

# Investigating the Compliance of Tourism Principles with the Components of Sustainable Tourism: Bangladesh Perspective

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## Abstract

*This is qualitative research that has been prepared by using secondary data. The main objective of this paper is to examine the compliance of tourism principle of Bangladesh with the components of the sustainable tourism that is prepared by the United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). This paper describes that Bangladesh has a \$421.4 billion travel and tourism economy. The Bangladesh government formed the national tourism policy-2010 to attain the goal of sustainable tourism.*

*This study finds that national tourism policy-2010 has nine policies or principles and all of these comply the components of the sustainable tourism. Finally, this study recommends some steps to attain the goal of sustainable tourism in Bangladesh.*

**Keywords:** Sustainable tourism, Compliance, Tourism Policy, Bangladesh.

## Introduction

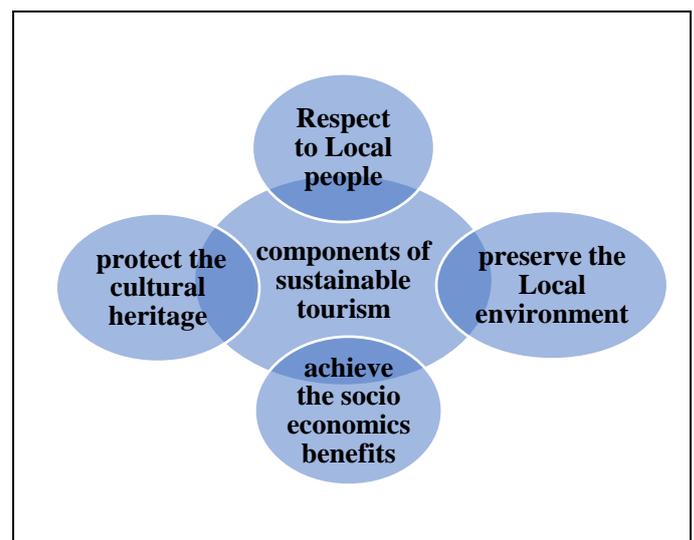
People love the travelling for several purposes, including trade and recreations. The current value of the world tourism economy is \$7.6 trillion that is growing at the rate of 3.8% for the 2016.<sup>16,25</sup> Bangladesh earned \$421.4 billion from the travel and tourism economy. However, the concept of sustainable tourism was introduced in the 1970s due to the negative effects of tourism around the world. After initiating the concept of sustainable development in 1987 by The UN World Commission on Environment and Development, in 1999, the German Forum on environment and development introduced the definition of Sustainable Tourism at the UN environmental Conference in New York, USA. It stated that sustainable tourism is the tourism that justly and socially fulfills the social, cultural, environmental and economic necessities for current and future generations.<sup>2</sup>

However, the voices for sustainable tourism have been strengthening around the world. Large number of pro-environmental organizations are functioning around the world. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) - a non-profit organization has been working since 1990 with 750 organizations and 15000 members in the 190 countries.<sup>5</sup> Besides, about 60 non-profit organizations have been working around the world to implement the concept of sustainable tourism for instance: The Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), Global Partnership for

Sustainable Tourism (GPST), The Sustainable Tourism Certification Alliance (STCA).

Consequently, this study deals as the initiative to check the compliance of the tourism principles of Bangladesh with the components of sustainable tourism.

**Concept of Sustainable Tourism:** The Cambridge dictionary defined the tourism as the business that offers the services for the tourist.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, sustainable tourism is nothing but the eco-friendly tourism. UNESCO defined sustainable tourism as the tourism that maintains the respectfulness to both local people and the tourist, cultural heritage, customs and the local environment.<sup>22</sup> Sustainable tourism has multi-dimensions including cultural tourism, eco-tourism and nature-based tourism. Moreover, The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) states that the ecotourism or sustainable tourism is nothing but the Dutiful tour to natural areas that preserves the environment and develops the welfare of native people.<sup>21</sup>



**Figure 1: The Component of the Sustainable Tourism**

In addition, United Nation World Tourism Organization defined sustainable tourism as the tourism that takes complete accountability of its present and future social, economic as well as ecological effects, considering the necessities of tourists, the industry, the environment and local population.<sup>23</sup> As well, sustainable development goal, the tourism that generates employments and stimulates as well as support the local culture and heritage is called sustainable tourism.<sup>4</sup> From the above discussion, table 2 summarizes the components and functions of Sustainable Tourism.

**Table 1**

**The Components and Functions of Sustainable Tourism**

The Components of Sustainable Tourism	Functions
Responsibility to Environment	Efficient use of environmental resources, abiding by the law of the ecology, preserve the natural heritage, biodiversity
Responsibility to Local communities and Heritage	Respect the socio-cultural legitimacy of local people, protect their cultural heritage, customs and traditional standards, establish the inter-cultural thoughts and mutual forbearance.
Socio-economic benefits	Make sure the socioeconomic benefits to all participants (tourists + local host) through practical and long-lasting economic setup and actions, by the equitable distributions of income, employment opportunities and social services

Source: UNWTO,<sup>23</sup> TIES,<sup>21</sup> and UNESCO<sup>22</sup>

**Responsibility of an Eco-friendly Traveler:** Sustaining Tourism is an international organization that works to make responsible tourist to the tourism for the protection of the environment. It suggests some steps for being a responsible tourist Sustainable tourism.<sup>19</sup> These are follows:

- Be respectful to the localities, cultures, religious places and the environment
- Avoid unnecessary waste and usage of plastic bottles
- Moderate energy consumption
- Save water
- Educate yourself about the tourist spot
- Choose sustainable seafood
- Promote the local economy.
- May donate to local people through competent authorities, but not promote the begging economy
- Always reject the unlawful drug or sex trade
- Choose those companies who support Eco-friendly tourism.

The main objective of this paper is to investigate the compliance of tourism principle of Bangladesh with the components of sustainable tourism. More purposely, the goals of this paper are:

- To highlight the tourism principle and policy of Bangladesh

- To inspect the compliance of the components of sustainable tourism in Bangladesh

**Methodology**

This is qualitative research by nature that has been prepared by collecting secondary data on the issues of tourism, sustainable tourism. Besides, several books, articles and websites have been reviewed to organize this paper.

**Review of Literature**

Several types of research have been done on sustainable tourism issues of Bangladesh. Jahan and Amin<sup>12</sup> empirically studied sustainable tourism on the Sylhet division of Bangladesh. Rahman<sup>14</sup> explained the debates related to the development issues of sustainable in Bangladesh. Sultana<sup>18</sup> discusses the contribution of tourism in Bangladesh economy. Roy and Mallika<sup>15</sup> describe the current status and the prospects of the tourism sector of Bangladesh. Shakil<sup>1</sup> evaluates the development of Sustainable tourism, Cox’s Bazar, Bangladesh. Iraj<sup>11</sup> discusses the potentials of Sustainable Tourism of Bangladesh.

Howlader<sup>9</sup> raises the ethical issues of sustainable tourism in Bangladesh. Howlader<sup>10</sup> discusses the functions of the World Tourism Day. Hasan et al<sup>8</sup> showed a position of Bangladesh tourism by the country branding. Khandakar<sup>13</sup> prescribed the strategies and guidelines for the Development of Sustainable Tourism in Bangladesh. Thomsen,<sup>20</sup> presented the Prospects of Sustainable Tourism of Bangladesh.

From the above discussion, it can be summarized that the researches which are conducted on Sustainable Tourism of Bangladesh, mainly cover the introduction, strategies and guidelines, potentials and prospects, case studies on Sylhet and Cox’s bazar, the ethical issue of sustainable Tourism and contribution of tourism, etc. However, this research paper is unique from the earlier researches because it investigates the compliance of tourism principle of Bangladesh with the components of sustainable tourism.

**Examining the compliance of Sustainable Tourism in Bangladesh**

It should be mentioned that the Government of Bangladesh prepared the first national tourism policy in 1992. After 18 years in 2010, the Bangladesh Tourism Corporation upgraded and reformed the tourism policy of 1992. The main objective of the Bangladesh tourism policy-2010 is to make the tourism sector as the source of national income through the development of economic infrastructure related to the tourism sectors. Besides, making master plan for the development of the tourism sector, making exclusive tourist zone, protecting the local culture, customs and heritage, attaining the goal of sustainable tourism is also the objective of this policy. However, table 2 highlights the nine policies of the national tourism policy of Bangladesh-2010 and checks its consistency with the elements of sustainable

tourism. The United Nation World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) determined these elements.

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that the National Tourism Policy of Bangladesh-2010 complies the principles or components of sustainable tourism.

**Conclusion and Policy Recommendations**

At last, it can be concluded that National Tourism policy of Bangladesh-2010 follows the principles or elements of sustainable tourism. Finally, this paper recommends the following points to achieve the target of sustainable tourism through National Tourism policy of Bangladesh-2010:

- The Government of Bangladesh should facilitate and involve the local people of tourist spot to prevent the pollution.
- The Government should construct adequate economic infrastructure in the tourist zone by the public and

private initiative to ensure equal employment opportunity.

- National tourism authority should educate and train the tourist guide/ security/guard about the issues of sustainable tourism, so that they can help/assist the local and foreign tourist to protect the environment, culture and heritage of the tourist spot.
- The competent authority should provide the handouts, booklets and books containing the messages of ecotourism and description of tourist spot among the tourists in their buses, airlines, ships and railway. Tourism authority also establishes the printed and digital billboards that carry the guidelines and videos for the tourist' concern.
- The Government may establish some museum on the local caste, ethnicity, customs, culture and heritage. Then tourist may be inspired to preserve the environment spontaneously.

**Table 2**

**Compliance of the National Tourism Policy of Bangladesh 2010 with the Components of the Sustainable Tourism**

Policy	National Tourism policy of Bangladesh 2010	Compliance with the Element of the Sustainable Tourism
Policy-1	Incorporate the national tourism under the planning and implementation of sustainable tourism	Yes, fulfill the Responsibility to Environment
Policy-2	Encourage the private and expatriate investor to invest in the tourism sector individually or with the government.	Yes, preserve the Environment
Policy-3	Searching for the new tourism places. Preserve and protect these places.	Yes, preserve the Environment
Policy-4	Allocate the budget for the development and protection of historical places and cultural heritage. Besides, take the project under ADP to develop the railway, road and highway, air and naval routes.	Yes, practical and long-lasting economic setup
Policy-5	Encourage the private investor to construct and develop the economic infrastructure related to the tourism.	Yes, Employment creation, economic development, benefit for all
Policy-6	Take the collective initiative to incorporate the national culture, ethnic culture and festival as the tourism events. So, the people and government ministries should promote the national song, bawl song etc.	Yes, conserve the customs and the cultural heritage
Policy-7	Diversify the tourism sector and develop the sports tourism, religious tourism, educational tourism, health tourism, adventure tourism etc.	Yes, comply the biodiversity
Policy-8	Development of the ecotourism by the Ministry of environment and the other ministry. Develop the sea beaches, islands, forestries, hill areas.	Yes, improve the ecotourism
Policy-9	Propagate about the natural beauties, attractiveness of national tourist spots of Bangladesh among the tourist generating countries. Also make easy the visa processing of the tourist.	Yes, promote the sustainable tourism

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