



STUDY REPORT for the First Session

‘Study of Eco-Tourism for the Sikkim Biodiversity Conservation and Forest Management Project’



Photo : Courtesy from Mr.Surendra K.Pradhan

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Chapter 1 — Introduction

1-1 Project Background

The State of Sikkim, with rich abundance of flowering plants per unit area compared with the other neighboring states and countries such as Nepal and Bhutan, is located in the area of the biodiversity hotspot of Eastern Himalaya Region. Total geographical area of the State, which comprises to four administrative districts, namely East district, North District, South District and West District, is 7,096km² with the total population of the four districts of 581,546 (2009). The State is embraced with the rich biodiversity of more than 4,500 species of flowering plants, more than 50 species of pisces, 690 species of butterfly, 16 species of amphibians, 78species of reptiles, 550 species of birds, 154 species of mammals. The forest coverage of the State was 37% in 1975 then it steadily increased to 46% in 2005. Yet the steadily increase of the forest coverage, open forest coverage remains approximately 25% which does not meet the national forest coverage target of two thirds of the total geographical area in the hilly states including the Sikkim.

As Sikkim experiences moderate temperature in summer and has exceptionally rich biodiversity and unique culture, there has been remarkable increase in the number of tourists for the recent years. On the other hand, there is a growing concern on the adverse impacts on the rich biodiversity and its ecosystem caused by the rapid increase of tourists. The balance between the development and nature conservation is an urgent issue to be addressed.

Under these circumstances, JICA launched the '*the Sikkim Biodiversity Conservation and Forest Management Project*' in March 2010. The Project aims to strengthen biodiversity conservation activities and forest management capacity, and to improve the local people's living standard who depend their livelihood on the forest by collecting baseline data and promoting sustainable biodiversity conservation, afforestation and income generation activities including ecotourism for the community development.

Ecotourism, as one of the key components of the Project, is needed to have a policy and its guidelines to implement ecotourism promotion activities. Sikkim has yet to draw the policy and the guidelines of ecotourism. The counter part of the Project, Sikkim State Department of Forest, Environment, and Wildlife Management (DFEWM) which has already prepared the draft of the ecotourism policy, plans to hold relevant meetings and seminars for the local people, local related governments and NGOs to explain the policy. Prior to commence the ecotourism components for the Project, JICA and DFEWM have agreed to draw the basic ecotourism policy for the Sikkim State. DFEWM will explain the policy to the public around May 2011. At the same time, DFEWM plans to draw ecotourism guidelines which address the basic rules for visitors and tour operators in order to

minimize the impacts on rich biodiversity and ecosystems of Sikkim as well as to revise the related Sikkim State's regulations.

1-2 Scope of Work of the Study and Expected Outcomes

(1) Scope of Work

The scope of work for this study is;

- to draw the draft of Sikkim ecotourism policy and its guidelines based on the results of the seminar held at four districts for the local people, tour agents, tour operators, NGOs, relevant government organizations who put opinions and ideas on the policy and through the discussion with DFEWM, and
- to review the existing regulations related to the development of ecotourism in Sikkim and give some advice to DFEWM to revise some of them if it is necessary.

(2) Expected Outcomes

The expected outcomes of this study are the followings.

- DFEWM and local people understand the concept of the ecotourism and share the common knowledge of sustainable tourism and its importance.
- A framework of the ecotourism policy and its guidelines on the Project site including the definition, principles, and a basic strategy for the ecotourism applicable to the Project site will be drawn, and DFEWM will be able to commence the activities to promote ecotourism.

1-3 Methods of the Study

(1) The Methods of the Study

One consultant was assigned as a short-term expert on the ecotourism policy formulation programme to conduct the study. The study of the programme has been divided into two phases, which are a preparation phase of the study carried out in Japan prior to the consultant travel to Sikkim, India and the main part of the study carried out in Sikkim. The person conducted the study as the scheduled shown *Annex 3* with the assistance of the Project staffs, DFEWM staffs as counter-parts and JICA India Office during his visit to Sikkim, India. During the preparation phase of the study, the consultant carried out the followings in October 2010.

- Review the Project activities and the results of the surveys conducted year 2008 to 2009
- Collect some definition of ecotourism, guidelines of other countries' case studies of ecotourism including Japan

The duration of major part of the study in the Sikkim, India was 50 days commenced from October 9th, 2010 and ended on November 27st, 2010 including traveling from Japan to Sikkim, India and vice versa.

The methods of the main part of the study are;

- to collect documents, statistical data and information by visiting to Sikkim local governments, NGOs, the environmental agency, travel agents and tour operators, and review and analyze these documents and data,
- to conduct interview surveys to Sikkim local governments, NGOs, DFEWM's district forest guard, local people, travel agents and tour operators on the topic of ecotourism, and analyze the results of the survey,
- to hold meetings for four districts on the topic of Sikkim ecotourism policy draft for local and international NGOs, Phanchyats, tour operators, tour agents, local government organizations and other local communities and take some of the good suggestions and opinions and reflect them to the draft of the policy, and
- to discuss with key DFEWM staffs on the topic of the ecotourism policy, its issues, its guidelines and existing regulations which shall be revised to meet the forth coming implementation of the ecotourism policy.

(2) Key Target Groups for Interview Surveys

During the study, interview surveys targeting the following groups were conducted aiming to collect documents, statistical data and opinion on the ecotourism and the environmental conservation.

- International and local NGOs such as, WWF, KCC (Khangchendzonga Community-based Committee), ECOSS (Ecotourism and Conservation Society of Sikkim)
- Key stakeholders related to tourism business such as, TASS(Travel Agent Association of Sikkim), SAATO(Sikkim Association of Adventure Tour Operators), Department of Tourism
- Owner of Accommodations such as, Homestay owners
- Key DFEWM staff

(3) Study Schedule

The schedule of the study is shown in *Annex 3*.

1-4 Protected Areas and Reserved Areas

(1) Protected Areas

Up until May 2010, there were 8 sites registered as Protected Areas which are managed by DFEWM in Sikkim. Besides, these Protected Areas, there are one biosphere reserve and one

conservation reserve. Table 1-2 shows the area size and characteristics including tourist attractions for these sites.

Table1-1 Protected Areas and Reserved Areas in Sikkim

Protected Areas, Biosphere Reserve, Conservation Reserve	Category	Area (km ²)	Location	Characteristics
Khangchendzonga National Park	National Park	1,784	North & West District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique geomorphologic features of high mountains & peaks, Mt Khangchendzonga (8585m), third highest peak of the world • 8 trekking trails are notified and operation
Khangchendzonga Biosphere	Biosphere Reserve	2,913	North & West District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local communities inhabiting within the biosphere
Fambonglho Wildlife Sanctuary	Sanctuary	52	East District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identified Trek Routes: Pangthang-Golitar-Tinjurey; Tumin-Gharay lake- Tumin Ridge • Easily accessible by road, 20kms from Gangtok to the nearest point, Pangthang from where one has to hike or trek to reach the places of interest
Maenam Wildlife Sanctuary	Sanctuary	35	South District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two trekking routes have been identified
Kyongnosla Alpine Sanctuary	Sanctuary	31	East District	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tseten Tashi Cave, Goral Rock, Kyongnosla Ridge which provides panoramic view of Mountains, Peaks and hilly country sides across, Nakchok Lakes • 5 kms moderate trek from Gate to cave and to Kyongnosla Ridge.
Singba Rhododendron Sanctuary	Sanctuary	43	North District	Entire Sanctuary being located in the picturesque Yumthang Valley where Rhododendrons flowers are the main attraction during the flowering season.
Bersey Rhododendron Sanctuary	Sanctuary	104	West District	Barsey ridge with Rhododendrons & it provides panoramic view of mountains, peaks, hill tops, lush green forests across.
Pangolakha Wildlife Sanctuary	Sanctuary	128	East District	Trans- boundary protected area bordering with Bhutan, Tibet and North Bengal
Kitam Bird Sanctuary	Sanctuary	6	South District	Easily accessible by Melli- Jorethang highway as it passes through the Sanctuary
Sling Dong Faieanum Orchid Conservation Reserve	Conservation Reserve	0.06ha	South District	Rare orchid endemic to the area can be observed. Easily accessible by Rabongla-Tinkitam Road.

Source: DFEWM

Notification No.204, dated 24/05/2010 declares the expansion of Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve which was 2619.92km² prior to the notification and now is 2931.12 km² including Transition Zone of 311.2 km² as shown in the **Table 1-2**. Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP) forms the ‘Core Zone’ of the Biosphere Reserve under the Notification. However, what the Notification implying KNP as the ‘Core Zoe’ is that KNP is just the core zone to the Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve.

DFEWM has been working on the demarcation of the Core Zone, Tourism Zone and Buffer Zone within KNP. DFEWM has also been working on the demarcation of the three zones for the rest of the seven Wild Life Sanctuaries shown on the **Table 1-1** and will process the official procedure of the KNP’s demarcations to be declared as gazette as well as the seven Wild Life Sanctuaries’ demarcation of the three Zones after DFEWM finalizes all surveys required for the demarcations.

Definition for each of the three Zones within KNP as well as the seven Wild Life Sanctuaries’ will be;

- Core Zone: totally restricted. Prohibits all the human activities except for the required maintenance work
- Tourism Zone: tourism utilization zone, such as trekking, camping only in the designated area or routes
- Buffer Zone: multiple use zones, such as, plantation, afforestation

The official procedure of processing the demarcation of the three Zones within KNP as well as the rest of the seven Wild Life Sanctuaries is shown on the *Figure 2-1 in Chapter 2*.

Table 1-2 Area Size of Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve after the Notification No.204

	Previous (km ²)	After the Notification (km ²)
Khangchendzonga National Park as a 'Core Zone'	1784.00	1784.00
Buffer zone	835.92	835.92
Transition Zone	0	311.20
Total Area Size	2619.92	2931.12

Source: DFEWM

(2) Reserved Areas

There are three kinds of reserved forest areas in Sikkim, namely, Reserved Forest, Khasmal and Gorucharan. The definition and the area size of the each are shown on the table below. All the PAs including KNP are included within Reserved Forest which has an area size of 542.39 km².

Table 1-3 Reserved Areas in Sikkim

Kinds of Reserved Areas in Sikkim	Definition	Total Area Size (km ²)
Reserved Forest	Forestland settled and notified by the Government of Sikkim as reserved forest	5452.39
Protected Forest (Khasmal)	Forestland settled and set aside by the Government of Sikkim to meet domestic need of timber, firewood, and fodder of residents of the adjoining villages	285.00
Protected Forest (Gorucharan)	Forestland settled and set aside by the Government of Sikkim for grazing of cattle of the adjoining villages	104.00
Total Area Size of the three Reserved Areas		5841.39

Source: DFEWM

1-5 Factors Impeding the Development of Ecotourism

Major factors impeding the development of ecotourism are well documented on the JICA report, 2009 "Preparatory Study on Integrated Project for Sustainable Development of Forest Resources in Sikkim Final Report". The summary of the description is below.

- **Relating to the nature of ecotourism and its social impact**
 - No Sikkim ecotourism policy has been formulated
 - Lack of understanding of the business of ecotourism by State key government departments, NGOs, and local communities
 - NGOs are naive about the impact that ecotourism

- The concept of ecotourism should be expanded to include adventure tourists as well as general leisure tourists interested in the nature of Sikkim
- The opportunities to alleviate poverty through tourism are not properly exploited
- No impact studies on biodiversity and ecosystems are carried out
- **Relating to facilitation**
 - Several permits are required to visit Sikkim and certain areas within the state
 - Movement of vehicles within Sikkim is restricted
 - Connectivity into or out of Sikkim can be interrupted
- **Relating to the business of ecotourism**
 - Very weak marketing for village tourism initiatives and no marketing links with industry partners
 - Quality of homestays is often not up to standard
 - Tariff of homestays in Sikkim is high comparing to neighbouring countries
 - Difficulty of organising cultural shows for visitors
 - Lack of opportunities to buy souvenirs and handicrafts which are not produced with tourists needs in mind
 - No appropriate interpretation centres and orientation centres & No appropriate museums
 - Capacity building of stakeholders about ecotourism is necessary
 - Too many imported goods and employ too many workers from outside the state
- **Relating to general infrastructure and tourism infrastructure**
 - No control or planning of tourism development and inappropriate tourism infrastructure
 - Roads need improvement
 - Few roadside facilities including hygienic toilets
 - Congestion and damage on popular trekking routes
 - Clean-up of littering in nature areas is urgently required
 - Waste management in tourist areas and at tourist sites is urgently required

1-6 Roles of JFMC, EDC and PSS

The Joint Forest Management Committee (JFMC), Ecodevelopment Committee (EDC), and Pokhri Sanrakshan Samiti (PSS; Lake Conservation Committee) are village-based committees established for the purpose of joint management and conservation of forests and biodiversity under the jurisdiction of DFEWM (JICA Report, 2009).

(1) Roles of JFMC

1) Selection of JFM areas

For the selection of JFM areas, the JFM Notification stipulates that the DFO shall choose Gram Panchayat wards consisting of unit of 5 villages that meet these two conditions on a priority basis: 1) the ward is vulnerable to severe biotic interference and damage to forest crops; and 2) villagers are willing to offer their cooperation. In 2006, DFEWM issued a directive on decentralization of JFM in Sikkim aiming at JFMC or EDC would become the nodal agency for all programmes related to forests, land use and environment, medicinal plants, watersheds, and wildlife and biodiversity (JICA Report, 2009).

2) Selection of beneficiaries

According to the JFM Notification, beneficiaries should be from economically underprivileged classes that reside in the vicinity of the forests. However, the Notification also stipulates that every family living in the local village area should be given the opportunity to become a member if they are interested in forest protection work (JICA Report, 2009).

3) Duties

The main duty of a JFMC is to protect forests and plantations in the JFMC area with Committee members. Forest and plantation protection activities include the following: 1) informing forest officials about trespassing or damages in the said forest/plantation, or forest theft; and 2) assisting the forest officials in preventing and controlling fires and grazing in the forests/plantations (JICA Report, 2009).

4) Planning and funding

The activities of a JFMC are carried out under the National Afforestation Programme (NAP) and based on a micro plan specifying a detailed work program, timeframe, and budget. The micro plan is prepared in a participatory manner to reflect the needs of the village. Entry point activities (EPAs) refer to activities for creating community assets for the purpose of community development. Examples of such activities in Sikkim include the construction of footpaths and gates and the installation of water tanks at schools (JICA Report, 2009).

Activities commonly selected under the micro plan are as follows.

- Plantation and regeneration
- Soil and moisture conservation
- Entry point activities
- Awareness raising
- Microplanning²⁴

- Fencing
- Monitoring and evaluation

(2) Roles of EDC & PSS

1) Selection of EDC and PSS areas

EDC areas are selected in the same manner as the selection of JFMC areas. The DFO (Wildlife), in consultation with the DFO (Territorial), selects Panchayat wards in the vicinity of protected areas. For selection of PSS areas, lakes are identified by the DFO (Territorial) and local communities or NGOs (JICA Report, 2009).

2) Selection of beneficiaries

Beneficiaries are also selected in the same manner as the selection of JFMC members. An EDC member is not allowed to become a member of another EDC or a JFMC (JICA Report, 2009).

3) Establishment

Requirements for the establishment of EDCs are the same as those for JFMCs, except that their establishment requires approval from the DFO of the Wildlife Division instead of the Territorial Division. The establishment process of PSS directly involves the local Panchayat. Once established, the PSS has to be registered at the office of the DFO. Further, a state level federation of PSS's called the Rajya Pokhri Sanrakshan Sangh (the State Lake Conservation Federation) can be formed in order to discuss various issues related to lake conservation (JICA Report, 2009).

4) Duties

EDCs are responsible of conservation and management of wildlife and biodiversity in their respective areas. All duties assigned to EDCs are categorized as follows (JICA Report, 2009).

- Assistance in forestry works
- Assistance in ecodevelopment activities
- Protection and conservation of forests, environment, wildlife, and biodiversity
- Assistance in the implementation of various forest legislations
- Assistance in ecotourism activities

The main duties of a PSS are to ensure the protection of the lakes, their environment, wildlife, and biodiversity under the PSS area, and to provide assistance in ecotourism. Their activities include the following (JICA Report, 2009).

- Conducting awareness and education campaigns on lake conservation
- Adopting garbage control measures
- Cleaning lakes

- Managing tourist shops near the lakes
- Observing the biodiversity around the lakes
- Patrolling for illegal activities of tourists

5) Planning and financial management

EDCs have the same system of planning and financial management as JFMCs, where funds are transferred from the central government. However, PSS's have a unique system of financing and expenditure, as explained below.

A PSS generates its funds by way of collecting Lake Conservation Fees worth ten INR 10 per tourist per day. Half of the levy collected is deposited into the revolving fund of the PSS, and the rest is transferred into the bank account of the State Environment Agency. The fund is used for the activities specified in the Lake Conservation Plan prepared annually by the PSS and the DFO, and approved by the Gram Sabha (JICA Report, 2009).

1-7 Roles of Panchayat

Panchayati or Panchayati Raj is a system of governance in which gram Panchayats are the basic units of administration. It has 3 levels: village, block and district.

The Panchayats receive funds from three sources – (i) local body grants, as recommended by the Central Finance Commission, (ii) funds for implementation of centrally-sponsored schemes, and (iii) funds released by the state governments on the recommendations of the State Finance Commissions. Panchayat is a village chief working for the good of the village. Rural Management and Development Department is responsible for the activities of Panchayat. Powers and responsibilities are delegated to Panchayats at the appropriate level.

The duties of Panchayat are described below.

- Preparation of plan for economic development and social justice.
- Implementation of schemes for economic development and social justice in relation to subjects given in Eleventh Schedule of the Constitution.
- To levy, collect and appropriate taxes, duties, tolls and fees.

Source: Wikipedia

1-8 State Pollution Control Board Sikkim

The State Pollution Control Board, which comes under DFEWM, has regular air and water quality monitoring programmes to assess the status of pollution in the natural environment. The followings briefly describe the major activities of the Board.

- Industrial monitoring for air pollution within Sikkim
- Air pollution monitoring for the parameters at regular basis at the various stations within Sikkim
- Water quality monitoring for the parameters at regular basis at the various stations within Sikkim
- Assessment of noise level in and around Gangtok
- Conduct environmental awareness campaign

1-9 Required Permits for Visitors

At present, there are three kinds of permits for the people of non-Indian nationalities to visit some places in Sikkim. On top of these permits, there are certain areas which the people of non-Indian nationalities are not allowed to visit due to the issue of the border between India and China.

- Entry Permit: to enter to Sikkim, all the people of non-Indian nationalities have to get the entry permit prior to visit Sikkim.
- Permit for the Entry to Each of the Protected Areas: to enter to each of the Protected Areas, all the people including the people of Indian nationalities have to get the permits from branches at each of the district or the headquarter of DFEWM. DFEWM is currently working on the streamlining the issuing the permits.
- Permit for the Entry to Restricted Areas: all the people of non-Indian nationalities have to get the permit from Home Department to visit the restricted areas for the foreign nationalities.

Figure 1-1 Protected Areas of Sikkim



Note: This map does not show the KNP's Biosphere Reserve and Transit Zone

Source: DFEWM

Chapter 2 — Results of the Work

2-1 Definition of Ecotourism

(1) Definition of Ecotourism

Several terms relating to ecotourism, such as, sustainable tourism, green tourism, rural tourism, community-based tourism, have been emerged over the last 20 years or so. Nevertheless the term of Ecotourism is said to be originated from North America in 1980's, it was not officially used until at the Third International Convention on National Parks in 1982 (Yokoyama 2006). The first mention of ecotourism in the English-language academic literature was by Romeril in 1985 (Robin, *et al.*, 2010). In the 1990's the tourism industry realized the profit potential of ecotourism and the term "eco" was used by travel agents to market their tour packages. Eventually, ecotourism organizations such as the International Ecotourism Society (TIES) and the Ecotourism Society (TES) were formed (Travel and tourism, 2005). The term of ecotourism has been widely used since the mid 1990's. Ecotourism seems to be mostly practiced in the area of enriched biodiversity areas, such as, biodiversity hot spots, national parks, protected areas, both marine and land around the globe. Examples of those areas are; tropical to temperate rainforests, mangrove areas, coral reefs and areas holding unique ecosystems.

There are some common characteristics of ecotourism frequently described or documented on various articles, books and websites which examine the definition of the term, its characteristics and successful case studies of the ecotourism. Some examples of the definition of ecotourism are mentioned as below.

The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) (<http://www.ecotourism.org/>)

TIES defines ecotourism as "*Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.*"

WWF's definition of Ecotourism (http://www.panda.org/about_wwf)

WWF describes the definition of Ecotourism as "*There is no generally accepted definition of Ecotourism, but Ecotourism is widely understood to contain the following elements*".

- Nature-based
- Small scale or operates with small groups
- Contributes actively to nature conservation
- Offers excellent nature interpretation
- Based in, actively involves and benefits the local community

The Nature Conservancy's definition of Ecotourism (<http://www.nature.org/>)

The Nature Conservancy describes Ecotourism as follows.

"Environmentally responsible travel to natural areas, in order to enjoy and appreciate nature (and accompanying cultural features, both past and present) that promote conservation, have a low visitor impact and provide for beneficially active socio-economic involvement of local peoples."

The Nature Conservancy has distinguished ecotourism from nature tourism by its emphasis on conservation, education, traveler responsibility and active community participation, and it has specified the ecotourism as possessing the following characteristics:

- Conscientious, low-impact visitor behavior
- Sensitivity towards, and appreciation of, local cultures and biodiversity
- Support for local conservation efforts
- Sustainable benefits to local communities
- Local participation in decision-making
- Educational components for both the travelers and local communities

Ecotourism Australia (<http://www.ecotourism.org.au/>)

The definition of ecotourism adopted by Ecotourism Australia is: *"Ecotourism is ecologically sustainable tourism with a primary focus on experiencing natural areas that fosters environmental and cultural understanding, appreciation and conservation"*.

Fiji's Tourism and Ecotourism Policy

The Fiji Government's Ecotourism and its strategy for Fiji deals specifically with ecotourism. The strategy defines ecotourism as:

A form of nature-based tourism which involves responsible travel to relatively undeveloped areas to foster an appreciation of nature and local cultures, while conserving the physical and social environment, respecting the aspirations and traditions of those who are visited, and improving the welfare of the local people.

Basic features of ecotourism can be concluded as follows.

- Tourism based on nature, culture and historical resources
- Conserve these resources and conduct tourism in a sustainable manner
- Contribute to local community in terms of the economic and social benefit

2-2 Procedures of Formulation of the Sikkim Ecotourism Policy

(1) Prior to Proceed the Official Procedure

Prior to go through the official procedure for the ecotourism policy formulation, drafts of the policy have been prepared by taking the following steps which were attempted to reflect key stakeholders' opinion and ideas.

Step 1: (October 2010)

Prepare *first draft* of the Ecotourism Policy by discussion with key DFEWM officers

Step 2: (November 2010)

Hold meetings for the four districts at each of the center city to explain the first draft. Reflect some of the opinion and ideas which are relevant and useful to the contents of the policy and prepare the *second draft* of the policy.

Step 3: (April 2011)

Hold a meeting for four districts and other key stakeholders in the capital city of Sikkim, Gangtok, to explain the second draft. Reflect some of the opinion and ideas which are relevant and useful to the contents of the policy and prepare the *third draft* of the policy.

(2) Public Comments and Opinions on Sikkim Ecotourism Policy

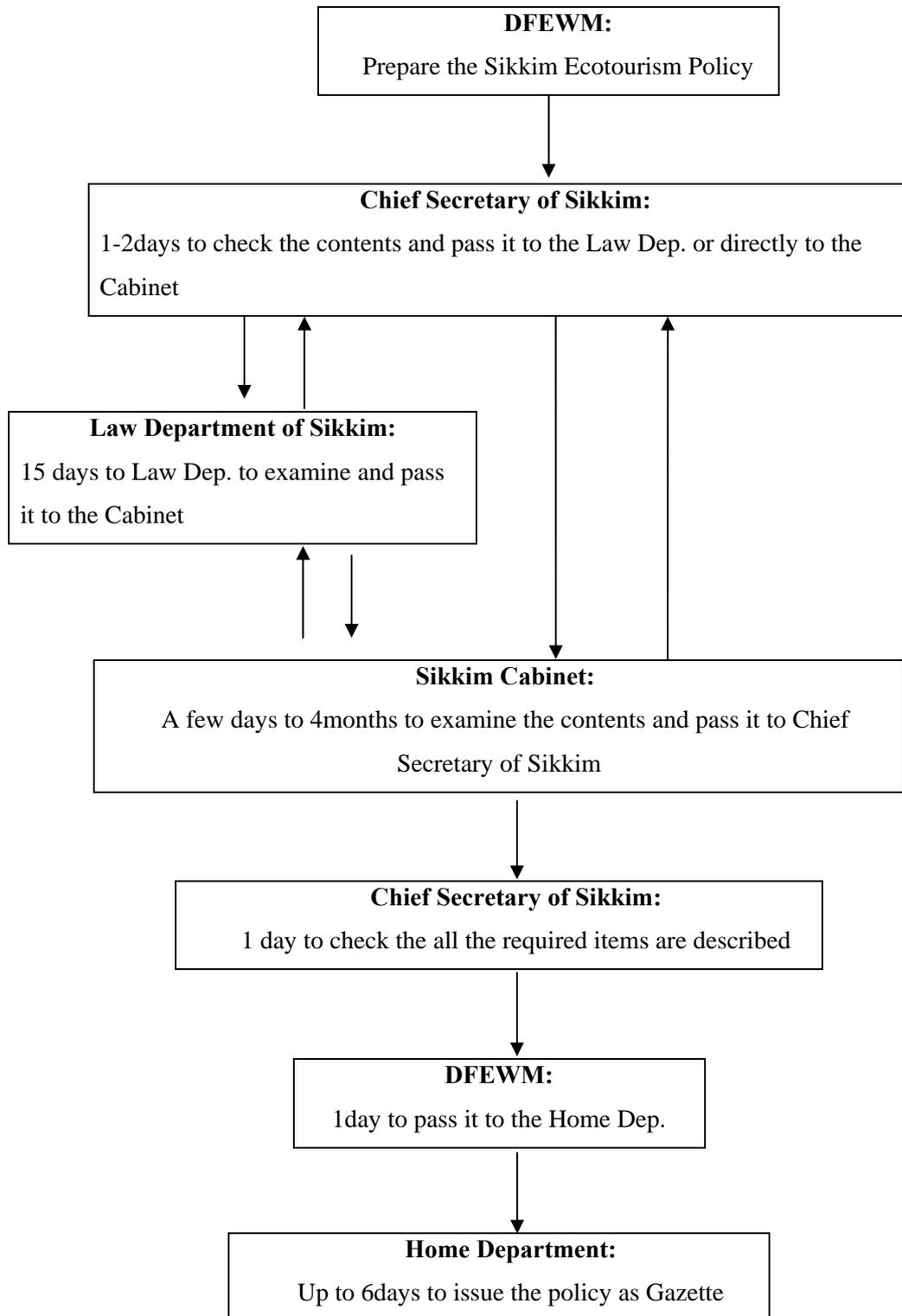
Comments and Opinions made by the participants attending the four district meeting on the first draft of the Sikkim Ecotourism Policy are shown in ***Annex 5***. Date of the meeting and the numbers of participants on the meeting are the followings.

- North: Date of the Meeting-4th, November, 2010 Number of Participants - 22
- East: Date of the Meeting-9th, November, 2010 Number of Participants - 38
- South: Date of the Meeting-11th, November, 2010 Number of Participants - 65
- West: Date of the Meeting-12th, November, 2010 Number of Participants - 78

(3) Official Procedures for the Formulation

After the completion of the third draft of the policy based on the results of the meeting held in Gangtok, DFEWM will precede the official procedure to formulate the policy. The policy must go through the Law Department's assessment before it goes through the cabinet or after the cabinet assessment. The total duration of the procedure takes minimum of several days to maximum of approximately 5 months working days (approx:6months) except for the case of the Sikkim Cabinet is not available to examine the contents due to the closer of the Cabinet for a meantime. The procedure is illustrated as the figure below.

Figure 2-1 Official Procedure of the Formulation of the Ecotourism Policy



2-3 Draft of Sikkim Ecotourism Policy

The second draft of Sikkim Ecotourism Policy is described in *Annex1*.

2-4 Draft of Sikkim Ecotourism Guidelines

The draft of the Sikkim Ecotourism Guidelines is described in *Annex2*.

2-5 Revising the existing Regulations for Ecotourism

(1) Legal Framework

The legal framework for forest management and biodiversity conservation in Sikkim includes national and state acts (**Table 2-1**) which DFEWM is responsible for executing.

Table 2-1 List of Acts and Rules for Biodiversity, Forest and Wildlife Conservation of Sikkim

Category	Act	Rules
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Biological Diversity Act (2002) and amendment (2003) ■ Environment (Protection) Act (1986) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ G.S.R.261 (E) [15/04/2004] – Biological Diversity Rules (2004)
Forest Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Forest (Conservation) Act (1980) and amendment (1988) ■ Indian Forest Act (1927) ■ Draft State/Union Territory Minor Forest Produce (Ownership of Forest Dependent Community) Act (2005) ■ Sikkim Forests, Water Courses, Road Reserve (Protection and Preservation) Act (1988) and amendment (2000) ■ Compensatory Afforestation Strategy for the Proposed Project Act (1988) ■ Forest Rights Act (2006) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ G.S.R.23(E) – Forest (Conservation) Rules (2003) ■ G.S.R.719 – Forest (Conservation) Rules (1981) and amendment (1992)
Wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ No. 16 of 2003, Wild Life (Protection)Amendment Act (2002) ■ Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act (1972) and amendment (1993) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ S.O.1092(E) [22/9/2003] – The National Board for Wild Life Rules (2003) ■ S.O.445(E) [18/4/2003] – The Declaration of Wild Life Stock Rules (2003) ■ G.S.R.350(E) [18/4/1995] – The Wildlife (Specified Plant Stock Declaration) Central Rules (1995) ■ G.S.R.349(E) [18/4/1995] – The Wildlife (Specified Plants – Conditions for Possession by Licensee) Rules (1995) ■ G.S.R.348(E) [18/4/1995] – The Wildlife (Protection) Rules (1995) ■ Recognition of Zoo Rules (1992) ■ G.S.R.328(E) [13/4/1983] – The Wildlife (Protection) Licensing (Additional Matters for Consideration) Rules (1983) ■ G.S.R.29(E) [25/1/1973] – The Wildlife (Stock Declaration) Central Rules (1973) ■ G.S.R.198(E) [9/4/1973] – The Wildlife (Transaction and Taxidermy) Rules (1973)

Source: JICA Report, 2009

Table 2-2 List of Notification Related to Khangchendzonga National Park and its Biosphere

No	Notifications	Dated
1	Declaration of Khangchendzonga National Park	26.08.1977
2	Notification on Environmental fee for Mountaineering Expeditions within Sikkim	20.08.1993
3	Withdrawal of grazing from Reserved Forest areas in Sikkim, vide Notification No.426/F	17.07.1995
4	Enquiry and deterring the rights on the extended area the Khangchendzonga National Park in West Sikkim MemoNo.294(396)	04.12.1996
5	Amendment of Notification No.54(75)Home/93/33 on Environmental Fee for Mountaineering Expeditions within Sikkim	14.03.1997
6	Extension of Khangchendzonga National Park	19.05.1997
7	Sikkim Forest Department Reward Rules, 1998, vide Notification No.402/F	05.09.1998
8	Declaration letter for Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve	07.02.2000
9	General description of the boundary - Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve Notification	07.02.2000
10	“Rajya Van Sangrakshan Evam Paryavaran Puraskar” vide Notification No 67/F/Env&WL	29.04.2009
11	Sikkim Forest cattle trespass Rules, 2000, vide Notification No.421/F. Env&WL	27.01.2001
12	Entry & other fees chargeable for entering into the National Park & Sanctuaries in Sikkim	03.05.2001
13	Delegation of Power & Functions on the functionaries right from Forest Guard to the Conservator of Wildlife & Territorial Circles in Sikkim	04.09.2001
14	Delegation of Sacred Peaks, Caves, Rocks Chhoedtens Hotsprings of Sikkim	20.09.2004
15	Formation of State Board for Wildlife	08.07.2004
16	Sikkim State Biodiversity Board, vide Notification No.20/Home/2006	07.03.2006
17	Opening of Peaks for Alpine Expedition	20.03.2006
18	Guidelines for Lake Conservation in partnership with Gram Panchayats and Pokhari Sanrakshan Samiti's in Sikkim. Vide Notification No. 355/F	31.07.2006
19	Commission to Study the State of Glaciers and its Impact on Water System in Sikkim	26.09.2007
20	Constitution of Support Core Group with Scientists and Officers of various State Government Departments to Commission to Study the State of Glaciers and its Impact on Water System in Sikkim	09.04.2008
21	Sikkim Wildlife (Regulation of Trekking) Rules, 2005	10.02.2006
22	State Forest Officers are defined as Forests Officers under Sub-section(2) of Section 2 of Indian Forest Act.1927, and empowers to carry out all or any of purposes of the said actor rules made there under to the done by a Forest Officer, vide Notification No.05/GOS/FEWMD	06.12.2006
23	Partial Modification of paragraph 7 of the Notification No. 892/FEWMD, dated 10/02/2006, Nursing Himal Trek	11.12.2006
24	Guidelines for the Appointment of Himal Rakshak	10.02.2006
25	Singalila Ecotourism Promotion Zones in West Sikkim	10.02.2006
26	Enhancement of Wages for Skilled and Unskilled Workers in Sikkim	15.04.2008
27	Establishment of Directorate of Ecotourism under Forest, Environment, and Wildlife Management Department, Government of Sikkim, vide Notification No. 64/Home/2008	05.07.2008
28	Ex-Gratia or relief Payments in respect of Wild Animal and Human Conflicts vide Notification No.282/PCCF/DFEWM/Gos	27.02.2009
29	Notification of Expansion of Khangchendzonga Biosphere Reserve	24.05.2010
30	Addendum to the Notification 892/FEWMD dated 10.02.2006 Singalila Ecotourism Promotion Zones in West Sikkim	16.08.2010

Source: Management Plan of the Khangchendzonga National Park 2008-2018

Under the National Forest (Conservation) Act (1980) and amendment (1988), important state notifications such as that on the establishment of Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMCs) in Sikkim (1998) and amendments (2001, 2002, and 2006), and the Sikkim Ecodevelopment

Notification (2002) on the establishment of Ecodevelopment Committees (EDCs) are gazetted by the State Government of Sikkim (JICA Report, 2009).

Other rules related to forest management and biodiversity conservation in Sikkim are listed below.

- Sikkim Ecology Fund Environment Cess Rules (2007)
- Sikkim State Biological Diversity Rules (2006)
- State Environment Agency Guidelines (2006)
- Guidelines for Lake Conservation in Partnership with Gram Panchayat (2006)
- Sikkim Ecology Fund and Environment Cess Act (2005)
- Sikkim Wildlife (Regulation of Trekking) Rules (2005)
- Ecotourism Notification No 273. (2008)

(2) Suggestion on the Revising the existing rules related to Ecotourism Development

As the results of the discussion with DFEWM on the issue of the revising the existing rules and regulations related to ecotourism in Sikkim, the following rule should be revised.

Sikkim Wildlife (Regulation of Trekking) Rules (2005)

Sikkim Wildlife (Regulation of Trekking) Rules (2005) should be revised as the following points included in the *Section 3) Actions prohibited in wildlife area, (2) A trek manager shall ~.*

- Inform the nearest wildlife checkpost, in case the parties come across forest fire, wildlife offence by someone, death carcass of wild animals during their nature trip
- Prepare and carry medical first aid kits for clients when take them to the trip
- Arrange insurance for clients when take them to the trip

Annex 1: 2nd Draft of SIKKIM ECOTOURISM POLICY

1. Preamble

The State of Sikkim, with rich abundance of flowering plants per unit area compared with the other neighboring states and countries such as Nepal and Bhutan, is located in the area of the Mega-Biodiversity hotspot of Eastern Himalaya Region. The State is embraced with the rich biodiversity of more than 4,500 species of flowering plants, more than 50 species of Pisces, 690 species of butterfly, 16 species of amphibians, 78 species of reptiles, 550 species of birds, and 154 species of mammals. The State is also unique as a destination on the tourism canvas of the world. Nature is bountiful in gifting Sikkim with great landscapes, forests, streams, rivers, glaciers, lakes, snowcapped mountains and cold deserts. All these beautiful gifts are wrapped in different flavours of indigenous social practices, exotic cultures and rich traditions.

Most of these natural treasures lay in the Protected Areas under the Department of Forests, Environment, and Wildlife Management (DFEWM) the Government of Sikkim. It is of utmost necessity that we conserve this natural heritage and at the same time open our doors to welcome visitors from both domestic and foreign countries to enjoy and appreciate this unique gift of nature as well as local people's unique culture. Since the Government of Sikkim promotes Ecotourism in the state, it is necessary to formulate the policy of ecotourism which will act as a guiding principle in bringing about a unique amalgamation of tourism and conservation and at the same time share the benefits of this endeavor at the grassroots.

2. Policy Objectives

The main objectives of Ecotourism Policy in Sikkim are as follows.

- Generate incentives to local communities for nature conservation through alternative income sources and livelihood, and empower local communities to manage ecotourism.
- To conserve the existing biodiversity, ecosystems and religious monuments of the state of Sikkim as well as Sikkim people's culture and tradition.
- To delight and satisfy visitors as eco-tourists to the state to enjoy excellent nature as well as culture the Sikkim can offer.
- To encourage children to enjoy excellent nature- base activities.
- To encourage people in Sikkim to understand nature conservation and their own culture.
- To promote ecotourism in a sustainable manner.

3. Policy Vision

The vision of the policy is to establish Sikkim as an ultimate and unique ecotourism destination offering joys and satisfaction to visitors and to contribute to local communities' prosperity.

4. Key Principles of Sikkim Ecotourism

The following key principles shall be directed, for all forms of ecotourism for the development, planning, management, and promotion in the state of Sikkim.

- Ecotourism promotion and developments would conserve nature including biodiversity and ecosystems as well as local people's culture and tradition of Sikkim.
- Adherence to international ecotourism principles, guidelines and standards for the development of ecotourism in the state of Sikkim.
- Generating income sources to local communities preferably to economically disadvantaged through ecotourism activities.
- Promoting the use of sustainable natural, cultural and local resources to develop and promote ecotourism in the state with the emphasis on the use of renewable energy.
- Facilitating partnership for planning, implementation, coordination and monitoring ecotourism activities with key stakeholders such as NGOs, government, local communities, tour agents and tour operators.
- Enhancing cooperation among the local entrepreneurs such as,—home stay operators, tour operators, travel agents, — government departments and other key players in the development of ecotourism infrastructures and promotion of ecotourism products.

5. Definition of Sikkim Ecotourism

Definitions of the key terms related to ecotourism are as follows.

- Ecotourism: A form of tourism that involves travelling to relatively undisturbed natural areas with the specific objectives of learning, admiring and enjoying nature and its wild plants and animals as well as local people's cultural aspects including religious monuments, while conserving the natural and social environment, and improving the welfare of the local people (Fiji Ecotourism Policy, TIES & World Tourism Organisation).
- Ecotourism Activities: Activities, which are coordinated by a professional nature interpreter, are designed to entertain clients. Examples of the activities are, trekking, bird watching, hiking, rafting, participating in cultural events, photography, mountaineering and angling.
- Sustainable Ecotourism Development: Development of ecotourism in the State of Sikkim, which meets the needs and aspirations of the current generation without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

- Ecotourism Assets: Natural and cultural features that attract visitors, such as landscapes, endemic or rare flora and fauna, local agricultural products, local culture and tradition including cultural festivals, and historical monuments and heritage sites.
- Ecotourism Products: A combination of activities and services which are sold and managed through professional eco-tour operators including local communities or individuals.
- Ecotourism Services: Services including transportation, local cuisine, camping, lodging, guiding and interpretation. These services should cause minimal damage to the natural and cultural environment and promote a better understanding of the natural and cultural aspects of an area.
- Eco-tour Operators: Tour operators specializing to cater ecotourism.

6. Sikkim Ecotourism Council

The Sikkim Ecotourism Council would be an autonomous council as outlined in the organizational diagram. The Sikkim Ecotourism Council would have an executing arm which is the Department of Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management (DFEWM). The council also has a local village level cooperation system which is Eco-development Committee (EDC), Joint Forest Management Committee (JFMC), Pokhri Sanrakshan Samiti (PSS) or Eco-Tourism Committee depending upon the area, and they shall work in coordination with the Panchayat (village chief).

6-1 Organizational Strategy

To organize and ensure an effective management and implementation of ecotourism objectives and principles in the state of Sikkim, the following organizational strategies are essential:-

- Creation of an autonomous Sikkim Ecotourism Council which is represented by civil society, tourism professionals and public sector representatives.
- As per the directives of the Ecotourism Council, the Ecotourism Directorate (ED) of DFEWM will execute the programmes and activities and shall monitor the development and progress of ecotourism in the state. Also ED shall work in coordination with the village level bodies to implement the activities and monitor the negative impacts of ecotourism at the local village level.
- The council will have assistance from the key government organizations described as an advisory group as well as an international advisory group illustrated in the organizational diagram.
- ED will work in close collaboration with key government departments such as, Tourism, Rural Management and Development Department, Home Department, related scientific organizations and civil society bodies including local and national level NGOs.
- A strong coordination will exist with the Tourism Department and Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation (STDC) for the promotion and publicity of ecotourism products and destinations.
- Coordination with the Rural Management and Development Department for infrastructure development such as, water, sanitation, village trails and footpaths.

Members of Sikkim Ecotourism Council are as follows.

- *Chief Patron: Chief Minister*
- *Two Patrons: Minister of Forest and Minister of Tourism*
- *Chief Secretary – Chairman*
- *PCCF-cum-Secretary ,Forest Department (DFEWM)-Member Secretary*
- *Secretary, Tourism Department -Member*
- *Secretary, Rural Management & Development Department- Member*
- *Director, Ecotourism Directorate-Member*
- *Two Local Level NGOs-Members*
- *National Level NGO- Member*
- *President TAAS: Travel Agent Association of Sikkim- Member*
- *President SAATO: Sikkim Association of Adventure Tour Operators- Member*

6-2 Activities of Sikkim Ecotourism Council

The Sikkim Ecotourism Council shall:-

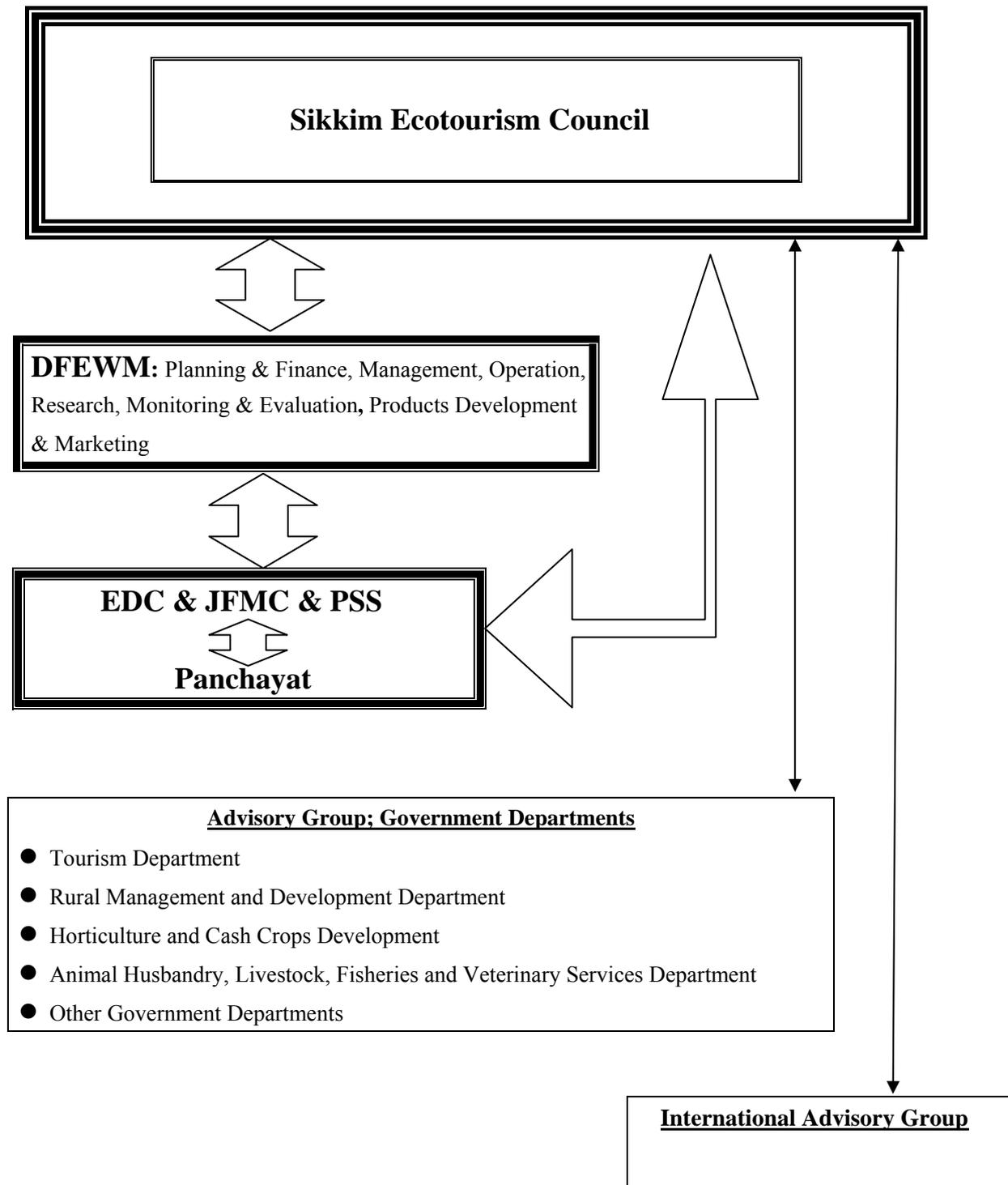
- Meet once every 6 months.
- Establish guidelines for ecotourism, and revise them in consultation with the key stakeholders including NGOs, local communities, tour operators, travel agents and relevant government authorities.
- Monitor the activities of ecotourism to ensure minimum negative impacts on the biodiversity and ecosystems of Sikkim. Emphasis should be on the carrying capacity of the Protected Areas (PAs) in Sikkim including Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP).
- Evaluate the negative impacts brought by ecotourism activities and existing rules and regulations, and review and revise the rules in consultation with the stakeholders which have direct or indirect influence to the ecotourism activities as and when necessary.
- Review and finalise a draft ecotourism action plan and a long-term development plan which are prepared by ED.
- Monitor the trainings and capacity building carried out by ED.
- Issue the Sikkim-Ecotourism label to private entities which adhere to the Sikkim Ecotourism Guidelines.
- Influence the activities of private entities which violate the main principles of Sikkim Ecotourism, through relevant organizations.
- Request tour operators, guides and home stay owners to provide information on Sikkim's ecotourism products and ecotourism services, since this information is needed for planning and monitoring of ecotourism activities.

- Establish Sikkim ecotourism safety standards and emergency procedures and facilitate the implementation of emergency procedures with relevant organizations in case of accidents.

6-3 Role of Ecotourism Directorate (ED), Department of Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management (DFEWM)

The role of ED is described below.

- **Planning & Development:**
 - Ensuring the implementation and execution of the ecotourism guidelines,
 - Set standards and certify ecotourism enterprises that are operated by private entrepreneurs.
 - Coordination with the Home Department, and other related key government organizations in border sensitive ecotourism sites to ensure the smooth operation of ecotourism activities,
 - Implement the strategies of Sikkim Ecotourism.
 - Organize seminars, workshops and international conferences among concerned government officials, NGOs, and other stakeholders.
 - Organize trainings-cum-awareness for hotel-home stay owners, ecotourism interpreters, tour operators, guides, taxi drivers and local communities.
- **Financing:**
 - Monitor the revenue generation and allocation of funds for the development of ecotourism.
 - Develop a plough back mechanism for funds generated for sustainability of ecotourism related activities.
- **Operation & Management:**
 - Set standards for the carrying capacity in the Protected Areas and other Reserved Areas to prevent damage to the biodiversity and ecosystems,
 - Publication of newsletters, bulletins, pamphlets, status reports and other information and dissemination of important government notifications and rules,
 - Ensure visitors, tour operators, tour agencies and guides to follow the prescribed guidelines
- **Monitoring & Evaluation, Research:**
 - Monitor the environmental impacts which are caused by tourism activities,
 - Enlisting of ecotourism operators in the state and monitor their activities,
 - Recognize outstanding ecotourism enterprises and operators by rewards,
 - Facilitate scientific assessment of relatively unexplored ecotourism destinations for their potential and promotion,
 - Develop participatory ecotourism monitoring plans in collaboration with NGO, CBO's, Panchayat, EDC'S, PSS and JFMC's,
 - Monitor the training and capacity building programmes that are conducted by various other agencies and provide support and cooperation,
 - Research and documentation on ecotourism assets and features.



7. Strategies of Sikkim Ecotourism

Strategies of Sikkim Ecotourism are as follows.

7-1 Strategies for Training and Capacity Building

Strategies for training and capacity building are;

- Training and capacity building should be given by professionals to local communities including home stay owners, youth, and women's group who wish to engage on ecotourism activities. The topic of the training and capacity building are specific themes, such as, environmental education, home stay management, waste management, computing, microfinance, cooking local cuisine and guides for trekking, bird watching, fauna and flora photography, angling, rafting and religious monuments;
- Provide technical capacity building for tourism operators, frontline staff of DFEWM as well as various stakeholders including JFMC, EDC and PSS;
- Plan certificate courses for nature interpreters and eco-guides for trekking, bird watching, fauna and flora photography and other activities;
- Provide training and capacity building to DFEWM staff within the country as well as abroad.

7-2 Strategies for Awareness and Education on Ecotourism, Environmental Conservation and Waste Management

Strategies for awareness and education on ecotourism, environmental conservation and waste management are;

- Plan awareness programmes on ecotourism policy contents, its guidelines and function of ecotourism council including the JICA's roles for line departments and local communities;
- Plan awareness and educational programmes for local communities and school children on environment conservation and waste management.

7-3 Strategies for Zoning and Modeling for the Ecotourism Sites and other general Tourism Sites

Strategies for zoning and modeling for the ecotourism sites and other tourism sites are;

- Establish zonings for ecotourism development sites outside PAs, which will be called ecotourism zone hereafter, and general tourism development zone, and differentiate the two zones in Sikkim;
- Make some variation of the ecotourism zone which has specific objectives such as, ecotourism zones for trekking, ecotourism zones for bird watching, ecotourism zones for flower photography;
- Regulate the design and appearance of new ecotourism infrastructures such as, accommodations, view points, footpaths, and restaurants that blend with the landscape;

- Promote village tourism;
- Select villages from the ecotourism zone and establish model from each district and focus on efforts on allocating finance, manpower for capacity building and facilities and equipments, and disseminate the successful cases to the other ecotourism zone.

7-4 Strategies for Stakeholder Partnership

Strategies for stakeholder partnership are;

- Develop partnership with NGOs, local people who run and operate homestay, guides, produce local agro-products and handicrafts, tour operators / tour agents to develop ecotourism business in a fair trade manner;
- Develop partnerships with Community-based Organizations (CBO's) /EDC's, JFMC's and PSS and local communities to manage ecotourism sites;
- Establish and enhance networks with key stakeholders including research institutions, universities, private sector associations, public agencies and national and international NGO's;
- Hold seminars and events to discuss and deliberate on ecotourism achievements with participation of key stakeholders;
- Dissemination of information related to ecotourism to key stakeholders in all the four districts;
- Hold annual meetings of ecotourism stakeholders, policy makers, NGOs, private sector on a rational basis in each district.

7-5 Strategies for Promotion / Publicity and Marketing

Strategies for promotion / publicity and marketing are;

- Develop an image for ecotourism in the state and subsequently preparation of the state ecotourism marketing strategies and marketing plans for domestic and international markets;
- Participate in national and international tourism trade marts;
- Plan the promotion through media such as, tie-ups with travel TV programs, magazines, travel books, internet portals etc;
- Plan ground promotions at various shopping malls or important events in domestic markets to enhance domestic tourism;
- Plan a transparent pricing system for the visitors who use ecotourism services such as, accommodation, guide services and transportation;
- Develop appropriate packaging and branding of ecotourism destinations;
- Develop websites, and plan web promotions and electronic marketing in national and international markets.

7-6 Strategies for Microfinance

Strategies for microfinance are;

- Plan a mechanism of microfinance system through banks at a reasonable interest rates targeting the local people who wish to engage in ecotourism activities;
- Inform the microfinance system to the people in Sikkim including the local villagers.

7-7 Strategies for Products Development

Strategies for products development are;

- Enhance and improve current products such as, increase the number of current trekking routes and interconnecting existing routes;
- Improve current home stay facilities such as toilets, shower, bedroom and dining rooms which meet the need of visitors especially from foreign countries;
- Promote local communities to produce agricultural products, such as, organic vegetables, honey, dairy products and rice, to offer as local cuisines;
- Develop new ecotourism products such as, bird watching trails, fauna and flora photo hunting trails, medicinal tourism, one day or more hikes to wetlands of Sikkim as well as rivers, highlighting the various high and low altitude lakes;
- Open some potential ecotourism destinations;
- Promote festivals which have direct relation to nature and biodiversity conservation such as, orchid flower festival, bird watching festival, and trekking festival;
- Nature Interpretation Centers will also function as Ecotourism Promotion Centers;
- Promote environmental friendly lodges, managed by either a local individual or a local community in or near wilderness areas;
- Repair and maintenance of rest houses owned by DFEWM;
- Ensure fair and equal treatment for the strict ecological safety and protection rules to be followed by all the stakeholders.

7-8 Strategies for Benefiting the Poor

Strategies for benefiting the poor are;

- Facilitate self employment opportunities for the poor in ecotourism enterprises;
- Encourage supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises by the poor;
- Facilitate direct sales of goods and services to visitors by the poor (informal economy);
- Encourage establishment and running of tourism enterprises by the poor - e.g. micro, small and medium sized enterprises, or community based enterprises (formal economy);
- Set up systems of voluntary support by tourism enterprises and tourists to the poor.

7-9 Strategies for Infrastructure Development

Strategies for infrastructure development are;

- Prohibit concrete infrastructures and building structures inside PAs;
- Construct / Improve appropriate infrastructures around the PAs such as, signage, footpaths, information centre including informative maps showing the trekking routes, toilets and view points at the entrance of each of PAs.

7-10 Strategies for Safety

Strategies for safety are;

- Ensure to have insurance set by all the tour operators, guides, tour agents whose clients may have accidents and injuries during their trip, and guides, and to carry first aid kit when they are in the field with their clients;
- Plan training and issuing certificates system for safety. The training will focus on methods of medication to save clients and quick rescue operation to all the tour operators, guides, tour agents whose clients may have accidents and injuries caused by the engagement of tourism activities and;
- Plan a system of notifying landslides high risk areas to the tour operators, tour agents, guides and drivers of vehicles through the related associations on a regular basis by coordination with other key state government departments.

Annex 2: Draft of Guidelines for Sikkim Ecotourism

1. Objectives

The objectives of the Sikkim ecotourism guidelines set out for the Protected Areas as well as the outside of the Protected Areas described below are to conserve the biodiversity and ecosystems of Sikkim and ensure visitor's safety.

The guidelines are set out for the people listed below.

- Visitors such as, trekkers, mountaineers
- Ecotourism services operators such as, trekking service providers, trekking companies
- Guides such as, trekking guides, mountaineering guides, bird watching guides
- Research scholars
- Visitors other than the types mentioned above

2. Contents of Guidelines

There are two kinds of Guidelines defined by the area, one for the guidelines for the Protected Areas and the other for the outside of the Protected Areas. The following guidelines are described by the areas.

2-1 Guidelines for Protected Areas

Two guidelines, one for "Guidelines for Ecotourism Operators and Guides", and the other for "Guidelines for Visitors and Research Scholars" for the Protected Areas, are described below.

(1) Guidelines for Ecotourism Operators and Guides

Guidelines for ecotourism operators and guides are as follows.

The people shall NOT:

- Use firewood or kindle fire in wildlife and forest areas
- Damage or cut shrubs or thickets
- Pollute water body
- Collect plants or their parts
- Accompany with dogs, cats and other pet animals
- Feed, shout, tease, chase, disturb or molest wild animals
- Play loud music or use loud speakers
- Camp outside the designated campsites
- Trek outside of the designated natural trails
- Defecate within 100meters of any water body

- Camp within 500 meters of the periphery of any lakes
- Cause environmental pollution
- Defile sites of religious and cultural significance such as, sacred monuments, lakes rocks, caves and shrines
- Commit any other act that may be injurious to forests, water bodies, plants, animals or disturb the natural tranquility of such sites or become a nuisance to other trekkers
- Leave any non-biodegradable materials in Protected Area during a trek, and such materials shall be declared at the forest/wildlife check-post both before and after the entry
- Sell liquor, drugs and other intoxicants within a Protected Area
- Carry out any research study or study within Protected Areas without the prior permission of the Government
- Indulge in hunting of any animals or carry on the business of buying and selling any animals, animal articles, antique cultural artifacts, trophy, uncured trophy or meat of wild animals and specified plants
- Destroy or remove any wildlife, infrastructures and plants/trees, sign boards of the protected areas
- Swim in lakes, rivers or approach glaciers inside the National Park/Protected Areas or camp in areas of wildlife interest or their habitats
- Collect specimens of wildlife without permission of the competent authority

The people shall :

- Engage trekking service providers who are genuine Sikkim subjects and possess the certification of identification
- Engage pack animals owned by genuine Sikkim subjects and possess the certification of identification
- Provide adequate cooked food for the trekking service providers while in a Protected Area and ensure that they do not use firewood
- Obtain a permit and pay prescribed fees before entering a Protected Area
- Register at the forest /wildlife checkposts before entering a Protected Area
- Arrange to carry sufficient kerosene and LPG for heating and cooking purpose
- The pack animal operator shall arrange for fodder for the pack animals and ensure that they do not graze freely in Protected Areas
- Obtain permission from the State Home Department and also from State Chief Wildlife Warden, Forest for Alpine Expedition
- Segregate degradable and non-degradable litters and burn or bury all bio-degradable items and carry back all other non-degradable items
- Keep to the permitted nature trails and treks
- Inform the nearest wildlife checkpost, in case the parties come across forest fire, wildlife offence by someone, death carcass of wild animals during their nature trip
- Carry medical first aid kits for clients when take them to the trip

- Arrange insurance for clients when take them to the trip

(2) Guidelines for Visitors and Research Scholars

Guidelines for visitors and research scholars are as follows.

The people shall NOT:

- Use firewood or kindle fire in wildlife and forest areas
- Damage or cut shrubs or thickets
- Pollute water body
- Collect plants or their parts
- Accompany with dogs, cats and other pet animals
- Feed, shout, tease, chase, disturb or molest wild animals
- Play loud music or use loud speakers
- Camp outside the designated campsites
- Trek outside of the designated natural trails
- Defecate within 100meters of any water body
- Camp within 500 meters of the periphery of any lake
- Cause environmental pollution
- Defile sites of religious and cultural significance such as, sacred monuments, lakes rocks, caves and shrines
- Commit any other act that may be injurious to forests, water bodies, plants, animals or disturb the natural tranquility of such sites or become a nuisance to other trekkers
- Leave any non-biodegradable materials in Protected Areas during a trek, and such materials shall be declared at the forest/wildlife check-post both before and after the entry
- Sell liquor, drugs and other intoxicants within Protected Areas
- Carry out any research study or study within Protected Areas without the prior permission of the Government
- Indulge in hunting of any animals or carry on the business of buying and selling any animals, animal articles, antique cultural artifacts, trophy, uncured trophy or meat of wild animals and specified plants
- Destroy or remove any wildlife, infrastructures and plants/trees, sign boards of the protected areas
- Swim in lakes, rivers or approach glaciers inside the Protected Areas or camp in areas of wildlife interest or their habitats
- Collect specimens of wildlife without permission of the competent authority

The people shall :

- Engage trekking service providers who are genuine Sikkim subjects and possess the certification of identification

- Provide adequate cooked food for the trekking while in a Protected Area and ensure that they do not use firewood
- Obtain a permit and pay prescribed fees before entering a Protected Area
- Register at the forest /wildlife checkpoints before entering a Protected Area
- Arrange to carry sufficient kerosene and LPG for heating and cooking purpose
- Keep to the permitted nature trails and treks
- Segregate degradable and non-degradable litters and burn or bury all bio-degradable items and carry back all other non-degradable items
- Also inform the nearest wildlife checkpost, in case the parties come across forest fire, wildlife offence by someone, death carcass of wild animals during their nature trip
- Obtain permission from the State Home Department and also from State Chief Wildlife Warden, Forest for Alpine Expedition

2-2 Guidelines for Non-Protected Areas

Guidelines for the outside of the Protected Areas are set out only for ecotourism operators and guides. The contents are described below.

The people shall NOT:

- Cater for more than twenty people at one time
- Allow clients to purchase endangered animal parts or antique cultural artifacts

The people shall :

- Listen to the opinions of scientists and conservation NGOs as well as local communities when planning tour activities
- Follow all the rules and regulations enforced the visiting areas
- Hold orientation sessions for clients prior to running activities
- Hire guides who are familiar with ecotourism
- Support local conservation effort and income generation activities such as, favor accommodation services managed by local individuals or community
- Carry medical first aid kits for clients when take them to the trip
- Arrange insurance for clients when take them to the trip
- Collect feedback from the local community as well as clients when planning future tours

3. Penalties

As for the penalties for the person, private entities such as, tour operators, tour agents, or any other organizations violate the guidelines set for the Protected Areas, Notification No:887, Sikkim Wildlife (Regulation of Trekking) Rules, 2005, dated 10/02/2006 and Wild Life Protection Act 1972 will be applied.

Annex 3: Study Schedule (First Session)

No	Date	Time	First Session: Study Schedule Contents	Accommo	
1	10/9	Sat	Leave Tokyo Arrive Delhi	Delhi	
2	10	Sun	Arrive in Gangtok	Gangtok	
3	11	Mon	Meeting with Sikkim State DFEWM, Discuss the study schedule with C/P	Gangtok	
4	12	Tue	Prepare the Meeting, Discuss the study schedule with C/P	Gangtok	
5	13	Wed	09:30-17:30 FIRST MEETING: FOR FORMULATION OF ECOTOURISM POLICY	Gangtok	
6	14	Thu	Interview Survey & Data collection	Gangtok	
7	15	Fri	8:00	Site Survey: West District- KCC, PTDA	Pelling
			12:00-14:00	Yuksam, National Park Management Office	
			14:30-18:00	Site Survey: Khechopalri Lake- Pelling Halt	
				Interview Survey: Khangchendzonga Conservation Committee(KCC)	
8	16	Sat	10:00-14:00	Site Survey: Bird Sanctuary, Monastery,	Yangsum
			15:00-17:00	Site Survey: Rivers & Mountains	
9	17	Sun	9:00-12:00	Site Survey: Bird Sanctuary, Monastery,	Gangtok
			14:00	Interview Survey: NGO-Akash Ganga, Soreng	
			19:00	Arrive Gangtok	
10	18	Mon	9:30	Site Survey: North District-	Tingvong
			11:30-12:30	Interview Survey: NGO-Endeavours Organization	
			13:00-14:00	Site Survey:Sevensisters Waterfall	
			16:00-17:00	Interview Survey: Mangan Tourism Development Committee	
11	19	Tue	10:00-14:00	Site Survey:Trecking routes, Bird watching, Orchids, Monastery	Tingvong
			15:00-18:00	Site Survey: Waterfalls, Streams, Angling	
12	20	Wed	10:00	Leave Tingvong Home Stay	Gangtok
			11:00-12:30	Interview Survey: NGO-Passingdang, Mayal Lyang -Owner of HomeStay	
			13:00-13:30	Observation: North Sikkim Handicraft Centre	
			18:00	Arrive Gangtok	
13	21	Thu	Interview Survey & Data collection	Gangtok	
14	22	Fri	Interview Survey & Data collection	Gangtok	
15	23	Sat	Draft of the Ecotourism Policy	Gangtok	
16	24	Sun	10:00-16:00	Site Survey:Fambunglho Wildlife Sanctuary	Gangtok
				Document Filing	
17	25	Mon	Draft of the Ecotourism Policy	Gangtok	
18	26	Tue	Draft of the Ecotourism Policy	Gangtok	
19	27	Wed	Interview Survey & Data collection, Draft of the Ecotourism Policy	Gangtok	
20	28	Thu	Interview Survey & Data collection, Draft of the Ecotourism Policy	Gangtok	
21	29	Fri	Document Filing	Gangtok	
22	30	Sat	Draft of the Ecotourism Policy, Discuss the Ecotourism Guidelines	Gangtok	
23	31	Sun	Document Filing	Gangtok	
24	11/1	Mon	Prepare the 4 districts Meeting,	Gangtok	
25	2	Tue	13:30-15:30 <i>Discuss the contents of existing Sikkim State regulations</i> Meeting with TAAS	Gangtok	
26	3	Wed	Prepare the 4 districts Meeting,	Gangtok	
27	4	Thu	11:00-15:00 4Districts Meeting: North	Gangtok	
28	5	Fri	Document Filing	Gangtok	
29	6	Sat	Document Filing	Gangtok	
30	7	Sun	Document Filing	Gangtok	
31	8	Mon	Document Filing	Gangtok	
32	9	Tue	11:00-15:00 4Districts Meeting: East	Gangtok	
33	10	Wed	<i>Discuss the contents of Sikkim Ecotourism Guidelines</i> 16:00-18:00 <i>Meeting with SAATO(Sikkim Adventure Association and Tour Operators)</i>	Gangtok	
34	11	Thu	11:00-15:00 4Districts Meeting: South	West	
35	12	Fri	11:00-15:00 4Districts Meeting: West	South	
36	13	Sat	09:00-15:00 <i>Site Observation in South District</i>	Gangtok	
37	14	Sun	<i>2nd Draft of the Ecotourism Policy</i>	Gangtok	
38	15	Mon	<i>2nd Draft of the Ecotourism Policy & Ecotourism Guidelines</i>	Gangtok	
			15:00-18:30 <i>Meeting with Fisheries Department, Meeting with Tour Agent</i>		
39	16	Tue	<i>Draft of the Ecotourism Policy, Ecotourism Guidelines, Sikkim State regulations</i>	Gangtok	
40	17	Wed	<i>Draft of the Ecotourism Policy, Ecotourism Guidelines, Sikkim State regulations</i>	Gangtok	
41	18	Thu	<i>Draft of the Ecotourism Policy, Ecotourism Guidelines, Sikkim State regulations</i>	Gangtok	
42	19	Fri	<i>Discussion with DFEWM :Draft Ecotourism Policy & Guidelines, State regulations</i>	Gangtok	
43	20	Sat	Study report writing	Gangtok	
44	21	Sun	Study report writing	Gangtok	
45	22	Mon	<i>Discussion with DFEWM :Draft Ecotourism Policy & Guidelines, State regulations</i>	Gangtok	
46	23	Tue	Study report writing	Gangtok	
47	24	Wed	Submit & Explain the Study Report to DFEWM	Gangtok	
48	25	Thu	06:00-13:05-16:55	Leave Gangtok - Bagdogra Bagdogra - Delhi	Delhi
			18:30	Submit & Explain the Study Report to JICA India Office	
49	26	Fri	11:00	Leave Delhi	
50	27	Sat	6:00	Arrive Tokyo	

Annex 4: Presentation Contents of 4 Districts Meeting on Draft of Sikkim Ecotourism Policy

1st Draft of

SIKKIM

ECOTOURISM POLICY

JICA Consultant
Kazuishi Watabe

November, 2010

- **Ecotourism Policy Objectives**
- **Key Principles of Sikkim Ecotourism**
- **Definition of Sikkim Ecotourism**
- **Strategies**

Ecotourism Policy Objectives

- Generate incentives to local communities for nature conservation through alternative income sources and livelihood, and empower local communities to manage Ecotourism.
- To conserve the existing biodiversity, ecosystem and religious monuments of the state of Sikkim as well as Sikkim people's culture and tradition.
- To delight and satisfy visitors as eco-tourists to the state to enjoy excellent nature as well as culture the Sikkim can offer.
- To encourage children to enjoy excellent nature- base activities.
- To encourage people in Sikkim to understand nature conservation and their own culture.
- To promote ecotourism in a sustainable manner.

Key Principles of Sikkim Ecotourism

- Ecotourism promotion and developments would conserve nature including biodiversity and ecosystem as well as local people's culture and tradition of Sikkim.
- Adherence to international ecotourism principles, guidelines and standards for the development of ecotourism in the state of Sikkim.
- Generating income sources to local communities through ecotourism activities.
- Promoting the use of sustainable natural, cultural and local resources to develop and promote ecotourism in the state.
- Facilitating partnership for planning, implementation, coordination and monitoring ecotourism activities with key stakeholders such as NGOs, government, local communities, tour agents and tour operators.
- Enhancing cooperation among the local entrepreneurs such as, home stay operators, tour operators, travel agents, government departments and other key players in the development of ecotourism infrastructure and promotion of ecotourism products.

Definition of Sikkim Ecotourism -Part 1-

- **Ecotourism:** A form of tourism that involves travelling to relatively undisturbed natural areas with the specific objectives of learning, admiring and enjoying nature and its wild plants and animals as well as local people's cultural aspects including religious monuments, while conserving the natural and social environment, and improving the welfare of the local people (Fiji Ecotourism Policy, TIES & World Tourism Organisation).
- **Ecotourism Activities:** Activities, which are coordinated by a professional nature interpreter, are designed to entertain clients. Examples of the activities are, trekking, bird watching, hiking, rafting, participating in cultural events, photography, mount-biking, mountaineering and angling.
- **Sustainable Ecotourism Development:** Development of ecotourism in the State of Sikkim, which meets the needs and aspirations of the current generation without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

Definition of Sikkim Ecotourism -Part2-

- **Ecotourism Assets:** Natural and cultural features that attract visitors, such as landscapes, endemic or rare flora and fauna, local agricultural products, local culture and tradition including cultural festivals, and historical monuments and heritage sites.
- **Ecotourism Products:** A combination of activities and services which are sold and managed through professional eco-tour operators including local communities or individuals.
- **Ecotourism Services:** Services including transportation, local cuisine, camping, lodging, guiding and interpretation. These services should cause minimal damage to the natural and cultural environment and promote a better understanding of the natural and cultural aspects of an area.
- **Eco-tour Operators:** Tour operators specializing to cater ecotourism

Strategies of Sikkim Ecotourism

- 1. Strategies for Training and Capacity Building**
- 2. Strategies for Zoning and Modeling the Ecotourism Sites and other Tourism Sites**
- 3. Strategies for Stakeholder Partnership**
- 4. Strategies for Promotion / Publicity and Marketing**
- 5. Strategies for Product Development**
- 6. Strategies for Infrastructure Development**

1 Strategies for Training and Capacity Building

- Training and capacity building should be given to the local communities including home stay owners, youth, and women's group who wish to engage on ecotourism activities. The topic of the training and capacity building are specific theme, such as cooking for local cuisine, guides for trekking, bird watching, fauna and flora photo-hunting, mountain biking, angling, rafting, religious monuments, environmental education, home stay management, waste management, computing and microfinance.
- Provide technical capacity building for tourism operators, forest department as well as various stakeholders including JFMC and EDC.
- Plan awareness programmes for relevant government, such as Rural Management and Development, Fisheries and Animal Husbandries and Agriculture.
- Plan specific education qualifications for the appointment of Eco-guides such as, trekking, bird watching, fauna and flora photo-hunting and other capacities.
- Provide trainings of DFWM staff within the country as well as abroad.

2 Strategies for Zoning and Modeling the Ecotourism Sites and other Tourism Sites

- Beside Protected Areas, establish zonings for ecotourism development sites and general tourism development sites in Sikkim;
- Regulate the design and appearance of new infrastructures such as, accommodations, view points, foot paths, and restaurants to match to the landscape of the sites;
- Promote village tourism within the ecotourism zones;
- Set up some models for village tourism within ecotourism sites and disseminate the models to other sites.

3 Strategies for Stakeholder Partnership

- Develop partnership with NGOs, Local people who run and operate home stay, guides, create handicrafts, produce local agro-products and tour operators / tour agents to develop ecotourism business in a fair trade manner;
- Develop partnerships with CBO's /EDC's and JFMC' and local communities to manage ecotourism sites;
- Establish and enhance networks with key stakeholder including research institutions, universities, private sector associations, public agencies and national and international NGO's;
- Hold seminars and events to discuss and deliberate on ecotourism achievements with participation of key stakeholders ;
- Dissemination of information related to ecotourism to key concerned stakeholders in all the four districts;
- Hold annual meetings of ecotourism stakeholders, policy makers, NGOs, private sector on a rotational basis in each district.

4 Strategies for Promotion / Publicity and Marketing

- Develop an image for ecotourism in the state and subsequently preparation of the state ecotourism marketing plan;
- Participate in national and international trades and fairs;
- Plan the promotion through media such as, tie-ups with travel programs, magazines internet portals and other media tie-ups;
- Plan ground promotions at various shopping malls or important events in domestic markets to enhance domestic tourism;
- Develop appropriate packaging and branding of ecotourism destinations;
- Develop websites and plan web promotions and electronic marketing in national and international markets.

5 Strategies for Product Development

- Enhance and improve current products such as, increase the number of current trekking routes and connecting exiting routes to the others;
- Improve current home stay facilities such as toilets, shower, bedroom and dining rooms which meet the need of visitors from foreign countries;
- Promote local communities to produce agricultural products, such as, organic vegetables, honey, daily products and rice, to prepare as local cuisines and sell to visitors;
- Develop new ecotourism products such as, bird watching trails, fauna and flora photo hunting trails, medicinal tourism, one day or more hikes to wetlands of Sikkim as well as rivers, highlighting the various high and low altitude lakes;
- Open some of potential tourist destinations encourage only high quality tourists to ensure minimum impact on environment;
- Promote local festivals at the ecotourism sites such as, rural villages, sites nearby protected areas and relatively unexploited areas;
- Establish the ecotourism office, ecotourism centre at each district closely working with Tourism Department;
- Promote environmental friendly lodges, managed by either individual or a local community in or near wilderness areas;
- Repair and maintenance of rest houses owned by the forest department;
- Ensure fair and equal treatment for the strict ecological safety and protection rules to be followed by all the stakeholders.

6 Strategies for Infrastructure Development

- Restrict concrete infrastructure and building structures should meet the specification as laid out by the ecotourism department inside protected areas;
- Construct / Improve appropriate infrastructures within and around the protected areas such as, sign posts, foot paths, information centre including large maps showing the trekking routes, toilets and view points at the entrance of each protected area.

Annex 5: Four Districts' Minutes of the Meeting on Sikkim Ecotourism Policy

East District: Minutes of the meeting in Gangtok on 9th November 2010

- ✧ Sailesh Pradhan suggested – How is the training and capacity building to be done. Who does this training.eg., eco-friendly constructions. It is important to find out who trains the people in the right way. There is a need to identify the instructors.
- ✧ The policy discussion should reflect who regulates the design and appearance of new infrastructure. Difficult for FEWMD to regulate eco-tourism structures at the private areas. Hence the committee, local organizations should regulate.
- ✧ DC – Training and capacity building, we did not have clear policy and strategy on ecotourism. Sikkim gifted with natural beauty, we should have clear policy and strategy in place. So far no such policy in place but now after this policy is in place then after a few years after training, capacity building, trial and error in a few years time we may be able to achieve our objectives. The presentation has covered the entire gamut of eco-tourism. The very fact that we are now creating a policy and strategy means that, we are now coming and consolidating the fragmented practice of eco-tourism Sikkim has been doing. Zoning has to be done. While implanting the policy we will identify the zone. Identifying people depending on their interested and imparting the respective training. Designing of houses cannot be enforced forcefully. The people should be willing voluntarily. Through a notification also it can be done, but voluntary is preferred and more effective Notification may not help. Voluntary is one thing but investive is a better way to maintain. Technical help is also required to design, architectural advice.eg. Culture department gives aid to old heritage houses this needs to be expanded.
- ✧ Prez TAAS- There should be eco-tourism committee. The committee will act as a catalyst between tour operators and the government.eg. Orchids- Orchids society, Birds- Ornithological society. Specific experts should be included in the committee.
- ✧ DC- The committee will be the buffer, and the committee will be the main body for eco-tourism in terms of regulation etc. It should be the principal body that should play the co-ordinating role. Trainers should be specialist in each field, not given to NGO's exclusively. Home stay operators should be proficient to entertain any kind of tourist depending on the culture from which place they have come. The home stay operator should be a certified operator.
- ✧ Dr. Dewan -Sikkim Anglers Association- Who is going to benefit. Are villagers going to benefit. The villagers have been trained so much that they are confused. Main objective is conservation and should be strictly enforced. Regulatory body should be strictly enforced. All line departments should be cohesive. The guidelines etc should be made very clear. Develop a package for villagers to be really involved. The policy should include this. Constant repeated training coupled with field visit is necessary. The money benefit should go to the right people. Coordinating committee should be formed at the district level with all line departments. In zones that are identified there will be certain regulations. But what about areas outside the zones which are no identifies. The basic idea of zoning is. Eg Dzongu is beautiful, but now danger of destruction, hence if we identify Dzongu as an eco-tourism zone then we may be able

to save Dzongu. May be priority areas will get priority funding. The fund can be used as seed money and later funding can be done from other sources. Presently regular tourist, but now we should be prepared for eco-tourist. We should create a model so that people see the example and follow.

- ✧ DC- our efforts should be focused, first we should focus on certain areas. Zoning is required, Levels of eco-tourism potential is different in different zones. Different areas have different potential. First we may concentrate on the area having the highest tourism captivity. Zoning will also help to identify the co tourism product in that zone eg, eco-tourism policy. To identify the USP of the zone is imp. Zoning will identify the USP of the area. Zoning can be done at one go, but the implementation should be done in select zones. About area outside the zones, those areas are capable of selling other tourism products, and they can carry on. But there are specific eco-tourism hot spot that can be zoned. Restriction is applicable only in restricted protected areas. Zoning is a big issue. It is controversial since it includes other key departments. The idea is to convey that the idea of zoning is to protect against uncontrolled tourism. Conservation and promotion will be done by the people from the village. Unfortunately the common man is not involved. Awareness and sensitization should be done to the people. People must also know their responsibility to nature.
- ✧ Council of representative from all line Dep. and becomes a high powered core n under this we can have committees sub committees etc. The committees' members should consist of experts. The expert should prove their credentials. Well structured and high power core should be constituted. Institutionalization for training and capacity building. Professional training should be imparted. Committee alone may not be able to implement all alone.
- ✧ DC- we already have institutes and we can use these institutes to impart courses on the Eco-tourism. Identification of the trainees should be need based and only the right people should be trained. Identification of beneficiaries based on their need, interest, capacity imp. Second professional training by institute. Follow up after the training. Identify the funding source.
- ✧ Eco tourist people not high. Eco-tourist are participatory. At least 25 % of fund should be set aside for the marketing. The policy should have a clause, suppose a particular point does not work then we should be able to change. It should be flexible and dynamic.
- ✧ One point missed is sustainability in the marketing in the policy document. The mechanism for marketing activities should be included in the policy and also who will look after in the future. Who will carry on in the future? Sustainability is important. Implementation should be gradual with controlled activities. Example should be taken from the Dzumsa system in Lachen and Lachung. Role of institutions imp. Eg. Tour operator's. The role of each player should be specified. All tour operators not equal, many do not have an education in tourism, no practical training but u can register as tour operators. So may be the tour operator may be certified and a certain standard be made by Tourism Dept. Also to strengthen the lifestyle, of the poor people who are actually maintaining the culture, food etc .Some kind of incentives should be given to these people to maintain. There is a tourist trade act and it includes few clauses that should have a minimum tourism training etc.

Certification is important. Everybody should not be involved. Certification should be done by a board. This should be out of the tourism zones. The festivals should be standard like the International Rhododendron festival.

● Summary :

- ✧ Criteria for zoning. How do we zone the area? Whatever we can incorporate at the inception level. We would be coordinating at various levels n at lower level by voluntarism..we would give accordance as per changes through time...
- ✧ What about left out areas? The areas would also be taken up in the next phase. North eastern industrial policy-declared by GOI
- ✧ Conservation and promotion: we balance both the activities by making it a people centric approach. Whether we should have many committees or few committees.
- ✧ We would be using the infrastructure available in the state n the project will be providing funds.no intention for creating a new institute albeit one at pangthang. Sustainability will be noted.
- ✧ Advertisement of home-stay not done.eg the Pasatanga home stay.
- ✧ Regular calendar of festivals – suggestion should be incorporated. Fixed date for the regular festival. Events should be pre-decided for higher publicity.

North District: Minutes of the meeting in Mangan on 4th November 2010

● **Regard to Strategies**

- Dzongu Tourists in Kabi
- Major tour operators and environment encouraging the Home Stay efforts
- Propogation of Home Stay by tour operators
- Involve village community people in the Ecotourism Council-Home stay owners
- No associates of Home stay owners- from Homestay owners associates
- Development of partnership between Home stay owners Ecotourism and NGO
- Strategies for marketing and promotion of ecotourism.
- Partnership is needed

● **POLICY FRAME**

- Low volume and high income
- Need of the hour is to form strategic partnership.
- Efforts added - maximum money
- No Government regulation for ecotourism

● **Regard training and capacity building**

- Awareness through PRI(why not)
- Awareness program will O/C Panchayats
- If everything is made very clear in the website then things would work fine
- Home stay shall be specific and under one umbrella
- Since ecotourism is focused in village –will such kind of meeting be organized in villages
- Awareness campaign in each village
- Is government going to have one website for all home stays-aggressive marketing has to be done so that interests remains?
- Balance all the tourists' inflation
- About awareness should be in school-students awareness can be given to students
- Promotion of the area flow best we can project the area for attraction of tourists.
- If generation activities is especially important for villages

The project area-Awareness –separate issue –ecotourism will deal about awareness related to ecotourism

● **Solid waste management**

- KCC example- Kabi endeavours and the villager for one day
- Forest department to levy fees for cleaning policy
- Changu example-pokhari Sanghrakshan committee
- Fees lived through home stay tariff
- Policy needed to levy taxes for cleaning of villages
- Solid waste management
- Ecotourism society in every local area
- Pollution control board can be separated from the department.

● **Permit from protected areas**

- 5days permit foe Dzongu area
- Plan and give concentration
- Forest department should play a major role in tourism sector aka yellow stone NP.
- Forest shall play a more proactive role in development of tourism
- Limitation of capacities –the forest department

- Forest department can play major role in zoning prudent development etc.
- Homestay, bird-watching
- No inclusion land development land shade etc
- Over rules contradict
- Policy involvement is there

South District: Minutes of the meeting in Namchi on 11th November 2010

1. Veena Rai: Kitam: Lot of butterfly are available in Kitam, how about adding the area as butterfly zone? How do we regulate the designs of footpaths esp., concrete footpath, akin like Dzongri trail, stone path rather than concrete and also no stone structures in the middle of the jungle? Can we have regulations on the dam projects, maybe ask them to plant trees or create some kind of policy for them to regulate their cutting of trees..
2. Purannidhi: This is to inform the house that in the year 2007 we have started our own ecotourism venture, Indreni Pariyar. The Kitam bird sanctuary near sumbuk has lots of industries which pollute the area and needs restraining, can the department and JICA do something about it? Our area is rich in biodiversity can research be birds and butterflies and other species in sumbuk.(spiders ants etc).
3. Himalayan Admission society: Preserve the area..... Alternative livelihood is required... finance and guidance is needed...Who develops ecotourism professionally. Finance and proper guidelines needed.
4. Strategies for product development: Karma Subba President, Yangyang Cultural Village Tourism Co-operative Society---- DC: Gangtok as Switzerland, why not develop other part of the state. How about promoting homestay in Yangyang? Develop ecotourism sites in and around the stat and declare eco village sites n provide all necessary help and ideas for eg Pathing is one example where all houses were wooden. Should Eco-village areas have any concrete buildings..**BIG NO TO CONCRETE**.FEWMD should try to tie up with other Dept.. need for eco police...
5. Mitra Chauhan: Sadam: Need culture hall and library..trekking route is needed..From Sadam Tareybhair to Tamlachaur
6. VR: Promoting the flower industry...something different for people to stay n come in South Sikkim so we can try something different...
7. Mingma Sherpa:Perbing Village Tourism: Ecotourist: has been fully natural: Preference shall be coming to village tourism, flower, orchids in tendong forest:..Beautification of forest shall be given to people n NOC shall be given at once.. Devils Falls...need to explore n add new areas for ecotourism. Leniency in forest conservation act in c/w the dev of eco-tourism related infrastructures in the forest areas.
8. **UP adhakshya**: tourists like village areas, there are 17 village tourism societies in South Sikkim working under the banner of SSTDS(South Sikkim Tourism Dev Society)..one day in homestay for study..no concrete building...maybe..The constructions should blend with the environment.
9. People can do the policing at their own steam
10. **Social fencing**: is there but in theory...if Sikkim is rich in ecotourism yet not have an eco-police to look into the matter.
11. **NW**: eco guides can act as eco police.(**hot debated topic**)
12. **VR**: need to develop inner self.
13. **NW**: what we lacking in tourism..so many home facility but lacking in publicity.
14. **TAAS**: not included in the doc: Sikkimese cardamom is one of the mainstay livelihood..last few years it has degenerated and we have been going to very hard phase. No solution..if one of the component within JICA prog would be to study n rejuvenate the crisis..tc of education in Sikkim n everything would tc of itself...330

crores is a HUGE AMT wat s/m is there to monitor the progress in Sikkim...divert ur money thru villages...no funds to develop the infrastructure in village.

15. **RN Rai:** General Secretary, SSTDS: Identification of sites for Ecotourism..Authenticate villages for Ecotourism n related issues. Trekking routes to be developed...
16. **NW:** Zoning will be done later n marketing will be taken up....capacity building is needed.. training will be provided.

West District: Minutes of the meeting in Gevzing on 12th November 2010

1. Responsible tourism is part of ecotourism: Tourist is responsible n shall be responsible for ecology.
2. Suman Rai: Ribdi: Can we engage garbage pickers in trekking route n also how n when is it going to be implemented? As part of the responsible tourism n thru capacity building, existing JFMC n EDC near PA, the guide is n should take care of it.
3. SR: one trekking zone is there can JICA help it? ADB is taking up the project for development of trekking route in Singalila.
4. Singalila route needs maintenance? Barsey to Singalila route needs urgent maintenance to make the route workable? Supreme need is to conserve the PA.
5. Problem in Gorkey? Can the route be maintained by NREGA.
6. Sushil Tamang: darap E C: Village tourism does not have any legal entity. Needs legal entity for functioning...Ecotourism in Sikkim is better..Homestay does not have any minimum requirements, needs to develop minimum requirements...two important points are needed a Wellness tourism. Many points were there in Blanket manner..Common policy may not meet the requirement of certain areas...needs site specific measures..Needs to find out the activities for the areas... Rampant construction will dilute the theory of Ecotourism.... Handicrafts and handlooms are missing, there is a need to focus on this area...while identifying the product feasibility of site is needed... website is needed on an aggressive way...travel agents within the state cannot market the ecotourism sites...needs to be based with IATA n other travel agents abroad...local culture and cuisine have to be marketed along with flora and fauna n needs to be marketed..
7. DC: how do we implement it, what is the status of the ecotourism council.....Enforcement of the policy shall be done thru the FD.. The status is statutory.
8. DC: if tourism is developed as a sustainable industry then we have to put a stop to development activities...esp., CC footpath..People r not interested in conservation... Earn money from tourism and not through tourism infrastructure..
9. Develop an effective mechanism to restrict the construction of concrete structures in villages.

Annex 6: Four Districts' Timetable of the Meeting

Sl No	Time	Activity	Resource Person
1	1100 hrs	Registration ,Arrival of Guest and Participants	
2	1115-1130 Hrs	Welcome Speech	Member Secretary, Ecotourism (SPFP)
3	1130-1200 Hrs	Presentation on draft review	Shri Kazushi Watabe, JICA Consultant
4	1200-1330 Hrs	Discussion on the draft	Chaired by Chairperson, District Ecotourism Committee
5	1330-1400 Hrs	Summary of the proceedings on discussion.	Chairperson, District Eco- Tourism Committee
6	1400-1415 Hrs	Address by District Collector	
7	1415-1430 Hrs	Address by Chief Guest	
8	1430 Hrs	Vote of Thanks	DFO, Eco Tourism
9	1430 Hrs	Lunch	

Annex 7: Proposed Study Schedule for the Second Session

No	Date	Time	Second Session: Study Schedule Contents	Accommo
1	4/9	Sat	Leave Tokyo Arrive Delhi	Delhi
2	10	Sun	Arrive in Gangtok	Gangtok
3	11	Mon	Meeting with Sikkim State DFEWM, Discuss the study schedule with C/P	Gangtok
4	12	Tue	?? Second MEETING: FOR FORMULATION OF ECOTOURISM POLICY	Gangtok
5	13	Wed	Review and analyse the contents of Sikkim Ecotourism Policy & Guideline	Gangtok
6	14	Thu	Review and analyse the contents of Sikkim Ecotourism Policy & Guideline	Gangtok
7	15	Fri	Review and analyse the contents of Sikkim Ecotourism Policy & Guideline	Gangtok
8	16	Sat	Discuss the contents of existing Sikkim State regulations with C/P	Gangtok
9	17	Sun	Document Filing	Gangtok
10	18	Mon	Discuss the contents of Ecotourism Action Plan	Gangtok
11	19	Tue	Discuss the contents of Ecotourism Action Plan	Gangtok
12	20	Wed	Discuss the contents of Ecotourism Action Plan	Gangtok
13	21	Thu	Discuss the contents of Ecotourism Action Plan	Gangtok
14	22	Fri	Discuss the contents of Ecotourism Action Plan	Gangtok
15	23	Sat	Study report writing	Gangtok
16	24	Sun	Study report writing	Gangtok
17	25	Mon	Study report writing	Gangtok
18	26	Tue	Study report writing	Gangtok
19	27	Wed	Explain the Study Report to Sikkim State DFEWM	Bagdogra
			Gangtok - Bagdogra	
			Bagdogra - Delhi	
20	28	Thu	Explain the Study Report to JICA India Office	
			21:00 Leave Delhi	
21	29	Fri	8:00 Arrive Tokyo	

Annex 8: References

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2nd Draft of SIKKIM ECOTOURISM POLICY (23/11/2010)

1. Preamble

The State of Sikkim, with rich abundance of flowering plants per unit area compared with the other neighboring states and countries such as Nepal and Bhutan, is located in the area of the Mega-Biodiversity hotspot of Eastern Himalaya Region. The State is embraced with the rich biodiversity of more than 4,500 species of flowering plants, more than 50 species of Pisces, 690 species of butterfly, 16 species of amphibians, 78 species of reptiles, 550 species of birds, and 154 species of mammals. The State is also unique as a destination on the tourism canvas of the world. Nature is bountiful in gifting Sikkim with great landscapes, forests, streams, rivers, glaciers, lakes, snowcapped mountains and cold deserts. All these beautiful gifts are wrapped in different flavours of indigenous social practices, exotic cultures and rich traditions.

Most of these natural treasures lay in the Protected Areas under the Department of Forests, Environment, and Wildlife Management (DFEWM) the Government of Sikkim. It is of utmost necessity that we conserve this natural heritage and at the same time open our doors to welcome visitors from both domestic and foreign countries to enjoy and appreciate this unique gift of nature as well as local people's unique culture. Since the Government of Sikkim promotes Ecotourism in the state, it is necessary to formulate the policy of ecotourism which will act as a guiding principle in bringing about a unique amalgamation of tourism and conservation and at the same time share the benefits of this endeavor at the grassroots.

2. Policy Objectives

The main objectives of Ecotourism Policy in Sikkim are as follows.

- Generate incentives to local communities for nature conservation through alternative income sources and livelihood, and empower local communities to manage ecotourism.
- To conserve the existing biodiversity, ecosystems and religious monuments of the state of Sikkim as well as Sikkim people's culture and tradition.
- To delight and satisfy visitors as eco-tourists to the state to enjoy excellent nature as well as culture the Sikkim can offer.
- To encourage children to enjoy excellent nature- base activities.
- To encourage people in Sikkim to understand nature conservation and their own culture.
- To promote ecotourism in a sustainable manner.

3. Policy Vision

The vision of the policy is to establish Sikkim as an ultimate and unique ecotourism destination offering joys and satisfaction to visitors and to contribute to local communities' prosperity.

4. Key Principles of Sikkim Ecotourism

The following key principles shall be directed, for all forms of ecotourism for the development, planning, management, and promotion in the state of Sikkim.

- Ecotourism promotion and developments would conserve nature including biodiversity and ecosystems as well as local people's culture and tradition of Sikkim.
- Adherence to international ecotourism principles, guidelines and standards for the development of ecotourism in the state of Sikkim.
- Generating income sources to local communities preferably to economically disadvantaged through ecotourism activities.
- Promoting the use of sustainable natural, cultural and local resources to develop and promote ecotourism in the state with the emphasis on the use of renewable energy.
- Facilitating partnership for planning, implementation, coordination and monitoring ecotourism activities with key stakeholders such as NGOs, government, local communities, tour agents and tour operators.
- Enhancing cooperation among the local entrepreneurs such as,—home stay operators, tour operators, travel agents, — government departments and other key players in the development of ecotourism infrastructures and promotion of ecotourism products.

5. Definition of Sikkim Ecotourism

Definitions of the key terms related to ecotourism are as follows.

- Ecotourism: A form of tourism that involves travelling to relatively undisturbed natural areas with the specific objectives of learning, admiring and enjoying nature and its wild plants and animals as well as local people's cultural aspects including religious monuments, while conserving the natural and social environment, and improving the welfare of the local people (Fiji Ecotourism Policy, TIES & World Tourism Organisation).
- Ecotourism Activities: Activities, which are coordinated by a professional nature interpreter, are designed to entertain clients. Examples of the activities are, trekking, bird watching, hiking, rafting, participating in cultural events, photography, mountaineering and angling.
- Sustainable Ecotourism Development: Development of ecotourism in the State of Sikkim, which meets the needs and aspirations of the current generation without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations.

- Ecotourism Assets: Natural and cultural features that attract visitors, such as landscapes, endemic or rare flora and fauna, local agricultural products, local culture and tradition including cultural festivals, and historical monuments and heritage sites.
- Ecotourism Products: A combination of activities and services which are sold and managed through professional eco-tour operators including local communities or individuals.
- Ecotourism Services: Services including transportation, local cuisine, camping, lodging, guiding and interpretation. These services should cause minimal damage to the natural and cultural environment and promote a better understanding of the natural and cultural aspects of an area.
- Eco-tour Operators: Tour operators specializing to cater ecotourism.

6. Sikkim Ecotourism Council

The Sikkim Ecotourism Council would be an autonomous council as outlined in the organizational diagram. The Sikkim Ecotourism Council would have an executing arm which is the Department of Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management (DFEWM). The council also has a local village level cooperation system which is Eco-development Committee (EDC), Joint Forest Management Committee (JFMC), Pokhri Sanrakshan Samiti (PSS) or Eco-Tourism Committee depending upon the area, and they shall work in coordination with the Panchayat (village chief).

6-1 Organizational Strategy

To organize and ensure an effective management and implementation of ecotourism objectives and principles in the state of Sikkim, the following organizational strategies are essential:-

- Creation of an autonomous Sikkim Ecotourism Council which is represented by civil society, tourism professionals and public sector representatives.
- As per the directives of the Ecotourism Council, the Ecotourism Directorate (ED) of DFEWM will execute the programmes and activities and shall monitor the development and progress of ecotourism in the state. Also ED shall work in coordination with the village level bodies to implement the activities and monitor the negative impacts of ecotourism at the local village level.
- The council will have assistance from the key government organizations described as an advisory group as well as an international advisory group illustrated in the organizational diagram.
- ED will work in close collaboration with key government departments such as, Tourism, Rural Management and Development Department, Home Department, related scientific organizations and civil society bodies including local and national level NGOs.

- A strong coordination will exist with the Tourism Department and Sikkim Tourism Development Corporation (STDC) for the promotion and publicity of ecotourism products and destinations.
- Coordination with the Rural Management and Development Department for infrastructure development such as, water, sanitation, village trails and footpaths.

Members of Sikkim Ecotourism Council are as follows.

- *Chief Patron: Chief Minister*
- *Two Patrons: Minister of Forest and Minister of Tourism*
- *Chief Secretary – Chairman*
- *PCCF-cum-Secretary ,Forest Department (DFEWM)-Member Secretary*
- *Secretary, Tourism Department -Member*
- *Secretary, Rural Management & Development Department- Member*
- *Director, Ecotourism Directorate-Member*
- *Two Local Level NGOs-Members*
- *National Level NGO- Member*
- *President TAAS: Travel Agent Association of Sikkim- Member*
- *President SAATO: Sikkim Association of Adventure Tour Operators- Member*

6-2 Activities of Sikkim Ecotourism Council

The Sikkim Ecotourism Council shall:-

- Meet once every 6 months.
- Establish guidelines for ecotourism, and revise them in consultation with the key stakeholders including NGOs, local communities, tour operators, travel agents and relevant government authorities.
- Monitor the activities of ecotourism to ensure minimum negative impacts on the biodiversity and ecosystems of Sikkim. Emphasis should be on the carrying capacity of the Protected Areas (PAs) in Sikkim including Khangchendzonga National Park (KNP).
- Evaluate the negative impacts brought by ecotourism activities and existing rules and regulations, and review and revise the rules in consultation with the stakeholders which have direct or indirect influence to the ecotourism activities as and when necessary.
- Review and finalise a draft ecotourism action plan and a long-term development plan which are prepared by ED.
- Monitor the trainings and capacity building carried out by ED.
- Issue the Sikkim-Ecotourism label to private entities which adhere to the Sikkim Ecotourism Guidelines.

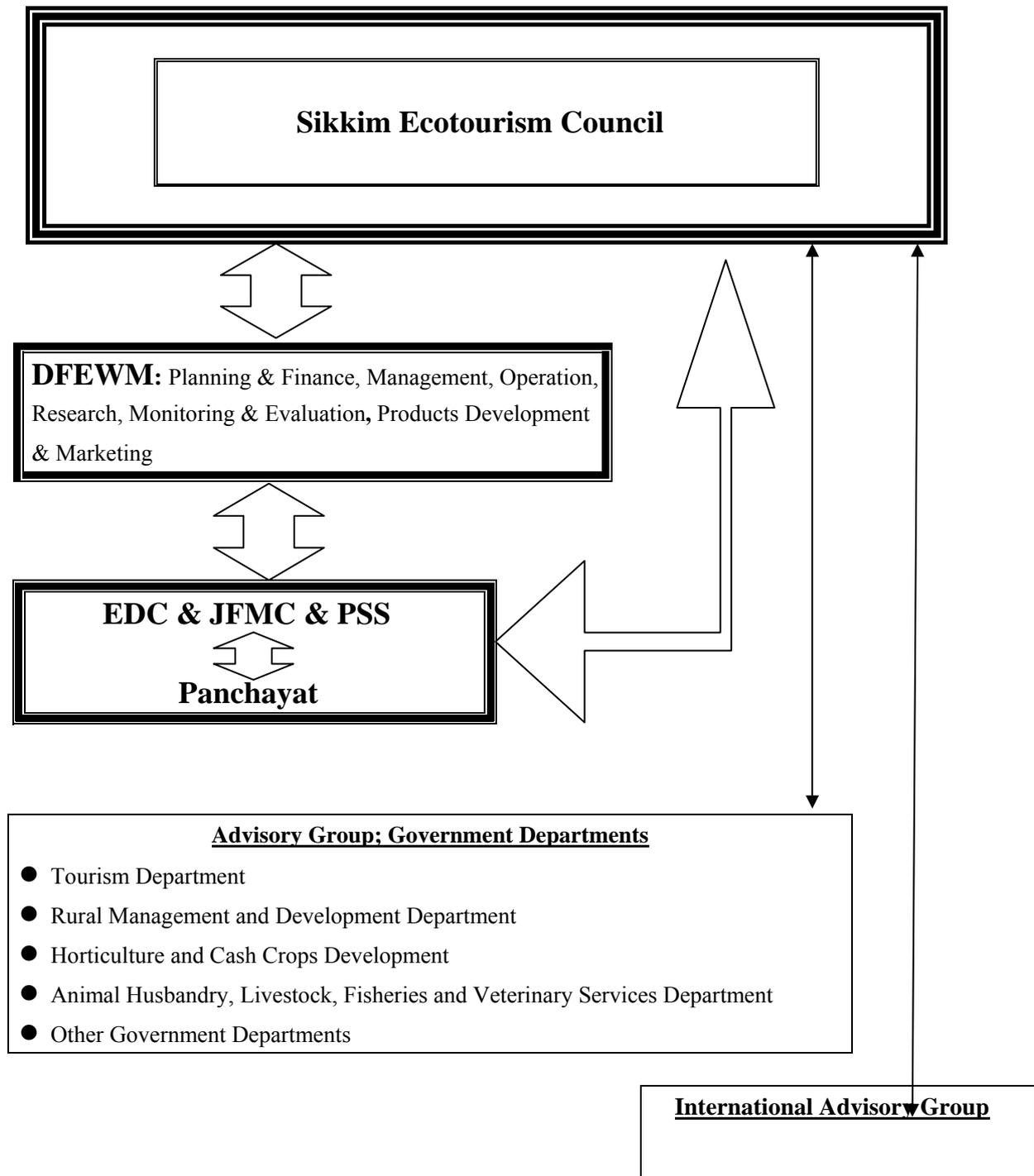
- Influence the activities of private entities which violate the main principles of Sikkim Ecotourism, through relevant organizations.
- Request tour operators, guides and home stay owners to provide information on Sikkim's ecotourism products and ecotourism services, since this information is needed for planning and monitoring of ecotourism activities.
- Establish Sikkim ecotourism safety standards and emergency procedures and facilitate the implementation of emergency procedures with relevant organizations in case of accidents.

6-3 Roles of Ecotourism Directorate (ED), Department of Forest, Environment and Wildlife Management (DFEWM)

The role of ED is described below.

- **Planning & Development:**
 - Ensuring the implementation and execution of the ecotourism guidelines,
 - Set standards and certify ecotourism enterprises that are operated by private entrepreneurs.
 - Coordination with the Home Department, and other related key government organizations in border sensitive ecotourism sites to ensure the smooth operation of ecotourism activities,
 - Implement the strategies of Sikkim Ecotourism.
 - Organize seminars, workshops and international conferences among concerned government officials, NGOs, and other stakeholders.
 - Organize trainings-cum-awareness for hotel-home stay owners, ecotourism interpreters, tour operators, guides, taxi drivers and local communities.
- **Financing:**
 - Monitor the revenue generation and allocation of funds for the development of ecotourism.
 - Develop a plough back mechanism for funds generated for sustainability of ecotourism related activities.
- **Operation & Management:**
 - Set standards for the carrying capacity in the Protected Areas and other Reserved Areas to prevent damage to the biodiversity and ecosystems,
 - Publication of newsletters, bulletins, pamphlets, status reports and other information and dissemination of important government notifications and rules,
 - Ensure visitors, tour operators, tour agencies and guides to follow the prescribed guidelines
- **Monitoring & Evaluation, Research:**
 - Monitor the environmental impacts which are caused by tourism activities,
 - Enlisting of ecotourism operators in the state and monitor their activities,
 - Recognize outstanding ecotourism enterprises and operators by rewards,
 - Facilitate scientific assessment of relatively unexplored ecotourism destinations for their potential and promotion,

- Develop participatory ecotourism monitoring plans in collaboration with NGO, CBO's, Panchayat, EDC'S, PSS and JFMC's,
- Monitor the training and capacity building programmes that are conducted by various other agencies and provide support and cooperation,
- Research and documentation on ecotourism assets and features.



7. Strategies of Sikkim Ecotourism

Strategies of Sikkim Ecotourism are as follows.

7-1 Strategies for Training and Capacity Building

Strategies for training and capacity building are;

- Training and capacity building should be given by professionals to local communities including home stay owners, youth, and women's group who wish to engage on ecotourism activities. The topic of the training and capacity building are specific themes, such as, environmental education, home stay management, waste management, computing, microfinance, cooking local cuisine and guides for trekking, bird watching, fauna and flora photography, angling, rafting and religious monuments;
- Provide technical capacity building for tourism operators, frontline staff of DFEWM as well as various stakeholders including JFMC, EDC and PSS;
- Plan certificate courses for nature interpreters and eco-guides for trekking, bird watching, fauna and flora photography and other activities;
- Provide training and capacity building to DFEWM staff within the country as well as abroad.

7-2 Strategies for Awareness and Education on Ecotourism, Environmental Conservation and Waste Management

Strategies for awareness and education on ecotourism, environmental conservation and waste management are;

- Plan awareness programmes on ecotourism policy contents, its guidelines and function of ecotourism council including the JICA's roles for line departments and local communities;
- Plan awareness and educational programmes for local communities and school children on environment conservation and waste management.

7-3 Strategies for Zoning and Modeling for the Ecotourism Sites and other general Tourism Sites

Strategies for zoning and modeling for the ecotourism sites and other tourism sites are;

- Establish zonings for ecotourism development sites outside PAs, which will be called ecotourism zone hereafter, and general tourism development zone, and differentiate the two zones in Sikkim;
- Make some variation of the ecotourism zone which has specific objectives such as, ecotourism zones for trekking, ecotourism zones for bird watching, ecotourism zones for flower photography;
- Regulate the design and appearance of new ecotourism infrastructures such as, accommodations, view points, footpaths, and restaurants that blend with the landscape;

- Promote village tourism;
- Select villages from the ecotourism zone and establish model from each district and focus on efforts on allocating finance, manpower for capacity building and facilities and equipments, and disseminate the successful cases to the other ecotourism zone.

7-4 Strategies for Stakeholder Partnership

Strategies for stakeholder partnership are;

- Develop partnership with NGOs, local people who run and operate homestay, guides, produce local agro-products and handicrafts, tour operators / tour agents to develop ecotourism business in a fair trade manner;
- Develop partnerships with Community-based Organizations (CBO's) /EDC's, JFMC's and PSS and local communities to manage ecotourism sites;
- Establish and enhance networks with key stakeholders including research institutions, universities, private sector associations, public agencies and national and international NGO's;
- Hold seminars and events to discuss and deliberate on ecotourism achievements with participation of key stakeholders;
- Dissemination of information related to ecotourism to key stakeholders in all the four districts;
- Hold annual meetings of ecotourism stakeholders, policy makers, NGOs, private sector on a rational basis in each district.

7-5 Strategies for Promotion / Publicity and Marketing

Strategies for promotion / publicity and marketing are;

- Develop an image for ecotourism in the state and subsequently preparation of the state ecotourism marketing strategies and marketing plans for domestic and international markets;
- Participate in national and international tourism trade marts;
- Plan the promotion through media such as, tie-ups with travel TV programs, magazines, travel books, internet portals etc;
- Plan ground promotions at various shopping malls or important events in domestic markets to enhance domestic tourism;
- Plan a transparent pricing system for the visitors who use ecotourism services such as, accommodation, guide services and transportation;
- Develop appropriate packaging and branding of ecotourism destinations;
- Develop websites, and plan web promotions and electronic marketing in national and international markets.

7-6 Strategies for Microfinance

Strategies for microfinance are;

- Plan a mechanism of microfinance system through banks at a reasonable interest rates targeting the local people who wish to engage in ecotourism activities;
- Inform the microfinance system to the people in Sikkim including the local villagers.

7-7 Strategies for Products Development

Strategies for products development are;

- Enhance and improve current products such as, increase the number of current trekking routes and interconnecting existing routes;
- Improve current home stay facilities such as toilets, shower, bedroom and dining rooms which meet the need of visitors especially from foreign countries;
- Promote local communities to produce agricultural products, such as, organic vegetables, honey, dairy products and rice, to offer as local cuisines;
- Develop new ecotourism products such as, bird watching trails, fauna and flora photo hunting trails, medicinal tourism, one day or more hikes to wetlands of Sikkim as well as rivers, highlighting the various high and low altitude lakes;
- Open some potential ecotourism destinations;
- Promote festivals which have direct relation to nature and biodiversity conservation such as, orchid flower festival, bird watching festival, and trekking festival;
- Nature Interpretation Centers will also function as Ecotourism Promotion Centers;
- Promote environmental friendly lodges, managed by either a local individual or a local community in or near wilderness areas;
- Repair and maintenance of rest houses owned by DFEWM;
- Ensure fair and equal treatment for the strict ecological safety and protection rules to be followed by all the stakeholders.

7-8 Strategies for Benefiting the Poor

Strategies for benefiting the poor are;

- Facilitate self employment opportunities for the poor in ecotourism enterprises;
- Encourage supply of goods and services to tourism enterprises by the poor;
- Facilitate direct sales of goods and services to visitors by the poor (informal economy);
- Encourage establishment and running of tourism enterprises by the poor - e.g. micro, small and medium sized enterprises, or community based enterprises (formal economy);
- Set up systems of voluntary support by tourism enterprises and tourists to the poor.

7-9 Strategies for Infrastructure Development

Strategies for infrastructure development are;

- Prohibit concrete infrastructures and building structures inside PAs;
- Construct / Improve appropriate infrastructures around the PAs such as, signage, footpaths, information centre including informative maps showing the trekking routes, toilets and view points at the entrance of each of PAs.

7-10 Strategies for Safety

Strategies for safety are;

- Ensure to have insurance set by all the tour operators, guides, tour agents whose clients may have accidents and injuries during their trip, and guides, and to carry first aid kit when they are in the field with their clients;
- Plan training and issuing certificates system for safety. The training will focus on methods of medication to save clients and quick rescue operation to all the tour operators, guides, tour agents whose clients may have accidents and injuries caused by the engagement of tourism activities and;
- Plan a system of notifying landslides high risk areas to the tour operators, tour agents, guides and drivers of vehicles through the related associations on a regular basis by coordination with other key state government departments.