

Research Article

Conservation of Majang Forest Biosphere Reserve: An opportunity through Community based Ecotourism Programme in Majang Zone, Gambella, South West Ethiopia

Chiranjib Kumar Choudhary^{1*}, Selemon Thomas Fakana¹ and Alemken Berihun Mengist¹

¹*Department of Wildlife and Ecotourism Management, Gambella University, Gambella, Ethiopia*

**Corresponding Author's E-mail: chiranjib_kumar@hotmail.com*

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ABSTRACT

The study conducted to develop the potential ecotourism programs and to generate awareness regarding importance of biodiversity conservation among local community. The purpose was to find out alternate job opportunities through non-farm income based on environmental calendar and cooperative system. The study employed mix methods of research and has used an exploratory research design. Data were collected through in-depth interviews and focus group discussion besides to field observations. Interviews were held with indigenous communities, officials, tour operators, lodge and resort operators, visitors and Non-Governmental Organisations. The study suggests implementable government policies and ecotourism framework that would have both social and environmental implications which would further help in Participatory Forest Management and community based conservation activities. Ecotourism has been identified as an stimulator for minimising the dependency of local community on Majang Forest Biosphere Reserve.

Key words: Cooperative, Conservation, Community Based Ecotourism Programme, Ecotourism, Gambella, Majang Forest Biosphere Reserve

