

Ecotourism

The Motive and The Means for
Conservation of Wildlife

Tigers in Sikkim

- ◈ Takchang (Nepali: ताकछाङ) village near Pakyong in East Sikkim. The word tak means "tiger" and tshong means "house", translating to "House of a Tiger". (Wikipedia)
- ◈ Pugmarks of a Royal Bengal Tiger have been found in the snow at an altitude of 10,000 feet in the Himalayas near Jeleppla in eastern Sikkim (Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary) after a gap of nearly 18 years. (April 02, 2009, Midday).

Why Preserve Dangerous Animals?

- ◆ Life on earth impossible without trees, birds and insects. No human intervention can replace them.
- ◆ Tigers, lions, elephants, rhinos and all the big mammals are not indispensable: Humans can take over their ecological jobs (eating other animals and vegetation) and can profit from it too.
- ◆ There is a huge cost to their preservation, especially for remote communities, both in terms of the suffering caused by animals, as well as in terms of their traditional resources being snatched away for wildlife.

Why Preserve Dangerous Animals?

- ◆ Moral, religious or ecological arguments are not enough to ensure the survival of wild animals in the face of the inherent conflict between humans and animals.
- ◆ All big animals are dangerous and harmful alive but valuable dead (they can be consumed or sold)
- ◆ Large mammals have been wiped out of most habitats due to this conflict (and greed) and have no future unless this relationship is reversed.
- ◆ Wildlife Tourism is the only way to change human wildlife conflict into symbiosis.

Who Wants Wild Animals?

- ◆ Those who have nothing to lose (urban people, tourists, moralists).
- ◆ Those whose jobs and businesses depend on wild animals (writers, film makers, foresters, conservationists).
- ◆ Poachers and other consumers.
- ◆ Many NGOs would lose their reason to exist if wildlife prospers.

Who Wants Wild Animals?

- ◆ Rural communities may tolerate wild animals but would be happy without them.
- ◆ All this can change if wildlife also creates jobs and businesses, especially for its victims.
- ◆ Wildlife Tourism can make that happen.

Tourism The Motive for Conservation: The Yellowstone National Park

The 1872 Act, establishing the Yellowstone National Park, the first national park known to the modern world, describes the park as “---the tract of land ----- lying near the headwaters of the Yellowstone river ----- is hereby reserved and withdrawn from settlement, occupancy or sale ----- and dedicated and set apart as *a public park or pleasuring-ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people --*“.

Tourism the Motive for Conservation: Yosemite National Park

“Yosemite Land Grant” 1864, to the State of California, by the President, was made “upon the express conditions that the premises shall be held for public use, resort, and recreation [and] shall be inalienable for all time.”

Tourism the Motive for Conservation: Australia

15 protected areas in Australia, such as Barron Grounds Nature Reserve (NSW), Montague Island Nature Reserve (NSW), Fogg Dam Conservation Reserve (NT) etc. have been created for attracting tourism for its economic benefits.

Tourism the Means and Motive for Conservation:

(Higginbottom Report)

- ◆ “In a survey of 27 private game reserves in the province of KwaZulu-Natal, 48% of managers said that if they had not had (wildlife) tourism available as an alternative commercial option, they would have continued to farm cattle.
- ◆ Nature tourism was responsible for reintroduction of popular game viewing species such as lion, cheetah, elephant and buffalo; a wider distribution of other animal species; and an increase in 'connectivity' of wildlife habitats across the broader landscape.
- ◆ tourism) doubled between 1972 and 1996, motivating a trend toward conversion of private land from livestock to wildlife (Richardson 1998).
- ◆ In Europe, Latin America and North America, there are large private estates, including areas of conservation significance, that effectively operate as private tourism ventures.

Tourism the Means of Conservation:

The population of the highly endangered mountain gorilla, in the Virunga massif, spread across Rwanda, Uganda and Congo, has grown from 380 to 480 (2010), mainly due to the 'positive effect of gorilla tourism'. Tourists pay \$ 1500 for an hour. 17% increase in overall numbers between 1989 and 2003; increase was greatest in gorilla groups habituated for tourism or for research.

2018 Estimate: 1000

Tourism the Means of Conservation:

- ◆ **Península Valdés in Argentina** is the nursery ground for one of the largest remaining populations of southern right whales. This population has been studied since 1970 and now registers an annual growth of 7%.
- ◆ In 1991, around 17,400 people participated in boat-based whale watching, 96,400 passengers went on whale-watch tours at Península Valdés in 2004.

Wild animals only in PAs, Why?

- ◆ Forest Departments unable to protect wild animals in all forests.
- ◆ Even within national parks, tourism zones have highest wildlife densities.

Tourism the Means of Conservation

- ◆ MP spends all its tourism revenues on PA management.
- ◆ MP got Rs. 459.57 million in 2011-12 from GoI and NTCA. Earnings from tourism also rose to a significant sum of approximately Rs. 200 million in 2011-12.
- ◆ Bandhavgarh tiger reserve earned \$1.2 million in tourist revenue and almost the same amount from government sources.
- ◆ Reintroduction of Tigers in Panna, Gaur in Bandhavgarh and Blackbuck in Kanha, Swamp Deer in Satpura, all financed by tourism revenues.
- ◆ Obviously, without tourism revenues, PAs in MP would have been in a far worse condition.

WHERE TOURISM SAVED NATURE:

- MOUNTAIN AREA CONSERVANCY PROJECT (MACP), **PAKISTAN**: MARKHOR AND URIAL GREW FROM <200 (BOTH) TO 1684+1782 SINCE THE BEGINNING OF COMMUNITY BASED TOURIST (SPORT) HUNTING SINCE 1989.
- COMMUNITY BASED NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (CBNRM), **NAMIBIA**: ORYX, KUDU, WILDEBEEST, ELEPHANT, HARTEBEEST AND OSTRICH POPULATIONS ROSE FROM 100, 225, 150, 250, 10, 150 IN 1994 TO 1200, 1500, 1000, 800, 250, AND 400, RESPECTIVELY, IN 2004, IN NYAE NYAE CONSERVANCY.

How Tourism Saves Nature

- ◆ Ecotourism (Access to Wilderness) is a Demanded Public Service: Government Has to Meet the Demand.
- ◆ Ecotourism is an Economic Force (It creates wealth, jobs and businesses): **What Pays, Stays.**
- ◆ Ecotourism is the only Economic Activity Which Requires Preservation of Wilderness and Wildlife.

HOW TOURISM SAVES NATURE:

- ◆ Generates Resources for Conservation (e.g. nearly Rs. 30 cr. in MP)
- ◆ Creates Jobs for People Who May, Otherwise, Overuse Forests and Wild Animals for Making a Living. (60-70% Jobs for Locals).
- ◆ Makes People Willing to Tolerate Losses and Restrictions.
- ◆ Tourists Act as Ears and Eyes for Antipoaching.
- ◆ Tourists Deter Criminals.
- ◆ Generates Awareness About Conservation Issues.
- ◆ Builds Public Support for Conservation.
- ◆ Enhances Staff Self-Respect and Motivation.
- ◆ Tourism Zones are better Funded and Supervised.

Travel and Tourism the Most Powerful Economic Force on Earth

- ◆ In **2017**, Travel & Tourism's direct, indirect and induced impact accounted for: US\$8.3 trillion contribution to the **world's GDP**, 10.4% of **global GDP**. 313 million jobs, 1 in 10 jobs around the **world**. (WTTC)
- ◆ **Foreign Exchange Receipts by India**: USD 27.36 billion (2017)

TOURISM AND POVERTY ALLEVIATION

- ◆ PRINCIPAL EXPORT FOR 83% OF DEVELOPING COUNTRIES.
- ◆ 80% OF WORLD'S POOR LIVE IN 12 COUNTRIES, TOURISM IS A SIGNIFICANT AND GROWING IN 11 OF THEM.

HOW ECOTOURISM HELPS LOCALS:

- ◆ CREATION OF JOBS (LOW END?)
- ◆ NEW BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES.
- ◆ APPRECIATION OF PROPERTIES.
- ◆ RURAL DEVELOPMENT: ELECTRICITY, ROADS, SCHOOLS, POLICE STATIONS, TELEPHONES

CHALLENGES

HOW TO

- ◆ GENERATE AND DEMONSTRATE MORE AND VISIBLE **BENEFITS FOR LOCAL COMMUNITIES** (JOBS AND BUSINESSES).
- ◆ IMPROVE THE **IMAGE** OF WILDLIFE TOURISM. (LOCALS DISPLACED FOR OUTSIDERS' ENJOYMENT).
- ◆ **PROTECT** COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE, RESOURCES AND CULTURE.
- ◆ **REGULATE** AND **CONTROL** VOLUMES.
- ◆ MAKE TOURISM **RESPONSIBLE** AND **SUSTAINABLE**.

Wildlife and Tourism: Made For Each Other.

- ◈ Wildlife Survives Only Where Ecotourism Flourishes.
- ◈ Ecotourism Flourishes Where Wildlife Flourishes.
- ◈ Ecotourism Only Industry Which has Strong Stakes in Conservation.



THANK YOU

Ecotourism? What?

- *Responsible Tourism to Natural Areas that Conserves the Environment and improves the well being of Local Communities.*
- *Ecologically Sustainable Tourism.*
- Involves wildlife watching, trekking, nature trails, camping, bird watching, adventure sports etc.
- Minimum Impact on Natural Resources and local communities
- Generates Environmental and Cultural Awareness
- Financial Benefits for Conservation and Local Communities.

ECOTOURISM IS ABOUT

- Game Drives, Safari Drives, Canoe/Kayak Safari;
- Elephant Safari, Tiger Show (*Sher Darshan*);
- Trekking, Hiking, Nature Trails;
- Watching Animals/Birds from Hides at Water Holes, Feeding Sites;
- Camping;
- Angling;
- Hunting?
- Adventure Sports (Rappelling, Rock Climbing).

Ecotourism Desirables

- ◆ High Value, Low Volume
- ◆ Dispersed (Thinly Spread over Large Areas)
- ◆ Diversified (Multiple Activities – Game Drives, Walking, Cycling, Camping, Hides/Watch Towers)