CHAPTER VII
# CHAPTER VII

## PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT OF ECOTOURISM

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CHAPTER VII

PLANNING FOR DEVELOPMENT OF ECOTOURISM

7.0 General:

Western part of the Pune district has good tourism potential as compared to any district in the Maharashtra. The present famous tourist places and under utilised tourist places are discussed in the second chapter. The socio-economic study in the third chapter revealed that socio-economically people of the study area are backward due to geographical condition, lack of commitment and will of the government official, politician and traditional attitude of the local people. The fourth and fifth chapter have evaluated present nature of tourism in the study region. The focus has been kept on role of stakeholders in tourism and their efforts and perspective about environmental management, conservation of environment, promotion of culture and well being of the local people as objectives of the eco-tourism. The diversification of tourists and development of potentials area has been understood with the study of travel circuits and views, strengths and weakness of local community of the potential area with perspective of tourism development in the sixth chapter. Hence, with the understanding of problems and potential of tourism, strength and weakness of the local people and role of all concerned stakeholders, the present chapter proposes to suggest planning strategy for sustainable development of eco-tourism in the study region. This would be useful to prepare rational guideline for eco-tourism development within the study region and outside as well.

7.1 Planning notion

Development of tourism with maintaining harmony of the area and well being of local people are the notion of the suggested planning strategy. Altman (1992) has stated that “For local people, developing sustainable tourism requires a balance between cultural and environmental considerations, matched, to a lesser extent, by economic success”. It has been noticed in the study that some of the tourist places are flooded all the time of year. The mass tourism creates environmental problems and cultural dilemma at the tourist places. After certain years such places looses their virgin nature. In addition, most of the beneficiaries from the tourism activity are people of outside region and local people remain deprived from the benefits of development. Thus, it is necessary to maintain the
harmony of the famous tourist places and promotion of potential tourist places with encouragement of local people in the tourism development process at all the level.

The present research work has revealed that immediate action is needed to cultivate the ethos of environmental management among the stakeholders for achieving the sustainable development of eco-tourism in the study area. Similarly researcher also has emphasized on participation of local people in all the levels i.e. decision, planning and implementation. Similarly, well being of the local people may be achieved if they will get employment opportunities with proper training and awareness programme. Simultaneously, focus on diversification of tourists and strengthening of local people of potential area has become essential.

Understanding with this scenario and complex nature of tourism sector, an integrated planning strategy may be useful to develop eco-tourism in the study area. Numbers of central and state government departments are directly or indirectly related to the tourism. Similarly, various private business enterprises are also related to the tourism development. Therefore there is a need to adopt integrated approach, which involves all stakeholders along with government and non-government agencies for the development of ecotourism.

The present investigation attempts to design planning strategy in such way that it would consider the strength of related local people to resolve the problem of the area and effective use of local human resource in tourism development process. It may help to identify the tourist site specific situation and subsequently incorporating related stakeholders and development authorities. Therefore, the strength and constraint of the study area has to taken into account while suggesting various programmes.

7.2 Planning Strategy:

The understanding of strength, problems and potential of the study area and role of the various stakeholders in the tourism activity in the present study, a holistic approach has been adopted to design the planning strategy. According to Ferrario (1980), the economic success of ecotourism depends on the beauty of the natural area and the charisma of its wildlife and the ease with which wildlife is seen, accessibility of the area and the comfort of accommodation, and the quality of nature interpretation and other guided services. Mow forth and Munt (1998) have identified eight tools of sustainability. They are area protection, industry regulation, visitor management technique, environmental impact assessment, carrying capacity calculation, consultations, code of conduct and finally
sustainable indicators. The scholars have suggested that the long-term survival of ecotourism can be secured with the implementation of an "Ecotourism Ethic" which has three parts. First, stimulate an awareness of nature within the ecotourist, second, the maximization of economic benefits for local people with preservation of the environment and third, encouraging cultural sensitivity among visitors for better understanding about local cultures. Achieving sustainable development of ecotourism in the area, norms of EM and role of all the stakeholders have been suggested in the planning strategy.

Similarly, solution on the issues related to mass tourism has been dealt with perspective of diversification of tourist and development of potential areas with concept of nodal or lead village to achieve the objective of participation of local people and regional development in sustainable manner. It has also been understood that the sustainable utilisation of tourism potential has to take cognizance that tourism development must be there without causing irreversible damage to the natural environment.

The following section is dedicated to make suggestions for the improvement of ecotourism.

7.2.1 Participation of local people:

It has been expected that local community have to involve and lead to the overall economic development of the area. Initially it is essential to educate the local population about local environment and its importance through guidance and awareness.

Due to the creation of protected areas in forest traditional rights of the local people about collection of forest products and grazing have come to at stake. If conservation is to be succeeded, and the losses due to deprivation of traditional rights need to be compensated, it is necessary to develop a stake in the conservation of wildlife and their habitats by implementing participatory in ecotourism activities.

There is tremendous scope to get maximum economic benefit by providing services like various types of local food, handicraft, local cultural programme, guide, local travel, providing good accommodation at tourist location. This may be the additional income source to the locals as compared to present tourism business. The participation could make effective by providing financial strength, guidance and training about professional business and practices of EM.

It is difficult for an individual to run the services related to tourism activity because of variety of services and need of financial strength Share of local people as stakeholder in tourist activity may be possible only if require technical and financial
support is given. Local participation is often expensive to run, may generate expectations that far exceed eventual outcomes, and may create new conflicts as marginal groups become more articulate and elites are able to gain a greater slice of participatory benefits through their own networks (Zazueta1995). Thus, the strength of co-operative tradition and local co-operative organisation i.e. SHG, village panchayat and youth groups need to run the services on co-operative basis for equitable share. It will not only help to involve maximum number of local people but also more feasible to raise required finance through co-operative institutions. It will work with notion that ‘owned and managed by the community for the community’.

The effective community participation could be encouraged by promoting small tourism project rather than mega ones. The sustainability of the project depends upon the symbiosis of professional and environment friendly attitude of the local people. It could be cultivated through training programmes conducted in collaboration with complementary institutions and individuals. The customisation of the programme may be based on site specific characteristics. NGOs can play crucial role in strengthening local community groups for successful ecotourism ventures.

Planning for development of tourist place or an area should be based on the regional strength and initiatives of the people rather than intervention from outside the region. Therefore involvement of local people should encourage in the activities related to tourism development and sustainability of environment such as designing planning, decision and management of tourism related activities. The existing local body of local self government, co-operative institutions and essentially Gramsabha may be more effective to cherish this goal.

The study area has immense potential natural resources, if available human resources potential and our objectives are clearly defined and potential natural resources matched with human capabilities and implementation of appropriate policies of ecotourism development can be ensured to meet the challenge of mass tourism.

7.2.2 Role of government and policies.

Heeley (1981) has mentioned that the effectiveness of planning for tourism is likely to depend on the extent to which appropriate planning and management functions exist to guide and monitor its development and effects. Making the transition to sustainable tourism activity will require fundamental reorientation of the way that
government departments and representative trade organisations guide tourism development.

A policy for developing domestic tourism can simultaneously strengthen the tourism industry and bring more economic benefit to the society. In this regard government provide some subsidised or low interest loan and some tax concession on the activity.

Develop state specific ecotourism policies and strategies with involvement of key stakeholders. The policies must provide for regulations for development and access, fees structure and specify the roles.

The tourist places are facing the problem of mass tourism and the rich natural resource, essential to be saved from pollution created by transportation. For that, restrictions on vehicle at certain point as implemented at Matheran, a tourist place near Mumbai and beyond that point transport facility make available which are reasonably run on fuel like LPG, CNG, BIODISEL or battery operated preferably owned by local people.

Necessary amendments in the law need to be made regarding revenues into park management, form and extent of construction of concerned services and their role in conservation activity and practices of EM and heavy fine on the breaking the laws. Government should provide essential cardinal principle of ecotourism development for all the stakeholders for effective planning and practices of ecotourism.

The effective achievement of the objective about participations of local communities and well being of local people should be defined by policy on share in employment and authority in planning and decision making.

Increasing number of tourists gives impetus to the process of economic development in the form of construction activity, development of infrastructure and service facilities. The result is that concrete forest replacing natural forest and tourist place also looses its importance as a tourist destination. McHugh (1996) has put forth the example about the success of Manyallaluk, it has derived from aboriginal input and control over tourism development. Tourists are restricted to the homestead area unless on a guided tour and further requested not to enter the community living area. On the basis of experience, the zoning of developmental area should be designed in terms of environmental, cultural and aesthetic norms and restriction on concrete density.

In the take off stage of tourism development, active participation of local population could be achieved through providing institutional and financial help to the local concern bodies and training programme about skills related to tourism activity under
programme of capacity building of local human resources for implementation of ecotourism. Government should have central and local monitoring bodies related to the effective use government efforts taken through various policies and programme.

Formulation of rules and norms regarding practices of environmental management and their implementation is urgent need for development of ecotourism. Government has to provide a information centre at various levels which could help to give appropriate information about the place and also try to create basic facilities at the tourist place either from government bodies (MTDC) or encouraging local people on line of bread and breakfast scheme of Maharashtra Government.

Security and safety of the tourists are important aspects, as most of the potential tourist places have remote location. Thus, increasing police personnel and encouraging local by creating Gram Surksha Dal as security force with the help of local people.

Private enterprise should also promote ecotourism and observe the regulations. Non governmental organisations should be involved in the promotion and regulation of ecotourism.

There are number of constitutional provisions about strengthen principles of ecotourism, such as participation of local people with help of fundamental rights, development activities with directive principle of state policy and responsible tourist and stakeholders by fundamental duties. These entire safeguards have to be enforced while designing and implementing the project of ecotourism.

7.2.3 Diversification of tourist:

Some tourist places are overcrowded in most part of the year. It has created environmental and cultural issues at the places i.e. Lonawala, Panshet.

For finding any solution on the problems of mass tourism and promotion of development of ecotourism, diversification of tourists is essential. Following ways have been suggested for the diversification of tourist.

Wherever possible, restrict tourist number and develop overcrowded tourist places on the line of ecotourism to reduce visitors’ pressure in popular destinations.

The efforts should be taken for diversification of tourists towards underutilised potential tourist places and contiguous villages with ecotourism perspective.

Tourists trend in the study region has shown that the maximum tourist are one day visitor and have higher frequency of visit at few certain tourist destination. To increase their time duration and diversification of tourist with travel-circuit approach, which will helps in development of area and employment generation.
It is necessary to emphasise on development of potential alternative tourist spots based on comprehensive survey about various concern environmental and cultural aspects with the help of government, private investment and local people.

Rural tourism with urban recreation amenities should be discouraged. Birds and wild animal viewing, forest trek, adventure, participation in local cultural programme, fairs and festivals should be encouraged.

Potential tourist places have problems of accessibility, unavailability of infrastructure development like road, accommodation and availability of water, power, and health services. Therefore development of alternative tourist places requires government and private investment with proper coordination between various concern departments along with participation of local people.

7.2.4 Promotion of culture

Government should provide a platform for artisan, street performer musician and dancer from the region, to show their talent and encouragement and preservation of ethnicity. Information about local culture, history, tradition of the tourist places need to be published and disseminate through concerned stakeholder as their capacity. On the line of Rajgad fort, exhibition about the important feature of tourist places has to be encouraged with the help of stakeholders and its maintenance could be covered from the visitors through entry fee and managed by local people.

Handicraft production has noticed insignificant in the study area. With the help of NGOs and experts, it is necessary to revive and encourage locals to produce it commercially. Its publicity and sale have to be done with the help government support and stakeholders like hotel owner and tour operator. Hotel, accommodation services should provide local food and sense of ethnicity through traditional architecture, wherever possible use of local material in construction and displaying the images related to local culture.

Annual fair of the villages has a good occasion to attract tourist and introduce them about local culture through local drama Tamasha, religious songs like Bharud, Bajan, Kirtan. Similarly, there are folk stories, folk songs, which are unknown to the outsider. Such local culture features are essential to promote with all possible efforts.

The study region is also culturally rich. It has ancient and modern temples, historical heritage such as forts and caves sites, which are well known for its historical monuments,
architectural design and their religious faith. Its information essential to publish in books and display on board at the concern tourist places to aware visitors.

7.2.5 Practices of conservations:

Tourism must be correlated to the resources that are available and this needs to be looked into carefully. Therefore urgent need to probe into the relationship between man-environment in tourist area to controlled tourist flow with the actual carrying capacity.

Restoration of forest is important for sustainability of the tourist place, which requires government as well as private involvement. Forest department should increase staff to ensure proper implementation of laws and protection of forests. Simultaneously establishment of “forest security force” on the line of “Gram Suraksha Dal” (village security force) by recruiting local people in some honorarium with certain accountability of vigilance on cattle grazing, tree falling, forest firing in reserved and protected forest.

Traditional ideas like “Deorai” (sacred forest), should be encouraged. It may be suggested here that some attractive schemes to satisfy need fuel wood and afforestation for creation of a biosphere reserve to conserve and to restore the ecological order should be designed. It may be based on the principles of joint forest management (JMF). Crop-combination with tree farming may be promoted. Additionally grazing activity should not be allowed specifically on hilly slope and in protected or restricted forest area. All available common lands in villages should be put under multipurpose tree planting, restore grasslands for fodder and energy plantation. This would enhance the beauty of the landscapes. So that it will check further environmental deterioration of barren lands and restore earlier luxurious green cover in the area that attract tourist with maintaining ecological balance. This activity could be encouraged with participation local people to generate employment.

A separate wing of tourism promoting conservation may be set as, “Tourism Conservation Cell” should be opened in the study area. It should promote understanding and involve partnerships between stakeholders, which could include government, non-government organization, industry, scientists and locals. It should promote moral and ethical responsibilities and behaviour towards natural and cultural environment, by all stakeholders.

Apart from that reduce pressure on natural resources by introducing alternative energy sources such as solar, wind etc. and educate masses about it. Use of traditional fuel (Bio mass) should be control because increasing population is creating pressure on
surrounding environment. Encourage use of kerosene and L.P.G. in the hotels instead of wood from forest.

7.2.6 Resource management:

Conservation is equally, some times, more important than promotion of tourism. The cost of conservation should be met from tourism receipts. How to accomplish this is a matter that can be decided by the government after consulting with the stakeholders (Vijayakumar, 2003). Conservation of environment along with promotion of tourism can be succeeded, if tourist places and protected areas developed on economic grounds, such as revenue generated from the visitors. The study of Barrett (1995) has advocated taxation on the visitors on the basis of observation that the burden on rural roads is generated by urban based motorists; at least 55 percent of recent rural road traffic growth has been leisure related. The revenue may be generated at the local level through taxation on local economic activities, parking and entry fee according to polluters pay principle (PPP). This revenue is urgently needed to strengthen base for conservation activity, spent on infrastructure development and maintenance and sustainable development of ecotourism.

7.2.7 Role of private and NGOs:

It has been mentioned that establishment of economic activity initially need investment and professional attitude and technical know how. Thus, it is essential to create an enabling policy environment to encourage the private sector to take greater initiatives in ecotourism. Implementation of ecotourism projects through private sector sponsorship, bilateral funding in collaboration with local organizations has to be encouraged. Private sectors will sponsorship through 50% funding and technical support and local organizations 50% funding and total management.

Non-governmental organisations should be involved in the promotion and regulation of ecotourism. With the help of NGOs and other voluntary organisations, steps may be taken to create tourism awareness programme. It is also highly imperative to educate all stakeholders in tourism about the need for promoting sustainable tourism.

Ecotourism can succeed in study region, when along with local people, concerned government officials, field related NGOs and conservation bias experts and tour operator should be involved in all stages of planning and implementation in promotion of ecotourism.
7.2.8 Promotion of tourist places:

Along with tourist place general information, emphasis on information regarding local environment, rare plants and animals, important cultural features of the place need to be fully publicised and distributed through all possible stakeholders to create environmental and socio-cultural awareness between the local people and outsiders for the restoration of the habitat. It has been revealed that maximum of tourists expenditure is on transport. Thus, increase of expenditure on food, handicraft, guide and others aspects has to be focused to direct inflow of money to the local people.

Marketing of the tourist place under proper norms of image building as an ecotourism destination with international standards has to be promoted with the help of possible means of media. The sufficient awareness about the fragility of the local ecology has to be develop with awareness campaign to highlight economic and conservation benefits of ecotourism.

7.2.9 Infrastructure development:

Concentrated and focused development is always cost-effective and fruitful than dispersed and haphazard development. Thus, infrastructure development is very essential for development of tourism in potential areas, which have potential tourist destinations in the identified tourist circuits.

The number of places, famous for wild life viewing, at such destination construction of well-built observation tower essential for wild life viewing at suitable place. There is a need to prepare maps indicating places of ecotourism in the study region and appropriate literature highlighting about the places with instruction board at proper places.

The biggest obstacle in the way of ecotourism has been lack of good roads, public toilet and other basic facilities. It is necessary to develop basic minimum facilities, line waysides convenience, clean modern bathrooms and toilets and safe drinking water, good quality roads and it also require proper maintenance. Explore ways to improve coordination and reduce conflicts between different government agencies in order to have better enforcement and development.
7.2.10 Responsible tourists:

Graefe et al. (1990) suggested that visitor management may be direct (regulate or restrict visitor activities) or indirect (influence visitor behaviour). Limiting use is only one of a number of strategies. Tourists must be involved in conservation efforts. Encouraging sensitivity among visitors is necessary to better understand local environment and cultures. There are sophisticated ways such as legal, fiscal, institutional and technological methods for environment concerns. The fundamental rethinking is necessary to generated among people about their attitudes and values towards nature through environmental education and environmental awareness programme.

There should be punishment and awareness about avoid trampling, do not pick plants or flowers, not to disturb wildlife nor its habitat.

Use kerosene or bottled gas for cooking, heating and lightning; avoid using fuel-wood.

Wherever possible use biodegradable carrying material and try to avoid plastic.

Respect the sanctity of holy places and historical sites with good behaviour.

Educate tourists about the ecology, customs, manners, and culture of the visiting places and support local conservation programs.

The knowledge of local socio-cultural traditions and their importance must be included in school curriculum to cultivate respect about the heritage.

7.2.11 Hotel Owner:

All service providers of various tourist facilities and their operator and employees essential to have sufficient information and training regarding their service matter including local environmental and cultural issues.

Use of new environmental friendly technology that is designed to reduce pollution and increase use of non-conventional energy, make it obligatory wherever is possible in accommodation tourism related activity such as Hotel, accommodation, transport and other service providers.

Introduce a green rating system for the tourism industry.

Invest in capacity growth of stakeholders through training programmes and skill building of key personnel including local communities. Promotion of local people as owner by providing financial and capital support and employment in the related service sector through appropriate professional training to the local people is essential.
It should be obligatory to the stakeholders to have clear aims and objectives and programme with respect to principle of ecotourism to carry their services in ecologically sensitive areas.

The stakeholders have to promote local culture by displaying wall piece of local importance, organising the function based on folk song, folk drama.

7.2.12 Tour Operator:

Making the transition to sustainable tourism activity will require fundamental re-orientation of the way that tourism companies do business.

Tour operator and employees essential to have sufficient information and training regarding their service matter including local environmental and cultural issues.

Tourism companies or tour operator can set up sustainable tourism as a core issues programme of their management functions. The basis of programme must be reduce non-biodegradable waste outputs, efficient use of available energy and water, minimise solid and water waste output, environmental friendly products and awareness of tourist about environmental and cultural background of the tourist place for responsible travel.

Tour operators should be encouraged to share their profit with local people by taking their help in various services like guide, accommodation, local food, buying local forest collected foods and handicrafts. When pioneering companies take such measures and they realise it is beneficial for business as well as contributes to conserving the environment and local culture, many more will pursue the same path.

Australia has an accreditation system to rate tour operators and resorts on the basis of their 'green-ness, termed "Green Evaluation," this system can hopefully be used to monitor operators, based on their commitment to sound conservation and sustainability.

Making the transition to sustainable tourism activity will require fundamental re-orientation of the way that government departments and representative trade organisations guide tourism development and the way tourism companies do business.

Economic development is the prince priority of a nation, so it should be correlated with the parallel need to conserve the environment of natural resources. On the same line, tourism is no doubt essential but tourism, economic development and environment have to go hand in hand and must develop a symbiotic relationship, which should not affect our ecosystem. The type and scale of tourism development should be compatible with the environment and socio-cultural characteristics of the local community. In the planned
strategy focus has been kept on overall area development strategy guided by an integrated landuse plan and associated with commensurate expansion of public services.

7.2.13 Practices of EM:

It is necessary to develop a record regarding air, water and solid pollution at particular interval of time as indicated in the guideline of EM. This is responsibility of concerned stakeholders and may couple with schools or colleges.

It is proved beyond doubt that segregation of garbage is prerequisite for garbage management. Such rule must be observed at tourists destinations villages involve in the activity. It is necessary to ensure that non-biodegradable garbage should be dispose off with scientific technique. Biodegradable garbage can be managed using effective microorganism.

EM guidelines have insisted conservation of energy in various ways by the hotel industry. It may be achieved by adopting two fold strategies, firstly, to use energy saving devices and secondly to use non conventional renewable source of energy systems (NRSE). For this, solar energy, wind energy and gobar gas (Bio gas) can be suggested as suitable system in the study area.

Environmental awareness is must for developing ecotourism. This can be develop by propaganda campaign. It is also necessary to policy instruments and economic instruments. So that environmental awareness can be converted in to economic benefits i.e. policy instruments like supply of tap water to those, which use energy saving devices and alternative source of system. The economic instrument in the form of tax benefit for plantation programme, soil conservation etc.

It is mandatory to raise the standard of ecotourism to international status. This is generally over looked by the stakeholders. It is necessary to change the attitude casual to serious regarding disaster management at the outset it is necessary that the network of electricity supply should be upgraded. The tourist places are near the natural ecosystem and hence they are prone to accident like snake bites and attack by wild animals. For this, proper medical aid must be provided at sight supported by efficient system of transport for hospitalisation. Tourist should be made aware about possible disaster before wandering in the forest.
7.2.14 Self evaluation:

It has been promoted through various schemes like ‘Global Reporting Initiative’, ISO 14001, Environmental management system etc. it may be suggested here that on such line a mode of self evaluation can be implemented in the region. The stake holder should make compulsory to give self evaluation report in check and counter checks can be designed from time to time. A simple self evaluation report may be prepared by stakeholder has been given.

- How much energy consumed per month?
- Do you segregate garbage? In how many types?
- How much amount of garbage created per type per day?
- Do you keep or sale only biodegradable products?
- Have you installed fire fighting equipments?
- Do you perform any social responsibility in near by villages?

This will help to calculate per capita consumption of resources and extra efforts apart from business practices for environmental and cultural harmony.

7.3 Résumé:

With the understanding of problems and potential of tourism, strength and weakness of the local people and role of all concerned stakeholders, in the tourism activity. While suggesting planning strategy priority has been given to the conservation of resources, well being of local people diversification of tourist and development of potential areas. It is also suggested that while implementing the development programme emphasis has been given on participatory approach and thus, strength of local people such as traditional knowledge, good traditions suggested to promote with strengthen the local government institutions. Similarly proper policy formulation, awareness among all stakeholders, and promotion of tourist places and proper training to the stakeholders about practices of EM have essentially emphasised. Government strength and support is essential to promote positive aspect of ecotourism and regulate problem of mass tourism.
Efforts of forest department and others for management of forest resources

Plate No.7.13 Garden, Nursery & awareness
Plate No.7.14 Plantation of medicinal plants

Plate No.7.15 Restoration of forest
Plate No.7.16 Handicraft sale office

Plate No.7.17 Shed for organic manure
Plate No.7.18 Exhibition on forest resources