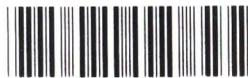


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E46937

**SUSTAINABLE NATURE-BASED TOURISM: MODEL OF GOOD
PRACTICE FOR PHOBJIKHA VALLEY, BHUTAN**

GANESH SHARMA

**A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate School of Naresuan University
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Master of Arts Degree
in International Tourism and Hotel Management
(International Program)**

May 2011

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This thesis entitled “Sustainable Nature-Based Tourism: Model of Good Practice for Phobjikha Valley, Bhutan” submitted by Ganesh Sharma in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Master of Arts Degree in International Tourism and Hotel Management is hereby approved.


..... Chair
(Kannapa Pongponrat, Ph.D.)


..... Committee
(Srisuda Chongsithiphol, D.B.A.)


..... Committee
(Bhandhira Lertdechdecha, Ph.D.)


..... Committee
(Sawaros Srisutto, Ph.D.)

Approved


.....
(Assistant Professor Kanungnit Papatwibul, Ph.D.)

Dean of the Graduate School

May 2011

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Ganesh Sharma

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Author Ganesh Sharma

Advisor Srisuda Chongsithipol, Ph.D.

Co-Advisor Bhandhira Lertdechdecha, Ph.D.

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ABSTRACT

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The increasing trend of tourist arrival and their purpose to visit Bhutan signify a risk to the natural environment of Bhutan as tourism activities, which are engaged in providing the touristic product and services result to detrimental effect to environment. Hence, Bhutan being an emerging tourist destination, there is an urgent need to look into the matter pertaining to the impact of tourism to environment. The purpose of this research was to frame a sustainable tourism management model for Bhutan, focusing on the Phobjikha Valley, one of the most important wildlife conservation areas in the Kingdom. The case study method was used for the research, and the data was collected from journal articles, books and interviews. The key environmental management issues in all the case study sites were examined and compared, and then the best practices and strategies to address the issues were identified. The research presented three major management issues such as 1) Protection of Land and Vegetation, 2) Conservation of Birds and Animals and 3) Waste Management. The major strategies to address the issues that are acknowledged in the study were involvement of the local community, education to the local community and tourist, collaboration among the stakeholders, regulation, monitoring and research. Keeping these strategies in mind, a model for sustainable tourism management practice was developed; it was called TOURISM, which stands as: T for Tourist (destination experience for tourist & their behavior), O for Obligation (responsibility, duty and commitment of all the stakeholders), U for Unity

(collaboration, coordination & consultation, cooperation of stakeholders), R for Regulation (planning, enforcement and implementation) , I for Investigation (research, monitoring and evaluation), S for Sustainability (Balance between protection of environment and income from tourism business) and M for Management (finance, human resource, technology and marketing). Lastly, this paper recommends future research on sustainable tourism using information directly from the focused site.

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