

45th BCS

Read the following text and answer the questions that follow:

An offshoot of the environmental movement of the 1970, ecotourism has come into its own over the past two decades. Thanks to an increasing awareness of environmental issues such as climate change, combined with a high demand among European and North American travellers for unspoiled locations, authentic cultural experience, and recreational challenges, ecotourism is growing at a rate of 20 percent annually, making it the fastest-growing sector in the tourism industry. The **International Ecotourism Society defines ecotourism as economically sustainable, ecologically sensitive, and culturally acceptable.** Closely related is the concept of sustainable tourism identified in our common future, the Brundtland Commission's report to the 1987 World Commission on Environment and Development: Development that "meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

Ecotourism's principles clearly distinguish it from conventional mass tourism. Instead of classic tourist meccas, ecotourism seeks out remote locations with strict environmental protections and operates on a small scale. Tourists, business and local residents are encouraged to minimize their impact on the

environment by recycling materials, conserving energy and water, safely treated human waste and properly disposing of garbage, using alternative energy, and building in a manner that fits in with natural surroundings. The financial benefits from ecotourism are passed on to the community through conservation projects, employment, partnerships and local participation in the development and management of local resources.

Synonymous with 'green' tourism, ecotourism promotes cultural sensitivity and respect for traditions and customs in order to avoid the kind of exploitation that has turned tribal ceremonies into side-shows and relics into souvenirs. Ecotourism also plays a political role in its support of human rights and democracy.

The popularity of ecotourism is a problem in itself. The original ecotourists were small in number, deeply committed to conservation and actively engaged in cultural exchange. At one time, they were willing to rough it and go off the beaten path, but now so-called ecotourists travel and expect the comforts of home package in a pretty setting. In the process, nature once an honoured treasure, has become a commodity and a photo opportunity. Larger numbers of ecotourists consume more resources and leave a larger impact on the environment, and eco-operators require more land to accommodate demand. As ecotourism spreads to more sensitive, corners of the earth, it could end up defeating its original purposes.

Ecotourism can be achieved only if steps are taken in the right directions. In 1993, British Airways led the way as the first airline to implement a systematic environmental policy. **The International Hotels Environment Initiative (IHEI) has more than 5000 members from 111 countries. In cooperation with the United Nations Environment Program and the International Hotel and Restaurant Association, the IHEI developed an "Environmental Action Pack for Hotels in 1995 to promote environmental management, energy and water conservation, and waste and emission reduction.** In 1996, the World Tourism Organization, the World Travel and Tourism Council, and the Earth Summit Council drafted Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry, recognizing the interdependence of Tourism, peace, development and environmental protection. The year 2002 was declared the United Nations International Year of Ecotourism, with an ecotourism summit held in May.

Whether initiated by trade or intergovernmental organizations, blueprints and agreements can be meaningful only if governments are proactive. **Belize and Costa Rica, for example, have established national policies and strategies to further ecotourism.**

Brazil, Indonesia, Namibia and Nepal integrate small-scale, community-oriented approaches into their tourism programs. While progress continues to be made on many fronts and by many players, it is the individual traveller who will keep ecotourism on track.

Tourists can make informed choices about travel destinations and tour operators, as well as conscious efforts to reduce their individual impact on the environment and to practice cultural sensitivity toward local people. They can participate in volunteer conservation projects and gain skills and knowledge in the process. They can pressure governments to pass and enforce laws that protect the environment. Ultimately, they can spend their money where it is put to green use. Nature is counting on them.

Answer the questions in your own words. Don't copy from the text above. Copying from the text above may affect the evaluation. 5x6=30

(a) What are the main aims of ecotourism?

The primary goals of ecotourism are to promote tourism in a way that is

- environmentally sustainable,
- culturally respectful, and
- beneficial to local communities.

Ecotourism focuses on preserving natural areas and promoting conservation, allowing tourists to enjoy nature in its purest form. Ecotourism also highlights the importance of respecting local traditions and avoiding their exploitation. Additionally, it aims to

bring economic benefits to local communities by

- creating jobs,
- supporting conservation efforts, and
- building partnerships.

(b) On what does the success of ecotourism depend?

The success of ecotourism depends on a variety of factors, including the commitment of all involved parties—

- tourists,
- local communities,
- businesses, and
- governments.

Tourists must choose eco-friendly travel options and reduce their impact on nature. **Tour operators** should follow sustainable practices, like saving water and energy. **Governments** need to make laws to protect the environment and ensure tourism is controlled. **Local communities** should be involved in planning and managing tourism so they can benefit from it without harming their surroundings.

(c) What initiatives have hotels taken to reduce their impact on the environment?

Hotels have taken several steps to minimize their environmental footprint. For example, the International Hotels Environment Initiative (IHEI) promotes environmental management by encouraging hotels to

- conserve energy and water,
- reduce waste, and
- manage emissions responsibly.

Some hotels use alternative energy sources, recycle materials, and ensure that their buildings blend into the natural surroundings. These measures help limit the negative impact of tourism on the environment while also making hotels more eco-friendly.

(d) Define ecotourism. What are the principles of ecotourism?

Ecotourism refers to a form of tourism that is environmentally responsible, supports conservation, and promotes the well-being of local communities. It emphasizes sustainable travel to natural areas and aims to minimize the negative impact on the environment.

The principles of ecotourism include

- conserving energy and water,
- recycling waste,
- supporting local economies, and
- respecting cultural traditions.

It also encourages tourists to travel in small groups to protect sensitive environments, ensuring that nature and culture are preserved for future generations.

(e) How do the governments support ecotourism? What individual tourists can do to support ecotourism?

Governments support ecotourism by making rules and policies that protect natural areas and promote sustainable tourism. Countries like Costa Rica and Belize have strong policies to encourage ecotourism. On the other hand, nations such as Brazil and Nepal integrate community-based approaches into their tourism strategies.

Individual tourists can support ecotourism by

- choosing eco-friendly destinations,
- conserving resources, and
- respecting local cultures.

They can also take part in volunteer projects to protect the environment. Tourists can encourage governments to pass laws that protect nature and make sure their money is spent in ways that support conservation.

(f) What are the dangerous impacts of ecotourism on environment?

Though ecotourism aims to protect nature, it can have negative effects if it becomes too popular.

More tourists visiting natural areas **can use up** resources like water and energy and create more waste. When too many tourists visit sensitive areas, it can harm the environment and disturb wildlife. Some ecotourism operators also expand their businesses to meet the demand, which can lead to deforestation or other damage. If not managed

carefully, ecotourism can end up harming the very places it is meant to protect.

Write briefly the main idea of the above text. Add your comments. Give a suitable title to it. (within 100 words)

Title: The Promise and Perils of Ecotourism/ The Importance of Ecotourism/ The Prospects and Challenges of Ecotourism

The main idea of the text is that ecotourism promotes responsible travel by protecting the environment, respecting local cultures, and helping local communities. The goal is to let tourists enjoy nature in its pure form while also making sure natural areas are not harmed. Ecotourism encourages cultural sensitivity, ensuring that traditions are not exploited, and it supports local communities by creating jobs and conservation projects.

My Comment: Ecotourism is essential for protecting the environment while giving people the chance to experience nature. **However, it must be done carefully, as too many visitors can harm sensitive areas.** Both tourists and businesses need to respect local cultures and protect natural resources to make sure ecotourism benefits everyone without causing damage.