

CHAPTER - I

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism 'A passport to peace' is official motto and the slogan raised all over the world, when the year 1967, was declared the international tourist year by United Nations at the International Union of office travel organization (Singh, 1990).

Tourism growth is one of the greatest success stages of our times. It may be the top global industry by the early 21st century. At present more than 500 billion U.S. Dollars world trade and 300 million persons engaged in this industry (Kandari, 2000). It provides high income and employment multipliers than any other trade or industry. Tata consultancy and services has made survey in India regarding these industries. It was observed that one employment in this industry creates 2.57 employments in the other related industries. Tourism has also multifarious, socio-cultural implications, social awareness, modernization of infrastructure, conservation of cultural and natural heritage, improvement in health and hygiene conditions and strengthening social integration. It is smoke less industry and can act as an agent to holistic development.

Tourism is the major economic activity which improves the quality of life of the residents. It is necessary to protect and flourish the resources on which tourism depends. It needs grass root level planning based on in-depth study of ecology of the region and socio-cultural

profile, which maintain resources and minimise the environmental damage.

1.2 TOURISM AND GEOGRAPHY:

Our earth is a unique planet in our solar system provides a platform for various activities of man. 'GOD'S' earth in all its fullness and beauty is for the people (Thomas Cook, 1860).

Geography studies earth and human activities on it under the two branches, the physical geography and human geography. Physical geography is concerned with the physical characteristics and processes of the atmosphere, biosphere, lithosphere and hydrosphere. While human geography is concerned with human activities and organization in so far these relate to the interaction of people with their physical, environmental and environment created by human beings and the consequences of these two branches.

In tourism geography these two branches intermingled with each other and provided the background to this industry. Thus it is known that the tourism industry consists of both physical factors and human activities.

Tourism is very much concerned with spatial conditions, the location of tourist area and the movements of people between place to place. Hence the geography has a foundation role to play in examining the spatial interplay of tourists demand and satisfaction (Robinson H. 1976). It has an important part to play in the reconciling of tourist activity

with their demands upon particular environment. It touches geography at many points that appropriates the study for geographers.

1.3 ECOLOGY AND TOURISM:

The term ecology is derived from the Greek word "OIKOS" meaning a place to live in. It is defined as "Ecology is the scientific study of the interrelationships between living organisms and the environment in which they live. It consists of biotic and abiotic environmental relationships. Biotic environment has physical variables that determine where the species can survive and reproduce. Each physical variable is continuous and every animal and plant species reproduce best along some parts of each physical continuum (Mishra, 1996). The biotic environment includes all the plants, animals and micro-organisms with which a particular species interacts in nature.

Ecological system which formed by the interaction of all chemical and physical factors and the environment in which they live, all being linked by the transfer of energy and materials, forming a biodiversity of the region.

The earth is a home to a rich and diverse array of living organisms whose genetic diversity and relationships with each other and with their physical environment constitute earth's biodiversity. This is the natural biological capital of the earth and this created one of the major sources of tourism today. But the adverse effect of human interference on biodiversity is increasing dramatically and threatening the very

foundation of sustainable development which compel to give thought to ecotourism. The proper and balanced use of physical factors and human activities is necessary to maintain ecology and hence concept of ecotourism emerged. In this concept it is expected that the balance of ecology and tourism should be maintained that is there should be optimum use of ecology.

According to eco tourism society (1998), eco tourism should be considered a segment of the longer nature tourism market. Eco tourism is a relatively new phenomenon in tourism. The central theme of ecotourism is travel, to natural areas with low impact, sustainable, environmental awareness in the tourist, provides direct financial benefits for conservation and travel that sustains the well being of local people (A. leep, 2002). According to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) publication, 1996, ecotourism has its roots in the environmental movement which originated in the western industrialized nations during the 1960's. The ecotourism hails as the new environmental paradigm". The ideology of conservation is embodied in ecotourism. Ecotourism uses the promise of rural development to persuade underdeveloped countries to conserve their natural environment with western style tactics.

A recent study found that while tourism as a whole is growing at approximately 4 per cent, nature based tourism is increasing at annual rate between 10 and 30 per cent (Reign gold, 1993).

1.4 IMPORTANCE OF THE TOPIC:

India, the country of rich cultural and natural heritage is endowed with equally rich biodiversity. All the bio geography zones of India possesses their own peculiar floral and faunal wealth. Some of the world's richest and most diverse natural areas are included within the boundaries of the country.

Western ghats is identified as one of the eighteen global biodiversity hot spots (Brij Gopal Edt. 1997) with its unique ecological spectrum and has soloman beauty of its own. The region has the potential to develop as a wild life and nature tourist resorts. Since wild life tourism is a resource based recreation, conservation should be the top priority in it. Conservation and recreation, the two forms of landuse, often conflict, need to equate. Ecotourism is the probable remedy for sustainable wild life and nature tourism development.

The Koyana basin is located in the heart land of western ghats. It has become multifunctional region after hydroelectric project. The region equally rich in its biodiversity and consists of Mahabaleshwar hill station. The association of natural and cultural factors attribute the present ecosystem of the region. The region has also gifted with many natural, historical, religious developed places endear the tourism. But unfortunately, heavy rush of tourists created eco-imbalance in the region. Hence the topic is selected to evaluate region through ecotourism point

of view and assess to make balanced use of resources to maintain ecological balance and develop tourism activities.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The general objective of the study is to make an evaluation of Koyana basin through ecotourism point of view. However the following are the specific objectives of the study.

- i. To assess the geographical basis for tourism development.
- ii. To evaluate the present tourism attractions.
- iii. To investigate potential tourism attractions.
- iv. To prepare landuse map of the region for study of eco-tourism.
- v. To suggest a few recommendations for tourism development in the region.

1.6 METHODOLOGY AND COLLECTION OF DATA:

For the present work the data is collected from primary as well as secondary sources.

- i. The primary data is collected by visiting the places in Koyana basin.
- ii. The selected cultural festivals (Yatra) in the region were observed.
- iii. Photographs of the places for different seasons were taken for the study.
- iv. Interviews of a few personnels and residents were taken.

- v. Secondary data is collected from district census handbook, socio economic review of Satara district, Gazetteer of Satara district, topo-sheets of the region, Mahabaleshwar municipal Office tourist records, Satara transport office records, the books and journals.
- vi. Toposheets and quarter inch sheets were used to prepare base map of the region.
- vii. Statistical methods and cartographic techniques were used as per availability of data.

The collected information, finally tabulated, analysed with the help of maps, diagrams, photographs and conclusions have been drawn.

1.7 CHAPTER OUTLINE:

The present study "Tourism and ecology of the Koyana basin" is divided into five chapters.

The first chapter deals with introduction, significance of the study, methodology, source of data and chapter outline.

The second chapter is related with region, location, physiography, climate, drainage, flora and fauna, cultural setting and transport network.

The third chapter deals with ecological setup of the region. The ecology and tourism relationship within the region has shown in this chapter.

The fourth chapter deals with present and potential tourism attractions in the region.

The fifth chapter is the conclusions and suggestions.

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