

Social Media and Ecotourism: A Review Study

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Abstract—Applications of internet, social media and web 2.0 tools have brought changes in the tourism sector and have influenced the ecotourism industry. In 2015 about two billion people around the world used social media on daily basis. They share posts on face book, pictures on flicker, instagram, videos on you tube, and write their reviews on blog. Social sites are very popular mechanism among ecotourism stakeholders. The objective of the review study is to identify the interrelationship between social media and ecotourism. The present study reviewed 14 articles stating the role of social media in ecotourism and uses of social media by ecotourism actors: ecotourism service providers and ecotourists. Few parameters were selected for review like year of publication, study area, objective, methodology, key findings. Content Analysis is used for analyzing the papers to achieve the objective. Ecotourism is still at its growth stage. There were few studies available in literature that focus on social media and ecotourism industry. Most of the studies were exploratory in nature. 10 of the total studies focused on marketing aspect of the ecotourism using websites and other social media tool and applied Content analysis technique. It was found that Internet and different social media platforms like websites, facebook, twitter, instagram, and blogs help ecotourism operators in better promoting ecotourism products and services. Ecotourists use social media for sharing experiences and gaining knowledge about ecotourism sites. Online promotion of ecotourism has positively affected the industry but there is still requirement of better presenting ecotourism online.

Keywords: Ecotourism. Social media, internet, ecotourism marketing.