

# Indian agritourism industry- an instrument of economic development

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## Abstract

Tourism is also well recognized as an engine of growth in the various economics in the world. It has emerged as one of the largest global economic activities. Several countries have transformed their economics by developing their tourism potential. Tourism has great capacity to generate large scale employment and additional income source to the skilled and unskilled.

As per the estimate of world Travel and Tourism council (W.T.T.C) tourism generated more than worth \$5 trillion of output equivalent to about 8% of total world G.N.P India's share of world tourist advent has been merely 4% W.T.T.O in its tourism vision 2020 has projected that there would be about 1.6 billion International tourists in all countries of the world by the year 2020. As per the same assessment India is expected to fuel 4.5 times growth international tourist destination thus playing a major role in the economy of the states.

**Keywords:** Tourism; Global Economics; World Travel and Tourism Council; International Tourists; W.T.T.O.

## 1. Introduction

Agro tourism will bring the primary sector agriculture closer to the service sector and will attract more attention to development of rural road and rail network. India is already established as one of the top tourist destination in the world. Value addition by introducing novel products like agro tourism would only strengthen the spirited of Indian. Promotion of Tourism would bring many direct and indirect benefits to the people. It has a great capacity to create additional source of income and employment opportunities to the farmers.

Agro tourism is the form of tourism which capitalizes on rural culture as a tourist attraction. It is just like to ecotourism except that its primary appeal is not the natural landscape but a culture landscape. If the attractions on offer to tourist contribute to improving the income of the regional populations, agro tourism can promote local development. To make sure that it is also helps to preserve diversity, the rural population itself must have documented agro biodiversity as valuable and worthy of protection. Agro tourism is defined as "Travel that combines agriculture or rural settings with product of agriculture operations all within a tourism experience".

It gives the opportunity to tourist to experience the real enchanting and authentic contact with rural life, taste the local genuine food and get familiar with the various farming tasks during the visits. It provides the welcome escape from the daily hectic life in the peaceful rural centers in India and there are large scope and great potential to develop agro tourism.

## 2. Reasons for popularity

People are more interested in how their food is produced and want to meet the producers and talk with them about what goes into food production. Children who visit the farms often have not seen a live duck, or pig and have not picked a mango right off the tree. This form of expanded Agri-tourism has given birth to what are often called "entertainment farms". These farms provide to the pick-your-own crowd, offering not only regular farm products, but also food, open-pen animals, train rides, picnic facilities pick-your own produce. Agri-tourism projects re-enforce the need to support local growers and sources and allow the visitor to experience what it is to be part of the land.

## 3. Objectives

- 1) To analyze the role of agro tourism in economic development.
- 2) To identify potentialities and the limitations of the agro tourism

## 4. Methodology

This paper is based on secondary data collection. All the data used for the purpose of this research has been sourced from various sources like research papers, newspapers, Articles, website and books.

#### 4.1. Review of literature

However, despite the positive impacts of tourism, such as economic benefits, it has significantly contributed to environmental degradation, negative social and cultural impacts and habitat fragmentation. These undesirable side-effects have led to the growing concern for the conservation and preservation of natural resources, human well-being and the long-term economic viability of communities (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006)

Ayala (1995) defines ecotourism as 'tourism that allows for the enjoyment and understanding of the nature and culture of a destination while producing economic benefits and actively promoting environmental conservation.' Ecotourism management encounters many challenges, including establishing a profitable and ecologically sustainable industry, while simultaneously achieving a satisfying experience for visitors and increasing standards of living in the host community (Lim & McAleer, 2005).

A wide variety of factors, including social, cultural and economic considerations at each level of the tourism system, affects the implementation of sustainable tourism practices (Day & Cai, 2012).

The growth of the tourism industry particularly in developing countries has not been planned and predicted accurately and is poorly organised, which has consequently resulted in the degradation, depletion and, in some cases, total destruction of essential economy-supporting natural resources Baker, 1997; Obua & Harding, 1997; Shackley, 1996 Therefore, it is logical to stress the sustainability enhancement since it contributes to environmentally sensitive tourism development and protection of natural resources from the detrimental environmental impacts of tourism.

As a resource-dependent industry, tourism must recognise its responsibility to the environment. Tourism development that consistently ignores environmental concerns is unlikely to remain viable in the longer term (Pigram, 1990).

Development and implementation of sustainable tourism certification is a process that can result in an important dialogue and policy-making process about the type of tourism development that a country wishes to pursue, greater awareness in the business community of the needs and contributions of the local communities, and a shift in attitudes across sectors and generations (Bowman, 2011)

Institutional pressures have a key driving role in stimulating the adoption of environmental legislation by life-cycle considerations for reducing negative impacts and by demanding specific performances, such as the elimination of toxic substances from the production of electronic goods or restricting industrial discharges and emissions to nature. Moreover, for successfully implementing the sustainable development strategies, having the top management's formal commitment and the maturity of inter-organizational relations are critical (Adriana, 2009)

#### 5. Social impact of agro tourism centers

Agro tourism is also a tourism business but it is different from the common tourism because it has a base of agriculture and rural lifestyle. Generally tourism has provided to see and enjoy the natural places as well as some heritage. But Agro Tourism is a Tourism which includes experiences, education and culture change. Agro Tourism follows the concept "Come, pluck a fruit, smell a flower, run in the fields, lie on the hay and be lost in rural India." Agro Tourism centers provide the following social and cultural environment to the tourists.

- Cultural change between urban and rural people including social moral values.
- It provides pollution and noise free locations for travel and tourism at rural backgrounds.
- The cost of food accommodation, Recreation and travel is minimum in agro tourism.
- A family surroundings at the tourist place is one of the most important characteristics in the agro tourism.

- Agro Tourism can safety the curiosity of urban people about sources of food plants, animals and industrial agro raw materials.
- It provides information about the rural handicraft languages, culture, traditional dresses and lifestyle.
- In agro Tourism, Tourists not only see and watch agriculture farms but also they can participate in the agriculture activities and experiences the farming.

#### 6. Agriculture tourism development corporation

The following potential technology components are identified suitable for establishment as a new unit or to exploit existing unit with some essential alteration or improvement in the agro tourism programme.

##### 1) Agro Eco Tourism Centre

The main feature of this center will be to establish with lodging and boarding facility along with wild life parks or sanctuaries, esthetic ecology or mountains hill, lakes, river with suitable agro technology suited to the area.

##### 2) Agro Eco Tourism Centre

Agro-eco-tourism sight will be referred as a tourist sight of agro technology on commercial scale or as cottage industry or practices for livelihood support located very near to the main eco tourism center or the road side of the main tourism center.

##### 3) Agro Technology Park

The state governments are promote the enterprisers for agro business of different kind as cluster approach with several incentives and facility for development of agro technology parks for quality production on commercial scale, preferably for export promotion.

#### 7. SOCIO economic prospects of agro eco tourism

Agro-eco tourism is the economic activity that occurs when people link travels with agricultural products, services or experiences. The prospects of agro eco tourism depend on the agriculture and allied sectors. Agro eco tourism will be an important source of income rising to the farmers and farm workers by creating enhanced opportunity of employment and quality Production. It will be a potential business to improve the socioeconomic status of the rural people of all levels whether they are engaged in farming, cattle rearing, traditional food processing, preservation of local culture and tradition, specialist in art, craft and other indigenous skill or expert of local folk, dances and music etc. Further economics of local transporters and other people linked with tourism activities will also get additional benefit.

Agro eco tourism will give an opportunity to rural people for quick and good return for their product and services. It will check migration of rural people to cities for finding job opportunities, by providing employment and agro business opportunity. It will give to rural people and farmers to charge a good amount of money for the visit and experience of their work and culture. Agro eco tourism will create a positive impact on the understanding of local people as well as of tourists both domestic and international regarding importance of wild life, natural resources, ecology wild flora and agro biodiversity and concept of its conservation and its economic utilization in combination of traditional as well as advance agro technology. It is also expected that agro eco tourism center or sight will serve as a potential source of new technology development adaptation and extension among the local people, national and international tourists.

#### 8. AGRO-ECO-tourism-benefits

Agro-eco tourism can bring about many more added benefits in rural areas by way of assisting farming and other rural families to

use existing resources effectively in order to improve income and the viability of the farm business, providing interactive opportunities to the villagers with national and international tourists right in their own places thereby enhance understanding of the outside world, improving and the infrastructure facilities and standards for tourists and local people, enriching the heritage and culture of the region, increasing foreign currency earning through "Rural windows" and bringing about overall transformation of rural sectors into active functional centres.

- Minimizes the negative impact of present day tourism upon the natural
- Socio cultural environment
- Maintains the ecological balance
- Conserves the traditional cultures prevailing in the natural rural areas
- Provides a concurrent employment opportunities for local communities as a family business
- Rural Development
- Reduce the gap of development, income etc between the rural and urban areas.
- Accords dignity to the farming profession

## 9. Constraints

The survey of the existing units revealed critical aspects of looking at agro-eco tourism include unclear definition, since different components make up the agro-tourism products. Definition needs to be endorsed at a national tourism level. Agro-eco-tourism destinations are not always convenient and at times conducted in isolated areas. In such cases, lack of transport and back up services, lack of awareness among both farmers and tourists about the potential benefits, lack of basic information for financing such projects/entrepreneurs, lack of integration into the whole tourism economy, lack of market intelligence research, etc are the major impediments.

Another bottleneck is lack of co-ordination between main stream tourism and agro tourism in respect of the different components making up an agro-eco-tourism industry in a region.

The issues which need attention for the promotion of agro-eco-tourism are:

**Publicity-** It is difficult to provide publicity to remote agro-eco-tourism units. Hence, either collectively such agro-eco-tourism operators can provide publicity or organizations like ITDC, State tourism development Corporations, NGOs, Press and tour operators can take up this responsibility.

**Transport –** Reaching the remote agro-eco-tourism units is the greatest challenges due to lack of approach roads and poor transportation facilities in rural areas.

**Accommodation-** Safe and clean accommodation is must in agro-ecotourism.

**Networking –** Networking public and private stakeholders at national and state level to assist the agro-eco-tourism operator at remote places in necessary. This network can get policy support, infrastructure and publicity to agro-tourism units.

**Capacity building of farmers-** Farmers need to be oriented on maintenance of facilities, hospitality and public relation which he may not be aware.

**Safety of tourists-** Agro-eco-tourism units is located in remote areas which lack roads, medical facilities, telecommunication and sometimes threat from theft and wild animals. Hence, support of local population is must besides facilities for emergency medical care.

## 10. Conclusion

India has a great potential to the development of agro tourism, because of natural conditions and different types of agro products as well as variety of rural traditions, festivals. It is good opportunity to develop an agro tourism business in Tamilnadu but there is a

problem of low awareness about this business in the farmer and problem of the finance and proper view in the farmers of Tamilnadu. Hence the agriculture departments of the districts orient about it and provide some suggestions regarding Agro tourism.

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