

Mount Everest Coop

Sustainable Tourism in Nepal

1. Nepal

1.1 Nepal's geographical wonder is a small landlocked country in South Asia wedged between India and China covering 147,000-sq. km. (Plain 17% & Mountains 83%)

1.2 Its population is 23.2 million with an annual growth rate of 2.3%.

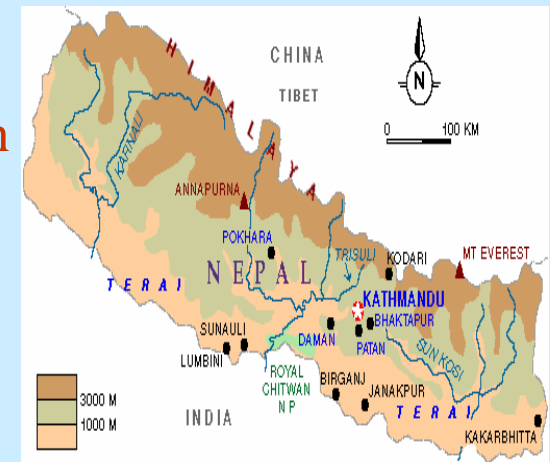
1.3 Only 45% of its population is literate

1.4 Only declared Hindu kingdom in the world.

1.5 10% people in Nepal live in urban and semi-urban areas

1.6 90% are spread in rural areas

1.7 45% are below poverty line where the basic norms are still far beyond their reach.



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1. Nepal

1.8 The first ascent of Mt. Everest (Sagarmatha in Nepalese) catapulted this small nation to world fame in 1953.

1.9 Amazing altitudinal diversities results different climates in the country.

1.10 Higher hills including the capital city receives a weather pattern closely the same as middle Europeans.

1.11 35⁰c in plains and 20⁰c in mountains are the warmest temperature throughout the year.

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2. Tourists Attraction in Nepal

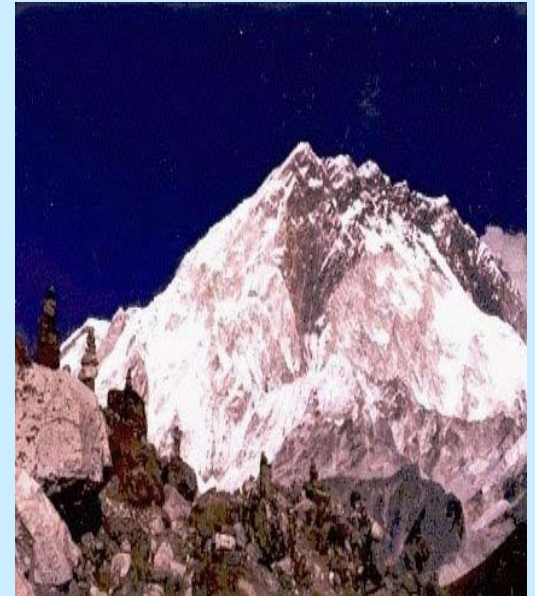
2.1 Nepal is the entirely mountainous country except for the lush plain of lowland Terai and temperate fertile valley spread across the middle of this rectangular country.

2.2 885 km. east to west and 193 km. north south.

2.3 It includes the eight of the world's fourteen highest peaks and deepest river gorge in the world.

2.4 The highest peak Mount Everest as the roof of the world has been a central tourist's attraction for almost everyone.

2.5 These geographical features offer the climbers and rafting enthusiasts to conquer these majestic mountains, wild rivers and gorges.



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2. Tourists Attraction in Nepal :

2.6 The country with great altitudinal diversities can please all types of tourists along with their individual cravings for thrilling mountain expedition, trekking, and jungle safari with world's largest variety of birds, highly turbulent rivering adventures, and fascinating romance.

2.7 For instance panoramic flight scene and hot air ballooning, taste of uniquely rich diverse culture, geographical miracles bewitching lakes and rivers, National parks and hunting reserves ancient Buddhist Monasteries and Stupas and exceptional natural beauties.

2.8 At the end of the 1996 it was known that almost 47% of the visitors considered scenic beauty and mountains as the most important factor in deciding to visit Nepal.

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2. Tourists Attraction in Nepal :

2.9 20% of the tourists considered trekking as their most important factor to visit Nepal.

2.10 Nepal is perceived as an independent tourist destination with more than two third of the visitors deciding to visit 'Nepal' as a holiday destination without considering any other country/destination.

2.11 The panoramic natural beauty found in Nepal's mountain areas with its many different Eco-systems and country's rich cultural heritage attracts tourists to Nepal.

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3. Mount Everest Coop in Tourism:

3.1 Mount Everest Coop Tours and Travels is the first and only cooperatively organized tourism organization.

3.2 Established in Nepal with deep commitments practicing sustainable tourism to provide quality products to nature, adventure and heritage lovers from around the world.

3.3 Our aim is to conserve the Nepalese Eco-system, social order, heritage and culture enlightening the values of this wealth among visitors and local people.

3.4 Mt. Everest coop emphasizes on the drilling down of tourism revenue up to the grass root level for the benefit of our coop members & the stakeholders.

3.5 We insist on value based sustainable tourism promoting friendship, fraternity and cooperation between tourists and local folks to pave a way to peace and harmony.

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3. Mount Everest Coop in Tourism:

3.6 This is a government registered cooperatives organization of 350 general and associate members and licensed from Ministry of tourism and Central Bank to operate tourism business.

3.7 Coop also provides financial & insurance services to its members.

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4. Defining Tourism in Present World:

4.1 Tourism is a complex functional system comprised of five components viz. Tourists, Attractions, Service facilities, Transportation and Information direction.

4.2 Tourism is a series of activities of the people for the development of tourist movement.

4.3 This is a practice of traveling for recreation, pleasure or culture, exploration, promotion or encouragement of touring and accommodation of tourists.

4.4 Tourism is the world's largest industry these days.

4.5 This has made leading contribution in improving the economy of many countries including Nepal.

4.6 Former President Jimmy Carter said in Travel Agents Congress in USA "Travel is a strong influence in the development of human potentials and vital link in the World communication. By visiting other lands exchanging ideas and making new friendship, we can help to build goodwill and peaceful intercourse among all people." This gives a high vision in the value system of world tourism to make it sustainable.

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5. Economic Implication of Tourism in General :

5.1 The rewards gained both financial and socio-economic are immense in tourism.

5.2 The contribution of tourism to the economy exceeds that of other sectors in several countries, to the extent it appears as one of the essential elements in the trade balance.

5.3 Tourism provides direct employment to millions of people in the hotel industry, transport, travels, trekking and mountaineering, entertainment and also the indirect employment generating out of them.

5.4 Tourism is the only export industry that earns large amount of foreign exchange without exploiting natural resources and without exporting any manufactured or raw materials for development specially for the developing countries in balancing the adverse balance of trade.

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5. Economic Implication of Tourism in General :

5.5 Tourism is the world's largest industry today. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO) a total of 625 Mill. Arrivals were recorded in 1998 contributing US\$444 Bill in receipts.

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6. Impact of Tourism in Nepal :

6.1 "It was only in the early 1950s that Nepal came out of its centuries-old isolation and embarked on the path of modern development. One of the most immediate effects was the advent of tourism.

6.2 The few foreign visitors who wandered during the early days were overwhelmed by the wealth of culture and natural wonders they saw in Nepal.

6.3 They went back to tell glowing tales of a hidden Shangri-La in the Himalayas.

6.4 The first ascent of Mt. Everest in 1953 further enhanced the image of the kingdom and helped to make it known around the world as an adventure destination." - (RNAC Shangri-La 1996)

6.5 In Nepal the beginning of the tourism industry dates back to the later fifties and early sixties. The recorded numbers we got is only 6000 in 1962 which reached to 156,000 in 1976, 266,000 in 1988 and 491,000 in 1999.

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6. Impact of Tourism in Nepal :

6.6 Tourism continued to be one of the important aspects of the Nepalese economy in 1999. Among the tourist visited in 1999 54% were from Asia, 36 from western Europe 10% from North America and 3% from Australia and pacific.

6.7 Tourism contributes 3.6% to GDP and 16% of total foreign exchange earnings of the country.

6.8 It also gave direct or indirect employment to 257,000 people in 1998. (Economic survey of Nepal 89/99)

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7. Sustainable Tourism in Nepal :

7.1 Many tourists visit Nepal for its unique natural and cultural resources

7.2 In 1995 over 363,000 tourists visited the country, they spent more than 117 mill. US\$ from which half was generated by trekking tourists.

7.3 But less than 1% of the tourism generated revenue reaches to the rural areas where tourism belongs.

7.4 More than 90% people and most of the tourists attractions are in rural areas of Nepal.

7.5 Therefore tourism can be of help to rural people benefiting them economically and socially.

7.6 WTO defines "sustainable tourism development meets the needs of the present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunity for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support system."

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7. Sustainable Tourism in Nepal :

7.7 Sustainable tourism is based on the unique characters of natural, cultural and social environments and interests of certain groups of tourists in these environments.

7.8 Planners of sustainable tourism development should aim for improving the environmental situations of the project areas and minimizing negative impacts on natural, cultural and social environments.

7.9 At the moment Nepal's capacity to benefit fully from the socio-economic opportunities of tourism is minimal.

7.10 To promote the sustainable tourism the distribution of tourism earnings within tourism sites in the country must not be neglected.

7.11 After the establishment of Nepal Tourism Board (NTB) as a National Tourism Organization is promoting and networking different non-governmental (Local & International) and private sector organizations which are working for sustainable tourism development.

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7. Sustainable Tourism in Nepal:

7.12 For example IUCN-World Conservation Union, SNV-Netherlands Development Organization, WWF and ICIMOD- International Center for Integrated Mountain Development are deeply involved in the development of sustainable tourism in the different part of the country.

7.13 At present two networks namely "Sustainable Tourism Network" STN; and "Eco-tourism in Protected Areas Network" ETPAN are promoting sustainable tourism in Nepal. Under these networks- there are around 50 enterprises are active in their mission.

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Sustainable Tourism in Nepal

8. Mount Everest Coop - Promoting Sustainable Tourism :

8.1 Mount Everest Coop promotes and applies universal cooperative principles in its tourism business also.

8.2 Mount Everest Coop tours and travels promote and practice the same objectives and methods as published by International Cooperative Alliance in Cooperative Agenda-21.

8.3 "Sustainable tourism therefore, must be based on the rational use of natural resources so as not to destroy the environment which is sought after by the tourists (destruction that is often caused by mass tourism). Tourism cooperative, whether cooperatively-owned travel agencies, developers, or tour operators, aim to provide adequate low cost tourist opportunities to cooperative members. Essentially they have the same concerns as the private sector of the tourism industry; however, tourism cooperatives can be influenced by members to make sustainable development and environment issues high priorities". (Cooperative Agenda-21, ICA).

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Mount Everest Coop - Promoting Sustainable Tourism :

8.4 Social and economic development of target communities and members of the cooperatives is our focus.

8.5 Promoting environmentally and ecologically safe tourism.

8.6 Promoting plastic free environment in the target areas.

8.7 Involving members in tourist activities, by providing information about safe and hygienic environment at home.

8.8 Collaborating with International and local level NGOS in the sustainable tourism development.

8.9 Mt. Everest coop has close link with TICA and BITS-Paris and having involved in the promotion of social tourism, distributing fair share of tourism earnings back to the service provider/ member and attraction target.

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Sustainable Tourism in Nepal

9. Main Tourism Focus :

9.1 Promoting Home Stay Tourism :

Working to develop members/host socio-economic status and living standard which enhance cultural exchange and establish long ties between tourists and host members.

9.2 Village/Cultural Tourism :

We promote traditional/cultural village along with beautiful natural mountain sceneries. we also plan to promote environment friendly, pro-poor, ecologically balance tourism where part of the tourist spending would go to the stakeholders /members and to improve social economic infrastructure in new target area.

9.3 Fair Trade in Tourism :

We apply and promote fair trade in tourism. Mt. Everest Coop is connected with fair trade in tourism network, UK promoting fair trade principles. Fair trade in tourism is also a key aspect of sustainable tourism. It aims to maximize the benefits from tourism for local destination stakeholders through mutually beneficial and equitable partnerships.

By, Shanta R. Sharma Neupane, President, Mount Everest Coop Limited