

Chapter 4

The Future of World Tourism: The Role of World Bodies


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ABSTRACT

The chapter covers the role of leading international organisations which are working to transform tourism industry into sustainable tourism. The organisations are working with collaboration with local Governments, NGOs, Hotel industry, and Tourism operators to promote ecotourism in deprived regions of the world. The fundamental objectives of these organisations are to save nature through the protection of natural resources. Create awareness about ecotourism and giving knowledge regarding sustainable traveling are main purposes of these organisations. The organisations have aims to improve living standard of local communities through ecotourism.

ECOTOURISM

Ecotourism is a particular type of tourism based on nature that provides pleasure and satisfaction to tourists through the experience of natural destinations and promotes

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the welfare of the local community (Xu et al., 2023; Ceballos-Lascurain, 1992; Higgins, 1996). Ecotourism involves travelling to less prominent regions to save natural resources, gain knowledge about the culture and biodiversity, and improve local communities living conditions (Khanra et al., 2021). The investigation regarding ecotourism started in 1980 when the term was first used in academic literature (Xu et al., 2023). The year 2002 was celebrated as the International Year of Ecotourism (IYE) as declared by the United Nations. In the same year, the Journal of Ecotourism was also established as a professional journal regarding ecotourism. The concept of ecotourism has become prominent over time as researchers and academicians focused on ecology and environmental sustainability (CREST, 2019).

Sustainable tourism is facing many challenges, like environmental protection, economic instability, and social issues due to less public awareness regarding ecotourism (Xu et al., 2023). One of the significant issues is the high rate of tourists having less awareness about ecotourism, which severely affects natural resources, local culture and community, and the economy of the destinations. Additionally, infrastructure construction in order to facilitate tourists and meet their prestigious needs has become a significant issue in the current era (Ahmad et al., 2018; Xu et al., 2020; Shasha et al., 2020; Chiu et al., 2014). Such challenges and contradictions should be tackled to develop sustainable tourism in deprived destinations (Xu et al., 2023), as climate change and other natural resources are severely affected by such factors and are considered significant hurdles in improving ecotourism (CREST, 2020). To resolve these challenges and difficulties, reconsidering the plans to develop ecotourism in the future will be worthwhile. Governments, international NGOs, and local bodies can play a vital role in this regard. Thus, future research should be focused in exploring the role of international organizations, governments and local bodies in formulating appropriate management policies in order to preserve the natural resources and ecological environment to promote a sustainable tourism industry and to reduce the poverty of the local communities (Xu et al., 2023).

Long-term sustainable development is the fundamental concern of ecotourism (Whitelaw et al., 2014), along with conservation of natural resources, development of economic income and local infrastructure, enhancing local participation, improving education, providing social benefits, boosting rural economies, and alleviating poverty in underdeveloped and developing economies (Linsheng & Limin, 2017; Snyman, 2017; Ardoin et al., 2015; Oladeji et al., 2022; Coria & Calfucura, 2012; Ross & Wall, 1999). Thus, it is worthwhile to explore the role of world bodies in promoting ecotourism regarding sustainability, conservation of natural resources, and welfare of local communities. The governments of almost all countries are collaborating with different international organizations and regional bodies to promote ecotourism in developed and developing countries. The fundamental purpose of all these struggles is to reduce poverty and the world's safe natural resources and climate.

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