

Tourism Policy

The tourism industry is growing very rapidly and Nepal has tremendous potential for tourism development because of its unique natural and cultural heritage. In this context, this tourism policy has been formulated with the aims of: increasing national productivity and income; increasing foreign currency earnings; creating employment opportunities; improving regional imbalances and projecting the image of Nepal more assertively in the international arena; through the development and diversification of the travel and tourism industries.

Objectives:

- + To develop tourism as an important sector of the national economy by developing linkages between tourism and other sectors.
- + To diversify tourism down to rural areas so as to improve employment opportunities, foreign currency earnings, growth of national income and regional imbalances.
- + To improve natural, cultural and human environments of the nation in order to develop and expand the tourism industry.
- + To maintain a good image of the nation in the international community by providing quality service and a sense of security.
- + To develop and promote Nepal as an attractive tourism destination.

Policy

- + The participation of the private sector will be sought to the maximum extent for development and diversification of tourism products. The involvement of government will be primarily directed towards infrastructure development. Apart from this, Nepal government will maintain its role as coordinator and motivate for the growth of the travel and tourism industries.
- + Participation of the Nepalese people in the integrated manner will be carried out for environmental conservation programmes which contribute to sustainable tourism development.
- + Existing tourism infrastructure and facilities will be upgraded. Priority will be given to developing new tourist destinations, particularly in rural areas.
- + Popular religious tourism sites will be improved and promoted in order to develop religious tourism.
- + Nepal will be developed as a centre for adventure tourism.
- + Tourist service and facilities will be encouraged to upgrade in quality. Special efforts will be made to make Nepal a secure place for tourists.
- + Due attention will be paid to improving regional imbalances while developing tourism.
- + Competitive tourism promotion and marketing will be launched in tourist originating markets to establish Nepal as a major tourist destination.
- + Linkages will be established between tourism and agro-based as well as cottage industries. Emphasis will be placed on developing these related sectors simultaneously.
- + Local investment will be encouraged in service-oriented, travel and trekking agency businesses in which local investors have proven capability. Foreign investment, including joint ventures, will be promoted in areas which transfers skills and technology or in capital intensive industries like hotels and resorts.
- + The National Civil Aviation Policy will be implemented as an integral part of Tourism Policy.

Working Policy:

- + Tourism investment will be diversified and channeled for the creation and improvement of infrastructure in new destination areas.
- + The private sector will be motivated to make systematic and effective use of existing infrastructure in order to develop sightseeing packages of cultural and religious sites, high Himalayan ranges and places with outstanding natural beauty.
- + The private sector will be motivated to operate environmentally friendly recreational, adventure activities based on water, land and air in various parts of Nepal.
- + Services and facilities will be expanded in temples, monasteries and other religious sites to attract more domestic tourists on the one hand, while attempting to develop such sites as international religious centres on the other.
- + Wildlife tourism will be developed and promoted in various geographic areas, in recognition of the bio-diversity that exists in the nation.
- + New trekking routes and climbing peaks will be opened, in a phased manner, with a view to spreading mountain tourism on a regional basis.
- + Coordination will be maintained with neighboring countries to enhance cross border tourism activities based on mutual benefit.
- + Innovative and promotional products such as conference tourism, cultural and youth tourism, international sports competitions etc. will be specially encouraged.
- + Rural tourism will be encouraged. Rural communities will be motivated to launch various programmes that contribute to the growth and promotion of rural tourism.
- + Programmes developed at different levels will be implemented for the awareness of people on tourism.
- + National environmental guidelines for tourism will be formulated and subsequently adopted to minimize adverse environmental impacts from tourism.
- + Local environmental codes will be designed in conformity with prevailing international conventions and national guidelines pertaining to the environment.
- + Land with high tourism potential under the ownership of the government will be leased out to private entrepreneurs for development of environmentally friendly resorts. The credentials and business plans of the private entrepreneur will be considered before leasing out such land on a long term basis.
- + The private sector will be allowed to invest in infrastructural services and facilities for tourists. However, certain standards will be fixed for such infrastructural services and facilities.
- + Tourism entrepreneurs will be encouraged to adopt codes of conduct through their respective professional associations for enhancement of quality in the services and facilities they offer.

Trekking areas will be classified into three categories as follows:

- General Trekking Area : Areas with a network of good trails and which offer basic services and facilities to tourists will be categorized as general trekking areas.
- Guided Trekking Area : Area already open for trekking but not meeting minimum infrastructural requirements such as trails, and basic services and facilities such as hotels and lodges, will be categorized as guided trekking areas. Only group trekkers handled by trekking agencies will be allowed to visit such areas under fixed annual quotas.
- Controlled Trekking Area : Areas in the high-Himalayan region which are out of modern civilization and have very sensitive natural environments, and ancient indigenous cultures will be categorized as controlled trekking areas. Only group trekkers handled by trekking agencies and accompanied by a government deputed liaison officer will be permitted to visit such areas.

