Tourism has been recognized as one of the fastest growing service industries in the world. Its economic contribution is realized in the form of tourism receipts, contribution to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), its ability to create jobs and also contribution to the growth of adjunct sectors. Tourism’s economic influence had motivated many developing countries to draw up and implement ambitious projects for tourism development and allocate funds for maintenance of pilgrimage centres, heritage sites and chains of tourism attractions and destinations.

While as a result of these initiatives, tourist inflows to developing countries have increased manifold in recent decades, these also have brought in their trains a host of issues and problems linked particularly to sustainability of tourism growth. Realizing the need for sustainable tourism development, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) published its sustainable tourism guidelines in 1996 to promote sustainable tourism practices all over the world. In the guidelines, the issues linked to sustainability of tourism growth in ecologically fragile regions were particularly highlighted.

Against the above backdrop, the present study, “Tourism Industry in Sikkim: Study of Trends and Patterns of Growth during the period 1991-2007” makes an attempt to examine the trends and pattern of growth of the tourism industry in the tiny Himalayan state of Sikkim particularly from the perspective of sustainability of tourism growth.

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For any error that remains, I stand personally responsible.

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Supriya Dam
(Supriya Dam)