

Introduction

On my journey to Gangotri, the source of the Ganga River, I experienced the Himalayan Mountains for the first time. As our vehicle ascended the mountainside, each view was so spectacular, we thought *this* must be it, *this* must be the climax. With each new level, however, we saw new mountains that had been blocked from view before. The drive began with the smaller, green mountains, etched over in places with terrace farms. Then we saw gray, snow-dusted peaks, and finally, rising serenely behind them, the glacier-covered white giants. I remember, above all, a feeling of deep satisfaction with the awesome beauty surrounding us.

These are the natural splendors the nongovernmental organization Shri Bhuvneshwari Mahila Ashram (SBMA) of Uttarakhand, India wishes to utilize to promote the ecotourism project they are developing. In May of 2004 I volunteered with SBMA and attempted to assist them in their goal of alleviating Uttarakhand's environmental and socio-cultural crises in an eco-friendly manner. Through my previous travels I had been made acutely aware of the negative impact tourists like myself could have on a local environment and culture, and therefore was compelled to continue research on the topic of ecotourism in Uttarakhand even after leaving India.

My thesis evaluates the potential of ecotourism as a tool for sustainable development in Uttarakhand, India. To begin, I discuss Anthony Giddens' sociological theory of "disembedding" as the lens through which to examine the effects of modernization on societies like Uttarakhand. I then give a definition and overview of ecotourism, which I propose as a method for the people of Uttarakhand to "re-embed" themselves. It is important to note that while ecotourism can be used as an instrument to

achieve sustainable development, it cannot be relied upon as a solution for all Uttarakhand's problems. Ecotourism must be implemented in conjunction with other sustainable industries if it is to achieve lasting benefits for the community.

After the ecotourism section, I provide background on Uttarakhand and, as a basis of comparison, analyze the state of Goa, India, known for its "successful" tourism industry. Evaluating which aspects of Goa's tourism development Uttarakhand should emulate and those it should avoid will facilitate the generation of an ecotourism policy for Uttarakhand. This policy proposal is provided in the subsequent section. Finally, my suggestions for further research describe the steps that can be taken by researchers interested in promoting the cause of ecotourism in the Uttarakhand region.

Theory

According to Anthony Giddens, modernity is a "double-edged phenomenon."¹ As compared to traditional social orders, modernity has the potential to provide superior security and rewards to an enormous population.² However, there are many drawbacks to modernity, one of which is growing ecological concerns.³ A phenomenon intrinsic to modernity is what Giddens terms "disembedding" or, "the 'lifting out' of social relations from local contexts of interaction and their restructuring across indefinite spans of time-space."⁴ This process is integral to the reorganizing of social life, which is necessary for modernization, and, like modernity, can produce positive and negative results.⁵

¹Anthony Giddens, *The Consequences of Modernity* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990), 7.

²Ibid., 7.

³Ibid., 8.

⁴Ibid., 21.

⁵Ibid., 22-29.

When the people of Uttaranchal migrate from the rural areas to urban centers in search of work, they stay in contact with their family and friends via telephone, internet and other means. While this ability to communicate without regard for time or space allows relatives to stay in touch while earning higher wages than they could at home, it encourages a lifestyle that leads to less familiarity with traditional culture. When a culture that has developed over time is suddenly abandoned for a new one, unhealthy and even dangerous consequences can occur.

Throughout this paper I will use Giddens' concept of "disembedding" to identify societal stress the people of Uttaranchal are experiencing. The purpose of the paper is to identify and adapt a resource for the people to "re-embed" themselves, or to regain control over their destinies and once again tie their livelihoods to their native land. The resource I propose for re-embedding is a specific ecotourism policy.

Ecotourism

Though in its infant stages, ecotourism is increasingly one of the most popular forms of tourism⁶. According to the World Tourism Organization, (WTO) ecotourists make up 20% of world travel.⁷ Some claim this estimate is inflated,⁸ but much depends on the definition of ecotourism. When ecotourism is loosely defined, it seems to be a burgeoning industry. Just where to draw the line on what does and what does not

⁶Wight, P.A., "Ecotourists: Not a Homogeneous Market Segment," in *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism*, ed. David B. Weaver (New York: CABI Publishing, 2001): 38.

⁷McKercher, B., "The Business of Ecotourism," in *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism*, ed. David B. Weaver (New York: CABI Publishing, 2001): 569.

⁸David B. Weaver, *Ecotourism in the Less Developed World* (New York: CAB International, 1998), 20.

constitute ecotourism is a complicated question. Reputable and knowledgeable sources disagree on the definition of ecotourism, as the table below illustrates:⁹

Source	Definition
Ceballos-Lascurain (1987, p14)	Traveling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestations (both past and present) found in these areas
The Ecotourism Society (1991a,b)	Responsible travel to natural areas which conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people
Ecotourism Association of Australia (1992)	Ecologically sustainable tourism that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation
National Ecotourism Strategy of Australia	Ecotourism is nature-based tourism that involves education and interpretation of the natural environment and is managed to be ecologically sustainable This definition recognizes that “natural environment” includes cultural components and that “ecologically sustainable” involves an appropriate return to the local community and long-term conservation of the resource
Tickell (1994, p.ix)	Travel to enjoy the world’s amazing diversity of natural life and human culture without causing damage to either.

The WTO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) identified several factors most definitions of ecotourism hold in common. According to the WTO and UNEP, ecotourism is a type of tourism based on the appreciation of nature and the

⁹Blamey, R.K., “Principles of Ecotourism,” in *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism*, ed. David B. Weaver (New York: CABI Publishing, 2001): 6.

traditional culture of the area.¹⁰ There is an educational element to ecotourism, and it is a form of tourism that “minimizes negative impacts upon the natural and socio-cultural environment.”¹¹ Ecotourism generates alternative occupations for local people, while generating awareness of conservation issues among the host community and the tourists.¹²

My definition of ecotourism draws from UNEP’s construction and what the World Wildlife Federation (WWF) deems “community-based ecotourism.”¹³ For the purposes of this paper, ecotourism is a type of tourism that is developed and regulated largely by the local community, retains most of the profits within that community and minimizes the harmful effects on the local culture and environment. It is an industry that promotes conservation of the environment and strives to be sustainable.

The term “sustainable,” like “ecotourism” does not have one set definition. A commonly accepted definition comes from the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED) in 1987: “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”¹⁴ When carried out in its ideal form, a sustainable industry is one that can be carried on indefinitely. Unlike typical manufacturing industries that rely on nonrenewable resources for their raw materials, or

¹⁰United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, Education for Sustainable Development, 19 August 2003, available from http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=21954&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html; Internet; accessed 20 March 2005.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid.

¹³World Wildlife Fund, Guidelines for Community-Based Ecotourism Development, July 2001, available from http://www.wwf.org.uk/filelibrary/pdf/community_based_ecotourism.pdf; Internet; accessed 3 March 2005; 4.

¹⁴World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* (1987), 8; quoted in Blamey, R.K., “Principles of Ecotourism,” in *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism*, ed. David B. Weaver (New York: CABI Publishing, 2001): 10.

use forms of energy that pollute the environment, a sustainable industry will never be wanting for resources or bring about its own demise through excess.

History

After World War II, as world travel became more convenient and less expensive, international organizations promoted tourism as a tool to develop less developed countries. Tourism was considered an ideal industry for countries with little infrastructure and cash flow, but with pleasant climates and “exotic” cultures.¹⁵ In many developing countries, governments found that compared to other industries, tourism tends to generate high amounts of foreign exchange income and creates many jobs.¹⁶ Tourism was seen as an industry that was less polluting than typical manufacturing industries,¹⁷ provided side benefits such as the construction of roads for tourists that would also be used by locals, and one that created incentives to maintain historical sites in the area.¹⁸ Beyond all this, many believed tourism would promote cultural understanding and international peace.¹⁹

However, after a few decades, people began to realize that traditional or mass tourism was not achieving the goals of eradicating poverty or increasing the standard of living of people in less developed countries. While the tourism industry did bring some benefits to the host countries, it often had the effect of making a very few very rich, while making the poor still poorer.²⁰ In addition to this, it seemed to be a slightly more subtle form of the colonialism many of the countries had been subject to before the war.

¹⁵Weaver, *Ecotourism in the Less Developed World*, 45.

¹⁶Elizabeth Boo, *Ecotourism: The Potentials and Pitfalls* (Washington, D.C.: World Wildlife Fund, 1990), 5.

¹⁷Weaver, *Ecotourism in the Less Developed World*, 45.

¹⁸*Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, 47.

²⁰*Ibid.*, 47.

Some of the harmful effects of mass tourism include “price rises...changes in local attitudes and behavior; pressure on people (crowding, disturbance, alienation); loss of resources, access, rights, privacy; denigration or prostitution of local culture; reduction of aesthetics; pollution in various forms; lack of control over the destination’s future; and specific problems such as vandalism, litter, traffic, and low-paid seasonal employment.”²¹

Westerners, typically the ones who can afford to travel, tend to impose their culture on whichever countries they visit. These “psychocentric” travelers create a market for imported goods, enjoying the familiarity, for example, of McDonald’s in a foreign country.²² The dependency that is created on imported goods drives the local markets to ruin, and at the same time disrupts the integrity of the traditional local culture.²³

The people of the host countries, the planners of tourism development, and even some of the tourists themselves have seen the need for a new type of tourism. Ecotourism was one of the forms of tourism developed in an effort to address this need. Other types of “alternative tourism” include adventure tourism and cultural tourism.²⁴

In 2002 the United Nations recognized the growing importance and potential of ecotourism by declaring it the “International Year of Ecotourism.”²⁵ This effort was jointly led by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), and led to greater worldwide efforts to promote ecotourism, especially in less developed countries. Conventions,

²¹Blamey, “Principles of Ecotourism,” 18.

²²Weaver, *Ecotourism in the Less Developed World*, 47.

²³Ibid., 150-151.

²⁴Ibid., 8.

²⁵ United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, United Nations’ International Years, 21 March 2005, available from <http://www.unesco.org/mab/UNyears.htm>; Internet; accessed 21 March 2005.

conferences, workshops, fairs, and other events were all organized under the name of the International Year of Ecotourism. UNESCO placed a particular emphasis on the importance of including a wide variety of stakeholders in the development of ecotourism. In order to access those stakeholders who were unable to attend the World Ecotourism Summit or other conventions, the WTO and the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP) organized a web conference on sustainable development of ecotourism in April 2002.²⁶ Surveys were taken of various countries' participation, progress, and reaction to the different UNESCO initiatives.²⁷ At the end of 2002, recommendations to further promote ecotourism were made.²⁸

Ecotourism in India

Many of the events produced for the International Year of Ecotourism were held in India.²⁹ As 2002 was also declared the International Year of Mountains,³⁰ it was a year that focused on issues central to the mountainous state of Uttaranchal.

India has reportedly established a committee for ecotourism activities.³¹ It also has attempted to define a national strategy for development of ecotourism.³² However, India, and Uttaranchal in particular, seems to be somewhat lackadaisical on the promotion of ecotourism. It certainly works to promote tourism, but tends to neglect the finer points of sustainable development. Little funding is given to the ecotourism department in Uttaranchal, as opposed to the general tourism branch that has considerable

²⁶United Nations, Assessment of the results achieved in realizing aims and objectives of the International Year of Ecotourism, 18 June 2003, available from <http://www.world-tourism.org/sustainable/IYE/IYE-Rep-UN-GA-2003.pdf>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2005; 4.

²⁷Ibid., 1.

²⁸Ibid., 2.

²⁹Ibid., 4.

³⁰Ibid., 1.

³¹Ibid., 22.

³²Ibid., 22.

resources at its disposal.³³ Although there are several reputable Indian ecotourism businesses, the general attitude towards true ecotourism seems to lack seriousness.

Benefits of Ecotourism

Ecotourism can promote a positive attitude toward conservation among the local people as well as the tourists.³⁴ Where traditional tourism constructs luxury hotels that only the very wealthy (and often not native) people can afford to build, ecotourism tends to rely on more modest accommodations that are owned by the less affluent, local people. Traditional tourism, once it finds a product or service that sells to the tourists, aggressively pursues production of that product or service, with little concern for the effects on the environment or culture. In ecotourism, profit is not the only factor considered. The environmental and social effects of a product or service are also considered, and decisions are made accordingly. Responsible ecotourism involves reliance on local food production to provide for the tourists, a sense of mutual respect between the tourists and hosts, non-polluting or low-pollution lifestyles of the tourists, and local ownership and control of the money-making resources, as well as powers of decision-making.³⁵

Ecotourism attempts to retain the economic benefits of the tourism industry, such as increased income and job opportunities, while minimizing the negative effects. There is also a potential for positive outcomes of intercultural interaction between the tourists and hosts. While it is generally accepted that tourists will benefit from learning about the

³³A.K. Ghosh, Managing Director GMNV and Additional Secretary of Tourism. Interview by Alana Herro, May 2004, 74/1 Rajpur Road, Dehradun.

³⁴World Wildlife Fund, Guidelines for Community-Based Ecotourism Development, July 2001, available from http://www.wwf.org.uk/filelibrary/pdf/community_based_ecotourism.pdf; Internet; accessed 3 March 2005; 6.

³⁵Ibid., 1-3.

cultures they visit, it is also possible that certain desirable cultural traits may pass from tourists to host communities. These traits may include a more equal relationship between men and women, or a less rigid social hierarchy.

Costs of ecotourism

It is important not to over estimate the possibilities of ecotourism. It is not a panacea,³⁶ and there is no completely benign form of tourism.³⁷ While ecotourism is the most desirable form of tourism, it, too, has its drawbacks. Introducing people to relatively untouched areas will have at least some impact on that environment. It is debatable whether or not ecotourism can be completely environmentally sustainable. The object of ecotourism is, after all, to bring people to relatively untouched and pristine areas of the world and have them experience it. Tourists will also necessarily impact the local culture. Interactions between cultures will inevitably lead to conflict and change.³⁸

Ecotourism can lead to the over-preservation of one species at the expense of biodiversity in the area.³⁹ The ecotourism market is not as robust as some, because it is generally small, and susceptible to exterior influences. It is particularly sensitive to political and economic changes of the host countries.⁴⁰

More dangerous, though, is a mutation of true ecotourism. The spread of ecotourism can lead to a healthy trend towards sustainable development; however, with out precautions, “ecotourism” can quickly devolve into mass tourism, or a variation of

³⁶Ibid., 6.

³⁷Weaver, *Ecotourism in the Less Developed World*.

³⁸Michelle LeBaron, *Bridging Cultural Conflict* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2003), 19.

³⁹World Wildlife Fund, Guidelines for Community-Based Ecotourism Development, July 2001, available from http://www.wwf.org.uk/filelibrary/pdf/community_based_ecotourism.pdf; Internet; accessed 3 March 2005; 6.

⁴⁰Ibid., 10.

it.⁴¹ The local elite may seize control of the local ecotourism industry, taking control from the less powerful members of the community.⁴² As a site grows more popular, the exuberance of tourist response may lead to use beyond an area's carrying capacity. An additional unintended effect of ecotourism can be when opponents of ecotourism directly attack the resources of ecotourism, i.e. the natural setting or wildlife in an area.⁴³

Yet another source of trouble for the proper functioning of ecotourism is when the ecotourists do not properly educate themselves on the required behavior of an ecotourist. Suggested guidelines for ecotourists include being respectful of the local culture, remembering to behave as a guest, never litter when traveling, and support local industry.⁴⁴

Necessary components

As with other types of tourism, a stable government and safe international atmosphere is conducive to ecotourism. Certain countries, like Costa Rica, Belize, and Australia are firmly established and well known in the ecotourism industry. These countries profited from the first wave of ecotourism that spread across the world, taking advantage of their important and popular biospheres.

More recently, ecotourism has begun to expand to more unusual areas. Ecotourism can flourish in a wider range of climates or biospheres than traditional tourism, including rainforests, mountains, the arctic, islands, coasts, deserts, grasslands, savannahs, wetlands, and others.⁴⁵

⁴¹Weaver, *Ecotourism in the Less Developed World*, 25.

⁴²Ibid., 28.

⁴³Ibid., 28.

⁴⁴Ibid., 29.

⁴⁵Table of Contents, in *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism*, ed. David B. Weaver (New York: CABI Publishing, 2001): vi.

Unlike mass tourism, ecotourism is reliant on the growth of a “dense network” of locally owned and run small businesses. The larger, less locally grounded business that generally typify the global tourism market have no place in the ecotourism industry.⁴⁶

The Market

In order to implement a new business, it is important to understand your market. Though ecotourism is increasing in popularity, and the main tourism industry is moving towards a more nature-based and environmentally friendly outlook,⁴⁷ the industry still relies on a niche market⁴⁸. Most studies find that ecotourists generally come from higher-end income levels, higher educational levels, are female, and are in the age range of 20 to 54.⁴⁹ These travelers have specific criteria in mind when they are choosing an ecotrip. Depending on how serious and dedicated a traveler is, different needs must be satisfied by the ecotrip. Generally, however, the ecotourist is looking for a unique, quality experience, and is willing to pay more for this experience.⁵⁰ The more dedicated ecotourist is looking for an experience that immerses one in nature, and is willing to forego comforts for periods of time. They are considered “hard core” ecotourists.⁵¹ Less dedicated ecotourists are more interested in trips that are convenient and fit into their already scheduled vacations.⁵² These types of ecotourists are labeled “casual.”⁵³

⁴⁶United Nations, Assessment of the results achieved in realizing aims and objectives of the International Year of Ecotourism, 18 June 2003, available from <http://www.world-tourism.org/sustainable/IYE/IYE-Rep-UN-GA-2003.pdf>; Internet; accessed 2 March 2005; 15.

⁴⁷Wight, “Ecotourists: Not a Homogeneous Market Segment,” 40.

⁴⁸McKercher, B., “the Business of Ecotourism,” in *The Encyclopedia of Ecotourism*, ed. David B. Weaver (New York: CABI Publishing, 2001): 569.

⁴⁹Wight, “Ecotourists: Not a Homogeneous Market Segment,” 40-43.

⁵⁰McKercher, “The Business of Ecotourism,” 567-568.

⁵¹Ibid., 571.

⁵²Ibid., 571.

⁵³Ibid., 571.

Uttaranchal

Physical and Demographics

Uttaranchal, which means “Northern Mountains,” is a small state in the Himalayan region of India, sharing borders with Tibet, Nepal, and the states of Himachal Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh. Home to some of the tallest mountains in the world and one of the holiest pilgrim treks of India, the “Char Dhama,” the state has attracted people from across the country and world for ages.⁵⁴ Uttaranchal (UA) boasts an abundance of natural beauty and the world-famous Corbett National Park.⁵⁵

The state is divided into east and west regions, Garhwal and Kumaun, which are then divided into 13 districts total, and inhabited by eight million people, making it one of the least inhabited states in the country.⁵⁶ In 2001, Uttaranchal had a total population of 8,479,562, a rural population of 6,309,317 and urban population of 2,170,245. This means about three-fourths of the population is rural, and the other quarter is urban.⁵⁷

Development Indicators

At constant prices, UA’s Gross State Domestic Product (GDP) per capita in 1993-94 was 5,745 crore rupees and in 2001-2002 was 6,829 crore rupees.⁵⁸ Currently, Uttaranchal has a literacy rate of 65%. In 2001 the female literacy rate was 60.26%.⁵⁹ In

⁵⁴“Uttaranchal,” in *Let’s Go: India & Nepal*, ed. Gabriel Melchiades Struck, et. Al (New York: Saint Martin’s Press, 2003), 628.

⁵⁵Ibid., 628-629.

⁵⁶Shri Bhuvneshwari Mahila Ashram, Uttaranchal, 2004, available from http://www.sbmahimalaya.org/mountains/mt_uttaranchal.htm; Internet; accessed 18 February 2005.

⁵⁷Census of India, Rural-Urban Distribution of Population, 2001, available from <http://www.censusindia.net/results/rudist.html>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2005.

⁵⁸Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, *National Income Statistics* (Mumbai: Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy Pvt. Ltd., 2004), 332.

⁵⁹Indian NGOs, Social and Developmental Canvas of India, 2001, available from <http://www.indiangos.com/issue/women/statistics/statistics1.htm>; Internet, accessed 26 March 2005.

2001 the number of adult females per 1000 males was 895 in the state of Uttarakhand,⁶⁰ and the population growth rate from 1991-2001 was 19.2%.⁶¹

History

Uttarakhand seceded from the state of Uttar Pradesh in November of 2000 because the people of Uttarakhand felt their unique needs as hill people, or “Paharis,” were not effectively being addressed by the state government. Though a new state, UA has a rich tradition of grassroots social action, including the world-renown 1973 Chipko or “tree hugging” movement and the more recent decade-long struggle to become its own state.

Industry

Over 75% of the population is rural, as dairy, agriculture, and horticulture are major components of the state’s industry.⁶² The government of UA has developed different schemes in an attempt to develop the region. Tehri Garhwal, a district in the state, is home of the controversial, incomplete and enormous Tehri Dam.⁶³ Tourism, particularly in the form of pilgrimage, also plays a major role in the economy of the state.⁶⁴

Recently the government has been developing programs to enhance the pilgrimage industry and further exploit the other tourism capabilities of the state.⁶⁵

Besides its natural and religious resources, the state has many advantages for tourists:

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Reforming Politics, Population Change and the Democratic Structure, October 2001, available from <http://www.india-seminar.com/2001/506/506%20alistair%20mcmillan.htm>; Internet, accessed 26 March 2005.

⁶²Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia, Uttarakhand, 9 March 2005, available from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uttarakhand#People>; Internet; accessed 3 January 2005.

⁶³Ibid.

⁶⁴Ibid.

⁶⁵Ibid.

good roads, (which the military maintains because of UA's proximity to the Tibetan border) three airports and six railway stations.⁶⁶

However, Uttaranchal does not have the carrying capacity for the amount of pilgrims that currently visit. Environmental degradation resulting from overuse of roads, vehicles, lodging, and improper disposal of waste is a serious problem in the heavily traveled areas. For the good of the Paharis and to maintain the atmosphere that draws people to it, the state needs to re-center its tourism policies on being environmentally friendly and sustainable. Because the tourism season is short (many areas are snow bound December through March)⁶⁷ the environmental damage is more acute.

Goa

Physical and Demographics

Goa is the smallest state in India and is located on the Arabian Sea with the state of Maharashtra in the North and Karnataka to its south and east. Goa is on the west coast of India, in the tropical region, with a yearly climate that ranges from 20 to 35 degrees Celsius.⁶⁸ The typically pleasant weather is overtaken by the arrival of the monsoon around the end of June.⁶⁹ One third of Goa is forested area, and while there are mountains and numerous rivers, Goa is best known for its beautiful beaches.⁷⁰ Along

⁶⁶Ibid.

⁶⁷Shri Badarinath, The official website of Shri Badarinath-Shri Kedarnath Temples Committee, 2002, available from http://www.badarikedar.org/Badrinath_general_Info.htm; Internet; accessed 4 January 2005.

⁶⁸Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, Goa – Facts and Figures, 2002, available from http://www.goatourism.org/About_Goa/facts.htm; Internet; accessed 14 January 2005.

⁶⁹Ibid.

⁷⁰Ibid.

with the beaches, the region is famous for its Portuguese-Catholic tradition, and laid-back atmosphere.⁷¹

Like Uttaranchal, Goa has famous national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and pilgrimage sites (Catholic and Hindu). The state is divided into two regions, North Goa and South Goa, which are then further divided into eleven talukas. The roads connecting major cities of Goa are considered in excellent condition, and many buses offer service transporting people inter and intra state.⁷² The capital city of Panaji is close to the international/national Goa Airport.⁷³ There are two major railway stations in Goa, one of which is served by the high-speed Konkan Railway.⁷⁴ In 2001, Goa had a total of 1,343,998 people, 675,129 from rural areas and 668,869 from urban areas.⁷⁵ About half of Goa's population is rural and the other half urban, with a slight balance towards the urban areas.

Development Indicators

Goa is considered a state with a relatively high standard of living. This is based on a variety of factors, such as having one of the highest per capita incomes in the country. The GDP per capita, in constant prices, was 19,824 in 1993-94.⁷⁶ In 2001-2002 it was 31,912 crore rupees.⁷⁷ 82.32% of Goans are considered literate, which is one of the

⁷¹“Goa,” in *Let's Go: India & Nepal*, ed. Gabriel Melchiades Struck, et. Al (New York: Saint Martin's Press, 2003), 171.

⁷²Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, *Getting There*, 2002, available from <http://www.goatourism.org/Transportation/road.htm>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2005.

⁷³Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, *Getting There*, 2002, available from <http://www.goatourism.org/Transportation/air.htm>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2005.

⁷⁴Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, *Getting There*, 2002, available from <http://www.goatourism.org/Transportation/rail.htm>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2005.

⁷⁵Census of India, *Rural-Urban Distribution of Population*, 2001, available from <http://www.censusindia.net/results/rudist.html>; Internet; accessed 10 February 2005.

⁷⁶Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, *National Income Statistics*, 314.

⁷⁷Goa Industrial Development Corporation, *Why Goa?* 1998, available from <http://www.goaidc.com/whygoa.html>; Internet; accessed 16 January 2005.

highest rates in the country.⁷⁸ In 2001 the female literacy rate was 75.51%.⁷⁹ The sex ratio (women per 1000 men) for Goa was 964 in 2001.⁸⁰ The population growth rate from 1991-2001 was 14.89%.⁸¹

History

Goa was under Portuguese control for 450 years, and remained so even after India's independence, not coming under Indian rule until 1962.⁸² This singular influence in the region has given Goa a unique Catholic-Indian heritage. After liberation from Portuguese control in 1961,⁸³ the government poured money into developing the infrastructure in the 1960s and 70s.⁸⁴ The area quickly became a tourist hot spot, particularly for western counter-cultural "hippies."⁸⁵ Goa was granted statehood in 1987.⁸⁶

Industry

Tourism is the main industry of the state, but many still rely on mining, agriculture, and fishing for income.⁸⁷ Goa receives 400,000 international tourists (12%

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Indian NGOs, Social and Developmental Canvas of India, 2001, available from <http://www.indianngos.com/issue/women/statistics/statistics1.htm>; Internet, accessed 26 March 2005.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Reforming Politics, Population Change and the Democratic Structure, October 2001, available from <http://www.india-seminar.com/2001/506/506%20alistair%20mcmillan.htm>; Internet, accessed 26 March 2005.

⁸²Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, History and Heritage, 2002, available from <http://www.goatourism.org/History/mythology.htm>; Internet; accessed 15 January 2005

⁸³Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, About Goa, 2002, available from http://www.goatourism.org/About_Goa/goa_intro.htm; Internet; accessed 15 January 2005.

⁸⁴Frontline, A History of Migration, 2004, available from <http://www.frontlineonnet.com/fl2124/stories/20041203001905400.htm>; Internet; accessed 9 February 2005.

⁸⁵Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, About Goa, 2002, available from http://www.goatourism.org/About_Goa/goa_intro.htm; Internet; accessed 15 January 2005.

⁸⁶Ibid.

⁸⁷Wikipedia The Free Encyclopedia, Uttaranchal, 9 March 2005, available from <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goa>; Internet; accessed 3 January 2005.

of the country's total)⁸⁸ and 1.6 million domestic tourists per year. There is a particularly heavy influx of tourists every 10 years to celebrate Goinchea Saibache Fest, when the remains of St. Francis Xavier, usually housed at the Basilica of Bom Jesus,⁸⁹ are paraded around the town. Throughout India and around the world Goa is known as an ideal spot for "3S" (Sea, Sand and Sun)⁹⁰ tourism. It remains to be seen whether the destruction of tourist areas in Thailand and other East Asian areas will result in an increase in tourism to Goa. Although tourism is important to the state's economy, there are many problems with the way it is carried out in Goa.

Compare and Contrast

Goa and Uttaranchal have many similarities. They are both states that have a history of attracting tourists (pilgrims and others) and have ample natural beauty to attract many more tourists. Both are new states that formed decades after the independence of India.

In many ways Uttaranchal today is comparable to Goa after its liberation from Portuguese control in the early 1960s: UA is a new state, full of potential, but suffering from severe out-migration. It is a precarious moment for Uttaranchal, which has a new government eager to increase industry and raise the standard of living of the Paharis. On the cusp of development, UA has the opportunity to learn from the example of Goa, a state that looked to tourism as a method of improving its standard of living. My proposal is that, like Goa, Uttaranchal should use a type of tourism to promote its development.

⁸⁸Government of Goa, Places of Tourist Interest, 17 March 2005, available from <http://goagovt.nic.in/gag/platou.htm>; Internet; accessed 23 March 2005.

⁸⁹Goa Tourism, Geographical Details, 1 October 2004, available from <http://www.goa-tourism.com>; Internet; accessed 20 February 2005.

⁹⁰Weaver, *Ecotourism in the Less Developed World*, 47.

However, UA should not imitate Goa in every particular. Certain elements of Goa's development scheme should be emulated, but others should be guarded against.

Goa managed to benefit from its experience of disembedding. However, it also experienced significant negative consequences from its failure to re-embed properly. To generate specifics for Uttaranchal's ecotourism policy proposal, a comparison of each region's current strengths and weaknesses within four categories follows. The four categories are: human and economic development, migration, cultural integrity, and the environment.

Human and Economic Development Indicators

The brief overview of the two states presented above indicates that Goa has achieved a higher standard of living than Uttaranchal. Indeed, Goa is considered one of the most highly developed states in India.⁹¹ This label must be carefully given; some measurements of "progress" can be misleading. It is important to look at different facets of development, as well as have an understanding of the reasons statistics appear as they do.

As an example, the Hill Regions (Uttaranchal areas, before it became its own state) in 1980 and 1985 had the highest per capita income of the state of Uttar Pradesh.⁹² However, this was largely due to excessive logging, an industry that provided little income retention for local people, and simultaneously destroyed their main source of livelihood. In 1991 the Hill Regions were shown to have the lowest growth rate of all the regions of the state,⁹³ and in 1996 the Hill Region in Uttar Pradesh had the highest sex

⁹¹Government of Goa, Official Web site, 17 March 2005, available from <http://goagovt.nic.in/goaatgla.htm>; Internet; accessed 23 March 2005.

⁹²R.S. Bora, *Himalayan Migration* (Altamira Press: New Delhi:1996), 22.

⁹³*Ibid.*, 21.

ratio of women to men.⁹⁴ The comparatively low growth rate and higher sex ratio are indicators not of prosperity but of increased out-migration of males from the region.⁹⁵

Another statistic to view carefully is the unemployment rate. According to the Government of India's Central Statistical Organization, in 2001 the Uttaranchal workforce participation rate was 36.93%. In rural areas it was 39.63% and the urban rate was 29.09%.⁹⁶ The Goan workforce participation rate was 38.88%. In rural areas it was 40.7%, and in urban areas it was 37.05%.⁹⁷ In imitation of Goa's tourism promotion, one of the goals of the ecotourism project is to increase the employment opportunities in Uttaranchal so as to decrease the out-migration from the state and from rural areas within the state. Therefore, a comparison of employment statistics seems appropriate.

However, even in developed countries accurate employment statistics are difficult to obtain and undergo considerable debate by experts. These problems are exacerbated in countries with fewer resources for precise data collection. In addition, the informal sector, which would typically be quite significant in an economy heavily reliant on tourism, is not accounted for in these figures. Also, unlike developed countries with welfare systems and other "safety nets," people have a greater incentive to take any work available. For these reasons, employment statistics can be misleading, and should be regarded as imprecise estimates.

⁹⁴Ibid., 22.

⁹⁵Ibid., 22.

⁹⁶Central Statistical Organization, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Government of India, *Women and Men in India, 2002*, available from http://mospi.nic.in/Women_and_Men_in_India2002_Final%20Report.pdf; Internet; accessed 23 March 2005, 41.

⁹⁷Ibid., 41.

To see the differences in the quality of life of Paharis and Goans, general comparisons are useful, but precise quantifications of the differences are difficult to obtain. A few more indicators will help round out the picture.

Goa's birth rate is 18 per 1000, which, along with the 7.47 per 1000 death rate, is the lowest in the entire country. It is also the state with the smallest crime rate. It is number one in several other areas as well, such as the road network density, doctor to patient ratio, and number of hospital beds to the population.⁹⁸ Uttaranchal, on the other hand, has severe nutrition problems: it is the state with the lowest per capita milk intake in the country.⁹⁹ In 1998-1999, only 22% of the births in Uttaranchal were attended by a professional, while in Goa 91% were.¹⁰⁰ In addition, Uttaranchal's dropout rate at the primary level is a staggering 52.53%, whereas Goa's is a mere 8.58%.¹⁰¹

The human development indicators presented above can be seen as assessments of the effects of the process of disembedding from the traditional cultures of Uttaranchal and Goa, which both states began doing with the arrival of European colonizers. The results reveal that thus far, disembedding has been more beneficial to the state of Goa than to Uttaranchal.

Migration

The phenomenon of migration is the quintessential example of Giddens' theory of disembedding. By moving away from his or her traditional homeland and adapting to the

⁹⁸Goa Industrial Development Corporation, Why Goa? 1998, available from <http://www.goaidc.com/whygoa.html>; Internet; accessed 16 January 2005.

⁹⁹Bhatt, Manoj. "Migration issues," 22 March 2005, email to Alana Herro.

¹⁰⁰Ibid.

¹⁰¹Indian NGOs, Social and Developmental Canvas of India, 2001, available from <http://www.indianngos.com/issue/women/statistics/statistics1.htm>; Internet, accessed 26 March 2005.

structure of time and space of the modern urban center, the migrant is “lifted out” of the social relations present in the traditional rural areas.

Uttaranchal has suffered from the drain of out-migration since soon after the beginning of the rule of the British Raj. Because new restrictions were placed on access to the forest, a main source of livelihood vanished from the Pahari people’s culture. The men felt the necessity of migrating out of their home villages in search of a livelihood. The women stayed behind and tended to their traditional work: family and agriculture. With the introduction of the cash economy, even greater pressure was put on the men to migrate in search of higher wages.¹⁰²

Though migration to cities outside of Uttaranchal is a problem, according to the 1961 and 1981 Census Reports, in 1961 and 1981 the number of people migrating into the Uttaranchal area was greater than those leaving. Data shows that 1.9% and 3.0%,¹⁰³ respectively, of the population was migrating in to the region. When the data is broken down further, it is clear that this is due to people migrating to the urban centers. The cities of Dehradun and Nainital drew in a disproportionate number of people from surrounding areas. Dehradun had a net migration of +11.1% in 1961 and +14.6% in 1981, while Nainital had a net of +25.1% and +15.8%.¹⁰⁴ Most of the rural regions of the area had more out-migrants than in-migrants during these years. For example, Tehri Garhwal had a net migration of -5.7% in 1961 and -5.6% in 1981.¹⁰⁵ For the same years, Almora had a net migration of -3.5% and -8.3%.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰²Shri Bhuvneshwari Mahila Ashram, Uttaranchal, 2004, available from http://www.sbmahimalaya.org/mountains/mt_uttaranchal.htm; Internet; accessed 18 February 2005.

¹⁰³Bora, *Himalayan Migration*, 19.

¹⁰⁴*Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁰⁵*Ibid.*, 19.

¹⁰⁶*Ibid.*, 19.

Rural-urban migration continues to be a problem for the region today. Though Uttaranchal has managed to educate much of its populace, for many people, jobs are not in place for the level of education achieved.¹⁰⁷ As I was on the train to Dehradun I met a man who was on his way home to his family for the first time in 2 years. Though he missed his family very much, he had been working abroad, he said, because the wages were better. This is a common occurrence for people of this area.

Goa's migration situation was once similar to that of Uttaranchal's today. In the 1850s those seeking better economic opportunities began the trend of out-migration within Goa to the cities, and even out of Goa for those who could afford to leave. This trend grew for over a century.¹⁰⁸ The government development programs in the 1960s and 1970s were implemented in part in an attempt to address the migration problems. The efforts of the government were successful in improving the economy and effectively quelled the out-migration problem, but soon led to the problem of excessive in-migration from out of the state.¹⁰⁹

Cultural Integrity

Disembedding necessarily creates distance between people and their traditional culture. The physical disembedding of people from their home communities when they migrate is one obvious example of the way people are distanced from their culture. However, there are other signs that demonstrate a loss of cultural integrity.

¹⁰⁷Bhatt, Manoj. "Migration issues," 22 March 2005, email to Alana Herro.

¹⁰⁸Frontline, A History of Migration, 2004, available from <http://www.frontlineonnet.com/fl2124/stories/20041203001905400.htm>; Internet; accessed 9 February 2005.

¹⁰⁹Ibid.

A change in traditional Garhwali diet is one demonstration of a moving away from the traditional culture. The ragi or manduwa (*elusine coracana*)¹¹⁰ and the sanwa (*Echinochloa Frumentaceum*)¹¹¹ are two types of highly nutritious millet that flourish in the Garhwali region. Paharis consider them a symbol of their culture; indeed, there are several Garhwali folk songs that relate the numerous qualities of the grains.¹¹² When wheat and rice were introduced to the region, it created a grain hierarchy. Wheat and rice began to be considered more prestigious, reserved for company and the men in the family.¹¹³ Wheat and rice, however, are also less nutritious and not as well adapted to the mountain environment. This symbolic way of denigrating the traditional culture in favor of the modern is an example of the detrimental effects disembedding has for the people and land of Uttaranchal.

The loss of cultural integrity is present not only in the changing diet but also in the new forms of dwellings the Paharis are building for themselves. When first the British Raj and then the Indian government, in the name of conservation, restricted the local people's access to the forest, the people lost use of the resources traditionally used to build their homes. These traditional architectural techniques were developed over time to be amenable to the seismically dynamic character of the region.¹¹⁴ The Paharis are not allowed to take the needed resources from the forest, and are instead pressed to use

¹¹⁰Hill Crops, Elusine Coracana, June 2001, available from <http://www.narc-nepal.org/HIGHLIGHTS/AnnReport9900/..%5C..%5CHIGHLIGHTS%5CAnnReport9900%5CHILLCROPS.htm>; Internet; accessed 27 March 2005.

¹¹¹Plants for a future: Database search results, Echinochloa Frumentaceum, 2000, available from http://www.ibiblio.org/pfaf/cgi-bin/arr_html?Echinochloa+frumentacea&CAN=LATIND; Internet; accessed 27 March 2005.

¹¹²Bhatt, Manoj. "Migration issues," 22 March 2005, email to Alana Herro.

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

mainstream architectural patterns. These include materials such as cement, iron rods and concrete, all of which are unsuitable for the Himalayan environment.¹¹⁵

Restricted access to the forest plays yet another role in contributing to hazardous conditions for the Pahari people. As the people lost control of and became alienated from the land, which had been so intrinsic to their traditional culture, they began to care less and less about the degradation of the forests. Typically, neither the illegal felling nor the forest fires in the area are attended to.¹¹⁶ Over-harvesting of trees leads to not only less biodiversity and natural beauty, but also increases the likelihood of landslides, flash floods, and ground water problems.¹¹⁷ Forest fires, which were once fought by community efforts, are very frequent and are generally ignored by the Paharis unless it is impossible to do so.¹¹⁸

The effects of disembedding, which separate people from their traditional culture, may lead to a loss of distinct cultural traits and traditions, while at the same time create imminent threats of physical danger for the people living in the region.

When comparing Uttaranchal and Goa's human and economic development and migration, Goa clearly outperformed Uttaranchal. However, in the area of cultural integrity, Goa's achievements are debatable.

Goa has managed to maintain a reputation based on its traditional culture. It is well known for its blend of Indian and Portuguese-Catholic way of life.¹¹⁹ However, many have found the influx of tourists and their western culture to be an attack on the

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

¹¹⁷Martin J. Haigh, "Deforestation in the Himalaya," in *The Changing Global Environment*, ed. Neil Roberts, (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell Ltd., 1994), 447.

¹¹⁸Bhatt, Manoj. "Migration issues," 22 March 2005, email to Alana Herro.

¹¹⁹Department of Tourism, Government of Goa, Goa in Brief, 2002, available from http://www.goatourism.org/About_Goa/goa_intro.htm; Internet; accessed 28 March 2005.

Goans' traditional way of life. Citizens' groups and political parties complain of the drugs, loose morals and loud parties tourists bring with them when they come to Goa.¹²⁰ Such groups include Citizens concerned about Tourism,¹²¹ Jagrut Goenkarandchi Fauz, (Vigilant Goans' Army)¹²² and the Bharatiya Janata Party.¹²³ However, tourism and its revenues have so infiltrated the society that locals and officials frequently put the industry before the common good and even the law. Though Goa has a restriction on loud music after 10 pm, police and other officials are easily bribed to allow raves to go on all night, even in the vicinity of hospitals and school children's homes.^{124, 125}

Some people disagree that tourism in Goa has led to the breakdown of society. One sociologist claims that most of the activities young Goans participate in as a result of the tourists are not due to the demonic influences of the west, but the rebellious nature of youth.¹²⁶ However, I argue that when tourism is allowed to run rampant as it has in Goa, damage to the people and culture is done. When the local people are allowed to take control of the development of tourism there is empowerment instead of helplessness. Uttaranchal should emulate Goa's successful marketing and development of a lucrative tourism industry without losing its cultural integrity. If control of the ecotourism project

¹²⁰UNESCO the Courier, Fear and Loathing in Goa, July/August 2000, available from http://www.unesco.org/courier/2000_07/uk/doss31.htm#top; Internet; accessed 19 February 2005.

¹²¹Ibid.

¹²²India Abroad News Service, Church in Goa Warns of Adverse Impact of Tourism, September 1996, available from <http://www.goacom.com/news/news96/sep/tourism.html>; Internet; accessed 19 February 2005.

¹²³Rediff on the Net, Goans Oppose Move to Open Casinos, 30 September 1999, available from <http://www.rediff.com/business/1999/sep/30goa.htm>; Internet; accessed 24 February 2005.

¹²⁴Goa Environment Federation, July 2000, available from <http://www.goacom.com/gef/>; Internet; accessed February 13, 2005.

¹²⁵UNESCO the Courier, Fear and Loathing in Goa, July/August 2000, available from http://www.unesco.org/courier/2000_07/uk/doss31.htm#top; Internet; accessed 19 February 2005.

¹²⁶Ibid.

remains firmly in the hands of the local people of Uttaranchal, the likelihood of the occurrence of the disembedding problems Goa is experiencing will decrease.

Environment

It is in the area of environmental conservation that Goa most obviously suffers from the effects of disembedding. The people's connection to the land is clearly in jeopardy. When Uttaranchal looks to imitate Goa in its other areas of success, it must take care to guard against incurring the environmental problems Goa has created for itself.

Uttaranchal currently is suffering from its own environmental crisis. The existing regulations of pilgrimage, national parks and commercial logging perpetuate the degradation of the environment.

The pilgrimage season is brief (May-September)¹²⁷ and attracts several thousand pilgrims.¹²⁸ The influx exceeds the carrying capacity of the area in several ways. There is a lack of adequate accommodation (many people pay to sleep in offices or stores),¹²⁹ transportation (my companions and I flagged down a trucker to drive us in his cabin that already held three other people), and sanitation facilities (the Ganga River is used as place to wash, drink, and dispose of waste).¹³⁰ The masses of traveling people necessarily create pollution, with the strain on the infrastructure creating additional environmental problems, as roads, vehicles, and other facilities are overused, breakdown, and create more pollution. There are some studies underway to determine the effects of

¹²⁷Yatra India, India Travel Guide, 2005, available from <http://www.yatraindia.com/uttaranchal-travel-guide/uttaranchal-trekking.html>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2005.

¹²⁸Presenting Uttar Pradesh on a Platter, Major Tourist Spots of Uttar Pradesh, 2000, available from http://www.upportal.com/tourism/major_uttarakhand.asp; Internet; accessed 28 March 2005.

¹²⁹India Travelogue, Pilgrimage, available from <http://www.indiatravelogue.com/leis/pilg/pilg8.html>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2005.

¹³⁰Uttaranchal Environment Protection & Pollution Control Board, State of Environment Report, 2003-04, available from <http://www.ueppcb.com/state.htm>; Internet; accessed 20 December 2004.

pilgrimage on the environment. The Uttaranchal Environment Protection and Pollution Control Board (EPPCB) detects and records the ambient air and water quality, and is currently planning a project to assess the effect that mass bathing, which occurs as a religious ceremony every six years in Uttaranchal, has on the environment.¹³¹ However, the pilgrimage industry is so lucrative, and the people so dependent on it, that instituting and maintaining regulations is very difficult.

Deforestation is another major environmental problem the Paharis face. As discussed earlier, deforestation is related to a loss of cultural integrity for the people of Uttaranchal. This phenomenon is also a serious environmental hazard. Since colonial times the forest has been exploited for commercial purposes.¹³² The decrease in forested area has led to a host of problems. Without a strong root system in place on the hillsides, erosion and landslides become common occurrences.¹³³ Without a canopy and a root system, the soil becomes more compacted, and less water can infiltrate the ground, causing increased runoff, erosion, the likelihood of floods and the lowering of groundwater tables.¹³⁴

Historically, the economic situation of Uttaranchal has left it little room to consider the environmental consequences of such industries as logging and pilgrimage. However, with an increase in landslides, forest fires, and problems with air and water quality, as well as the world's growing knowledge of the importance of a clean environment, Uttaranchal has given more attention to this factor. Numerous laws to protect the environment have been passed, and government organizations have been

¹³¹Ibid.

¹³²Haigh, "Deforestation in the Himalaya," 443.

¹³³Ibid., 447.

¹³⁴Ibid., 444-447.

formed and charged with monitoring and enforcing environmental standards.¹³⁵ Special wildlife preserves like Corbett National Park have been made sanctuaries and are protected from human destruction. Unfortunately, these measures can result in further alienating the local people from the land they are now forbidden to use, even for firewood and food, and do little to protect the rest of the state from the forces of commercial loggers.¹³⁶

Laws that claim ecologically sensitive forest areas for the government and label those desperate enough to brave the armed guards protecting the areas “poachers” take away the peasants’ sense of pride and stewardship of the land. When I was in the Uttaranchal areas, I witnessed several spontaneous forest fires that the people tended to ignore, unless it affected their particular lot of land. This attitude of helplessness and indifference to the destruction of the forests is partly a result of the people’s severed interest in the land.

In its past, Goa has encountered similar dilemmas to those faced by Uttaranchal when attempting to promote development. Issues of mining, agriculture and aquaculture have plagued the region for decades.¹³⁷ Once tourists began arriving in the area in heavy concentrations, other environmental issues came to the forefront. Though it has powerful opponents, Goa’s citizenry is aware of and concerned about its state’s environmental issues. In 1986 the Goa Foundation, Goa’s most prominent environmental group, was formed.¹³⁸ Groups such as the Goa Foundation have fought various environmental

¹³⁵Eco-Ethics International Union, EEIU India Uttaranchal Reports and Letters, 15 January 2004, available from <http://www.eeiu.org/chapters/uttaranchal/reports.html>; Internet; accessed 28 March 2005.

¹³⁶Ibid.

¹³⁷Goa Environment Federation, July 2000, available from <http://www.goacom.com/gef/>; Internet; accessed February 13, 2005.

¹³⁸Goa Foundation, 17 March 2005, available from <http://www.goacom.com/goafoundation/>; Internet; accessed 23 March 2005.

problems, bringing to the forefront such issues as pollution from particulate from mining dust, the detrimental effects of unsustainable aquaculture, improper garbage generation and disposal, overuse of plastic bags, and destruction of the mangroves.¹³⁹ Often the most controversial environmental issues, however, are those related to tourism. Various festivals and rave parties are notorious for the inordinate amount of noise pollution and litter they create.¹⁴⁰ Hotels are continuously in violation of coastal regulations, which state that no buildings may be constructed within 200 meters of the coastline.¹⁴¹ Hotels are also accused of using excessive amounts of water resources for pools and other luxuries, which can lead to water shortages and ground water pollution.¹⁴²

Both Uttaranchal and Goa have urgent environmental problems that are due in large part to the disembedding of their respective cultures. Uttaranchal must be wary of the mistakes Goa has made on its road to development, while at the same time attempting to rectify its current problems.

Ecotourism Policy

The following is my policy proposal based on the information presented above for the implementation of ecotourism in Uttaranchal. Ecotourism has the potential to be a tool to help the Pahari people successfully re-embed themselves into their homeland. However, one must bear in mind two points. The overall theme of the policy, which will differentiate this venture from other, less successful projects, is pre-planning, and slow, careful, monitored growth. The other, more important point, is that in order for the

¹³⁹Goa Environment Federation, July 2000, available from <http://www.goacom.com/gef/>; Internet; accessed February 13, 2005.

¹⁴⁰Ibid.

¹⁴¹Goa Foundation, Bombay High Court at Goa Delivers Major Environment Verdict, 17 March 2005, available from <http://www.goacom.com/gef/dox/judgement-rebello.html>; Internet; accessed 23 March 2005.

¹⁴²Paul Harding, *Lonely Planet: Goa* (Melbourne: Lonely Planet Publishers, 2003), 18.

ecotourism venture to be successful, it must be formed, implemented, and owned by the people of Uttaranchal themselves. The recommendations developed here grew out of my research and my experience with the people of Uttaranchal, and is, I hope, a fusion between the desires of the Paharis and the ways my research has shown is the best way to achieve those goals. However, because this project is based in the people, any recommendation here that the people of Uttaranchal overrule must give way to their judgment. As a westerner who has traveled in the Uttaranchal area, I believe my advice is most valuable when recognized as being from the perspective of an outsider.

My recommendations fall under five general categories.

(1) Studies.

Before considerable cost and effort is placed into developing an ecotourism industry, a preliminary study should always be done to determine the viability of the project.¹⁴³ The World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) has a general list of criteria for this type of study. The Foundation insists that the economic and political environment be amenable to secure investment, sufficient ownership within the community, safe conditions for tourists and the local community (both in perception and in actuality), access to adequate health infrastructure, and decent transportation mechanisms within the area.¹⁴⁴

An assessment of the communities' existing strengths and skills should be made.¹⁴⁵ Whether these involve hospitality, a unique handicraft or skill, or proficiency in a certain language should be evaluated and then built upon.

¹⁴³World Wildlife Fund, Guidelines for Community-Based Ecotourism Development, July 2001, available from http://www.wwf.org.uk/filelibrary/pdf/community_based_ecotourism.pdf; Internet; accessed 3 March 2005; 8.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., 8.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., 7.

Carrying capacity studies must be undertaken before any development or marketing can be done. Certain ecosystems are more fragile than others, and should therefore have more restricted access. Other areas may need a better-developed infrastructure before a significant number of people should be attracted to the area.¹⁴⁶

It is also important that studies be done to measure and record the current situation of Uttaranchal, so that in the future it is possible to analyze the relative effects ecotourism has had on various aspects of life in Uttaranchal. Studies on the current health of the environment, the quality of life, the average incomes, tourism rates, migration, and other issues would be beneficial. Specialists will ultimately determine the specific elements of each category that will be studied, but some suggestions I have are measurements of groundwater table, forested area, and wild animal population for the environmental studies. Quality of life shall include literacy rates, sex ratio, life expectancy, and infant mortality.

Finally, surveys of the potential market base would benefit the ecotourism project immensely. This would be a two-pronged approach, focusing on both domestic and international traffic. Currently domestic tourists to the area are primarily pilgrims, but with surveys it could perhaps be determined what inducements could be created to convince the pilgrims to not only visit the holy sites but also partake in some form of ecotourism. If it is determined that pilgrims have no interest in any other pursuits, perhaps they will at least express interest in pursuing their trek by more eco-friendly means than have previously existed, such as riding in vehicles running on carbon natural gas or riding a horse for transportation. Pilgrims would be the easiest survey group to

¹⁴⁶Weaver, *Ecotourism in the Less Developed World*, 61.

access, because they are already in the area. Surveys should be done by literate locals, who will read aloud and take down answers from the respondents.

Residents of nearby areas, who do not necessarily have plans to make pilgrimages, but who potentially have the means to take vacations, should also be surveyed to determine what might attract them to the area, and what aspects have drawn them to the area or kept them away in the past. These surveys could be done in person, by mail, internet or phone.

International tourists who are interested in ecotourism will probably be the most rewarding market base to research. The international tourists who visit the area should be surveyed to determine their reactions to their visit and their recommendations to enhance future visits. Reaching international tourists abroad who have not yet come to Uttaranchal is also important. Surveys that determine prospective tourists' prior knowledge of the area and what criteria might induce them to visit Uttaranchal would be most beneficial. The internet will probably be the most effective tool for this research, but various traveling agencies and ecotourism organizations could be involved as well.

(2) Committees

Committees must be formed for the dual purpose of dispersing new information to the people, and getting the peoples' input. According the World Wildlife Foundation (WWF) one of the best ways to strengthen the community's understanding of their rights and responsibilities in decision-making is to work within the structures that already exist in the community.¹⁴⁷ The local panchayat of leaders in the community is a good starting point for forming committees for the ecotourism project. It may be advisable to form

¹⁴⁷World Wildlife Fund, Guidelines for Community-Based Ecotourism Development, July 2001, available from http://www.wwf.org.uk/filelibrary/pdf/community_based_ecotourism.pdf; Internet; accessed 3 March 2005; 12.

other committees in addition to the panchayats. A state-wide ecotourism organization could be formed, (that will hopefully be a model for a national tourism organization) which may consist of environmental experts, development experts (who would preferably be home-grown), locals who will be affected, directly or indirectly, and perhaps even sadhus or other locally known and respected leaders.

The input that these committees would generate includes improving on and making more detailed the recommendations listed here, as well as generating more. Most particularly, the committees will need to apply themselves to designing and approving the plans of development.

(3) Plans of Development

There are a multitude of aspects of development that must be attended to in pre-planning this ecotourism project. First, a detailed and comprehensive business plan is necessary.¹⁴⁸ In order to encourage local ownership and investment in the industry, loans should be given, where necessary, to worthy candidates. The principles of micro lending used by the Gramine Bank should be employed.

Another important aspect is the physical development or construction of tourist facilities. Perhaps in the initial stages of the project no new construction will be necessary. However, plans should be in place in the event more construction is needed. To promote the principles of ecotourism, the traditional types of building will be favored over the modern concrete slab style houses. Ecotourists will find the traditional housing more aesthetically pleasing, and as they are more cost effective and more able to withstand earthquakes, they are a better choice for all involved.

¹⁴⁸Ibid., 20.

When any new infrastructure addition is made, the environmental impact of its construction should be considered. A reasonable balance between cost and environmental effects should be reached, bearing in mind that savvy ecotourists will appreciate extra pro-environment efforts. The amount of construction, its pace and placement should be duly considered and agreed upon. Infrastructure development should not be allowed to proceed at the rate that is most profitable, but at the rate that is sustainable or that causes minimal environmental problems. Certain areas should be allotted for possible development, while others, particularly the most ecologically sensitive areas, should be protected from development. Buffer zones around these areas should be considered.¹⁴⁹ Although the experts might have an idea of how much interest and thus the amount of desirable construction, there should nevertheless be plans in place for unexpected amounts of growth.

Restrictions must be placed on *who* is allowed to develop the areas. If foreigners are not outright restricted from investing in construction and development of the area, then at least local investors should be given large incentives. With creative financing and loans, locals should be given opportunities to seize control over the development of their land. The amount of public financing of the ventures must be addressed. India already has the tradition of a mixture of public and private-controlled market. Uttaranchal should make use of this tradition by using the government's involvement to protect the environment and the interests of the local people, but not relying on public funds to artificially support failing ventures.

Other plans of development include determining in what ways to diversify the economy, so that it is not solely focused on ecotourism. An economy too heavily focused

¹⁴⁹Weaver, *Ecotourism in the Less Developed World*, 86.

on one industry is more vulnerable to market changes. Immediately following, if not in conjunction with the implementation of the ecotourism project, other industries should be supplemented. These may include sustainable logging, sustainable farming, and others.

In order to supplement these other industries and to keep local revenue as high as possible, plans should be made to restrict imports allowed into the area for the tourists. Importation of foods for tourists in Nepal has left little revenue for the locals.¹⁵⁰ An emphasis should be placed on the nutritional value of traditional foods like the manduwa and sanwa, for both locals and tourists, so that a similar problem does not occur in Uttaranchal.

Besides planning for an over-abundance of tourists, preparations must be made for an influx of in-migrants from other states. People native to Uttaranchal should be given preference for work permits, and others should be allowed in to a certain extent. However, Uttaranchal cannot sustain the entire country, and in order to allow the standard of living of their state to improve, it must regulate immigration from surrounding areas.

Certain forms of infrastructure should be installed, particularly toilet facilities. As one of the existing problems with the pilgrimage industry is the misplacement of human waste, a side benefit of providing facilities for the intended ecotourists will be their availability to the pilgrims as well.

¹⁵⁰Ibid., 150-151.

The best way to achieve all of these development plans is to use horizontal integration of the community in decision making as well as vertical integration at the state, national and international levels.¹⁵¹

(4) Education

To prepare the local population for the upcoming change in lifestyles, much education must be offered. One of the issues to be addressed is the value of traditional practices and the importance of maintaining them when confronted with other practices. With the advent of widespread media use, tourism may not be the main instigator of the spread of western culture, but it can be an aggravator. To mitigate these aggravating effects, attempts should be made to bring a heightened awareness of the worthy qualities of the traditional culture.

At the same time, it would be wise to prepare the Pahari people regarding what they can expect from foreign tourists. This will help them understand interactions with westerners better, and may help avoid misunderstandings. Also, it will hopefully give a fuller picture of what westerners are like, rather than just what will be visible in a tourist-host interaction. Also, with an insight into western experiences and personalities, the local people may be better able to craft their product to the liking of the tourists.

Other issues to be addressed include lessons on how to handle an increase in money. As cash flow is expected to increase, and many of the local people will have little experience with significant amounts of cash, lessons should be given on money management. The schools should focus offer courses on hospitality, tourism and

¹⁵¹World Wildlife Fund, Guidelines for Community-Based Ecotourism Development, July 2001, available from http://www.wwf.org.uk/filelibrary/pdf/community_based_ecotourism.pdf; Internet; accessed 3 March 2005; 10.

management courses. How to think and act creatively in the ecotourism market will be a necessary skill for new entrepreneurs to learn.

Also, language lessons should be offered for those who need them. Natives of Uttaranchal who are proficient in English can be paid to teach those who are not. Perhaps this would mean a few people from Dehradun traveling to rural areas to teach. English is the most practical language to teach because English will be the most universal language spoken by the potential ecotourists. However, as markets begin to develop from other areas, consideration should be given to teaching other languages as well.

There are multiple venues through which these lessons can be provided. As discussed above, the local panchayat, schools and community meetings should be utilized. Less traditional means can be used as well. The group SBMA has “mountain children forums” where children from different villages come together for a week, and, through a series of lessons on information and empowerment, go back to their villages and implement a new initiative. Ecotourism could be one of the themes of a forum.

(5) Special Issues

Indigenous input in ecotourism certification

In order to regulate the ecotourism industry, as well as assure ecotourists that they are supporting conscientious, responsible businesses, a statewide certification process is recommendable. While certification is an important component of implementing authentic, beneficial ecotourism ventures in the Uttaranchal area, the method of constructing a consensus on the certification requirements is equally important. Local people, through the venues listed above, should have complete control over this process. Opportunities should be given to educate the local people on standards used elsewhere

and what their market base will be looking for, but the ultimate decision should be left in the hands of the residents of Uttaranchal. According to the Indigenous Tourism Rights International, (ITRI) indigenous people are often overlooked when it comes to developing regulations that are achievable.¹⁵² When those with influence or money are allowed to define the criteria for ecotourism certification, then those without either are often left incapable of participating in the ecotourism market.

Sex trade

Certain tourist areas like Thailand have become known as places for participating in the sex trade. The people who find this occupation to be their best option, or who are simply forced into it, are often children. Although tourism does not usually implement prostitution in an area, it tends to augment the problem.¹⁵³ Therefore, guards must be put in place to deter the growth of prostitution in Uttaranchal with the influx of tourists.

Such ways of combating the conjoined growth of tourism and the sex trade include focusing on developing markets that women already have a tendency to dominate, or target educating women so that they do dominate a particular market. Traditionally such markets have included beauty parlors, handicrafts, and others. When women can make enough for themselves and their children to live on through other means, both groups are less likely to find prostitution their best remaining option.

Funding

As this thesis is not a business proposal, it does not include detailed plans on financing the ecotourism project. As various NGOs in Uttaranchal are planning on

¹⁵²Carol Kalafatic, ed., "Rethinking Tourism Certification: Proceedings of an Online Indigenous Conference" June-July 2004 (e-conference proceedings), Indigenous Tourism Rights International, P.O. Box 4657, St. Paul, MN, 55104, December 2004.

¹⁵³Weaver, *Ecotourism in the Less Developed World*, 58.

developing ecotourism, with the help of their benefactors, and as the government of Uttaranchal has, at least in name, an ecotourism department, most of the funding should be expected to be drawn from these areas.

Re-acclimation

It can be expected that the people who return to their villages when work is available will have re-adjustment issues to their old way of life. Formation of support groups should be considered, where people can discuss their feelings about returning home.

Suggestions for Further Research

To supplement my work, research should be done on complementary types of sustainable development to be implemented in conjunction with an ecotourism project in Uttaranchal. This could include researching the types of industries that have been promoted alongside other ecotourism ventures. The industries that have been most successful in achieving the goals of local profit retention, sensitivity to local culture, and conservation of the environment should be replicated, while those that perform poorly in those areas should be avoided or modified.

More extensive research into particular case studies of ecotourism should be investigated to glean creative ways of marketing to various populations and other useful information.

Once some ecotourism has begun in Uttaranchal, it will be important to have a process to spread the venture to scale in the whole state. Research on ways of communicating with and mobilizing people on a large scale will assist in this area.

Conclusion

Uttaranchal's process of disembedding has created opportunities as well as severe problems for the region. Instead of rushing headlong into development, the people of Uttaranchal should be careful to employ processes that will help them re-embed themselves in their traditional culture. The analysis presented above demonstrates that ecotourism can be used as one of these tools.

Because Uttaranchal is comparable to Goa in many ways, the people of Uttaranchal should use Goa as both a model and a warning. Where unregulated mass tourism has failed Goa, well-planned ecotourism can help Uttaranchal achieve sustainable development. Careful planning and attention to long-term sustainability as opposed to quick profits will lead to success. Uttaranchal's form of ecotourism must, of course, be developed and controlled by the Paharis themselves, and should be implemented alongside other sustainable industries in the region.

With the development of ecotourism in the region of Uttaranchal, it is my hope that others like myself will have the opportunity to witness the magnificent splendor of the Uttaranchal region. The grandeur of the Himalayas is beauty that should be shared with people across cultures and preserved for generations to come.

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