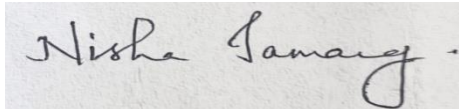


## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the thesis entitled “STATE, NGO’s and Ecotourism: A Study of Select Ecotourism Projects of Sikkim has been prepared by me under the guidance of Professor Ranjita Chakraborty, Department of Political Science, University of North Bengal. No part of this thesis has formed the basis for the award of any degree or fellowship previously.

**Nisha Tamang Lama**



Department of Political Science

University of North Bengal

Raja Rammohunpur

Dist- Darjeeling

Pin-734013

Date:

# UNIVERSITY OF NORTH BENGAL

ACCREDITED BY NAAC WITH GRADE B++

Dr. Ranjita Chakraborty  
Professor  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE



“समानो मूल समिति समानी”

Phone: (0353) 2580192  
Fax : (0353) 2699001  
P.O. North Bengal University  
Raja Rammohunpur,  
Dist. Darjeeling  
West Bengal, India,  
Pin – 734013  
Email : ranjitac.slg@gmail.com

## CERTIFICATE OF SUPERVISOR

It is certified that the work contained in the thesis titled “**STATE, NGOs AND ECOTOURISM: A STUDY OF SELECT ECOTOURISM PROJECTS OF SIKKIM**” by Ms. Nisha Tamang(Lama)”, has been carried out under my supervision and that this work has not been submitted elsewhere for a degree.

November,2022

Signature of Supervisor

  
(Dr.Ranjita Chakraborty) 04-11-2022

Professor

Department of Political Science

North Bengal University

Professor  
Department of Political Science  
University of North Bengal

Document Information

<b>Analyzed document</b>	Nisha Tamang Lama_Political Science.pdf (D148494656)
<b>Submitted</b>	11/3/2022 6:23:00 AM
<b>Submitted by</b>	University of North Bengal
<b>Submitter email</b>	nbuplg@nbu.ac.in
<b>Similarity</b>	7%
<b>Analysis address</b>	nbuplg.nbu@analysis.arkund.com

Sources included in the report

<b>W</b>	URL: <a href="https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/bitstream/handle/1974/5190/Ayotte_Alexandra_L_200909_MES.pdf?sequence=1">https://qspace.library.queensu.ca/bitstream/handle/1974/5190/Ayotte_Alexandra_L_200909_MES.pdf?sequence=1</a> Fetched: 4/26/2022 10:41:41 AM		<b>4</b>
<b>W</b>	URL: <a href="https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327846688_Tourism_community-based_tourism_and_ecotourism_a_definitional_problematic">https://www.researchgate.net/publication/327846688_Tourism_community-based_tourism_and_ecotourism_a_definitional_problematic</a> Fetched: 9/30/2019 12:18:12 PM		<b>5</b>
<b>W</b>	URL: <a href="https://www.uou.ac.in/sites/default/files/slm/BTTM-602.pdf">https://www.uou.ac.in/sites/default/files/slm/BTTM-602.pdf</a> Fetched: 3/6/2021 12:33:39 PM		<b>11</b>
<b>W</b>	URL: <a href="https://forest.rajasthan.gov.in/content/dam/raj/forest/ForestDepartment/PDFs/news/DRAFT%20%20ECOTOURISM%20POLICY%20RAJASTHAN%2031st%20Dec.pdf">https://forest.rajasthan.gov.in/content/dam/raj/forest/ForestDepartment/PDFs/news/DRAFT%20%20ECOTOURISM%20POLICY%20RAJASTHAN%2031st%20Dec.pdf</a> Fetched: 3/3/2021 2:45:49 PM		<b>1</b>
<b>W</b>	URL: <a href="https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323969338_Public_Participation_and_Ecotourism_The_role_and_the_right_of_people_in_Sikkim">https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323969338_Public_Participation_and_Ecotourism_The_role_and_the_right_of_people_in_Sikkim</a> Fetched: 10/23/2019 11:46:06 PM		<b>11</b>
<b>W</b>	URL: <a href="http://sikennis.nic.in/WriteReadData/UserFiles/file/ET_Policy_book_Pages_20-01-12[1].pdf">http://sikennis.nic.in/WriteReadData/UserFiles/file/ET_Policy_book_Pages_20-01-12[1].pdf</a> Fetched: 11/10/2021 8:20:27 AM		<b>23</b>
<b>W</b>	URL: <a href="http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/FINAL%20Draft%20of%20Sikkim%20Ecotourism%20Policy.pdf">http://www.indiaenvironmentportal.org.in/files/FINAL%20Draft%20of%20Sikkim%20Ecotourism%20Policy.pdf</a> Fetched: 4/30/2021 9:44:31 PM		<b>23</b>

Entire Document

STATE, NGO'S AND ECO-TOURISM: A STUDY OF SELECT ECOTOURISM PROJECTS OF SIKKIM A thesis submitted for the Award of the Degree of Philosophy (Ph.D.) in Political Science under the University of North Bengal Submitted By Nisha Tamang lama Department of Political Science University of North Bengal Research Supervisor PROF. RANJITA CHAKRABORTY Department of Political Science University of North Bengal November 2022

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

74% **MATCHING BLOCK 1/78** **W**

definition of sustainable development as 2 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

*Ranjita Chakraborty*  
**Professor**  
 Department of Political Science  
 University of North Bengal  
 4-11-22

*Nisha Tamang*

## **ABSTRACT**

The present study seeks to address the understanding of community-based ecotourism projects in Sikkim 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 communities in planning and managing ecotourism in the context of hegemonic state-market relations in the area under focus.

The present study focused on the Ecotourism Policy and the nature of the linkage between the government of Sikkim, the local NGOs, and the local community of the Ecotourism destination. 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. NGOs have a potentially valuable role in supporting and building the capacity of local communities to participate in ecotourism programs, especially in defining the zoning and designing interpretation materials and facilities. Many NGOs have been participating in the tourism industry based on their different aims, but their major involvement has occurred within the area where tourism is linked with the local Community and environment; "community-based ecotourism". Field trips were undertaken to study the ET projects in Sikkim. No study has focused on the conditions of the operation as well as the outcome of these projects.

The present study seeks to examine Sikkim's Ecotourism Policy establishing the state as an ultimate and unique ecotourism destination offering memorable and high-quality learning experiences to visitors while contributing towards poverty alleviation and promotion of nature conservation. In Sikkim, though ecotourism projects are in operation, studies have focused on community participation and promoting conservation and sustainable development

## PREFACE

Ecotourism is a means of sustainable economic development and protection of the cultural and natural heritage of our country. Sikkim the ultimate eco-tourism destination is the policy motto of the state. The state is employing a system of environmental fees and permits for entry and stays time restriction in some environmentally sensitive high-altitude pristine. Since Ecotourism (ET) brings many changes at the community level. The community should have a greater voice in the development and conservation of their natural resources. 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 s natural settings. Community-based Tourism in developing countries tends to be located in rural areas. Many rural tourism initiatives are being conceived within the agenda of community-based Tourism, which combines aspects of community development, poverty alleviation, cultural heritage, and conservation. With the introduction of the concept of rural tourism, the Government of India also showcases the very idea of opening the rural life of India to its visitors. The scheme of rural tourism was started by the Ministry of Tourism in 2002-03 to highlight rural life, art culture, and heritage. The intention behind this idea was to benefit the local people economically and socially, as well as to enable the local communities to be self-dependent which ultimately results in the development of the village. In India tourism is viewed and promoted as a 'development paradigm' and a key component for growth. Along with the national government, many state governments are keen to promote community-based tourism in the form of rural tourism and home stay few are west Bengal, Kerala, Karnataka, Sikkim Rajasthan, Ladakh, etc. They are helped by local NGOs, National banks, and International NGOs.

Community-based tourism centers in Sikkim are generally run, promoted, and monitored by local people. Each community-based tourism destination has its own local body or community-based

organization. Sikkim Tourism is interested in seeing that all tourism projects in Sikkim are eco-friendly. For this, there is close coordination between the Eco-Cell of the Forest Department and the Tourism Department. All projects in these sensitive bio-diversity areas are cleared through the Eco-Cell of the Forest Department. Thus, it is ensured that tourism development projects do not infringe on environmental law. The Sikkim Ecotourism Policy has been developed proactively by the State to not only ensure the sustainable livelihood of the local people but to protect and manage the forest, as well. There is also a growing demand for new products- village tourism and homestays, mountain biking, paragliding, and bird and butterfly-watching, all of which can generate a host of new service providers from amongst the local youth. Tourism has linkages with a wide range of allied sectors and services that can provide employment and income to locals. By developing local capacities for entrepreneurship, and service delivery and a focus on high-value nature and culture-based products, the state can leverage these opportunities to make tourism a key sector in Sikkim's economy.

With a flourishing tourism industry that was on the one hand more bent towards mass tourism, in 2002, the South Asian Regional Conference on Ecotourism was organized in Sikkim by The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) and Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim (ECOSS) with support from UNDP and the Ministry of Tourism. This was a milestone in introducing the concept of Ecotourism to Sikkim and the North East Region and in defining community-based tourism in the state. Several ecotourism sites in different parts of the state Kewzing, Yuksam, Dzongu, and Pastanga were some of the first community-based tourism (CBT) sites that evolved as a result and established themselves lived in keeping visitors at their homes, will promote cultural tourism simultaneously with nature-based tourism. For this purpose, village tourism is needed to be highlighted with new model villages.

At present Government, stakeholders, and local NGOs have all tied their hands for making Sikkim, “The Ultimate Ecotourism Destination”. weaving in principles of strong community participation.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

First and foremost, Praise and thanks to God, the Almighty, for his showers of blessings throughout this research work to complete the research successfully.

I would like to express my deep and Sincere gratitude to my research supervisor, professor Ranjita Chakraborty for her continuous support and guidance throughout my Ph.D. Course.

I am truly indebted to her encouragement and dedication.

I also express my gratitude to the tourism Department, Government of Sikkim for their support and information.

I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation to the communities of Dzongu, Dentam (Uttaray) Assam Linchey who participated in my research and willingly share their experiences.

I would also be thankful to my colleagues who supported me in gathering information from various NGOs and Stakeholders.

Last but not the least, I'm grateful to my husband Bikash, my little son Barnab for continuous support and understanding when undertaking my research work, and my brother Deepan for his support in the Technical field of editing and formatting

The Present Study is dedicated to my beloved mom whose dream was to see me complete my Ph.D. and who bless me continuously from heaven.

Finally, I am greatly indebted to all of my well-wishers whose prayers and inspiration help me to fulfill my research work.