

Advancing

Pokhara's

Tourism Potential

A study on Tourism Development Act 2020



Sujata Dhakal

**Advancing Pokhara's Tourism Potential:
Policy Brief on
Tourism Development Act 2020**

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Pokhara-11 Fulbari, Gandaki Province, Nepal

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Published in June, 2023

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The completion of this Policy Brief, “Advancing Pokhara's Tourism Potential: Policy Brief on Tourism Development Act 2020”, has been made possible through the collaborative efforts and support of various individuals and organizations.

I would like to extend my heartfelt appreciation to Ms. Laxmi Sampath Goyal, the Former Chief Executive Director of the Centre for Civil Society (CCS), India, for her invaluable guidance throughout the course of this research endeavor.

I am grateful to Mr. Bharat Raj Paudel, Information Officer of PMC, Mr. Romnath Upadhyaya, Secretary of the Tourism Development Committee of PMC, Mr. Narayan Pd. Sharma, Department Head, Department of Law, PMC, and Mr. Manahar Kadariya, Senior Horticulture Development Officer, Agriculture Development Department of PMC, for their valuable contributions and assistance throughout the research process.

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to Mr. Sujan Regmi, Executive Director of PRC, for his direct guidance, which played a crucial role in shaping this paper. I would like to thank all individuals who have directly or indirectly contributed by identifying key issues, providing guidance, and offering valuable feedback and comments. The participation of government officers, former bureaucrats, and academicians has been immensely encouraging and enriching.

Lastly, I express my special thanks to our fellow colleagues at PRC for their dedicated efforts in assisting with the preparation of this policy brief. Their support has been invaluable. I would like to express my gratitude to Mr. Biruj Adhikari Kshetri for his exceptional creativity in designing and formatting this policy brief.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In pursuit of advancing economic prosperity in Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC), Pokhara Research Centre (PRC) is dedicated to conducting evidence-based policy research aimed at fostering citizen participation in policymaking, thereby facilitating the development of an informed society. Recognizing the significance of tourism in both economic and social sectors, Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) has prioritized tourism as a key driver of development. To this end, the Tourism Development Act 2020 was introduced and passed by the eighth municipal assembly.

The act primarily focuses on establishing local executive institutions responsible for planning, supervising, managing, conserving, and promoting tourism development in PMC. Each committee is equipped with specific rights, rules, and regulations to guide their operations and fulfill predetermined objectives, along with a fixed number of committee members. While two committees fall under the jurisdiction of PMC, the remaining one operates under the Homestay Operation and Management Act of Gandaki Province.

PRC conducted a comprehensive study involving key informant interviews with relevant stakeholders and desk research to gather secondary data. Through these endeavors, specific issues pertaining to the act were identified, and based on global trends and best practices, potential recommendations were formulated.

This policy brief provides a critical analysis of the Tourism Development Act 2020, highlighting key problem areas and proposing actionable recommendations. By aligning the findings with international standards and emerging trends, the aim is to contribute to the effective implementation and enhancement of the act for the sustainable growth of tourism in PMC.

ABBREVIATIONS

PRC	:	Pokhara Research Centre
PMC	:	Pokhara Metropolitan City
GDP	:	Gross Domestic Product
WCED	:	World Commission on Environment and Development
DST	:	Dubai Sustainable Tourism
DET	:	Department of Economy and Tourism
ICT	:	Information Technology

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1. Background

Pokhara, known as Nepal's tourism hub, is a scenic city with many lakes and serves as a gateway to trekking and mountaineering expeditions. On March 10, 2017, the official establishment of Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) covered an area of 464.24 square kilometers. PMC has a population of 402,995 distributed across 33 wards. It plays a vital role in the tourism industry, contributing approximately 10% to the national GDP.

Nepal's governance system shifted from a unitary state to a federal structure, resulting in the creation of 753 local levels across the country. Pokhara Metropolitan Municipality functions as a local government among these tiers. Initially, in 2016, there were 13 wards in Pokhara, but the number increased over time to 18, with the addition of wards 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 in 2033, 2037, and 2052, respectively.

As per the 2015 constitution, Pokhara became a metropolitan city, leading to an expansion of ward numbers. It was named Pokhara Lekhnath Metropolitan Municipality and incorporated various areas. However, in response to a request from the Municipal Council, the government decided to remove the "Lekhnath" part from the name, renaming it Pokhara Metropolitan Municipality. Currently, the metropolitan city comprises 33 wards. There has been a persistent agenda of declaring PMC a "Tourism Capital."

Devolution of power, as outlined in the 2015 constitution, involves sharing authority between the central authority and its constituent units to ensure efficient and responsive governance. Devolution decentralizes power and authority constitutionally to the sub-national level of government, enabling the decentralization of development benefits and improving service delivery. The division of powers among federal, provincial, and local levels forms the basis of Nepal's federal system of governance.

According to Schedule 8, the local government has the authority to protect and promote language, culture, and sculptures. This includes regulating policies, laws, and standards for tourism enterprises, as well as managing tourism royalties and fees. The constitution also establishes shared rights among the federal, provincial, and local tiers of government, aligning with the objectives of the Tourism Development Act.

The federal government has various organizational structures and frameworks to fulfill the functions and objectives of tourism-related acts, statutes, and policies. Similarly, PMC, through its Tourism Development Act 2020, has provisions for the development of three institutions: the Metropolitan Tourism Development Committee, Ward Tourism Promotion Committee, and Pokhara Municipality Homestay Operation Committee, each with their specific roles and responsibilities.

Tourism significantly contributes to the socio-cultural, economic, and environmental aspects of development. It

has a multiplier effect on the host destination, supporting the management of local markets, promoting local revenue, and facilitating the operation and management of traditional, religious, and festival activities, as well as watershed and wildlife preservation. The development lens of tourism is closely linked to health, education, and sports.

When discussing tourism, it is essential to acknowledge the local organization operating within the tourism sector. Here are a few key tourism entities within Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC):

- Nepal Tourism Board (NTB)
- Immigration Office
- Pokhara Tourist Bookshop Association (PTBA)
- Pokhara Money Changers Association (PMCA)
- Fewa Boat Association, Pokhara
- Nepal Association of Rafting Agents (NARA), Pokhara
- Tourism Entrepreneur Women Association Nepal (TEWAN)
- Women Tourism Entrepreneur Forum (WOTEF)
- Embroidery And Garment Association
- VITOF Kaski
- Tourist Transport Committee
- Pokhara Bus Entrepreneurs Association
- Trekking (Equipment Shop Association (TESA)
- Taxi Association Pokhara (TAP)
- Pokhara Chambers of Commerce and Industry (PCCI)
- Nepal Air Sport Association
- Nepal Association of Tour and Travels (NATTA) Pokhara
- Trekking Agencies Association of Nepal (TAAN), Pokhara
- Paschim Anchal Hotel Association, Pokhara
- Pokhara Tourism Council
- Annapurna Conservation Area Project
- Tourism Office Pokhara

2. Policy Highlights

To develop, expand, protect and promote the tourist heritage, social, cultural, economic, institutional, environmental, and information technology to develop sustainable tourism in Pokhara. The Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) passed the Tourism Development Act 2020 from its eighth municipal assembly on 6 February 2020, exercising the right of article 102(1) of the Local Government Operation Act 2017 and exclusive and concurrent powers disseminated to the local government by the constitution of Nepal.

The act majorly focuses on the local executive institution formation to operate/supervise and manage the plans and programs and to conserve and promote the tourism development of PMC. The act is indistinct on the formation of three tourism development committees working on the different levels of the local government, namely: Metropolitan Tourism Development Committee, Ward Tourism Development Committee, and Home Stay Operation Committee respectively. The first two institutions are to be formed in the initiation of the PMC at the metropolitan and ward level, whereas the Home Stay Operation Committee comes under the provincial homestay management committee working procedures. Each committee is provided with sets of rights/ rules and regulations to guide them in order to meet the objectives and the fixed number of members in committee formation. The act aims for the proper management of tourism potential and sustainable tourism in Pokhara Metropolitan City. Some of the key objectives of the acts are:

- Safeguarding and enhancing the natural and cultural tourism assets present in PMC.
- Establishing a strong brand and effective marketing strategies for local products.
- Creating job opportunities through the growth and diversification of tourism-related businesses and enterprises.
- Cultivating PMC as a secure, trustworthy, and high-quality tourism destination by prioritizing sustainable management practices.
- Promoting sustainable tourism in the Pokhara metropolitan area, ensuring the delivery of exceptional services, and supporting the establishment and development of necessary institutions for tourism promotion.

3. Key Issues Analysis

The declaration of Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) as the tourism capital has long been a promise in the agendas of local candidates and eagerly awaited by the residents. PMC's diverse tourism assets hold great potential for its economic growth and development. However, the effectiveness of its policies and their implementation may pose significant challenges. The initial introduction of the tourism development act was delayed by a considerable period of five years. Even after its enactment, numerous concerns continue to hinder the progress of tourism development in PMC. One of the primary issues pertains to the documentation process and procedural aspects surrounding the formulation and passing of the act. This includes clarifying the timeline of its introduction, the number of meetings held, and the topics discussed. Furthermore, the act's initial focus appears to be primarily on tourism infrastructure and heritage, overlooking crucial considerations for providing amenities to tourists.

Institution formation lacks the inclusion of environmental and cultural experts. There is also no such inclusion for the indigenous or women members in the committee proposed to form. The action and implementation entity

are a crucial part of any policy. In this context, the absence of execution of this policy is the major issue. PMC doesn't have a separate tourism department formed for the policy to execute. Even after 2 years of the policy being introduced, its implementation seems to be naught with no formation of all three committees, hence, no development of the working procedures, working rules/ regulations. Formulation of committee do not result in formation of working procedures, rules and regulations but committees should be formed only after making those documents, this mandates the committees to carry out responsibilities and duties mandated by those documents. Despite the decentralization of power in all committees proposed to be formed, the jurisdictional ambiguities are making its role more confusing and repetitive. The compulsion of requirement to get the recommendation letter from the committee regardless for tourism businesses after submitting the application to the responsible institution for the tourism firm's establishment and operation in the local level makes the process even more prolonged and bothersome.

4. Context

The tourism development act was only formed and introduced 5 years after the adoption of federalism in Nepal. Despite taking a long time to formulate the act, no documentation are kept regarding the details of formulation which shows a huge negligence for development of tourism in the city, which may also indicate that the tourism act is developed for formality on paper only. Following it, officials' response, reasoning for the lack of process recording is due to the unformed responsible tourism department. Currently, the projects and programs demanded related to tourism are ratified by the department of Environment, whereas other tourism-related papers work gets done under the administrative department. In the fiscal year (2020/21), 2 crores 46 lakhs from the local budget were allocated for tourism development programs.

In the fiscal year 2021/22, the local government allocated a budget of 26 crores and 67 lakhs for the tourism and agricultural departments to carry out various programs (Budget Statement, 2021). These programs aimed to encourage private investment in tourism-related infrastructure construction and the immediate development of low-cost tourism infrastructure. However, the budget speech for the Fiscal Year 2022/23 does not provide specific information on the allocation of funds for tourism development. Despite the stated objectives and priorities of the budget, tourism development and promotion were not given separate budgetary consideration.

Instead, the budget for tourism development falls under either infrastructure development or road and transportation development. Several programs have been identified in official documents, such as the Advertisement of PMC as the tourism capital and the establishment of Pokhara as the agri-tourism hub. Additionally, various initiatives including the construction of connecting roads from one lake to another, preservation of lakes, introduction of boat services to the Gupteshwor cave system, pavement construction, and

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the establishment of tourism information centers in bus parks and airports, were mentioned in official records. However, the actual implementation of these programs is yet to be realized. Budgets have been allocated and spent without proper Documentation. The failure to effectively implement the formulated policies has prevented the government from rectifying the situation.

5. Detailed Review

5.1. Regulatory Body Oversight

Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) while being in proceeding to declare itself the tourism capital of Nepal and also has a chunk of revenue collection from the tourism enterprise does not have a department of tourism to synchronize/ regulate the policies/acts passed as it seeks to increase comfort and uplift the standard of the tourism sector of PMC. After 7 years of transaction of government into federalism or the decentralization of power for the betterment of each sector, PMC could not manage to form the tourism department, which would be majorly responsible to execute the tourism-related plans and programs for tourism development. It could facilitate the functioning of the tourism sector by providing professional advice and support for the creation of sustainable tourism plans and policies, engaging in marketing and promoting the country, and providing a general visionary orientation for the development of the tourism sector.

The administrative department and the division of urban development, tourism, and the environment look after other tourism- related works, but the context here is about the decentralization of power and role dissemination of the governmental institution. The act mentions the formation of three institutions viz: Metropolitan tourism development committee, ward tourism development committee, and PMC homestay regulation committee, which will need a separate department of tourism that will be responsible for monitoring, guiding, and resource management for the purposed committee of the Tourism Development Act.

Specifying department roles avoids role confusion and repetition, development of a separate department also can counsel the committees in the working ethical dilemmas also. For e.g.: Bhaktapur Metropolitan city of Nepal, which is famous for its ancient architecture, and cultural heritages have a separate heritage department that works for the preservation/ protection/promotion of the heritage sites only. This not just shows the importance of unaccompanied departments for the protection of the heritage but also the reliability and role clearance regarding the specific functions.

5.2. Act Implementation Shortfall

The Tourism Development Act was introduced in 2020, and certified on 6 February 2020, which is five years after the metropolitan had gained its power to formulate its own laws. Even after completing 2 years of formulation of the act, there is no execution of the act. Tourism-related plans and projects are ratified/carried out

without weighing up the act, which clearly shows the haphazard working process. The major purpose of the act is to bring the practice of decree and order to the functioning, which PMC is lacking in itself. No execution of the act means no chance for it to improve or fill the gap that comes in between the policy intention and outcome. When the act itself doesn't come into execution, the working procedures, code of conduct, and other necessary guiding documents cannot be made, which incompletes the act itself also. Hence, PMC is not utilizing its right provided to it by the system of federalism.

5.3. Legislative Provision Disruption

Firstly, the lack of inclusive and gender responsive committee formation as per the article 3, 6 and 9 is the major problem on the act. Despite the given issue, the establishment of the metropolitan tourism development committee strays from the provision for committee formation as outlined in the act. As per the act, the committee should consist of nine members, with the Mayor of the PMC serving as the committee president, an expert in tourism appointed by the Metropolitan Executive Officer as the Vice Chairperson, three members from the Metropolitan Assembly appointed by the Metropolitan Executive Officer, three individuals with expertise in tourism appointed by the Mayor, and one designated official responsible for overseeing the tourism sector of the Metropolitan Municipality, serving as the secretary.

However, in contravention of the committee formation provision, the PMC has established a metropolitan tourism development committee with a total of ten members, exceeding the prescribed composition by one additional member.

5.4. Institutional Responsibility Quandary and Procedural Length

The policy issue at hand pertains to Article 10, Sub article 1 of the act, which designates the Metropolitan Tourism Development Committee as the authority responsible for granting permissions to tourism-related businesses and enterprises. According to the provision, even after applicants submit their applications to the ward offices, an additional requirement is imposed whereby recommendation letters from the Metropolitan Tourism Development Committee are needed. This prerogative granted to the committee is posing a significant obstacle for citizens and resulting in unnecessary delays in the licensing process, causing inconvenience and frustration for the applicants.

5.5. Negligence in procedural documentation

The right to information only applies as the fundamental right of the citizen, when there happens to be the documentation or recording of the governmental data and particulars. Act development is not a one-day process, the necessity/idea goes through various processes to prepare itself as an act. From the formulation of the conception letter to proposal development, legal verification, billing, etc. there are several seen and unseen

procedures that the public has the right to ask for. Not just the public, but the policymakers themselves can use the documentation or record the reference or case studies for further improvement. The tourism development act 2077 doesn't have any development record of its own.

There is no manuscript or documented information about the major questions, such as when was the bill introduced, and how many debates took place. and what are the points debated or corrected? Presence of sectorial stakeholder and their numbers in the meetings etc. Without the documentation of the policy/act development procedure, policymakers don't let themselves and the researchers, academicians or any stakeholders, have the space for correction and recommendation, hence it leads to loopholes in the act and unwanted policy outcomes.

The committee in question lacks a definitive date for documentation, thereby indicating a significant oversight on the part of the relevant authority responsible for archiving. This raises concerns regarding the accountability and transparency of the local government, which serves as the representative body for the citizens at the grassroots level.

5.6. Multifaceted Gap: The Preamble's Failure to Encompass Various Aspects of Tourism

Whether it's the policymakers, bureaucrats, or the public who study or practice, the impacting factor of any act is its preamble. The purpose behind the development of action is the major concern that any individual first checks for. The Tourism Development Act 2077 of Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) has missed mentioning the dynamics of tourism besides the tourism heritage. Tourism is a broad concept that comprises different components. The preamble of the tourism development act hence has not clearly mentioned the major components as tourists, Tourism enterprises, i.e.: Hotels, Restaurants, Adventure etc. The answer to the “why” of any Act should precisely cover the factor which determines the sense of inclusiveness and enfolds the idea of other tourism-related spheres.

5.7. Institutional Role Inconsistencies

The Act includes provisions in Article 3, 6, and 8, outlining the establishment of three distinct institutions responsible for the development and promotion of tourism in PMC. These institutions have designated bodies comprising predetermined members, including the mayor, along with defined objectives, duties, and responsibilities. However, it is observed that the first institution, namely the Metropolitan Tourism Management Committee, possesses broad objectives and similar duties and responsibilities, which results in a contradiction with the functions of the other institutions, i.e.: Development and Promotion of local cultural heritage. and This decentralization of power and responsibilities appears to generate role conflicts within the system. Consequently, it can be concluded that the Act lacks clear demarcation and separation of powers among these institutions.

5.8. Disregard for Sustainable and Ecotourism Standards

The existing policy issue revolves around Article 4 and 7 of the Tourism Development Act, which outlines the objectives, duties, and responsibilities of the committees involved. Regrettably, there is a noticeable absence of necessary consideration for the vital principles of sustainable and ecotourism within these provisions.

To ensure a more robust and responsible approach to tourism development, it is imperative to prioritize sustainable and ecotourism practices. Such practices can be achieved by developing alternative and niche tourism destinations and products. By integrating these concepts into the objectives and responsibilities of the committees, we can proactively address the environmental and socio-cultural impacts of tourism while fostering long-term sustainable growth. By rectifying this policy gap, we can promote tourism development that harmonizes with ecological preservation, respects local communities, and contributes to the overall well-being of the destination.

The relationship between tourism and the environment is intricately intertwined. Given the complex and contentious nature of tourism dynamics and conservation efforts on Tourism Destination, government regulations prove more effective than industry eco-certification. Hence, it is imperative for PMC to seize the opportunity to prioritize environmental concerns in tourism development by including a mandatory environmentalist as a committee member. By incorporating an environmental expert, PMC can ensure a more comprehensive and responsible approach to tourism development that harmonizes with ecological preservation goals. This proactive step will not only safeguard natural tourist attractions but also reinforce the commitment to sustainable practices within the tourism industry.

Sustainable and ecotourism are crucial components of nature-based recreation and tourism that prioritize environmental preservation. The current policy issue lies in the absence of an environmental expert within the committee established by the act. Nepal's abundant natural resources significantly contribute to the tourism sector; however, it is essential to address the potential environmental impacts caused by tourism activities.

6. Recommendation

6.1. Establish a dedicated Department of Tourism within PMC

PMC need to form a dedicated department of Tourism to synchronize, regulate, and execute tourism-related plans and programs for the development of the tourism sector in the city. With the current system of ratifying tourism plans and projects through the Department of Environment, there exists a need for decentralization of power and role dissemination among government institutions. By forming a separate Department of Tourism, the responsibilities related to tourism can be appropriately assigned, reducing role confusion and ensuring clarity in the administration of tourism-related matters. The formation of a Department of Tourism will also

facilitate the functioning of various committees mentioned in the Tourism Development Act, such as the Metropolitan Tourism Development Committee, Ward Tourism Development Committee, and PMC Homestay Regulation Committee. The department can provide monitoring, guidance, and resource management support to these committees, enabling them to effectively carry out their designated roles.

6.2. Precision Progress: Empowering Data-driven Tourism Development

Tourism Development is itself a vague topic of importance. The development of tourism put forward new requirements for the tourism development. Following the requirement, documentation, and data bases plays a crucial role in analyzing the necessity or demand. Database simply works as a block chain that links every possible aspect of tourism development, i.e.: tourism enterprises, demand, production, and government. It also gives businesses to the travel and tourism industry and also the foundation for it to make innovative decisions. Data can reveal the tourist behavior. Database includes the transaction-level information such as tourism expenditure on flights, car rentals, mode of transport, hotel stays, restaurant visits, and visits to attractions. Furthermore, it also includes data on inbound tourism as well as outbound tourism. PMC should hence focus more on the data-based tourism development rather than the random. It will not only help PMC to practice the demand-based development, but also gives the clear insights or case studies for the future plans and programs.

PMC should initiate the research or collaborate with the different tourist services providing governmental/nongovernmental institutions for the tourist data and utilize it to track the tourist's interest/expectations from traveling. Development does not every time bring the expected outcomes, that is due to the lack of research and a data-based approach. Hence PMC should first invest in the tourist data track to further initiate the development related task.

This point can also be linked to the issue of procedural documentation. Documentation or data recording is not important for the current context of the development initiation but also for future correction or case studies. Documented data guides the development to be more systematized and empirical.

For instance: as per the objectives of the municipal tourism development committee, it will categorize and work on the branding of local tourist-related goods. The major concern of the point is: what is the demand for those goods in the tourist market, or what goods are actually in demand? To answer these basic questions needs a database, without which if work is carried then there is a high chance of investment wastage in branding, and goods also won't get the market, which will create a loss more than beneficence and expected tourism growth may not be achieved which is clearly evident in current context).

6.3 Strategic Investment: Targeted Budget Allocation for Tourism Sector

It is evident that a direct correlation exists between budgetary allocation in the tourism sector and subsequent economic growth. Therefore, in order to effectively achieve the objective of declaring Pokhara Metropolitan City (PMC) as the tourism capital, it is crucial for PMC to establish a dedicated tourism department and implement a distinct sector-wise budget allocation specifically for tourism development. This strategic approach will not only facilitate focused execution of tourism-related initiatives but also expedite the overall pace of tourism development. By employing such an approach, PMC can proactively drive sustainable and eco-tourism practices (for this, the budget should address allocations for sustainable tourism development as well as climate responsiveness budget allocations in tourism practices while capitalizing on the economic benefits associated with the tourism industry).

6.4 Unified Access: Advancing Decentralized One-Stop Service Policy

Tourism Development Act 2020, Article 10, sub article 1 states that the metropolitan tourism development committee is responsible for granting the recommendation to the concerned permission giving body i.e. (Ward, Metropolitan city), even are the individual applies for permission to operate tourism related business in the local level. This process makes the individual go through the different governmental institution just to register the enterprise. The long and bothering process of permission taking should be rethink by the PMC.

The decentralized system of government has provided PMC with the jurisdictions regarding tourism enterprise registration. Due to the formlessness of the Metropolitan Tourism Development Committee which counts as responsible to permit the registration, decentralized system is spurned. The registration process is being run by the provincial and federal authority.

Despite, PMC can ask the individual can directly ask permission to the Metropolitan tourism development committee or the local concerned authority should be provided with the solitary right to permit the business. Or PMC should form the Metropolitan Tourism Development Community as soon as possible to carry out its function as authorized by the Act. This will cut off the shillyshally procedure to operate tourism business, while motivating the upcoming tourism business startups through the easy registration procedure.

6.5 Clarification and Harmonization of Institutional Roles in Tourism Development

To address the issue of institutional role inconsistencies outlined in Article 3, 6, and 8 of the Act, it is essential to achieve clarity and harmonization in the roles and responsibilities of the institutions responsible for tourism development in the PMC. It can be done by establishing a clear demarcation lines and separation of powers between the institutions. Define their specific roles and responsibilities, ensuring that each institution has distinct objectives and duties that are complementary rather than duplicative. This will eliminate role conflicts

and promote effective coordination and collaboration. The problem of role conflict also can be solved by developing a collaborative framework that facilitates effective communication, coordination, and cooperation among the institutions. Establishing mechanisms for regular consultation and information sharing to ensure alignment and avoid duplication of efforts.

6.6 Eco Centric Tourism: A Pathway to Sustainable Exploration

Nature is a new trend in the travel industry. Tourism facilities in developed countries are integrated with the environment and have been taken care of regarding its extension. Tourism as a profitable sector of business also has its own economic, social, and ecological limits, which need to be minimized by sustainable strategies. PMC's Tourism Development Act is only focused on the development and promotion of tourism and has not attended to the idea of sustainable tourism. The concept of “sustainability” began with the document Our Common Future (WCED, 1987) in which sustainable development was defined as “satisfying the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs” (WCED, 1987).

The trend towards greater economic development leads to the increasing use of natural resources that are threatened with extinction, while new technologies being applied in the industrial, agricultural, construction, and transport sectors can greatly endanger air, water, and land quality, and cause an increase in the volume of toxic waste and hazardous materials. In this regard, the rapid development of tourism and the pressure exerted by tourist movements have an impact on a global level. It's about genuine concern and care for the social, ecological, and cultural systems that the tourism industry is embedded within and depends on. PMC hence should incorporate the idea of sustainable tourism in the Act for the improvement of the tourist experience and address the needs of host communities.

Dubai Sustainable Tourism (DST) part of Dubai's Department of Economy and Tourism (DET) is shining a light on 50 of the city's pioneering initiatives in environmental conservation and sustainability across the tourism ecosystem. From Bedouin practices to nature reserves and safaris, Dubai has long had a harmonious connection with its surroundings. Environmental protection is ingrained into the very DNA of Dubai's natural landscape and is something that continues to be enhanced. The Dubai Supreme Council of Energy formulated and launched the Dubai Integrated Energy Strategy 2030 in 2011, with the purpose of diversifying sources of energy and increasing the clean energy share. Dubai aims to increase the share of clean energy to 29% and the Emirate's energy demand by 30% by 2030. Dubai is also incentivizing and certifying the hotels and resorts to have their own harvesting fascial farm, and other several initiatives pertaining to its green agenda, including recycling, conserving water & electricity as well as attention paid to food waste.

Considering the issue of not having a proper plan of action for sustainable tourism, PMC as a local government,

which also has sets of executive powers in term of education can also bring the tourism reform through it. Although tourism as content has been involved in different parts of the syllabus of students, there is no definite tourism learning center that will teach students about the prospect of tourism and hospitality (there is but the earnings are limited to curriculum only and very less in practices) There is a need for common standards, uniformity and harmony in curriculum, faculty qualification and education delivery which the provincial government should arrange to meet the demand and supply of skilled man power in tourism sector. Government should create separate research wing to conduct research and studies of various aspects of tourism and hospitality as Gandaki province has the prospect to be the tality hub of South Asia. It can be one stop solution for national and international students to learn about tourism as the climate, weather, Adventure sports prospect, and rich cultural diversity of the PMC.

Tourist Card: The Copenhagen Card is an all-inclusive city pass that provides access to more than 80 attractions and public transportation. The Copenhagen Card generated more than 1 million. visits to the participating museums and attractions in 2017, which signals an increase of 172% from 2012. The adjoined Copenhagen Card App guides tourists around the city and between attractions. The card app also provides data to understand the movement patterns of users. It's sustainable, digital, and easily accessible for all.

6.7 Innovative Paradigm: Digitized Promotion and Recognition of Tourism Models

PMC is rich with the assets of the tourism, but the model is not yet confirmed which is creating a hurdle on the part of promotion and branding. Having a large area with geographical, and resource variations, PMC can provide tourists with the Eco Tourism, Mass Tourism, and Adventurous experiences at a once. For the tourism to be developed or promoted, PMC first should decide on the model of tourism that it will be taking forward.

As the Post-modernist initiatives of branding and promotion, mass media or digital platforms such as Television, social media, digital marketing campaigns through internet etc. can be used as a means of advertisement. The audio/visual consumption ratio of modern society will work as the adding factor to digitized promotion. PMC hence should start to offer innovative tourism and hospitality information, products, services, spaces, and experiences adapted to the needs of the consumers through ICT-based solutions and digital tools.

The International Airport which has been constructed and the evolving new or the existing local/regional destinations can be utilized as the adding factor to the tourism promotion in PMC. Metropolitan's sister relations with the different cities/state nationally and internationally should be availed for Publicity/Marketing.

For e.g.:

PMC can collaborate with national and international Television programs or even with tourism-related influencers from social media platforms globally.

6.8 Equitable Enrichment: Harnessing Inclusive Tourism for Sustainable Development

While talking about the tourist, PMC tends to address the services assessable to every group, viz: especially abled. As an early role model when speaking of access issues, PMC should transform its public transportation, such as pedestrian zones, into comfortably usable zones for every user. For e.g.: Malaga municipality of Spain has public transportation using the city's own app EMT which has a set of functions for e.g., blind passengers. They are able to request bus stops through a voice message function included in the app. Moreover, most of the public transportation is provided with panels using voice announcements, certain ones even using Braille systems, being set up with extra screens for sign language and some tourist information is available in augmented reality. PMC should be well equipped with guided tours for people with reduced mobility (for this, PMC should create laws so that the service providers embed this form of tour in their packages). We can also take another example of Brighton city of England, which offers special 'all terrain' wheelchairs at the seafront to enable people with disabilities to enjoy the beach. They are free to use, and tourist can make a booking up to one week in advance or just rent the wheelchair on the actual day of your visit.

PMC should initiate to develop the tourism which is more differently abled tourist friendly. The city areas along with the hill trails and famous tourist destinations should be assessable to every group of people. No tourist should not feel un-accessible just because of their physical inability.

A commonly raised issue is the lack of well-maintained public toilets and tourist facilities in popular tourist destinations and routes for the priority as well as common tourists. PMC should formulate an Action Plan with a simple objective – to provide, directly or through partnerships with stakeholder. An easy example can be the construction of toilets and rest rooms of acceptable standard, enroute or wayside of every tourist destination.

7. Concluding Remark

The strategic reassessment of Tourism Development as a local initiative in PMC demands meticulous deliberation. The prevailing inefficiencies stemming from management malpractices have hindered progress in this domain. While endorsing a comprehensive overhaul is advisable, neglecting political and economic factors would only exacerbate the prevailing disorder. Tourism assumes a pivotal role in the prosperity of global economies and has been extensively studied over the years. However, harnessing its potential necessitates a comprehensive examination of multifaceted aspects.

Prior to proclaiming PMC as the tourism capital, several pivotal factors must be duly considered. Active engagement in discussions and collaboration with the relevant central authority represent indispensable initial

steps, preceded by the formulation of a comprehensive guiding document—the act itself. Effective implementation, accompanied by the development of other procedural documents, becomes imperative.

As the act takes shape, it should be regarded as a dynamic document requiring constant referencing and refinement. Such an approach fosters an environment of learning and innovation, thus enabling the growth and revitalization of the sector. Undoubtedly, the path to recovery must embrace transformative measures, as it proves inadequate to address challenges with the same approaches that contributed to their emergence. Throughout this process, policy and relevant institutions must undergo substantial changes, laws ought to be redefined, and fresh, more astute concepts need to be introduced.

This paper serves as an endeavor to initiate an analysis of the Act, encompassing the numerous areas it ought to encompass. By emphasizing the reform agenda, it underscores the significance of considering the involvement of diverse stakeholders within the tourism sector of PMC. Above all, reforming tourism development calls for the collaboration and coordination of the key stakeholders involved, necessitating further in-depth research, particularly on policy options pertinent to the current context.

8. Reference

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About Pokhara Research Centre (PRC)

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 an Alternative.



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