

# Analysis for the Potential of Ecotourism in Bastar Region

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**Abstract** - Bastar has been a benediction for Chhattisgarh State, In order to use the available potentialities and elements to proliferate the development of tourism in Bastar region, mechanisms should be put in place to regulate and control this process and set priorities to save time and effort in addition to directing the state investments in the right direction. The development process, (As some regions in Bastar have supernumerary potentials and advantages that exceed many other regions, but also bereft of many other elements necessary and important in the maturation process).The excerpt of these regions for tourism development is imperative in the development process. Not every region is suitable for tourism and recreational development and achieves economic feasibility, and best choice of location is an important element in the growth process itself. Bastar has a lot to offer to its visitors, which lie in and steam from its lush green region.

**Key Words:** Tourism, Ecotourism, Potential, Development, Bastar.

## INTRODUCTION

Travel is developing as one of the world's largest marketing sector now days consistent with the World Travel and Tourism Council. Globally tourism is identified by the governments as a sector with high potential for economic growth and to generate employment. It has been calculated that travel & tourism generated 9.4 Indian GDP and jobs 1 in 8 for the Indian economy in 2017. As tourism cares the year 2017 was an interesting year in India because it has received quite 10 million (10.04 million) foreign tourists for the first time, registering 14% growth in 2017 over 2016. The Foreign tourists arriving in India during Jan-Nov 2018 was 93.67 million (Provisional) with a growth of 5.6% over the corresponding year of 2017 Domestic Tourist Visits to all or any States/UTs is received 1652.49 Million and Annual Growth Rate 2.3%. Present years have given travel & tourism growing at a faster rate than both the broader economy and other important sectors like financial services, automotive and health care. Eco-tourism has been distinguished as one of the rapid thriving and an essential economic market in the tourism industry in natural areas around the world. It focuses on biodiversity, local culture, rare species, and personal development, wilderness adventure, volunteering and pursuing new ways to live on our vulnerable earth. Scarcity of natural area and pristine environment and live close to a densely populated area and demand of ample

quality of the environment have emerged the concept of eco-travel.

Ecotourism is one of the segments of tourism that has integrated into visiting delicate, stark, and comparatively untapped natural areas, expected as a low-impact and sometimes diminutive alternative to standard mass tourism. It could be damaged if mass tourism is not properly coordinated. It offers opportunities for tourist to take the experience of dynamic exposure of nature and culture and to know about the significance of biodiversity conservation and local cultures. It welcomes and entertains tourists in a fashion so that it is minimally harmful to the environment and endorses & supports the native cultures in the locations it is sustaining in. The term has got much attention in recent years, especially within the developing world.

## LITRATURE REVIEW

"Eco-tourism is responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well being of local people"( **International Eco-Tourism Society, 1991**)

"Ecotourism is environmentally responsible travel and visitation to relatively undisturbed natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and any accompanying cultural features - both past and present) that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socio economic involvement of local populations" (**The World Conservation Union, 1996**).

Conversation, sustainability and biological diversity are three important interrelated aspects of Eco-tourism. But sustainability is most important among the three because sustainable development ultimately helps to achieve the aim of eco-tourism of a particular tourist destination. Basically, eco-tourism planning follows the concept of sustainable development which tells proper or appropriate use of resource and sustains it for future generation.

Eco-tourism includes environmental, social, economic, occupational and infrastructural aspects which will ultimately lead to sustainable development of tourist destination.

## Objectives of the Study

This research paper tries to explain the different ways as how this region can be positioned as an attractive tourist destination and how this will ultimately benefit of employment generation for local people and growth of distinct sectors and sub-sectors which is linked up to tourism. This paper also tries to aspire at the strengths and

opportunities this region is blessed with. Thus the study aims to explain the following objectives:

- To examine the potential of the region in positioning it as a popular tourist destination.
- To identify the unidentified spots which have the potential to offer novel products in tourism and that can help to disperse tours to new destinations and that will also help to enhance the image and popularity of tourism destination.
- The study purports to know the benefit of ecotourism in the community and among the stakeholders and to the tribal population of this region.
- The research reports also focuses on the significance of tourism infrastructure so as to preserve local handicraft, folk arts and culture of the region and so that attract more tourists.

### Research Methodology

A qualitative research approach and an exploratory research design have been tackled in this research study. The work is based on secondary data such as published books, journals and research papers and web to collect relevant data and information. The potential study has been drawn by analyzing the extent of foreign and domestic tourists visit in Chhattisgarh. The study seeks to analyze the potential of ecotourism in the tourism sector in the Bastar region as a unique tourist destination.

### TOURISM IN CHHATTISGARH

Chhattisgarh, is the 26th state of the India formed on 1 November 2000, has existed in the central region of India. The boundary lines of the state are surrounded by seven neighbouring states such as Uttar Pradesh and Jharkhand in the north, Orissa in the east, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana in the south, Maharashtra in the south-west and Madhya Pradesh in the north-west. Its capital is Raipur. Area of Chhattisgarh state is 52,199 square miles (135,194 square km) with the population of 25,540,196 as per census 2011. Its 44% of the country is forested and which shares 12% of India's forests, is the third number of most green state of India. The state largely consists of plateaus streaked with high range of Satpura within the north, the river Mahanadi and its tributaries within the central plains and therefore the Bastar plateau within the S. The paths (hills) produce to the most river systems - Mahanadi, Hasdeo, Sheonath and Indravati. Intersected by these meandering rivers and studded with hills and plateaus, the state has various natural features of great beauty. The land features have huge potential for tourism. Its tourism potential lies in many areas like Ecotourism, Pilgrim tourism, Business tourism, Culture and ethno-tourism, Culture heritage and village tourism, etc.. In summation, it's one among the greenest states of India with over 44 % its total area under lush forests. The forests of Chhattisgarh aren't only experienced for its distinct flora and fauna, but also have about 88 species of medicinal plants. Chhattisgarh has three national parks and 11 wildlife sanctuaries which may be stand as national and international tourist destination. This forest region is filled with greenery

and wonder of natural beauty which may be a boon to the people who want to relax and obtain far away from their tension. The unique combination of biological diversity and deep cultural heritage makes Chhattisgarh a unique ecotourism destination with huge potentials for the development of ecotourism in the region. The states have also number of ancient monuments with excellent carved temples, Buddhist sites, castles, and rock paintings. The rare wildlife, caves, waterfalls and hill plateaus are still untouched and unknown. These also offer an attractive and alternate experience to visitors.

### Statistics of Tourism in Chhattisgarh

#### Domestic tourist visit in Chhattisgarh

The domestic tourist growth has been seen gradual increase over the period 2011 to 2015, with the growth coming at a sustained compound annual increase rate of 14.35%. Domestic tourist visit annual growth rate has been decreased -26.0% from period 2016 to 2017.

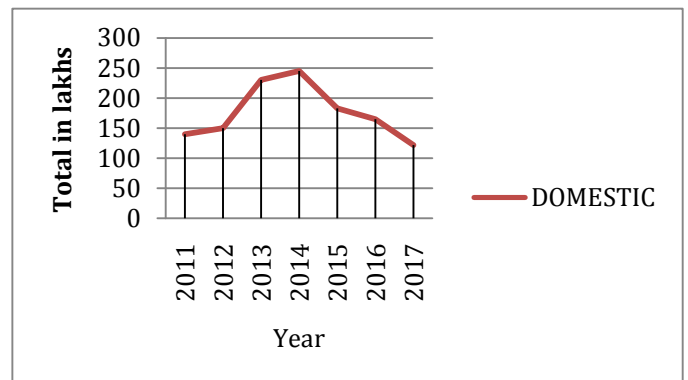


Chart 1 Domestic tourist visit from 2011-2017

#### Foreign tourist visit in Chhattisgarh

International tourist's growth has seen ups and downs from 2011-2014 averages to a compound annual increase rate of 18.2% with a notable drop in 2013 and a 100% rise in 2014. Foreign tourist annual growth pace has been decreased -27.0% from period 2016 to 2017.

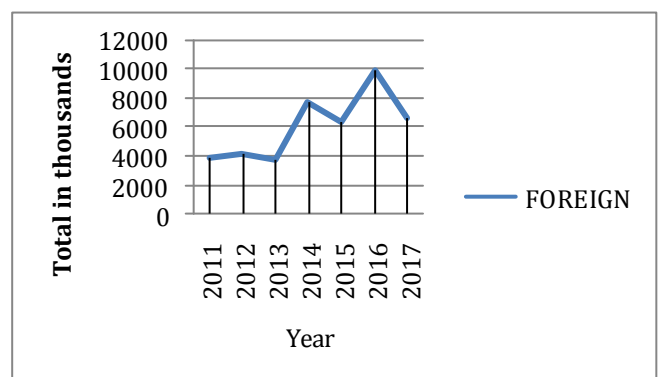


Chart 2 Foreign tourist visit from period 2011-2017

### Total tourist visit in Chhattisgarh

Statistics of total tourist visit from 2015-2017 has been analyzed in decline of tourism in Chhattisgarh Amount of total tourist visit has been decreased from year 2015- 2017 this is due to lack of marketing and promotion and lack of public facilities in tourist spots. Known destinations of Chhattisgarh have been really popular and visited there is a need to provide new tourist attraction. Straight off a day's tourists main thrust to experience new destination having natural attraction.

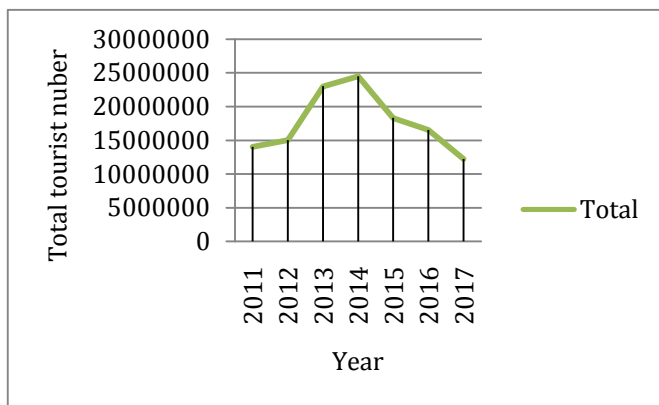


Chart 3 Total tourist visit from 2011-2017

### TOURISM POTENTIAL IN BASTAR REGION

Bastar division is spread in an area of about 39,060sq. Km. The length of Bastar division is 402 kilometer from north to south and 360 km from east to west. Out of total area of the division, 23138 sq. Km. (59.15%) is under forest cover. Its forests form nearly 19.03% of the total forests in the country. It holds a special biological, mythological, scenic beauty, National parks, wildlife centuries, rich tribal culture, history and archeological value. Some of the potential spots of ecotourism are following:-

**Wildlife** - Bastar is one of the richest biodiversity areas in the state. The region has two National Parks, Kanger Valley (Bastar district) and Indravati Tiger Reserve (Bijapur district) and two biosphere reserves such as Pamed (Dantewada) and Bhairamgarh wild life centuries and Kurschel valley

**Nature Trails**- Bastar has endowed with full of natural beauty. It takes in many waterfalls such as Chitrakote, Tirathgarh, Kangerdhara, Chitradhara, Mahadev-gamer, Madhwa, Tamdaand Mandarin gamer, Suratgarh, Dalpat Sagar, Bodhghat dam, Malangir Falls, Fulpad waterfall, Jharalava waterfall, Aranpur waterfall, Bagmundi Waterfall, Jharalawa waterfall, Bedna waterfall, Dudma Jhodi waterfall, Gupteshwar, Ranidarha, Malger, Satdhara, Vogtung, Namibia, Lankapalli, Bogtum, care-Marre, Khursel, Handawada, Usur waterfall and Malajkundam,

**Natural Caves**-Kutumsar cave, kailashgufa, Dandak cave, Churipagar cave, Jogi cave, Nodapalli cave, Sakal Narayan cave, Usur cave and Shankanpalli cave.

**Rich Tribal Culture**-There is the major population of tribes in the Bastar region where many tribal groups are residing such as Gond, Muria, Bison horn tribal, Abujhmaria, and Halba. Tourist can get amazing experience of tribal tradition and culture.

**Art And Handicrafts**- Dhokra Handicrafts, Bell Metal Handicrafts, Wrought Iron Art, Ornaments/Tribal Jewelry, Contemporary Art (Godwa sculptors of Kondagaon),Terracotta, Wood Craft, Bamboo Craft, Cowrie Craft Bastar Kosa Sadi and Cotton Fabrics, Tumba, Sisal and Shell Craft.

**Archeological Sites** -Archeological museum of Jagdalpur, anthropological museum, memorial stone pillars in Gamawada, Kailash Nagar, a peak of Bailadila range, Remains of ancient forts and numerous temple in Bhairamgarh and Statue of Buddha in Bhongpal.

### Potential Analysis

Bastar region has the potential to turn a really attractive eco-tourism destination given the varied tourist attractions it offers. There has been ample strength and opportunities lies for tourism potential. But at that place is some threats and weakness in the region that can be solved by proper strategy and management.

### Strength

- 59.15% are under forest cover out of the total area of the partition.
- Home to two national parks and two wild life centuries.
- Rich tribal culture, Heritage
- The area is rich in handicraft and handloom
- Less crowded and less inhabited.
- Presence of waterfalls, forests, caves and rare species of flora and fauna.

### Weakness

- Inadequate knowledge of opportunities among tourists and tour operators.
- Absence of tourism policy and lawmaking to define the authority and responsibility of varied stakeholders in the development of ecotourism.
- Need of adequate ecotourism policy, tourism policy alone is not sufficient ecotourism development.
- Poor inter linkage and accessibility.
- Inadequate physical infrastructure.

### Opportunity

- Tremendous potential for Eco tourism
- Tourism potential unexploited
- Presence of natural physical features like mountains, woodland, waterfalls, caves and river etc.
- Potential to increase the number of tourist and visitors in the state.
- Promotion of local handicraft.

### Threat

- Security threats arising out of Naxal activities
- Loss of traditional knowledge and wisdom.
- Most of the spots are seasonal and not open for tourists in monsoon season.

### ISSUES AND ACTION REQUIRED

Genuinely, the Chhattisgarh state government has recognized that tourism can be a crucial revenue earner for the state. But there is a lot attention is required in the right direction to be set as a popular tourist destination. What facilities and services are required that is very essential is to be provided first. Furthermore proper strategies and initiatives for promoting tourism at various sites can be negotiated along the basis of site situation. The merchandise of the tourism sector is different from other industrial products. A tourism product is the amalgamation of tourism services and offerings being provided by the distinct integral of the tourism industry. The flora and fauna, landscape, lush greenery, wildlife adventure, stay in hotel, traveling, festival, tradition and culture of the destination etc. Constitute the invisible and intangible structure of the tourism product. These all are must to be identified and well sorted.

### Major Issues as Regard to Tourism in Bastar Region

- Poor accessibility and poor accommodation facilities in the destination less popular.
- Inadequate knowledge of and opportunities among tours and tour operators.
- Lack of trained and educated tourist guides.
- Lack of tour operators and information center.
- Lack of public facilities and infrastructure.
- Lack of designated markets and exhibition and lack of promotion of local handicrafts.
- Lack of marketing, promote and popularity of tourism potential.

### Major Action which is Required

- There should be ensured full participation from the local community and should ensure an efficient coordination between the regulating bodies.
- There should need to be focused efforts towards the conservation of the environment and the prevention of ecological degradation.
- Tourism policy and legislation must be drawn up to define the authority and responsibility of varied stakeholders in the development of ecotourism.
- Participation of stakeholders such as individuals, communities, eco-tourists, tour operators and government institutions must be ensured in the preparation, development, execution and monitoring phases.
- Publication of handbook about the flora –fauna, rare species and local art and craft

- Marketing and promotion of ecotourism potential through Media, internet and mags.
- In that location should be capacity building to educate and knowledge the local people on how to be good hosts, how to look after the safety of visitors and how to give local information and advise visitors on preserving the environment
- In that location should be designated market and state level art and craft policy for promotion of local handicrafts.
- There is a need to encourage the production of handicrafts and handloom items with local identity for sale to the visitors that can create jobs and occupations and distribute income among the people of the region.

### CONCLUSION

The region holds the potential to become a really attractive eco-tourism destination given the varied tourist attractions it offers. This area has 59.15% of lush green forests, two national parks and two wildlife sanctuaries. It's several modern attractions in protected areas like Kanger Valley national parks, Indravati park, Pamed and Bhairamgarh sanctuaries which is also the place of the wild buffalo and endangered Hill Myna, which are the state animal and state bird respectively. Nevertheless, these are the positive signals about the ecotourism potential, but there is another side to the present story. There is an enormous gap between the untapped potential and hence the reality. If make a comparison with states neighboring state, found accordingly larger volume of notational national and international tourists in these states like Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Orisa and Utter Pradesh, This distinguishable difference and so the huge untapped potential provide opportunities to both the government and other stakeholders of the tourism sector within the state. This true tourism potential has often increased with its unique and modern ecotourism market and elevate.

There is varied number of fantastic tourist spots that the Bastar region has if proper steps have been taken tourism are often developed into a serious revenue earner for the state's fund, creating income generation opportunities in primary, secondary and tertiary sectors. So as to make sure planned development and growth a planned approach must be taken in.

There is an aggressive requirement of tourist infrastructure, public facility, marketing and publicity of its tourism potential. Tourism policy and legislation must be framed to define the office and responsibility of varied stakeholders in the development of ecotourism. At that point is, no designated market for local handicraft and handloom that need to provide marketing and promotion for job opportunities and income generation of local people.

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