



Policy Recommendations and Guidelines on Sustainable Tourism Development in Bangladesh – A Systematic Review

Mohammed Mosaraf Hossain^{1*}, Md. Saiful Islam²

Abstract

Tourism centered on natural and cultural heritage, while also addressing local community income, proves pivotal in achieving sustainable development globally. Despite Bangladesh's abundant natural beauty and historical sites, its tourism sector lags behind neighboring countries. Unplanned tourism growth risks unsustainability, exacerbating existing challenges. Therefore, sustainable principles are vital for any tourism initiative. This paper examines Bangladesh's tourism landscape and proposes sustainable development policies and guidelines. It synthesizes publicly available documents on tourism laws, policies, and strategic papers to identify key sustainability issues across four dimensions. Additionally, it delineates roles and responsibilities for stakeholders to foster sustainable tourism. The policy recommendations and guidelines presented aim to enrich the discourse on sustainable tourism in Bangladesh. They are intended for academic use and can augment existing literature on the subject. The insights provided are valuable for governmental bodies, private sectors, development agencies, and NGOs involved in the tourism sector. By adhering to sustainable practices, Bangladesh can harness

its tourism potential while preserving its natural and cultural heritage. This approach not only supports economic growth but also safeguards environmental and community well-being. Implementing these recommendations can pave the way for a resilient and thriving tourism sector in Bangladesh, capable of balancing economic progress with environmental stewardship and social inclusivity.

Keywords: Sustainable Tourism, Cultural Heritage, Community Engagement, Policy Recommendations, Bangladesh.

Introduction

Bangladesh, with its rich tapestry of natural beauty and cultural heritage, offers significant potential as a tourism destination. From the verdant landscapes of the Sundarbans, home to the Bengal tiger, to the historical relics of Mahasthangarh and the scenic beauty of Cox's Bazar, the country possesses a wealth of attractions that remain largely underutilized. Despite these assets, Bangladesh's tourism sector lags behind its regional neighbors, such as India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka, whose tourism industries are more developed and attract larger volumes of international tourists. This discrepancy is due, in part, to the country's historical focus on other economic sectors, primarily agriculture and the garment industry (Sultana & Islam, 2013). While these industries have been pivotal to Bangladesh's economic foundation, contributing to employment and export earnings, the tourism sector has been largely overlooked as a potential driver of economic growth since the country's independence in 1971. The need for diversification in

Significance | It guides Bangladesh towards sustainable tourism, preserves heritage, engages communities, and shapes policy for inclusive economic and environmental benefits.

*Correspondence. Corresponding Author
Mohammed Mosaraf Hossain, Department of
International Tourism & Hospitality
Management (ITHM), Primeasia University,
Dhaka, Bangladesh.
Email: mosaraf.hossain@primeasia.edu.bd

Editor A. B. M. Abdullah, Ph. D., And accepted by the Editorial Board Apr 27, 2022 (received for review Mar 22, 2022)

Author Affiliation.

¹ Department of International Tourism & Hospitality Management (ITHM), Primeasia University, Dhaka, Bangladesh.

² Department of Maritime Tourism & Hospitality Management, Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Maritime University, Bangladesh.

Please cite this article.

Mohammed Mosaraf Hossain, Md. Saiful Islam (2022). Policy Recommendations and Guidelines on Sustainable Tourism Development in Bangladesh – A Systematic Review, Journal of Primeasia, 3(1), 1-9, 30034

developing economies is well-documented, with the transition from an agrarian-based economy to one that is more industrial and service-oriented playing a crucial role in modernizing and advancing national development (Haraguchi, Martorano, & Sanfilippo, 2019). Tourism, in particular, offers a promising pathway for economic diversification by attracting foreign exchange, creating employment opportunities, and encouraging investment in infrastructure. Recognizing this, many developing nations have turned to tourism as a means of supplementing their traditional industries. Tourism can provide much-needed capital for development, especially in countries like Bangladesh, where foreign direct investment and earnings are essential for sustaining growth (Wall & Mathieson, 2006).

However, the rapid growth of tourism, if not carefully managed, brings with it substantial challenges, particularly concerning environmental degradation, cultural disruption, and unsustainable development practices. In Bangladesh, these concerns are particularly pronounced, as many of its most popular tourist destinations are ecologically fragile and culturally sensitive areas. The unchecked growth of tourism could exacerbate existing issues such as pollution, resource depletion, and loss of cultural identity. This underscores the urgent need for a sustainable approach to tourism development—one that ensures the preservation of natural resources and cultural heritage while also providing economic benefits to local communities (Hasan, Hassan, & Islam, 2014).

Sustainable tourism is not a standalone type of tourism but rather a philosophy and framework that should guide all tourism-related activities. It calls for the responsible planning and management of tourism to ensure that it contributes positively to both the environment and the host communities. According to Butler (1999), sustainable tourism emphasizes the balance between economic growth, social equity, and environmental integrity. This concept is particularly relevant for Bangladesh, where tourism development must be approached with care to avoid the pitfalls of over-tourism and to maintain the integrity of its natural and cultural assets. Various forms of tourism, including ecotourism, cultural tourism, rural tourism, and community-based tourism (CBT), can and should be developed within the framework of sustainability (Hasan & Islam, 2015; Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005).

The purpose of this study is to explore the current state of Bangladesh's tourism sector and to offer policy recommendations and guidelines for its sustainable development. By synthesizing publicly available documents, including tourism laws, policies, and strategic papers, the study identifies the key challenges and opportunities for promoting sustainability in the sector. The findings are presented through the lens of four dimensions of sustainability: economic, socio-cultural, environmental, and governance. These dimensions highlight the importance of a

holistic approach to tourism development, ensuring that it supports economic growth, protects the environment, respects local cultures, and involves all relevant stakeholders in the decision-making process.

This study contributes to the broader discourse on sustainable tourism in Bangladesh by providing actionable insights for policymakers, private sector actors, development agencies, and NGOs. By adhering to the principles of sustainable tourism, Bangladesh has the potential to unlock the economic benefits of tourism while safeguarding its natural and cultural heritage for future generations. In doing so, the country can create a resilient tourism sector that fosters inclusive economic growth, environmental stewardship, and social well-being.

Materials and Methods

This study employed a qualitative research methodology, specifically a content analysis of publicly available documents to evaluate the sustainability dimensions of tourism in Bangladesh. The content analysis focused on tourism laws, policies, and strategic documents published by various entities, including the United Nations, governments, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), as outlined by Shaw & Gould (2001). Content analysis is a widely used qualitative technique that helps researchers interpret the underlying meanings within text data and aligns with the naturalistic paradigm of research (Neuendorf, 2017). This approach allows for a comprehensive evaluation of tourism sustainability through the identification of recurring themes, patterns, and dimensions across different documents.

Approach to Content Analysis

In qualitative research, content analysis can be carried out using one of three distinct approaches: conventional, directed, or summative. The directed approach was selected for this study, as it begins with a theory or prior research to guide the analysis and the development of initial codes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). In this case, the analysis was initially guided by three primary dimensions of sustainability: economic, socio-cultural, and ecological. Through the course of the analysis, a fourth dimension—governance—was identified and integrated into the study's framework. This governance or institutional dimension was found to be crucial in ensuring the implementation of sustainable tourism practices and policies. As a result, the final analysis covered four key dimensions: economic, socio-cultural, ecological, and governance.

Data Sources

The documents selected for analysis included reports, policies, and strategic papers published by authoritative bodies such as the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), Bangladesh's National Tourism Organization (NTO), various government bodies, and international NGOs focused on sustainable tourism development. A qualitative analysis of these

reports, supplemented by articles and case studies related to sustainable tourism in Bangladesh, was performed to deepen the researchers' understanding of the topic. By analyzing these sources, the study sought to identify the key principles, challenges, and opportunities for sustainable tourism development in Bangladesh.

Coding Process and Thematic Analysis

The content analysis was conducted using a directed coding approach, where initial codes were derived from the existing theory of sustainable tourism. These codes were organized into four major themes corresponding to the dimensions of sustainability: economic, socio-cultural, ecological, and governance. Each theme was subdivided into specific principles, responsibilities, and recommendations for the different stakeholders involved in tourism development. The analysis focused on how sustainable tourism principles could be applied in practice and what steps could be taken to ensure tourism's long-term viability while preserving cultural and ecological integrity.

To make the findings accessible and easily understandable, the themes and codes were presented in bullet-point format. Each code was discussed briefly under its corresponding theme to ensure that the key insights were communicated clearly to the reader. This format was adopted to enhance readability and to allow for a quick reference guide for stakeholders, particularly those in policymaking and implementation roles.

Documents Analysed

A wide range of documents were included in the content analysis, with the details of these reports provided in Appendix 1, 2, and 3. The documents analyzed covered a broad spectrum of topics related to sustainable tourism, including tourism development strategies, environmental impact assessments, socio-cultural considerations, and governance structures. These documents provided the foundational knowledge necessary to understand the current state of tourism in Bangladesh and offered valuable insights into the areas that require attention for sustainable development.

Criteria for Selection of Documents

The selection of documents was based on relevance, recency, and authority. Priority was given to documents published by credible organizations such as the UNWTO, Bangladesh government agencies, and respected NGOs. Additionally, only documents published within the last decade were included to ensure that the findings and recommendations were based on the most up-to-date information available.

Presentation of Findings

The findings from the content analysis were organized into four broad themes: (1) key principles of sustainable tourism development, (2) responsibilities of stakeholders, (3) dimensions of sustainable tourism (economic, socio-cultural, ecological, and governance), and (4) issue-specific recommendations. Each of these themes was explained in a manner that not only highlighted the

critical aspects of sustainable tourism but also provided actionable insights for stakeholders involved in the tourism sector in Bangladesh. The use of bullet points for presenting these findings allowed for clear and concise communication of complex ideas, making the study practical and easy to follow for a diverse audience.

Enhanced Roles of Tourism Intermediaries, Transportation, Accommodation, and Food & Beverage Sectors in Sustainable Tourism Development

Tourism Intermediaries

Tour Operators and Travel Agencies

Tour operators and travel agencies play a crucial role in shaping sustainable tourism practices, ensuring that tourism activities meet both market demands and sustainability criteria. Key responsibilities include:

Tourist Satisfaction through Market Analysis

Design tourism products and services tailored to tourists' expectations, based on thorough market research and demand projections. This ensures a balanced approach that meets economic objectives while fostering responsible tourism.

Promotion of Environmentally-Friendly Tours

Develop and market tour packages that are climate-conscious, energy-efficient, and have a low ecological footprint. By emphasizing eco-tourism and minimizing environmental harm, intermediaries contribute to long-term sustainability.

Culturally Appropriate Tours

Design tours that respect the cultural heritage and traditions of local communities, avoiding activities that may disrupt or disrespect socio-cultural values.

Local Economic Empowerment

Support grassroots economic development by promoting locally-produced goods, such as handicrafts and agricultural products. This helps inject economic benefits directly into local communities.

Employment of Local Communities

Create job opportunities for local residents by employing them as guides, translators, or hosts in homestays. This fosters a sense of ownership among locals and ensures the community benefits directly from tourism activities.

Ethical Tour Design

Avoid promoting tours that may cause environmental degradation or harm the social and cultural fabric of a destination. Sustainable practices should be prioritized in all tour activities.

Tourist Education

Actively educate tourists about the importance of preserving the environment and respecting local socio-cultural norms, encouraging responsible behaviour throughout their visit.

Transportation: Sea, Air, Road, and Rail

The transportation sector is a key pillar in delivering sustainable tourism, both in terms of reducing carbon emissions and ensuring a positive tourist experience. Sustainable practices include:

Tourist Satisfaction and Safety

Maintain high service standards at a reasonable cost while ensuring the safety and security of tourists throughout their journey.

Promote Climate-Friendly Travel

Encourage the use of low-carbon or electric vehicles, bicycles, and other green modes of transport to reduce the environmental impact of tourism-related travel.

Adoption of Renewable Energy

Utilize renewable energy sources, such as solar or wind power, in transportation infrastructure wherever possible, contributing to broader climate action goals.

Biodiversity Conservation

Participate in conservation programs by integrating eco-friendly practices into operations and educating travelers on their environmental footprint.

Local Economic Involvement

Offer employment opportunities to local people within the transportation sector, ensuring they benefit from tourism's economic contributions.

Capacity Building

Provide training to transport sector employees to enhance service delivery and ensure adherence to sustainability guidelines.

Compliance with Labour Laws

Treat all employees with dignity and respect, ensuring fair wages and working conditions in line with national labor laws.

Accommodation Sector

Accommodation providers have a substantial role in ensuring that the tourism industry operates in harmony with environmental and socio-cultural standards. Sustainable practices in accommodation include:

Tourist Satisfaction

Deliver quality accommodation services while ensuring tourists have a pleasant and fulfilling experience.

Use of Renewable Energy

Invest in renewable energy solutions like solar panels to reduce carbon emissions and reliance on non-renewable resources.

Resource Efficiency

Adopt water and energy conservation measures, ensuring that natural resources are used efficiently to minimize waste.

Waste Management

Implement waste reduction strategies, including recycling and reusing materials, to reduce the environmental footprint of accommodation operations.

Conservation Programs

Engage in local environmental conservation initiatives and dedicate a portion of profits to support social, cultural, and environmental preservation.

Cultural Sensitivity

Respect the local culture by ensuring that accommodations reflect and honor local traditions and values. Avoid any services or practices that could be offensive or disruptive to the host community's social and religious sentiments.

Local Employment and Training

Hire local residents, offering training programs to build capacity and integrate them into the hospitality industry.

Tourist Awareness: Educate guests about the socio-cultural and environmental sensitivities of the destination, encouraging responsible behaviour.

Food and Beverage Sector

Food and beverage services form an integral part of the tourist experience. Their sustainability responsibilities include:

Tourist Satisfaction through Quality

Ensure food safety and hygiene while offering high-quality, locally sourced food and beverages that reflect the culinary traditions of the destination.

Promotion of Local Cuisine

Highlight traditional and locally produced foods, contributing to the cultural tourism experience and supporting local farmers and producers.

Energy Efficiency

Implement energy-saving measures, such as using energy-efficient appliances and practices that minimize energy waste.

Waste Reduction: Reduce food waste through strategies like portion control, recycling, and proper disposal of perishable food items.

Local Employment

Employ local residents, providing them with training and opportunities for career development in the food and beverage sector.

Long-term Sustainability

Collaborate with other stakeholders, including local authorities, to promote and implement sustainable tourism practices that benefit the wider community and ensure long-term environmental and socio-economic sustainability.

Considerations for Sustainable Tourism Development in Bangladesh

Tourism Master Plan

A comprehensive national tourism master plan is critical for guiding sustainable tourism development in Bangladesh. This plan must be regularly updated to reflect the industry's evolving needs and address changes in market demands, environmental conditions, and socio-cultural dynamics. A robust and adaptive

master plan will ensure that tourism growth aligns with sustainability principles.

Market-Based Tourism Development

Economic sustainability hinges on market-driven tourism development, where tourist demand projections are the cornerstone of decision-making. Developing a tourist destination without considering demand projections risks unsustainable operations. Thus, a careful market analysis must guide tourism product development to ensure the long-term viability of destinations.

Domestic vs. International Tourism

Bangladesh's tourism policy must prioritize the domestic market, as it represents the majority of tourism activity. Domestic tourism should be promoted as a means to enhance local economic development while reducing the financial outflow associated with international tourism. A focus on domestic tourism will help stabilize the industry and maximize economic benefits.

Multi-Stakeholder Approach

Sustainable tourism development necessitates the engagement of all relevant stakeholders, including government bodies, local communities, the private sector, NGOs, and tourists. A bottom-up approach, which involves local communities in decision-making, is key to fostering sustainability and ensuring equitable distribution of benefits.

Public-Private-Community Partnership (PPCP)

For tourism to have a long-term positive impact, it must involve not only public and private sectors but also the local communities that rely on the natural and cultural resources at the destination. PPCP ensures that tourism development benefits all stakeholders, promotes local involvement, and safeguards the resources upon which tourism depends.

By integrating these practices across sectors and ensuring that all stakeholders are involved, Bangladesh can develop a robust, sustainable tourism industry that benefits its economy while preserving its cultural and environmental heritage for future generations.

Results

The analysis of tourism development in Bangladesh revealed several critical insights related to sustainable tourism practices across key sectors. Tour operators and travel agencies have demonstrated increased attention to tourist satisfaction by designing products that meet market demand, ensuring cultural appropriateness, and promoting environmental responsibility (Hossain & Firozzaman, 2007; Jahan & Amin, 2014). Many operators are now incorporating local products, such as handicrafts and agricultural goods, into their offerings, enhancing economic benefits for grassroots-level communities (Kabir et al., 2012). However, the adoption of environmentally sensitive and energy-efficient practices remains

inconsistent, with some agencies still lacking comprehensive strategies for minimizing ecological impacts (Islam, 2009; Kalam & Hossen, 2018).

The transportation sector showed mixed results in terms of sustainability efforts. While there have been initiatives to promote climate-friendly travel, such as the adoption of electric vehicles, the use of low-carbon transportation remains limited (Khandakar, 2014; Islam et al., 2021). Safety and security for tourists have improved, but more efforts are needed in integrating renewable energy and reducing carbon footprints, especially in road and rail transport (Kumar, 2018). Local employment in transportation has seen some progress, though the training and capacity-building efforts have not fully met the sector's potential to uplift local communities (Hong, 2018).

In the accommodation sector, there has been significant progress in energy-efficient practices, particularly in larger hotel chains adopting renewable energy sources like solar power (Hossain & Nazmin, 2006). Many accommodations have implemented water conservation measures and efficient waste management systems, reducing their environmental impact (Kumar et al., 2021). However, smaller, locally-owned establishments face challenges in implementing such measures due to limited resources. Additionally, many accommodations have begun contributing to local socio-cultural and environmental conservation programs, enhancing their community engagement and environmental stewardship (Jahan & Amin, 2014).

The food and beverage sector has made advancements in promoting local cuisine, particularly traditional dishes unique to the destination area (Islam et al., 2021). However, food safety and hygiene practices still vary, with a lack of uniform adherence to national standards in smaller establishments (Kumar et al., 2021). Some positive progress has been observed in waste management, with certain businesses adopting recycling and food waste reduction strategies (Hossain & Nazmin, 2006). Nonetheless, the wider adoption of low-carbon energy and efficient resource use in food and beverage operations remains a challenge (Islam, 2009).

Discussion

The findings of this study highlight the current state of sustainable tourism practices in Bangladesh, emphasizing both progress made and areas needing improvement across various sectors of the tourism industry (Kobra, Bhuiyan, & Zayed, 2018). Each sector—tour operators and travel agencies, transportation, accommodation, and food and beverage—plays a unique role in shaping the sustainability of tourism in Bangladesh. However, challenges in fully embedding sustainability principles remain, particularly when it comes to environmental stewardship, local community involvement, and long-term economic viability (Lane, 2018).

Appendix 1. UN Agencies documents

1. United Nations General Assembly (1987). *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future*.
2. United Nations Conference on Environment & Development (1992). "Agenda 21" Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 3 to 14 June 1992.
3. United Nations (2015). Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The resolution was adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015.

Appendix 2. Legislation

Environmental legislations	Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act, 1995 The Environment Court Act, 2000
Conservation acts and policies	Forest Act, 1927 Bangladesh Wild Life (Preservation) Order, 1973 National Forest Policy, 1994 Marine Environment Conservation Act, 2004 Biological Diversity Act, 2012 Wildlife (Conservation and Security) Act, 2012 Ecologically Critical Areas (ECA) notified under the Bangladesh Environment Conservation Act, 1995. Game Reserve, National Park and Wildlife Sanctuary as declared under the Bangladesh Wild Life (Preservation) Order, 1973
Climate change regulations	Climate Change Trust Law, 2010 Ozone Depleting Substances (Control) Rules, 2014
River, wetland and water-based tourism	Bangladesh Water Act, 2013 National River Protection Commission Act, 2013 The Canal Act 1864
Playground, open space, park and natural water reservoir	Mega city, Divisional Town and District Town's municipal areas including country's all the municipal areas' playground, open space, park and natural water reservoir Conservation Act, 2000
Tourism	National Tourism Policy, 2010 The Bangladesh Parjatan Board Act, 2010 The Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation Order, 1972 Bangladesh Tourist Reserve Area and Special Tourist Zone Act, 2010 The Bangladesh Hotel and Restaurant Act, 2014 Bangladesh Travel Agency (Registration and Control) Act, 2013 Civil Aviation Act, 2017 Civil Aviation Authority Act, 2017

Appendix 3

Besides, Bangladesh is a signatory to some international conventions that were also reviewed:

1. Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES), 1973.
2. Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972.
3. International Plant Protection Convention (IPCC), 1951.
4. The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat, 1971.
5. Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), 1992.

Tourism Intermediaries

Tour operators and travel agencies have begun incorporating market analysis to better understand tourist preferences, ensuring products and services are designed with customer satisfaction in mind. This shift toward demand-driven tourism offerings not only enhances customer experience but also supports local economies by promoting local products, such as handicrafts and agricultural goods. However, the inconsistent adoption of environmentally sustainable practices, such as energy-efficient tour operations and eco-friendly travel packages, suggests that more awareness and effort are required. The design of tour packages should prioritize minimizing environmental impact, integrating low-carbon transportation, and promoting eco-friendly accommodations (Lu & Nepal, 2009).

The reluctance of some agencies to embrace these practices may stem from a lack of training or insufficient incentives. To address this, policy-makers and tourism authorities should collaborate to introduce guidelines and offer incentives, such as tax reductions or certifications, to encourage widespread adoption of sustainable practices. Encouraging tourists to choose environmentally conscious tour packages by offering unique experiences tied to local culture and traditions can also drive demand for sustainable tourism (Majumder & Hossain, 2011).

Transportation Sector

The transportation sector in Bangladesh is a vital component of tourism infrastructure, but it faces challenges in achieving sustainability. Although climate-friendly travel options like electric vehicles are emerging, they are not yet widely adopted due to infrastructure limitations, high costs, and insufficient promotion. Furthermore, the country's reliance on fossil fuel-based transport remains a significant barrier to reducing carbon emissions. While safety and security standards for tourists have seen improvements, greater focus is needed on integrating renewable energy solutions within the transport sector, particularly in road and rail services (Miller & Twining-Ward, 2005).

Employing local people in transportation-related roles has improved, contributing to local economies. However, training programs and capacity-building initiatives for workers remain insufficient. The transport sector needs comprehensive training programs focusing on customer service, safety, environmental sustainability, and technical expertise. This would not only improve the overall quality of services but also allow the local workforce to better benefit from the growing tourism industry (Neuendorf, 2017).

Accommodation Sector

Accommodations in Bangladesh are progressing towards sustainability, particularly larger hotels that have started using renewable energy sources such as solar power, improving energy efficiency, and adopting waste management strategies (Wall &

Mathieson, 2006). Water conservation and resource efficiency practices are becoming common among top-tier accommodations, contributing to a reduced environmental footprint. However, smaller and locally-owned accommodations often lack the financial and technical resources to implement these practices effectively (Parveen & Rajon, 2008).

To promote sustainability across all accommodation providers, government support in the form of grants, technical assistance, and training programs is essential. Additionally, the tourism industry should foster a culture of collaboration where larger hotel chains mentor and support smaller businesses in adopting sustainable practices (UNWTO & UNDP, 2017). Contributions to local environmental and cultural conservation initiatives are promising steps, but greater participation is needed across the board. Accommodations can also play a larger role in educating tourists on environmental conservation and cultural sensitivity, raising awareness about sustainable behaviors during their stay (Rahman, Hossain, Miti, & Kalam, 2010).

Food and Beverage Sector

The food and beverage sector is pivotal in creating an authentic travel experience by offering local cuisine, which not only enhances tourist satisfaction but also supports local agriculture and food traditions (Sultana & Islam, 2013). Promoting traditional Bangladeshi dishes and beverages fosters cultural appreciation and contributes to the local economy. However, the sector faces challenges with uniformity in food safety and hygiene standards, particularly in smaller establishments that may lack the capacity to meet national guidelines (Rasoolimanesh, Ramakrishna, Hall, Esfandiar, & Seyfi, 2020).

Energy efficiency and waste management in food production and service remain critical areas needing attention. Larger restaurants and hotels have begun implementing waste reduction strategies, but smaller businesses are lagging behind due to a lack of resources and training (Siraj, 2009). Establishing food waste management programs that encourage recycling and the use of compostable materials could help mitigate environmental impacts. Furthermore, incentivizing the use of low-carbon energy sources such as biofuels or renewable energy in food preparation will not only reduce greenhouse gas emissions but also strengthen the sector's contribution to sustainable tourism (Rasul & Manandhar, 2009).

Multi-Stakeholder Collaboration and Public-Private-Community Partnerships (PPCP)

A major theme emerging from this study is the need for collaboration among stakeholders to achieve long-term sustainability in tourism. Government agencies, private sector players, local communities, and NGOs must work together to develop, implement, and monitor sustainable tourism policies and initiatives. A bottom-up approach, involving local communities from the outset, is critical for ensuring that tourism development

benefits the broader society. Community involvement in tourism planning can foster a sense of ownership, leading to stronger protection of cultural heritage and natural resources (Sheikh, 2020). Public-Private-Community Partnerships (PPCP) have proven effective in ensuring that tourism benefits are equitably shared. These partnerships can support capacity-building initiatives, provide employment opportunities, and ensure that tourism development does not negatively impact local environments or cultures. Ensuring that local communities have a say in tourism development is also crucial for minimizing negative social and environmental consequences. PPCPs can help mitigate conflicts between tourism development and local livelihoods by providing alternative income sources through tourism (Singh, 2008).

Conclusion

In conclusion, sustainable tourism development in Bangladesh requires a coordinated effort across key sectors, including tour operators, transportation, accommodation, and food and beverage services. By aligning tourism practices with environmental conservation, socio-cultural respect, and local economic empowerment, the tourism industry can promote long-term sustainability. A comprehensive national tourism master plan, guided by market-based development and regular monitoring, is essential for ensuring stability and growth. Prioritizing domestic tourism, fostering multi-stakeholder engagement, and implementing Public-Private-Community Partnerships (PPCP) will help balance economic benefits with environmental and social preservation. By adopting these strategies, Bangladesh can create a thriving tourism sector that not only attracts tourists but also enhances community development, protects cultural heritage, and safeguards natural resources for future generations. Sustainable tourism is a pathway to equitable growth and environmental stewardship in Bangladesh.

Author contributions

M.M.H. conceptualized and developed the methodology, and prepared the original draft and collected, M.S.I. reviewed and edited the writing.

Acknowledgment

Not declared

Competing financial interests

The authors have no conflict of interest.

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