7. **Kukreti Mohan (2020)**. This article focuses on the research and analyses of the state of Uttarakhand's and the Indian government's ecotourism policies, specifically the framework. In general, it evaluates and explores the potential of the state's natural resources for the expansion of ecotourism that is community-based and the sustainable development of the villages, including the preservation of biological variety. It also proposes that a comprehensive plan is necessary, with an emphasis on visitor satisfaction regarding hospitality, especially in rural homestays; sustaining carrying capacity; proper disposal plans; and maximizing the use of local handicrafts, artifacts, and cultural activities to promote a sense of civic responsibility among visitors and ensure a calm and healthy atmosphere for local tourism.
8. **Ramdas Lad (2020)**. This study, which used a combination of primary and secondary data, was carried out in the Nainital District and served as the basis for the research

article. According to the research, ecotourism would give skilled residents of the state access to jobs and business opportunities.

9. **Negi Singh Chatar Dr. (2019).** Some of the main components of sustainable tourism have been covered in this paper. The four pillars of tourism—economic, ecological, cultural, and local sustainability—form the foundation of sustainable tourism. In order to attain sustainable tourism, each of these four components needs to be taken into consideration. The current study aims to achieve a few specific goals. These elucidate the correlation between the growth of tourism and community development, foster the notion of community-based tourism by means of enhanced opportunities that arise from tourism's integration with the community, and propel tourism's expansion through community development and environmental sustainability.
10. **Joveriya, Mariya (2019).** This paper examines the issues surrounding the state of Uttarakhand's tourism industry and offers potential solutions. The study is qualitative in nature and draws information from secondary sources. Given that the area attracts a sizable number of tourists annually for a variety of reasons, it was found that there is a vast potential for tourism. It further suggests that in order to maintain a balance between environmental consciousness, sustainability, and profitability throughout development, local communities and the government should work together.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To evaluate the current status of ecotourism in Uttarakhand.
2. To identify and analyze the key opportunities offered by sustainable ecotourism in Uttarakhand.
3. To examine the major challenges and constraints hindering the growth of sustainable ecotourism in Uttarakhand

METHODOLOGY

This research is primarily based on secondary data that has been accessed through various research papers, journals, websites, and news articles. For this very purpose a detailed study was done reviewing these data sources.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Current Status Of Ecotourism In The State

One of the main factors in Uttarakhand's success story is the service sector of tourism. Uttarakhand's diversity in geography, culture, and environment has made it among the most travelled to states in northern India. From about 22 million visitors in 2014 to about 39 million in 2019, Uttarakhand has seen a steady increase in tourism, with a compound annual growth rate of 11.97%. According to a new World Tourism & Travel Council (WTTC) report, India has the seventh-largest tourism economy in the world in terms of absolute size. The industry is expected to grow at a rate of 7% between 2017 and 2027. In terms of visitor arrivals, Uttarakhand is anticipated to follow suit. (**The Tourism Policy of Uttarakhand, 2023**). A study released in 2018 by Niti Aayog, the government of India's leading policy think tank, estimates that 27 million tourists travelled through Uttarakhand.

This number is expected to rise to 65 million by 2025, which is significantly more than the state's population of roughly

11.4 million. Between 2010 and 2015, the tourism sector—which includes trade, lodging, and dining establishments as contributing factors—accounted for more than 20% of the GDP. In the upcoming years, the state government anticipates that tourism will increase its economic contribution. Additionally, the government is looking to highlight and support ecopreneurs in order to promote ecotourism and preserve the rich cultural and natural diversity of the state. This will not only meet the need to preserve the environment but also create jobs in the state and serve as a useful strategy to reduce migration out of the state. All of these factors are contributing to the advancement of ecopreneurship.

In October 2021, Dharni declared the ecopreneurship drive against the backdrop of growing tourism. Though on a relatively small scale, the Uttarakhand Forest Department already began holding training programmes for nature guides and bird watching. There is a far greater challenge in the chief minister's target of training 100,000 ecopreneurs.

Uttarakhand, by virtue of its abundant natural and cultural legacy, has established itself as one of India's top ecotourism destinations. The state provides a wide variety of ecotourism experiences, all of which are designed to promote sustainable practices and showcase the state's distinctive ecological and cultural resources.

The Uttarakhand tourism department has introduced a number of village treks to raise tourists' awareness of the state's diverse culture and surroundings. The lives of the Kumauni villagers are intuitively revealed by these trails. Together, the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board, the state forest department's ecotourism division, and Garhwal-Kumaon Mandal Vikas Nigam have successfully implemented eco-tours, raising the bar for adventure travel. The groups also manage homestays in the region by giving landholders the necessities and money they need to function well. (**Gautam Sadhana, Tyagi Madhav, Tyagi Mahima, Gautam Shubham, Gupta M. K., 2021**). Jim Corbett National Park remains a top destination when it comes to wildlife and nature-based tourism. Every year, thousands of tourist's flocks there for its carefully planned jeep safaris, nature walks, and bird-watching excursions. Strict rules and a cap on the number of visitors are in place to safeguard the park's fragile ecosystem, and these activities are intended to have as little of an impact as possible from humans. Programmes for visitor eco-education that highlight the value of protecting wildlife and practicing responsible tourism are among the recent initiatives.

A consistent stream of hikers and nature lovers has also been drawn to the UNESCO-recognized Nanda Devi and Valley of Flowers National Parks. Unmatched trekking and botanical tour opportunities are provided by these parks, which also feature rare wildlife and an amazing array of alpine flowers. Authorities have put in place measures like limited visitor numbers and improved waste management protocols in order to protect these delicate ecosystems. These actions have been vital in preserving the parks' immaculate state and enabling visitors to responsibly take in their natural beauty.

Skiing and other wintertime sports still make Auli a top choice. The area's introduction of sustainable practices and eco-friendly resorts has assisted in drawing eco-aware tourists. Auli becomes a trekking and camping mecca in the off-season, with trails that provide incredible panoramas of the Himalayan region peaks. The dedication towards sustainable tourism development is emphasized by its focus on maintaining ecologically conscious infrastructure, such as waste recycling units and solar-powered establishments.

In communities like Munsiyari and Binsar, community-based ecotourism is becoming more popular. Munsiyari, which boasts incredible views of the Panchachuli spikes provides homestays and locally led guided treks as immersive cultural experiences. This model guarantees that local communities receive direct economic benefits while also offering tourists genuine experiences. Similar to this, Binsar Wildlife Sanctuary has grown in popularity among eco-tourists thanks to nature trails and eco-lodges managed by the local community. These programmes have strengthened local communities' authority and promoted a closer bond between tourists and the environment.

Uttarakhand's tourism industry is heavily reliant on pilgrimage and eco-spiritual tourism, with the Char Dham Yatra and Hemkund Sahib attracting millions of pilgrims each year. There have been advancements in the way that the Char Dham Yatra, which includes Yamunotri, Gangotri, Kedarnath, and Badrinath, manages the environmental effects of big crowds. In order to lessen the pilgrimage's environmental impact, waste management initiatives and environmentally friendly lodging have been implemented. Similar to this, the serene and holy atmosphere of Hemkund Sahib, which is situated in the upper Himalayas, draws hikers in addition to pilgrims. To maintain the natural and spiritual integrity of the location, environmentally conscious tourism practices are encouraged.

The ecological fragility of the state's terrain has led the government to prioritize the promotion of lesser-known hidden gems in recent years, realizing the importance of these sites for the state's future. The main goals of these initiatives are to promote eco-friendly travel, encourage adventure travel in outlying areas, ease traffic in heavily trafficked areas, and launch new tourism initiatives in the state. At the same time, the government is still dedicated to improving the basic infrastructure, especially with regard to communication and connectivity, in order to meet the requirements of the pilgrims and visitors who are touring the state.

In addition, the state is making significant efforts to support tourism and environmental preservation. According to the Times of India, the state has designated five ecological tourism circles and three green tourism destinations that will be set up by the Forest Department in an effort to increase tourism in the area.

The following locations have been chosen:

- Dehradun-Rishikesh-Tehri;
- Yamuna Tonnes Valley;

- Tankapur-Champawat-Devidhura (Pithoragarh)-Nainital;
- Ramnagar-Almora-Nainital

Consequently, a strong structure of ecologically sound procedures and community involvement characterize Uttarakhand's ecotourism industry. The state is making constant improvements to its infrastructure and diversification of its offerings to make sure that the growth of tourism does not compromise its rich heritage of culture and nature. Uttarakhand's emphasis on environmentally conscious travel and conservation makes it a model for responsible ecotourism in India.

2. To Identify And Analyze The Key Opportunities Offered By Sustainable Ecotourism In Uttarakhand.

Sustainable ecotourism provides immense opportunities for regional economic development in Uttarakhand, a state blessed with rich biodiversity, unique cultural traditions, and majestic Himalayan landscapes. Identifying and analyzing these opportunities is essential to understand how ecotourism can contribute not only to economic growth but also to ecological conservation and social well-being.

Uttarakhand's abundant biodiversity, adventure sports, and cultural legacy present enormous opportunities for sustainable ecotourism. With more than 550 bird species, bird-watching is becoming more and more popular, while adventure seekers are drawn to trekking, camping, rafting, and kayaking. Village development and local income can be boosted by rural tourism that highlights traditional attire, folklore, and locally produced goods. The state's tourism industry is further broadened by its woods, wellness customs like yoga, and rising demand for vacation rentals. Furthermore, Dehradun's higher education centres provide chances for research, conservation, and ecotourism awareness, making the industry a powerful engine of job creation and economic expansion. (Negi Singh Chatar, 2019).

In the Eco-Sensitive Zones (ESZs) of Uttarakhand, ecotourism is a potent instrument for sustainable development. It encourages environmental preservation while giving nearby populations an alternate source of income. Ecotourism aims to educate tourists and strengthen the bond between humans and nature, in contrast to mainstream tourism, which frequently puts profit first (Lohani, Nirmala, 2024).

One of the foremost opportunities lies in employment generation. Ecotourism creates direct jobs in guiding, trekking, mountaineering, and wildlife safaris, while also generating indirect employment in homestays, transport services, handicrafts, and local food outlets. Such employment avenues are particularly crucial in rural and hilly regions of Uttarakhand, where limited livelihood opportunities often drive large-scale migration.

Another opportunity is income diversification. Ecotourism allows households dependent on agriculture to supplement their earnings through tourism-related activities. For instance, villagers can run eco-friendly lodges, organize cultural

programs, or sell traditional products like woollens, honey, and herbal medicines to visitors. This helps reduce economic vulnerability and fosters inclusive growth.

Ecotourism also plays a significant role in biodiversity conservation. Revenues generated from national parks, wildlife sanctuaries, and trekking routes can be reinvested in habitat protection, afforestation, and sustainable resource use. This creates a financial incentive for both the government and local communities to preserve fragile ecosystems.

Furthermore, ecotourism encourages cultural preservation. Tourists are increasingly interested in experiencing traditional Uttarakhand lifestyles, festivals, crafts, and cuisine. As a result, local communities find renewed pride in their heritage, which promotes the continuation of long-standing traditions.

Lastly, ecotourism offers an avenue for community empowerment. Well-designed projects that involve Self-Help Groups (SHGs), women's cooperatives, and youth organizations can enhance local participation, entrepreneurship, and decision-making power. This not only improves livelihoods but also strengthens social cohesion and resilience.

In general, tourism is essential to Uttarakhand's growth since it stimulates the economy, generates employment, and upgrades infrastructure. It employs thousands of individuals in a variety of connected industries and makes a substantial contribution to the state's GDP. Additionally, the industry's profits support infrastructure initiatives like better roads and public transit, which boost tourism and benefit the community (Kumar Rajnikant, 2025).

In a nutshell recognizing and seizing these chances is essential to developing a plan that would allow Uttarakhand to use ecotourism as a means of promoting inclusive, sustainable, and culturally aware growth. The state can guarantee that its tourism industry is robust and advantageous for present and future generations by striking a balance between economic gains, ecological preservation, and social empowerment.

3. To Examine The Major Challenges And Constraints Hindering The Growth Of Sustainable Ecotourism In Uttarakhand

While sustainable ecotourism offers tremendous potential, it also faces serious challenges that must be addressed to ensure long-term viability. One major challenge is the fragile ecological environment of the Himalayan region. Rapid growth in tourism has often led to deforestation, soil erosion, waste accumulation, and pressure on limited natural resources. The unchecked spread of resorts and hotels in eco-sensitive zones further threatens biodiversity and ecological balance. Alongside environmental concerns, infrastructure limitations also pose a significant barrier. Many ecotourism destinations in Uttarakhand remain underdeveloped due to poor road connectivity, limited eco-friendly accommodation, and inadequate sanitation facilities. These deficiencies reduce the quality of tourist experiences and hinder sustainable growth.

Adding to these challenges is the seasonality of tourism, which causes instability in local incomes and resource utilization. Uttarakhand experiences peak tourist inflows during summer and pilgrimage seasons, while off-peak months see low activity. This uneven distribution affects the livelihoods of local communities and reduces the efficiency of tourism-related infrastructure. Furthermore, policy and regulatory gaps remain a persistent challenge. Although policies promoting ecotourism exist, weak enforcement, fragmented planning, and lack of coordination between government departments reduce their effectiveness. This often leads to unregulated activities that harm both the environment and local communities. The situation is exacerbated by limited community participation, as many ecotourism initiatives are dominated by external operators or private investors, leaving locals with minimal benefits. Without meaningful inclusion, ecotourism risks becoming exploitative rather than empowering.

Natural catastrophes and climate hazards including landslides, floods, and wildfires in Uttarakhand exacerbate these socio-environmental problems. These occurrences harm infrastructure, discourage long-term investments, and cause uncertainty for the tourism industry. Furthermore, a disorganized and unsustainable tourist model has resulted from unplanned expansion in disaster-prone areas, little government coordination, and little community involvement. The large number of visitors puts additional burden on the underdeveloped infrastructure, leading to problems with waste management, pollution, and traffic congestion. These stresses not only harm the environment but also make it impossible for local residents to fairly profit from tourism. (Negi Singh Chatar, 2019).

Unplanned expansion in the Kumaon region has resulted in overpopulation and overuse of attractive locations. Tourists are forced to rely on private cabs due to the ineffective public transit system, which restricts their ability to explore possible places. Low community involvement impedes efficient planning and execution, and a lack of cooperation across government departments has led to operational inefficiencies and delayed infrastructure projects. Additionally, the expansion of firms associated to tourism is constrained by the limited use of contemporary promotional techniques, such as upgraded websites and digital marketing. (Singhal Neeti, Agrawal Shalu, 2024).

These difficulties are further highlighted by a detailed examination of the ecotourism industry in Nainital. **Pandey Kumar Manoj and Singh Akhilesh (2023)** claim that unplanned construction and poor waste management are to blame for the area's congestion and environmental damage. Littering and careless behavior are exacerbated by visitors' and residents' ignorance of ecotourism concepts. Insufficient community participation in making choices and benefit-sharing impedes the growth of sustainable tourism and may lead to disputes. The municipality is also unable to develop a sustainable tourism model due to inadequate transportation, trash, and lodging infrastructure and resource management.

The eco-sensitive zones (ESZs) in Uttarakhand provide

as a state-level example of the potential and constraints of ecotourism. Even while ecotourism has positive social and economic effects, there are still issues with waste management, infrastructure development, and striking a balance between tourist and conservation. To guarantee the ecotourism industry's long-term survival, these problems must be resolved (Lohani, Nirmala, 2024). It is evident from analyzing the interrelated environmental, infrastructure, and social issues in various geographical areas that comprehensive approaches are required to strike a balance between ecological preservation and financial gains. Ecotourism runs the risk of becoming unsustainable and reproducing the detrimental effects frequently linked to mass tourism if these obstacles are not removed.

CONCLUSION

Sustainable ecotourism in Uttarakhand holds immense potential to drive regional economic development while preserving the state's unique ecological and cultural heritage. By creating employment, diversifying income, promoting biodiversity conservation, and empowering local communities, ecotourism can serve as a catalyst for inclusive and resilient growth. However, realizing this potential requires addressing challenges such as environmental degradation, infrastructure gaps, seasonal fluctuations, and limited community participation. A balanced, well-planned approach that integrates ecological protection with economic and social benefits is essential to ensure that Uttarakhand's ecotourism remains sustainable and contributes meaningfully to long-term regional development.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Improve Infrastructure:** Develop eco-friendly accommodations, roads, transport, and waste management facilities to enhance tourist experiences.
- **Promote Community Participation:** Involve local communities, SHGs, and women's cooperatives in planning and managing ecotourism for equitable benefits.
- **Capacity Building and Awareness:** Train locals and educate tourists on sustainable tourism practices and environmental conservation.
- **Diversify Tourism Activities:** Expand adventure, rural, wellness, bird-watching, and cultural tourism to reduce seasonal dependency and increase income.
- **Strengthen Policy and Regulation:** Enforce ecotourism policies, coordinate planning, and monitor environmental impacts.
- **Conservation and Cultural Preservation:** Link tourism revenues to biodiversity protection and preservation of local culture.
- **Disaster Preparedness:** Implement strategies to manage risks from landslides, floods, and forest fires.

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