



BHARATHIDASAN UNIVERSITY

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### **Unit-I**

***Concept of ecotourism***

**Name : Dr.S.Umamaheswari**

**Assistant Professor**

**Department of Environmental Biotechnology**

# Concepts of Tourism

- Tourism is the movement of people away from their usual place of residence to other places for leisure, recreation, business, or other purposes. It has evolved into a multi-faceted activity that contributes to the economy, culture, and social fabric of countries around the world. The concepts of tourism go beyond mere travel; they encompass a broad spectrum of activities that reflect people's needs, desires, and interests.
- Tourism is not only about the destinations or the experiences people seek but also the impact it has on local communities, environments, and economies. As a result, tourism is increasingly classified and analyzed according to various criteria, such as purpose, scale, environmental impact, and more.

- Classification of Tourism
- Tourism can be classified in multiple ways based on various factors, including the purpose of travel, the type of activity undertaken, the impact on the environment, and more. Below is a detailed look at different types of tourism:

# 1.RELIGIOUS TOURISM

Religious tourism involves travel undertaken for the purpose of visiting sacred sites, participating in pilgrimages, or experiencing spiritual activities. This type of tourism is often associated with specific religious events or practices.

- Examples:
- Pilgrimages to Mecca (Hajj for Muslims), Varanasi (India for Hindus), Jerusalem (for Christians, Jews, and Muslims).
- Visiting temples, churches, mosques, and other sacred sites.
- Religious tourism plays a significant role in shaping the identity of destinations and can contribute to both cultural exchange and economic growth.

## 2. CULTURAL TOURISM

Cultural tourism refers to travel that involves exploring the cultural heritage of a destination, including its arts, music, festivals, architecture, and traditions. This type of tourism enables visitors to engage with and learn about the culture of a region.

- Examples:
- Visiting museums, galleries, and heritage festivals.
- Attending traditional dances, music performances, and theater shows.
- Cultural tourism allows for deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity, while also promoting the preservation of cultural heritage

### 3.HERITAGE TOURISM

Heritage tourism specifically focuses on the preservation and exploration of historical sites, monuments, and landmarks that hold significance in the history of a people or place. Heritage tourism is often intertwined with cultural tourism, but it emphasizes the historical and archaeological value of a destination.

- Examples:
- Visiting UNESCO World Heritage Sites, like the Great Wall of China or the Pyramids of Giza.
- Exploring castles, ancient cities, and historical landmarks.
- Heritage tourism not only supports the preservation of historical sites but also allows visitors to connect with the past in meaningful ways.

### 4.MONUMENTAL TOURISM

Monumental tourism involves traveling to see large and historically significant structures that embody the culture, art, and history of a place. These monuments could be physical structures or sites that have symbolic or historical importance.

- Examples:
- The Eiffel Tower in Paris, the Statue of Liberty in New York, or the Taj Mahal in India.
- Architectural wonders like the Parthenon or Colosseum.
- Monumental tourism can draw large numbers of visitors and contribute significantly to the economy, especially in cities known for iconic landmarks

## 5.ADVENTURE TOURISM

- Adventure tourism caters to travelers seeking excitement and challenges. It involves physical activities and exploration in natural environments that require some degree of risk or skill. This type of tourism is growing rapidly as people look for unique, adrenaline-filled experiences

### Examples

- Trekking in the Himalayas, white-water rafting, bungee jumping, skydiving, and mountaineering.
- Exploring remote areas or natural landscapes like jungles, deserts, or mountains.
- Adventure tourism often appeals to thrill-seekers and can contribute to the development of remote regions by providing employment and stimulating local economies.

## 6. MASS TOURISM

- Mass tourism refers to large-scale tourism where a significant number of people visit a destination at the same time. This type of tourism is often facilitated by affordable transportation and standardized services, leading to a high volume of tourists.

### Examples:

- Beach resorts, package holidays to popular destinations, cruise tourism.
- Major international tourist destinations like Paris, London, or New York.
- While mass tourism is a key contributor to the global economy, it can also lead to overcrowding, environmental degradation, and loss of cultural authenticity at popular tourist destinations.

## 7.SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

- Sustainable tourism focuses on minimizing the negative impacts of tourism on the environment, local communities, and economies while maximizing the benefits for future generations. It emphasizes responsible travel that promotes conservation, supports local businesses, and respects cultural traditions.

### Examples

- - Eco-friendly accommodations, nature-based tourism, and community-based tourism.
- - Participating in conservation activities like wildlife safaris or volunteering in environmental projects.
- Sustainable tourism aims to balance economic growth with environmental stewardship, ensuring that tourism can be a long-term source of income and a means of fostering cross-cultural understanding.

## 8. CONSUMPTIVE TOURISM

- Consumptive tourism refers to travel where tourists actively consume or take something from the environment or local culture. It involves activities that result in the extraction or use of resources from a destination.

### Examples

- - Hunting, fishing, or collecting souvenirs and artifacts.
- - Wildlife safaris where tourists capture images or purchase local crafts.
- Consumptive tourism can be controversial, particularly when it leads to the depletion of natural resources, endangers wildlife, or causes cultural commodification.



## 9. NON CONSUMPTIVE TOURISM

- Non-consumptive tourism, on the other hand, involves activities that do not deplete or damage the resources of a destination. These types of activities can be enjoyed without leaving a lasting negative impact on the environment or local cultures.

Examples:

- - Hiking, bird-watching, or eco-tourism activities.
- - Visiting national parks and wildlife reserves where tourists do not interfere with wildlife habitats.
- Non-consumptive tourism promotes conservation and responsible use of resources, offering a more sustainable option for travelers who want to minimize their impact on the environment.

# Introduction of Ecotourism

- **Ecotourism** is a form of sustainable tourism that emphasizes the preservation of natural environments, the well-being of local communities, and the education of travelers about ecological conservation and cultural heritage. It focuses on responsible travel to natural areas that conserve the environment, promote sustainability, and benefit local people. Unlike mass tourism, which often exploits resources and causes environmental degradation, ecotourism is designed to minimize negative environmental impacts while enhancing the traveler's experience and providing economic opportunities for local communities.
- Ecotourism plays a crucial role in preserving biodiversity, promoting environmental awareness, and supporting sustainable development. Its increasing popularity is a response to concerns over the negative impacts of conventional tourism, such as habitat destruction, wildlife exploitation, and pollution.

# Concepts of Ecotourism

1. Environmental Conservation: Ecotourism aims to reduce the environmental footprint of tourism activities. It promotes the conservation of natural resources, protects ecosystems, and safeguards biodiversity. Sustainable practices like waste reduction, energy conservation, and the protection of wildlife habitats are integral to ecotourism.

2. Cultural Preservation: Ecotourism also emphasizes the importance of respecting and preserving local cultures and traditions. It encourages responsible travel that fosters cultural exchange while preventing the commodification or exploitation of indigenous peoples and their heritage.

3. Economic Development: Ecotourism is intended to bring economic benefits to local communities by providing them with opportunities for income generation through tourism. It seeks to create jobs, develop local infrastructure, and promote the growth of small businesses, all while ensuring that the local economy is linked to sustainable practices.

- The core concept of ecotourism, therefore, is the idea that tourism should be designed in such a way that it benefits both the environment and the people while offering visitors an enriching,

# History and Origin of Ecotourism

- The roots of ecotourism can be traced back to the growing awareness in the 1960s and 1970s about the environmental degradation caused by mass tourism. As the world became more industrialized, traditional tourism began to take a toll on fragile ecosystems and local communities. This led to a movement toward more sustainable forms of travel.

- 1960s-1970s: The term "ecotourism" was not widely used during this period, but the roots of the movement can be traced to this era when conservationists, environmental activists, and ecologists began advocating for the protection of nature and wildlife.
- 1980s: The idea of ecotourism started to formalize with the rise of international environmental awareness, particularly after the publication of the "Brundtland Report" in 1987, which introduced the concept of sustainable development.
- 1990s: Ecotourism started gaining formal recognition as a niche market. Organizations like the International Ecotourism Society (TIES), founded in 1990, played a crucial role in defining ecotourism and setting standards for its practice. The term "ecotourism" was now widely recognized, and the industry began to establish itself as a viable alternative to mass tourism.
- The movement grew in the 1990s and 2000s as travelers became more environmentally conscious and sought out travel experiences that aligned with their values, particularly in relation to sustainability and environmental protection.

# Objectives of Ecotourism

The key objectives of ecotourism can be summarized as follows:

1. Conservation of Natural Resources: A primary goal of ecotourism is the protection of the environment. This includes preserving habitats, protecting endangered species, and promoting biodiversity. By visiting protected areas and respecting natural resources, ecotourists contribute to the conservation of ecosystems.
2. Education and Awareness: Ecotourism aims to educate travelers about the natural world, environmental issues, and sustainable practices. It also helps to raise awareness of the importance of conservation and environmental stewardship, often through guided tours, interpretation programs, and eco-friendly practices.

3. Support for Local Communities: Ecotourism seeks to provide economic benefits to local communities, particularly those living in or near conservation areas. By generating income through sustainable tourism activities, local populations are encouraged to protect the environment, as they see direct benefits from conservation efforts.

4. Minimizing Negative Impact: Ecotourism is designed to minimize the negative impact on ecosystems and wildlife. It aims to reduce pollution, avoid habitat destruction, and promote responsible behavior by tourists to ensure that tourism does not harm the very resources it seeks to enjoy.

5. Sustainability: The ultimate objective of ecotourism is to promote long-term sustainability in the tourism industry by balancing economic, environmental, and social needs. This involves careful management of tourism activities to ensure that future generations can enjoy the same natural and cultural resources.

# BENEFITS OF ECOTOURISM

## 1. Environmental Benefits:

- Conservation of biodiversity<sup>\*\*</sup>: Ecotourism helps fund conservation efforts by generating revenue for national parks, wildlife reserves, and protected areas.
- Sustainable land use<sup>\*\*</sup>: Ecotourism often promotes the sustainable use of land and resources, encouraging landowners to conserve rather than exploit natural areas.
- Environmental education<sup>\*\*</sup>: By raising awareness about environmental issues, ecotourism fosters a sense of responsibility among tourists, who are more likely to support conservation initiatives and adopt eco-friendly practices in their daily lives.

## 2. Economic Benefits:

- Job creation: Ecotourism creates employment opportunities for local communities, including guides, hospitality workers, and craftspeople, contributing to local economic development.
- Sustainable income: Ecotourism provides an alternative source of income for communities that may rely on agriculture or natural resource extraction, helping reduce dependency on activities that harm the environment.
- Revenue for conservation: Entrance fees to national parks, nature reserves, and other protected areas are often used to fund conservation projects, ensuring the sustainability of these areas.



### 3. Cultural Benefits:

- Cultural preservation: Ecotourism helps preserve local cultures and traditions by promoting respect for indigenous customs and lifestyles. It encourages cultural exchange, allowing visitors to learn from local communities and vice versa.
- Promoting cultural pride: By showcasing indigenous cultures and traditions to visitors, ecotourism can instill a sense of pride in local people and encourage them to continue their cultural practices.

### 4. Social Benefits:

- Community empowerment: Ecotourism often involves local communities in decision-making and tourism management, empowering them to take control of their development and preserve their cultural and environmental heritage.
- Improved infrastructure: Ecotourism can lead to improved infrastructure such as roads, healthcare, education, and waste management, benefiting both tourists and local residents.

# Factors Affecting Ecotourism

## 1. Environmental Factors:

- Climate and weather conditions: Ecotourism activities are often dependent on specific environmental conditions such as favorable weather, biodiversity, and ecosystem health. Changes in climate or environmental degradation can reduce the attractiveness of ecotourism destinations.
- Conservation status: The effectiveness of conservation programs, such as protected area management and wildlife preservation, directly impacts the sustainability of ecotourism.

## 2. Economic Factors:

- Funding for conservation: The financial viability of ecotourism projects depends on a stable source of funding for conservation initiatives. Without adequate funding, conservation programs may struggle to maintain protected areas or to invest in sustainable tourism infrastructure.
- Market demand: The demand for ecotourism is influenced by trends in the global tourism market, the increasing preference for sustainable travel, and the willingness of consumers to pay a premium for eco-friendly experiences.

### 3. Social and Cultural Factors:

- **Local community involvement:** The success of ecotourism depends on active participation from local communities. Communities must be willing to engage with the tourism industry and adopt sustainable practices to ensure the long-term success of ecotourism initiatives.
- **Cultural sensitivity:** Ecotourism must be designed in a way that respects local cultures and prevents the exploitation or commodification of indigenous peoples and traditions.

### 4. Technological Factors:

- **Sustainable technologies:** The use of eco-friendly technologies, such as solar power, water conservation, and waste management systems, can significantly reduce the environmental impact of ecotourism.
- **Digital marketing and online platforms:** The rise of digital marketing and online booking platforms plays an important role in promoting ecotourism destinations and educating potential travelers about the importance of sustainable tourism.

### 5. Political Factors:

- **Government policies and regulations:** Effective governance is essential to the success of ecotourism. Policies related to environmental protection, tourism management, and community development need to be aligned with the principles of sustainability.

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