Facilitating Sustainable Mountain Tourism

Volume 1: Resource Book

Editors
Ester Kruk, John Hummel, and Kamal Banskota

ICIMOD
SNV
Connecting People's Capacities
NTB

About the Organisations

International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) is an independent regional knowledge, learning and enabling centre serving the eight regional member countries of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan – and the global mountain community. Founded in 1983, ICIMOD is based in Kathmandu, Nepal, and brings together a partnership of regional member countries, partner institutions, and donors with a commitment for development action to secure a better future for the people and environment of the Hindu Kush-Himalayas. ICIMOD's activities are supported by its core programme donors: the Governments of Austria, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, Norway, Switzerland, and its regional member countries, along with programme co-financing donors. The primary objective of the Centre is to promote the development of an economically and environmentally sound mountain ecosystem and to improve the living standards of mountain populations.

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Contents

Foreword
Acknowledgements
Acronyms and Abbreviations

Part 1: Introduction

Chapter 1: Introducing this Resource Book **3**

Introduction and Background of the Resource Book 3
Guiding Principle of the Resource Book 4
Resource Book Flow 5
Regional and Mountain Perspective 5
Structure and Overview of the Resource Book 6
Intended Use of the Resource Book 6

Chapter 2: Project Cycle Facilitation **7**

Introduction: Project Cycle Facilitation in Sustainable Mountain Tourism 7
A Framework for Tourism Project Cycle Facilitation 8

Part 2: Overview of Concepts

Chapter 3: Overview of Tourism **19**

Introduction: Concepts and Definitions of Tourism 19
Tourism: Dynamism and Growth 21
Overview of International Tourism 22
Tourist Arrivals in the South Asian Region 24
Tourism and the World Economy 25
Impacts of Tourism 26
Major Issues and Constraints 28

Chapter 4: Concepts and Principles of Sustainable Mountain Tourism **31**

Introduction: Sustainable Development and Mountain Tourism 31
Tourism Carrying Capacity and Limits of Acceptable Change 35
Pro-Poor Tourism (PPT) as a New Approach to Sustainable Tourism 41

Chapter 5: Sustainable Mountain Tourism Planning and Management **45**

Introduction: Imperatives of Mountain Tourism Planning 45
Components of a Tourism Plan 46
The Tourism Planning Process 48
Framework for Monitoring Sustainability of Mountain Tourism 53

Part 3: Overview of Approaches

Chapter 6: Participatory Planning and Organisation **57**

Introduction: The Importance of Participation in Sustainable Mountain Tourism 57
Participatory Approaches in Sustainable Mountain Tourism Development 59
Participatory Planning and Organisation Tools 66

Chapter 7: Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration **71**

Introduction: The Need for Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration 71
Multi-Stakeholder Processes in Sustainable Mountain Tourism 71
Lessons Learned in Tourism Multi-Stakeholder Collaborations 76

Chapter 8: Gender and Social Inclusion **83**

Introduction: Challenges for Women in Mountain Tourism 83
Concepts of Gender Mainstreaming and Social Inclusion in Tourism 85
Mainstreaming Gender and Social Inclusion in the Tourism Project Cycle 88
Monitoring and Evaluation in Sustainable Mountain Tourism 90

Chapter 9: Tourism Enterprise Development and Market Linkages **93**

Introduction: Enterprise Development in the Tourism Economy 93
Step-by-Step Guide to Sustainable Mountain Tourism Enterprise Development 94

Chapter 10: GIS for Planning and Development **107**

Introduction: GIS in Tourism 107
GIS for Sustainable Mountain Tourism Planning and Development 108
Potential GIS Applications in Mountain Tourism 109
The Future Role of GIS in Sustainable Mountain Tourism 112

Chapter 11: Monitoring and Evaluation **113**

Introduction: The Need for Monitoring and Evaluation 113
Definition of Monitoring and Evaluation 114
How to Monitor and Evaluate Tourism Projects and Programmes 115
Evaluation in Tourism Project Cycles 117
Monitoring Sustainable Mountain Tourism 118

Part 4: Issues and Trends in Institutional Development

Chapter 12: Public-Private Partnerships in Tourism Clusters **129**

Introduction: Stakeholders in Sustainable Mountain Tourism 129
Balance between Public and Private – Competitiveness is Key 140

Chapter 13: Analysis and Assessment Instruments **141**

Introduction: Analysis Process and Use of Instruments in Tourism 141
Analysis and Assessment Systems in Tourism 145
Instruments for Analysis and Assessment in Tourism 152

References

References **155**

Foreword

Tourism is the world's biggest industry, and it is still growing. According to the latest published statistics, the industry reached an all-time record in 2004 with 691 million international tourist arrivals worldwide, generating 523 billion US dollars per year. The annual growth rate in tourism is expected to be more than 4% over the next 20 years. The contribution of tourism to developing economies is impressive: tourism accounts for more than twice the amount of cash transfers from rich to poor countries in the form of government aid. The estimated market share for mountain areas is roughly 15-20% of the global tourism market, generating between 70 and 90 billion US dollars per year. Mountains are believed to be second in global popularity as tourist destinations after coastal regions. In spite of its indisputable magnetic pull for tourists, however, the share of the Himalayas in the global tourism market is relatively small. The need to address mountain concerns and the potential contribution that tourism can make to mountain communities are increasingly acknowledged. Agenda 21 of the UN Conference on Environment and Development stated that the fate of the mountains may affect more than half of the world's population and it recognised mountain tourism as an important component in sustainable mountain development and conservation. Remote mountain areas often have great appeal for tourists, and in many of these areas tourism may be one of the few viable options for sustainable mountain development.

The International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) began research into mountain tourism in the early 1990s, and gave it priority as a catalyst for development in the Himalayas. The knowledge gathered by ICIMOD over the last 15 years has been packaged into different programmes and training modules to build capacities in mountain tourism. Most of its training manuals are being used as reference materials by tourism organisations, knowledge institutions, policy makers, and development partners in the region, and are cited widely by researchers in mountain tourism throughout the world. Because of their experience in training for mountain tourism, ICIMOD and SNV (Netherlands Development Organisation) were approached by the Asian Development Bank to lead the human resource development component of its South Asian Subregional Economic Cooperation (SASEC) Tourism Development Plan on facilitating sustainable mountain tourism. ICIMOD and SNV, together with the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB), organised a week-long training on mountain tourism for representatives of national and state tourism organisations from Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, and Nepal, with additional participants from the Tibet Autonomous Region of China and Myanmar sponsored by ICIMOD to cover the wider Himalayan region. The importance of the topic and lack of resource materials led to requests to ICIMOD and SNV by trainees to publish the course materials in order to maximise their usefulness. The original course materials have been revised to produce a comprehensive, market-oriented resource document with illustrative case studies from the Himalayan region and are presented here as a Resource Book (Volume 1) and Toolkit (Volume 2).

ICIMOD believes that for tourism to be a vehicle for sustainable poverty reduction in the Himalayas, a pro-poor and inclusive tourism strategy is essential. A facilitation model that enables the participation of all relevant stakeholders will make this possible through participatory tourism approaches and pro-poor partnerships with the private sector supported by sound mountain tourism policy and planning frameworks. I trust that this Resource Book and Toolkit will provide the necessary practical concepts, tools, and approaches to develop a type of mountain tourism that will bring sustainable benefits to the mountain poor and marginalised and to conserve the breathtaking beauty of the Himalayan environment.

Andreas Schild
Director General, ICIMOD

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Just as the sustainable mountain tourism sector is a multi-faceted phenomenon that can only be a success if it embraces a wide variety of stakeholders, this Resource Book and Toolkit is the result of a collaborative effort of colleagues, partners and resource people who have all contributed their valuable time and inputs to the process.

First, we would like to thank the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for their trust in us to lead the human resource development component of the SASEC Tourism Development Plan on facilitating sustainable mountain tourism. Without their generous financial assistance to design, develop and conduct the initial training course, and to publish the books developed from them, these books would not have been possible. In particular, we would like to acknowledge the dedication and support of Lisa Choegyal (Tourism Resource Consultant), Elizabeth Nanda (Human Resources Consultant), and Snimer K. Sahni (former Senior Project Economist).

Second, we would like to thank the Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) for their assistance in helping us to organise the training course. Their ceaseless efforts in soliciting nominations from the participating countries, sending out invitations to the NTOs from the five SASEC countries (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka) and helping us with the international logistical arrangements, is very much appreciated. In particular, we would like to praise the support of Lila B. Baniya (Manager Sustainable Tourism Development) and Uday Bhattarai (Assistant Manager Tourism Products and Resources).

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABTO	Association of Bhutanese Tour Operators
ACA	Annapurna Conservation Area
ADB	Asian Development Bank
APPA	appreciative participatory planning and action
CBO	community-based organisation
CBT	community-based tourism
CO	community organisation
CREST	Centre for Resources and Environmental Studies
DDC	district development committee
DFID	Department of International Development
DNPWC	Department of National Parks and Wildlife Conservation
DoT	Department of Tourism
ESS	enterprise support services
FG	functional group
FIT	free independent traveller
GDP	gross domestic product
GIS	geographic information system
ICIMOD	International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development
IDOS	institutional development and organisational strengthening
INGO	international non-government organisation
IOM	integrated organisation model
IUCN	The World Conservation Union
LFA	logical framework approach
MAD	market analysis and development
MDF	Management for Development Foundation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
M & E	monitoring and evaluation
MoCTCA	Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MSE	micro and small enterprise
MSP	multi-stakeholder process
NGO	non-government organisation
NTA	National Tourism Administration
NTB	Nepal Tourism Board
NTNC	National Trust for Nature Conservation
NTO	national tourism organisation
PDR	People's Democratic Republic
PLA	participatory learning and action
PMU	programme management unit
PPST	pro-poor sustainable tourism
PPT	pro-poor tourism
PRA	participatory rural/rapid appraisals
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RAAKS	rapid (or relaxed) appraisal of agricultural knowledge systems
SARS	severe acute respiratory syndrome
SASEC	South Asian Subregional Economic Cooperation
SM	social mobilisation

SNV	Netherlands Development Organisation
STDC	sustainable tourism development committee
STDS	sustainable tourism development section
STN	Sustainable Tourism Network
STO	state tourism organisation
SWOT	strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats
TMI	The Mountain Institute
TRPAP	Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Programme
TWG	Tourism Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organisation
US	United States
USD	US dollar
VDC	village development committee
VICE	visitors, industry, community, and environment