

**AN EXPLORATION OF MODERN SUSTAINABLE
TOURISM-FOCUSED DEVELOPMENT: THE CASE OF
MICROENTERPRISES IN SRI LANKA**

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Declaration

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Abstract

Sustainable ecotourism plays a crucial role in balancing environmental conservation with economic and social benefits, contributing to long-term sustainability. This study examines existing global ecotourism practices and their implementation in Sri Lanka, mapping them against the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). A qualitative research approach was adopted, utilizing a single case study to explore the challenges and strategies for sustainable ecotourism development. Data was collected through semi-structured interviews and site observations, followed by manual content analysis to identify key themes and patterns. Findings highlight that ecotourism fosters biodiversity preservation, cultural heritage protection, and economic empowerment through community-driven initiatives. However, challenges such as environmental degradation, regulatory inefficiencies, and socio-economic disparities hinder its sustainable development. Addressing these challenges requires a multi-faceted approach, including eco-friendly infrastructure, inclusive community participation, and innovative financial models. By adopting sustainable strategies and fostering stakeholder collaboration, Sri Lanka can strengthen its ecotourism sector, ensuring long-term economic resilience, environmental stewardship, and social well-being. This study underscores the importance of integrating sustainable practices to position Sri Lanka as a global leader in ecotourism while safeguarding its natural and cultural heritage for future generations.

Key Words – ecotourism, sustainability, environmental, social, economic, challenges

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List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Description
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
UNDESA Development	United Nation-Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNEP	United nations Environmental Programme
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council