The present study is carried out to estimate economic or recreational value of the Kaziranga National Park, because with the emergence of ‘sustainable development’ strategy it is very much essential to estimate true economic value of the environmental resources and services, and only a hand full studies have been conducted in North Eastern Region of India.

On the other hand, resources are allocated according to the value of the assets in an economy. Without proper estimation of value, resources are bound to be misallocated. For proper management of public parks and wildlife sanctuaries in the developing countries like India, there is an urgent need to estimate the true economic value of these assets. The economic value of the environmental resources and services helps the policy makers in making and implementing more meaningful policies regarding resource utilization and allocation.

National parks and wildlife sanctuaries have played an important role that balances the needs for biodiversity conservation against degradation of environmental conditions of different countries while keeping the rapid pace of development. Recently these parks are provided for recreational activities on leisure demands of the people. In the present situation due to increased recreational pressure and the consequent damage to the environment, management of these parks comes under close scrutiny. So, it needs economic valuation, but it is not straightforward since this kind of public service is not
directly sold to the visitors for a price. On the other hand, these environmental resources or services are characterized by non-excludability and externality. For these characteristics the market system cannot capture all aspects of these resources. Therefore, these recreational or biodiversity services are mispriced by the market and the policy makers should use a new valuation approach to assess the value of these resources namely non-market valuation methods. Non-market valuation methods provide data and help the policy makers to take decisions on how best to manage the natural resources. Two common approaches to the non-market valuation are Travel Cost Method (TCM) and Contingent Valuation Method (CVM) generally used for assessing economic value of environmental resources. In the present study, both methods are used to estimate recreational value of the Kaziranga National Park (KNP) of Assam.

The present study is arranged and demonstrated in six different chapters. General introduction of the study is elucidated in the Chapter-1. In this chapter, rationale and basis of the present study, definition of ecotourism and importance of it in developing countries, purpose of the study, objectives, hypotheses and conceptual framework of the research work are explained in detail. The purpose of this section is to present a comprehensive view of the basic ground and necessities of economic valuation of public parks in developing countries like India.

Chapter-2 of the thesis entitled ‘Review of Literature’ unfolds in-depth explanation of various research works which are conducted in foreign countries and also in India since 1980s. This is followed by a discussion on the research gaps of the previous studies.
which are carried out to estimate recreational value of the Kaziranga National Park (KNP).

Chapter-3 pertains to Kaziranga National Park. It discusses regarding the present status, geography, climatic condition, history and development, flora and fauna, wildlife management system of the park. It is followed by constraints of the management system of KNP and a brief discussion on works of the NGOs related to the park management system, it presents a clear picture of the present conditions of the national park.

In Chapter-4 of the thesis, entitled ‘Methodology and Data’, the principal topics discussed are: various types of non-market valuation methods and its drawbacks, process of selecting samples and relevant information for the present study, and the background and procedure of selecting particular methods to attain the objectives of the present research work.

In Chapter-5 of the thesis, an analysis of results of the present research work has been furnished. It is divided into two different parts: descriptive statistical analysis and econometric analysis. Descriptive statistical analysis part presents the results on socio-economic characteristics or background of tourists and in the second part findings are presented according to the objectives of the study.

Chapter-6 relates to suggestions and policy implications of the present research work, which are drawn on the basis of information collected from tourists of the national park. It is followed by the conclusion part of the study.