CHAPTER 9
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ABOUT THE CHAPTER:
This chapter gives some practical suggestions and recommendations based upon findings primary and secondary data as well as upon personal observations. These suggestions and recommendations will be of importance to tourism developers in the rural areas. Rural tourism in the community should be developed not simply on the analysis of costs and benefits in the short-term, but also from a long-term perspective and sustainable tourism. The findings of this study showed that sustainable tourism aims to minimise environmental and cultural damage, optimise visitor satisfaction, and maximize long-term economic growth for the region. It is way of obtaining a balance between the growth potential of tourism and the conservation needs of the. Over a similar time-span, tourism in rural areas has grown, partly because of market forces, seeking different kinds of holiday, and partly as a result of government initiatives. This growth has been most noticeable in the countries of the developed world, where sophisticated economic diversification agencies have been hard at work promoting new uses for the countryside, influencing both potential providers of tourism facilities, and the markets for rural tourism through press and media contacts. There is also need of capacity building for local community and enhancing community participation for sustainable rural tourism development.

9.1 CONCLUSION
Sustainable rural tourism has been developed to counter the threats which unmanaged tourism can bring. Sustainable rural tourism sees tourism within destination areas as a triangular relationship between host areas and their habitats and peoples, holidaymakers, and the tourism industry. In the past, the tourism industry dominated the triangle. Sustainable rural tourism aims to reconcile the tensions between the three partners in the triangle, and keep the equilibrium in the long term. Sustainable tourism aims to minimise environmental and cultural damage, optimise visitor satisfaction, and maximize long-term economic growth for the region. Over a similar time-span, tourism in rural areas has grown, partly because of market forces, seeking different kinds of holiday, and partly as a result of government initiatives. This growth has been most noticeable in the countries of the developed world, where sophisticated economic
diversification agencies have been hard at work promoting new uses for the countryside, influencing both potential providers of tourism facilities, and the markets for rural tourism through press and media contacts.

The rural environment in Himachal Pradesh is however, a very fragile one. It is easily either changed or damaged by rapid changes of any sort: tourism is a powerful agent for change. This is an important issue because of the role rural areas play in many nations as repositories of both natural and historical heritage. It is also important commercially. Surveys show that rurality is a unique selling point for holidays in the countryside. Customers look for high quality and unspoiled scenery, for peace, quiet, and, to some extent, solitude, and for the personal attention which small-scale tourism enterprises can offer to their guests. The case for sustainable tourism in rural areas is, therefore, a very strong one. The concept of sustainability in rural tourism must be a multi-purpose one if it is to succeed. It cannot be successfully based on a narrow pro-nature conservation ethic. It should aim to:

- Sustain the culture and character of host communities.
- Sustain landscape and habitats.
- Sustain the rural economy.
- Sustain a tourism industry which will be viable in the long term and this in turn means the promotion of successful and satisfying holiday experiences.
- Develop sufficient understanding, leadership and vision amongst the decision-makers in an area that they realize the dangers of too much reliance on tourism, and continue to work towards a balanced and diversified rural economy. There are, however, many difficulties in implementing the principles of sustainability discussed above in a free market economy.

**RURAL TOURISM BENEFITS IN HIMACHAL PRADESH**

Rural Tourism has a number of positive benefits in Himachal Pradesh in terms of increased incomes, increased employment, and added avenues for upward mobility for locals and increased revenue. However, there are also some socio-economic and environmental impacts associated with these benefits that need to be highlighted. These impacts have arisen as a result of the trajectory that tourism has followed in Himachal Pradesh and can be summed up as follows:

1. The growth of mass tourism has been rapid and uncontrolled.
2. The seasonal nature of tourism has led to swings in employment and income most markedly in the small sector and to the unskilled worker.

3. Recognition that tourism is a vulnerable industry, subject to the fads of the trade; hence, tourism cannot be allowed to permanently change the face of the coast in the long run.

4. A systematic study of the environmental impacts of tourism, through perhaps, a life cycle analysis, and the valuation of the environment to enable its integration into decision-making.

**Need of Sustainability**

The tourism has positive effects, but also negatives. In the positives is the creation of employment the increase in the economic levels the positive effect for the new inversions in the conservation of natural spaces, avoids the migration of the local population, and improves the economic and socio-cultural level of the local population. The tourism is one of the few intensive sectors of employment, is one of the few alternatives to the destruction of employs caused by the technological change, the globalization process and the reduction of the working time. In the negative effects, as important then the positives, is the rising of the consume of ground, water, energy, destruction of landscapes with the creations of news infrastructures, the raise in the production of disposals, the alteration of ecosystems, the introduction of exotic species of animals and plants, the lost of traditional habits, the raise of the prostitution (sexual tourism), the narcotic traffic, more forest fires and the raise of the prices of the houses. The tourist flows contributes to the climate change, the acid rain, and the formation of the troposphere ozone, mainly because the transports of the tourist by air or by road are one of the principal sources of emissions of carbon dioxide and another contaminant gases. Most of the promotions of the sustainable tourism, are only image operations, because the demolition of an obsolete hotel, or construction of a bicycle line, the selective collection of remainders or some equipment to save water and energy, or to wash less times the towels, did not avoid the serious unsustainable repercussions the tourism.

**A RICHLY PARADOXICAL INDUSTRY**

1. The rural tourism industry is a richly paradoxical industry in Himachal Pradesh with which to engage. The preceding discussion of the claimed benefits of this industry reveals the large number of aspects that involve paradox, and hence represent potential areas of conflict brought by tourism. It is promoted as a potential panacea for many of the ills that rural
communities face in the post-modern era, on the premise that rural communities don’t have many of the so-called “ills” of modern society.

2. The aspects of rural life that have long been seen as constituting disadvantage, are drivers of rural tourism. The isolation, the lack of cultural attractions, infrastructure, crowded places and frantic pace of life are central motivators for tourists. Yet if rural areas are successful in engaging with tourism they are promised that they will gain the same advantages and living standards as their citified cousins. The result will be the undermining of their basis for attraction and the acquiring of the ills of urbanized living, a totally self-defeating exercise. The other side of this paradox is that, to remain the panacea for many of the forces discussed above that foster a desire in tourists for rural experiences, rural communities will have to stay the way they are. The fundamental characteristic about tourism as an industry is the central importance of the tourist. Unlike many commodity markets, a tourism industry only exists if there are tourists, and more importantly, tourists that are attracted to experiences in the host community. This means the consumer has ultimate power and the rules of the industry reflect this relationship between consumers and producers.

3. On the face of it communities engaging with tourism must follow the rest of the pack and obey the rules. This is particularly so where the attraction base has mass appeal, and is therefore part of the global marketplace. But if rural communities in particular, adopt this approach, they are most certainly supplementing there existing vulnerability to global commodity markets with another globalised, and equally unstable, market. So the paradox emerges in playing the game by the rules and at the same time, making the industry work in ways that protect them from the worst effects of a globalised markets.

4. Engaging with tourism has been described as requiring rural families to adopt the knowledge, skills and culture of a new profession. The nature of the customer also means that interaction with tourists is a central requirement of the exchanges in this profession, exchanges that involve intimate sharing with the customer. This level of intimacy with tourists brings potential changes that are beneficial to both hosts and guests, and also potentially transforming.

5. Besides providing tourists a peep into the rich rural cultural heritage, traditions and customs, home stay units are providing self employment opportunities to the rural folk. Under this
scheme, minimum one and maximum three rooms can be registered as home stay in rural areas where the owner of the house is also residing.

6. The global economic reforms, labour crisis and climate change coupled with repeated crop failures has brought numerous challenges and opportunities especially to the fruit growers. Rural tourism is one such opportunity, which can help and improve the well being of rural areas. However, it has its pitfalls and challenges as well. Although the role of tourism as a tool for the economic renewal of rural areas has long been acknowledged there is still debate on whether tourism brings more advantages or disadvantages to rural areas.

7. Developing rural tourism is a challenging task. The major problem lies in defining rural tourism, the scale of development and level of participation of the local people. Rural tourism is difficult to define and covers all recreational activities that occur in rural settings, such as village tourism, eco tourism, cultural tourism, heritage tourism, adventure tourism and nature based tourism. Rural tourism is not likely to succeed if urban tourism infrastructure is transplanted into a rural setting. Large resorts in rural mountain scenery look spectacular but they do not necessarily guarantee a thriving tourism industry and their contribution to the local economy is highly debatable. Moreover, they put unnecessary burden on the fragile local resources. Rural tourism projects need to be integrated into the local economy, and the use of local capital and local produce must be encouraged. Similarly the objectives of promoting rural tourism cannot achieve if it is controlled by people based in large urban centers without the active participation of the local rural population.

a. Rural tourism should help diversify the economic base, rather than simply replace one dominant rural activity for another and it should strive to give the visitor an authentic taste of rural culture which is a key component of rural tourism.

b. It cannot be said with certainty whether tourism will pull rural areas out of decline, but what is certain is the fact that tourism in rural Himachal is on the rise and this trend is likely to increase in the coming years. A planned sustainable approach is the need of the hour.

8. If we want rural areas to be sustainable, they must have the appropriate financial sources and revenues. That, however, requires employment opportunities not only in the agriculture sector. These opportunities must be relevant to the specific features of the region or municipality, as described in the article. Sustainable development is based on the idea of “Think globally and act locally”. The surveys present deficiencies which indicate that the real
use of the documents is much more limited. Individual activities are predominantly
dependent on the personal will of politicians. That means focus on development-based
activities, cooperation, and maximal use of local resources, including local community.

9. Strategic documents of rural micro-regions should have a wide reach; should be used as tools
for discussion about the main problems and solutions, should reflect strategies of local
entrepreneurs. It is the only way to realize the strategies of individual entrepreneurs, as well
as entrepreneurs in rural tourism. Even though it may be true that rural tourism is not as
economically attractive as most of other sectors, in the end it contributes to the protection of
demographic structure of rural areas and supports the specific cultural heritage and
environment. The question whether it is only financial resources needed and the income
gathered from job availability comes up. Next and equally important sources are social
capital, social network. These relate to cooperation and relation among people. Economic
benefits alone are not the strategic asset of rural areas, but it is rather the hope for the
“romantic” side of life. Nevertheless, within strategic development of rural areas, it is
necessary to have in mind small enterprises and to support them in their innovativeness.

RURAL TOURISM TO BE A COMPANION INDUSTRY

Rural tourism can become as a panacea for rural economy of Himachal Pradesh. It can be a
good companion industry if properly managed but the importance of maintaining farm activity as a
core business is essential from both the agricultural and tourism industry viewpoints. Rural tourism
activity can stimulate interest in farm product and like traditional co-operative approaches within
agriculture to distributing and marketing farm products, needs strong mutual support from other
regional businesses. Tourism’s capacity to generate economic effects in a large number of sectors
within the economy means that it has been seen as a potential panacea for rural downturns.

Rural tourism faces limited market segmentation opportunities and increased sensitivity to
seasonality. Tourism has the power to create and exacerbate social divisions locally, a consequence
of which is to make the potential cleavage a highly charged subject of local debate and source of
social tension. Distribution of the wealth brought by tourism is a critical aspect in this conflict, and
examples include: tourism businesses employing only those from their immediate kinship groups,
tourism precincts receiving preference in allocations of funds for infrastructure maintenance and
improvement. Rural residents see that tourism has some negative elements that detract from it as a
companion industry. Things like damaged signs, litter, bad behaviour, damage by vehicles to bush roads and tracks, the tarting up of places for tourists, the potential for in-migration, increased traffic, lack of respect for private land, leaving of gates open, invasion of privacy.

**Rural Tourism for Employment Generation**

A constant theme within the literature especially that generated by government agencies, is the potential for tourism to create employment within rural communities, particularly labour intensive services and new product development. The Australian Tourism National Action Plan seeks to enhance the capacity of tourism to create jobs in regional Australia (DIST, 1998b). However, academic researchers point out that it can only do so if the share of the tourism market is increasing. Rural tourism areas are reliant on stimulating demand both domestically and internationally.

**OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH**

The employment theme is extended to include specific opportunities for young people within rural communities in the hope that tourism may provide an incentive for them to remain. The tourism industry is often promoted as an exciting and growing industry suited to the energies and enthusiasm of young people. Career options are enhanced with the opportunities for training and direct involvement in running tourism businesses, especially those within small communities.

Rural communities have been forced to try many different agricultural activities to try and survive the problems of rural downturn, drought and diminishing returns at the farm gate for their produce. Tourism is promoted as one way of diversifying their economic base via the alternative “crop” that tourism can represent to rural communities. Having unused or under-utilized on-farm assets was a motivating factor for nearly half of farm-stay operators to consider converting these assets to use in tourism. Diversification into rural tourism tends to stimulate new developments and enterprises within a rural community enabling locations in decline to take control of their economic destiny. Tourism changed the structure of agriculture in Hawaii without causing its demise. It resulted in a movement to high-value, non-traditional crops, such as floriculture and nursery products and the newly acquired tastes of tourists helped to stimulate demand for products, and particularly exports. Rural tourism development eventually diversifies the resident population of a
community along with the product offerings of the region. These offerings include changed agricultural activity and changed mix of goods and services.

NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES

Tourism generates new opportunities for industry. Even those rural businesses not directly involved in tourism can benefit from tourist activity through developing close relationships with tourist facilities where local foods can be used as part of the tourism offering in a locality. Rural tourism facilitates expansion of complimentary businesses such as service stations and new businesses are created to cater for tourist needs for hospitality services, recreational activities and arts/crafts.

IMPROVED FACILITIES AND AMENITIES FROM RURAL TOURISM

10. Again, the claim that tourism will bring improved community facilities and amenities is a common catch-cry of the agencies wanting to promote it as a means of rural renewal. And while governments often see tourism as leading to better infrastructure and public amenities, not all residents of an area will benefit equally from such development.

11. The tourism industry which celebrates the historical, constitutional and cultural distinctiveness of very small jurisdictions underscores and reinforces the identity of those small places. Many government agencies promote this benefit of tourism but without the cynical reference to pernicious globalization. Specifically, they highlight the value of natural and man-made environments for both tourists and hosts and the capacity of tourism to use and build upon traditional skills, with the rural way-of-life a critical component of community identity.

12. Where indigenous rural tourism is involved, tourism is cited as keeping traditional culture strong and that communities feel pride in community tourism achievements. Tourism encourages conformity to an ideal image of community which can result in growth of personal ties and community solidarity. Thus the basis for community solidarity shifts from shared cultural background to shared image. Amenities play a fundamental role in shaping a community's identity and pride and so the potential of tourism for improvements to facilities and amenities has positive implications for community pride, particularly rural museums as an important repository of rural culture.
9.2 SUGGESTIONS

PROMOTION OF RURAL TOURISM

There is need of more promotion of rural tourism in the selected districts in general and Himachal Pradesh in particular. 'Home Stay Scheme' and 'Har Gaon Ki Kahani' launched by the state government can promote rural tourism to generate employment, income and promote new destinations by exhibiting ancient heritage and culture of the State. Event based tourism promotion activities can also be started by the tourism department to capture the attention of tourists round the year. Events like trekking, mountain biking and para-gliding can be organized for adventure lovers. More eco-tourism circuits can be created in Lahaul-Spiti, Kullu and Kinnaur districts. The level of impact of tourism depends on the class of tourism, so we have to analyse the types and their impacts to try to obtain the solutions for these problems. Such as adventure tourism maybe the worse one of all the tourism, usually it goes to unaltered zones, and quickly degrades by the discharge by the high consumption of resources to per capita, the problem bends if this takes control of all terrain vehicles, that used to go out of the paths. People are moving to rural areas that are far away from cities, and this is causing a re-organisation of the economic activity of the rural areas. Similarly while ecotourism is concerned it is supposed to be the sustainable tourism, is tourism non-massed, that it does not consume resources, in which his users are consciences with the nature and tries to diminish the impacts.

1. There is need of the development of the strategy should be used to encourage an ongoing dialogue between government, tourism businesses, communities and other interests about the future of an area and tourism’s role in that future.
2. The strategy can be used to guide and encourage infrastructural investment in transport, public services, marketing, information and interpretation.
3. Tourism businesses should gain in security and can invest for the long term because they can develop in a more stable environment.
4. Nature Conservation, the Arts and Cultural Activities can be drawn into the strategy making process. They will gain in stature from being recognized and valorized by being part of that process. The process should see conservation as a positive rather than a negative viewpoint. The human and political energies behind the Arts and Nature lobbies should be used to guide tourism, not simply to protect their position against tourism of any kind.
5. The strategy can protect the special scenic, historic and cultural heritage of an area, thus preserving tourism’s future seed corn. It should help to establish the financial and political interdependence between conservation and tourism.

6. The strategy-making process can encourage new entrants into tourism. These can include farm diversification schemes, craft workshops, cycle hire, speciality food production, re-organised public transport marketed to visitors, new restaurants, etc. Often these can help retain, diversify or even increase employment opportunities. Notably, many new tourism enterprises are led by women: female activity rates have traditionally been low in rural areas.

7. Strategy-making can be used as a vehicle for new ideas and for the beginning of an ongoing educational process bringing new skills, and new flexibility into the business and political life of a region.

8. Public dialogue and discussion can allow time for a consideration of the costs and benefits of alternative types of tourism, and alternative types of investments.

9. Most rural tourism businesses are small and are unable to afford effective marketing or training. The strategy-making process can be used to encourage future co-operation in marketing and training between businesses and between communities, and to seek niche markets for an area where it can have an advantage over competing areas.

10. The production of a well researched and carefully written plan, backed by the whole community, can be used as an effective lever to obtain public sector funding to begin the process of both development and the reconciliation of tourism and environmental issues through good management. The existence of a public sector investment programme should in turn encourage private sector investment.

SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM STRATEGIES HIMACHAL PRADESH

1. It is important people should be skilled not only in tourism development but also in economic, ecological and social analysis. While local knowledge is useful, impartiality is much more vital if trust is to be maintained amongst the many parties taking part in the strategy-making process.

2. Wide consultations amongst all interest groups are essential. These consultations will include trade and business, transport, farmers, administrators, and the custodians of the natural and historic assets of the area.

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3. Tourism relies more than any other industry on local goodwill — the ability to make
holidaymakers feel welcome. The local population must be happy with their visitors, and secure
in the knowledge that the visitor influx will not overwhelm their lives, increase their housing
costs, and impose new and unwelcome value systems on them. Openness can be achieved by
public discussions, by careful use of the press, radio and television, and by the development of a
two-way dialogue with the community.

4. The strategy-making process should not be a once-only affair. It has to be an evolving
long-term enterprise, able to cope with change, and able to admit to its own mistakes and
shortcomings. It is the beginning of a partnership between business, government and cultural and
conservation interests. It can be claimed that these keys to success are counsels of perfection.
Certainly, it is probably impossible to be totally impartial, or that openness can ever be complete.
But these are the ideals for which the strategy maker should strive, and ideals which should be
encouraged.

Priorities

1. Conservation and tourism management should be the first priority, followed by job
retention and creation and the encouragement of business, especially locally based businesses.

2. Measures should, however, be taken to assist hill sheep farms to undertake limited and
care-fully controlled diversification into tourism; without this help there is a danger that the
Cheviots will be sold for forestry purposes. This would change its character completely, to the
detriment of existing ecosystems, and to the marketing image of the whole region.

3. Hilly areas should be developed for walking and farm tourism, because they are
ecologically strong, and their sheep/beef cattle farming communities need economic support and
diversification. The hills need a comprehensive footpath and parking policy, and a marketing
initiative.

4. Local development groups should be formed to ensure grassroots involvement. The first
of these could be in the small towns and in the village of of Himachal Pradesh.

5. A comprehensive footpath, signpost, information and interpretation policy should be
implemented, designed to help visitors get to know the area, understand its wildlife and its
historical heritage, stay longer and spend more money.
6. A new more closely focused marketing plan should replace the current broad approach. Marketing would be targeted towards special interest groups and specific geographical areas.

7. A series of training and education courses should be offered to encourage new entrants to tourism and to help existing businesses.

8. A major investment in infrastructure and staff should be made in order to fund both development and management. Part of the investment should be made in an ongoing process of strategy monitoring and evaluation, adapting the strategy to changing conditions.

9. The ideas behind Sustainable Rural Tourism Strategies are frequently denigrated by people in a hurry. They are sometimes attacked by developers seeking rapid, short-term returns on their investments. Other regions may follow conventional short-term plans, and gain more jobs and more visitors and more investment. But pause. If the people of an area love their landscape, their way of life, their language, their dialect, their cuisine and their heritage — they will pause. They will reflect that the creation of the great palimpsest that is the countryside has taken many years of human effort. They will remember the toil of those first settlers who cleared the woodlands, those who built farms, villages, roadways, labouring to add churches, schools and gardens, founding families and traditions. Organic change, reconciling tensions between conflicting motives, needs time.

Need of Community Participation

1. Community participation in the development process can take many forms according to the circumstances. However, tourism research hardly mentions different forms of community participation in the rural tourism development. Rather, it is implied that one form of community participation is valid universally. This rigidity in tourism studies may illustrate that tourism research has debated the concept of participatory tourism development approach in isolation and without much connection with general community participation studies that may create better insights and greater maturity for the formulation of policies for community participation in the rural tourism development.

2. The adaptation of a typology of community participation to tourism development seems to reduce the conceptual vagueness regarding community participation in the tourism development process by enabling us to label and identify various forms of community
participation. In this sense, it may also lead to tourism scholars not using different phrases interchangeably for community participation in the tourism development. This appears to be a limitation to the free-will of authors writing on participatory tourism development issues to employ various phrases as a perfect substitution for each other, but it is essential to categorize and clarify forms of community participation in the rural tourism development for the purpose of effective and scientific communication.

3. Community participation should take place at different levels, and in different form in these tourist destinations. In this vein, it was not an objective to provide a means for the postulation of concrete prescriptions for community participation in tourism. The key point to emerge from the preceding analyses is that community participation in the rural tourism development should be regarded as a categorical term enabling host communities to participate in the rural tourism development in various forms under different circumstances. Obviously, much more research is still needed to clarify how community participation may be initiated and organized.

**Community Participation and Sustainability**

There is need of long-term tourism planning with consensus and support from the host population is a growing theme in tourism literature. Recent examples of participatory approaches to tourism planning note the success with which it has been developed (both in terms of pleasing local residents and providing quality tourism products and services. By developing a process whereby the community participates in every aspect of tourism planning, they are working towards creating a mechanism that can be used to mitigate the negative impacts and to develop an approach to tourism that satisfies at least some of the needs of the community. Built into the process is a 'feedback loop' wherein the community is consulted and must take time to evaluate whether or not they are meeting their goals for tourism and community development. There is need of inclusion of three fundamental parts to this preplanning process: (1) engendering capacity for stakeholder participation; (2) building community trust and ownership; and (3) ensuring open dialogue and information.

**Engendering Capacity**
Before embarking on the creation of a tourism development plan community members should consider developing mechanisms for ensuring that all voices in the community are heard and that as many stakeholders develop the capacity to access the decision-making process as possible. Our analysis uncovered resident apathy and feelings of disempowerment as many respondents did not feel able either to have their concerns aired, or to influence the power structures in their communities. Opening the process to the participation of whole community does not ensure that all members are able to participate. There is need that planners and development experts can use to help encourage a wider engagement in the process of community planning and decision-making: notify less-organized interests early in any planning process affecting them; educate citizens and community organizations about the planning process and both formal and informal 'rules of the game'; supply technical and political information to citizens to enable informed, effective political participation and negotiation; and encourage community-based groups to press for open, full information about proposed projects.

**Building Trust and Ownership**

1. Ideally, as capacity is encouraged and more community members feel able to take a meaningful part in decision-making processes in their communities, mutual trust will develop between the various parties. The knowledge and skills of community members is increased as they become more involved in community activities.

2. Learning new knowledge and skills, and enriching old ones, can help to increase and maintain self-esteem, self-actualization, and other humanistic concepts of development which in turn can motivate community members for future involvement and action.

3. Community development specialists and planners should be encouraged to involve stakeholders more directly in the process of planning community activities. The members of local service clubs especially have the potential to undertake more of a role in planning and organizing communitywide activities.

**Ensuring Open Dialogue and Information**

1. The access to information is an essential ingredient both for engendering community support for, and involvement in, the creation of tourism development plans. Tourism business owners, local entrepreneurs and others involved in the development of tourism activities
must be made aware of the importance of transparency and the provision of information to the community at large.

2. This information needs be provided to members of the community through a process of open dialogue during which members should be able to engage with the information and those providing it. Instituting these three facets of the pre-planning phase for community tourism development would begin the creation of confidence and trust in the system so that all interested parties will be deemed to have a legitimate voice on issues affecting them and confidence that their voice will be heard in the decision-making process.

3. The small scale of most community-based tourism initiatives means that their impact, both on nature conservation and on income and employment for the community as a whole, is limited. They can be more influential and successful if they are integrated within other sustainable development initiatives at a regional and local level.

4. Rural tourism can be integrated with other sectors of the rural economy, creating mutually supportive linkages and reducing financial leakage away from the area. It can also be coordinated with agriculture, in terms of the use of time and resources and in providing markets for local produce. In principle, multiple sector activity within local communities should be encouraged. Rural tourism markets are small, seasonal and sensitive to external influences such as political changes or economic instability in the host.

5. On the other hand, rural tourism can shield against threats to other sectors. As well as horizontal integration within the community, the success of local ecotourism initiatives may depend on vertical integration with national level initiatives to support and promote responsible tourism. National level support is needed in terms of linking conservation and tourism activities and responsibilities, appropriate legislation and assistance towards small enterprises and community initiatives, and national and international promotion.

6. Involving the community is a critically important and complex subject for successful community-based tourism. Opportunities and solutions will vary considerably in different areas and between communities. An important principle is to seek to work with existing social and community structures, though these can create challenges as well as opportunities. It can also help to identify potential leaders and people with drive.

7. The main objective should be to achieve broad and equitable benefits throughout the community. Issues of gender may also be important and rural tourism can provide good
opportunities for women. Community-based tourism requires an understanding, and where possible a strengthening, of the legal rights and responsibilities of the community over land, resources and development. This should apply in particular to the tenure of community-held lands and to rights over tourism, conservation and other uses on these lands, enabling the community to influence activity and earn income from tourism.

8. It should also apply to participation in land use planning and development control over private property. Community-led initiatives, private enterprise and investment should be encouraged where appropriate, within a structure which enables the community to benefit, and have decision-making power over the level and nature of tourism in its area. There are various ways in which the community can relate to private enterprise. The degree of community involvement and benefit can develop over time.

Community Involvement

1. Private tourism businesses should employ local people. Although a useful form of employment, it is very important to guard against poor wages and conditions and to ensure that training is offered to local people, including in management.

2. Local individuals selling produce and handicraft to visitors directly or through tourism businesses. This has often proved to be a good way of spreading benefits within a community.

3. Private tourism businesses (internally or externally owned) being granted a concession to operate by the community, in return for a fee and a share of revenue. There are many examples where this has worked well.

4. Individuals, with links to the broader community, running their own small tourism businesses. Success can vary and lack of skill and tourism knowledge has often proved a weakness.

5. Commually owned and run enterprises. Sometimes these suffer from lack of organisation and incentive, but this can be overcome with time. Action can be taken to strengthen relationships between the community and private partners.

This includes:

• Advice and training for communities on their rights and negotiating practices;
• Ensuring transparent, simple and consistently applied deals give sufficient incentive to private enterprises, recognise commercial realities, and minimise administrative burdens and uncertainty; and

• Establishing committees involving local people, private operators and possibly government agencies and NGOs, to ensure understanding and smooth operation of agreements, and to help local communication.

Distribution of Benefits

1. The method of distribution of income earned by communities to individual members needs careful attention. This can sometimes be covered in legislation relating to communal rights.

2. There are examples where communally-earned income from rural tourism has been directly divided between households or placed in community development funds or separate trusts for use on community projects such as health or education programmes.

3. Developing effective legislation to empower local communities and helping them strengthen their relationship with private enterprise.

4. All community-based rural tourism initiatives should be centered on a clear strategy agreed and understood by the local community and all other stakeholders with an interest in tourism and conservation. The strategy should enable a comprehensive picture to be formed of needs and opportunities in an area, so that a range of complementary actions can be taken.

5. One of the main benefits from working on a strategy is to provide the community with the tools and knowledge necessary for decision making. The strategy should be community-led and community-focused. However, it is essential that people with experience and knowledge of tourism and conservation are involved in its preparation.

6. People involved should include representatives of the local community, knowledgeable tourism operators, local entrepreneurs, relevant NGOs, conservation agencies including protected area managers, and local authorities. Links should be made as appropriate to the regional and national government level.

7. Inputs to the strategy should include:
• Careful consultation within the community covering attitudes and awareness of tourism, possible opportunities and pitfalls, existing experience, concerns and level of interest;
• A comprehensive market assessment and an assessment of the natural and cultural heritage, including opportunities presented for ecotourism and sensitivities and constraints.

It is also helpful to set out a clear statement of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. The output of the strategy process should be an agreed vision for rural tourism over a specified period, together with an identification of aims, objectives and strategic priorities, an action plan, and a way of monitoring results. The action plan should identify practical initiatives, including a timescale and an indication of responsibility and resources required. It is very important, in order to avoid frustration, not to be too ambitious in terms of targets and timing. The actions identified may include specific development or marketing projects. In some locations at least as much, or more, attention may need to be paid to action to manage tourism, including policies on development control and the handling of existing visitors. In many places, the relationship between the local community and a protected area may be an important element of the strategy, including agreed action on the level of any park admission fees and their subsequent use for conservation or within the community, which is an important issue for rural tourism.

**Increase participation of the poor in the development of tourism**

While the percentage of poor people in urban areas is increasing, there are still more in rural areas, both in total numbers as well as a proportion of the population. One key opportunity of involving more of the poor in tourism is to develop tourism enterprises where they live. This is not to say that the poor will necessarily own an enterprise, or even provide the labour, just because it is located in a rural area, but location is a first step. Furthermore, two strengths of tourism for increasing participation are that a) because the customer comes to the product (not vice versa), there are more opportunities for expanding the range of transactions; and b) tourism usually involves a wide range of enterprises, i.e. the small and informal as well as the well-established or multi-national. One advantage specific to rural tourism is that the nature of the product often involves enterprises that feature local ownership such as bed and breakfasts (B&Bs), home visits and farm stays.
Bring wider benefits to rural areas

Rural areas generally suffer high levels of poverty, and are also characterised by lower levels of non-farm economic activity, infrastructural development, and access to essential services. They may also suffer from depopulation of the able-bodied, and lack of political clout. The development of tourism can help address several of these problems through: economic growth, economic diversification and stabilization;

- Employment creation, as primary source of income but most importantly secondary source of income.
- Reduced out-migration and possibly re-population.
- Maintenance and improvement of public services.
- Infrastructural improvements.
- Revitalising crafts, customs and cultural identities.
- Increasing opportunities for social contact and exchange.
- Protection and improvement of both the natural and built environment.
- Increasing recognition of rural priorities and potential by policy-makers and economic planners.

Comparative Advantage of Rural Tourism

1. Manufacturing industry gravitates to areas with good transport links, infrastructure, and commercial skills. Rural areas usually have few sources of comparative advantage for attracting economic activity other than agriculture or industries based on harvesting natural resources. Tourism is one of the few sectors that can be suitable to remote or non-urban areas, provided that there is sufficient access for tourists.

2. Because there are few other options, its value to the poor can be particularly high. However these and other reasons mean that expanding tourism into new rural areas can make policy sense. There are also practical reasons why doing so may appear to be a relatively ‘easy’ option. The nature of rural tourism products and clientele may mean that relatively basic facilities suffice, which are easier to develop than high quality resorts.

3. There may well be assets in rural areas (man-made structures, culture, nature) that can be readily adapted for tourism development. Tourism development can also have negative impacts on residents. In rural areas, displacement of people from their land and competition for other natural resources such as water, forest, and wildlife are likely to be the key trade-
offs. Pro-poor strategies should therefore focus on minimizing negative impacts as well as exploiting potential benefits. However, any assessment of the key features of successful tourism development and the key characteristics of rural areas leads to the hypothesis that developing tourism in rural areas faces major obstacles.

**SUSTAINABLE TOURISMSTRATEGIES**

1. Almost all successful businesses, and many successful regions, develop according to carefully worked out business plans and strategies. The plans seek to reconcile competing demands, to avoid wasteful investments and duplication of effort, and to research and seek out niche markets where special success can be achieved. Sustainable Tourism Strategies should have all these attributes, but in addition, ten special features should be noted. The development of the strategy should be used to encourage an ongoing dialogue between government, tourism businesses, communities and other interests about the future of an area and tourism’s role in that future.

2. The strategy can be used to guide and encourage infrastructural investment in transport, public services, marketing, information and interpretation.

3. Tourism businesses should gain in security and can invest for the long term because they can develop in a more stable environment. Nature Conservation, the Arts and Cultural Activities can be drawn into the strategy making process. They will gain in stature from being recognized and valorized by being part of that process. The process should see conservation as a positive rather than a negative viewpoint.

4. The human and political energies behind the Arts and Nature lobbies should be used to guide tourism, not simply to protect their position against tourism of any kind. The strategy can protect the special scenic, historic and cultural heritage of an area, thus preserving tourism’s future seed corn. It should help to establish the financial and political interdependence between conservation and tourism. The strategy-making process can encourage new entrants into tourism. These can include farm diversification schemes, craft workshops, cycle hire, specialty food production, re-organised public transport marketed to visitors, new restaurants, etc.

5. Often these can help retain, diversify or even increase employment opportunities. Notably, many new tourism enterprises are led by women: female activity rates have traditionally been low in rural areas.
6. Strategy-making can be used as a vehicle for new ideas and for the beginning of an ongoing educational process bringing new skills, and new flexibility into the business and political life of a region. Public dialogue and discussion can allow time for a consideration of the costs and benefits of alternative types of tourism, and alternative types of investments. Most rural tourism businesses are small and are unable to afford effective marketing or training.

7. The strategy-making process can be used to encourage future co-operation in marketing and training between businesses and between communities, and to seek niche markets for an area where it can have an advantage over competing areas. The production of a well researched and carefully written plan, backed by the whole community, can be used as an effective lever to obtain public sector funding to begin the process of both development and the reconciliation of tourism and environmental issues through good management. The existence of a public sector investment programme should in turn encourage private sector investment.

PRESERVATION OF RURAL CULTURE AND HERITAGE

So on one hand proponents of tourism (usually governments) state that it facilitates cultural exchange, transformation and social contact and then promote its capacity to preserve rural culture and heritage. On face value this may represent a paradox, but tourism does have a capacity to provide the impetus for preservation of cultural heritage while it acts as a vector for cultural exchange. In rural tourism the ‘sense of place’ is a fundamental element in both the tourists’ and host community’s feelings of what makes the area attractive to visit and live in. This sense of place is maintained partly through rural museums which play a vital role in preserving heritage.

CULTURAL AND SOCIAL EXCHANGE

The motivation for farm hosts engaging with tourism is as much a social driver as an economic one, and meeting and socializing with people is the main reason for remaining in the tourism business, even when the returns are poor. German farming families who offer vacations on the farm experience social relationships with tourists that transgress touristic encounters and exchanges so that meaningful relationships, and often friendships, result from the interaction with tourists. These meaningful social exchanges are in part dependent on the nature of the rural lifestyle and the low numbers of tourists. The situation in rural tourism is a mixed, and sometimes, contradictory picture. In contrast to the frequently touted claims of benefits from tourism, the returns
to communities are sometimes the opposite of what was promised, and in most instances, marginal at best. If a Porter analysis is also done, a gloomier picture emerges under the harsh light of industry analysis. If however, this helps rural communities to understand the realities of tourism and to have realistic expectations of the role of tourism in their lives and livelihoods, such an analysis will be a sobering, but useful exercise. The relevance of applying this conceptual framework is highlighted by the impact that entering the tourism industry can have for ill-informed and unprepared operators. Given the initial investment amounts quoted earlier as establishment costs, whilst the sums are small, they represent significant investments for small business.

Training

Training is accepted as important in all spheres of economic activity. Training in rural tourism is generally poorly developed: this is a major stumbling block to development. Rural tourism requires relatively little new capital: the physical landscape, natural and built heritage, farming pattern, and, in many cases, redundant buildings, are all there. But, successful rural tourism requires totally new skills: in marketing, in hospitality, in catering, in heritage interpretation and guidance, in visitor management, in festival and event promotion, in building conversion, and in rural tourism strategy planning itself.

Training has tended to concentrate on small businesses and employees. It has usually been short term, with little linkage between courses, and no long term training plan. Existing business courses have usually been adapted: little specifically tailor-made material has been produced on rural tourism. Training for rural tourism professionals, planners and administrators is less well developed. The market is smaller, but paradoxically, the need is probably greater. Planners and professionals are the industry’s leaders, acting as brokers between businesses, between businesses and politicians, and frequently, between businesses and markets. Once again, training materials are usually adapted from other subject materials, and short courses with little linkage are the norm.

Community Involvement and Community/Industry Co-operation

Community involvement and community/industry co-operation are special features of rural tourism in some places. They can bring local capital investment into play, can lessen conflicts between visitor interests and local interests, and can contribute towards the authenticity of rural
holidays which many visitors seek. Yet community involvement is unsuccessful in some places, while very valuable in others. Research is needed to ascertain whether there are any basic ground rules for this type of work, whether involvement is only successful in the short term, and what exactly can and cannot be delivered in co-operation with rural communities. Its findings should be disseminated via the various publications and training materials envisaged elsewhere in this Section.

Agency Intervention in Rural Tourism Development

Many public sector agencies are involved in rural tourism development, management and marketing. Few of the agencies involved were designed specifically to work on rural tourism, or, in many cases, on tourism of any kind. Examples of their diverse origins include agricultural advisory services, national park authorities, regional and local planning agencies, state forestry authorities, rural development agencies, local government planning services, leisure services and general administrative services, and, of course, all embracing tourist boards ranging from national through regional to local level. Some public sector involvement in tourism and development in rural areas will probably always be needed. Whether, however, public sector agencies should carry out the full range of roles, or should be limited to a regulatory function, is not clear. Certainly, in some areas, co-operatives, semi-state agencies and private consultancies carry out roles reserved elsewhere for the state sector. This area of research would, therefore, examine, compare and evaluate the ways in which rural tourism is being developed and arranged by different forms of agency.

EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR RURAL TOURISM

1. There is need of education and training of local people of development of rural tourism. It is frequently overlooked because many people, having experienced holidays as consumers, and having been involved in other types of business, assume that little further knowledge or skill is required to enter the tourism industry. But tourism is a complex and highly professional enterprise: success rarely comes without considerable expertise.

2. Rural tourism requires additional and specialised skills. It is readily admitted that the restructuring of the rural economy will entail new capital inputs. To use that new capital effectively, trained administrators, managers, operators and employees are necessary. An
hotelier would be unlikely to survive as a farmer without several years of training. But farmers and other rural people are commonly expected to enter the world of tourism with either no training, or training which lasts only a few days.

3. Training and education programmes in rural tourism should bring a number of benefits. They should help develop more care and commitment amongst all those involved. They should help businesses become more effective and profitable, by encouraging better marketing, organisation and co-operative working and helping gain repeat visits from guests. They should help professional planners and administrators understand the need to plan rural tourism in a sustainable and profitable way.

4. Finally, there is the critical but hard-to-define point that well-thought-out training programmes help widen horizons, raise standards and create professional and positive attitudes. There is need to set out the client groups who need training in rural tourism, evaluates their requirements and suggests possible outline curricula, discusses the constraints on the development of rural tourism education programmes and puts forward a framework for research and development.

**Policy Perspective for Sustainable Tourism**

The interconnection of hosts and guests through the natural and built environment at any one destination, and the influence on the actions of each predicated upon the action/inaction of each of the demand- and supply-side variables, demonstrates the variety of stakeholders that must be accommodated from a policy perspective. Governments, as well as industry associations, have attempted in the past to address these varied groups' interests while still attempting to placate the broader Western agenda of sustainable development. There is need of some specific points in Himachal Pradesh:

1. Travel and tourism should assist people in leading healthy and productive lives in harmony with nature;
2. Travel and tourism should contribute to the conservation, protection and restoration of the earth’s ecosystem;
3. Travel and tourism should be based upon sustainable patterns of production and consumption;
4. Travel and tourism, peace, development and environmental protection are interdependent;
5. Protectionism in trade in travel and tourism services should be halted or reversed;
6. Environmental protection should constitute an integral part of the tourism development process;
7. Tourism development issues should be handled with the participation of concerned citizens, with planning decisions being adopted at a local level;
8. Travel and tourism should use their capacity to create employment for women and indigenous peoples to the fullest extent.
9. Tourism development should recognize and support the identity, culture and interests of indigenous peoples.
10. International laws protecting the environment should be respected by the travel and tourism industry.

1. The local level can also involve site planning, which refers to the specific location of structures and facilities based on a land use plan. The importance of planning, management and regulation at the local level is being recognized increasingly worldwide. Environmental and socioeconomic conditions vary greatly at each locality within the same country and region, and sometimes within a municipal territory.
2. This is especially true for Himachal Pradesh, a state of natural and cultural diversity, where the bonds of traditional community structures are strong and varied. WTO has stated that local authorities responsible for counties, districts, cities, towns, villages, rural areas and attractions sites are becoming increasingly This is in line with trends towards decentralization as governments give more responsibility to local authorities. It also reflects the recent emphasis on community involvement in tourism through participation in tourism planning and related development processes.

**Sustainability is Imperative for Tourism Planning**

1. Sustainability is imperative for tourism planning as destinations encounter increasing pressure on the natural, cultural and socio-economic environments from tourism growth. It has been recognized that uncontrolled growth in tourism aimed at short-term benefits often can harm the environment and societies as well as destroy the very basis of tourism.
2. Host societies have become more aware of such problems, along with some consumers who now demand higher environmental standards from tourism suppliers and greater commitment from tour operators and travel agents. Tourism also has the potential to bring economic benefits to host communities and helps alleviate poverty and conserve natural and cultural assets, provided there is proper planning and management with a long-term vision.

3. Sustainable rural tourism development helps in meeting the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. Sustainable tourism development requires management of all resources to fulfill economic, social and aesthetic needs while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, and biological diversity and life support systems.

4. The key for achieving sustainable tourism is careful planning, systematic implementation of the plans, as well as continuous and effective management. This should include a comprehensive approach that considers environmental, socio-cultural and economic, institutional and financial aspects, together with their mutual relations when formulating policies, strategies, programmes or projects.

5. Ideally, local plans would be integrated into regional and national tourism policies and plans. The tourism sector both depends on and stimulates other economic activities. Quality tourism services and programmes cannot be provided without linkages to agriculture, food production, transportation, construction, manufacturing, handicraft production, and other related economic activities.

Areas of further research

Research is necessary to evaluate the management, control and operational questions involved in creating sustainable rural tourism Himachal Pradesh. Evaluation should be made in terms of job retention, creation and diversification, visitor satisfaction, capital and manpower requirements, environmental protection and community participation and partnership. Special consideration should be given to two fields. For long term strategic planning, an increasing number of rural regions and localities are developing tourism strategy plans. These plans assess tourism assets, weaknesses and environmental carrying capacities. After a review of market opportunities, the long term plan looks at how best to develop and manage specific areas, communities and ecosystems. The plans discuss infrastructure requirements, traffic management
Conclusion

schemes, new enterprise development, training for tourism businesses and marketing techniques. Five-to ten-year time scales are usually adopted. There are many different ways of drawing up and implementing long term strategy plans. Some, for example are based on intensive community consultation techniques; others adopt a much more top down approach. Research and evaluation is needed to assess the effectiveness of strategy planning in general, and of specific types of planning in detail. Effectiveness should be measured in terms of the cost of strategy development and administration, commercial success, effectiveness in environmental and community conservation, and in terms of job retention, creation and diversification. At the tactical level, the implementation of strategy plans requires detailed knowledge of issues such as visitor management schemes, heritage interpretation, ways of encouraging new entrants to tourism, the validity of co-operative marketing schemes, rural public transport schemes, historic building conservation and ways of successfully integrating nature conservation and tourism.