

PROCEEDINGS

**Workshop on "Ecotourism in Himalaya: Prospects and Challenges"
Product Development and Marketing for Ecotourism**

21st and 22nd December 2005, Timber Trail Hotel, Parwanoo

Organised by

The Biodiversity Conservation Society (BiodCS)
Shamshi, District Kullu, Himachal Pradesh

Supported by

The Ford Foundation, New Delhi

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Background

Recent trends show that the proportion of what we call the “ecotourist” out of the total tourist arrivals is rapidly on the increase. More and more people, especially the young are now attracted to remote forest areas, adventure and serious trekking. Students from city schools all over the country arrive annually in large numbers and enjoy a variety of nature based activities. Fortunately the states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttaranchal have much to offer to this new, emerging breed of ecotourists.

One area of concern in the tourism sector in general and in ecotourism specifically, is how we can understand and measure the negative impacts of visitation on wild areas. Good research and greater understanding of the impact of tourism would have to be a cornerstone in any development of sustainable eco-tourism. Hence, there is a need to work out a simple but sustainable mechanism to monitor the impact of eco tourism, so that we can work collectively towards achieving our common goal.

Towards this end a workshop on “Ecotourism in Himalaya: Prospects and Challenges” was organized at Timber Trail, Parwanoo, Himachal Pradesh on the 21st and 22nd of December, 2005, with the support of the Ford Foundation, New Delhi. Participants included a cross section of practitioners from across the country as well as senior officers of Government and representatives of civil society (Annexure II). The workshop was also attended by the Forest Ministers of HP and Uttaranchal.

The Workshop objectives

- ? Enhance the understanding of the participants about the development of Ecotourism based livelihoods, and marketing.
- ? Identify institutions to facilitate Ecotourism product development and marketing.
- ? Develop understanding to institutionalize community partnerships with government and private sector for sustainable livelihood development and marketing via Ecotourism.
- ? Highlight the issues in Ecotourism product development and marketing with emphasis on the potentials for synergy between different programmes.
- ? Identify areas for collective action to maximize efficiency, effectiveness and impact of ecotourism-based livelihood initiatives.

The Process

21st December 2005 : Day One

The Workshop started on 21st December 2005 with the inaugural session. The speeches delivered by the Principal Secretary Tourism, Principal Secretary Forests and Principal Chief Conservator Forests, HP set the agenda of the Workshop. The Hon’ble Forest Minister, HP formally inaugurated the WS during this session.

Mr Avay Shukla, Principal Secretary, Tourism drew attention to the fact that though tourism was booming in the state, it had yet to benefit the local people especially the poor. Attributing this to some flaw in the current EcoTourism (ET) policy of the state, Mr Shukla indicated that perhaps the previous ET initiative in the state was too forest department centric. He stressed the need to

broadbase the direct stakeholdership by including departments like PWD, Town & Country Planning and even Rural Development. The forest department needs to perceive and change its role as a facilitator rather than a regulator. There was a need to be more open about sharing assets like rest houses. Other issues highlighted by Mr Shukla included the prevailing urban mess and the loss of architectural integrity in nearly all new construction. Local communities need to be empowered; this was fundamental. All tourism needed to become eco-tourism, eventually. He also emphasized on the integrated development planning for achieving the targets of development without degrading the environment.

Mr Ashok Thakur the PS Forests who had till recently been steering both the state's tourism and the forest policies, emphasized on the community aspect of ET. He highlighted several points in the proposed ET Revised Policy (under consideration of GoHP). Mr Thakur said that under the new policy all forest rest houses would be open to the public and for this a MoU will be entered into between the ET Society and the forest department. He mentioned that in future CAT Plan funds would also be used for renovation of forest rest houses. The Heritage villages scheme of the GoI would be more vigorously pursued in the state. He also mentioned that to rule out the adverse impacts of eco-tourism in the wild areas, strict rules will be framed and proper follow up will be ensured by the forest department with the help of the communities.

Agreeing with the various comments and suggestions made by the earlier speakers, the PCCF, Mr RA Singh, indicated that in ET the lead role would continue to be of the forest department and that others were most welcome and would be encouraged to join. Mr. Singh opined that the Eco-Tourism programme will provide opportunities for harmonizing different facets of mountain environment, its local inhabitants, their livelihoods and culture. The natural resource based Eco-Tourism development leading to generation of sustainable livelihoods can be one of the long term methods of the sustainable mountain development. As issues connected to sustainable rural livelihoods come more into focus, there is simultaneously a growing need for better co-ordination between various government departments and their capacity to institutionally engage with civil society groups.

The Hon'ble Forest Minister, Thakur Ram Lal drew attention to the various comments and suggestions made by the earlier speakers and endorsing them further added that GoHP had decided to hand over all the natural wetlands and manmade reservoirs in the state to the Wildlife Wing for better protection and management. Importantly, the minister emphasized that the ET policy and thrust need not be in conflict with interests of other departments and that all needed to evolve joint and shared action plans to push ecotourism in the state of Himachal Pradesh. He also explained that Government of Uttaranchal is progressing to promote the concept of eco-tourism in the state.

The first session was devoted to the Product Development and Marketing chaired by Mr. Kiran Desai of Center for Environment Education, Ahmedabad. There were five case studies presented: Sunshine-SAHARA partnerships by Ankit Sood; Banjara Camps by Rajesh Ojha; Jungle Loges and Resorts by Madhu Sharma; Spiti Initiatives – Homestays by Ishita Khanna; and The Himalayan Ski Village by Amit Negi. The presentations mostly emphasized the Ecotourism as a product which need to be marketed with care so that the environment is not polluted or disrupted. The corporate social responsibility was also elaborated.

The first two presentations indicated that in a short span there was big growth in hinterland tourism. But this appeared to be more so in the Banjara Camps case where the sites were accessible by road. The learning appears to be that ET is about small projects, small capital and small operators. It was important to follow up with visitors and kind of be in touch with them. Both examples showed that local community income got a boost as handicrafts and other local produce "worth crores" was sold in recent years. An excellent presentation on the Jungle Lodges Resort (JLR) in Karnataka was made by their Executive Director, Ms Madhu Sharma. She brought out the near phenomenal growth in tourist traffic to the various sites of JLR. A learning from this example, contrary to the ones from the

previous two examples, was that “small does not work.” JLR had taken up aggressive marketing within the country and abroad with easy reservations via internet. JLR had graduated to a level where it provided consultancy services to different clients in various parts of the country. An interesting presentation on promoting homestays in Spiti by a local NGO, Muse drew attention to local involvement in improving sanitation and cleanliness and waste disposal (untreated as yet) but also towards maintaining architectural integrity of the homes and retaining old systems of using dry toilets and thus helping conserve precious water. In this case study, an innovative system of paying livestock insurance premia from ET earnings has been put in place. Two related points, seen as necessary for ET came out in the last presentation. These focused on issues related to organic farming which is being researched and pushed around Manali town. The second idea was about setting up a Kullu Haat (Delhi Haat model) in Manali to attract handicrafts and local produce from within the Kullu valley and thus promote incomes of local communities.

Mr. Kiran Desai, the session chairman, in his summary brought out the very important issue of bringing an appropriate match between the product and the marketing strategy. With greater clarity about the target groups, better design and presentation of products and consequent success in marketing was achievable.

The second session was on Ecotourism in Uttaranchal chaired by Mr. R.A. Singh, Pr. CCF, HP. The Forest Minister of Uttaranchal, Mr. Nav Prabhat made a presentation on the ecotourism initiatives in Uttaranchal. Mr. D.V.S. Khati, CCF in Uttaranchal presented a case study of Corbett NP. Mr. Vrigarsh Raj Tariyal presented his work on ecotourism with UNDP support, and Mr. Vikram Singh highlighted the points related to the Mahseer based ecotourism activities in UA and HP.

Hon’ble Forest Minister of Uttaranchal, Mr Nav Prabhat indicated in his address that UA was the first state in the country to establish Conservation Reserves, a new protected area category under the IUCN protected areas classification list. Another achievement for the state was the settlement of the protracted Gujjar dispute in and around Rajaji national park. This had been amicably settled with the Gujjars agreeing to and moving outside the park. It was important, the minister stressed that the impact of tourism on local cultures be understood and carefully addressed as often outside music and fashions and foods were detrimental to local values and traditions. In UA tourism the emphasis was on local food, local entertainment, and local souvenirs. However, there is a need to find ways to tackle cultural attrition. An excellent presentation on the Corbett Tiger Reserve by one of its ex directors Mr. Khati was a treat. It would seem that the locals are gradually beginning to develop a stake in conservation of the reserve and can see a future there.

A new term “Bio-tourism” was introduced in a presentation. Mr. Vikram Singh’s presentation on Mahseer conservation and sportsfishing interestingly highlighted the involvement of the rich and famous in conservation upon being allowed to satisfy an ancient human drive – to kill. But community involvement in protection and monitoring of the fish resource along allocated stretches of the river apparently helped share the booty with the locals. However, a point about mahseer angling being illegal within protected areas (as in HP) remained unanswered.

Chairman of the session, Mr. RA Singh thanked the Hon’ble Minister from UA and agreed with the suggestions and concerns expressed and indicated that Himachal had much to learn from the vast Uttaranchal experience in ET and would certainly heed the advise given.

The third session was on Capacity Building and Equity chaired by Dr. Ganesan Balachander of The Ford Foundation. The presentations were Certification in Ecotourism by Puneet Dwiwedi; Capacity Building for Ecotourism by Kiran Desai; Benefits to Local Communities from Tourism at three World Heritage Sites by Seema Bhatt; Ecotourism Learning by Ramesh Jain; ATREE experience by Manoj Debas. The presentations put emphasis on the capacity building for the ecotourism so that both the communities and environment are benefited.

Though late in the day, this emerged as an interesting session with many of the assumptions being questioned and new challenges highlighted. At the outset, the session chairman Dr. Ganesan Balachander stressed three critical issues relating to the viability of small enterprises, the policy environment and matters addressing issues of equity. In her study of three World Heritage Sites, Ms Seema Bhatt brought out the fact that in one case, the Kaladeo Ghana bird sanctuary in Rajasthan about 50 % of the employment generated consisted of people from the nearby Bharatpur town and the actual local poor were deprived of this opportunity. Mr. Manoj Dabas's presentation questioned many of the assumptions and approaches managers and decision makers tend to take towards ET development programmes. He brought out that actually government officers and others were as much in need to capacity building as the local community and it was essential that patronizing attitudes be dropped sooner than later. Mr. Kiran Desai's presentation highlighted issues of policy around ET and indicated the need for institutional and professionalized inputs into capacity building. Selected institutions or individuals needed to be involved with the follow up process as well. Mr. Puneet Diwedi's presentation on certification highlighted the obvious advantages of performance over process orientation in the evolution of CBET and that this gave an objective tool to measure performance and make mid course corrections.

Dr. Balachander, the session chairman, summarized some of the issues from the studies presented and in particular mentioned that issues around equity need to be reflected upon more critically and these need to factor into the policy process.

22nd December, 2005 : Day Two

On 22nd December, 2005, Mr. Shekhar Singh chaired the morning session on Institution Building which had four presentations: the on-going work of Society for Hill and Rural Area Advancement (SAHARA) in the buffer zone of the Great Himalayan National Park; Periyar experience by Anil Bharadwaj; Manali Initiative by Kunal Satyarthi; and WWF experiences by Murali. The presentations highlighted that there is a need to build strong institutions wherein the ecotourism activities can be grounded.

SAHARA, a local NGO, has been at the forefront of a CBET initiative around the GHNP in Kullu for several years now. The ET activities around GHNP, mainly involving treks of varying difficulty have been serviced by an ET Group set up under SAHARA. Members of this group are usually un or underemployed young males from the households of women group members. SAHARA has organized mainly poor women into Savings & Credit groups and nearly all income generation activities are carried out through these groups. The ET benefits thus flow directly to the households of women members of different S&C groups. Recently, several of the women's groups pooled their savings and loaned them to SAHARA to help procurement of equipment like tents, sleeping bags and so on. This reflects a growing confidence among members of the future of ET in the area and how it could benefit the local economy.

A presentation on the Periyar Tiger Reserve, cited as a success story in wildlife tourism in the country was made by its former director, Mr. Anil Bhardwaj. In several innovative ways the earlier poachers were included in the protection effort and the impressive results showed how genuine involvement of local people can turn poachers to protectors. These very same protectors are now being trained afresh to become ET watchers and guides and further enhance their incomes. Tourist pressure at Periyar has always been a problem. Working towards less negative impact of visitation has become a priority. One lead being actively pursued is to achieve greater diversion of tourists to nearby centres like Sabrimala shrine and elsewhere. However, given the humungous visitation to Sabrimala itself of pilgrims from far and wide, the question could well be, how Periyar can handle the overflow from Sabrimala instead of the other way round?

A crisp, fact filled presentation on the Manali Initiative by Mr. Kunal the DFO of Kullu highlighted the present plight of Manali, raising the critical question whether Manali may already have strayed beyond the point of no return? The DFO thought so. Given the crammed and cramped conditions, what with over 20000 legal rooms in around 500 registered hotels / guesthouses; only one lane, narrow roads taking on a nearly unstoppable flow of cars with nowhere to park them, Manali may well have lost the case as an ET destination. A possible solution to easing the tourist pressure on Manali would involve effective and imaginative diversion of tourist to other destinations within the Kullu valley and beyond? Surveys carried out revealed that though many tourists were willing to walk and trek and visit nearby places, there was a dearth of information and where to get it and also uncertainty about arrangements and facilities.

Session chairman Mr. Shekhar Singh pointed out that handling tourist pressure and more importantly its negative impacts were a key to future management and sustainability of ET? The success of ET could be measured in it becoming an effective instrument in conservation of natural resources.

Based on the above presentations, the next session was for the group-work. All the participants worked in two thematic working groups (see the themes below). Each working group based on the case studies and their own experience, was to identify:

- ? Lessons from the case studies (what works and what doesn't)
- ? the issues in Ecotourism product development and marketing with emphasis on the potentials for synergy between the different programmes.
- ? actions that can be taken at the individual/ organizational/ site specific level.
- ? areas for collective action to maximize efficiency, effectiveness and impact of ecotourism-based livelihood initiatives.

Two Themes

- i. Institution building for Eco Tourism (e.g. EcoT Society of HP)
- ii. Marketing strategies for ET products

The two groups made presentations to all the participants. The discussions mainly focused on the example of the EcoSoc (Ecotourism Society of Himachal Pradesh). It was pointed out that there is a need to further strengthen the mandate of the EcoSoc so that the role of the government department is mainly of facilitator and the local institutions such as Panchayats and user groups implement and manage the local level initiatives. The marketing strategies were also to be people oriented with government in the role of a facilitator or provider of programmes such as capacity building for institution building, product development, etc.

The Workshop Outcome

The afternoon session was to discuss the deliberations of WS proceedings so far. Shekhar Singh, Kiran Desai, G. Balachander, Vinay Tandon, and Anil Bharadwaj moderated the discussion. The group presented the draft recommendations of the workshop (Pl see Annexure I below). In introducing the recommendations, Mr. Shekhar Singh mentioned that in the last two days of presentations and discussions it was not coming clear what ET was about? He clarified that the purpose of ET was to promote conservation and not basically be seen as income generation or rural livelihoods. It was therefore important that the recommendations spell out the principles of ET and that these needed to be adequately reflected in policy. This was followed by an open discussion during which participants including the panel shared their views and concerns. These are summarized below.

Mr. Kiran Desai stated that ET needed financial resources and that these may also be got from mainstream tourism. Similar concerns about investment in ET were raised by Mr AK Gulati. The issue of whether or not “5 Star” culture should figure in ET was commented upon. Mr. Desai felt that the issue should be left open and it was for the tourist to choose what “star” they were comfortable with. ET he asserted “limits and liberates tourism”. Ms. Ishita Khanna indicated that whether it was 5 or 7 star, the issue was about the “culture” being environmentally friendly. Mr. Desai also raised a question about whether it was possible to have “a pre-determined carrying capacity”? He further added that it was the stake of the local community that would stand as a buffer between “destruction and conservation”. Mr. Anil Bhardwaj mentioned that we need to look at conservation at the landscape level and not just of wildlife. He also said that in the marketing and product design it was the process that was very important. Mr. Puneet Diwedi said that it was important to have a feedback mechanism in order to figure out how a particular policy was doing. Mr. AK Gulati also raised the issue of self-sustainability of CBET. He said that the recommendations need to be put in a positive way and that the marketing and inter-sectoral issues need to be further addressed. Ms. Seema Bhatt added that it was essential to have monitoring and evaluation mechanisms figure in the recommendations. Mr. Sanjeeva Pandey saw the pilot projects as a testing for the relevance of the policy and also added that third party monitoring was necessary. Mr. Farhad Vania observed that the policy (policies) needed to have a period of validity and that an interface between GoI and State ET policies was required. He mentioned that it was important to understand when ET actually became Mass tourism? Mr. Sukhdev emphasized that in pilot locations at least the ET Plans should be implemented through the panchayats and wondered why people were afraid of the panchayats? Ms. Priya drew attention to the need to build safeguards in so far as benefit sharing was concerned and that ways to understand the impact of ET were a priority. Mr. Amit Negi said that while R&D in ET was essential and ongoing, it was important to have it carried out in a time frame. It would be very useful, he said to develop a database for people in ET. A participant mentioned about the need to reflect the precautionary principle in the set of ET principles, while someone pleaded that “ET is business. It is to be enabled”. In addition, the panel contributed the following points for consideration and for action in enabling ET in HP and elsewhere.

- ? Ultimately the principles of Eco Tourism (ET) need to apply to all tourism
- ? There is a need to elaborate on the principles of ET in the documents such as The Revised ET Policy (circulated during the Workshop).
- ? The emphasis is to be on ET as a process sub-divided into small-small steps in a sequence leading to the nature conservation. The activities such as organizing people in User groups, rural development, product development, etc. are part of the Big Picture which strengthens environmental conservations and discourages pollution and degradation.
- ? No one sector can “go it alone” in any sphere. There is growing cross sectoral interface implying that we have a host of cross and inter-sectoral issues in policy, in co-ordination and in convergence.
- ? If role of communities is to be enlarged and genuine empowerment allowed to happen, various institutions from Panchayati Raj Institution (PRIs) to Government agencies and all in-between have to make available institutional space for Community Based Organizations to function and grow and get involved in the policy process.
- ? In order to document, collate and analyze / synthesize the various existing and emerging policy issues and concerns of different sectors / departments and simultaneously incorporate feedback from the village / grass-root level, and to factor these alongwith research findings and best practices into a dynamic policy process, there is a need to develop an institutional mechanism dedicated to steering the policy process.

- ? A beginning in this direction has been made under the HPFSR project with the establishment of Policy Analysis and Planning Unit (PAPU) and its mandate to engagement with the policy process in a multi-stakeholder interests' environment. This mandate can be extended to include looking at the range of emergent policy issues related to ET. Another, urgent and important issue in ET is to develop and validate general and location specific indicators that measure the negative impact of visitation particularly in eco-sensitive and fragile environments. Working on understanding through an analytical process, the combined impact of different policies and a role in guiding monitoring of this process could be another area entrusted to PAPU.

Ms. Ishita Khanna of the MUSE was requested by the workshop participants to coordinate and monitor the activities related to eco tourism in Himachal Pradesh. She gracefully accepted. Further action on this to be co-ordinated with Mr Sanjeeva Pandey.

Draft Recommendations

In the context of the new draft Eco Tourism (ET) policy which states that activities will be promoted in tandem with the principles of Community Based Eco Tourism (CBET); the following principles be adopted

A. Principles

- 1 (a) ET is that activity which contributes positively to conservation by:
 - ✍ promoting local support for conservation by developing among local people a stake in conservation through participatory approaches and by providing alternate livelihoods
- 1 (b) Promoting wider support by:
 - ✍ developing a larger constituency
 - ✍ giving a stake to a larger number of people in conservation
 - ✍ Raising financial resources for conservation by
- 1 (c) Deploying profits made from ET.
- 2 (a) ET is an activity which does not promote or support environmentally unsustainable activities like:
 - ✍ disturbance at landscape level or to wildlife (eg tiger `darshan`)
 - ✍ “five star” accommodation
 - ✍ excessive consumption of electricity / water and so on
 - ✍ generation of non bio degradable / large quantities of garbage
 - ✍ trigger increased pressure on local natural resources, e.g. goats
 - ✍ exceed scientifically pre - determined carrying capacity
- 2 (b) ET does not violate local cultural norms
3. ET can only be effective as a means for conservation as part of a larger, comprehensive integrated conservation and development plan. Ultimately the principles of ET need to apply to all tourism.

Definition: (The above principles are consistent with the internationally accepted ET definition adopted by the International Eco Tourism Society):

“Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people”
4. If the role of communities is to be enlarged and genuine empowerment allowed to happen, various institutions from Panchayati Raj Institutions to Govt agencies and all in between have to make available institutional space for Civil Society Organizations to function and grow and get involved in the policy process.

B. Capacity Building

In order to effectively implement ET activities capacities need to be developed at all levels:

1. **Systemic** capacity including development and integration of policies, laws, schemes, interface between GoI and state policies and programs at state and sub-state levels.

For this purpose it is recommended that a specific sub group under the HP ET Society be set up comprising representatives of all concerned departments and civil society groups. The function of this sub group to include regular monitoring policies / programs and pursue with Govt. the required modifications and changes in policy

2. **Institutional** capacity. In addition to the HPET Soc, there is a civil society group to function as a watchdog and pressure group. This group will also interact with Govt. of HP to strengthen institutional capacity within Govt. and benefit sharing safeguards.
3. **Individual** capacity. This needs to be taken up across all levels of Govt. and appropriate civil society groups. Modules on ET need to be developed and introduced into other, general training programs.

List of Participants

Guest Participants

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11.	Rajesh Ojha	Banjara Camps & Retreats Pvt. Ltd., 1A, Hauz Khas Village; New Delhi-110016	011-26861397; 26851552/53; 9810040397 www.banjaracamps.com
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Guest Participants from Uttarakhand

1.	Mr. Nav Prabhat	Hon'ble Forest Minister, Uttarakhand	
2.	DVS Khati	Chief Conservator of Forests, (Planning and Financial Mgmt), 87 Rajpur Road, Dehradun	dvskhati@yahoo.com
3.	Mr, Vrigarsh Raj Tariyal	Society for Community Involvement in Development (SFCID), Pipalkoti, Distt.-Chamoli, Uttarakhand (India) 246472	jpmaithani@www.sfcid.org Tel: 01372-266450 Mob: 09412973399

Officials from Tourism and other Departments

1.	Avay Shukla	Pr. Secretary, Tourism and Transport, HP
2.	D Mukerjee	Sec.-cum-Principal, IISM, Shimla
3.	Pramod Chauhan	PS to Forest Minister, HP
4.	KL Mastana	District Tourism Officer, Solan
5.	Laxmi Sharma	DD News, Shimla
6.	BS Thakur	APRO, Solan

Officials from the Forest Department

1.	Ashok Thakur	Pr. Secretary, Forests, Himachal Pradesh
2.	RA Singh	Pr. CCF, HP.
3.	AK Gulati	Addnl. Pr. CCF (WL)
4.	RK Sood	CCF, HPFSRP
5.	RK Gupta	Director, Kandi Project at Solan
6.	Parveen Thapliyal	MD, HP Handloom and Handicraft Corporation
7.	BD Suyal	CF (P&L) at Shimla
8.	DP Sinha	CF (Finance) at Shimla
9.	M Narayanappa	CF, Nahan
10.	Alok Nagar	DFO, Solan
11.	Kunal Satyarthi	DFO, Kullu
12.	Vinay Tandon	Consultant, PAPU
13.	Farhad Vanya	Consultant, PAPU
14.	Sanjeeva Pandey	CF, Parks at Shamshi
15.	Labh Singh	Dy. Director, GHNP, at Shamshi.
16.	Suneet Bharadwaj	ACF Probationer, Kullu

**Ecotourism Society of Himachal Pradesh
Memorandum of Association; Articles of Association;
Financial Regulations; Staff Regulations**

Memorandum of Association

The name of the Society shall be the **Ecotourism Society of Himachal Pradesh** which hereafter will be referred as "The Society".

1. The head office of the Society shall be located at Shimla (Himachal Pradesh).
2. Area of operation of the Society shall be the whole of the Himachal Pradesh.
3. **Objectives of Society**

The Society shall be an autonomous and independent body with the main aim of promotion of Community Based Ecotourism (CBET) in Himachal Pradesh particularly using latest approaches of Participatory Forestry Management for sustainable development of the Forests. This Society is based on the Ecotourism Policy of Himachal Pradesh 2001 which emphasizes "that *involvement of local communities in the tourism (called 'ecotourism' herein after) would support their livelihood needs and consequently create their direct stake in conservation of local culture, ecology and environment.*" "This concept of 'community based ecotourism' would go a long way in providing better income generation options to the rural people. This would also mean less dependence upon the natural resources in as far as it amounts to removal of produce from these areas. There would be, moreover, greater incentive in conservation of local traditions, culture, heritage and environs, as these would be seen as aiding in local economy rather than an impediment to it."

To achieve this main aim, the society shall have the following objectives:

- a. To develop the State of Himachal Pradesh as a shining example of Community Based Ecotourism the world over.
- b. To promote community based ecotourism (CBET) which is ecologically sustainable, financially viable, culturally acceptable, and beneficial to the village communities and encourages nature conservation education in the relevant places in Himachal Pradesh
- c. To project the pristine beauty and natural environment of Himachal Pradesh to the world, while not undermining the resource base.
- d. To evolve strategies for the development and the efficient use of the Forest Rest Houses, Forest Inspections Huts and other relevant infrastructure (camping sites, forest trails, film shooting grounds, etc.) which could help in promoting the CBET in local Panchayats.
- e. To organize activities particularly with educational institutions/school children in respect of disseminating information through workshops, presentations, paper- readings and essay-writing competition etc. in respect of CBET and its allied fields.
- f. To negotiate with other persons, institutions etc. for promoting and enhancing the CBET resources and networking.
- g. To disseminate information on all matters related to CBET development in Himachal Pradesh.
- h. To advise the HP Government on all matters related to development of CBET in Himachal Pradesh.
- i. To create, and or maintain such assets as felt necessary.

The Governing Body of the Society shall be the body constituted by the Government of Himachal Pradesh keeping in mind the aforesaid objectives.

Except for the Biodiversity Conservation Society (BiodCS) (or any other society to be notified separately by the Govt of HP) which is operating in the Great Himalayan National Park, all other Societies pertaining to ecotourism in HP Forest Department will be merged in the Ecotourism Society of Himachal Pradesh.

1. The Society

The Society shall consist of the following members:

i.	Chief Minister, Himachal Pradesh	President
ii.	Forest Minister of Himachal Pradesh	Vice President
iii.	Pr. Secretary Finance, Govt. of HP	Member
iv.	Pr. Secretary Tourism, Govt. HP	Member
v.	Pr. Secretary RD, Govt. HP	Member
vi.	Pr. Secretary Education, Govt. HP	Member
vii.	Pr. Secretary Fisheries, Govt. HP	Member
viii.	Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests, HP	Member
ix.	Addnl. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), HP	Member
x.	Pr. Secretary, Forests, Govt. of HP	Member Secretary

We the several persons whose names and addressed are given below having associated ourselves for the purpose described in the Memorandum of Association do hereby subscribe our names to this Memorandum of Association and set our several and respective hands here unto and form ourselves into a Society under Society Registration Act, 1860 and hold copy of which duly certified to be true copy by three members of the governing Body is filed herewith along with this Memorandum of Association this _____ day of the month _____ of _____ in the year of Two Thousand and Five.

Sr. No.	Name	Designation	Age	Signature
1.		Pr. Secretary (Forests), to the Govt. of HP.		
2.		Pr. Secretary (Finance) to the Govt. of HP.		
3.		Pr. Secretary (Tourism) to the Govt. of HP.		
4.		Pr. Secretary (Education) to the Govt. of HP.		
5.		Pr. Secretary (Rural Dev.) to the Govt. of HP.		
6.		Pr. Secy., (Fisheries) to the Govt. of HP.		
7.		Pr. CCF, HP, Shimla.		
8.		Addnl. Pr. CCF (WL), HP.		

In the presence of (i) Sh. _____
(Designation & Address)

(ii) Sh. _____
(Designation & Address)

Articles of Association

Rules of the Ecotourism Society of Himachal Pradesh

1. Title

These rules shall be called “Rules of the **Ecotourism Society of Himachal Pradesh**”

2. Scope and Application

These Rules shall extend to all the units and activities of the Society.

3. Date of Application

These Rules shall come into force from the date on which the Rules of **Ecotourism Society of Himachal Pradesh** are approved by the HP Government.

4. Definitions

In these Rules unless the context otherwise requires:

- i. “Act” shall mean The Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- ii. The “Society” or “EcoSoc” shall mean the **Ecotourism Society of Himachal Pradesh**.
- iii. “Governing Body” shall mean the body as constituted under these rules by the Government of Himachal Pradesh.
- iv. “The Chairman” shall mean the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Society.
- v. “State government” shall mean Government of Himachal.
- vi. The “Executive Committee” shall mean the body which is constituted as such under Rule-16 as the Executive Committee of the Society.
- vii. "Officers and Staff" shall mean employees (permanent or temporary) of the society appointed by the Executive Committee or any authority or officer delegated with the powers to do so and would include consultants, NGOs, fellows, eco-volunteers, community organizers, and research staff.
- viii. “CEO” shall mean the Chief Executive Officer of the Governing Body of this Society who shall be of the rank of the Chief Conservator of Forest of HPFD as nominated by the Govt. of HP.
- ix. “Voluntary Agencies” shall mean non government organizations or group of people assigned responsibility for execution of any activity under the Society by an authority empowered to do so, and would include registered Societies, public trusts and non profit making groups and companies.
- x. “CBET” shall mean Community Based EcoTourism.
- xi. “CBET Agency” shall mean Forest Division level/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency.
- xii. “FRH” and “FIH” shall mean Forest Rest House and Forest Inspection Hut.
- xiii. “HPFD” shall mean Himachal Pradesh Forest Department.
- xiv. “Ecotourism Policy” shall mean Policy on Development of Eco-Tourism in Himachal Pradesh, 2001

5. Functions of the Society

In pursuance of the above objectives, the functions of the Society, to be undertaken directly by the Society through its staff, or sponsored/supported by it through other institutions, agencies or individuals, shall be as follows:

- a. To implement the CBET with the involvement of local communities, Voluntary Organisations, staff of the HPFD and other departments as enshrined in the Ecotourism Policy.
- b. To undertake all activities that may be necessary for the achievement of the objectives referred to in the Memorandum of Association.
- c. To create duly empowered administrative mechanism, through such participation as may be deemed necessary of various departments and autonomous agencies of the state government, and external experts for the achievement of the objectives of the Society.
- d. To establish links and work in active cooperation with the Tourism Board/Deptt, Fisheries Deptt, and other related agencies, both at the State as well as GoI level.

- e. To establish and/or support, for the implementation of the CBET, under the Chief Executive Officer, field offices and other appropriate mechanisms like field units scattered all over the state of Himachal Pradesh and to delegate to them necessary powers to enable them to discharge their responsibilities.
- f. To take appropriate steps within its area of operation to:
 - i. maintain ecological sustainability
 - ii. maintain prioritized FRHs, FIHs, forest trails, camping sites, film shooting grounds to facilitate CBET
 - iii. facilitate participation of community in CBET
 - iv. enhance nature-awareness through nature conservation education.
 - v. create additional employment opportunities for local villagers
- g. To employ directly or indirectly by grants to other institutions/persons to further the programmes to be undertaken or supported by the Society.
- h. To facilitate marketing activities in respect of the CBET
- i. To arrange for competence based training for the staff and community members associated with the CBET in its area of operation (use institutions such as HIPA, Forest Training Schools at Chail and Sundernagar, Community Training and Tourist Center, Sai Ropa, and other institutions within the state and outside)
- j. To set up or establish any special services such as creation of CBET based-User Groups in Panchayats, etc., in furtherance of the CBET interests of the population.
- k. To hire services of daily wage workers and professionals on contract basis for short term assignments.
- l. To invest the funds or the money entrusted to or received by the society or in any such manner as may from time to time be determined by the society and also to hold or transfer such investments
- m. To maintain an information data base on the CBET of Himachal Pradesh.
- n. To accept or invest grant of money, securities of property of any kind and to undertake and accept the management of any endowment, trust, fund or donation not inconsistent with objectives of the Society.
- o. To undertake public-private partnerships of Government properties in the field of CBET with the permission /as per directions of the Govt. of HP and to raise funds therefrom.
- p. To do all other such things as may be considered necessary by the Society and may be incidental or conducive to attainment of its objectives.

6. Property, Assets and Liabilities

The income and property of the Society, however, derived shall be applied towards promotions of the objectives thereof as set-forth in the Memorandum of Association, subject nevertheless, in respect of expenditure of grants made by the Government of Himachal Pradesh to such limitations as the government may, from time to time, impose. No portion of the income and property of the Society shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise, howsoever by way of profit, to the persons who at any time have been members of the society or to any of them or to any person claiming through them provided that nothing herein contained shall prevent the payment in good faith of remuneration to any member thereof or other persons in return for any service rendered to the Society or travelling allowance, halting or other charges.

7. Government Powers

State Government may appoint one or more persons to review the work and progress of the Society, and to hold inquiries into the affairs thereof and to report thereon in such manner as the Government may stipulate and upon receipt of any such report, the Government may take such action and issue such directions as they may consider necessary in respect of any of the matter dealt with in the report and the Society shall be bound to comply with such directions. The government may by special order restrict or extend the scopes and functions of the Society, if required keeping in view the performance of Society in achieving the objectives assigned thereto. In addition, the State Government may, at any time, issue directives on matters of policy to the Society and the latter shall be bound to promptly comply with such directives.

8. Dissolution

If on winding up or dissolution of the Society, there shall remain after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities any assets and property whatsoever the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Society or any of them but shall be dealt with in such manner as the State Government may determine.

9. Composition of the Governing Body

The Governing Body will consist of members from Govt. departments (40%), institutions (20%) and Eminent Personalities and NGOs (40%):

- **Chief Minister, HP Secretariat Shimla-171001, Chairman**
- Forest Minister, HP Secretariat Shimla-171001
- Tourism Minister, HP Secretariat Shimla-171001

Members

Official Members

- i. Principal Secretary Tourism, HP Secretariat Shimla-171001
- ii. Principal Secretary, Finance, HP Secretariat Shimla-171001
- iii. Principal Secretary, Education, HP Secretariat Shimla-171001
- iv. Principal Secretary, Rural Development, HP Secretariat Shimla-171001
- v. Principal Secretary, Fisheries, HP Secretariat Shimla-171001
- vi. Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, Himachal Pradesh, Talland, Shimla
- vii. Addnl. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife), HP, Talland, Shimla
- viii. One Senior IFS Officer to be nominated by Pr. Secy Forest who has experience of working as Director, Great Himalayan National Park, Shamshi, Distt. Kullu. PIN 175126
- ix. Chief Executive Officer of the EcoSoc.
- x. Principal Secretary Forests, HP Secretariat Shimla-171001Member-Secretary

Institutions

- i. Director, Wildlife Institute of India, Post Box-18, Chandarabani, Dehradun-248001 Uttarakhand (Tel: 0135 2640112)
- ii. Director, GB Pant Institute for Himalayan Environment & Development, Kosi-Katarmal, Almora, Uttarakhand (Tel 05962 241015)
- iii. Member-Secretary, Biodiversity Conservation Society, Shamshi (Kullu)
- iv. Director, Western Himalayan Mountaineering Institute, Manali
- v. CEO of Uttarakhand Eco Tourism Society.

Eminent Personalities and NGOs

- i. Kanwar Ajay Bahadur Singh, Nahan, Distt. Sirmaur, HP.
- ii. Mr. MP Bezbaruah, Permanent Representative, World Tourism Organization, Jeevan Bharati Bldg., Tower 1, 7th Floor, 124 Connaught Circus, New Delhi 110001. (Tel: 011 23725445; Fax: 23725218; email: mpbezbaruah@yahoo.co.in)
- iii. Mr. Vinay Tandon, Program Manager – NRM, Winrock International India, 1, Navjeevan Vihar, New Delhi 110017, INDIA, Tel: 91-11-26693868; Fax: 91-11-26693881; email: vinay@winrockindia.org
- iv. Shri Shekhar Singh, Indian Institute of Public Administration, C-17A-Munirka, New Delhi (Tel: 011 26178048)
- v. Dr. Sejal Worah, Padmini Niwas, The Mall, Mussoorie PIN 248179, Uttarakhand (Tel 0135 2633123; email: sejalw@vsnl.com)
- vi. Mr. Rajiv Bhartari, IFS, Uttarakhand (Tel: 09412053603; email: rajivb@leadindia.org)

- vii. Director, SAHARA, Village Kalwari, Tehsil Banjar, Distt. Kullu (Tel: 94180 45363; email: saharaghnp@hotmail.com)
- viii. Payson R. Stevens, Village Ghiyaghi, Tehsil Banjar, Distt. Kullu, HP (Tel: 01903 227109; email: inm@aol.com)
- ix. Ms. Prabhavati Dwabha, Ramana's Seva Samiti, Vill. Tapovan, Laxman Jhula PIN 249192, Distt Tehri Garhwal, Uttaranchal (tel: 0135 2435558; email: dwabha@hotmail.com)
- x. Mr. Rajiv Bharti, Village Gushaini, Tehsil Banjar, Distt. Kullu, HP (Tel: 01903 225031)

10. Tenure of nominated members

The term of nominated members shall be five years. Such members shall not be eligible for remuneration but will be paid TA/DA for attending meetings and other official business in connection with the Society.

11. Cessation of membership

Members of the governing body shall cease to be such members if:

- i. They resign, are of unsound mind, are insolvent or are convicted of a criminal offence involving moral turpitude.
- ii. They do not attend three consecutive meetings of Governing Body without proper leave of the Chairman.
- iii. An official member of the Governing body becomes a member by reasons of the office of appointment he/she holds, his membership of the governing body shall be terminated when he/she ceases to hold that office or appointment.

12. Resignation of membership

Resignation of the membership of the governing body shall be tendered to the Chairman, Society and shall not take effect unless it has been accepted on behalf of the Chairman.

13. Casual Vacancies

- i. Any vacancy in the membership of the Society shall be filled by nomination of the authority entitled to make nomination, and the persons appointed in the vacancy shall hold office only for the unexpired period of the term of the membership.
- ii. The Governing Body shall function notwithstanding that any person who is entitled to be a member by reason of his/her office, is not a member of the Society for the time being and notwithstanding any other vacancy in its body, whether by non-appointment or otherwise and no act of the Society shall be invalidated merely by reason of the happening of any of the member of Governing Body.

14. Powers and Functions of the Governing Body

The governing body shall have the following powers and functions:

- i. To implement the decisions/proposals finalized by the Society for the development of the CBET in Himachal Pradesh.
- ii. To review the implementation and management of CBET in Himachal Pradesh and to give overall policy guidance and direction for efficient functioning of the Society.
- iii. To work in accordance with the Ecotourism Policy.
- iv. To consider and approve the balance sheet and audited accounts of the Society for the previous year.
- v. To consider and approve the annual report prepared by the Executive Committee.
- vi. To add and to amend the rules of the Society.
- vii. To secure effective coordination between different departments and other Government/ Government aided Institutions for the benefit of achievements of the objectives of the Society.
- viii. To perform such other functions as are entrusted to it under these Rules.
- ix. To delegate all such powers to the Executive Committee, CEO, and CBET Agency not expressly mentioned including financial powers and its delegation.

- x. To promote public-private partnerships of Government properties in the field of CBET with the permission /as per directions of the Govt. of HP and to raise funds therefrom.

15. Proceedings of the Governing Body

- i. The meetings of the Governing Body shall be held at least once a year at the time, date and place as may be determined by the Chairman.
- ii. Except as otherwise provided in these Rules, all meetings of the governing body shall be called by fifteen days prior notice under the signatures of the CEO, EcoSoc of HP and in case of special meeting also, the fifteen days prior notice shall be issued. A summary of the business to be transacted at the annual and other meetings be communicated to the members well in advance.
- iii. The inadvertent omission to give notice to or the non-receipt of notice of any meeting by any member shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.
- iv. If the Chairman is not present in the meetings of the governing body, the next senior most member will chair the meeting.
- v. One third of the members of the governing body present in person shall form a quorum at every meeting of the governing body provided that no quorum shall be necessary in respect of any adjourned meeting.
- vi. All disputed questions at meetings of the governing body shall be determined by vote and in case of equality of votes, the person chairing the meeting shall have a casting vote.

16. Office and Authorities of the Governing Body

The officers of the Society shall be the CEO, Chairperson, Executive Committee, and such other persons as may be designated as such by the Governing Body.

17. Executive Committee

The affairs of the Society shall be administered subject to the Rules and Regulations and orders of the Society, by an Executive Committee, which shall consist of the following:

Official Members

Principal Secretary Forests	Chairperson
Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests, Himachal Pradesh	Member
Addnl. Pr. Chief Conservator of Forests (Wildlife)	Member
Rep. of Secretary Finance	Member
Rep. of Secretary Tourism	Member
Two Conservator of Forests and two Divisional Forest Officers from the prioritized forest circles/divisions	Members
Chief Executive Officer	Member-Secretary

Eminent Personalities and NGOs

1. Mr. Vinay Tandon, Program Manager – NRM, Winrock International India, 1, Navjeevan Vihar, New Delhi 110017, INDIA, Tel: 91-11-26693868; Fax: 91-11-26693881; email: vinay@winrockindia.org
2. Shri Shekhar Singh, Indian Institute of Public Administration, C-17A-Munirka, New Delhi (Tel: 011 26178048)
3. Dr. Sejal Worah, Padmini Niwas, The Mall, Mussoorie PIN 248179, Uttarakhand (Tel 0135 2633123; email: sejalw@vsnl.com)
4. Director, SAHARA, Village Kalwari, Tehsil Banjar, Distt. Kullu (Tel: 94180 45363; email: saharaghnp@hotmail.com)
5. Payson R. Stevens, Village Ghiyaghi, Tehsil Banjar, Distt. Kullu, HP (Tel: 01903 227109; email: inm@aol.com)
6. Mr. Rajiv Bharti, Village Gushaini, Tehsil Banjar, Distt. Kullu, HP (Tel: 01903 225031)

18. Functions and Powers of the Executive Committee

- a. It shall be the responsibility of the Executive Committee to endeavor to achieve the objectives of the Society and discharge all its functions as delegated by the Governing Body.
- b. The Executive Committee shall have the powers and responsibilities in respect of the following:
 - ☞ To frame, amend or repeal the bye-laws and rules of the Society with the approval of Governing Body.
 - ☞ To frame regulations including Service Rules with the approval of Governing Body.
- c. The Executive Committee shall have the power to enter into arrangement with other public or private organisations or individuals for furtherance of its objectives.
- e. The Executive Committee shall have powers for fund-raising (at national and international levels), securing and accepting endowments, grants-in-aid, donations, or gifts to the Society on mutually agreed terms and conditions or gifts shall not be inconsistent or in conflict with the objectives of the Society or with provisions of these Rules with the approval of Governing Body.
- f. The Executive Committee shall have the power to take over and/or acquire in the name of the Society by purchase, gift or otherwise from government and other public bodies or private individuals, any movable and immovable properties in the state or elsewhere or other funds together with any attendant obligation and engagement not inconsistent with the objectives of the Society and the provisions of these Rules with the approval of Governing Body.
- g. The Executive Committee shall take all steps required for the successful implementation of the management of the CBET in Himachal Pradesh.
- h. The Executive Committee shall have the power to sell or give on lease any movable or immovable property of the Society with the approval of the Governing Body provided, however, that no asset of the Society created out of Government grants shall without the approval of the Government be disposed of encumbered or utilized for purposes other than those for which the grant was sanctioned.
- i. The Executive Committee will be responsible for the proper maintenance of accounts including preparation of working manuals and timely audit. It will be authorized to appoint Chartered Accountants and fix their emoluments in this behalf.
- j. The Governing Body may delegate to the Executive Committee, CEO, EcoSoc or any of its members and/or to a Committee/Group or any other officer of the Society such administrative and financial powers and impose such duties as it deems proper and also duties that are to be discharged (Refer to Functions of CEO at No. 25).
- k. Issues requiring immediate attention will be decided by the Executive Committee in its meetings but will subsequently have to be approved by the Governing Body in its next meeting.
- l. Consider and approve the Annual Plan of Operations of EcoSoc and any subsequent alternations in it.
- m. Consider and approve the Annual Budget of EcoSoc.
- n. Sort out problems in the implementation of the management of EcoSoc.
- o. To ensure co-ordination with the line departments for the management of CBET in Himachal Pradesh.
- p. To review the implementation of the activities under the management of the EcoSoc.

19. Proceedings of the Executive Committee

Every meeting of the Executive Committee shall be presided over by the Chairperson and in his/her absence, by a member chosen by the members present at the meeting to chair for the occasion. One third of the members of the Executive Committee present shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Executive Committee, provided that no quorum shall be necessary in respect of any adjourned meeting.

- 20.** Not less than seven clear days notice of every meeting of the Executive Committee shall be given to each member of the Executive Committee provided that
 - a. The Chairperson may call an emergency meeting at the notice of three days, and
 - b. Any inadvertent omission to give notice of the meeting shall not invalidate the proceedings of the meeting.

21. Every notice calling a meeting of the Executive Committee shall state the date, time and place at which such meeting will be held and shall, except otherwise provided in these Rules, be under the signature of Member Secretary.
22. The Executive Committee shall meet so far as necessary but at least once in each half of the year.
23. Each member of the Executive Committee including the Chairperson shall have one vote and if there shall be equality of votes on any question to be decided by the Executive Committee, the Chairperson shall, in addition have a casting vote.

24. Regulations

The Executive Committee will frame /amend Regulations with the approval of the GB, not inconsistent with these Rules, for the administration and management of the affairs of the Society for the following matters:-

- I. Service matters of officers and staff including creation of posts, qualifications, selection procedures, service conditions, pay and emoluments, discipline and control rules.
- II. Important financial aspects including formulation of budget, purchase procedures, delegation of financial powers, investment of funds, maintenance of accounts, audit, TA and DA rules etc.
- III. Such other matters as may be necessary for the furtherance of the objectives and the proper administration of the affairs of the Society. Provided that for the purpose of this Rule, following guidelines would be kept in view while creating the posts and formulating the Service and Financial Regulations:
 - a. All appointments shall be only on contract basis except officers on deputation with the approval of the Government.
 - b. For work related specific assignments, persons would be deployed on fixed emoluments with provision for revision each year if considered appropriate;
 - c. Till such time, the Society formulates its own set of regulations, the decisions taken by the Executive Committee in all such matters will be carried out;

25. Functions of the Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer for CBET will be a Chief Conservator of Forests from the HPFD. He/she will work as member-secretary of the Executive Committee, assisted by a Conservator of Forest and two Assistant Conservator of Forests. This team will be located in the office of the Pr. CCF, Talland, Shimla. Pr Secy Forest will issue orders for the officers either on full time or part time basis. Their salaries will continue to be paid by the HPFD.

In association with the Forest Division Coordination Committee, the CEO will facilitate the implementation of the following activities:

a. Marketing

- develop brochures, booklets, posters, bird checklist, flora, souvenirs, website, map, logo and a tag line to market the environment-friendly `Heritage FRH'/other FRH/camp-sites/film-shooting grounds and trekking routes around them. Also display interesting information regarding birds, mammals, plants, local ecosystem, long-term landscape change, socio-economic variables of influence (population growth, tourist increase etc.) in form of charts/pictures/maps, etc.
- network with various organisations in Himachal Pradesh and outside who encourage nature conservation education (e.g. WWF offices all over the country, Bombay Natural History Society, National Museum for Natural History at Delhi, Head Offices of Navodaya, and Central Schools, and others) to be involved with the CBET programme of HP.
- identify and prioritise the `Heritage FRH' (more than 75 years old or so with an historical account) for their maintenance conforming to the original architecture and appropriate publicity and marketing.
- Hire services of daily wagers, marketing professionals and others on contract basis with the approval of General Body.

b. Tourist Facilities

- ? develop rules and Regulations in consultation with the Division level coordination Committee for effective management of CBET. These rules will be site-specific (a FRH/camp site in remote area

may have different set of rules as compared to the FRH/camp site located on the roadside). The rules will incorporate items such as FRH/camp-site/film-shooting fee, Do's and Don'ts in nature, and other locality specifics. Display the rules and regulations at the prominent points in English and Hindi

- ? Conduct regular surveys for the tourists coming to a popular `Heritage FRH/forest trails/other FRH/camp-sites/film-shooting grounds. They may be Backpackers who rely mostly on local availability of food, shelter and other services, such as school children, NCC cadets, trekkers from Youth Hostel of India, some tight-budget foreigners; Do-it-yourself Trekkers who come prepared with own food, tents, etc. A number of foreigners are in this category, and Pre-planned Trekkers with pre-planned, organized trips, which are executed by a trekking agency. Develop plans to cater to these trekkers, accordingly.
- ? Invest timely in infrastructure e.g. timely repairs/maintenance of FRH, trekking routes, bridle paths, etc. Conduct regular scouting trips arranged by the Division level Coordination Committee with the HPFD staff on different routes through the forest/Wildlife areas (PAs) and report back on trail conditions, wildlife, forest use, littering by trekking groups, etc.
- ? Improve the waste disposal around `Heritage FRH/forest trails/other FRH/camp-sites/film-shooting grounds.
- ? Wherever needed, use alternative energy sources e.g. indane cooking gas, solar lights, solar geysers, green houses (most of these are available from Himurja). Introduce fuel sufficiency rule, whereby LPG will be used in the kitchen and firewood will be provided for the fire-places in FRH rooms (which is in good demand from the tourists). Let there be dedicated firewood plantations in association with the HPFD (about 10,000 trees of fast growing firewood species per hectare to be planted in three to ten hectares for each FRH, and develop a rotation so that the wood is available on annual basis) for the selected/prioritised FRHs and camping sites. Let tourists pay for this facility. Till it happens, make alternative arrangements, e.g. from the HP State Forest Corporation.
- ? create herbal gardens of local medicinal plant in the compounds of the FRHs with information about plants, their uses. A well maintained medicinal plant nursery is part of nature conservation education and a big attraction for the tourists.

c. Training and Capacity Building

- develop and implement training programmes for effective CBET activities involving staff and community in:
 - ? participatory resource management ('Heritage FRH'/FIH/forest trails/other FRH/camp-sites/film-shooting grounds);
 - ? resource sharing rights and responsibilities;
 - ? planning procedures;
 - ? local level coordinating arrangements;
 - ? leadership issues;
 - ? NGO roles and responsibilities;
 - ? shared understanding of biological diversity between staff and communities, etc.
 - ? infrastructure development and maintenance
 - ? self defense and first aid, etc.
- train a cadre chowkidar/cook/guide from the local Panchayats and post them at priority FRHs/FIHs. Facilitate appropriate training for concerned Forest Guards/Dy. Rangers/Rangers through specially designed courses at the Forest Training School, Chail or Sundernagar and Community Training and Tourist Center, Sai Ropa in GHNP's ecozone.
- Capacity Building of the local youth (employment opportunities) in
 - ? Basic courses in mountaineering and adventure with the help of Mountaineering Institute, Manali
 - ? Courses in Communication, personal hygiene

- ? Exposure visits
- ? Special courses in Guide and Cook training for the trekking parties
- ? Soft Adventure: trekking, fishing, rock climbing, rappelling, camping
- ? Wildlife viewing, bird watching, science tours, culture fairs and festivals (devtas)
- ? Yoga and meditation
- ? Environmental awareness programmes through Community based street theater

d. Community Involvement

- link management of `Heritage FRH'/other FRH/FIH/camp-sites/film-shooting grounds and trekking routes around them to the local Panchayats and let the tourists also know about it. The tourists coming to nature often appreciate such efforts. CBET is to be seen as an income generation activity to supplement the incomes of the local villagers.
- Make sure that the CBET activities does not result in local culture deprecation (spread of AIDS and use of narcotics).
- Develop user groups for CBET following HP Participatory Forest Management Rules, 2001.

e. Nature Conservation and Education

- Set-up a mechanism to share incomes (25%) from a Forest Division level Coordination Committee (fee from the `Heritage FRH'/other FRH/camp-sites/film-shooting grounds and trekking routes) with the Executive Committee. Rest of the income (75%) is ploughed back for maintenance of FRHs, etc.
- Encourage research and documentation for the best efforts made in CBET in HP.
- Start regular programmes in conservation education for the local schools, village communities, and the tourists. The HP Gyan Vigyan Samiti (of National Literacy Mission) may do a good job in association with the Ecotourism Society of HP.
- Facilitate introduction of nature conservation education in school and college curriculum in Himachal Pradesh
- Develop schemes and plans such as Nature camps, Nature Education and Awareness for the local school/college students and teachers around a FRH/FIH/camp-site/forest trail and raise funds from sources such as Centrally Sponsored Scheme, and others.

The CEO will also undertake any other activity as considered by the Executive Committee of the EcoSoc. All above regulations shall be approved by the EC.

26. Bye-laws

Subject to specific directions of the Society and the provisions in these Rules and Regulations to be framed thereunder, the Executive Committee shall have powers to frame and amend bye-laws for the conduct of activities of the Society for achievement of its objectives and these bye-laws with the approval of GB, may, inter-alia, include matters relating to :-

- a. Establishment of field units and branch offices.
- b. Conduct of business of Executive Committee and other Committees and sub-Committees;
- c. Grant-in-aid to voluntary agencies;
- d. Involvement of individuals and contractual new arrangements with them;
- e. All aspects of technical resource support;
- f. Such other things as may be necessary for implementation of the management of ecotourism in Himachal Pradesh.

27. Forest Division level/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency

The Forest Division level coordination shall be done by integrating CBET aspects in the forest division level planning. The Forest Division level CBET Agency of each Forest Division/Wildlife Division will be a registered body (under the Societies Registration Act, 1860) and a part of EcoSoc. It will promote the objectives

of EcoSoc for implementation of CBET in the Division. The CEO of EC will approve the Memorandum of Association, Articles of Association and Financial Regulations of the Divisional level CBET Agency.

28. Composition of the Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency

The Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency shall have the following members:

1.	Divisional Forest Officer (Territorial/Wildlife)	Chairman
2.	Assistant Conservator of Forest	Member
3.	All Range Officers	Member
4.	Local Panchayat Pradhan of prioritized CBET area	Member
5.	Local Panchayat Up-Pradhan of prioritized CBET area	Member
6.	Three Nominated villagers representing the local CBET User Groups	Member
7.	Any local NGO or Self Help Group	Member
8.	Two Special Invitees (official/non-official)	Members
9.	Range Officer (as nominated by the DFO)	Member-Secy.

29. Functions of Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency

- i. The Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency shall take all steps required for the successful implementation of CBET in the Division.
- ii. It shall be the responsibility of the Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency to endeavor to achieve the objectives of the Society and discharge all its functions as delegated by the CEO of EC.
- iii. The Forest Division/Wildlife Division CBET Agency shall coordinate with district level agencies concerning tourism, fisheries, etc. and resolve local implementation problems.
- iv. It shall prepare the Annual Plan of Operations of CBET in the Division and implement it as approved by the CEO.
- v. It shall prepare the Annual Budget of CBET in the Division. The Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency will be responsible for the proper maintenance of accounts including preparation of working manuals and timely audit.
- vi. The Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency shall have the power to enter into arrangement with other public or private organizations or individuals for furtherance of CBET in the Division.
- vii. The Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency shall have powers for fund-raising at (national and international levels), securing and accepting endowments, grants-in-aid, donations, or gifts to the Agency on mutually agreed terms and conditions or gifts which shall not be inconsistent to or in conflict with the objectives of the EcoSoc.
- viii. Issues requiring immediate attention will be decided by the Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency in its meetings but will subsequently have to be approved by the CEO.
- ix. Around each FRH/FIH, Forest Trail, Camping site or the Film shooting ground, a User Group will be formed of such villagers/inhabitants who are poor and unemployed. Such a User Group based on CBET will be of about 15 to 20 persons. In case a User Group of poor and unemployed youth already exist in a village (or a locality) in form of Self Help Group or a Women Saving and Credit Group, such a group will also be considered for CBET based activities. The user group will be the basic organization to operationalize the CBET. A CBET-User Group will work in close association with the local Panchayat. An NGO of local origin, if working in a Panchayat may also be considered for CBET implementation.
- x. All the FRH, FIH, Forest trails, Camping sites, and Film Shooting grounds of HPFD will undergo an exercise of the prioritization on the basis of a criteria suggested by the Executive Committee of the Society. Accordingly, they will be taken up for CBET activities based on the funds and resources of the Society.

- xii. 25% of total annual receipts from fee of the `Heritage FRH'/other FRH/camp-sites/film-shooting grounds and trekking routes will be sent to the account of the Executive Committee. Rest of the income i.e. 75% will be utilised for maintenance of FRHs, camping grounds, trekking routes, and related activities to achieve the EcoSoc objectives as per the approved APO.
- xiii. The Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency can also receive grant-in-aid from the Executive Committee.
- xiiii. The Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agency shall hold its meeting at least once in six months.

30. Annual Report of the Society

The Annual Report on the working of the Society and the work undertaken by it during the year together with balance sheet and Audited Accounts shall be prepared by the CEO for information of the EC and GB and the members of the Society. A draft of the Annual Report along with the Audited accounts of the Society and the Auditor's Report thereon shall be placed before the Governing Body in its Annual General Meeting.

31. Amendments

With the prior approval of the Governing Body, the Society may alter, extend or abridge these rules or amalgamate the Society in accordance with the provisions of the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

- i. As and when there is any change in the nomenclature of Ministries, Departments, or institution(s) and designation(s) mentioned in the Rules, such changes shall automatically stand incorporated in these Rules.
- ii. If such Society needs to be dissolved, it shall be dissolved as per provisions laid down by the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- iii. If, on the winding up or dissolution of the Society, there shall remain, after the satisfaction of all debts and liabilities, any property whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to, or distributed amongst the members of the Society or anyone of them but shall accrue to the State Government which will decide about its utilization in accordance with provisions of the Act.

32. Miscellaneous

Once in every year, a list of members of the governing body shall be filed with the Registrar of Societies as required under the Societies Registration Act, 1860.

- a. If any change occurs in the composition of the governing body or in the holder of the office of the Chairman or the Chief Executive Officer at any time for any reasons intimation of such change shall within 30 days be submitted to the Registrar of the Societies.
- b. All properties belonging to the Society shall be deemed to be vested in the Governing Body of the Society but shall be referred to as the property of the Society.

33. Suits by and against the Society

Subject to provisions of this Act, the person in whose name the Society may sue or be sued shall be of the Society or any member of the Society authorized by the Governing Body in this behalf;

- i. No suit or proceedings shall abate by reasons of any vacancy or change in the holder or the office of the Chairman, the Chief Executive Officer or any member of the Society authorized in this behalf;
- ii. Every decree or order against the Society in suit or proceedings shall be executable against the property of the Society and not against the personal property of the Chairman, Chief Executive Officer, or any other member of the Governing Body/Society.
- iii. Nothing herein shall exempt the Chairman, Chief Executive Officer or any other member of the Governing Body from any original liability under the Act or entitle him to claim any contribution from the property of the Society in respect of any fine paid by him on conviction by a criminal court.

Every member of the Society may be sued or prosecuted by the Society for any loss or damages caused to the Society or its property for anything done by him detrimental to the interests of the Society.

34. Service of Notice

- i. A notice may be served upon any member of the Society either personally or by sending it through the post under certificate of posting in an envelope addressed to such members at the last known address.

- ii. Any notice so served by post shall be deemed to have been duly served on the day following that on which the letter, envelop or wrapper containing the same shall be sufficient to prove that the cover containing such notice was properly addressed and put into the post office.

35. Financial Regulations

A. Powers of the Chief Executive Officer

The Chief Executive Officer shall be the principal Executive Officer of the Society and shall be responsible for proper administration of the affairs and funds of the EcoSoc and efficient implementation of various activities of the CBET management in a mission mode under the directions and guidance of the Chairperson of the Executive Committee. The Chief Executive Officer shall exercise all the technical, administrative, financial and disciplinary authority powers exercised by the Head of the Departments. He shall also continue to perform the duties and exercise the powers as may be or may have been assigned to him by the HP Government/Executive Committee.

For the effective discharge of his/her functions he/she shall have powers to:

- a. Prescribe the duties of the officers and staff of the EcoSoc.
- b. Exercise such supervision and disciplinary control as may be necessary.
- c. Coordinate and exercise general supervision over the activities of the Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agencies.
- d. Approve APO and Annual Budget of the Forest Division/Wildlife Division level CBET Agencies.
- e. Conduct meetings of the Executive Committee and keep a record of proceedings, and Action-Taken-Reports of these meetings in accordance with these Rules.
- f. Exercise financial, technical and administrative powers of head of departments.
- g. Discharge such other functions as may be or may already have been assigned to him by the HP Government/Executive Committee/Governing Body in furtherance of the objectives of the Society.

B. Funds of the Society

- a. The funds of the Society shall consist of the following:
 - i. grants-in-aid made by the state government for furtherance of the objectives of the Society.
 - ii. Contribution from other sources such as fund raising for the CBET at national as well as international levels (by the CEO); fund raising will be of two types: (a) to plan, design, develop and execute projects for the management of CBET in HP (b) to develop a corpus fund for CBET in HP.
 - iii. Income from the assets of the Society;
 - iv. Receipt of the Society from other sources, and income from the rent of all the FRH/ FIH of HPPD. Fee from trail permits, camping sites, film shooting grounds fee, and receipts from other sources will also be the income of the EcoSoc.
 - v. Grants, donation or assistance of any kind from foreign governments and other external agencies with prior approval of the central government.
- b. The bankers of the Society shall be decided by the Executive Committee. All funds shall be paid into the Society account with the bank and shall not be withdrawn except through a cheque signed by such officers as may be duly empowered in this behalf by the Executive Committee.
- c. Till such time the grant-in-aid rules are finalized and approved, the Society shall spend the annual budget allotment made to it by the government through the forest department.

C. Accounts and Audit

- i. The Society shall maintain proper accounts and other relevant records and prepare annual accounts comprising the Receipts and payment account, statement of liabilities in such form as may be prescribed by the Registrar of Societies or the State Government.

- ii. The accounts of the Society shall be audited annually by a Chartered Accountant or any agency so authorized by the Executive Committee in accordance with the provisions of the Societies Registration Act, 1860.
- iii. The audited accounts shall be submitted to the Society which shall submit a copy of Audit Report along with its observation to the State Government within 15 days from the receipt thereof.
- iv. The accounts of the Society shall also be subject to the provisions of the Comptroller and Auditor General (Duties Powers and Conditions of service) Act, 1971 as amended from time to time.

Workshop Glimpses (21-22 Dec, 2005 – Timber Trail, Parwanoo)

