

Policy Brief on

Gandaki Province

# TOURISM ACT, 2022



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Gandaki Province Tourism Act, 2022**

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Pokhara Research Centre  
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Tourism is an important aspect of the Gandaki Province economy and the Nepalese economy in general, accounting for around 10% of the province's total GDP. Indeed, tourism has been highlighted as one of the seven important drivers of prosperity in Gandaki Province (Policy and Planning Commission, 2020). As a result, the provincial administration is committed to effectively regulating the province's tourism industry. The Gandaki Province Tourism Act, 2022 was passed by the provincial government with this goal in mind. To realize the full potential of the industry, a combination of structural policy adjustments and tourism-specific actions is required.

In this regard, this policy brief highlights the key issues present in the Gandaki Province Tourism Act, 2022 and provides comprehensive recommendations to the concerned stakeholders in order to address these issues. The brief addresses on a number of topics, including foreign exchange transactions, the classification of travel and trekking organizations, mountaineering, conflicts with federal laws, conservation, sustainable development, and women's empowerment. The recommendations for resolving these concerns are based on a thorough analysis of this Act using a number of primary and secondary data sources.

## **Table of Content**

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<b>1. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2. POLICY HIGHLIGHTS</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. KEY ISSUES AND ANALYSIS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. CONTEXT</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5. DETAILED REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5.1 Classification of Travel and Trekking Agencies</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>5.2 Price Publication</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5.3 Foreign Currency Transaction</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5.4 Penalties</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>5.5 Mountaineering Related Provision</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>5.6 Tourist Transportation</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>5.7 Contradiction with Federal Law</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>5.8 No Provisions for Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs, Travel         and Trekking Guides</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>5.9 No Provisions for Conservation and Sustainable Tourism</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>5.10 A Verbatim Copy of Federal Law in Many Provisions</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>19</b>

## **1. LEGISLATIVE BACKGROUND**

The Gandaki Province's first Provincial Assembly commenced in 2017 and ended in 2022. During the five years, the Provincial Assembly passed 59 acts in total. The Gandaki Province Tourism Act, 2022 was one of the 59 laws that was created, and it was passed by the Provincial Assembly during the conclusion of the first term. The bill was registered in the Provincial Assembly on March 26 and after rigorous discussion on the bill at the legislative committee it was approved on July 29 of the same year. In Gandaki Province the legislative committee is the only committee that has the authority to conduct discussions on bills that are introduced in the Province Assembly. According to the Gandaki Province Assembly Secretariat, this act was discussed in six different meetings of the legislative committee with the presence of committee members. Details on the meetings and Member of Provincial Assembly (MPAs) attendance is shown in the table below:

<b>S.N.</b>	<b>Meeting No.</b>	<b>MPAs Present</b>
1.	142	11
2.	143	7
3.	144	11
4.	145	10
5.	146	12
6.	149	12

*Source: Gandaki Province Assembly Secretariat, 2022*



## **2. POLICY HIGHLIGHTS**

The Gandaki Province passed the Gandaki Province Tourism Act, 2022, to make necessary arrangements for the convenience of domestic and foreign tourists, their interests, and to achieve economic development through the protection, promotion, and development of the tourism sector of the province.

This policy brief primarily focuses on the policy concerns and reforms that should be introduced in the Gandaki Province Tourism Act during its amendment to better regulate and enhance the Gandaki Province's tourism industry. The Gandaki Province Tourism Act, 2022 includes certain noteworthy regulations regarding registration of tourism enterprises, domestic and international tourist transportation, formation of cultural groups, domestic tourism promotion, establishment of a provincial tourism fund, declaration of provincial tourism zones, tourist police, formation of provincial tourism board, and penalties regarding disobedience of the provisions on the act. The Act, however, fails to address several critical issues.

### **3. KEY ISSUES AND ANALYSIS**

This policy brief seeks to identify the Gandaki Province Tourism Act's policy concerns and offers reform plans for those issues. To prepare this policy brief, primary and secondary data were both gathered. Interviews with key informants and meetings with stakeholders generated the primary data. The secondary data was gathered by examining this act, the Tourism Act, 1978 (a federal act), as well as other research, articles, and documents.

Despite the formulation of the Gandaki Province Tourism Act, 2022, almost five years after the establishment of the Provincial Assembly, there are still very deep issues that the Act has failed to address. According to the research's findings, some of the problems include unclear criteria for categorizing travel and trekking agencies, discriminatory and rigid rules for foreign currency transactions, harsh fines for registered agencies, no provisions for obtaining mountaineering permits from within the province, inadequate regulations for tourist transportation, and a lack of policies promoting women's empowerment. This Act also consists of some provisions that are in conflict with the federal law.

## **4. CONTEXT**

The Constitution of Nepal, 2015, which established a federal structure of government, provides a sense of optimism for the development of tourism. It provides the provincial, federal, and local governments with both sole and joint authority to formulate policy, law, and standards related to tourism. The federal Tourism Act of 1978 previously governed the travel and tourism sector. Using the authority granted by the Nepalese Constitution, Gandaki Province has designated tourism as one of its development pillars. Tourism is one of the seven main factors contributing to the province's economy (Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Gandaki Province, 2020).

With its aesthetically beautiful nature set alongside the diverse and unique culture, many places in this Province have been recognized as once in a lifetime destination by many travel advisors around the world. According to the Provincial Policy and Planning Commission, Gandaki Province (2019), 40% of tourists that visit Nepal are estimated to travel to this province. Additionally, the majority of the industry in the province is made up of tourism-related businesses, such as hotels, travel and trekking companies, restaurants, etc. Many new tourism businesses will be developed as the nation's tourism progressively picks up to handle the rising number of visitors. However, it has taken the provincial assembly almost five years to pass the Gandaki Province Tourism Act, which was finally approved on 29<sup>th</sup> of July 2022. The regulations and directories related to the Act are still being prepared. Therefore, the Act has not yet been implemented.

## 5. DETAILED REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### 5.1 Classification of Travel and Trekking Agencies

Section	Sub-section	
Section 4	Sub-section 1	The classification of travel and trekking agencies will be as prescribed.
Section 4	Sub-section 2	Classified travel and trekking agencies as per sub-section 1 can be given facilities as specified by the provincial government

Section 4 of the Act provides the classification of travel and trekking agencies, with the provincial government providing facilities based on that classification. However, there is no mention of the criteria for categorizing travel and trekking agencies. It is unclear whether the classification is based on the quality of the services offered, the size of the travel and trekking agencies, or the type of services provided. As a result of the lack of clarity in this provision, confusion has increased rather than decreased.

In 1997, when the federal Tourism Act of 1978 was amended, a similar clause was included. However, the failure to create rules, processes, and categorization indicators prevented the amendment to that section from being put into effect. It is unclear whether the inclusion of this section was done purely for show or whether it genuinely serves to categorize travel and trekking agencies because most of the provisions in this act are verbatim duplicates of federal law, including this one.

### **Recommendations**

It is essential to categorize travel and trekking companies since it gives us a foundation for determining the standard or range of services they offer. Based on the classification of the travel agency, customers can also choose their travel. It aids in streamlining and improving the convenience of the travel booking service sector. The provincial government could specify in advance how travel and trekking agencies will be categorized under this Act. While amending the act, this provision could be stated in a clearer manner. Additionally, under this Act, specifics on the agency classification could be specified in the regulations and directories.

## 5.2 Price Publication

Section	Sub-section	
Section 6	Sub-section 1	The travel and trekking agency licensed according to this Act shall provide information to the Ministry regarding the rates and details of the fees charged for the facilities provided by it.
Section 6	Sub-section 2	The fee rate as per sub-section (1) shall be published in the format prescribed by the Ministry

According to Section 6 of this Act, travel and trekking companies must give the Ministry information in a predetermined manner on the rates and specifics of the fees they charge for the services they offer. However, in reality, the prices and details of the fees charged for the services provided by travel and trekking agencies can fluctuate frequently as a result of a number of factors, such as seasonality, demand, fuel prices, frequent changes in the prices of lodging and dining establishments, the types of packages, the uncertainty of tourists adding activities and days outside of regular packages, etc. On the other hand, in upper hilly and mountainous regions, the prices charged by teahouses and guesthouses often fluctuate according to the number of travelers. Therefore, it is extremely challenging and time-consuming for travel and trekking businesses to regularly inform and update the Ministry. Under these circumstances, agencies are compelled to create tour packages that fit the predetermined format by publishing fees and facts in the manner specified by the Ministry. Additionally, it might prevent travel and trekking companies from developing new, creative tour packages that appeal to a wider spectrum of tourists. As a result, it might be difficult to draw in new types of visitors, which would limit the province's tourism potential. Additionally, the act makes no mention of the procedure or format for informing/notifying the ministry. Thus, this provision might lead to more needless government intervention and demonstrate a lack of confidence on the part of the government in travel and trekking companies, potentially leading to conflict between the government and the private sector rather than fostering cooperation to grow the province's tourism industry.

### Recommendations

This Act should be amended to eliminate the need for travel and trekking agencies to update their price lists so frequently. The provision should be changed to require the travel and trekking companies to give tourists the price they charge for package deals during specific months or fiscal quarters. Giving these businesses time allows them to focus on their services completely rather than worrying about government paperwork. Additionally, the predetermined format for the price list should be eliminated

to allow the agencies to develop unique, high-quality tour packages with a variety of price points. To make it easier for agencies to update their pricing lists, there should also be a provision in the Act that allows information to be provided to the ministry via electronic means.

### 5.3 Foreign Currency Transaction

Section	Sub-section	
Section 7	Sub-section 1	According to this Act, when travel and trekking agencies provide services to foreign tourists, they must make transactions in such a way that the bill is paid in the convertible foreign currency specified by the Government of Nepal.
Section 7	Sub-section 2	According to sub-section (1), all foreign currency transactions earned within Nepal or abroad should be done through Nepal Rastra Bank

According to Section 7 of the Act, when offering services to foreign visitors, travel and trekking companies must do business in such a way that the bill is paid in the convertible foreign currency designated by the Government of Nepal. The Nepal Rastra Bank must be used for any transactions involving foreign money. However, it is quite difficult for travel and trekking firms to trade in foreign currency for some simple services offered, especially for straightforward operations like selling a bus ticket to a foreign visitor. It unquestionably influences or hinders the travel agents' ability to give high-quality services. Although it is a good practice to carry out transactions so that the bill is paid in convertible foreign currency, doing so for every service they offer, no matter how minor, will actually lower the quality of the tourist services they provide in order to raise foreign exchange. Obtaining a license for foreign currency transactions is a difficult process. Additionally, the regulations that apply to enterprises when transacting in foreign currency, such as the requirement to deposit the money in the Rastra Bank within 24 hours of the transaction, are not conducive to commerce. However, hotels, restaurants, lodges, bars, and resorts are not required to transact in convertible foreign money for the services they offer to foreign tourists. Because of this, it appears that the provisions of this Act favor hotels, restaurants, resorts, lodges, and bars over travel and trekking companies. Such provisions are not at all encouraging to travel and trekking business.

### Recommendations

Government policy and legislation should include elements that are advantageous to businesses (Turok, 2010). After all, these tourism-related businesses, including travel and trekking companies, frequently have direct contact with tourists and help to create a positive perception of the destination through the services they offer. While creating rules and regulations, the government must concentrate on making it simpler for these enterprises to deliver services (Liu et al., 2020). Therefore, the Act needs a clause allowing travel and trekking companies the discretion to forgo using foreign currency for

simple transactions like purchasing a bus ticket. If done so, the dispute over the discrepancy in foreign currency transactions for services between hotels, resorts, etc., and travel and trekking companies can also be resolved. Furthermore, good communication with the Nepal Rastra Bank is required in order to include features that make it convenient for travel and trekking agencies to conduct foreign currency transactions.



## 5.4 Penalties

Section	Sub-section	
Section 21	Sub-section 1	If anyone operates a travel and trekking agency without obtaining a license as per Section 3, the Ministry may order the closure of such agency or business and fine him/her up to twenty thousand rupees.
Section 21	Sub-section 2	The ministry may fine up to ten thousand rupees for the first offense and from ten thousand rupees to twenty thousand rupees for the second offense, if the information regarding the fee is not published according to section 6.
Section 21	Sub-section 3	The Ministry may fine a person who violates sub-section 1 of section 7 for the first time up to forty thousand rupees and for the second time from forty thousand to eighty thousand rupees.
Section 21	Sub-section 10	If a person engaged in the tourism business as per Sections 3, 9, and 20 violates the rules issued under this Act or the instructions or orders issued by the Ministry, the Ministry may fine such person up to twenty thousand rupees.

Section 21, sub-section 1 of this act penalizes anyone who operates a travel and trekking agency without registering or obtaining a license with a fine of up to twenty thousand rupees and the immediate closure of the business. Similarly, according to sub-sections 2, 3, and 10 of the same section: a.) if a registered and licensed travel and trekking agency fails to publish information about its fees, the fine is up to twenty thousand rupees; b.) if transactions are not conducted in convertible foreign currency while providing services to foreign tourists, the fine is up to eighty thousand rupees; and c.) if a person operating a travel and trekking agency violates the regulations established by this Act, the Ministry's directives, or orders, they could face a fine of up to 20,000 rupees. The main issue regarding the fines for licensed/registered travel and trekking agencies and unlicensed agencies is that the fines for unlicensed agencies is far lower than the fines for registered agencies. Therefore, unregistered operators could escape punishment more easily than those who operate within the boundaries of the law. In addition, the inspection for registered and unregistered travel and trekking agencies is done very

rarely by the respective authorities. As a result, it might entice individuals to operate without a license or registration rather than obtain one.

### **Recommendations**

Both enterprises and customers are protected by laws and regulations. There may be a number of repercussions for breaking the laws, and penalties are an efficient way to keep organizations on track (Aproskie & Goga, 2011). Firms shouldn't be discouraged by such fines. By using effective and inventive consequences, the government must make it a priority to keep travel and trekking agencies inside the law. Therefore, the above-mentioned penalty issues should be modified as part of this Act's amendment. In hopes of preventing agencies from conducting business without registration, it may include provisions for more severe penalties for the second and subsequent violations of Section 21 of the Act.

## 5.5 Mountaineering Related Provision

Section	Sub-section	
Section 22	Sub-section 1	No mountaineering party shall attempt to climb any mountains without obtaining permission in accordance with prevailing laws.
Section 22	Sub-section 2	Other arrangements related to mountain climbing will be as per the prevailing laws and regulations

Section 22 of the act states that mountaineering activities within the province must be carried out in accordance with the prevailing law, with all other arrangements also carried out in accordance with the prevailing laws and regulations. However, the federal government has the jurisdiction to establish national mountaineering policy, law, standards, planning, execution, and regulation under Provision 29 of Schedule 5 of the Constitution of Nepal. As a result, all mountaineering expeditions require permission from the federal Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Civil Aviation (MoCTCA). Among the 123 mountain peaks that are open for mountaineering, three of the fourteen mountains in the world that are higher than 8000 meters are located in Gandaki Province, according to the Department of Tourism (DOT, 2019). However, the Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), a non-profit organization, issues mountaineering permits under a federal government provision for 24 different peaks throughout Nepal, including six summits in the Gandaki province (NMA, n.d.). Under the current system, tourists must obtain a permit from the Federal Ministry of Tourism in Kathmandu. Moreover, if tourists in Gandaki Province want to summit a certain peak in the province, they have to go to Kathmandu, complete all the processes for obtaining a permit, and return back to the province to climb the mountain. This has made the process of obtaining a permit very cumbersome.

### Recommendations

Gandaki Province has the potential to draw alpinists from all over the world and develop itself into a mountaineering hub. Mountaineering offers the province a unique opportunity to position itself as a legitimate tourism destination. Despite the fact that the federal government is in charge of collecting the royalties from mountaineering operations, the province can still profit from it by supporting local workers and businesses. Nonetheless, it is crucial that the provincial government issues mountaineering licenses autonomously rather than federal government in order to make this process simpler and the sport more accessible. It must also be the province's top priority for tourism development. Hence, the amendment of this act could include provisions that lets the establishment of separate non-government and non-profit organizations similar to the NMA that can issue permits and promote mountaineering activities within the province.

## 5.6 Tourist Transportation

Section	Sub-section	
Section 31	Sub-section 1	The provincial government can operate tourist transport services by itself or through any association or company to provide quality transport facilities to internal and external tourists.

Section 31, sub-section 1 of the Act states that the provincial government may operate tourist transportation services either directly or through any association or company in order to provide quality transportation to both internal and external tourists.

However, the federal government's Motor Vehicles and Traffic Management Act, 1993 defines a tourist vehicle/transport service as "a public vehicle with a certificate of registration to serve foreign tourists." As a result, a tourist vehicle cannot legally serve domestic tourists because the Motor Vehicles and Traffic Management Act does not contain similar provisions for domestic tourists. In practice, however, many tourist vehicles, particularly tourist buses, are packed with Nepali tourists. Domestic tourism has recently become a major source of revenue for tourism businesses, and tourism transportation is no exception. Indeed, domestic tourists helped the tourism industry, including tourist transportation businesses, survive the COVID-19 crisis (Dahal, 2020). There is no reason to limit tourist vehicles to international visitors only.

However, this Act makes no changes to the provisions that allow tourist vehicles to transport domestic tourists. The provincial government is required to operate two separate transportation services for domestic and international tourists. Instead of providing quality transportation services to tourists, managing two separate transportation services may become more difficult. Furthermore, transportation services, particularly buses for international tourists, are more advanced and convenient, whereas public transportation is not. Because the majority of domestic tourists are perfectly capable of consuming quality transportation services, the provisions of the Act also appear to discriminate between domestic and international tourists. As a result, the inclusion of Section 31 in this act without addressing the issue of Section 3 of the Motor Vehicles and Traffic Management Act, 1993 may complicate the delivery of tourist transportation services within the province.

### Recommendations

The functionality of tourist vehicles should be explicitly expanded by the Gandaki Province Tourism Act to accommodate both domestic and foreign tourists. For instance, the Province Tourism Act (2022) of Bagmati Province refers to both domestic and foreign visitors as "tourists" and any type of traveler may be transported by a tourist vehicle. Therefore, in order to lawfully provide tourist vehicle services for

both domestic and foreign tourists, the Gandaki Province Tourism Act, 2022 may have regulations akin to those in the Bagmati Province Tourism Act, 2022. If done so, the province can provide quality transportation services to both domestic and foreign tourists without using separate vehicles for two different types of tourists. Additionally, the legislation should give the private sector the sole authority to operate transportation services and the government's role should be limited to formulating regulations and conducting oversight rather than directly participating in running businesses within the province.

## 5.7 Contradiction with Federal Law

The Provincial Assembly of the Gandaki Province passed the Tourism Act on 29th July 2022, five years after the provincial assembly was formed. However, approximately three provisions of this act contradict with the Tourism Act 1978 of the federal government. The conflicting provisions with the federal Act are mentioned below:

S.N.	Topic	Federal Act	Provincial Act
1.	Clarification time before suspension of license of travel and trekking agencies	Provision of 15 days period to submit clarification before suspending license as per section 7 sub-section 2.	Provision of 15 days period to submit clarification before suspending license as per section 7 sub-section 2.
2.	Time for clarification for trekking guides	According to sub-section 2 of section 44, the provision of 15 days to submit an explanation before revoking the license of any trekking guide.	According to sub-section 2 of section 19, the provision of 21 days to submit an explanation before revoking the license of any trekking guide.
3.	Deadline to maintain the standard	Sub-section 2 of section 12 provides for the provision of a reasonable time frame to maintain the specified standard if the quality of the licensed hotels, lodges, restaurants, and resorts, or hotels is not up to the specified standards.	Sub-section 2 of Section 12 provides for a maximum of seven days to maintain the specified level if the quality of the licensed hotel, lodge, restaurant and resort, or hotel is not up to the specified standards.

## Recommendation

According to Article 1 of Nepal's constitution, "Any law that contradicts with the law of the federal government will not be valid." Therefore, to conform with the federal law, it is necessary to change the Gandaki Province Tourism Act's conflicting provisions.

## **5.8 No Provisions for Empowerment of Women Entrepreneurs, Travel and Trekking Guides**

Every industry in Nepal is dominated by men, including travel and tourism (Asian Development Bank, 2020). Female entrepreneurs and workers are disproportionately underrepresented in Nepal's tourism sector (Palikhe, 2018), and the Gandaki province is no exception. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which is accomplished through 17 Sustainable Development Goals, was also adopted by Nepal. The Sustainable Development Goals 5, 8, and 10 are consistent with increasing the participation of women and minimizing gender disparities in the tourism industry. Similarly, given that the Gandaki province is a major destination for both domestic and foreign tourists and that the provincial government views the tourism sector as the main source of prosperity, it is necessary to prioritize this industry in order to lay the groundwork for a sustainable provincial economy through sustainable tourism development (First Five Year Plan of Gandaki Province, 2019). Similarly, the province also intends to promote gender equality in all areas to create an inclusive province for everyone. Therefore, it is essential to empower female entrepreneurs and workers in the tourism industry in order to ensure sustainable tourism development within the province. However, the act does not contain any provisions aimed at increasing the participation of women in the province's tourism industry. Some problems still exist as a result of the underrepresentation of women in all facets of tourism (Upadhyay, 2021). For female travelers who prefer to travel with female staff, it can be challenging to find female porters and travel and trekking guides. The inclusiveness aspect of this Act is questioned when sections relating to women's empowerment are absent.

### **Recommendations**

The provincial government should provide subsidies to companies formed by women as well as female tourism workers to ensure equal representation opportunities for women and to empower women entrepreneurs and workers. Registration and licensing fees may be waived or reduced as part of these subsidies. Given that the biggest barrier to the expansion of women-owned businesses is access to finance, there should be a legal requirement to offer them low-interest loans (Ranabhat, 2022). Additionally, to address the issue of the demand for female tour guides and porters, the amendment to this Act should also include free guide training for women, equal pay requirements, etc.

## **5.9 No Provisions for Conservation and Sustainable Tourism**

Tourism, environment, culture, and society are all interdependent. Therefore, when creating acts and policies, it is important to keep in mind how to promote and manage tourism such that the preservation of the environment and culture is a major component of achieving sustainable development (Liu, 2003). A balance must be struck between these components in order to achieve a sustainable tourism practice because the great majority of tourism operations are directly dependent on the natural environment, culture, and host locations. (Dolnicar & Leisch, 2008). The fundamental problem with Gandaki Province's tourism law is that it contains very few if any, provisions for the preservation of the natural environment, the local culture, and the tourist destination itself.

A very good provision is made in section 24 of the Act for the preservation of traditional culture, knowledge, and groups. Similarly, section 27 of the act includes provisions for the creation and administration of a provincial tourism fund. However, the usage of the tourism fund is restricted to providing assistance and rescue to tourism workers. In reality, the Act could have expanded the scope of the tourism fund to include initiatives to preserve the natural environment of the host locations, but it did not. Additionally, some of the components that this Act could have not left out include the tourist code of conduct for responsible tourism, corporate social responsibility of the tourism business for conservation, and preservation of nature and culture. However, neglecting to address the elements of sustainable tourism shows that sustainability is not important to the province.

## **Recommendations**

This Act should be amended to include additional provisions pertaining to the sustainable development of the province's tourism industry. Coherent provisions that benefit both people and the environment as a whole should be added to the Act in order to accomplish this. In order to develop responsible tourism within the province, the first amendment to this Act should include the creation of the provincial tourist code of conduct. Additionally, tourism businesses should be required to use a portion of their profits to support the growth and preservation of tourist destinations, the environment, and culture as part of their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts. The tourism fund mentioned in Section 27 of the Act should also be applied to conservation initiatives. Lastly, subsidizing alternative tourism pursuits like ecotourism, village tourism, etc. could also help encourage sustainable tourism activities.



### **5.10 A Verbatim Copy of Federal Law in Many Provisions**

The Nepalese Constitution grants the province the authority to create its own laws and policies to enhance tourism development within the province. In order to develop the province's tourism industry, the province can make laws based on its geographical, cultural, and socioeconomic characteristics. The province of Gandaki is a nexus of environment and culture with tremendous potential for tourism growth. To fully capitalize on its tourism potential, the province must enact its own pertinent laws. However, this Act has simply duplicated the majority of the federal tourism act's provisions by making only a few minor changes and introducing relatively few new ones. There is no need to replicate the provisions of a federal act for the province when the province has the right and opportunity to make its own laws. Nevertheless, it appears that the province is still unable to fully exercise its rights to create its own set of laws and policies.

### **Recommendations**

The province should fully exercise its right to create its own tourism act by including provisions that assist the private sector in fully exploiting the province's tourism potential. For this, the Act should be amended and new provisions that solely address tourism issues specific to the province should be introduced. Gandaki province is diverse in terms of both biodiversity and cultural diversity. While developing tourism laws for the province, the province's environmental and cultural diversity should be taken into account. As a result, when these laws are drafted, the private sector must be given flexibility to accommodate new types of tourism activities other than traditional tours, trekking, adventure activities, and mountaineering activities. Priority should be given to introducing new concepts of tourism activities appropriate for the province's tourism products, such as culinary tourism, sustainable tourism and eco-friendly tourism. As a result, the province must be creative enough to develop its own set of laws rather than merely replicating federal laws.

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## About Pokhara Research Centre!!!

**Pokhara Research Centre (PRC)** is a research-based non-partisan organization based in Pokhara. Established in 2019, PRC focuses on socioeconomic dimensions of domestic public policy research.

Guided by the motto of "*Economic Freedom with Good Governance*", PRC is following the international principle of individual choice and liberty translated into the equal opportunity of enterprise, rule of law, and the democratic principle of free expression as a tool to design its programs and initiatives; creating positive impact at the province level, through policy reform; PRC works under three broad functional domains; Research, Training, and Advocacy.

PRC's one of flagship program Youth in Policy and Governance Fellowship Programme (YPG Fellowship) aims to train the youth of Gandaki Province in law-making and public policy. The primary role of a PPSP Fellow is to deliver extensive research support to their assigned MP for their parliamentary work. The organization is also focusing on other youth training programs on the free market, entrepreneurship, and economic freedom in the region supported by Atlas.

The organization's core values are; Creating public values, Evidence-based policy-making, and the investment approach to public service delivery. PRC intervenes in areas viz. Enterprise Development, Economic Policy Reform, Governance & Advocacy, and Public Policy Delivery.

The organization has launched programs such as Gandaki Discourse, Political Economic Discussion Series (PEDS), and Formation of Gandaki Leader Circle (GLC) dedicating it to establishing itself as a state-level policy think tank.

Further, PRC is the partner of Atlas Network, Centre for International Private Enterprise, National Endowment for Democracy, United States Embassy in Kathmandu, Samriddhi Foundation, Hriti Foundation, and Bikalpa n Alternative.



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