



## ECO TOURISM : A STUDY OF NIVATI VILLAGE FOR ECOTOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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### ABSTRACT

Tourism industry has been at forefront in representing the natural resources and the culture of a country at a global level. Tourism builds the economy of a country. Earlier only the esteemed people of the society had the luxury to travel for leisure and adventure. Tourism not only benefits traveler but also the stake holders who serves the traveler needs and wants. This process gives a livelihood for the local community to develop and take care of its surrounding. If they take care of the tourist place than only tourists will visit. The awareness of nature care not only likes with the habitats but also with the visitors. Maharashtra state in India is very well known for many tourist attractions. These attractions include historical places such as palace, forts, museums, beaches, national parks, sanctuaries, religious places, etc. As the days past and human needs evolved, so does the way of tourism evolve. Currently there are many forms of tourism such as, adventure tourism, pilgrimage tourism, educational tourism, art and culture tourism, and so on. This research paper is focused towards the sustainable development of tourism in Konkan area of Maharashtra. This research paper takes into account the case study of Nivati village located in Sindhudurg district of state Maharashtra. The aim of the research paper is to gather and analyze the information of the village and formulate the plan for the inception of eco-tourism in the village. The objective of this paper is to identify the areas and develop those areas which will aid in eco-tourism. Areas such as socio-economic background, culture, traditions, etc. of the local community. The tourism development needs to protect the right of indigenous people and their livelihood. In many cases, the tourist needs to be educated as they are visitors to this region and needs to maintain the environment tourist friendly. The hypothesis of the study is that ecotourism sustains the development than the ordinary tourism development. The scope of this research will be limited to studying and analyzing the qualitative aspects only and quantification of any sort will be avoided.

**KEYWORDS :** eco-tourism, sustainable, socio-economy, vernacular architecture.

### 1.0. INTRODUCTION

Sustainable tourism means uplifting the natural surrounding and the local community instead of exhausting them and putting pressure on them. The Konkan area in Maharashtra is located at the foothills of Western Ghats. The Western Ghat is included as world heritage site by the United Nations. Total 4 sites from western ghat of Maharashtra are identified under the UNESCO (United Nations Educational Scientific Cultural Organisation) (Lewis, 2012). The Western Ghats are known for rich biodiversity. This ghats play a vital role in bringing in the monsoon to the western part of the country. This can be achieved through awareness program and identifying the potential of the region. has always been considered as way of relaxation with oneself, family, friends, etc. Tourism has achieved huge market across the globe. Due to advancement in technology and growing social media platforms has enabled world to come closer and explore the places at their fingertips. Yet, the feel of experiencing it in real has made the tourism sector grow exponentially. Tourism empowers the individual to explore different ends of the world by knowing different culture, economy, social life and this process makes the tourist feel an adventure to be part of. The host, catering the tourist has an important role to play. The host caters the need of the tourist who might be new to this part of world. It is the duty of host to make the tourist comfortable in unknown place and make him/her understand the expectations from a tourist of the locals in that particular area. This reason makes both tourist and host important part of tourism. The place of tourism is the epicentre of tourism growth. Therefore, to attract tourist to a destination, the place of interest plays a vital role, but to sustain the tourist flow for a period of time continuously, depend upon the role of host and tourist at such tourist place. The tourist and host are human beings can communicate in a way which is understandable, but the tourist place is part of nature and it communicates with organic matter including human in its own way. It becomes very important for tourism development to sustain via understanding the role of every human associated with this sector. Ecotourism is the way forward to maintain the originality of the tourist places without conflicting interest of tourist and host.

### 2.0. Background

The Konkan region of India is generally considered as ideal for ecotourism because of its pristine natural environment coupled with its proximity to Mumbai and Goa. Biodiversity and a rich forest ecosystem extend along the length of the Western Ghats. White sand and blue water beaches, attractive waterfalls and characteristic ethnicity of the Konkan people, invites tourists to a rich and diverse experience. The State Government declared Sindhudurg district as an

ecotourism destination in 2006. The thrust of the policy is to promote village tourism which will upgrade the socio-economic conditions of the villages while preserving their natural and cultural heritage. The objective of this research is to know, is village tourism the right solution for Konkan? Will it be sustainable in the long run? Will it improve the socio-economic conditions of the poor? Or will it lead to destruction its very unique ecosystem? Are the people of Sindhudurg ready to participate in tourism activities? What are the infrastructural requirements for making Sindhudurg a world-class tourism destination? To analyze the ground realities, a study was undertaken by a team of environmental architects and experts from Rachana Sansad's Institute of Environmental Architecture at the behest of the Minister of State for Finance, Planning and Rural Development, Govt. of Maharashtra, Hon. Minister Shri Deepak Kesarkar. A team of 30 researchers and 10 experts from the Institute's Research and Design Cell have conducted two survey visits ably supported by the office of the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Sindhudurg Zilla Parishad.

The study included conducting random household surveys, interviews and focused group discussions with stakeholders, mapping of the villages and interesting tourism spots, studying existing vernacular housing patterns and understanding people's aspirations. The study presents public opinion after receiving suggestions and objections received via surveys, the final report was prepared for implementation. For this research paper, a study of Parule-Nivati-Bhogwe-Devbaug villages were chosen as part of ecotourism development. This four villages form a cluster. State transport bus facility is provided to commute between nearest villages. Major town near Parule cluster is Kudal. Two-wheeler and Four-wheeler are used by locals to commute. Popular festival celebrated by villagers are Holi, Narali Pournima, Ganesh festival, Diwali, etc. Due to its versatile climate and topography we can find all around Konkan, variety of indigenous flora and fauna. Coconut trees, mango trees, beetle nut trees, jack fruit trees, cashew trees. Mongoose, langoor, snakes are variety of fauna found in and around Parule cluster. Many marine lives are also found here, such as dolphin, whale, etc. Rice and fish are staple diet and amboli and chicken are popular dishes. Dressing is saree for women and men wear shirt and pant.

An International airport is proposed at Chipi which is at 04 km from Parule. Existing Dabolim airport is at 29 km near to Panji. Panji is at 88 km. Kudal is at 22 km from Parule. Kudal is major town and market place with train connectivity. Kudal is 476 km by road from Mumbai and 78 km from Panji. Vengurla is another town located at 30 km from

Parule. Nivati is at 7.6 km from Parule and Bhogwe is 6.7 km from Parule. Devbag is at 30.5 km from Parule by road.

**2.1. Demographic data of Nivati village**

**Table 1: Area of Nivati village**

Village Name	Area (Hectares)
Nivati	138.45

**Table 2: Population of Nivati village**

Population	Male	Female	Total
Nivati	479	483	962

Inferences: The female population is higher than male population in the village.

**Table 3: Literacy data of Nivati Village**

Village Name	Literate Population (%)
Nivati	92

Inferences: The literacy rate is good in the village.

**Table 4: Occupation data of Nivati village**

Village Name	Agriculture (%)	Fishing (%)	Tourism (%)	Other (%)
Nivati	10	80	5	5

Inferences: Primary occupation is Fishing.

**Table 5: Income range of Nivati village**

Village Name	Income range (Rs. /annum)
Nivati	50,000-1,50,000

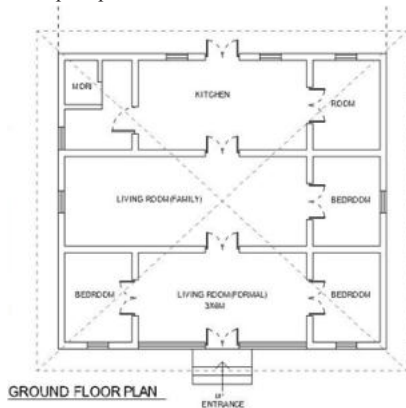
Inferences: As primary occupation is fishing the income range for a family in Nivati village is lesser than compared to adjoining villages which are in tourism sector as primary occupation. Therefore, if the tourism sector is introduced in the village than definitely the income range will grow per family.

**3.0. Nivati**

History reveals that earlier Muslim community settled and later on under Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj rule, the port was established and fishing community grew, currently 200 fishing boats are acquired by villagers. Area of village spread over 138.45 hectares. Religion found among majority people is Gabhith. Majorly fishing is the prime occupation of the people residing in Nivati, apart from fishing agriculture is also part of occupation and livelihood. Annual footfall of tourist ranges between 10k-20k. During Holi festival the villagers from near by villages gather for the occasion. This count ranges between 20k-30k.

**3.1. Vernacular Architecture**

Local set up of houses was stacked close to each other with only 900 mm distance between adjacent house. All the structures are ground and ground + first floor. Most of the houses are build from locally available materials such as laterite stone as building material, wooden work as supports and interior furniture, thatch roof with Mangalore roofing covering, cow dung- mud plaster and same as flooring. Traditionally, a Tulsī plant is placed in the open court opposite to the entrance, which is worshiped by the females of the house. Provision of fishing net assembly in the open space of the house.



**Figure 18: Typical plan of villager house**



**Figure 19: Wooden jali at building façade elevation**



**Figure 20: Large overhang of thatch roof**



**Figure 21: Laterite stone as building façade elevation material**



**Figure 22: Vernacular roofing with thatch and Mangalore tile**



**Figure 23: Level difference between interior spaces**



**Figure 24: Quality of light in interior space affects due to large overhangs**

Improvements in light and ventilation through roofing system. Spaces are functional and adequate. Relation of spaces with one another justifies the culture and socio-economic background of the villager. Larger spaces with less utility space. Enclosed verandah with larger sit out area. Multipurpose open space.

**3.2. Tourist Attractions**



**Figure 25: Fishing safari**



**Figure 26: Picturesque beach**



**Figure 27: Nivati rock**

**3.3. SWOT Analysis**

**Strength:** Self sustainable living practice of locals. Fishing port for locals. Nivati beach front.

**Weakness:** CRZ rules limit the growth of village. Illegal construction activity. Lack of sewage disposal system.

**Opportunity:** Existing jetty can be revamped. Locals ready to take tourism as profession.

**Threat:** Lack of market. Lack of parking space creates chaos for locals during festivals.

**4.0. Findings**

This part of Konkan region is not yet operating to the fullest as tourism sector. Devbag is oversaturated with tourist and due to non-availability of land to grow further, it cannot accommodate the rising demand. Thus, it becomes necessary to make surrounding area able to accommodate the tourist. The lack of infrastructure and initiative by government withheld the growth of tourism in this part of circuit. The natural setting, vernacular architecture, people aspiration for tourism industry could be a boost for ecotourism in this circuit. The social media and mouth to mouth publicity is lacking for advertisements for this region as tourist destination with eco-friendly setting. The vernacular structures of villagers are more than 75-100 years old with local materials and local craftsmanship executed. The same if utilized as part of home stay for the tourist, will boost the economy of villager and impart lost vernacular architecture to the urban dweller. Every village has its own strength for tourism growth and need to take advantage of it by converting weakness in strengths and avoiding threats.

**5.0. Proposals**

The lack of potable water could be taken up by government by providing potable water through Jal program. The development of road network, to connect the near by villages. Development of jetty throughout this belt to enhance water way transportation, resulting in socio-economic sustainable growth of this region. CRZ rules to be monitored and implemented and relaxed case to case basis. Fund the

growth of local organizations through various government program. Government could add these places on to their portals to enhance tourist activities in this region. Chipi international Airport itself will boost ecotourism in this part of region. Identifying and developing no vehicular zones, pedestrian friendly shopping bazar with local art and festivals exhibits on street and open spaces. Training program for developing locals to cater tourist with more efficiency. Waste and sewage disposal management system. Proper road network along with bridges construction in order to cut down the distances. Providing geo bags along the sea coast to avoid soil erosion along the coast and avoid sinking of land along the sea. Disaster management cell and training to locals in case of disaster to avoid negative impact during such events. Already there are self-funded organizations such as self-help groups, bed and breakfast schemes, which are operating successfully. The growth of tourism sector will promote job sector in this region which will retain the locals from migrating and will have sustainable living for locals through tourism sector.

The villagers could utilize their own home as part of home stay for tourist. New homes could be constructed in the open areas of the respective dwelling unit to accommodate tourist. This could be another way of earning for the locals. The advertisement could be posted on Maharashtra tourism development corporation official website. Recognized bloggers could be invited for the experience and they could write their experience to the future user of this place. (Kusum, 2003)

## 6.0. CONCLUSION

The natural setting of this region and available resources and proposals has justified the hypothesis that the ecotourism will not only survive but thrive to its potential other than normal tourism. If ecotourism developed in well planned and well executed with the association of stake holders, it is win-win situation for government, local people, tourist and the natural resource of this region to welcome people across globe and sustain for positive growth. It will be positive way forward, if this example and approach used around other tourist destination to convert ordinary tourism in to ecotourism for sustainable growth of this sector.

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