CHAPTER 1 I. INTRODUCTION

The idea of development has been for a long time entwined with the idea of material development as the indices, hinged upon items related to economic development. Due to a gradual realization that the older conception of development was a narrow idea, as it could not capture the other indices of development that directly had a relation to the real purposes like the improvement in the quality of the lives of human beings, a new scale of development was framed called human development index that referred to categories like literacy, health, education, nutrition, mortality, environmental degradation, housing, etc. Seen in this way development conjures up an anthropocentric and less inclusive vision. Subsequently, an alternative conception of development that was more inclusive and emanated a non-anthropocentric vision of development emerged. The alternative concept of development is more inclusive and looks up to a just situation where a human being is a small link in the entire chain of nature where development takes place in a way where man and nature are not in conflict but in harmony in a sustainable way. The development seen from this perspective does not just involve changes in economic terms but also facilitates change in social systems, structures, institutions, and belief systems as well. This emergence was no doubt due to the increasing awareness in the 1960s of the effects that technology, industry, economic expansion, and population growth were having on the environment. The development of such awareness was aided by the publication of two important books at this time. Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*, first published in 1962, alerted readers to how the widespread use of chemical pesticides was posing a serious threat to public health and leading to the destruction of wildlife. Of similar significance was Paul Ehrlich's 1968 book, *The Population Bomb*, which warned of the devastating effects the spiraling human population has on the planet's resources. Of course, pollution and the depletion of natural resources have not been the only environmental concerns since that time: dwindling plant and animal biodiversity, the loss of wilderness, the degradation of ecosystems, and climate change are all part of a raft of "green" issues that have implanted themselves into both public consciousness and public policy over subsequent years. Sustainable development has been defined as balancing the fulfillment of human needs with the protection of the natural environment so that these needs can be met not only in the present but in the indefinite future. The term was used by the Brundtland Commission in their report *Our Common Future* in 1987, coined what has become the most often-quoted definition of sustainable development as

development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."

The primary objective of Sustainable Development is to reduce the absolute poverty of the world's poor by providing lasting and secure livelihoods that minimize resource depletion, environmental degradation, cultural disruption, and social instability. The field of sustainable development can be conceptually broken into three constituent parts: environmental sustainability, economic sustainability, and sociopolitical sustainability. The first three dimensions address key principles of sustainability, while the final dimension addresses key institutional policy and capacity issues. Sustainable development does not focus solely on environmental issues. The United Nations 2005 World Summit Outcome Document refers to the "interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars" of sustainable development as economic development, social development, and environmental protection.

Indigenous people have argued, through various international forums such as the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and the Convention on Biological Diversity, that there are four pillars of sustainable development, the fourth being cultural. The Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity (UNESCO, 2001) further elaborates on the concept by stating that "...cultural diversity is as necessary for humankind as biodiversity is for nature"; it becomes "one of the roots of development understood not simply in terms of economic growth, but also as a means to achieve a more satisfactory intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual existence". In this vision, cultural diversity is the fourth policy area of sustainable development.

Sustainable Development and Eco-Tourism

Tourism has become one of the largest employment-generating industries and according to WTO statistics, the global tourism sector will expand surpassing 1 billion international travelers by the year 2010 and 1.6 billion by the year 2020. Global economists forecast continuing international tourism growth, ranging between three and six percent annually, depending on the location. As

one of the world's largest and fastest-growing industries, this continuous growth will place great stress on remaining biologically diverse habitats and indigenous cultures, which are often used to support mass tourism. As the Charter on Sustainable tourism declares tourism depends on resources that are very fragile and therefore, environmental requirements and economic expectations of the region must be met. Following this, the Charter for Sustainable Tourism was formulated in 1995 guided by the Rio Declarations on the Environment and Development and the recommendations of Agenda 21. The Charter envisages sustainable development as "a guided process which envisages global management of resources to ensure their viability, thus enabling our natural and cultural capital, including protected areas, to be preserved." It further observes that tourism should contribute to sustainable development through participation in sustainable development strategy and respect the fragile balance between the natural, cultural and human environment. Therefore, increasingly destinations and tourism operations are endorsing and following "sustainable tourism". The pillars of sustainable tourism are environmental integrity, social justice, and economic development.

Ecotourism is an entirely new approach to tourism. The concept of Ecotourism developed in the 1980s as a response to the call for sustainable tourism as a response to an increase in environmental consciousness which had begun in the late 1950s and gained momentum in the 1980s (Figgis, 1993; Wight, 1993; Figgis, 1994; Harris and Leiper,1995; Eagles, 1996; Ceballos-Lascurian,1996). Ecotourism may be defined as travel to natural areas to appreciate the cultural and natural history of the environment, taking care not to disturb the integrity of the ecosystem, while creating economic opportunities that make conservation and protection of natural resources advantageous to the local people. In short, ecotourism can be categorized as a tourism program that is - "Nature-based, ecologically sustainable, where education and interpretation is a major constituent and where local people are benefited."

Ecotourism (also known as ecological tourism) is a form of tourism that appeals to ecologically and socially conscious individuals. Generally speaking, ecotourism focuses on volunteering, personal growth, and learning new ways to live on the planet. It typically involves travel to destinations where flora, fauna, and cultural heritage are the primary attractions. Ecotourism is a conceptual experience, that enriches those who delve into researching and understanding the

environment around them. It gives us insight into our impacts, as human beings and also a greater appreciation of our natural habitats. Responsible ecotourism includes programs that minimize the negative aspects of conventional tourism on the environment and enhance the cultural integrity of local people. Therefore, in addition to evaluating environmental and cultural factors, an integral part of ecotourism is the promotion of recycling, energy efficiency, water conservation, and the creation of economic opportunities for the local communities.

Defining "Ecotourism" has proven to be a difficult task given all the different players attempting to define it. People tend to define things in terms that are beneficial to themselves, hence the variety of definitions. There are however several workable definitions currently in wide use.

Ecotourism was first defined by Cebalos-Lascurian, Hector (1996, Tourism, Ecotourism, and Protected Areas, Cambridge, U.K: International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN)) as "traveling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas." The International Ecotourism Society defines Ecotourism as: "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local people". The Australian Commission on National Ecotourism Strategy calls it: "nature-based tourism that involves education and interpretation of the natural environment and is managed to be ecologically sustainable".

Since the publication of Martha Honey's book "Ecotourism and Sustainable Development," Martha Honey's definition is quickly becoming the standard. Her seven defining points of ecotourism are:

1) ***Involves travel to natural destinations:*** These destinations are often in remote areas, whether inhabited or uninhabited, and are usually under some kind of environmental protection at the national, international, communal, or private level.

2) ***Minimizes impact of the damage caused by Tourism:*** Ecotourism strives to minimize the adverse effects of hotels, transport, and other infrastructure by using recycled materials available

as local building materials, renewable sources of energy, recycling and safe disposal of waste and garbage, and environmentally and culturally sensitive architectural design.

3) ***Helps in building environmental awareness:*** Ecotourism means education, for both tourists and residents of nearby communities. Well before departure tour operators generally supply travelers with reading material about the country, environment, and local people, as well as a code of conduct for both the traveler and the industry itself. This information helps prepare the tourist as The Ecotourism Societies' guidelines state "to learn about the places and peoples visited" and "to minimize their negative impacts while visiting sensitive environments and cultures".

4) ***Provides direct financial benefits for the conservation of biodiversity of the region:*** Ecotourism helps raise funds for environmental protection, research, and education through a variety of mechanisms, including park entrance fees, tour company, hotel, airline, and airport taxes, and voluntary contributions.

5) ***Provides financial benefits and empowerment for local people:*** The local community must be involved with and receive income and other tangible benefits (potable water, roads, health clinics, etc.) from the conservation area and its tourist facilities.

6) ***Respects local culture:*** Ecotourism is not only "greener" but also less culturally intrusive and exploitative than conventional tourism.

7) ***Supports human rights and democratic movements:*** Mass tourism pays scant attention to the political system of the host country or struggles within it unless civil unrest spills over into attacks on tourists. Ecotourism demands a more holistic approach to travel, one in which participants strive to respect, learn about, and benefit both the local environment and local communities.

The Charter on Sustainable Tourism also identified the facilitators of ecotourism as the state and NGOs. Tourism as an industry is a booming industry generating not only employment but also revenue for the government. To tap the full potential of tourism and at the same time provide it with sustainability a symbiotic relationship between tourism and the environment needs to be worked out which at the same time would uplift the local economy and involve the local community in preserving and conserving the natural resources and maintain the fragile balance.

Agenda 21 identified information, integration, and participation as key building blocks to help countries achieve development that recognizes these interdependent pillars. It emphasizes that in sustainable development everyone is a user and provider of information. It stresses the need to change from old sector-centered ways of doing business to new approaches that involve cross-sectoral coordination and the integration of environmental and social concerns into all development processes. Furthermore, Agenda 21 emphasizes that broad public participation in decision-making is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving sustainable development. Therefore, the active contribution of government, as well as private actors and local communities in promoting tourism, is a contribution to sustainable development.

Ecotourism in India

The tragedy of mass tourist spots digging their graves and the emerging global market for ethnic and unique experiences gave rise to enterprises under the banner of ecotourism (ET) in various parts of the world. Despite its increasing importance as a business opportunity and its phenomenal growth within the larger tourism industry, the concept of Ecotourism is not well defined. Used as a tool to harvest consumer surplus in the context of economic growth and environmental degradation, ET practices vary from wildlife and heritage to health and adventure. ET is generally perceived as a 'high-value low volume enterprise' depending on a few interested tourists with a high willingness to pay. Developing countries are gradually realizing that ET can be a livelihood tool for rural communities and can also result in the sustainable management of natural resources.

Many different models of tourism management have emerged in India. These can be grouped into three categories:

- Community Managed
- Private Sector / NGO / Government Managed, and
- Joint Venture

An increasingly common approach to tourism management is for communities to hold complete or nearly complete ownership. In the community-based system, all management and decision-

making are done by communities surrounding the natural areas (Rodriguez, 2004). While a more traditional model is to have the private sector, NGOs, or the government manage tourism within and surrounding a park. Finally, a model growing in popularity is Joint Ventures between the communities, the private sector, and NGOs (Stronza, 2004). In the community-based model, the economic benefits are held at the community level with few leakages. Although it may be difficult for the community to manage the model if they lack the capacity or technical training to efficiently manage such areas as marketing and commercialization. When the system is managed by the government/private sector/ and NGO the majority of the benefits do not get passed along to the communities and are kept by the managing organization. In some instances, the community may benefit in the way of direct and indirect employment, as well as subsidies. In the jointly managed venture, economic benefits are shared via profit-sharing and capacity-building practices that support employment and development at the local level. Revenue opportunities may even be enhanced by partnering local knowledge of the area with private sector expertise and efficiency.

Ecotourism in the Indian context has significant implications for nature and culture conservation, rural livelihoods, and conservation education. Eco-tourism is a vast business domain having wide repercussions on the socio-ecological fabric of an economy. Therefore, it is time now to develop these broad guidelines into clearer regulations, strategies, and action plans. While guidelines can be national, policies need to reflect state-specific needs and imperatives of ET. Hence these recommendations provide space for regions and communities to innovate and retain their ecological and cultural integrity. In terms of the process of policy formulation, there has to be dialogue, consensus, a bottom-up approach, decentralized governance, and redressal mechanisms. The Quebec declaration (2002) says:

"formulate national, regional, and local ecotourism policies and development strategies that are consistent with the overall objectives of sustainable development, and to do so through a wide consultation process with those who are likely to become involved in, affect, or be affected by ecotourism activities;"

Any policy is to be perceived differently from policy goals and should contain both a strategic statement and a settled course of action to be followed by an institution. The objective of a tourism

policy is to provide tools for containing the growth of tourism beyond viable, acceptable, and sustainable natural, social and economic thresholds. Tourism policy should also enable the identification and mitigation of impacts. It should cater to all aspects of the tourism production function (Batta 2000): primary inputs (resources), intermediate inputs (facilities and services), and the final output (experiences). As far as Ecotourism (ET) sub-sector is concerned, clear planning and control of the sector is a globally identified need (Martin and Uysal, 1990).

The only document available about ecotourism policy at the national level is the Ecotourism Policy and Guidelines 1998 identifies key players in Ecotourism as Government, Developers/operators & suppliers, Visitors, Host communities, NGOs & Research Institutions. It also prescribes operational guidelines for these key players. The policy defines and hence approaches ET with a clear conservation bias. It lays out cardinal principles suggesting the importance of the involvement of local communities, minimizing the conflicts between livelihoods and tourism, and environmental and socio-cultural carrying capacities. It also perceives that ET should be part of the integrated development of the area. It emphasizes the role of careful planning in infrastructure development and detailed benefit-cost analysis before implementation. It talks about standards, continuous monitoring, and codes of conduct for visitors. Thereafter a consultative meet was held in 2006 whereby it was suggested that within the Ministry of Tourism a Directorate of Ecotourism be set up both at the Centre and in the states that would provide strategic direction and engage stakeholders in dialogues related to multilateral agreements and local self-governance in the context of ecotourism.

Statement of the Problem

The problem that this study seeks to address is of understanding the success of community-based ecotourism projects in India that are reportedly successful in generating livelihood opportunities for the local community but unsuccessful in institutional setup, fiscal incentives, and community ownership. The problem is not a binary one of success versus failure but of understating different layers of success and failure, the associated political ecological factors, the role of institutions, practices, and entrenched values. The particular problem is associated with how community- based ecotourism has been able to promote sustainable tourism and at the same time understand what has been the nature of interlinkages between the state, NGOs, and the local community in the

promotion of sustainable ecotourism in the region under focus. The study also seeks to look into the degree of freedom given to the community in planning and managing ecotourism in the context of hegemonic state-market relations in the area under focus.

Review of Literature

CBNRM is an approach to conservation and development that recognizes the rights of local people to manage and benefit from the management and use of natural resources. It entails transferring back to communities' access and use rights, empowering them with legislation and devolved management responsibility, building their capacity, and creating partnerships with the public and private sector actors to develop programs for the sustainable use of a variety of natural resources. In the years following the Second World War, a series of factors augmented the process of a theory of economic growth that could apply to third-world nation-states. The factors include the political agenda of the U.S.A to order the post-war world, to provide access to the third world market for the capitalist business groups, the nationalist development project taken up by the newly decolonized nation-states' elites and the success of the Marshall Plan in Europe. An extensive body of literature emerged during and after 1950 to understand and suggest ways of development within the third world. One of the major outcomes of this growth- oriented development paradigm marked by a predatorial use of natural resources resulting in environmental degradation resulted in the emergence of green political thinking. Although its origins can be traced to the nineteenth century, as a powerful combination of philosophical, moral, and political ideas to influence policy programs it is relatively a new ideology. The industrial growth-oriented model of development's dangerous outcome was for the first time exposed to the people through the publication of the book, The Silent Spring (Carson, 1962) which discussed the widespread use of toxic agents and the dangerous result that was inevitable agriculture and the food chain and subsequently on all forms of life on this Earth. In his book Small is Beautiful, Schumacher (1974) questioned the moral basis of materialism and endless economic growth with little or no knowledge of the natural processes and limits leading to environmental disasters. He argued for the ethics of simplicity and restraint in matters of consumption and the ideal of nonviolence. The notion of a self-sufficient community committed to production for local needs is a direct offshoot of this argument. Since the seventies, green philosophy took on a radical turn through campaigns and experiments in living, and Naess

(1989) one of the most influential thinkers developed it further by arguing for the universal right to self-unfolding that is not just limited to human entities but to plants and animals. This right would help us to understand biodiversity and evaluate our conduct towards the potentiality of other living beings. This kind of deep ecological thinking is mellowed down by thinkers like Bookchin (1986) who argues for an exploration of the process/by which humans dominate each other to understand the man/nature relationship. He advocated for participatory egalitarian communities which would act as partners with the natural world.

Disillusionment with the developmental state inspired a variety of CBNRM experiments and initiatives across South Asia in the late 70s and early 80s. Communal activities emerged that challenged the authority of the state and tinted the need for more decentralized decision-making that would give a voice to local communities (Kothari, 1989). Some of these social movements placed the 'environment' at the center stage like Chipko in the Himalayas. They found responsible the state for ecological demolition and sought to redress this by asking for greater local control over forests. Similarly, in Orissa, many rural communities took charge of patches of forests that they were using and that was not being managed well by the Forest Department. But other movements such as Pani Panchayat in Maharashtra came out more out of concern for inadequate or failed development efforts of the state. Excluding the state entirely, to play a more active role in development programs they asked for changes in the developmental process that would enable local communities.

Several other efforts were set off by 'outside agents' often out of a sense of voluntarism and sometimes due to 'practical' managerial necessities. Inspired by ideas of welfare work or more radical thinking individuals and NGOs, took on the task of what was perceived as a different mode of rural development. They mobilized resources and organized communities from literacy to irrigation tank rehabilitation to soil conservation to improved agricultural practices to help define and implement developmental activities of various kinds. Some focused on specific concerns such as women's issues (van Koppen *et al.*, 2001; Gupta, 1999,28-31) or tribal development (Vohra, 1990; Pathak and Gour-Broome, 2000; and sought to create space for these marginalized groups to have a say in natural resource management.

Local villagers were then involved to regulate their grazing activities on the slopes and setting up sharing mechanisms to manage the water harvesting structures. The success of the experiment led to the setting up of many such 'hill resource management societies' with official support. Similarly, a forest officer in Arabari, West Bengal, striking a deal with local communities to save the plantations made by the Forest Department eventually led to the now-famous concept of joint forest management (JFM) (Chatterji, 1996; Deb and Malhotra, 1993; Sarin, 1995; Correa, 1996; Saxena *et al.*, 1997; Corbridge and Jewitt, 1997; Lélé, 1999; Jeffery and Sundar, 1999; Kumar *et al.*, 1999; Ravindranath *et al.*, 2000; Sundar *et al.*, 2001; Lélé *et al.*, 2005; Sarin *et al.*, 2003b). Some of the most famous initiatives were initiated by innovative government officials. The famous Sukhomajri experimentation in Haryana was led by a technocrat who was worried over the silting of a lake, for which he got constructed soil conservation structures on the slopes of the catchment (Chopra *et al.*, 1988; Seckler and Joshi, 1981; SPWD, 1984).

Traditions of farmer-managed canal irrigation systems in the north (Kuhls of Himachal Pradesh or kuhlos of Nepal) (Baker, 1997; Pradhan, 2003; Yoder, 1994; Zwarteween and Neupane, 1996), as well as farmer-managed tank irrigation systems in the south, were studied with renewed vigor. In the period following these earlier movements and initiatives, much older
'traditional' systems of community management were 'rediscovered'. Van panchayats in the Kumaon region of the Indian Himalayas were found to be a longstanding example of a state-recognized but highly decentralized forest management program (Sarin, 2001b; Agrawal, 1999c; Agrawal, 2001b; Ballabh and Singh, 1988). Many communities in Orissa copied the examples set by decades-old community protection initiatives in their neighborhood to launch their efforts (Pattanaik, 2002; Conroy *et al.*, 1998; Conroy, 2001; Kohlin, 1998).

Academic influence in favor of community-based development, in general, existed as early as the 1950s, the major discourses that directly or indirectly lent support to CBNRM emerged to a large extent as a result of the above 'lived experiences. Based to a large extent on evidence from forestry, much of this discourse has highlighted continuities in underlying political and ideological imperatives of colonial and post-colonial development and its negative impact on environmental policies.

One can delineate three major strands of thought that emerged in the context of community participation-based natural resource management. One major academic discourse that emerged in the 1980s highlighted the limits of the post-colonial state in environmental management. This discourse based on evidence gathered from studies on forestry and forest policies highlighted the continuities in underlying political and ideological imperatives of colonial and post-colonial development and its negative impact on environmental policies. The proponents argue that the centralization of power within the bureaucracy, with an eye on prioritizing industrial and commercial needs, has resulted in the alienation of local communities from control over common resources (Guha, 1989; Nadkarni *et al.*, 1989; Pathak, 1994; Gadgil and Guha, 1992; Shiva, 1991; Alvares, 1979; Mukundan, 1988; Shankari, 1991; Sengupta, 1991; Mishra, 1993). Although critics differ in terms of the prescriptions offered, there is a common underlying argument that local communities must play an important role in environmental management. Agarwal and Narain in their book 'Towards Green Villages', vigorously argue for control (and property rights) of village communities (Agarwal and Narain, 1989). Some activists argue that many tribal groups have spoken about self-rule and how tribal communities can manage their own resources best. (Rahul, 1997). The second strand of thought that is also critical of the state's role in natural resource management interrogates how development planning works and how it underplays the role of local communities in this process. Chambers's extensive work on 'farmer first' highlights how development planning has advantaged the voice and knowledge of the development planner and silenced to a great extent the voice and knowledge of local communities. The reason behind the failure of many development projects, programs, and policies in various sectors, particularly agriculture and rural development, according to him, is the result of an overly centralized, bureaucratic, and technocratic approach to development. Chambers also highlights the importance of participatory techniques such as participatory rural appraisal (PRA) and rapid rural appraisal (RRA) as a means by which the local's voice can be articulated (Chambers, 1983; Chambers *et al.*, 1989; Thompson and Scoones, 1994). This discourse is different from the earlier discourse in the sense that it critically looks at the changing dimensions of the role of the state. The emphasis is put on altering the development process to make it more participatory and give greater control to local people.

The third strand of thought in the literature is the one on 'traditional knowledge, a discourse which goes beyond just a critique of development planning to highlighting the "environmental soundness and cultural embeddedness of traditional, indigenous or local knowledge systems" (Agarwal and Narain, 1997; Mukundan, 1988; Reddy, 1991; Shankari, 1991; Shankari and Shah, 1993). Traditional or indigenous resource management systems conceived, managed, and maintained by local communities were seen as a viable alternative to modern technology such as large dams that allegedly had disastrous consequences. The focus was on the need to develop innovative technologies that blend local knowledge with modern scientific methods to make them socially, economically, and ecologically more viable (Chambers *et al.*, 1989; Reddy, 1999; 2004). The main thrust of this critique is that the modern state by overcentralizing has disregarded local cultures and thwarted cultural plurality (Ostrom, 1990; 1992; Coward, 1980; Chatterjee, 1998; Kothari, 1988). The literature that developed as a critique of atomistic human behavior and paved the way for literature on collective action demonstrated that such a tragedy of environmental degradation and danger to the Earth was neither predictable in theory nor obtained in practice (McKay and Acheson, 1987; Berkes, 1989; Bromley, 1992). Numerous case studies brought to light the existence of old and new institutional arrangements for community management of natural resources. Attention now shifted to mapping out the conditions under which collective action would take place (Wade, 1988; Ostrom, 1990; 1992; Baland and Platteau, 1999; Agrawal, 2001a; Agrawal and Ostrom, 2001). Much of this literature unconditionally assumes that the role of the state should be limited to facilitating community control. To the proponents of this school, greater control of the local environment and natural resources is the right of local communities (a right that was taken away by colonial and post- colonial governments) and needs to be restored. Related to this is the normative goal of ensuring more cultural diversity or protection of the identities of certain ethnic groups, or more generally maintaining a certain lifestyle (Uphoff, 1998).

Second, there are several instrumental arguments for why a community-based approach will be more effective because it mobilizes local knowledge and skills, and ensures greater accountability. Korten (1986) talks of three reasons for getting into CBNRM: a) local people can adapt the centralized design to suit local conditions, b) local people can mobilize local resources, and c) increases local accountability, and results in greater conservation (because assigning clear rights

to specific local groups will close open-access situations and these groups can protect and monitor the resource more effectively), and even more equitable outcomes (because they are more democratic). By the 1990s, the stage was thus well set to 'mainstream' CBNRM.

Broadly speaking, any situation where the local community is involved in some manner in the management of natural resources in its immediate environment could be called a case of community-based natural resource management. Within South Asia alone, such a term would encompass a wide variety of initiatives and practices that have emerged over the past two to three decades. One can think of these initiatives falling into four broad categories:

1. Traditional systems of resource management that continue to exist if not flourish, e.g., irrigation *Kuhls* of Himachal Pradesh or *kuhlos* of Nepal, minor irrigation tanks of peninsular India, the *phad* system, and *malgujari* tanks in Maharashtra, tribal forest management systems of northeastern India, *van panchayats* of Kumaon, and customary fisheries management systems on the Sri Lankan and south Indian coast.

2. Individual experiments are typically initiated by voluntary efforts, activist groups, or even local communities with or without indirect support from the state and other sources. These range from entirely self-initiated forest protection groups such as those in Orissa to NGO-initiated tank renovation projects in Tamil Nadu to more multi-sectoral watershed development projects taken up by various NGOs.

3. Several government-implemented programs for sectoral decentralization of natural resource management in forestry and irrigation, including JFM and PIM in India, CFM in Nepal, irrigation management transfer (IMT) in Sri Lanka and Pakistan, participatory management of protected areas in Pakistan and Nepal, etc.

4. A few (and mostly tentative) state-initiated efforts at decentralization of government as a whole, including devolution of control over natural resources, as has been attempted in parts of India under recent Panchayati Raj and PESA legislation, and earlier 6th schedule legislation in northeastern states of India. (Menon *et al*, 2007)

The boundaries are overlapping and so there is no consensus as to which categories CBNRM refers to. Up Hoff (1998) makes a clear distinction between the first category and the rest, calling the first one 'community management' (CNRM) which 'refers to [situations of] communities having full and generally autonomous responsibility for the protection and use of natural resources and pointing out that this situation obtains only in special cases. The rest three categories he seems to put under CBNRM. Ribot on the other hand combines categories 2 and 3 above under CBNRM, and distinguishes them from democratic decentralization (which corresponds to category 4), arguing that the difference between an explicit process of devolution of political power on the one hand and NGO-driven experiments or even state-led sectoral programs that amount to only administrative decentralization on the other makes a significant difference in terms of outcomes (Ribot, 2002). Yet others (Ramakrishnan *et al.*, 2002) clu democratic devolution programs along with sectoral programs when studying what they call DNRM. (Menon *et.al* 2007)

(Aryamani, et al 2019) This paper explains as the environment and cultural diversity are considered the greatest asset of ecotourism, the study lays stress on the promotion of ecotourism through the development of model tourism through villages and the development of new trekking areas maintenance of environment quality conducive to tourism. As the tourism industry is one of the important sectors recognized by the Nepalese economic sector, different policies related to tourism can be found.

(Nault &Stapletri,2011) This paper explains the issues of community-based ecotourism development in a small remote community in western Mongolia. It assesses the community's desire to develop ecotourism their understanding of the issues involved and the feasibility of the process in a poor herding community. This study focused on tourism in Mongolia and tourism in Bayan-ulgill and Saqooq. The study used both quantitative and qualitative(interview) methods method to identify several points including the survey at saqooq. This study emphasized the issue of community participation in ecotourism development and challenges to the implementation of an ecotourism project. It also focused on the ability of the community participatory approach to tourism development in a remote community. This study's finding suggests some possible

alternative directions to full community participation and control for community-based ecotourism development.

(Thampi2005) This paper describes the eco-tourism project at the Periyar tiger reserve (Thekkedy) in Kerala, India the western Ghats region of Kerala can be protected as an ecotourism zone. The tourism department of the government of Kerala has taken steps to give focused attention to the ecotourism wing has been created to give policy support for the development of the ecotourism destination in the state. The paper describes the project at Periyar which has two basic objectives to manage the protected area and to get local people involved in it. This paper also highlights the achievement received by the ministry of tourism for excellence in Environmental concern in January 2000.

This paper studies country-based tourism as a proper tool for biodiversity conservation by the government for government economic benefit, particularly for local people. This paper also describes CBET as a potential source of economic development for poverty alleviation, particularly in a marginal rural area with limited agriculture potential. In this article, the author illustrates that CBET involves trying to meet multiple objectives. For biodiversity conservation ecotourism is a fairly good land use it can generate income and contribute to community development. This paper also identifies that the effectiveness of CBET must be evaluated in comparison to other types of incentives for conservation action. The author concludes that trust and a positive relationship between local people & project staff was the most important factor.
(Kiss 2004)

Community-based Ecotourism (CBE)

Since Ecotourism (ET) brings many changes at the community level, therefore, the community should have a greater voice in the development and conservation of their natural resources. CBE implies ecotourism programs that take place under the control and active participation of local people who inhabit or own a natural attraction (Lindberg et al., 1999). CBE works closely with local people, provides an incentive for conservation, and more and more often, works outside on locally owned land. As communities are the first to be affected by ecotourism destination areas, therefore, communities are an integral part of sustainable ecotourism. Community-managed

tourism attempts to let communities decide what type of growth they would like to see and then help them implement their plans (Lindberg and Hawkins, 1999). The involvement of the local community in planning and management is also essential for sustainable ecotourism (Coltman, 1989; WTO, 1993; Cater and Lowman, 1994). According to Zeppel (1997), the preservation of cultural tradition, conservation of the natural environment, and maintenance of social, cultural, and religious values are the benefits of ecotourism for rural or indigenous communities. In remote areas with inadequate development ecotourism projects can improve the quality of life, self-esteem, and well-being of local and indigenous communities, and ecotourism can assist with sustaining traditional cultures as natural settings.

With globalization and the rollback of the state from different sectors, one can witness the partnership of the private sector and the public sector. Activities that were earlier conducted by the state and were very centralized have given way to decentralization and the participation of the community and associations of the community. Tourism has also experienced this change and ET in particular has brought in the participation of the local community in the planning as well as the implementation of the projects. As the community lack, adequate capacities to take up sustainable strategy for ecotourism NGOs have come in as the agency to impart training as well as act as the facilitator for the conduct of ecotourism.

NGOs throughout the world, at some point in time, were envisaged to play an important role in seeking alternatives to development and a means to encourage processes of democratization within the state (Fisher, 1997: 445). In South Asia, and more specifically India, a diverse number of leftist movements, social movements, and people's science movements also gained prominence at this time (Mencher, 1999: 2081). These movements were innovative, demanded space for their innovations, and sought and emphasized alternative ways of thinking as well as grassroots struggle.

The first major critique of community-based development is that it is framed in the context of wider hegemonic discourses and practices of development. Grounded in Foucauldian ideas of development as a discursive formation, it highlights the fact that practices and perceptions of development are rooted in a certain form of rationality that allows for a limited form of agency and renders 'unthinkable, unsayable, and undoable others' (Rossi, 2004). A critical study of NGO-driven CBNRM, as well as ecotourism, should take cognizance of the above developments and take off from the existing critiques of community-based development that at least partially apply

to it. This means that envisaging alternative forms of development in the context first of state-centered development and more recently a neo-liberal paradigm of development has its limits, be it in terms of limited devolution to communities, the privileging of hegemonic market- based ideologies or the manifestation of what Ferguson calls 'depoliticized' development – all of which prevent the emergence of new forms of democratization (Ferguson, 1990). A significant literature exists, for example, on JFM and PIM in India that highlights the limited powers given to communities and the fact that besides a 'new' concern of environmental management, the state's thinking continues to be very much situated in old state-centered thinking. (Sundar *et al.*, 2001; Kolavalli, 1995). Even initiatives celebrated in the media, such as the Rajiv Gandhi Watershed Mission in Madhya Pradesh, have come in for criticism from scholars (Baviskar, 2002). There is also evidence to suggest that even older community-initiated collective action is being stifled by excessive government intervention under the guise of the new 'joint' management programs. Experiments with community forest management (CFM) in Orissa, for example, have been incorporated within official JFM strategies, hence reducing the autonomy of community involvement in the management of forests and increasing the role of forest department staff (Edmunds *et al.*, 2003). Similar experiences exist about the 'institutionalization' of participation in tank management.

Other critiques have also highlighted the dangers of strategies such as enterprise-based conservation where nature becomes a commodity and communities increasingly see their environment in individualistic market-oriented terms, very much part of the neo-liberal agenda (Anderson, 2000). State-initiated devolution efforts are generally in worse shape – while local bodies may be in place and even implementing developmental programs, control of natural resources has rarely been handed over to them (Lélé, 2005). But this critique applies to NGOs as well. Kamat, using the example of activists who started taking up developmental work in Maharashtra, highlights how the NGO developmental agenda is shaped and directed by wider hegemonic (apolitical) discourses of development resulting in substantive redistributive forms of development being sidelined, something that *a priori* at least appears to hold for the vast majority of NGO initiated CBNRM experiments (Kamat, 2002). The second critique pertains to the 'community' in CBNRM. The discursive limits to CBNRM highlighted above are central to how 'community' has been problematical. Many scholars have argued that in current development

practice, the community is visualized as primarily a rational, economic space that gives cultural and historical aspects peripheral importance. Not only culture but even mediating categories such as class, caste, gender, and race are poorly understood in forming a community. Oblivious of internal differentiation and history and the cultural context of community, and even the state's influence in structuring social relations and community space, contemporary development practice is seen to be based upon a conceptualization of community as a small, locally situated and harmonious, and autonomous social (in fact economic) formation (Agrawal and Ostrom, 2001; Mosse, 2003a; b; Manor, 1999; Sundar *et al.*, 2001; Ferguson, 1990; Rossi,2004; Baviskar, 2002). While Li (1996) has highlighted how 'idealized' notions of community are a means by which to highlight the need for decentralization and the privileging of the local community, our concern here is with what this implies in terms of the working of CBNRM. Several points need to be mentioned: (1) communities are often envisaged as communities of a shared understanding (Agrawal and Gibson, 1999; Agrawal and Ostrom, 2001) and hence internal differentiations are ignored; (2) imagining such communities of shared understanding results in certain voices within the community being privileged over others; (3) the priorities of the community (in a differentiated sense) are not adequately examined and (4) communities are viewed as 'autonomous' and in opposition to the state often resulting in simplified claims that community-based management is the solution.

One dimension of this critique is elite capture and how women and socially disenfranchised castes and classes are routinely excluded from the space of community participation (Mollinga, 2002; Manor, 2004; Agrawal, 2001a; Agrawal and Gibson, 1999; Harriss and Alavi, 1989; Baland and Platteau, 1996). To what extent questions of *whose resource management* and *what kind of resource management* are problematized in CBNRM are open to question. As a result, little attempt is made to engage with the heterogeneous needs of the community or to address inequities (Mosse, 1999; Jairath, 1999; Meinzen-Dick and Palanisami, 2001). The third critique that links the prior two is that of the pressures of projected implementation through large external agencies and how the process works on the ground. Mosse (2003a; 2005) and Baviskar (2002), for example, highlight how targets and achievements often drive the nature of the intervention. While Mosse highlights how specific project decisions are thrust upon communities due to the pressures on staff in NGOs to deliver desirable outcomes, Baviskar also focuses on how particular villages are selected to

make the ‘process’ more workable. Whether or not these constraints are endemic to community-based management requires, as Mosse correctly argues, more ethnographies of development.

Collective action is privileged and conflicting claims and needs are sought to be managed. The user groups themselves have limited internal democracy and by their very nature are less than representative of the community. Furthermore, although 'participatory' methodologies are often used, it is very often the case that exercises such as resource mapping pay inadequate attention to differential and competing needs. The results of such simplified assumptions are visible in the actual practice of CBNRM at several levels. Community-based management is often envisaged at the scale of the community alone and attempts are primarily made to forge community-level NRM groups. In the case of government schemes such as PIM and JFM, the community is envisaged largely in terms of user groups that invariably have government officials as Ex-Officio members. NGO initiatives are rarely very different.

There are several reasons, despite these critiques and their applicability to NGO-driven development and CBNRM more particularly, that more detailed, comparatives studies are required. First, there is still relatively scant literature on NGO-driven CBNRM in South Asia. Much of the literature on CBNRM in South Asia is 'grey' unpublished literature that invariably is more descriptive than analytical. Second, NGO-driven CBNRM is at best an umbrella term that describes a vast array of experiments that could be very different (Fisher, 1997; Mencher, 1999; Vohra, 1990) hence the danger of generalizing based on a small sample of studies.8 Third, there are several NGOs who appear to be cognizant of the critiques of NGO-driven development and who have ostensibly tried to grapple with them. It is not obvious that all practitioners of CBNRM have confined themselves to ‘mainstream’ ideas of development or are confining themselves to the neo-liberal paradigm of development more recently, blindly rejecting any role for the state or blindly embracing the market. Third, as we have seen while scanning the literature on ecotourism and community-based ecotourism studies, the focus is on the economic aspect and no/negligible focus on the politics that operates in the operation of these projects as well as the nature of interlinkage between the State, NGO and the local community.

The state’s role in the partnership has often been undesirable, especially in control and monitoring which has resulted in conflicts instead of cooperation by the state.

The above review has revealed that while CBNRM has drawn considerable academic attention from social scientists the political aspects have been generally excluded from such studies. While studies on ecotourism are aplenty the political aspect has been hardly studied especially the nature of the partnership between the state, NGOs, and the community in the management of sustainable ecotourism. The following major research gaps can be identified concerning this general observation:

(i) There has not been any attempt to inquire into the political aspects of increasing practices of Public Private Partnership in India, particularly about ecotourism to understand the nature of gains that have accrued to the local community through such practices about the overall emphasis on Public Private Partnership in India.

(ii) Studies on community-based ecotourism have covered the economic aspect but the nature of the linkage between the State and the NGOs as well as the linkage between the local community and the State and the NGO has not been studied generally.

(iii) A glaring research gap lies in areas covered by studies on ecotourism. Most such studies have been made in North, Central, and Southern India. In Sikkim through ecotourism projects are in operation, studies have focused on the tourism aspect and the impact on the biodiversity of the ecotourism project. No study has focused on the conditions of the operation as well as the outcome of these projects.

V. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES & RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The proposed study has the following broad objectives to fulfill:

1. To lay bare the nature and extent of State, NGO, and local community linkages about ecotourism projects in India.
2. To develop local and contextual insights into ecotourism projects in the region under focus.
3. To bring together materials for sensitization to ecotourism experiments for sustainable development and to derive some implications for formulations and implementations of public policy in this regard.

Our study would seek to answer the following broad research questions about the research gaps identified above:

1. What have been the ideas and practices of State, NGO, and local community linkage meant for ecotourism in India, particularly about the local community?
2. How to identify the associated factors for the success of ecotourism projects?
3. How to identify the impediments to the sustainability of ecotourism projects?

VI. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK & HYPOTHESES

Political ecology examines the political dynamics surrounding material and discursive struggles over the environment in the third world. It seeks to address the issue of how politics plays a key role in the human-environment relation leading to environmental degradation/conservation. The role of unequal power relations in constituting a politicized environment is a central theme. Environmental matters are survival matters. While the links between environment and survival are evident, the local meanings vary. Since the late 1980s with the promotion of the concept of `sustainable development, which meant the integration of environmental conservation with economic development, for a heterogeneous group of politicians, state officials, business leaders and nongovernmental organizations keen to incorporate environmental considerations into the development process without unduly disrupting that process became a major consideration. Political ecologists are thus keen to understand the dynamics and properties of a `politicized environment'. One way in which to represent that environment is through what Blaikie (1995) terms `a chain of explanation' surrounding specific environmental problems

Through its recognition of threats to equity and diversity and its promotion of social and environmental justice, political ecology helps to strengthen the balance between men's and women's rights and responsibilities in local communities. It also seeks to explore the multidimensional linkages among gender, environment, livelihoods, and poverty, so that it benefits both women and men. It addresses as well the economic and political barriers to environmental sustainability and social justice.

In light of the above, we need to situate the local community's role in ecotourism. First, its attractiveness lies in its compatibility with the neo-liberal emphasis on social capital formation and transference of welfare state functions to communities and non-state actors. Second, it may be seen as an opportunity of reclaiming power and resistance to hegemonic discourse at local level

situations. The latter, however, is fostered more by favorable political ecological conditions. As theoretical insights are still lacking about those proper conditions, therefore, we will only work on the tentative theoretical framework supporting the linkages between the local community, State, and NGO in the management of community-based ecotourism.

The broad hypotheses that can be derived at this stage may be stated as follows:

1. Ecotourism will continue to marginalize environmental sustainability so long as they are formed and shaped under the logic of the current nature of neo-liberal development strategy.
2. Ecotourism under certain local conditions, environmental, political, socio-cultural, etc., and involvement of appropriate change agents may lead to the local community's greater control over their lives and immediate environment as well as environmental sustainability.

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY & PLAN OF WORK

The present study has a thrust toward qualitative research in its methodological orientation in the proper sense of qualitative research (Babbie,2004). However, it does not foreclose the use of statistical tools wherever necessary. It may be stated in this context that the recalcitrance of qualitative methods regarding standards of validity is considered. But this study's validity and for that to rely on quantitative research may not be a realizable goal given the present level of information that we have been able to assimilate so far. In this respect, qualitative research may be more reliable to make way for quantitative research in the future in this area. Following certain powerful tools of qualitative research such as grounded theory and emergent analysis, we would be prepared to review or improve on our preliminary hypothesis and research questions. Ordinary tools of focus group study or intensive interviewing will be employed whenever suitable. The selection of project sites would be dependent on preliminary exploration of the area in light of the variety of situations such as different types of agencies involved with the projects and sectoral variations. Some ideas about such variations to be covered in the study may now be given.

Most tourism authorities agree to the fact that to be successful, ecotourism should promote the conservation of natural resources and also provide economic gain for the host country and the local people (Doan, 2000). To that end, tourism must be sustainable. Although the Brundtland Report did not specifically address tourism, each of the three Brundtland Report components: economic

sustainability, ecological sustainability, and equity, are projected as necessary for a tourism project to be truly sustainable (A. Woodley, 1993). Therefore, for a development project, such as ecotourism, to be sustainable, a system of checks and balances must be put in place to safeguard the local environment and cultures (Hunter & Green, 1995). Research into sustainable development projects is not well represented. Many authors discuss the lack of systematic reviews of the effects of tourism and development (Doan,2000).

The Consultation Workshop on Ecotourism in Sikkim in January 2006 gave a call for efforts to undertake a detailed carrying capacity study for ecotourism in Sikkim and to develop a clear management strategy to ensure the environmental and economic sustainability of the sector. Representatives from the state Forest Department, the state Tourism Department, the Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim (ECOSS), The Mountain Institute (TMI), various other NGOs, the Sikkim Association of Tour Operators (SATO), and local ecotourism committees participated in the consultation. In his opening address, the Minister for Forests and Wildlife Shri Sher Bahadur Subedi called for greater dialogue and consultations on the issues confronting the sector as a whole. He said that all efforts were being made to promote Sikkim as the "ultimate ecotourism destination". Deliberations were preceded by case studies from various ecotourism committees, mostly community-owned initiatives. They included representatives from Kewzing Tourism Development Committee, Yambong Singalila Community-based Ecotourism Initiative, Sikkim Ecotourism Conservation Federation, Yuksam Community Ecotourism and Trekking, Hee Bermiok Tourism Development and Heritage Conservation Society, Hee Gyathang Ecotourism Committee.

A tree brought out a white paper on ecotourism policy in India soon after. The identified gaps as brought out through the consultations that took place pointed out a lack of effective monitoring and decentralization of the ET projects. Apart from that community involvement is also very limited as the local community is involved only as guides or cooks. This is also due to the lack of capacity of the community to manage such projects and often these projects become resorts rather than community-based ecotourist destinations. As very limited research work has been conducted on these projects the present study intends to fill up the research gap. We would like to study the ET policy and the nature of the linkage between the government of Sikkim, the local NGOs, and

the local community of the ET destinations. We would probe the successes as well as the weaknesses of the projects and in the process address the question of how to promote and sustain community-based ecotourism. A major success has been the emergence of a community- based non-government organization the Khanchendzonga Conservation Committee (KCC). The challenge has been how to build the capacity of the local community to effectively manage the ET project as well as tackle the difficult weather condition that often hampers communication and other logistic capabilities.

Extensive library work would be undertaken to study the ET projects in some select countries as well as in India. Field trips would be undertaken to study the ET projects in Sikkim.

VIII. CHAPTERISATION

The thesis is proposed to be organized by way of the following chapters:

Chapter 1. Introduction

Chapter 2. Ecotourism: Institutionalization and Practice in the world with special reference to India.

Chapter 3. Ecotourism and the role of the Government with special reference to Sikkim

Chapter 4 Community participation in the Ecotourism Projects with special reference to Sikkim

Chapter 5. Summary and Conclusions