

**PROSPECTIVE OF ECOTOURISM IN KOYNA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY IN SATARA
DISTRICT (M.S.)**

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Abstract

Ecotourism is entirely a new approach in tourism. In India, the concept of ecotourism is comprised only up to Wildlife areas. National parks and Wildlife Sanctuary are the most developed tourism destinations in this category. In present study Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary in Koyna River Catchment area is selected for ecotourism. There are some tourist places to visit along the National Park. The Dam site, Garden, Ghats, Lake, Sadaa, Waterfall, rich Flora and Fauna are the common but distinguished features of this sanctuary.

Keywords: *Ecotourism, Wildlife Sanctuary, Flora, Fauna etc.*

1.1 Introduction:

The nature based tourism is growing vastly which can become the important channel to utilise wisely the biodiversity and wildlife. Ecotourism is a new approach in tourism. It was introduced in Africa with legalization of hunting in Africa in 1950. This need for recreational hunting zones lead to the creation of protected areas, national parks, and game reserves. The term ecotourism is given by Hector Ceballos-Lascurian in 1983. Recently, the growth of ecotourism and tourism industry compared and the result was that 20 to 35 per cent growth recorded by Ecotourism as compared to the growth by tourism recorded merely 4 to 5 per cent annually.

India has been launched the Ecotourism concept in the wild areas of National Parks, Wildlife Sanctuary and cultural areas. Ecotourism is accepted by Government of Maharashtra. Recently Western Ghats got the nomination from UNESCO's World Heritage Centre Committee for some sites i.e. Kas Plateau, Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary, Chandoli National Park and Radhanagari Wildlife Sanctuary.

UNESCO has declared five protected area to become World Heritage Site. Out of them there are four categories are found in India. They are in the below;

i) Sanctuary:

It is an area having sufficient ecological, geomorphological and natural importance. It is decided for protect and develop the wildlife. Under some rights people can reside into the sanctuary

ii) National Park:

As same as Sanctuary, it also give importance to ecological, geomorphological and natural characteristics. It is also decided for protect and develop wildlife. National park conferring the rights of the people residing in it. None of the right to the people in this type. Unlike the sanctuary National park doesn't allow grazing of livestock.

Wildlife Sanctuary is recognized by IUCN (International Union for Conservation of Nature) category II protected areas. India has total around 500 wildlife sanctuaries. In Maharashtra state there are six National Parks, 35 Wildlife Sanctuaries and one Conservation Reserve.

1.2 Objective:

To study potential of ecotourism in Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary.

1.3 Material and Methods:

For the present work the data is collected from secondary source. The secondary data is collected from the Govt. offices (Grampanchayat, Talathi, Forest Department), District Census Handbook, Statistical Abstract, Gazetteer of districts, internet etc. With this statistical techniques are used as per the availability of data. The collected information finally tabulated, analyzed, interpreted and conclusion has been drawn.

1.4 Study Area:

Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary is located from 17° 22' 39.94" North to 17° 46' 11.58" North Latitude and 73° 34' 57.32" East to 73° 49' 01.48" East Longitude. It comes in Satara and Ratnagiri districts. This Sanctuary is covered an area of 423.55 sq. km. It was formed in 1985. This sanctuary is located at the east and west catchment area of Koyna Dam. It is protected by the Shivsagar reservoir and the steep slope hills around the reservoir.

1.5 Explanation of Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary:

The detailed explanation of Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary is given below;

Table 1.1

Distribution of core forest area in Koyna W.L.S.

Sr. No.	Type of forest	Area in Sq. km	Area in Percentage
1.	Reserved Forests	136.66	47.74
2.	Unclassed forests	59.76	20.87
3.	Nonforest Areas	89.66	31.32
	Total Area under Core Forest	286.28	100.00

Source: Divisional Forest Office, Kolhapur, p.18.

About 47.74 per cent area is occupied by reserved forest, whereas unclassified forest covered 20.87 per cent of area. Nonforest area is 31.32 per cent which covers the flat top plateau, grass land areas etc.

A) Distribution of Flora and Fauna in Koyna W.L.S.:

Plants do the important role in maintaining the ecosystem through giving food and fresh air. They are very essential for the life of human being and animal kingdom. The sanctuary is enriched with a vast vegetation cover that mainly comprises of southern moist mixed deciduous forests and the southern tropical evergreen forests (Gade A.D. and Chavan S. M., 2014 p. 3). In Koyna Sanctuary, there are very less major grass lands. There are Bamboo, Karvi, and Kumbal etc. Fodder species available in less proportion. Jambhul, Amba, Toran, Payar, Shikakai, Umber, Hirda, Aloo, Awalaa, Behada, Karwand, etc. fruits are rich. Ain, Kinjal, Gela, Bibba, Katak, Nana, Pisa, Jambha etc. are also abundant. Garambi and Ran Jambhul are rare species found here. Water body of Shivsagar Backwater of Koyna Dam create the different atmosphere for the flora growing in this habitat. Therefore some flora types are endemic and some are endangered species. IUCN listed the list of species which are under the threat in Koyna W.L.S.

Table 1.2

IUCN listed species in Koyna W.L.S. of Western Ghats of South Maharashtra

Sr. No.	Species	IUCN position
1.	Nothopegia castanaefolia	Critically endangered
2.	Prunus ceylanica	Endangered
3.	Canthium dicoccum	Vulnerable
4.	Dimocarpus longan	Lower risk/near threatened
5.	Tabernaemontana heyneana Lower	risk/near threatened
6.	Holarrhena pubescens	Least concern
7.	Aglaia lawii	Lower risk/least concern
8.	Aglaia elaeagnoidea	Lower risk/least concern
9.	Chukrasia tabularis	Lower risk/least concern
10.	Knema attenuata	Lower risk/least concern
11.	Myristica dactyloides	Lower risk/conservation dependent
12.	Mangifera indica	Data deficient
13.	Diospyros ebenum	Data deficient

Source: Tree species composition in Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary, Northern Western Ghats of India, Joglekar A. and others, CURRENT SCIENCE, VOL. 1688 108, NO. 9, 10 MAY 2015, p. 1688.

This sanctuary has spotted Tiger, wild dogs, Leopards, etc. of Carnivores, Gaur, Sambar, Bhekar, Mouse Deer, Four Horned Antelope, Giant Squirrel, Porcupines etc. are the Herbivores. This compose about 25-30 major species of Mammals are found here. Hornbill and other endangered species of Birds are also important. Species named as Blue finned Mahasheer is the fish species found here. Atlas moth, moon moth and other types of butterflies which are endangered species are also abundant. The detailed information of major animals is given below;

Table 1.3

Distribution and growth of Fauna in Koyna W.L.S.

Sr. No.	Name of Animal	2007	2008	Growth in percentage (2007-2008)	2009	Growth in Percentage (2007-2008)
1.	Tiger	05	02	-60.00	02	0
2.	Leopard	33	35	06.60	23	-34.28
3.	Indian Gaur	218	361	65.59	229	-36.56
4.	Sambar	49	55	13.04	85	54.54
5.	Barking Deer	15	52	63.63	68	1.92
6.	Sloth Bear	33	54	06.66	167	209.25

7.	Mouse Deer	15	16	75.60	19	18.75
8.	Wild Boar	82	144	3200.00	198	37.50
9.	Porcupine	01	33	1175.00	-	-
10.	Wild Dog	04	51	1500.00	164	221.56
11.	Peacock	01	16	-	10	-37.50
12.	Jackal	-	-	-	30	-
13.	Giant Squirrel	-	53	-	85	60.37
14.	Hare	-	35	-	246	602.85
15.	Langur	-	22	-	86	290.90
16.	Mongoose	-	19	-	90	373.68
17.	Jungle fowl	-	263	-	595	126.23
18.	Monkey	-	149	-	290	94.63
19.	Chital	-	-	-	-	-
20.	Wild Cat	-	-	-	47	-
21.	Four horned antelope	-	05	-	-	-
22.	Crocodile	-	-	-	-	-
23.	Pangolin	-	17	-	-	-
24.	Monitor Lizard	-	-	-	28	-

Source: Divisional Forest Office, Kolhapur, Wildlife, Vol. II, p. 177.

The above table shows the animal count during the year 2007 to 2009. The number of tiger is decreased from 05 in 2007 to 02 in 2008. The wildlife counting team couldn't find the direct siting of Tiger directly by Camera trap. Only footprint are found in Koyna W.L.S. The number of leopard is decreasing time to time. It was decreased from 35 in 2008 to 23 in 2009 by -34.28 per cent. Barking deer has been increased by only 1.92 per cent. Time to time the use of new technology and practices get the accurate result. Therefore the number of animals has increased from their previous number to the present by huge number or percentage. It is happened with Wild Boar, Porcupine and Wild Dog which are increased by 3200.00, 1175.00 and 1500.00 percentage respectively. The peacock are decreased from their previous count by -37.50 per cent. Some animal counts are not available in the table.

B) Ecotourism Attractions in Koyna W.L.S.:

This sanctuary have some places of attraction for ecotourist. The flora and fauna are the main attractions. But except this Shivsagar Lake view, Vasota fort, Jangli-Jaigad fort, Bhairavgad fort on the west margin of the Western Ghats scarp, Boating at Bamnoli, Ozarde waterfall etc. are some other places to visit.

E) Potential Ecotourism attractions:

i) Sadaa (Plateau): The plateaus in Western Ghats hills are having importance for the rich biodiversity of flora and fauna. Kas and some adjacent plateaus are having mammals, amphibians, reptiles and butterfly. The avian population is having diversity in the species. The flora of Ephemerals are found here. Sadaa plays an important role in the growth of flora in rocky surface during monsoon season. Therefore they are

important spots for the development of Ecotourism. Some examples of Sadaa are Kas Plateau, Chalkewadi plateau, Chakdev plateau. Dicholi plateau, etc.

ii) Trek Trails: There are some important trek points exist in this sanctuary but some other trek trails have the scope to develop in the future.

- a) Koynanagar-Humbarli-Torane trek trail
- b) Avasari-Jangli-jaigad fort trek trail
- c) Avasari-Dicholi Sadaa trek trail
- d) Bamboli ferry-Vasota fort trek trail
- e) Bannoli ferry- Shindi- Chakdev trek trail

iii) Other potential spots:

- a) Dicholi caves
- b) Navaja to Ozarde waterfall road
- c) Bannoli to Met-Indoli watersport area
- d) Avasari to Karanjwade water transport route.

1.6 Conclusion:

As per the study it is concluded that Koyna Wildlife Sanctuary is in potential state of ecotourism. The government should concern about the developmental activity of this destination. Tourism alone cannot attain the development of this place as per the present developmental processes. The trekking trails have no essential assets to develop this place. The Koyna backwater lake area is the highest potential area in this destination. Ozarde waterfall should maintain and develop as an ecotourist place for those who prefer the natural tourism. Fort Vasota except its lacunas should develop as a place of ecotourism.

References:

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