

PUNJAB ECOTOURISM POLICY, 2009

1. PREAMBLE

Punjab is endowed with a very rich spectrum of landscapes, forests, wildlife, wetlands, community reserves, conservation reserves and cultural diversity. It is also home to several endangered species including the Indus Dolphin. The State has potential to become a premier eco-destination. Presently, a majority of tourists are deprived of experiencing other lesser known but potentially rich facets of the State's natural heritage.

Ecotourism or Ecologically Sustainable Tourism has been defined as responsible tourism to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well being of local communities. General public are, now, more willing to visit the forests and appreciate their splendor and imbibe their values. The cause of conservation of forests and wildlife can be further strengthened if they are allowed to be visited in a responsible manner and appreciated, respected and enjoyed by the public to encourage them to become a stakeholder in conservation efforts.

Ecotourism is one of the tools whereby people are encouraged to visit natural beauty of forests to promote action to conserve it. It is about striking harmonious synergy between cause of conservation, aspirations of local communities and need for sustainable travel. It accommodates and entertains visitors in a way that is minimally intrusive or destructive to the environment and sustains & supports the native culture. National Forest Policy, 1988 also calls for building a massive people's movement for protecting natural forest as national heritage.

With this background, the Government of Punjab has resolved to make the promotion of ecotourism in the State a priority area. It shall be developed in harmony with the broad framework outlined in the Tourism Master Plan for the state.

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The focus shall be on conservation of natural resources through awareness building, diversification of tourism activities and destinations, and local community participation and synergy with general development of tourism sector. This Policy is aimed at informing and sensitizing the general public and related Government Departments towards ecotourism and laying down the framework for its growth in the State in an environmentally, socially and economically sustainable manner.

2. MISSION:

Strive to provide excellent ecotourism services to the visitors after following sound principles of eco-tourism, valuing the living community and recognizing the need to integrate the interests of people and nature.

3. OBJECTIVES:

To achieve the above mission, the Policy seeks to pursue the following objectives:

The State shall endeavor to promote regulated and meaningful public access to forests, peripheral areas and other natural landscapes of the State, through:

- a) Identification and promotion of ecotourism potential sites
- b) Development of permissible and ecologically sound ecotourism infrastructure;
- c) Diversification of the range of tourism activities available at destinations;
- d) Development and enforcement of standards and norms for ecotourism activities;
- e) Securing involvement of the local communities living in and dependent on peripheral and other areas for their livelihood;
- f) Awareness building amongst general public; local communities and government staff;

g) enunciate mechanism for securing partnership of private sector enterprise committed to the goals of ecotourism for development of infrastructure and services

(h) Sensitization of community and augmentation of local community livelihood ;

With the ultimate objectives of:

- a. Conserving the natural resource base of the State;
- b. Promoting the State as a prominent ecotourism hub;
- c. Securing economic benefits for the local communities without adversely affecting their cultural ethos.

4. PRINCIPLES:

The development, management and promotion of ecotourism in the State shall be governed by the following guiding principles:

- a. Building environmental and cultural awareness and respect and provide positive experience for both visitors and hosts.
- b. Ecotourism would involve a selective approach, scientific planning, effective control and continuous monitoring.
- c. It should be planned as a part of the overall area development strategy guided by an integrated land-use plan and associated with commensurate expansion of public services.
- d. Emphasis will be given to actively involve the local communities and enhancing their economic conditions .
- e. The type and scale of tourism development should be compatible with the environment and socio-cultural characteristics of the local communities and would lead to sustainable development of the area.
- f. Only activities and facilities having least impact on the natural resources and the local culture to be permitted. Preference should be given to use the already existing infrastructural facilities available in the area rather than creating a new one.
- g. Adhering to the principles of carrying capacity to avoid overuse of natural resources.

- h. Capacity building of local communities and other stakeholders will be ensured.
- i. State will ensure that certain part of project cost/economic returns of such activities are ploughed back in conservation and development of natural resources of that area.
- j. All ecotourism activities are to be in conformity with the spirit of the existing environmental law of the country, including the Wildlife (Protection) Act, the Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980, management/working plan prescriptions and the various directives and guidelines issued by the Government from time to time.
- k. Rules and guidelines regarding technical procedures, stakeholder participation and impact mitigation to be developed and strictly adhered to.
- l. Adherence to international standards in terms of quality and safety in developing and operating ecotourism facilities and activities to be given high priority.
- m. Priority is to be given to developing sites near existing and known tourist destinations.
- n. Creation of environmental awareness amongst all sections and age groups, especially the youth, to be incorporated as a major activity for each ecotourism destination.
- o. Preference to the 'quality of experience' rather than the number of visitors should be given.
- p. Wherever resources harnessed for ecotourism are traditionally in use by the local community, activities and facilities shall be developed in consultation with them and mechanisms to provide benefits to the community will be also identified and implemented as per the provisions of National Forest Policy, 1988.
- q. Adoption of a "single window system" for delivery of ecotourism services.
- r. Marketing strategies to be based on sound market research and segmentation analysis, making wide use of electronic, print

and cyber media for marketing Punjab Ecotourism as a multi-faceted ecotourism destination and will be developed as per the overall master plan of the state.

s. Installation of technologically efficient systems including non-conventional energy sources be adopted for operation of ecotourism facilities.

t. Multi stakeholder partnership in developing and operating facilities and activities to be encouraged. Development and operations to be undertaken either solely by the government agency concerned or in partnership with the local community and private enterprises, depending upon the specific requirements and the category under which the destination area falls.

u. Technical co-operation with national and international agencies having expertise in ecotourism to be encouraged, without compromising on local interests. Experiences of other states should also be considered and suitably incorporated in the state.

5. STRATEGY:

The stated objectives would be achieved through following strategies:

5.1. Site identification:

a) Potential sites will be identified jointly by Dept of Forests and Wildlife Preservation and Dept of Tourism and will be prioritized for phased development.

b) criterion for selection of project site would be its nearness to the tourist destination , its economic viability and enthusiasm and willingness of local communities to preserve its nature and man made heritage.

5.2. Ecotourism activities:

Ecotourism activities to be identified and developed at any destination shall be site-specific i.e. dependent upon the potential of the particular site being developed. Following are the activities and facilities that may

be undertaken for promoting an area as an ecotourism destination within the State.

a. Nature Camps

Camping sites may be identified and provided with basic facilities to enable the tourists to stay in natural surroundings either solely to experience the wilderness or additionally for participating in other activities requiring overnight stay in forests.

b. Eco-friendly Accommodation

Adequate facilities for boarding and lodging of tourists may be developed. The infrastructure must be eco-friendly and strictly in accordance with guidelines laid down in this regard. Suitable existing buildings, located in picturesque locations, may also be developed for tourist accommodation. Where feasible, local community members may also be encouraged to provide lodging and boarding facilities to the tourists, subject to prescribed quality standards.

c. Trekking and Nature Walks

Trekking routes of varying distances and guided nature trails through designated paths may be identified and developed in scenic landscapes rich in biodiversity, causing minimum disturbance to the natural vegetation and soil. Staff and local persons, especially youth may be appropriately trained to act as Nature Guides and Naturalists so as to assist visitors during wildlife viewing and trekking.

d. Wildlife Viewing and River Cruise

Wildlife viewing in eco-friendly vehicles or on elephant backs may be promoted at appropriate sites for observing wildlife. Sites having suitable water-bodies may be developed for providing river cruise facilities in non-polluting boats.

e. Adventure Sports

Facilities for adventure sports such as rock climbing, rappelling and parasailing along with water sports such as river rafting, boating and canoeing may be developed in consultation and cooperation with experts and the concerned department or agency having control over the water bodies.

f. Angling

Angling facilities for Mahaseer and other suitable fish species, strictly on a catch and release basis, may be developed on suitable rivers/ water bodies flowing through or along the forest areas in consultation with the concerned Department. Angling guidelines to be formulated and be strictly followed. If necessary, water bodies may be artificially stocked by rearing and releasing fish seed into the rivers that have been depleted of the target species over time.

g. Herbal Ecotourism

Herbal ecotourism may be made the thrust area at suitable locations having a rich herbal heritage. Traditional medicinal practices of such locations may be explored and based on these; authentic herbal products having appropriate certifications and recognition may be made available to the tourists.

h. Visitor Interpretation Centers and Conservation Education:

Existing interpretation facilities may be strengthened to make them more comprehensive to accommodate the requirements of various classes of visitors envisaged. Each destination must incorporate ways to enhance and enrich the visitor experience.

Conservation education to be promoted in and around each destination for creating awareness amongst school and college students, local communities, government staff and visitors in order to maintain and enhance support for ecotourism and environmental conservation. Various means that may be adopted include naturalists (guides), media campaigns, formation of eco-clubs at schools and colleges, exposure visits to destinations, displays and hoardings, community centers etc. New and innovative methods shall also be encouraged.

i. Other Facilities

Facilities for any other eco-friendly activities may also be provided based on specific requirements of a site provided the activity is compatible with the overall objectives of this policy and in conformance with the various standards and guidelines laid down in this regard.

5.3. Development of Ecotourism:

5.3.1 A Sub-Committee will be constituted under Executive Committee (which is headed by Chief Secretary) of the Punjab Heritage Tourism Promotion Board to promote ecotourism in the state. The Sub-Committee will be called Ecotourism Development Committee (EDC) and will be chaired by the Financial Commissioner Forests. The Director, Tourism will be the convener of this sub-committee. The other member of the sub-committee will be

- a) Principal Secretary Tourism or Representative
- b) Principal Secretary Finance or Representative
- c) Principal Secretary Irrigation or Representative
- d) Principal Secretary Science , Technology and Environment or Rep
- d) Principal Chief Conservator of Forests,
- e) Chief Wildlife Warden
- f) Chief Architect.

The committee will be assisted by experts, whenever required. The detail Composition and its activities shall be governed by the Bye-Laws framed and approved by the PHTPB.

5.3.2 The mandate of the sub-committee (EDC) will be formulation, approval and supervision of ecotourism projects in the state under the operational guidelines issued under this policy framework. The activities of the EDC will be implemented through the field units of Forest Department / Forest Development Corporation in case of government forest lands and by land owners or their authorized representatives in case of private forest lands. However when necessary, the project can also be implemented through other agencies viz Tourism Department, Central/State Government Undertakings, Forest Committees, Local Bodies, Self help groups..

5.3.3 This Policy will be only applicable to all types of forest lands in the state including that covered under Punjab Land Preservation Act.

5.3.4 The Department of Forests and Wildlife Preservation will suitably modify working plan/management plan to enable the provisions of this Policy.

A) General guidelines:

- (i) The Project Proponents would submit their proposals on prescribed proforma (to be framed by EDC) to member secretary which will seek comments of concerned departments/agencies and examine and place before EDC for its decision.
- (ii) The development of physical infrastructure should be preceded by the preparation of an inventory of resources and a zoning/management plan to ensure preservation and public use of valuable natural sites . Efforts will be made to use the existing resources before creating a new one.
- (iii) Forest rest houses /inspection huts would be optimally utilized for ecotourism purposes. In this regard Dept of Forests would frame a guideline in consultation with Dept of Tourism. If required, some temporary tents could also be set up at such sites.
- (iv) Concept of home-stay be promoted. Host families having reasonable accommodation in the villages, en-route to good eco-treks can accommodate tourists on paying prescribed rates. Dept of Tourism will select, notify & regulate such entities.
- (v) Site specific Ecotourism Management Plan will be prepared by the project proponents to bring flexibility in approach for diverse eco-sites and to customized facilities for various target groups while meeting the basic principles of eco-tourism. The Ecotourism Management plan would include followings:
 - plan for development of infrastructure: ,
 - activities to be undertaken such as trekking, bird watching, angling, boating to view wildlife, adventure activities, Eco-friendly accommodation/camping overnights at designated sites etc
 - local participation in eco-tourism facilitation such as catering, local transport, upkeep of camping sites, guide services, sale of local products etc

- Interpretation activities to generate curiosity and provide information on issues related to conservation of environment & forests
- Linkages with other tourist destination centers
- Emphasis on regeneration of habitats, maintenance of existing infrastructure, focus on marketing and building of brand value must be laid.
- Prescribing mechanism for monitoring parameters like impact of activities on the natural environment e.g land, water , air ; supply of water and waste disposal system for each site.
- Implementation of ecotourism management plan
- The EDC shall approve the Eco-tourism management plans and will prescribe the carrying capacity of various Eco-tourism sites in accordance with the criteria of Working Plans/ Management Plans for forest owned land and in consultation with Chief wildlife Warden for wildlife habitats

(v) Department of Tourism, Punjab will establish standards for resort development, camp-sites, covering among others - the style and locations of structures, treatment of sewage and control of litter, reservation of open spaces and public use of fragile areas, etc.

(vi) It will be ensured, that sewage is not directed to ground water and solid waste is systematically collected and disposed of suitably. Adequate precautionary measures should be taken to avoid noise pollution.

(vii) Eco-friendly material to be used for construction activities to minimise any possible adverse impact on local environment.

(viii) Facilitate community livelihood and community empowerment

(ix) Physical planning and design should integrate community services including availability of potable water and transportation.

(x) Only 20% of the land can be constructed upon.

(xi) The construction of the structures should not be higher than 30 feet in any case.

- (xii) Respect and follow the planning restriction, standards and codes provided by the government and local authorities.
- (xiii) Implement sound environment principles through self-regulation
- (xiv) Building should be designed strictly on functional and environmental considerations and avoid over construction. Respect, support historic and religious object sites.
- (xv) Provide information and interpretive services to visitors especially on attraction and facilities, safety and security, local customs, traditions, prohibitions and regulations and self-conduct and behaviour.
- (xvi) Involve the local community to the extent possible in various activities and vocations ensuring, at least 10% employment given to local community.
- (xvii) EDC to ensure that certain fixed amount is charged to the projects which is used for sustainable development of the area as per the approved plan and also for welfare of local communities.
- (xviii) Wherever applicable local Municipal corporation laws to be followed.
- (xix) **In general, the operational guidelines issued by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, 1998 would be followed.**

B) Guidelines for Private Forest land owners covered under PLPA to develop Ecotourism:

In addition to general guidelines mentioned above, following specific guidelines will be applicable to private forest land owners to promote ecotourism activities on their land:

- (a) Only those private eco-sites which fit into the state tourism master plan and form part of existing/proposed circuits will be promoted.
- (b) For private land owners, they have to own minimum land having an area of 2.5 acres in order to promote ecotourism on their property.

- (c) Private land owners cannot indulge in the construction of housing society, industry or malls.
- (d) The project will not be allowed purely on commercial considerations. The compliance of ecotourism principles would be the main consideration.
- (e) The private entrepreneur may operate within National Parks/ Wildlife sanctuaries with the permission of Dept of Forests and Wildlife.
- (f) Besides general conditions, if need be, site specific conditions may be stipulated by the EDC with regard to dos and don'ts for each project before permitting.
- (g) Monitoring of approved projects will be carried out annually by the experts set up by EDC with representatives of Dept of Tourism.
- (h) In case of non-compliance of the conditions stipulated in the approval order, due notices shall be given to project proponents and approval order may be withdrawn by EDC after following due process to be prescribed.
- (i) Accommodations of all types & structures for other facilities shall only be in the form of temporary structures such as tents, dismantlable prefab materials or local materials etc. However, private developers can seek permission of competent authority(i.e MoEF, GOI under FCA, etc.) for construction of permanent structures in forest, protected areas and areas closed under PLPA.
- (j) Temporary structure shall not be free of FAR and Ground coverage.
- (k) It should be ensured that tourism facilities such as accommodation, dining area, toilets, interpretation centres etc are preferably established on open area(non-forest land) and in case such area is not available at the site then on already broken up areas (cultivated area) where no felling of tree is involved.
- (l) A minimum Rs 30000 per acre will be taken in each case by the EDC subject to maximum of Rs 5 lacs for one project, out of which, Rs 15000/acre will be kept as processing fees for project and Rs 15,000/acre will be kept as corpus by the EDC which will be used for conservation and development of the area as per the approved management plan including that for welfare of the local

communities. This amount will be reviewed by the EDC from time to time.

However, community based ecotourism projects will pay only the processing fees.

(m) Detailed project report must include description of all temporary work, arrangements for solid/liquid waste disposal, details of trails/treks and other common/private facilities to be used. A site development plan and a clear essential action plan for conservation and management of the forest area would also be part of the DPR.

(n) The Project will preferably use locally produced products, including food stuffs, promote use of non-conventional energy, reduce fuel-wood consumption, and strengthen community based institutions.

C) Guideline for Setting up and operation of Eco-Resorts/Units for promotion of ecotourism where approval of Ministry of Environment and Forests, GOI , have been obtained under Forest Conservation Act, 1980

The guidelines for such cases is **Annexed**.

D) Safety Measures:

- i) The entry of the number of tourist to the forest department owned land and wildlife habitat areas shall be kept within prescribed carrying capacity.
- ii) The onus shall always remain with the private operators to abide by the laws of the State and the Union Government.
- iii) Eco-tourism would aim to have low impact on environment and further minimal infrastructural requirements.
- iv) The DPR/Management Plan would establish standards for development, refurbishing of the infrastructure, waste disposal, and treatment of sewage, control of litter and optimum use of the fragile eco-system accordingly.
- v) Introduce regulatory measures to ensure social, cultural and environmental sustainability as well as safety and security of tourists.

- vi) Negative effects of traditional tourism on the ecology and social fabric must be reduced and the cultural integrity of the local people would be protected.
- vii) The project may be monitored under various relevant Acts of the Government and action may be taken as per the statutory provisions under relevant acts.

5.4. Capacity Building:

- (i) Adequate capacity will be developed of the principal actors at various levels by EDC in consultation with Dept of Tourism, Dept of Forests and Wildlife Preservation and other stakeholders.
- (ii) The government would encourage people's participation in ecotourism through Joint Forest Management Committees, Panchayati Raj Institutions, local bodies, co-operatives, NGOs and Forest Development Agencies.
- (iii) Improved access is to be provided to markets, credit and training through interaction with Dept of Tourism.
- (iv) The NGOs with good track record and reputation will be encouraged to participate in the programme especially for capacity building, promotion and evaluations.

5.5. Coordination Mechanism:

The State Govt. will aim to achieve necessary linkages and synergies in the policies and programmes of all concerned departments/agencies by establishing effective coordination mechanism at the state and district levels. Linkages with other policies/programs of the state govt. will also be established.

6. Eco-tourism as Forestry Activities:

Ecotourism has been identified as one of the management tool for conservation of natural resources. Therefore, Ecotourism will be considered as forestry activity only if it meets the basic principles of ecotourism enunciated in the policy document. The State shall also endeavor to integrate ecotourism activities with forestry activities so

that there is synergy between the efforts to develop forest resources in the state and that to the interests of eco-tourists.

7. Publicity:

Although it is expected that interest in eco-tourism will spread more by word of mouth than by any other means, initial publicity of the scheme is a sine-qua-non for its success. Proper publicity/ extension measures will be put in place by the Dept of Tourism and EDC to launch and promote the concept in the state as well as in the country.

(Annexure 5.3 para (C)) of Ecotourism Policy of Punjab

Guideline for Setting up and Operation of Eco-Resorts/Units for Promotion of Ecotourism in Punjab

1. Applicability:

The guideline will be applicable for setting up of eco-resorts/units for promotion of ecotourism in the state where approval of Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India is required/have been obtained for diversion of forest land under Forest (Conservation) Act, 1980.

2. Legal/Administrative Requirements:

- a) Only after obtaining the approval of Ministry of Environment & Forests, Government of India under FCA, 1980 for use of forest land, the project proponent will seek approval of their project by the Ecotourism Development Committee (EDC).
- b) The Ecotourism Development Committee (EDC) attached to the Executive Committee of the Punjab Heritage Tourism Promotion Board will be the competent authority to deal all matters related to promotion and development of ecotourism activities in the state including approval of ecotourism management plan for setting up of eco-resorts/units as mentioned in para (a) above.
- c) All ecotourism activities are to be in conformity with the provisions and spirit of the existing environmental laws including the Wildlife(

Protection) Act, 1972; Forest(Conservation) Act, 1980 ; Management/Working Plan of the area and the various directives /guidelines issued by the Government from time to time

3. Guiding Principles for Eco-Resort/Ecotel:

The basic principles for setting up and operation of an eco Resort/ unit would be as under:

- (i) adopt principles of green/sustainable building concepts in creation of infrastructure and practice to minimise impact on the environment.
- (ii) Place an emphasis on sustainability and environmental conservation
- (iii) Consider needs of local community and facilitate their involvement in ecotourism activities
- (iv) Promote knowledge and understanding of sustainability and ecological practices.

4. Project Report:

The project proponent will submit a detail project report on prescribed proforma which will contain essential components like :

- (i) Sanction order of MoEF , GOI under FCA, 1980
- (ii) Site map giving details of activities including entry and exit.
- (iii) Project cost
- (iv) EIA report as applicable
- (v) Details of proposed activities
- (vi) Eco-tourism Management Plan etc

The application form will be prescribed by the Ecotourism Development Committee.

5. Ecotourism Management Plan:

Preparation of an Ecotourism Management Plan will be mandatory for setting of any eco resorts on forest/other lands. A Site specific Ecotourism Management Plan will be prepared by the project proponents to bring flexibility in approach for diverse eco-sites and as per the requirements/need of potential target groups. The Ecotourism Management Plan will include following components:

Part-I : To be submitted by project proponent:

- (i) On-site infrastructure facilities-
Eco-friendly accommodation, access to the site, dining area, camping site, public toilet, waste disposal, interpretation centre, facility for support staffs and other related facilities
- (ii) Off-Site Activities: trekking, bird watching, angling, boating to view wildlife, adventure activities etc.
- (iii) Services to be provided both on-site and off-site ; which will include local transport, catering, upkeep of site, guide service, exhibit of natural as well as cultural heritage and their interpretation, sale of local products etc.
- (iv) Local community participation in ecotourism facilitation
- (v) Linkages with other tourist destination centres

Part II: To be prescribed by the competent authorities

- (i) Carrying capacity
- (ii) Monitoring Mechanism
- (iii) Fees and other charges
- (iv) Other Conditions

5. Guideline for Submission of Ecotourism Management Plan:

Part- I

On-Site Facilities	Mandatory Requirement	Desirable Requirement
1. Land and Basic architecture	Minimum 2.5 acres of land	
	Only upto 20% of the total land can be constructed upon; however this will not include area for parking and internal road; the total area for these (parking & internal road) will be not more than 5% of the total area	In keeping with the local landscaping, incorporate architectural styles typical to the area, thus blending with the environment
		Existing resources to be used before creating new one
		Avoid over construction.

		Respect, support historic and religious object sites
		Adequate greening of open area in and around the site including encouraging visitors to participate.
		Implement sound environment principle through self regulation
	Follow planning restriction, standards and codes provided by the government and local authority e.g PUDA, local bodies etc	
2. Accommodation and provision of other infrastructural facilities	Maximum height of the building will be Ground + one floor and in no case structure will be higher than 30 feet including that of STRUCTURES like water tank etc.	Use of locally manufactured/eco-friendly materials with lowest environmental impact
		Use materials, systems, and components that can be recycled or reused
3. Energy Use		
	As far as possible reduce total building energy consumption and peak electric demand.	
		Provide day lighting integrated with electric lighting controls

		Use efficient equipment and appliances
		Limit the burning of firewood and Use renewable or other alternative energy sources
4. Water Use	Preserve site watersheds and groundwater aquifers, if required, site specific plan to be placed	
	Install rainwater harvesting system.	Conserve and re-use rainwater for their operations
	Maintain appropriate level of water quality on the site and in the resort specially areas adjoining river/stream/spring.	Reduce potable water consumption
	reduce building water consumption by recycling of water	
5. Waste-Disposal and Recycling	Sewage not directed to ground water and solid waste is systematically collected and disposed/re-used suitably within campus site and not at public place	
	Adequate precautionary measures should be taken to avoid noise pollution	
	As far as possible Control and reduce environmentally unfriendly products such as plastics, asbestos, CFCs, pesticides and toxic, infectious, explosive or flammable material.	Use of eco-friendly materials for stationery and other activities like publicity materials etc
6. Interpretation Centre	Provide information services to visitors on nature conservation, local attractions including flora ,fauna and	

	unique feature of the area, safety and security, local customs, traditions, prohibitions and regulations and self-conduct and behaviour	
7. Other facilities	Provision of accommodation and ancillary facilities for support staffs, if on site.	Linkages with other tourist destination centres
Off-Site Facility		Ecotourism activities to be undertaken with the active involvement of local people/community/ forest department
		Facilitate capacity building of the local community
	At least 10% employment for service sector to be provided to locally trained people residing within a distance of 10 km from the site subject to availability.	

Part II:

i) Carrying Capacity	Carrying capacity for ecotourism inside the forest department owned areas and wildlife habitats will be prescribed by the forest department.
ii) Monitoring Mechanism	mandatory monitoring of environmental and other parameters will be prescribed by the various agencies under the existing laws/rules/regulations. In addition , EDC may also prescribe any other mechanism for monitoring of key environmental factors including that of project implementation
iii) Fees and other charges	A minimum Rs 30000 per acre subject to a maximum of Rs five lacs for the whole project ; will be taken in each case by the EDC, out of which, Rs 15000 will be kept as processing fees for project and Rs 15,000 will be kept as corpus for use by the EDC towards conservation and

	development of the area as per the approved management plan including for the welfare of the local communities. This amount will be reviewed by the EDC from time to time.
Note:	Eco-resorts which have paid NPV and Compensatory afforestation charges imposed by Govt. of India under FCA, 1980 will be exempted from payment of external development charges and Change of Land Use charges. This shall override any other departmental provisions.
	Eco-Resorts/units which qualify as hotel as per the proposed hotel policy may also attract facilities/concessions under that policy guidelines
iv)Other Conditions	Local laws/municipal laws as applicable in the area shall also be applicable
	Activities APPROVED by GOI shall be ONLY ALLOWED
	Besides general conditions, if need be, site specific conditions may be stipulated by the EDC with regard to dos and don'ts for each project before permitting.
	Suitable access compatible with the restrictions under the forests laws up to the site.
	Structural and fire safety norms shall be as per National Building Code (NBC).
	Other physical norms/building regulations (not covered above) shall be as per PUDA Building Rules for projects outside M.C. Limits and the projects inside M.C. limits shall be governed by M.C. Building Rules.

6. Safeguards:

- a) Private land owners cannot indulge in the construction of housing society, industry or malls.
- b) Private developers having proven track records in working in the field of eco-resorts/ ecotourism would be preferred.
- c) The project will not be allowed purely on commercial considerations. The compliance of ecotourism principles would be the main consideration.
- d) Detailed project report must include description of all temporary works, arrangements for solid/liquid waste disposal, details of trails/treks of forest lands to be used.

- e) The onus shall always remain with the private operators to abide by the laws of the State and the Union Government.
- f) Negative effects of traditional tourism on the ecology and social fabric must be reduced and the cultural integrity of the local people would be protected.
- g) In due course, the eco-resorts/units so set up, will be rated by Department of Tourism which include factors mentioned in the part I of the guideline and on social responsibility programme.
- h) In general, **the operational guidelines issued by the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, 1998 would be followed.**