

**“A Baseline Study on Ecotourism Potentiality in Dang District”
(A Case Study of Baraha Chhetra, Dang, Nepal)**

A Thesis

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Letter of Recommendation

This is to certify that the thesis entitled *Baseline Study on Ecotourism Potentiality in Dang- A Case study of Baraha Chhetra* Submitted by Mr. Ram Maharjan for the Partial fulfillment of the requirement of **Master's Degree** of Humanities and Social Science in Rural Development has been carried out under my Supervision. I therefore, recommended this thesis for the final approval and acceptance.

(Supervisor)



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Letter of Approval

This is to certify that the thesis entitled *Baseline Study on Ecotourism Potentiality in Dang - A Case study of Baraha Chhetra* Submitted by Mr. Ram Maharjan, has been evaluated and accepted for partial fulfillment of the requirement for the **Master's Degree of Arts in Rural Development**.

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The study has been a matter of great achievement for me. I feel that this study has enabled me to use my knowledge and ideas achieved during my academic years and increased the capacity of my analytic brain. I hope that this study will be proved fruitful in the ecotourism promotion in Baraha Chhetra in appreciable extent.

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Abstract

Tourism in Nepal is in one or the other way associated with nature and natural areas, tourism in Nepal is often viewed from an ecotourism perspective too. Development of ecotourism might be the mile stone for nation development. The “Baseline Study of Ecotourism Potentiality in Baraha Chhetra” is the topic of the research which includes “to find out baseline information on ecotourism potentiality on study site” as a main objective.

Though the site is enclosed diverse potential site for the tourism industry, still the Baraha Chhetra lags behind in the tourism perspective and promotion of ecotourism. Hence, Baraha Chhetra was selected for this study. The study was conducted through literature review, observation, queries with the respective organizations and scholars. Stratified and random sampling method was applied for selection of sample size. The closed and open type of questionnaire was prepared having three main parts which were socio-economic status, natural environment and ecotourism related issues. Whereas, the formal and informal interviews, focus group discussion were conducted to enrich the data of the study.

*The ethnic composition in the study site were 19.61% Khas (Brahmin/Chhetri/Thakuri), 23.53% Dalit (Kami, Damai), and 55.86% Janajati (Tharu, Nath, Magar, Yadav and Newar). The unique culture and the indigenous knowledge of various Janajati (indigenous peoples) like Tharu, Nath, Magar, Yadav and Newar etc have praiseworthy for ecotourism development . The attainment of primary level of education (23.71%) was quite high compared to the rest of other in the studied site. The average per capita income of the total population of the study site was NPR 8,174.83 in average. Most of the populations in the study site depend on agriculture (34.02%). It was found that 49.02% households were 0-0.339 hectare landholding, 29.21% households were 0.339- 0.678 hectare land holdings, 19.72% households were 0.678- 2.71 hectare land holding and 7.84% households were more than 2.71 hectare land holdings. 35.29% of the households had scarcity of food for 0 – 6 months while, 21.57% households have food deficit for the whole year (i.e.12 months). Similarly, 19.61% households have no deficit of food and 23.53% households have food surplus. The consumption of fuel wood (94.32%) was high in comparison to electricity (49.02%) or other forms of alternative energy in the study site. The site harbors the significant flora: Sal (*Shorea robusta*), Sisoo (*Dalbergia sisoo*), Acacia catechu*

(Khayer), Bambax ceiba (simal), etc. and fauna: Chari Bagh (Felis bengalensis), Ban biralo (Felis chaus), White rumped vulture (Gyps bengalensis), Red headed Vulture (Sarcogyps calvus), Brown Hawk Owl (Ninox scutulata), Rato tauke suga (Psittacula roseate) etc. which have contributed to enrich the biodiversity of the district. Most of the populations of the study site had to depend on well (37.25%), Stream (15.72%), Jaruwa (31.37%) and had to walk a long distance for drinking water. In fact, smoke from fuelwood, water pollution, deforestation, solid waste were the most well-known environmental problems in the study site. The flow of tourist was not satisfactory. The purpose of visit of the tourists in the study site was religious (45.09%), natural view (21.53%), recreation (29.41%), and study (1.49%). The availability of transportation was some what good but still need to be improved. Similarly, the available facilities such as lodging and fooding wear seen to be poor. So, it is needed to improve for flourishing tourism.

The study has concluded that the Baraha Chhetra has high potentialities for tourism development. But the facilities (transportation, lodging and fooding, amenities) should make available for well development of tourism. As the increased contributions of communities to locally managed ecotourism create viable economic opportunities, including high level management positions, and reduce environmental issues associated with poverty and unemployment, the active participation of local communities in the promotion of ecotourism should be encouraged. Similarly, effective planning, management and control should be ensured for the sustainable growth of ecotourism in Baraha Chhetra.

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Abbreviation/Acronyms

ACAP : Annapurna Conservation Area Project
ADB : Asian Development Bank
CBS : Central Bureau of Statistics
CBOs : Community Based Organizations
DDC : District Development Committee
EIA : Environmental Impact Assessment
EPR : Environment Protection Rules
EPC : Environment Protection Council
GoN : Government of Nepal
GOs : Government Organizations
HHs : Households
GPS : Geographical Positioning System
IEE : Initial Environmental Examination
INGOs : International Non Government Organizations
IUCN : The World Conservation Union
MoCTCA : Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation
MoPE : Ministry of Population and Environment
MoEST : Ministry of Environment and Science Technology
NEPAP : Nepal Environmental Policy and Plan
NGOs : Non Government Organizations
NTB : Nepal Tourism Board
PAs : Protected Areas
TM : Tulsipur Municipality
TNM : Tribhuvan Nagar Municipality
STN : Sustainable Tourism Network
TIES : The International Ecotourism Society
TRPAP : Tourism for Rural Poverty Alleviation Project
UNDP : United Nations Development Program
UNEP : United Nation Environment Program
VDCs : Village Development Committees
WTO : World Tourism Organization