

## STATUS OF TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN SAHYADRI RESERVE OF MAHARASHTRA

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**Abstract:** Maharashtra offers quiet and beautiful buffer area of Sahyadri Tiger Reserve. The four tiger reserves i.e. Sahyadri, Melghat, Tadoba and Pench in Maharashtra. At the periphery of the Sanctuary, the areas being actively promoted as a tourism zone by the Government of Maharashtra. Sahyadri Tiger Reserve is including Chandoli National Park and Koyana Wildlife Sanctuary. Sahyadri Tiger Reserve is the only place where climax and near-climax vegetation is plentiful and prospects. The area is bestowed with several bio-geographical peculiarities. Climax evergreen formation of higher evolutions have been wiped out or highly degraded everywhere in Western Maharashtra except in tiger reserve area, where this type still occupies substantial area. This would create serious environmental problems in the form of increased tourist traffic, water pollution, littering of non-degradable waste and general disturbance. This study suggests that government should take necessary action to guard the valuable resources.

**Keywords:** Buffer area, Tourism development, Tiger Reserve, Sanctuary etc.

### INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an industry concerned with attracting people to a destination, transporting them there, housing, feeding and entertaining them upon arrivals and returning them to their homes or it is an industry which deals mostly with consumers, tourism, money and people which provide them goods and services (Suryavanshi, 2012). Physical geography provides the essential background, against which tourism places are created and environmental impacts and concerns are major issues that must be considered in managing the development of tourism places (Bharadwaj, 2012). Nature-based tourism is a large and growing global industry (Ceballos & Lascurain, 1998). It is based on the natural attractions of an area, it includes bird-watching, wildlife photography, walking, stargazing, camping, shooting, fishing and visiting forests. Nature-based tourism, also known as ecotourism or nature tourism, is defined as "tourism that consists of traveling to relatively undisturbed or uncontaminated natural areas with the specific objective of studying, admiring, and enjoying the scenery and its wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural manifestation found in these areas" (Boo, 1990).

Maharashtra is the first state to reserve buffer area of its entire tiger. Maharashtra has designated buffer and non-buffer zones, which are being developed further to promote tourism. Government of Maharashtra reserve in an area conservation plan of 1165.57 sq km spread across Satara, Ratnagiri, Kolhapur and Sangli districts. Sahyadri Tiger Reserve is the only place where climax and near-climax vegetation is plentiful and prospects. The sanctuary area is home to several species endemic flora and harbors different species of fauna. Rich scenic conditions and wildlife attracts tourists effectively and make them visit a region or extend their stay in the presence of wildlife. This paper explores the impacts of wildlife tourism, both positive and negative ways and provides directions for its design, planning and management.

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