
UNIT 16 MANAGING TOURISM- SUSTAINABILITY AND CARRYING CAPACITY APPROACHES

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16.0 OBJECTIVES

After studying this unit, you should be able to:

- understand the concept of sustainability;
- describe what is responsible tourism;
- explain environmental auditing;
- distinguish various types of carrying capacity; and
- explain the EIA.

16.1 INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS TOURISM and SUSTAINABILITY?

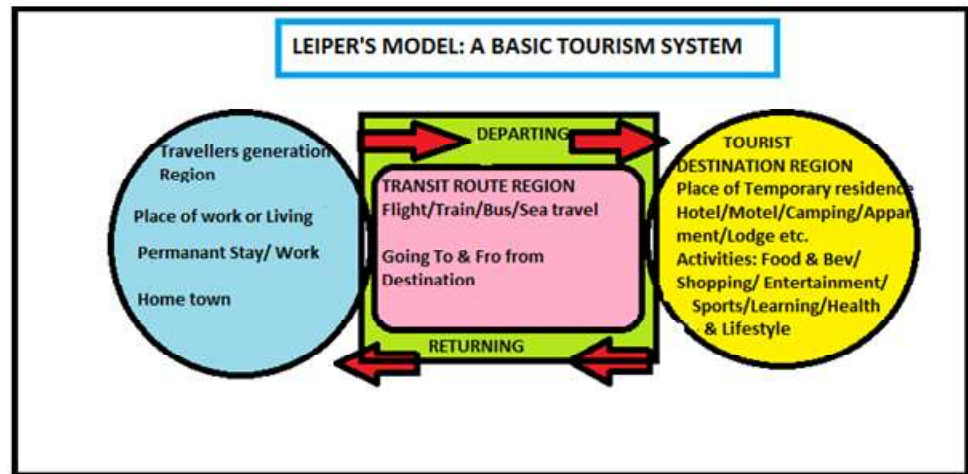
By now you would have already understood the meaning of tourism and various stakeholders involved in tourism development and consumption. Just to recap what we learnt in earlier units, tourism is a phenomenon or an activity which involves movement of people from one place to another for various reasons. Mathieson and Wall in 1982 defined tourism as “The temporary movement of people to destinations outside their usual places of work and facilities created to cater to their needs.”

Activities of tourism have always been prevalent since a very long time but after World War II there was a commercial shape given to tourism which was more prominent then and kept increasing. All that growth in tourism happened with the growth in industrialisation, free time, and disposable income. During this time there was a huge development and the tourism activities around the world kept increasing. As tourism brings in foreign income it is much liked by both developing and developed Nations. Since tourism brings income to the destination, it is important to know the likes and dislikes of the tourists. In doing so, tourism became a commodity (any product which is created after understanding needs of customers usually at mass level for sale to customers to earn profits) and in the wake of developing tourism and considering it as another commodity like any other business, customer choices and preferences were given the highest preference. These preferences and choices did not care much about sustainability. Hence the concept of sustainability was not looked at in the wake of earning profits.

Once the choices of tourists were known, destinations started planning activities suitable to tourists demands and requirements as is the case of any commodity. Hence there were many man-made changes such as development of roads, hotels, recreational activities, shopping, entertainment activities and so on to woo the tourists' interests forgetting the interest of sustainability. In pursuing so, many forms and types of tourism emerged to serve the interest of the tourist. Every form and type of tourism had its impact on the local economy, ecology, and Society. To simplify, when tourism activity happens, tourists interact not just with the hotel staff at destination but also visits the local society and interacts with local culture, values, infrastructures, rules and regulations, language, flora, and fauna. During the tourism activity at destination, tourists may not follow the local values, rules and may not respect local culture which causes disrespect/harm to local society, ecology, and values of destination. For many years, many impacts of tourism on destination were not considered or even measured except for economic impacts and jobs creation. As economy was always considered the first-choice, impact on society, culture and ecology was either not seen or unnoticed which led to unplanned developments to attract tourist, uncontrolled usage of natural resources and many activities which may not be suitable to ecology but attractive to tourists. Hence there were many impacts rather harmful impacts on local society and ecology and environment. In this unit we shall try to understand how tourism is created, managed and various factors involved in management of tourism at destination and what are various approaches about sustainability, what could be done and associated terms involved in destination management.

16.2 WHAT IS TOURISM SYSTEM AND HOW DOES SUSTAINABILITY COME IN PICTURE?

To understand further, we must first understand what is managing tourism and in doing so we also need to understand how tourism is created and how tourism is consumed. Leiper's model has been used to comprehend the tourism environment and various stakeholders involved in the creation of the tourism ecosystem and various regions involved (Tourist home and Destination region along with the transit route).



Let us first understand the traveller generating region and the tourist destination region. At the Traveller generating region there are various activities that happen at the home region or tourism production region due to which tourist decides to undertake tourist activity. There are motivators or triggers that bring urge to travel to a particular destination such as availability of attraction, spare time, spare money and other factors like marketing, advertisement, promotion of products and services in the home region increases tourist interest in undertaking tourism activity. Once a traveller makes his/her mind, there are many actions that take place in the Origin region which may be considered as touchpoints. There are various touch points such as travel agency, online information from advertisements, websites, and Online Travel Agencies' for bookings. This leads a traveller to take a decision to undertake a tourism activity.

Next region to understand is the stage when tourist undertakes the real travel to reach the destination, at this stage traveller uses various modes of transport to reach destination. During this stage, tourists interacts with transport authorities and professionals for few hours to few days depending upon mode of transport (Air/ Water/ Land (Rail/Road)) used and there are more touchpoints en-route to and from destination (such as going to and travelling through airport, train station or sea port along with experience while traveling through various travel modes to destination). If travellers are having long distance journey, they may engage in activities such as food and beverages, transiting at airport or railway station (which includes short stay at hotel at airport or railway station). All the experiences incurred during the transit route while going to the destination and back home are covered in this stage.

Next region to explore is the Tourist destination region. Once tourists are at their destination, there are many activities that take place such as hotel/accommodation for stay, restaurants and takeaways for food and drinks, local attractions, sightseeing and various other activities at destination. All these activities take place with the involvement of tourism stakeholders at destination. To make sure that all the activities are organized in a systematic and pleasant manner, lots of actions at destination are executed which impact local society, economy, culture, flora and fauna at destination. These actions could be hotels built on a beach or in a mountain at the cost of the living space of the locals. Locals may have to move out to make room for a hotel building. In the similar way, a beach resort may have used lots of space of various species of plants and animals who lived there for generations.

Hence the next stage is when a tourist goes back to his/her hometown through the same or different travel mode and shares his/her experiences to family/friends through various modes such as word of mouth or e-word (electronic word of mouth which includes using various social media platforms). You just saw how much the activity is involved in one trip or conducting tourism. For each stage of the tourism activity, there are various complexities and procedures involved. The role of tourism management is quite complex and involves overall responsibility to make sure there is good experience for tourist, travel and tourism operators at both destination and hometown. In the complete circle, however, there is huge potential of tourism to impact environment adversely if the process of tourism is not properly planned and executed.

16.3 UNDERSTANDING VISITORS IN TOURISM MANAGEMENT

As you saw above that how tourism is executed from generating an idea to physically undertaking tourist activity with post tourism reviews. All these coordinated activities need a systematic channel of guidelines and professionals planning, executing and managing these activities. Such synchronized actions to run tourism business including managing finances to suit the pocket of tourist and making sure tourism owners are getting profit and finances are dealt with properly are part of tourism management. It also includes planning of various tourism destinations, tourism product development, their marketing, operations, service delivery, managing human resource to cater to tourists, providing assistance to tourists and facilitating their overall trip/journey, meet customer demands, managing customer complaints and ensuring customer satisfaction for smooth growth of business. All these activities are quite complex individually and hence team of professionals with required expertise and knowledge undertake such operations. In doing so, sustainability must be considered at every step to make sure destinations are available for future generations.

Tourism management is a complex process which involves management of variety of activities such as studying tourism activity at origin and destination (this involves studying of requirements of people at home or generating regions, their likes, habits, paying capacity, their choices for travel etc.), planning of the tour packages (based on the data collection and interviews such decisions are made), making various travel arrangements, and delivering accommodation and attraction activities while en-route and at destination. All the mentioned factors must consider sustainability. It also involves various marketing efforts to attract tourists to travel to a destination (this could include road shows, billboards, hoardings, flyers, newspaper advertisements etc.). It is a complex sector involving a wide range of economic operations (money is involved at every stage such as researching tourist choices and needs through surveys to building hotels and other attractions at destination and good investment in developing big transport infrastructure) which are the result of inputs from various sectors (also called stakeholders). It is dependent on various attractions be it natural (mountains, sea beaches, waterfalls etc.), artificial or man-made (fountains, entertainment houses like Disney park, zoos, artificial lakes etc.). Its operations also depend upon various services provided by several suppliers (such as tour operators, travel agents, guides etc.). Hence managing tourism activity is managing various sectors of economic activities in various industries to act in a coordination thus providing tourist best experience.

Additionally, we can breakdown tourism management to understand better into smaller sectors such as various tourism activities which represent complex systems. In tourism management, we need specialised skills and people handling such management need, various specialised skills to manage tourism businesses which include skills to manage visitor attractions, managing historical and geographical attraction of tourism destination, accommodation for tourists, tourism distribution channels (such as travel agencies and tour operators), dealing with the government policies and procedures impacting tourism, tourism businesses and entrepreneurs, human resources in tourism, finance for tourism and much more.

16.3.1 Who Manages Visitors in Tourism? How is Sustainability Involved?

Tourism is mainly managed at two levels namely, the micro (at individual business level) and macro levels (at policy development level and government or Destination management body level) which means it is managed by a wide range of organisations and stakeholders. Now we also need to know who are stakeholders and specifically who are tourism stakeholders?

As per corporate finance institute “in business, a stakeholder is any individual, group, or party that has an interest in an organisation and the outcomes of its actions. Common examples of stakeholders include employees, customers, shareholders, suppliers, communities, and governments”.

So, whom do you think would fall in this category of stakeholders for Tourism and Hospitality? Let us try and find out.

In tourism, various stakeholders include but are not limited to the list below.

- a) Tourists
- b) Host Communities, (local, regional, or national community)
- c) Host government,
- d) Government at Tourist place of Origin
- e) Businesses at Destinations
- f) Government Organisations nationally and internationally
- g) Non-Government Organisations
- h) Education and Community Organisations
- i) Tourism and Hospitality industry

These above-mentioned stakeholders have different goals which need to be considered in the management of tourism. This means each stakeholder has its requirements and destination managers must acknowledge these requirements. Hence these stakeholders must know about sustainability and how their actions will impact the destination.

Following are the components of Tourism and Hospitality that are utilised to complete a tourism activity.

A) Travel Trade Organisations and Transportation:

Tourism Organisations, Tour operators, Travel Agents, Airlines, Airports, Railways, Roadways, Seaports and Cruise ships

B) Lodging and Stay:

Hotels, Hostels, Resorts, B&B, Apartments, Caravan parks, Camping Grounds

C) Attractions:

Natural- Mountains, sea beaches etc., Man-Made- Castles, Palaces etc., Purpose built- Theme parks, Zoos etc.

D) Food and Beverage:

Restaurants, Bars, Café, Quick service outlets, Takeaways, Catering companies, catering employment and suppliers

E) Functions and Business:

Marriages, Banquets, Clubs, Casinos, Meetings, Incentive Travel, Conferences, Exhibitions

16.4 CONCEPT OF SUSTAINABILITY

Let us now understand what sustainability means? It is to ask one common question to yourself, “can I do this forever?” For example, can I get oil forever? Or can I extract coal forever from earth’s womb by the current practice of extraction? If your answer to these questions is no, this means it is not sustainable practice.

So how do we become sustainable? In finding an answer to this question, a good approach is to keep in mind that sustainability is the capacity to sustain forever. Or in other words sustainability is the ability to maintain resources for a very long period of time. The definition of sustainability as per the Earth Summit (1992) is “the ongoing capacity of earth to maintain all life”. The word sustain comes from the Latin word “sustinere” which means to hold up. In simple words sustainability is to have resources for the current generation while making sure to retain or regenerate for future generations. There are three key components or pillars of sustainability namely:

- i) Society
- ii) Economy
- iii) Environment

Now we also need to understand what sustainable development is. “It is the development that meets the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

The term sustainability can be used at various contexts and is quite extended and can be applied to various types of sustainable developments. So, understanding from above definitions and examples, to be sustainable, we must maintain the balance of resources for present at the same time keeping for future generations. Society is one of the three components that play important role by either supporting the sustainability or ignoring it. Another component is economy, which plays important role in sustainable development as everyone needs money and businesses care more about profits. This leads to less sustainable development activities. Lastly but most importantly, the environment, where tourism activities take place and environment is the most important reason to attract tourists to a

particular destination. Tourism environment includes, all the natural and man-made attractions, host population, facilities that make it a tourist destination. For Example: A beach resort comprises of beach, locals, beach activities such as surfing, boating etc. locals to run those activities and facilities to reach there, stay there and to eat out. Hence, the destination environment includes everything that makes it a tourist destination.

16.4.1 Concept of Tourism Sustainability

Having known about sustainability gives us a clear understanding of how to use resources but what about tourism and hospitality? Do we use any resources in tourism? Oh Yes! we do use many resources in undertaking tourism activities. If we were to understand sustainability in tourism, we must first look at various tourism resources we use and to find out if they cover three basic key components of sustainability which are, Society, Economy and Environment? In tourism we widely use all the three key components.

So far in tourism we have not been implementing the concept of sustainability for long time rather these concepts were loosely implemented in developing or underdeveloped countries where economy was the prime motive. Being humans, we have capacity and expertise to build structures for many tourism destinations and there are many examples where the habitats of plants and animals have been destroyed through tourism activities. In the similar way, when too many tourists visit one destination, locals feel overcrowding and the price of the land, building and rent increases. In this way, locals are deprived of their basic needs and rights of being locals and may have to move out of their hometown. This excludes locals or hosts from destination which does not fulfil the criteria of sustainability.

It is important for us to understand in more detail about how best we could be sustainable in tourism. Sustainable tourism is the one that stresses on sustaining the tourism industry in all the ways. The various aspects where we need to look at tourism sustainability are efficient usage of natural and man-made resources at tourist destinations, making sure that local culture is not impacted by tourist visiting destinations and also to make sure that destination has enough economic gains to continue tourism business. To break it down, we must understand that when a tourism destination is developed to cater to the needs of tourists, many resources are used and sustainability should be considered in every action from the stage of building a tourism destination to marketing the destination to operations on a day today basis.

For example, if a beach resort is being prepared,

- 1) There must be involvement of locals to prepare the resort,
- 2) There must be use of local products and materials
- 3) There must be awareness of local plants and animals in that area
- 4) These displaced plants and animals might need shifting and preparing alternative habitats or plantation
- 5) There must be enough avenues for locals to enjoy their local culture and values
- 6) Locals must have opportunity of sustaining their businesses through tourism
- 7) Social issues like traffic jams, negative impacts of tourism should be taken care of

- 8) Local government involvement is imperative in executing laws and policies benefiting locals

And the list goes further. In doing so, we covered three criteria namely Social, Economic and Environmental.

Now it does not just stop here, we need to use tourism for overall development of the destination along with fulfilling requirements of tourists without harming the host destination so that we can save the environment, create employment, and fulfil all stakeholders' requirements along with keeping it safe for future generations to use.

For a destination to be sustainable, we must recognise that it must satisfy all its stakeholders in the long term. To achieve the sustainability goals, the destination management must prepare a strategic planning approach which executes marketing of destination focused on tourists, but planning is focused on the needs of local people. We should also understand that the tourist experiences every aspect at destination and every time tourist faces good or bad experience with locals it creates an impression. These series of small impressions with many stakeholders strongly influence the success or failure of the visit. Hence planning of tourism destinations keeping in view of sustainability plays an important role on success of visitor management.

Let us get a deeper understanding of various stakeholders and their roles and impacts on sustainability.

- **Host Community:** They are the most important stakeholder as they live and work at the destination and provide local resources to visitors. Being locals, they have varied knowledge, realistic approach and belonging towards their place. It is therefore important to involve the local community in the decision-making process. This also ensures that tourism does not bring unacceptable impacts upon the local people and their homes on a short- or long-term basis.
- **Tourists:** They undertake tourism to seek satisfying experiences and feel the worth of money spent undertaking tourism activity at the destination through various tourism products. They seek a high quality of service and a well-managed and organised destination.
- **Tourism Industry** which is a bigger umbrella and covers many hospitality and tourism outlets which cater to the needs of tourists. It is responsible for the development of tourism and the delivery of the tourism product. It acts as a body and various tourism organisations are available at local levels to international level such as local tourism councils and World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO).
- **Individual businesses** which make the industry run and provide employment to many. They seek an adequate return on the investment. These could be from local to international level organisations such as international hotels chains, Airlines, Entertainment businesses like Disney international. Now the multinational organisations are usually well-resourced with good spending/investment, experience of operations, expertise, and power at both local and international levels. Often such business houses may have limited interest and commitment to destinations, hence impacting sustainability.

Local businesses are usually traditionally small, family-based ventures which may be lacking capital, expertise, qualified workers. So, they may also not have much of the say in the decision making for local tourism planning.

- **Government:** It may be at local council level or at national level which are big players in the development of tourism. These are the public sectors which see tourism as a means to increase incomes, stimulate regional development and generate employment. Often plays various roles such as policy formation, rules, infrastructure development and governance.

Sustainable tourism development is an ongoing process which requires maintaining a balance between the needs of all the stakeholders and the provision of services keeping social, economic, and environmental factors. In this process of maintaining balance, long term planning is required to make sure that tourists' demands are met without impacting the host destination. This could be achieved by inclusion of technology, education and awareness through campaigns and making rules for safeguarding host population and investing businesses. Hence being a sustainable tourist destination needs coordinated and continuous efforts of all the stakeholders with business growth and guest satisfaction.

16.4.2 Essential Features of Sustainable Tourism Destination

By now you have clearly understood the importance of sustainability and its long-term vision of ensuring that consumption of resources for catering to current tourists does not exceed the current and future capacity of host destination. Hence sustainability of destination is maintained. To do so, there are few key factors that need to be given important consideration. These are;

- i) Carrying capacity
- ii) Destination management
- iii) Strategic planning

In developing tourism, there has been many efforts to improve the infrastructural development which has caused tremendous damage to various aspects of sustainability. The approach used was a short-term vision and it was not long-term planning hence there was short term economic growth at the cost of overuse of diminishing resources for current or future generations. Let us get further details on three concepts of Sustainability.

Check Your Progress A

- 1) Briefly explain what sustainability is?

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2) What must you do to ensure a tourism destination is sustainable?

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16.5 CONCEPT OF CARRYING CAPACITY

As the name suggests, carrying capacity is the maximum capacity to hold something. This could be applied to any physical container like a jug carrying 1 liter of water. It is easier to understand the carrying capacity of a car which is a 5-seater or 7-seater car. Similarly, we need to define a carrying capacity for a tourism destination keeping in mind the sustainability concept. It is the number of people that can be at a destination to enjoy its environment without any decline of quality experience of tourists and without unacceptable change to the host environment. Let us use the same example of 5-seater car which has a capacity to fit 5 people, but if there are 6 or 7 people in the car, there will be shortage of space, it will become uncomfortable for enjoying the journey, it's a safety risk as only 5 seat belts are there and there will be extra load on engine too. So, it is important to follow the carrying capacity regardless of being in the car or any tourism destination. Hence carrying capacity could be summarised as, "capacity of destination to accommodate tourism activity without harmful impact on itself".

Mathieson and Wall (1982) define carrying capacity as: 'The maximum number of people who can use a site without an unacceptable alteration in the physical environment and without an unacceptable decline in the quality of experience gained by visitors.'

The issue here could be that it is easier to define the carrying capacity of a car or jug and we know as we see the car or jug where it is clearly mentioned and obvious. But in the case of tourism, it is not obvious for the sake of tourism development and economic growth, carrying capacity concept is not adhered to much extent in the recent past. Hence, it was left on the destination managers and tour operators/ travel agents to push tourism to a destination without caring much on destination sustainability which included using its resources and culture. But the situation has changed much and especially with the Covid-19 there is a new normal and hence we look forward to adhering to sustainability concept by all stakeholders.

There are a few types of carrying capacity to have better understanding. This shall be discussed in the next topic.

16.5.1 Various Approaches to Carrying Capacity

As mentioned in detail previously about the concept of Carrying Capacity, let us investigate further on its types and its meaning and impacts to tourism.

a) Physical carrying capacity

To explain this concept, we shall take earlier example of 5-seater car. As the name states it has a physical capacity to accommodate 5 persons. Now let

us implement same to a tourist destination. As we do not have any specific dimensions, to apply physical carrying capacity it equates to the amount of suitable physical land available for infrastructural development of facilities such as accommodation, entertainment areas, car parking facilities, food and beverage outlets etc. So, to make sure physical carrying capacity is maintained destination developers and managers must make sure there is not too much of development physically to accommodate too many tourists at one point of time.

b) Psychological Carrying Capacity

To explain this concept too, we shall take an earlier example of a 5-seater car. If we have 6 or 7 people sitting in a 5-seater car, we feel congested and do not enjoy the journey of the car especially if you are paying fare for travelling in the car. Similarly, the psychological capacity of a tourism destination is exceeded when a visitor's experience is significantly impaired. To a certain extent, we may be OK with some crowded and busy places, but overcrowding is never enjoyed. Hence, Psychological capacity is quite different for every individual and may differ from person to person. Destination management and planners can do some landscaping of a destination in such a way that people cannot see others much and can reduce the impact of overcrowding.

c) Biological Carrying Capacity

The biological capacity of a destination covers plants and animals living at that destination. You may also call native plants and animal species. When there is environmental damage or disturbance to the habitat of native plants and/or animals which is unacceptable, it falls under the category of biological carrying capacity. When there are too many roads, accommodation, food and beverage facilities etc. built in national parks or in a natural habitat which brings tourists; such activities hinders the free movement and growth of flora and fauna and hence disturbs biological carrying capacity. To quote an example of helicopter service at Mata Vaishnodevi shrine, there is enormous noise pollution which scares local animals of the mountains of Trikuta mountain.

d) Social Carrying Capacity

Local population plays an important role from development to execution of tourism in any tourism destination. When tourism activity begins, locals are very keen on developing business and results to the employment opportunities. But when negative factors come in picture such as, high pricing, congestion, theft and so on, locals tend to feel negative for tourism and do not support it and in some cases even oppose it. Social carrying capacity involves participation of the local community in tourism. It is community-based tourism planning and sustainability. This means that managers and developers of a tourism destination must keep in mind the level of tourism development to the extent that it does not create a negative impact for the host population. Hence host communities, residents and businesses must accept a level of tourism that does not overpower locals.

- 1) Briefly explain the term Carrying capacity.

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- 2) Explain any three approaches to carrying capacity.

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16.6 UNDERSTANDING DESTINATION AND VISITOR MANAGEMENT

By now it is understood and obvious that it takes lots of complex tasks to complete any tourism activity. Hence destination management is very important and requires lots of planning and execution with a team of professionals to understand visitor's behaviour and various actions to manage these. It also requires lots of coordination and interrelationship among various elements of tourism. The coordinated management of all the elements that make up a destination includes tourist behaviours and expectations which require its managers to have good knowledge of local culture, economics, policies, and human resource management skills.

Let us try to understand step-by-step as to how Destination management takes place to manage visitors coming to a destination and their impacts on local people, culture, environment, and economy.

Visitor management is a part of destination management which takes necessary actions to deliver a high-quality experience to the visitor and to manage the consequences of visits at the destination.

As discussed above, managers at destination deal with everything that is related to the hospitality, travel and tourism industries. They offer solutions and management in the travel, accommodations, and food industry. They also do liaisoning with associations or agencies (intermediaries) that are directly involved with tourism services. They are also responsible to plan and execute various campaigns to promote the destination. Overall, they are responsible for growth of destination including all the elements for overall growth of the destination. Let us look at different tasks that need to be executed for the performance of tourism business.

- a) Managing budgets and accounts
- b) Overlooking the day-to-day functions
- c) Managing staff and induction

- d) Tourism promotion
- e) Ensuring customer satisfaction
- f) Expanding business revenue
- g) Financial planning
- h) Handling customer complaints or queries
- i) Marketing and advertising of the tourism business
- j) Keeping up with emerging industry trends
- k) Improving tourism-related activities

To undertake all the above complex activities, we need to have proper systems in place and we also need support in the forms of policies and procedures. There are organisations at destinations which help tourism at destination to achieve its goals and such organisations are called **Destination Management Organisations**. These institutions use the local know-how and government support to work on policy management; these institutions also work on planning legislation and partnership building with destination stakeholders. The destination stakeholders include local businesses, local population, NGOs that are involved in the outcome of tourism at destination, act as voice for host destination and work with DMO's to reflect contemporary thinking of the local destination stakeholders.

DMOs also act as one stop information for government policies and local's thinking where they try to develop policies which involve locals using a national framework. DMO also updates on various services being delivered at destination and how to best channelise and promote these services such as visitor services, identify gaps and filling those gaps, fulfilling training needs and support the local businesses.

16.7 UNDERSTANDING RESPONSIBLE TOURISM

Let us understand the term responsible tourism. It is considered as a tourism activity that is very much respecting sustainability. Tourism activities undertaken under responsible tourism are responsible to both destination and tourism business. It can also be termed as tourism activities undertaken responsibly. To understand better, let us take an example of a tourist who takes transport and reaches a destination where he/she stays at a hotel, spends good time in entertainment/religion/activities and goes back to home town/place of origin.

In this circuit, the tourist was not fully aware of many aspects of destination culture as he was only dealing with hotel staff (some of them may not be locals) and may have quite a different image of destination culture/issues. Secondly, he/she while undertaking activities at destination may not be aware of impacts of his/her actions such as how much carbon footprint, how much damage is done to host flora, fauna, and culture by him/her. Thirdly, the power of money may urge locals to develop businesses that suit the needs of tourists where local cultural/regional values may hamper, hence locals are in loss. In a normal tourism activity, money plays an important role and not much of emphasis is given to know other important aspects for locals. But in case of responsible tourism, true balance is made where the impacts on locals or host destinations are reduced. Tourists are informed of their actions which drives momentum where methods are already

devised to make sure least disruption or destruction while undergoing tourism activity.

The actions of responsible tourism make sure that the negative impacts (economic, social and environmental) are minimised and locals are respected and benefited by tourism activity with improved working conditions and involvement of the host population in decision making. Such tourism helps in respecting diversity and helping conservation of local environment. Most importantly, responsible tourism develops respect between the guest-host relationships and improves confidence of locals.

16.7.1 Concept of EIA (Environment Impact Assessment)

An important concept of understanding about environment is EIA that is Environment Impact Assessment. Whenever we go to a tourist destination, there are lots of man-made structures, facilities and amenities present to facilitate positive tourist experience for the growth of tourism. Now in making these man-made structures, natural habitats of both flora and fauna including host population may be compromised. Not only that, when major projects in development of a destination are involved such as water and sewage pipelines, and similar other projects including roadways, railways etc. there is need to understand to know how much damage could be expected from such projects. To understand the impacts to environment the project needs to undergo the EIA through a structured process. Professionals from various departments work to find the quantum of impacts and suggest if the project is feasible environmentally or if there are some modifications/suggestion to mitigate the impacts just in case the project was to be executed. Hence, EIA is an important stage for any project development including tourism.

16.7.2 Environmental Auditing

To understand environment auditing we look at the activities and practices that take place in an organisation and these actions are then measured with the standard criteria. To make it simpler, environment auditing checks for any risks that tourism destinations may pose such as noise pollution, waste from tourism and hospitality and contamination of air, water, or land as a by-product. It is essentially a system to check the environment performance of an organisation by assessing its prevailing systems. This helps in understanding the environmental issues and framing policies to mitigate the issues and safeguard the environment. To summarise this, we should take environmental auditing as a tool to assist destination management. It facilitates managers and policy makers to understand any harsh impacts of the tourism operations and help them to develop the tourism products. This also makes sure to safeguard the environment and provide increased guest satisfaction without altering the choices of tourists.

16.8 LET US SUM UP

To sum it up, let us start from the concept of tourism activity which starts from tourist going out from place of normal residence and interacts with hosts during travel in transit and at destination. He/she uses local facilities at destination and pays for services before he travels back to home or place of origin. In this process, exchange of money takes place along with host meeting demands of tourist

including various facilities to make it a smooth experience for tourist in this journey. To manage all these activities, we need professionals who at every stage of tourism and assist tourist in creating good experience of their journey both ways along with stay and activities at destination. These professionals understand the need of tourists and create tourism products matching to the demand of the tourists. To do so there are many complex systems that need to be catered. Carrying capacity helps destination managers to allocate resources in line with the capacity of destination and helps to maintain the sustainability of tourism product (destination). There are systems in place to check the environmental level and issues through structured means called environmental auditing. Also, there are ways to find feasibility of tourism projects through environment impact assessment. This assessment helps managers to devise ways to mitigate harmful impacts of tourism on environment and prepare policies to provide solutions or reduce harmful impacts. The important factor to have tourism sustainable asks to care for natural resources at destination for the use by coming generations. To do so there is good example of responsible tourism which assists tourism activities by tourists without harming host destination which includes locals, flora, and fauna.

16.9 KEY WORDS

Sustainability: Sustainability is to have resources for the current generation while making sure to retain or regenerate for future generations.

Carrying Capacity: It is the capacity of a tourism destination to accommodate tourism activity without harmful impact on its flora, fauna, tourist experience and host population.

Destination Management: The coordinated management of all the elements that make up a destination which includes tourist behaviours and expectations. This requires its managers to have good knowledge of local culture, economics, policies, and human resource management skills.

Stakeholder: A stakeholder is any individual, group, or party that has an interest in an organization and the outcomes of its actions

Responsible Tourism: All tourism activities carried out responsibly and minimizing negative impacts (economic, social and environmental) on locals and benefiting them with improved working conditions and decision making.

Tourism Impacts: Tourism impacts means the effects of tourism on the host region with respect to society, economics, and environment.

Host Population: The population at the tourist destination which may or may not be involved in tourism activity but gets impacted through various tourism development and management operations.

Flora and Fauna: All the plant life in the ecosystem stands for flora and all the animals stands for fauna.

16.10 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Check Your Progress 1

- 1) See Section 16.4
- 2) See Sub-section 16.4.2

Check Your Progress 2

- 1) See Section 16.5
- 2) See Sub-section 16.5.1

16.11 TERMINAL QUESTIONS

- 1) What is tourism sustainability?
- 2) What is carrying capacity? Write its three types.
- 3) What is EIA and why do we use it?
- 4) What is Environmental auditing?
- 5) What is responsible tourism?
- 6) What is a DMO?

