

Article

Not peer-reviewed version

Tourism Policy Development and Change: An Examination of Sustainability in India's Tourism Policy 2022 and its Implications.

Anant Kumar Pathak *

Posted Date: 15 January 2024

doi: 10.20944/preprints202401.1090.v1

Keywords: Tourism; Tourism policy; Sustainable development; Sustainable tourism; Indian tourism policy



Preprints.org is a free multidiscipline platform providing preprint service that is dedicated to making early versions of research outputs permanently available and citable. Preprints posted at Preprints.org appear in Web of Science, Crossref, Google Scholar, Scilit, Europe PMC.

Copyright: This is an open access article distributed under the Creative Commons Attribution License which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

Article

Tourism Policy Development and Change: An Examination of Sustainability in India's Tourism Policy 2022 and its Implications

Anant Kumar Pathak

Department of Geography, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi-110025; anant9@outlook.com

Abstract: The article discusses how tourism policy has changed since World War II, highlighting how the everchanging political and economic climate has shaped policies that were formerly centered on promoting inbound travel and tourist growth to becoming more inclusive and sustainable. Within that framework, the paper systematically examines the development of Indian tourism policy and thoroughly explores the implications of its most recent version. It concludes that modern tourism policies have evolved into comprehensive frameworks that structure the growth of the industry and make it more inclusive and sustainable. Nations such as India are well-suited to meet the demands of modern tourism and offer appropriate frameworks for sustainable and resilient tourist growth.

Keywords: tourism; tourism policy; sustainable development; sustainable tourism; Indian tourism policy

Evolution of Tourism Policies

Governments have used tourism policies to control tourism at both national and local levels (Liu et al., 2020). They play a crucial role in steering tourism towards a desired direction, particularly by managing tourism practices, providing economic support, and promoting tourism products at a global level.

Since governments are the ones that create tourism policies, their goals and objectives reflect the requirements and vision of contemporary governments. Also, the nature of the tourist strategy reflects the contemporary socioeconomic situations both locally and globally. Events of global scale, like wars, affect the national economies in many ways, disrupting trade, international travel and bilateral relationships. Following the devastating effects of World War II on the global economy, nations were under pressure to revive their economies and were looking for avenues and strategies for quick economic expansion (Soshiroda, 2005). Tourism is one such industry that has seen humongous growth since 1950s. As (D'Amore, 2009) states:

“The industry has grown from a total of 25 million international arrivals in 1950 to a projected 1 billion international arrivals in 2010, and a further projection to 1.6 billion by 2020.”

Clearly, the tourism industry has provided a significant contribution in rejuvenating the pace of global economic growth after the 2nd World war.

Many of the newly independent, underdeveloped countries also benefitted from tourism's growth as they had a rich natural and cultural heritage that was utilized by their national governments to profit through tourism. For example, (Bossen, 2000) establishes that how making a cultural festival of Fiji into a tourist event helped diversify the Fijian economy and induce economic growth through making policies on inbound tourism.

On similar lines, from the 1940s until the 1980s, many economies such as China, America, and Europe introduced legislation pertaining to inbound tourism (Airey, 1983) to systematize the industry, encourage its expansion, and direct the economic growth that tourism provides to their lesser developed regions (Zhao & Li, 2006).

However, the aggressive indulgence of governments in growing the tourism sector resulted in numerous un-sustainable outcomes (Baum & Sivas, 2008) that negatively impacted the environment and society in general (Edgell, 1983). Since governments valued economic benefit of tourism over anything else, there was very little attention given to the sustainability aspect of it (Joppe, 2018). Tourism as a facet of globalization (Mair, 2005) was no different than other economic sectors in its striving to grow at the cost of human and natural resources (Muler Gonzalez et al., 2018).

Works of (Ehigiamusoe, 2022; Liu et al., 2022; Khoshnevis Yazdi & Shakouri, 2017; Dreher, 2006) have established this fact that globalization has helped countries achieve economic growth in general. In addition, tourism has been a major force shaping globalization (Song et al., 2017), that makes tourism, if not equally, but to some extent, responsible for environmental degradation. To be fair, (Ehigiamusoe et al., 2022) give tourism a credit for offsetting to a degree, the adverse impacts of globalization, like CO₂ emissions. However, the net outcome doesn't come in the favour of the environment.

Therefore, switching to sustainable development was the only option left before the world (Wu & Wu, 2012), as there's only one option to sustainability, that is unsustainability (Bossel, 1999).

The necessity for a comprehensive framework for sustainable development—economic growth combined with social progress and environmental preservation—thus realized, that can be institutionalized, as implementation of sustainability in government institutions could provide for a successful multi-stakeholder governance of sustainable development (Heinrichs & Schuster, 2016) and which is globally accepted. Stockholm Declaration in 1972 and the subsequent Rio Declaration of 1992 established exactly that- institutionalization of sustainability and primarily recognizing people's right to clean environment and holding governments responsible for it (Simon Yarza, 2012).

Post Rio Declaration, tourism strategies took into consideration the need for sustainable growth, pooling local resources and coordinating local governments. Hence, tourism policies nowadays place a strong emphasis on sustainability (Dodds, 2007).

Development of Indian Tourism Policy

The first tourism policy (The Tourism Policy, 1982) was more of a marketing statement than a development strategy. Its major goal was to promote India to visitors as the perfect vacation destination. In June 1982, the Planning Commission designated tourism as an industry. Policies to do this will be developed around six main categories (Six Ss): welcome (Swagat), information (Suchana), facilitation (Suvidha), safety (Suraksha), cooperation (Sahyog), and infrastructure development (Samrachana) (Iyer 2006).

In June 1986, the Planning Commission of India established the National Committee on tourism to develop a long-term plan for the tourist industry. In November 1987, the Committee, led by Mr. Mohammed Yunus, issued its report. Mr. Yunus' study proposed that the present Department of Tourism be replaced with a National Tourism Board (NTB) and that a separate cadre on the Indian Tourism Service be established to oversee the NTB's operations.

The National Action Plan for Tourism (1992) identifies seven primary objectives as central Ministry issues, including socioeconomic development of localities. Developing domestic tourism for the low-budget market. International tourist development. Increasing the number of available jobs. Preserving the nation's heritage and the environment. Product diversification in tourism. Increase India's share in global tourism (from 0.4% to 1% in the next five years).

The 2002 tourism policy is based on a multifaceted approach that includes speedier or more rapid execution of tourist projects, development of integrated tourism circuits, capacity building in the hospitality industry, and innovative marketing tactics. The fundamental goal of the National Tourism Policy (2002) is to position tourism as a significant economic growth engine. The government attempts to accomplish this goal by encouraging domestic and international inbound tourism, agro-rural tourism, new tourist circuits, expanding tourist infrastructure, establishing new locations, and involving public-private partnerships (PPP) (Ahamed 2018).

The foundation of the tourist industry in India is the promotion of the country's exceptional biodiversity, rivers, forests, and rich cultural legacy. The difficulties in this industry are in keeping

things in their original form while yet providing access to both domestic and foreign tourists. India's tourism industry has the power to pique the interest of the local populace in the preservation of the country's natural and cultural resources, resulting in more sustainable economic growth.

Tourism Development during Five-Year Plans

The seventh five-year plan enhanced Indian tourist planning. The following policies are proposed by India's seventh five-year plan for tourist planning: To develop domestic tourism aggressively. It emphasized the development of more beach resorts. To hold conferences, trekking conventions, and winter sports so that international tourists have a variety of possibilities.

The eighth five-year plan emphasized the need to increase private sector engagement in the tourist sector. The Union government has made several provisions for the growth of the tourist industry. In May 1992, a National Action Plan for Tourism was announced (Twelfth Five Year Pla...). The goals of this action plan were as follows: to conserve the environment and national heritage; to socially and economically develop tourist places; to improve job possibilities in the tourism sector; and to develop domestic tourism for the budget or economy category. Increase India's share of global tourism; stimulate foreign tourism; and diversify tourist products.

The government has prioritized the development of fundamental infrastructure such as transit and municipal utilities, as well as the facilitation of lodging and other services for all types of tourists, both local and foreign. Indigenous and Natural Health Tourism, Rural and Village Tourism, Pilgrim Tourism, Adventure Tourism, Heritage Tourism, and Youth and Senior Citizens Packagers were the key thrust areas of the 9 FYP (Twelfth Five Year Plan, 2012-17).

In the tenth FYP, there has been a notable increase in foreign tourist arrival (FTAs) to India in the previous three years because of numerous initiatives. An advertising campaign called 'Incredible India' was launched for international markets. It climbed by around 65% from 2.38 million in 2002 to 3.92 million in 2005, while foreign exchange revenues increased by approximately 96% over the same period. According to the tourism satellite accounting for India, tourism contributed 5.9% to the country's GDP in 2003-04, while employment in the tourism sector, both direct and indirect, was 41.8 million in the same year, accounting for 8.78% of total employment in the country (Twelfth Five Year Plan, 2012-17).

The Ministry of tourism proposes to continue supporting the development of world-class infrastructure in the nation during the 11th FYP, as existing tourist goods may be upgraded and extended to satisfy new market demands. The Ministry has sanctioned Rs.323.00 Crores for various projects around the country for the current fiscal year. This is an all-time high and will allow projects to be completed on schedule throughout the working season (Eleventh Five Year Pl...).

The 12 FYP added a new dimension to tourism's contribution. The strategy emphasizes the need of using a "pro-poor tourism" approach to enhancing the net benefits of tourism to disadvantaged areas and ensuring that tourism growth helps to reduce poverty reduction. The strategy paper also emphasizes the importance of developing a complete set of strategies for a wide range of activities, from macro to micro, such as product and infrastructure development, marketing, branding, and promotion, planning, policy, and investment (12 Five Year Plan, 2012-17).

Implication of Indian tourism policy 2022

When it comes to National Tourism Policy 2022, green tourism serves as the foundation and expands upon the idea of the green economy. This entails engaging in tourism-related activities within a sustainable social and economic framework. This will be accomplished via developing specialty tourism from the ground up in accordance with sustainable tourism principles and greening traditional tourism. Greenifying traditional tourism entails adjusting traditional tourist activities to incorporate equitable resource transfer and more effective resource utilization.

Conversely, greenifying traditional tourism would require regulating visitor numbers to lessen the strain on regional resources. This is because most traditional tourism offerings are being used to capacity, inflating the economies of tourist destinations and increasing the risk of unemployment and other socioeconomic inequality upon deflation. Thus, while considering inclusivity and effective

resource transfer, a balance must be struck between the tourist destination's carrying capacity and its economic advantages.

The National Framework for Sustainable, Responsible, and Inclusive Tourism is a framework that the National Tourism Policy developed to accomplish this transition. The framework is in line with the aims of sustainable development, the climate action plan, and a definition of tourism that is recognized globally. To formulate and execute policies that incorporate the elements of environmental sustainability, socio-cultural sustainability, and economic sustainability, the framework first adopts the UNWTO definition of tourism. Furthermore, the framework intends to create a climate action plan and have tourist stakeholders adopt it. In accordance with national regulations, this climate action plan calls for cutting greenhouse gas emissions, increasing the use of renewable energy sources, and achieving net zero emissions.

To achieve SDG 2030, all national policies in India, including those related to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, have been modified. Similarly, a framework for coordinating tourist development with SDG is developed, drawing comparisons between the aims of sustainable development goals and the growth of the tourism industry.

The national tourist policy's guidance for destination development, creation, and administration is another feature. It consists of several frameworks and strategies to integrate sustainability and set up mechanisms for progress measurement and reporting; multi-stakeholder participatory planning; public investment and capacity building for promoting green tourism; appropriate taxation policies; and coordination between the various ministries of the Indian government.

The fundamental idea behind integrating sustainability into tourism practices is the understanding that every tourism destination is unique and needs a unique set of strategies and processes to ensure its sustainable growth as a travel destination. This strategy guarantees the implementation of place-specific interventions that are concurrently vertically linked with the plan, providing the stakeholders with the leeway and power to operate locally. Place-specific sustainable frameworks respect the resources that are available locally and consider cultural norms to create destination planning that is cognizant of the advantages and difficulties of the location.

It is crucial to keep track of the progress achieved continuously. In relation to the planning and development of the destination, it aids stakeholders in calibrating their actions and forecasts. The national policy highlights the emissions associated with the tourist industry as one of the important metrics. It covers greenhouse gas emissions, ground water contamination, and solid waste. These emissions are closely related to the idea of ecological footprints, but in the context of tourism, the fewer the footprints, the better. They may be thought of as the footprints of tourism activities.

The tourist sector and destinations will be pushed to get the "Sustainable Tourism Criteria for India" (STCI) based accreditation. The STCI will include accreditation for lodging, tour companies, and other tourism attractions. Furthermore, the measuring, reporting, and verification of sustainable aspects of tourism will also incorporate international best practices for tourism.

However, a multi-stakeholder participatory planning process is intended to advance the master plan for the tourism destination. The strategy makes sure that the number of tourists visiting a place is limited to prevent overtourism and, therefore, fatigue on the parts of the economy, ecology, and culture. Accordingly, to prevent sociocultural and environmental stress, carrying capacity and visitor management strategies are implemented; the "plastic free destination" (PFD) and green mobility program will be the main areas of activity.

Programs, frameworks, and criteria described above shall be made known as part of the partnership and capacity building initiative for sustainable development promotion. Centers of excellence will be established at all levels of government to develop the skills, knowledge, and resources needed to instruct businesses and other stakeholders in sustainable and ethical tourist practices. This strategy will guarantee that the mechanism's evolutionary character is generated and perpetuated, and that knowledge-based governance for the development of sustainable tourism is encouraged.

Regarding the finance strategy, PPP (Public Private Partnership) programs and public investments will be used. The government's investments in infrastructure related to protected areas,

cultural assets, water, waste management, sanitation, transportation, and electricity will provide as a foundation for and promote private sector involvement in the tourist industry. MSMEs will receive special consideration when it comes to funding green tourism. Given that MSMEs are the main point of contact between the local community and industry and the small-scale, local growth engines that create jobs for them, it is a fair approach that demonstrates the government's intention to uphold the principles of inclusion and conservation of local resources within the framework of sustainable development.

Additional funding sources include foreign direct investment (FDI), which is crucial for both sustaining the capital inflow and putting the potential local tourism attraction on the map of the world. Within this concept, portfolio investments and private equity also have their proper positions.

Finally, for effective strategy implementation at the national and subnational levels, collaboration and partnerships across the several ministries in charge of the environment, energy, labour, agriculture, transport, health, finance, security, and other pertinent sectors will be guaranteed.

Thus, it can be confidently concluded that modern tourism policies have evolved into comprehensive frameworks that structure the growth of the industry and make it more inclusive and sustainable. Nations such as India are well-suited to meet the demands of modern tourism and offer appropriate frameworks for sustainable and resilient tourist growth.

Funding: This work was not supported by any Funding Agency.

Disclosure statement: The authors report there are no competing interests to declare.

References

1. Akira Soshiroda. Inbound tourism policies in Japan from 1859 to 2003. *Annals of Tourism Research* **32** Elsevier BV, 2005.
2. Axel Dreher. Does globalization affect growth? Evidence from a new index of globalization. *Applied Economics* **38** Informa UK Limited, 2006.
3. Chunyan Liu, Xueting Dou, Jiangfeng Li, Liping A. Cai. Analyzing government role in rural tourism development: An empirical investigation from China. *Journal of Rural Studies* **79** Elsevier BV, 2020.
4. Claus Bossen. Festival Mania, Tourism and Nation-Building in Fiji: The Case of the Hibiscus Festival, 1956-1970. *The Contemporary Pacific* **12**, 123–154 Project MUSE, 2000.
5. David Airey. European government approaches to tourism. *Tourism Management* **4**, 234–244 (1983).
6. David L. Edgell. UNITED STATES INTERNATIONAL TOURISM POLICY. 1983 J. Jafari and Pergamon Press Ltd, 1983.
7. Eleventh Five Year Plan 2007-12. (2007). Planning Commission, Government of India (GOI)
8. Fernando Simon Yarza. The so-called right to the environment: a challenge to the theory of fundamental rights. *REVISTA ESPANOLA DE DERECHO CONSTITUCIONAL* **32**, 153–179 (2012).
9. Haiyan Song, Gang Li, Zheng Cao. Tourism and Economic Globalization: An Emerging Research Agenda. *Journal of Travel Research* **57** SAGE Publications, 2017.
10. Harald Heinrichs, Ferdinand Schuster. Still some way to go: institutionalisation of sustainability in German local governments. *Local Environment* **22** Informa UK Limited, 2016.
11. Hartmut Bossel. Indicators for sustainable development: theory, method, applications. International Institute for Sustainable Development Winnipeg, 1999.
12. Heather Mair. Tourism, Globalisation, and Cultural Change: An Island Community Perspective. *Annals of Tourism Research* **32** Elsevier BV, 2005.
13. Jianguo Wu, Tong Wu. Sustainability indicators and indices: an overview. *Handbook of sustainability management* 65–86 World Scientific, 2012.
14. K.H. Iyer. Tourism Development in India. Vista International Publishing House, 2006.
15. Kizito Uyi Ehigiamusoe, Muhammad Shahbaz, Xuan Vinh Vo. How Does Globalization Influence the Impact of Tourism on Carbon Emissions and Ecological Footprint? Evidence from African Countries. *Journal of Travel Research* **62** SAGE Publications, 2022.
16. Kizito Uyi Ehigiamusoe. A disaggregated approach to analysing the effects of globalization and energy consumption on economic growth: New insights from low-income countries. *International Journal of Finance & Economics* **28** Wiley, 2022.
17. Louis D'Amore. Peace through Tourism: The Birthing of a New Socio-Economic Order. *Journal of Business Ethics* **89** Springer Science and Business Media LLC, 2009.

18. Marion Joppe. Tourism policy and governance: Quo vadis?. *Tourism Management Perspectives* **25** Elsevier BV, 2018.
19. Mustak Ahamed. Indian Tourism-The Government Endeavours Resulting into Tourism Growth and Development. *International Journal on Recent Trends in Business and Tourism (IJRTBT)* **2**, 7–15 (2018).
20. Rachel Dodds. Sustainable Tourism and Policy Implementation: Lessons from the Case of Calviá, Spain. *Current Issues in Tourism* **10**, 296–322 (2007).
21. Soheila Khoshnevis Yazdi, Bahram Shakouri. The globalization, financial development, renewable energy, and economic growth. *Energy Sources, Part B: Economics, Planning, and Policy* **12** Informa UK Limited, 2017.
22. Tom Baum, Edith Szivas. HRD in tourism: A role for government?. *Tourism Management* **29** Elsevier BV, 2008.
23. Twelfth Five Year Plan 2012-17. (2012). Planning Commission, Government of India (GOI).
24. Vanessa Muler Gonzalez, Lluís Coromina, Nuria Galí. Overtourism: residents' perceptions of tourism impact as an indicator of resident social carrying capacity - case study of a Spanish heritage town. *Tourism Review* **73** Emerald, 2018.
25. Weibing Zhao, Xingqun Li. Globalization of tourism and third world tourism development. *Chinese Geographical Science* **16**, 203–210 (2006).
26. Yuanzhi Liu, Akintoye Victor Adejumo, Oluwabunmi Opeyemi Adejumo, Timothy Ayomitunde Aderemi. Globalization and Economic Growth: A Sustainability Analysis for South Asian Countries. *Global Policy* **13** Wiley, 2022.

Disclaimer/Publisher's Note: The statements, opinions and data contained in all publications are solely those of the individual author(s) and contributor(s) and not of MDPI and/or the editor(s). MDPI and/or the editor(s) disclaim responsibility for any injury to people or property resulting from any ideas, methods, instructions or products referred to in the content.