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Identifying the Potential of Eco-tourism in Pathankot, India

Ar. Chetna Bathre and Ar. Naveena Verma

Architecture Block No.6, Lovely Professional University, Jalandhar-Delhi Grand Trunk Road, Phagwara 144 001, Punjab, India

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ABSTRACT

Ecotourism is a thriving industry that hosts diverse flora and fauna, providing visitors with a one-of-a-kind experience. It addresses two major issues in the region: the economy and the preservation of biodiversity. The study's goal is to identify potential areas for eco-tourism in Pathankot, which is located in Punjab at the meeting point of three states: Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, and Himachal Pradesh. Pathankot has a lot of potential for eco-tourism because of the abundance of scenic beauty present due to its geographical settings, which will not only put Pathankot on the tourism map but will also help the local community promote their culture and raise environmental awareness. Currently, the city is better known as a stopover location rather than a well-established tourist destination. This research study will aid in the exploration and identification of the various revenue-generating options available through eco-tourism. Personal interviews and secondary data analysis were used in the methodology. It is hoped that this study will aid in providing a different perspective towards Pathankot.

Key words: Eco-Tourism, Local community, Economy, Tourist destination.

Introduction

"Tourism is the act and process of spending time away from home in pursuit of recreation and pleasure, while making use of the commercial services." ("John K. Walton | Britannica" n.d.)

Tourism is an economic, cultural, and social phenomenon that involves people travelling to countries or places outside of their normal place of residence for leisure or business, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization. Visitors (tourists or excursionists; residents or non-residents) are referred to as tourists, and tourism refers to their activities, which include tourism expenditure. ("Glossary of Tourism Terms | UNWTO" n.d.) Travel has become an essential part

of daily life, and tourism is one of the world's fastest growing industries, contributing significantly to the global economy. India has a substantial travel and tourism industry. The government is also working effectively to raise investment in the tourism sector. It provides a diverse portfolio of niche tourism products, including cruises, adventure, medical, wellness, sports, MICE, eco-tourism, film, rural, and religious tourism. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council's Economic Impact 2019 report, India's Travel & Tourism GDP contribution increased by 4.9 percent, ranking third. Furthermore, the report emphasizes that between 2014-2019, India saw the greatest increase in job creation (6.36 million), ("Indian Tourism And Hospitality Industry Analysis Presentation | IBEF" n.d.) "Eco-

(¹Student of Masters of Architecture, ²Assistant Professor, LPU)

tourism is a type of tourism, which is defined as “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of local people, and involves interpretation and education” (“What Is Ecotourism - The International Ecotourism Society” n.d.) With so many options for recreational activities on the market, people want a one-of-a-kind experience. Visitors from urban areas, in particular, prefer to travel to pristine, tranquil, untouched natural areas away from the hustle and bustle of city life. The UNWTO has been involved in the field of eco-tourism since the early 1990s, working to develop a set of guidelines centered on the strong connection between protected areas and tourism, with responsibility of achieving that tourism contributes best possible way towards protected areas rather than weakening them. (“Ecotourism and Protected Areas | UNWTO” n.d.) One of the fastest growing industries is tourism industry. According to research humans possess innate tendency to seek connections with nature and other forms of life. (“E.O. Wilson Explains Why Parks and Nature Are Really Good for Your Brain - The Washington Post” n.d.) Eco-tourism is gaining popularity and showing annual growth rate of 5% globally and holds accounting for 6% of global GDP (“Defining Eco-Tourism” n.d.) India is the world’s most diverse country. In terms of eco-tourism, India is nature’s bounty, with a wide range of experiences available, including biological parks, mountains, lush green jungles, tea gardens, and wild sanctuaries. The aim and objective of the paper is to identify the potential eco-tourism sites by ascertaining the present status of tourism, perspective of locals and tourists on the eco-tourism planning and development and suggest additional measures for the development of ecotourism to make maximum benefit from the region’s geographical settings in order to achieve multiple objectives that will benefit the government, local community, environmental conservation, and public awareness, as well as present the region with a new identity from stopover to a major tourist destination.

Methodology

The current paper is purely a qualitative analysis based on the available primary and secondary data. Secondary data was gathered from available literature such as government reports, journals, newspaper articles, and various other websites. The primary

data, such as the tourism product’s strengths and weaknesses, is based on selective personal interviews conducted using a structured questionnaire.

India is the world’s most diverse country. In terms of eco-tourism, India is nature’s bounty, with a wide range of experiences available, including biological parks, mountains, lush green jungles, tea gardens, and wild sanctuaries.

Tourism in Punjab

While India is diverse in terms of what it has to offer tourists, some states comprise and embody all of the country’s richness, and Punjab is one of those unique states, that offers such richness. As the land of gurus, Punjab has a rich heritage of significant religious shrines, palaces, monuments and historical embodiments, wetlands, and much more to attract all types of tourists. It is also famous for its handicrafts, woodcrafts ornately designed in unique traditional designs and patterns, and needlework products, most of which are in high demand among domestic and foreign tourists. Punjab is primarily an agricultural state, with agriculture employing 70% of the workforce. Agriculture is the backbone of the Punjab economy, and it is thriving, and the state is known as the “Granary of India.” (Kaur 2017)

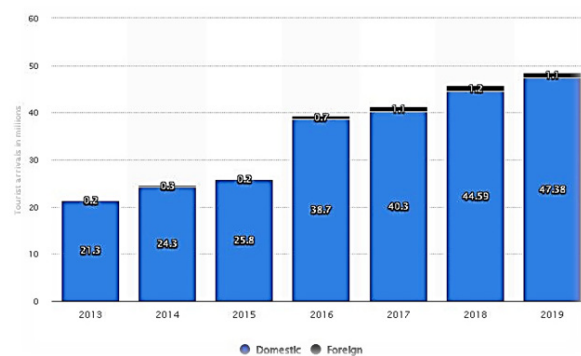


Fig. 1. Foreign and domestic tourist arrival in Punjab between 2013-2019 (“• India: Tourist Arrivals in Punjab by Type | Statista” n.d.)

Contribution of tourism to national economy

At the national level, the third TSA reveals that tourism contributes 2.70 percent of GDP in direct terms. When the indirect share is factored in, the total contribution equals 5.20 percent. In terms of employment, the direct share is 5.40 percent, with a total share of 12.38 percent including the indirect component. (December 2019)

Infrastructure

In terms of infrastructure facilities, Punjab is ranked first in India. Punjab’s road, rail, and air transportation networks, connectivity, bridge construction, and infrastructure facilities are among the best in the country. (“Industrial Development and Economic Growth In Punjab” n.d.)

Tourism based vision

Under the Tourism Policy 2018, Punjab envisions to increase tourist visits in the state from 25 million to 50 million over the next five years by building new infrastructure and improving existing ones. (“Industrial Development & Economic Growth In Punjab” n.d.)

Study Area

Pathankot is a small city in Punjab that was officially designated as a district by the Punjab government on July 27, 2011. Pathankot is last city on the highway connecting three states J & K, Himachal Pradesh and Punjab, due to its strategic location connecting three states it is frequently used as stop over before heading the journey towards mountains of J&K and other places of Himachal Pradesh like Dalhousie, Kangra, Dharamshala etc. (“District Pathankot, Government of Punjab | Meeting Point of Three States | India” n.d.)

Table 1. Demographics of Pathankot (“Pathankot City Population Census 2011-2022 | Punjab” n.d.)

City	Pathankot		
Government	Municipal Council		
Urban Agglomeration	Pathankot Metropolitan		
State	Punjab		
	As per 2011 census		
	Total	Male	Female
City Population	148,937	78,117	70,820
Literates	118533	636958	54575
Children (0-6)	14221	7871	6350
Average Literacy (%)	87.99	91.05	84.65

Demographics

Geology

Pathankot is bordered by the Ravi and Chakki rivers. It is situated in the Shivalik Hills’ foothills. The district’s two rivers are the Beas and the Ravi, as well as the Upper Bari Doab Canal system, which irrigates the majority of the district.(Welfare, n.d.)

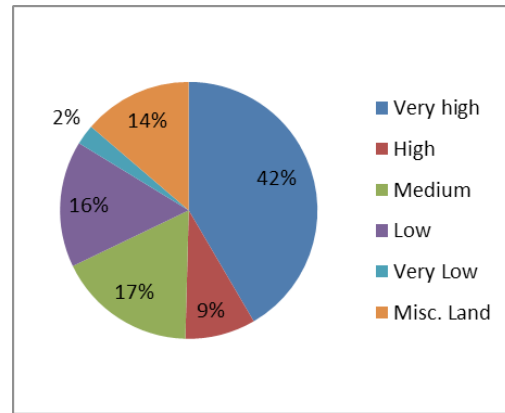


Fig. 2. Soil erosion risk category

Soil erosion risk categories of Pathankot

Topography

The tehsils of Dhar and Pathankot are located in the northern part of the Gurdaspur district, in the foothills of the Shivalik range. Elevations range from 381 m to 930m above mean sea level in the hilly tract that covers the north east segments of Pathankot and Dhar tehsils. (Welfare, n.d.)

General history of forest

The Shivaliks are an ecologically sensitive area, and the tract under evaluation is located in the heart of the Shivaliks. as a result of the destruction of undergrowth and forest lands in the Shivalik mountainous region, rains and the harmful action of highland torrents and steams have exposed and washed away surface soil from the high lands. The majority of the state’s land has been cleared for crop production, having left only about 5.76 percent for forests. Prior to the arrival of the British, the Shivalik forest was one of the thickest in the world. The forests were owned by 49 chieftains; when the British arrived, the local chieftains relinquished most of the land areas to the local landlords. As a result, the land was cleared of forests to create land for agriculture. Herbivores were quickly outnumbered. The majority of the carnivores lost their habitat, were killed by bullets, and thus dropped significantly in number. All of this resulted in major soil erosion and hill torrents, transforming cultivable fields into non-arable wastelands. As a result, the occupants lost their source of income (Forest and Closed 2022)

Flora and Fauna

The major vegetation types along the increasing

rainfall gradient area from west to east Subtropical Dry Evergreen Dodonea Scrub Pine subtropical, Mixed deciduous forest, dry Siwalik sal forest, and moist mixed deciduous forest. Upper canopy trees with thin or thick undergrowth of shrubs, grasses such as *Saccharum bengalense*. The Himalayan Yellow-Throated Marten, goral, black and several species of migrating birds in winter, freshwater catfish, striped dwarf catfish (*Mystus vittatus*), and spotted snakehead can all be found in the Shivalik range, which serves as a transition zone between the Himalayas and the Tarai plains (*Channa punctate*) (Welfare, n.d.)

Economy

Pathankot is a thriving city in comparison to other towns in Punjab. Pathankot is located in the foothills of Shivalik range. In this region stone crushing is primary source of income. Rivers Ravi, Beas and Chakki carry boulders from mountains and deposited on banks of river when they reach in plains leading to stone crushing as important industry. In and around Pathankot, there are over 200 stone crushers. Pathankot is also a commercial hub of wholesalers and distributors, provides its services to several parts of north India. Pathankot and the surrounding areas are home to a large number of army and air force personnel. Due to presence of cantonment area in the city local vendors are benefitted as they are awarded contracts by residents of cantonments and consume their services and local goods, helping boost local prosperity (Industrial and of, n.d.)

Climate

Pathankot has a warm and temperate climate. Pathankot’s average annual temperature is 21.4 degrees Celsius. The annual rainfall here is approximately 1163 mm. October is the driest month, with only 15mm of rain. July has the most precipitation, with an average of 292 mm. The month of June is the warmest of the year. In June, the average temperature is 30.2. The average temperature in January is

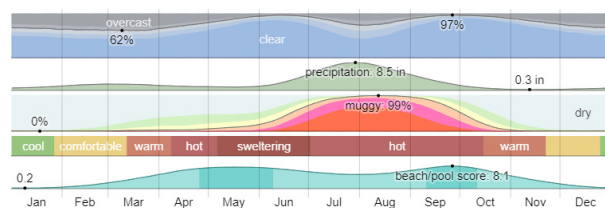


Fig. 3. Pathankot weather by month

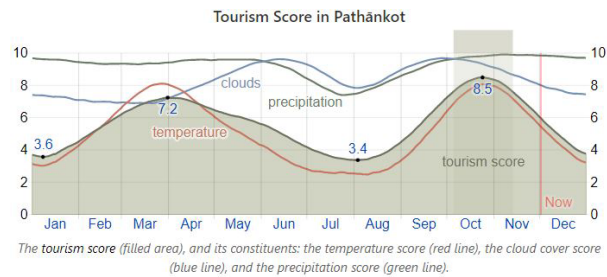


Fig. 4. Tourism score Pathankot

10.8 degrees Celsius. It is the year’s coldest average temperature (“Pathankot Climate: Average Temperature, Weather by Month, Pathankot Weather Averages - Climate-Data.Org” n.d.)

Connectivity

Air: Pathankot has a domestic airport located 3 Km from the city centre and 7 Km from the Pathankot railway station. Pathankot is well connected to major cities such as Delhi. Sri Guru Ram Dass Ji International Airport in Amritsar is the closest international airport to Pathankot. (“How to Reach | District Pathankot, Government of Punjab | India” n.d.)

Road: Pathankot is a well-connected city by road network. It not only connects the three states of HP, JK, and PB, but also the rest of the country. The NH15, which begins in Pathankot and ends in Gujarat, is an important highway that connects the city to other states that pass through cities. The National Highway 1A runs from Uri in Kashmir to Jalandhar. The NH154 connects various locations in HP. (“Transportation in Pathankot, Roadways and Railways in Pathankot” n.d.)

Rail: Pathankot has two major railway stations. Pathankot Junction Station is the name of the main station and the other is referred to as Chakki bank station. It was, however, recently renamed Pathankot cantonment station. (“Transportation in Pathankot, Roadways and Railways in Pathankot” n.d.)

Bus: Pathankot has two major bus terminals. One of them is comparatively small and located near railway station. (“Transportation in Pathankot, Roadways and Railways in Pathankot” n.d.)

Tourism in Pathankot

Though the city has some tourist attractions such as forts, temples, and wildlife sanctuaries, it does not attract tourists, so the contribution of the tourism sector is insignificant.

Table 2. People’s perception towards Tourism in the region

People’s perception towards development of eco-tourism in the region	
Questions	Responses
1. Do you know about Eco-tourism?	<p>Legend: Yes (blue), No (red), Maybe (orange)</p>
2. Do you welcome tourist with open hand?	<p>Legend: Yes (blue), No (red), Maybe (orange)</p>
3. Eco-Tourism creates employment	<p>Legend: Strongly disagree (blue), Disagree (red), Neutral (orange), Agree (green), Strongly agree (purple)</p>
4. Approach of government towards ecological condition improvement	<p>Legend: Yes (blue), No (red), Maybe (orange)</p>
5. Pathankot offers a lot in term of natural beauty	<p>Legend: Strongly disagree (blue), Disagree (red), Neutral (orange), Agree (green), Strongly agree (purple)</p>
6. Environment of Pathankot region is clean?	<p>Legend: Strongly disagree (blue), Disagree (red), Neutral (orange), Agree (green), Strongly agree (purple)</p>
7. Is Pathankot region is preferred destination for development of eco-tourism and why?	<p>Legend: Yes (blue), No (red), Maybe (orange)</p> <p>Reason: Presences of untouched and unexplored places which have picturesque views and way from city.</p>
8. Opinion on what should be done for the promotion of the region’s eco-tourism potential?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awareness about the eco-tourism. • Campains should be held to preserve the cleanliness.

Table 2. Continued ...

Questions	Responses
9. Main motive of the tourists to visit the particular region? enlist some of the reasons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote local. • Government support and involvement of locals. • Right kind of promotion to right kind of audience. • To get away from crowded places and rush of the city. • Novelty of experience of scenic beauty and peace of mind.
10. Any suggestions or recommendation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visit temple, Historical places • Travel to Himachal and J&K • A structured plan to implement ecotourism in this area, so that it doesn't disturb the natural ecosystem of the region. • Better infrastructure in terms of transport, accomodation.
11. Expectation from government towards the development of the area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliberate steps to make this place as a tourist place. • Governnt tourism department should invest in the upcoming of the region and run campaigns to encourage tourism. • Infusion of resources. • Awareness drive. • Improvement in infrastructure. • More avenues for local.

Importance/Benefit of its location

Pathankot's geographical location helped the city's economy majorly

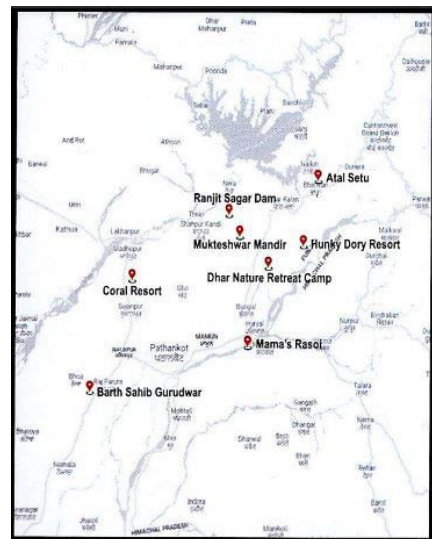
1. Timber trading due to the presence of dense forest.
2. Stone crushing – Rivers that flow through moun-

tains and into plains are compelled to deposit boulders on their bed, providing an abundance of raw material.

3. Being a stopover contributed to the economy up to a certain point (Industrial and Of, n.d.)

In terms of tourism

1. Rivers, as a water element, have their own advantages, and lake has become an important part of recreation and tourism as both a location for leisure activities and an attraction in their own right, opening up many water-related activities.
2. The presence of scenic beauty in abundance, providing a picturesque backdrop to the location.
3. This could become a part of the tourist circuit that opens up further in Himachal Pradesh and J&K.



1. Atal Setu
2. Ranjit Sagar Dam
3. Mukteshwar Mandir
4. Hunky Dory Resort
5. Coral Resort
6. Barth Sahib Gurudwar
7. Dhar Nature Retreat Camp

Fig. 5. Places of interest in Pathankot ("Pathankot Tourism," n.d.)

Existing proposal for eco tourism

All the selected land parcels around Ranjit Sagar Lake is presently remain as undeveloped (except old dam colony area) and henceforth, Shivalik (Dhauladhar) Tourism Development Board has

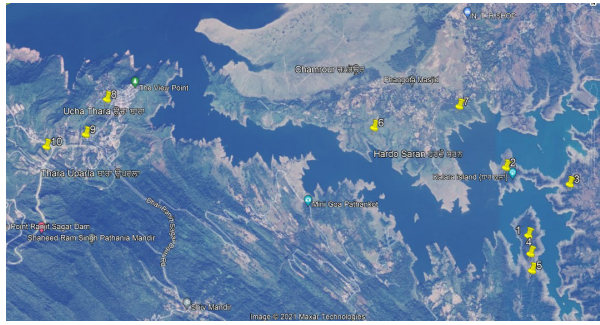


Fig. 6. Image courtesy Google Earth(National and Pillars, n.d.)



Fig. 8. Zone I Nahar ke Bir

Table 3. Source : (National and Pillars, n.d.)

S.No.	Land Parcel	Village	Area (Acres)
1.	Parcel 1	Kulara Island	16.48
2.	Parcel 2	Musharba Island	2.9
3.	Parcel 3	Faugli-Kulara	19.38
4.	Parcel 4	Naloh-Jatoli	1.86
5.	Parcel 5	Naloh-Palangi	56.20
6.	Parcel 6	Phangota-Atharwan & Chibbar	45.72
7.	Parcel 7	Phangota-Dalyal & Chibbar	67.26
8.	Parcel 8 & Parcel 10	Dam Colony	102.42
9.	Parcel 9	Southern Pocket	10.71



Fig. 9. Zone II Tureti (Tarehti)

planned to utilize these identified land parcels by developing it as an important tourist destination to enhance state economy. (National and Pillars, n.d.)

Identified Zones for Eco-Tourism

In general, the forest cover in Pathankot Forest Division’s Shahpur Kandi tract is spread across 30 villages.(Forest and Closed 2022)Tureti (Tarehti) is one of the 30 villages.

Flora and fauna

Rakh-Nehar-Ki Bir Reserved Forest Area is located on either side of the upper Beri Doab canal. The protected forest area can be found along roads, rail lines, canals, and bunds. Shisham, Kikar, Mulberry, Mango, Willow, and other trees abound. These are commonly referred to as the Shahpur kandi forest. Unclassified forests are typically grown on land transferred from the Revenue and Rehabilitation Department to Forest Departments. Shisham, Kikar

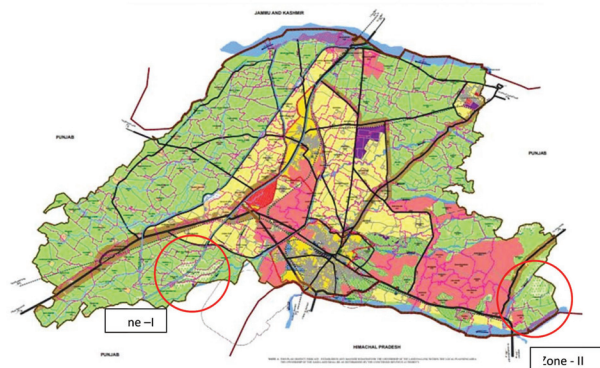


Fig. 7. Master plan of Pathankot (Mm et al., 2010)

Table 4. (Forest and Closed 2022)

Suggested zones for Eco-Tourism		
Zone -I Nahar ke Bir	Zone-II Tureti(Tarheti)	
Area	124 Hectare	357 Hectare
Urbanization	Rural	Rural
Category of work of cultivators, Agricultural labours, near by villages	Household industry worker and other work.	

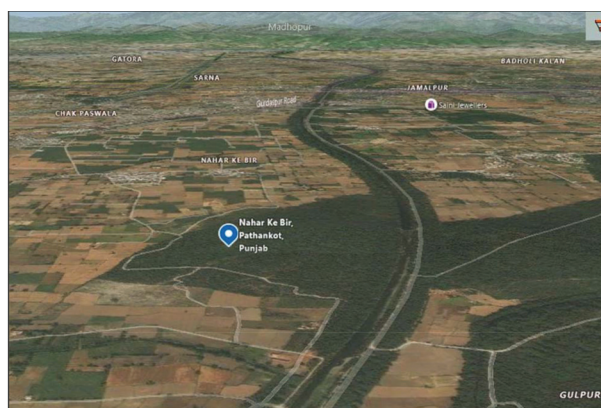


Fig. 10. Zone - I Naharke Bir (image courtesy Google Earth)

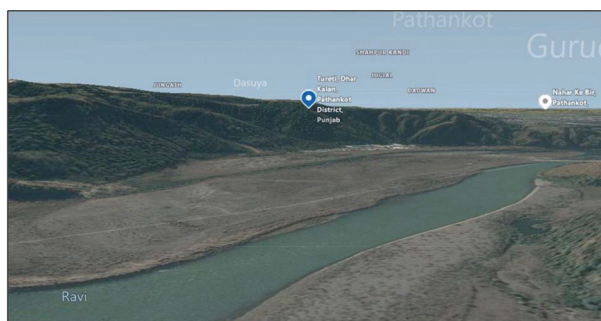


Fig. 11. Zone – II Tureti (Tarheti) (Image courtesy Google Earth)

eucalyptus, mulberry, popular, and other trees abound, as do various wild animals and birds. (Forest and Closed 2022)

Economic status

The economic situation of communities living near forest areas has deteriorated. Their reliance on for-

ests for the collection of forest products such as wood, fodder, non-timber, and other fuelwood products is extremely high. This is putting immense pressure on the forest in this ecologically sensitive and biodiverse zone. Unemployed youths in this area is quite high, and they are likely to be seamlessly enticed into illegal activities such as poaching, illegal felling, the sale of illicit liquor, and drug use, among others. The circumstance of village women is even worse. They are the primary stakeholders who are adversely impacted by poverty. Women must work hard to meet their daily needs who collect fuel wood as well as feed for livestock from neighbouring forest areas. Due to a lack of employment opportunities, seasonal migration of people to nearby towns occurs (Forest and Closed 2022).

Lack of Awareness

People in this area do not have a secondary source of income, and their primary source of income is insecure. The community is unaware of other economic opportunities such as eco-tourism or community forestry as effective management tools that will assist people in achieving the twin goals of forest conservation and livelihood security.

Potential

Punjab has one of the world’s most vibrant cultures, from cuisines to festivals, and is known for its heart-warming and hospitable nature. Because of the presence of natural beauty and water bodies, the identified zones have enormous potential for eco-tourism. It is beneficial in bringing citizens harmony with nature. This hilly tract has a lot of potential for eco-tourism, which could encourage people to grow and

Table 5. Characteristics of Eco-Tourism

Characteristics of eco-tourism (25)	Zone I- Nahar ke Bir	Zone II – Tureti (Tarehti)
1. Tourism based on nature.	yes	Yes
2. Educational and interpreting elements.	yes	Yes
3. Small, locally owned service providers	yes	Yes
4. Reduces negative environmental and socio-cultural consequences.	yes	Yes
5. Aids in the preservation of the area.	yes	yes
a. Offering economic benefits to host communities by managing natural areas for conservation purposes	yes	Yes
b. Providing local communities with a novel source of income and job opportunities.	yes	Yes
c. Demonstrate great awareness of the value of preserving natural and cultural resources., both among residents and visitors.	yes	Yes

Table 6. Recommended strategies

Recommended strategies for zone – I		
Recommended strategies	Reasons for recommendation (Best practices)	Examples of recommended strategy
Eco-village Resort	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Involvement of local community in planning and developing eco-tourism projects encourages socially responsible practices. • Encourages long-term relationships between locals and tour operators. • It generates employment. • Encourages the preservation of local traditions and vernacular architecture. • Wealth stratification is less likely which will in return benefit the local community. 	<p>Shame-e-Sarhad, Hodka, Gujrat Location: Northern border of Bhuj district. With a strong emphasis on community-owned and managed tourism. Community members, including women, youth, and artisans, were intended to be key stakeholders. The project showcases culture, tradition, and vernacular architecture (Bunga), providing visitors with a one-of-a-kind experience. And there is an uncut flow of money in the local economy.(Puri, Singh, and Gantait 2018)</p>
Centre for conservation and research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Observing the relationship between the environment and the human population could lead to new discoveries. • Will help to raise awareness. • Tourism can include awareness programmes. • Skilled labour can be created in the local population by trained students and volunteers. • If new scientific evidence is found, the chances of proposing public policies to conserve the area increases. 	<p>Tambopata Macaw Project, Peru A partnership has been formed between conservation biologists an ecotourism company (Rainforest Expeditions), and a volunteer-recruiting non-profit NGO(the Earthwatch Institute).In exchange, researchers were given funding, transportation, food, and lodging, as well as volunteers to assist with data collection. The project enhanced the ecotourism site’s long-term viability.(Brightsmith, Stronza, and Holle 2008)</p>
Agroforestry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agroforestry will maintain land fertility and prevent soil erosion,nearly 65 percent of the region is at risk of soil erosion according to a soil survey report. (Welfare, n.d.) • Assist in the effective management of the land. • Improvement of the local community’s socioeconomic situation. 	<p>Padma Resort Ubud, Bali Eco-tourism Project with in the river valley and overlooking forests of Payangan. Agroforest is one of the tourism product offered in this project, Flowers, herbs, shrubs, fruits, and tropical greenery abound in the three-hectare Agroferestry Garden. Providing fresh fruits, herbs, and vegetables to the resort. Visitor can take a stroll or have guided tour to discover fruits, herbs, native flowers and coffee plantation.(“Agroforestry Tour - Padma Resort Ubud” n.d.)</p>
Ecological Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abundance of trees and plants makes it favorable place for the ecological park. • Ecological Parks aims to protect the ecosystem, region can also serve as recreation and allow the public to know about the nature of the place. • Ecological parks no longer depend on picturesque aesthetic but also have ecological value. 	<p>Golden Gate Park, (U. S) It is the third most visited park in the United States, with gardens, museums, art, flowers, birds, lakes, trees, and wildlife, as well as the California Academy of Sciences and Conservatory of Flowers. There are also numerous opportunities to participate in sports, clubs, and other extracurricular activities.(“Golden Gate Park - San Francisco, CA” n.d.)</p>

Table 6. Continued ...

Recommended strategies for Zone-II		
Recommended strategies	Reasons for recommendation (Best practices)	Examples of recommended strategy
Eco-resort/lodges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topographical advantage. • Employment opportunities • Unique experience. 	<p>Andhra Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation (APTC)</p> <p>The APTC collaborated with the AP Forest Department to launch a new eco-tourism model that involved the local community. Ex. Local Forest Protection Committees provide lodging, guide services, security, and food. Under Community Forest Management, other infrastructure. ("Eco Tourism with AP Forest Development Corporation" n.d.)</p>
Jungle trekking Camping site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Utilization of natural resources like mountains, landscapes and forest. • Presence of water body • Local services will generate employment. 	<p>Thenmala eco-tourism, Kerala</p> <p>The World Tourism Organization has named Thenmala as India's first planned eco-tourism project as one of the premier project. ("Thenmala - India's First Planned Ecotourism Destination, Kollam Kerala Tourism" n.d.)</p>
Village tour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide tourists the opportunity to interact with local communities and experience the culture and traditions, art forms, and ethnic cuisine. 	<p>Kumbalangi eco-tourism, Kerala</p> <p>Organising tours for visitors in nearby villages as part of tourism activities. The village has been maintained in such a way that nature can be seen in its purest form here. Tourists can stay with locals and experience village life firsthand, as well as sample the region's ethnic seafood cuisine. ("Kumbalangi Eco-Tourism Village Tourist Places In Ernakulam Kerala Tourism" n.d.)</p>

conserve forests. As a result, eco-tourism facilities that blend in with the environment can be built. In suitable areas, required eco-tourism facilities like walking trails, temporary camping sites, accommodations etc can be developed eco-tourists. A perfect blend of culture and nature is likely to be created for visitors to have a one-of-a-kind experience. The zones are well connected to the city and are close to the state highway that connects to Dalhousie. Eco-tourism in this region can provide people with the following benefits:

- Additional sources of income include guiding (tourist guide), homestay, and the sale of craft materials.
- Multiplier effects from tourist purchases of local goods and services.
- Better tourism infrastructure will benefit the locals.
- It will not only benefit locals by preserving the

forest, but it will also prevent the occurrence of soil erosion.

- Community will take greater pride in their culture and surroundings.

Conclusion

The increase in tourist interest in eco-tourism is due to the fact that it is a one-of-a-kind experience, and India is blessed by nature, as is Pathankot. This area has potential for eco-tourism due to its geographical location, abundance of scenic beauty, and many other things to offer in terms of tourism. The government has identified the areas and proposed the development of the identified land parcels. Aside from the government-designated zones, two zones, Nahar ke Bir and Tureti (Tarehti), have all of the eco-tourism characteristics. The communities that live in these areas are typically poor, so there is a

great opportunity to improve their economic status by involving them in Community Based Ecotourism. The local climate is pleasant thus favors the tourism activity. These zones are easily accessible and connected by a well-developed road network. The people are incredibly friendly and extend an open hand to visitors. The local community is unaware of the secondary source of income available through tourism. For the betterment of the community and eco-tourism, the community must be aware of the situation and provide a welcoming environment for visitors. Promoting local tourism in terms of accommodation, culture, food, and other aspects will provide a monetary benefit to the community, as money will be spent on local resources rather than on a chain hotel, where the majority of profits will leave the community and locals will be disadvantaged. This novel concept of eco-tourism aims to appeal to two distinct groups: first, to pique the interest of the host communities, who are an integral part of society, so that they learn to value their own identity as well as their environment, culture, and ecology; and second, to entice visitors who are fascinated by the nature, history, culture, artistic skills, and lives of rural societies, and who wish to enjoy and appreciate them, without abusing, manipulating or destroying it, thereby ensuring its preservation for future generations.

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